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# Streaming Services: A Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis to Untangle Service Switching

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## Abstract

*Millions of subscribers switch back and forth between streaming services. When considering switching from one streaming service to another, subscribers usually compare them side-by-side and either completely switch to the alternative streaming service or partially switch by using both streaming services. To understand when subscribers engage in complete or partial switching and identify nuanced differences in these switching behaviors, we draw on expectation disconfirmation theory, conducting a mixed methods approach based on interviews (N=44) and a fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (N=224). We contribute to switching research by illuminating the different configurations that lead to complete and partial switching, suggesting that relying on the same explanation for these different switching behaviors falls short. While we reveal a unifinal explanation for complete switching, partial switching requires more complex, equifinal explanations. We advance research on streaming services by identifying affordability and perceived content exclusiveness as important constraints for switching behavior in this context.*

**Keywords:** Expectation Disconfirmation Theory; Mixed Methods Study; Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), Parallel Use, Service Switching.

## Introduction

Streaming services such as Netflix and Disney+ proliferate, reaching more than 80 percent of potential subscribers in the US (Leichtman, 2022). Many subscribers frequently switch back and forth between different streaming services (Faughnder, 2022). When switching, subscribers typically do not immediately replace their incumbent streaming service, e.g., Netflix, with an alternative one, e.g., Disney+ [1]. Instead, they use streaming services in parallel to compare them side-by-side and decide which one they will use in the future (Abarinova, 2022). Based on comparing the two streaming services, they might either use Disney+ instead of Netflix (i.e., complete switching), or complement it with Disney+ (i.e., partial switching). From a streaming service provider's perspective, these different switching behaviors have important implications for their retention measures. In the case of partial switching, both streaming services retain the subscriber, while complete switching implies subscriber loss for the streaming service left behind. Since streaming service providers' revenues are directly dependent on the number of subscribers (Westcott et al., 2022), understanding when subscribers engage in which switching behavior is key to maintaining subscription numbers.

Information systems (IS) switching research recognizes differences in switching behaviors. A switch implies that users compare services and change their behavior in one of two directions: complete switching, meaning that users entirely discontinue using an incumbent service and replace it with an alternative one, or partial switching, meaning that users concurrently use an alternative service along the incumbent service without entirely discontinuing it (Gong et al., 2022). Research acknowledges the existence of complete and partial switching as different switching behaviors (Bhattacherjee et al., 2012) but typically summarizes complete and partial switching to general switching behavior, such that it offers one general explanation without considering potential nuances in these switching behaviors (see Table 1). At its core, prior IS switching research suggests that switching behavior, in general, can be explained by users' evaluation of which service is superior and their satisfaction with the incumbent and the alternative service (Lin et al., 2022).

While such insights are helpful to understand why users switch in general, we see opportunities to contribute to IS switching research by explaining complete and partial switching as two separate switching behaviors. First, research does not explain how subscribers' evaluation of streaming services based on different factors lets subscribers either completely or partially switch. We think that this is important for IS switching research as it offers insights to what extent prior explanations for switching behavior are generalizable across complete and partial switching or if their explanatory power is limited to either one of these switching behaviors.

Second, when comparing streaming services, subscribers may differ in their evaluation of which streaming service is superior in which terms and still exhibit the same switching behavior. Prior IS switching research focused on crafting unifinal explanations for switching behavior, essentially suggesting that all users follow the same rationale when considering switching. As such, prior work reached indifferent conclusions on which factors are relevant for users' evaluation of services, e.g., on whether constraints such as switching costs make users less likely to switch (Chang et al., 2014; Xu et al., 2014) or not (Fan & Suh, 2014; Hsu, 2014). We aim to resolve such seemingly inconsistent findings and develop knowledge for IS switching research by considering the possibility that subscribers may differ in their evaluation of which factors are relevant when considering complete and partial switching, such that they may follow equifinal rationales toward the same switching behavior.

Third, considering the unique characteristics of streaming services, we study the role of constraints that may restrict switching behavior in this specific context. Among the characteristics of streaming services are that they provide exclusive content to set themselves apart from other streaming services (Riekkinen, 2018), which indicates that there may be constraints that restrict subscribers' switching behaviors. Identifying if and how such constraints restrict subscribers' switching behaviors affords the opportunity to understand the limits of generalizability of switching behavior explanations and offer more nuanced, context-specific explanations of complete and partial switching to the emerging stream of streaming service literature.

We take these opportunities to carve out when subscribers engage in either complete or partial switching by considering that subscribers may follow different, equifinal rationales toward the switching behaviors and that context-specific constraints may restrict their switching behavior. We ask the following research question:

> Why and how do subscribers completely or partially switch streaming services?

Following an abductive theory-building approach (Van Maanen et al., 2007), we draw on expectation disconfirmation theory (EDT) (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004; Oliver, 1980) to understand how expectations, positively disconfirmed expectations[2], and satisfaction with the streaming services explain complete and partial switching, and how constraints may restrict these switching behaviors. Since EDT fundamentally focuses on users' subjective perceptions in the form of their expectations and disconfirmed expectations (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004), we adopt a proxy view on the information technology artifact by focusing on subscribers' perceptions of streaming services (Akhlaghpour et al., 2013; Orlikowski & Iacono, 2001). The proxy view allows us to capture the perceived differences between the streaming services rather than focusing on objective technological characteristics. We conducted a mixed methods approach with two studies (Venkatesh et al., 2016). Study 1 follows a qualitative research design based on 44 semi-structured interviews, identifying four expectations and two constraints relevant to streaming services. Since subscribers might differ in their disconfirmation of the identified expectations yet show the same switching behavior, we consider that combinations of the four disconfirmed expectations together with subscribers' satisfaction with the streaming services explain streaming service switching in the form of configurations. To reflect this in our research design, Study 2 builds on Study 1 using a fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis

(fsQCA) (N=224), uncovering one configuration that explains complete switching and three configurations that explain partial switching. Integrating the identified constraints into the fsQCA, we reveal that affordability and perceived content exclusiveness restrict the switching behaviors. Based on a dialogue between our findings, EDT, and prior IS switching and streaming literature, we craft propositions for the theoretical mechanisms that guide partial and complete switching.

We advance IS switching research by shedding light on the different causes of complete and partial switching, highlighting that the switching behaviors need to be considered separately and explanations cannot be generalized across them. We extend switching literature by revealing a unifinal explanation for complete switching and showing that partial switching requires more complex, equifinal explanations. We advance streaming service literature by revealing affordability and perceived content exclusiveness as constraints that restrict complete and partial switching, suggesting that the explanatory power of EDT is limited when such constraints are not addressed.

## Related Research on Streaming Services

Streaming services offer subscribers a flexible way of watching media content suggested by a content database based on viewing algorithms (Lobato, 2018). While there are different types of streaming services, subscription streaming services that offer on-demand access to media content with periodic payment plans have the highest market value (Moulding, 2021).

There is a growing body of research on subscription streaming services (Pereira & Tam, 2021). Among others, research shows that satisfaction with a service primarily depends on content quality (Riekkinen, 2018). Satisfied subscribers are more likely to continue using a streaming service and less likely to engage in content piracy (Riekkinen, 2018). Related work finds that the availability of streaming services and whether the content fits subscribers' preferences influence the likelihood of piracy (Godinho de Matos et al., 2018). Studies show that price, quality, and availability of feature films influence perceived utility of a streaming service and willingness to pay (Mann et al., 2008). Indications suggest that providing subscribers with content samples allows them to make better-informed decisions about whether they should consume it (Hoang & Kauffman, 2018). Subscribers use streaming services across different streaming devices, such as their laptops, tablets, or mobile phones (Hoang & Kauffman, 2018), suggesting that a streaming service's compatibility with their streaming devices plays an important role for their streaming service use behavior. The possibility of consuming media content with streaming services at any time increases the likelihood of binge-watching, which refers to intensive consumption of media content over a short period (Schweidel & Moe, 2016). Research finds that binge-watching decreases the intention to continue subscribing to a specific streaming service, as subscribers deplete available content faster (Godinho de Matos & Ferreira, 2020). Subscribers who are satisfied and perceive a streaming service as useful are more likely to continue using it (Pereira & Tam, 2021). Further evidence suggests that subscribers' behavior may be constrained by the money subscribers are willing to spend, as subscribers who engage in content piracy exhibit a particularly low willingness to pay (Godinho de Matos et al., 2018). Relatedly, there are indications that exclusive content is another important constraint for subscribers' behavior (Riekkinen, 2018), as it helps streaming services set themselves apart from alternative streaming services.

While prior findings offer important insights into different factors that may guide and constraint subscribers' behavior, they offer no insights into why and how subscribers switch streaming services. To complement prior streaming research by crafting explanations for subscribers' streaming switching behavior, we next turn to IS switching research.

## Theoretical Background

In this section, we present the status quo of IS switching research and outline expectation disconfirmation theory (EDT) as the theoretical lens of this study.

### IS Switching Research

IS switching research explains switching behaviors in various contexts, including e-commerce (Li & Ku, 2018), messaging services (Lin et al., 2022), mobile payment applications (Gong et al., 2022), and social networking sites (Chang et al., 2014). Across studied contexts, explanations for switching behavior base on users' evaluation about an alternative service's superiority compared to the incumbent service and their satisfaction with the incumbent and the alternative service (Lin et al., 2022) (see Table 1).

Irrespective of the evaluation and satisfaction, evidence suggests that there are constraints that restrict users' switching behaviors. For instance, the literature identifies habit (Bhattacherjee et al., 2012), inertia (Polites & Karahanna, 2012), security concerns (Bhattacherjee & Park, 2014), switching costs (Hsu, 2014), and switching exhaustion (Maier et al., 2015) as factors that hinder users from switching to an alternative service (see Table 1). Since streaming services offer flexible monthly subscription plans

(Godinho de Matos & Ferreira, 2020) that make switching from one streaming service to another comparably easy compared to other services, we suggest that the consideration of constraints relevant to streaming services helps to craft contextualized explanations for streaming service switching behaviors.

Prior work recognizes two different switching behaviors: a user entirely discontinuing the incumbent service and replacing it with an alternative service, called *complete switching* (Zou et al., 2022), and a user concurrently using an alternative service along the incumbent service without entirely discontinuing it, called *partial switching* (Gong et al., 2022). Despite acknowledging such nuances of switching behavior, studies either exclusively focus on complete switching (Raddatz et al., 2023; Zou et al., 2022) or consider complete and partial switching jointly in terms of general switching behavior (Gong et al., 2022) (see Table 1). As such, extant IS switching research draws the implicit assumption that explanations for switching behavior are generalizable across complete and partial switching, not considering that the causes that let users either completely or partially switch may differ.

Yet, indications suggest that complete and partial switching may in fact require different explanations. Users typically evaluate and compare services based on different, context-specific aspects (see Table 1). The evaluation of which service is overall superior may be intuitive for users when they evaluate the alternative service as better in every aspect than the incumbent service, such that they completely switch to the alternative service. Yet, it may be more complex when the incumbent service is better in some terms, and the alternative service is better in others. For instance, subscribers may find that the alternative streaming service offers better content while the incumbent streaming service is cheaper. Subscribers who are unsure which streaming service is overall superior may reason to partially switch to the alternative streaming service, such that they leverage the advantages of both. These illustrations highlight that there may be fundamental differences in how users' evaluation of streaming services based on different factors lets subscribers either completely or partially switch, suggesting a need to consider the possibility that the switching behaviors require separate, nuanced explanations.

Extant IS switching research leveraged unifinal explanations for switching behavior, suggesting that all users follow the same rationale toward their switching behavior. By following – from a methodological perspective – linear approaches to craft such unifinal explanations (see Table 1), IS switching research reached different conclusions on which factors are relevant for users' switching behaviors, e.g., on whether constraints such as switching costs hinder switching (Bhattacherjee & Park, 2014) or not (Fan & Suh, 2014; Hsu, 2014). Such seemingly inconsistent findings may stem from subscribers evaluating what factors are relevant for their switching behavior differently, yet they still may exhibit the same switching behavior. Recall the previous illustration of subscribers partially switching to an alternative streaming service due to it offering better content, which explains why some subscribers partially switch. Other subscribers may find that the alternative streaming service is cheaper and provides better usability, while the incumbent streaming service offers better content. Despite following a different rationale, these subscribers may also reason to partially switch to the alternative streaming service to complement it to their incumbent one. We suggest taking a configurational perspective that allows for considering such equifinal explanations toward the switching behaviors provides opportunities to reconcile seemingly inconsistent findings.

**Expectation Disconfirmation Theory**

To explain complete and partial switching, we turn to expectation disconfirmation theory (EDT) (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Oliver, 1980). IS research draws on EDT to explain post-adoption behavior such as continuous (Brown et al., 2014) and discontinuous use (Zamani & Pouloudi, 2021) in various contexts, e.g., online forums (Fadel et al., 2022), office software (Tams et al., 2018), and cloud-based technologies (Lankton et al., 2016).

**Table 1. Switching Studies Published in Top IS Journals**

| Context | Major findings | Outcome | Switching focus | Methodological approach | Reference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blockchain | Perceived benefits of blockchain and blockchain awareness increase switching intention to blockchain. | Switching intention | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Raddatz et al., 2023 |
| Cloud computing services | Relative usefulness, expected omnipresence of cloud computing, dissatisfaction, subjective norm, and self-efficacy increase switching intention while switching costs and security concerns decrease it. Switching intention increases switching behavior. | Switching intention, switching behavior | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Bhattacherjee & Park, 2014 |
| Collaboration services | Inertia decreases intention to use an alternative service, while perceived ease of use, relative advantage, and subjective norm increase it. | Use intention of an alternative service | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Polites & Karahanna, 2012 |
| E-commerce | Perceived breach and feelings of violation after a data breach increase the likelihood of switching. | Switching likelihood | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Choi et al., 2016 |
| | Low efficiency, conformity, personal experience, social presence, social support, social benefit, and self-presentation increase switching intention, which in turn increases switching behavior. | Switching intention, switching behavior | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Li & Ku, 2018 |
| E-learning services | Perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness explain attitude towards using a service moderated by whether users evaluate a service separately or jointly with another service. | Attitude | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Ho et al., 2020 |
| Email services | Alternative attractiveness increases switching intention to another email service, while satisfaction and switching costs decrease it. | Switching intention | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Kim et al., 2006 |
| Messaging services | When comparing competing services, satisfaction with service A increases continuance intention with service A, and satisfaction with service B increases continuance intention with service B. Continuance intention with service A leads to a preferred choice towards service A, while continuance intention with service B leads to a preferred choice towards service B. | Continuance intention, preferred choice | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Lin et al., 2022 |
| Mobile payment applications | Affective commitment and calculative commitment decrease switching behavior. | Switching behavior | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Gong et al., 2022 |
| | Privacy concerns and monetary rewards of alternatives increase switching behavior, while inertia decreases it. | Switching behavior | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Wang et al., 2019 |
| Mobile service providers | Service use and duration of user-provider relationship, and service bundling decrease switching behavior. Older and female users are less likely to switch. | Switching behavior | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Ranganathan et al., 2006 |
| Smartphones | Switching benefits, perceived switching value, and satisfaction increase switching intention while switching costs decrease it. | Switching intention | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Hsu, 2014 |
| | Value of and commitment to the status quo increase continuance intention. | Continuance intention | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Goyal et al., 2022 |
| Social networking sites | Social networking site exhaustion increases discontinuous use intention while switching exhaustion decreases discontinuous use intention. | Discontinuous use intention | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Maier et al., 2015 |

| Context | Major findings | Outcome | Switching focus | Methodological approach | Reference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Switching costs decrease switching intention, while regret, dissatisfaction, and alternative attractiveness increase switching intention. | Switching intention | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Chang et al., 2014 |
| | Dissatisfaction with the incumbent social networking site, attraction from the alternative SNS, and peer influence increase switching intention while switching costs decrease it. | Switching intention | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Xu et al., 2014 |
| Software and hardware | Disconfirmation decreases regret and increases satisfaction. Regret decreases satisfaction and continuance intention and increases switching intention. Satisfaction decreases switching intention and increases continuance intention. | Switching intention, continuance intention | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Zou et al., 2022 |
| Web blogs | Satisfaction and sunk costs decrease satisfaction, and alternative attractiveness increases it. | Switching intention | Complete switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Zhang et al., 2009 |
| Web browsers | Relative advantage increases switching intention, while satisfaction decreases it. Switching intention increases switching behavior, while habit decreases it. | Switching intention, switching behavior | Complete switching/ partial switching | Linear (isolated factors) | Bhattacherjee et al., 2012 |

EDT postulates that when users are exposed to information about an alternative service, they form expectations about it (Susarla et al., 2003). Expectations serve as reference points for the subsequent evaluation of an alternative service (Oliver, 1980). Only after adopting the alternative service can users determine the discrepancy between their expectations and actual experiences with a service, making its adoption a necessity for studying users' post-adoption behavior (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004). Suppose users experience a service as better than expected. In that case, i.e., their expectations are disconfirmed, they develop satisfaction and continuously use it. In contrast, if users experience a service not as better than expected, i.e., their expectations are not disconfirmed, they develop dissatisfaction and are less likely to continuously use it (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015). This suggests that users' expectations, disconfirmed expectations, and satisfaction with a service guide their post-adoption behavior (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004). With this, EDT inherently focuses on users' subjective perceptions rather than the objective technological characteristics of a service. This focus aligns with a proxy view of the information technology artifact (Akhlaghpour et al., 2013; Orlikowski & Iacono, 2001), which is helpful for explaining post-adoption behavior, as it focuses on users' view of a service.

Users develop various expectations toward an alternative service and determine the discrepancy between each expectation with the actual experiences individually (Venkatesh et al., 2011). Disconfirmed expectations generally lead to use behavior, while not disconfirmed expectations do not (Lankton & McKnight, 2012), which aligns well with prior IS switching research focusing on crafting unifinal explanations for switching behavior. Yet, users differ in their rationales for use behavior (Y. Liu et al., 2017). While some subscribers may disconfirm all various expectations, i.e., conclude that an alternative service is superior in every regard, others likely disconfirm only some of their expectations while not disconfirming others. This suggests that combinations of disconfirmed expectations, i.e., configurations, guide behavior and affords the possibility to consider that multiple, equifinal configurations representing different rationales explain switching behaviors.

Most EDT studies rely on linear methodological approaches (see Table A.1 in Appendix A), assuming that disconfirmed expectations linearly and independently influence satisfaction and use behavior (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015). Initial EDT literature goes beyond linear relationships, revealing a nonlinear relationship between disconfirmed expectations, satisfaction, and use behavior (Brown et al., 2012; Lankton et al., 2016), essentially focusing on general explanations for use behavior based on the positive influence of isolated disconfirmed expectations (Venkatesh et al., 2011). While IS research drawing on EDT identifies linear and non-linear relationships among disconfirmed expectations, satisfaction, and use behavior (see Table A.1 in Appendix A), studies have in common that they focus on unifinal explanations, i.e., crafting one explanation for use behavior that accounts for all users. As such, prior work does not consider that users can have different rationales for the same use behavior (Y. Liu et al.,

2017). We take a configurational perspective that allows us to respect the possibility of equifinal explanations for use behavior by considering that different configurations of disconfirmed expectations may guide behavior.

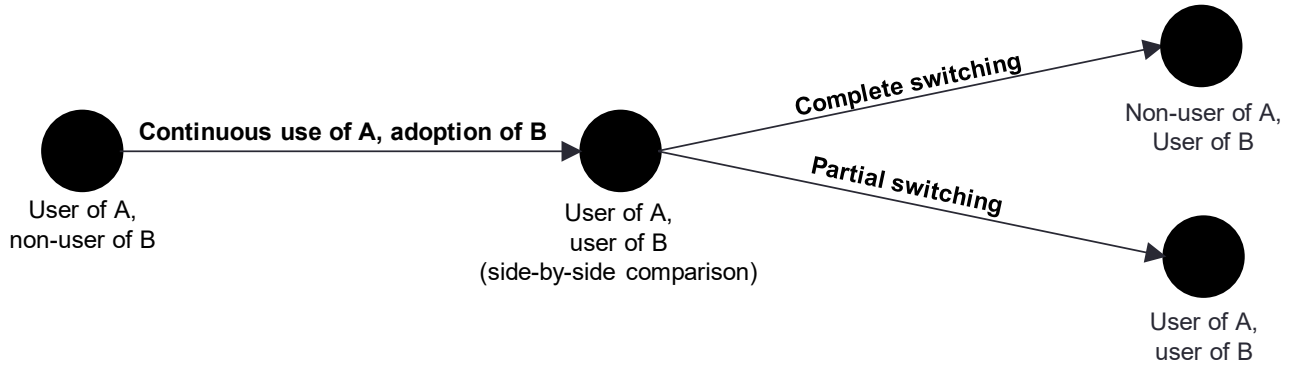
## Untangling Streaming Service Switching: Complete and Partial Switching

EDT helps explain – e.g., in the streaming service context – switching behavior (Fan & Suh, 2014; Lin et al., 2022). Subscribers initially expect an alternative streaming service to be superior to the incumbent streaming service. To compare it with the incumbent streaming service, they adopt it, which is – similar to other post-adoption behaviors (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015) – essential for explaining subsequent switching behaviors. Based on the side-by-side comparison, subscribers either completely or partially switch to the alternative streaming service (see Figure 1). Given that streaming services typically offer monthly subscription plans (Godinho de Matos & Ferreira, 2020), we consider complete switching as the behavior to discontinue the incumbent streaming service at the end of the current monthly subscription period while continuing to use the alternative streaming service longer than the current monthly subscription period. Likewise, we consider partial switching as the behavior to continue using both streaming services longer than the respective current monthly subscription period.

Complete and partial switching differ from non-switching-related behaviors (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015) as they consider that subscribers develop and disconfirm their expectations based on comparing two services. Thus, we require a theoretical perspective that affords considering the comparison of two services to explain streaming service switching. Leveraging EDT (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004), we suggest that subscribers develop expectations about an alternative streaming service's superiority compared to the incumbent one based on second-hand information. For instance, a streaming service provider may claim that the alternative streaming service offers better content than the incumbent streaming service subscribers currently use.

After adopting the alternative streaming service and gaining first-hand information about it, subscribers use their prior expectations as the basis to compare the incumbent and alternative streaming service side-by-side. The discrepancy between expectations and actual experiences is captured by disconfirmed expectations (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015), reflecting whether the experiences based on the side-by-side comparison surpass the expectations. For instance, subscribers might find that the alternative streaming service offers even better content compared to the incumbent streaming service than they initially expected.

The disconfirmed expectations guide subscribers' satisfaction (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015). Disconfirmed expectations lead subscribers to develop satisfaction with the alternative streaming service and impact their satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, as they suggest that the incumbent streaming service is inferior to the alternative streaming service. In contrast, not disconfirmed expectations lead them to develop satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, as the side-by-side comparison uncovers that the incumbent streaming service is not much or not at all inferior to the alternative streaming service. It also impacts subscribers' satisfaction with the alternative streaming service, as the alternative streaming service did not surpass their expectations (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015).




Note: "A" represents the incumbent streaming service, "B" represents the alternative streaming service. Solid lines represent the focus of this study.

**Figure 1. Streaming Service Switching**

There is strong support in the literature that satisfaction, reflecting subscribers' overall evaluation of a service, influences use continuance (Lin et al., 2022; Zou et al., 2022) and discontinuance (Zamani & Pouloudi, 2021). While dissatisfaction lets subscribers get rid of a service (Xu et al., 2014), satisfaction lets them continue using it (Lin et al., 2022). We consequently suggest that no satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service facilitates complete switching, and satisfaction with the incumbent and alternative streaming service facilitates partial switching.

Since subscribers have expectations about several aspects of an alternative service (Ho et al., 2020), e.g., that it offers better content or is cheaper, they experience various disconfirmed expectations. While some expectations might be disconfirmed, others might not be disconfirmed. We consequently consider that different configurations of disconfirmed expectations guide their satisfaction with the streaming services and resulting switching behaviors.

Following suggestions to consider constraints to describe the limits of the generalizability of a theory (Busse et al., 2017), we consider that there may be constraints that restrict switching behavior in the streaming service context. For instance, subscribers may disconfirm that an alternative streaming service is overall superior to their incumbent streaming service, letting them be satisfied with the alternative streaming service but not with the incumbent streaming service. Yet, their favorite TV show may only be available on the incumbent streaming service, such that they nevertheless do not completely switch to the alternative streaming service and stick with only subscribing to the incumbent streaming service. This illustration highlights the need to consider the possibility that there are constraints that may restrict the generalizability of EDT in the context of streaming services.

In sum, we suggest that prior expectations serve as the basis for the side-by-side comparison, i.e., determine the aspects on which the streaming services are compared, and configurations of disconfirmed expectations and satisfaction with the streaming services explain complete and partial switching restricted by constraints (see Figure 2).

## Mixed Methods Approach

To study complete and partial switching, we undertook two sequential studies (Ractham et al., 2022), adopting an expansion-focused mixed methods approach (Venkatesh et al., 2016) (see Figure 2).

In Study 1, we took a qualitative approach to identify the expectations and constraints relevant to streaming service switching. Given that retrospective expectations are suited as estimators for actual expectations prior to a behavior (Oliver & Burke, 1999) and are commonly used in IS research drawing on EDT (F. Liu et al., 2020), we took a retrospective point of view, studying subscribers who compare the two streaming services side-by-side. Following the principles of guided retrospective introspection (Schwarz et al., 2014), we examined subscribers' expectations and constraints by inviting them to recount their beliefs and describe switching from one streaming service to another.

In Study 2, we expanded the results of Study 1 to evaluate our model of streaming service switching. While prior expectations serve as the basis for the side-by-side comparison in the overlap phase, i.e., determine the aspects on which the streaming services are compared, the effects of the expectations and actual experience are fully captured by disconfirmed expectations (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015). We thus focus Study 2 on investigating how disconfirmed expectations together with satisfaction with the streaming services influence complete and partial switching intention restricted by the constraints. To consider that configurations of disconfirmed expectations and satisfaction with the streaming services explain switching behaviors, we took a fsQCA. We triangulated the results of Study 1 and Study 2 to develop complementary insights into the switching behaviors and their causes.

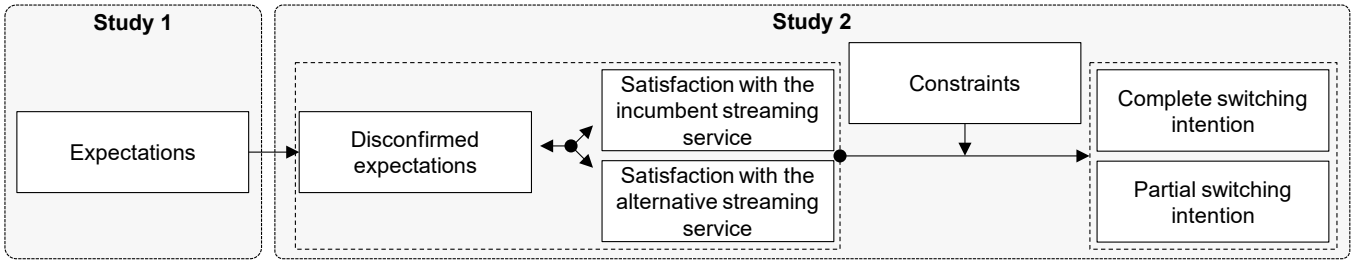



**Figure 2. Model of Streaming Service Switching**

## Study 1: Expectations, Disconfirmed Expectations, Satisfaction, and Constraints Influence Streaming Service Switching

This section outlines the data collection, data analysis, and results of Study 1.

### *Data Collection*

To identify subscribers' expectations and the constraints that restricted their switching behavior, we adopted the sampling strategy of interviewing subscribers who currently compare streaming services side-by-side, meaning that they used an incumbent streaming service and recently adopted an alternative streaming service. This established a clear shared understanding of the study context and enabled us to collect rigorous impressions and beliefs (Schwarz et al., 2014), providing us retrospective insights into the expectations prior to the adoption and current insights into the side-by-side comparison and constraints. We contacted potentially suitable interviewees on social media groups focused on streaming services such as Netflix, Disney+, and Amazon Prime Video. We interviewed 44 subscribers, a sufficient sample size for qualitative studies (Collins et al., 2006). We stopped the interviews when no new information emerged, indicating we had reached sufficient saturation. We created our interview guideline based on recommendations from previous research (Myers & Newman, 2007) and conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews (Schultze & Avital, 2011). We recorded all interviews with the permission of the interviewees and transcribed them for qualitative analysis. Each interview lasted between 5 and 20 minutes. We report the sample characteristics in Table 2.

### *Data Analysis*

In line with previous research (Maier et al., 2022), we followed the established coding scheme for descriptive and interpretive coding (Myers, 2019). We began by identifying statements describing subscribers' expectations for considering switching to an alternative streaming service and the constraints that restricted them from actually switching. We next used descriptive coding. For instance, we coded the following statement with the descriptive code *more appealing content:* "For me, one of the main problems was that the content offered by {INCUMBENT} has become increasingly smaller. {ALTERNATIVE}, on the other hand, started to offer more and more content that interested me". We then used interpretive coding to group similar descriptive codes (Myers, 2019). For example, we coded *more appealing content* from the example together with the similar descriptive code *less new content* with the interpretive code *expected improved content quality*. We then mapped the interpretive codes to our model of streaming service switching. We assigned interpretive codes describing the expected superiority of the alternative streaming service compared to the incumbent streaming service to expectations, e.g., *expected improved content quality*. We provide a coding example and the validation in Appendix B (see Table B.1 and Table B.2).

### *Results*

We identified the four expectations *expected improved compatibility*, *expected improved content quality*, *expected improved usability*, and *expected reduced costs* that influence subscribers to consider switching to an alternative streaming service. We also identified the two constraints *affordability* and *perceived content exclusiveness* that restrict subscribers' switching behavior. We explain the identified expectations and constraints in Table 3.

**Table 2. Demographics of the 44 Interviewees**

| **Age** (in percent, mean: 28.77; SD: 10.13) | | **Sex** (in percent) | | **Incumbent streaming service** (in percent) | | **Alternative streaming service** (in percent) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <20 | 20.45 | Female | 56.82 | Netflix | 43.18 | Netflix | 27.27 |
| 20-29 | 47.73 | Male | 43.18 | Amazon Prime Video | 25.00 | Amazon Prime Video | 15.91 |
| 30-39 | 15.91 | | | Disney+ | 15.91 | Disney+ | 29.55 |
| 40-49 | 6.82 | | | Other | 15.91 | Other | 27.27 |
| >49 | 9.09 | | | | | | |

**Table 3. Findings of Study 1**

| Influencing factor | Definition | Exemplary quotation |
|---|---|---|
| Expected improved compatibility | The degree to which subscribers expected the alternative streaming service to work better with the preferred devices used for watching content (e.g., browser, smart TV) than the incumbent streaming service. | "What bothered me about {INCUMBENT} was that you couldn't use it in any browser. That just seemed to be better with {ALTERNATIVE}". |
| Expected improved content quality | The degree to which subscribers expected the alternative streaming service to provide more appealing media (e.g., movies, TV shows) than the incumbent streaming service. | "For me, one of the main problems was that the content offered by {INCUMBENT} has become increasingly smaller. {ALTERNATIVE}, on the other hand, started to offer more and more content that interested me". |
| Expected improved usability | The degree to which subscribers expected the alternative streaming service to be less complicated to use than the incumbent streaming service. | "The interface of {INCUMBENT} was totally confusing, not user friendly at all. {ALTERNATIVE} seemed to be way easier to use". |
| Expected reduced costs | The degree to which subscribers expected the fees of the alternative streaming service to be lower than those of the incumbent streaming service. | "At {INCUMBENT}, you still had to pay for some episodes. I thought {ALTERNATIVE} is cheaper because everything is included". |
| Affordability | The degree to which subscribers believe that they have the financial resources to subscribe to the incumbent streaming service and the alternative streaming service. | "In the end, it also comes down to a question of cost—what you can and want to spend each month. That's the question you need to ask yourself if you want to switch". |
| Perceived content exclusiveness | The degree to which subscribers believe that the incumbent streaming service provides unique content. | "Because some shows run exclusively on [INCUMBENT]. There's just the question of how else to get it without buying it on DVD". |

Note: {INCUMBENT} refers to the incumbent streaming service, and {ALTERNATIVE} refers to the alternative streaming service.

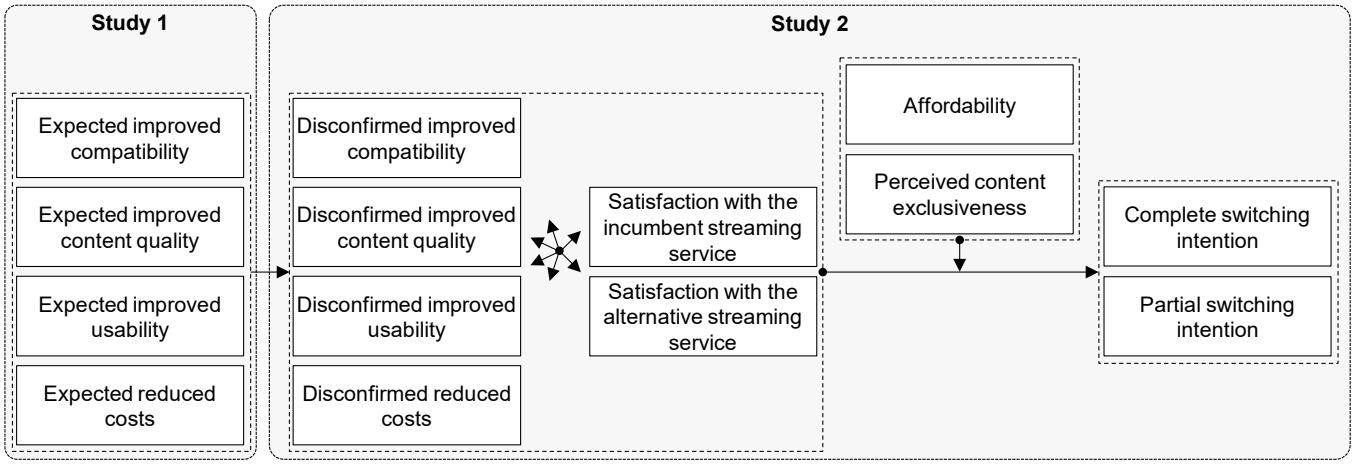



**Figure 3. Refined Model of Streaming Service Switching**

Our findings reveal that subscribers develop four expectations as the basis for the side-by-side comparison between the incumbent and alternative streaming service. In line with EDT (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004), we suggest that after adopting an alternative streaming service, subscribers disconfirm these expectations based on the side-by-side comparison of the streaming services. Based on the disconfirmed expectations, they develop satisfaction with the incumbent and alternative streaming service, which guides their subscribers' complete and partial switching intention, restricted by the identified constraints (see Figure 3).

### Study 2: Configurations Influence Complete and Partial Switching

In Study 2, we expand Study 1 by analyzing how configurations of disconfirmed expectations, satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service lead to compete and partial switching intention restricted by the constraints. Disconfirmed expectations capture the

effects of the prior expectations and actual experiences (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015), so we refrain from including the expectations in Study 2.

### *Data Collection*

We conducted an online survey and advertised for participants on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to collect data from subscribers who currently compare streaming services side-by-side, i.e., who started an additional subscription within the last five weeks. In this way, we consider a subscription period of approximately one month, as many streaming services offer free trial subscriptions of up to one month (Sheppard, 2024). Using MTurk for data collection is well-established in IS research (Chan et al., 2019). To ensure data quality, we followed the guidelines for data collection with MTurk in IS research (Lowry et al., 2016). We used MTurk's built-in feature to filter for participants who reside in the United States. We also filtered out MTurk workers who frequently finish tasks unusually fast based on their approval rate for previous tasks and the overall number of approved tasks.

To ensure the accuracy of responses, we included attention-check questions, such as "Please choose 'Somewhat agree'". We implemented screening questions to ensure that only participants who met this criterion participated in our study (see Table C.1 in Appendix C). These include "I do not have a subscription to a video-on-demand (VoD) service." and "How many VoD services do you currently subscribe to?". Only participants who answered "no" to the first question and typed in a number higher than one to the second question were allowed to proceed with the survey. We included another screening question, "Examples of VoD services are Spotify and Apple Music", that had to be answered with "No". Since MTurk workers who purposefully select misleading responses to pass the screening questions are more reluctant to admit their lack of knowledge (Sharpe Wessling et al., 2017), they are more likely to indicate "Yes" and are, thus, not included in our final sample. We also tested for inconsistency among MTurk workers' answers by asking a question in two different ways (Sharpe Wessling et al., 2017). We asked, "How many weeks has it been since you subscribed to {ALTERNATIVE}?" and "When did you subscribe to {ALTERNATIVE}?", filtering out participants who inserted a number higher than five to the first question or indicated a date that is not within the previous five weeks for the second question. We also asked the participants to identify the incumbent and the alternative streaming service and filtered out participants who responded to both questions with the same streaming service. We compensated survey participants above the US minimum wage.

In total, 239 participants passed our screening questions and attention checks. We deleted 15 participants because they skipped three or more questions, so our final sample consisted of 224 participants. This exceeds the sample size requirements for QCA (see Appendix C). We summarize the demographics of the survey participants in Table 4.

### *Measures*

We outline our measures in Appendix C (see Table C.2). All items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale from one ("Strongly disagree") to seven ("Strongly agree"). For disconfirmed expectations, we aligned the measures with previous literature (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015) but adjusted them to include the comparison between the incumbent and alternative streaming service. For instance, for *disconfirmed improved content quality*, we drew on the construct of end-user satisfaction with content (Tarafdar et al., 2010), which includes items such as "The information content meets my needs". We then aligned it with previous disconfirmed expectation constructs (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015) and added the comparison between the incumbent and alternative streaming service, resulting in the item "Compared to my initial expectations, the content of {ALTERNATIVE} meets my needs much more compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected". Similarly, we adapted *disconfirmed improved compatibility* based on compatibility (Venkatesh et al., 2003), *disconfirmed improved usability* based on perceived difficulty of use (Maier et al., 2022), and *disconfirmed reduced costs* based on costs (Brown & Venkatesh, 2005). We measured *affordability* with three items based on established measures (Notani, 1997) that we adapted to the streaming service context. We adapted four items for *perceived content exclusiveness* based on the uniqueness of goods (Christodoulides et al., 2009) by explicitly referring to the content of the incumbent streaming service. We measured *satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service* and *satisfaction with the alternative streaming service* with established measures from previous work (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015).

**Table 4. Demographics of the 224 Survey Participants**

| **Age** (in percent, mean: 32.94; SD: 10.87) | | **Sex** (in percent) | | **Incumbent streaming service** (in percent) | | **Alternative streaming service** (in percent) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <20 | 1.79 | Female | 47.77 | Netflix | 41.07 | Netflix | 37.05 |
| 20-29 | 47.32 | Male | 51.34 | Amazon Prime Video | 22.77 | Amazon Prime Video | 19.64 |
| 30-39 | 27.23 | Other | 0.89 | Disney+ | 32.14 | Disney+ | 31.25 |
| 40-49 | 13.84 | | | Other | 4.02 | Other | 12.06 |
| >49 | 9.82 | | | | | | |

We grounded the measures for *complete switching intention* and *partial switching intention* in established measures from IS switching research (Chang et al., 2014) by indicating how subscribers behave regarding the incumbent and alternative streaming service. For instance, we adapted the item "I am considering switching from my current SNS service" to "I am considering to stop using {INCUMBENT} and continue using {ALTERNATIVE} instead" for complete switching intention and "I am considering to continue using {INCUMBENT} and {ALTERNATIVE} in parallel" for partial switching intention.

### *Measurement Model*

We tested the measures for indicator reliability, construct reliability, and discriminant validity (Mattke et al., 2021). We dropped one item of *disconfirmed improved usability* due to low loading (see Appendix C, Table C.2). The loadings of the remaining items exceeded the threshold of 0.70, so we conclude *indicator reliability* (Carmines & Zeller, 2008). Further, we confirm *construct reliability* as the average variance extracted (AVE) of all measures exceeds 0.50, and the composite reliability (CR) is higher than 0.70 (see Appendix C, Table C.3) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). We determined the *discriminant validity* by evaluating the square root of the AVE, which fulfilled the condition of being greater than the corresponding construct correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). We conclude that our measurement model is valid.

### *Data Analysis Using fsQCA*

To evaluate the proposed model of streaming service switching, we used an fsQCA with a moderation analysis (Ma et al., 2023). This approach allows us to identify how configurations of disconfirmed expectations and satisfaction with the streaming services explain complete and partial switching intention, and how the constraints influence this relationship. The configurational approach is helpful to investigate equifinal rationales for behavior, i.e., if multiple configurations of conditions lead to the same outcome (Lee et al., 2019; Misangyi et al., 2017). This way, it allows us to analyze equifinal explanations that lead to an outcome (Dawson et al., 2016). As conditions, we investigated disconfirmed improved compatibility, disconfirmed improved content quality, disconfirmed improved usability, disconfirmed reduced costs, satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service. As constraints, we investigated affordability and perceived content exclusiveness. As outcomes, we investigated complete or partial switching intention.

Following guidelines for moderation analysis with a configurational perspective (Ma et al., 2023), we performed five steps for the analysis (see Table 5). We describe the calibration, analysis for necessity, analysis for sufficient configurations with configurational moderation analysis, robustness tests, and validation in more detail in Appendix C.

### *Results*

This section presents the results of the fsQCA for complete and partial switching intention. For complete switching intention, we identified no necessary condition and one sufficient configuration without including the constraints. Including the constraints, we revealed a sufficient configuration composed of the same conditions but including *no perceived content exclusiveness*. Since the core and peripheral conditions changed when including the constraints and *no perceived content exclusiveness* became a core condition, we conclude that it is a configurational moderator.

**Table 5. Configurational Moderation Analysis**

| Influencing factor | Definition |
|---|---|
| 1. Necessary condition analysis | We tested the conditions for necessity for complete and partial switching intention. |
| 2. Sufficient configuration analysis without the potential moderators | We identified the sufficient configurations for complete and partial switching intention without considering the constraints. |
| 3. Sufficient configuration analysis including the potential moderators | We identified the sufficient configurations including the constraints for complete and partial switching intention. |
| 4. Comparison of the resulting sufficient configurations with and without inclusion of the constraints | We compared the results of step 2 and 3 and checked whether the constraints fulfill the requirements for configurational moderation:<br>a) The present or absent conditions of the sufficient configurations should not change from step 2 to 3.<br>b) At least one configuration with a constraint should show changes of core and peripheral conditions.<br>c) Each constraint should be a core condition in at least one of the configurations. |
| 5. Interpretation of the moderating influences | We interpret the findings to conclude whether the constraints are configurational moderators, scope conditions, or not relevant for complete and partial switching intention. |

For partial switching intention, we identified *satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service* as a necessary condition for partial switching intention (consistency = 0.90, coverage = 0.88, relevance of necessity = 0.71). We identified three sufficient configurations without including the constraints. Including the constraints, we revealed a sufficient configuration composed of the same conditions but including *affordability* and *perceived content exclusiveness*. The core and peripheral conditions did not change, so the constraints do not alter the interaction among the conditions in the identified sufficient configurations, such that they are no configurational moderators. Yet, since they are present in each configuration, i.e., are needed to enable partial switching intention, we conclude that they are scope conditions for partial switching intention (Goertz & Mahoney, 2013; Meier et al., 2024a).

We graphically present the identified sufficient configurations for complete and partial switching without the constraints in Figure 4 and the sufficient configurations including the constraints in Figure 5. In these figures, each column represents a sufficient configuration for either complete or partial switching intention. Black circles (●) indicate present conditions, white-crossed out circles (⊗) indicate absent conditions, and blank spaces ( ) indicate 'Don't care situations', meaning that a specific condition in a configuration is not relevant for the outcome.

Large circles indicate core conditions, i.e., conditions with a strong causal relationship with an outcome, and small circles indicate peripheral conditions, i.e., conditions with a weak causal relationship with an outcome (Fiss, 2011). Notably, core conditions should only be interpreted as theoretically more important when a distinction between core and peripheral conditions is theorized 'a priori' (Dwivedi et al., 2018). We did not theorize about differing importance of, for instance, specific disconfirmed expectations 'a priori' based on literature and theory but solely distinguish between core and peripheral conditions for the sake of identifying moderators and scope conditions (Ma et al., 2023). Thus, we follow recent configurational IS research in reporting them for the sake of transparency but do not distinguish between core and peripheral conditions in the theoretical interpretations (Meier et al., 2024a). Following recommendations for configurational moderation analysis (Ma et al., 2023), we focus on interpreting the solutions including the constraints. We provide the truth table, results of the necessary condition analysis, and robustness tests in Appendix C.

We evaluated the overall quality of our solutions for complete and partial switching intention including the constraints based on consistency and coverage (Ragin, 2006). The solution consistency for complete switching intention is 0.91, which describes the extent to which the solution explains the outcome (Schneider & Wagemann, 2010). The solution coverage is 0.19, which describes the proportion of observations the solution covers (Ragin, 2006). The solution consistency for partial switching intention is 0.92, and the solution coverage is 0.78. This shows that our solutions have high explanatory power.

**Complete switching intention.** The sufficient configuration for complete switching intention (CS) describes subscribers who experienced disconfirmed improved compatibility, disconfirmed improved content quality, disconfirmed improved usability, disconfirmed reduced costs, no satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service as peripheral conditions. A constraint for these subscribers' complete switching intention is that they must not experience perceived content exclusiveness as a core condition.

| | Complete switching intention | Partial switching intention | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CS | PS1 | PS2 | PS3 |
| Disconfirmed improved compatibility | ● | ● | ● | ⊗ |
| Disconfirmed improved content quality | ● | ● | ● | ⊗ |
| Disconfirmed improved usability | ● | ● | | ⊗ |
| Disconfirmed reduced costs | ● | | ● | |
| Satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service | ⊗ | ● | ● | ● |
| Satisfaction with the alternative streaming service | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Raw coverage | 0.26 | 0.74 | 0.75 | 0.13 |
| Unique coverage | 0.26 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.04 |
| Consistency | 0.89 | 0.91 | 0.90 | 0.96 |
| Solution coverage | 0.26 | 0.81 | | |
| Solution consistency | 0.89 | 0.90 | | |

Note: Black circles (●) indicate present conditions, white crossed-out circles (⊗) indicate absent conditions, and blank spaces ( ) indicate 'Don't care situations'. Large circles indicate core conditions, small circles indicate peripheral conditions.

**Figure 4. Sufficient Configurations Without the Constraints**

| | Complete switching intention | Partial switching intention | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CS | PS1 | PS2 | PS3 |
| Affordability | | ● | ● | ● |
| Perceived content exclusiveness | ⊗ | ● | ● | ● |
| Disconfirmed improved compatibility | ● | ● | ● | ⊗ |
| Disconfirmed improved content quality | ● | ● | ● | ⊗ |
| Disconfirmed improved usability | ● | ● | | ⊗ |
| Disconfirmed reduced costs | ● | | ● | |
| Satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service | ⊗ | ● | ● | ● |
| Satisfaction with the alternative streaming service | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Raw coverage | 0.19 | 0.72 | 0.72 | 0.13 |
| Unique coverage | 0.19 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.04 |
| Consistency | 0.91 | 0.92 | 0.92 | 0.97 |
| Solution coverage | 0.19 | 0.78 | | |
| Solution consistency | 0.91 | 0.92 | | |

Note: Black circles (●) indicate present conditions, white crossed-out circles (⊗) indicate absent conditions, and blank spaces ( ) indicate 'Don't care situations'. Large circles indicate core conditions, small circles indicate peripheral conditions.

**Figure 5. Sufficient Configurations Including the Constraints**

**Partial switching intention.** The first sufficient configuration for partial switching intention (PS1) depicts subscribers who experienced disconfirmed improved compatibility, disconfirmed improved content quality, disconfirmed improved usability, and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service as peripheral conditions and satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service as a core condition. The second sufficient configuration (PS2) describes subscribers who experienced disconfirmed improved compatibility, disconfirmed improved content quality, disconfirmed reduced costs, and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service as peripheral conditions and satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service as a core condition. The third sufficient configuration (PS3) depicts subscribers who experienced no

disconfirmed improved compatibility, no disconfirmed improved content quality, no disconfirmed improved usability, and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service as peripheral conditions and satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service as a core condition. Constraints for all these subscribers' partial switching intentions are that they must experience affordability and perceived content exclusiveness as peripheral conditions.

We evaluated the sufficient configurations based on their raw coverage and unique coverage. The raw coverage describes the proportion of configurations covered by a specific sufficient configuration, while the unique coverage explains the proportion uniquely covered by a sufficient configuration, excluding the proportions that are covered by other sufficient configurations (Ragin, 2006; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). Hence, the unique coverage explains the degree to which a sufficient configuration differs from others. The consistency scores of all sufficient configurations exceed the minimum required consistency of 0.75. Their raw coverage ranges from 0.13 to 0.72, showing the configurations' empirical relevance. The unique coverages of the sufficient configurations range from 0.02 to 0.19. This shows that each configuration uniquely is empirically relevant for explaining complete and partial switching intention.

**Meta-Inferences and Propositions**

We next integrated the qualitative findings of Study 1 with the quantitative findings of Study 2. We used the bridging approach (Lewis & Grimes, 1999) to develop a consensus between the findings of Study 1 and Study 2 based on sound theoretical explanations from the extant literature. This enables us to generate meta-inferences from a sequential research design (Venkatesh et al., 2016) and develop propositions for complete and partial switching intention. We evaluate the meta-inferences regarding design quality, explanation quality, and legitimation of meta-inferences (see Appendix D, Table D.1).

When customers perceive products and services as exclusive, they are more likely to purchase them (Hung et al., 2011) and feel more connected to them (Strandvik & Heinonen, 2013). Customers who perceive a product or service they own as exclusive are more likely to stay loyal to a brand (Bachmann et al., 2019), which aligns with our finding of Study 1 that the perception of exclusiveness binds them to a streaming service and hinders them from switching to an alternative streaming service. Extending this line of argumentation, our findings of Study 2 show that no perceived content exclusiveness is an important enabler for subscribers to be able to develop a complete switching intention, as subscribers no longer feel compelled to retain their subscription with the incumbent streaming service to access exclusive content. When subscribers perceive that the incumbent streaming service does not offer content they cannot find elsewhere, they compare the incumbent and alternative streaming service solely based on other factors, i.e., compatibility, content quality, usability, and costs (see CS in Figure 4 and Figure 5). In other words, when customers experience perceived content exclusiveness toward their incumbent streaming service, they will not completely switch to an alternative streaming service. Conversely, not experiencing perceived content exclusiveness enables complete switching, as it allows subscribers to base their switching behavior solely on the comparison between the incumbent and alternative streaming service. We suggest the following proposition (P):

> P1: Subscribers must not experience perceived content exclusiveness to have a complete switching intention.

Our findings highlight that subscribers compare streaming services based on various aspects, including their compatibility with their streaming devices, content quality, usability, and subscription costs. Since subscribers use various streaming devices, such as their tablets, laptops, and mobile phones (Hoang & Kauffman, 2018), they only consider completely switching to an alternative streaming service when it is more compatible and works better with the devices they use for watching content. Subscribers also evaluate a streaming service based on its content quality (Godinho de Matos et al., 2018; Hoang & Kauffman, 2018), e.g., the offered TV shows and movies, such that they seek the streaming service that provides higher content quality. Subscribers often rely on remote controls for using streaming services on their TV or other streaming devices (Rigby et al., 2018), making it difficult for them to navigate the user interface and access the streaming service's content (Miesler et al., 2014). We confirm this by showing that subscribers generally expect an alternative streaming service to provide improved usability. Despite most streaming services offering comparably low monthly subscription plans (Godinho de Matos & Ferreira, 2020), research suggests that users are sensitive to service costs (Blut et al., 2022), which is underlined by our findings that subscribers only consider completely switching when they expect to save money with an alternative streaming service in the long term. Our findings illuminate that subscribers seek the overall superior service (Zou et al., 2022), so they must disconfirm their expectations of an alternative streaming service being superior in terms of compatibility, content quality, usability, and subscription costs. Only then are they satisfied with the alternative streaming service and not satisfied with

the incumbent streaming service, letting them completely switch, granted they are not constrained from switching by perceived content exclusiveness. This suggests that all subscribers with complete switching follow the same, unifinal rationale: to completely switch when the alternative streaming service is overall superior to the incumbent streaming service (see CS1 in Figure 5). We propose:

> P2: Subscribers who evaluate the alternative streaming service as overall superior to the incumbent streaming service and are satisfied with the alternative streaming service but not the incumbent streaming service have a complete switching intention when they do not experience perceived content exclusiveness.

Furthering the insight that subscription costs play an important role in subscribers' switching behavior, our findings suggest that subscribers must have the necessary financial means to afford subscribing to multiple streaming services to switch to an alternative streaming service partially. Evidence suggests that subscribers who engage in content piracy exhibit a low willingness to pay (Godinho de Matos et al., 2018), indicating that they may not be able or may not want to spend money on an additional subscription to an alternative streaming service, irrespective of whether they potentially evaluate it as a worthy complement to their incumbent streaming service. Relatedly, subscribers must experience perceived content exclusiveness with the incumbent streaming service to partially switch to an alternative streaming service. Since they would not be able to watch the exclusive content on the alternative streaming service, i.e., would lose access to its exclusive features (Bachmann et al., 2019), they keep the incumbent streaming service alongside the alternative streaming service, irrespective of whether they evaluate the alternative streaming service as potentially superior. While perceived content exclusiveness and affordability do not change the interplay between the disconfirmed expectations and satisfaction with the streaming services in the configurations for partial switching intention (see PS1, PS2, and PS3 in Figure 4 and Figure 5), our findings suggest that they are important prerequisites for partial switching, so we suggest:

> P3: Subscribers must experience affordability and perceived content exclusiveness to have a partial switching intention.

While subscribers need to evaluate the alternative streaming service as overall superior to the incumbent streaming service to switch completely, findings suggest that the situation is different for partial switching intention. Subscribers with partial switching intention evaluate the alternative streaming service as superior in some ways and the incumbent streaming service as superior in others, such that they seek to complement their existing subscription with an alternative streaming service that offers certain advantages over the incumbent streaming service. While they share the satisfaction with both streaming services, they follow different rationales for their partial switching intention. For instance, some subscribers intend to partially switch to an alternative streaming service because it allows them to watch high-quality content on compatible devices with improved usability (see PS1 in Figure 5). Others similarly seek improved compatibility and better content quality and partially switch to an alternative streaming service because it has low monthly subscription costs despite it potentially not offering better usability (see PS2 in Figure 5). Yet others do not evaluate the alternative streaming service as superior in any of those aspects but consider partial switching as it offers them a way to access appealing additional content (see PS3 in Figure 5) (Wayne, 2018). These findings highlight that partial switching requires more complex, equifinal explanations compared to complete switching. Since subscribers do not have to let go of their incumbent streaming service when partially switching to an alternative one, they differ in reasoning as to why they complement the incumbent streaming service with the alternative streaming service, granted they can afford multiple streaming services and the incumbent streaming service offers exclusive content compared to the alternative streaming service. Thus, we propose:

> P4: Subscribers who are unsure whether the alternative streaming service is overall superior to the incumbent streaming service but are satisfied with the incumbent and the alternative streaming service have partial switching intention when they experience affordability and perceived content exclusiveness.

## Discussion

Subscribers regularly switch between different streaming services. We propose a model of streaming service switching to offer a nuanced understanding of switching behaviors, i.e., complete and partial switching. We next discuss our study's theoretical and practical implications, its limitations, and avenues for future resarch.

### Theoretical Implications

Our findings contribute to research by shedding light on the different causes of complete and partial switching, revealing the more complex, equifinal explanations for partial switching intention, and identifying constraints that restrict streaming service switching.

There is a rich body of IS literature explaining why users switch from one service to another (see Table 1). Thereby, prior IS switching research indicates differences in switching behavior, suggesting that users either completely or partially switch to an alternative service (Bhattacherjee et al., 2012). Despite acknowledging such nuances in switching behaviors, IS switching research has either exclusively focused on complete switching (Zou et al., 2022) or did not consider differences between complete and partial switching by focusing on switching in general (Gong et al., 2022), effectively suggesting that explanations for switching behavior are generalizable across complete and partial switching. Our findings challenge this assumption, showing that the same factors are relevant for explaining complete and partial switching, but how they give rise to the switching behaviors in the form of configurations differs (see P2 and P4). We contribute to the stream of IS switching research by shedding light on the different causes in terms of configurations for complete and partial switching, suggesting that the switching behaviors must be considered separately and that explanations cannot be generalized across them.

Extant IS switching literature suggests that users engage in switching behavior when they evaluate an alternative service as superior, are not satisfied with their incumbent service and satisfied with the alternative service (Lin et al., 2022). With this, literature essentially crafts a single, unifinal explanation for switching behavior. Our findings confirm the intuition from prior work that subscribers follow the same, unifinal rationale for complete switching. To detach from the previously used streaming service and leave it behind, subscribers need to disconfirm that the alternative streaming service is overall superior (see P2). We go beyond extant IS switching research by showing that the situation is different for partial switching. Subscribers partially switch to an alternative streaming service when they evaluate the alternative streaming service in only some ways as superior to the incumbent streaming service and are satisfied with both streaming services (see P4). While the ways in which subscribers evaluate the alternative streaming service as superior to the incumbent streaming service may differ, they may still exhibit the same partial switching behavior (see PS1, PS2, and PS3 in Figure 5). The specific factors based on which users compare an incumbent and alternative service may differ in other contexts, but we expect that the explanations for complete and partial switching, at their core, are generalizable across services. We contribute to extant IS switching literature drawing on linear approaches by revealing a unifinal explanation for complete switching and showing that partial switching requires more complex, equifinal explanations.

We also offer valuable insights into the constraints that restrict switching behaviors in the context of streaming services. Prior work identified constraints that restrict switching behavior in various contexts, such as habit (Bhattacherjee et al., 2012), inertia (Polites & Karahanna, 2012), and switching costs (Hsu, 2014). We reveal affordability and perceived content exclusiveness as context-specific constraints for streaming service switching. While subscribers may consider completely switching to an alternative streaming service based on their evaluation of its superiority and resulting satisfaction, they must not experience perceived context exclusiveness to actually develop complete switching intention. Perceived content exclusiveness possesses the power to bind them to the incumbent streaming service and so effectively keeps them from completely switching (see P1). Similarly, subscribers who consider partially switching must experience affordability and perceived content exclusiveness to actually develop partial switching intention. In other words, if they cannot afford multiple streaming services or are not bound to the incumbent streaming service by exclusive content they are unlikely to partially switch (see P3). With this, we show that the explanatory power of EDT is limited when such constraints are not addressed. While other context-specific constraints may be relevant for other services, the insight that not considering constraints limits the explanatory power of EDT is generalizable across contexts. We contribute to the emerging stream of streaming service research by revealing the context-specific constraints that restrict streaming service switching.

### Practical Implications

We offer practical recommendations to help streaming service providers prevent subscribers from completely and partially switching.

**Offer appealing exclusive content and personalized content recommendations.** Our findings align with practical indications (Grimes & Nicolaou, 2021), showing that subscribers who intend to switch to an alternative streaming service completely do not feel deprived of exclusive content from the incumbent streaming service. In other words, subscribers who value the exclusive content of a streaming service are unlikely to completely switch to another. Streaming services can make use of this insight by monitoring subscribers' content preferences and deliver tailored exclusive content that matches their interests.

Personalized content recommendations can reduce partial switching by reinforcing the perceived content quality of a streaming service. Many subscribers who partially switch do so because they seek additional content they believe is missing from their incumbent streaming service (see Figure 5). Streaming services can counteract this by proactively suggesting content that matches subscribers' preferences before they seek alternatives. For instance, if a subscriber frequently watches TV shows and movies from a specific genre, but trending content in that genre is exclusive to an alternative streaming service, the incumbent streaming service can highlight lesser-known but thematically similar exclusive content. Further, recommender systems can dynamically adapt to disengagement signals, such as reduced time spent on a streaming service or frequent unsuccessful searches for content, by suggesting more relevant content at key moments. This ensures that subscribers continue to perceive that the incumbent streaming service offers high quality content, making them less likely to complement it with an alternative streaming service.

**Monitor subscribers' willingness to pay to estimate their affordability.** Our results show that subscribers only develop partial switch intention when they perceive they can afford to spend money on the incumbent and alternative streaming service. In other words, subscribers who have low affordability will likely not partially switch to an alternative streaming service. By estimating subscribers' affordability, e.g., by frequently surveying them on their willingness to pay for a streaming service (Wertenbroch & Skiera, 2002) and contrasting that with the subscription costs of the incumbent streaming service plus the average subscription costs of alternative streaming services, streaming service providers can identify subscribers at risk of partially switching to an alternative streaming service, which would split up their attention and viewing time among the two streaming services.

Dynamic pricing strategies can reduce cost-based switching. Some subscribers switch completely or partially because an alternative streaming service is cheaper. Streaming services can address this by implementing time-limited discounts for subscribers at risk of switching, e.g., those who have cancelled the automatic renewal of their subscription. Tiered subscription models, where subscribers pay based on content access level or streaming quality, can make the incumbent streaming service more competitive from a cost perspective. By strategically managing pricing, streaming services can mitigate complete and partial switching to cheaper alternative streaming services.

**Limitations and Future Research**

This research is limited in some ways. We specifically focus on subscription based streaming services. Different expectations and disconfirmed expectations might be relevant for other streaming services, e.g., advertising supported streaming services, as providers make revenues from advertisements, and subscribers do not need to pay a monthly fee. Following recommendations of prior IS research on EDT (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015), we focus on positive disconfirmed expectations, suggesting that exceeded expectations contribute to satisfaction with the streaming services and the resulting switching behaviors. Future research could contrast different EDT models (Fadel et al., 2022) to underline the robustness and generalizability of our findings. We also did not distinguish based on the different devices that subscribes may mainly use for consuming content. Since initial research indicates that, for instance, smaller screen sizes can lead to a perception of higher quality (Bampis et al., 2023), future research should explore how the characteristics of different streaming devices influence subscribers' perceptions of streaming services. We take an individual perspective, offering insights into the switching behavior of individuals. Future research should complement those insights by focusing on the switching behavior of collective actors like families. For instance, parents may subscribe to streaming services such as Disney+ for their children, making switching of streaming services the decision of the whole family – the children who consume the streaming service and develop perceptions about it, and the parents who pay for the subscription and potentially engage in the switching behavior. While our study offers insights into affordability as an important constraint of streaming service switching, we do not offer insights into the subscription prices that subscribers may actually find affordable. Future research could offer insights in that regard by, for instance, studying subscribers' willingness to pay as a proxy (Wertenbroch & Skiera, 2002).

Our study relies on MTurk for data collection, which introduces potential self-selection bias, as participants may choose tasks based on pay and effort, or misrepresent eligibility (Jia et al., 2017). To mitigate this, we implemented screening measures, attention checks, and checked for consistency of responses to exclude ineligible or inattentive respondents. While these steps improve data validity, future research should replicate our findings with alternative sampling methods to further ensure generalizability. Related to that, our sample is based on participants who reside in the United States. Given that content preferences and pricing models may vary across countries, future

research should examine whether our findings hold in other geographical and cultural contexts.

Our study shows that subscribers differ in their rationales for some switching behaviors (i.e., partial switching). Since we know from previous IS research that users' individual differences influence technology use behavior (Maier et al., 2020), it is relevant to study how profiles of users, based on their individual differences, influence their switching behavior. While we focus on how expectations, disconfirmed expectations, and satisfaction explain streaming service switching constrained by affordability and perceived content exclusiveness, practical evidence indicates that specific events, such as controversial content published on a streaming service (Shaw, 2020), influence streaming service switching. Future research should draw on extant insights that disruptive events influence different user behaviors (Meier et al., 2023, 2024a), studying if and how such disruptive events trigger switching behavior. Given that users form expectations when being exposed to information about a service, future studies should research how subscribers develop expectations about the superiority of an alternative streaming service compared to the incumbent streaming service, contributing antecedents to our model of streaming service switching.

## Conclusion

Many subscribers often switch between streaming services. Since subscribers may either completely or partially switch to an alternative streaming service, we explored when subscribers engage in which switching behaviors. We contribute to IS switching research by revealing that different configurations lead to complete and partial switching, suggesting that explanations for these switching behaviors differ. While we identify a unifinal explanation for complete switching, partial switching requires equifinal explanations. We contribute to IS research interested in streaming services by showing that affordability and perceived content exclusiveness are important constraints that restrict streaming service switching and limit the explanatory power of EDT when not considered. We conclude by providing actionable insights for streaming service providers on how to leverage the constraints to avoid complete and partial switching and offering recommendations for future research on IS switching.

## Notes

[1] We use the term "alternative streaming service" to describe the streaming service subscribers consider switching to, irrespective of whether subscribers have or have not used that streaming service in the past. We use the term "incumbent streaming service" to describe the streaming service subscribers already used before considering switching.

[2] Following prior work (Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015), we subsequently use the term disconfirmed expectations to refer to the positive disconfirmation of previous expectations.

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## Appendix A: Related Research

**Table A.1. Representative IS Studies Using EDT**

| Reference | Major findings | Context | Methodological approach |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bhattacherjee, 2001 | Confirmation increases perceived usefulness and satisfaction. Perceived usefulness increases satisfaction and continuous use. Satisfaction increases continuous use intention. | Online banking services | Linear (structural equation modeling) |
| Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004 | Expected usefulness increases disconfirmation and satisfaction. Disconfirmation increases perceived usefulness and satisfaction. Satisfaction increases attitude. Perceived usefulness increases attitude and continuous use intention. Attitude increases continuous use intention. | Computer based training, rapid application development software | Linear (structural equation modeling, qualitative analysis) |
| Bhattacherjee & Lin, 2015 | Disconfirmation increases perceived usefulness and satisfaction. Subjective norm, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction increase continuous use intention. Habit, satisfaction, and continuous use intention increase continuous use behavior. | Workplace IT | Linear (structural equation modeling) |
| Brown et al., 2012 | The study draws on assimilation contrast as a specific EDT model to show that relationship between expectations and experiences is curvilinear. The effect of expectations on technology use depends on the magnitude and direction of the difference between expectations and experiences, and negative disconfirmation has a stronger influence on use than positive disconfirmation. | Knowledge management systems | Non-linear (polynomial modeling, response surface analysis) |
| Brown et al., 2014 | Six different EDT models are compared. The assimilation contrast model best explains satisfaction, use intention, and use, suggesting that negative disconfirmation has a stronger influence than positive disconfirmation. | Knowledge management systems | Non-linear (polynomial modeling, response surface analysis) |
| Fadel et al., 2022 | Information filtering in online forums is influenced by initial expectations, especially when there is a large difference between expectations and actual experiences. The study confirms the assimilation contrast model. | Online forums | Linear (linear mixed-effects models) |
| Fan & Suh, 2014 | Disconfirmation of an incumbent IT and expectation of a disruptive IT increase dissatisfaction with an incumbent IT. Dissatisfaction with an incumbent IT increases switching intention. | Disruptive IT | Linear (structural equation modeling) |
| Lankton & McKnight, 2012 | Expectations (e.g., usefulness, ease of use) influence experiences (e.g., usefulness performance, ease of use performance). Experiences influences disconfirmation. Disconfirmation influences satisfaction, which in turn influences continuous use intention. | Database management systems | Linear (structural equation modeling) |
| Lankton et al., 2016 | Disconfirmation has a non-linear relationship with trusting intention when expectation maturity is high. It has a linear relationship with trusting intention when expectation maturity is low. | Web development software, presentation software, customer relationship management software | Non-linear (polynomial modeling, response surface analysis) |
| Susarla et al., 2003 | Functional capability, prior system integration, and perceived provider performance increase satisfaction with ASP, disconfirmation decreases it. | Application service provision (ASP) | Linear (structural equation modeling) |
| Venkatesh et al., 2011 | Initial beliefs decrease disconfirmation. Disconfirmation increases satisfaction and modified beliefs. Satisfaction and modified beliefs increase attitude. Modified beliefs and attitude increase continuous use intention. | E-government technologies | Linear (structural equation modeling) |

## Appendix B: Study 1

**Table B.1. Coding Scheme Example**

| Data examples | Descriptive coding | Interpretive coding |
|---|---|---|
| "What bothered me about {INCUMBENT} was that you couldn't use it in any browser. That just seemed to be better with {ALTERNATIVE}". | Not compatible with the browser | Expected improved compatibility |
| "What really annoyed me about {INCUMBENT} was that it didn't work on my TV and streaming device. I always had to connect my laptop to the TV to use it. From {ALTERNATIVE} I was hoping it would work better with my devices". | Not compatible with TV and streaming device | |
| "For me, one of the main problems was that the content offered by {INCUMBENT} has become increasingly smaller. {ALTERNATIVE}, on the other hand, started to offer more and more content that interested me". | More appealing content | Expected improved content quality |
| "Whenever I checked {INCUMBENT}, there was no new content that interested me. And with {ALTERNATIVE}, it felt like they were constantly releasing new movies and series". | Less new content | |
| "I found {INCUMBENT} quite complicated to use. And from {ALTERNATIVE}, I had heard that it would be much more intuitive to use". | Complicated navigation | Expected improved usability |
| "The interface of {INCUMBENT} was totally confusing, not user friendly at all. {ALTERNATIVE} seemed to be way easier to use". | Confusing user interface | |
| "At {INCUMBENT}, you still had to pay for some episodes. I thought {ALTERNATIVE} is cheaper because everything is included". | No additional costs | Expected reduced costs |
| "{INCUMBENT} became too expensive for me in the long run, also because the subscription to {ALTERNATIVE} was much cheaper in comparison". | Subscription fee too high | |
| "In the end, it also comes down to a question of cost—what you can and want to spend each month. That's the question you need to ask yourself if you want to switch." | Too expensive to subscribe to another streaming service | Affordability |
| "Because some shows run exclusively on [INCUMBENT]. There's just the question of how else to get it without buying it on DVD". | Incumbent streaming service offers exclusive content | Perceived content exclusiveness |

### Validation of Qualitative Inferences

We evaluated the qualitative inferences regarding data collection and analysis and state design validity, analytical validity, and inferential validity (see Table B.2).

**Table B.2. Validation of Qualitative Inferences**

| Category of validity | Validation |
|---|---|
| Design validity | A detailed description of the research process ensures descriptive validity.<br>Credibility and transparency are ensured by a sufficiently large sample (Collins et al., 2006).<br>Using an established theory ensures transferability. |
| Analytical validity | Interview structure based on EDT (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004) ensures plausibility and theoretical validity.<br>The semi-structured approach leaves room for unforeseen questions while at the same time preserving consistency within the structure. |
| Inferential validity | Mirroring answers back to participants ensures a correct understanding of descriptions and, thus, greater interpretative validity.<br>Coding is based on answers by using descriptive and interpretive coding (Myers, 2019).<br>Multiple judges have validated the coding (Fleiss et al., 1981). |

## Appendix C: Study 2

**Table C.1. Screening Questions**

| Screening question | Required answer |
|---|---|
| I do not have a subscription to a video-on-demand (VoD) service. | **No** |
| Examples of VoD services are Spotify and Apple Music. | **No** |
| How many VoD services do you currently subscribe to? | **>1** |
| Which of these VoD services did you last subscribe to that you did not use before? | **Any answer except "None"** |
| Which of these VoD services did you use the most before subscribing to {ALTERNATIVE}? | **Any answer except "None", not the same streaming service as in the previous question.** |
| How many weeks has it been since you subscribed to {ALTERNATIVE}? | **<=5** |
| When did you subscribe to {ALTERNATIVE}? | **Date within the previous five weeks** |

### Sample Size

Following the sample size requirements for QCA, the ratio of observations to conditions needs to be lower than 0.20 (Marx, 2010). We examined eight conditions with 224 observations, which means the ratio is 0.04. Hence, the sample size is sufficient.

### Measurement Items

**Table C.2. Reflective Measurement Items for Study 2**

| Construct | Measure | Loading |
|---|---|---|
| Disconfirmed improved compatibility | **Compared to my initial expectations, …** | |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} is much more compatible with the devices I like to use for watching content compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.88 |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} fits much better with the devices I like to use for watching content compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.88 |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} is much more convenient to use with the devices I like to use for watching content compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected | 0.84 |
| Disconfirmed improved content quality | **Compared to my initial expectations, …** | |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} provides much more content (e.g., movies, TV shows) that I want to watch compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.85 |
| | …the content of {ALTERNATIVE} meets my needs much more compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.87 |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} provides much more content that seems to be just about exactly what I need compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.83 |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} provides me with much more appealing content compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.89 |
| Disconfirmed improved usability | **Compared to my initial expectations, …** | |
| | …it is much less difficult to understand how to use {ALTERNATIVE} compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.85 |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} is much less difficult to use compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.88 |
| | …it is much less easy to get the results that I desire from {ALTERNATIVE} compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | -* |
| | …using {ALTERNATIVE} is, overall, much less difficult compared to using {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.87 |
| Disconfirmed reduced costs | **Compared to my initial expectations, …** | |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} is much less expensive compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.89 |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} is much less pricey compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.83 |
| | …{ALTERNATIVE} is much less of a big-ticket item compared to {INCUMBENT} than I initially expected. | 0.85 |

| Construct | Measure | Loading |
|---|---|---|
| Satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service | **How do you feel about your overall experience of using {INCUMBENT}?** | |
| | Very displeased (1) / Very pleased (7) | 0.92 |
| | Very frustrated (1) / Very contented (7) | 0.88 |
| | Absolutely terrible (1) / Absolutely delighted (7) | 0.89 |
| Satisfaction with the alternative streaming service | **How do you feel about your overall experience of using {ALTERNATIVE}?** | |
| | Very displeased (1) / Very pleased (7) | 0.83 |
| | Very frustrated (1) / Very contented (7) | 0.82 |
| | Absolutely terrible (1) / Absolutely delighted (7) | 0.86 |
| Affordability | If I want to, I could easily afford to subscribe to {ALTERNATIVE} and {INCUMBENT}. | 0.83 |
| | For me, spending money on subscriptions to {ALTERNATIVE} and {INCUMBENT} is not a problem. | 0.85 |
| | My personal income permits me to easily spend money on a subscription to {ALTERNATIVE} and {INCUMBENT}. | 0.80 |
| Perceived content exclusiveness | {INCUMBENT} provides exclusive content (e.g., movies, TV shows). | 0.82 |
| | {INCUMBENT} provides precious content. | 0.84 |
| | {INCUMBENT} provides rare content. | 0.79 |
| | {INCUMBENT} provides unique content. | 0.86 |
| Complete switching intention | I am considering to stop using {INCUMBENT} and continue using {ALTERNATIVE} instead. | 0.95 |
| | The chance of me stopping using {INCUMBENT} and continuing using {ALTERNATIVE} instead is high. | 0.94 |
| | I am determined to stop using {INCUMBENT} and continue using {ALTERNATIVE} instead. | 0.95 |
| Partial switching intention | I am considering to continue using {INCUMBENT} and {ALTERNATIVE} in parallel. | 0.95 |
| | The chance of me continuing using {INCUMBENT} and {ALTERNATIVE} in parallel is high. | 0.94 |
| | I am determined to continue using {INCUMBENT} and {ALTERNATIVE} in parallel. | 0.95 |
| Note: Marked items (-*) were dropped due to low loadings, indicating non-significance; all items except satisfaction with the alternative streaming service and satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service were measured with a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = 'Strongly disagree' to 7 = 'Strongly agree'. {ALTERNATIVE} indicates the alternative streaming service, and {INCUMBENT} indicates the incumbent streaming service. | | |

### Common Method Bias

We additionally tested for common method bias (CMB). We used Harman's single-factor test, which shows that 28.13 percent of the data variance is explained by only one factor. We also examined the correlation matrix (see Table C.3) for high correlations (>0.90) (Pavlou et al., 2007). Therefore, we can state that CMB does not distort the results.

**Table C.3. Descriptive Statistics and Discriminant Validity**

| | | M | SD | CR | CA | AVE | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | Disconfirmed improved compatibility | 5.40 | 1.10 | 0.90 | 0.84 | 0.75 | 0.87 | | | | | | | | | |
| (2) | Disconfirmed improved content quality | 5.41 | 1.12 | 0.92 | 0.88 | 0.74 | 0.76 | 0.86 | | | | | | | | |
| (3) | Disconfirmed improved usability | 5.22 | 1.14 | 0.90 | 0.84 | 0.75 | 0.58 | 0.62 | 0.87 | | | | | | | |
| (4) | Disconfirmed reduced costs | 5.34 | 1.06 | 0.89 | 0.82 | 0.73 | 0.57 | 0.53 | 0.54 | 0.86 | | | | | | |
| (5) | Satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service | 5.26 | 1.29 | 0.93 | 0.88 | 0.80 | 0.15 | 0.13 | 0.12 | 0.21 | 0.90 | | | | | |
| (6) | Satisfaction with the alternative streaming service | 5.69 | 0.98 | 0.87 | 0.78 | 0.70 | 0.52 | 0.54 | 0.37 | 0.44 | 0.31 | 0.84 | | | | |
| (7) | Affordability | 5.46 | 0.97 | 0.87 | 0.78 | 0.69 | 0.24 | 0.13 | 0.26 | 0.31 | 0.49 | 0.25 | 0.83 | | | |
| (8) | Perceived content exclusiveness | 5.27 | 1.12 | 0.90 | 0.85 | 0.69 | 0.18 | 0.11 | 0.18 | 0.29 | 0.69 | 0.22 | 0.57 | 0.83 | | |
| (9) | Complete switching intention | 4.45 | 1.96 | 0.96 | 0.94 | 0.89 | 0.40 | 0.39 | 0.20 | 0.26 | -0.13 | 0.11 | -0.14 | -0.16 | 0.95 | |
| (10) | Partial switching intention | 5.15 | 1.62 | 0.96 | 0.94 | 0.90 | -0.10 | -0.08 | 0.05 | 0.08 | 0.51 | 0.05 | 0.41 | 0.58 | -0.48 | 0.95 |
| Note: M = mean; SD = standard deviation; CR = composite reliability; CA = Cronbach's α; AVE = average variance extracted; the square root of AVE is listed on the diagonal of bivariate correlations. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Configurational Approach**

fsQCA is based on set theory and allows for empirically examining the relationship between multiple conditions and an outcome of interest (Schneider, 2019). For our study, the conditions refer to *disconfirmed improved compatibility*, *disconfirmed improved content quality*, *disconfirmed improved usability*, *disconfirmed reduced costs*, *satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service*, and *satisfaction with the alternative streaming service*. Following recommendations for configurational moderation analysis (Ma et al., 2024), we considered the constraints *affordability* and *perceived content exclusiveness* as additional conditions and potential moderators. As outcomes, we investigated *complete switching intention* and *partial switching intention*.

The conditions and the outcome were expressed in fuzzy set memberships from zero to one. While a fuzzy set membership of zero indicates a condition that does not apply to a subscriber, a value of one describes that a condition perfectly applies to a subscriber. Values between zero and one describe partial memberships to conditions. For example, a membership of zero for disconfirmed improved content quality indicates that these subscribers' expectations that the alternative streaming service provides better content than the incumbent streaming service were not exceeded. A membership of 0.30 indicates that they were rather not exceeded, a membership of 0.70 indicates that they were rather exceeded, and a membership of one indicates that their expectations that the alternative streaming service provides better content than the incumbent streaming service were exceeded.

**Calibration.** Following previous QCA studies (Mattke et al., 2020), we first calculated the mean of each construct and used the direct calibration function to compute the mean values to fuzzy set memberships (Ragin & Davey, 2016). To calibrate the mean values, we used three anchors based on the seven-point Likert scale. Specifically, we used the value two of the seven-point Likert scale for full-non-membership ("Disagree"), the mean value four for the cross-over point ("Neither disagree nor agree"), and the value six for full-membership as anchors ("Agree"). These calibration anchors make use of the meaningful data collected by the Likert scale and align with extant IS research using fsQCA to analyze survey data (Meier et al., 2024a). The resulting set memberships range from zero to one, where a mean Likert score of two is calibrated to a set membership close to zero, reflecting that a condition rather does not apply to a subscriber, while a Likert score of six is calibrated to a set membership close to one, reflecting that a condition rather applies to a subscriber. This calibration ensures that the resulting set memberships preserve the meaning of the Likert scale.

**fsQCA.** We followed a five step approach for conducting a configurational moderation analysis with fsQCA (Ma et al., 2024). In the first step, we examined each condition for necessity in relation to complete switching intention (see Table C.4) and partial switching intention (see Table C.5). Necessary conditions describe conditions that need to apply for subscribers to exhibit a specific outcome. To be defined as necessary, a condition needs to exceed the recommended consistency threshold of 0.90, coverage threshold of 0.60, and the relevance of necessity threshold of 0.60 (Thomann et al., 2018). Consistency explains the degree to which subscribers with the same condition share the same outcome (Ragin, 2008). A consistency threshold of 0.90 for the analysis for necessary conditions ensures that only highly relevant conditions are considered necessary, i.e., conditions that appear in at least 90% of the observations that exhibit the outcome. Coverage describes the degree of data covered by this condition, i.e., a condition's relevance (Thomann et al., 2018). We avoided trivial necessary conditions, i.e., conditions that are close to a constant (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012), by considering coverage and relevance of necessity (Ragin, 2006).

**Table C.4. Analysis for Necessary Conditions for Complete Switching Intention**

| Condition | Consistency | Relevance of necessity | Coverage |
|---|---|---|---|
| DICO | 0.95 | 0.44 | 0.73 |
| ~DICO | 0.16 | 0.91 | 0.52 |
| DICQ | 0.96 | 0.44 | 0.73 |
| ~DICQ | 0.15 | 0.91 | 0.52 |
| DIU | 0.91 | 0.50 | 0.72 |
| ~DIU | 0.22 | 0.91 | 0.62 |
| DRC | 0.94 | 0.46 | 0.72 |
| ~DRC | 0.19 | 0.92 | 0.62 |
| SIN | 0.81 | 0.45 | 0.65 |
| ~SIN | 0.29 | 0.95 | 0.82 |
| SAL | 0.95 | 0.32 | 0.68 |
| ~SAL | 0.15 | 0.96 | 0.69 |

Note: 'DICO' indicates disconfirmed improved compatibility, 'DICQ' indicates disconfirmed improved content quality, 'DIU' indicates disconfirmed improved usability, 'DRC' indicates disconfirmed reduced costs, 'SIN' indicates satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, 'SAL' indicates satisfaction with the alternative streaming service, and 'CSI' indicates complete switching intention. '~' indicates the logical NOT. Bold conditions indicate necessary conditions.

**Table C.5. Analysis for Necessary Conditions for Partial Switching Intention**

| Condition | Consistency | Relevance of necessity | Coverage |
|---|---|---|---|
| DICO | 0.88 | 0.54 | 0.81 |
| ~DICO | 0.22 | 0.98 | 0.91 |
| DICQ | 0.87 | 0.53 | 0.80 |
| ~DICQ | 0.21 | 0.98 | 0.91 |
| DIU | 0.85 | 0.61 | 0.82 |
| ~DIU | 0.25 | 0.96 | 0.86 |
| DRC | 0.88 | 0.57 | 0.82 |
| ~DRC | 0.22 | 0.97 | 0.86 |
| **SIN** | **0.90** | **0.71** | **0.88** |
| ~SIN | 0.18 | 0.90 | 0.62 |
| SAL | 0.93 | 0.44 | 0.81 |
| ~SAL | 0.15 | 0.98 | 0.86 |

Note: 'DICO' indicates disconfirmed improved compatibility, 'DICQ' indicates disconfirmed improved content quality, 'DIU' indicates disconfirmed improved usability, 'DRC' indicates disconfirmed reduced costs, 'SIN' indicates satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, 'SAL' indicates satisfaction with the alternative streaming service, and 'CSI' indicates complete switching intention. '~' indicates the logical NOT. Bold conditions indicate necessary conditions.

In the second step, we performed the analysis for sufficient configurations without including the constraints to identify how the disconfirmed expectations and satisfaction with the streaming services generally explain the switching behaviors. We created a truth table based on the identified disconfirmed expectations, satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, and satisfaction with the alternative streaming service. We then reduced this truth table by using a frequency threshold of four (Marzi et al., 2023), such that more than 80 percent of the initial observations remained in the reduced truth table (181 of 224), which is in line with methodological recommendations for large-N fsQCA (Greckhamer et al., 2018). We then used a raw consistency threshold of 0.75 (Ragin, 2006) and a proportional reduction of inconsistency (PRI) threshold of 0.75 (Greckhamer et al., 2018; Meier et al., 2024b) (see Table C.6). We simplified the remaining truth table using the Quine McCluskey algorithm. The Quine McCluskey algorithm is a Boolean minimization process that identifies the simplest possible configuration that is associated with an outcome. For instance, consider a solution that contains two configurations that lead to the same outcome and differ in only one condition that is present in one configuration and absent in the other. Since the configurations differ in only one condition yet give rise to the same outcome, the Quine McCluskey algorithm can minimize the solution to one configuration that contains all similar conditions and eliminates the differing condition, creating a so-called 'Don't care situation'. This 'Don't care situation' represents that the condition of the minimized configuration can be either present or absent without changing the outcome. Hence, the Quine McCluskey algorithm is helpful in minimizing the truth table that contains all configurations that lead to an outcome and create a concise solution including the sufficient configurations.

**Table C.6. Truth Table for Complete Switching Intention Without the Constraints**

| DICO | DICQ | DIU | DRC | SIN | SAL | CSI | Number | Raw consistency | PRI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 0.89 | 0.82 |
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 0.81 | 0.60 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 0.76 | 0.46 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 133 | 0.75 | 0.71 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 0.67 | 0.17 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 0.65 | 0.19 |

Note: 'DICO' indicates disconfirmed improved compatibility, 'DICQ' indicates disconfirmed improved content quality, 'DIU' indicates disconfirmed improved usability, 'DRC' indicates disconfirmed reduced costs, 'SIN' indicates satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, 'SAL' indicates satisfaction with the alternative streaming service, and 'CSI' indicates complete switching intention.

For partial switching intention, we again created a truth table and reduced it by using the same frequency, consistency, and PRI thresholds (see Table C.7). We also simplified the remaining truth table using the Quine McCluskey algorithm. Since both resulting solutions do not include theoretical assumptions to make use of logical reminders, they reflect complex solutions, which is in this case also the intermediate solution.

**Table C.7. Truth Table for Partial Switching Intention Without the Constraints**

| DICO | DICQ | DIU | DRC | SIN | SAL | PSI | Number | Raw consistency | PRI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0.96 | 0.90 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 0.95 | 0.89 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0.91 | 0.81 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 133 | 0.91 | 0.89 |
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 0.90 | 0.80 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 24 | 0.64 | 0.44 |

Note: 'DICO' indicates disconfirmed improved compatibility, 'DICQ' indicates disconfirmed improved content quality, 'DIU' indicates disconfirmed improved usability, 'DRC' indicates disconfirmed reduced costs, 'SIN' indicates satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, 'SAL' indicates satisfaction with the alternative streaming service, and 'PSI' indicates complete switching intention.

We also identified the parsimonious solutions by making use of 'easy' and 'difficult' counterfactuals (Park, Pavlou, et al., 2020) (see Figure C.1). We compared the intermediate and parsimonious solution to identify core and peripheral conditions (Fiss, 2011) (see Figure 4). Core conditions have a strong causal relationship with an outcome within a sufficient configuration, and peripheral conditions have a weaker causal relationship with an outcome in a sufficient configuration.

| | Complete switching intention | Partial switching intention |
|---|---|---|
| | CS | PS |
| Disconfirmed improved compatibility<br>Disconfirmed improved content quality<br>Disconfirmed improved usability<br>Disconfirmed reduced costs | | |
| Satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service | ⊗ | ● |
| Satisfaction with the alternative streaming service | | |
| Raw coverage | 0.29 | 0.90 |
| Unique coverage | 0.29 | 0.90 |
| Consistency | 0.82 | 0.88 |
| Solution coverage | 0.29 | 0.90 |
| Solution consistency | 0.82 | 0.88 |

**Figure C.1. Parsimonious Solution Without the Constraints**

In the third step, we performed the analysis for sufficient configurations including the constraints to identify how they interact with the other conditions. We again created truth tables for complete and partial switching intention and reduced them based on the same frequency, consistency, and PRI thresholds (see Table C.8 and Table C.9). We then simplified the remaining truth table using the Quine McCluskey algorithm and combined the intermediate with the parsimonious solution to identify core and peripheral conditions (see Figure 5).

**Table C.8. Truth Table for Complete Switching Intention Including the Constraints**

| AFF | PCE | DICO | DICQ | DIU | DRC | SIN | SAL | CSI | Number | Raw consistency | PRI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0.94 | 0.83 |
| 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 0.90 | 0.80 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 0.85 | 0.72 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0.81 | 0.58 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0.77 | 0.43 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 130 | 0.75 | 0.70 |
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 0.66 | 0.15 |
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 0.65 | 0.17 |

Note: 'AFF' indicates affordability, 'PCE' indicates perceived content exclusiveness, 'DICO' indicates disconfirmed improved compatibility, 'DICQ' indicates disconfirmed improved content quality, 'DRC' indicates disconfirmed reduced costs, 'SIN' indicates satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, 'SAL' indicates satisfaction with the alternative streaming service, and 'CSI' indicates complete switching intention.

**Table C.9. Truth Table for Partial Switching Including the Constraints**

| AFF | PCE | DICO | DICQ | DIU | DRC | SIN | SAL | PSI | Number | Raw consistency | PRI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0.96 | 0.92 |
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 0.96 | 0.91 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0.93 | 0.84 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 130 | 0.92 | 0.91 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 0.92 | 0.84 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 0.81 | 0.65 |
| 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0.74 | 0.34 |
| 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 0.71 | 0.42 |

Note: 'AFF' indicates affordability, 'PCE' indicates perceived content exclusiveness, 'DICO' indicates disconfirmed improved compatibility, 'DICQ' indicates disconfirmed improved content quality, 'DRC' indicates disconfirmed reduced costs, 'SIN' indicates satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service, 'SAL' indicates satisfaction with the alternative streaming service, and 'CSI' indicates complete switching intention.

| | Complete switching intention | Partial switching intention |
|---|---|---|
| | CS | PS |
| Affordability | | |
| Perceived content exclusiveness | ⊗ | |
| Disconfirmed improved compatibility | | |
| Disconfirmed improved content quality | | |
| Disconfirmed improved usability | | |
| Disconfirmed reduced costs | | |
| Satisfaction with the incumbent streaming service | | ● |
| Satisfaction with the alternative streaming service | | |
| Raw coverage | 0.26 | 0.90 |
| Unique coverage | 0.26 | 0.90 |
| Consistency | 0.82 | 0.88 |
| Solution coverage | 0.26 | 0.90 |
| Solution consistency | 0.82 | 0.88 |

**Figure C.2. Parsimonious Solution Including the Constraints**

In the fourth step, we compared the resulting sufficient configurations of the fsQCA without and with the constraints. To interpret the constraints' influence on the relationship between the other conditions and the outcomes as moderators, they need to fulfill the requirements for configurational moderators (Ma et al., 2024). First, the inclusion of the constraints should not change the present or absent conditions within the sufficient configurations. Second, at least one sufficient configuration should change in terms of core and peripheral conditions. Third, the configurational moderator should be a core condition in at least one of the sufficient configurations. If a constraint fulfills all three criteria, it is considered a configurational moderator that alters the interaction among the conditions in the identified sufficient configurations. While it is not considered a configurational moderator if it does not satisfy all three requirements, it may still reflect a scope condition that needs to be present or absent for an outcome to occur (Goertz & Mahoney, 2013), i.e., enable an outcome to occur without changing the interaction among the conditions within the sufficient configurations. In the fifth step, we interpreted the moderating influences to conclude whether the constraints reflect configurational moderators, scope conditions, or are not relevant for complete and partial switching intention.

### Robustness of the Results

We tested for sensitivity to the sample and the calibration to ensure the validity of our results. We decreased the frequency threshold of our analysis to three to test for sensitivity to the sample. The repeated analysis revealed substantially the same results, which shows that our results are robust to this threshold. We then changed the calibration anchors (minimum value = 1; mean value = 4, maximum value = 7). The analysis showed the same configurations, which shows the robustness of our solution.

### Validation of Quantitative Inferences

We evaluated the quantitative inferences regarding data collection and analysis and state design validity, measurement validity, and inferential validity (see Table C.10).

**Table C.10. Validation of Quantitative Inferences**

| Category of validity | Validation |
|---|---|
| Design validity | Constructs aligned with extant research.<br>Sufficient sample size (Marx, 2010).<br>Based on EDT (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004) to ensure internal validity and highly generalizable design to ensure external validity.<br>No common method bias (see Appendix C). |
| Measurement validity | No issues with content validity, indicator reliability, construct reliability, and discriminant validity.<br>Robust to adaptions in calibration anchors and frequency threshold (Park, Fiss, et al., 2020) (see Appendix C). |
| Inferential validity | Reliable and robust solution due to high consistency and frequency threshold (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). |

## Appendix D: Quality of Meta-Inferences

**Table D.1. Quality of Meta-Inferences**

| Category | Validation |
|---|---|
| Design quality | The mixed methods strategy includes appropriate methods (interviews and fsQCA) to answer the research questions.<br>Methods (interviews and fsQCA) were conducted with quality and rigor (Ma et al., 2024; Myers, 2019). |
| Explanation quality | Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative inferences revealed reliable theoretical statements that explain complete and partial switching intention in the context of streaming services. |
| Legitimation of meta-inferences and potential threats and remedies | Sample integration: Sequential qualitative and quantitative data collection within the same population but with disjunctive samples.<br>Weakness minimization: Complementation of the subjective results of the interviews with fsQCA.<br>Conversion: Conversion of qualitative inferences based on EDT (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004; Oliver, 1980)<br>Multiple validity: Individual and separate validation of the qualitative study, quantitative study, and the mixed methods approach.<br>Political validity: Meta-inferences were drawn from the triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative study to answer the research questions. |