



Online Streaming Platforms and Media Consumption: A Descriptive Study of Usage Patterns, Choice Management, Engagement, and Binge-Watching

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Abstract

This descriptive quantitative study aims to investigate the impact of online video streaming platforms on individuals' media consumption habits, focusing on usage patterns, content selection, and interaction, as well as the role of these platforms in the development of binge-watching behaviour among Algerian users. Using an online survey distributed to a sample of 110 respondents from Algeria, the study found that the use of OVS platforms has led individuals to adopt new usage patterns that align with both the digital and individual contexts of viewing. Furthermore, individuals have become more autonomous and in control of decisions regarding the content they consume and have developed new ways of interacting digitally with content. The use of these platforms also contributes to the development of binge-watching behaviour.

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- ✓ Usage patterns
- ✓ Viewing communities

1. *Introduction*

The rapid development of technology has forced us to rethink our perspective toward the media and its relationship with the audience. The media industry was impacted by the evolution and advancement of technology, particularly the applications of the internet, which led to the creation of new patterns of media consumption and use. The audio-visual media industry is one of the fields most impacted by these transformations because of the advancement of various connected devices (smartphones, tablets, computers, smart TVs etc.) in addition to the widespread availability of high-speed internet.

This has encouraged the transition from traditional media to new media or virtual media for the broadcasting of audio-visual content.

Nowadays; TV and movies (cinema) are in front of a competition with Online Video Streaming and Video On Demand platforms (OVS/ VOD), which has greatly grown in the last few years; we can name Netflix; shahid; Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ ..etc. These services promoted the entertainment industry and led audience to experience a new ways of accessing and watching media.

Both online streaming services (OSS) often -known as Online video streaming services (OVS)- and Video on demand services (VOD) refer to the ways of providing and delivering video content via the internet to the audience; and the videos content includes movies, series, TV shows, documentaries, and even video games.

OVS/VOD platforms allows users to browse; navigate; choose; watch and download content at anytime from anywhere, on any internet-connected device. That is made the act of watching neither related to TV or cinema, nor linked to specific places (home; cinema...); it has become more flexible than before and it is not dependent on the media's schedule. For academics, these transformations in use can increase audience independence in their relation with media.

The expansion of online streaming services and the development of their features; has led to an increase in the amount of their users; and it has become a phenomenon that inspired several research to investigate the effects of these services on media consumption and usage patterns.

For Kaur and Ashfaq (2023) streaming services have transformed the way people engage with and consumer media. In their study they revealed that Netflix (the most famous streaming service) caused in the rise in binge-watching; the increase in diversity of content due to original programming, and made the discover of new content easier for viewers due to the personalized recommendation. According to the study Netflix has successfully followed consumer trends and preferences by providing a variety of content; a user friendly interface; no ads; and offline viewing options.

The features of OSS led the audience to become more active; more selective and more self-directed to use new media; that is what revealed by the study of Steffiani Reisa (2020); the researcher showed that

the fragmentation process facilitates new media audience to consume the content based on their interests and needs. The study noted that binge-watching is a new behaviour that grows as a result of users' selected exposure.

Steiner and Xu (2018) was interested by the binge-watching as a pattern of use relate to the streaming services platforms; they looking for the motivations behind this habit. According to their study, the main reasons why users choose to engage in binge-watching sessions are catching up with the missed episodes, relaxation, the feeling of fulfilment that users have after completing a series or season, immersion in the narrative universe, cultural inclusion and a better consumer experience. Additionally, features like portability and navigability are crucial in influencing customers' choices to watch several episodes in a single sitting. In other side, the study showed that the binge-watching makes users feel shame, guilty and regret about their prolonged binge-watching sessions, but at the same time they feel proud and connected to the cultural discourse after watching a certain show.

Another study about the motivations and gratifications of binge-watching indicates that social interaction, escape from reality, easy accessibility to content and advertising motivate users; notably students; to spend more time binge watching. The study also noticed that users plan to continue binge watching if they were negatively gratified after doing it (Panda & Pandey, 2017).

Pitman and Sheehan (2015) identified five main motivation for engaging in binge watching sessions:

engagement, relaxation, time occupation, hedonism and social component of consumption. According to the research, the primary reason why people choose to binge watch is that this type of consumption creates a higher degree of involvement than watching an individual episode. The more a user feels emotionally involved in the story, the more feelings he develops for the characters, the more he chooses to engage in this type of behaviour. User can also refer to binge watching as a fortifying experience during which they suspend their thoughts and obligations from everyday life.

Academic researches reveal a significant and crucial change in the media landscape and consumption. Today we cannot deal with the relation media-audience in the same way as before. Based on the previous studies; this study has comes for purpose to examine the impact of online streaming services platforms (both OVS and VOD) on Algerian users' watching habits, usage patterns, and binge watching by asking the following questions:

Q1: What effects did the online streaming services have on Algerian users' usage patterns? And their methods of engaging with the content?

Q2: Did the Algerian user develop a binge-watching habit?

2. Study concepts:

2.1 Online Video Streaming / Video on Demand platforms

Digital streaming platforms are an extension of on-demand television

services, as embodied by cable television services in the U.S., starting with HBO, Showtime, and Netflix. These platforms are organized around a customized service logic. They are subscription-based and can be shaped according to individual preferences. This structure moves these platforms away from traditional television broadcasting and turns them into differentiated, personalized services (Begum, 2022, p. 12).

These platforms have revolutionized the way individuals watch video content through two main types of services:

***Online Video Streaming (OVS):** This technique provides video content in real time over the internet, allowing users to stream video on their devices (smartphones, computers, smart TVs, tablets, etc.) (Kaur & Ashfaq, 2023, p. 10).

***Video on Demand (VOD):** This service allows users to select and watch video content whenever they want, rather than adhering to scheduled broadcast times. It also enables users to browse and select content from a vast library, which they can then stream directly to their device (Kaur & Ashfaq, 2023, p. 10).

There are two primary business models for VOD services, which differ based on their cost structures:

- **Transactional VOD (TVOD):** Users pay a fee for each individual event they watch, such as through services like Google Play Movies or Apple iTunes.

- **Subscription VOD (SVOD):** Users pay a recurring fee for access to a content library, as seen with platforms like Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video. This can also include digital purchases, where content is either downloaded or stored permanently in the cloud (Reisa, 2020, p. 124).

Digital streaming services operate on a customer-centered philosophy, where the consumer exclusively decides what, when, and how content is consumed (Reisa, 2020, p. 124). This provides viewers with greater freedom of choice and mobility, liberating them from the constraints of traditional linear television (Boca, 2019, p. 07).

2.2 Binge-watching

The term "binge-watching" or "excessive viewing" refers to the act of watching continuously and uninterrupted for long periods, as described by Raymond Williams in his discussion of the practice of binge-watching television series (Jeremy , 2020, p. 55). Perks refers to this as "media marathons," which are especially common during holiday breaks or breaks from media routines (Jenner, 2018, p. 248) . This term began to gain significant popularity around 2000, when DVD box set sales soared, allowing audiences the opportunity to watch multiple episodes of a show at once or even an entire season in one sitting (Reisa, 2020, p. 124). Platforms like Netflix further spread the concept of binge-watching by releasing entire seasons of their shows at once, in contrast to traditional television, where episodes are typically released weekly. Additionally, the autoplay feature, which automatically

queues the next episode, enhances and encourages continuous viewing, fostering sustained engagement and immersion (Kaur & Ashfaq, 2023, p. 11).

Netflix defines binge-watching as “watching between 2-6 episodes of the same TV show in one sitting,” (Pauley, 2021, p. 53) but Dickinson defines it as watching more than two episodes of a TV show within 24 hours (Begum, 2022, p. 16). According to Reisa (2020, p. 124), determining the number of episodes that qualify as binge-watching is challenging because it varies depending on individual media consumption habits. This is why many researchers prefer to define binge-watching as the act of “viewing multiple episodes of the same program or series in a single sitting, with varying levels of intentionality.” (Viens & Farrar, 2021, p. 5).

reports the characteristics of the participants.

3. Methods and Materials

This descriptive quantitative study was conducted by an online survey directed to the Algerian users of online streaming services platforms (OSS) through email, social media messaging, and in-person meetings; for aims to describe and gather information about the effects of these platforms on the usage patterns; how the users engage with these services; and the role of OVS/VOD in the development of binge-watching behaviour.

A snowball sampling technique was used for data collection, which took place in June – August 2024. The sample size was 110 participants. The table below

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics

Gender	Male	Female			
	42.86%	57.14%			
Age	[10-20]	[21-30]	[31-40]	[41-50]	[51-60]
	9,52%	23,81%	52,39%	4,76%	9,52%
Professional status	Student	Active worker	Unemployed	Retired	
	28.58%	61.90%	4.76%	4.76%	
Relationship status	Single	Married	Divorced		
	57.14%	38.10%	4.76%		

4. Results

4.1 Usage patterns

FIG.1. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN USING OSS PLATFORMS?

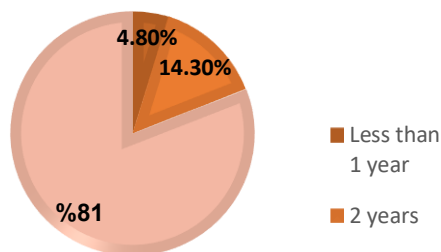
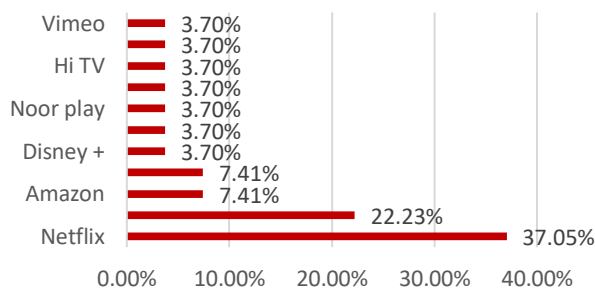


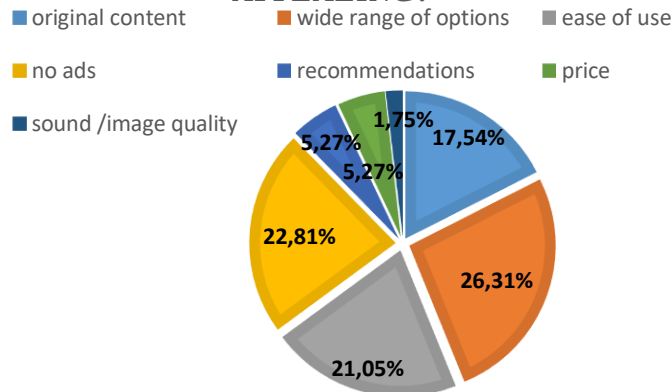
Fig.2. Which platforms do you use more?



The majority of the sample (81%) admitted that they have been using OSS platforms for more than two years, while 14.3% have been using them for about two years, and 4.8% for less than a year. Netflix is the most popular platform among respondents, with 37.05% indicating exposure to it, followed by Shahid at 22.23%, and

Amazon and Hbo Box at a lower rate of 7.41%. There is also modest usage of several other platforms.

FIG. 03. WHICH FEATURES OF OSS PLATFORMS DO YOU FIND MOST APPEALING?



The most attractive feature of streaming platforms, according to 26.31% of respondents, is the variety of options and content. Followed by the absence of ads at 22.81%, and ease of use at 21.05%. Original and exclusive content also appeals to users, accounting for 17.54%. The

content recommendation and suggestion feature, as well as subscription price, each account for just 5.27% of the total. Lastly, while the quality of sound and image attracts users to these platforms but at a lower rate of 1.75%.

FIG. 04. PLACES OF EXPOSURE TO THE PLATFORMS

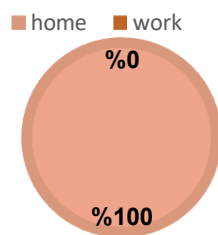


FIG.05. YOU USUALLY WATCH CONTENT ON THESE PLATFORMS WITH:

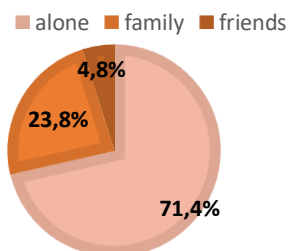
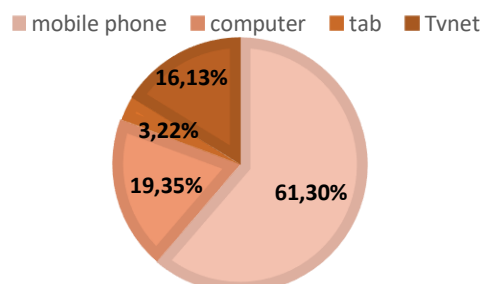


FIG.06. WHICH DEVICE DO YOU USE TO ACCESS THESE PLATROFMS?



Respondents' usage patterns differ in regard to locations, devices, and times of exposure to OSS platforms. The home is

the preferred place for individual use for 71.40% of

respondents, while 23.80% use it with family and 4.8% with friends.

It is noted that mobile phones are the most commonly used devices to access these platforms, at a rate of 61.30%, due to their portability, ease of use, and constant availability with individuals. Computers come in second at 19.35%, followed by internet-connected smart TVs at 16.13% and, to a lesser degree, tablets at 3.22%.

FIG.07. HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE OSS PLATFORMS?

■ daily ■ once in a week ■ once in a month

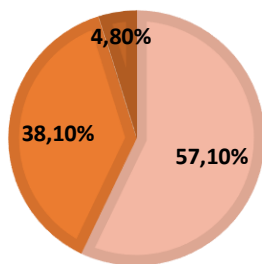
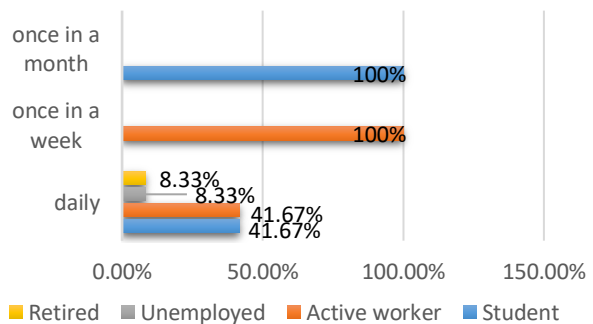


Fig.08. The frequency of OSS platforms usage according to the professional status variable

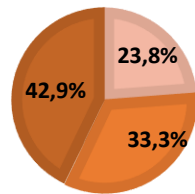


The results indicate that individuals tend to use the platforms intensively and frequently, with 57.10% reporting daily usage. Among these, students and employees make up the majority at 41.67%, while a smaller percentage consists of unemployed and retired individuals (8.33%). While 38.10% of respondents reported using the platforms

once a week, all of whom belong to the employee category. On the other hand, 4.80% use them once in a month, and all of these individuals are students. This situation is primarily attributed to how the respondents organize their daily lives based on their professional or academic schedules and their leisure time.

FIG.09. DO YOU PLAN YOUR EXPOSURE TO OSS PLATFORMS?

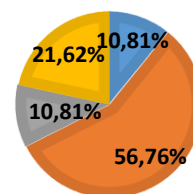
yes no sometimes



According to the respondents' answers, 42.90% sometimes plan their exposure to digital streaming platforms, while 33.30% do not commit to any prior planning or scheduling. In contrast, 23.80% stated that they consistently strive to organize their viewing schedules for these platforms. Free time is the most significant factor influencing the choice of exposure time to OSS platforms, accounting for 56.76%, followed by holidays at 21.62%. This is

FIG.10. WHAT INFLUENCES THE SELECTION OF EXPOSURE TIMES FOR OSS PLATFORMS?

broadcast schedule free time work/ study program holidays



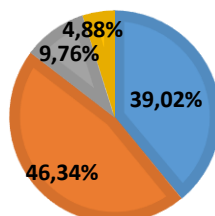
generally due to the entertaining nature of the usage. Schedules for work or school (10.81%) and the release dates of new episodes or seasons (10.81%) also have an impact, but to a lesser extent.

The findings indicate a move away from fixed programming constraints, resulting in greater flexibility and freedom to adapt viewing schedules to the user's availability and everyday life needs.

4.2 Management of content selection and engagement

FIG.11. WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT DO YOU PREFER?

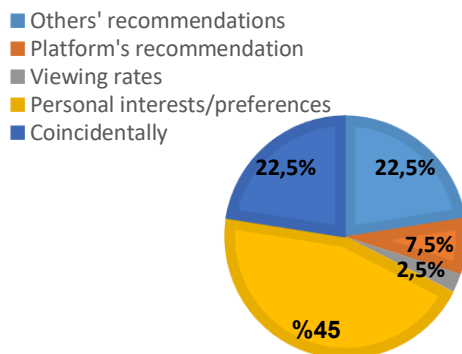
Movies Series Tv shows Animation



46.34% of respondents prefer watching series offered by OSS platforms, compared to 39.02% who prefer movies, while 9.76%

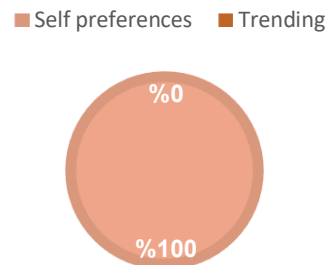
said they prefer TV shows, and 4.88% who prefer anime.

FIG.12. HOW DO YOU USUALLY CHOOSE THE CONTENT?



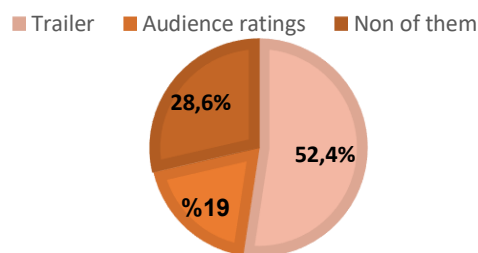
The selection of content to which users are exposed is influenced by several variables. This process is primarily based on users' personal interests and preferences, accounting for 45%. In the second position are recommendations from platform users or coincidental exploration (22.5%).

FIG.13. IN YOUR CONTENT SELECTION, DO YOU CONSIDER MORE:



Recommendations from the platform itself help 7.5% of users in choosing content, while viewing rates have an even smaller impact at 2.5%. The respondents emphasize that they consider their personal interests (100%) rather than simply following what is trending when choosing content.

FIG..14. BEFORE DECIDING TO WATCH CONTENT, YOU CHECK:

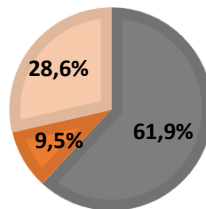


Trailers for content play a crucial role in deciding whether or not to watch it fully. According to 52.4% of respondents, they consult these trailers before deciding whether to watch or follow. On the other

hand, only 19% of respondents rely on audience ratings. In contrast, 28.6% of respondents stated that they do not pay attention to trailers or audience ratings when choosing content.

FIG.15. DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE BECOME MORE IN CONTROL OF THE TYPE OF CONTENT YOU ARE EXPOSED TO?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Relatively

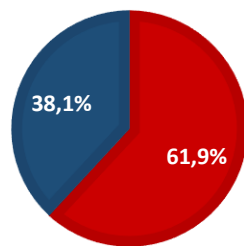


As a result of the above, 61.90% of respondents reported that digital platforms (OSS) have allowed them to have more control over the type of content they are exposed to, while 28.60% indicated that this is relative. Meanwhile, 9.50% claim

that the platforms have not helped them control the type of content they come across, which may be due to an inability to manage the volume of content available or the excessive variety of choices.

FIG. 16. DO YOU SUBSCRIBE TO SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS/PAGES RELATED TO THE CONTENT YOU FOLLOW ON OSS?

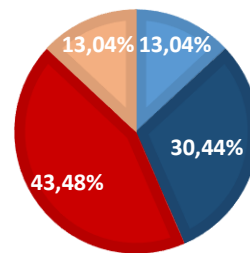
■ Yes ■ No



Most respondents subscribe to groups and follow pages on social media related to the content they follow (61.90%), while 38.10% stated that they do not. For subscribers, the main reason to join is largely driven by the need to know others' opinions about the content, accounting for

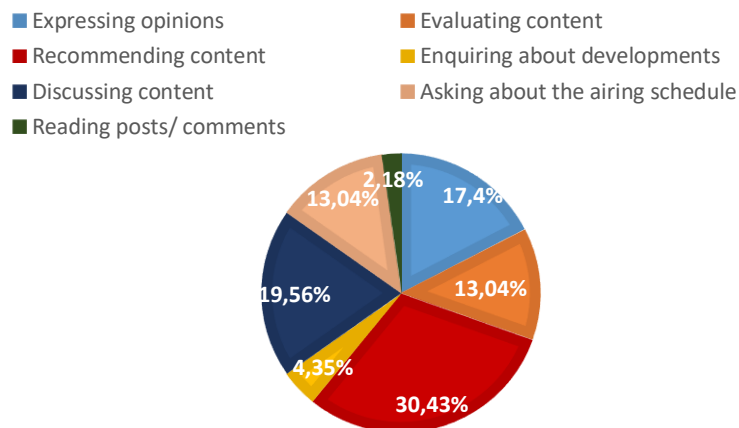
FIG. 17. WHY DO YOU SUBSCRIBE TO THESE GROUPS/PAGES?

■ Share experiences ■ Discuss content
■ Discover opinions ■ Stay updated



42.48%. In contrast, 30.44% are motivated by a desire to discuss the content with others. Moreover, 13.04% of users join these groups/pages to share experiences and stay updated on the latest developments related to the content.

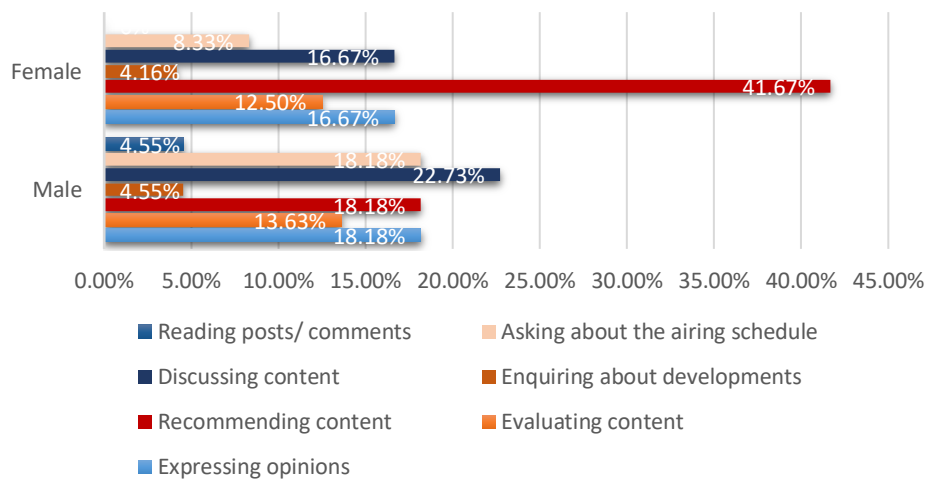
FIG. 18. HOW DO YOU INTERACT WITH OTHERS ABOUT CONTENT?



The majority of user interactions regarding content take the form of recommending what to watch (30.43%) and discussing the content (19.56%). Afterwards, users express their opinions (17.40%), and to a lesser extent, evaluate the content (13.04%)

and ask about the airing schedule for new episodes or seasons (13.04%). Lastly, interactions include inquiring about developments in the events (4.35%) and simply reading comments and posts (2.18%).

Fig. 19. Interaction by gender variable

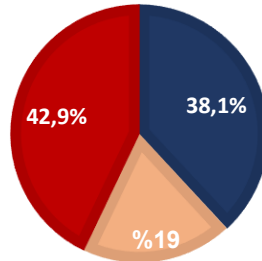


When comparing the genders, we find that females are more likely to recommend watching content (41.67%), express their opinions (16.67%), and discuss the content (16.67%). In contrast, male interactions are more focused on discussing the content

(22.73%), followed by expressing opinions, recommending content, and asking about the airing schedule of new episodes (18.18% each).

FIG. 20. DOES DIGITAL INTERACTION AROUND CONTENT AFFECT YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF IT?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Sometimes

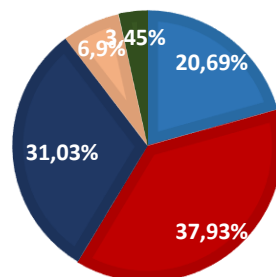


42.90% of respondents admitted that digital interaction around the content sometimes affects their understanding of it, while 38.10% indicated that this interaction

actually has a definitive impact on their comprehension. In contrast, 19% stated that interaction does not influence the way they understand the content.

FIG. 21. DOES SUBSCRIBING TO THESE GROUOS/PAGES MAKE YOU FEEL A SENSE OF:

■ Belonging ■ Participation ■ Sociability ■ Friendship ■ Similarity



Engaging in these groups and pages allows users to integrate into a community of viewers, enabling them to experience a sense of participation and sharing in exposure to the same content while interacting with it through digital mediums. This interaction helps develop digital social

relationships, fostering a feeling of belonging to a larger community of viewers who share exposure to the same content. This, in turn, creates a bond among those exposed and allows them to form what is known as a "viewing community".

4.3 Binge-watching

FIG. 22. DO YOU ENGAGE IN BINGE-WATCHING?

Always Sometimes Rarely

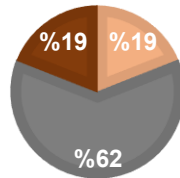
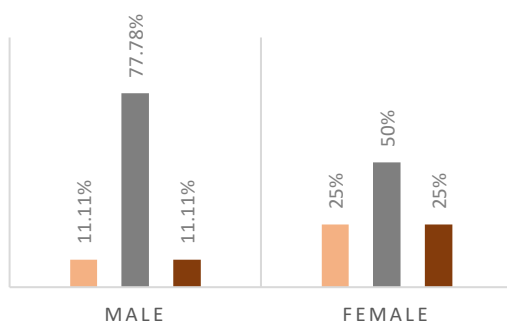


FIG. 23. ENGAGING IN BINGE-WATCHING BY GENDER VARIABLE

Always Sometimes Rarely

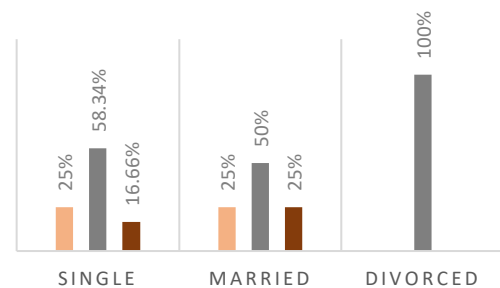


The majority of the sample engages in binge-watching sometimes, accounting for 61.90%, compared to 19% who do so always and 19% who do so rarely. This behaviour can be attributed to several factors that may influence it, including free time, daily life routines, work, studies, and so on.

When comparing the two genders, we find that the percentage of males who engage in binge-watching sometimes is higher than that of females in the same category (77.78% compared to 58.34%).

FIG. 24. ENGAGING IN BINGE-WATCHING BY RELATIONSHIP VARIABLE

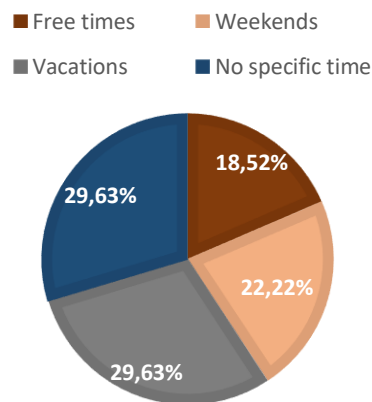
Always Sometimes Rarely



Meanwhile, the percentage of females who engage in binge-watching regularly (always) is higher than that of males (25% compared to 11.11%).

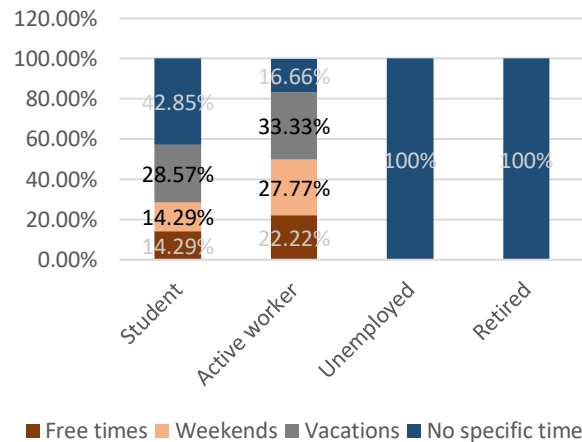
Regarding relationship variable, the data indicate that the majority of singles engage in binge-watching sometimes, with a prevalence of 58.34%, while 25% of them doing it always. A similar pattern is observed among married individuals, where 50% report binge-watching sometimes and 25% do so always.

FIG. 25. WHEN DO YOU ENGAGE IN BINGE-WATCHING?



The findings suggest that the most significant factor influencing engagement in binge-watching is the times when individuals are free. We can see that 29.63% of respondents reported that they binge-watch during their annual vacations, while 22.22% do so over the weekend. Furthermore, 29.63% of respondents stated that they do not have a specific time for binge-watching, as it depends on their personal schedules and changes in their daily routines. Free time also influences

Fig. 26. Time Of Binge-watching By Professional Status Variable



binge-watching among 18.52% of the respondents.

When comparing the results in relation to the professional status variable, it is evident that unemployed individuals and retirees do not adhere to a specific schedule for binge-watching, as they are not tied to work or study commitments. In contrast, employees and students are more influenced by holidays and their available free time.

FIG. 27. WHAT IS THE DURATION YOU TYPICALLY SPEND BINGE-WATCHING?

1 Hour 2 Hours 3 Hours More than 3 hours

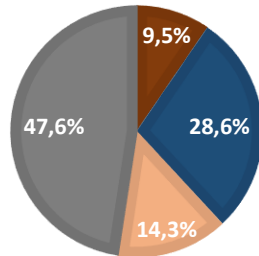


FIG. 28. TIME SPENDING IN BINGE-WATCHING BY GENDER VARIABLE

1 Hour 2 Hours 3 Hours More than 3 hours

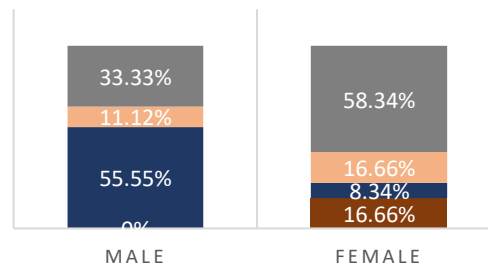


FIG. 29. TIME SPENDING IN BINGE-WATCHING BY RELATIONSHIP VARIABLE

1 Hour 2 Hours 3 Hours More than 3 hours

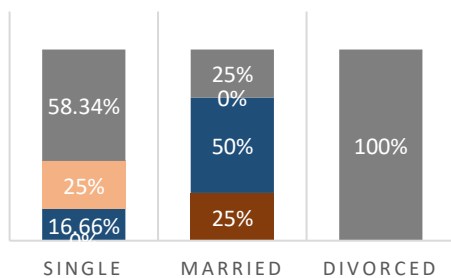
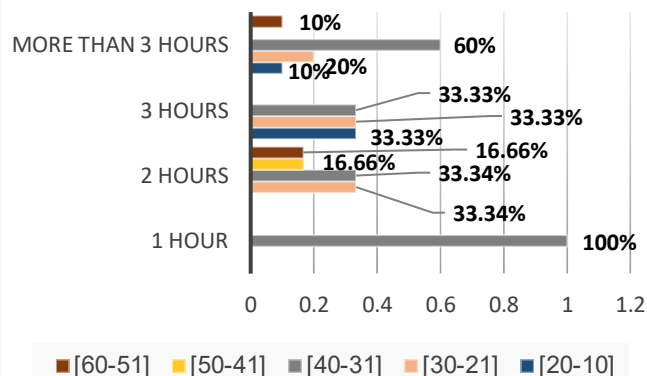


Fig. 30. time spending in binge-watching by age variable

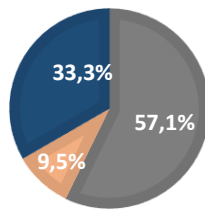


47.60% of respondents engage in binge-watching for more than three hours in a single sitting. Meanwhile, 28.60% watch for two hours, 14.30% for three hours, and 9.50% limit their viewing to one hour. When examining the variables of gender, age, and relationship status, it is evident that females are more engaged in binge-watching, with 58.34% of them reporting that they watch for more than three hours. In contrast, the majority of males limit their viewing to two hours (55.55%).

Additionally, 60% of those who binge-watch for more than three hours belong to the age group of [31-40]. Furthermore, most singles also spend the same amount of time binge-watching, accounting for 58.34%, while married individuals tend to watch for two hours (50%). As a result, determinants such as age, gender, and relationship status may influence the duration of binge-watching, which is primarily related to the daily commitments of each group.

FIG. 31. IN ONE SITTING, DO YOU WATCH:

■ One program ■ Two programs ■ Several programs

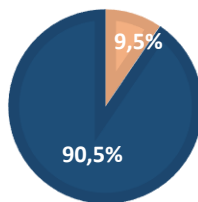


The majority of respondents (57.10%) stated that they watch only one programme during a one viewing sitting, while 33.30%

reported watching several programmes, and 9.50% watch two programmes.

FIG. 32. DO YOU PREFER PROGRAMMES THAT BROADCAST:

■ One episode periodically ■ An entire season at once

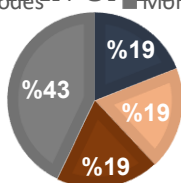


90.50% of respondents prefer programmes that broadcast an entire season at once, which may significantly encourage binge-watching of the same programme. In

contrast, 9.5% prefer programmes that release one episode periodically, and these individuals may be more likely to watch multiple programmes in the same session.

FIG. 33. HOW MANY EPISODES OF THE SAME PROGRAMME DO YOU WATCH IN ONE SITTING?

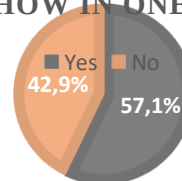
■ One episode ■ Two episodes ■ Three episodes ■ More than 3 episodes



42.90% of respondents tend to watch more than three episodes of the same programme in one sitting, while 19% are content to watch just one, two, or three episodes. This

FIG. 34. HAVE YOU BINGE-WATCHED AN ENTIRE SEASON OF A SHOW IN ONE...

■ Yes ■ No

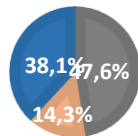


is attributed to the binge-watching nature of viewers, whether it involves one programme or multiple programmes. We also note that 57.10% of respondents

reported having watched an entire season of the same programme in one sitting, compared to 42.90% who have not.

FIG. 35. DOES THE DURATION OF A SINGLE EPISODE AFFECT THE NUMBER OF EPISODES YOU WATCH?

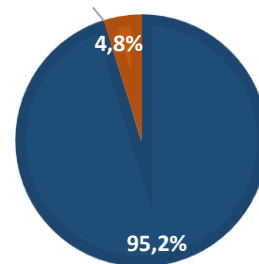
- The shorter duration of episode, the more episodes i tend to watch
- The longer the duration of the episode, the fewer episodes i tend to watch
- It does not have an effect



The duration of a single episode of a programme inversely affects the number of episodes watched in one sitting. According to 47.60% of respondents, the shorter the episode duration, the more episodes they tend to watch. In contrast, 14.3% stated that when the episode duration is longer, they watch fewer episodes. Meanwhile, 38.10% reported that episode duration does not affect the number of episodes they watch. On the other hand, the decision to continue watching episodes consecutively is

FIG. 36. WHAT ENCOURAGES YOU TO WATCH MORE THAN ONE EPISODE OF THE SAME PROGRAM?

- The desire to know more
- The platform's suggestion to watch the next episode



influenced by several factors. According to 95.20% of respondents, the desire to learn more about the developments and progression of the story is a key factor. Meanwhile, 4.80% believe that the excitement and suspense of the events drive them to keep watching. Notably, respondents indicated that the platform's suggestions to watch the next episode do not influence their decision to continue viewing.

FIG. 37. AFTER THE END OF EACH EPISODE, IS YOUR DESIRE TO WATCH MORE BE:

- High
- Low

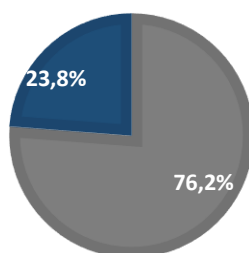
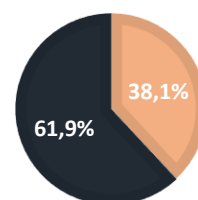


FIG. 38. WHILE BINGE-WATCHING, DO YOU FIND THAT YOU WATCH EPISODES:

- Fewer than you intended
- More than you intended



76.20% of respondents reported that their desire to watch more at the end of each episode of the programme is high, which often drives them to continue viewing. In contrast, 23.80% indicated that their desire to watch more is low, which may be due to either fatigue or boredom. At the same time, 61.90% of respondents stated that binge-watching leads them to watch more

episodes than they had intended, while 38.10% reported that they watch fewer episodes than they had intended.

The inability to control the number of episodes watched, resulting in an excess beyond the pre-planned or anticipated amount, is indicative of binge-watching behaviour.

FIG. 39. WHEN YOU BINGE-WATCHING, DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR LEVEL OF ATTENTION AND FOCUS:

■ Remains constant ■ Decreases over time

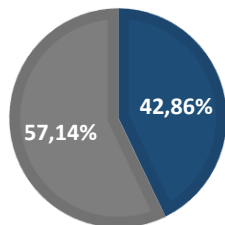


FIG. 40. THE LEVEL OF ATTENTION AND FOCUS BY GENDER VARIABLE

■ Remains constant ■ Decreases over time

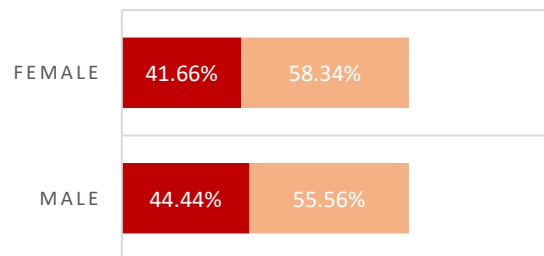
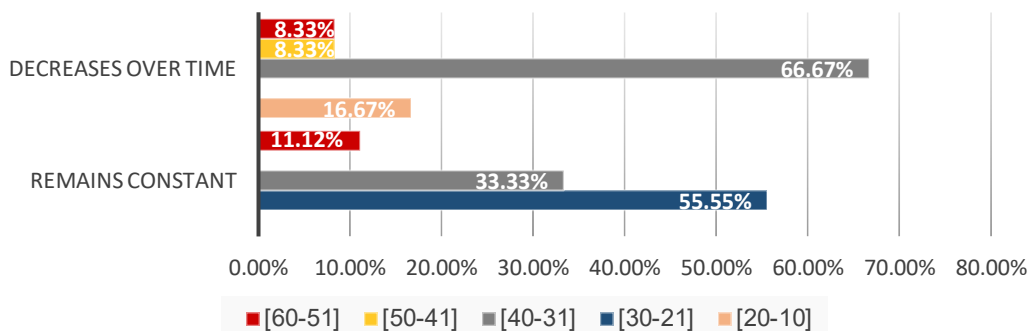


Fig. 41. THE LEVEL OF ATTENTION AND FOCUS BY AGE VARIABLE



57.14% of respondents reported that their level of attention and focus during binge-watching decreases over time, leading to reduced awareness of the events and a decline in the quality of interpretation and reception. Most of these individuals belong to the age group [31-40], accounting for 66.67%.

In contrast, 42.86% of respondents indicated that their level of attention and focus remains constant. Notably, the

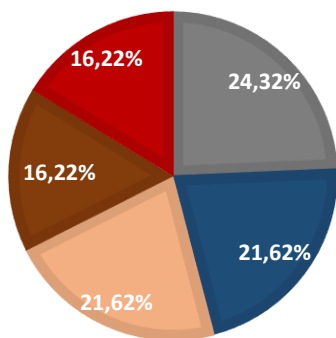
majority of these individuals fall within the age range of [21-30], representing 55.55% of this group. This observation may be influenced by factors such as age and the duration of viewing.

According to the gender variable, the situation is similar for both genders, as the level of attention and focus generally

decreases as the duration of binge-watching increases.

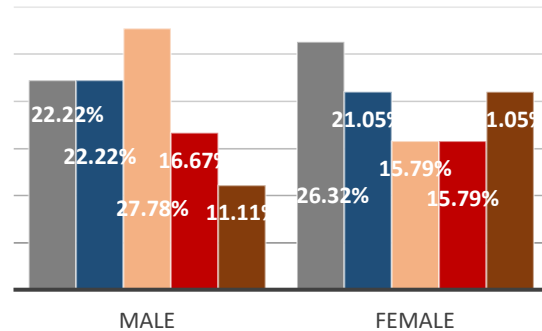
FIG. 42. AFTER BINGE-WATCHING, WHAT FEELINGS DO YOU TYPICALLY EXPERIENCE?

■ Satisfaction
■ Fatigue
■ Desire for further viewing
■ Information satiation
■ Feeling of guilt for wasting time



24.32% of respondents reported that binge-watching generates a sense of satisfaction and fulfils related needs. However, it also elicits other feelings, primarily fatigue, noted by 21.62% of participants, as well as an increased desire for further viewing, also reported by 21.62%. Additionally, 16.22% indicated that binge-watching leads to a sense of information saturation, along with occasional feelings of guilt for wasting time watching.

Fig. 43. feelings experienced after binge-watching by gender variable

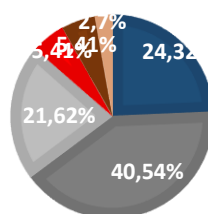


When comparing the genders, it is evident that females report higher levels of satisfaction (26.32%), followed by fatigue and feelings of guilt for wasting time, each reported by 21.05%.

Conversely, the feeling of an increased desire for further viewing is most prevalent among males, at 27.78%, followed by feelings of satisfaction and fatigue, each reported at 22.22%.

FIG. 44. YOU RESORT TO BINGE-WATCHING IN ORDER TO:

■ Relieve stress
■ Eliminate boredom



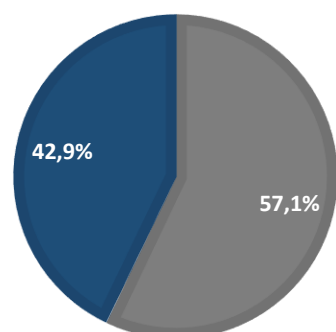
Binge-watching is motivated by several factors, the primary one being the desire to eliminate boredom, reported by 40.54% of respondents. The need to relieve stress follows at 24.32%, and the desire to reduce feelings of loneliness is noted by 21.62%. For some respondents, the need to interact

with others regarding the content (5.41%) and the act of wasting time (5.41%) are motivations for binge-watching.

Additionally, it is important to note that 2.70% of respondents indicated that they have no specific reason for binge-watching.

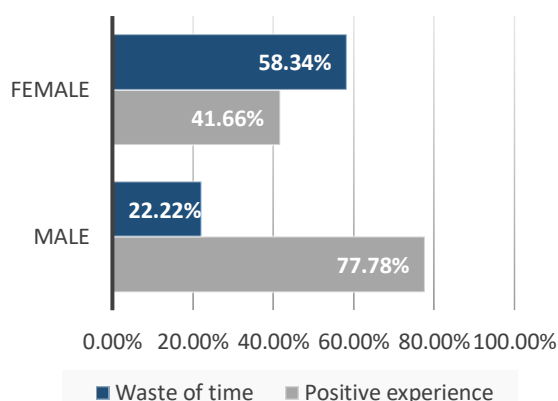
FIG. 45. DO YOU THINK BINGE-WATCHING IS A:

■ Positive experience ■ Waste of time



57.10% of respondents viewed binge-watching as a positive experience, while 42.90% considered it merely a waste of time.

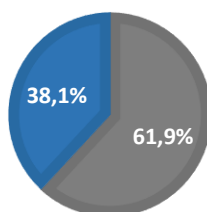
Fig. 46. How is binge-watching viewed by the gender variable?



Attitudes towards binge-watching vary by gender, with the majority of females perceiving it as just a waste of time (58.34%), while males view it as a positive experience, at 77.78%.

FIG. 47. DO YOU THINK USING DIGITAL STREAMING PLATFORMS MAKES YOU LESS IN CONTROL OF THE TIME SPENT WATCHING?

■ Yes ■ No



61.90% of respondents reported that using digital streaming platforms has made them less able to manage the time spent watching, while 38.10% believe that these platforms have not affected their control over viewing time.

The inability to control the time spent watching is one of the indicators of binge-watching.

5. Discussion

Usage patterns

The use of digital streaming platforms reflects the innovative ways in which users engage with entertainment. As an advanced technological application, these digital platforms have become an integral part of the daily lives of many individuals.

The findings of this study suggest that participants' lengthy utilisation of these platforms—more than two years for the majority of them—has driven them to develop new methods for organising and structuring their usage.

The results suggest that usage patterns adapted to the nature and features of digital platforms considerably improve a new kind of reception context characterised by individuality. Today, we are discussing the reception processes within individual contexts because of the preference for individual or private consumption at home, using personal devices like cell phones - primarily-, as well as the freedom from location, time, and medium restrictions. This differs from the participatory element that characterised collective usage of traditional media, particularly television, which was strongly linked to domestic

contexts and family dynamics—what Sean Cubitt referred to as the "living room politics context," (Morley, 1992) where participation means sharing the same reception experience simultaneously with others. actually, today, at least in terms of time and media, it can be difficult to claim that users have the same receiving experience.

In fact, the individual context is a direct outcome of the digital context, which includes technical features of viewing that make it more flexible and always available and accessible.

Current audience is no longer dependent on the programming imposed by the medium, which is often fixed; rather, they adjust their exposure processes to their own daily life context. The study's findings show that free time and holidays are major factors in determining exposure timing, and users are no longer tied by the media's content selection, which often aligns with broadcast scheduling. digital platforms consistently provide a diverse array of content, making this one of the main draws for users, along with other features that increase the enjoyment and flexibility of using these platforms, such as ease of use, absence of advertisements, original content, and recommendations; price, etc. The findings of the study related to the use of digital streaming platforms suggest that the contextual transformation in the viewing and reception process reveals a new perspective on the concepts of authority and dominance in individuals' relationships with media, as emphasized by Lull, Morley, and Goodman in their

research on television usage in domestic and family contexts.

Individuals now have control over the exposure process—its forms, substance, organisation, and adaptation—independent of others' authority and depending on their personal circumstances and preferences. We can recognize a partial degradation of age and gender authority, particularly regarding who holds the power of choice (parents determine what their children are exposed to, or the oldest family member decides what type of content the family watches, or masculine power is exercised in deciding what content the family is exposed to when gathered in front of the television (Morley, 1992). Consequently, the distribution of power and dominance in people's interactions with modern media has changed, making them more autonomous.

Management of content selection and engagement

Selection management refers to how users make decisions about the content they consume on streaming platforms, as well as how they construct their preferences and watch lists, independent of the shared media experiences imposed by the scheduling of the medium.

Content selection management is linked to two main factors:

- How content is selected.
- How consumption decisions are made.

The results indicate that series are more popular than movies, while users don't seem to be very interested in TV shows.

The findings suggest that users make selections based on their preferences and areas of interest, but coincidence also plays

a significant role. On the other hand, recommendations from users regarding content consumption through so-called 'taste communities' (Jenner, 2018, p. 253) assist in the selection process. Even though the platforms provide recommendation lists, these do not greatly impact the decision-making process, as evidenced by the low level of interest expressed by respondents in this feature (Fig 03). Furthermore, the viewing rates of the content have minimal impact on the selection process.

Content selection does not necessarily mean fully engaging with it; therefore, the selection process should be complemented by a decision to engage, which users depend on trailers for the content. These trailers provide a brief synopsis of the work's content and the progression of its events, emphasising key moments and transformations. Moreover, audience ratings may have a considerable impact on this decision. However, these variables may not serve as fundamental determinants in the engagement decision-making process, as indicated by 28.6% of respondents who reported that they do not rely on these elements when deciding to engage with specific content.

Users feel more in control of the kind of content they engage with due to the availability of information provided through trailers, audience ratings, viewing rates, and recommendations.

The individual context of exposure and reception practices, along with the lack of interactivity that characterizes television viewing, combined with the fact that streaming platforms may not be participatory sites (as they merely provide

viewing capabilities), unlike social networking sites, has led viewers to seek independent interactive platforms and create what is known as “viewing communities” or “fan communities”.

Digital platform users actively participate in viewing communities by subscribing to groups and pages dedicated to the content they engage with. These communities thrive within digital social networks, serving to fulfil users' needs for interaction regarding the content. This engagement facilitates the exchange of opinions, discussions, and shared experiences among users, in addition to providing access to the latest updates and developments related to the content.

Viewer communities provide a range of ways for users to interact with content, including discussion, opinion expression, and content evaluation. However, the most common trend observed in participants' interactions is the provision of viewing recommendations. These activities assist other users in making informed decisions and choices regarding the content. Additionally, these communities facilitate users' inquiries about updates on show developments and broadcast schedules.

Interaction with content significantly influences the comprehension and perception of its meaning, as it often shapes the ways in which viewers interpret and understand the content. It is rare for such interaction to have no effect on the audience's understanding of the content.

Engaging in viewing communities and digital interaction surrounding content allows users to immerse themselves in a participatory experience that fosters social relationships. Although these relationships

may be virtual, they contribute to a sense of belonging and similarity within a broader community of viewers that primarily forms around the content, without placing significant emphasis on national identity and affiliation. Lori Hitchcock Morimoto and Bertha Chin describe this idea as "transcultural homology" (Jenner, 2018, p. 254) which liberates the audience from the constraints of national belonging and enhances their connection to cross-border products through perceived personal affinity.

Binge-watching

Binge-watching is defined as the immersive experience of viewing content for prolonged periods, and it depends on three main criteria:

- *Duration: the total viewing time often exceeds three hours.

- *Quantity: this may involve engaging with either a single program or multiple shows.

- *Volume: this refers to the amount of content consumed from the same program in one sitting, typically more than three episodes. The length of each episode influences the total number watched, and it can even extend to watching an entire season in one session.

Binge-watching among the sample population has not reached the level of addiction, as it is generally engaged in only occasionally rather than continuously. This phenomenon is associated with several factors:

- * **Availability of free time:** primarily during holidays, vacations, and leisure periods; however, it may not be confined to specific times, particularly for individuals who are not employed or studying.

* Factors such as gender, age, and relationship status significantly affect the duration of binge-watching.

The immersion in binge-watching a single program is associated with several motivators, foremost among them is the desire for continued engagement with the content and a quest for additional information. Furthermore, the captivating and suspenseful nature of the events heightens the need to watch more after each episode concludes. This often results in individuals watching more episodes than they initially anticipated.

The effects of binge-watching can be recorded through the following findings:

*Decreased attention and focus: prolonged engagement in binge-watching, particularly over extended periods, may negatively impact the quality of content reception, interpretation, and understanding.

*Development of various emotions: these include feelings of satisfaction, fatigue, and a desire for further viewing. To a lesser extent, this may also encompass informational satiation and feelings of guilt related to time wastage.

*Stress reduction: nevertheless, binge-watching serves as an effective means to alleviate boredom, reduce stress, and mitigate feelings of loneliness.

*Binge-watching is viewed as a positive experience for male users, who often do not perceive it as a waste of time. In contrast, the majority of female viewers tend to regard it as a waste of time.

The characteristics of digital platform consumption, marked by flexibility and ease of access, along with the abundance and diversity of content available

continuously, have significantly impacted users' management of viewing time and duration. This shift has led to a decrease in users' control over the time spent watching. The design features of these platforms encourage users to pursue additional content that aligns with their preferences and fulfils their needs. Consequently, this generates an increased demand for further viewing, resulting in deeper immersion and ultimately transforming the experience into binge-watching.

6. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study make it possible to observe how online video streaming platforms affect entertainment and media consumption in general. In the digital age of media, the audience has become more in control, more selective, and more self-directed in their usage. They have also become more independent than before in their relationship with the media.

The use of online video streaming platforms, within both digital and individual contexts, along with all their specificities related to usage patterns and interaction, has significantly reinforced the concept of the active audience, which has the ability to make decisions about their usage and adapt it within the context of their daily lives. Simultaneously, this form of media consumption is contributing to a further fragmentation of the audience, driven by the proliferation of media production, the expansion of choice, and the increasing independence of the audience. This underscores the need for

additional research aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the transformations occurring within the audience, both as a conceptual framework and as a social construct, in relation to digital media.

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