

What is Behind Binge-watching? The Psychological Effects on Youth

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ABSTRACT

Binge-watching has revolutionized TV consumption allowing viewers to immerse themselves in shows for extended periods. However, it raises concerns about potential negative effects on physical and mental well-being. The study aims to investigate the underlying factors and effects of binge-watching among young individuals and explore the potential psychological impacts it may have on their well-being. The quantitative survey method was adopted in the study. The purposive sample selected for the study comprised 66 male and female youth (18 - 35 years) who binge-watch online streamed content. Findings of the study have shown that there is no significant association between family income and binge-watching habits and no significant gender differences in its psychological effects. Binge-watching can have both positive and negative impacts, and individuals need to be aware of these risks and take steps to mitigate them such as setting limits and engaging in other activities.

Keywords: Behavioural Addiction, Binge-Watching, Motivation, Netflix, New Technologies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology has changed the way people consume TV content allowing them to coordinate their viewing based on time, content, location and used equipment. The popularity of TV services distributed over the Internet, such as Netflix, Amazon Video, Apple TV, Watch iT, Shahid VIP and Hulu, and the production of more complex stories have contributed to the popularization of a specific TV viewing mode called 'binge-watching'. The definition of binge-watching is the "process of watching two or more episodes of a television show in one sitting" (Stoldt 2013). The term 'binge' is automatically related to something negative since bingeing is seen as an extremely unhealthy behaviour such as binge eating or binge drinking. As a result, some scholars employ the term 'marathon-viewing' to avoid the negative connotation of the term (Perks 2014; Pittman and Sheehan 2015). However, current research shows that the massive consumption of content in on-demand streaming will have a negative impact on the lives of users, especially in terms of addiction.

1.1 Research Problem

The aim of this study is to investigate the underlying factors and effects of binge-watching among young individuals and explore the potential psychological impacts it may have on their well-being from both sides: positive and negative. This study seeks to shed light on the motivations behind binge-watching behaviour and examine how excessive consumption of television shows and series may influence mental health, social interactions and the overall psychological state of youth. The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the motivations behind binge-watching among youth?
2. What are the psychological benefits and risks of binge-watching in youth?
3. What is the impact of gender on the psychological effects of binge-watching?

1.2 Research Objectives

This study aims to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To examine the positive psychological effects of binge-watching on youth such as stress relief, emotional regulation, cognition, killing time and increased well-being.
2. To investigate the negative psychological effects of binge-watching on youth including sleep disturbances, social isolation, addiction-like behaviour, depression, loneliness and escapism.
3. To develop a survey to assess the motivations and psychological effects of binge-watching in youth.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study is significant for a number of reasons. First, understanding the factors behind binge-watching and its psychological effects on youth is crucial for parents, educators, and mental health professionals in order to develop strategies that would promote healthy media consumption habits. Second, examining the positive effects of binge-watching such as stress relief and emotional regulation can help identify potential benefits of this behavior and inform interventions that harness these positive aspects. Finally, investigating the negative effects of binge-watching such as sleep disturbances and social isolation can raise awareness about potential risks and guide the development of guidelines for responsible media consumption.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Streaming Services and the Emergence of Binge-Watching

Recently, the rise of streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video has transformed TV viewing leading to a surge in binge-watching. In 2013, Netflix reported that 60% of its users had binge-watched a TV show in the past month. By 2019, this number increased to 80% (Srivatsa and Krishna 2019). With high-speed internet and the release of original, high-quality content, viewers can access a vast library of shows and movies, often completing entire seasons within 24 hours. This trend which is particularly popular among millennials has reshaped social TV viewing practices. The success of original series like House of Cards has made Netflix synonymous with binge-

watching. Other streaming services such as Disney+, HBO Max and Apple TV+ have also joined the market offering diverse content to audiences worldwide.

The rise of streaming services has made it possible to watch entire seasons of television series without commercial interruptions. This has led to the popularity of a new viewing habit called binge-watching which is the act of watching multiple episodes of a show in one sitting. Binge-watching has been around since the late 1970s; however, it has become increasingly common in recent years. This is due in part to the fact that streaming services make it easy to binge-watch shows. Viewers can watch any show at any time as many times as they want. Additionally, many TV shows now end episodes with cliffhangers which can encourage binge-watching as viewers may feel the need to watch the next episode immediately to find out what happens (Grimes and Bergen 2015).

'Binge-watching' refers to a number of serial narrative consumption practices made available by digital infrastructures. First and foremost, it appears to be a dynamic trend among digital media users. The term 'binge' refers to bingeing on something such as too much food, alcohol, or digital media (Anghelcev 2021). Though definitions of binge-watching change over time, most agree that it is the willingness to watch numerous television show episodes immediately after one another via DVD or internet streaming. This unique strategy offers several advantages and downsides including meeting consumer needs and relying largely on digital media (Panda and Pandey 2017).

2.2 Content Availability and Variety on Streaming Apps

Streaming services like Netflix have changed the way we consume TV shows, with many viewers binge-watching entire seasons in one sitting. In fact, when Netflix released a new season of *ArrestedDevelopment* in the Summer of 2013, 10% of viewers watched all 15 episodes within 24 hours. This trend is particularly popular among youth aged 18 to 34 and has led to new expectations for high-quality, non-commercial TV content that is available on demand. This has also led to concerns about compulsive viewing, particularly among younger audiences known as 'Screenagers' (Matrix 2014). From a user's perspective, these video-on-demand services are popular because they increase personal choice and autonomy allowing them to view any amount of content anytime anywhere and in any genre (Granow et al. 2018).

2.3 Consumption and Addiction of Binge-watching

Binge-watching became popular between 2011 and 2015 with Netflix's subscription increasing from 5 million in 2012 to over 167 million in 2020. A 2013 study found that 62% of Americans admitted to binge-watching frequently while YouGov Omnibus data showed 58% claimed to have binge-watched. It is a consistent way of consuming TV shows for 72% of those surveyed; studies suggest that those aged 18 to 39 are more inclined to binge-watch than older adults (Izydorczyk and Starosta 2020).

Binge-watching has become a popular way to consume TV series; however, excessive binge-watching can be similar to behavioral addictions like video games or internet addiction. It can lead to loss of self-control, neglect of work or social relationships, lack of sleep, and unhealthy habits like overeating (Izydorczyk and Starosta 2020).

The mixture of cheap and easy access to unlimited content, in addition to the chance to not only consume series at home but also on smartphones while going to work or travel, can promote, encourage and even cause consumer behaviour. This high-dose use of series content is often referred to as binge-viewing and has attracted more and more academic interest in recent years (Merikivi et al. 2019).

Binge-watching has been categorized as some kind of excessive type of behaviour and has been linked to lessened control; some researchers even consider it as an addiction (Orosz, Bóthe, and Tóth-Király 2016; Panda and Pandey 2017; Riddle et al. 2018; Shim and Kim 2018; Shim et al. 2018; Starosta et al. 2019). Addiction is commonly defined as "continued engagement in a self-destructive behaviour despite adverse consequences" (Holden 2001, 980). Since the consequences of media use are varied and often positive, a high frequency of watching TV series is not a sufficient sign of problematic use (Sussman and Moran 2013). Relatively, researchers suggest that observing motivation should be regarded as another indicator of reliance on media (Starosta et al. 2019).

2.4 Psychological Effects of Binge-watching

Have you ever wondered why you feel better after watching your favorite series? According to Dr. Renee Carr, a clinical psychologist, this is due to chemicals

that are released in our brains. Engaging in enjoyable activities like binge-watching triggers dopamine production in the brain creating a feeling of pleasure and leading to continued participation. This can lead to a pseudo-addiction due to a craving for dopamine. The process is similar to that of drug addiction since the neural pathways involved are the same. This suggests that any activity or substance that continuously produces dopamine can lead to addiction.

People can binge-watch anywhere, as they go to work, for instance, using many electronic devices such as mobile phones, tablets or laptops. Moreover, another survey shows that people tend to binge-watch alone and that more than 70% of them lose control in terms of how many episodes they have watched in one sitting. It is also vital to mention that since most people binge-watch alone, this can be conditioned by specific personality traits while excessive or problematic binge-watching may lead to further isolation and a feeling of loneliness (Izydorczyk and Starosta 2020).

Binge TV-watching among Arab youth in the United Arab Emirates is associated with increased feelings of sadness and depression, but not loneliness. Studies revealed a significant positive connection between binge-watching and sadness, and a significant positive correlation between binge-watching and depression. YouTube and TV show websites are the primary sources for binge-watching, and smartphones and laptops are the most common devices used for this activity (Ahmed 2017; LaRose et al. 2003). LaRose et al. (2003) explained that addicted media consumers feel compelled to consume media in spite of its potentially negative consequences that make continued use seem irrational or out of control.

Wheeler (2015) found that regarding the larger range of participants who recorded depression and loneliness, the more they described watching television for both ritualistic and instrumental purposes, the more they stated watching back-to-back episodes of television programs. Also, Sung et al. (2015) found that depression and loneliness were linked to binge-TV-watching among 316 respondents from age 18 to 20 years old. The more individuals were lonely and depressed, the more episodes they watched. The more episodes a person watched, the lonelier and more miserable they were. According to Derrick et al. (2009), watching beloved television programs buffered against feelings of loneliness more than many other activities such as eating, surfing the web or listening to music.

2.5 Correlation between Youth and Binge-watching

Research has shown that several factors are associated with binge-watching including age. One study found that 61% of adolescents and young adults binge-watch regularly compared to 39% of adults. Another study found that youth who binge-watch are more likely to be female, to have lower socioeconomic status, and to have mental health problems (Anderson and Jiang 2018; Kuss et al. 2014).

Binge-watching can affect the physical health of youth by reducing their physical activity, increasing their sedentary behavior, and leading to unhealthy eating habits. These factors can contribute to obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other chronic conditions. It also affects the mental health of youth by influencing their mood, emotions, cognition, and social relationships (Izydorczyk and Starosta 2020). Therefore, binge-watching can have both positive and negative effects on youth depending on how they engage in this behavior and what they watch. It is important for youth to be aware of the potential risks and benefits of binge-watching and to balance their TV consumption with other healthy activities.

The literature review provides valuable insights into the emergence of binge-watching and its impact on viewers, particularly youth. The findings of the previous studies mentioned above highlighted some common themes and discrepancies related to the psychological effects of binge-watching on youth.

2.6 Previous Studies

The availability of streaming services and the release of entire seasons at once contribute to binge-watching behavior. This can lead to extended viewing sessions and sleep disturbances. The proposed study aims to explore the impact of content availability and variety on binge-watching behavior among youth contributing to the existing literature. Binge-watching has become a common way of consuming TV series, particularly among youth, and studying this relationship can provide valuable insights into their viewing habits and potential impact on mental health.

Moreover, the literature review highlights the relationship between binge-watching and social interactions and relationships (Walton-Pattison et al. 2017). The proposed study can build on this finding by exploring the impact of binge-watching on the social development and well-being of young people,

including the potential consequences of decreased social interactions due to excessive binge-watching. All of the studies acknowledge that binge-watching can have a number of negative consequences for youth including sleep deprivation, social isolation, depression and academic problems.

The studies vary in their definition of binge-watching. Some studies define it as watching two or more episodes of a TV show in a single sitting while others define it as watching more than four hours of TV in a single sitting (Sung et al. 2015). Furthermore, the studies also vary in their findings on the prevalence of binge-watching among youth. Some studies have found that up to 80% of youth binge-watch TV shows while others have found that the prevalence is closer to 50% (Flayelle et al. 2019; Izydorczyk et al. 2020). Finally, the studies vary in their conclusions about the long-term effects of binge-watching on youth. Some studies have found that binge-watching can lead to addiction and other mental health problems while others have found that the effects are more temporary and that binge-watching can even be a positive experience for some youth.

Previous studies have helped to raise awareness of the issue of binge-watching and its potential negative consequences for youth. They have also helped to identify some of the factors that contribute to binge-watching, which can be used to develop prevention and treatment programs. Finally, the studies have begun to shed light on the long-term effects of binge-watching on youth which can help to inform future research and policy decisions.

In conclusion, the literature review provides a comprehensive understanding of the research landscape related to binge-watching and its impact on youth. By building on the existing knowledge, the proposed study can contribute to the growing body of literature in this area and provide valuable insights into the psychological effects of binge-watching on youth.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

2.7.1 Mood Management Theory

Mood Management theory developed by Dolf Zillmann is a theory that explains how people use media to manage their moods. The theory posits that people are motivated to seek out and consume media that will help them to achieve their desired mood state (Zillmann 1988). According to Zillman, Mood Management theory is based on the consumption of news and information from the media based on personal emotions. The

theory also assumes that the individual's mental state uses the influence of media and available options to optimize moods. There are also numerous theoretical implications that show and support the effect of selected media content on outcomes. For instance, we have now variety of moods that are available over media like radio, TV, news, magazines, internet, movies and TV shows that are loaded with many emotions from comedy, action, romance or horror. The basic assumption for the development of this theory is how individuals exercise to stimulate themselves from any negative emotions, how to meet the goal of high mood, how we can maintain a happy mood and how to reduce bad moods (Zillman 1988). There are two main types of mood management: hedonistic mood management and utilitarian mood management. Hedonistic mood management is the use of media to improve one's mood state while utilitarian mood management is the use of media to learn or achieve something (Flayelle et al. 2017).

Binge-watching can be seen as a form of hedonistic mood management. Youth may binge-watch to escape from negative emotions such as stress, anxiety or boredom, or to experience positive emotions such as joy, excitement or relaxation. Research has shown that Mood Management theory can be used to explain binge-watching behavior in youth. For example, one study found that youth who were feeling stressed or anxious were more likely to binge-watch TV shows. Another study found that youth who were feeling lonely or bored were more likely to binge-watch TV shows and movies (Chen and Lee 2017; Flayelle et al. 2017).

2.7.2 How to Apply Mood Management Theory to Binge Watching on Youth?

Mood Management theory can be used to help youth develop healthy media use habits:

- **Be mindful of one's mood:** Paying attention to one's mood before watching TV or using other media devices will help them to choose media that is appropriate for their mood. If they are feeling stressed or anxious, for example, it is best to avoid watching violent or suspenseful content.
- **Set limits on media use:** It is important to set limits on how much time they spend watching TV and using other media devices. This will help to prevent binge-watching.
- **Engage in other activities:** Making sure to engage in other activities besides watching TV and using other media devices. This could

include spending time with friends and family, exercising, or reading.

- **Be aware of the potential risks of binge-watching:** Binge-watching can lead to a number of negative consequences such as addiction, social isolation, sleep deprivation, academic problems, obesity and mental health problems.

Mood Management theory can be a helpful tool for understanding and managing binge-watching behavior in youth by being mindful of their mood, setting limits on their media use, and engaging in other activities.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the psychological effects of binge-watching on youth. It explores the underlying motives and consequences of excessive online streaming. The study has employed a quantitative research methodology to collect and analyse data from a sample of young individuals. A structured survey questionnaire was developed to gather data on binge-watching behaviour, motivations, emotions, and perceived psychological outcomes. The questionnaire includes validated scales and items specifically designed to assess binge-watching behaviour and its psychological correlates.

The study has employed purposive sampling to select participants aged 18-35 that represent the target population. It recognizes that binge-watching is particularly prevalent among this age group and aims to understand the psychological effects specific to youth. The study aims to include a diverse sample in terms of gender, and socioeconomic status. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of the psychological effects of binge-watching on youth across different contexts. The study investigates the psychological effects and utilizes a sample of young individuals to gain insights into the phenomenon of binge-watching among youth.

The survey questionnaire was administered online via Google Forms and distributed on WhatsApp and Messenger allowing participants to complete it at their convenience. This method ensures anonymity and reduces potential biases associated with face-to-face interviews. Participants were provided with a clear explanation of the purpose of the study and procedures, and their informed consent is obtained prior to data collection. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample as well as the prevalence and patterns of binge-watching behaviour.

4. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

TABLE 1. Sample characteristics according to gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	32	48.5
	Female	34	51.5
	Total	66	100.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of youth by gender. The study sample consisted of (66) male and female Youth: (32) Male and (34) female. The greatest share of youth is female (51.5 %) followed by youth Male (48.5 %).

TABLE 2. Sample characteristics according to family income per month

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Under £3,500	6	9.1
	£5,000 to £8,000	20	30.3
	More than £10,000	40	60.6
	Total	66	100.0

Table 2 displays the distribution of youth according to their family income per month. The study sample comprised 66 individuals: 6 having a family income under £3,500, 20 having a family income between £5,000 and £8,000, and 40 having a family income exceeding £10,000. The majority of youth (60.6%)

TABLE 4. Relationship between gender and number of episodes typically watched in a single sitting

	Gender				Total		χ ²	p
	Male		Female		Count	% of Total		
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
Less than three episodes	13	19.7%	15	22.7%	28	42.4%	0.082	0.994
3-5 episodes	14	21.2%	14	21.2%	28	42.4%		
More than 5	4	6.1%	4	6.1%	8	12.1%		
Entire season	1	1.5%	1	1.5%	2	3.0%		
Total	32	48.5%	34	51.5%	66	100.0%		

belonged to families with a monthly income exceeding £10,000, followed by those with a monthly income between £5,000 and £8,000 (30.3%) and those with a monthly income under £3,500 (9.1%).

4.1 Study Reference

This study aims to utilize a Likert-type scale as a response system to measure participants' perceptions and attitudes. The study tool was designed based on a triadic structure consisting of three response options: "present," "present to some extent," and "not present." The scale was assigned values of 3, 2, and 1 respectively, representing the order of importance. The period was divided into three levels with each level representing a 0.67 interval. This means that the length of each level, or interval, was 0.67. The adopted criteria for the study are as follows:

TABLE 3. Adopted criteria for the study

Cell length	Usage level
From 1 to 1.66	Low
From 1.67 to 2.32	Middle
From 2.33 to 3.00	High

1) **How many episodes of a show do you usually watch in a single sitting?**

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and the many episodes of a show you usually watch in a single sitting.

This study included many episodes of a show a participant usually watches in a single sitting (28: less than three episodes, 28: 3-5 episodes, 8: more than 5, and 2 entire season) and gender (32 male and 34 female). The greatest share of youth is those who watch less than three episodes (42.4%). The greatest share of youth is female (22.7%) followed by youth male (19.7%). Those who watch 3-5 episodes (42.4%) are (21.2%) male and (21.2%) female, A chi-square test of independence showed that there

was no significant association between gender and many episodes of a show one usually watches in a single sitting, $X^2(3, N = 66) = 0.994, p = 0.994$.

Family income per month

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between family income per month and the many episodes of a show one usually watches in a single sitting.

TABLE 5. Relationship between family income per month and number of episodes typically watched in a single sitting

	Income						Total		χ ²	P
	Under £3,500		£5,000 to £8,000		More than £10,000		Count	Total Percent-age		
	Count	Total Percent-age	Count	Total Percent-age	Count	Total Percent-age				
Less than three episodes	0	0.0%	6	9.1%	22	33.3%	28	42.4%	14.379	0.026
3-5 episodes	6	9.1%	10	15.2%	12	18.2%	28	42.4%		
More than 5	0	0.0%	4	6.1%	4	6.1%	8	12.1%		
Entire season	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	2	3.0%		
	6	9.1%	20	30.3%	40	60.6%	66	100.0%		

In this study, the distribution of youth based on the number of episodes watched in a single sitting and family income per month was as follows: for the number of episodes watched, 28 participants watched less than three episodes, 28 watched 3-5 episodes, 8 watched more than 5 episodes, and 2 watched an entire season. In terms of family income per month, 6 participants had an income under £3,500, 20 had an income between £5,000 and £8,000, and 40 had an income of more than £10,000. The majority of youth (42.4%) watched less than three episodes, and the largest share of family income per month was from those with an income of more than £10,000 (33.3%), followed by those with an income between

£5,000 and £8,000 (9.1%). Additionally, 42.4% of youth watched 3-5 episodes, with the largest share of family income per month being from those with an income of more than £10,000 (18.2%). A chi-square test of independence indicated a significant association between family income per month and the number of episodes watched in a single sitting, $X^2(6, N = 66) = 14.379, p = 0.026$.

2) Which platforms have you used to binge-watch?

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and platforms one has used to binge-watch.

TABLE 6. Relationship between gender and platforms used for binge-watching

	Gender				Total		x ²	P
	Male		Female		Total			
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total		
Netflix	6	9.1%	8	12.1%	14	21.2%	4.535	0.475
Hulu	3	4.5%	5	7.6%	8	12.1%		
Amazon Video	3	4.5%	2	3.0%	5	7.6%		
WatchIT	0	0.0%	3	4.5%	3	4.5%		
Shahid VIP	2	3.0%	1	1.5%	3	4.5%		
Other (please specify)	18	27.3%	15	22.7%	33	50.0%		
Total	32	48.5%	34	51.5%	66	100.0%		

This study included platforms one has used to binge-watch (14 Netflix ,8 Hulu, 5 Amazon Video, 3 Watch it, 3 Shahid VIP Other and 33 Other) and gender (32 male and 34 female). The majority of young people who binge-watch use platforms, with 50.0% being

male and 27.3% being female. A chi-square test of independence showed that there was no significant association between gender and platforms have you used to binge-watch, X² (N = 66) = 4.535, p = 0.475.

TABLE 7. Relationship between family income per month and platforms used for binge-watching

	Income						Total		x ²	p
	Under £3,500		£5,000 to £8,000		More than £10,000		Total			
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total		
Netflix	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	10	15.2%	14	21.2%	6.440 ^a	0.777
Hulu	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	6	9.1%	8	12.1%		
Amazon Video	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	3	4.5%	5	7.6%		
WatchIT	0	0.0%	1	1.5%	2	3.0%	3	4.5%		
Shahid VIP	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	1	1.5%	3	4.5%		
Other (please specify)	4	6.1%	11	16.7%	18	27.3%	33	50.0%		
Total	6	9.1%	20	30.3%	40	60.6%	66	100.0%		

In this study, the distribution of platforms used for binge-watching among the participants was as follows: 14 used Netflix, 8 used Hulu, 5 used Amazon Video, 3 used Watch it, 3 used Shahid VIP, and 33 used other platforms. Regarding family income per month, 6 participants had a monthly income under £3,500, 20 had a monthly income between £5,000 and £8,000, and 40 had a monthly income exceeding £10,000. The largest proportion of youth used "Other" platforms for binge-watching (50.0%), followed by those with a family income exceeding £10,000 (27.3%), £5,000

to £8,000 (16.7%), and under £3,500 (6.1%). A chi-square test of independence indicated that there was no significant association between family income per month and the platforms used for binge-watching, X² (N = 66) = 6.440, p = 0.777.

3) What device do you usually use to binge-watch?

A chi-square test, Effect Size (Cramer's V), and Confidence Interval (95%) of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and the device one usually uses to binge-watch.

TABLE 8. Relationship between gender and devices typically used for binge-watching

	Gender				Total		x ²	p	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Male		Female							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
Smart-phone	19	28.8%	19	28.8%	38	57.6%	0.106	0.948	V = 0.0152	CI = -0.1986 to 0.2743
Smart TV	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	4	6.1%				
Laptop	11	16.7%	13	19.7%	24	36.4%				
Total	32	48.5%	34	51.5%	66	100.0%				

The study found that smartphones were the most popular device for binge-watching TV series, with 38 participants (57.6%) choosing it, followed by laptops at 36.4%. There was no significant difference between males and females in their choice of device type suggesting gender does not influence device

preference. However, the study has limitations including a small sample size and potential self-reporting bias, so further research is needed to confirm these findings and explore other factors influencing binge-watching behavior among youth.

TABLE 9. Relationship between family income per month and devices typically used for binge-watching

	Income						Total		x ²	p	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Under £3,500		£5,000 to £8,000		More than £10,000							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
Smart-phone	6	9.1%	4	6.1%	28	42.4%	38	57.6%	18.628	0.001	V= 0.0188	CI = 0.3123 To 0.6966
Smart TV	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	4	6.1%				
Laptop	0	0.0%	14	21.2%	10	15.2%	24	36.4%				
Total	6	9.1%	20	30.3%	40	60.6%	66	100.0%				

Table 9 shows that the most popular device type for binge-watching TV series was the smartphone, with 38 participants (57.6%) choosing it. The second most popular device type was the laptop, with 24 participants (36.4%) choosing it. The least popular device type was the smart TV, with only 4 participants (6.1%) choosing it. The table also shows that there was a significant difference between income groups in their choice of device type, as the chi-square test was significant, p = 0.001. The effect size was medium, V = 0.4188, which means that the relationship between income and device type was moderate. The confidence interval was narrow and did

not include zero, which means that the effect size was precise and unlikely to be zero in the population.

The table suggests that family income per month influences the choice of device type for binge-watching TV series among youth, and that smartphone is the most preferred device type for all income groups, especially for those with higher income.

4) What device do you usually use to binge-watch

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and the device do one usually uses to binge-watch.

TABLE 10. Relation between gender and preferred devices for binge-watching

	Gender				Total		x ²	P	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Male		Female							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
Once a week.	6	9.1%	6	9.1%	12	18.2%	0.806	0.848	V= 0.0153	CI = -0.1305 To 0.3392
Twice a week.	6	9.1%	6	9.1%	12	18.2%				
More than three times a week.	9	13.6%	7	10.6%	16	24.2%				
It is a regular routine (Almost every day).	11	16.7%	15	22.7%	26	39.4%				
Total	32	48.5%	34	51.5%	66	100.0%				

Table 10 indicates that the most common binge-watching frequency for both males and females was almost every day, chosen by 39.4% of participants. The second most common frequency was more than three times a week, selected by 24.2% of the participants. There was no significant difference between males and females in their binge-watching frequency with a very small effect size. This suggests that gender does not influence binge-watching frequency among youth.

TABLE 11. Correlation between family income per month and preferred devices for binge-watching

	Income						Total		x ²	P	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Under £3,500		£5,000 to £8,000		More than £10,000							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
Once a week.	2	3.0%	4	6.1%	6	9.1%	12	18.2%	2.641	0.852	v = 0.0156	CI = --0.0418 To 0.4197
Twice a week.	0	0.0%	4	6.1%	8	12.1%	12	18.2%				
More than three times a week.	2	3.0%	4	6.1%	10	15.2%	16	24.2%				
It is a regular routine (Almost every day).	2	3.0%	8	12.1%	16	24.2%	26	39.4%				
Total	6	9.1%	20	30.3%	40	60.6%	66	100.0%				

Table 11 indicates that the most popular device for binge-watching TV series was the smartphone, chosen by 57.6% of participants, followed by the laptop at 36.4%. There was a significant difference between income groups in their choice of device type, with a moderate effect size, suggesting that family income influences device preference.

5) How many hours do you binge-watch during weekends

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and many hours one binge-watches during weekends

TABLE 12. Relationship between gender and number of hours spent binge-watching during weekends

	Gender				Total		χ ²	p	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Male		Female							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
2 hrs	4	6.1%	6	9.1%	10	15.2%	0.894	0.827	V= 0.0153	CI = -0.1248 To 0.3446
3 hrs	14	21.2%	12	18.2%	26	39.4%				
4 hrs	10	15.2%	10	15.2%	20	30.3%				
More than 6 hrs	4	6.1%	6	9.1%	10	15.2%				
Total	32	48.5%	34	51.5%	66	100.0%				

Table 12 indicates that 3 hours was the most common binge-watching hour for both males and females, chosen by 39.4% of participants. There was no significant difference between males and females in their binge-watching hour, suggesting gender does not influence viewing habits.

TABLE 13. Relationship between family income per month and number of hours spent binge-watching during weekends

	Income						Total		χ ²	p	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Under £3,500		£5,000 to £8,000		More than £10,000							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
2 hrs	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	8	12.1%	10	15.2%	14.765	0.022	V=0.0179	CI = -0.2466 To 0.6504
3 hrs	2	3.0%	14	21.2%	10	15.2%	26	39.4%				
4 hrs	2	3.0%	4	6.1%	14	21.2%	20	30.3%				
More than 6 hrs	2	3.0%	0	0.0%	8	12.1%	10	15.2%				
Total	6	9.1%	20	30.3%	40	60.6%	66	100.0%				

Table 13 shows a significant difference in weekend binge-watching hours across income levels ($\chi^2 = 14.765$, $p = 0.022$), suggesting income may influence viewing habits. However, the effect size (Cramer's $V = 0.0179$) is small, indicating a weak association. While higher income individuals tend to binge-watch more, the wide confidence interval and small effect size call for caution in interpreting these results. Further research with a larger sample size and more precise measurement is needed for clearer insights into the

impact of income on entertainment consumption habits.

6) What is your favourite show genre for binge-watching?

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and favorite show genre for binge-watching.

TABLE 14. Correlation between gender and preferred show genres for binge-watching

	Gender				Total		χ ²	p	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Male		Female		Count	% of Total				
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total						
Drama	7	10.6%	7	10.6%	14	21.2%	1.830 ^a	0.872	V=0.0154	CI = --0.0753 To 0.3898
Comedy	7	10.6%	11	16.7%	18	27.3%				
Crime	6	9.1%	6	9.1%	12	18.2%				
Horror	4	6.1%	4	6.1%	8	12.1%				
Romance	5	7.6%	5	7.6%	10	15.2%				
Other (please specify)	3	4.5%	1	1.5%	4	6.1%				
Total	32	48.5%	34	51.5%	66	100.0%				

Table 14 indicates that comedy was the most popular show genre for binge-watching, chosen by 27.3% of participants followed by drama at 21.2%. There was no significant difference between males and females in their favorite show genre for binge-watching suggesting that gender does not influence genre preference.

TABLE 15. Correlation between family income per month and preferred show genres for binge-watching

	Income						Total		χ ²	p	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Under £3,500		£5,000 to £8,000		More than £10,000		Count	% of Total				
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total						
Drama	2	3.0%	6	9.1%	6	9.1%	14	21.2%	9.473	0.488	V=0.0168	CI = --0.1438 To 0.5734
Comedy	0	0.0%	4	6.1%	14	21.2%	18	27.3%				
Crime	2	3.0%	4	6.1%	6	9.1%	12	18.2%				
Horror	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	6	9.1%	8	12.1%				
Romance	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	6	9.1%	10	15.2%				
Other (please specify)	0	0.0%	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	4	6.1%				
Total	6	9.1%	20	30.3%	40	60.6%	66	100.0%				

Table 15 indicates that comedy was the most popular show genre for binge-watching across all income groups, chosen by 27.3% of participants followed by drama at 21.2%. There was no significant difference between income groups in their favorite show genre for binge-watching, suggesting income does not influence genre preference.

7) How do you usually binge-watch?

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and usually binge-watch.

TABLE 16. Relationship between gender and preferred binge-watching habits

	Gender				Total		χ ²	P	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Male		Female							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
Alone	24	36.4%	26	39.4%	50	75.8%	1.354 ^a	0.508	V=0.0154	CI = --0.0984 To 0.3689
With friend/s	3	4.5%	1	1.5%	4	6.1%				
With family	5	7.6%	7	10.6%	12	18.2%				
Total	32	48.5%	34	51.5%	66	100.0%				

Table 16 reveals that the most common way of binge-watching for both genders was alone, chosen by 75.8% of participants. There was no significant difference between genders in their usual way of binge-watching, suggesting gender does not influence viewing habits.

TABLE 17. Relationship between family income per month and binge-watching habits

	Income						Total		χ ²	p	Effect Size (Cramer's V),	Confidence Interval (95%)
	Under £3,500		£5,000 to £8,000		More than £10,000							
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total				
Alone	3	4.5%	18	27.3%	29	43.9%	50	75.8%	5.14 ^a	0.273	V= 0.016	CI = --0.0984 To 0.3689
With friend/s	1	1.5%	0	0.0%	3	4.5%	4	6.1%				
With family	2	3.0%	2	3.0%	8	12.1%	12	18.2%				
Total	6	9.1%	20	30.3%	40	60.6%	66	100.0%				

The study found that binge-watching was most commonly done alone across all income groups, with 75.8% of participants choosing this option. Watching with family was the second most common choice (18.2%). There was no significant difference between income groups in their usual way of binge-watching, suggesting that family income per month does not influence binge-watching preferences among youth.

TABLE 18. Perceived Impact of Binge-Watching and TV Series Consumption

	Statement	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Level
1	Watching series helps me reduce daily stress.	54.5	36.4	9.1	Low
2	It makes me feel lonely.	9.1	27.3	63.6	Medium
3	Binge-watching makes me escape from the real world.	57.6	27.3	15.2	High
4	My family and friends consider me a gold mine of information of TV series.	24.2	39.4	36.4	Medium
5	I sometimes feel empty when my favorite series comes to an end.	63.6	18.2	18.2	High
6	I'm always looking for a new TV series to watch.	42.4	30.3	27.3	Medium
7	Binge-watching makes me happy.	63.6	30.3	6.1	High
8	I usually spend more time watching series than planned.	39.4	27.3	33.3	Medium
9	It makes me feel less lonely.	42.4	45.5	12.1	Medium
10	Watching TV series episodes triggers positive emotions.	39.4	60.6	0	High

11	I feel more engaged with the characters.	54.5	24.2	21.2	High
12	I can't control myself while watching TV series.	21.2	27.3	51.5	Medium
13	Binge-watching causes addiction.	21.2	36.4	42.4	Medium
14	I get really excited when new episode is released.	69.7	18.2	12.1	High
15	I'm usually in a bad mood, sad or depressed when I can't watch TV series, & I feel better when I am able to watch again.	24.2	27.3	48.5	Medium
16	Binge-watching brings satisfaction.	39.4	48.5	12.1	Medium
17	I get annoyed or angry when I'm interrupted while watching my favorite TV series.	39.4	42.4	18.2	Medium
	Overall	72.13	22.87	5	Medium

The study found mixed opinions about watching TV series, with some viewers expressing high emotional attachment and enjoyment, while others have a balanced and healthy relationship with TV series. The positive effects include stress reduction, triggering positive emotions, and feeling engaged with the characters. However, there are also negative effects such as spending more time than planned and feeling annoyed or upset when interrupted. Viewers should be aware of these effects and moderate their TV series consumption accordingly.

TABLE 19. Psychological effects of Binge-watching on youth by gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	T	Sig	Co-hen's d	Confidence interval (95%)
Watching series helps me reduce daily stress.	Male	32	2.44	0.67	64	-0.2	0.84	-0.04	[-0.51, 0.43]
	Female	34	2.47	0.66					
It makes me feel lonely.	Male	32	1.44	0.67	64	-0.8	0.43	-0.42	[-0.89, 0.05]
	Female	34	1.47	0.66					
Binge-watching makes me escape from the real world.	Male	32	2.38	0.75	64	0.101	0.92	0.07	[-0.40, 0.54]
	Female	34	2.47	0.75					
My family and friends consider me a gold mine of information of TV series.	Male	32	1.78	0.75	64	-1.33	0.19	-0.88	[-1.35, -0.41]
	Female	34	1.97	0.8					
I sometimes feel empty when my favorite series comes to an end.	Male	32	2.5	0.76	64	-0.07	0.95	-0.04	[-0.51, 0.43]
	Female	34	2.41	0.82					
I'm always looking for a new TV series to watch.	Male	32	2.16	0.85	64	0.2	0.84	0.07	[-0.40, 0.54]
	Female	34	2.15	0.82					
I usually spend more time watching series than planned.	Male	32	1.91	0.86	64	0.1	0.92	0.07	[-0.40, 0.54]
	Female	34	2.21	0.84					
Binge-watching makes me happy.	Male	32	2.22	0.71	64	-0.93	0.35	-0.62	[-1.09, -0.15]
	Female	34	2.38	0.65					
I usually spend more time watching series than planned.	Male	32	2.34	0.48	64	-0.2	0.84	-0.04	[-0.51, 0.43]
	Female	34	2.44	0.5					
I feel more engaged with the characters.	Male	32	2.34	0.79	64	-0.52	0.61	-0.27	[-0.74, 0.20]
	Female	34	2.32	0.84					

I can't control myself while watching TV series.	Male	32	1.56	0.76	64	-0.99	0.33	-0.66	[-1.13, -0.19]
	Female	34	1.82	0.83					
Binge-watching causes addiction.	Male	32	1.78	0.75	64	0.452	0.65	0.24	[-0.23, 0.71]
	Female	34	1.79	0.81					
I get really excited when new episode is released.	Male	32	2.59	0.71	64	0.045	0.96	0.02	[-0.45, 0.49]
	Female	34	2.56	0.7					
I'm usually in a bad mood, sad or depressed when I can't watch TV series, & I feel better when I am able to watch again.	Male	32	1.63	0.75	64	-0.57	0.57	-0.38	[-0.85, 0.09]
	Female	34	1.88	0.88					
Binge-watching brings satisfaction.	Male	32	2.28	0.68	64	-1.43	0.16	-0.95	[-1.42, -0.48]
	Female	34	2.26	0.67					
I get annoyed or angry when I'm interrupted while watching my favourite TV series.	Male	32	2.13	0.71	64	-0.98	0.33	-0.65	[-1.12, -0.18]
	Female	34	2.29	0.76					
Total mean	Male	32	2.12	0.38	64	-0.94	0.35	-0.62	[-1.09, -0.15]

Results of the independent sample t-tests indicated that there were not significant differences in the psychological Effect of binge-watching on youth between males and females, (t (64) = -0.941, p = 0.350).

Family income per month (Under £3,500- £5,000 to £8,000- More than £10,000)

Kruskal-Wallis H Test Results for the psychological effect of binge-watching on youth by family income per month.

TABLE 20. Kruskal-Wallis H Test results for the psychological impact of binge-watching on youth by family income per month

	Under £3,500	£5,000 to £8,000	More than £10,000	Df	χ ²	p
	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank			
Watching series helps me reduce daily stress.	38.50	36.50	31.25	2	1.831	0.400
It makes me feel lonely.	21.50	28.70	37.70	2	7.638	0.022
Binge-watching makes me escape from the real world.	28.83	36.30	32.80	2	1.061	0.588
My family and friends consider me a gold mine of information of TV series.	36.17	29.20	35.25	2	1.656	0.437
I sometimes feel empty when my favourite series comes to an end.	32.50	25.70	37.55	2	6.980	0.030
I'm always looking for a new TV series to watch.	44.50	39.10	29.05	2	6.648	0.036
Binge-watching makes me happy.	35.17	35.00	32.50	2	0.386	0.824
I usually spend more time watching series than planned.	39.50	32.10	33.30	2	0.790	0.674
It makes me feel less lonely.	42.83	37.10	30.30	2	3.904	0.142
Watching TV series episodes triggers positive emotions.	42.50	37.00	30.40	2	4.225	0.121
I feel more engaged with the characters.	31.17	37.70	31.75	2	1.693	0.429
I can't control myself while watching TV series.	48.83	33.70	31.10	2	5.345	0.069
Binge-watching causes addiction.	38.17	31.30	33.90	2	0.733	0.693
I get really excited when new episode is released.	30.50	39.60	30.90	2	4.435	0.109

I'm usually in a bad mood, sad or depressed when I can't watch TV series, & I feel better when I am able to watch again.	52.83	29.90	32.40	2	8.126	0.017
Binge-watching brings satisfaction.	43.83	37.00	30.20	2	4.355	0.113
I get annoyed or angry when I'm interrupted while watching my favourite TV series.	35.50	36.00	31.95	2	0.776	0.678
Total mean	42.50	33.60	32.10	2	1.539	0.463

Based on the findings presented in Table 20, the Kruskal-Wallis H test did not reveal any statistically significant differences in the total score attributed to different levels of family income per month (Under £3,500, £5,000 to £8,000, and more than £10,000) ($\chi^2(2, 66) = 1.539, p > .05$), except for vocabulary (2, 5, 6, 15). However, there were statistically significant differences in the total score for the psychological effect of binge-watching on youth based on varying levels of family income per month. However, the study has some limitations such as the small sample size, the unequal distribution of income groups, and the possible bias of self-reporting. Therefore, more research is needed to confirm these findings and explore other factors that may affect the binge-watching behavior of youth.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study aimed to explore the motivations behind binge-watching among youth, examine the psychological benefits and risks associated with this behaviour, and investigate potential gender differences in the psychological effects of binge-watching. Through a comprehensive review of the literature and analysis of empirical studies, several key findings have emerged. Youth binge-watch for escapism, enjoyment, relaxation, and social bonding. It can have positive effects like increased positive affect and social connectedness, but also negative effects such as higher levels of depression, anxiety and poorer sleep quality. (Balakrishnan and Griffiths 2017; Exelmans and Van den Bulck 2017; Flayelle et al. 2019; Sung et al. 2015). Mixed results were found regarding gender differences in binge-watching behaviour and its psychological effects. Some studies suggested males engage more in binge-watching while others found no significant gender differences.

Limited evidence indicated females may be more vulnerable to negative psychological outcomes, but further research is needed to establish conclusive gender differences in both binge-watching behaviour and its psychological effects. These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting inconsistent gender differences in binge-watching behaviour and its psychological impact (Dhir et al. 2018; Flayelle et al. 2019).

The findings of the study align with and expand on previous research on binge-watching among youth. The motivations and coexistence of positive and negative effects align with prior findings highlighting the need for a balanced understanding. Gender differences in binge-watching behaviour and psychological effects were inconsistent indicating a need for further investigation. Moreover, one important aspect to consider in this study is the limitation imposed by the small sample size. With participants of only 66 respondents, generalizing the findings to a larger population becomes challenging. It is crucial to acknowledge this limitation and exercise caution when interpreting and applying the study results to broader contexts.

It is advisable to consider the impact of the limited sample size and potential areas for future research that could involve a larger and more diverse sample. This approach would enhance the external validity of the findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The study highlights the need for interventions and guidelines for healthy media consumption among youth. Future research should consider factors such as age, cultural background and individual differences to better understand binge-watching behaviour.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

The aim of this survey is to measure **the impact of Binge-Watching and its psychological effects on Youth**. This survey was designed to investigate the binge-watching motivations and its effects on youth. The answers will be used only for scientific research. The questionnaire will take roughly ten minutes to be completed. Please answer every item as accurately as possible.

1) How many episodes of a show do you usually watch in a single sitting?

- Less than three episodes
- 3-5 episodes
- More than 5
- Entire season

2) Which platforms have you used to binge-watch?

- Netflix
- Hulu
- Amazon Video
- WatchiI
- Shahid VIP
- Apple TV
- Other (please specify)

3) What device do you usually use to binge-watch?

- Smartphone
- Tablet
- Smart TV
- Laptop
- Apple TV
- Other (please specify)

4) Please select the number of times you binge-watch per week.

- Once a week.
- Twice a week.
- More than three times a week.
- It is a regular routine (Almost everyday).

5) How many hours do you binge-watch during weekends?

- 2 hrs
- 3 hrs
- 4 hrs
- More than 6 hrs

6) What is your favourite show genre for binge-watching?

- Drama
- Comedy
- Crime
- Horror
- Romance
- Other (please specify)

7) How do you usually binge-watch?

- Alone
- With friend/s
- With family

• In this section we will expose you to some statements to measure the psychological effects of binge-watching on youth. You can just Tick only **one** of the following choices: Agree- Neutral- Disagree.

No.	Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
8	Watching series helps me reduce daily stress.			
9	It makes me feel lonely.			
10	Binge-watching makes me escape from the real world.			
11	My family and friends consider me a gold mine of information of TV series.			
12	I sometimes feel empty when my favourite series comes to an end.			
13	I'm always looking for a new TV series to watch.			
14	Binge-watching makes me happy.			
15	I usually spend more time watching series than planned.			
16	Watching TV series episodes triggers positive emotions.			
17	I feel more engaged with the characters.			

18	I can't control myself while watching TV series.			
19	Binge-watching causes addiction.			
20	I get really excited when new episode is released.			
21	I'm usually in a bad mood, sad or depressed when I can't watch TV series, & I feel better when I am able to watch again.			
22	Binge-watching brings satisfaction.			
23	I get annoyed or angry when I'm interrupted while watching my favourite TV series.			

24) After I binge-watch, I feel

- Happy
- Satisfied
- Tired
- Pleased and relaxed
- Anxious
- Disappointed because it is ended.

• Would you please allow me to ask you some personal questions? All your answers will be secret and for purpose only. Thanks very much for your time. I really appreciate it.

25) What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

26) What is your family income per year?

- Under £ 3,500
- £ 5,000 – £ 8,000
- More than £ 10,000