ESCAPISM, THE NEED FOR AFFECT AND TRANSPORTATION AS PREDICTORS OF BINGE WATCHING IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The present study explored the factors that facilitate binge-watching behavior among young adults. Previous researches determined that escapism, need for affect and transportation can be considered as the predictors of binge-watching. To testify the existing literature on binge-watching and factors contributing to this behavior, 350 university students took part in a survey. Findings revealed that need for affect and transportation significantly predict binge-watching while escapism failed to predict binge-watching behavior due to non-significant results. Moreover, this study finds out that phenomenon of binge-watching has no significant impact on gender. Based on the findings, we propose that factors facilitating binge-watching i.e., need for affect and transportation can have adverse effects on students' academic performance and mental well-being. Consequently, further researches need to adopt more holistic approach in investigating binge-watching and its effects.
Keywords: Binge-watching, Need for Affect, Escapism, Transportation, Contributing factors

INTRODUCTION

You sit yourself down in front of the TV after a long day at work, and decide to start watching that new show everyone's been talking about. Cut to midnight and you've crushed half a season — and find yourself tempted to stay up to watch just *one more* episode, even though you know you'll be paying for it at work the next morning. (Danielle, 2017)

You are not alone, there are millions like you in the world as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu are now part of millions of TV series viewers' daily routines (Deloitte, 2018; 2019). Although binge-viewing has been around since the age of video box sets, but in recent years streaming services have revived and normalized bingeing (Feeney, 2014). Binge-watching has been largely positioned as a common and celebrated contemporary form of entertainment. As early as 2013, Netflix declared binge-watching "the new normal" (Netflix, 2013). The share of people who binge-watch TV shows, instead of watching them episode by episode i.e., when each episode airs, has been growing consistently for over a decade. A study of 4,500 consumers in six developed Western and East Asian countries found that binge-watching had increased, globally, by 18% in the prior year (Limelight, 2019). Similarly, survey data revealed that Netflix subscriptions reached 203.67 million worldwide in 2020, and binge-watching of TV shows was reported as the preference of 72% of the individuals surveyed (Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020).

An interesting analogy on the topic is provided by Matrix (2014), which compares binge-watching to binge-eating potato chips. It explains that both are "certainly appetizing, hard to stop after having just one, likely to make consumers feel a bit unwell in high amount but ultimately not satisfying." The argument makes the notion that binge-watching television may share hazardous and addictive traits like consuming fast food. In fact, these challenges are frequently the subject of recent research. It was argued that binge-watchers might have a dependent on or addiction to media stimulation (Devasagayam, 2014). Also, binge watchers were shown to be more

prone than non-watchers to experience depression or loneliness (Sung, Kang, & Lee, 2015b).

But the question is why it happens? Why one binge-watches? Maybe this behavior occurs when one experience stress. As the notion that people use media to escape the hassles is one of the oldest (Pearlin, 1959; Kubey, 1986). Also, recent studies suggest that individuals consider binge-watching a form of entertainment that help out to escape from reality (Wagner, 2016), thus avoiding, at least temporarily, the negative emotions caused by daily stressors or loneliness. But in contrast to the primarily negative connotation of escapism found in prior researches, some studies propose that escapist entertainment use may be a functional coping strategy in some situations and may thus have beneficial effects on the well-being of media users. (Halfmann and Reinecke, 2019). Since these first reflections on mass media and escapism, the scope and the availability of entertainment programs have increased significantly.

Another reason for binge-watching behavior can be the traits of an individual. Some people are analytical and motivated to avoid emotional experiences, whereas other people are passionate and tend to seek out emotional experiences (Maio & Esses, 2001). Researches have repeatedly found that for certain members of the audience higher levels of need for affect are associated with higher levels of media enjoyment (Oliver, 1993; Zillmann, 1998; Oliver, Weaver & Sargent, 2000; David, Horton, & German, 2008; Bartsch 2010). In the same way, studies into personality factors that account for individuals' enjoyment of media has provided important insights into the role of personality in shaping emotional media preferences. For example, empathy and female gender role identification have been linked to sad film preference whereas male viewers and individuals who are high in sensation seeking, trait aggressiveness, and low in empathy typically reported more enjoyment of frightening and violent movies. (Oliver, 1993)

One more reason for this can be when an individual is simply engrossed in the narrative and identify with one of the characters or curious about the ending of the story. As every day, people around the world spend a substantial amount of time with narratives like reading novels and watching shows. A number of studies have shown that reading or listening to a narrative can alter beliefs that recipients hold about the world, even if the characters and events described

in the narrative are fictitious (Gerrig & Prentice, 1991; Prentice, Gerrig, & Bailis, 1997; Green & Brock, 2000; Marsh & Fazio, 2006; Fazio & Marsh, 2008). Gerrig (1993) and Green and Brock (2002) have proposed that the persuasive impact of fictional narratives is based on an experiential state called ''transportation,' which makes the recipients' beliefs more susceptible to influences by information provided in the narrative.

To contribute to the growing body of literature on binge-watching, this research aims to determine the relationship between escapism, transportation and need for affect with binge watching among university students. It also aims to find out the gender differences in terms of binge watching among university students.

Escapism
Escapism is defined as individual's motivation to engage in escape-facilitating activities. These escape facilitating activities can either promote positive experiences which is termed as self-expansion or these activities can prevent individuals from thinking about previous negative experiences or future challenges which is called self-suppression (Stenseng et al.,2012).

The Need for Affect
The need for affect is defined as the general motivation of people to approach or avoid situations and activities that are emotion-inducing for themselves and others (Maio & Esses, 2001).

Transportation Mechanisms
This study pursues the definition of transportation proposed by Riddle (2013) that is the loss of attention to the real word (attentional component), emotional response to narrative (emotional investment), and imagining how a narrative would turn out differently (mental rumination). These three components work together to create the transportation experience.

Previously, transportation has been defined as a feeling of being lost in the world of a narrative and leaving the real world behind (Green & Brock, 2000). They argued that it is a distinct mental process which centers upon three components; attentional component (a loss of access to the real world), emotional involvement (strong emotional responses to narrative) and mental imagery. Green et al. (2004) also acknowledged that transportation is not limited to readers of written texts, yet it can also refer to the

context of visual media such as movies and television programs. Slater et al. (2006) argued that the third component mental imagery is not related to visual media and should referred as story involvement, or the degree to which participants imagined how a narrative might have turned out differently. On which basis, Riddle (2013) named the third component as mental rumination.

Binge Watching

Binge watching is defined as viewing back-to-back episodes of the same program or series in a single sitting with varying degrees of intentionality (Viens & Farrar, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

Introducing the theoretical context, Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) suggests that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media, meaning they are aware of the reasons for choosing different media options. People use media for cognitive and affective needs, the need for personal identity, social interaction, and escapism (Katz et al., 1974, as cited in Barn & Davis, 2010). Previously, in psychological literature, escapism is always been linked to coping with emotional distress by repressing acknowledgment of the stressors (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; 1985). Stenseng et al., (2012) model suggests that process of escapism has two dimensions. One is self-suppression, where one intends to inhibit negative feelings while the other is self-expansion, where one seeks positive experiences. However, the goal is the same for both i.e. temporarily enhancing emotional state.

Relevantly, studies propose that media consumption contributes to persuasion. And for persuasion to take place, there must be a process of transportation in which all mental capacities and systems are integrated into the narrative's events. The reader loses attention to some real-world facts in favor of accepting the narrative world that the author has created. Beyond losing access to factual information, readers who have been transported could also go through intense feelings and motivations, even if they are aware that the events in the novel are fictional. Additionally, readers begin to think actively what might have happened at the end of the story. Lastly, people who were being transported, are somewhat changed by the experience (Green & Brock, 2000).

Rationale

Binge-watching has become a popular phenomenon as we are living in a time of digital media. On that account, this study on binge-watching has certain aspects that will benefit the target population and literature as well. First, binge-watching has become a part of life for most of us and it is a potentially addictive habit (Flayelle et al., 2019; 2020), which can harm students' academic performance. Second, transportation plays role in changing one's beliefs (Green & Brock, 2000) which can be hazardous. If one experiences transportation and starts to identify with one of the evil characters, being persuaded of the malevolent theme of the story, there is a possibility that they will act out what they are watching. This idea is similar to Bandura's theory of social learning. According to social learning theory, human learns new behaviors by copying others, and this coded information acts as a guide for action on later occasions (Bandura, 1986). So, to prevent binge-watching from developing into an addiction that might compromise binge-watchers' academic performance as well as be hazardous for them personally, there is a need to comprehend the factors behind binge-watching. Lastly, existing literature on binge-watching in Pakistan has not studied the factors behind this phenomenon. For this purpose, the present study aims to determine the underlying factors of binge-watching namely; the need for affect, escapism, and transportation in visual media, and aid in bridging the gap in the literature.

Literature Review

The television landscape has cultivated a climate of change in last few decades. One of the most significant changes occurred is binge watching, which is a revolution in the way TV was used to consumed. And the major contribution in this phenomenon is of streaming services like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Hulu that provide the flexibility to watch multiple episodes in one sitting (Flayelle et al., 2019; Veins & Farrar, 2021). This flexibility may bring pleasure to many while bringing adverse effects on an individual's wellbeing as well (Raza et al., 2021).

In addition to these adverse effects, some studies emphasized that one of the motivations behind binge-watching is escapism. Likewise, Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi (1990) investigated that 63% females and 37% males indulge in binge watching. Each subject's daily evening record (past 6:00 p.m.)

of television viewing reports were examined in order to locate the highest and lowest nights of viewing for each respondent. Results indicated that subjects appear to engage in heavy viewing to escape solitude and negative experiences.

Same results were identified when Castro et al. (2019) explored binge watcher's experience by focusing on 40 Netflix viewing sessions from 11 millennials (individuals born within 1983-1996) in their homes. With the help of mixed-method approach, they suggested that binge-watching is an individual activity mainly performed at the end of the day to relax, for boredom relief purposes and for escapism.

Moreover, Gao et al. (2017) draws on belongingness theory to explore the impact of social presence on addiction to social networking sites (SNSs). 278 SNS users from China participated in the study. Social presence was measured by five-item scales adopted from Khalifa and Shen (2004) and Steuer (1992). A sense of belonging was assessed by a four-item scale developed by Teo et al. (2003) and Lin (2008). Escapism was measured with four-item scales adopted from Hirschman (1983) and Wu and Holsapple (2014). The results demonstrate that social presence is positively related to a sense of belonging and enjoyment. In addition, A sense of belonging has a positive effect on escapism. Specifically, a strong sense of belonging helps users to escape from the mundane world and enter a pleasurable, arousing mental state while they play and have fun.

Similarly, Munawar and Siraj (2022) investigates the antecedents that contribute to binge-watching and its problematic symptoms. The sample comprised of 297 binge watchers from Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Items within the survey were taken from Flayelle et al.'s (2019b) Watching TV Series Motivations Questionnaire (WTSMQ) and Binge-Watching Engagement and Symptoms Questionnaire (BWESQ). A Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that binge-watchers with coping and escapism motivation showed the greatest tendency to exhibit problematic symptoms. Further, findings also revealed that binge-watchers falling in age ranges of 18-22 years and female watchers exhibited the most problematic symptoms.

Another study used Grounded Theory to analyze interviews with a dozen individuals who media marathoned while going through a health struggle. Their analysis identified five major themes in which engaging in escapism that enables emotional and avoidance coping was one. Further, several participants reveal that they media marathoning or binge watching was the way to escape from reality or being distracted from their health concern (Perks, 2018).

Furthermore, Wang (2019) administered a survey to 157 television binge-watchers to identify the role of different motivations for binge watching. Stress level was measured with the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), Self-control ability was evaluated with five items scale by Walton-Pattison et al. (2018) while to measure Binge-watching gratifications and outcomes, scales were adapted from a study by Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Bayesian estimation and Bayesian estimation (BSEM) were performed. He found out that binge watching were used as an escape to temporarily alleviate stress.

Moreover, some studies attempted to measure binge watching rate and capture the viewing aspects of binge watching i.e. transportation; viewer immersion into the visual narrative. In the following study, participants were given a pre-questionnaire to measure their usual binge-watching activity by using modified version of Sung et al. (2015) binge-watching behavior instrument. Then, they filled out weekly questionnaire to track down viewing experience and Green and Brock's transportation instrument to report transportation. After creating frequency table, regression analysis was utilized to measure how the dependent variables were associated with the independent variables. Findings revealed that increase in binge watching behavior predicted an increase in transportation and the subcomponents (attention, emotional investment and mental rumination) as well. Further, they discovered different aspects of binge watching like viewing on tablets and game consoles predicted higher levels of transportation than binge-viewing on Mac or PC (Warren, 2016).

Likewise, Pittman and Sheehan (2015) administered a survey to 262 television binge watchers in order to identify the motives behind binge watching. The first section of the survey assessed what types of programs and platforms were used for binge-watching by providing a list of programs. Scales developed by Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) were used as a basis for this study. With the help of factor analysis, they found that engagement is the strongest motivation for binge watching behavior. In fact, engagement is the only motivation to predict

frequency of viewing: the more engaged one feels with the story lines and the characters, the more frequently they will binge watch.

Another study, Anghelcev et al. (2020) examined psychological constructs related to the subjective experience of binge-watching serial video content among 378 US college undergraduates. Transportation was measured by using scale developed by Appel et al. (2015) while binge-watching behavior was determined by assessing how many episodes one watches in one sitting. To capture trait differences in ability to experience flow, scale by Engeser and Falko (2008) was used. Also, parasocial interaction was measured by using a 5-item scale adapted from Rubin and McHugh (1987). The results underscore the centrality of transportation in shaping viewers' perceptions of the binge-watching experience and their binge-watching behaviors. Transportation was positively related to binge-watching frequency and mediated the impact of binge-watching session length.

Similarly, Irimiás et al. (2021) aimed to develop and empirically test a conceptual model of TV series consumption, escapism, immersion, and travel intentions with partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). These four constructs' (TV series consumption, Escapism, Immersion in fantasy world, Travel intention) used in this study have been elaborated on the basis of their previous research results on fandom and tourism. The convenience sample consisted of 385 Hungarian respondents. By using path analysis, they find out that narrative transportation is a structured gradual process: TV series consumption first leads to escapism, escapism to immersion and then immersion to travel intention. The mediated relationships (via escapism and immersion) between media consumption and travel intention are found to be significant.

Moreover, the study was conducted to identify the motivations behind binge watching in which 292 responses were included. Participant's general TV-watching behavior was measured by assessing how much time they spent on watching TV on an average weekday while binge-watching specific behavior was assessed by asking how many episodes of a program they usually watched in one sitting. The motivation scales refined by Rubin (1976, 1979) for TV watching were adopted in this study. A series of cross-tabs and correlation analyses shows that escapism is one of the motivations behind binge

watching and the number of episodes binge watched was significantly and positively related to respondents' levels of media transportation. In other words, the more episodes participants binge watched, the more they tended to experience engagement with the program (Sung et al., 2018).

Another study by, Gabbiadini et al. (2021) administered a survey on 196 TV series viewers to investigate the underlying psychological mechanisms (escapism, loneliness and identification with media characters) leading to binge-watching. Participants' tendency for binge-watching was measured by considering the "Binge-Watching" subscale of the "Binge-Watching Engagement and Symptoms" proposed by (Flayelle et al. 2019). The UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell et al., 1978) was used to measure loneliness while the Internet Disorder Scale (IDS-15; Pontes and Griffiths, 2017) was adopted for measuring participants' levels of problematic use of Internet-related technologies. And for assessment of identification with the characters of a TV series, the scale proposed by Igartua (2010) was used. A series of multiple regression analysis were performed. The results indicated that escapism predicted participants' stronger identification with media characters, which in turn promoted greater binge-watching tendencies. They suggest that binge-watching could be interpreted as a coping strategy for media escapists, who enjoy TV series as a privileged online space in which the need to escape finds its fulfillment, allowing them to manage loneliness by identifying with a fictitious character.

Furthermore, Maio and Esses (2001) tested in their research whether the tendency to prefer films that were happy and sad over non-emotional films would be greater for people who are high in the need for affect than for people who are low in the need for affect. 116 psychology undergraduates participated in this study for course credit. All of the participants received the Need for Affect Questionnaire, a demographic information sheet, and various filler measures. They assessed criterion measures namely; mean, standard deviation, and run correlation analysis. As predicted, results showed that the increased willingness to view the emotional films over non-emotional films was greater for participants who were high in the need for affect than for participants who were low in the need for affect.

Similarly, Appel and Richter (2010) conducted two experiments in which 314 individuals participated. In

this study, they hypothesized that the need for affect would be a relevant predictor of narrative transportation. In experiment one, researchers used a measure similar to the two-item psychiatric patient index developed by Green and Brock (2000). The need for affect was assessed with the Need for Affect Questionnaire (Maio & Esses, 2001) while transportation was assessed with the Transportation scale developed by Green and Brock (2000). In experiment 2, they used a 13-item self-report measure based on a previous instrument by Parisi and Katz (1986) to assess participant's beliefs regarding story's main theme and used similar questionnaires to measure the need for affect and transportation as was in experiment 1. Throughout experiments, regression analysis was used. Consequently, find out that need for affect had positive effect on transportation and the magnitude of a person's need for affect determines whether and to what extent the person experiences transportation into the story world and is persuaded by the information presented in the narrative.

The proposed study aims to determine the relationship between escapism, transportation and need for affect with binge watching among university students. It also aims to find out the gender differences in terms of binge watching among university students. On which, current literature has not yet offered much findings.

Objectives
1.   To determine the relationship between escapism and binge-watching among university students.
2.   To determine the relationship between transportation and binge-watching among university students.
3.   To determine the relationship between need for affect and binge-watching among university students.
4.   To find out the gender differences in terms of binge-watching among university students.
5.   To investigate whether escapism, transportation, and the need for affect are predictors of binge-watching among university students.

Hypotheses
1.   There is likely to be significant relationship between escapism and binge-watching among university students.

2.   There is likely to be significant relationship between transportation and binge-watching among university students.
3.   There is likely to be significant relationship between need for affect and binge watching among university students.
4.   There is likely to be significant gender differences in terms of binge watching among university students.
5.   Escapism, transportation, and the need for affect are predictors of binge-watching among university students. content.

Method
Research Design
This study followed correlational design by collecting data through self-reported measures. The purpose of correlational design is to determine occurrence and relationships among variables. In other words, this design is used to investigate the degree to which variation in one variable are associated to differences in one or more other variables. (Curtis et al., 2016)

Participants
Three hundred university students who binge watch shows or TV series were recruited from different universities of Lahore through convenience sampling. Convenience sampling was used because it allows researcher to select participants that are easily available. In the current study, the target population was university students that can be effortlessly approached in universities, also, it is not costly and not as time consuming as other sampling strategies are. (Stratton, 2021)

Inclusion and Exclusion
University students ranging from 18-30 years of age who binge-watch shows or TV series were included. However, those who cannot read and write English or have any physical disability and diagnosis for mental health issues were excluded within this study.

Materials and Measures
Demographic Information
The demographic form holds questions that require participants to report their gender, age, level of education, university name along with the genre they usually prefer while watching TV series or shows.

General Binge-Watching Scale (GBWS)
General Binge-Watching Scale by Veins and Farrar (2021) was used that consists of seven items and is measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all like me) to 5 (Very much like me). These items have two dimensions. The first one measures the fundamental definition and assesses whether the respondent is a binge watcher or not. However, the second dimension determines the varying levels of intentionality involved with binge-watching. The overall reliability of the scale is .89.

The Streaming Escapism Scale (ES)
The Streaming Escapism Scale was used that assesses either an individual indulges in online streaming to escape from negative feelings(self-suppression) or to experience positive feelings (self-expansion). It has 14 items scored on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1(Never) to 6 (Always) with a .71 reliability (Stenseng et al., 2020).

Transportation Scale (TS)
A modified version of the Transportation Scale by Green and Brock (2000) with nine items were used. This scale was also used in previous studies to measure transportation on a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). (Riddle, 2013; Slater and Rouner, 2002; Wang and Calder, 2006). It has a reliability of .77 (Stephen Warren, 2016).

The Need for Affect Questionnaire (NAQ-S)
The Need for Affect Questionnaire (NAQ-S) short form was used in this study to assess general motivation to seek emotions. It consists of 10 items that were measure on a seven-point scale (-3= Strongly disagree to 3= Strongly agree). It has two dimensions. The first is motivation to 'approach' emotions-inducing situations while the second is motivation to 'avoid' emotion-inducing situation or events. The reliability of this scale ranges from .72 to .82 (Appel et al., 2012).

Procedure
After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board of University permission was taken from different universities to recruit participants for the study. The sample size was comprised of 350 university students ranging from 18-30 years of age who binge watch TV series. The participants were asked for informed consent and questionnaires (if

agree to participate), which took approximately 10 minutes. Informed consent includes information on the study's objectives, confidentiality, and informs the participants that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any moment. Participants were also be informed that this study has no projected risk.

Statistical Analysis
Analysis was done using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 22. Descriptive analysis include frequency, mean and standard deviation. The alpha level will be set at α 0.05 for the proposed study. Inferential statistics included Pearson Product Moment of Correlation, Independent sample t test and Regression analysis. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was computed to assess the relationship of binge watching with escapism, transportation and the need for affect Independent sample T-test was used to identify gender differences in terms of binge watching whereas regression analysis was computed to test whether escapism, transportation and the need for affect are predictors of binge-watching.

Results
Data from the pre-questionnaire showed the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants (Table 4.1). Further, psychometric properties and relationship among study variables are reported (Table4.2, Table 4.3). Similarly, gender differences in binge-watching and results from regression analysis to predict binge-watching is presented in the tables following (Table 4.4, Table 4.5). To ensure the data is normally distributed, analysis for normality testing was computed.

Table 3.1
Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographics	Full Sample	
	n	%
Gender		
Male	214	61.1
Female	128	36.6
Prefer not to say	8	2.3
Age		
18-20	116	33.1
21-23	187	53.4
24-26	37	10.6
27-30	10	2.9
Universities		
Public Sector	11	46

Private Sector	23	54
Education Level		
Bachelors	296	84.6
Masters	54	15.4
Education Program		
Humanities and Sciences	99	28.5
Medicine	24	6.8
Business School	45	12.8
Information and Technology	40	11.4
Science and Technology	62	17.7
Engineering	20	5.7
Aviation	16	4.6
Law	15	4.3
Media and Mass Communication	9	2.5
Language and Literature	20	5.7
Genre		
Action and Adventure	59	16.9
Anime	16	4.6
Horror	32	9.1
Mystery	38	10.9
Romance	36	10.3
Fantasy	29	8.3
Science Fiction	19	5.4
Crime Fiction	41	11.7
Drama	21	6
Comedy	32	9.1
Thriller	27	7.7

350 university students participated in which 214 (61.1%) were male students, 128 (36.6%) were female students and 8 students (2.3%) did not specify their gender. Participants from age range of (21-23) constitute the major part in the research. Similarly, data from students of private sector was 54% while the data from students of public universities were

46%. Mostly participants tend to prefer Action and Adventure and Crime fiction genre among all other categories.

Table 3.2

Psychometric Properties for Escapism, Need for Affect, Transportation and Binge-watching

Scale	M	SD	Range	Cronbach's alpha
Escapism	3.493	1.926		.776
Self-Expansion	3.771	.346		.678
Self-Suppression	3.080	1.263		.752
Need for Affect	.677	1.577		.741
Avoidance	.290	.623		.707
Approach	1.063	.769		.721
Transportation	3.270	.846		.611
Attention	3.399	.089		.506
Emotional Investment	3.083	.411		.344
Mental Rumination	3.273	.329		.394
Binge-watching	3.473	.471		.842
Fundamental Factor	3.459	.471		.699
Impulsive Factor	3.484	.157		.784

Note. (*n*=350)

Reliability coefficient for all four variables was satisfactory. Cronbach alpha for Escapism was .776, for Need for Affect is .741, for Transportation is .611 and for Binge-watching it is .842.

Table 3.3

Correlation between escapism, need for affect, transportation and binge-watching (n = 350)

Variables		N	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1.	Escapism	350	48.91	11.131	-			
2.	Need for Affect	350	-7.23	10.580	-.374**	-		
3.	Transportation	350	3.06	.522	.305**	-.224**	-	
4.	Binge-watching	350	3.47	.918	.202**	.370**	.380**	-

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

A Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was run to determine the relationship of escapism, need for affect and transportation with binge-watching. Results showed that binge watching has statistically

significant positive correlation with escapism (n=350, r= .202, p<.001), with need for affect (n=350, r= -.370, p<.001) and with transportation (n=350, r=.380, p<.001).

Table 3.4

Gender Differences in Binge-watching (n=350)

Variables	Male		Female				95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD	t (340)	p	*LL*	*UL*	
Binge-watching	3.46	.924	3.53	.904	-.648	.817	-.268	.135	0.0765

Note. p>.001

An independent sample t-test was conducted to determine gender differences in binge-watching behavior. Results showed that there is no significant difference of binge-watching behavior among males (*M*= 3.46, *SD*= .924) and females [*M*=3.53, *SD*=.904; *t* (340) = -.648, *p*=.817)

Table 3.5

Regression Coefficients of Escapism, Need for Affect and Transportation on Binge-watching

Variables	Model 1		
	B	β	SE
Constant	1.620		.292
ES	-.001	-.007	.004
NAF	.026**	.302	.004
TM	.554**	.315	.088
R²	.230		

*Note. N=350. *p<.05. **p<.01.*

A standard multiple regression analysis was run to predict Binge-watching behavior while considering Escapism, Need for Affect and Transportation as predictors among university students. This table showed .230 variance which means that the model including Escapism, Need for Affect and Transportation explains 23% of the variance in Binge-watching.

Discussion

With the increasing expansion of online streaming platforms like Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime, binge-watching has become a common activity for many individuals. As this emergent media trend provides users with more options and control over their viewing schedule, individuals seem to watch more shows than ever before, and especially in higher amounts at a time.

In order to get a clear insight of this behavior and to know that binge-watching behavior occurs more when an individual want to escape, when an individual tends to seek emotion inducing situations or when they engrossed into the narrative world increase their intent to watch more. Hence, this study attempted to predict binge watching behavior in relation to Escapism, Need for Affect and Transportation. It was hypothesized, first, that there would be significant correlation between Binge-watching and Escapism, which is accepted as Binge-watching found to has statistically significant correlation with Escapism (see Table 4.3). This finding is also supported by research studies where 11 millennials were assessed through mixed method approach. It was found out that escapism is one of the reasons individuals binge-watch as well as it greatly impacts the duration of shows that participants binge-watched (Castro et al., 2019) Similarly, Munawar and Siraj (2022) examined the factors that contribute to binge-watching and tendency toward problematic binge-watching. Results revealed that binge-watchers with escapism motivation showed the greatest tendency to exhibit problematic symptoms.

Similarly, Hypothesis 2 stated that there would be a significant correlation between Need for Affect and Binge-watching which is strengthen by the findings obtained. Table 4.3 shows that there is a significant correlation between Binge-watching and Need for Affect as well as positive correlation between approach dimension of Need for Affect with Binge-watching (r=.349, p<.001) and negative correlation with the avoidance dimension of Binge-watching (r= -.290, p<.001). These findings are also in coherence with the previous researches (Maio and Esses, 2001; Bartsch et al., 2010) as the researchers assessed habitual binge-watchers and found that suggested individuals who tend to seek emotion inducing situations are more likely to binge-watch as compare

to individuals who avoid emotion inducing situations.

According to Hypothesis 3, there would be a significant correlation between Binge-watching and Transportation. This hypothesis is also accepted and fully supported by the research studied done in the past (Warren, 2016) where researcher found significant correlation between transportation and binge-watching along with the total viewing sessions and hours per session significantly predicting transportation. Another study surveyed undergraduates who binge-watch on the daily or weekly basis, found out that there is a positive significant correlation between transportation and binge-watching, suggesting the higher the transportation level the more an individual binge-watch. (Anghelcev, et al., 2020). Previous research shows that the cause for increased transportation can be the former narrative-related experience (Green et al, 2004), suggesting the more episodes viewer watch of a serialized show in sequence, the more viewer learn about the characters, as well as the story lines. (Warren, 2016)

Moreover, Hypothesis 4 specified that there is would be a significant gender difference in binge-watching behavior while findings revealed that there is no significant difference in binge-watching behavior among males and females. Therefore, the hypothesis 4 has been rejected. The reason for that is the proportion of male participants were higher than the female participants in the study which compromised the criteria for comparison. Another reason could be cultural differences as the researches (Starosta and Izydorczyk, 2020) that suggest binge-watching is neutral in terms of gender were conducted in Western culture, which is obviously different than culture of Pakistan.

Lastly, to explore the predicting role of Escapism, Need for Affect and Transportation in Binge watching behavior and testify the Hypothesis 5, regression analysis was conducted. Results for the regression analysis in Table 4.5 showed .230 variance which means that the model including Escapism, Need for Affect and Transportation explains 23% of the variance in Binge-watching. Although the value of R square is .230, explanatory variables i.e., Need for Affect and Transportation significantly predict Binge-watching while Escapism would not consider as the predictor because it is not significant at the given level of significance($p<.001$). This finding was supported by various studies as one study (Gabbiadini et al., 2021) considered 24% of variance in the model to predict binge-watching as the results were significant. Similarly, Cornel and Berger, 1987) suggests that small value of R-square is satisfactory if significant. Another study Ozili (2022) that suggests if value of R-square is between 0.10 and 0.50, it is acceptable in social science research but only when some or most of the explanatory variables are statistically significant. Likewise, (Cohen, 2003 as cited in Miles, 2005) provided predictable descriptions of effect sizes for R-squared. A small effect as being R^2 equal to 0.02, a medium effect as $R^2 = 0.13$, and a large effect as being $R^2 = 0.26$.

Basically, social sciences seek to study human behavior and relationships, both of which are dynamic and always changing. Individual self-interest, group dynamics, emotions, and other factors can all greatly impact human behavior that makes it challenging to precisely anticipate human behavior. And even if it is possible to incorporate all the explanatory factors that explain human behavior into the model, some of those explanatory factors might have a weak or non-linear relationship with the dependent variable, which would reduce the value of R-square (Ozili, 2022).

Conclusion

In a nutshell this study examined whether escapism, need for affect and transportation are predictors of binge-watching and is there any gender difference exist in terms of binge-watching. Findings revealed that there is no significant gender difference exist regarding binge-watching while positive and statistically significant correlation was established among study variables and two independent variables i.e., need for affect and transportation significantly predict binge-watching (dependent variable) suggesting, the more one seek emotion inducing situations and immerse into the narrative world, the more one binge-watches. Whereas escapism (another independent variable) would not be considered as a predictor of binge-watching due to non-significant results. Hence, future researches should opt for more holistic approach to know how digital technologies affecting the lives.

Implications

Findings mentioned above have various implications like recognizing factors behind binge-watching help us to introduce counselling services in colleges or

universities as binge-watching has adverse effects on mental health and academic performance of students (Flayelle, 2018, 2019).

This study also investigates the individual difference i.e., the need for affect (a trait) in relation to binge-watching that would help us to fill significant knowledge gaps in literature of personality and binge-watching as well.

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