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FULL PAPER

Netflix and chill? The content-related and gratificational antecedents of binge-watching tendency

Netflix and Chill? Einfluss von inhaltebezogenen Programmattributen und Gratifikationen auf Binge-watching Verhalten

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of binge-watching and its antecedents. By examining content-related factors such as preferences for TV formats, serial genres, and narrative structures this study extends current knowledge of factors influencing binge-watching behavior. Furthermore, this paper also analyzes factors previously identified in the literature, such as uses and gratifications, to provide a comprehensive understanding of their impact on binge-watching. A cross-sectional online survey with 1,959 German participants was conducted. Based on this data, multiple regression analysis was used to identify significant influences on audiences' binge-watching behavior and to assess effect sizes. The analysis suggests that strong preferences for TV series in general and for specific serial genres (comedy/sitcom, crime, sci-fi and fantasy) positively influence peoples' binge-watching tendencies, while preferences for horror and family serial genres as well as sports events have the opposite effect. In addition, specific narrative structures (dark tonality, extraordinary story setting) positively drive binge-watching as does the use of the streaming services Netflix and Amazon Prime Video. Regarding uses and gratifications, fun, entertainment, arousal, and passing time also show a positive correlation with audience's binge-watching tendency, while the desire to be informed about current events in the world correlates negatively. Overall, the model was able to explain 43.9% of the variance. This study offers insights into previously unexamined factors that relate to binge-watching while validating previously identified motivators in the German market. The study suggests that motivations and influences for binge-watching are even more varied than previously assumed and prove to be useful information for understanding why audiences watch TV programs back-to-back.

Keywords: binge-watching, content preferences, gratifications, streaming services, SVOD, TV formats, TV genres, Uses and Gratifications

Zusammenfassung: Die Studie untersucht inhaltsbezogene Einflussfaktoren auf das Binge-Watching-Verhalten, wie Vorlieben für Fernsehformate, Seriengenres und Erzählstrukturen. Darüber hinaus werden in dieser Studie auch bereits in der Literatur betrachtete Faktoren, wie z. B. Uses and Gratifications betrachtet, um ein umfassendes Verständnis ihrer Auswirkungen auf das Binge-Watching zu erhalten. Basierend auf einer Onlinebefragung 1.959 deutscher Streamingnutzer wurde eine multiple Regressionsanalyse durchgeführt, um signifikante Einflüsse auf das Binge-Watching-Verhalten zu identifizieren und Effektgrößen zu

ermitteln. Die Analyse deutet darauf hin, dass Präferenzen für TV-Serien im Allgemeinen und für bestimmte Seriengenres (Comedy/Sitcom, Crime, Sci-Fi und Fantasy) das Binge-Watching-Verhalten positiv beeinflussen, während Präferenz für Horror- und Familienserien sowie Sportereignisse den gegenteiligen Effekt haben. Darüber hinaus wirken sich bestimmte Erzählstrukturen (düstere Tonalität/Setting, außergewöhnlicher Handlungsort) positiv auf das Binge-Watching-Verhalten aus, ebenso wie die Nutzung der Streaming-Dienste Netflix und Amazon Prime Video. Hinsichtlich der Uses and Gratifications zeigen Spaß, Unterhaltung, Erregung und Zeitvertreib ebenfalls eine positive Korrelation mit der Binge-Watching-Tendenz des Publikums, während der Wunsch, über aktuelle Ereignisse in der Welt informiert zu werden, negativ korreliert. Insgesamt konnte das Modell 43,9 % der Varianz erklären. Diese Studie bietet Einblicke in bisher nicht untersuchte Faktoren, die mit Binge-Watching in Verbindung stehen, und validiert gleichzeitig zuvor identifizierte Motivatoren auf dem deutschen Markt. Die Studie deutet darauf hin, dass die Motivationen und Einflüsse für Binge-Watching noch vielfältiger sind als bisher angenommen und sich als nützliche Information erweisen, um zu verstehen, warum das Publikum Fernsehsendungen ‚am Stück' schaut.

Schlagworte: Binge-Watching, Inhaltspräferenzen, Gratifikationen, Streaminganbieter, SVOD, TV-Formate, TV-Genres, Nutzen und Gratifikationen

1. Introduction

With the growing popularity of streaming services, specific video content is more easily accessible to audiences than ever before. This enabled consumers to watch any show they want at a frequency they preferred, regardless of the linear TV program dictated by networks (Czichon, 2019). Streaming services provide a large content library available to all their users with an internet connection (Jenner, 2016). In 2022, 80% of European internet users accessed video content this way (von Abrams, 2022). Furthermore, the usage of streaming services has become so common that TV remotes nowadays often implement specific buttons for streaming services such as "Netflix" or "Amazon Prime Video" (Schaber, 2022). With the rise of streaming platforms, the phenomenon of binge-watching (BW) emerged, which describes the act of watching multiple episodes of one show in quick succession (von Abrams, 2022; Walton-Pattison et al., 2018). It was first introduced by Netflix in 2013 as the "new, normal" (Netflix, 2013) way of consuming TV shows. Recently, more than 70% of US Americans reported themselves as binge-viewers (Steiner & Xu, 2020).

Even though BW as a term was coined rather recently, the practice itself began to develop much earlier. In the 1980s, TV channels started to air entire seasons of shows as one big marathon (Ahmed, 2017). Later, consumers were able to binge episodes of one show in quick succession by buying a DVD box set (Hills, 2007). Streaming services like Netflix or Amazon Prime Video increased this autonomy even more by enabling viewers to marathon any show provided by their services, regardless of whether people even knew about these shows beforehand and intended to watch them. BW mostly applies to TV series content but was observed for other content forms as well, e.g. sports content (Steiner, 2018) or reality and game shows (Merikivi et al., 2016). The strategic aim is to increase consumption of video content, which in turn may attract new subscribers and avoid customer churn. It

is also of paramount importance for the marketing strategies of streaming providers. Thus, understanding BW and its antecedents is highly relevant for researchers, broadcasters, and marketing professionals alike (Song et al., 2021). Given the relatively recent nature of the subject, there are still many aspects of BW that have not been extensively covered by researchers. Several studies focused on the effects of excessive BW on mental health (Flayelle et al., 2020; Horvath et al., 2017; Song et al., 2021). The uses and gratifications that lead viewers to a BW session have also been addressed in some studies (e.g., Flayelle et al., 2020; Panda & Pandey, 2017; Pittman & Sheehan, 2015). Anyhow, the effects of preferences for specific TV programs, genres, or content-related aspects on BW have only rarely been investigated (Chang & Peng, 2022; Ferchaud, 2018; Schweidel & Moe, 2016) and more frequently on a qualitative basis (Flayelle et al., 2020; Turner, 2021). In sum, while most research to this point covers mental health aspects of BW, the content-related personal preferences that influence BW are not particularly well understood.

Therefore, this paper tries to close this research gap by giving a more refined view of how gratifications and content characteristics may affect binge-watching tendency (BWT). For this purpose, we analyzed observational data from a cross-sectional survey (N = 1,959) of German streaming service users via multiple regression analysis. By doing so, this paper extends the existing literature and yields significant insights for media professionals who produce or distribute content in order to boost their show's viewing hours, as well as for marketing and broadcasting executives.

2. Background/literature review

While there is an increasing stream of research focusing on BW, there is no clear consensus for the operationalization and measurement of the concept (Flayelle et al., 2020). Jenner (2016, p. 265) notes that "at any rate, what exactly constitutes a binge is likely to be different for everybody and defined through highly individualized terms and practices". Some researchers define BW by an exact minimum number of episodes watched in close succession (e.g., Merrill Jr. & Rubenking, 2019; Pittman & Sheehan, 2015; Pittman & Steiner, 2019), given that viewers tend to identify BWT more through the number of episodes than the total time spent on viewing a show (Jenner, 2021). Others captured the participants' BWT with the help of multiple questions regarding their attitude toward their viewing behavior (e.g., Shim et al., 2018). One advantage of this approach is that it eliminates the need for respondents to recall the exact number of episodes watched, thereby reducing the likelihood of inaccurate responses due to memory lapses (Shim et al., 2018). We define BW as "the consumption of multiple videos in one sitting" (Song et al., 2021) and operationalize this behavior by three attitudinal items, focusing on whether respondents watch multiple episodes in one sitting, in quick succession and if they watch episodes as a binge (Shim & Kim, 2018; Song et al., 2021).

Regardless of the operationalization, several overarching observations can be identified in the literature, especially regarding the gratifications of BW as well as its advantages and disadvantages (Rubenking et al., 2018). In addition to socio-demographic and mental health-related aspects, we can broadly group these findings

into content characteristics and uses and gratifications. These will be reviewed in more detail below (for an overview of the literature, see Table 1).

Table 1. Literature overview

Construct	Effect on BW (if any)	Sources
Content characteristics: Television formats		
TV Series	+	Mikos, 2016
Movies	-	Mikos, 2016
Documentaries	+	Ahmed, 2017; Nikolic et al., 2023*; Rentfrow et al., 2011*
Daily Soaps	n/a	Devisetty & Phadtare, 2023*; Dhiman, 2021*
News Broadcasts	n/a	Diego & Etago, 2013*; Noh, 2021*
Sports	+	Diego & Etago, 2013*; Gantz et al., 2006*; Rentfrow et al., 2011*
Reality TV	+	Ahmed, 2017; Jenner, 2020; Pittman & Steiner, 2019; Shim & Kim, 2018
Content characteristics: Preference for serial genres		
Drama	+	Ahmed, 2017; Ferchaud, 2018; Gantz, 2006*; Mikos, 2016; Moore, 2015; Shim & Kim, 2018
Comedy/Sitcom	+	Abou & Ennam, 2024; Ahmed, 2017; Mikos, 2016; Moore, 2015; Shim & Kim, 2018
Crime	+	Ferchaud, 2018; Mikos, 2016
Mystery	+	Ferchaud ,2018
Sci-Fi and Fantasy	+	Mikos, 2016; Moore, 2015
Action and Adventure	+	Moore, 2015
Animation	+	Gantz, 2006*
Content characteristics: Preference for narrative structure		
Dark Tonality	+	Mikos 2016, Ferchaud 2018
Cross-episode Storylines	+	Erickson et al., 2019; Ferchaud, 2018; Flayelle et al., 2020; Kozak & Zeller-Jacques, 2021; Mikos, 2016; Rubenking et al., 2018; Steiner & Xu, 2018
	0	Pittman & Steiner, 2019
Long Episodes	+	Steiner & Xu, 2018
Complex Story Structure	+	Ferchaud, 2018; Flayelle et al., 2020; Mikos, 2016

Uses and gratifications		
Arousal	+	Ferchaud, 2018; Flayelle et al., 2019; Flayelle et al., 2020; Mikos, 2016; Pittman & Sheehan, 2015; Rubenking et al., 2018; Shim & Kim, 2018; Song et al., 2021; Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020
Fun	+	Flayelle et al., 2020; Pittman & Sheehan, 2015; Shim & Kim, 2018; Song et al., 2021; Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020
	-	Ferchaud, 2018; Horvard, 2020
Entertainment	+	Abou & Ennam, 2024; Flayelle et al., 2020; Nanda & Banerjeee, 2020: Pittman & Sheehan, 2015; Starosta et al., 2019; Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020; Steiner & Xu, 2018; Sung et al., 2018
	0	Tukachinsky & Eyal, 2018
Relaxation	+	Abou & Ennam, 2024; Mikos & Castro, 2021; Perks, 2021; Song et al., 2021; Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020
	0	Sung et al., 2018
Passing Time	+	Flayelle et al., 2020; Song et al., 2021
	0	Nanda & Banerjee, 2020; Sung et al., 2018
Boredom	+	Abou & Ennam, 2024; Flayelle et al., 2020; Mikos & Castro, 2021
Habit	+	Bastos et al., 2024
Escape	+	Flayelle et al., 2020; Granow et al., 2018; Nanda & Banerjee, 2020; Panda & Pandey, 2017; Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020
	0	Sung et al., 2018
Company	+	Abou & Ennam, 2024; Ahmed, 2017; Flayelle et al., 2020; Song et al., 2021; Sung et al., 2018
	0	Tukachinsky & Eyal, 2018
Intersocial	+	Panda & Pandey, 2017; Shim & Kim, 2018; Song et al., 2021
	0	Sung et al., 2018
Family and Friends	+	Mikos & Castro, 2021; Shim & Kim, 2018
Life satisfaction		
Life Satisfaction	+ (for lower mental health)	Ahmed, 2017; Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020; Taqiyah, 2024; Tefertiller, 2018
Socio-demographic factors		
Age	- (higher age)	Ahmed, 2017; Excelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017; Flayelle et al., 2020; Jasmine et al., 2023; Orosz et al., 2016; Panda & Pandey, 2017; Rubenking et al., 2018; Shim et al., 2018; Shim & Kim, 2018; Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020

Income	-	Song et al., 2021
	0	Ahmed, 2017
Educational Level	+ (higher education)	Spruanc et al., 2017, Song et al., 2021
	- (higher education)	Shim et al., 2018

Notes. * Research not directly focused on binge-watching

Characteristics of streaming services can also increase BWT, such as few interruptions between episodes (Walton-Pattison et al., 2018), a lower price (Panda & Pandey, 2017), or an effective recommendation algorithm. The perception and construction of BW audience typologies by service providers have also been studied (Steiner, 2021). BW has been intensively addressed concerning mental health aspects. Several studies found that BW can be a product of a self-control deficiency (e.g., Granow et al., 2018; Song et al., 2021). Parallels between BW and other forms of binge behavior like binge-drinking, binge-eating (Sung et al., 2018), or excessive TV viewing (Song et al., 2021) have been identified. Problematic viewing behavior can result from the gratifications people derive from BW; audiences may distract themselves from their problems with excessive BW (Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020). The act of BW can be seen as quite impulsive (Pittman & Sheehan, 2015) and offering only temporary relief (Song et al., 2021). Rather than planning a specific BW session, people may let themselves get lost in the flow (Pierce-Grove, 2021). Unplanned BW often leads to strong feelings of regret among viewers (Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020) and lower life satisfaction in the long term, although this might vary depending on the type of shows consumed (Pittman & Steiner, 2019). Finally, studies also showed that there is a positive correlation between depression (Ahmed, 2017) or anxiety (Tefertiller 2018) and BW. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, scholars found that people with a lower level of BW showed a higher level of psychological well-being (Taqiyah, 2024). BW could, therefore, be either a way to cope with negative feelings (Granow et al., 2018) or be partly responsible for a poor mental state (Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020).

2.1 Content characteristics: Television formats

Traditional TV research already examined the role of formats like documentaries (Nikolic et al., 2023; Rentfrow et al., 2011), news programs (Diego & Etayo, 2013; Noh, 2021), or sports programs (Diego & Etayo, 2013; Rentfrow et al., 2011) for television consumption. Viewing behavior of audiences with different TV format preferences can differ significantly. Sports fans, for example, plan their viewing sessions more often and are much more involved with their preferred program before and after their viewing experience than fans of different formats (Gantz et al., 2006). Studies suggest that television series are particularly suitable for binge-watching (Flayelle et al., 2020; Rubenking & Bracken, 2021). However, BW can also be observed for other formats as well (if to a lower degree): Steiner (2018), for example, found that viewers used the term binge to describe their behavior of

watching a lot of TV, including sports tournaments. However, research on television formats and BWT, for many aspects, is mostly qualitative (Czichon, 2019; Flayelle et al., 2020). Mikos (2016) found that TV shows are generally preferred over films for media marathoning. Furthermore, the 'binge-ability', which Ferchaud (2018) describes as the likelihood of a show being binged because of its characteristics, may vary concerning the format of the content, e.g., daily soaps or reality TV (Devisetty & Phadtare, 2023; Dhiman, 2021; Jenner 2020). Thus, preferences for different types of TV formats (like shows, movies, or documentaries), might affect the BWT.

2.2 Content characteristics: TV series genres

Given the high relevance of TV series for TV consumption, the genre has attracted strong research interest. Genres are a well-known differentiator of serial television viewing behavior, with drama being the most popular (Parrot Analytics, 2022). TV series genres play a critical role in helping viewers decide what they want to watch since they are easily identifiable by users and make it easier to articulate their preferences (Noh, 2021). Possible ways to assign a genre to a TV show could be to either look for common textual elements present in the genre or to check its classification in movie databases like the Internet Movie Database (IMDb; Noh, 2021). Nikolic et al. (2023) differentiated between ten genres, such as romance, drama, animation, sci-fi, action, horror, and comedy. Rentfrow et al. (2011) additionally mentioned mystery, while Noh (2021) also included crime and family as distinct genres.

People seek out certain genres to derive a sense of community or identity, with their preferences being often linked to their personality and demographic (Rentfrow et al., 2011). Because audiences are repeatedly exposed to content, preferences can develop further and build up over time (Nikolic et al., 2023). Involvement may vary between fans of different genres. Animation fans, for example, were found to be a lot less engaged with their favorite program than fans of primetime drama shows (Gantz, 2006).

However, the effect of genre on BW has only rarely been studied. Qualitative studies have found that crime, mystery (Ferchaud, 2018), drama (Shim & Kim, 2018), action, sci-fi and fantasy (Moore, 2015), as well as comedy (Ahmed, 2017) have a strong impact on BW. Abou & Ennam (2024) found in their study that college students preferred humorous content for their BW sessions.

2.3 Content characteristics: Narrative structure

Going even 'deeper' than the analysis of genres, qualitative research has also focused on the narrative structure of TV shows. Mikos (2016) found that shows which are famous for their complex narrative (e.g., "Game of Thrones") were described by study participants as especially 'binge-able'. This was confirmed in other studies, in which series with more complex storylines were preferred for BW (e.g., Ferchaud, 2018; Flayelle et al., 2020). Similarly, shows with longer episodes require more attentive viewing and are also more likely to be binged because viewers feel a

stronger urge to follow the narrative (Steiner & Xu, 2020). The effect of episode-spanning storylines is inconclusive in prior research. Steiner and Xu (2020) found that users preferred these types of series for BW; this might be especially true for series produced for streaming services (Kozak & Zeller-Jacques, 2021). Other studies indicate that episodic conclusions increase BW (e.g., Ferchaud, 2018; Mikos, 2016), while others found no significant effect (Pittman & Steiner, 2019). Another relevant content characteristic was identified in the qualitative studies by Ferchaud (2018) and Mikos (2016), where participants preferred to binge TV shows with a darker tonality like "House of Cards" or "Breaking Bad".

2.4 Uses and gratifications

In addition to what type of content audiences prefer, scholars have often investigated the possible motivations for media use. Rubin (1981) identified arousal, entertainment, relaxation, passing time, companionship, social interaction, information, fun, boredom, and habit as primary motivators for television consumption. Alongside these gratifications, scholars have identified additional motivations such as fandom (Yoon et al., 2021), and sex appeal (Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2007) as relevant to TV consumption. Regarding BW, the effect of hedonic motivations such as arousal, entertainment, and fun has been considered especially important (Shim & Kim, 2018; Song et al., 2021). Watching their favorite show leads viewers to experience an emotional high point (Pittman & Sheehan, 2015). BW can therefore be seen as a particularly pleasurable experience that increases enjoyment (Flayelle et al., 2020). Gratifications related to social interaction have also been shown to impact audiences' BWT. These include users' need to feel less lonely (Ahmed, 2017), being able to talk to others about a show (Panda & Pandey, 2017), or being a part of a fan group (Shim & Kim, 2018). Hedonic motivations are especially important for viewers who plan out their viewing sessions, saving up content for a binge during school or work breaks (Perks, 2021). Habit can also be seen as a potent predictor of BW, overshadowing more conscious intentions of watching something (Bastos et al., 2024).

Based on the literature review of content-related and uses and gratification-based research on BW, we formulate the following research questions:

RQ1: Which format preferences influence the audience's BWT?

RQ2: Which preferences for specific TV genres influence audience's BWT?

RQ3: Which preferences for content characteristics influence audience's BWT?

RQ4: Which uses and gratifications influence the audience's BWT?

3. Method

3.1 Operationalization and scale selection

The survey in our study consists of a series of questions designed to assess participants' television format, serial genre, and content characteristics preferences, as well as their streaming service usage and BWT. We relied on established items and scales identified in the literature to operationalize the dependent and independent variables. Where necessary, we developed new items (for a complete list of survey items, see Appendix A1).

The dependent variable in this study is BWT. We used three items based on Song et al. (2021) to determine the BWT of the viewers (e.g., "I tend to watch multiple videos/episodes of a particular television program in one sitting") on a Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7).

To assess uses and gratifications we relied on established items based mostly on Rubin (1981). Participants rated these items also on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). These statements all read "I watch video streaming series, because…" and included gratifications such as "fun", "entertainment", "information", "escapism", "arousal", "entertainment", "intersocial", and "family and friends".

Regarding content characteristics, we included variables on preferences for TV formats, serial genres, as well as narrative structures. Preferences for TV genres were based on the most frequently used genre evaluations in literature, such as mystery, crime, drama, family (not including children's programming), action, animation, sci-fi and fantasy, romance, horror, and comedy (Ahmed, 2017; Ferchaud, 2018; Moore, 2015; Shim & Kim, 2018). These were assessed using a scale from 1 (dislike very much) to 7 (like very much). Preferences for TV formats such as shows (Rubenking & Bracken, 2021), movies, documentaries, daily soaps, news broadcasts, information shows, sports, and reality TV were also taken into account (Flayelle et al., 2020; Kim, 2020; Nikolic et al., 2023; Rentfrow et al., 2011; Rubenking & Bracken, 2021).

For the aspects of narrative structure, we could not rely on established items. Therefore, we decided to develop specific measurements and operationalize certain aspects as bipolar scales. These dimensions of narrative structure were based on previous literature and developed and validated in a series of workshops with a total of 13 program experts from a leading German television production company and one of the leading German film festivals, which took place in December 2022 and January 2023. As a result, a bipolar scale for narrative structure characteristics was derived, comprising tonality (light vs. dark), story setting (extraordinary vs. every day), narrative complexity (complex vs. simple), narrative style (slow vs. fast-paced), multi-episodic storyline (closed episodes/overarching story arcs), and episode length (short vs. long). The items were evaluated on a scale of 1 to 7, i.e., respondents indicated their preference for the type of content, for example, 1 for highly complex series and 7 for simpler narratives, where the midpoint indicated indifference.

To ensure the validity of the answers, for all items relating to the TV format, serial genre, or narrative structure, three at the time of the survey recent and well-known content examples were provided (e.g., sci-fi and fantasy genre was indicated by "House of the Dragon", "The Witcher", "Star Trek: Picard"). The selection of examples was also developed and validated during the workshops.

In addition, the actual usage of SVOD services was assessed using an ordinal scale ("1 – never", "2 – monthly", "3 – weekly", or "4 – daily"). The SVOD services queried included Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Disney+, DAZN, Apple TV+, Paramount+, and WOW.

Since the response options are not interval-scaled, dummy variables were utilized for further analysis. Consequently, the responses were transformed into categories of users and non-users, thereby creating an artificial dichotomy. This approach aligns with the methodology outlined by Döring (2023), facilitating a clear distinction between engagement levels in these digital platforms.

In addition, our research also considers key demographic and socio-economic variables as control variables. These include age, gender, educational level, and income. These control variables allow for a more nuanced analysis of BW behavior, taking into account the diverse backgrounds and living circumstances of the respondents.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the items for the main study, a qualitative pre-test and then a quantitative pre-test was conducted among German university students. Adjustments were made based on the feedback received. The qualitative pre-test took place in January 2023; the quantitative pre-test over two weeks, spanning January and February 2023. Following the exclusion of 23.5% of the responses due to factors such as incomplete surveys, a total of 702 datasets were deemed suitable for analysis. All items, old and new, were applied in this comprehensive preliminary survey.

3.2 Survey design and sample

The study employed a cross-sectional online survey to investigate BW behavior. Based on the conceptual framework and operationalisation, a fully structured questionnaire was designed and executed using Tivian XI GmbH's EFS survey tool. To conduct the online survey, participants were recruited via the certified panel provider Bilendi. The survey was carried out in two separate field phases to minimise common method bias. The first wave took place in February 2023, which interviewed participants on their media usage and content preferences, the second in March 2023, focusing on the usage of streaming services, with a four-week interval between them. Participants who completed the survey during the first phase were invited to partake in the second phase. To integrate the data from both phases, individual test IDs were used to link and merge the two datasets. This two-wave approach provided a comprehensive and robust set of responses for our analysis, limiting potential common-method bias.

A total of 2,528 participants engaged in both phases of the survey. However, the dataset underwent a cleaning process to ensure data quality and accuracy. Concerning the average questionnaire completion time of 11 minutes and 59 se-

conds, we excluded participants who finished the survey in less than five minutes. We factored out participants with inconsistent response behavior by controlling for 'impossible' answer combinations in mutually exclusive item batteries. One-sided clicking behavior was evaluated by calculating the standard deviation for each item battery and looking for cases with a standard deviation of zero throughout the whole questionnaire or a large item battery. Extreme outliers (e.g., in reported hours per week of streaming content usage) were also eliminated, as well as cases where respondents did not provide answers to at least one of the three questions regarding BWT. In total, 569 cases were eliminated and a total of $N = 1,959$ cases were deemed suitable for the final analysis.

3.3 Construct quality assessment

In our study, we measured BWT as a construct comprising three indicators to ensure construct validity, in line with the methodology proposed by Bagozzi et al. (1991). To assess factor reliability, we applied Cronbach's α and examined the factor loadings to ensure item reliability, following the guidelines of Fabrigar et al. (1999) and Nunnally (1978). All indicators met the Cronbach's α threshold of 0.7, thereby indicating satisfactory reliability. Our exploratory factor analysis (EFA), utilizing principal component analysis with varimax rotation, revealed that the BWT construct is comprised of three reliable indicators (α = 0.877, loadings: 0.873–0.911). Additionally, a principal component analysis successfully extracted the life satisfaction factor. The reliability of this scale was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of α=0.918. This comprehensive analysis underscores the robustness and reliability of the constructs used in our study.

To assess the validity of our constructs, we observed the correlations between our items. While there were some moderate Pearson correlations between items of the same category (e.g., different items of uses & gratifications) the overlap of items across categories did not exceed a correlation coefficient of 0.5, with the vast majority lying under the value of 0.3 (see Appendix A4). Furthermore, the value of the variance inflation factors (VIFs) lies under the conservative threshold of 3, as proposed by Hair et al. (2019). Only two items exceed this level but still lie under the acceptable threshold of 5. We, therefore, do not consider multicollinearity as a problem.

3.4 Sample composition and data analysis

The sample included 961 men (49.1%) and 998 women (50.9%). Regarding educational qualifications, 33.6% of the participants held a university degree, 19.6% had completed general university entrance qualifications, 34.1% had finished vocational training, and 11.3% possessed a primary or secondary school certificate. 65.1% of the respondents were employees or civil servants, followed by retirees (16.3%), unemployed/homemakers (8.1%), self-employed individuals (5.6%), and students or apprentices (4.9%). 8.8% of the respondents reported having a migration background. The survey included participants from all German federal states, with the largest portion from North Rhine-Westphalia (22.4%), Bavaria

(13.4%), and Baden-Wuerttemberg (11%). The most prominent age group was those between 30 and 39 years, comprising 29.1% of the sample, followed by the 40–49 age group at 27.5%, those 60 years or older at 19.1%, and the 50–59 age group at 12.6%. The youngest cohort, aged 18–29, was the smallest group in the sample (11.7%). The sample data is summarized in appendix A2.

The gathered data was processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27, focusing on multiple regression analysis and factor analysis. Specifically, we conducted exploratory factor analysis (EFA), as outlined by Netemeyer et al. (2003), utilizing principal component analysis with varimax rotation. This approach was employed to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs and measures that were adapted for our study.

Given that three indicators were operationalized to gauge the tendency towards BW, these were consolidated into a single factor via an explorative principal component analysis. This analysis extracted a principal component that can be termed as the BWT.

4. Results

Our study reveals significant insights into the factors influencing BWT. The model explains 43.9% of the variance (adjusted R^2), which represents a good quality fit in the context of behavioral and social sciences research (Cohen, 1988). For an overview of the regression model results, see Table 2, the means and standard deviations can be found in Appendix A3.

Table 2. Regression model on BWT

Item	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Content characteristics: Television formats					
TV series	0.057	0.011	0.115	5.300	0.000***
Movies	-0.014	0.013	-0.023	-1.047	0.295
Documentaries	0.005	0.012	0.008	0.385	0.701
Daily soaps	-0.008	0.011	-0.016	-0.730	0.465
News broadcast	0.001	0.012	0.002	0.094	0.925
Information shows	-0.019	0.014	-0.030	-1.391	0.164
Sports	-0.024	0.010	-0.054	-2.548	0.011*
Reality TV	0.022	0.012	0.043	1.832	0.067
(Live) Entertain-ment/event show	-0.013	0.012	-0.024	-1.061	0.289
Children's program	0.015	0.011	0.026	1.335	0.182
Content characteristics: Preference for serial genres					
Drama	0.018	0.012	0.036	1.538	0.124
Comedy/sitcom	0.058	0.011	0.122	5.252	0.000***
Crime	0.035	0.012	0.070	2.880	0.004**

Mystery	0.003	0.012	0.006	0.238	0.812
Sci-Fi and fantasy	0.032	0.011	0.071	2.882	0.004**
Family	-0.025	0.012	-0.048	-1.987	0.047*
Romance	0.023	0.012	0.044	1.880	0.060
Horror	-0.021	0.011	-0.044	-1.921	0.055
Action and adventure	0.015	0.012	0.031	1.278	0.201
Animation	-0.024	0.012	-0.047	-2.053	0.040*
Content characteristics: Preference for narrative structure					
Dark tonality	0.031	0.014	0.048	2.278	0.023*
Cross-episode storylines	0.023	0.012	0.036	1.872	0.061
Long episodes	0.006	0.014	0.008	0.422	0.673
Complex story structure	0.000	0.014	0.000	0.022	0.982
Everyday setting	-0.038	0.014	-0.055	-2.791	0.005**
Fast paced story development	0.008	0.014	0.010	0.571	0.568
Uses and gratifications					
Arousal	0.052	0.014	0.086	3.710	0.000***
Fun	0.055	0.021	0.089	2.617	0.009**
Entertainment	0.063	0.024	0.096	2.594	0.010*
Relaxation	0.024	0.018	0.039	1.387	0.165
Passing time	0.047	0.015	0.080	3.128	0.002**
Boredom	0.017	0.012	0.031	1.393	0.164
Escape	0.007	0.012	0.014	0.604	0.546
Habit	-0.016	0.012	-0.030	-1.361	0.174
Learning about world events	-0.031	0.014	-0.057	-2.149	0.032*
Information	-0.004	0.015	-0.007	-0.241	0.810
Company	0.004	0.013	0.008	0.331	0.740
Intersocial	0.000	0.015	-0.001	-0.028	0.977
Family and friends	-0.005	0.013	-0.010	-0.407	0.684
Controls					
Intercept	-1.684	0.188		-8.982	0.000***
Age (years)	-0.006	0.002	-0.079	-3.635	0.000***
Gender	-0.080	0.041	-0.040	-1.926	0.054
Income	-0.020	0.014	-0.028	-1.417	0.157
Educational level	-0.014	0.013	-0.020	-1.066	0.287
Amazon Prime Video use	0.077	0.019	0.083	4.114	0.000***
Netflix use	0.112	0.018	0.133	6.160	0.000***

Disney+ use	0.003	0.022	0.003	0.130	0.896
DAZN use	-0.002	0.033	-0.001	-0.053	0.958
Apple TV+ use	-0.024	0.042	-0.013	-0.566	0.572
Paramount+ use	-0.048	0.040	-0.026	-1.183	0.237
Sky Wow use	0.016	0.030	0.011	0.526	0.599
Model Fit	R²	Adj. R²	F	df	p-value
	0.454	0.439	30.982	51	<0.001***

Notes. Significance levels: *<.05, ** <.01, ***<.001

TV format preferences mostly did not show a significant effect on BWT. Only a preference for series proved to be positively significant ($\beta = 0.115$, $p < 0.001$), while liking sports programs proved to be a negative predictor ($\beta = -0.054$, $p < 0.05$). Several serial genres impacted participants' BWT significantly. The strongest positive relationship was observed for comedy/sitcom ($\beta = 0.122$, $p < 0.001$), followed by sci-fi and fantasy ($\beta = 0.071$, $p = <0.01$), and crime shows ($\beta = 0.070$, $p < 0.01$). Conversely, a preference for family shows was negatively associated with BWT ($\beta = -0.048$, $p < 0.05$) as well as for animation ($\beta = -0.047$, $p < 0.05$). In terms of narrative structure, a preference for darker themes had a positive correlation ($\beta = 0.048$, $p < 0.05$) while a preference for everyday settings ($\beta = -0.055$, $p < 0.01$) was negatively correlated with BWT. Noteworthy, a storyline that spans multiple episodes was not associated with a significant increase in BWT, with the p-level being close to 0.05 ($\beta = 0.036$, $p = 0.061$).

The uses and gratifications correlated with BWT behavior included entertainment ($\beta = 0.097$, $p < 0.001$), fun ($\beta = 0.089$, $p < 0.01$), and arousal ($\beta = 0.086$, $p < 0.001$). Another notable motivation for watching was to pass time ($\beta = 0.080$, $p < 0.01$) while learning about world events ($\beta = -0.057$, $p < 0.05$) was negatively correlated. Certain motivations such as seeking escapism or learning new things did not significantly correlate with BWT.

Concerning the control variables, only age had a small but significant negative relationship with BW ($\beta = -0.079$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that BWT is less frequent as age increases. Gender just failed to have a significant effect ($\beta = -0.040$, $p = 0.054$). Focusing on the use of the most relevant SVOD services, only the use of Netflix ($\beta = 0.133$, $p < 0.001$) and Amazon Prime Video ($\beta = 0.083$, $p < 0.001$) proved to be positively associated with BWT.

The results show that there is an effect on BWT for every category we observed, however not every item showed a significant influence. The direction of the effect also differed between items. Table 3 shows the results of the research questions of our study.

Table 3. Table of results

Item	Results
RQ1: Content characteristics: Preference for television formats	
TV shows	positive effect
Movies	no effect
Documentaries	no effect
Daily soaps	no effect
News broadcast	no effect
Information shows	no effect
Sports	negative effect
Reality TV	no effect
(Live) Entertainment/event show	no effect
Children's program	no effect
RQ 2: Content characteristics: Preference for serial genres	
Drama	no effect
Comedy/sitcom	positive effect
Crime	positive effect
Mystery	no effectv
Sci-Fi/fantasy	positive effect
Family	negative effect
Romance	no effect
Horror	no effect
Action	no effect
Animation	negative effect
RQ3: Preference for narrative structure	
Dark tonality	positive effect
Cross-episode storylines	no effect
Long episodes	no effect
Complex story structure	no effect
Everyday setting	negative supported
Fast paced story development	no effect
RQ 4: Uses and gratifications	
Arousal	positive effect

Fun	positive effect
Entertainment	positive effect
Relaxation	no effect
Passing time	positive effect
Boredom	no effect
Escape	no effect
Habit	no effect
Learning about world events	negative effect
Information	no effect
Company	no effect
Intersocial	no effect
Family and friends	no effect

5. Discussion

The purpose of this empirical study was to investigate the antecedents of BW behavior, operationalized as BWT. To deepen the research on this relatively recent phenomenon, we closely examined factors such as preferences for TV formats, serial genres and narrative structures, and uses and gratifications to provide a comprehensive understanding of their impact on BWT.

The strongest influence on BWT is exerted by uses and gratifications, particularly hedonic ones such as fun, entertainment, and arousal. BW is mostly used to satisfy a need for these hedonic motivations. Shows that are particularly delightful to watch can therefore be considered especially binge-able. This observation aligns with findings from other qualitative studies (Flayelle et al., 2020), which have now been empirically verified for Germany.

Surprisingly, social gratifications did not show a significant effect, differing from previous studies like Panda & Pandey (2017). The desire to discuss a series on an SVOD service with others or to watch the same series as friends and family does not significantly influence BWT. At the same time, BWT does not seem to be a substitute for social contact, as loneliness showed no influence on BWT. This observation is consistent with the findings of Tukachinsky & Eyal (2018), who also detected no correlation with loneliness. The discrepancy with Panda & Pandey (2017) may be due to the sample selection, as their study was conducted among college students, while this study does not have such a limitation.

Relaxation was not found to be a significant gratification driving BWT, potentially due to the greater cognitive effort required for BW (Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020). However, passing time did significantly affect BWT, suggesting that BW is strongly driven by impulses. Additionally, a negative influence of the gratification of learning about current world events suggests that BW is less about education and gaining new insights and more about enjoying content. This might align with

the almost significant effect of escapism on BWT. Therefore, the hedonic and pass time oriented uses and gratifications like fun or arousal are found to affect BWT, in line with previous research (Pittman & Sheehan, 2015).

As already noted, the effects of content characteristics on BWT have received significantly less academic attention, with most studies being conducted qualitatively. We contributed to the body of research by examining their impact on BWT quantitatively. Considering TV formats, only a preference for TV series showed a significant (and large) effect on BWT. This might not seem surprising since TV series are widely considered to be especially suitable for BWT (Flayelle et al., 2019). However, it is interesting to see that the other TV formats did not display significant effects, therefore, indicating somewhat limited appeal to drive BWT strategies. Extending this line of thought, sports formats were found to be negatively associated with BWT. This might be explained by the fact that sports events do not follow narratives in which viewers could become more deeply involved over episodes. The advantage that is generated through cumulative viewing is therefore absent. On the contrary, sports formats are driven by their live character, which severely limits BW potential.

With TV series being the most relevant content category for BWT, our analysis also yields interesting insights into the relevance of serial content characteristics. The effect of preferences for series with a dark tonality in combination with the gratification of arousal is in line with the traditional theory of tragedy, which alludes to a kind of catharsis effect (positive feelings aroused through negative identification), which could influence BWT. This is also mirrored for the more 'dark' genre of crime series, in line with previous findings (e.g., Ferchaud, 2018). In addition, our findings point to the relevance of extraordinary story settings as a driver for BWT. This is underscored by the influence of preferences for sci-fi and fantasy series on BWT, where the setting diverges from reality.

On the other hand, the results of the regression analysis show a negative effect of everyday settings on BWT. The family genre, which deals with more everyday situations, exhibits a negative influence on BWT. This type of light-hearted and potentially low-brow genre has been discussed in the past as part of the escapist use and gratification of BW (Halfmann & Reinecke, 2021). However, since escapism could not be demonstrated to be a significant factor in this study, it might also correlate with the fact that BW is less an escapist than, as outlined above, a more positively performed, hedonic behavior. Taken together, our findings may explain previous assessments that shows like "Game of Thrones", "Dr. Who", or "Breaking Bad" are often associated with BWT (Mikos, 2016; Pittman & Steiner, 2019; Starosta et al., 2019). Anyhow, the often-cited relevance of storylines arching over many episodes was not found to have a significant effect.

Interestingly, in addition to the family genre, only animation has a negative influence on BWT. It might be assumed that animation shows might cater to a very specific demographic which could be distinct from the typical binge-watcher. This finding suggests a more complex relationship between genre and viewing behavior, warranting further investigation into how different narrative structures and themes impact BWT.

Regarding control variables, we found that the usage of specific SVOD services, notably Netflix and Amazon Prime Video is correlated with BWT. Here, it is unclear if correlation or causation can be observed. The literature review had already suggested that several product characteristics of streaming services like Netflix may facilitate BWT, such as lack of advertising interruptions (at least at the time of the study), affordable price, and an effective recommendation algorithm. Furthermore, the range of series offered by the service is likely an important factor; according to a Nielsen study for the year 2022 (Nielsen, 2023), 10 of the 15 most-streamed series were found on Netflix. This makes particular sense, as Netflix first and foremost is not only associated with the potential to binge-watch but even formed the concept of BW. In a similar vein, Amazon Prime Video as (again, at least at the time of the study) the foremost competitor can serve as a similar outlet. This is in line with literature that conceptualizes both of these outlets as the main device for binge-watchers (Nanda & Banerjee, 2020). But it also might be argued that higher BWT may drive the purchase of a respective streaming provider subscription. This might be especially true if BWT drives habit formation, which has been shown to significantly affect not only usage intention but also brand perception of a service (Zabel et al., 2024) The findings of this study, therefore, provide several starting points for further research.

The controls indicated that only age serves as a significant factor for BWT. Previous research yielded inconclusive results. While Pittmann and Sheehan did not find a significant effect of age (2015), Flayelle et al. (2020) did argue for a small effect in their literature review. Those vague results can be interpreted in line with research on other digital technologies, which past research frequently described as a young people's game. However, this general cohort effect of the use of digital technologies, similar to virtual reality (Kunz et al., 2022), online journalism (O'Brien et al., 2020), or video games (Greenberg et al., 2010), might vanish over time as older cohorts become more and more inclined to use digital technologies, thus also more inclined to a tendency to binge-watch (Charness & Boot, 2009).

6. Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into various factors influencing BWT, thereby enriching the existing body of research, particularly within the German context. Our findings reveal that the motivations and determinants of BWT are crucial in deciphering the reasons behind the continuous, back-to-back consumption of TV shows by audiences. Furthermore, the understanding of BWT is more diverse and complex than previously thought.

Concerning this understanding, hedonic uses and gratifications like fun, entertainment, arousal, and passing time exhibit a strong positive effect on the propensity to binge-watch, whereas the desire to stay informed about current world events shows a negative correlation. Inter- or parasocial and family/friend-relational uses and gratifications are not central, underlying the hedonistic nature of BW.

Furthermore, our analysis highlights that a generally strong preference for TV series and serial genres like comedy, crime, sci-fi and fantasy in particular, have a positive impact on BWT. On the contrary, genres such as horror and family, along

with sports events, tend to negatively influence these tendencies. The use of streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video emerges as a significant positive factor, aligning with the global trend towards on-demand digital media consumption. Additionally, a preference for darker tonalities and extraordinary settings in TV shows further underscores the importance of content characteristics in driving BW behaviors.

Our study yields several practical implications. First, the high relevance of the serial TV formats for BWT holds implications for streaming platforms and content library operators alike. A focus on reality-based or sports content, as displayed, e.g., by the streaming platform RTL+, may not drive BWT to a similar degree as can be observed on the market-leading streaming competitors. Also, specific content characteristics can be identified that could prove to be more suitable for audience strategies built around BW behavior. Employment of complex storytelling, novel settings, or darker tones tends to be more engaging and thus more likely to induce BW behavior. This finding is important for content producers and streaming services in garnering strategies to create BW-worthy formats for a content-hungry audience. Also, it remains to be seen if smaller streaming providers can profit from BWT in the same way that the larger providers, Netflix and Amazon Prime Video did in our sample.

Nevertheless, this study naturally has its limitations. Firstly, the cross-sectional nature of this study limits the ability to causal inferences. Longitudinal studies or research designs including either real-world data from streaming services or experiments could help generalize some of the findings of this study and better understand how such behavior develops over time. Related to said point, while we try to circumvent common-method bias via a two-wave survey, data from different sources could also help to further mitigate the risk of such biases.

Secondly, while our sample was diverse and representative of the German population, it is limited due to cultural and geographic reasons. In this regard, genre or serial preferences may be affected by (previous) traditional television, or newer streaming services offered in Germany, which may vary from other countries. Also, the operationalisation of BWT, which focuses on episodes, may have been more applicable for serial contents than for formats where units are not defined as episodes (e.g., feature films). The findings may also be affected by other 'general' cultural and media-specific factors, e.g., the fact that German media markets are often slow adopters of new technology and trends (Naudé & Nagler, 2017). Thus, the study of different cultural contexts could validate and/or extend our findings, e.g., regarding uses and gratifications or content characteristics. A cross-country survey in Europe but also on other continents or in developing countries could further develop the understanding of 'general' traits of hedonic BW behavior. They would enhance our understanding of how regional variations in media consumption patterns and media availability influence BW behaviors. This could be particularly enlightening in regions where streaming services are just beginning to gain a foothold, offering a glimpse into how BWT might evolve in new markets.

While our model explained a considerable portion of the variance (43.9% adjusted R^2), it leaves room for exploration into factors that were not included or were less significant in our study. Our study focused primarily on content charac-

teristics and personal gratifications, not addressing other relevant factors such as personality, mental health, or specific life circumstances that might influence BW behavior. Future research could delve into the psychological and social aspects not captured in this study.

Furthermore, while the present research took a bird's eye view on the subject, dealing with the abstraction of formats, genres, and content characteristics, future research could also focus on BW behavior at the media product level, e.g., focusing on specific particularly (un-)successful shows. Here, a variety of methods could be applied such as incentive-aligned experiments, conjoint analyses, or qualitative comparative analyses. This would also be particularly interesting from a marketing perspective. As pointed out, BW plays a central role in marketing strategies of streaming providers. The study of specific word-of-mouth qualities and the underlying market dynamics between hit shows and niche offerings can yield important insights for marketing to BW-willing audiences.

7. References

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Appendix

Appendix A1. Questionnaire

Item	Operationalization
Content characteristics: Television formats	Please indicate what you think about the following video content.
TV shows	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Movies	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Documentaries	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Daily soaps	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
News broadcast	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Information shows	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Sports	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Reality TV	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Content characteristics: Serial genres	Please indicate which series you like to watch.
Drama	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Comedy/Sitcom	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Crime	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")

Mystery	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Sci-Fi/Fantasy	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Family	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Romance	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Horror	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Action	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")
Animation	1 ("I don't like it at all") to 7 ("I like it very much")

Content characteristics: Narrative structure	Please indicate on a scale which type of series you prefer.
Dark tonality	1 ("friendly, carefree atmosphere/wholesome world") to 7 ("Gloomy mood/troublesome")
Over branching storylines	1 ("episodes that are closed in terms of content") to 7 ("stories spanning episodes")
Long episodes	1 ("short episodes") to 7 ("long episodes")
Complex story structure	1 ("multi-layered/complex narrative") to 7 ("simply narrated/ one can follow casually")
Everyday setting	1 ("ordinary setting") to 7 ("special setting")

Gratifications	"I watch video streaming series..."
Arousal	"...because it's exciting."
Fun	"...because they are fun for me."
Entertainment	"...because they are entertaining."
Relaxation	"...because I can relax."
Passing Time	"...to pass the time."
Boredom	"...because I'm bored."
Escape	"...to escape reality and seek refuge in fictional worlds."
Habit	"...because it's a habit."
Learning about world events	"...to find out about what's happening in the world."
Information	"...to learn how to do things I've never done before."
Company	"...so that I don't feel alone."
Intersocial	"...so that I can talk to other people about the program."
Family and Friends	"...because my friends and family watch it too."

Life satisfaction (construct)	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following statement (1: "do not agree at all" – 7: "completely agree")
LS1	"In most areas, my life corresponds to my ideals."
LS2	"My living conditions are excellent."
LS3	"I am happy with my life."

Binge-watching tendency (construct)	Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following statement (1: "do not agree at all" – 7: "completely agree")
BW1	"I tend to watch several episodes of a particular series in one sitting."
BW2	"I tend to watch several episodes of a particular series in quick succession."
BW3	"Sometimes I watch episodes of a series back-to-back ("binge-watching")."

Appendix A2. Sample demographics

Variable	Number	%
Sex		
Female	961	49.1
Male	998	50.9
Education		
University degree	658	33.6
General university entrance qualifications	384	19.6
Vocational training	667	34.1
Primary or secondary school certificate	222	11.3
Others	27	1.4
Employment		
Employee/civil servant	1268	65.1
Retiree	318	16.3
Unemployed/homemaker	159	8.1
Self employed	109	5.6
Student/apprentice	96	4.9
Migration status		

With	172	8.8
Without	1778	91.2
Age		
18–29	229	11.7
30–39	570	29.1
40–49	539	27.5
50–59	247	12.6
60+	374	19.1

Appendix A3. Means and standard deviations

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Age	45,07	13,900
Education	4,03	1,422
Income	4,57	1,432
Subscriptions		
Amazon Prime Video	2,28	1,092
Netflix	2,30	1,188
Disney+	1,63	0,980
DAZN	1,26	0,685
Apple TV+	1,15	0,537
Paramount+	1,17	0,557
Sky Wow	1,26	0,706
Others	0,60	0,856
Content Characteristics: Serial Genres		
Mystery	3,74	2,181
Crime	4,04	2,024
Drama	3,73	2,040
Familie	3,41	1,952
Action	3,87	2,014
Animation	3,11	1,966
Sci-Fi & Fantasy	3,89	2,243
Romance	3,24	1,989
Horror	3,20	2,117
Comedy	3,96	2,122

Content Characteristics: Narrative Structure		
Dark tonality	3,97	1,598
Complex story structure	3,66	1,580
Over branching storylines	4,02	1,618
Long episodes	4,24	1,424
Everyday Setting	3,83	1,525

Gratifications		
Arousal	4,49	1,692
Fun	5,34	1,664
Entertainment	5,52	1,557
Relaxation	5,30	1,641
Passing Time	4,97	1,732
Escape	3,92	1,988
Boredom	3,67	1,915
Habit	3,94	1,886
Learning about world event	3,68	1,882
Information	3,35	1,830
Company	2,94	1,901
Intersocial	3,27	1,876
Family and Friends	3,29	1,922
Content Characteristics: Television Formats		
TV Shows	4,64	2,053
Movies	5,05	1,660
Documentaries	4,66	1,717
Daily Soaps	2,65	1,990
News broadcast	4,88	1,776
Information Shows	4,59	1,590
Sports	3,58	2,227
Reality TV	2,68	1,912

Appendix A4. Correlations

	Age	Gender	Edu-cation	Income	Amazon	Netflix	Disney+	DAZN	Apple TV+	Para-mount+	Sky Wow	Mystery	Crime	Drama	Family	Action
Age	1	,079"	-,123"	-,090"												
Gender	,079"	1	0,040	,095"												
Education	-,123"	0,040	1	,322"												
Income	-,090"	,095"	,322"	1												
Amazon	-,252"	,045	,056"	,151"	1	,388"	,354"	,276"	,240"	,253"	,233"					
Netflix	-,364"	,005	,096"	,190"	,388"	1	,390"	,222"	,226"	,251"	,212"					
Disney+	-,293"	0,036	,101"	,144"	,354"	,390"	1	,281"	,361"	,383"	,307"					
DAZN	-,141"	,169"	,087"	,104"	,276"	,222"	,281"	1	,489"	,479"	,480"					
Apple TV+	-,143"	,079"	,125"	,096"	,240"	,226"	,361"	,489"	1	,570"	,471"					
Paramount+	-,143"	,102"	,080"	,077"	,253"	,251"	,383"	,479"	,570"	1	,477"					
Sky Wow	-,135"	,100"	,078"	,108"	,233"	,212"	,307"	,480"	,471"	,477"	1					
Mystery	-,343"	0,039	,094"	,094"	,313"	,402"	,330"	,096"	,164"	,150"	,158"	1	,533"	,387"	,288"	,443"
Crime	-,202"	,006	,108"	,133"	,269"	,320"	,226"	,150"	,171"	,140"	,142"	,533"	1	,471"	,336"	,578"
Drama	-,254"	-,192"	,102"	,083"	,263"	,338"	,194"	,130"	,185"	,157"	,135"	,387"	,471"	,483"	,483"	,353"
Family	-,237"	-,135"	,087"	,073"	,217"	,264"	,256"	,165"	,208"	,164"	,164"	,288"	,336"	,483"	1	,335"
Action	-,188"	,131"	0,042	,095"	,323"	,283"	,253"	,174"	,164"	,152"	,150"	,443"	,578"	,353"	,335"	1
Animation	-,337"	,199"	,092"	0,041	,234"	,216"	,288"	,204"	,210"	,186"	,194"	,398"	,249"	,211"	,341"	,322"
SciFi/Fantasy	-,220"	,138"	,081"	,074"	,292"	,299"	,318"	,097"	,140"	,154"	,152"	,606"	,347"	,272"	,197"	,440"
Romance	-,240"	-,239"	,101"	,096"	,218"	,304"	,226"	,161"	,215"	,177"	,139"	,314"	,316"	,546"	,499"	,296"
Horror	-,196"	,162"	-0,005	0,032	,254"	,279"	,268"	,154"	,200"	,170"	,206"	,553"	,375"	,237"	,198"	,438"
Comedy	-,385"	,047"	,156"	,097"	,229"	,255"	,274"	,150"	,149"	,119"	,134"	,343"	,321"	,317"	,472"	,333"
Fun	-,277"	-0,018	,051"	,098"	,293"	,364"	,235"	0,045	0,035	,063"	,066"	,349"	,310"	,290"	,200"	,285"
Entertainment	-,278"	-0,025	,053"	,093"	,285"	,356"	,226"	,053"	0,045	,068"	,073"	,337"	,333"	,302"	,215"	,310"
Relaxation	-,268"	-,085"	-0,007	,073"	,249"	,289"	,205"	0,010	0,027	,049"	0,034	,270"	,278"	,280"	,201"	,259"
Passing Time	-,221"	-,045	-,035	0,033	,261"	,276"	,198"	,066"	,076"	,078"	,065"	,253"	,241"	,225"	,190"	,226"
Escape	-,307"	-,046"	-0,005	-,052"	,259"	,228"	,206"	,116"	,144"	,139"	,107"	,293"	,196"	,239"	,234"	,210"
Boredom	-,292"	-0,015	-0,026	-0,045	,193"	,217"	,183"	,103"	,135"	,118"	,107"	,224"	,161"	,179"	,194"	,184"
Habit	-,224"	-0,035	-0,014	-0,005	,229"	,228"	,191"	,153"	,144"	,154"	,128"	,221"	,231"	,245"	,276"	,208"
Learning ab. Events	-0,045	0,043	0,031	-0,019	,175"	,114"	,145"	,200"	,194"	,166"	,159"	,127"	,168"	,223"	,276"	,171"
Information	-,119"	,055"	0,013	-0,005	,199"	,174"	,156"	,204"	,215"	,187"	,166"	,169"	,174"	,238"	,298"	,196"
Company	-,191"	-0,007	-0,026	-,116"	,145"	,129"	,140"	,171"	,201"	,183"	,131"	,178"	,137"	,189"	,232"	,128"
Intersocial	-,192"	0,020	0,020	0,038	,190"	,235"	,233"	,208"	,176"	,180"	,181"	,239"	,201"	,242"	,309"	,215"
Family & Friends	-,169"	0,020	0,045	,080"	,212"	,241"	,212"	,214"	,178"	,162"	,187"	,201"	,169"	,234"	,310"	,181"
Arousal	-,204"	,045"	0,010	0,035	,282"	,284"	,233"	,124"	,150"	,153"	,134"	,346"	,341"	,301"	,255"	,374"
Series	-,209"	-,078"	,095"	,066"	,201"	,232"	,245"	,047"	,099"	,089"	,096"	,369"	,350"	,342"	,326"	,384"
Movies	-,100"	,048"	,106"	,104"	,190"	,176"	,180"	0,027	,076"	,049"	,068"	,304"	,371"	,227"	,188"	,391"
Documentaries	-0,027	,079"	,097"	0,039	,071"	,069"	,078"	,054"	,074"	,047"	,073"	,197"	,235"	,179"	,146"	,201"
Daily Soaps	-,104"	-,128"	-,052"	0,027	,138"	,086"	,131"	,190"	,224"	,190"	,154"	,050"	,070"	,190"	,347"	,108"
News	,232"	,082"	0,038	,095"	,025	-,089"	-,054"	,086"	,052"	0,034	0,023	-,079"	,045	,057"	,076"	0,031
Information Shows	,102"	-0,022	-0,024	0,045	,053"	-0,008	-0,008	,075"	,083"	,081"	,048"	0,011	,093"	,118"	,148"	,089"
Sports	,071"	,358"	,058"	,131"	,122"	,062"	,072"	,381"	,153"	,159"	,201"	0,005	,128"	0,012	,126"	,185"
Live Entertainment/Event Shows	-,145"	-,095"	0,040	,052"	,143"	,096"	,138"	,218"	,244"	,173"	,148"	,080"	,134"	,235"	,356"	,157"
Reality TV	-,266"	-,083"	,050"	,118"	,189"	,216"	,210"	,250"	,270"	,235"	,196"	,168"	,193"	,260"	,408"	,179"
Children's Program	-,144"	-,060"	,067"	,083"	,148"	,117"	,225"	,189"	,189"	,171"	,122"	,158"	,167"	,229"	,330"	,197"
Dark tonality	-,057"	,184"	0,023	0,007	,155"	,182"	,096"	,117"	,083"	,087"	,128"	,333"	,260"	,071"	-,113"	,232"
Everyday Setting	,050"	-,116"	0,024	-0,028	-0,016	-,121"	-0,020	,054"	,069"	,063"	0,025	-,205"	-,149"	0,045	,198"	-,102"
Complex Story Structure	-,066"	-0,014	-0,026	-0,013	0,031	-,075"	0,027	,088"	,057"	,060"	,056"	-,153"	-,174"	-,054"	,191"	-,080"
Fast paced Story Development	-,062"	0,008	0,035	0,038	,080"	,082"	,099"	,115"	,086"	,093"	,090"	,102"	,146"	,066"	,093"	,182"
Cross-episode Storylines	-,178"	,104"	,106"	,111"	,156"	,201"	,094"	,082"	,076"	,063"	,077"	,235"	,111"	,099"	0,026	,098"
Long Episodes	-0,045	,091"	0,026	0,026	,104"	,121"	,108"	,052"	,105"	,121"	,055"	,202"	,115"	,125"	0,008	,186"

	Ani-mation	SciFi/Fantasy	Romance	Horror	Comedy	Fun	Enter-tainment	Relax-ation	Passing Time	Escape	Bore-dom	Habit	Learning ab. Events	Infor-mation	Compa-ny
Age															
Gender															
Education															
Income															
Amazon															
Netflix															
Disney+															
DAZN															
Apple TV+															
Paramount+															
Sky Wow															
Mystery	,398**	,606**	,314**	,553**	,343**										
Crime	,249**	,347**	,316**	,375**	,321**										
Drama	,211**	,272**	,546**	,237**	,317**										
Family	,341**	,197**	,499**	,198**	,472**										
Action	,322**	,440**	,296**	,438**	,333**										
Animation	1	,425**	,192**	,387**	,483**										
SciFi/Fantasy	,425**	1	,234**	,479**	,297**										
Romance	,192**	,234**	1	,213**	,302**										
Horror	,387**	,479**	,213**	1	,287**										
Comedy	,483**	,297**	,302**	,287**	1										
Fun	,190**	,316**	,202**	,226**	,274**	1	,864**	,699**	,576**	,375**	,240**	,311**	,178**	,142**	,103**
Entertainment	,198**	,311**	,227**	,238**	,262**	,864**	1	,745**	,604**	,366**	,241**	,329**	,183**	,138**	,099**
Relaxation	,147**	,250**	,211**	,184**	,228**	,699**	,745**	1	,633**	,434**	,284**	,356**	,193**	,185**	,156**
Passing Time	,174**	,206**	,197**	,183**	,229**	,576**	,604**	,633**	1	,453**	,490**	,427**	,233**	,250**	,261**
Escape	,241**	,264**	,248**	,234**	,212**	,375**	,366**	,434**	,453**	1	,410**	,416**	,359**	,412**	,496**
Boredom	,229**	,170**	,198**	,200**	,237**	,240**	,241**	,284**	,490**	,410**	1	,450**	,241**	,330**	,459**
Habit	,184**	,143**	,234**	,186**	,226**	,311**	,329**	,356**	,427**	,416**	,450**	1	,380**	,390**	,454**
Learning ab. Events	,223**	,090**	,226**	,169**	,155**	,178**	,183**	,193**	,233**	,359**	,241**	,380**	1	,734**	,425**
Information	,262**	,148**	,266**	,205**	,194**	,142**	,138**	,185**	,250**	,412**	,330**	,390**	,734**	1	,491**
Company	,244**	,117**	,226**	,165**	,167**	,103**	,099**	,156**	,261**	,496**	,459**	,454**	,425**	,491**	1
Intersocial	,268**	,194**	,269**	,227**	,233**	,208**	,216**	,233**	,288**	,423**	,347**	,419**	,466**	,518**	,556**
Family & Friends	,241**	,149**	,260**	,178**	,202**	,196**	,183**	,186**	,251**	,330**	,286**	,390**	,408**	,451**	,463**
Arousal	,260**	,304**	,268**	,310**	,236**	,500**	,512**	,460**	,409**	,442**	,265**	,377**	,356**	,363**	,293**
Series	,219**	,351**	,271**	,221**	,284**	,318**	,335**	,275**	,215**	,182**	,115**	,221**	,060**	,077**	,102**
Movies	,191**	,320**	,173**	,226**	,222**	,290**	,304**	,268**	,188**	,152**	,060**	,105**	,081**	,047**	0,020
Documentaries	,206**	,226**	,103**	,163**	,160**	,158**	,151**	,117**	,103**	,054**	,050*	0,044	,155**	,118**	0,023
Daily Soaps	,136**	0,003	,319**	,092**	,097**	-0,006	0,002	0,043	,089**	,199**	,135**	,234**	,215**	,233**	,256**
News	0,009	-0,023	0,042	0,010	-,048*	-0,008	0,001	-0,011	-0,003	-,074**	-,072**	0,006	,209**	,112**	-0,006
Information Shows	,049*	0,021	,147**	,068**	0,030	0,035	,055*	0,038	,056*	0,004	0,029	0,021	,220**	,176**	0,027
Sports	,149**	0,036	,071**	,099**	,124**	0,012	0,012	-0,016	-0,007	-0,010	0,017	0,036	,206**	,193**	,082**
Live Entertainment/Event Shows	,170**	,053*	,364**	,120**	,181**	0,032	,069**	,054*	,085**	,161**	,151**	,177**	,248**	,252**	,213**
Reality TV	,223**	,090**	,375**	,187**	,236**	,085**	,099**	,109**	,150**	,204**	,200**	,233**	,255**	,294**	,239**
Children's Program	,302**	,161**	,304**	,145**	,245**	,079**	,095**	,106**	,097**	,128**	,083**	,104**	,170**	,222**	,157**
Dark tonality	,107**	,296**	-,113**	,368**	-,061**	,132**	,112**	,066**	,067**	,079**	,062**	0,028	0,017	,053*	,047*
Everyday Setting	-0,011	-,185**	,167**	-,150**	,079**	-,113**	-,104**	-,062**	-0,027	0,037	0,024	,110**	,062**	,080**	,117**
Complex Story Structure	,147**	-,117**	,087**	-,073**	,278**	-,075**	-,078**	-0,043	0,037	,055*	,086**	,102**	,060**	,115**	,115**
Fast paced Story Development	,060*	0,043	,062*	,106**	,104**	,071**	,081**	,054*	,048*	0,015	0,026	0,044	,063**	,091**	,048*
Cross-episode Storylines	,095**	,259**	,082**	,121**	,049*	,173**	,158**	,064**	,074**	,134**	0,021	,061**	,070**	,079**	0,042
Long Episodes	,068**	,322**	,049*	,155**	0,011	,150**	,141**	,094**	,094**	,135**	0,032	,064**	0,036	,062*	,063**

	Inter-social	Family & Friends	Arousal	Series	Movies	Documen-taries	Daily Soaps	News	Information Shows	Sports	Live Entertainment/ Event Shows	Reality TV	Children's Program	Dark tonality
Age														
Gender														
Education														
Income														
Amazon														
Netflix														
Disney+														
DAZN														
Apple TV+														
Paramount+														
Sky Wow														
Mystery														
Crime														
Drama														
Family														
Action														
Animation														
SciFi/Fantasy														
Romance														
Horror														
Comedy														
Fun	,208**	,196**	,500**											
Entertainment	,216**	,183**	,512**											
Relaxation	,233**	,186**	,460**											
Passing Time	,288**	,251**	,409**											
Escape	,423**	,330**	,442**											
Boredom	,347**	,286**	,265**											
Habit	,419**	,390**	,377**											
Learning ab. Events	,466**	,408**	,356**											
Information	,518**	,451**	,363**											
Company	,556**	,463**	,293**											
Intersocial	1	,715**	,412**											
Family & Friends	,715**	1	,368**											
Arousal	,412**	,368**	1											
Series	,165**	,146**	,295**	1	,468**	,248**	,170**	0,005	,054	0,041	,179**	,147**	,185**	
Movies	,108**	,106**	,225**	,468**	1	,391**	0,023	,137**	,156**	,124**	,107**	,069**	,151**	
Documentaries	,087**	,071**	,103**	,248**	,391**	1	-0,023	,254**	,351**	,148**	,080**	,074**	,190**	
Daily Soaps	,246**	,242**	,164**	,170**	0,023	-0,023	1	,150**	,172**	,118**	,449**	,461**	,239**	
News	,107**	,076**	,078**	0,005	,137**	,254**	,150**	1	,503**	,258**	,163**	,055*	,146**	
Information Shows	,140**	,109**	,102**	,054*	,156**	,351**	,172**	,503**	1	,168**	,264**	,194**	,217**	
Sports	,177**	,200**	,148**	0,041	,124**	,148**	,118**	,258**	,168**	1	,236**	,167**	,181**	
Live Entertainment/Event Shows	,262**	,238**	,177**	,179**	,107**	,080**	,449**	,163**	,264**	,236**	1	,579**	,268**	
Reality TV	,273**	,282**	,202**	,147**	,069**	,074**	,461**	,055*	,194**	,167**	,579**	1	,240**	
Children's Program	,172**	,177**	,146**	,185**	,151**	,190**	,239**	,146**	,217**	,181**	,268**	,240**	1	
Dark tonality	,075*	,053*	,164**	,061*	,154**	,131**	-,108**	0,019	-,039	,077**	-,112**	-0,043	-,048*	1
Everyday Setting	0,044	,056*	-,051*	-0,025	-,086**	-0,041	,227**	,059*	0,045	0,015	,138**	,115**	,148**	-,273**
Complex Story Structure	,086**	,096**	-,081**	-,059*	-,109**	-,051*	,164**	-0,007	0,044	,054*	,130**	,111**	,158**	-,323**
Fast paced Story Development	,078**	,075**	,112**	,059*	,056*	,049*	0,022	0,037	0,040	,084**	,058*	,074**	0,037	,113**
Cross-episode Storylines	,127**	,115**	,175**	,070**	,129**	,060*	-0,007	-0,001	-0,045	,061**	0,002	0,029	0,022	,271**
Long Episodes	,081**	,073**	,218**	,128**	,112**	,050*	-0,005	-0,020	-0,008	-0,008	0,007	0,032	0,028	,242**

	Everyday Setting	Complex Story Structure	Fast paced Story Developement	Crossepisode Storylines	Long Episodes
Age					
Gender					
Education					
Income					
Amazon					
Netflix					
Disney+					
DAZN					
Apple TV+					
Paramount+					
Sky Wow					
Mystery					
Crime					
Drama					
Family					
Action					
Animation					
SciFi/Fantasy					
Romance					
Horror					
Comedy					
Fun					
Entertain-ment					
Relaxation					
Passing Time					
Escape					
Boredom					
Habit					
Learning ab. Events					
Information					
Company					
Intersocial					
Family & Friends					
Arousal					
Series					
Movies					
Documen-taries					
Daily Soaps					
News					
Information Shows					
Sports					
Live Entertainment/Event Shows					
Reality TV					
Children's Program					
Dark tonality	-,273**	-,323**	,113**	,271**	,242**
Everyday Setting	1	,367**	-,070**	-,163**	-,069**
Complex Story Structure	,367**	1	0,031	-,126**	-,088**
Fast paced Story Develope-ment	-,070**	0,031	1	0,030	,116**
Cross-episode Storylines	-,163**	-,126**	0,030	1	,305**
Long Episodes	-,069**	-,088**	,116**	,305**	1

Notes. **. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).
*. The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).