

## AI-Driven Content Consumption: The Impact of Binge-Watching on Traditional Television Viewing in Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

The binge-watching method of consuming entertainment content is significantly altering the dynamics of television viewership, especially in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI), where content recommendations are more personalised. This research aims to study the effects of binge-watching motives on traditional television viewing in Malaysia. By understanding the extent of binge-watching, the motivations behind it, and its impact on conventional television viewing, this study provides insights for television broadcasters, advertisers, and content creators. The research identifies six primary motivations for binge-watching: social influence, enjoyment, escapism, stress relief, freedom of watching, and accessibility. The time spent binge-watching is analysed to determine its negative impact on traditional television viewing. This quantitative research involved collecting data from 226 respondents through convenience sampling. The data was analysed using the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS), employing multiple regression and linear regression analyses to derive results. The multiple regression results showed that escapism and accessibility have a significant positive relationship with the time spent binge-watching. In contrast, social influence and freedom of watching have a significant negative relationship with the time spent binge-watching. The linear regression results indicated a moderately strong negative relationship between the time spent binge-watching and the time spent on traditional television viewing in Malaysia. Hence, it is recommended that television broadcasters prepare for this changed dynamic of binge-watching as it would impact television viewership negatively. Businesses, advertisers and content creators must also adapt to binge-watching to promote their brands effectively.

**Keywords:** *Binge-watching, motivation of binge-watching, television viewership, AI, content consumption.*

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, binge-watching has become a global phenomenon, fundamentally transforming how audiences consume television shows and movies. Binge-watching, often referred to as marathon viewing, is defined as watching multiple episodes of a show or video in a single sitting (Steins-Loeber et al., 2020). The emergence and widespread adoption of streaming platforms such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime have fuelled this behaviour, as these platforms provide entire seasons of shows at once, allowing viewers to consume content at their own pace.

This shift marks a departure from traditional television viewing, where audiences adhered to fixed broadcast schedules, waiting a week for new episodes (Steiner & Xu, 2018). With binge-watching, viewers bypass these constraints, experiencing instant gratification by seamlessly continuing to the next episode. This on-demand accessibility removes the suspense associated

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with cliffhangers, which were traditionally designed to maintain audience engagement over time (Rubenking & Bracken, 2021). As a result, traditional broadcasting is experiencing a decline, with significant implications for television networks, advertisers, and content creators. Understanding Malaysians' binge-watching habits, the motivations driving this behaviour, and whether it poses a significant threat to traditional viewership has become increasingly important.

## RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In Malaysia, the traditional television and home video market is projected to generate \$1.83 billion in revenue by 2025 (Statista, 2024a). However, traditional television subscriptions have been gradually declining in recent years, dropping significantly from 6.5 million to 6.3 million in 2023 (Statista, 2024b). Astro, Malaysia's leading pay-TV provider, reported a 9% decline in subscription revenue in the fourth quarter of 2020, alongside an 18% drop in TV advertising revenue (Tan, 2020).

On the other hand, Subscription Video on Demand (SVoD) services are expected to grow from 26% household penetration in 2023 to 43% by 2028, driven by better broadband access and competitive pricing (Marketing Magazine Malaysia, 2024). Furthermore, the number of Over-the-Top (OTT) users in Malaysia is projected to reach 32.7 million, with a user penetration rate of 87.7% by 2029 (Statista, 2024a). This trend highlights the growing popularity of binge-watching in Malaysia and underscores the need to identify the key motivations behind it.

AI technologies have revolutionised content delivery, enabling personalised user experiences. Streaming platforms utilise advanced algorithms to analyse viewing history, preferences, and behaviours leading to binge-watching tendencies (Ercegovac & Ercegovac, 2023). For example, Netflix's recommendation system, powered by AI, influences 80% of viewer's activities (Raj, 2023). These AI-driven systems not only enhance user satisfaction but also normalise binge-watching by making it effortless for viewers to discover and continuously consume their preferred content (Gomez-Uribe & Hunt, 2015).

Understanding these motivations is particularly crucial for advertisers, as television advertising has traditionally been the most expensive yet highly effective medium due to its broad reach (Kuyucu, 2020). However, if binge-watching continues to divert audiences away from traditional television, advertising strategies will need to shift towards streaming platforms and OTT content. Advertisers must align their approaches with the consumer motivations that drive binge-watching. Additionally, insights into binge-watching behaviour can help content creators refine storytelling techniques, optimise episode lengths, and leverage AI-driven recommendations to enhance viewer retention (Steiner & Xu, 2018). To remain competitive, TV channels can diversify their content offerings to align with viewers' binge-watching tendencies. In Malaysia, media giants like Media Prima and Astro are already integrating AI to analyse audience behaviour, deliver personalised content, and streamline digital operations (Hairi, 2024). By understanding these evolving consumption patterns, businesses, advertisers, TV networks, and content creators can develop data-driven engagement strategies, optimise advertising effectiveness, and produce content that resonates with modern audiences. This study aims to identify the key motivators behind binge-watching and examine whether its rise significantly impacts traditional television viewership.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Malaysian television landscape has evolved from basic free-to-air (FTA) channels to a diverse range of offerings, including pay-TV and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV). The launch of TV3 in 1984 marked the beginning of private broadcasting in Malaysia, followed by significant expansion in the mid-1990s, with players such as Media Prima Berhad introducing channels like NTV7 and 8TV. Subscription-based services, such as Mega TV and Astro, also gained popularity, offering viewers a broader selection of content. At present, audiences access FTA channels and pay-TV services, including Astro, NJOI, and IPTV platforms like Unifi TV. The rise of streaming platforms such as Netflix has led to a shift towards on-demand viewing, granting audiences greater control over their content consumption (CacaFly Malaysia, 2024). Despite this digital transformation, appointment viewership—where audiences tune in for live or scheduled broadcasts—remains prevalent, particularly for sports and reality shows. This traditional viewing behaviour fosters a sense of collective participation (Modili et al., 2022). In response to changing consumption habits, traditional broadcasters are adapting by offering on-demand services (Alzubi, 2023). While streaming dominates among younger demographics, the hybrid model of live and on-demand content ensures that traditional television viewing continues to maintain its relevance within Malaysia's evolving media landscape. The concern is whether it will be able to sustain in face of increasing binge-watching tendencies of consumers.

### *The Current State of AI-Powered Streaming Platforms and Traditional Television Viewing in Malaysia*

The rise of streaming platforms has transformed video consumption, granting viewers unprecedented control over their entertainment choices. Generative AI, powered by machine learning and deep learning, enables highly personalised recommendations, automated playback, and multilingual subtitles, enhancing user autonomy and deeper engagement (Pilipets, 2019). In Malaysia, binge-watching is growing rapidly, with platforms like Netflix, Viu, Amazon Prime, Disney+, and HBO Max driving the trend. Netflix's all-at-once release model eliminates waiting time, reinforcing binge-watching behaviour (Castro et al., 2019). Research by Jumrah et al. (2023) supports this literature, identifying how Netflix is one of the most popular platforms among Malaysian youths, with many using it for 2–5 hours daily. Pilipets (2019) identified three key features, in his study, shaping the Netflix experience—recommendation, attention, and attachment—highlighting how AI-driven suggestions tailor content to individual preferences, leading people to binge-watch for prolonged periods anytime, anywhere (Razali, 2022). This AI-driven streaming is mirrored across all OTT platforms, where AI refines content accessibility and encourages extended viewing (Sung, Kang, & Lee, 2018). Moreover, streaming platforms are not restricted to sitcoms or TV series alone. They provide a wide array of content, including movies, documentaries, educational series, tutorials, child-friendly content, live streaming, and even interactive media (Suwanto et al., 2021). This shift underscores AI's role in fostering a culture of on-demand entertainment and changing how Malaysians consume media.

As streaming platforms continue to flourish, traditional television struggles to retain audiences, particularly among younger viewers. Alan et al. (2021) report that rural audiences in Asap Koyan, Belaga Sarawak, rely on RTM (TV1, TV2), Media Prima (TV3), and Astro for government updates, sports, and entertainment. RTM and Media Prima channels see an average

viewing time of 30 to 59 minutes, primarily in the evening, while Astro retains viewers for over two hours, with night time viewing preferred. However, Malaysian youth increasingly favour American entertainment-focused content over local TV programmes, using traditional television primarily for entertainment, trend awareness, and social surveillance (Bindah, 2019). This generational divide highlights the challenges faced by linear television in maintaining relevance against AI-powered streaming services.

Beyond convenience, binge-watching is deeply connected to psychological and social factors. Prihantoro (2024) found that Indonesia's Generation Z binge-watches for pleasure, accessibility, and control, with OTT media consumption increasing by 40% annually. Similarly, the study by Drushya et al. (2021) identified loneliness and depression as key psychological triggers, making streaming platforms a coping mechanism for emotional distress.

However, research exploring what drives binge-watching in Malaysia, and to what extent, remains limited. Ramayani et al. (2018) examined its impact on interpersonal communication among Sunway University students, revealing that binge-watching fulfils entertainment, escapism, and social needs. Mahmud and Wahab (2021) expanded on this by exploring its psychological and social effects on Malaysian university students. However, most studies focus solely on youth and students, rather than the broader Malaysian population. Furthermore, no Malaysian studies have directly compared the impact of binge-watching on traditional television viewership, leaving a significant gap in understanding this behavioural shift.

### *Binge-Watching Motivations*

This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating how binge-watching motivations influence traditional television consumption. Six key motivations are explored: social influence, stress relief, escapism, entertainment, freedom of watching, and accessibility. Binge-watching is often a collective experience, discussed among peers and amplified on social media platforms, fostering shared interests and social bonding, thereby giving rise to social influence (Starosta et al., 2019; Lades et al., 2022). The immersive nature of binge-watching offers a temporary escapism from stress and daily pressures. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this behaviour increased as individuals sought comfort and relaxation through entertainment (Sigre-Leirós et al., 2022; Steins-Loeber et al., 2020). Binge-watching also allows viewers to detach from reality and immerse themselves in fictional worlds. This aligns with findings that escapism is a core motivator for extended viewing (Tolba & Zoghaib, 2022; Rubenking & Bracken, 2021). Moreover, the high-quality storytelling and production value of streaming content engage viewers, further supported by AI algorithms that recommend content tailored to individual preferences (Arslan & Ghazal, 2024). Freedom of watching is another motivator enabled by AI-driven streaming platforms, providing unparalleled autonomy, allowing users to decide what, when, and how they watch content—a stark contrast to traditional appointment viewing (Kalra et al., 2024). Lastly, technological advancements, with the advent of diverse gadgets (tablets, mobile phones, laptops) and affordable internet access, have made streaming platforms widely accessible, democratising media consumption across demographics (Chen, 2024).

By evaluating the extent to which binge-watching affects traditional television viewing and the motivations driving it, this study provides insights to media stakeholders in developing AI-driven content, personalised marketing campaigns, and new engagement strategies in Malaysia's rapidly evolving media landscape.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study utilises the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory as its theoretical framework, given its relevance in analysing how audiences actively select media to fulfil specific needs. U&G theory provides a robust lens to explore motivations like escapism, entertainment, and social interaction, which are particularly relevant to binge-watching behaviours in a streaming-dominated era (Tolba & Zoghaib, 2022). By addressing the implications of binge-watching on content consumption, the study equips industry stakeholders with critical insights to navigate the evolving media consumption paradigm.

RO1: To identify what motivates people to spend time on binge-watching in Malaysia.

RO2: To examine how different motivations influence the duration of binge-watching sessions in Malaysia.

RO3: To investigate how the time spent on binge-watching impacts television viewership in Malaysia.

### METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research design was employed to examine the motivations behind binge-watching in Malaysia, its relationship with time spent binge-watching, and the impact on traditional television viewership. A survey was distributed to collect data on demographics, binge-watching motivations, time spent binge-watching, and television viewing habits. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between motivations and binge-watching duration, while linear regression analysis was used to determine the impact of binge-watching on traditional television viewership.

The study targeted the Malaysian population, which is 34.1 million as of 2024 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2024) and utilised a sample size of 200 due to resource constraints. This sample size achieved over a 90% confidence level, ensuring reliability. Selecting the right sampling technique is critical for research validity and generalisability. For binge-watching studies, where the population size is undefined, convenience non-probability sampling is a practical choice. While it lacks full representativeness, it has been successfully used in many exploratory research studies where the target audience's specific population is unknown (Bhardwaj, 2019). A quantitative study by Bastos et al. (2024) supports this, as they also used convenience sampling to examine binge-watching habits, highlighting its suitability for undefined populations. Similarly, in Malaysia, where binge-watcher demographics remain unknown, this study adopted convenience sampling due to its accessibility and efficiency. Given resource constraints, data collection through online platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp provided a cost-effective means to reach a broad audience. Since binge-watchers are already active internet users, with 83.1% of Malaysians using social media (Howe, 2024), leveraging social media aligns well with the study's objectives. However, online recruitment may exclude less active digital users, limiting generalisability. Future research should integrate probability sampling for greater representativeness.

Ethics approval was obtained to ensure the study complied with guidelines for research involving human participants in form of informed consent that was acquired from all respondents, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality.

The survey was structured to address specific variables related to binge-watching behaviour, motivations, and demographics. It began with demographic questions, covering six aspects: respondents' age, educational background, ethnicity, household income, marital status, presence of children, and location of residence. These questions were primarily sourced from Starosta et al. (2019) and the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2024). Three items were included to examine binge-watching patterns, focusing on the type of screen used, viewing methods, and streaming services, adapted from Steins-Loeber et al. (2020). Next, 24 items were used across six motivations to explore the drivers of binge-watching: social influence, enjoyment, escapism, stress relief, freedom of watching, and accessibility, all sourced from Starosta et al. (2019). Following this, three questions addressed the duration and perception of binge-watching behaviour, while two additional questions collected data on hours spent watching traditional television in the past week and during a single sitting. These five questions were referenced from Steins-Loeber et al. (2020). In total, the survey consisted of 41 items, incorporating open-ended, close-ended, and Likert-scale questions, all derived from validated sources to comprehensively analyse binge-watching patterns, motivations, and demographic variables.

This study employed the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Excel, and Google Forms for data analysis. To analyse the relationship between binge-watching motivations (social influence, enjoyment, escapism, stress relief, freedom of watching, and accessibility) and the time spent on binge-watching, multiple regression analysis was conducted (Lades et al., 2022). The analytical model is defined as follows: Time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia =  $\alpha + \beta \text{ * social influence variable} + \beta \text{ * enjoyment variable} + \beta \text{ * escapism variable} + \beta \text{ * stress relief variable} + \beta \text{ * freedom of watching variable} + \beta \text{ * accessibility variable}$  where social influence, enjoyment, escapism, stress relief, freedom of watching, and accessibility are independent variables, and time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia is the dependent variable. Here,  $\alpha$  represents the y-intercept (constant), indicating the dependent variable's value when all independent variables are zero.  $\beta$  denotes the slope coefficient, reflecting the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

To analyse the relationship between time spent on binge-watching and traditional television viewing in Malaysia, linear regression analysis was employed. The equation for this model is: Time spent on traditional television viewing in Malaysia =  $\alpha + \beta \text{ * time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia}$  where time spent on binge-watching is the independent variable, and time spent on traditional television viewing is the dependent variable, with  $\alpha$  as the y-intercept and  $\beta$  as the slope coefficient.

For both multiple and linear regression analyses, the study used the p-value to interpret the results. A significance level of  $p = 0.05$  was applied as the threshold for rejecting the null hypothesis (Di Leo & Sardanelli, 2020).

## RESULTS

The researcher conducted data analysis based on the respondents' data collected from the survey questionnaires. The sample size for this study was 200 respondents. However, upon distribution, the researcher successfully gathered data from 229 respondents. Of these, three were neither Malaysian nationals nor citizens or permanent residents of Malaysia and were therefore excluded. The final dataset comprised 226 respondents, whose data were used for analysis and findings generation.

The demographics of the study are described in Table 1. The demographic data highlight an educated, urban, and family-oriented sample. The majority are Malaysian nationals (98.7%), with a strong female presence (75.7%). The age group is skewed towards 25–34 (42%) and 35–44 (21.7%), suggesting that binge-watching is common among working adults seeking entertainment. Education levels are high, with 60.6% holding a bachelor’s degree, aligning with digital literacy trends. In terms of ethnic representation, Chinese (38.1%) and Malay (32.3%) respondents dominate, with the majority earning between RM 2,501 and RM 6,000 (34.5%), indicating middle-income earners who may engage with both paid and free streaming services. A significant portion (65.5%) is married, and 75.2% have children, suggesting that binge-watching may include family co-viewing. Lastly, the urban concentration, with 79.6% from Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, or Putrajaya, is unsurprising given the higher internet penetration rates and access to multiple streaming services in metropolitan areas.

Table 1: Demographic distribution of respondents

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Nationality</b>		
Malaysian national, citizens of permanent residents of Malaysia	226	98.7%
Non-Malaysian	3	1.3%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	52	23.0%
Female	171	75.7%
Non-binary	3	1.3%
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	44	19.5%
25-34	95	42.0%
35-44	49	21.7%
45-54	24	10.6%
55-64	12	5.3%
65-74	2	0.9%
75+	0	0
<b>Highest level of education</b>		
Primary education	0	0
Secondary Education	9	4.0%
Diploma	34	15.0%
Bachelor’s degree	137	60.6%
Master’s degree	41	18.1%
Doctoral (PhD) degree	4	1.8%
Decline to state	1	0.4%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Malay	73	32.3%
Chinese	86	38.1%
Indian	44	19.5%
Others	23	10.1%

<b>Household income per month</b>		
Less than RM 2,500	65	28.8%
RM 2,501- RM 6,000	78	34.5%
RM 6,001-RM 13,000	59	26.1%
More than 13,001	24	10.6%
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	148	65.5%
Single	69	30.5%
Divorced	7	3.1%
Open relationship	1	0.4%
Cohabiting in a relationship	1	0.4%
<b>Children</b>		
Yes	170	75.2%
No	56	24.8%
<b>Current location of residence</b>		
Northern Region: Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Perak	18	8.0%
East Coast Region: Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang	3	1.3%
Central Region: Selangor, federal territories of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya	170	79.6%
Southern Region: Negeri Sembilan, Malacca, Johor	19	8.4%
West Malaysia: Sabah and Sarawak	6	2.7%

The findings in Table 2 indicate that the majority prefer streaming multiple episodes on television screens, with Netflix dominating as the most used platform (79.2%). This suggests that Malaysians gravitate towards high-quality content and personalised recommendations offered by premium streaming services. Additionally, when asked about their perception of binge-watching, 43.4% of respondents defined it as watching five or more episodes of a 15–30-minute programme, 36.3% defined it as watching three or more episodes of a 30–45-minute programme and 41.6% defined it as watching two or more episodes of a 90–120-minute programme. This perception aligns with global trends, where people watch consecutive episodes due to its accessibility and ease of consumption (Kalra et al., 2024).

Table 2: Binge-watching patterns among Malaysians

Binge-watching patterns	Frequency	Percentage
<b>When you watch multiple episodes of a single television program in a row, on what type of screen do you watch them? (Respondents could choose more than 1 option)</b>		
TV screens	141	62.4%
Laptops	134	59.3%
Desktop/ computer/ monitor	21	9.3%
Tablet	26	11.5%
Phone	94	42%
<b>When you watch multiple episodes of a single television program in a row, what viewing methods do you typically use to do so? (Respondents could choose more than 1 option)</b>		
Cable TV marathon	44	19.5%

Broadcast TV marathon	36	15.9%
Streaming services	178	78.8%
Buying or renting the DVD box set	9	4.0%
Video on demand through my television provider (VOD)	25	11.1%
Episodes I have recorded on my digital video recorder (DVR)	25	11.1%
BitTorrent or other file sharing software	60	26.5%
<b><i>Which of the following streaming services do you use to watch multiple episodes of television in a row? (Respondents could choose more than 1 option)</i></b>		
Netflix	179	79.2%
Hulu / Hulu Plus	3	1.3%
Amazon Instant Video	12	5.3%
HBO Go or HBO Now	45	19.9%
Viu	8	3.5%
Astro	7	3.1%
YouTube	9	3.9%
TV Box	4	1.8%
Torrent	2	0.9%
World Movies	2	0.9%
Others	20	8%
<b><i>In your opinion, how many consecutive TV episodes of the following lengths qualify as Binge-watching?</i></b>		
<i>15-30 minutes in length</i>		
2 episodes or more	29	12.8%
3 episodes or more	28	12.4%
4 episodes or more	45	19.9%
5 episodes or more	98	43.4%
None of this qualify	17	7.5%
No opinion	9	4.0%
<i>45-60 minutes in length</i>		
2 episodes or more	39	17.3%
3 episodes or more	82	36.3%
4 episodes or more	57	25.2%
5 episodes or more	36	15.9%
None of this qualify	4	1.8%
No opinion	8	3.5%
<i>90-120 minutes in length</i>		
2 episodes or more	94	41.6%
3 episodes or more	68	30.1%
4 episodes or more	22	9.7%
5 episodes or more	26	11.5%
None of this qualify	7	3.1%
No opinion	9	4.0%
<b><i>In your opinion, how many consecutive full-length movies qualify as binge-watching?</i></b>		
2 or more	93	41.2%

3 or more	96	42.5%
4 or more	16	7.1%
5 or more	16	7.1%
None of the above qualify	5	2.2%
<b>Approximately how many hours of bingeing did you do in 1 sitting?</b>		
Less than 5 hours	152	67.3%
5-10 hours	62	27.4%
11-15 hours	7	3.1%
16-20 hours	2	0.9%
21-25 hours	3	1.3%

From this point onwards, the study addresses what motivates Malaysian viewers to binge-watch. This study evaluated the motivations for binge-watching based on six independent variables: social influence, enjoyment, escapism, stress relief, freedom of watching, and accessibility on a Likert scale of 1–5. The findings in Table 3 reflect that 37.2% of respondents disagreed that they binge-watch because their friends expect them to do it, 31% of the respondents disagreed that they binge-watch because they want to contribute to their group, followed by 30.1% of respondents who also disagreed that they binge-watch because they don't want to feel excluded from their group. However, 30.1% agreed that they binge-watch because their friends suggested they do it, 28.8% agreed that they binge-watch because it makes them feel part of a group, and 28.3% agreed that they binge-watch because their friends do it.

When the means are evaluated, they reflect that for the social influence motivation, the statement “My friends expect me to do it” had the lowest mean of 2.23. This means that the majority of the respondents disagreed that meeting friends’ expectations was a reason to spend time on binge-watching. On the other hand, the statement “It makes me feel part of a group” had the highest mean at 2.88, meaning most respondents either disagreed or were neutral about whether binge-watching makes them feel part of a group. Overall, the social influence motivation had a mean of 2.67 with a standard deviation of 1.14, meaning most respondents either disagreed or were neutral about whether social influence motivates them to spend time on binge-watching.

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of social influence variable

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
It makes me feel part of a group	31 (13.7%)	55 (24.3%)	62 (27.4%)	65 (28.8%)	13 (5.8%)	2.88	1.141
I want to contribute to my group	39 (17.3%)	70 (31.0%)	52 (23.0%)	56 (24.8%)	9 (4.0%)	2.67	1.143
I don't want to feel excluded from my group	46 (20.4%)	68 (30.1%)	44 (19.5%)	59 (26.1%)	9 (4.0%)	2.63	1.186
My friends suggest that I do it	38 (16.8%)	66 (29.2%)	43 (19.0%)	68 (30.1%)	11 (4.9%)	2.77	1.189
My friends expect me to do it	61 (27.0%)	84 (37.2%)	51 (22.6%)	27 (11.9%)	3 (1.3%)	2.23	1.021
My friends do it	39 (17.3%)	49 (21.7%)	62 (27.4%)	64 (28.3%)	12 (5.3%)	2.83	1.174
Total						2.67	1.14

The findings in Table 4 indicate that 58.4% of the respondents agreed that they binge-watch because it's fun, followed by 54% of respondents agreeing that they binge-watch because they feel relaxed. Additionally, 53.5% agreed that they binge-watch because they enjoy doing it, and lastly, 50.9% agreed that they binge-watch because it makes them feel happy. When the means are evaluated, the results show that the statement "I feel relaxed" had the lowest mean at 3.96, while "I feel happy" and "It's fun" had the highest mean at 4.04. These figures suggest that the respondents agreed with both statements. Overall, the enjoyment motivation had a mean of 4.01 with a standard deviation of 0.788, meaning the majority of respondents agreed that enjoyment is a strong motivation for the time spent on binge-watching.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of enjoyment variable

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I feel happy	2 (0.9%)	5 (2.2%)	40 (17.7%)	115 (50.9%)	64 (28.3%)	4.04	0.794
I feel relaxed	2 (0.9%)	5 (2.2%)	45 (19.9%)	122 (54.0%)	52 (23.0%)	3.96	0.774
It's fun	3 (1.3%)	5 (2.2%)	29 (12.8%)	132 (58.4%)	57 (25.2%)	4.04	0.768
I enjoy doing it	3 (1.3%)	7 (3.1%)	35 (15.5%)	121 (53.5%)	60 (26.5%)	4.01	0.816
Total						4.01	0.788

The findings in Table 5 show that the majority of respondents agreed with all the statements of the escapism variable. 44.7% of respondents agreed that they binge-watch because it transports them to another world, followed by 39.8% agreeing that they binge-watch because it makes them forget their worries, and lastly, 33.6% agreed that they binge-watch because it makes them forget their problems. When the means were evaluated, the results show that the statement "Because I forget about my problems" had the lowest mean at 3.65, while "Because it transports me to another world" had the highest mean at 3.81. Both figures, 3.65 and 3.81, suggest that respondents moderately agreed with both statements. Overall, the escapism motivation had a mean of 3.73 with a standard deviation of 1.037, meaning the majority of respondents agreed that escapism is a key motivation for binge-watching.

Table 5: Descriptive analysis of escapism variable

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Because I forget about my worries	6 (2.7%)	21 (9.3%)	55 (24.3%)	90 (39.8%)	54 (23.9%)	3.73	1.012
Because I forget about my problems	8 (3.5%)	22 (9.7%)	66 (29.2%)	76 (33.6%)	54 (23.9%)	3.65	1.058
Because it transports me to another world	11 (4.9%)	13 (5.8%)	42 (18.6%)	101 (44.7%)	59 (26.1%)	3.81	1.042
Total						3.73	1.037

The findings in Table 6 show that 58% of respondents agreed that binge-watching helps them unwind. Additionally, 53.5% agreed that they binge-watch because it takes their mind off things, while 49.6% said it transports them to another world. A further 49.1% agreed that they

binge-watch because it clears their head, followed by 48.2% who viewed it as a great stress reliever. Moreover, 45.6% agreed that it helps them forget about their worries, and 41.6% said it makes them forget about their problems. This shows that respondents agreed with all statements related to stress relief motives. When the means were observed, it was found that the statement "I forget about my problems" had the lowest mean at 3.66, meaning respondents moderately agreed with this statement as a reason for binge-watching. On the other hand, the statement "It takes my mind off things" had the highest mean at 4.07, showing that most respondents agreed with this statement. Overall, stress relief motivation had a mean of 3.86 with a standard deviation of 0.903, meaning the majority of respondents agreed that stress relief is a key motivation for binge-watching.

Table 6: Descriptive analysis of stress relief variable

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
It takes my mind off things	2 (0.9%)	7 (3.1%)	30 (13.3%)	121 (53.5%)	66 (29.2%)	4.07	0.791
It clears my head	6 (2.7%)	18 (8.0%)	51 (22.6%)	111 (49.1%)	40 (17.7%)	3.71	0.939
It helps me unwind	3 (1.3%)	7 (3.1%)	28 (12.4%)	131 (58.0%)	57 (25.2%)	4.03	0.788
It's a great stress reliever	3 (1.3%)	11 (4.9%)	42 (18.6%)	109 (48.2%)	61 (27.0%)	3.95	0.878
I forget about my worries	5 (2.2%)	17 (7.5%)	53 (23.5%)	103 (45.6%)	48 (21.2%)	3.76	0.945
I forget about my problems	6 (2.7%)	23 (10.2%)	58 (25.7%)	94 (41.6%)	45 (19.9%)	3.66	0.995
It transports me to another world	10 (4.4%)	10 (4.4%)	39 (17.3%)	112 (49.6%)	55 (24.3%)	3.85	0.986
Total						3.86	0.903

When it comes to freedom of watching, Table 7 reveals that 38.1% of respondents agreed that they binge-watch because they can watch trailers before deciding on a TV show. However, most respondents (28.3%) disagreed that they binge-watch only after checking ratings. As for the statement "I don't like spending time in a social circle," most respondents (34.5%) had a neutral response. When examining the means, the statement "I don't like spending time in a social circle" had the lowest mean at 3.00, meaning most respondents in this study were neutral toward this statement. On the other hand, the statement "I watch trailers before deciding on a TV show" had the highest mean at 3.55, meaning respondents moderately agreed with this statement. Overall, the freedom of watching motivation had a mean of 3.21 with a standard deviation of 1.085, meaning it is a neutral motivator for time spent on binge-watching, with a variance of 1.085.

Table 7: Descriptive analysis of freedom of watching variable

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I watch trailers before deciding on a TV show	10 (4.4%)	38 (16.8%)	44 (19.5%)	86 (38.1%)	48 (21.2%)	3.55	1.131
I watch a TV show only after I have checked the ratings	15 (6.6%)	64 (28.3%)	62 (27.4%)	61 (27.0%)	24 (10.6%)	3.07	1.116

I don't like spending time in a social circle	11 (4.9%)	66 (29.2%)	78 (34.5%)	55 (24.3%)	16 (7.1%)	3.00	1.009
Total						3.21	1.085

The findings in Table 8 show that 48.2% of respondents agreed that they binge-watch because they prefer watching a series of episodes continuously, followed by 46.9% who agreed that they binge-watch because they can freely choose the scenes they want to watch. Additionally, 44.2% agreed that they binge-watch because they like to save their favourite TV programmes for later as fans, 41.6% binge-watch because they get free access to great TV content, and 40.7% find binge-watching more convenient. Furthermore, 38.1% binge-watch because they can skip to the end to selectively watch highlights, 36.7% find binge-watching more efficient, and 35.4% of respondents agreed that they binge-watch because they get the content for free. When examining the means, the statement "I get the content for free" had the lowest mean at 3.27, meaning most respondents were neutral toward this statement, whereas the statement "I prefer watching a series of episodes continuously" had the highest mean at 4.02, indicating that most respondents agreed with it. Overall, the accessibility motivation had a mean of 3.54 with a standard deviation of 1.067, meaning the majority of respondents moderately agreed that accessibility is a motivation for the time spent on binge-watching, with a variance of 1.067.

Table 8: Descriptive analysis of accessibility variable

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
I have free access to great TV content	13 (5.8%)	35 (15.5%)	37 (16.4%)	94 (41.6%)	47 (20.8%)	3.56	1.150
I get the content for free	16 (7.1%)	56 (24.8%)	39 (17.3%)	80 (35.4%)	35 (15.5%)	3.27	1.198
Binge-watching is more efficient	6 (2.7%)	38 (16.8%)	68 (30.1%)	83 (36.7%)	31 (13.7%)	3.42	1.009
Binge-watching is more convenient	7 (3.1%)	30 (13.3%)	68 (30.1%)	92 (40.7%)	29 (12.8%)	3.47	0.980
I can freely choose the scenes I want to watch	8 (3.5%)	26 (11.5%)	41 (18.1%)	106 (46.9%)	45 (19.9%)	3.68	1.031
I can skip to the end to selectively watch the highlight of an episode	19 (8.4%)	38 (16.8%)	43 (19.0%)	86 (38.1%)	40 (17.7%)	3.40	1.200
I like to save my favourite TV programmes for later as a fan	11 (4.9%)	35 (15.5%)	48 (21.2%)	100 (44.2%)	32 (14.2%)	3.47	1.067
I prefer watching a series of episodes continuously	4 (1.8%)	11 (4.9%)	32 (14.2%)	109 (48.2%)	70 (31.0%)	4.02	0.899
Total						3.54	1.067

The study then conducted a multiple regression analysis to determine which motivations of binge-watching significantly impact the time spent on binge-watching. Table 9 shows the significance level and the standard beta coefficient for each of the six motivators. According to the results, social influence ( $\beta=-0.152$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), escapism ( $\beta=0.243$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), freedom of watching ( $\beta=-0.133$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and accessibility ( $\beta=0.231$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) are significant predictors of the time spent

on binge-watching in Malaysia. However, enjoyment ( $\beta=0.046$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and stress relief ( $\beta=0.089$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) are not significantly related to the time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia. The standard beta coefficient of escapism motivation is the highest at 0.243, meaning it is the strongest predictor for the time spent on binge-watching. In other words, a greater amount of time spent on binge-watching is associated with escapism motivation compared to other independent variables, namely, social influence, freedom of watching, and accessibility. As shown in Table 9, the multiple regression analysis model shows that the R-value for this study is 0.789, indicating a moderately strong positive relationship between the motives of binge-watching and the time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia. The  $R^2$  for the model is 0.622, indicating that 62.2% of the variance in time spent on binge-watching can be explained by binge-watching motivations in Malaysia.

Table 9: Multiple regression analysis output between the motives of binge-watching and the time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia

Independent Variables	Standard Beta Coefficient	t	Significance: P-value
Social influence	-0.152	-2.272	0.024
Enjoyment	0.046	0.618	0.537
Escapism	0.243	3.588	0.000
Stress relief	0.089	0.860	0.391
Freedom of watching	-0.133	-2.023	0.044
Accessibility	0.231	3.167	0.002

Note:  $R = 0.789$ ,  $R^2 = 0.622$ , Adjusted;  $R^2 = 0.601$ , F-statistic = 8.564, P-value = 0.000

As shown in the equation below, when the multiple regression analysis model is interpreted, taking only the significant variables into account, it shows that the time spent on binge-watching is significantly affected by social influence, escapism, freedom of watching, and accessibility. The standard beta coefficient for social influence is -0.152. This means for a 1-unit increase in social influence motivation, the time spent on binge-watching will decrease by 0.152, assuming all other independent variables remain constant. The standard beta coefficient for escapism is 0.243. This means for a 1-unit increase in escapism motivation, the time spent on binge-watching will increase by 0.243, assuming all other independent variables remain constant. The standard beta coefficient for freedom of watching is -0.133. This means for a 1-unit increase in freedom of watching motivation, the time spent on binge-watching will decrease by 0.133, assuming all other independent variables remain constant. Lastly, the standard beta coefficient for accessibility is 0.231. This means for a 1-unit increase in accessibility motivation, the time spent on binge-watching will increase by 0.231, assuming all other independent variables remain constant.

$$\text{Equation: Time spent on binge-watching} = -0.152 \times \text{social influence} + 0.243 \times \text{escapism} - 0.133 \times \text{freedom of watching} + 0.231 \times \text{accessibility}$$

Next, the effect of time spent on binge-watching on traditional television viewership in Malaysia is evaluated using linear regression analysis, with the independent variable being time spent on binge-watching and the dependent variable being time spent on traditional television viewing in Malaysia. Table 11 shows that time spent on binge-watching ( $\beta=-0.571$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) has a

significant negative relationship with time spent on traditional television viewing in Malaysia. The standard beta coefficient for time spent on binge-watching is -0.571, indicating a negative relationship with time spent on traditional television viewing in Malaysia. As shown in Table 11, the linear regression analysis model summary indicates that the R value is -0.571, meaning there is a moderately strong negative relationship between time spent on binge-watching and traditional television viewing. The  $R^2$  for the model is 0.326, indicating that 32.6% of the variance in time spent on traditional television viewing is explained by time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia.

Table 11: Linear regression analysis output between the time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia and the time spent on traditional television viewership in Malaysia

Independent variable	Standard Beta Coefficient	t	Significance: P-value
Time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia	- 0.571	3.876	0.000

Note:  $R = -0.571$ ,  $R^2 = 0.326$ ; Adjusted,  $R^2 = 0.312$ , F-statistic = 15.020, P-value = 0.000

As shown in the equation below, the standard beta coefficient for time spent on binge-watching is -0.571. This means for a 1-unit increase in time spent on binge-watching, time spent on traditional television viewing is expected to decrease by 0.571 units.

Equation: Time spent on traditional television viewing in Malaysia =  $-0.571 \times$  time spent on binge-watching in Malaysia

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of binge-watching motivations among Malaysians reveals escapism and accessibility as key positive drivers, leading to increased viewing time. Escapism, a critical motivator, allows viewers to disengage from daily stressors and immerse in alternate realities, fulfilling psychological needs for detachment, which is also aligned with findings of previous researchers (Tolba & Zoghaib, 2022).

Similarly, accessibility, characterised by on-demand content availability and user-friendly interfaces, significantly enhances engagement, particularly in Malaysia where affordable internet access has democratised media consumption (Xu & Yan, 2011). These findings align with global trends where streaming platforms cater to users' need for convenience and escapism (Modili et al., 2022). On the other hand, motivations like social influence and freedom of watching demonstrate mixed effects. Social influence often prompts viewers to watch specific shows to align with peers but does not necessarily increase viewing time. Similarly, freedom of watching—associated with selective, non-linear habits—may lead to shorter sessions (Starosta et al., 2019). These nuances underline the complexity of motivational factors in binge-watching behaviour.

That is why, this study finds social influence to be a significant but negative predictor of binge-watching time in Malaysia, diverging from previous research. Possible reasons include reduced urgency to binge-watch due to peer discussions or the accessibility of streaming platforms eliminating fear of missing out (FOMO). Spoilers from friends and family may also lessen motivation. Additionally, freedom of watching is identified as a significant negative factor, contradicting Conlin et al. (2016), who argued that viewing autonomy encourages binge-

watching. Instead, this study suggests Malaysians use their viewing freedom to regulate consumption rather than overindulge. Technological advancements, such as access to ratings and trailers, may further reinforce this behaviour by minimising impulsive binge-watching decisions.

While enjoyment and stress relief positively influence binge-watching as observed in the descriptive analysis, this study finds they do not significantly impact the time spent binge-watching among Malaysians. This contradicts prior research, which identifies these factors as key drivers of prolonged viewing (Starosta et al., 2019; Steins-Loeber et al., 2020). A possible explanation lies in cultural and contextual differences. Western studies often highlight entertainment and stress relief due to differing work-life balance norms and leisure practices (Flayelle et al., 2020). In Malaysia, binge-watching may be less about personal gratification and more influenced by external factors such as digital accessibility and social expectations, aligning with findings on media consumption in collectivist cultures (Xu & Yan, 2011).

The multiple regression analysis indicates that the six identified motivations account for 62.2% of the variance in binge-watching time. However, 37.8% remains unexplained, suggesting other factors like content variety, pricing, and psychological states, such as loneliness and depression, also contribute to binge-watching. This aligns with past research which highlights that binge-watching serves as a coping mechanism for individuals experiencing emotional distress (Drushya et al., 2022; Sigre-Leirós et al., 2022).

Another key finding of this research is that there exists a significant negative relationship between binge-watching and traditional television viewing in Malaysia, with a standard beta coefficient of -0.571, indicating that every unit increase in binge-watching time decreases traditional television viewing by 0.571 units. This reflects a fundamental shift in viewing habits, where streaming platforms have disrupted conventional television by offering immediate gratification and tailored content (Raj, 2023).

The decline in traditional television consumption suggests a weakening reliance on scheduled programming, with audiences gravitating towards flexible, personalised viewing experiences. Chen (2024) found that algorithm-driven recommendations encourage continuous engagement, reducing the appeal of rigid broadcast schedules. This shift requires traditional broadcasters to rethink content strategies, such as adopting hybrid models that integrate on-demand streaming options alongside scheduled broadcasts. Additionally, shorter episodic formats, interactive content, and exclusive digital-first releases could help retain viewership.

Escape and accessibility were found to significantly increase binge-watching time and in turn, adversely effecting tradition television viewership, reinforcing previous research that highlights the psychological appeal of streaming (Anghelcev et al., 2020). The ability to disengage from real-world stressors and seamlessly access content across multiple devices makes binge-watching an attractive alternative to traditional television. As traditional television often lacks this level of flexibility, broadcasters may need to enhance content accessibility through mobile apps, digital libraries, and AI-driven recommendations to compete with streaming platforms. Businesses and advertisers, on the other hand, should reconsider how best to place their ads and promotions now that the dynamics of media consumption are shifting towards binge-watching and may be more prevalent on streaming platforms.

## CONCLUSION

The advent of streaming services has revolutionised media consumption by offering unparalleled flexibility in content selection, viewing times, and device choices, thereby removing the constraints of traditional television's appointment-viewing model (Rubenking & Bracken, 2021). In Malaysia, this shift is evident as a growing number of individuals engage in binge-watching, leading to a decline in traditional television viewership. This study identifies key motivations for binge-watching among Malaysians, including social influence, escapism, the freedom of watching, and accessibility. The linear regression analysis confirms a significant negative relationship between time spent binge-watching and traditional television viewing, indicating that as binge-watching increases, conventional TV consumption decreases. The proliferation of streaming platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video is expected to further accelerate this trend in Malaysia. Notably, Malaysians have been recognised as one of the leading binge-watchers in Asia, highlighting a cultural inclination towards this viewing behaviour (Mahmoud & Wahab, 2021). As traditional television viewership declines, the broadcasting industry faces significant challenges, necessitating adaptation to evolving consumer preferences. Advertisers and marketers must also recalibrate their strategies to effectively engage audiences migrating from traditional television to streaming platforms. However, this study's scope was limited to a general Malaysian audience, without delving into specific age demographics or geographic locations. Future research should explore how technological advancements shape binge-watching behaviours across different age groups and regions, particularly in rural areas where access to streaming services may be limited. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for stakeholders seeking to navigate the shifting media landscape in Malaysia.

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