

## **BINGE-WATCHING AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Author Name – **Bhavni Singh**, Research Scholar  
Enrolment No. RUP23010701  
Guide Name- **Dr. Pranav Singh**, Director Rama University  
Journalism and Mass Communication Department  
Rama University, Kanpur India 209217

This abstract explores the impact of binge-watching on the academic performance of college students, focusing on the increasing popularity of online streaming services (OSS) and its implications. The phenomenon of binge-watching has become prevalent with the rise of OSS, particularly in India, where access to such platforms has surged. Binge-watching is influenced by various factors such as boredom, stress, loneliness, social engagement, and habit, leading to both physical and psychological consequences. These behaviors can significantly affect academic performance, as heavy television use and prolonged binge-watching can detract from academic engagement, negatively impact grades, and disrupt social life. Theoretical frameworks like Social Learning Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory provide insights into the motivations and effects of binge-watching, highlighting how new media influences behavior and academic outcomes. The study underscores the need for awareness of the potential risks associated with excessive media consumption and its detrimental effects on students' academic achievements.

Keyword- Binge-watching, Academic performance, Online streaming services (OSS), Social Learning Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The term 'binge-watching' has turned into a buzzword for many Over-the-top (OTT) content platforms today that encourage this activity to garner profits through its audience. The word 'binge' has been associated primarily with excessive consumption of food or drink. Etymologically, the word binge can be traced to 1848, when it was initially used as a dialect verb to indicate a wooden vessel that was soaked in water so that the wood would swell to prevent leakage (etymonline). By 1854, the same word was addressed in the case of excessive consumption of alcohol or food (etymonline). In today's context, 'binge behavior' is attributed to the consumption of any product excessively in short

time frames as a means of escapism or to evoke psychological comfort (Shim and Kim, 2017). In the context of Over- The-Top (OTT) content consumption or Television consumption, any behavior wherein an individual consumes multiple episodes of a program in continuity within a single sitting is called Binge watching (Jenner, 2016; Schweidel and Moe, 2016; Panda and Pandey, 2017; Shim and Kim, 2017).

Binge-watching is also defined by some research studies as an accelerated consumption of two or three episodes to six or more episodes of any given television or OTT series at a stretch without an interval (Deloitte, 2015; Troleau et al., 2016; Schweidel & Moe, 2016; Ramayan et al., 2018, Starosta & Izydorczyk, 2020; Anghelcev et al., 2021). Rubenking & Bracken (2018) defined Binge-watching as an individual's "focused, deliberate viewing" of all the televised episodes of a given program for long periods. Their study also highlighted that Binge-watching is prone to be influenced by the changing dimensions of content and platform (Rubenking & Bracken, 2018). Based on the varied descriptions, one can conclude that Binge-Watching is a term that defines a viewer's deliberate watching of serialized content for a duration of three or more hours in one single sitting, at a conducive time and a place as intended by the viewer.

Technological advancement has further promulgated the use of OTT platforms, wherein, a series can be watched without a break, at any given time, according to one's convenience, on the gadget one has chosen, if one has a subscription. Hotstar, Jio TV, Netflix, Amazon Prime, YouTube, AltBalaji, etc, are gradually become household names in the Indian context. In the case of platforms like YouTube, one can even consume audio-visual content freely. Thus, with the dawn of an era where hand-held technological devices like smartphones and internet connectivity have become popular gadgets accessible to many, binge-watching behavior has received a boost (Shim & Kim, 2017).

Research conducted by Dentsu Marketing Cloud (2020) stated that the viewership of digital streaming platforms in India had received a 240% increase post-2016. These research findings highlighted that 65% of the new generation preferred an OTT platform as compared to a TV for watching videos, and around 49% of them binge-watched for about 2- 3 hours per day (Dentsu Marketing cloud, 2020; ETBrandEquity, 2020).

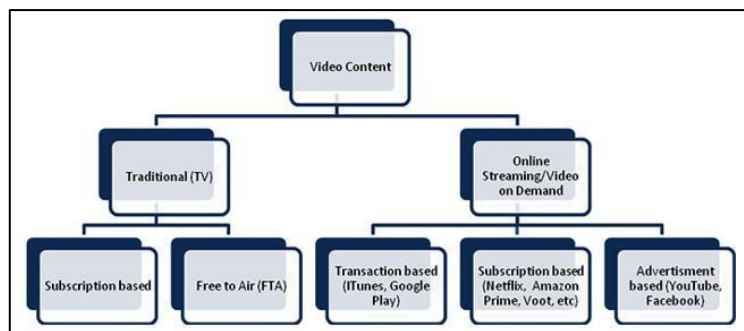
Binge-watching behavior also addressed as 'marathon-viewing' (Perks, 2014) was declared by Netflix as the 'new normal in 2013 itself (Netflix Inc, 2013). However, a study conducted by Granow, Reinecke, & Ziegele (2018) indicated that this intensive successive watching of televised content, which might seem like a trending pattern in entertainment could significantly impact an influencer

both negatively and positively. Winland (2014), also found that students' academia was affected by the consecutive hours spent on streaming content rather than studies.

The following study is based on a quantitative, printed, and online survey research amidst 300 students belonging to the North-East of India and studying in Assam and Delhi. This study aimed at exploring the impact of Binge- watching on the academic performance of the North-East students of India. Research by Kapur R., (2018) includes participation in class activities and assignments, examinations, and homework assignments, as determinants of the academic performance of students. The research uses the same determinants as variables in order to analyze the binge-watching impact on the academic performance of students.

### 1.1. What is Online Streaming Services?

When film and television content is provided directly to users via high-speed internet, instead of a cable or satellite provider, the media streaming service is referred to as Over-The-Top or OTT. An online streaming service (OSS) is an on demand online entertainment source for TV shows, movies and other media. These services provide an alternative to cable and satellite on demand service, often at lower cost and use of which requires fees, either per view or subscription.



*Figure 1: Video Content Channels*

As given in *Figure 1*, some services feature wide hardware support for numerous devices such as smart TVs, streaming media receivers, computers, tablets and smartphones. Others may be more limited in the type of devices. Other services are ad-supported, like Google video, or run on a freemium model and also offer some full feature movies at a cost. Examples of pay video streaming services include Netflix, YouTube, Amazon Prime, etc.

### 1. The Binge-watching Phenomenon

The phenomenon of Binge-watching television initially saw its rise in the 1980s, when in USA, some TV stations started a replay of certain popular TV shows at stretch. This gave way to video-on-demand (VOD)- a concept of watching a serial after it has been aired for particular Online sources for a fee. At a later stage, Netflix initiated a DVD-by-mail rental service for subscription fees (Reiber, 2016). This concept gained popularity and led to many individuals watching entire sessions of shows

back-to-back, which led to the phenomenon of Binge' Watching. Netflix gradually permitted its customers to access a library of movies and streams instantly for a monthly subscription fee of around \$8 to \$12 (Reiber, 2016).

## **2. Binge-watching in the Current Scenario**

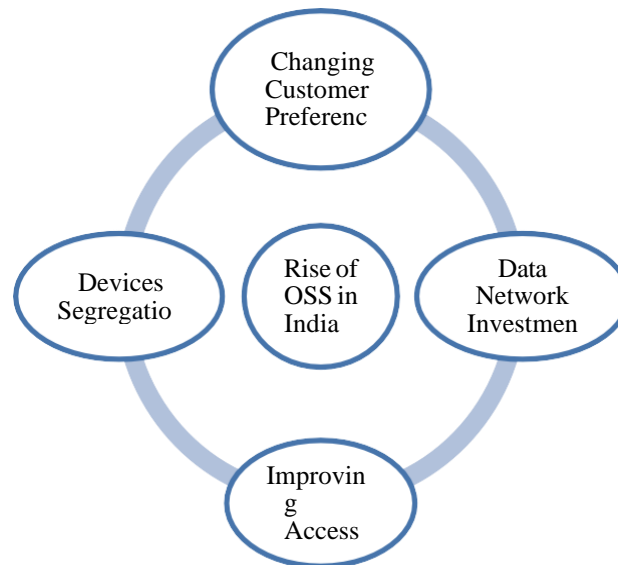
Digitization, technological development, and large-scale access to the internet led to the dawn of Over-The-Top content. The smartphone revolution accelerated this phenomenon as video content consumption became an “anywhere, everywhere and anytime multi- screen and multi-device experience” (Rawal, 2019). However, this experience has led to both entertainment access as well as access to unwarranted content available to all ages, despite parental control software that is integrated on many OTT platforms.

B. Dhiman (2019) points out in his research that OTT platforms emphasize a ‘binge-watching model’ in view of generating revenue from its audience with more viewing hours. These platforms also advertise what could be binge- watched. Having to cater to the appetite of a large audience, OTT platforms resort to providing a massive amount of content inclusive of films, series, stand-up comedy, etc. While having good and enjoyable content related to entertainment, these platforms are not bereft of content that is not meant for youngsters and contains expletives, uncouth language, violence, crime, rebellion against values, and taboos in society (B. Dhiman, 2019). Thus, multiple research findings have pointed out to not just the pros but also the cons of Binge-watching over the years.

### **1.2. Rise in India for OSS:**

With the accelerating shift in the digital paradigm, in the OTT market in India, the contenders have naturally upped their game by incorporating new technologies, increasing marketing spend, tempting on monthly/yearly plans. The online consumption of content, in a diversified country like India who's never satisfied of consuming good content, is on a steep rise and the OTT gambit that has gained momentum reaching an inflection point. OTT platforms let modern day consumer control their media consumption – from curating their personal selection of content to picking the smart device they want to watch it on. OTT (Over the Top) media services which offer direct streaming services to viewers, have been gaining popularity worldwide. Some of the frontrunners of such services are Netflix and Amazon Prime, which remain popular worldwide. According to a report released by Counterpoint Research in April 2018 [3], the Indian streaming platform Hotstar is the most popular OTT platform in India. Hotstar is closely followed by Amazon's Prime Video and SonyLIV, while Netflix ranks 4th.

The popularity of OTT platforms is slowly rising with the increase of local OTT platforms like ALTBalaji, Voot and SonyLIV, which are giving direct competition to foreign platforms like Prime Video and Netflix. Recently, the popular food delivery app Zomato also joined the OTT industry with the introduction of its Zomato Originals. The main reason behind so many new OTT platforms coming to the market is the increasing profits generated by such platforms in India. The main 4 factors



for rise in OSS popularity in India are as given in *Figure 2* follows:

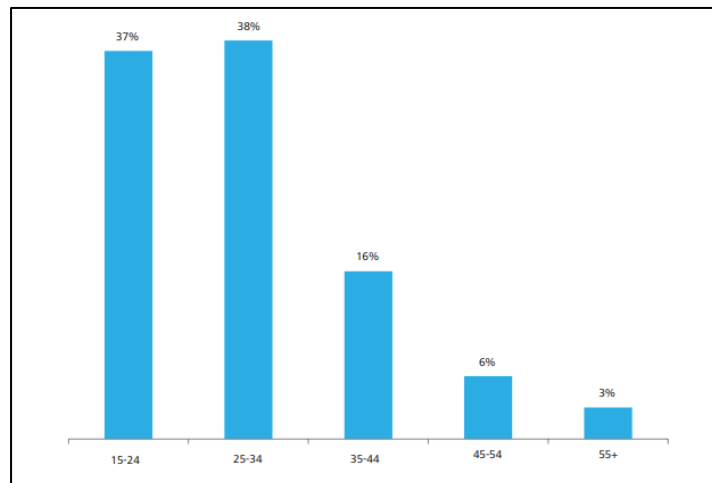
**Figure 2:** Factors for Rise in OSS popularity in India

Another factor contributing to the popularity of certain platforms is the pricing of these OTT platforms. The prices play a really important role as many local OTT platforms provide the majority of their content free of cost, while international platforms like Netflix and Prime Video have a process of monthly or annual subscription in order to let the users access their content. This is a major reason behind the popularity of local OTT platforms.

With the explosion of OTT platforms in recent years and with the availability of affordable data, the consumption of digital media has also increased. It will be interesting to see what kind of strategies these OTT platforms will follow in order to attract more audiences to their channels.

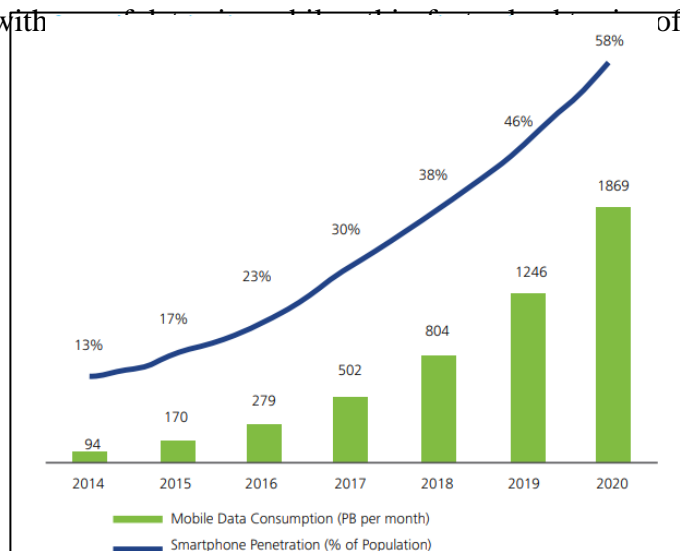
*Figure 3* shows how internet users are segregated in India by age group. The growth in internet users was seen both in rural and urban parts of India. Internet users in rural India is expected to reach 250 million by 2020, while 516 million internet users are expected to be in urban India by then. With improved networks, better access to internet, multimedia service-capable mobile devices and application development ecosystem, more and more media consumption would happen on digital platforms. While the internet user base in India is growing at a rapid rate, most of these users (75%) belong to the age group of less than 35 years. More than half of the app users in India are aged

between 18 and 24 years and a further 29% between 25 and 35. 45% of these users reside in the top 4 metros.



**Figure 3:** Indian internet users - Age wise distribution [1]

Figure 4 shows smartphone penetration in India as projected medium, research done by Deloitte India in 2015. While the proliferation on mobile devices would enable the digital media consumption, data prices, and anywhere connectivity would play equally important role in shaping the digital media consumption habits among Indian users. Average data price per MB on mobile networks has fallen significantly over the past few years; however, mobile data tariffs are likely to mirror the trends in 2G market where voice tariffs in India are stabilizing after long period of sharp falls. With increasing in penetration along with



of OSS as explained before.

*Figure 4: Projected smartphone penetration and mobile data consumption (in Petabyte per month) for India [1]*

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As per the report by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations published in March 2019, '*An Analysis of Competition and Regulatory Intervention in India's Television Distribution and Broadcasting Services*' [2], it emphasizes the government's effort to publish the Reference Interconnect Offer (RIO) declaring MRP and bouquet rates which are required to declare the maximum retail price (MRP) within 60 days and distribution platform operators to declare network capacity fee and distribution retail price (DRP) within 180 days for the content they are promoting. It also gives brief about the history of Evolution of India's Television Broadcasting and Distribution Services, and talks about The Rise of Over –the-Top (OTT) Platforms. This report also shows the consumer preferences which has been changed over the introduction of online streaming services along with TV broadcasting. The report highlights that Hotstar is on top with respect to major OTT platforms. The report ends up on note of creating the regulations for such newly emerged platform of broadcasting.

As per report by E & Y [4], after the launch of the Netflix peoples are habitual to watch all the seasons at a one time and the subscription of the Netflix increased as per age groups of 18 to 24 in the Gen Y generation. Netflix changes the viewers expectations concerning what, how and when they watch. This cause disruptive effect on traditional TV scheduling, ratings, advertising and cable subscriptions. VOD increases the tendency of binge watching. Online streaming services increases the trend of personalisation per the users as per their interests. In a family where the kids aged between 10 to 16 years they use the streaming services from their parents subscription. If their parents do not allow them then they are ready to pay for their subscription.

The study done by Romil Sharma [5] shows that, long hours in front of a screen would have a greater negative effect on young people than adults and as per study average time spend by adult on OTT is four hours forty three minutes each day watching live TV. Gen Y is most likely to engage to engage in binge watching. For younger generation binge watching is not about social exile but about enhancing participation in social conversations and it is connected with FOMO "Fear of missing out". Teens said that bingeing on TV comedies or drama provides a "Sanctuary for comfort and relaxation". Due to effect of binge watching the networks ordering a single season up to 10-13 episodes instead

of standard 20-22. Now TV marathons are called as “Just in time fandom” to catch up and keep up with friends. This regime of watching is borrowed from concept of Hartley.

As per the study conducted by Deloitte [1], it was found that there are many reasons for the rise of on-demand content consumption through digital platforms in India. It states that this increase is due to the increase in number of devices that are capable of supporting digital media along with increase in network coverage and advancement of technology that is (3G, 4G/LTE). The study also states that there is a shift in consumer preference towards digital media consumption as compared to traditional forms of media like TV, print press and radio this in turn has resulted in shift in global advertising spends to digital mediums. The number of internet users in India has also increased and almost 75% of this population belong to the age group of less than 35 years out of this the total time spent on digital media by youth is about 21 % which is spent on audio and video entertainment. It is also seen that service providers are also trying to capture the attention of consumers by providing contents that are exclusive and for which customers can pay subscription on daily, weekly, monthly or long-term basis. Payment mechanism is also another critical component of digital market in India. There are multiple payment options like credit card, 3rd party wallet including mobile wallet, telecom wallet and net banking. There has been an increase in digital consumption and audio and video have emerged as leading online traffic generators. Marketers are focusing on digital media due to shift in viewer preferences from traditional media. Younger demographics are moving towards digital video content and online music streaming. The research concludes that in future digital audio and video on-demand services will see a lot of activity and getting business model right will be critical for success.

### **3. Binge-watching and its impact**

Research organized by De Feijter et al., (2016) among Dutch participants led to the findings that binge-watching had led to planned activities by respondents getting postponed due to a lack of control over a time commitment to bingeing content. Binge-watching had further led to a solitary and sedentary lifestyle, as it was mostly consumed on personal gadgets (De Feijter et al., 2016). This indicates that Binge watching could lead to desk-bound, sedentary lifestyles among students.

A research study by Azza (2017) amongst Arab residents led to the findings that most students binge-watched while they were studying at universities. The study findings revealed a positive correlation between depression and binge-watching tendencies of students. This analysis could further highlight that excessive binge-watching could lead to depression that would further affect the academic performances of students.

Findings of Panda and Pandey (2017) during research among college students in the USA pointed out that the primary reason students binge watched included the need to feel socially inclusive amidst



peer conversations, escape motivation, easy availability, and the viral nature of advertisements employed by the companies to influence the need to remain hooked on to a particular platform. Another finding of this research also pointed out that any experiences of anxiety or nervousness among students, post a binge experience only increased the binge-watching need leading to a gradual addiction to series watching (Panda and Pandey, 2017).

A study by Granow et al., 2018 led to the understanding that while binge-watching was an important source of entertainment and media enjoyment, it was also the cause of guilt feelings that arose from the procrastination of other goals which led to inner conflicts within an individual.

Findings by Merrill & Rubenking (2019) in research conducted amidst 651 southeastern students from the USA found that as compared to males, females binge-watched for a longer duration. The study also highlighted that binge-watching for college students was primarily associated with leisure and sensation-seeking, as a result, most college students viewed binge-watching as a norm and not as risky behavior. The study also revealed that students binge-watched to procrastinate other activities (Merrill and Rubenking, 2019).

The research study by Ramayan et al., (2018) also highlighted that binge-watching was primarily an activity for entertainment and fun. This study also pointed out that students also binge-watched to understand celebrity culture and to initiate interpersonal discussions based on the content watched.

Study research conducted by Chambliss et al., (2017) among undergraduate student volunteers in the mid-Atlantic US region led to the findings that binge-watching had led to distraction from studies and a disruption in one's academic performance. The students affirmed that binge-watching had turned into an "academic obstacle". A similar outcome was also in the research findings of Gangadharbatla et al., 2019, where the findings pointed out to declining grades, absence at school and work, physiological problems of exhaustion, hunger-loss, sleep deprivation, and other psychological issues related to loneliness, depression, and mental fatigue.

Two other studies in the states of Bihar (Ahuja, 2020) and Haryana (Dhiman and Malik, 2022) had similar findings wherein students affirmed a dwindling in their academic performances and a lack of physical activities. Study findings in both these papers also showed that students massively binged on sexual content, abusive, undue booze, and violent series.

Another research conducted in the city of Pune by Wagh et al., (2022) pointed out that watching content that was both sexually implicit and violent had a psychological impact which had led to sleeplessness, anguish, and a feeling of insecurity amongst some youth. This study also confirmed the loss of academic ground and health issues amongst youth (Wagh et al., 2022). Similarly, research done on the same topic in Mumbai amongst 90 students by Dhanuka & Bohra (2019) highlighted that youngsters despite being aware that they were addicted to binge watching web-series were unable

to self-regulate. This had led to an aftermath impact on their mental and physical health including insomnia, lack of productivity at work, development of anti-social behavioral traits, and emotional disturbance post their binge- watching of web series (Dhanuka & Bohra, 2019).

Binge-watching impact has a varied impact on people across the world. This research probed Binge-watching amongst students of North- East in India at a time when Covid-19 had just begun and lockdown had not yet been initiated.

### **BEHIND THE SCENES: WHAT ENABLES BINGE WATCHING BEHAVIOUR**

While binge watching is a popular viewing pattern among the younger demographics, the exact motives and purpose behind engaging and continuing this behaviour have yet to be extensively explored. At present, it would appear that there are a plethora of contributing factors, speculated on the basis of television uses and gratifications.

#### **Boredom**

Watching television serves an alleviatory function for boredom. Heavy television viewers are noted for being easily bored and therefore use television as a way to fill time when they have nothing else to do (McIlwraith, 1998). Similarly, college students have specifically cited boredom during their free time as the major reason behind their binge watching in the summer, before the academic year began (Devasagayam, 2014).

#### **Stress**

Television is also used to alleviate stress and its relaxing effect has been found in experiments conducted by Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi (2002) wherein they monitored the heart rate, skin resistance and brain waves of television viewers. Their results indicated that viewers feel relaxed while watching television but this feeling was terminated upon cessation of their viewing. Therefore, one may surmise that students have a stress reduction motive behind binge watching as it has been consistently found that they face a plethora of stressors (Hurst, Baranik, & Daniel, 2013). In fact, when reality is stressful and unpleasant, students binge watch as an opportunity to escape, with television programs becoming a way for them to 'leave' unsatisfying circumstances such as examinations, peer pressure, studying and uncertainties regarding their future career and evaluations (Panda & Pandey, 2017).

#### **Loneliness**

In the transition to college life and adjusting to an unfamiliar environment, students also face various challenges including interpersonal difficulties and loneliness for which television is sought out to satisfy social interaction needs (Aherne, 2001; Greenwood & Long, 2009; Hurst et al., 2013).

Students gain a sense of belonging by substituting real life companionship with television and using this medium as means to identify with others (characters and actors) (Greenwood & Long, 2009).

This is facilitated by the development of imagined friendships with characters where viewers feel as if they have a special connection with them, known as parasocial relationships (PSR) (Eyal & Cohen, 2006; Greenwood, 2008; Greenwood & Long, 2009). Research evidence supports the social surrogacy hypothesis according to which PSRs in favoured television shows provide students with a sense of belonging (Derrick, Gabriel, & Hugenberg, 2009). A significant predictor of developing PSRs among college students is loneliness indicating that they turn to their favoured programs when they feel lonely and report a reduction in such feelings while viewing (Derrick et al., 2009; Eyal & Cohen, 2006).

Furthermore, greater parasocial involvement with favourite characters has also been predicted by increased viewing hours and such relationships have been established while binge watching for a long duration (Devasagayam, 2014;

Greenwood, 2008). Binge watchers report having developed PSRs which propelled them to continue watching the television show so as to sustain the relationship and spend time with their favourite characters (Devasagayam, 2014).

### **Social Engagement**

Apart from compensating for paucities in interpersonal connections, binge viewing is considered to be an acceptable behaviour that has social value for college students and young viewers. Binge watching both enables and enhances their interaction in peer groups and participation in social conversation and such viewers are motivated to spend increasing amounts of time doing so in order to speak to their friends about the series they are viewing (Matrix, 2014; Panda & Pandey, 2017).

Stemming from this need for relatedness is the fear of missing out (FoMo) wherein college students and young viewers fear that they will be excluded from cultural conversation if they have not seen a particular program (Conlin, Billings, & Averset, 2016; Panda & Pandey, 2017). Specifically, FoMo plays a role in the viewing pace of drama series wherein viewers binge watch to catch up with the current narrative and therefore be able to belatedly join the cultural conversation (Conlin et al., 2016). Additional social contributing factors are recommendations and feedback on television series from others, thus exemplifying the interactional influence involved (Panda & Pandey, 2017).

### **Habit and Addiction**

Binge watching is integrated into viewers daily lives as a cultural practice thereby becoming a habitual activity (Mikos, 2016). However, the more college students binge watch, there is a greater proclivity for them to spend more subsequent time doing so, thus resulting in dependence (Panda & Pandey, 2017). This lends credence to the existing argumentation put forth that prolonged viewing is

an addiction to television (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Sussman & Moran, 2013). In fact, 60 percent of binge watchers report feeling addicted to the television shows that they watch (Devasagayam, 2014).

Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi (2002) chose to explain the addictive nature of television based on the association viewers make between watching television and tension reduction which is reinforced in various ways. On one hand it is positively reinforced by relaxation while viewing and negatively reinforced by stress and rumination after the activity is ceased.

This is supported by the finding that students who feel nervous or anxious after binge watching for a significant amount of time have a higher propensity of continuing to engage in this behaviour. A vicious cycle ensues as students who binge watch for more time in order to escape reality find solace in doing so which escalates their escape and furthers their addiction (Panda & Pandey, 2017).

Another key concept that has been used to explain addictive behaviour is flow, which is “the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement” (Chou & Ting, 2003; Csikszentmihalyi 1977 as cited in Panda & Pandey, 2017). This is experienced by college students while binge watching and wherein they are psychologically invested, view with focused concentration and have a distorted sense of time (Panda & Pandey, 2017).

Therefore, consistent reinforcement for watching television and state of flow contribute to this ritualistic habit becoming an addictive behaviour (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Panda & Pandey, 2017; Sussman & Moran, 2013).

Known as television addiction, it is characterised by increased craving and viewing time, increased urges to continue viewing and inability to discontinue the behaviour despite attempting to stop which leads to watching for longer than intended (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Sussman & Moran, 2013). Similarly, binge watching is an automatic process where viewers continue viewing television without thinking (Walton-Pattison, Dombrowski, & Pesseau, 2016). There is also an association between binge viewing and low self regulation, with those who find it difficult to control themselves having a tendency to continue watching (Sung, Kang & Lee as cited in EurekaAlert!, 2015), perpetuating the addiction to television series.

### **IMPACT OF HEAVY TELEVISION USE AND BINGE WATCHING**

Operating differentially for viewers, binge watching can satisfy various gratifications yet it also has the potential to become an overindulgent or addictive behaviour. Though appearing to be fairly innocuous, binge watching is conjectured to have multifarious effects on student viewers based on the parallels drawn to heavy television use.

#### **Physical Health**

The physical health ramifications of prolonged television exposure have been extensively researched. As a sedentary activity, high exposure to television is associated with physical inactivity among adults, especially for female college students whose physical exercise is negatively correlated with television viewing (Buckworth & Nigg, 2004; Meyer et al., 2008). Consistent research findings have also associated prolonged television exposure to higher risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes (Grøntved & Hu, 2011).

Research evidence has also highlighted the effect of television use on eating patterns. Van den Bulck (2000) found that viewers tend to adjust their eating habits in accordance to their television viewing habits. Furthermore, adults who watch television tend to consume more high calorie snacks, fast food, soft drinks, alcohol and less nutritious food such as fruits and vegetables (Bowman, 2006; Sisson, Shay, Broyles, & Leyva, 2012; Van den Bulck, 2000). These findings can be explained based on the fact that watching more television means that there is more time to eat snacks and consume drinks (Van den Bulck, 2000).

With such unhealthy dietary practices being associated with heavy television viewing, research has also investigated the association between television use and obesity, yielding mixed results. On one hand, time spent watching television has been associated with obesity in adults, with those watching more than two hours a day having high body mass index (BMI) and being obese (Bowman, 2006; Vioque, Torres, & Quiles, 2000). However, Van den Bulck (2000) found no such link to obesity.

In addition, prolonged television viewing is associated with sleep disturbances, lack of sleep and alterations in melatonin levels, thus affecting the sleeping patterns of viewers (Sigman, 2007; Van den Bulck, 2000). In particular, increased fatigue, insomnia and poor sleep quality are associated with higher frequency of binge watching, mediated by cognitive pre-sleep arousal which is potentially attributed to the greater narrative involvement and character identification occurring when binge watching (Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017).

### **Psychological Consequences**

Watching television for prolonged periods of time also has ramifications pertaining to cognition, emotion and mental health. Cognitive effects include deficits in concentration and attention span (Christakis, Zimmerman, DiGiuseppe, & McCarty, 2004; Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). After heavy use of television, viewers report lower levels of alertness and difficulties in concentrating when compared to before they began (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). In addition, a prospective study of adults identified that worse cognitive functioning (poorer executive control and slower processing speed) in mid life is associated with high levels of television consumption during early adulthood (Hoang et al., 2016).

Heavy viewers also experience emotional consequences. They report that their mood is either the same or worse after watching television for a prolonged period of time and the experience of heavy viewing is less enjoyable (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). Binge watchers have reported feelings of emptiness after a show or a season of a series concluded (Devasagayam, 2014). Similar experiences were reported by viewers who underwent parasocial breakups with characters they had PSRs with when the character was taken off the show or the show ended, resulting in loneliness and depression (Eyal & Cohen, 2006).

Higher levels of loneliness and depression have also been associated with binge watching behaviour, along with anxiety and fatigue (Devasagayam, 2014; Sung, Kang & Lee, 2015 as cited in Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017; Wheeler, 2015 as cited in Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017). Finally, other consequences include lower life satisfaction among heavy television viewers when compared to light viewers and non viewers (Frey, Benesch, & Stutzer, 2007).

### **Academics**

Research has also identified that heavy television use has an impact on college students' academics. Increased television viewing is positively related to academic dishonesty which includes cheating on assignments and examinations or plagiarising others' work (Pino & Smith, 2003). On the other hand, there is a negative correlation between watching television and grade point average as well as academic confidence, particularly among female college students (Jacobsen & Forste, 2011; Walsh, Fielder, Carey, & Carey, 2013). Multitasking by using electronic media like television while engaging in academic work is common among college students and this habit serves as a distraction with detrimental effects on students' performance (Jacobsen & Forste, 2011). Apart from serving as a distraction, watching television can also displace time spent on other activities such as academic and recreational reading among college students (Mokhtari et al., 2009).

### **Social Life**

Some researchers are concerned that binge watching has deleterious effects on long term social skills (de Feijter, Khan, & van Gisbergen, 2016 as cited in Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017; Panda & Pandey, 2017). In the case of college students, watching television is often a solitary activity and the time they spend doing so replaces the time they could be spending with friends, going out and various other social oriented activities (Finlay et al., 2012; Van den Bulck, 2000).

However, others contend that binge watching is actually a social phenomenon. Though people view alone, they feel the need to discuss with their friends about the series they are watching. Media marathons are also organised as a personal leisure activity among groups of friends, typically on

weekends, and even incorporated into the daily rituals of couples, acting as a social event with viewers' partners (Mikos, 2016).

### **Addiction**

Television addiction has social and role consequences by impacting relationship maintenance, jeopardising functions at work and at home, reducing time spent with colleagues and friends and less time participating in community and volunteering activities (Bruni & Stanca, 2008; Sussman & Moran, 2013). Heavy viewers report feeling guilty and dissatisfied about not having spent that viewing time on productive activities, work or other recreation activities (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Sussman & Moran, 2013). Binge watchers have reported a similar goal conflict wherein such viewing undermines their pursuit of goals and they also anticipate feelings of regret after a binge watching period (Walton-Pattison et al., 2016).

Students, in particular, experience feelings of loneliness, stress, anxiety and emptiness after completing a binge watching session, which is attributed to the disturbance in flow associated with addiction. Additionally, as their dependence on binge watching to cope with reality increases, other adaptive coping strategies to deal with their emotions deteriorate (Panda & Pandey, 2017).

### **Motives of binge watching for teenagers**

In recent year ,Teenagers binge watching percentage has obviously been increased , According to a survey has been held in the united states in 2020 on 1,507 respondents, has stated that the binge watchingpercentage among respondents of age between 13 to 17 years old is 60 %, while the percentage of adult aged from 18 to 29 years old is 69% (Navarro,j 2021). These high percentages require existence of strongmotives that stimulate this phenomenon among teenagers, similarly as in a study of (Panda. S & Pandey. S ,2017) that concerns witteenagers' motives to binge watch, the data of this study is estimated by interviews and focused group discussions.(Panda. S & Pandey. S) stated that escaping reality, easy access to the online platforms and thepoor social interactions are the three main motives of teenagers' binge watching in digital platforms as Netflix.

### **Binge watching behavioral effect on teenagers**

Binge watching has a great impact on teenagers' mental and Psychological health. In a study conducted by (Groshek. J, Krongard.S & Zhang.Y ,2018) to investigate the effect of binge watching on teenagers' mental health by analyzing data of survey conducted on 450 teenagers in the Northeastern region of the United States, (Groshek. J, et al, 2018) stated that binge watching causes severe mental and psychological health problems of symptoms as depression, frustration, sleep disturbance, & obesity.

## Media and students' Academic performance

### Academic Engagement

“Engagement is an important facet of students' school experience because of its logical relationship to achievement and to optimal human development” (Nelson , 2018 , p.15) Academic engagement measures to what extent student is engaged and focused his study ,and this could be identified by multiple aspects related to student participation , achievement , overall GPA , motivation , presentation skills and studying skills , the more student is engaged in his study , the more grades he got and the more success he achieved , A study by Nelson , 2018 , focused on explaining what is academic engagement and what factors could affect it , the study stated 6 Questions to identify factors that lead to negative influence on academic achievement , one of them was focused on showing the effect of stress on students' academic engagement , the study proved that stress has bad impact on academic engagement and could affect functioning factors such as planning , organizing and orienting one's attention

**impact of social media duration of usage on students grades** According to a study in Jordan , Social Media has its power on students , with influence of technology , social media could be used as helpful way of academic progress , students use social media to communicate with their peers , creating groups to finish team work tasks , sharing academic interests , using textbooks , so it's an essential way of communication in their lives , but on other hand , it could also lead to bad influence on students' academic achievement . The study aims to investigate influence of social media on student academic achievement by using random sample method of all graduate and undergraduate students who enrolled in Business college. The results of this research indicated that there is negative association between duration of using social media and students grades , the study attributed the fact that successful students usually spending more time studying by using available methods including social media to improve their academic performance , on the other hand , students with lower academic performance spend a lot of time on social media but for nonacademic purposes , so it depends on how student use the medium , not medium itself .( Alkhateeb.M,2020)

### Effects of Netflix Binge watching on Students' academic achievement

A study in Egypt by Osman , 2020 , focused on showing the effect of watching Netflix on teenagers , the study used focus groups with 4 groups of teenagers , 9 Questions was asked , the questions varied from how do you know about Netflix , what are Motives for watching series on Netflix , and



last question was Have your relationships with others changed after watching the series ? one of its results was focused on showing teenagers watching habits , and it proved that most of them take watching Netflix as a daily routine in their lives , indeed they could finish one season of TV show in a couple of days , and the study conducted that teenagers are highly exposed to Netflix to the way it could turn to be an addiction , another result proved that the majority of focus groups in the study had their relationship with others got affected by content they saw on Netflix , in addition , one of them highlighted that he learned how to escape from classes at school from series , and this could lead to bad influence on students' academic achievement (Osman, 2020) Binge watching is common among university students (Riddle et al.2017 ;Chastin et al , 2018) , a study by university of Twenty , 2018 , Focused on showing the impact of binge watching on students learning behavior , the study used survey method , and it indicated that students who watch more online series they are likely to spend less time planning on physical activities , one participant highlighted that binge-watching occupied a large part of his/her day with binges up to 10 hours per day and a mean watching time of more than five hours per day. , in addition the study proved that binge watching can have a negative influence on academic achievement and students learning behavior.

A study on polish university students in 2020 , with a research group consists of 1004 participants , the sample consists of 854 (85%) women and 150 men (15%) , the average age was 22 years , the results of the study indicated that binge watching leads to negative social consequences , individuals lose their connection with other people , family and friends , so they become social isolated , in addition , the study proved that people who excessively binge-watches can lose control of amount of time they spend watching because they unable to control their behavior , and this could lead to neglect duties such as school which leads to worse academic results( Starosta,et al,2020)

A study by Clarke , 2019 , its purpose was to examine multivariate relations between binge watching , binge eating , and binge drinking and depression, anxiety, and stress among college students , the results of the study addressed multivariate relations between binge watching with depression , stress and anxiety among 102 college students ages 18 to 24( Clarke et al , 2019 )<sup>22</sup> Stress has its direct or indirect impact on student academic performance (Nelson , 2018 , P26) According to study by university of Arizona , stress shown long term impacts on various areas related to academic engagement , this study results show the relationship between stress and skills engagement factor of students , and it proved that students experiencing high levels of stress they are less actively engaged in classroom and they are likely to miss classes or have lower attention (Nelson , 2018 . P70)

### **Theoretical framework:**

The Research depends on two Theoretical Frameworks (Social learning theory and uses & gratifications theory)

### **1- Social learning theory**

Burrhus Frederic Skinner consign Operant conditioning theory in 1948, Mainly, it was assuming that consequences of actions as punishments, reinforcement and reward can guide & determine the individual behavior, in addition to its controlling to the repetition of this individual behavior's over again. B.F. Skinner proved this through Applying an experiment on a rat in a box and he accomplish his results by observing the rat's attitude toward certain situations. (Berger.v,2005)

While Albert Bandura continued on his fellow (B.F. Skinner) and developed the social learning theory in 1977, Mainly, it proposes that observing & imitation are the main stimulant and mentor for the individual social behavior. Bandura assume that a specific behavioral acquisition or adoption can be determined by 4 stages, (1-Attention: which means to which extent the behavior grasp the individual attention \ 2-Retention: which concerns with the individual remembering rate to the behavior \ 3-Reproduction: concerns the individual ability (especially the physical ability )to apply the behavior \4-Motivation: it concerns with the will of adopting the behavior as a result of observing the consequences of actions on another person doing the same action before). Bandura has 4 main assumptions in his theory, 1<sup>st</sup>: learning how to behave is attained by observation especially in the category of children as that they seek to imitate the behaviors applied by their same gender, 2<sup>nd</sup> punishing and awarding a person for a certain behavior will surely direct the behavior of another person as that he has seen its consequences, 3<sup>rd</sup>: learning doesn't always clue to behavioral changes, 4<sup>th</sup>: cognitiver reasons determine whether a behavior will be adopted or not. ( McLeod.S. A., 2016)

### **Social learning theory relation to new media:**

Peoples' activity in various social media platform is in rapid increase, As that the growth of Internet users increased by 7½ % in the recent years (Kemp.s,2021)<sup>26</sup>. In October 2021, 4.88 billion people are using internet around the world, which represents 62% of the whole world's population (digital around the world, 2021) , consequently digitalization became a necessity not an option in recent years as stated by Mariana Mazzucato in an article published by International Institute for Management Development (The future of the world will depend on digitalization , 2020)<sup>28</sup>. therefore, teenagers are now tending to look up for their role models in various digital media platform as Netflix rather than in their real society, as a result of teenagers escaping to the reality and their wide exposure to digital media content thus , they will tend to imitate the character who may be a hero of the series and

implement their applied values and behavior in the series . as assured lately by (Osman.D, 2020)<sup>29</sup> in a research that was investigating the effect of watching Netflix series on teenagers values , the researcher depended on social learning theory by Bandura ,she proposed that the revolutionizing digital platforms as Netflix has a leadership role in shaping teenager's beliefs , values and even their adaptation to new and different behaviors.

### **Scope of usage:**

Since, digital platforms as (Netflix) are reinforcing teenager's behaviors & attitude toward many aspects in their social life therefore,Netflix binge watching will affect with assurance their academic achievement in a way or another. It can direct their priority against their academic enrollment in classes as a result of their fully engagement in watching different series so they would prefer giving attention more for watching, at the same time, there are Netflix series presents the harmful impact of the absence of education priority for some student which can stimulate education progress for teenagers watching this series because they have seen the consequences of the academic failure. Consequently, the researchers see that social learning theory is the most applicable theory to investigate the effect of Netflix binge watching on teenager's behavior toward their academic achievement.

### **2- Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Uses and gratifications theory was originated in 1940s by Lazarsfeld- Stanton (Idid et al , 2012)<sup>30</sup> Katz introduced uses and gratifications theory when he came up with the notion that people use media to their own benefits , According to West and Turner UGT was an extension of Needs and Motivation Theory . Uses and Gratifications Theory focuses on both the message and the sender who is considered as an active user for a certain media, so it is an approach to understand why and how people seek to use specific media to satisfy specific needs, this theory aims to answer two main Questions : what does media do to people and what do people do with media Uses and Gratifications Main hypothesis is that individual users will continue to be engaged with social networking sites if their gratifications and needs are fulfilled by such tools , Uses and Gratifications theory it's being defined as "the social and psychological origins of needs which generate mass media expectations or other sources, leading to different media exposure patterns, to eventually gratify these needs and their other consequences (Taha,2020)<sup>31</sup>

### **Theory Relation to New Media:**

This Theory passes through stages since its origin in 1940s , First it was used to understand the consumption and gratification of various radio programs , then later it was expanded in 1970s to

include other forms of media , in its final stage , the most recent interest surrounding this theory is to link between the reason why media is used and the archived gratification , and UGT researchers started to develop the theory to be more predictive by connecting audiencebenefits and consequences with media , Most of research papers that examines the effects of any medium on audience ,they use uses and Gratifications theory . (McQuali ,2010)<sup>32</sup> identified the five basic gratifications of media as (a) cognitive needs , (b) affective needs , (c) personal integrative needs , (d) social integrative needs , and (e) tension free needs , the more establishment of media platforms the more uses and gratifications theory could be applied , each media platform could be used for a certain need , and that is what uses and gratifications theory aims to explain .

### **Scope of usage:**

Since uses and gratifications theory explains why people seek out certain forms of media and how their media Choice gratify certain needs and goals(Clarke , 2019)<sup>33</sup> , this theory is applicable to be applied on Netflix binge watching phenomena , as teenagers watch Netflix ( which is consider a media platform ) to satisfy certain needs ,in addition , the main reason behind binge watching phenomena is thatstudents each Netflix to satisfy specific needs, In case of Binge watching phenomena , it could be possible after applying uses and gratifications theory that teenagers seek out Netflix as a media platform to satisfy tension free needs , Tension free needs are met when person engages in media to escape sources of Tension (McQuail , 2010)<sup>34</sup> , by using Netflix as a platform to escape a source of tension , students start to escape classes and spend less time studying to watch , Indeed , they become less organizing , planning , and orienting in their academic progress , this could lead to a negative influence on their grades and academic achievement (Nelson , 2018)<sup>35</sup>

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The binge-watching trend has caught on with all students as this research showed that all the students accepted that they were binge- watching. Binge-watching is turning into a 'new normal' (Netflix Inc, 2013) for most youth. The analysis showed that Binge- watching did not have a significant impact on the academic performance of students. Neither did Northeast students of India use binge- watching as a means of a relaxing break nor escape motivation. Most variables only showed neutrality in the analysis of students. The negative impact was seen in an insignificant numerical percentage. The only impact that could be considered important was sleep deprivation in some of the students. Sleep - deprivation due to binge-watching could lead to further health issues. A similar result was also seen in (Wagh et al., 2020). The study suggests a post-Covid analysis on the same topic as there was a massive surge in OTT subscribership post the pandemic.

The research is investigating the effect of Netflix binge watching on the teenagers' academic achievement as that, Netflix as a platform has many exclusive and attractive features that mostly attracts teenagers and increases their level of binge watching without realizing or noticing and this is the main problem as those teenagers could be unaware of the consequences of their binge watching. since teenagers and the upcoming generation are the future of their community, thus each topic related to the teenagers worth the investigation therefore, the research main objective was to determine teenager's exposure to Netflix, which content type stimulate their binge watching in addition determining the effect of binge watching on their academic achievement and its impact on their future plans also discussing its impact on their mental health. Thus according to the previous chapter (data analysis chapter), a set of data findings and information has been developed and collected to answer the main research questions that was set at the beginning of the study.

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