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Relationships between Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Binge Watching Engagement

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Abstract

This study sought to measure the relationship between television binge watching engagement and individual characteristics such as personality and emotional intelligence. It was predicted that binge watching engagement would be related to scores on the Big Five personality scale and a trait measure of emotional intelligence. Positive and Negative Affect (mood), Transportation (mental involvement), and Parasocial Relationship (character connection) scores were all considered engagement variables. Other demographic factors such as Religiosity, Gender, and Hours of Television Consumption Per Week were expected to be related to these binge watching engagement factors. It was found that those who scored high in Conscientiousness were less likely to be mentally involved (transported) into the narrative of the television show than those who scored low on Conscientiousness. Additional testing found that those who scored higher in Neuroticism and Agreeableness were more likely to have lower Positive Affect Scores than those who scored lower in Neuroticism and Agreeableness at the end of binge watching. Those who scored high in Emotional Intelligence also scored higher in Positive Affect and lower in Negative Affect than those lower in Emotional Intelligence. Participants completed the study with less Positive and Negative Affect than when they arrived. This research confirmed the relationship between a person's binge watching experience and some individual differences. Implications television's effects through mental involvement (transportation) and emotional affect are considered in the discussion.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Binge Watching

The long-term effects of television have been widely noted for many years. In fact, Canadians aged 18-34 watch an average of 18.5 hours of television each week (CRTC, 2017). The CRTC (2017) reported that of Canadians 18+, 94% had watched television at least once in the month and that 60% of Canadians had also watched television online, on sites such as Netflix.

Today's middle aged and older adults watch considerable amounts of television, but there is a stronger chance that they are going to watch on a television screen connected to a cable network (or internet protocol television (IPTV) equivalent). The younger generation is more likely to use internet streaming services such as Netflix, which can be consumed through mobile devices, computers, and televisions, not on a cable or IPTV type plan (CRTC, 2017). Of the Canadian population, 50% has used Netflix, and 69% has streamed video online. The media platform Netflix, among others, has lead the way to the binge-watching phenomenon found with internet based watching.

The Oxford Dictionary's runner-up for word of the year in 2013, to "binge watch", was defined as "watch[ing] multiple episodes of (a television program) in rapid succession" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013). Despite the prevalence of binge watching, when this literature review was carried out, there were limited studies on its mediators and correlates (Walton-Pattison, Dombrowski, & Pesseau, 2018). However, there were multiple experimental studies suggesting effects of television through both positive and negative media (Tsay & Bodine, 2012; Padilla-Walker, Coyne, Collier & Nielson, 2015). Whether the content being consumed had a positive, prosocial focus or if it was negative, full of violence and mistrust, television had an impact.

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Could these effects be magnified through binge watching?

Binge watching has been operationally defined by Walton-Pattison et al. (2018) as 2-3+ episodes of consecutive, same-series watching. There have been attempts by many to create more specific operational definitions, including longer lengths of time and the addition of guilt to a binge-watching session. For example, Feeney (2014) suggests that binge watching should be 4 or more consecutive television episodes that were at the expense of other life activities, often causing guilt for the binge-watcher. Guilt has not been a part of other researcher's definitions. Even negative and violent shows such as the Walking Dead reportedly can bring viewers pleasure and enjoyment (Pena, 2015). However, Walton-Pattison et al.'s (2016) research found that those who binge watched felt that their amount of television watching contributed to their not achieving their goals in life.

The operational definition used for binge watching in the current study was based on the commonalities of all three of these preceding definitions. The definition of a single binge-watching instance used in this study was watching 3 or more consecutive television episodes. Thus, seeking to find full effects of television binge-watching, 1+3 (~40-45 minute) or 2+6 (~20-25 minute) consecutive television episodes were used. Walton-Pattison et al. (2018) found in their survey that on average people watched ~3 hours of consecutive binge TV watching at least one day per week, which was confirmed by Netflix and other streaming services. Watching 5 or more episodes in a row has not been uncommon for young adults, especially when they were sick, travelling, or wanting a day at home (Pena, 2015; Walton-Pattison et al., 2018). Watching a television series all day or for hours on end has become synonymous with the modern young adult's weekend plans. Given how common binge watching has become, it is important to explore the effects it has on viewers.

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1.2 Social Learning Theory

TV media is a modern means of socialization. Engagement with television characters and stories satisfies needs and replicates a sense of friends and community (Tal-Or, 2016). The term transportation is used to describe complete immersion into a show's world, often losing touch with or even becoming unaware of one's surroundings when fully transported into a television show (Tal-Or, 2016). Identification is also intimately related to transportation. Identification was defined in this study as when a person finds similarities between themselves and a character, feeling closeness and a bond with them (Tal-Or, 2016). When a transported person is identifying highly with a character, they will often take on their worldview and perspective. The character's experience becomes the watcher's vicarious experience (Harris & Sanborn, 2014). Studies have found that when a person highly identifies with a character and feels transported, not only will they be less likely to question the character's behaviours and opinions, but they will change their opinions and attitudes to match the character with whom they strongly identify (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009; Igartua & Barrios, 2012).

Parasocial relationships are among the major gratifications of watching television (Nabi, 2016). While identification is what takes place as the consumer is watching television, parasocial relationships involve developing real-feeling emotional rewards. This makes the viewer want to watch more to feel connected to the relationship again (Nabi, 2006; Nabi, 2016). Ellithorpe and Brookes (2016) discovered that statistically significant distress was found among fans of couples who breakup on television shows, even when the breakup was spoiled ahead of time. Parasocial relationships are similar to real socialization, as they mimic real interactions through transportation and identification, and are strong enough to elicit emotions, suspense and learning

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(Nabi, 2006). The worlds' consumers of media are exposed to new opinions, ways of thinking and behaviors (Murphy, Frank, Moran, & Patnoe-Woodley, 2011). These forms of socialization are likely to persuade a person to think differently (Murphy et al., 2011). The intensity of these relationships is also important to consider for how strong their influence might be. Americans spend more time watching television than interacting socially with peers, so the influences of these relationships are important to measure (Madison & Porter, 2015). Just as in social situations, not everybody is effected the same by television. These effects should be mediated by motivational and attention based factors (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). If a person only has television on in the background of another task, or was watching for reasons other than personal ones, then the strength of effects will vary greatly (Tsay & Bodine, 2012).

1.3 Motivation

Why watch TV? Watching television has become more than a way to pass time or have something to talk to co-workers about. It has become a means of fulfillment; socially, emotionally and experientially. Other motivations for television watchers are emotional elevation, reward, escape and gratification (Tsay & Bodine, 2012; Pena, 2015). Tsay and Bodine (2012) found with very high statistical significance that those who watched television because of habit, pleasure, and relaxation thought of the characters as role models and guides. The on demand and specialized nature of today's television has moved towards more internally motivated fulfillment and satisfaction of intrinsic needs. This shift reflects a person's desire for television to satisfy desires for autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Tamborini, Bowman, Eden, Grizzard, & Organ, 2010). A person's motivation and attention level can even alter their judgments about what they see on-screen. This could include "judgments about their [a

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character's] emotions, personalities, or behavioral tendencies" (Ybarra, Kross & Sanchez-Burks, 2014, p. 98). This internalization of motives was more common among those who were millennials or younger, rather than older generations that did not grow up with on-demand watching (Walton-Pattison, 2018; Pena, 2016). For older viewers the predominant motivation for watching television was for external reasons, such as to have something to talk about with someone (Pena, 2015).

Research on the effects of television have not typically been completed in a binge-watching design. Therefore, this research sought to understand if the effects were exemplified or even magnified with the bingeing of typical content.

1.4 Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory predicts that a person exposed to the worldview, beliefs, and perceptions presented in television will internalize them. For example, if a person has never known any person from Papua New Guinea and they watch a television show where its inhabitants were all portrayed as cannibals, the viewer may be cultivated to believe that this was true of people from there. Cultivation theory can be used to help explain how television can influence already formed beliefs, while also bringing up children into false conceptions of reality in television (Nabi & Riddle, 2008). Conceptions are cultivated, meaning they are created and attained over long term watching (Nabi & Riddle, 2008). Cultivation theory is closely tied with cognitive processing models like the availability heuristic (Nabi & Riddle, 2008; Shrum, 2001). The availability heuristic can be seen as a person using their most easily available memories of an event (from television) and using that as their reality, instead of other experiences (Nabi & Riddle, 2008). This is also tied to the idea of construct accessibility whereby the creation of heuristics and

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schemas can be sustained through frequent exposure to the false reality of television (Nabi & Riddle, 2008). These effects can be especially strong if people interact more with television than with other people in person. Hetsroni's (2014) theory of cultivation focuses around distortions of reality. They said that cultivation "...enculturates a homogeneous conception of the world among the heavy viewers," (p. 10). For example the CBC Network has a 2016 reality television show called "This is High School", whereby they portray high school life on their show as the true reality students face today. This could impact viewers by changing how they view the realities of today's world. Through emotional responses facilitating belief in the reality of television, and media's pushing messages of its reality and relatability, watchers should have stronger internalization, or cultivation effects.

1.5 Engagement

TV can affect watchers differently based on the frequency, duration, content, attention and engagement levels of the consumer (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). Each of these variables has been found to affect how the show is interpreted, the types of reactions, and the strength of these effects. Attention can be described in terms of passion versus passive watching (Harris & Sanborn, 2014; Tsay & Bodine, 2012). Passive watching was found to not have any significant effect on parasocial relationships (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). Harris and Sanborn (2014) explain more broadly that passive intake of media content has an effect, but it develops slowly and more subtly over time. Engagement with media can take many forms. Tsay and Bodine (2012) outline 5 types that were critical to how a person engaged and was involved in television show consumption. First, central to passionate engagement with media was cognitive engagement with the message or purpose of the content. Second, was emotional or affective engagement whereby

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the watcher had “interpersonal reactions reflecting emotional involvement, such as empathizing with a character” (p. 187). The third was behavioural engagement which happened during or after the show, whereby watchers talked to the characters on their screen, or discussed it afterwards with peers in person or online. The fourth was called referential involvement, which was when the viewer saw similarities between the character and themselves. If strong enough, this reference could lead to identification and parasocial relationships. Their final interaction with media was critical involvement, where the viewers critically viewed the show, questioning the events, plot line, and trajectory of the show with themselves or peers. Extreme critical involvement could be contacting the directors of the show to complain or suggest changes. The stronger these five engagement types were in a person, the more likely they were to be influenced by the messages of the media (Tsay & Bodine, 2012).

1.6 Five Factor Model and Personality Traits

Why study individual differences as they relate to television consumption? The fullest understanding of the roles and effects of television media comes through a biopsychosocial approach (Harris & Sanborn, 2014). This model emphasizes the connectedness of biological, psychological and social influences on a particular topic. Research in to the topic of television’s differing effects are being studied through the utilization of personality measures (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). Personality in part has been rooted in dispositional, recurrent, and personal factors or traits (Nabi & Riddle, 2008; Brumbaugh et al., 2013). For example, a person’s levels of neuroticism, openness and extraversion have been found to remain consistent across the lifetime. These dispositional traits can be seen in newborn children (Kagan & Snidman, 1991) and have also been found to have an impact on a person’s television watching preferences (Lull

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& Dickinson, 2016). Understanding differences in individuals' personalities may help explain and predict what kinds of media will be preferred and how media may impact a person's life (Rentfrow, Goldberg, & Zilca, 2010).

The dispositional traits Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness (NEO) tend to be described as biologically based, and have been found to be unlikely to change over the lifespan (Nabi & Riddle, 2008). Researchers have found that the multidimensionality of personality plays a significant role in how a people are swayed by the opinions displayed on television (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). In one recent study individuals high in neuroticism were found to be most affected by the opinions shown on television across all measured categories, while extraversion was found to have no statistically significant effect on any types of parasocial interactions (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). High and low levels of openness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism suggested statistically significant results in estimates of societal and interpersonal violence (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). Lull and Dickinson (2016) reported that those who spend more time watching television also have higher levels of narcissism. Those who scored higher on their narcissism scale tended to watch many genres, especially reality type shows like sports, political talk shows, drama reality shows and horror shows. Their literature review suggested that individuals with certain worldviews or values tend to watch shows that mirror their own beliefs and cultivate them further. Their study suggested that the amount of time consuming media has an impact on personality traits and values, just as the content that they were viewing will affirm and cultivate narcissism.

Nabi and Riddle (2008) followed an older, more foundational personality theory for their study. Rather than using the modern Five Factor model, they followed Eysenck's P.E.N. Model which consisted of Psychoticism, Extraversion and Neuroticism. Modern theories no longer use

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psychoticism, but have formed agreeableness and conscientiousness from his single category.

Despite their use of an older model, their findings still have significance in understanding how personality interacts with media. Their findings suggest that dispositional personality traits play a significant role in genre selection and interpretation, therefore, having significant worldview impacts.

Another interesting study done by Brumbaugh, Kothuri, Marci, Siefert, and Pfaff (2013) found physiological differences between people with different personality traits when watching emotion-provoking scenes. Individuals high on the trait extraversion had high skin conductance in the opposite times that individuals low on extraversion did. Specifically, the skin conductance results showed that extraverts had stronger reactions to interpersonal emotionality than introverts. They also found that gender was a significant mediator of personality responses to emotional stimuli. Women high in conscientiousness had significantly stronger reactions to use of a gun than men high in conscientiousness. Overall, “the sad scene produced the largest arousal increases for women and the largest arousal decreases for men” (Brumbaugh et al., 2013, p. 299)

These studies on the impacts of personality traits on how an individual is impacted by what they watch on TV warrant a closer look. Specifically, how personality factors impact how an individual is affected by binge watching television needs to be explored. The present study sought to determine if personality effects were exemplified through a binge watching design.

1.7 Emotional Intelligence

In addition to personality traits, another factor found to impact how an individual is affected by television viewing is Emotional Intelligence. Indeed, research has indicated that Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) measures important personality traits not found in the Big 5

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(Ackley, 2016). Emotional Intelligence (EI) was defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as “the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions” (p. 189). Ackley (2016) also used a modern and broad definition of the Emotional Quotient (EQ) as “the integration of emotions with cognition to impact performance” (p. 279). Two categories have been created under the umbrella of EI, Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) and Ability Emotional Intelligence (AEI). Salovey and Mayer (1990) propose that a person's EQ score will be able to predict their emotional skills, comparable to how the intelligence quotient (IQ) can predict cognitive skills. Their ability model of emotional intelligence said that a person can improve their EQ. However, they hold that a person's EQ can only be developed to the point of their natural ability, which has been the same since birth. Salovey and Mayer's four branches of EQ all surround a person's ability to understand, perceive their own emotions, to facilitate thought and manage them (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004). In contrast the EQ theory developed by Goleman expands into four clusters that focus not only on the internal emotional abilities, but also upon social awareness and relationship management (Wolff, 2005).

Ackley (2016) measured emotional intelligence using a trait based measure. High EQ has often been associated with better understanding, navigation of social situations and more empathy (Brabec, Gfeller, & Ross, 2012). This could lead an individual to be more mentally involved (transported) into a narrative. Mental involvement includes a person's conscious awareness being focused on the television show. High levels of transportation may include being unaware of personal surroundings. Brabec et al. (2012) conducted a study where he compared the social cognitions (interpretations of thoughts or attitudes in social situations) of high and low Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) individuals, not including those in the middle ground of TEI.

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They found there were gender differences among low TEI individuals, with men with low TEI demonstrating lower social cognition abilities compared to women with low TEI. Indeed, findings that suggested women are better able to understand facial expressions and have stronger empathy than men, lead to literature suggesting “female superiority” in this area of EI (Brabec et al., 2012, p. 892). However, among the high TEI individuals, there was less of a gender difference on a Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RME-R) with men and women showing more equal abilities in the area of social cognition. This test displays a photograph of only the eyes of a person displaying an emotion on their face, and the participant was asked to decide what the correct understanding of their facial expression was. This test has strong correlations with understanding of other’s emotions through empathy. These results from Brabec et al. (2012) suggest that there may be gender differences within TEI.

Emotional intelligence scores have also been found to be an important factor to measure when examining individual differences in binge watching engagement. Emotions play a role in how a person perceives and responds to a television show’s content (Tsay & Bodine, 2012). Brabec et al. (2012) discussed how emotional intelligence is closely tied to empathy. Together, emotional intelligence was seen as something that may be related to mental involvement (transportation) and emotional affect, therefore, having an impact on a person’s overall television watching experience. Emotional intelligence scores were considered an important factor to measure when examining individual differences in binge watching engagement.

1.8 Positive Content

Positive television content includes relatable content that a person can identify with, that elevates their mood, facilitates an emotional experience, and presents social situations that have

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examples of strong emotional understanding and social cognitions. Since television can be a type of socialization, watching shows that demonstrate high emotional intelligence and diversity could be able to teach individuals to be more accepting of diversity, minorities, and help them to create healthier interpersonal relationships (Lienemann, 2013; Harris & Sanborn, 2014). Black and Barnes (2009) found that those who watched a dramatic television show had developed better facial reading skills. They suggested these effects took place because the viewers were watching a social situation when another group did not. The documentary group did not include interpersonal reactions, but was science-based and did not focus on the emotions of people. Positive content elevates mood, facilitates an emotional experience, and presents positive emotions, creating parasocial relationships and vicarious experiences (Bartsch, 2012; Padilla-Walker et al., 2015). Prosocial behaviour, which was defined as doing something for someone else without expecting something in return, can be influenced by the media (Padilla-Walker et al., 2015). An example of prosocial media content is Disney movies which have an exceptionally high amount of prosocial behaviour; almost one act per minute (Padilla-Walker et al., 2015). Prosocial television can effect a person three ways. First, “[i]n the short term, viewing prosocial content can influence cognition (by activating prosocial script in memory), [second,] arousal (by physiologically decreasing stress), and [third] affect (by putting the person in a good mood)” (Padilla-Walker et al., 2015, p. 1318). Watching prosocial television was also heavily associated with decreased aggression, more social interaction, and higher levels of altruism. These studies were conducted in children and youth, not within adults. Indeed, numerous studies have documented the fact that television content can affect people positively, just as other studies have shown how it can affect a person negatively (Padilla-Walker et al., 2015).

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1.9 Negative Content

Thousands of studies have suggested that watching violent media was associated with increased violent and aggressive behaviour (Padilla-Walker et al., 2015). Through identification with characters, watchers were more likely to adopt their behaviors and attitudes (Unz, Schwab & Winterhoff-Spurk, 2008). The broad term, violence in media, was broken down by Unz et al. (2008) into different categories, which provoke different emotions at different intensities. Intentional violence towards humans versus objects provoked different responses, while unintended violence produced another type of emotional response. Unz et al. (2008) also found an interaction between gratification and emotionality. Those who received high gratifications from violent television were more likely to show lower levels of emotional disturbance than those who avoided violent television (Unz et al., 2008). The uses and gratifications perspective could also be a part of what lead to the desensitization effects found in Bartsch et al.'s (2012) research. In Bartsch et al.'s (2012) research those who watched violent television were more likely to become desensitized because of the gratifications (satisfactions) they received. Those who did not receive gratifications from television were not likely to watch as much violence, and therefore were less desensitized.

A neuroscience study which used an EEG to measure brain activity found short term desensitization to another person's emotional experience after violent media consumption. They suggested that this "emotional anesthetization" had strong implications for restraining aggressive behavior (Stockdale, Morrison, Kmiecik, Garbarino and Siltan, 2015, p. 1381). This process of desensitization was not described as conscious, but could still deeply skew a person's perceptions of the world (Riddle, 2010). One method used by researchers to test the effects of violence in media is to ask people about what they believed to be the prevalence of crime. Nabi

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and Riddle's (2008) questionnaire asked people about what they believed to be the prevalence of violent and negative behaviours such as poisonings, deaths and murder rates in a study with undergraduate students. Riddle found that their responses closely mirrored the television's crime rates rather than real-world crime rates. For example, poisonings in television hospital dramas comprised close to 20% of criminal cases, but the real-life number was less than half of this (Hetsroni, 2014). Indeed, respondents to Nabi and Riddle's (2008) survey were found in almost all of the questions to fail to select the actual real world crime statistics. Unz et al. (2008) found that their participants' negative emotional reactions to television media content were stronger than their positive reactions. Cultivation (changes in the person's mind due to television consumption) was especially high for violent content over positive content as fact that Riddle (2010) hypothesized was due to people being less likely to actually witness a murder or other violence than they were to actually positively interact with others. Indeed, past research has found that perceptions most strongly cultivated from media occurred in cases when a person did not have personal experience with the content being portrayed. In the case of criminal and violent behaviour this lack of personal experience is likely to be true for most individuals, especially for those who have not witnessed physical violence, working in a hospital, or for a police agency. Another reason negative content could affect people so strongly was because viewing a television drama was found to be processed in the same area of the brain as real trauma (Scherer, 1998).

Considering the possible influence of religiosity on cultivation (internalization of TV content), Jewish respondents to a perceived reality questionnaire reported that they were less likely to be a victim of violent crime, and that there was lower crime in their opinion than non-religious individuals (Hetsroni, 2014). In Hetsroni's (2014) review of the literature, he found

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that generally speaking across religions Cultivation effects were found to be higher among non-religious individuals. Hetsroni (2014) also said this was most likely because their religion provides a strong worldview, and was in many ways different from what was displayed on television. Perhaps the effects of cultivation could be applied outside of religiosity, to any content that does not closely mirror a person's experience. Negative media, such as a character getting sick or dying on a television show, could teach individuals how to react to this new situation before they have experienced it (Bartsch et al., 2012). This goes along with socioemotional selectivity theory, as put forth by Carstensen, Fung and Charles (2003) which discusses their natural openness to experiencing negative content for its use as a learning tool. Media has the power to alter worldview, beliefs and behaviours through engaging content.

1.10 Introduction to the Current Study

This study sought to measure the immediate effects of binge watching television on people who varied in dispositions and lifestyles. Previous studies measuring the effects of television on cognition and emotion have previously found that individual differences affect the severity and interpretation of various television media (Tsay & Bodine, 2012; Brumbaugh et al., 2013). Lifestyle choices such as religiosity and the amount of television watched can impact worldview, perhaps just as much as dispositional traits such as extraversion and neuroticism (Hetsroni, 2014, Rentfrow, Goldberg & Zilca, 2011).

Personality traits have been shown to affect individuals' television show interpretations (Nabi & Riddle, 2008). For example, high trait neuroticism was correlated with more television use than low neuroticism, perhaps due to the mood-altering capabilities of certain genres of TV (Bartsch et al., 2012; Rentfrow et al., 2011). The present research sought to build on the past

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literature by examining how an individual's personality impacts how TV affects their level of Transportation (mental involvement), Parasocial Relationship (one-sided character connection) and state mood (Positive and Negative Affect Scores [PANAS]) related to their binge watching television. Based on the previous literature, which suggested differences after watching short clips, this study expected to find stronger differences since the binge watching session was much longer. Individuals high in neuroticism were expected to be more transported than those who were low on neuroticism. Individuals who identified as strongly religious were expected to have had less of a parasocial relationship with the characters than those who did not consider themselves strongly religious. Demographic factors such as Ethnic/Racial identification, Gender, TV Consumption per Week were also measured to see if they related to emotionality and engagement. Due to the theory of desensitization, those who usually watched more television were expected to have less of an overall emotional effect. Furthermore, those who watched less television were expected to have more of an emotional effect. In light of the fact that previous research has found significant effects after having participants watch just 1 episode of TV it is expected that the present study will replicate their findings. Additionally, differences between one episode and an entire binge session were unknown.

The Trait Emotional Intelligence of each participant was expected to be a strong mediating factor in their state mood and level of identification, or relationship with the characters. Those with high TEI were expected to be less affected by the negative television content because they have been found to cope better with negative emotionality (Beath, Jones, & Fitness, 2015). High TEI was also expected to be correlated with stronger parasocial relationships in the groups because high TEI has been correlated with more positive emotionality and better interpersonal relationships.

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Effects of binge-watching versus regular viewing were also compared. To date, there have been no experimental studies comparing the effects of viewing a single television show, to the effects of binge watching television.

1.11 Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Big 5 Personality Traits and Trait Emotional Intelligence levels will mediate binge session engagement (Transportation, Parasocial Relationship, Positive and Negative Affect Scores at the end of binge watching).

Hypothesis 2: High TEI individuals will show less negative emotionality (Negative Affect Scores) than low TEI individuals.

Hypothesis 3: Demographic factors such as Ethnicity, Gender, Religiosity and Television Consumption per Week will account for variance within levels of television engagement (Final Transportation, Parasocial Relationship, Positive and Negative Affect Scores).

Hypothesis 4: Engagement and mood effects will be more significant after a full binge watching session.

2.0 Method

2.1 Research Overview

The study was an experimental design, measuring participant's interactions with binge watching television through questionnaires. There were three television show groups, Sci-Fi, Dramatic Comedy and Irreverent Comedy. Each group answered the same questionnaires despite watching different shows. Most participants completed their questionnaires online via a link on their personal smartphone. Less than 5 participants completed their surveys using paper and pen

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copies. Participants completed questionnaires on the day of the study. See sections 2.4 to 2.9 for an explanation of each measure.

2.2 Participants

There were 80 participants in this study. They were all active undergraduate students at the time of participation. Many students participated in exchange for 3% extra credit in an approved course, though a few participated without compensation. There were 75 participants between the ages of 18 and 29, and 5 were over the age of 30. The aim of this study was to measure those who binge watch regularly, replicating their natural environment to study its effects in a controlled, experimental setting. Pena (2015) said that college age students were a generalizable and well-sourced sample to use for researching binge watching activities. Exclusionary criterion excluded any person with lack of hearing or sight to be able to fully engage in a television show, since there was no closed captioning or described video for the study. Participants were warned ahead of attending the study that if they felt uncomfortable watching television shows that display scenes of violence, sexual suggestions, profanity or drug use, should not partake in this study.

2.3 Setting

The study environment was intended to replicate the average binge-watcher's home and therefore was held in a lounge with a large flat screen television (or projector), couches and lounging chairs. The goal for all participants to feel at ease and less prone to nervousness for partaking in a study. Snack food and beverages were also provided to encourage a relaxed environment to enjoy the content being binge watched. Also, since the study was multiple hours

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long, if food were not provided then participants could become tired and hungry, which could influence their responses on their questionnaires, such as reporting lower moods. When signing up for a study date, they were also invited to bring their own snacks, pillows, or blankets. This was all to encourage a home-like binge watching environment. A few participants brought their own snacks, dinner, blankets, pillows, and stuffed animals.

2.4 Apparatus

2.4.1 Participant Binge Watching Questionnaire

This measure was created by the researcher to measure participant demographics and television history. Demographic factors asked about Age, Gender, Racial/Ethnic Group identification and Religiosity. Binge watching questions included how much time they spent watching television per week, and how many binge watching sessions they had in the last month and last 6 months. This measure also asked about their motivations for watching with yes or no answers. For example, “to escape or forget life” and “to relieve boredom.” The questionnaire ended with important questions that gauged their television viewing experience both outside and inside the study. It asked if they spend more time watching television with others or alone, since they may interact with the binge session differently if it was not in their ideal circumstance. Additional questions asked whether they had seen an episode of the show before, and from which type of device they primarily watch television. Every question in this questionnaire required participants to respond by clicking or circling the answer that best described themselves.

2.4.2 Big Five Inventory (John, Naumann, and Soto, 2008)

The second measure was a 44-question personality inventory. The measure begins by

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saying, “I am someone who...” followed by statements such as “can be moody.” Participants responded to each question using a 5-point Likert scale from “disagree strongly” to “neither agree nor disagree” to “agree strongly.” The Big Five Inventory (BFI) was used a tool to find a person’s dispositional traits in the most influential five areas of personality. Openness was measured with questions such as “is curious about many different things”. Conscientiousness was measured with questions such as “makes plans and follows through with them”.

Extraversion was measured with questions such as “Is talkative”. Agreeableness was measured with questions such as “Is considerate and kind to almost everyone”. And Neuroticism was measured using questions such as “Can be tense”. Brumbaugh et al. (2013) discussed how personality may affect a person’s emotional response and behaviour. They found higher levels of extraversion and neuroticism to be correlated with increased sensitivity to negative emotionality, which was expected to be an important factor to measure in this study. Differences in personality scores between individuals were expected to be reflected in different responses to the same stimuli. The BFI measured each personality dimension to see if any were associated with certain emotional responses. The BFI is a commonly used research tool and has acceptable validity; A meta-analysis (of 85 papers) found a Chronbach’s alpha of almost .8 in each of the five categories (Li, Xu, & Chen, 2015).

2.4.3 Trait Emotional Intelligence Short Form (Petrides, 2009)

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Short Form (TEIQue-SF) was created by Cooper and Petrides in 2009. This measure consists of 30 statements that were answered using a 7-point Likert scale. A 1 on the scale means “completely disagree” and 7 means “completely agree.” An example was “I tend to change my mind frequently.” The TEIQue-SF was used to find an

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emotional intelligence quotient, which has value in understanding how a person interacts with their own emotions, and the emotions of others. This was an important factor to measure since emotions were central to the television viewing experience. Level of TEI was expected to be a moderator in how participants interacted with the television show. The TEIQue-SF is a commonly accepted research tool and has strong validity with a Cronbach's α of .89 for men and .88 for women (Cooper & Petrides, 2010).

2.4.4 The Binge Watching Experience Questionnaire

The Binge Watching Experience Questionnaire consisted of multiple measures from different researchers. This was necessary due to previous research focusing on a limited number of factors. The present study combined these factors to find any relationships. All the questions consisted of statements that were responded to by circling or selecting one of five options on a Likert scale. The scale ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Questions 1-6 were an adapted version of Green and Brock's (2000) 11 item transportation scale. Nabi and Finnerty (2006) made variations on this scale for use in television, despite this measure being developed for reading. This study follows their work in adapting it for television purposes. An example of one of the reverse questions was "I found my mind wandering while watching the show." The validity of Nabi and Finnerty's (2006) adapted for television, 5 item shortened scale was $\alpha = .76$. Questions 7-13 were taken from Jones' (2013) Thesis, where she combined multiple Parasocial Relationship, and Parasocial Interaction scales. She reported an alpha level of .98 in using Auter and Palmgreen's (2000) Parasocial Interaction measure. An example from the Parasocial Relationship questions was, "I usually agreed with my favourite character."

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2.4.5 Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, and Tellegen, 1988)

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) is the most referenced mood scale within psychological research studies with over 24,000 citations in Google Scholar. This measure is used in a wide range of settings, from medical practice to psychological research. In the context of binge watching, the PANAS and variants have been used to measure emotions and its changes over time as it relates to binge watching. It consists of 20 words that describes feelings and emotions, such as “nervous” and “excited.” Each word was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1, “very slightly or not at all” to 5, “extremely.” This measure has very high validity, with Chronbach’s alpha ranging from .86–.90 for positive affect and .84 to .87 for negative affect.

2.4.6 Post-Binge Watching Session Questionnaire

The Post-Binge Watching Session Questionnaire was nearly identical to the The Binge Watching Experience Questionnaire (BWEQ), but the last 4 questions on the sheet were reflective upon the study as a whole. This questionnaire was created so that the participants reflections could be measured against other previously researched factors. They follow the same 5 point Likert scale as used in the BEWQ. These questions asked about potential confounds, such as “I would have preferred to binge watch the show alone.” If the participant did not feel comfortable in their surroundings, they were expected to be less likely to fully engage with the television show, and affect was expected to be less likely to occur.

2.5 Procedure

Participants were recruited through in class professor announcements, emails, and posters

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across campus. They were directed to sign up online for one of nine available study dates. The outline for the online sign up for prospective participants included a review of the letter of consent, a brief overview of the study procedure, and what they will be allowed to bring and do in the study. After being asked to read these items they selected their study date of choice. One of the three possible show choices was being shown each session, but the show content was not made known to the participants before arriving at their session. Two or three days before and on the day of each participant's binge watching session, they received an email describing the location and time of their session.

The procedure for the binge watching day was the same for all three TV show groups. All participants were asked to arrive by 5:45 p.m in a campus lounge and left around 3.5-4 hours later. First, they were greeted by the researcher and given two copies of their informed consent to read over and sign. Each copy included their participant ID. Once signed, the participants kept one copy and the researcher kept the other. Then, participants were instructed to check the email they used to sign up for the research on to find the links where they completed their questionnaires. They were asked to complete all of the questions under the first link. In this questionnaire was the Participant Binge Watching Questionnaire, Trait Emotional Intelligence, Big Five Inventory, and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule. Once these measures were completed by every participant, the group was given an overview of the study by the researcher. The participants were encouraged to enjoy the snacks in the room. The instructions of conduct while watching the shows allowed for quiet discussions, sitting however they pleased to watch the shows, bathroom breaks and snack breaks whenever desired. Participants were informed that they could talk, but to keep discussions quiet, to not disturb their peers. They were reminded that if the content was too disturbing or if they would like to leave at any time, they could do so

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without penalty. The researcher explained that after the first episode, and after the final binge watching episode, they would complete link number two, which included Transportation, Parasocial Relationship, and Positive and Negative Affect Schedules. The researcher encouraged the participants to take as much time as needed to complete the forms, and that they may complete them away from their peers to ensure genuine feedback. The researcher continued to say that when the last episode of the binge session was complete, they would be asked to complete the last set of questions under link number three, which was very similar to those under link number two. For those who had paper copies, they were asked to return the copies at the end of the session only. At the end, all participants were thanked by the researcher. They were reminded that if they had further questions about the purpose of this study, that they would be emailed a short informational debriefing form explaining the purpose of the study, and if they had any additional concerns, they had their own copy of the informed consent letter with contact information.

2.6 Stimulus Materials

The rationale for television show choice was based on Netflix's most binge watched content. Netflix was said to be the largest internet based movie and television streaming service, with over 94 million monthly subscribers (Sund & Jones, 2017). The purpose of choosing the most popular shows was to be able to generalize the findings of this study to the average watcher. In June 2016, a Netflix press release created a "Binge Watching Scale" that was the basis of this study's stimulus materials (Dwyer, 2016). This scale was created from Netflix's users between October 2015 and May 2016. They analyzed of their top 100 television shows, how long it took for people to finish the series. The average was an entire season finished in less

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than a week. Divided by genre, thriller was the most binge watched, with 2+ hours per session. After thriller, the second most popular, in descending order, was horror, sci-fi, action & adventure, and dramatic comedies. Less binge watched, were shows that did not have intense emotionality or reactivity. These shows were political, superhero and crime dramas, with the least being irreverent comedies. Dwyer (2016) said that these were too thought-provoking for long binge sessions, requiring breaks for processing, whereas the more binge-worthy had cliff hangers and stories that urged the viewer to continue watching to completion. In this study, dramatic comedy, sci-fi and irreverent comedy were used. Dramatic comedy and sci-fi were chosen for 2 reasons. First, because they were among the most binge watched genres. Second, because they were generally likable by the general population. Horror and Thriller, which were the first and second most binge watched genre, were excluded to avoid a high participant drop-out rate. Dwyer (2016) showed irreverent comedy as a less-binge worthy show, and was used to compare against the other two more binge-worthy shows.

2.6.1 Dramatic Comedy

Atypical was rated as MA by Netflix and released in August 2017. Despite the high age rating, other private rating sites gave *Atypical* a 13-16+ age rating (Slaton, 2017). *Atypical* was chosen for this study because it's storyline and characters were reported by reviewers to be both likable and engaging (RottenTomatoes, 2017). This show emphasized positive coping through life's difficulties. According to reviewers online watching this show promotes an overall feel-good experience. *Atypical* follows the life and family of high school senior Sam, who was beginning to enter the dating world. Sam's family was a typical American family, but he was the atypical member of the family. He was different from his family since he had Autism Spectrum

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Disorder (ASD). Much of the light-hearted comedy and drama from this show was because of the interactions between Sam's atypical nature and the typical nature of those around him.

2.6.2 Sci-Fi

Timeless was released in October 2016 by the NBC network with a general audience rating. It was chosen for the genre's high position on the binge-worthy scale and less feel-good style when compared to *Atypical*. This show was centered around a cat-and-mouse chase to catch a bad guy, travelling through history to do so. *Timeless* addressed many historical events that influenced America, including the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and Nazi Germany during World War II. This show emphasized the struggles of African Americans throughout history and harmony among differences. *Timeless* followed the lives of a Professor of History, Military Soldier, and Coding Expert throughout time and space to catch the bad guy who was seemingly attempting to destroy America before it even began. This show was centered around the impacts of time travel and its effects on the main character's lives. There was violence, gun use and murder but there was very little gore or explicit content. Instead, *Timeless* consistently presented the deep struggles of the main characters, focused around the deaths of loved ones, racism, and dishonesty.

2.6.3 Irreverent Comedy

Netflix's representative on the least binge watched shows was *BoJack Horseman*. This animated series first aired in 2014. The third season was released in Summer 2016, with the fourth in Summer 2017. It followed the life of an anthropomorphized horse, BoJack, living alongside humans in Hollywood. The show was centered around BoJack who tried to regain the

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fame he once had in his youth. The content of this show takes place in an alternate reality where animals were essentially humans with animal features and personalities. Much of the humor played off of their animal and human natures. The show recreated an anthropomorphized reality with recreations of famous paintings, television shows, and popular Figures as animals. It contained a mixture of reality, humans with names like “Diane” but also less serious names like “Mr. Peanutbutter” (Nussbaum, 2016). *BoJack Horseman* was less crude than other adult animated series such as *Family Guy* or *South Park*, but it still made jokes about, and contained, mature content such as sex, drinking, and religious topics (Slaton, n.d.).

3.0 Results

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

3.1.1 Participant Demographics

A total of 84 people participated in the present study over 9 different binge watching sessions. Due to incomplete questionnaires, 80 participants were used for statistical analysis. As is common in psychological research, 73.8% (n=59) of the participants identified themselves as female, and 26.3% (n=21) identified themselves as male. There were no individuals who identified themselves as another gender. Most participants were under the age of 25. See Figure 1 for frequencies of participants by age.

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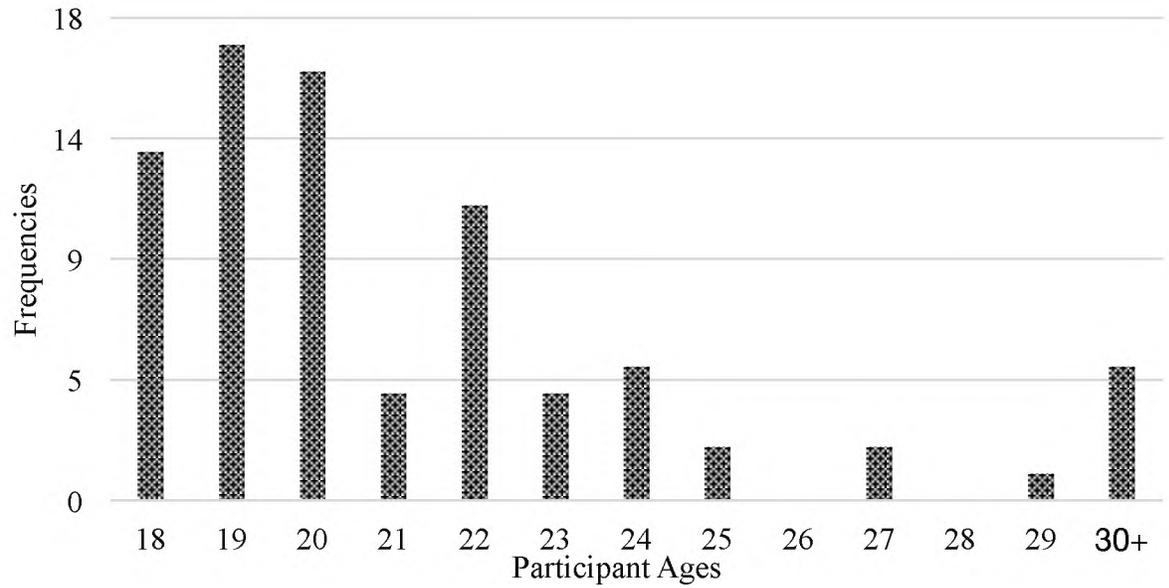


Figure 1 Frequencies of participant ages

The majority of participants identified as Caucasian. Other groups in this study included African-Canadians, Latinos/Hispanics and Others (most commonly described themselves as “Biracial”). See Figure 2 for the frequencies of participants by their Racial/Ethnic group.

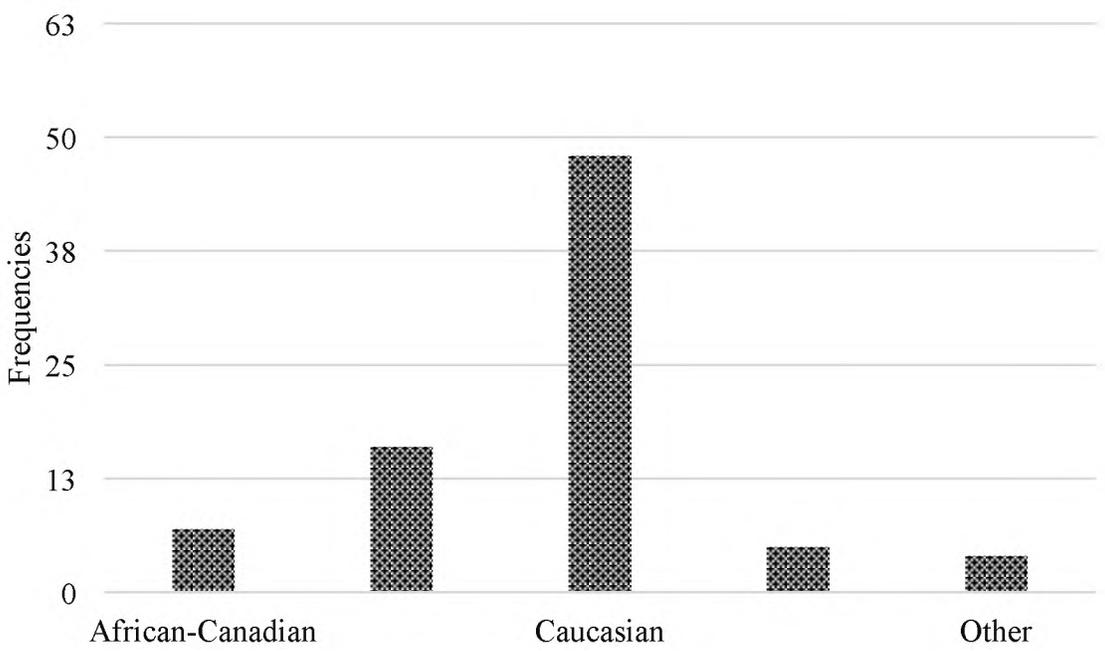


Figure 2 Frequencies of Racial/Ethnic group identification among participants

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The spirituality of this group was positively skewed, and no participants considered themselves never religious or spiritual. See Figure 3 for frequencies of participant Spiritual/Religious identification levels.

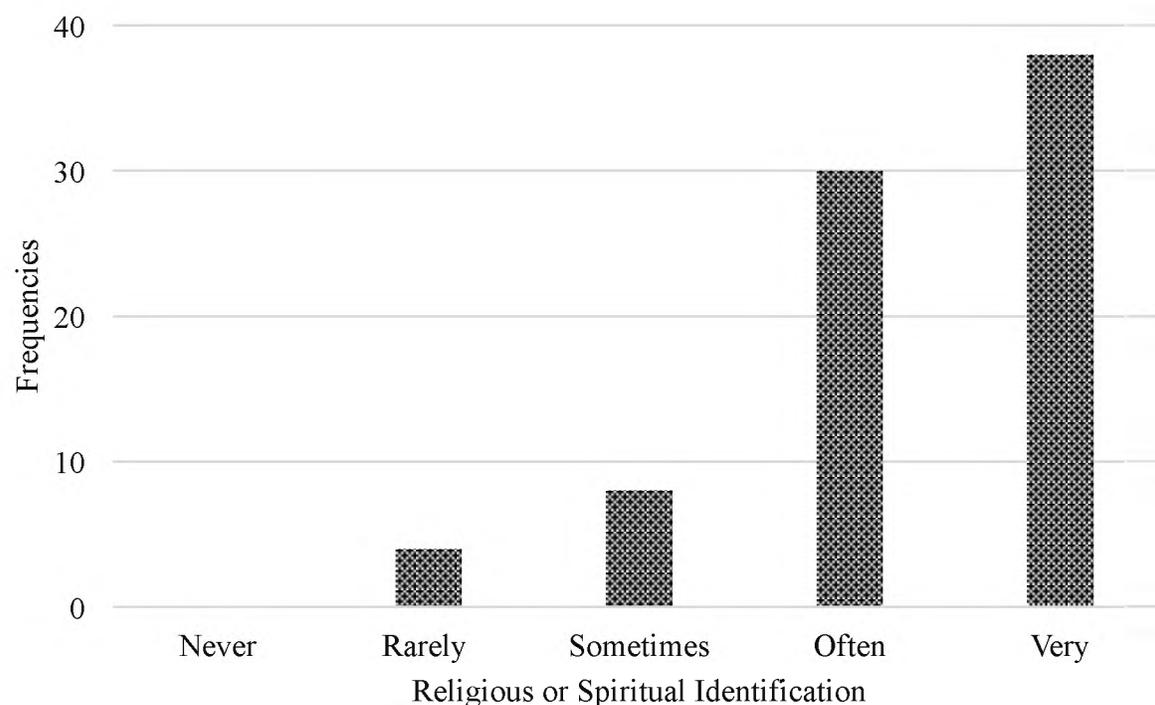


Figure 3 Frequencies of participant Spiritual/Religious identification levels.

Majority of participants (55%) watched 1-6 hours of television per week. See Figure 4 for the frequencies of television watching per week. This question was used in later analysis because responses to other binge watching questions varied less than hours of television per week. The average television watching per week was 4.98 hours with a standard deviation of 2.22. This was notably different from what Tsay-Vogel and Krakowiak (2016) found in their study, which had an average of 13.36 hours and a standard deviation of 10.15.

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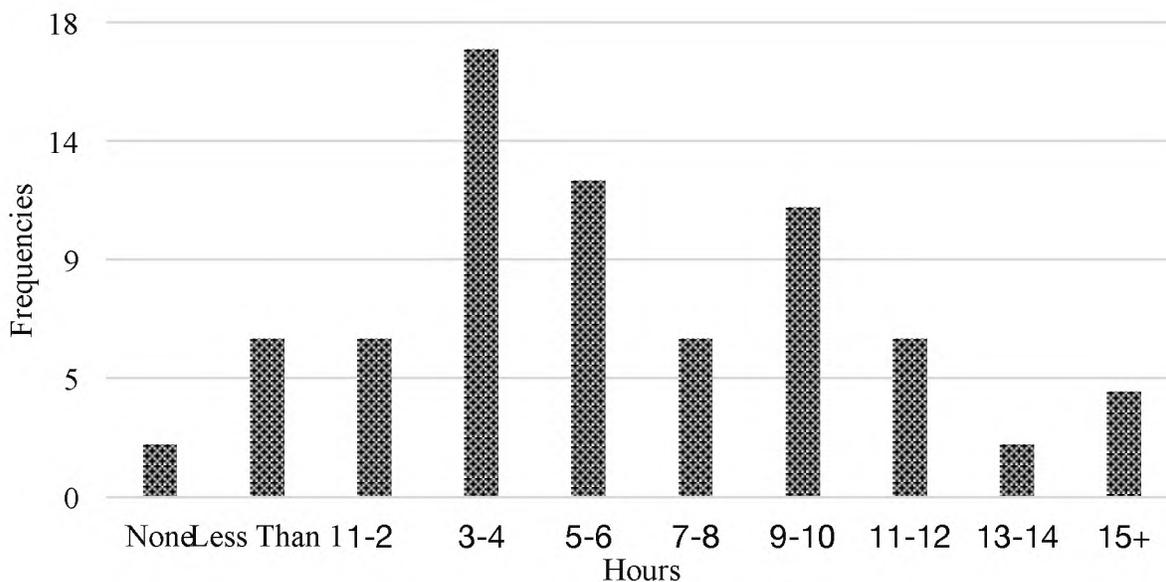


Figure 4 Hours of TV consumption per week

Only 5 out of the 80 participants in this study had not binge watched television before. Those who had binge watched before were asked additional questions about their binge watching. See Tables 1 and 2 for frequencies of binge watching sessions over the last month, and 6 months.

Sessions	N	Percent
0-7	63	78.8%
8-15	9	11.3%
15+	3	3.8%

Table 1 Watching Sessions in the Last Month

Sessions	N	Percent
0-15	48	60%
16-45	12	15%
46-75	11	13.8%
76+	4	5%

Table 2 Binge Watching Sessions in the Last 6 Month

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Of those who had binge watched, 78 individuals binge watched on a platform such as Netflix or CraveTV, and 7 participants had not. Most participants primarily watched television alone. See Figure 5 for frequencies of primary television viewing alone and with others.

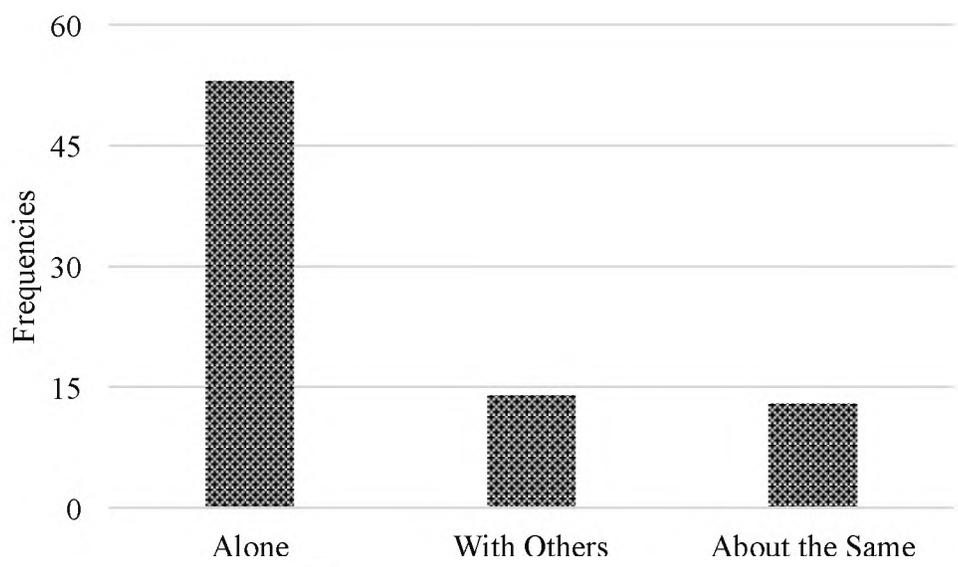


Figure 5 Frequencies of primary television viewing alone and with others

Most participants primarily watched television shows on laptops. See Figure 6 for frequencies of their primary television viewing method.

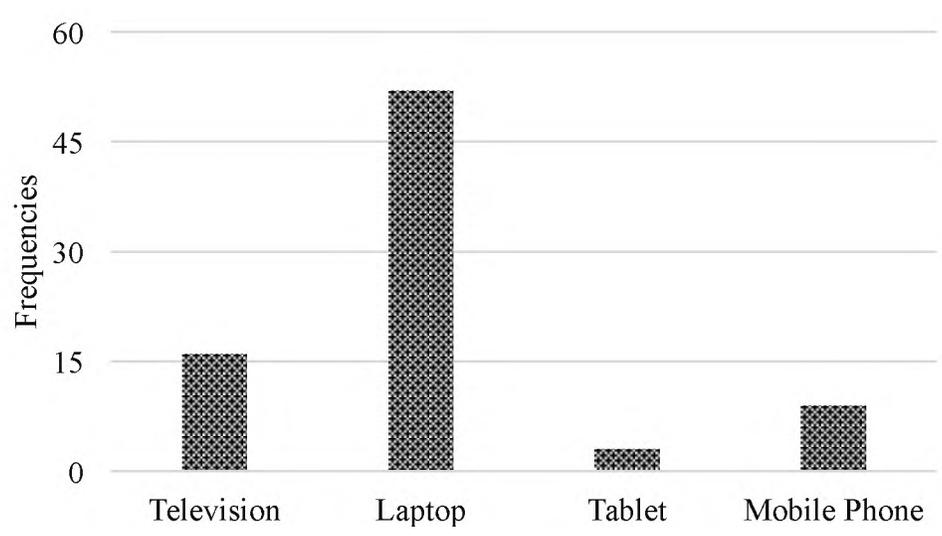


Figure 6 Primary television watching method

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Participant motivations for binge watching were also measured with 10 yes/no questions. Boredom relief was the most selected motivation, at 86%. See Table 3 for an illustration of the frequencies for their television watching motivations.

What motivates you to watch television shows?	N	Percent
To relieve boredom	69	86%
To learn something	25	31.3%
To feel connected to people	8	10%
To feel happier	31	38.8%
To feel sad or empathize	11	13.8%
To escape or forget life	46	57.5%
To have something to do when sick	57	71.3%
To have as a reward from work or studying	53	66.3%
To have something to talk about with others	35	43.8%
To experience the feelings or actions of characters	27	33.8%

Table 3 Frequency with which people chose each motivation for watching television shows

3.1.2 Show

The 9 binge watching sessions took place between September 18th and November 15th 2017. The number of people who watched each show are summarized in Figure 7.

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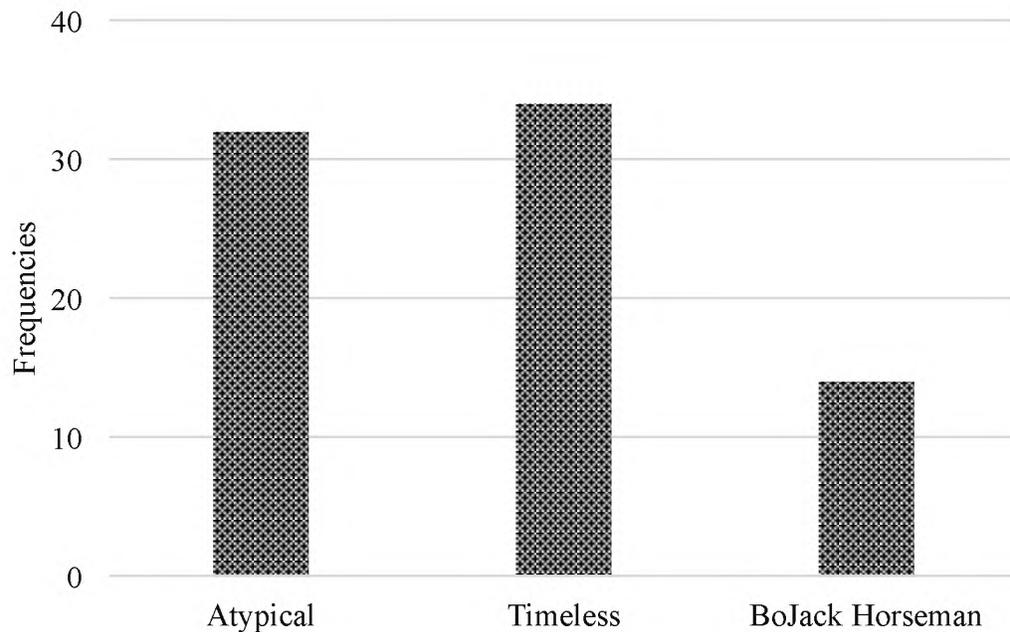


Figure 7 Television show participant frequencies

Thirteen participants reported that they had seen at least one episode of their assigned show, and 67 participants reported that they had never seen their assigned show. The majority of the participants reported that they would have preferred to watch the show alone, and that they felt the binge watching environment hindered their binge watching engagement. The majority also reported that they enjoyed binge watching the show. Seven out of the 9 participants who did not like the show were a part of the BoJack Horseman group, and 1 participant from both the Atypical and Timeless group did not enjoy the show. See Table 4 for the participant's reaction to their binge watching experience.

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Question	Statistic	Atypical	Timeless	BoJack Horseman
“I would have preferred to binge watch the show alone.”	Mean	2.53	2.68	2.93
	N	32	34	14
	Std. Deviation	1.414	1.173	1.207
“I felt like the room and uncommon television watching space hindered my full engagement.”	Mean	2.66	2.74	2.36
	N	32	34	14
	Std. Deviation	1.405	1.238	1.082
“I enjoyed binge watching this show.”	Mean	4.16	3.94	2.79
	N	32	34	14
	Std. Deviation	.847	.886	1.251

Table 4 Participant's reaction to their binge watching experience on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.2 Statistical Analysis: Hypothesis 1: Personality traits and Trait Emotional Intelligence levels will mediate binge session engagement (Final Transportation, Parasocial Relationship, Positive and Negative Affect Score)

Multiple linear regression was used to predict final transportation scores (Transportation 2) based on the following independent variables: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism and TEI. The model predicted a significant proportion of the variability of transportation 2 scores, $F(6, 73) = 2.511, p < .05$, with an R-square of .171. Openness was not a significant predictor of transportation 2 scores, $t = .308, p > .05$. Conscientiousness was a significant predictor of transportation 2 scores, $t = -2.401, p < .05$. See Figure 8 or a scatterplot of the relationship between conscientiousness and transportation 2 scores. Extraversion was not a significant predictor of transportation 2 scores, $t = .168, p > .05$. Agreeableness was not a significant predictor of transportation 2 scores, $t = .203, p > .05$.

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Neuroticism was not a significant predictor of transportation 2 scores, $t = .317$, $p > .05$. And TEI was not a significant predictor of transportation 2 scores, $t = .784$, $p > .05$. The equation for the regression line was: $\text{Transportation 2} = 4.762 + .28 \text{ Openness} - .195 \text{ Conscientiousness} + .099 \text{ Extraversion} + .128 \text{ Agreeableness} + .091 \text{ Neuroticism}$.

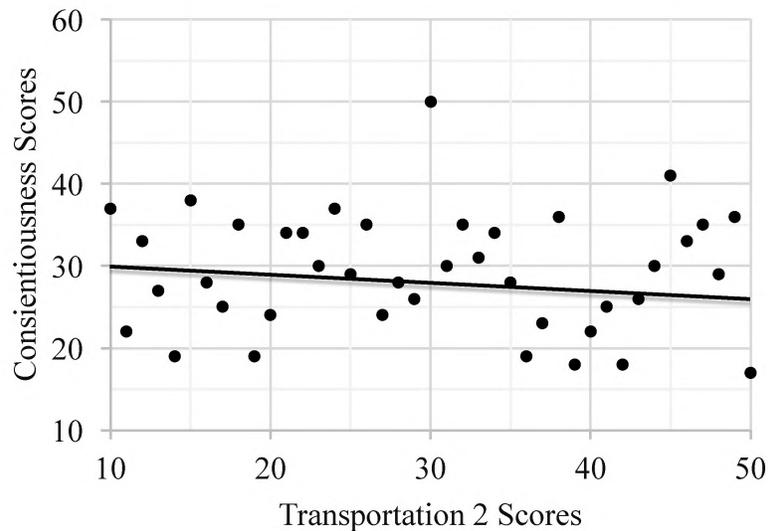


Figure 8 Conscientiousness scores by Transportation 2 scores

Thus, those who scored high in Conscientiousness were less likely to be transported in to the narrative of the television show than those who scored low on conscientiousness. No other personality or Trait Emotional Intelligence variables were significant predictors of final Transportation scores.

Multiple linear regression was used to predict Final Positive Affect Scores (FPAS) based on the following independent variables: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism and TEI. The model predicted a significant proportion of the variability of FPASs, $F(6, 73) = 3.277$, $p < .05$, with an R-square of .212. Openness was not a significant predictor of FPASs, $t = .205$, $p > .05$. Conscientiousness was not a significant

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predictor of FPASs, $t = 2.281$, $p > .05$. Extraversion was not a significant predictor of FPAS, $t = 1.861$, $p > .05$. Agreeableness was a significant predictor of FPAS, $t = 2.264$, $p < .05$. See Figure 8 for an illustration of Agreeableness by FPAS. Neuroticism was a significant predictor of FPAS, $t = -2.281$, $p < .05$. See Figure 9 for an illustration of Agreeableness by FPAS. TEI was not a significant predictor of FPASs, $t = 1.761$, $p > .05$. The equation for the regression line was:
 Positive Affect Score = $18.409 + .271$ Openness + $.115$ Conscientiousness + $.296$ Extraversion + $.510$ Agreeableness - $.463$ Neuroticism.

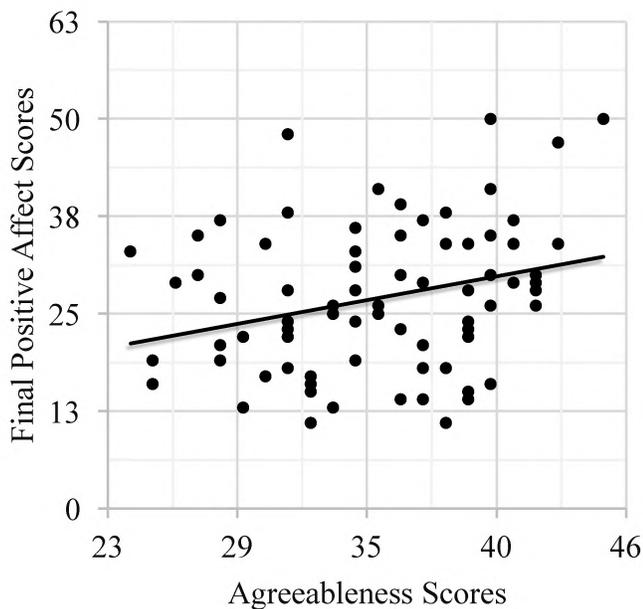


Figure 8 Agreeableness by Final Positive Affect Scores (FPAS)

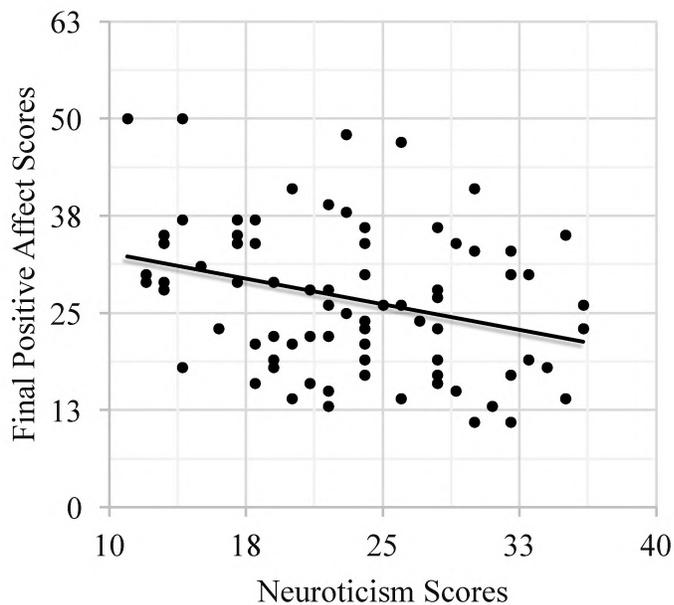


Figure 9 Neuroticism scores by Final Positive Affect Scores (FPAS)

Thus, Agreeableness and Neuroticism were significant predictors of final positive affect scores. No other personality variables were significant predictors of affect, and there was no evidence of a connection between affect scores and Trait Emotional Intelligence.

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This means that those who scored higher in Neuroticism were more likely to have lower Final Positive Affect Scores than those who scored low in Neuroticism. Also, those who scored high in Agreeableness were more likely to have higher Final Positive Affect Scores than those who scored lower in Agreeableness. No other personality variables were significant predictors of Final Positive Affect Scores or Trait Emotional Intelligence scores. This differs from previous research by Tsay and Bodine (2012) and Nabi and Riddle (2008), which found Neuroticism and Extraversion to more strongly influence their interactions with their television viewing experience. There were also no gender differences among responses and personality traits, as found by Brumbaugh et al., 2013).

3.3 Statistical Analysis: Hypothesis 2: High TEI individuals will show less negative emotionality (Negative Affect Scores) than low TEI individuals

A Repeated Measures (Baseline/Final Negative Affect Score x High/Low TEI) ANOVA was carried out to determine the relationship between Negative Affect Scores and High or Low TEI. There was a main effect of Negative Affect Scores, $F(1, 78) = 22.972, p < .05$. Thus, Negative Affect Scores got lower over time. There was a main effect of High or Low TEI $F(1,78) = 8.036, p < .05$. Thus, Individuals with High TEI showed lower Negative Affect Scores than those with low TEI. There was an interaction between Negative Affect and TEI $F(1, 78)=9.710, p < .05$. Negative Affect scores changed more for individuals Low in TEI than for those High in TEI. See Figure 10 for an illustration of the mean scores for each Negative Affect x TEI category.

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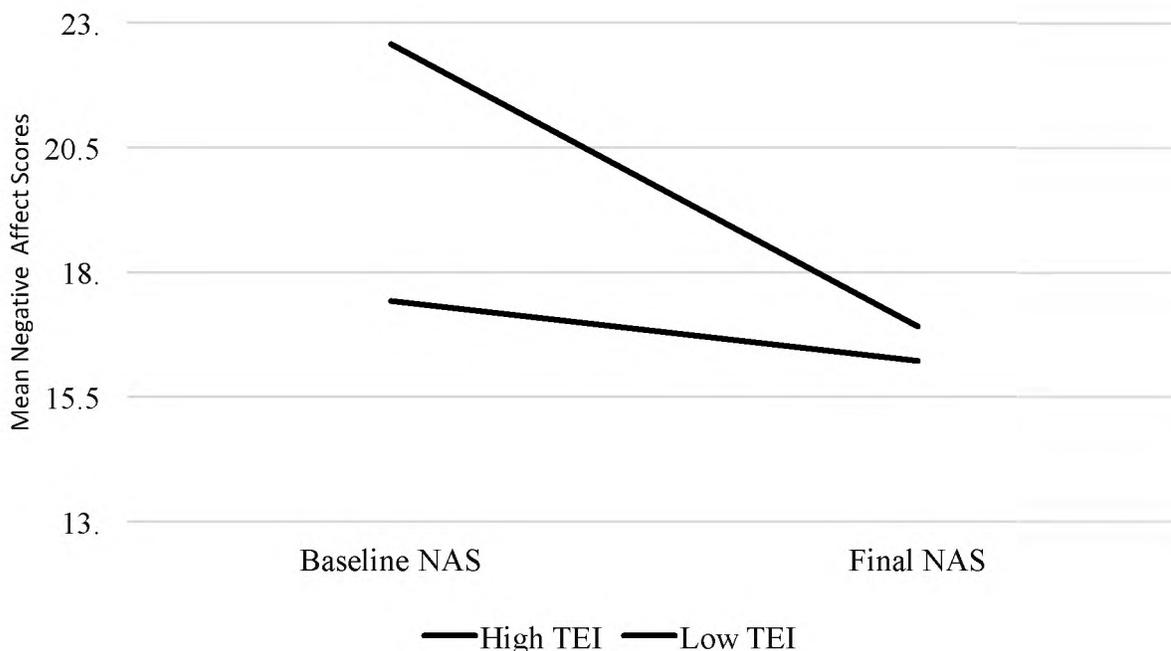


Figure 10 Mean Negative Affect Scores (NAS) by Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI)

These results indicated that participants reported decreased Negative Affect scores from Baseline to the Final Episode. This meant that Participants completed the study with less Negative Affect than when they arrived. Those with High Trait Emotional Intelligence also reported lower Negative Affect Scores than those with Low Trait Emotional Intelligence, who experienced Higher Negative Affect Scores. The decrease in negative affect scores was larger for those low in Trait Emotional Intelligence than for those high in Trait Emotional Intelligence. Parasocial Relationship and Transportation levels did not have any relationship to Trait Emotional Intelligence, Positive, nor Negative Affect Scores.

A Repeated Measures (Baseline/Final Positive Affect Scores x High/Low TEI) ANOVA was carried out to determine the relationship between Positive Affect Scores and High or Low TEI. There was a main effect when Positive Affect Scores were measured across time, $F(1, 78) = 25.422$, $p < .05$. Thus, Positive Affect Scores got lower over time. There was a main effect of

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High or Low TEI $F(1, 78) = 4.794, p < .05$. Thus, Individuals with High TEI showed higher Positive Affect Scores than those with low TEI. There was no interaction between Positive Affect and TEI $F(1, 78) = 1.854, p > .05$. The change in Positive Affect scores was similar for those with High or Low TEI scores. See Figure 11 for an illustration of the mean scores for each Positive Affect x TEI category.

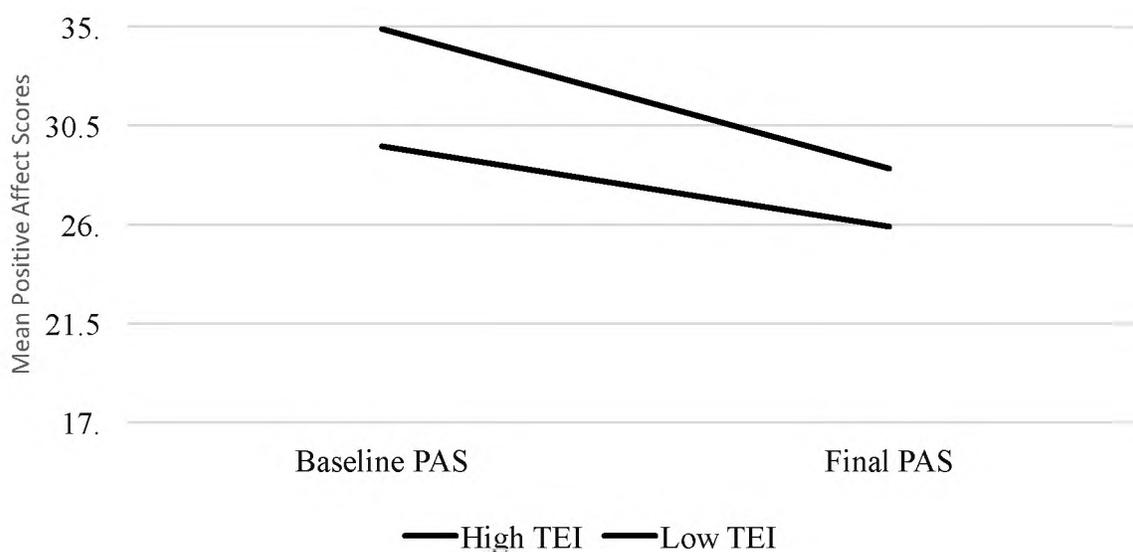


Figure 11 Mean Positive Affect Scores (PAS) by Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) category

There was no significant relationship between TEI and Transportation level, nor Parasocial Relationship level.

Thus, these results revealed that participants reported decreased Positive Affect scores from Baseline to the Final Episode. Therefore, Participants completed the study with less Positive Affect than when they arrived. Those with High Trait Emotional Intelligence also reported higher Positive Affect Scores than those with Low Trait Emotional Intelligence, who experienced lower Positive Affect Scores. The decrease in Positive Affect Scores were similar for those scoring both High and Low Trait Emotional Intelligence. Decreased positive affect

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scores across time and the same by High and Low TEI were not expected. Previous research by Stockdale et al. (2015) in short term violent media viewing found an increase in Negative Affect Scores, and a decrease in Positive Affect Scores using the same PANAS measure. The decrease in Positive Affect Scores was attributed to the violent content they were viewing. The level of violence presented in other studies was not similar to this study, so the difference in PANAS scores may be due to other causes discussed further in the Discussion section (4.0). Trait Emotional Intelligence and PANAS scores were not found in the research to this point, but other meta-mood scales have been used. Brabec et al. (2012) assumed based on previous literature that those with High Emotional Intelligence also have a more positive mood in general. They also found differences in Gender and Emotional Intelligence not found in this research.

3.4 Statistical Analysis: Hypothesis 3: Demographic factors such as Ethnicity, Gender, Religiosity and Television Consumption per Week will account for variance within levels of television engagement (Final Transportation, Parasocial Relationship, Positive and Negative Affect Scores).

A Univariate (Ethnicity x Gender x Religiosity x Television Consumption per Week) ANOVA was carried out to determine the relationship between final Transportation levels and Demographic factors. There was not a main effect of Ethnicity, $F(1, 76) = .137, p > .05$. Thus, there were no differences in transportation levels found for the different ethnicities. There was not a main effect of Gender $F(1, 76) = .135, p > .05$. Thus, transportation levels for males and females did not differ. $F(1, 76) = 9.710, p > .05$. There was not a main effect of Television Consumption per Week, $F(1, 76) = .34, p > .05$. Thus, transportation levels were similar for all levels of Television Consumption per Week. There was a significant interaction between Gender

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and Television Consumption per Week. $F(1, 76) = 4.26$ $p < .05$. Thus, females' transportation scores varied more with differing levels of TV consumption than males' transportation scores did. See Figure 12 for an illustration of the mean scores or final Transportation levels by Gender and Television Consumption per week.



Figure 12 mean Final Transportation levels by Gender and Television Consumption per week.

There were no significant relationships between Ethnicity, Gender, Religiosity, and Television Consumption per Week and changes in Parasocial Relationship, Final Positive or Negative Affect Scores.

When tested using Repeated Measures ANOVA to explore interactions with repeated observation of affect scores, there were no significant relationships between Ethnicity, Gender, Religiosity, and Television Consumption per Week and changes in Positive or Negative Affect Scores (E1/Final).

Ethnicity, Gender Religiosity, and Television Consumption per Week alone did not have any impact on Transportation scores. However, Females who also reported watching more television per week reported that they were more transported than males.

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There were no Ethnic, Gender, Religious, or Television Consumption per Week impacts on Final Parasocial Relationship levels, nor Episode One/Final and Final Positive or Negative Affect Scores.

3.5 Statistical Analysis: Hypothesis 4: Engagement and mood effects will be more significant after a full binge watching session.

A Repeated Measures (Baseline/Episode One/Final Positive Affect Score x Show) ANOVA was carried out to determine the relationship between the three positive affect score measurements and Show. There was a main effect of when Positive Affect was measured across time, $F(1, 77) = 27.563, p < .05$. Thus, Positive Affect Scores got lower over time. There was no main effect of Show, $F(2,77) = 2.531., p > .05$. Thus, Positive Affect Scores differed by Show. There was an interaction of Positive Affect Scores and Show (Timeless, Atypical and BoJack Horseman), $F(1, 77) = 6.917, p < .05$ Thus, Positive Affect scores changed the most for those who watched BoJack Horseman, and to a lesser degree for the other two shows. See Figure 13 for an illustration of the mean scores for Positive Affect Scores by show.

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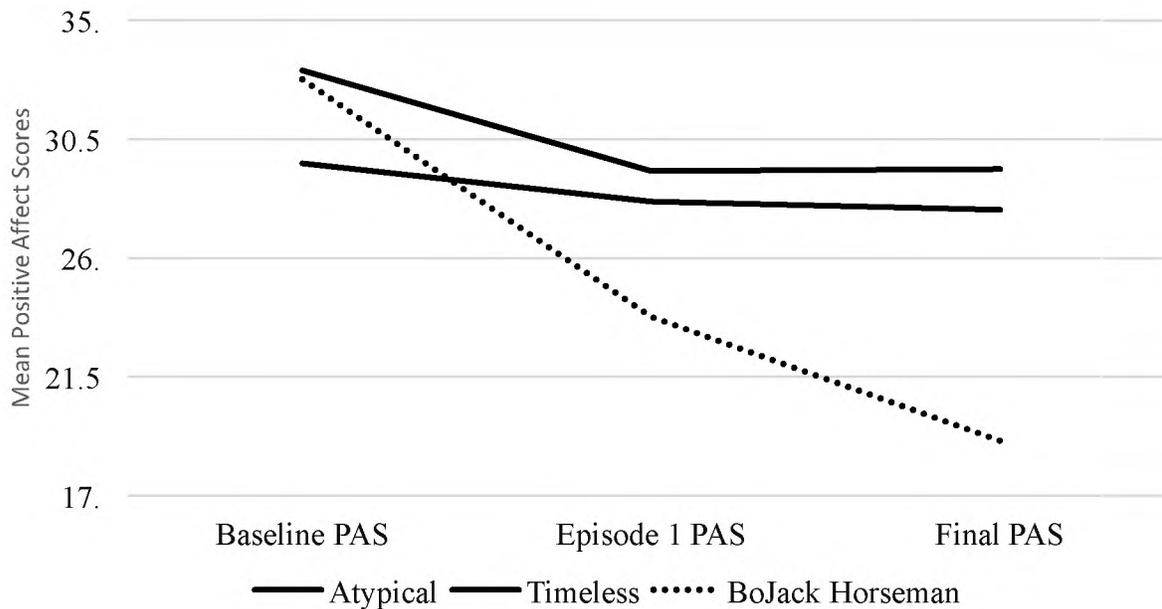
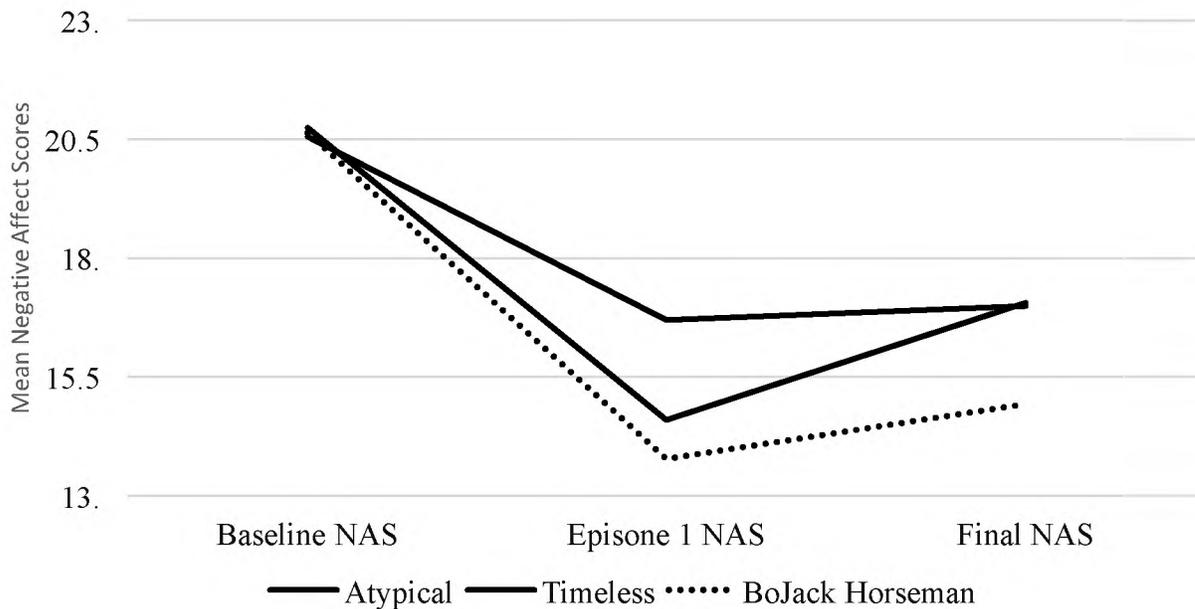


Figure 13 Mean Positive Affect Scores (PAS) by Show

A Repeated Measures (Baseline/Episode One/Final Negative Affect Score x Show) ANOVA was carried out to determine the relationship between Baseline, Episode One and Final Negative Affect Scores. There was a main effect of Negative Affect Scores, $F(1, 77) = 35.211$, $p < .05$. Thus, Negative Affect Scores got lower over time. There was no main effect of Show, $F(2,77) = .535$, $p > .05$. Thus, Negative Affect Scores did not differ by Show. There was not an interaction between Negative Affect Scores and Show (Timeless, Atypical and BoJack Horseman), $F(1, 77) = 6.917$, $p > .05$. Thus, Negative Affect Scores were not related to show. See Figure 14 for an illustration of the mean scores for Negative Affect Scores.

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Episode 1 NAS

Figure 14 Mean Negative Affect Scores (NAS) across time by Show.

Both Positive Affect Scores and Negative Affect Scores decreased from Baseline to the Final Episode. Positive Affect Scores also differed between Shows. Those who watched BoJack Horseman had Positive Affect Scores drop even lower than those who watched Atypical and Timeless. Negative Affect Scores did not drop differently between Shows.

Although attempts were made to create a home-like environment, some feedback suggested that people were not entirely comfortable with their binge watching experience. To explore a possible impact of this, two questions from the Binge Watching Experience Questionnaire.

Although attempts were made to create a home-like environment, some feedback suggested that people were not entirely comfortable with their binge watching experience. To explore the possible impact of show enjoyment, A bivariate correlation was used to test the

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relationship between Final Transportation scores (Transportation 2) and the question “I enjoyed watching this show”. There was a significant relationship between Transportation 2 scores and Binge Watch Alone scores, $r(80) = .609$, $p < .001$. See Figure 15 for an illustration of the relationship between Final transportation and “I enjoyed watching this show” scores

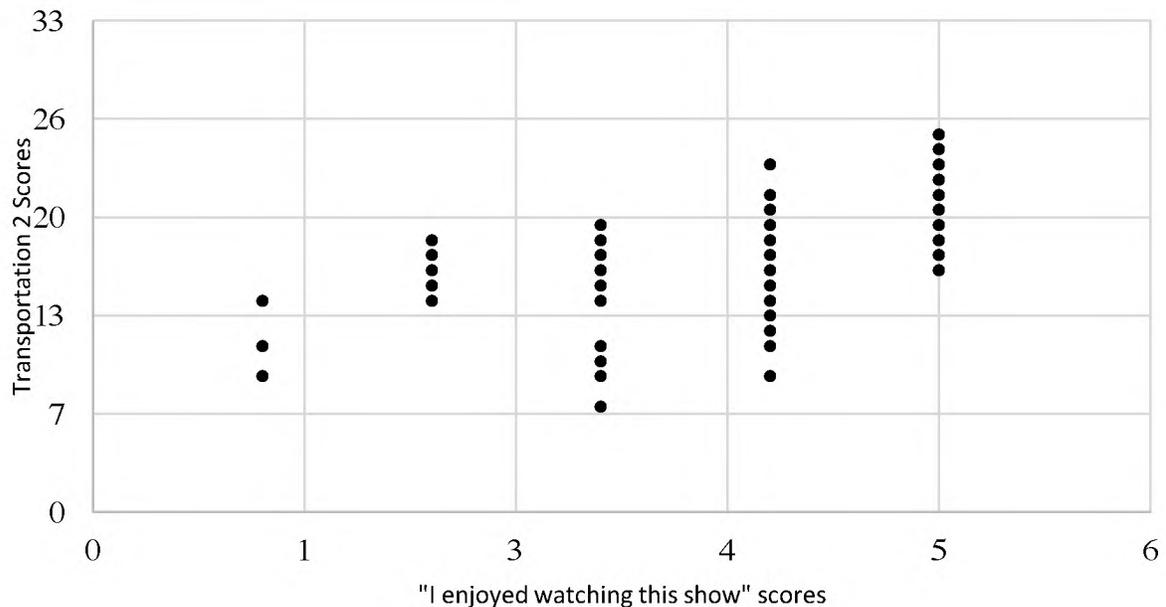


Figure 15 Final Transportation scores by the question “I enjoyed watching this show” on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

A Bivariate correlation was used to test the relationship between Final Transportation scores (Transportation 2) and the question “I would have preferred to binge watch this show alone”. There was a significant relationship between Transportation 2 scores and Binge Watch Alone scores, $r(80) = -.475$, $p < .001$. See Figure 16 for an illustration of the relationship between Final transportation and “I would have preferred to watch the show alone” scores.

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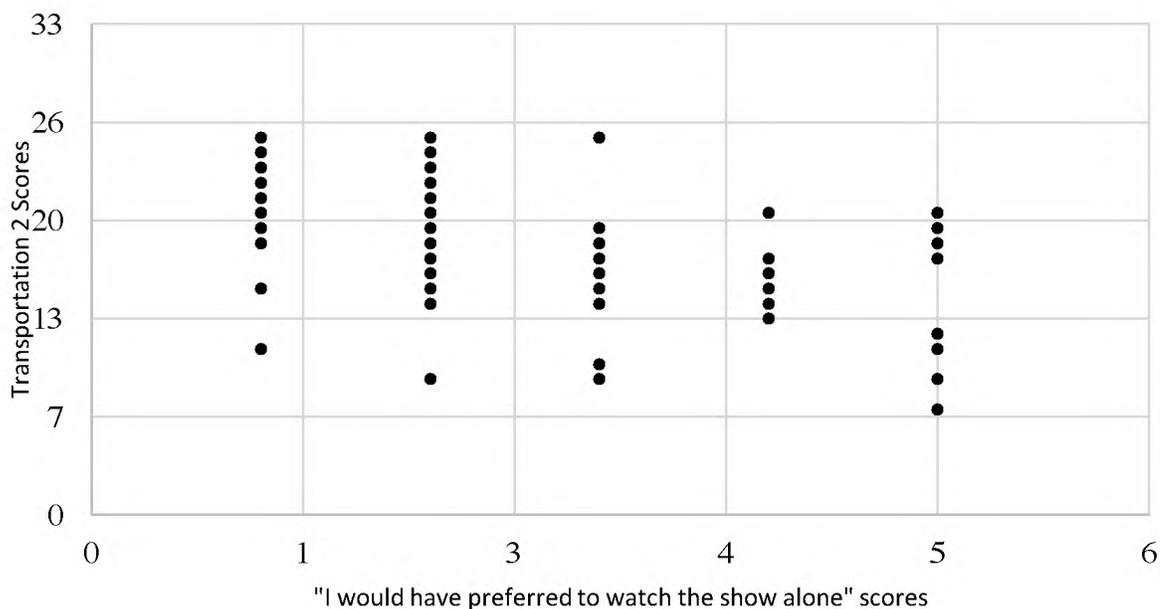


Figure 16 Final Transportation scores by the question “I would have preferred to watch the show alone” scores on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Thus, there was a positive relationship between Final Transportation scores and scores on the question “I enjoyed watching this show”. Those who scored higher in Final Transportation scores also reported higher levels of show enjoyment. Similarly, there was a negative relationship between Final Transportation shows and the question “I would have preferred to binge watch this show alone”. Those who would have preferred to watch the show alone reported lower transportation scores.

4.0 Discussion

4.1 Hypothesis 1: Big 5 Personality Traits and Trait Emotional Intelligence Levels will mediate binge session engagement (Final Transportation, Parasocial Relationship, Positive and Negative Affect Score)

Personality traits measured through the Big Five Inventory were included in this study based upon the findings of 2 key previous studies (Nabi & Riddle, 2008; Tsay & Bodine, 2012)

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which found that differences in amount or type of interaction with television based on personality. In Tsay and Bodine's (2012) research, they used a multifaceted Parasocial Relationship scale (in their research it was called a Parasocial Interaction scale) that was negatively correlated with Openness and Agreeableness, and positively correlated with Neuroticism. They also found the same personality factors to be significantly related to Positive and Negative affect scores and Parasocial Relationships. Congruent with Tsay and Bodine (2012), the present study also found significantly lower Final transportation scores for those who scored higher in Conscientiousness. The lack of significant findings of Parasocial Relationships in the present study could be due to the lack of questions or facets in this study's Parasocial Relationship measure. Given the significant connectedness of Transportation and Parasocial relationships, both measures in the present study should have reached similar significance on the same personality traits. Perhaps this was not the case in the present study because the Parasocial Relationship measure was not long enough. The measure used by Tsay and Bodine was a 29 question measure, which was considered too long for use in the present research.

Nabi and Riddle (2008) found that those scoring higher in Neuroticism were less likely to be cultivated by television shows than those scoring low in neuroticism. The concept of cultivation as used in cultivation theory is meant to refer to the long-term result of repeated episodes of high transportation and parasocial relationships in television. Since Neuroticism was significant in the long-term, this research supports Nabi and Riddle's (2008) claim that some personality factors are influencers in cultivation theory.

The current study's prediction of personality differences was based upon Brumbaugh et al.'s (2013) research which found significantly higher physiological responses in participants who had higher extraversion scores. The present results however did not replicate their findings with no correlation found with conscientiousness and openness. Since their methodology, content and measures differed from the present study, this could be a reason why extraversion was not found to be significant in this study. Their methodology used in the moment physiological testing of heart rate, skin conductance, and respiration. This differed from the

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present study's use of self-report surveys after an episode's completion. This could be a limitation in this research because television shows vary greatly on their content, and retrospection may not be an accurate representation of all the emotions experienced in the show. Brumbaugh et al. (2013) found differences in physiological responses by scene type between Extraversion, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness and Openness scores. Since the present study did not measure scenes within a single show, this may be why it did not find significance in some personality factors. One limitation of Brumbaugh et al.'s (2013) personality measure was that it contained only 10 questions. Since their measure has less validity, this could be why they found significance on items that the present study did not.

Nabi et al. (2006) used Emotional Intelligence, transportation and short form mood measures in their study, finding significantly different gratification levels among various television genres. Their research focused on participant recollections of television series watching as a whole, not in the moment. They found emotionality and transportation to be significant predictors of the gratifications of television watching in the genres chosen for their study. The present study confirmed these findings through the similar binge watching motivations questions. Nabi et al.'s (2006) research also found no significant Emotional Intelligence (TEI) differences among Transportation scores. This research differed from Nabi et al. (2006) in that it did find differences in emotionality and TEI, as described in the discussion of hypothesis 2 (4.2).

4.2 Hypothesis 2: High TEI individuals will show less negative emotionality (Negative Affect Scores) than low TEI individuals.

Individuals who scored higher in TEI, scored higher in positive affect scores at baseline and even though their positive affect decreased after watching TV, it was still higher than those with lower TEI after watching. Furthermore, individuals who scored higher in TEI also experienced less negative emotions at both baseline and at the end of the binge session. This was consistent with Beath et al.'s (2015) research, which stated that those with higher TEI tend to

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exhibit better coping skills than those scoring lower in TEI. These results were significant in suggesting the role of TEI in life, but since there were no significant relationships between TEI and Transportation or Parasocial relationship scores, this study was not able to substantiate that emotional intelligence played a role in cultivation. Also, there were no significant differences between gender and TEI, which was different from the findings of other studies which showed females having higher EI compared to males (Brabec et al., 2012).

4.3 Hypothesis 3: Demographic factors such as ethnicity, gender, religiosity and television consumption will account for variance within levels of television engagement (Final Transportation, Parasocial Relationship, Positive and Negative Affect Scores).

Ethnicity and Gender were expected to be related to television engagement because of the characters and content of the shows. Just as portraying accurate medical models on television helps shape how people think about the medical field, so too Hetsroni (2014) argued that proper representation of all people groups would help cultivate a better environment for all people. If a television show's main characters are mostly white males with subordinates being every other type of person, then people who do not identify with white males should not have as much of a cultivation effect (and therefore television engagement). This study found no significant ethnicity or gender differences in television engagement. One of the shows chosen in this study, *Timeless*, included two strong leads; a Caucasian female, and Black male. *BoJack Horseman* had few humans with animals of many species, not focusing on human races. *Atypical* did not have an exceptionally diverse cast, as it focused on a Caucasian family. There was more diversity in the present study's shows than the single majority Caucasian male show used in Hetsroni's (2014) research. Perhaps the present study's show choice could be part of the reason why there were no significant differences in Gender and Ethnicity.

In regards to why there were no results found around regarding Parasocial Relationships. the current study may have selected shows that portrayed characters with whom participants could not identify, or the parasocial relationship measure was not adequate. Since shows with

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diverse casts were used and Parasocial Relationship scores were not significant between ethnicities, nor any other variable, this suggested the latter. Research by Riddle, Peebles, Davis, Xu and Schroeder (2017) found differences between participants on the basis of their ethnic identification level. They measured a person's ethnocentrism and compared these scores to their parasocial interactions in two different types of shows. They found participants who watched a show that was clearly a part of their out-group to have less parasocial interactions with the characters than those within their in-group. Had the present research used an adequate Parasocial Relationship measure, perhaps these differences found by Riddle et al. (2017) could have been confirmed. The chosen parasocial relationships measure closely resembled only one facet of other Parasocial Relationship measures. This was chosen because it was closer to what was more often significant in Riddle et al.'s (2017) and Tsay and Bodine's (2012) research. Despite these similarities the chosen measure was not able to reach significance due to its very short nature. In the future, research should use a longer, already established measure such as the ones used by Riddle et al. (2017) or Tsay and Bodine (2012).

Additional studies have found differences between males and females not present in this study. For example, Brumbaugh et al. (2013), found females' skin conductance to respond more to sad or violent scenes with all-male actors than males watching the same scenes. The absence of these gender differences in the present study may have been due to the self-report measures used by the present study, compared to the in-the-moment physiological responses measured in Brumbaugh et al.'s (2013) research.

The significant differences between gender, amount of television consumed, and transportation scores should be interpreted with caution because there were less than 10 males who watched more than 6 hours of television per week. Had there been a larger sample size of males in each category, these results might have been quite different.

Religiosity and amount of time typically spent watching television was expected to have an effect on television watching experiences based on Hetsroni and Lowenstein's (2013) research. They found that religious individuals who watched more television were less likely to be

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cultivated by television violence than non-religious individuals. Based on their research, the present study measured religiosity. There were no significant differences between religiosity and television consumption per week in the present study. A weakness in this analysis was the absence of any rarely-religious, and non-religious participants in this study. Had the study included non-religious participants, stronger differences among the groups may have been present.

4.4 Hypothesis 4: Engagement and Mood effects after the first episode will be more significant after a full binge watching session.

Participant positive affect scores decreased over time, which suggested that they were engaged with the content of the show, but were not happier as a result of watching. Though there was no measurement of Positive and Negative Affect Scores (PANAS) scores across time found in the literature, PANAS scores after watching TV were expected to differ from their baseline. Bartsch (2012) measured PANAS scores only after watching television shows, and found significant correlations between mood and television show engagement. She found Positive Affect scores to be higher when participants also reported higher character engagement, and Negative Affect scores to be lower after watching TV. Perhaps this research did not see an increase in Positive Affect Scores because of the participant's lack of choice in what they were watching, or their discomfort with the binge watching environment. Despite best efforts to make the study space comfortable, it was not in the participant's natural binge watching environment. Participants were often required to share a couch with others, and be in the same room as people with whom they were not familiar. These unavoidable factors could have also contributed to the decrease in Positive Affect Scores.

4.5 Limitations

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A major limitation to the present study is that it was based on only 80 participants. More participants might have given this research more reliable results. Other limitations were found in the method, length, measures, environment, and operation of the present study.

The chosen method for this study had a few limitations. First, participant differences between show preference could have been a major contributor to why there was a decrease in Positive Affect scores, and no evidence of increased Transportation or Parasocial Relationship scores. Rentfrow et al. (2011) suggested that binge watching preferences were due to individual differences in satisfying psychological needs. They argued that people seek friendships with different people for varying reasons, and so too do people choose television shows for similar reasons. If the shows did not reflect their personality or mindset at the time, the results may not be representative of all binge watching. Had the participants been able to choose the show they would have liked to binge watch, these results could have concluded with a different result.

The length of this study was about 4 hours, but dependent on how long participants took to complete their questionnaires. This meant that the binge watching sessions varied in length. The shortest binge watching session group was 3 hours, and the longest was 4 hours. The differences found across these groups could have had negative impacts on the results.

The present study used a free online survey program called LimeSurvey. This free program was not mobile user friendly, which caused many participants to complain about not being able to read and select their answers without excessive zooming and scrolling. Participants using their mobile phones were not able to see the questions and Likert Scale labels at the same time, which may have led to recording of inaccurate answers. Additionally, previous research on a single episode of television's effects were conducted by recording physiological responses alone. This research relied only on self-report measures. Self-report may not be an accurate way to measure factors such as personality, emotional intelligence, or emotions.

The short Parasocial Relationship and Transportation measures were also limitations of this research. Perhaps their brevity and lack of dimensionality was a reason why there were few significant findings. Other research often had three or more categories within their Parasocial

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Relationship measure. Had this research more closely followed this multiple category format, perhaps parasocial relationships would have been a significant factor in this binge watching research.

The environment for this study was also not ideal for research. The available room did not have temperature control, and for 2 of the 9 sessions, the room was uncomfortably warm. Exploratory analysis comparing the results from these two dates against the other dates did not suggest any significant differences. Also, the study was forced to relocate to a different room for the second half of the research. This required a different sized viewing screen and different speaker system, which could have changed participant binge-watching experience.

In 1 of the 9 binge watching sessions, a measurement error was made. The group was given measures out of order (the Post-Binge Session Questionnaire at their Episode 1 time, and at the end, was given the Binge Watching Experience Questionnaire). The majority of the questions on the two measures were identical, but there were a few different questions about overall binge watching experience, but majority of the questions were identical. There were no significant differences in the results between the group that was given the reverse order questionnaires, so the data was kept in the sample.

Another unavoidable limitation of this research was that due to low participant numbers, additional study dates needed to be added, so the study took place over multiple months. This meant that when the participants were asked about their binge watching habits over the last 6 months, this included different months of the year. Perhaps future research should consider time restraints in making sure the participants are closer together.

4.6 Recommendations for Future Research

In future research, any study attempting to measure binge watching would benefit from additional questions about how much participants liked the show, and if they would watch it on their own time. The content of the shows should seek to satisfy the needs of participants, not just focus on the content of the shows and how participants respond. Another method of research in

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future studies could include participants watching the show on their own time and answering the questions as requested of them.

Prospective studies should seek participants who vary in religiosity and measure their religiosity specifically. This study measured religiosity level, but not the religion itself. Future research should seek to find participants who vary by religiosity and by religion for the most generalizable implications.

In order to strengthen future studies in this area, next steps should include the use of a longer and previously used Parasocial Relationship measure. Examples of successful parasocial relationship measures include Tsay and Bodine's (2012) and Riddle's (2017) measures. binge watching research would record responses in-the-moment and over time using both physiological and self-report measures. Perhaps participants could follow the same protocols as used in this study, and adding physiological measurement instruments to the duration of their binge watching experience.

4.7 Recommendations for TV Viewers

An important implication of the present research is its relevance to television viewers. The most important takeaway from the present study is awareness of how personal differences may be related to how they interpret and respond to television. Knowing how a person's background and traits fit in to the present research may help TV watchers be more aware of how television plays a part in their life. For example, those with High Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) saw the greatest drop in Positive Affect Scores. Knowing where a person scores on Emotional Intelligence may be related to how they feel after binge watching TV. Additionally, knowing Big Five Factor personality scores such as neuroticism and agreeableness may predict how much a person is going to be mentally interacting with the television show. These mental interactions have been related to changes in negative and positive emotions and in worldview.

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This means that if a person is higher in agreeableness, they may be more likely to be changed by television than those who are lower in this trait.

The present study also applies to parents of younger children. Knowing a child's traits can guide the parent in television show discussions. Knowing if the child is more or less likely to be emotionally affected by television shows may mean that parents should have more discussions about the realities of television, to show how they may not be something that needs to be accepted. Parents may also find comfort in knowing that if their child scores higher in neuroticism, then they may be less likely to be affected by television.

5.0 Conclusion

The present study explored the relationship between individual differences in the big 5 personality factors, TEI and the experience of binge watching television. Some personality and emotional intelligence differences were found to be related to television engagement. This suggests that some people could be more influenced by television than others. This study also confirmed much of the previous research in the role of individual differences. It suggests personality and life experience factors, such as how much television a person watches per week, has an important relationship with their emotions and connection with the created television world.

This research was original in its measurement of emotional intelligence and religiosity in binge watching television shows, while also confirming previous findings in personality. The significant findings of this study illuminated how personality might affect the television watching experience and therefore change how a person is cultivated. Understanding how television may affect individuals could have implications for both television viewers and producers of television. Further research in the area of individual differences in television engagement may be able to build off of its relationship with individual differences. This means

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people may be able to empower themselves to better understand how television impacts their lives, and how they can make healthier and wiser choices in the future.

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Appendix A: The Netflix Binge Scale (Dwyer, 2016)

The Netflix binge scale.

Members blow through *Breaking Bad*, *Orange is the New Black*, and *The Walking Dead*; are captivated by *House of Cards*, *Narcos*, and *Bloodline*.



NETFLIX

Appendix B: Participant Informed Consent Letter

Informed Consent Letter

Participant ID: _____

Title of Study:

The Significance of Personality and Emotional Intelligence in Binge Watching Consumption

Principal Investigator:

Angela Dekker, DekkerAngela@mytyndale.ca

Supervisor:

Dr. Nancy Ross, NRoss@tyndale.ca

Psychology Department, Tyndale University College and Seminary

Purpose of Study:

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to understand how personal differences influence interactions with television, and if these differences can be amplified by the duration of binge watching.

Study Procedures:

You will be asked to arrive for 5:45pm in the B400 lounge. First, you will be asked to read over and sign the informed consent letter, you will be sent a link to answer survey questions about your demographics and personality online. If you prefer, you may request a pen and paper copy of the same measures. Once completed, you will be binge watching the television show **Timeless**. This room will have couches and chairs for yourself, and all participants. These binge sessions will attempt to mirror home environments by allowing you to bring your own snacks, blankets and pillows. After the first episode, and after the last binge watching episode, you, and all fellow participants will complete another survey about your mood and binge watching experience. You can take as long as you need to complete the forms, and may complete them away from your peers in the same room or in the hallway to ensure genuine feedback. When the last episode of the binge-session is complete, you will respond to the final round of questions. After these questions are complete, your participation in the study is over. If you opted to use a paper copy of the measures, you will give back all forms to the researchers. You will be thanked for your participation, and finished the study, with no further correspondence.

You will be allowed to: Bring your own snacks, (non-alcoholic) beverages, pillows and blankets. At any time, without permission, you may go to the washroom, but not linger in hallway. You may have quiet discussions and snacks, sitting however you please to watch the shows.

Researchers will not be recording nor deceiving you in any way. All measures in this study will be forthright, self-report surveys. The expected total time for your session is four hours. You will not be required to complete any additional forms after your session is complete. However, due to the communal space you will be binge watching in, the other research participants will be aware of your participation in the study. Potential reactions to the television content will not be hidden from other participants.

Participant's Initials: _____

BINGE WATCHING

Informed Consent Letter

Participant ID: _____

Risks:

Timeless may contain strong language, scenes of violence, or scenes of sexual nature. All television shows to be watched in this study have been or are the most popular to watch online or on cable networks. The Television content may be considered offensive, hurtful, or damaging. You may experience a change in perception about the world, and you may become desensitized to scenes of violence, or you may experience strong emotions that can disrupt your sense of self.

Benefits:

There will likely be no direct health benefit for participation in this study. But we hope that all participants will enjoy the experiment, experience stress relief from being with peers, food, and watching enjoyable television content. We hope that the information obtained from this study may be beneficial to create a better understanding with how people and media interact with each other.

Confidentiality:

All your responses in this study will be anonymous. If you opt for a paper copy of measures, please do not write any identifying information (such as your name) in your booklet. Each booklet will be assigned with an identification number on every sheet of the booklet, but will not be directly linked with your name. At no time, will the research report identify or single you out. Your informed consent letter and booklet will be stored in a secure and locked location.

Compensation:

You will receive class credit for participating in this study, if you are a part of one of the pre-approved classes offering extra credit. You may not participate twice if you are in two classes approved for extra credit. When you complete the study and all measures, you will write your name on a list indicating which class you are seeking extra credit for, and this list will be given to your professor for credit.

Voluntary Participation:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You must be over the age of 18 to participate. If you decide to take part in this study, proceed to sign this consent form. After you sign the consent form, withdrawal is still permitted at any time and you do not need to give a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not jeopardize any standing at Tyndale or influence eligibility for extra credit. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your forms will be destroyed.

By signing this form, you do not waive any legal rights.

Additional Concerns:

If you would like to contact another person who is not the researcher with questions or concerns about this study, you may contact her Supervisor, Nancy Ross at NRoss@Tyndale.ca. Or if you have ethics related concerns you may contact the Tyndale Research Ethics Board at REB@Tyndale.ca

Participant's Initials: _____

BINGE WATCHING

Informed Consent Letter

Participant ID: _____

Consent:

I understand that I must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research. I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Participant's Initials: _____

BINGE WATCHING

Appendix C: Participant Measures Booklet

1 of 8

Participant ID _____

Participant Binge Watching Questionnaire*Instructions:* Please answer all questions by *circling* the answer that best describes you.

1. What is your gender? Male / Female / Other
2. What is your age? 18 / 19 / 20 / 21 / 22 / 23 / 24 / 25 / 26 / 27 / 28 / 29 / 30 +
3. Which racial or ethnic group(s) do you *most* identify as? African (-Canadian) / Asian / Pacific Islander / Caucasian / Latino or Hispanic / First Nations or Aboriginal / Other _____
4. How religious or spiritual are you? (Please circle)

1 Not religious or spiritual at all	2 Rarely religious or spiritual	3 Sometimes religious or spiritual	4 Often religious or spiritual	5 Very religious or spiritual
---	---------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

5. Do you associate yourself with a specific denomination? If so, which one? _____
6. How many hours per week do you spend watching television shows?
None / less than an hour / 1-2 hrs / 3-4 hrs / 5-6 hrs / 7-8 hrs / 9-10 hrs / 11-12 hrs / 13-14 hrs / 15+ hrs
A binge watching session is defined in as *watching three or more episodes of the same show in rapid succession.*
7. Have you had a binge watching session before? Yes / No If yes,
 8. How many binge watching sessions have you had in the last month? 0-7 / 8-15 / 15+
 9. In the last 6 months? 0-15 / 16-45 / 46-75 / 76+
 10. Has your binge watching been on an internet platform like Netflix or CraveTV? Yes / No

11. What motivates you to watch television shows? (circle all that apply)

To relieve boredom	Yes	To escape or forget life	Yes
To learn something	Yes	To have something to do when sick	Yes
To feel connected to people	Yes	To have as a reward from work or studying	Yes
To feel happier	Yes	To have something to talk about with others	Yes
To feel sad or empathize	Yes	To experience the feelings or actions of characters	Yes

12. Do you spend more time watching television with others or alone? With others / Alone / About the same
13. Have you watched at least one full episode of the TV show written in the informed consent before? Yes / No
14. Do you watch television primarily on a: Television / Laptop / Tablet / Mobile phone / Other _____

BINGE WATCHING

2 of 7

Participant ID _____

How I Am in General

Instructions: Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who *likes to spend time with others*? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which **you agree or disagree with that statement.**

I am someone who...

1	2	3	4	5
Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly

1. _____ Is talkative
2. _____ Tends to find fault with others
3. _____ Does a thorough job
4. _____ Is depressed, blue
5. _____ Is original, comes up with new ideas
6. _____ Is reserved
7. _____ Is helpful and unselfish with others
8. _____ Can be somewhat careless
9. _____ Is relaxed, handles stress well.
10. _____ Is curious about many different things
11. _____ Is full of energy
12. _____ Starts quarrels with others
13. _____ Is a reliable worker
14. _____ Can be tense
15. _____ Is ingenious, a deep thinker
16. _____ Generates a lot of enthusiasm
17. _____ Has a forgiving nature
18. _____ Tends to be disorganized
19. _____ Worries a lot
20. _____ Has an active imagination
21. _____ Tends to be quiet
22. _____ Is generally trusting
23. _____ Tends to be lazy
24. _____ Is emotionally stable, not easily upset
25. _____ Is inventive
26. _____ Has an assertive personality
27. _____ Can be cold and aloof
28. _____ Perseveres until the task is finished
29. _____ Can be moody
30. _____ Values artistic, aesthetic experiences
31. _____ Is sometimes shy, inhibited
32. _____ Is considerate and kind to almost everyone
33. _____ Does things efficiently
34. _____ Remains calm in tense situations
35. _____ Prefers work that is routine
36. _____ Is outgoing, sociable
37. _____ Is sometimes rude to others
38. _____ Makes plans and follows through with them
39. _____ Gets nervous easily
40. _____ Likes to reflect, play with ideas
41. _____ Has few artistic interests
42. _____ Likes to cooperate with others
43. _____ Is easily distracted
44. _____ Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature

BINGE WATCHING

3 of 7

Participant ID _____

Instructions: Please answer each statement below by putting a circle around the number that best reflects your degree of agreement or disagreement with that statement. Do not think too long about the exact meaning of the statements. Work quickly and try to answer as accurately as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. There are seven possible responses to each statement ranging from 'Completely Disagree' (number 1) to 'Completely Agree' (number 7).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Completely Disagree **Completely Agree**

1. Expressing my emotions with words is not a problem for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I often find it difficult to see things from another person's viewpoint.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. On the whole, I'm a highly motivated person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I usually find it difficult to regulate my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I generally don't find life enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I can deal effectively with people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I tend to change my mind frequently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Many times, I can't figure out what emotion I'm feeling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I often find it difficult to stand up for my rights.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I'm usually able to influence the way other people feel.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. On the whole, I have a gloomy perspective on most things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Those close to me often complain that I don't treat them right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I often find it difficult to adjust my life according to the circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. On the whole, I'm able to deal with stress.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I often find it difficult to show my affection to those close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I'm normally able to "get into someone's shoes" and experience their emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I normally find it difficult to keep myself motivated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I'm usually able to find ways to control my emotions when I want to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. On the whole, I'm pleased with my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I would describe myself as a good negotiator.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I tend to get involved in things I later wish I could get out of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I often pause and think about my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I believe I'm full of personal strengths.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I tend to "back down" even if I know I'm right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I don't seem to have any power at all over other people's feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I generally believe that things will work out fine in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I find it difficult to bond well even with those close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Generally, I'm able to adapt to new environments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Others admire me for being relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

BINGE WATCHING

4 of 7

Participant ID _____

Binge Watching Experience Questionnaire

Instructions: Please answer all questions on this page by *circling* the answer that best describes your experience watching the television show.

1. While I was watching the show, activity going on in the room around me was on my mind.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

2. I could picture myself in the scene of the events or as one of the characters in the show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

3. I was mentally involved in the show's narrative while watching it.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

4. The show affected me emotionally.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

5. I found myself thinking of ways the storyline could have turned out differently.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

6. I found my mind wandering while watching the show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

7. I have many of the same beliefs as my favourite character

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

8. I can identify with my favourite character

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

9. I'd watch my favourite actor/actress on a different program

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

10. I care about what happens to my favourite character

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

11. I'd enjoy interacting with my favourite character and my friends at the same time.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

12. I'd like to be more like my favourite character.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

13. I usually agreed with my favourite character.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

BINGE WATCHING

5 of 7

Participant ID _____

PANAS Questionnaire

Instructions: This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then list the number from the scale below next to each word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now.

1 Very slightly or not at all	2 A Little	3 Moderately	4 Quite a Bit	5 Extremely
-------------------------------------	---------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| _____ 1. Interested | _____ 11. Irritable |
| _____ 2. Distressed | _____ 12. Alert |
| _____ 3. Excited | _____ 13. Ashamed |
| _____ 4. Upset | _____ 14. Inspired |
| _____ 5. Strong | _____ 15. Nervous |
| _____ 6. Guilty | _____ 16. Determined |
| _____ 7. Scared | _____ 17. Attentive |
| _____ 8. Hostile | _____ 18. Jittery |
| _____ 9. Enthusiastic | _____ 19. Active |
| _____ 10. Proud | _____ 20. Afraid |

BINGE WATCHING

6 of 7

Participant ID _____

Post-Binge Watching Session Questionnaire

Instructions: Please answer all questions on this page by *circling* the answer that best describes your experience watching the television show.

2. I could picture myself in the scene of the events or as one of the characters in the show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

3. I was mentally involved in the show's narrative while watching it.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

4. The show affected me emotionally.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

5. I found myself thinking of ways the storyline could have turned out differently.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

6. I found my mind wandering while watching the show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

7. I'd like to be more like my favourite character.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

8. I usually agreed with my favourite character.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

9. experienced stronger emotions for my favourite character the more episodes I watched.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

10. I found myself liking my favourite character more with each episode.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

11. I enjoyed binge watching this show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

12. I felt like the room and uncommon television watching space hindered my full engagement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

13. I would have preferred to binge watch the show alone.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

BINGE WATCHING

7 of 8

Participant ID _____

Post-Binge Watching Session Questionnaire

Instructions: Please answer all questions on this page by *circling* the answer that best describes your experience watching the television show.

1. I could picture myself in the scene of the events or as one of the characters in the show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

2. I was mentally involved in the show's narrative while watching it.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

3. The show affected me emotionally.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

4. I found myself thinking of ways the storyline could have turned out differently.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

5. I found my mind wandering while watching the show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

6. I'd like to be more like my favourite character.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

7. I usually agreed with my favourite character.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

8. I experienced stronger emotions for my favourite character the more episodes I watched.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

9. I found myself liking my favourite character more with each episode.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

10. I enjoyed binge watching this show.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

11. I felt like the room and uncommon television watching space hindered my full engagement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

12. I would have preferred to binge watch the show alone.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

BINGE WATCHING

8 of 8

Participant ID _____

PANAS Questionnaire

Instructions: This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then list the number from the scale below next to each word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now.

1 Very slightly or not at all	2 A Little	3 Moderately	4 Quite a Bit	5 Extremely
-------------------------------------	---------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>_____ 1. Interested</p> <p>_____ 2. Distressed</p> <p>_____ 3. Excited</p> <p>_____ 4. Upset</p> <p>_____ 5. Strong</p> <p>_____ 6. Guilty</p> <p>_____ 7. Scared</p> <p>_____ 8. Hostile</p> <p>_____ 9. Enthusiastic</p> <p>_____ 10. Proud</p> | <p>_____ 11. Irritable</p> <p>_____ 12. Alert</p> <p>_____ 13. Ashamed</p> <p>_____ 14. Inspired</p> <p>_____ 15. Nervous</p> <p>_____ 16. Determined</p> <p>_____ 17. Attentive</p> <p>_____ 18. Jittery</p> <p>_____ 19. Active</p> <p>_____ 20. Afraid</p> |
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