Personality Traits in relation to Marathon Media Consumption

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1. ABSTRACT

The present study used to the Uses and Gratifications theory to examine the relationship between the Big Five and the practice of binge-watching and explored the relationship between media consumption and personality traits by examining how viewers personality traits influence the probability and degree viewers are inclined to engage in this activity. An online questionnaire (N = 145) determined that the degree to which individuals engage in marathon media consumption show small but significant relationships with the personality traits extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness and agreeableness. The implications of the study findings and limitations of the study are discussed.

1.1. DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part to this or any other third level institution. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Signed: Brendan Stoneham

Date: 13-04-2020

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1.2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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3. INTRODUCTION

As technological methods of consuming mass media evolve, so to do media consumption behaviours (Tukachinsky and Eyal, 2018). Binge watching is the practice of viewing multiple episodes of a television program in a single sitting (Pittman and Sheehan, 2015). Engaging in binge-watching television content is not a new phenomenon. The practice began decades ago, when technology such as video recorders became more prevalent. Since then the means and methods of viewing video content has evolved rapidly and dramatically due to the advancements in streaming services and widespread availability of video capable devises. These developments have made accessing and viewing media content far easier and convenient than ever before. This ease and convenience has resulted in the activity of binge watching becoming a more common viewing practice (Warren, 2016).

Recent years has seen a multitude of new streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Hulu offer on demand television, the US multinational mass media and entertainment conglomerate, Disney Corporation's, acquisition of Fox and the company's launching of its own streaming service, Disney+ (Sims, 2019) saw over 50 million subscriptions within its first 5 months (Harper, 2020). These streaming services have been broadly adopted by consumers, 158 million users worldwide subscribe to Netflix (Statista, 2019) with 250,000 of them in Ireland (Irish Independent, 2020) and 105 million amazon prime users subscribe in the US alone (Statista, 2019). Video media streaming has become a viable mainstream viewing method. Services such as these give viewers the ability to schedule what they want to watch, when they want to watch it and how they want to watch it (Cook, 2014). The functionality facilitated by such services include the ability to watch content at any time and practically anywhere and offer the ability to watch entire seasons of content without having to wait for subsequent episodes to be released. On top of this, the viewing experience has the added advantage of not being interrupted by advertisements shown during the consumed media content as is a common feature of traditional television viewing.

The desire to consume media is influenced by a host of social and psychological factors (Finn, 1997; Krcmar & Greene, 1999; Weaver, 1991; Green & Krcmar, 2005). Current psychological research into binge-watching has largely focused on the consequences of the practice (Ahmed, 2017; Baral, 2015; De Feijter, Khan, & Van Gisbergen, 2016; Exelmans & Van den

Bulck, 2017 and Wheeler, 2015). Future research into the area of media consumption should focus not only on benefits and consequences of binge watching but also begin to investigate how these are affected by moderating factors that influence why and how much a person binge-watches. Research conducted by Wheeler (2015), utilised various measures and found there were positive associations between depression, loneliness and attachment anxiety with media marathoning viewing.

This study attempts to investigate the practice of binge-watching and explore the relationship between media consumption and personality traits. The proposed research will attempt to fill that gap by examining how viewers personality traits influence the likelihood and extent of viewers binge-watching habits. It is hoped that by studying the relationship between personality and marathon media consumption, greater understanding of the motivations behind the practice and a means of predicting whether personality traits influence an individual's engagement in the practice of media marathoning, and if so, the frequency and extent to which they do. Personality may be one of the most important determinants of media choice (Chory & Goodboy, 2010).

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1. Marathon Media Consumption

Binge watching has become so mainstream the term binge-watch was short listed for the Oxford English Dictionary's word of the year in 2013. It defines the term as "the practice of watching multiple episodes of a television programme in rapid succession, typically by means of DVDs or digital streaming" (Oxford English Dictionary). Binge-watching can be defined as the viewing of more than one episode or hours of a television program consecutively (Pittman and Steiner, 2019). There is lack of consensus amongst researchers as to the implications there are for media consumers engaging in this behaviour (Tukachinsky and Eyal, 2018). Despite the widespread adoption of the practice, the term binge-watching does have associated negative connotations. Individual differences, such as age, gender, and personality influence peoples use and interaction with mass media and thus binge-watching (Ryan & Xenos, 2011). There is evidence to suggest that binge watching has significant positive relationships with attachment anxiety, loneliness and depression (Ahmed, 2017; De Feijter, Khan, & Van Gisbergen, 2016; Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017 & Wheeler, 2015). The sedentary nature of the activity of binge-watching television can increase the likely hood of developing diabetes (Baral, 2015). Research conducted by Wheeler (2015), focused on online streaming services and investigated the relationships between psychological wellbeing, attachment, depression and loneliness on viewing practices such as media marathoning and viewing motivations. It has been found in a study of people at higher risk of developing diabetes that the risk of developing diabetes increases by 3.4% for each hour spent sitting (Park, 2015).

The adoption of the metaphor "binge-watching", which elicits a sense of exaggeration, lack of control or even similarities to addictions such as binge eating and binge alcohol drinking confers a negative attribute to the behaviour (Tukachinsky & Eyal, 2018). To mitigate the negative implications of the term binge-watching the proposed study will use the term marathoning media consumption when referring to the practice.

The video streaming service Netflix started offering entire seasons of content in 2013 (Matrix 2014). This provided subscribers with the facility of viewing a television show from the start to finish uninterrupted if desired. One survey found that 66% of participants had

watched more than one episode of a television show consecutively (Neilsen, 2016). Spangler (2013) conducted a survey on behalf of Netflix, it found that 61% of those who view television shows online engage in media marathoning, watching between two to three episodes at least every few weeks. The majority of those who participated considered media marathoning to be the viewing of between two to six episodes of the same television show in one sitting (West, 2014). Despite the negative connotations associated with the practice, the same survey found that 73% of the participants felt positively about the practice of media marathoning television shows and 79% believed that television shows are more enjoyable when watched consecutively in a media marathoning session (West, 2014). The survey also revealed that 25% of those that had completed viewing an entire season of a television show within a month had done so within two days (Spangler, 2013). This study will investigate the television viewing habits and explore the relationship between marathon media consumption and personality types.

4.2. Media Uses and Gratification Theory

The uses and gratification theory speculates that media consumers have needs and goals and seek to satiate them through mass media consumption (Pittman and Sheehan, 2015). There is a plethora of studies conducted since the 1960s on Uses and Gratification which have found it to be robust (Leung and Zhang, 2016). This study will apply media uses and gratifications theory to marathon media consumption.

The development of online digital media and video capable devices have led to something of a revival in the uses and gratifications approach. A survey in 2012 showed that the uses and gratification theory is the 4th most prominent theory in use in the area of communication (Pittman and Sheehan, 2015). Research suggest that individuals utilize mass media to fulfil certain needs associated with their own psychological characteristics (Green & Krcmar, 2005).

The media uses and gratifications approach suggests that audiences actively recognize their own needs and requirements and choose the entertainment medium that best gratifies those specific needs. The activity is considered to be voluntary, driven by motivations and

individual preferences (Shade, Kornfield, & Oliver, 2015). Motivation is mediated by several factors such as the social and psychological characteristics of the individual. The nine basic motives of television viewing are as follows: relaxation, companionship, habit, passing time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape (Krcmar, 2017). The uses and gratifications theory has been further updated to address media marathoning. The five motivations for this practice have been found to be: Enhanced viewing experience, sense of completion, cultural inclusion, convenience/catching-up, and relaxation (Steiner and Xu, 2018). The media uses and gratifications theory suggests that media consumers' needs interact with their individual and societal characteristics and argues personality traits may influence media use and that media use and may in turn, affect outcome behaviours (Green & Krcmar, 2005). The societal environment in which the individual resides, social groups and relationships that the individual is a part of, contribute to those societal characteristics (Shade, Kornfield, & Oliver, 2015). This interaction produces problems and solutions that stimulate gratification seeking or problem-solving behaviour (Chory & Goodboy, 2010). This pursuit of gratification results in media consumption in the attempt to receive the desired gratification (Chory & Goodboy, 2010). Through this process, personality traits may establish the distinct features that motivate, and are ultimately impacted by gratification seeking and media use (Chory & Goodboy, 2010). Media marathon consumption is frequently driven by a sense of completion and the ability to moderate that completion (Pittman and Steiner, 2019).

Uses and gratifications theory is limited as it relies on three fundamental assumptions (Pittman and Steiner, 2019). It assumes that media consumers actively seek out media in order to gratify certain needs rather than being passive (Pittman and Steiner, 2019). It also assumes that the consumer is conscious of their own motivations for that consumption and can reliably report on those motivations and desires (Pittman and Steiner, 2019). Furthermore, it assumes that media content is in competition with each other for sources of need satisfaction (Pittman and Steiner, 2019). The motivations for gratification that specifically address media marathoning and differ from linear television viewing are "enhanced viewing experience" and "sense of completion" (Steiner and Xu 2018). As long as media continues to be consumed through technology, the uses and gratifications theory will

continue to provide an appreciation of why those types of media are consumed and the effects it may have (Pittman and Sheehan, 2015).

4.3. Television Viewing and Personality

This study employs the Big Five Inventory (Goldberg, 1992) this measure classifies personality across 5 dimensions: Extraversion vs. Introversion, Agreeableness vs. Antagonism, Conscientious vs. Lack of Direction, Neuroticism vs. Emotional Stability and Openness vs. Closedness to Experience. The Big Five Inventory breaks each dimension into facets and their correlated trait adjectives. There is a wealth of psychological research that suggests personality can be identified by five major factors (Krcmar & Kean, 2005). Previous research has found that Extraversion and Openness to Experience are the best predictors of media use. In addition, it is possible that Agreeableness and Neuroticism may be related to media use (Krcmar & Kean, 2005).

Extroversion is linked to gregarious, assertive, activity, excitement seeking, warmth, enthusiasm (John & Srivastava, 1999). Extroverts seek stimulation from external sources and prefers group and social activities (Reer and Kramer, 2017). Research into the effects of various personality factors on the viewing of verbally aggressive television shows found that participants that had scored higher in terms of sensation seeking and viewer aggression, which may be interpreted as being an extraverted characteristic (Banjeree, Greene, Kremar and Bagdasarov, 2009).

Introverts in contrast are more reflective and prefer solitude. One study on viewing behaviours found that participants who stated a preference for solitude favoured being alone when viewing video media content (Cohen and Lancaster, 2014). Introverts also exhibit a tendency to mediating before speaking (Ge, Tang, Zhou, Tang and Lang, 2016) and are perceived as quiet or shy at an interpersonal level and seek less social interaction, usually having smaller social networks (John & Srivastava, 1999).

Pittman and Steiner (2019) conducted research into attentiveness and its influence on viewer experience and its mitigation of regret after marathon media consumption behaviour. The research measured personality and marathon media consumption behaviour, and the motivations for viewing behaviours though an online survey. A sample of 800 were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk platform which may have resulted in a bias result however their findings indicate that people are more likely to engage in marathon media consumption behaviours when they are less agreeable, less conscientious, less open, more neurotic.

Tukachinsky & Eyal (2018) conducted a study to explore if depression, insecure attachment, and loneliness were positively related with the extent of marathon media viewing behaviours. While a significant relationship was found between depression and marathon media consumption the findings cannot be considered generalizable as the study was conducted on a cohort of participants which were all recruited from an introductory communication course in a university in the USA. Furthermore, participants were rewarded with research credits for their participation in the study.

4.4. Rationale for this study and its research questions

This study into the relationship between personality traits and media marathoning is important for a number of reasons. First, while there is a growing body of research into the influence of personality traits on media consumption, advancements in technology and changes in the way media is consumed have outpaced the research into this area leaving a gap in our current understanding. The study explores what media marathoning is as currently there is no clear definition on what constitutes a media marathon session. For the purposes of the proposed study, a media marathoning session will be defined as the consecutive viewing of more than one episode of the same television show.

The Netflix survey mentioned above defines a media marathoning session as viewing two to three episodes of a television show consecutively but what people perceive as a marathon may be dependent on more than simply the number of episodes viewed (Jenner, 2014). For example, viewing two to three episodes of a twenty-two-minute situational comedy maybe

be perceived as media marathoning whereas watching two ninety-minute football matches may not.

Thirdly, by identifying any relationship between personality traits and media marathoning behaviour this study illuminates possible effects and influences and thus help control for the possibility of personality traits functioning as confounding variables in future research conducted into this behaviour. Furthermore, the findings of the proposed study may help to determine if media marathoning should be considered similar in manner to other bingeing behaviours.

4.5. Hypotheses

Research conducted by Tosun and Lajunen (2009) suggests that Introverts and Extraverts seek different outcomes from internet usage with extraverts employing internet activity which supports their existing social interactions. It has been suggested that extroverts utilize media to enhance, rather than to replace, social interaction (Chory & Goodboy, 2010). The practice of marathon media consumption may provide extraverts with context and information for cultural "watercooler" type conversations associated with traditionally viewed television shows (Tukachinsky & Eyal, 2018).

H1: Extraversion will be positively correlated with media marathon viewing practices

Neuroticism is linked to anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness and vulnerability (John & Srivastava, 1999). Previous research into media consumption resulted in inconsistent findings (Chory & Goodboy, 2010). Pittman and Steiner (2019) found that participants are more likely to media marathon to a greater extent when they are more neurotic. However, as research has already indicated a link between marathon media consumption and depression, it is proposed here that those that score high on the neurotic measure will also engage in greater levels of marathon media consuming behaviour. Those high on the neuroticism scale are more likely to engage in television viewing behaviours to pass time, stimulation, and relaxation motives (Hall, 2009).

H2: Neuroticism will be positively correlated with media marathon viewing practices

Conscientiousness is linked to competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline and deliberation (John & Srivastava, 1999). Media marathoning has been found to be negatively associated with conscientiousness (Pittman and Steiner, 2019). It has been found that those high in conscientiousness use social media for the gratifications of maintaining existing social relationships. While non conscientious individuals use social media more for news and information (Kircaburun, Alhabash, Tosuntaş, & Griffiths. 2018). This study investigates if participants with high conscientiousness engage in greater media marathoning behaviour as a means to gratify their antisocial emotions (Chory & Goodboy, 2010).

H3: Conscientiousness will be positively correlated with higher levels of media marathoning

Agreeableness is characterized by trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, tender mindedness (John & Srivastava, 1999). Individuals low in agreeableness and conscientiousness have been found to be aggressive or hostile. A positive relationship has been found between agreeableness and with gratifications of informational and educational gratifications (Kircaburun, Alhabash, Tosuntaş, & Griffiths. 2018). However, media marathoning has been found to be negatively associated with agreeableness in terms of uses and gratification motivations enhanced viewing experience and sense of completion (Pittman and Steiner, 2019). This study investigates if participants with low agreeableness engage in greater media marathoning behaviour.

H4: Agreeableness will be negatively correlated with media marathon viewing practices

5. METHOD

5.1. Design

This study employs a non-experimental fixed design utilizing an online questionnaire that collected objective descriptive and quantitative data for statistical analysis rather than follow an experimental method. The rationale for using a survey it that it is an unobtrusive method that can be used for hypothesis testing (Shaughnessy, 2012). By employing a self-report survey-based methodology, a set of predetermined questions for all participants to answer resulted in greater data consistency and facilitated the summarization of all data gathered succinctly (Shaughnessy, 2012). The use of an online survey also increased the ability of the researcher to reach a broader population sample.

This research used the Big Five Inventory (Goldberg, 1992) measure of personality traits in an online self-report questionnaire. The self-reported scores provided by the participants serves as the independent variable. The dependent variable values of marathon media consumption were identified through the participant responses to questions focused on media consumption.

5.2. Participants

The study utilized a convenience sampling to recruit a sample population. The participants were recruited through the Social Networking Site (SNS) Whatsapp. An invitation request was sent via the SNS to friends, family, colleagues and associates with a brief explanation of the rationale behind the survey and a request to complete the survey. To try to enhance the generalizability of the findings and to describe people who did not participate in the survey, a request to forward the invitation on to any potential participants that are 18 years of age or more was included with the hope forwarding the invitation would result in producing snowball sampling and thus increase the population size of the sample and broaden the cohort.

Participants consisted of individuals of indiscriminate age (other than the pre-requisite of being older than 18 years of age), gender, nationality, ethnic group, sexual orientation or religious group. A convenience sample of 151 participants was recruited to participate in the study, on a voluntary basis with 145 continuing on to complete the survey. The sample consisted of

participants of varied gender (63.4% female, 35.9% male and 0.7% prefer not to say) and age. Participant age was grouped into age brackets providing an option set range as follows: 18 - 24, 25 - 34, 35 - 44, 45 - 54, 55 - 64, 65 - 74. The most frequently selected age bracket by participants were 35 - 44 years of age (35.2 %), 45 - 54 years of age (27.6 %) and 25 - 34 years of age (18.6 %).

5.3. Materials and Measures

The survey instrument included two major sections: (1) Measures of personality and (2) Television Viewing Habits.

Measures of Personality: This study employs the Big Five Inventory (Goldberg, 1992) this measure classifies personality across 5 dimensions: Extraversion vs. Introversion, Agreeableness vs. Antagonism, Conscientious vs. Lack of Direction, Neuroticism vs. Emotional Stability and Openness vs. Closedness to Experience. The Big Five Inventory breaks each dimension into facets and their correlated trait adjectives. There is a wealth of psychological research that suggests personality can be identified by five major factors (Krcmar & Kean, 2005). Previous research has found that Extraversion and Openness to Experience are the best predictors of media use. In addition, it is possible that Agreeableness and Neuroticism may be related to media use (Krcmar & Kean, 2005). The proposed study will seek to identify correlations between media marathoning with the personality traits; extroversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness and agreeableness.

Television Viewing Habits: Currently, no scale has been developed for the measurement of marathon media consumption. Marathon media consumption was defined as the viewing of more than 1 episode of a television show consecutively. A 5-item questionnaire was developed by the researcher to measure television viewing frequency and marathon media consumption habits. Questions included where: "How often do you watch TV?" and "How often would you watch multiple episodes of a television show consecutively?" With the options; Daily, Every other day, Weekly, Occasionally and Never. "How many hours a day do you watch TV?" with the options; Less than an hour, 1-2 hours, 3-4 hours and 5 or more hours. "Have you ever watched multiple episodes of a television show consecutively?" and "Have you ever watched an entire season of a television show within a week?" each offering a Yes/No response. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to be .280.

5.4. Ethical Considerations

As there were no controversial or potentially harmful aspects addressed in this study nor was any vulnerable population required for the survey sample the ethical considerations were relatively standard. An Ethics Form A was completed and submitted seeking ethical approval to the appropriate ethics board for review and consideration. Ethical Approval was granted by the Department of Technology and Psychology Ethics Committee (DTPEC) before any participants were invited or any data collection.

Informed consent was sought before participants were able to access the questionnaire by presenting participants with an embedded informed consent form on the online questionnaire. Any characteristics of the study that may have impacted on the participant's willingness to participate was clearly declared and a point of contact was supplied so the researcher could be contacted to answer any questions participants may have had regarding the study (Shaughnessy, 2012). Information describing the objective of the study and the research procedure was presented as well as assurances of confidentially, anonymity, secure data storage and adherence to DTPEC and PSI ethical standards were declared.

Participants were made aware that they were free to opt out of the study at any stage and an exit option was clearly displayed on the questionnaire. Participants needed to choose to agree before being directed to the research survey. Participation was entirely voluntary and did not pose any risk of psychological or physical harm to participants or to the researcher. Demographic information collected in the survey included age and any participants under eighteen unintentionally harvested through convenience sampling or snowballing were removed from the data set. All data collected was hosted on a secure and encrypted environment.

5.5. Pilot Study

A brief pilot study was conducted to test and assess the functionality of the questionnaire using Google Forms prior to the dissemination of the survey questionnaire to the sample group. The pilot study administered the survey to 4 participants known to the researcher via whatsapp. These 4 participants were debriefed after completion of the questionnaire to ascertain and issues relating their participation and any technical issues encountered.

The pilot study revealed some minor formatting problems in the survey. Feedback from the pilot study revealed that none of the wording or question structures were confusing for participants. The average completion time of the survey was reported to be less than 5 minutes and participants felt the questionnaire was intuitive and easy to use.

Data submitted in the pilot study was successfully captured via the Google Form and automatically populated into spreadsheet format.

5.6. Procedure

Stage 1. An invitation to participate in the survey was circulated through the SNS Whatsapp with a link to the personality traits in relation to marathon media consumption online questionnaire hosted on Google Forms.

Stage 2. Upon accessing the questionnaire participants read a brief overview of the purpose of the research and their rights.

Stage 3. Where invitees chose to continue and participate in the study they were prompted to indicate their understanding of their rights and grant their consent to participate in the study before being able to proceed to the formal questionnaire.

Stage 4. Participants were then directed to a measures of personality section of the questionnaire (Goldberg, 1992) for completion before proceeding to television viewing habits and demographics sections.

Stage 5. Upon completion of the questionnaire participants submitted their responses and the data collected

Stage 6. Participants responses to the personality traits in relation to marathon media consumption online questionnaire were gathered and exported to Microsoft Excel for appropriate scoring.

Stage 7. Statistical analysis was conducted on the scored collected date upon being imported into the IBM statistical analysis application SPSS (Version 24) for statistical analysis.

6. RESULTS

6.0. Descriptive Statistics

After incomplete responses were excluded, a total of 145 responses were included in subsequent analyses. Among those participants, 92 (63.4%) were female, 52 (35.9%) were male and 1 (0.7%) preferred not to say. The mean age for participants was 40.98 years old (SD = 11.11)

6.1. Inferential Statistics

Total scores on each of the personality traits measured by the Big 5 Personality Inventory were calculated. ExtraversionTotal (M = 26.26, SD = 5.65), AgreeablenessTotal (M = 35.24, SD = 5.62), ConsciensiousnessTotal (M = 34.83, SD = 5.47) and NeuroticismTotal (M = 21.93, SD = 5.62). Television Viewing Habits were labelled as follows; "How often do you watch TV?" = TVFreq, "How many hours a day do you watch TV?" = TVHrs, "Have you ever watched multiple episodes of a television show consecutively?" = Binge, "How often would you watch multiple episodes of a television show consecutively?" = BingeFreq and "Have you ever watched an entire season of a television show within a week?" = Series1Weeks.

To assess H1, a bivariate correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between each measure of television viewing habits and the Big-5 personality trait extroversion. As shown in Table 1, results indicate a very weak but significant positive relationship was identified between ExtraversionTotal and TVFreq, (r(145) = +.033, p = .689), a weak but significant negative correlation was found between ExtraversionTotal and TVHrs, (r(145) = -.054, p = .519) and a weak but significant negative correlation was found between ExtraversionTotal and Series1Weeks, (r(145) = -.065, p = .438). While the coefficients were small for these results, they do suggest that extraverts are likely to more frequently watch television but for shorter periods of time and less likely to consume an entire series within a week. No relationship between extraversion and marathon media consumption behaviour was found via the measures Binge (r(145) = -.022, p = .796) or BingeFreq (r(145) = -.003, p = .970).

6.2a. Table 1. Correlations between Extraversion Totals and TV viewing habits

		ExtraversionTotal	TVFreq	TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series1Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	.033	054	.022	.003	065
ExtraversionTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.689	.519	.796	.970	.438
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145

Analysis for H2 followed the same format, a bivariate correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between each measure of television viewing habits and the personality trait neuroticism. Table 2 results reveal a significant positive relationship between NeuroticismTotal and TVFreq, (r(145) = +.096, p = .249), and a week but significant negative correlation was found between NeuroticismTotal and TVHrs, (r(145) = +.039, p = .640), a weak but significant correlation was found between NeuroticismTotal and Binge, (r(145) = .045, p = .593). A significant negative correlation was identified between NeuroticismTotal and BingeFreq, (r(145) = -.147, p = .078).

6.2b. Table 2. Correlations between NeuroticismTotals and TV viewing habits

		NeuroticismTotal	TVFreq	TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series1Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	.096	.039	.045	147	.135
NeuroticismTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.249	.640	.593	.078	.105
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145

Again, analysis for H3 was conducted through a bivariate correlation analysis to determine the relationships between each measure of television viewing habits and personality trait conscientiousness. The results contained in Table 3 indicate a weak significant positive relationship between ConscientiousnessTotal and TVFreq and TVHrs, (r(145) = +.073, p = .382) (r(145) = +.066, p = .429) respectively. A negative correlation was found between ConscientiousnessTotal and Binge that as significant (r(145) = -.101, p = .230) as was the relationship between ConscientiousnessTotal and Series1Weeks, (r(145) = -.155, p = .063). A significant positive relationship was identified between ConscientiousnessTotal and BingeFreq, (r(145) = +.162, p = .051).

6.2c. Table 3. Correlations between ConscientiousnessTotals and TV viewing habits

		Consciensiousness l'otal	TVFreq	TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series I Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	.073	.066	101	.162	155
ConsciensiousnessTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.382	.429	.230	.051	.063
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145

A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationships between each measure of television viewing habits and the personality trait agreeableness. The results contained in Table 4 show the results from the analysis. AgreeablenessTotal showed a weak but significant negative relationship between AgreeablenessTotal and TVFreq, (r(145) = -.033, p = .696). No relationship was found between AgreeablenessTotal and TVHrs (r(145) = +.009, p = .915) or BingeFreq (r(145) = +.016, p = .846). A negative correlation was found between

AgreeablenessTotal and Binge that was weakly significant (r(145) = -.129, p = .124) as was the relationship between AgreeablenessTotal and Series1Weeks, (r(145) = -.061, p = .465). The personality trait Agreeableness does not show a strong relationship with marathon media consumption behaviour.

6.2d. Table 4. Correlations between AgreeablenessTotals and TV viewing habits

		AgreeablenessTotal	TVFreq	TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series1Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	033	.009	129	.016	061
AgreeablenessTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.696	.915	.124	.846	.465
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145

7. DISCUSSION

The objectives of this study were to investigate the relationship between television viewing habits and in particular the practice of marathon media consumption and the personality traits of Extraversion, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness.

7.0. Analysis Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis held that extraversion would be positively correlated with media marathon viewing practices. Specifically, that participants would be more likely to engage in marathon media consumption behaviours and do so more frequently where they score higher on the Big 5 Personality Inventory for extroversion traits. While a small positive but significant relationship was seen between frequency of TV viewing a weak negative correlation was shown for TVHrs, indicating that while those scoring higher on the extroversion trait may watch television more frequently, they view for shorter periods of time. No relationship could be inferred between the extraversion personality trait and the measures specific to marathon media consumption behaviours (Binge and BingeFreq). A small but significant negative correlation was found on the measure Series1Weeks indicates that extraverts are less likely to have consumed an entire television series within a week. While extraverts may leverage media consumption to enhance their social interactions (Chory & Goodboy, 2010) those scoring higher on the extraversion measure may be less inclined to use media as a replacement for interpersonal interaction as social contact is likely to be sought out to a greater extent by those high in Extraversion (Hall, 2009). The first hypothesis investigated could not be supported by the results found in this study.

7.1. Analysis Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis sought a positive correlation between neuroticism and marathon media viewing practices, and while a weak but significant relationship was found between neuroticism and the Binge variable, a significant negative correlation was identified BingeFreq. From this it appears that those participants higher on the neurotic scale may be more inclined to view more than 1 episode consecutively when viewing television content, they do not engage in this practice often. From these results, the second hypothesis cannot be fully supported as where participants scored higher on neurotic scale of the Big 5

personality trait, they were significantly less likely to engage in marathon media consumption regularly. Previous research has shown those that score higher on the neuroticism scale tend to prefer informational television shows and a disinclination for television comedy and action movies (Hall, 2009). Genre or television show format may have acted as a confounding variable as watching multiple television news shows may not be perceived as being consecutive viewing in the sense this study defined for marathon media consumption.

7.2. Analysis Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis examined the relationship between the personality trait conscientiousness and postulated that it would be positively correlated with higher levels of media marathoning. While the results found a weak significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and frequency of television viewing and the duration engaged in this activity, again a negative correlation was found between the personality trait conscientiousness and marathon media consumption activities, as was the relationship the measure for viewing an entire season within a week. A significant positive relationship was identified for the frequency of engagement in marathon media consumption. Overall these results would indicate that where participants scored higher on conscientiousness trait of the Big 5 personality measure, they were significantly less likely to engage in marathon media consumption. The third hypothesis investigated could not be supported by the results found in this study.

7.3. Analysis Hypothesis 4

The final hypothesis investigated television viewing habits and the personality trait agreeableness with a view to identifying a negative correlation between it and with media marathon viewing practices. The agreeableness score revealed a weak but significant negative relationship with TVFreq. However, no relationship could be ascertained for TVHrs or BingeFreq. A significant but weak negative correlation was found between AgreeablenessTotal and Binge that supports, in part, hypothesis 4. Participants that scored higher on the Agreeableness scale were less inclined to engage in marathon media consumption behaviours. This held true for the variable Series1Weeks which again indicates

that higher scores on the agreeableness scale would correlate with lower likelihood of viewing an entire television season in one week.

7.4. Limitations

This study had a number of limitations. First, as no existing scale or set of questionnaire items has been developed for use in measuring marathon media consumption a group of questions was developed for this study to address this. While the group of questions was based on previously research into the area (Pittman and Steiner, 2019) the Cronbach Alpha value obtained from the television viewing habits section of the online questionnaire was calculated to be .280, subsequently the internal consistency and the reliability of the test scores is quite low. Cronbach's alpha will generally increase as the intercorrelations among test items increase. As the reliability is low the researcher cannot be sure the results compiled from the survey are a valid measure of television viewing habits or of marathon media consumption.

Secondly, while a pilot study was conducted on 4 individuals, those individuals all spoke English as their first language. An informal debriefing of participants after the survey had been disseminated and data collected revealed that non-native English speakers had interpreted the term television viewing to mean more traditional television viewing methods and did not consider other services such as media streaming to be relevant. As Nationality, Ethnicity or Primary Language where not considered relevant to the research questions these demographic values were not collected in the survey and an opportunity to account for and explore these discrepancies was lost.

Thirdly, this study relied on the participants' self-reported data via an online survey. This method of data collection offers relatively reliable data however it is not as accurate as field reports or physiological measurements, furthermore it was a cross-sectional study, by nature this this type of study restricts the predictive capability as all responses gathered are based on a single point in time.

7.5. Suggestions for Further Research

Marathon media consumption is a behavioural activity that is connected to media interdependence, the development of media players and evolution of streaming services has resulted in greater levels of media consumption (Ahmed, 2017). Future research into this area should be focus on producing a specific definition for marathon media consumption behaviour that has broad consensus among researcher in this area, further to this, the development of a reliable measure or scale with internal consistency would be invaluable for all future researcher and provide greater consistency and opportunities for meta-analysis on findings in the future.

7.6. Conclusion

Despite the negative connotations associated with binge-watching (Wheeler, 2015; Downey 2018), binge-watching is clearly a popular activity with over 94% of participants reporting that they had watched multiple episodes of a television show consecutively indicating viewers of all personality types engage in marathon media consumption activities. The present study lends to this growing body of research by exploring the relationship between the big five personality traits of extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness and agreeableness.

Through this study's findings, it can be suggested that there is no significant relationship between the extraversion personality trait and marathon media consumption behaviours. The first hypothesis posited that Extraversion would be positively correlated with media marathon viewing practices. The analysis conducted for extroversion could not support this hypothesis based on the results found in this study. Indeed, contrary to the hypothesis, results indicate that participants that scored higher on the Introvert/Extrovert scale were, to a small extent, less inclined to consume a full season of a television show within one week. A positive correlation was found to exist between viewing multiple episodes of a television show consecutively and neuroticism, the correlation was small however and a negative correlation was found between this personality trait and the frequency of this behaviour. While, the second hypothesis sought a positive correlation between neuroticism and marathon media viewing practices, this argument could not be entirely supported. The relationship between the personality trait conscientiousness and marathon media

consumption showed a negative correlation. However, while a negative correlation was shown, refuting hypothesis three, a contradictory result showed a significant positive relationship with the frequency of engagement with this activity. Agreeableness showed a weak but significant negative relationship with the frequency Television was viewed but no relationship with wit the duration or frequency of marathon consumption behaviour. Those who scored lower on agreeableness also appeared to be less inclined to view multiple episodes of a television show consecutively.

Overall these results would indicate that there are small but significant relationship between personality traits and television and media consumption behaviour.

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9. APPENDIX

9.1. Appendix A - Information Sheet

Personality Traits in relation to Marathon Media Consumption



Form description

Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research study being conducted by Brendan Stoneham as part of a MSc in Cyberpsychology from IADT, Institute of Art, Design & Technology, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

Purpose of the Research

The objective of this research is to explore the relationship between media marathoning (also known as binge-watching) and personality types. This study adheres to all DTPEC and PSI ethical standards and has been approved by the IADT ethics board.

Do I have to participate?

You are free to decide whether or not you wish to take part in this study. You are also free to opt out of the study at any time. If you do decide to participate, you will be asked to indicate your consent before continuing. Once you submit your responses it will not be possible to withdraw as all data will be anonymised and so individual submissions will not identifiable.

What is required for the study.

The survey will begin by asking a number of questions based on personality. It will then ask a series of questions on your television viewing habits, finally there will be a section for demographic information such as age and gender.

What If there is a problem or concern?

If you encounter a problem or you have any questions or queries regarding this research, please contact the researcher on n00182628@student.iadt.ie

Privacy and Data Security

All information gathered will be confidential and anonymous and will be stored in a secure encrypted environment. All data will be deleted within 6 months of completion of the study.

9.2. Appendix B – Informed Consent

Consent Form	×	:
Description (optional)		
Understanding of this study and rights *		
I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above Study		
I confirm I have had the opportunity to ask questions		
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time		
I am 18 years or older		
Consent to participate *		
· I consent		

9.3. Appendix C – Online Questionnaire - Big 5 Personality Inventory

Personality	_		_			ž
Description (optional)						
1. I see myself as someor	ne who is to	alkative				
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
2. I see myself as someo	ne who ten	ds to find	fault with o	others		
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
3. I see myself as someon	ne who do	es a thorou	ıgh job			
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
4. I see myself as someo	ne who is c	depressed,	blue			
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
5. I see myself as someo	ne who is o	original, co	mes up wit	h new idea	as	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	Agree Strongly

6. I see myself as someor	ne who is r	eserved				
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
7. I see myself as someon	ne who is h	elpful and	unselfish v	vith others		
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
8. I see myself as someor	ne who car	n be somev	what carele	ess		
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
9. I see myself as someor	ne who is r	elaxed, har	ndles stres	s well		
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
10. I see myself as some	one who is	curious ab	out many o	different th	nings	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly

11. I see myself as someo	11. I see myself as someone who is full of energy							
Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly		
12. I see myself as someo	ne who sta	arts quarre	ls with oth	ers				
Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly		
13. I see myself as someo	ne who is	a reliable v	vorker					
Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly		
14. I see myself as some	one who ca	n be tense	÷					
Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly		
15. I see myself as some	one who is	ingenious,	a deep thi	nker				
Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly		

io. I see myseit as some	one wno ge	enerates a	lot of enthi	usiasm		
Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly
17. I see myself as someo	ne who ha	s a forgivir	ng nature			
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
18. I see myself as some	one who te	nds to be o	disorganise	ed		
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
19. I see myself as some	one who wo	orries a lot				
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
20. I see myself as some	one who ha	as an activ	e imaginati	ion		
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	0	Agree Strongly

21. I se	21. I see myself as someone who is tends to be quiet						
		1	2	3	4	5	
Dis	sagree Strongly	\circ	0	\circ	0	\circ	Agree Strongly
22. l se	e myself as someon	e who is ge	enerally tru	sting			
		1	2	3	4	5	
Dis	sagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
00.1	16						
23.1se	e myself as someon	e who tend	ds to be laz	У			
		1	2	3	4	5	
Dis	sagree Strongly	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	Agree Strongly
24. l se	e myself as someon	e who is er	motionally :	stable, not	easily upse	et	
		1	2	3	4	5	
Dis	sagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
25.1							
25. I se	e myself as someon	e wno is in	ventive				
		1	2	3	4	5	
Dis	sagree Strongly	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	Agree Strongly

26. I see myself as someone who has an assertive personality						
Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly
27. I see myself as someo	ne who ca	n be cold a	and aloof			
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
28. I see myself as some	one who pe	erseveres (until the tas	sk is finishe	ed	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
29. I see myself as some	one who c	an be moo	ody			
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
30. I see myself as some	one who v	alues artis	tic, aesthet	tic experie	nces	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly

31. IS	31. I see myself as someone who is sometimes sny, inhibited						
D	isagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly
32. Is	see myself as someon	e who is co	onsiderate	and kind to	o almost ev	veryone	
		1	2	3	4	5	
D	isagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
33. Is	see myself as someon	e who doe	s things ef	ficiently			
		1	2	3	4	5	
D	isagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
34. Is	see myself as someon	e who is ca	alm in tense	e situation:	S		
		1	2	3	4	5	
D	isagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
35. Is	see myself as someon	e who pref	fers work tl	nat is routi	ne		
		1	2	3	4	5	
D	isagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly

36.	6. I see myself as someone who is outgoing, sociable						
		1	2	3	4	5	
	Disagree Strongly	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	Agree Strongly
37.	l see myself as someon	e who is so	ometimes r	ude to oth	ers		
		1	0			-	
	Diagram Otropoli	1	2	3	4	5	A muse Otromolic
	Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
38.	I see myself as someon	e who mak	ces plans a	nd follows	through w	ith them	
			too planto al				
		1	2	3	4	5	
	Disagree Strongly	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	Agree Strongly
39.	I see myself as someon	e who get:	s nervous e	easily			
		1	2	3	4	5	
	Disagree Strongly	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	Agree Strongly
						0	
40.	I see myself as someon	e who like:	s to reflect	, play with	ideas		
		1	2	3	4	5	
	Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly
		_	_	_	_		

41.	11. I see myself as someone who has few artistic interests								
	Disagree Strongly	1	2	3	4	5	Agree Strongly		
43.	l see myself as someon	e who is e	asily distra	cted					
		1	2	3	4	5			
	Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly		
44.	44. I see myself as someone who is sophisticated in art, music, or literature								
		1	2	3	4	5			
	Disagree Strongly	0	0	0	0	0	Agree Strongly		

9.4. Appendix D – Television Viewing Habits

Television Viewing Habits

×	:

For the purposes of this study marathon media consumption is the viewing 3 or more episodes of a television show consecutively (or 2 where the television show is longer show)

How often do you watch TV2
How often do you watch TV?
O Daily
Every other day
○ Weekly
Occasionally
○ Never
How many hours a day do you watch TV?
C Less than an hour
1 - 2 Hours
3 - 4 hours
5 or more hours
Have you ever watched multiple episodes of a television show consecutively?
○ Yes
○ No

How often would you watch multiple episodes of a television show consecutively?		
O Daily		
Every other day		
○ Weekly		
Occasionally		
O Never		
Have you ever watched an entire season of a television show within a week?		
○ Yes		
○ No		
9.5. Appendix E – Demographics		
Demographics Description (optional)	×	*
	*	***
Description (optional)	*	*
Description (optional) Age	*	:
Description (optional) Age	*	•
Age Short answer text	*	*
Age Short answer text Gender	*	*
Age Short answer text Gender Female	*	**

9.6. Appendix D – SPSS Output and Tables

9.6.a. Frequency Tables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Age	145	18.00	76.00	40.9862	11.11992	123.653
Valid N (listwise)	145					

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Female	92	63.4	63.4	63.4
77-104	Male	52	35.9	35.9	99.3
Valid	Prefer not to say	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

Ages

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	18 - 24	13	9.0	9.0	9.0
	25 - 34	27	18.6	18.6	27.6
	35 - 44	51	35.2	35.2	62.8
Valid	45 - 54	40	27.6	27.6	90.3
	55 - 64	12	8.3	8.3	98.6
	65 - 74	2	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

9.6.b. Reliability Table

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.280	.034	5

9.6.c. Bivariate Correlations

		ExtraversionTotal	TVFreq	TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series l Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	.033	054	.022	.003	065
ExtraversionTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.689	.519	.796	.970	.438
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145
		NeuroticismTotal	TVFreq	TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series1Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	.096	.039	.045	147	.135
NeuroticismTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.249	.640	.593	.078	.105
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145
		ConsciensiousnessTot		TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series1Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	.073	.066	101	.162	155
ConsciensiousnessTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.382	.429	.230	.051	.063
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145
		AgreeablenessTotal	TVFreq	TVHrs	Binge	BingeFreq	Series1Weeks
	Pearson Correlation	1	033	.009	129	.016	061
AgreeablenessTotal	Sig. (2-tailed)		.696	.915	.124	.846	.465
	N	145	145	145	144	145	145