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## **ROLE OF BINGE-WATCHING IN THE EFFECT OF PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIP ON PURCHASING INTENTION**

*Research*

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# Role of Binge-Watching in the Effect of Parasocial Relationship on Purchasing Intention

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## Abstract

Parasocial relationships (PSRs), the one-sided cognitive and emotional connection between consumers and media personalities, have received attention in marketing research due to potential to influence consumer behavior. Particularly in an era of increasing media consumption, where digital platforms and binge-watching (BW) behaviors continue to shape the way consumers engage with content, PSRs offer valuable insight to understand consumers' decision-making processes. This study focuses on the role of PSRs in influencing consumers' purchase intentions and examines the moderating effect of BW behavior on this effect. Quantitative research with non-random sampling methods was designed and data was obtained using an online survey tool. A total of 267 valid responses were collected. Research findings demonstrate that parasocial relationships significantly influence purchase intention and that BW plays a moderating role in this effect. These results contribute to the understanding of how media consumption patterns, specifically BW, can influence consumer behavior in a marketing context. The findings of this study provide important information for marketers who want to leverage on the cognitive and emotional bonds consumers form with media personalities. Marketers can design more effective campaigns that focus on the increasing influence of media consumption behaviors. Overall, this study contributes to literature of consumer behavior, highlighting the importance of BW as a key factor to moderate the effectiveness of PSRs in driving purchase intentions.

**Keywords:** Binge-watching, parasocial relationship, purchase intention.

**JEL Code:** M30, M31

# Parasosyal İlişkinin Satın Alma Niyetine Etkisinde Art Arda İzleme Alışkanlığının Rolü

## Özet

Tüketiciler ile medya kişilikleri arasındaki tek taraflı bilişsel ve duygusal bağlantı olan parasosyal ilişkiler, tüketici davranışını etkileme potansiyeli nedeniyle pazarlama araştırmalarında ilgi görmüştür. Özellikle dijital platformların ve art arda izleme alışkanlığının tüketicilerin medya içerikleri ile etkileşim kurma biçimini şekillendirmeye devam ettiği artan medya tüketimi çağında, parasosyal ilişkiler tüketicilerin karar verme süreçlerini anlamak için değerli içgörüler sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma parasosyal ilişkilerin tüketicilerin satın alma niyetlerini etkilemedeki rolüne odaklanmakta ve art arda izleme alışkanlığının düzenleyici etkisini incelemektedir. Rassal olmayan örnekleme yöntemleriyle tasarlanan nicel araştırmada veriler çevrimiçi anket aracı kullanılarak elde edilmiştir. Toplam 267 geçerli anket toplanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları parasosyal ilişkilerin satın alma niyetini önemli ölçüde etkilediğini ve art arda izleme alışkanlığının bu etki üzerinde düzenleyici rolü olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu sonuçlar, medya tüketim modellerinin, özellikle art arda izleme alışkanlığının pazarlama açısından tüketici davranışını nasıl etkileyebileceğinin anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmaktadır. Çalışmanın bulguları, tüketicilerin medya kişilikleriyle kurduğu bilişsel ve duygusal bağlardan yararlanmak isteyen pazarlamacılar için önemli bilgiler sunmaktadır. Pazarlamacılar, medya tüketim davranışlarının artan etkisine odaklanan daha etkili kampanyalar tasarlayabilirler. Genel olarak, bu çalışma tüketici davranışı literatürüne katkıda bulunarak, parasosyal ilişkilerin satın alma niyetlerini yönlendirmedeki etkisini düzenlemede önemli bir faktör olarak art arda izleme alışkanlığının önemini ön plana çıkarmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Art arda izleme, parasosyal ilişki, satın alma niyeti.

**JEL Kodu:** M30, M31

## Introduction

In the continuously changing landscape of marketing, gaining a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior has become increasingly vital. A notable phenomenon that has experienced substantial growth is the concept of parasocial relationships, in which consumers form unidirectional connections with media figures. Recognition of this phenomenon began in the field of psychiatry and gradually spread to other fields with technological developments. One of the first definitions, by Horton and Richard Wohl (1956), defines it as one-sided emotional bonds that people form with media personalities, characterized by feelings of attachment and closeness despite the absence of interaction. These relationships often develop through regular exposure to media content, and individuals perceive media figures as approachable or relatable, but the interaction remains entirely one-sided (Chung & Cho, 2017). Parasocial relationships studied within the scope of marketing have been shown to significantly influence consumer attitudes and behaviors, affecting various aspects such as purchasing decisions and loyalty (Hwang & Zhang, 2018). Marketing research shows that consumers who develop parasocial relationships with media personalities are more likely to trust product recommendations and make purchases based on their endorsements. This dynamic exemplifies how parasocial connections can shape consumer purchasing behavior, as individuals often experience a sense of personal connection to these figures, which in turn influences purchasing decisions (Lacap et al., 2023; Leite & Baptista, 2022). Given the significant impact of parasocial relationships on consumer behavior, it is important to investigate how these connections are reflected in modern media consumption patterns, particularly behaviors such as binge-watching.

Binge-watching, originally associated with television viewing, has expanded across various media platforms with the rise of streaming services and social media. Binge-watching, defined as the consumption of multiple episodes of a program at once, has been likened in psychological research to addictive behaviors such as overeating or drinking (Panda & Pandey, 2017). In marketing, binge-watching is increasingly recognized for its potential to shape consumer behavior. Researchers have studied how prolonged exposure to media content impacts brand engagement, purchase intentions, and consumer loyalty (Claudina et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2023). The prolonged and immersive nature of binge-watching presents marketers with a distinct opportunity to

engage consumers over extended durations, facilitating sustained exposure to branded content and narratives. This extended engagement often contributes to the formation of parasocial relationships, wherein viewers develop perceived emotional bonds with media figures. In addition, both phenomena (binge-watching and parasocial relationships) are examined through the Uses and Gratifications theory. This theory emphasizes that individuals play an active role in media selection to meet their psychological and social needs. Thus, under the notion of Uses and Gratifications theory intersection of these phenomena can increase consumer engagement, create stronger brand loyalty, enhance loyalty, and positively influence purchase intentions (Nanda & Banerjee, 2020; Yang & Ha, 2021).

Considering given studies, parasocial relationships can positively influence consumer attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions. There remains a lack of research exploring how this effect unfolds within binge-watching environments. Specifically, the potential for binge-watching to intensify the emotional bonds formed through parasocial relationships and thus amplify their impact on purchase behavior has received little empirical attention. Existing literature tends to examine these constructions in isolation, overlooking their potential interaction. Therefore, this study treats this potential interaction as a gap and investigates not only the direct effect of parasocial relationships on purchase intention, but also the role of binge-watching as a moderating variable. To understand this interaction this research offers a novel contribution to literature by integrating two prominent media consumption behaviors to better understand their combined influence on consumer decision-making. It's also crucial for marketers to understand this moderation effect to enhance brand engagement and drive sales. By integrating the constructs of parasocial relationships and binge-watching, this research hypothesizes that parasocial relationships have a direct effect on purchase intention, and that binge-watching moderates this relationship. The study focuses on how repeated and immersive exposure to media figures through binge-watching may strengthen emotional bonds, thereby influencing consumer decision-making. To ensure contextual relevance, participants were first asked to recall and consider a media personality with whom they felt a strong parasocial connection and whom they could imagine purchasing products endorsed or used by. Subsequently, all scale-based responses were given with reference to this specific individual. A quantitative research

design was employed, and data was collected through an online survey using convenience sampling, which enabled efficient access to a diverse sample of participants with relevant media consumption habits.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### ***Parasocial Relationship***

Parasocial relationships (PSRs) are widely defined in the literature and refer to the way mass media consumers engage with figures such as celebrities, influencers, fictional characters etc. The engagement in this matter produces a cognitive relationship similar to social relations (Giles, 2002, p. 280). In brief, PSR is one sided emotional bond between consumers and a media figure. PSR emerges when consumers are repeatedly exposed to media figures thus consumers feel close to them and eventually thrive a bond like friendship (Chung & Cho, 2017, p. 483). This bond of PSRs has made them increasingly influential in shaping audience attitudes, trust formation, and behavioral outcomes, including purchase intention. As a result, PSRs serve as a critical lens through which to examine the persuasive power of media figures in contemporary marketing (Balaban et al., 2022).

### ***Parasocial Relationships and Purchase Intention***

PSRs offer a valuable framework in marketing for understanding the one-sided emotional connections that consumers form with media personalities, such as celebrities or influencers, who remain unaware of the relationship (Purnamaningsih & Rizkalla, 2020, p. 16). These relationships, although asymmetrical, significantly influence consumer behavior by shaping their perceptions and, consequently, their intentions. The stronger the parasocial bond, the more likely consumers are to develop the intention to purchase products or services endorsed by the media figure. Purchase intention, a critical predictor of actual purchasing behavior, is thus closely tied to the emotional attachment that consumers develop with media personalities. Marketers can leverage these dynamics by using media figures to enhance brand credibility and foster consumer trust, which, in turn, reduces perceived risk and strengthens purchase intention (Su et al., 2021). Furthermore, when consumers experience strong PSRs, they tend to place greater importance on parasocial interactions, which influences their

communication with and perception of the brand, ultimately fostering long-term customer loyalty (Almaida et al., 2021, p. 5; Hanief et al., 2019; Lee & Watkins, 2016).

Consumers with stronger PSRs are more willing to believe the opinions and information of media personalities. When consumers believe that the information provided is reliable, they feel less risky, and their purchase intentions get strengthened (Su et al., 2021). Almaida et al. (2021) further demonstrate that PSRs significantly predict consumers' purchase intentions, providing empirical support for the strategic collaboration between brands and celebrities in influencer marketing. PSRs formed through social media platforms have demonstrated substantial marketing utility by enhancing perceptions of source trustworthiness. This trustworthiness, in turn, positively influences purchase intentions through its impact on brand credibility (Chung & Cho, 2017, p. 489). However, Aw and Chuah (2021) present a contrasting perspective, suggesting that while PSRs can influence purchase intentions, the perceived self-serving motives of influencers can negatively impact this relationship. Their study indicates that when consumers perceive influencers' endorsements as self-serving, the strength of the parasocial relationship diminishes, leading to a decrease in purchase intention. Additionally, the role of self-discrepancy—as the gap between an individual's actual and ideal self—moderates the relationship between influencers' influence attempts and parasocial relationships, suggesting that consumers' perceptions of their own ideal selves can influence the strength of parasocial bonds formed with influencers. Given this body of evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H<sub>1</sub>: PSRs have a statistically significant and positive effect on purchase intention

### ***Binge-Watching***

Binge-watching (BW), a phenomenon that first started to emerge in people watching TV, has started to show itself in many areas with the spread of stream and social media. BW is defined as watching a program repeatedly and similar to binge eating or drinking behavior is considered as an addiction in the field of psychology (Panda & Pandey, 2017, p. 436). BW, which has become an increasingly popular viewing mode, has become an observable behavior among the majority of internet users, especially in the USA and China. For this reason, BW behavior has begun to be associated with business strategies rather than being seen as a common form of program consumption (Song et

al., 2022, p. 1) Main reason for this alteration is as field of psychology explains; during the BW behavior, individuals are not much stimulated mentally and gets relaxed, after the end of behavior relaxation decreases and mental stimulation increases which resulting in stress, and the viewing behavior is repeated to get away that stress and get relaxed again (Panda & Pandey, 2017, p. 436).

It is quite possible that consumers who are interested in a specific media program will finish one episode in a single sitting and then move on to the next episode. However, the existence of BW can be mentioned if the desire to move from one episode to another continues and the situation continues at other times (Merikivi et al., 2018, p. 112). BW may also not occur for everyone cause its defined as individual behavior. Characteristics that affect individual behaviors such as sensation seeking, need for cognition, and self-control may moderate one's tendency toward BW. Consumers with high self-control appear to be more rational in deciding whether BW action is good or bad (Song et al., 2021, p. 2). Although individual characteristics are important to avoid the risk of over-pathologization related to BW, it is important to note that there is a line between recreational behaviors that have the potential to become problematic and pure leisure habits. Contrary to psychology, in marketing purely leisure habits are defined as positive addictions if they are not harmful. In this respect, BW behavior is thought to be distinguished from problematic behaviors or addictions by emphasizing that high (but healthy) involvement is not problematic per se, nor is necessarily associated with negative consequences (Flayelle et al., 2019, p. 27).

### ***Binge-Watching & Parasocial Relationship***

Media tools (digital publishing, social media, entertainment platforms, etc.) that have become rapidly widespread in the last decade have made it possible for consumers' PSRs to be not only available at any time, but repeatable (Jarzyna, 2021, p. 417). Especially in terms of motivation to cope with loneliness this action of repeating process enhances binge-watching. Starosta et al. (2020) explores that BW tendencies are stronger in people who are depressed or lonely. In addition, like real life relationships, these people create PSRs with media actors. In this respect according to Akram et al. (2024) considering the basic factors that cause BW, such as pleasure, relaxation, getting away from reality or stressful situations, getting away from routine



life, feeling less lonely, etc., most consumers are looking for high-intensity PSRs and BW helps in this regard.

The Uses and Gratifications theory (UGT) suggests that individuals actively select media to fulfill specific needs, such as entertainment, emotional connection, and social interaction. BW, enabled by technological advancements, has become a popular behavior where viewers engage deeply with content over extended periods, fostering PSRs with media figures. Nanda and Banerjee (2020) highlight that this immersive viewing experience strengthens viewers' emotional bonds with media personas. Similarly, Yang and Ha (2021) demonstrate that PSRs, especially through social media influencers, significantly impact consumer behaviors, including purchase intentions. The more deeply a viewer connects with the media persona during BW, the stronger the PSRs develop, which in turn can influence consumer attitudes, behaviors, and purchasing decisions. This intersection between BW and PSRs under UGT highlights the dynamic role of media consumption in shaping consumer behavior in a digital and entertainment-driven landscape. Despite the growing body of literature on PSRs and BW, a comprehensive review reveals a significant gap, with few studies addressing the interaction of both constructs in relation to purchase intention. Research has shown that binge-watchers report stronger PSRs compared to non-binge-watchers, and that longer viewing sessions tend to elicit more pronounced parasocial bonds (Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen et al., 2023, p. 547). Studies exploring the impact of BW on PSRs suggest that binge-watchers are "cognitively and emotionally stimulated during and after their viewing experiences," which further enhances the effects of PSRs (Anghelcev et al., 2022). Additionally, Erickson et al. (2019) found a mild correlation between PSRs and BW, attributing this relationship to the increased duration and intensity of media exposure facilitated by binge-watching. Nanda and Banerjee (2020, p. 1226) also note that repeated exposure to media content featuring favored personalities can heighten the effects of PSRs, with binge-watching potentially fostering a form of media addiction. Given these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

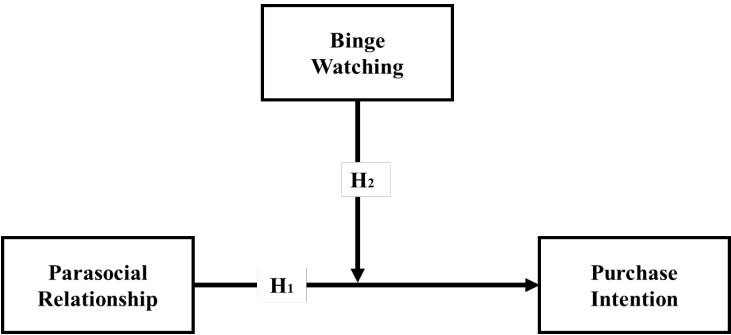
H<sub>2</sub>: BW has a statistically significant moderating role on the effect of PSRs on PI

**Methodology & Results**

***Research Design***

With the expansion of entertainment platforms in the world of digital marketing, it is possible to say that consumers’ viewing habits have changed. Today, especially with viewing habits such as BW, we, as consumers, expose our minds to millions of stimulants. On the other hand, it has been stated that in the watched contents PSRs, which develop in a way similar to a social relationship in terms of both mental and emotional closeness, are effective in consumers' consumption habits. Designed to address the question of whether BW behavior can change the effect of PSRs on purchase intention, this study is important from a marketing perspective in terms of determining whether BW behavior is truly harmful or a healthy addiction.

According to the statements given in the literature review, two research hypotheses were developed: Su et al. (2021) “consumers who believe in media personalities obtain a strong PSR, which leads them to feel less risky and their purchase intentions to be strengthened” and Anghelcev et al. (2022) “PSRs will be strengthened by the presence of BW”. Within the framework of the hypotheses stated in the previous section, the research model was formed as follows:



**Figure 1.** Research Model

To examine whether BW moderates the effect of PSRs on purchase intention (PI), a quantitative research design was employed. Data was collected through an online survey, utilizing a convenience sampling method, a non-random sampling technique. A total of 267 questionnaires were completed. The first section of the survey provided participants with necessary explanations and informed consent details, after which they

were asked if they voluntarily agreed to participate (Ethics committee approval was granted, Ethics Committee Date and Number: 13.11.2024:810117).

In the second section of the survey, participants were first provided with a brief explanation of PSRs and then asked to write a media personality with whom they felt they had the strongest PSR. Participants were also asked an optional question to indicate whether they had ever purchased a product endorsed or used by this chosen celebrity. Participants were then asked to respond to scale items of PSRs and purchase intention framed with reference to the selected media personality. After the participants answered these questions, they were asked questions of BW scale, regardless of the selected celebrity.

### ***Research Population & Measurements***

This study was conducted in Türkiye, focusing on participants from the Marmara region, particularly Istanbul. Istanbul was chosen because it is the most populous and culturally diverse city in the country, and because of its high levels of digital connectivity and media consumption. Although viewing habits and psychographic characteristics are known to vary across regions in Türkiye, Istanbul was considered a suitable and relevant location due to its representative media consumption trends and technological accessibility. These characteristics make it an ideal setting to investigate the variables used in this study (BW and PSRs).

PSRs were assessed using eight items adapted from Almaida et al. (2021). These items capture the emotional and cognitive aspects of PSRs with media personalities. For example, “When I am watching the celebrity, I feel as if I am part of her group”, “I think the celebrity is like an old friend”, “I would like to meet the celebrity in person”, and “The celebrity makes me feel comfortable as if I am with friends”. PI was assessed using three items, also adapted from the same source. These items measure the likelihood of purchasing products related to the media personality or content. Sample items include: “The likelihood of purchasing the products used by the chosen celebrity”, “It is likely that products used by the chosen celebrity would be my first choice when considering purchasing”, and “I would not buy another brand if the brand used by the chosen celebrity was not available”.

BW was measured using six items selected from the Binge-Watching Engagement and Symptoms Scale (Flayelle et al., 2019, p. 31). The scale consists of seven dimensions and 40 items overall. For this study, six items specifically measuring the BW dimension were selected. These six items focus on behaviors and emotions associated with BW, such as feeling an irresistible urge to continue watching after an episode ends, spending more time than planned on TV series, seeking emotional relief through continued viewing, and sacrificing sleep for prolonged viewing. All scale items were presented in a fixed order, and responses were captured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). In the final stage of the survey, participants answered questions about their demographic profiles and viewing habits.

**Findings**

To present the findings of this study examining the role of BW in the effect of PSRs on PI, firstly the demographic distribution of the 267 people who participated in the survey is presented in Table 1 below. According to Table 1; there is a close distribution in terms of gender, and a slight majority of the participants are women, when examined in terms of age distribution, it is seen that the number of participants decreases as the age categories increase and the vast majority of the participants (approximately 70 percent) are under the age of 35. Finally, when examined in terms of status, it is seen that the participants other than the unemployed constitute the vast majority in the distribution and the group of students is dominant in that majority.

**Table 1.** Demographic Distributions

Variable	Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	126	47.2
	Female	141	52.8
	<b>Total</b>	267	100
Age	18-24	108	40.4
	25-34	84	31.5
	35-44	66	24.7
	45+	9	3.4
	<b>Total</b>	267	100
Status	Student	97	36.3
	Public Sector	57	21.3
	Private Sector	74	27.7
	Unemployed	39	14.6
	<b>Total</b>	267	100

Celebrities that the participants of the study considered as PSRs and the examples of purchases made under the influence of PSRs are presented in Table 2 below. Participants in this study gave different responses to both celebrities and products they bought just because stated celebrity used it. To avoid confusion in summary, celebrities whose names were mentioned by at least five people and the same products purchased by at least five people were summarized. According to Table 2, it is examined that the most repeated PSRs celebrity is Demet Evgar and the most purchased product category under the influence of PSRs is cosmetics.

**Table 2.** Repeating (Min. 5) Celebrity Choice and Bought Products

Celebrity	Repeating #	Product	Repeating #
Demet Evgar	15	Cosmetics	16
Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ	14	Accessories	12
Serenay Sarıkaya	13	Clothing	10
Çağatay Ulusoy	11	Shoes	8
Yılmaz Erdoğan	9	Hair Care	8
Hadise	8	Books	5
Hande Erçel	7		
Cem Yılmaz	6		
Murat Boz	6		

Finally, within the scope of the descriptive statistics of the study, the Viewing Habits Distributions for the participants are presented in Table 3 below. Accordingly, when the viewing habits of the participants were evaluated, it was seen that watching via phone was the first in terms of the frequency of the device, followed by watching via PC, TV and tablet. When the types of content watched were examined, almost half of the participants stated that they watched series. In terms of the frequency of the types of content watched, the remaining participants watch types as movies, entertainment and social platforms accordingly. Finally, when the participants were asked what type of content they watched in general, more than half of the genres they watched were in the categories of Comedy, Science Fiction, Action and Romance (56.5% total).

**Table 3.** Habitual Distributions

Variable	Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Device	TV	52	19.5
	Phone	121	45.3
	Tablet	21	7.9
	PC	73	27.3
	Total	267	100

<b>Type</b>	Movies	87	32.6
	Series	107	40.1
	Entertainment Platforms	38	14.2
	Social Platforms	35	13.1
	<b>Total</b>		
<b>Genre</b>	Action	34	12.7
	Documentary	11	4.1
	Sci-Fi	43	16.1
	Drama	19	7.1
	Thriller	18	6.7
	Comedy	44	16.5
	Horror	20	7.5
	Adventure	10	3.7
	Musical	4	1.5
	Romance	30	11.2
	War	8	3.0
	Crime	6	2.2
	History	9	3.4
	Animation	11	4.1
	<b>Total</b>	267	100

To test the hypotheses, exploratory factor analysis is performed to maximize sample efficiency. According to Field (2013), when performing exploratory factor analysis, KMO values should be above 0.50 and the Bartlett Sphericity Test result should be below 0.05. According to Hair et al. (2010), the total variance explained by the composite factor should be at least 0.60. Finally, Durmuş et al. (2023) state that the last step at factor analysis is data reduction. In this process an item cannot be a factor alone, an item cannot load closely on two factors, and all item loadings should be above 0.50. After the data reduction, the internal consistency of the items representing the factors should be tested. According to Hair et al. (2010), the  $\alpha$  value of the Cronbach representing internal consistency should be above 0.70.

**Table 4.** Factor, Reliability and Normality

Scale	KMO / Bartlett	TVE	#	Loadings	$\alpha$	Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis
<b>PSRs</b>	.851/.000	68.298	7	.722-.928	.919	3.675	.311	-.830
<b>BW</b>	.797/.000	62.826	5	.744-.831	.851	3.923	.124	-.648
<b>PI</b>	.664/.000	69.442	3	.754-.875	.778	3.897	.087	-.529

According to the information given in Table 4, it is seen that the KMO values of the 3 scales used are above 0.50, Bartlett values are below 0.05 and the total explained variance values are above 0.60. Accordingly, it was determined that the sample size

was sufficient, the scale items are correlated and items used represent scales. In the data reduction stage, 1 item for PSRs (When the celebrity shows me how she feels about the brand, it helps me make up my own mind about the brand) and 1 item for BW (When an episode comes to an end, and because I want to know what happens next, I often feel an irresistible tension that makes me push through the next episode) were deducted from the analysis because the factor loadings were below 0.50. Finally in terms of internal consistency, it was determined that all  $\alpha$  values were above 0.70 thus scales used were reliable. In addition, after calculation of factors, mean, skewness and kurtosis values are presented in Table 4. Accordingly, it was observed that the skewness and kurtosis values were low, indicating that the data had a normal distribution, and the scale means were close to the negative axis on the 7-point Likert scale.

Following the formulation of factors, regression and moderation analysis were performed to test the research hypotheses. To allow for the examination of all hypothesis findings together, analysis is summarized in Table 5 below.

**Table 5.** Findings of Hypotheses

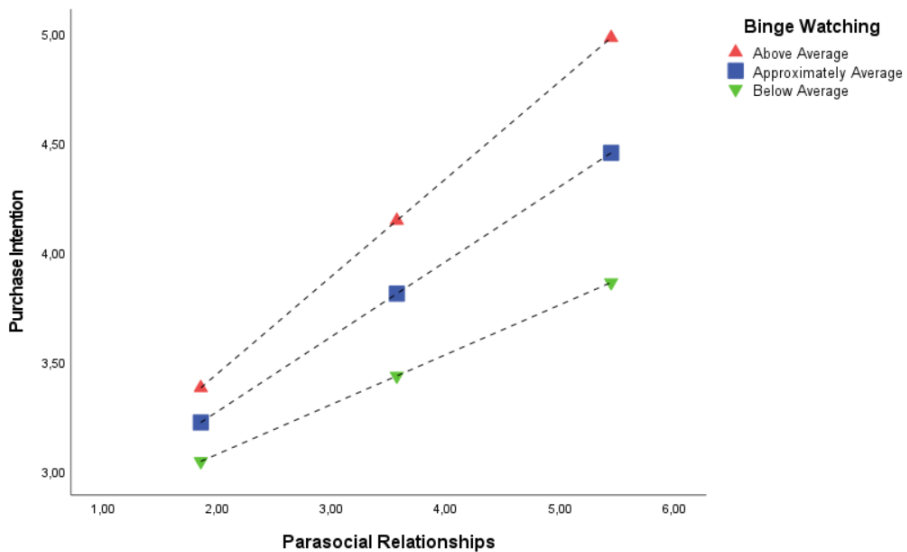
Direct effect of X on Y	PI (Y)					
	B	se	b	t	p	
Constant	2.257	0.213		10.574	0.000	
PSRs (X)	0.446	0.053	0.459	8,414	0.000	
Model Summary: R <sup>2</sup> =0.211; F=70.804; p=0.000						
Independent Variables	PI (Y)					
	B	Se	t	p	LCLI	UCLI
PSRs (X)	0.087	0.144	0.602	0.547	-0.197	0.371
BW (W)	-0.020	0.131	-0.154	0.877	-0.277	0.237
Interaction (X*W)	0.064	0.031	2.054	0.041	0.002	0.125
Model Summary: R <sup>2</sup> =0.0259; F=30.738; p=0.000						
Moderator (BW)*	Conditional direct effect of X on Y					
	B	Se	t	p	LCLI	UCLI
Below Average (2,20)	0.223	0.085	2.667	0.008	0.059	0.396
Approximately Average (4,00)	0.343	0.058	5.978	0.000	0.230	0.456
Above Average (5,60)	0.446	0.071	6.282	0.000	0.306	0.586
Model Summary for X*W: R <sup>2</sup> -chg=0.0119; F=4.220; p=0.041						
*Moderator values in conditional tables are the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles.						

For Table 5, SPSS, utilizing the PROCESS macro, was employed to examine the interaction model (default Model 1), with 5,000 bootstrap samples used to compute the 95% confidence intervals for the conditional effects and to assess statistical significance at the 0.05 level. The default settings for confidence intervals and bootstrapping were retained, as they provided robust and reliable estimates of the moderation effect. The bootstrapping procedure is particularly advantageous, as it does not rely on the assumption of normality, thereby facilitating more accurate and precise estimates of the effects (Hayes, 2017).

To interpret the findings in Table 5, the direct effect of PSRs on PI must first be explained. Accordingly, at the significance level of  $p=0.000$ , it was determined that *PSRs predicted PI at a rate of approximately 0.46 thus H1 hypothesis was accepted*. In short, for every 1 unit of PSRs increases, PI increases by 0.46.

According to Hayes (2013), both the interaction term ( $X*W$ ) and the conditional direct effect should be reported and interpreted in moderation analysis. The first interaction model was tested, revealing a significant interaction/moderation effect ( $p = 0.041$ ), indicating that BW plays a statistically significant moderating role in the effect of PSRs on PI. Thus, H2 was supported. The second conditional direct effect, assessing the impact of PSRs on PI at different levels of the moderation variable (BW), was found to be statistically significant, as indicated by the absence of zero values between the lower and upper confidence intervals (LCLI and UCLI) at all three levels of BW. This was evaluated using the "pick-a-point" approach, which involves examining the conditional effects at specific, meaningful values of the moderator. In this case, the values in the conditional tables are the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles of the distribution of BW. These conditional effects suggest that the influence of PSRs on PI varies depending on the level of BW, with the effect increasing as BW habit increases.





**Figure 2.** Moderation Effects for Binge-Watching on PI and PSRs

## Conclusion & Discussion

PSRs, characterized as one-sided emotional bonds between media consumers and media personalities, have gained increasing attention due to their potential to influence consumer behavior (Chung & Cho, 2017; Giles, 2002). This study contributes to this body of knowledge by confirming that PSRs have a significant and positive impact on PI, consistent with prior research (Hanief et al., 2019; Su et al., 2021). As suggested by Almaidia et al. (2021), PSRs help shape consumer perceptions and intentions by enhancing trust and brand credibility. The results of this study validate this assertion, demonstrating that stronger PSRs lead to a higher likelihood of purchasing products associated with media personalities.

Furthermore, this research extends existing literature by examining the moderating role BW in the effect of PSRs on PI. The findings align with previous studies (Nanda & Banerjee, 2020; Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen et al., 2023) that suggest binge-watchers, due to prolonged exposure to media content, develop stronger parasocial bonds with media figures. This study shows that BW not only strengthens the influence of PSRs on PI but also serves as a significant moderator. As consumers engage more deeply with content during extended viewing sessions, their emotional and cognitive investment in the media figure intensifies, which in turn amplifies their purchase

intentions (Anghelcev et al., 2022; Yang & Ha, 2021). The moderating role of BW highlights its capacity to enhance the persuasive power of PSRs, making it a critical factor in consumer decision-making processes.

### ***Theoretical Implications***

The existing body of literature on PSRs predominantly focuses on the direct effect of PSRs on consumer attitudes and intentions (Hanief et al., 2019; Su et al., 2021). However, this study contributes to literature by revealing the moderating role of BW in enhancing the effect of PSRs on PI. While previous research has established that PSRs significantly influence consumer behavior, this study extends the theoretical understanding by integrating the concept of BW, which has become a pervasive behavior in the digital age (Nanda & Banerjee, 2020; Yang & Ha, 2021). The findings underscore the importance of considering BW as a key factor that amplifies the emotional and cognitive bonds formed between consumers and media personalities, thus intensifying the impact of PSRs on PI. Additionally, the integration of BW into the PSR framework aligns with the Theory of Uses and Gratifications (UGT), which emphasizes the active selection of media content to fulfill emotional and social needs, such as connection and relaxation (Nanda & Banerjee, 2020). Furthermore, the study enhances the understanding of how prolonged exposure to media content, as facilitated by BW, contributes to the deepening of PSRs, ultimately influencing consumer purchase decisions (Anghelcev et al., 2022; Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen et al., 2023).

### ***Marketing Implications***

The findings of this study highlight the significant role that BW plays in strengthening the effect of PSRs on PI. Consumers who engage in extensive BW develop deeper emotional bonds with media personalities, which in turn amplifies their intention to purchase products associated with those figures. Marketers should focus on creating content that encourages extended engagement, such as series with multiple episodes or seasons, to capitalize on the potential for consumers to form stronger PSRs over time. This strategy not only enhances consumer attachment to the media personalities but also strengthens their purchase intentions. Additionally, marketers should prioritize partnering with media personalities or celebrities whose values align with the brand

and resonate with the target audience. The study shows that when consumers feel a stronger PSR with a celebrity, their purchase intention increases. Therefore, selecting influencers who authentically connect with the brand's values can further enhance the impact of PSRs on consumer behavior. By fostering these deeper relationships through strategic content creation and influencer partnerships, brands can effectively boost consumer trust, loyalty, and ultimately, purchase intentions.

### ***Limitation & Further Research***

While this study provides valuable insights into the moderating role of BW on the relationship between PSRs and PI, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the research did not incorporate psychographic segmentation or include questions designed to group participants into homogeneous subgroups based on psychological traits, motivations, or lifestyles, which have been shown as a motivation of BW behavior (Akram et al., 2024). Future research could therefore include psychographic segmentation to explore how individual characteristics such as personality, emotional needs, and lifestyle may further shape the findings. Additionally, this study was conducted within a specific geographic region. While this provides an important context for understanding media consumption in a major urban center, the results may not be generalized to other regions or countries with different media consumption patterns or cultural contexts. Expanding the sample to include diverse geographic locations would help assess the broader applicability of the findings.

Furthermore, this study focused solely on the effect of BW on PSRs and PI. Future research could expand the model by incorporating additional variables such as media content type, viewing genres, and the tools or platforms used for consumption. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different media consumption behaviors interact with PSRs to influence PI. A more complex research design that segments participants into groups based on their BW patterns (e.g., frequency, duration) could further elucidate the dynamics between media consumption and consumer behavior.

### **Disclaimer**

The author is solely responsible for the development of the research method, data collection and processing, literature review, empirical application, and preparation of

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