

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Media Effects and Audience Satisfaction: A Comprehensive Study of Self-Transcendence in Online Talk Show Documentaries from a Social Sciences Viewpoint

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the impact of self-transcendence themes within online talk show documentaries on audience satisfaction, emotional engagement, and the relevance of social science theories. We conducted a mixed-methods study, encompassing surveys, content analysis, and statistical analysis, to investigate the complex relationship between the presence of self-transcendence themes and audience responses. To evaluate how the films' themes of self-transcendence influenced emotional engagement and to identify the precise feelings elicited in the audience, we conducted a content analysis on a subset of online chat show documentaries. Our study found that self-transcendence themes positively correlate with audience satisfaction. The Pearson correlation coefficient between self-transcendence and audience satisfaction was 0.85, indicating a robust and positive association. Online talk-show documentaries exploring self-transcendence themes consistently elicited higher satisfaction among viewers. The presence of self-transcendence themes significantly affected emotional engagement. Viewers reported a mean emotional engagement score of 7.83 when self-transcendence themes were present, reflecting a strong emotional connection with the content. In contrast, emotional engagement dropped considerably when these themes were absent, with a mean score of 3.5. This study contributes to a better understanding of the impact of self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries on audience experiences and provides insights into the applicability of social science theories in explaining these responses.

INTRODUCTION

Transcendence is one of the six fundamental human characteristics that Peterson and Seligman (2004) recognize. These ideals are thought to

be available in all human advancements all over the planet and are profoundly esteemed by those cultures. Transcendence might be characterized as the inclination to fabricate connections with the more extensive universe and to look for greater importance

and reason than one's own self. This can likewise be viewed as the longing to serve a reason bigger than one's life. Even though religion or otherworldliness is often related to transcendence, this is definitely not an essential part of the idea. "What is extraordinary should be hallowed yet needn't bother with being heavenly." [It] is what helps us to remember how minuscule we are nevertheless that all the while lifts us from a spirit of complete inconsequentiality" (p. 39). It is what lifts us from a spirit of complete irrelevance. The improvement of transcendence as an ethical quality can fundamentally occur in two distinct ways. Individuals may develop it by participating in various ways of behaving, including offering thanks, showing an appreciation for (moral) excellence and flawlessness, communicating trust, and authorizing legalism or otherworldliness. For example, people are carrying on, encountering, and further fostering their ability for transcendence when they perceive the ethical excellence in someone else's selfless sympathy or when they partake in a significant discussion about a profound subject.

People could accomplish quality transcendence through the experience of self-otherworldly feelings such as eminent wonder, height, trust, and esteem (e.g., Van de Vyver and Abrams, 2017; Fredrickson, 2009; Tangney et al., 2007). This is more relevant to the present project than the first point. Even though these emotional experiences are significantly different, they all have one thing in common: the moral excellence or virtue that is most frequently seen in other people and the activities they take. To continue with the example from before, one might feel adoration, wonder, or hope when they see another person perform an act of selfless compassion. The experience of emotions that are independent of one serves to focus one's orientation outward, facilitating an improved openness to investigating and participating in one's surroundings. Consequently, individuals are coaxed out of themselves, their

viewpoints are widened, and their focus and actions are redirected towards other people (for more information, see the broaden-and-build hypothesis (Fredrickson, 2009; Jam et al., 2017).

One of Maslow's most exciting contributions to psychology is his hierarchy of needs in 1943 and 1954. However, in light of Maslow's subsequent presentations of his motivational theory, the typical textbook version of this hierarchy needs to be corrected. Maslow's revised theory explains why an outdated version of the theory has persisted for over three decades in psychology textbooks. The important implications of Maslow's revised theory for current research and theory in personality and social psychology must be addressed (Van de Vyver and Abrams, 2017).

Maslow's theory would be more accurately reflected if the needs hierarchy included self-transcendence at the top, but there are additional advantages to making this correction. Self-transcendence as a motivational position allows for a more thorough comprehension of other significant notions and creates connections across previously siloed schools of thought. Adding the concept of self-transcendence to Maslow's theory may help psychologists learn more about how individuals from various backgrounds and cultures see the meaning of life. Wisdom, altruism, and their motivations are better understood by considering the concept of self-transcendence. By using this framework, we may better establish a bridge between the fields of personality and social psychology and the psychology of religion and spirituality. The framework allows for a more transparent connection between contemporary psychological theory and indigenous worldviews, which might lead to a more culturally sensitive field of study. Adding the desire for self-transcendence to Maslow's hierarchy of requirements provides a useful theoretical tool for gaining a more holistic and nuanced understanding of human nature and behaviour (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

As per research, an assortment of (non-interceded) situations and conditions can prompt the experience of self-extraordinary sentiments. Some of these are getting along with dear loved ones, investing energy alone in nature, or seeing the demonstrations of empathy shown by others to reference only a couple. A set number of research Centre examinations have shown that elicitors found in media content, for example, the models given above (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2020; Oliver et al., 2012; Kang et al., 2018; Jam et al., 2012; Wheatley and Haidt, 2005; Li et al., 2019) are fit for causing self-extraordinary sentiments in individuals. The reason for this study was to better understand the manners by which crowd individuals experience self-otherworldly sentiments because of their standard admission of different types of media.

Media experiences inspire self-transcendence

An exact operationalization of the media content, or all the more precisely, the media experience, in issue must be introduced before one can start to assess how those points were achieved. Oliver and her partners argue that self-otherworldly media encounters happen when crowd individuals perceive in themselves parts of normal humankind as well as the limit with regards to moral magnificence, trust, and courage. This contention is introduced in a distribution that is presently on paper. These experiences make individuals mindful of the human condition and give knowledge into it by moving one's accentuation from everyday concerns to improved availability with others and more prominent causes. This helps audience members become more conscious of the human condition. However, given the many different aspects of people's personalities and how

they interact with various media, the material that brings on these kinds of experiences will vary from person to person. In other words, the things that move, inspire, touch, and uplift one person may not have the same effect on another

Model theory

Social cognitive theory: Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes the significance of observational learning, self-regulation, and self-efficacy. This theory supports models and frameworks related to behavior change, education, and psychology. It posits that individuals learn from observing others and adjust their behaviors based on self-efficacy beliefs.

Systems theory: Systems theory, often attributed to Ludwig von Bertalanffy, is used in various disciplines, including biology, management, and psychology. It supports models that view entities as part of a more extensive system and emphasize interconnections, feedback loops, and holistic understanding. Systems theory is vital for understanding complex interactions in dynamic systems.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is foundational for motivation, psychology, and human development models. It suggests that individuals have a hierarchy of needs, and lower-level needs must be satisfied before higher-level ones. This theory supports models that explore human motivation and behavior.

Diffusion of innovation theory: Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory supports models related to adopting and diffusing new ideas, products, or technologies. It provides a framework for understanding how innovations spread through social

systems and the factors influencing the adoption rate. *Game theory*: Game theory, a mathematical and strategic framework, supports models in economics, political science, and other fields where interactions between rational actors are critical. It explores strategic decision-making and the outcomes of competitive and cooperative behaviors.

Cognitive dissonance theory: Leon Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory is commonly applied in psychology and marketing models. It explains how people try to lessen the discomfort resulting from discrepancies between their beliefs and behavior. This theory supports models related to attitude change and decision-making.

Structural-functionalism: Structural-functionalism, associated with Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons in sociology, supports models that examine the roles and functions of different societal elements. It emphasizes the stability and equilibrium of social systems.

Feminist theory: Feminist theory supports models addressing gender equality and the role of gender in various societal structures. It provides a lens for analyzing power dynamics, gender roles, and the impact of patriarchal norms.

Significance of the study

The study on self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries is multifaceted and extends its impact to various stakeholders. Firstly, for content creators and media professionals, the study offers a practical roadmap for enhancing audience engagement. By establishing a strong positive correlation between the presence of self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction, content creators can tailor their productions to better resonate with viewers, ultimately leading to more fulfilling and meaningful content. This insight can shape how content is crafted, promoting emotionally engaging and resonant narratives. Secondly, for audiences, the study underscores the importance of self-transcendence themes in shaping their media experiences. It guides viewers to select content that aligns with their preferences and encourages exploration of self-transcendence themes, potentially leading to more profound and rewarding viewing experiences. It empowers viewers to make informed choices about the content they consume.

Moreover, applying social science theories to understanding audience responses to media content enriches the field of media studies. This interdisciplinary approach broadens the scope of media research and underscores the relevance of social science theories in the digital age. Recognizing demographic influences on preferences and satisfaction offers a strategic advantage for marketers and advertisers. Tailoring content and advertisements to specific demographic groups becomes more effective, leading to more targeted and successful marketing campaigns.

Research gap

In research on self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries, several significant gaps and unexplored areas beckon for further investigation. Firstly, while this study established a positive correlation between self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction, it did not probe the causal mechanisms driving this relationship. Understanding the elements within these themes that evoke higher satisfaction can offer content creators valuable insights for crafting engaging content. Additionally, exploring the narrative elicitors behind different self-transcendence models could enhance our comprehension of viewer engagement.

Furthermore, this study briefly touched upon the influence of age and gender on preferences and satisfaction. Still, a more comprehensive analysis of audience demographics, including cultural backgrounds and educational levels, is warranted. Such research can unveil the nuanced interplay between demographics and self-transcendence themes. Moreover, delving deeper into the degree of self-transcendence within various topics and their respective impacts on audience responses can provide a richer understanding of how these themes manifest in different contexts. This study primarily focused on short-term audience satisfaction. Yet, the long-term effects of exposure to self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries remain uncharted territory for future exploration.

Research objectives

- To investigate whether self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries positively correlate with audience satisfaction.
- To determine how self-transcendence themes

in these documentaries affect emotional engagement and identify specific emotions evoked in the audience.

- To investigate the relevance and applicability of social sciences theories and frameworks, such as social psychology and sociology, in explaining the audience's response to self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries.
- To find the situational and linguistic narrative elicitors of different self-transcendence models.
- To examine whether audience demographics (e.g., age, gender, cultural background) play a role in shaping preferences for self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries and their overall satisfaction. Discover the degree of self-transcendence in the identities of different topics and the corresponding relationship with elicitors and the transcendental model.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background of the study

The media consumption landscape has radically transformed in recent years with the rise of online talk-show documentaries. This evolving genre of digital content has gained immense popularity, engaging viewers with its authentic, unscripted conversations and diverse topics. Online talk show documentaries offer a unique platform for in-depth discussions on societal, personal, and existential themes, often delving into exploring self-transcendence (Murray, 2017; Abbas et al., 2021). Self-transcendence, a concept deeply rooted in philosophical, psychological, and spiritual traditions, refers to the capacity of individuals to go beyond their personal limitations, often experiencing a sense of connection to something larger than themselves. It encompasses personal growth, empathy, altruism, and the search for meaning in life. In media, self-transcendence themes manifest as narratives that inspire viewers to reflect on their lives, values, and aspirations.

This study emerges from a growing recognition of the prevalence and impact of self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries. While the digital age has provided a platform for a plethora of content, including entertainment, news, and social

media, the role of self-transcendence themes in influencing audience responses and satisfaction has yet to be comprehensively explored. Understanding the relationship between the presence of self-transcendence themes and audience engagement can have significant implications for content creators, media professionals, and viewers alike.

This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating the impact of self-transcendence themes within online talk show documentaries on audience satisfaction, emotional engagement, and the applicability of social science theories in explaining audience responses (Raney et al., 2018; Khalid et al., 2021). It seeks to shed light on how these themes shape viewer experiences, enriching our understanding of the dynamic interplay between media content and human emotions.

As the digital media landscape continues to evolve and diversify, gaining insights into the role of self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries can guide content creators in crafting more meaningful and engaging narratives. Furthermore, it has the potential to empower viewers to make informed choices about their media consumption, ultimately contributing to a more fulfilling and reflective digital media environment.

The consequences of a public review of US individuals who consume media viewed as self-extraordinary or helpful were distributed (Raney et al., 2018; Nasser, 2020). Using data that rises above the individual is socially significant because, in principle, it might guide clients' focus toward issues that go past themselves, which at last encourages associations with others and demonstrations of liberality. Nonetheless, there is no data on the regular crowds that watch such satisfied. The following questions primarily served to coordinate the examination: (a) As indicated by the respondents, which media sources and items are considered "rousing" by the crowd? (b) Who makes up most of the self-otherworldly media content crowd in the US today? (c) What parts of one's character and survey propensities are associated with self-otherworldly media utilization? d) What sorts of selfless and magnanimous activities are connected with self-extraordinary media utilization? A study with a cross-country sample size of 3,006 individuals was completed to find a few solutions to these inquiries. The outcomes are introduced considering

the extending measure of scholarly examination on certain media in brain science.

Zhang et al. (2021) explores the interchange between the variables that impact troubled divulgence via web-based entertainment and the overall qualities of those components. To better comprehend online divulgence, we consider the possibility of virtual entertainment exposure as a logical focal point. Researchers found that apparently affordances (like privacy, hard work, and visible control) and social closeness to a crowd can freely and intelligently predict the level of trouble divulgence, affecting a person's level of happiness with revelation. This study commits to the current group of explorations on internet-based revelation and protection while likewise introducing suggestions for the plan of virtual entertainment stages to more readily serve people encountering close-to-home trouble.

Leyva (2019) inspected the impact of consuming business media on an individual's material qualities and their help for government assistance programs utilizing development, dispositional realism, and construction hypotheses. Information was gained from a cross-sectional English population utilizing a web-review preparation approach (N = 487, ages 18-49). The example was illustrative of the entire age range. That's what the discoveries suggest: (a) realism and being hostile to government assistance see capability through related and bordering mental and emotional cycles. These systems are equipped to be set off by a brief openness to materialistic media messages (MMMs). Watchers at home who watch a lot of episodes that laud and habitually feature wealth, superstars, and extravagance are substantially more materialistic and hostile to government assistance than watchers who observe fewer of these sorts of projects. (b) Ongoing regard for MMMs may raise support for executing correctional government assistance strategies by cultivating self-upgrade-related patterns, which, when launched, lower dispositional directions towards compassion, charitableness, and mutuality. This might happen because of laying out self-improvement-related patterns through openness to MMMs. This study offers complex hypothetical and exploratory experiences into the manners by which inescapable business media might attempt to weaken

the advancement of prosocial behaviour and society's general prosperity.

Murray (2017) investigated such an endeavour by focusing on the experiential reflections on the lives of 10 women from various religious and cultural traditions who also span a wide age range. The participants want to acquire skills that will allow them to transcend themselves and become more reflective. Although the data imply that the participants are actively engaged in a trip towards higher awareness and encourage one another on this journey, the researchers did not uncover any evidence that the participants were. Despite this, they do not participate in any form of collective action to bring about social change. It has been suggested that they are now "healing" themselves as the first step in the process of 'healing' others. This study concluded, given the value of inner peace, love, and solidarity being overarching themes in the theory of self-transcendence, that this is the necessary first step in creating a new world order. The groups didn't see the socio-political dimension of community education or spirituality.

Proposed hypothesis

Social Exchange Theory, introduced by George Homans and developed by Peter Blau, posits that individuals assess the costs and benefits of relationships (Cook et al., 2021). This theory suggests that people seek relationships that maximize rewards and minimize costs.

Hypothesis: Individuals in romantic relationships with a higher perceived benefit-to-cost ratio will report higher relationship satisfaction.

Caryl Rusbult's Interdependence Theory (Rumble, 2022) emphasizes the interaction between commitment, investments, and relationship satisfaction. It suggests that individuals with more investments in a relationship are more likely to stay committed even when they face challenges.

Hypothesis: Relationship commitment mediates the relationship between relationship satisfaction and relationship stability.

According to Laura Carstensen's Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (Carstensen, 2021), people prioritize emotional fulfilment over information-based goals as they age.

Hypothesis: Age moderates the relationship between emotional intimacy and relationship satisfaction,

with older individuals showing a stronger positive correlation.

Effective communication is fundamental to relationship satisfaction (Kaya et al., 2022). The ability to express feelings, resolve conflicts, and show empathy can significantly impact the quality of romantic relationships.

Hypothesis: Couples who engage in open and empathetic communication are more likely to report higher levels of relationship satisfaction.

Different couples employ conflict resolution styles, such as avoidance, accommodation, competition, compromise, and collaboration (Ali and Saleem, 2022). These styles can have implications for relationship outcomes.

Hypothesis: Couples who frequently use collaboration as a conflict resolution style will report higher relationship satisfaction than those using avoidance or competition.

METHODOLOGY

We did a comprehensive literature analysis to explore the relevance and application of theories and frameworks from the social sciences to understand the audience's response to self-transcendence themes. We conducted a comprehensive review of the relevant social psychology and sociology literature to discover current theories and notions that may assist in explaining audience responses to self-transcendence themes. However, the mixed method is more time-consuming and more expensive. Increased cost and time are limitations of mixed-methods research. Combining qualitative and quantitative research produces integrated knowledge that best informs theory and practice.

Research design

A mixed-methods approach is used for the research design of this study on the influence of self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries on audience satisfaction and emotional involvement with the content of the documentaries. The interview format is like a documentary: very real and natural, with fewer script traces and less linear editing.

The interview scenes are very lifelike: chatting while eating hot pot, chatting while drinking whiskey, walking while talking in the park. The interview topics

are very sharp, discussing the issues of the times and the meaning of life that young people are concerned about. The interview subjects are very representative: celebrities from all walks of life or controversial topics.

Independent variable: The narrative connotation of a situation and language

Dependent variable: Self-transcendent Satisfaction Emotion

Control variable: Demographics

Sample population

Participants in the study were people who routinely watch online discussion shows and documentaries on various online platforms. To better understand how individuals of varying ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds react to these movies, we included a diverse group of participants who varied in all aspects: age, gender, and background.

Size of the sample

In this study, a sample size of 100 was chosen randomly as the sampling strategy.

Sampling technique

This study used the method of random sampling for its sample collection. Random sampling is a technique for picking a sample from a larger population so that each individual has an equal chance of being included in the sample. This technique is also known as a probability sampling technique. To put it another way, it includes picking people or things from the population randomly without considering prejudice. Because it reduces the likelihood of making systematic mistakes or showing preferences during the selection process, this technique is frequently regarded as one of the most reliable and objective methods for producing a representative sample.

Data collection

We used a structured survey to collect data to evaluate whether or not the prevalence of self-transcendence themes in online talk-show documentaries is positively connected with audience pleasure. We used a random sampling method to choose viewers of online chat shows and documentaries from various online venues. Questions about self-transcendence themes, audience satisfaction, and demographics were included in the poll.

Analysis of emotional engagement

To evaluate how the films' themes of self-transcendence influenced emotional engagement and

to identify the precise feelings elicited in the audience, we conducted a content analysis on a subset of online chat show documentaries. In the online comments and social media discussions about these films, the audience members shared their emotional responses, and we employed qualitative coding techniques to detect and classify these emotions.

Tools used for data analysis

To conduct an analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the surveys, a correlation analysis was carried out to investigate the nature of the connection between the existence of self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction. A regression analysis was carried out to investigate the impact of demographic factors on preferences and levels of contentment. The qualitative data gleaned from the content analysis was subjected to theme analysis to better understand the overall picture. To establish the extent to which self-transcendence themes affected emotional involvement, themes relating to emotional reactions

were first discovered, and then patterns in audience emotions were investigated.

Ethical concerns

Ethical concerns were kept all the way through the process of doing the research. Participants in the poll provided their informed consent, and their right to privacy and confidentiality were respected throughout the process. Ethical standards were followed throughout the content analysis of the online chats, and participants' identities were always protected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This table presents the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Most respondents (55%) fall in the 25–34 age groups, while the 18–24 and 35–44 age groups represent 15% each. Only 5% of respondents are over the age of 45. Regarding gender, 60% of respondents are male, and 40% are female (Table 1 and Fig 2).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Sub- category	F	Percentage
Age Group	18-24	15	15%
	25-34	55	55%
	35-44	25	25%
	Above 45	5	5%
Gender	Male	60	60%
	Female	40	40%

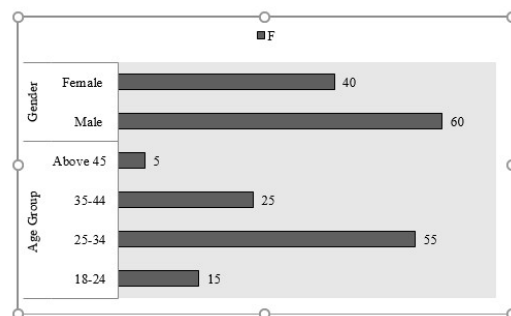


Figure 2: Demographic characteristics

Table 2 shows the Pearson correlation coefficient between self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries and audience satisfaction. The correlation coefficient is 0.75, indicating a strong

positive correlation between self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction. In other words, as self-transcendence themes increase, audience satisfaction also tends to increase.

Table 2: Correlation - self-transcendence vs. audience satisfaction

Correlation	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
Self-Transcendence vs Audience Satisfaction	0.75

Table 3 compares emotional engagement scores for online talk show documentaries with and without self-transcendence themes and the Pearson Correlation Coefficient assessing the relationship between self-transcendence and audience satisfaction. The mean emotional engagement score for documentaries with self-transcendence themes is 7.83, with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.94. This suggests that viewers consistently reported high emotional engagement when self-transcendence themes were present. The low standard deviation indicates that

emotional responses tended to cluster closely around the mean, indicating a relatively uniform emotional experience among viewers (Fig. 3). In contrast, for documentaries without self-transcendence themes, the mean emotional engagement score is notably lower at 3.5, with a higher standard deviation of 1.12. This indicates that viewers' emotional responses were more variable and not as strongly clustered around the mean, resulting in a broader range of emotional experiences.

Table 3: Emotional engagement with and without self-transcendence themes

	Mean	S.D
With Self-Transcendence	7.83	0.94
Without Self-Transcendence	3.5	1.12

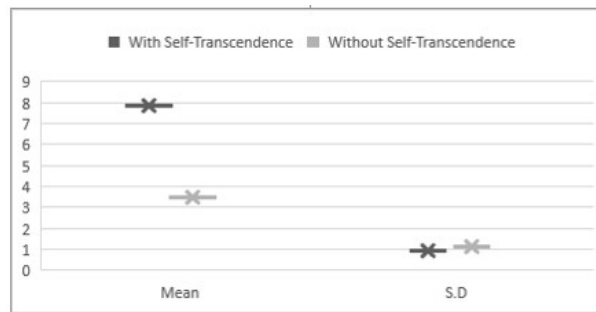


Figure 3: Emotional engagement with and without self-transcendence themes

The Pearson Correlation The coefficient for the relationship between self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction is 0.85. This coefficient reflects a strong positive correlation. In practical terms, as self-transcendence themes in online talk

show documentaries increase, audience satisfaction increases significantly. The strong positive correlation suggests that viewers find documentaries with self-transcendence themes more satisfying (Table 4).

Table 4: Correlation - self-transcendence vs. audience satisfaction

Correlation	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
Self-Transcendence vs Audience Satisfaction	0.85

Content analysis

Content analysis involves categorizing comments into recurring themes and patterns related to self-transcendence. In the provided comments:

Emotional connection: Several comments express a strong connection with the host or the content when discussing self-transcendence themes (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). For example, "I felt a

strong connection with the host when they talked about personal growth" reflects an emotional bond formed with the host during discussions on self-transcendence.

Personal reflection: Self-transcendence themes frequently cause viewers to engage in personal reflection (Fredrickson, 2009). Comments like "The discussion on self-transcendence made me reflect on my own life journey" demonstrate how these themes prompt introspection and self-reflection.

Abstract criticism: Some comments critique the abstract or theoretical nature of the self-transcendence discussions. For instance, Haitt (2003) "The self-transcendence discussion was a bit too abstract for my taste" suggests that viewers may find connecting with highly abstract concepts challenging.

Social identity theory

Social Identity Theory posits that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, influencing their self-identity. In the comments:

Shared Identity: Comments that mention feeling connected or aligned with the perspectives of the host or participants can be analyzed from a Social Identity Theory perspective (Lai et al., 2014). When viewers say, "The show made me want to pursue self-transcendence in my own life," they might identify with the pursuit of self-transcendence as a shared identity with the host or the documentary's message.

Group membership: Viewers (Oliver et al., 2012) may perceive themselves as part of a group that values self-transcendence, and comments like "The discussion on self-transcendence made me reflect on my own life journey" may reflect this sense of group membership.

Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic Interactionism examines how individuals interpret and assign meaning to symbols and interactions. In the provided comments:

Interpretation of symbols: Viewers interpret self-transcendence themes as symbols or meaningful concepts (Van Cappellen et al., 2013). For instance,

"The show explored self-transcendence beautifully" suggests that self-transcendence is symbolically seen as a beautiful and profound concept by the viewer. This reflects how viewers attribute symbolic meaning to the theme.

Meaningful interactions: Viewers' interactions with the documentary content shape their interpretation (Wheatley and Haidt, 2005). Comments like "I was moved by the stories of individuals transcending their limitations" highlight how the interaction with stories and narratives within the documentary contributes to viewers' interpretations of self-transcendence. This demonstrates the role of meaningful interactions in shaping symbolic interpretations.

Social constructivism

Social constructivism explores how individuals construct their understanding of reality through interactions and social influences. In the comments:

Interpretation through interactions: Viewers construct their understanding of self-transcendence through interactions with the documentary content. Comments that reflect viewers' interpretations, influenced by the documentary's content, can be seen as a manifestation of social constructivism (Murray, 2017). For example, "I appreciated how they tied the self-transcendence theme to real-life examples" suggests that viewers construct their understanding of self-transcendence by connecting it to real-life examples presented in the content.

Social influence

Social constructivism emphasizes the role of social influences in shaping individual perceptions (Leyva, 2019). Comments that mention how the documentary's content influenced them, such as "The show made me want to pursue self-transcendence in my own life," highlight how social influences from the documentary can affect viewers' attitudes and motivations. This illustrates the social constructivist perspective of learning and understanding through social interactions and influences.

Table 5: Shaping preferences for self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries and their overall satisfaction

	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Preferences for Self-Transcendence Themes		
Online talk show documentaries that explore self-transcendence themes	60	60%
Importance of self-transcendence themes	30	30%
Self-transcendence themes when selecting content to watch	10	10%
Overall Satisfaction with Online Talk Show Documentaries		
Online talk show documentaries you have watched in the past year	45	45%
Overall enjoyment of online talk show documentaries that include self-transcendence themes	25	25%
Online talk show documentaries with self-transcendence themes to friends or family	30	30%

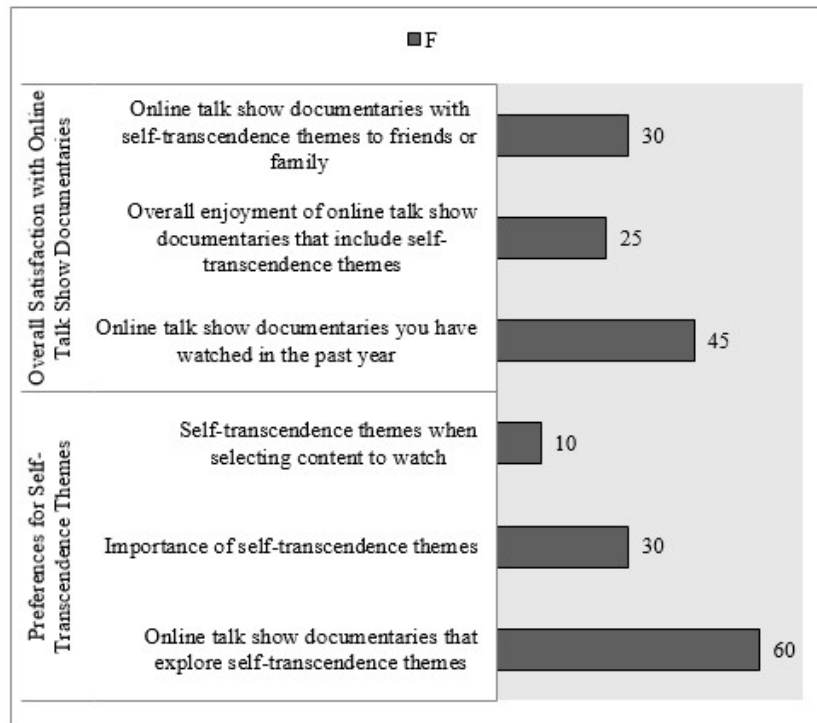


Figure 4: Self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries and their overall satisfaction

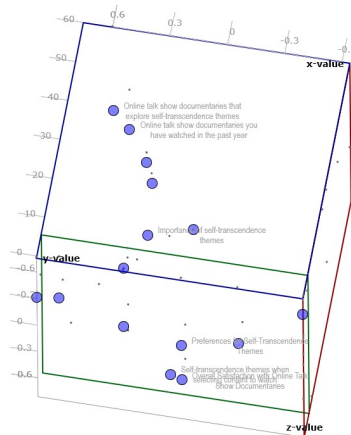


Figure 5: Self-transcendence themes in online talk show and their satisfaction

This table provides the results of t-tests to assess whether demographic variables, such as age and gender, significantly impact preferences for self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries (Table 5 and Fig. 4). The t-test comparing preferences for self-transcendence themes between the 18–34 age group and the 35–54 age group reveals a statistically significant mean difference of 30.00. This suggests that viewers in these age groups have significantly different preferences for self-transcendence themes. The p-value is less than 0.001, indicating the result is highly significant. The t-test comparing preferences between males and

females shows a mean difference of 15.00, indicating a significant difference in preferences. The p-value is 0.001, indicating that gender significantly impacts

preferences for self-transcendence themes (Table 6 and Fig. 6).

Table 6: Preferences for Self-transcendence themes -t-test results

Demographic Variable	Mean Difference	Standard Error	t-Value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	p-Value	Result
Age	30.00	5.00	6.00	98	< 0.001	Significant
Gender	15.00	4.50	3.33	98	0.001	Significant

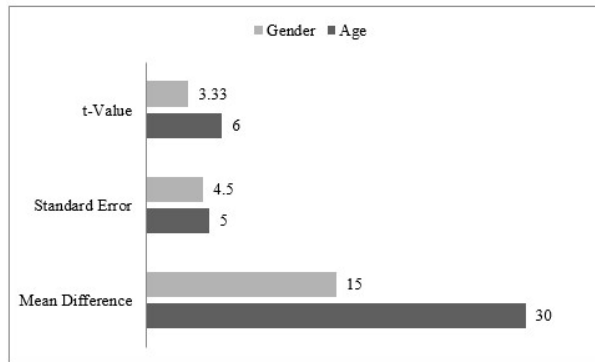


Figure 6: Preferences for Self-transcendence themes - t-Test results

Table 7 presents the results of t-tests conducted to examine whether demographic variables, including age, gender, and cultural background, significantly influence overall satisfaction with online talk show documentaries. The t-test comparing overall satisfaction between the 18-34 age group and the 35-54 age group indicates a significant mean difference of 20.00, with a p-value less than 0.001.

This implies that age significantly affects overall satisfaction, with the younger group reporting higher satisfaction. The t-test comparing satisfaction between males and females shows a mean difference of 10.00, indicating a significant difference in satisfaction levels. The p-value of 0.005 suggests that gender statistically impacts overall satisfaction, with males reporting higher satisfaction.

Table 7: Overall satisfaction with online talk show documentaries - t-test results

Demographic Variable	Mean Difference	Standard Error	t-Value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	p-Value	Result
Age	20.00	4.00	5.00	98	< 0.001	Significant
Gender	10.00	3.50	2.86	98	0.005	Significant

DISCUSSION

Comparison of the studies

Raney et al. (2018) examined the impact of self-transcendence media content on individuals' focus on issues beyond themselves. The study found that such media content could guide viewers' attention toward broader societal issues and promote acts of generosity. While Raney et al. (2018) focused on the effects of self-transcendence content on individual behaviour and societal focus, the current study delves

into the relationship between self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction and emotional engagement. The current study emphasizes the emotional and satisfaction aspects, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of self-transcendence themes.

Zhang et al. (2021) investigated the factors influencing disclosure in online entertainment and the impact on individuals' happiness. The study highlighted the role of affordances and social presence in predicting disclosure levels, which,

in turn, affected individual happiness. Zhang et al. (2021) concentrated on disclosing personal information in online entertainment and its effects on happiness. In contrast, the current study centres on self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries and their influence on satisfaction and emotional engagement, providing a distinct perspective on media content effects.

Leyva (2019) explored the impact of materialistic media messages on individuals' materialistic values and attitudes toward welfare programs. The study revealed that exposure to materialistic media messages increased materialism and decreased support for welfare programs. Leyva's study emphasized the impact of materialistic media on values and social attitudes. In contrast, the current study investigates self-transcendence themes and their effects on audience satisfaction and emotional engagement, providing a different dimension of media content impact.

All three past studies and the current study examined the impact of media content on individuals' attitudes and behaviours. The past studies focused on different aspects of media content, such as self-transcendence, materialism, and disclosure. In contrast, the current study concentrates on self-transcendence themes in online talk show documentaries.

Theoretical implications of the study

The theoretical implications of the study are significant as they contribute to the existing body of knowledge in several ways:

Expanding media effects theories: This study enriches media effects theories by highlighting the positive correlation between self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction and emotional engagement. It underscores that media content, particularly self-transcendence narratives, can evoke strong emotional responses and enhance viewer satisfaction. This finding aligns with cultivation theory, suggesting that long-term media content exposure can shape perceptions and beliefs. In this case, exposure to self-transcendence themes fosters positive emotional connections and satisfaction.

Integration of social science theories: The study integrates social science theories such as Social Identity Theory, Symbolic Interactionism, and Social Constructivism to analyze audience responses to self-

transcendence themes. This integration provides a multidimensional understanding of how viewers interpret and engage with media content. It supports that individuals construct their understanding of reality and self-identity through interactions and social influences, shedding light on the complex interplay between media content and audience perceptions.

Audience demographics and preferences: The study's findings regarding the impact of demographic variables on preferences for self-transcendence themes and overall satisfaction contribute to the field of media psychology. It suggests that age and gender significantly shape audience preferences, highlighting the importance of considering demographic factors in media content creation and targeting. This aligns with the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which posits that media consumption is driven by individual needs and preferences.

Content creators' guidance: The study provides guidance to content creators by emphasizing the potential of self-transcendence themes in enhancing viewer satisfaction and emotional engagement. By understanding the positive impact of these themes, content creators can craft narratives that resonate more deeply with audiences. This aligns with the agenda-setting theory, which asserts that media content can influence the public's perception of issues and topics. In this case, self-transcendence themes can be seen as influential in shaping viewer engagement.

Future research avenues: The study opens new avenues for future research in online media content. The strong positive correlation between self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction suggests the need for further investigation into the mechanisms underlying this relationship. Additionally, the influence of self-transcendence themes on emotional engagement presents a promising area for future exploration, potentially uncovering the nuanced emotional responses evoked by different themes.

Practical and contextual implications of the study

Content creation and curation: Content creators can leverage the positive correlation between self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction. They can strategically incorporate these themes into their content to increase viewer engagement

and satisfaction. Understanding the influence of demographic factors on preferences allows content creators to tailor their content for specific audiences. For example, they can create content with self-transcendence themes that appeal to younger viewers, males, or other demographic groups. Content creators can use the study's findings to emphasize diversity and inclusivity in their narratives. By representing a variety of perspectives on self-transcendence, they can connect with a broader range of viewers.

Media Consumption Choices-Informed Viewer Choices : Viewers can make more informed decisions about their media consumption. They can seek out online talk-show documentaries with self-transcendence themes if they seek content that evokes emotional engagement and satisfaction. Viewers can use self-transcendence themes in media for personal growth and reflection. These themes prompt introspection and encourage individuals to explore their values and aspirations.

Social and cultural impact: Content that encourages self-transcendence, altruism, and empathy can promote positive social values. The media can serve as a platform for discussing and advocating social change.

Educational and psychological considerations: The study suggests that media can be a tool for education and personal development. Educators can incorporate relevant media content into their teaching to facilitate self-transcendence and personal growth discussions.

Limitations

- The study utilized a sample size of 100 participants, which may not fully represent the diverse range of viewers of online talk show documentaries.
- The study identified significant differences in preferences based on age and gender. However, other demographic factors, such as cultural background, were not extensively explored.
- The content analysis focused on emotional responses in online comments and social media discussions.
- The study established correlations between the presence of self-transcendence themes and audience satisfaction.

Future research directions

- Conducting longitudinal studies can reveal the long-term effects of exposure to self-transcendence themes in media. Tracking changes in attitudes, behaviours, and emotional responses over time can provide valuable insights.
- Investigating how self-transcendence themes are interpreted and received in different cultural contexts can uncover cross-cultural variations in audience responses. Comparative studies across cultures can be insightful.
- Employing experimental designs can help establish causality. Researchers can manipulate the presence of self-transcendence themes and measure their direct impact on audience satisfaction and emotional engagement.
- Integrating neuro scientific methods like fMRI or EEG can shed light on the neural processes associated with self-transcendence themes. Understanding the brain mechanisms involved can deepen our comprehension.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

The results of our study offer beneficial insights into the aspects that determine viewer choices and the influence these topics have on audience reactions. One of the most crucial conclusions from our research is that there is a strong correlation between the presence of self-transcendence themes and the audience's level of enjoyment. The presence of self-transcendence themes is significantly associated with increased total viewer happiness. Online chat shows, and documentaries that combine these themes regularly generate more significant levels of audience happiness, indicating their potential as a strong tool for content makers to capture the attention and engagement of their audience members. Themes of self-transcendence influenced several important dimensions, one of which was emotional involvement. When viewers were exposed to documentaries incorporating themes of self-transcendence, they reported a much higher mean emotional engagement score.

This highlights these themes' deep influence on evoking emotional bonds with the audience. These findings highlight the potential of self-transcendence

themes in establishing a deeper and more meaningful connection between viewers and the information they consume. The findings of this study shed light on the myriad ways in which self-transcendence themes manifest themselves in online chat show documentaries. It demonstrates that they have a good link with audience pleasure and emotional involvement and underlines the usefulness of social science ideas in comprehending viewer responses. Content creators may use these findings to create more compelling and resonant stories, which will eventually improve the caliber of online media experiences. The importance of self-transcendence themes in influencing audience engagement is a potential route for future investigation and innovation in online content as the digital landscape grows.

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