



Master in Management

Major in Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Course of Managerial Decision Making

**Streaming Platforms:
how the Customer Journey is shaped by transnational strategies, data-driven
algorithms and tactics of narrative persuasion**

Thesis Supervisor: Luigi Marengo

Co-Supervisor: Pablo Collazzo

Candidate: Giulia Pelagatti

774311

Academic Year: 2024/2025

Index

Introduction.....	3
Chapter One.....	5
Literature Review.....	5
1.1 From Traditional to Streaming.....	5
1.2 Analysing the players.....	6
1.3 Pirate Streaming.....	7
1.4 The touchpoints leading to the bias.....	8
1.5 Problem Statement.....	9
1.6 Research Design.....	9
1.7 Findings.....	10
Chapter Two.....	11
Analyzing the sector: the evolution of the entertainment industry.....	11
2.1 Overview.....	11
2.2 The factors leading the shift.....	13
2.2.1 Digitalization.....	13
2.2.2 Algorithms.....	15
2.2.3 The winning business model.....	17
2.3 The impact on traditional houses of production: the case of The Walt Disney Company.....	20
2.4. A new type of competition: Streaming Wars, Blockbusters and the case of Netflix.....	22
2.4.1 Streaming Wars.....	22
2.4.2 Blockbusters as precursors of Streaming Platforms.....	23
2.4.3 The Case of Netflix.....	25
2.5 The effect of streaming platforms on pirate streaming.....	27
2.6 The bias on the Customer Journey process.....	30
Chapter Three.....	34
Methodology and Discussion.....	34

3.1 Research Design.....	34
3.2 Data Collection Methods.....	34
3.3 The Interview Questions.....	35
3.4 Sample.....	38
3.5 The interviews.....	39
3.5.1 Baby Boomers.....	39
3.5.2 Generation X.....	44
3.5.3 Generation Y.....	49
3.5.4 Generation Z.....	55
3.5.5 Generation Alpha.....	60
3.6 Conclusion.....	65
Chapter Four.....	66
Findings and Conclusions.....	66
4.1 Defining the Customer Journey process.....	66
4.2 Customer Journey in streaming services.....	68
4.3 Interviews Analysis.....	69
4.3.1 The older generations.....	69
4.3.2 Generational turning point.....	72
4.3.3 The younger generations.....	74
4.4 Conclusive Remarks.....	77
4.4.1 Narrative Persuasion.....	77
4.4.2 Transnational Strategies.....	78
4.4.3 Data-driven Algorithms.....	78
4.4.4 Answering the research question.....	79
4.5 Implications for future research.....	80
References.....	81
Appendix.....	85
Transcription of the interviews.....	85

Introduction

The objective of this thesis is the critical analysis of the entertainment industry evolution, focusing on how the rise of streaming platforms has changed this sector's ecosystem and the way these new players impacted consumers' behavior.

With the emergence of digital economy, the traditional entertainment industry has undergone an unprecedented shift that saw a significant acceleration during the Covid 19 pandemic.

This dramatic change has led the existing players, who were considered cornerstones of this sector, to adapt to the new rules of the game brought by digitalization and the new emerging actors.

Streaming platforms, through their enhanced features and digital innovation, have become extremely powerful.

Helped by the speed of globalization, these players have assumed the role of global cultural producers and standards setters.

This experimental thesis studies the following hypothesis: streaming platforms, through the touchpoints they integrate in their marketing strategies and business models, have the ability to influence consumers preferences and choices.

These tactics and tools have reduced consumers' decision-making power, interfering with their Customer Journey and their content selection process.

The research follows a precise structure, organized in four main chapters.

In the first one - *Literature Review* - I report the sources I have based my research on.

In this way, I illustrate what the academic debate has been focusing up until now and what has been already investigated.

On one hand, this is necessary to provide academic credibility to the study. On the other hand, it aims at explaining the relevance of the research question to be answered.

In this chapter I also provide an overview of the investigation, introducing the research methodology, the problem statement and the research question.

The second chapter, “*Analyzing the sector: the evolution of the entertainment industry*”, consists in the analysis of the entertainment sector.

I navigate through its evolution, considering the factors that led to its shift. I analyze the main strategies, their innovative features and their digital tools.

I go through the role they have assumed in society and I introduce the influence they have on the Customer Journey and content selection process.

Following, the third chapter is called “*Methodology and Discussion*”, it consists of the empirical part of the research.

I illustrate the methods I used to collect the primary data and the research design.

This includes the interview questions and the sample choice, as well as a brief summary of each interview, which allows me to identify the core elements to analyze.

In the last chapter, “*Findings and Conclusions*”, I illustrate the results of my research.

I will carefully analyze the empirical data I have collected, based on the theoretical notions I have identified.

The aim of this chapter is to successfully answer the proposed research question, concluding the study.

In this final part, I also introduce implications for future research that emerged while conducting the investigation to answer my research question.

Chapter One

Literature Review

1.1 From Traditional to Streaming

The entertainment industry has undergone significant transformation over the past twenty years as a result of the rise of streaming platforms, whose way has been paved by the increasing technological evolution.

The academic debate about the changes that this industry has been going through is continuously evolving, there are several studies about the causes and effects of its development from several different perspectives.

One of the primary objects of studies has been the analysis of such transformation: how and when the shift from traditional entertainment to streaming platforms has happened and which were its consequences (Alforova, Marchenko, Kot, Medvedieva, Moussienko, 2021).

The traditional actors that ruled the industry for the longest time registered a severe decline in consumer engagement, which shifted towards digital content.

This inevitably paved the way to the creation of a new emerging market, with new players stepping into the competitive landscape: it is the era of direct-to-consumer content.

The emerging digital actors brought important innovation to the industry, to which traditional houses of production had to adapt in order to survive the new market. This involved changing their strategies and business model, while adopting innovative digital solutions.

The literature has identified several factors that led to the industry transformation.

Alforova, Marchenko, Kot, Medvedieva, Moussienko (2021) consider digitalization as the main cause of the sectors' severe change, which paved the way to its evolution.

Following, Sim (2016) and Gillespie (2014) introduce the notion of algorithms, an essential tool for any kind of digital platform. They explain how the streaming market has integrated them as a core strategy.

As a consequence, these alterations led to the need for a new business model to be adopted by the main actors of the industry. The one that has proven to be the most successful is the transnational strategy, adopted by the majority of the entertainment industry's main players (Teece, 2010).

Through the work of Sirkeci (2013) I explain the core elements of this model and how streaming platforms successfully deliver transnational content (Chalaby, 2022) in today's globalized world.

Finally, one more aspect under scrutiny is the way traditional actors adapted to the industry transformation.

To do so, I consider the case of The Walt Disney Company, through the work of Sturgill (2019) that analyzed the firms' launch of *Disney+*.

1.2 Analysing the players

The study, while analyzing the sector, includes a consideration of the competition within the industry.

Particularly, it focuses on how the ways to gain comparative advantage have changed with streaming platforms compared to traditional media.

The fast evolution of this market and the rapid growth of its players have made it extremely fragmented and competitive, which is why the literature takes into account the phenomenon of the *Streaming War* (Luo, 2020).

Following, the thesis provides a brief excursus on blockbusters, as precursors of streaming platforms.

Through the analysis of the study conducted by Cucco (2009), this section goes through how blockbusters changed the Hollywood industry, and how their core elements have been reinterpreted by streaming platforms, who adapted them to their digital era.

The new players use the same blockbusters' logic to be dominant in the system.

This section also considers the case of Netflix, which has been identified as a global leader in the industry and one of the pioneers of the market's transformation.

The literature has studied the evolution of its business strategy, from its early days until the peak of its success.

Netflix can be considered the epitome of the transformation from traditional to digital: from a DVD rental service, to becoming the most powerful company offering platform-based distribution through direct-to-consumer consumption (Anindita, 2021).

When analyzing Netflix, I integrated the thought of Jenner (2024), who introduced the notion of *Grammar of Transnationalism*.

This concept further explains how this company puts in place a successful transnational strategy, through the notions of *Quantification of Diversity* and *Visibility Politics* Jenner (2024).

1.3 Pirate Streaming

One more aspect that will be considered while analyzing the sector is the effect that the emerging streaming market has been having on film piracy.

The latter consists of illegal streaming services online, taking place through several channels (most commonly websites), that post copyrighted content for the users to watch illegally.

The literature explores the reasons that drive consumers to look for content on illegal streaming services. The study conducted by Kim, M. S. and Kim, S. (2025), that analyzed the phenomenon using the Theory of Planned Behavior, makes relevant considerations.

To this extent, the thesis considers the work of Frick, Fletcher and Smith (2023).

On one hand, they conducted research on what is the positive effect of streaming platforms in terms of reducing film piracy.

On the other hand, they also considered the limitations to this benefit, caused by the nature and the characteristics of the emerging market and its environment.

1.4 The touchpoints leading to the bias

In the final part of the second chapter, I navigate through the basis of the thesis' research question.

I go through the streaming platforms' touchpoints that create a bias in the Customer Journey process, by influencing people's choices and preferences.

Pauley, A. (2021), among the strategies that these new players use to achieve their goals, focuses particularly on *storytelling* and *mediated intergroup contact*.

These tools set the tone of what streaming platforms are trying to communicate.

Mediated intergroup contact paves the way for the implementation of transnational strategies, well connected with the concept of "Grammar of Transnationalism" introduced by Jenner (2024).

In this chapter, I also explore the idea that streaming platforms, through their controversial solutions (particularly algorithms) are able to shape consumers preferences, based on socio-political and cultural relations (Hesmondhalgh, 2019) (Hesmondhalgh, Valverde, Kaye & Li, 2023).

According to Hesmondhalgh (2019), digitalization only reinforced an already existing power dynamic between the consumer and supplier.

The scope of this thesis is to demonstrate how streaming platforms' consumers do not follow a linear Customer Journey process, as they are influenced by the strategic and digital touchpoints we have presented.

1.5 Problem Statement

Up until now the existing literature has been focusing on market-makers:

- it identifies the causes and effects of the shift and how the behavior of this sector's traditional enterprises have adapted to the new market;
- it navigates through the new elements brought by the latest players and which business strategies are now considered winning and successful;

- it considered the role that streaming platforms have assumed at the global level as standard setters and cultural producers.

This thesis will step into the academic debate by focusing on the receivers' side: considering the power that these players have assumed up until now, how were users' preferences, attitudes and choices impacted?

The problem to be tackled is the extent to which the strategies introduced by streaming platforms have created a bias in the normal Customer Journey process.

The study aims at filling this gap, by integrating the existing literature with the primary data to be collected.

The research will investigate the influence that the latest touchpoints introduced by streaming platforms have on users: how their solutions shape their preferences and the impact that this has on their Customer Journey process.

1.6 Research Design

The objective of this thesis is to answer the following research question:

“How do the new touchpoints introduced by streaming platforms - transnational strategies, narrative persuasion and data-driven algorithms – create a bias in the Customer Journey process?”

The study is conducted through qualitative data, collected through semi-structured interviews.

The sample will consist of ten consumers, two for five generational clusters:

- Baby Boomers (Carrillo-Durán, Ruano-López, Fernández-Falero, Trabadela-Robles, 2022);
- Generation X (Euajarusphan, 2021);
- Generation Y (Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels, Kabadayi, Gruber, & Solnet, 2013);
- Generation Z (Priporas, Stylos & Fotiadis, 2017);

- Generation Alpha (Zierock, Schulze, & Angar, 2025) (McCrindle & Fell, 2020) (Jha, 2020) (Pérez, 2023).

Each generation is briefly introduced before putting forward the interviews, in order to highlight the characteristics relevant to study.

I will provide a summary of each interview, in order to identify the focal points necessary to draw the findings of this research.

Thus, the type of data gathered is qualitative and will be analyzed in the third chapter, while the results will be reported at the end of the study.

1.7 Findings

In the final chapter, as stated in the introduction, I display the findings of this study and the answer to the proposed research question.

Furthermore, I lay out implications for future research, emerged from my investigation.

Before setting out the empirical evidence, I provide a brief theoretical overview of the dependent variable under scrutiny - the Customer Journey (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016) - applied to the streaming platforms framework.

In the next session, I will go through a contextual chapter: the focus will be the analysis of the sector, particularly the way it changed over the years and how it paved the way for phenomenon under scrutiny to happen.

On one hand, it is necessary in order to understand where the research question originated from.

On the other, it will demonstrate the relevance of this investigation, considering what is currently at the center of the academic debate.

Chapter Two

Analyzing the sector: the evolution of the entertainment industry

2.1 Overview

The past two decades have been a pool for technological transformation: not only have we witnessed ongoing innovation in every existing industry, but also the creation of emerging ones.

The entertainment sector has been significantly influenced by digital changes, which have led to the development of streaming platforms.

These new actors have disrupted the existing market of entertainment, almost creating an entirely new one.

The old players adapted to the changes brought up by streaming platforms, both in internal and external factors.

Internally they developed new tools to improve their positioning in the market, while externally they changed the rules for competition and consumers preferences.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines streaming platforms as *'a technology that allows video, music, etc., to be sent over the internet so that people can watch or listen to it immediately rather than having to download it, or rather than having to watch or listen at the particular time when it is broadcast, also used to refer to a company that provides this technology'* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024: 1).

Just by analyzing this definition, we can immediately identify what advantages streaming platforms bring to consumers compared to the traditional players in the industry.

The key word is 'direct-to-consumer consumption': these players put content directly in the hands of consumers, without any type of constraint.

They can use the services when they want, where they want and for however long they want.

This obviously had a severe negative impact on traditional entertainment actors like cable TV, radios and even cinemas.

Consumers' engagement with content was characterized by time constraints: they had to go to the theatre to watch an early released movie, they needed to be lucky in order to catch their favorite song on the radio or, if they wanted to watch their favorite show, had to be available at the time it aired on television.

These limitations are what made the emergence of streaming revolutionary: the possibility of breaking these constraints and of controlling when to consume content is what made the shift in consumers' preference so rapid and extreme.

Another consequence of the last decades' technological innovation is the acceleration of life's pace: globalization has multiplied the flows of information through connectivity and instant communication, for both private and work life, reshaping the way in which people perceive and experience time.

The need for entertainment has become essential, it is a distraction from everyone's busy life. However, having control on when and where to exhaust such distraction has become necessary: consumers seek efficiency, speed and convenience when consuming services.

In the following section, I will analyse which specific factors caused the shift, and how they did it.

2.2 The factors leading the shift

The drastic transformation that characterized the entertainment industry in the last decades was caused by several factors.

First of all, the ongoing technological innovations have led to an increased digitalization, enhanced by the introduction of algorithms.

Secondly, traditional players have changed their business models in order to compete with the new emerging actors.

Furthermore, former players which have been leaders in the industry for decades, had to adapt to the transformations and increased competition of the new market.

Let us analyze how these factors became crucial in the entertainment market and how they led to the radical transformation this industry went through.

2.2.1 Digitalization

The entertainment industry, among all the other industrial sectors, has been one of the most influenced by technological evolution since its early days: it expands hand in hand with innovation (Alforova, Marchenko, Kot, Medvedieva, Moussienko 2021).

The evolution of the cinema industry is built up upon new technological solutions discovered over time.

From the creation of the first film made with a *camera obscura*¹, to the first sound films thanks to the creation of the low frequency amplifier in the 1920s; or else, the development of content production through the first transmission channels (Alforova, Marchenko, Kot, Medvedieva, Moussienko 2021).

The innovations in this industry were countless, and they multiplied with the beginning of the digital era: the development of new camera models, the introduction of special effects and 3D filming (Alforova, Marchenko, Kot, Medvedieva, Moussienko 2021).

All of these advancements had one common goal: to deliver a vivid content consumption experience for the consumer to enjoy. Thus, the focus was always internal and the market was driven by the supply.

The advent of the internet and the beginning of the digital era is what marked a radical change in the entertainment industry: the way content was produced, stored and consumed completely transformed (Alforova, Marchenko, Kot, Medvedieva, Moussienko 2021).

¹“ancestor of the photographic camera. The Latin name means “dark chamber” and the earliest versions, dating to antiquity, consisted of small darkened rooms with light admitted through a single tiny hole. The result was that an inverted image of the outside scene was cast on the opposite wall, which was usually whitened.” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025: 1.)

For the first time, anyone with internet access had the possibility to engage with content without airwaves limitations: this was the main driver of streaming services' creation (Alforova, Marchenko, Kot, Medvedieva, Moussienko 2021).

The main goal is to create content that is efficient, fast to consume for the audience and compatible with the latest technological devices.

Sim (2016) has identified three main advantages that characterized the market of streaming platforms: it offers freedom, convenience and mobility, which translates to a sense of empowerment in users.

Thus, the role that consumers appear to have assumed is of active participants taking decisions, in accordance with the demand-driven and direct-to-consumer perspective Sim (2016).

However, Sim (2016) challenges this interpretation by considering another aspect of this new emerging market: algorithms.

The author introduced the idea that what seemed an extension of freedom and control for users, was actually part of a bigger picture: consumer experience is not only guided, but to some extent manipulated by these innovative, data-driven tools through streaming platforms' recommendation systems (Sim, 2016).

In other words, his thought is based on the adornian² idea that while consumers feel a sense of autonomy and sovereignty in terms of content, in reality they are following a pre-fabricated model decided by the streaming platform through algorithms.

2.2.2 Algorithms

Algorithms are one of the most relevant instruments that has emerged with the new wave, being a core element of any digital platform.

They are defined as “*encoded procedures for transforming input data into a desired output, based on specified calculations*” (Gillespie, 2014: 1).

² Sim (2016) based his reasoning on Theodor Adorno's idea, according to which individuals believe they make decisions freely and independently, but in reality their choices are just a result of a bigger, pre-orchestrated plan.

In other words, they are a way to personalize the streaming platform of each individual consumer, according to their content preference.

They work through an information selection system, based on the activity of each user, with the goal of recommending the content that is most relevant to them, or that the platform wants to promote.

If at first algorithms might have been seen as a privacy violation, now consumers are not only well aware of their existence, but they also embrace it as a way to improve their consumption experience.

Netflix asks its users to rate each show or movie they watch, in order to make the content recommendations on the app more accurate: they have a “*what you might like*” section that consists of content that the user might find interesting.

Gillespie in *The Relevance of Algorithms* (2014), has identified six dimensions that explain the role and functions of algorithms.

“1. *Patterns of inclusion*: the choices behind what makes it into an index in the first place, what is excluded, and how data is made algorithm ready.

2. *Cycles of anticipation*: the implications of algorithm providers' attempts to thoroughly know and predict their users, and how the conclusions they draw can matter.

3. *The evaluation of relevance*: the criteria by which algorithms determine what is relevant, how those criteria are obscured from us, and how they enact political choices about appropriate and legitimate knowledge.

4. *The promise of algorithmic objectivity*: the way the technical character of the algorithm is positioned as an assurance of impartiality, and how that claim is maintained in the face of controversy.

5. *Entanglement with practice*: how users reshape their practices to suit the algorithms they depend on, and how they can turn algorithms into terrains for political contest, sometimes even to interrogate the politics of the algorithm itself.

6. *The production of calculated publics*: how the algorithmic presentation of publics back to themselves shape a public's sense of itself, and who is best positioned to benefit from that knowledge.” (Gillespie, 2014: 2).

Thus, streaming platforms' algorithms use consumers' choices and preferences as a starting point, to anticipate users and promote content through a data-driven logic.

To create them, user behavior is under scrutiny: the goal is to generate a content cluster upon which consumers become dependent.

Users are constantly fed with material that matches their preferences, until the latter become driven by the algorithm itself.

These tools have been at the center of an ethical debate that led to two different schools of thought.

By some, algorithms are considered a useful tool that improves users' experience. However, others argue that they are dangerous and manipulative instruments, able to alter consumers' decision-making power.

This thesis follows the second interpretation, studying their influence on the Customer Journey process.

Regardless, they expanded quickly. These tools allowed players to achieve rapid lead generation and retention, which is what made them so popular among most actors in the industry.

Accordingly, they have become a fundamental driver of comparative advantage, as they have an unprecedented capacity to catch consumers' attention, improving their loyalty levels.

In this sense, we can consider algorithms as one of the main reasons why traditional houses of production have developed their own streaming platform: traditional players would be unable to survive in the market without this powerful tool, given the benefit it brings.

2.2.3 The winning business model

When looking at the entertainment industry transformation, one factor to consider is how the main players have changed their business models.

Let us go through the new winning strategies that actors must adopt to survive, and possibly succeed, in the emerging market.

Up until now we have seen how new technologies and innovation have led to a more customer-centric approach: audiences are more powerful in terms of preferences, due to a wide differentiation of choices to make.

Accordingly, this highly impacted enterprises internally: the need to adopt a different and new value proposition within their business model has become essential (Teece, 2010).

The goal now is to capture value from new, innovative, products and services in order to satisfy consumers' demanding needs. To do that, an appropriate business model is fundamental (Teece, 2010).

Nowadays, the biggest players in the entertainment industry are defined as multinational corporations.

The Corporate Finance Institute uses the following definition:

“A multinational corporation (MNC) is a company that operates in its home country, as well as in other countries around the world. It maintains a central office located in one country, which coordinates the management of all of its other offices, such as administrative branches or factories. It isn't enough to call a company that exports its products to more than one country a multinational company. The multinational needs to maintain actual business operations in other countries and must make a foreign direct investment there.” (Corporate Finance Institute, 2024: 1).

Netflix and The Walt Disney Company are the biggest companies in the entertainment sector: they both perform business operations across the world, through foreign direct investments competing in the entertainment market at the global level.

With the speed of globalization, a business model that has been widely adopted by both traditional and emerging players are transnational strategies.

They are typical of multinational corporations and based on two core variables: local responsiveness and global integration (Sirkeci, 2013).

The former refers to the multinational corporation responding in-depth to local environments: it customizes products to local tastes and works cooperatively with the host government, particularly in terms of laws and regulations.

The latter refers to a primary interest in economies of scale by the multinational corporation, hence it carries production of standardized products and an integrated global supply chain (Sirkeci, 2013).

A company using a transnational strategy focuses deeply on both of these variables: it exploits synergies, while also having some degree of flexibility and adaptability (Sirkeci, 2013).

Taking as an example one of the aforementioned companies, Netflix has international operational structures and production hubs based abroad, for the creation and distribution of content.

The company invests in producing original content in several countries, beyond the United States, adapting it to local preferences and reaching international audiences (Chalaby, 2022).

Two examples of extremely successful products have been *Squid Game* in South Korea and *La Casa De Papel* in Spain, showing a high level of local responsiveness.

Both of these productions are part of Netflix's library and they represent a cosmopolitan type of content: local products, to which a global public has access to (Chalaby, 2022).

At the same time, the company also guarantees global integration through standardized products: its streaming platform is identical in each country, the structure of its original content is the same (e.g. short series) and it uses the same branding strategy.

According to Chalaby (2022), the term "transnational" is different from "global" and "international".

A transnational product refers to something that crosses the borders of multiple different nations, taking elements from each culture and merging them together in one, unique experience.

Some examples provided by Chalaby (2022) are broadcast television channels such as *Disney Channel*, or talent shows like *The Voice* or *The X Factor*.

They present some differences: while *Disney Channel* is the exact same product translated in different languages, talent shows have their own individual version in each country, but they deliver the same experience.

Both of these items offer one single format to be streamed across all nations, and they function in each local culture: they are transnational (Chalaby, 2022).

Streaming platforms act like global cultural agents: while traditionally television's main aim was to build and reinforce national identity, now its principal goal is to break cultural barriers across countries, promoting transnational content to be shared globally. This phenomenon has increased exponentially due to the speed and growth of globalization and, as such, it is at the centre of a debate.

On one hand it is interpreted as something positive, seen as a way of cultural exchange across nations.

On the other hand, it is perceived as a threat: some believe that these transnational products are slowly disrupting the uniqueness of each individual culture, fearing that this phenomenon will make them slowly fade away, in favor of one single global culture dictated by the Western one.

This thesis follows the second interpretation, investigating how transnational strategies contribute to the bias in the Customer Journey.

2.3 The impact on traditional houses of production: the case of The Walt Disney Company

The shift in the entertainment industry has had a huge impact on the existing players, streaming platforms have changed the rules of the competitive market, creating a new situation to which old players had to adapt.

Traditional houses of production, which for decades have dominated the environment, have changed their business models in order to survive: most of them created their own streaming platform where they placed their original content.

In that, let us analyze the case of The Walt Disney Company.

This company, since its foundation in 1923 by Walt Disney, has become a pivotal force in the entertainment sector.

The firm not only has multiple brands under its name competing in this market (e.g. *Marvel Studio*, *Pixar*, *20th Century Studios* and many others), but also operates in other sectors (e.g. *Disneyland*, a themed park with locations all around the world, or *Disney Store*, a chain of shops that sells branded merchandise located globally) (The Walt Disney Company, 2024).

This led the corporation to actively compete in more than one market through one brand, thanks to this synergistic marketing.

However, with the rapid digital transformation and the emergence of streaming platforms as new competitors in the market, even a powerful corporation like The Walt Disney Company had to review its business model.

In order to maintain its role as a leading player, the firm had to find a way to respond to the new market stimuli.

There was a need to address the shifts in consumers' preferences, developing new tools to maintain its comparative advantage in the entertainment sector.

For all these reasons, the company decided to step into the streaming platforms' market, by launching *Disney+* in the fall of 2019.

Initially, the platform was only made available in the United States, The Netherlands and Canada, but soon after it expanded internationally (Sturgill, 2019).

The firm was able to maintain its strong brand identity: the streaming platform did not contain any R-rated material, remaining the first choice for families with young children. At the same time, to fill this gap, it proceeded with the acquisition of Hulu where it streamed content that could not be directly associated with the Disney brand (Sturgill, 2019).

The platform merged together most of its franchises - *Marvel Studios*, *Pixar*, *Star Wars* - making it highly differentiated for its audiences and using its wide existing library as a strength against other players: most emerging streaming platforms had less original content to offer (Sturgill, 2019).

The platform works on a subscription-based model which allowed the company to successfully approach the *direct-to consumers* business model (Sturgill, 2019).

At its launch, Disney chose to bundle its streaming platform at a competitive price, making it a new, more attractive option compared to the competition (Sturgill, 2019). Today, after years of success, it still offers the basic plan at the same price of its launch; however, it gives the possibility to purchase upgraded plans for a higher price.

Disney+ turned out to be a thriving solution for the company, allowing it not only to survive and adapt to the industry's drastic transformation, but also to maintain its role as a cornerstone in the entertainment market.

At the same time, this success did not come without challenges: stepping into the streaming platforms market means entering one of the most aggressive and competitive competitions to exist. (Sturgill, 2019).

In the following section, we will navigate the competitive ecosystem of this new industry.

2.4. A new type of competition: Streaming Wars, Blockbusters and the case of Netflix

2.4.1 Streaming Wars

As anticipated, the streaming platforms market is characterized by a very intense competition.

The Covid 19 pandemic played a big role in defining it: during quarantine, every business sector has been severely hit by the measures taken to contain the virus.

Traditional industries were particularly impacted: they adapted to the new legislations and turned, where possible, their activities to a virtual setting, investing in smart working.

At the same time, when the global population was forced to remain home, the streaming platform market has been one of the greatest beneficiaries of the pandemic: watching movies was everyone's new favorite activity to kill time.

It can be stated that Covid 19 accelerated and intensified the shift from traditional entertainment to digital. During the pandemic, streaming services were the most used at a global level.

Despite the advantages, this new situation led to a disruptive competitive landscape, which culminated into what Luo (2020) calls a *Streaming War*.

It refers to an intense competition among streaming platforms. Features like content creation, release strategy, pricing strategy, value proposition, infrastructure and market expansion through subscribers growth, were all considered means to gain a plus against other players (Luo, 2020).

All of these elements were crucial in order to gain competitive advantage and positioning, through differentiation in the market.

Luo (2020) analyzes the major players in the entertainment sector, comparing them.

Netflix remains the global leader in the streaming sector. Its business strategy strongly relies on the creation of original content and platform personalization, which is why it maintains a premium price (Luo, 2020).

He also considers Disney+, whose strategy relies on competitive pricing and its large existing library (Luo, 2020).

Another major player in the industry is Amazon Prime Video, whose greatest advantage is having created an ecosystem of both streaming and e-commerce services.

The article considers other streaming services: Apple TV, HBO Max, Peacock.

The main observation and conclusion, which is a common ground for all the players under scrutiny, is that the pandemic has reshaped the market of the entertainment industry: while it was already going through a major shift, the Covid 19 situation has accelerated this process (Luo, 2020).

Comparing these companies before and after the pandemic, shows that the virus has been a boost for the already existing transition from a traditional to digital economy in the entertainment sector (Luo, 2020).

The main driver of the *Streaming War* is the creation of digital content: not only it needs to be highly differentiated to feed consumers expectations and needs, but it also needs to be coherent with each company's brand image and value proposition (Luo, 2020).

2.4.2 Blockbusters as precursors of Streaming Platforms

When analyzing Streaming Wars, it is necessary to address the phenomenon of blockbusters.

The latter took place in the 1950s and it revolutionized the Hollywood market.

A “blockbuster”, in cinematography, refers to a particular kind of film whose main characteristics are high production costs and good returns (Cucco, 2009).

The idea generated from the crisis that the Hollywood industry was going through at the time: during the era of McCarthyism³ several celebrities were involved in numerous scandals, tarnishing the cinema industry’s reputation. Furthermore, the birth of new competing media, the baby boom and the migration of a large part of population towards the suburbs, reduced cinematographic consumption (Cucco, 2009).

For all of these reasons, the solution to the crisis was to abandon investing in numerous, cheaper production, to invest in bigger ones with higher costs, but also higher returns (Cucco, 2009).

“The studios, no longer owning the cinema circuits, were free to focus on a few projects in which they could invest the money saved by reducing the volume of production. Big productions requiring the use of the most advanced technology helped differentiate the product from the supply of competing media such as television and helped revive the theatre as a privileged place for the film experience and, more generally, high-quality entertainment” (Cucco, 2009: 3), explains Marco Cucco in *The promise is great: the blockbuster and the Hollywood economy*.

³ The term refers to a specific period of time in the United States history, during which numerous people had been arrested with the charge of being part of communist infiltrations in the country. The goal of Joseph McCarthy was to eradicate communism from the country. However, despite his investigations being meticulous, most of the accusations he made were considered unsubstantiated: many American citizens were publicly condemned and lost their jobs without substantive proof of being part of a communist infiltration in the country (Britannica, 2024).

Blockbusters were a core element in the Hollywood industry, they evolved their marketing strategy over the years and became a manifest since the mid-1970s.

Such strategy consisted in using television as the main distribution mean, while theatres became a promotional tool: “it was only with the advent of television that Hollywood films became widespread and theatres began to play a strategic and leading role in the economy of that sector” (Cucco, 2009: 3), stresses the author.

Thus, blockbusters have not only changed and revolutionized cinematic production, but they also modified the business and marketing strategies of this sector.

Their goal was to generate high profit, through high investments in large productions, using specific and intense marketing strategies and using the country's national broadcast television as their global distribution channel.

To this extent, they can be associated with streaming platforms and defined as their precursors.

Accordingly, the new emerging actors reinterpreted blockbusters, adapting them to the innovations and changes brought by digitalization.

If we take in consideration Netflix's marketing strategy to promote a new film, many elements of the traditional blockbusters' formula can be recalled.

“È stata la mano di Dio” is an Italian film directed by Paolo Sorrentino, Netflix was an active part of its production.

This film was initially streamed at Venice's International Film Festival in 2021, it was later released in Italian cinemas across the nation and lastly it was made available to users on Netflix's streaming platform.

It is evident how this strategy strongly resembles the one initiated by blockbusters, but adapted to the digital and direct-to-consumer emerging economy.

2.4.3 The Case of Netflix

In order to better understand what being successful in the new entertainment ecosystem means, let us focus on the analysis of its major player: Netflix.

The Netflix Company is one of the most powerful actors in the streaming platforms market.

In this section we unfold this player's business model, analyzing how this corporation is able to dominate the dynamic and unpredictable environment that characterizes the digital entertainment industry.

This company started out as an online DVD rental service, working on a subscription-based system since its early days. In 2010, Netflix started expanding to other markets outside the United States - starting from Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean to then spreading globally (Anindita, 2021).

The company can be considered a standard setter in the context of Streaming Wars.

Its business strategy, as we have discussed, strongly relies on original content production and inducing a *binge-watching*⁴ pattern in users.

According to Anindita (2021), this practice is the main driver for Netflix's marketing strategy and it is used particularly for short series. It allows the company to extend the time users spend on the platform.

In order to work, Netflix makes sure to publish all episodes (or at least half of them) of one season in a one time release, causing an addiction effect in users that will watch the whole production in one sitting.

Netflix is said to have disrupted the traditional business model in the entertainment industry. To do so, it initially set a convenient price, which later on became premium as its original library expanded. Its subscription-based model also plays a relevant role, as it paved the way to a direct-to-consumer type of distribution.

Among its services, Netflix offers consumers an on-demand experience without the presence of ads, enhanced by algorithms that allow the service to be personalized to each individual's taste (Anindita, 2021).

As we have mentioned, a business model based on a transnational strategy is a winning factor for a company in the streaming market.

⁴ "to watch several episodes (= several parts) of a television series or programme, one after another" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024: 1).

Netflix is a well known example of this: on numerous occasions it was able to address individual cultures with one production, while delivering a unique experience for a global audience.

Successfully delivering this type of content requires the consideration of important factors, as well as the integration of specific strategies.

Cultures are extremely layered concepts, it is very easy to speak about them in the wrong way, causing disrespect in the way they are represented.

In order to avoid this issue and cause any type of disdain towards its own users, Netflix puts in place very specific tactics, addressed by Jenner (2024) in *The quantification of diversity: Netflix, visibility politics and the grammar of transnationalism*.

This author focuses particularly on “Quantification of Diversity” (Jenner, 2024: 1), a strategy used by the company to create result-oriented transnational content.

This tactic works through what the author names “Visibility Politics” (Jenner, 2024: 1), which refers to the screen time dedicated to characters representing a minority group in a production, without going in depth with their racial or social identity (Jenner, 2024).

This strategy is part of the “Grammar of Transnationalism” (Jenner, 2024: 1), through which Netflix is able to successfully produce transnational content.

It avoids controversial or sensitive issues of the culture they are willing to represent, in favor of moderated social challenges.

The latter are more likely to be accepted and shared by a global audience on one hand, while still being appreciated by the culture that has been represented on the other.

While this allows the company to gain important results and expand globally, it fails in making a real change and unfolding the structural causes of societal problems (Jenner, 2024).

Streaming platforms, through the exponential growth that they have been facing over the last decades, could be a powerful tool to help with socio-cultural issues.

However, they use their potential to either sell a progressive agenda or to shift consumers’ preferences through algorithmic tools, based on what they are trying to achieve (Jenner, 2024).

It can be stated that Netflix set the standards for its competitors in the digital entertainment landscape.

However, with the rapid spread of new digital solutions, other actors were able to catch up with its innovative strategies.

Despite being one of the initiators of the streaming market, it still faces the challenges of the *Streaming War* (Luo, 2020).

2.5 The effect of streaming platforms on pirate streaming

Illegal streaming piracy has become very popular, soon after the first years of digitalization.

Kim, M. S. and Kim, S. (2025) defined online streaming piracy as “the unlawful practice of duplicating digital items such as software, digital files, digital audio and videos for purposes other than creating backups, without obtaining explicit authorization and providing compensation to the copyright owner” (Kim and Kim, 2025: 1)

It is a phenomenon happening at the global level, there are several channels through which it operates, but the most popular are illegal streaming websites (Kim and Kim, 2025).

Here users can find cinematic items, such as exclusive content that is only available on subscription-based streaming platforms, or even that is only present in theatres and has not yet been released elsewhere.

Kim, M. S. and Kim, S. (2025) have conducted a study to understand the reasons behind people’s use of illegal streaming websites.

They analyzed the phenomenon through the Theory of Planned Behavior⁵ and then they observed the difference among generations, discovering that individuals' age influences the likelihood with which they use pirate streaming services.

Through their research, it emerged that the main driver is the economic factor: through online piracy, users can avoid the subscription costs required to access content on streaming platforms.

At the same time, the authors identified a number of elements that discourage individuals from recurring to illegal streaming.

On one hand they observed that people with strong morals are less likely to use these websites, on the other they registered that a percentage of users actually perceives the legal sanctions associated with this activity as a serious consequence (Kim and Kim, 2025).

Finally, one more reason why people avoid pirate streaming services, is the rapid development of legal streaming platforms.

The authors refer to these players as OTT⁶: they observed that their content differentiation, their convenience and their efficiency, has negatively impacted the illegal streaming business (Kim and Kim, 2025).

⁵ The latter aims at explaining and predicting human behavior in a given, specific context, particularly in situations in which the individual under scrutiny has low or no control over the situation.

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, control depends on three main factors:

- attitude towards the behavior;
- subjective norm;
- perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

⁶“*Over-The-Top*, a term used to describe the delivery of content over the Internet, bypassing traditional distribution methods such as broadcast TV, cable, or satellite services. Examples of OTT platforms include Netflix, Disney+, and Amazon Prime Video. The OTT market has been experiencing remarkable growth annually” (Kim and Kim, 2025: 1).

Frick, Fletcher and Smith (2023) conducted a study using the case of Netflix as an example: in 2015, the company lost the rights on Epix's films to Hulu.

The results have demonstrated that when a content was removed from Netflix platform, most users went to look for it on illegal streaming services, increasing the annual percentage of film piracy.

Particularly, they were able to measure - through the volume of Google searches - that the individuals' intention to opt for illegal streaming increased by 20% as a consequence.

Thus, the more differentiated the content offer is on streaming platforms, the less users will feel the need to look for it on illegal websites (Frick, Fletcher and Smith, 2023).

Despite film piracy has not yet been completely defeated by legal streaming platforms, the latter are fighting an indirect battle against it.

Building on the reasons identified by Kim, M. S. and Kim, S. (2025), whereby people avoid using illegal streaming services, legal platforms offer a legal space where users can enjoy content without any risk of sanction or issues of morality.

At the same time, both of these studies have recognized that there are some limitations that prevent legal streaming platforms from fully substituting piracy.

One of its main drivers is of economic character: people use illegal services because legal streaming platforms are too expensive.

Furthermore, the streaming market is growing to be extremely fragmented: different content is distributed on multiple platforms, not everyone is able to afford a subscription to more than one.

This might cause users to use film piracy, in order to look for content that is not present on the streaming platform they are subscribed to.

2.6 The bias on the Customer Journey process

Up until now we have examined the evolution of streaming platforms.

These players have changed the rules of the entertainment industry, causing the shift from a *traditional economy* to a *direct-to-consumer* one.

This thesis' aim is to investigate how streaming platforms' strategies and digital tools create a bias in the Customer Journey process, by influencing consumers choices and preferences.

In terms of content creation, storytelling⁷ is considered a core element of this new industry.

It is a powerful tool: the narrative that a platform chooses for a given production will dictate the perception of the audience on the subject matter (Pauley, A. 2021).

In 2021 Netflix Italy made available on its platform a film produced by Marco Tullio Giordana, "Yara".

The production told the story of Yara Gambirasio, one of the most high-profile criminal cases in Italy.

The narrative of this documentary was very clear: it pictured the main suspect of the crime as guilty. It showed all the existing proof against him, that ultimately led to his arrest.

After watching this documentary, I was firmly convinced that Massimo Bossetti had murdered Yara Gambirasio.

More recently, in 2024, Netflix Italy released a second production on the same case.

This time it was a short series "*Il caso Yara - Oltre ogni ragionevole dubbio*" by Gianluca Neri (*The Yara Gambirasio Case: Beyond Reasonable Doubt*).

The narrative of this documentary was completely different from the previous one: it showed many inconsistencies that characterized the investigation and it set the ground for emerging doubts concerning the main suspect's arrest.

After watching the second production, I believed that Massimo Bossetti might have been innocent instead.

This short example is the demonstration of how impactful narrative persuasion and storytelling can be on consumers' choices and preferences.

⁷ Defined as "the activity of writing, telling or reading stories" (Cambridge Dictionary 2024: 1), it is used by streaming platforms to set the tone for the story they are representing through their content.

Two productions treating the same subject matter led to two opposite perceptions in me, as a user. (Pauley, A. 2021).

These solutions are even more reinforced by *binge-watching marketing*: which makes it possible to retain consumers' attention for a large amount of time.

Through globalization, these players have rapidly expanded to other markets.

Major actors like Netflix - whose main strategy is the creation of original content - leverage topics of socio-cultural or political matter, adapted to different global perspectives.

To do so they use a transnational strategy, which has been identified as the most common and successful business model adopted by these players.

In these terms, another strategy used by streaming platforms is *mediated intergroup contact* (Pauley, A. 2021).

It refers to the way a social group is represented in media content, and how this affects the audience's perception of it. It is an impactful tactic, able to increase or reduce stereotypes and bias through a more positive or negative depiction (Pauley, A. 2021).

This idea, together with the Jenner's (2024) thought - the "Grammar of Transnationalism", particularly the concepts of "Quantification of Diversity" and "Visibility Politics" - are the strategies that allow streaming platforms to successfully deliver transnational content for a global audience.

As we have seen, a great role in shaping consumers' choices and preferences is played by algorithms.

Users are often divided in clusters according to their preferences, filters tend to highlight content that is preferred by dominant categories, while downplaying what is relevant to weaker ones (Hesmondhalgh, Valverde, Kaye, & Li, 2023).

In other words, streaming platforms have the power to decide not only which type of content to show, but also to leverage the accessibility of certain types of content over others.

The data-driven logic can slowly interfere with users' preferences, algorithms have the power not only to match consumers' taste, but also to reshape it according to their offer.

The case of Cambridge Analytica is a great example of this phenomenon: this company helped several politicians to gain consensus among the population through algorithms and campaigns on social media platforms (Amer & Noujaim, 2019).

Hesmondhalgh (2019) conducted a study on the democratization v. monopolization of the media through streaming platforms.

According to this research, these emerging players reinforced an already existing power dynamic between the consumers and suppliers.

They did so through digitalization, the innovative tools they brought and their controversial marketing strategies, which interfere with the normal process of product selection. (Hesmondhalgh, 2019).

Digitalization and technology are orchestrated on the basis of political, economic and cultural interests.

These actors operate following a specific *modus operandi*: they merge their transnational strategy with the blockbuster logic. They invest in big productions that catch cultural attention at the global level, dominating the scene and suffocating smaller, independent productions (Hesmondhalgh, 2019).

Furthermore, their marketing strategies and data-driven tools allow them to guide public opinion through an uneven system, where decision-making power is biased on the basis of socio-political and economic interests (Hesmondhalgh, 2019).

“The hopes invested in digitalization as a means of media democratization have generally not been realized” (Hesmondhalgh, 2019: 16).

This quote refers to the slow death of democratic success: digitalization, instead of promoting the democratization of the media and the possibility of individuals to emerge, has created a scenario in which everything is controlled by international dynamics of political or economic character, through digital platforms’ controversial tools and strategies.

Hence, what this thesis is investigating is the role of streaming platforms as preferences’ shapers, through their storytelling, transnational strategies and algorithm-driven marketing.

In the following section, I will illustrate the methodology of this research and the primary data I have collected, in order to answer the proposed research question.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Discussion

3.1 Research Design

As anticipated in the Literature Review, the primary data collected for this research follows a qualitative approach.

The aim is to demonstrate how streaming platforms - through their ever growing power, their strategies and technological innovation - create a bias in the normal Customer Journey process.

Hence, the nature of this study is highly subjective: interviewees will be asked questions exploring their personal use of streaming platforms and how much of an influence these players have in their social life, in order to find a reflection of my hypothesis in the participants' responses.

It is for these reasons that I have chosen to carry semi-structured, qualitative interviews with the aim of answering the research question below.

“How do the new touchpoints introduced by streaming platforms - transnational strategies, narrative persuasion and data-driven algorithms – create a bias in the Customer Journey process ?”

The research question aims at demonstrating that streaming platforms' touchpoints, which have been organized in three independent variables (transnational strategies, narrative persuasion and data-driven algorithm), impact the Customer Journey, labeled as the dependent variable.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The questions were studied for the interviewees to give genuine responses, without pushing the participants towards a specific answer, in order to collect uninfluenced and unbiased results.

The choice of semi-structured, qualitative interviews was taken to gain as much insights as possible from the participants.

The object of this research is subjective: having open-ended questions allows the interviewees to navigate freely on the topic and to possibly gain more unambiguous answers compared to closed-ended questions.

3.3 The Interview Questions

The interview has a structure based on five pillars:

1. Warm-up questions

The first part begins with generic questions, still relevant to the topic, aimed at making the participant feel comfortable and prepare for the next parts.

2. Narrative persuasion

The second round of questions investigates one of the three independent variables: the influence of narrative persuasion.

3. Transnational strategy

The third pillar navigates through the second independent variable: the effect of transnational strategy as a successful model.

4. Algorithms

Following, the fourth part considers the third independent variable: data-driven algorithms.

5. Customer Journey

Finally, in the last part I investigate the dependent variable, analyzing how streaming platforms, through their instruments and strategies, shape and bias consumers' choices and preferences in the Customer Journey process.

6. Closing the interview

This part includes one final question to close the interview, asking the participant if there is anything else he or she would like to say or clarify, concerning his answers.

Below I report the interview questions that were asked to each participant, in the same order.

Part One

1. How old are you?
2. How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?
3. How do you select the content to watch on streaming platforms? (Title, cover page, platform's suggestion, etc.).
4. How long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a "*watching-marathon*"?

Part Two

5. Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?
6. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?
7. Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?
8. Have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

Part Three

9. Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?
10. When you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?
11. Have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?
12. Do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

Part Four

13. Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?
14. What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?
15. Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?
16. Have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

Part Five

17. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?
18. Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?
19. When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?
20. Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?
21. Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?
22. Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

Part Six

23. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

3.4 Sample

Digitalization is a recent phenomenon that has grown exponentially over the past twenty years.

The existence of digital solutions is known by everyone, however each generation perceives it in a different way.

It is often assumed that digitalization is understood and used particularly by the younger generations compared to the older ones. However, while a part of the older generations has difficulties adapting to the latest innovations, the majority has been able to integrate them in their daily life.

It is for this reason that I decided to select streaming platforms' consumers and divide them into generational clusters.

This would allow me to have a complete picture of this phenomenon and collect insights to answer the research question I proposed.

In this way, I will be able to test the extent to which each generational group is influenced by streaming platform strategies in the way they select content, according to the Customer Journey process.

I will assume that there are five main groups of generations, for which I interviewed two participants.

The five generational clusters under analysis are:

- Baby Boomers: 1946-1964;
- Generation X: 1965-1980;
- Generation Y (Millennials): 1981-1996;
- Generation Z: 1997-2010;
- Generation Alpha: 2011-2025.

The objective of this division is not only to have a differentiated sample that homogeneously represents the consumers' population, but also to observe how each generation is individually influenced by streaming platforms.

The interviews have been carried out in person, the dialogue is informal and it has been recorded and transcribed at a later stage for analytic purposes.

Before the questioning started, each participant was asked for consensus to be recorded.

3.5 The interviews

In this next section I provide a summary of each individual interview, in order to identify the focal points to discuss in the last chapter.

Before the summaries, I briefly introduce the characteristics of each generation that are relevant to the research, namely the extent to which each generational group integrates digital solutions in their life.

3.5.1 Baby Boomers

The generational group of Baby Boomers consists of people born between 1946 and 1964, the oldest generation under scrutiny in this study (Carrillo-Durán, Ruano-López, Fernández-Falero, Trabadel-Robles, 2022).

Individuals born in these years had to radically adapt to the digital era, their relationship with digitalization presents several limitations, due to the difficulties in accepting and learning new technologies that are too far from their time.

On one hand, they are characterized by mistrust and fear for their privacy when it comes to digital innovation, on the other they also have a desire for affiliation⁸ and support⁹ at the social level (Carrillo-Durán, Ruano-López, Fernández-Falero, Trabadel-Robles, 2022).

⁸ the desire of belonging to or being part of a given community (Carrillo-Durán, Ruano-López, Fernández-Falero, Trabadel-Robles, 2022).

⁹ the desire of being connected with others and socially comforted (Carrillo-Durán, Ruano-López, Fernández-Falero, Trabadel-Robles, 2022).

Baby Boomers are not familiar with the ultimate technological developments, their traits can lead simultaneously to two opposite reactions.

They can be selective and skeptical when it comes to choosing content, but they can also be an easy prey for streaming platforms' ultimate marketing strategies.

Below I report the interviews of Lucia and Antonio, two individuals belonging to this generational group.

Let us analyze how Baby Boomers interact with the new digital solutions introduced by streaming platforms and how the latter interfere with their Customer Journey process.

Lucia

Lucia is a 71 year old woman, born in 1954 and thus belonging to the Baby Boomers' generational group.

She is not a serial streamer, she usually watches content once a week, in the evening. When she chooses her content, she often listens to her daughter's advice or else she looks at the title and the leading actor.

Lucia admits that if she really likes a show she can watch up to two or three episodes, but she does not define it as marathons: she claims that she can stop if she wants to, she is not addicted.

In the second part of the interview, the participant tells about a show that has made her deeply reason about control over women's bodies. After the watch, she reconsidered some of her standpoints concerning this topic.

In order to catch her attention, a show must feel real: she likes when the characters struggle with real-life issues, so that she can relate to them.

Lucia tells about a time when she watched two different productions about immigration, she admits that after watching the second one she was really confused: she did not know what was right and what was wrong anymore.

At the same time, she claims to have really strong and solid opinions: she might have reconsidered some of her perspectives, but she does not believe she has been led or influenced by streaming platforms' narrations.

Moving on, in the third part of the interview Lucia was asked whether she ever watched a foreign production, to which she responded by mentioning *Narcos* and *La Casa De Papel*.

However, she admits that she did not really catch culture-specific elements while watching these shows: to her, they all follow the structure of American movies.

When asked whether she ever notices the presence of characters belonging to social minorities, she admits that she hardly pays attention to this, unless they make it very obvious. But, in that case, it loses its purpose: it just remarks their difference from the rest.

Lucia thinks that sometimes they do a really good job in representing social issues, while sometimes they treat it like fiction: it depends on the type of show.

In the fourth part of the interview, Lucia is asked about platforms' recommendations. She admits that she does not like them, as she doesn't understand how they work or how they know her preferences.

When she opens a streaming platform, she either already knows what to watch or she asks other people for suggestions.

Lucia often plays an episode right after the previous one: she is mainly moved by curiosity, but the platforms' automatic play also has a role.

When asked whether her choices might be influenced by platforms' recommendations, the participant stresses that she trusts her preferences and her friends' advice: she does not like or trusts automatic recommendations.

She avoids them because she has been stuck in a cluster of contents before, which consisted of American-style movies. She likes the old ways better: to manually look for what she wants to watch.

In the fifth part of the interview, Lucia admits that her way of selecting content has changed over time: at first she did not comprehend how the platforms work, while now she is much better at searching for content.

She still listens to the advice of people around her, but she admits that if a title seems interesting to her, she just watches it.

She has the impression that streaming platforms always promote the same type of content, mainly American-style, and this is what makes her skeptical.

She is still confused by algorithms: sometimes they are accurate, while some other times they promote content that is completely out of line with her tastes.

She observes that people of her age tend to watch the same content as her, while younger people's tastes are completely different.

She states that her primary criteria when selecting are her own tastes, emotions and interests. However, she admits that if she sees a show or a movie everywhere, the curiosity to watch it often wins her over.

The participant was asked whether or not streaming platforms can influence people's response to social issues. She responded that a production can make her emotional and impact her deeply, but not enough to change her opinions, that always stay solid.

The participant believes that streaming platforms can be used for propaganda, but speaking of influencing public opinion, she claims that it only works with the younger generation.

Lucia ends the interview by saying that, to her, the main role of streaming platforms is to help relax.

Antonio

Antonio is a 67 years old male, born 1958 and thus a Baby Boomer.

He uses streaming platforms almost every night, he is particularly interested in documentaries.

He selects the content he likes by looking at titles or reviews he reads on newspapers.

He does not enjoy scrolling to look for something to watch, it takes too much time.

Antonio says that when he particularly enjoys a show, he can watch more than one episode, but he doesn't call it a marathon: he can stop whenever he likes.

In the second part of the interview, he tells about a documentary about the Vietnam War that he recently watched: it made him rethink the opinions he held for years.

A production, in order to be fascinating to him, needs to feel real: for this reason, he mainly chooses documentaries or movies based on real events.

He once watched two different productions about a politician he used to appreciate, but after watching the second one, his perception of the same figure changed.

Antonio says that he believes streaming platforms allow him to expand his perspectives, showing new possibilities, but he does not believe his opinions can be completely changed by content.

In the third part of the interview, Antonio says he has watched several productions set abroad. He admits that while in some cases he does catch culture-specific elements, most of the time each production is “Americanized”.

When asked whether he notices the presence of characters belonging to social minorities, he admits that he only pays attention to it if it concerns a core part of the narration, or the main characters (but most of the time he barely notices).

Antonio believes that real social issues are best represented in documentaries, which is the reason why he chooses this genre when selecting content. He claims that movies often simplify issues to fit everyone’s tastes, while documentaries represent the facts.

In the fourth part of the interview, Antonio is asked about algorithms. He prefers to choose his own movies, he does not like the platform taking decisions for him and he does not fully understand how they work.

He is pushed towards playing another episode out of curiosity, but the automatic play is also a temptation.

Once he accidentally opened his daughter's profile on Netflix, he noticed that the majority of the homepage consisted of American dating shows.

In the final part of the interview, Antonio admits that his way of selecting content evolved over time.

At first he was more curious and explored various genres, while now he has become more critical and selective, he goes directly for what he knows he likes. He doesn't like wasting time scrolling through the catalogue.

He notices how certain genres are pushed more than others, he finds it annoying and it does not improve his trust level towards the platforms.

He believes his content is unique and personal, but he also shares tastes with his friends.

He believes that his selection process is personalized and old-fashioned. Despite admitting to being tempted by the curiosity to watch a popular show, he states that he always tries to stay in control and trust his own method.

Antonio believes that the way he responds to socio-cultural and political issues depends on his values and beliefs: he does not think streaming platforms are powerful enough to interfere with that.

He does believe that global entities can use it for propaganda, but he remains skeptical about streaming platforms being able to shift whole opinions.

Antonio closes the interview by saying that streaming platforms can be an information vehicle. He prefers documentaries to movies, because he thinks a bad narration can interfere with real events.

3.5.2 Generation X

This generation was born between 1965 and 1980, before the digitalization era.

People born in this time are independent, with a pragmatic and skeptical attitude towards innovation (Euajarusphan, 2021).

Their characteristics were shaped due to the historical events they lived through and the way they were raised by their parents.

They value education, family and friends, having a preference towards intellectual development rather than material wealth (Euajarusphan, 2021).

They learned how to use technology and innovative solutions, like streaming platforms, in their adulthood (Euajarusphan, 2021).

This made them less enthusiastic about technological innovation compared to the younger generations, but at the same time they integrated it in their daily life.

Like Millennials, they use digitalization as an information vehicle and opinions exchanger, but their skepticism makes them less likely to be manipulated by the strategies used by digital players (Euajarusphan, 2021).

Thus, this generation is harder to reach: they value content quality, transparency and reliability, which makes them not an easy target for the digital marketing strategy implemented by streaming platforms.

At the same time, they better integrate technology in their life compared to older generations.

Let us investigate the effect of streaming platforms on this type of consumers through the interviews of Elena and Marco, identifying how their Customer Journey process has been affected.

Elena

Elena is a 55 years old female, born in 1970 and thus part of Generation X.

She uses streaming platforms three or four times a week. She usually looks at the title or reviews online before selecting something to watch, while other times she uses the platforms' suggestions.

Despite not calling it a marathon, often she watches more than she should: if a story is well-written, she finds it hard to stop.

In the second part of the interview, Elena admits that she reconsidered her opinions about abortion after watching a really touching production. She is particularly attracted to a show when its characters show complexity and reality, without moralizing excessively.

She talks about when she watched different productions treating a similar topic: after the first one, she almost distrust the justice system; while after the second one, she gained a new perspective about being innocent or guilty - there are always multiple layers in each case.

She admits that, despite her efforts to maintain her critical thought, if a story proves her wrong she will reconsider her opinion.

In the third part of the interview, she talks about a Korean romantic comedy she recently watched. She admits that while she did catch some culture-specific elements, the core structure of the movie followed the American model.

She notices the presence of characters belonging to social minorities and she believes it to be something positive and educating. However, it should not be carried out superficially. She also believes that, when representing social issues, streaming platforms tend to adapt the content to the type of audience they are trying to reach.

In the fourth part of the interview, Elena says that to her the platforms' automatic suggestions are useful, but sometimes they tend to be repetitive. When that happens, she tends to look for content elsewhere.

She does not believe that the platform's structure has an influence on her playing another episode, it depends more on the curiosity a story creates in her.

She admits that her preferences might be influenced by the platform's suggestions, particularly when she is too lazy to look for something to watch (she goes along with what the platform recommends her).

She admits that she never found herself stuck in a cluster of contents, because she tries to vary: if she notices she is watching the same things, she asks for advice on what to watch to her friends.

In the final part of the interview, Elena speaks about how her ways of selecting content on streaming platforms changed over time: she thinks she used to be more spontaneous in choosing, while now she is more selective. She wants something that meets her needs, that's why sometimes she relies on the platform's suggestions.

She believes that streaming platforms advertise their own original content the most.

This gives her the impression that they are just trying to sell something to her, rather than improving her customer experience through accurate recommendations.

She admits to liking multiple genres: she has some tastes in common with her colleagues, but also with her daughter.

Elena says that despite her attempts to select content by using alternative ways, sometimes she just listens to the platforms' suggestion due to tiredness or lack of time.

She observes that streaming platforms can show you new sides of an issue, leading to a change of heart.

The participant thinks that streaming platforms are a means for education and information, but she is not sure how global entities might take advantage of it: she finds it a scary thought.

She closes the interview by saying that streaming platforms can educate, but maintaining our critical thought is important.

Marco

Marco is a 48 years old male, he was born in 1976 and thus part of Generation X.

He works in the IT sector, he travels a lot for work and he usually uses streaming platforms between flights or during lunch break. He selects contents online or through specialized articles, but he sometimes also uses the platforms' suggestions.

He does not have time to do marathons, even if sometimes he would love to play one more episode.

In the second part of the interview, he tells about a time where he rethought his opinions on the Israel-Palestine conflict, after watching a documentary.

He is attracted to productions that can show him something new and real, knowing about sides of a story he never heard of can emotionally reach him.

He talks about watching different productions about the American army: after watching the first, he saw it as an enemy. However, the second one showed him what being a soldier really means: he was able to empathize with that and his initial view softened deeply.

He admits that he has changed his mind before, however he does not call it being led: he believes his critical thought is strong enough not to be influenced by streaming platforms.

In the third part of the interview, about transnational strategies, Marco said he recently watched a German show on Netflix.

When asked about whether he caught culture-specific elements in the show, he admitted that he did not immediately realize it was German, he was convinced it was American. He believes that the majority of content on streaming platforms, despite being set in a different country, are all characterized by the same hollywoodian print.

He admits that he normally does not pay attention to the presence of characters belonging to social minorities, but he does when they change the entire core of a character to be more inclusive, or in line with the “politically correct”.

Accordingly, he claims that today is very easy to get canceled. Hence, he believes that social issues on streaming platforms are filtered, in order to avoid offending anyone.

In the fourth part of the interview, Marco admits that he tries to avoid platforms' recommendations as he is quite critical of them. However, when he decides to follow them, he admits that he always enjoys the watch.

Marco admits that what pushes him towards playing another episode is the curiosity to see what happens next, rather than the platforms' structure.

He doesn't think that his preferences have been influenced by algorithms, he believes in his critical mind. He doesn't know if it is a loop, but he notices that streaming platforms offer repetitive content for him to watch - it is one more reason why he tries to avoid them.

In the final part of the interview, Marco admits that the way he selects content changed over time: at first he was more curious, he let himself be guided by the platform.

Now, since he lacks time, Marco gets informed on what to watch beforehand.

In this way, he opens the platform and looks directly for the content he selected.

At the same time, he does follow the platforms' suggestions if he doesn't have time to research.

The participant notices that platforms often sponsor the same item, this makes him doubt the system's intelligence.

He admits that, despite his efforts to have a unique and alternative selection method, he realizes that a lot of his friends watch similar productions as him.

Marco still believes that his selection process is personalized, but he realizes that he might be influenced by external forces somehow.

He believes that streaming platforms, through visual language, have the power to show different sides of the same story. At the same time he stresses that everyone, at the end of day, has a choice on what to believe.

When asked about global entities using streaming platforms to their advantage, Marco admits that the majority of people get easily manipulated and this is something that higher powers can exploit.

For this reason, he consults multiple sources of information and does not think he is part of this category of people.

3.5.3 Generation Y

This generational group, also known as *millennials*, was born between 1981 and 1996, in the middle of the digital innovation emergence, witnessing its beginning.

People born in this period of time are characterized by a prioritization of convenience, they are in favor of innovation and technological integration, but at the same time they also value personalization of products and the extent to which companies value social responsibility (Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels, Kabadayi, Gruber, & Solnet, 2013).

Generation Y is characterized by a necessity to multitask, what they look for in digital solutions is a tool that allows them to do multiple activities at the same time in an efficient way.

Thus, Millennials use streaming platforms not only as entertainment tools, but as means for information, which they like to share with others.

This inevitably makes them more exposed to the risk of being led in their customer journey process, presented by streaming platforms in a certain way.

The tools used by these players - i.e. recommendation through algorithms, transnational strategies or binge-watching marketing - are assumed to be particularly effective on this generational group.

Let us navigate through the interviews of Riccardo and Alessandro, two participants belonging to this generational group, and how their relationship with streaming platforms interferes with their Customer Journey process.

Riccardo

Riccardo is a 34 years old male, he was born in 1991 and thus, is a Millennial.

In the first part of the interview, the participant admits that he watches content on streaming platforms twice a week and, in order to choose what to watch, he mainly looks at the title or the trailer on Youtube.

Riccardo says that he does not spend more than three hours watching content, he has done *watching-marathons* before but he tries to limit himself.

In the second part of the interview he was asked whether he ever changed opinion over a person or an issue after watching a show, he says that it depends on the way a story is being narrated.

For Riccardo, a story is fascinating when there are elements of reality: he says that when he can perceive it, he can get emotionally involved. He mentioned the documentary about Senna, which showed multiple sides of his personality.

The participant admits that he changed his opinion after watching two different productions treating the same story, he reflected that it all depends on what sides of a narration they decide to show.

Riccardo admits that he has been led by streaming content before, he used to watch documentaries about personal growth. In that period of time, his daily life was deeply affected as he was trying to act like the characters.

In the third part of the interview, Riccardo says that he often watches foreign-based productions. Being Italian, his favorite content is the one produced in the United States: he appreciates the quality of their content.

He admits that, when watching American content, he could really feel and perceive their culture. He mentions the documentary representing the story of McDonalds: when he watched it, he felt fully immersed in the 1960s' fast food culture.

Riccardo believes that streaming platforms successfully represent social minority groups in their productions, showing sides of their world that he has never seen before.

However, when asked about whether streaming platforms are able to fairly represent real social issues, he admits that often they tend to simplify them in order to fit everyone's likings, in order to access more public.

In the fourth part of the interview, Riccardo is asked about algorithms. He is a supporter of this technology, as it allows him to avoid wasting time finding a show he likes.

He uses recommendations from Netflix and Prime Video very often.

When asked what pushes him towards playing another episode of a show, Riccardo admits that Netflix's automatic play is what gets him the most. However, he said that the way in which the previous episode ended also has an influence.

Riccardo admits that he does not worry about algorithms influencing his preferences, he enjoys their amenity but he is confident that they cannot interfere with his values and opinions. Therefore, even if they take the decision for him, he does not see it as a problem.

Riccardo admits that he has been stuck in a cluster of content before, but he does not blame it on algorithms, he links it to periods of his life when he likes certain genres more than others. Thus, he believes to have control on the type of content he watches.

In the final part of the interview, Riccardo shares that the way he selects content on streaming platforms has evolved since he first approached this service.

At the beginning, he used to spend more time scrolling through the platform to find the most interesting film or show to watch.

Now, he trusts the platforms' suggestions: he likes the idea of entering the platform and immediately having something to watch, instead of wasting time scrolling.

He notices that some content is more sponsored than other, it appears everywhere on the platform. However, he is not concerned by this, he finds it rather convenient: he has something new to watch.

He believes that there are some genres that everyone watches, the most popular ones, but at the same time everyone has their own tastes.

Riccardo thinks that the way he selects content is both personalized and influenced by external factors at the same time: sometimes he already knows what to watch and immediately looks for it, other times he lets himself be guided by the platforms' recommendations.

When asked whether streaming platforms can influence people's perception of social issues, he responded that it is our responsibility to have a critical mind and maintain our positions on things.

On this note, he believes that global entities have the power to guide public opinion, but we also have the freedom to choose what to watch and believe. He stresses the importance of always consulting neutral sources of information.

The participant ends the interview by saying that people should use streaming platforms to relax in their free time and be better, while always preserving their perception of things.

Alessandro

Alessandro is a 31 years old male, he was born in 1994 and thus, he belongs to Generation Y.

He shares that he does not have any specific routine around watching streaming platforms, but he often uses the service in the evening, after dinner.

In order to select content, he either looks online or he searches directly on the streaming platform: in this case, he looks mostly at the cover and at the information in the description.

Alessandro admits that if the show it's very catchy he will watch more than one episode in a row. He does watching-marathons, but mostly during the weekends.

In the second part of the interview, the participant says that he has changed his view about an issue after watching a show: he mentions *Bojack Horseman*, specifically the way the show portrays mental health and addiction.

In order to be fascinating to Alessandro, a show must relate to the world he lives in. In this way, he feels like he can experience what he is watching.

The interviewee shares that he watched different productions about the same Italian politician: one production was more on the character's side, the other enhanced his flaws and most controversial sides. After watching both productions, his perception of this person changed, as he gained a 360 degree view about him.

Following, Alessandro is asked whether he ever felt led or changed his mind after watching something.

He says it happened when he watched two different documentaries about the Chernobyl disaster: the two different narratives had a strong influence on how he perceived the phenomenon.

In the third part of the interview Alessandro mentioned the Japanese show *Alice in Borderland*.

He admits that he caught some culture-specific elements, but he mostly found commonalities between his society and the one represented on show.

He observes that globalization definitely had an impact on how Japanese culture was represented.

Alessandro finds the social minorities' representation by streaming platforms to be superficial and forced. In his opinion, sometimes these characters are integrated in a plotline where they do not fit, to him it feels like they had to be placed in the narration to respect a standard.

In the fourth part of the interview Alessandro shares that he has extended his trust towards streaming platforms' automatic recommendations.

He admits that they are all really similar, but they are also convenient: if he really likes a genre, automatic suggestions allow him to find related content very easily.

When asked what pushes him towards playing another episode, he responds that the platform structure surely has an influence, but what catches him the most is the way the previous episode ended.

The participant argues that he has been stuck in a loop of content before due to algorithms: he explains that, for a certain period of his life, he was only watching Japanese Anime.

In the final part of the interview, Alessandro admits that he got more lazy in the way he selects content.

He used to do some research about what to watch before opening the platform, while now he scrolls and he uses the automatic recommendations more frequently. He finds it to be more quick and efficient.

He notices that platforms sponsor mostly their own original content, he admits that it can be annoying if he ends up not liking a movie, otherwise he appreciates it.

Alessandro says that he shares similar tastes in terms of content with his friends and people of his age. However, he also watches more niche and unique genres: he defines Japanese Anime as “his thing”.

He is not sure whether his selection process is unique, but he definitely believes that the content he watches is: he observes that platforms choose productions according to his preferences.

At the same time, Alessandro admits that he often watches content that platforms advertise to everyone, so that is less unique and personalized.

The participant believes that streaming platforms’ content can influence people’s perception of socio-cultural and political issues, based on what parts of a story they decide to show.

Alessandro was asked whether, in his opinion, global entities have the power to exploit streaming platforms to guide public opinion in their favor.

He strongly believes they do, he mentioned a documentary he saw on Netflix, called *The Great Hack*, that showed him how several elections were tampered through social media.

The participant concludes the interview by saying that his purpose while using streaming platforms is merely to relax during his free time. However, he recognizes that they can be useful tools to spread the word on socio-political and cultural issues.

3.5.4 Generation Z

This generational group was born between 1997 and 2010, when the transformation from traditional to digital was in an already advanced stage.

Engagement and integration with brands was starting to be carried out online and the first streaming platforms were stepping into the market. (Priporas, Stylos & Fotiadis, 2017).

Gen Z is highly educated, they see digital solutions as tools to facilitate everyday life. This group was the first to present significant changes compared to the previous ones: as consumers, they are characterized by higher expectations in terms of digital communication and social media integration.

At the same time, being born in an environment of constant change at the political, social and cultural level, they tend to be less loyal and trustworthy.

These individuals, when choosing a brand, value their corporate social responsibility: they are deeply interested in social causes and integration.

Gen Z seeks technology, safety and authenticity, while also desiring to momentarily escape their reality: they value experiences when consuming content (Priporas, Stylos & Fotiadis, 2017).

Thus, this generation is highly familiar with digitalization, it knows its advantages and its risks.

Below, I present the interviews of Chiara and Luca, two streaming platforms consumers belonging to Gen Z.

Let us analyze how their Customer Journey process is influenced by the new tools and strategies introduced by streaming platforms.

Chiara

Chiara is a 23 years old female, she was born in 2002 and she belongs to Generation Z. She consumes streaming content daily, but prefers to watch shows and films in the evening.

When it comes to selecting material, she usually looks at the top 10 most watched shows on the streaming platforms, or else she chooses among the automatic suggestions. She also looks at what shows are currently viral on social media, she mentions Tiktok.

She often does watching-marathons, particularly during weekends. She admits that if she really likes a show she can stay up all night watching episode after episode.

In the second part of the interview, Chiara shares that she has changed her mind about a social issue after watching a show.

She says that being able to relate to the characters is what moves her the most, this is what she values in the content she selects.

When asked about watching the same topic treated in two different productions, Chiara mentioned the Menendez Brothers' case. She watched two different representations of it and she had a different perception of the events after each.

She admits that she might have been led after watching the two productions, considering how her impression changed, but she never paid too much attention to this.

In the third part of the interview, about transnational strategies, Chiara said that she watched *Squid Game* on Netflix, a Korean show.

She argues that there were some elements belonging to Korean culture, but she mostly felt that the production was universal: as an Italian she understood every reference.

Chiara explains that, when asked about streaming platforms' integration of social minority groups, she perceives it as something forced.

More specifically, she mentions Disney's live-action movies as an example: the company has been using actors of color to impersonate characters that were not originally of that ethnicity.

On this note, when asked whether or not streaming platforms successfully represent real social issues, she replies that it depends on the topic being treated.

However, she believes that most issues are simplified in order to reach a larger audience.

In the fourth part of the interview, Chiara is asked about platform suggestions: she considers algorithms to be very useful, she trusts the platforms' recommendations even if sometimes they can be repetitive.

When it comes to playing another episode of a show, she is mostly pushed by the narrative of the story. However, she also observes that the automatic play is very tempting.

Chiara argues that streaming platforms' suggestions are always based on her own preferences, but she is uncertain whether or not the latter are influenced by the recommendations themselves.

The participant recognizes that the genres appearing on her homepage can be quite repetitive: this might be an obstacle to discovering something new, since the suggestions are focusing on what she already likes.

In the final part of the interview, the participant shares that her way of selecting content has changed over time.

At the beginning, the content she watched used to be more differentiated, while now she focuses only on the genres she already likes. She admits that she barely chooses: most of the time she simply follows the automatic suggestions.

She notices that platforms sponsor their own original content the most, she understands that it's a marketing strategy.

At the same time it doesn't bother her because she usually likes Netflix's original content.

Chiara shares similar algorithms as her friends: they usually recommend content to each other, so that they keep discovering new genres, which is what makes it unique.

She believes that the way she selects content is personalized, since she chooses among suggestions that are made specifically for her by the platforms.

However, she admits that sometimes she also chooses shows that go viral on social media, distant from what she usually watches - in this way, she is influenced by external factors.

She is convinced that streaming platforms have the power to influence people's response to socio-cultural and political issues: she changed her mind several times.

Chiara thinks that in today's digitalized world everyone is under the influence of the media: she argues that global entities have used it in their favor before and she specifically mentions propaganda.

The participant concludes the interview by saying that streaming platforms can have a double face: they are useful as an information vehicle on one hand, while can be dangerous if used to promote an idea over another.

She stresses that people should always be loyal to their own interpretation of things.

Luca

Luca is a 20 years old male, born in 2005 and thus part of Generation Z.

He uses streaming platforms almost every night, he selects content using platforms' recommendations and by looking at the leading actors.

Luca often does watching-marathons, he recently watched the new season of a show all in one sitting.

In the second part of the interview, about narrative persuasion, the participant admits that he often changes his perceptions of things after watching shows.

Recently, he changed his mind about the importance of inmates' life conditions in prisons, which are often inhuman and degrading.

He likes a story to which he can relate, but he also likes fantasy worlds through which he can momentarily escape reality.

He admits that, after watching two different productions treating the same topic, he is often confused about how to interpret the represented issue. Sometimes, he looks for clarification on other platforms, like Youtube or Tiktok.

He believes that streaming platforms lead us, both through the way they tell a story and through showing us a certain type of content over another.

In the third part of the interview, Luca mentions *Elite* when asked about a foreign production he watched. He did not catch any culture-specific elements, he only found out it was Spanish when he set the original language.

He thinks that they tried too hard to make it look like an American teen drama.

He often notices the presence of characters belonging to social minorities, he argues that it has the potential to have a positive impact, but the way streaming platforms do it seems artificial and loses its purpose.

He believes that streaming platforms' original content is simplified to reach global audiences. However, there are many independent films on the same platforms that represent social issues more authentically.

In the fourth part of the interview, Luca is asked about algorithms. He likes this tool, every time he watches a recommendation he enjoys what he is watching, he feels like the platform knows him.

When asked about what pushes him towards playing another episode, he says it is a mix of the storytelling and the platform's structure, referring to the automatic play.

He admits that he uses recommendations a lot, sometimes he doesn't even read the description of a show: he always has a positive experience with the automatic suggestions, so he trusts the system completely.

At the same time, Luca said that for a certain period of his life he only watched crime documentaries and he felt stuck in that genre.

In the final part of the interview, the participant admits that when he first started using streaming platforms he felt more free in his choice.

He used to document himself online before watching a show, while now he lets himself be guided by the platforms' recommendations or by what is trendy on social media (he observes that often the two things correspond).

Luca notices that some genres are pushed more than others because they tend to appear everywhere, both on social media and the platforms' homepages. At the same time, it does not affect his trust towards the service: he usually likes the type of shows they promote.

He admits that he often watches the same content as his peers, especially speaking of productions that are popular on social media.

Luca is uncertain whether following the platforms' recommendations is a unique selection process, but he thinks it is personalized, since the suggestions are built up on his preferences.

He fully believes that streaming platforms can influence our response to socio-political and cultural issues.

The participant argues to have changed his political opinion because of Netflix: he started caring about social causes he did not know about before watching content that represented it, now he looks for political candidates that value the same issues.

Luca admits that, in his opinion, global entities can use streaming companies to push some ideas in their favor, he believes algorithms play a big role in that.

To conclude the interview, Luca defines streaming platforms as alternative schools: they can educate and they are powerful, they must be used mindfully.

3.5.5 Generation Alpha

Individuals that fall under this generational cluster were born between 2010 and 2025.

If Gen Z was the first one to be born in a fully digital-driven world, people belonging to Gen Alpha are building their life around technological innovations. (Zierock, Schulze, & Angar, 2025).

The integration of digital solutions in their daily routine is unprecedented, they are the largest generations in terms of numbers (McCrindle & Fell, 2020).

Gen Alpha is reshaping the marketing landscape through their attitudes towards social media and digitalization, they are reorganizing consumers' trends and preferences, as well as popular culture (McCrindle & Fell, 2020).

Their physiological and psychological spheres rotate around technology and digital integration, which impacts their cognitive behavior (Jha, 2020).

Accordingly, Gen Alpha is characterized by an intensive use of technological devices since their early stages of life, they perceive the newly introduced tools as an extension of themselves.

They usually prefer to consume short-length content on social media platforms that can quickly catch their attention. Furthermore, they are particularly attracted by content that evokes positive emotions and that reflects personal values and beliefs: this generation is interested in social causes, like sustainability and inclusivity (Pérez, 2023).

They are leaned towards a visual educational attainment, through multimedia tools, even if their attention span is shorter compared to older generations (Pérez, 2023).

Let us analyze how this generation interacts with streaming platforms, being the youngest and most familiar with the ultimate digital innovations.

Below, I report the interviews of Alice and Andrea, in order to study how their Customer Journey is influenced by streaming platforms' strategies and tools.

Alice

Alice is a 15 years old female, born in 2010 and thus part of Generation Alpha.

In the first part of the interview, it emerged that she does not have a specific routine around streaming platforms consumption, but she is an active consumer.

She selects her content either by looking at the platform itself, or through the recommendations coming from the people she is surrounded by, mainly her friends. She also looks for content on social media platforms quite often, particularly Tiktok and Instagram.

She admits that, if she really likes a production, she can do watching-marathons and watch it all in one sitting.

In the second part of the interview, treating narrative persuasion, Alice admitted that while consuming streaming content, she did change her mind around a person or an issue. However, she could not remember a specific example.

The interviewee said that a story, in order to be appealing to her, needs to have characters that she can relate to, with whom she can share her state of mind and emotions, as well as her difficulties and struggles.

When asked about whether she ever changed her mind about a topic after watching two different productions treating it, she responded with the example of the two Yara Gambirasio documentaries, that have been discussed earlier in this thesis.

She adds that documentaries are the type of productions that mostly have an influence on her perceptions, as they treat real life issues.

In the third part of the interview, dealing with transnational strategies, Alice said that she watched content produced in foreign countries on numerous occasions. She provides the example of *'La Casa De Papel'*, on Netflix.

She says that when watching foreign productions, sometimes she does not fully understand certain elements as she is not part of that community.

However, most of the time she perceives the foreign production as universal, with elements that everyone can relate to.

Although this participant did notice the presence of characters belonging to social minorities, she believes that sometimes their social issues are told in a way to fit everyone's liking, or the taste of the target audience.

She argues that the best stories are the ones that fully represent real social issues.

In the fourth part of the interview, covering algorithms, Alice claims to use automatic suggestions a lot when consuming content.

This is because most of the time they suggest content that she likes, even if sometimes it tends to be a bit repetitive. In that case, she consults social media or asks for advice from her friends.

She is often pushed to play the next episode while watching a show and she blames it on the narrative of the story.

The interviewee explains that they often end an episode with a very important detail of the story to be discovered in the next one, pushing consumers to play it.

Alice admits that she has felt stuck in a cluster of contents before, she recognizes that what is recommended to her is often similar to what she had just watched.

Finally, in the last part, the participant claims that the way she chooses content has not really changed over time: ever since she subscribed to her streaming services, she always chooses by looking at what's going viral on social media or at school, as well as the platforms' suggestions.

She admits that what she sees on Tiktok is usually also on her Netflix's homepage, so she notices that some content is more pushed than others. She finds it convenient and it enhances her interest: she always watches the viral and promoted shows.

She recognizes that she shares tastes with her friends at school, often they reunite to watch their favorite show together. At the same time, she also watches content with her mom, in that case the genre is different, so she believes it to be unique and personalized.

She admits that not all types of content are able to persuade her opinion, a lot of them are good enough to do it. However, if a production has valid arguments, it will shape her perspective.

She explains that often streaming platforms only represent the side of the story they stand for. She prefers an issue to be fully presented, so that she could make her own opinion about it.

She claims that streaming platforms can be a powerful tool for governments and institutions, however she does not fully know how they take advantage of it.

Alice concluded the interview by saying that streaming platforms are not only a good form of entertainment, but also a tool for information.

At the same time, it is for this reason that the topic treated needs to be told a certain way for everyone to understand them.

Andrea

Andrea is a 14 years old male, he was born in 2011 and thus he is part of Generation Alpha.

He uses streaming platforms during lunch, after school, or sometimes before going to bed, after dinner. In order to select content, he usually looks up what is currently viral on Tiktok, or he looks at the platforms' suggestions.

He does watching-marathons very often, particularly on the weekends.

In the second part of the interview, he talked about the time he changed his perception of his favorite basketball player.

The production showed the dark side of a person he idolized, he did not see him with the same eyes after the watch.

He likes when a production feels real and relatable to his life. He tells about watching two different productions about bullying.

The first was a soft teen drama, the topic was treated superficially. The second one was a documentary: it showed the real consequences of bullying and how dangerous it can be. After the second watch, he became much more aware of the issue.

He believes he has been led before, since he changed his mind on topics after watching content on numerous occasions. However, he is not sure if it was the production, or if he was just poorly informed.

In the third part of the interview, Andrea mentioned a Swedish show he recently watched, *Young Royals*, that everyone was talking about at school.

He admits that he never pays attention to cultural elements, his friend from school told him it was Swedish, he did not notice it by himself.

On the contrary, he often notices the presence of characters belonging to social minorities, particularly the LGBT+ community. He is not sure whether their presence has a positive impact, but he thinks it is a good thing.

Andrea believes that real social issues are better represented in documentaries rather than movies, since the latter have to meet everyone's tastes and are simplified.

In the fourth part of the interview, Andrea is asked about algorithms.

He has positive feelings about platforms' recommendations, he uses them often. However, he admits that they can be repetitive: he once had his homepage full of crime documentaries. When this happens, he looks for something new to watch on Tiktok.

He admits that what pushes him towards playing another episode is the curiosity to see what happens next, the episodes play automatically and he enjoys it.

Andrea does not pay attention to whether his preferences and choices are influenced by the platforms' suggestions: he knows that among the recommendations he will find what he likes, so he just goes along with it.

In the final part of the interview, Andrea does not believe that the way he selects content has changed that much: he follows the platforms' suggestions because he always finds what he likes, or else he uses social media to get inspired on what to watch.

It has been this way ever since he was allowed to remove parental control and received his first mobile phone.

He noticed that what goes viral on Tiktok is also promoted on streaming platforms, but he does not mind it: in his opinion, if something is popular it's good, so he wants to watch it.

Andrea says he has his own tastes, but he also shares some with his friends and other people his age. They all watch popular or viral shows, he finds it nice because he can comment on a show with friends.

When asked whether he believes his content selection process is unique, he admitted that he is definitely influenced by external factors: despite his streaming platform being personalized to his own states, social media has a big impact on his choices.

He claims that streaming platforms have influenced his response to socio-cultural and political issues many times, by showing him new sides of things.

Andrea believes that global entities can take advantage of streaming platforms to manipulate public opinions, however he is not sure how.

He closes the interview by defining streaming platforms as a fun way to learn about new things.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced the methods and the design of my research, as well as reporting the empirical data I have collected through the semi-structured, qualitative interviews.

After having introduced the scope of my research, in the next final section I will conduct the critical analysis of the interviews, reporting my findings and answering the proposed research question.

Chapter Four

Findings and Conclusions

4.1 Defining the Customer Journey process

As mentioned, the aim of this study is investigating the influence of streaming platforms on consumers' content selection process.

The latter is explained by the Customer Journey, a multidimensional construct, which includes cognitive, sensorial, behavioral and social elements. It involves consumers' satisfaction and product quality, but it does not translate into them. It is an holistic construct and it involves synergies between multiple touchpoints - digital, social and visual (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

The Customer Journey has three main phases:

- Pre-Purchase Phase: refers to the moment in which the consumer chooses among options. It involves research, evaluation and stimuli, according to their preferences (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).
- Purchase Phase: refers to the moment in which the consumer makes a choice. They choose a brand and a product, which is followed by an economic transaction (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).
- Post-Purchase Phase: refers to the moment in which the consumer, after the purchase, uses the product and considers whether or not to re-purchase from the same brand (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

During each one of these phases, several touchpoints get activated, which are classified in four main clusters:

- Brand-owned: refers to the brand's touchpoints, for example the website or the application. In the streaming platforms' system, algorithms are a brand-owned touchpoint (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

- Partner-owned: refers to touchpoints that are not directly led by the brand, but by its external partners. The latter cooperate with the brand during the sale, communication and distribution process (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).
- Customer-owned: refers to the consumers autonomous experiences, interactions or activities. They are part of the Customer Journey, but are not generated or led by the brand (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).
- Social/external: refers to moments of the Customer Journey that are entirely generated and led by consumers, upon which the brand has no direct or indirect control (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

According to Lemon, & Verhoef (2016), digitalization has overturned several aspects of the Customer Journey. The introduction of mobile and touch-based channels has changed consumers' behavior in terms of purchase: most of them use these channels to scroll or navigate through products, without having the intention to buy.

Throughout the Customer Journey, brands are interested in measuring and analyzing customer experiences. The latter can lead to consumers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction, which is directly linked to consumers' loyalty and retention towards a brand.

In order to manage customer experience, there are several initiatives to be implemented by brands in order to gain positive results (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

First of all, they need to integrate IT and marketing operations, as well as appropriate human resources. Secondly, they need to introduce personalized processes, in order to reduce the *pain-points*¹⁰ (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

Finally, it is necessary to integrate the brand's touchpoints with consumers' ones, by developing analytical and orchestrational skills within the brand. In this way, positive synergies will improve the customer experience (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

¹⁰ This term refers to any possible problem that might arise along the Customer Journey, throughout the interaction between the consumer and the brand (Lemon, & Verhoef, 2016).

4.2 Customer Journey in streaming services

Having defined the Customer Journey as a theoretical construct, let us analyze it in the function of streaming platforms.

In this market the product is not purchased, but is selected and consumed digitally inside a personalized and interactive ecosystem of options. This exposes consumers to numerous visual stimuli, automatic suggestions and trends.

Hence, streaming platforms' Customer Journey is unique and specific for this sector. Let us apply the phases of this construct to streaming services:

- Pre-purchase: it is the moment in which consumers select content within the streaming platforms' catalogue. In this phase, they are exposed to brand-owned touchpoints, particularly algorithmic suggestions, visual stimuli and promoted content.
- Purchase: despite an economic transaction not happening, the purchase phase can be linked to the moment in which the content to watch has been selected. Here, the activated touchpoints are transnational strategies and narrative persuasion.
- Post-purchase: the moment in which the consumer evaluates the content he just watched and his experience with the platform. Here, both customer-owned and brand-owned touchpoints should be activated.

On one hand, users decide whether to recommend the content they just watched, or to continue exploring the platform. On the other, the platform activates its algorithm in order to collect the necessary data to make future recommendations to the user.

When applying the Customer Journey framework to the streaming platforms' system, the independent variables under scrutiny in this study (narrative persuasion, transnational strategies and data-driven algorithms) can be labeled as brand-owned touchpoints.

Through the analysis of the data collected it emerged that streaming platforms, through their touchpoints, erode customer-owned ones. The latter consist in the autonomous

experiences, interactions or activities that consumers should undertake, without the influence of streaming platforms.

In the next session, I will go through how the additional elements brought by streaming platforms interfere with the traditional phases of the Customer Journey.

I will do so by analyzing the empirical data I have collected through the interviews, studying how each generation under scrutiny perceives these digital changes.

4.3 Interviews Analysis

In this section I will analyze the primary data collected through the interviews.

I will go through each generation, studying their relationship with the independent variables, in order to disclose how they affect the dependent one.

4.3.1 The older generations

Let us begin with the first generational group under scrutiny, Baby Boomers.

This cluster uses streaming platforms prioritizing functionality and selectivity. Through the interviews it emerged that - compared to the rest of the generational groups - they preserve their decision-making power the most, along the Customer Journey.

Despite being characterized by skepticism towards digital solutions, the influence in their selection process is still tangible.

In terms of narrative persuasion, this generation is more reactive towards strong content with elements of reality. They maintain a degree of critical distance compared to the younger generations, but this variable is the one that mostly influences their Customer Journey process.

Narrative persuasion is not rejected by this generation, it is rather mediated by a critical length. These consumers tend to be influenced particularly by this variable, because of their aloof attitude towards digital solutions: they focus more on content quality.

Looking at transnational strategies, this generation recognizes when a product is globalized: they both refer to “Americanized” content, noticing the cultural uniformity that characterizes international productions.

Speaking of data-driven algorithms, this generation is definitely the most skeptical: they do not understand how this technologic works, they are distrustful and they try to limit their use of platforms' recommendations.

Looking at the Baby Boomers' Customer Journey, the bias appears to be less evident compared to the younger generations.

During the pre-purchase phase, they consult multiple sources as they actively try to limit their use of the platforms' recommendations. On the other hand, their choice is influenced by product positioning and visibility on the platforms.

The purchase phase is when Baby Boomers retain their decision-making power the most. Their decision is deliberate: despite being influenced by marketing strategies (such as content visibility on the platform or narrative persuasion), product selection reflects their tastes and preferences more than any other generation under scrutiny.

Finally, in the last stage of the Customer Journey, Baby Boomers pursue a critical evaluation of the content they just watched. Their re-purchase phase is characterized by a re-processing of the product they selected and a very limited social effect: they value whether or not it matches their tastes and preferences.

On the other hand, this phase is biased by narrative persuasion: as mentioned, being skeptical of digital solutions leads to these consumers valuing more content quality and storytelling.

Overall, it can be said that Baby Boomers' Customer Journey is the least biased by streaming platforms' marketing strategies and digital tools.

While being less familiar with new technologies might make them an easy target, it also makes them skeptical and reluctant to try the proposed digital solutions.

At the same time, they are not immune: narrative persuasion creates a bias both in their post-purchase phase and in their interpretation of content.

The second generational group is Generation X, which showed an aware yet pragmatic use of streaming platforms.

This generation self-perceives as selective and "immune". However, based on their answers, their Customer Journey is more influenced than they believe.

From their interviews, some inconsistencies emerged between their perception of decision-making power and the invisible influence of streaming platforms' touchpoints.

Narrative persuasion is particularly effective on these consumers when it leverages the emotional and ideological spheres.

In this case, it influences both the purchase and post-purchase phase of the Customer Journey. They critically evaluate the content they watch during the post-purchase phase (after the watch), but at that point the persuasive effect had already happened in the purchase phase (during the watch).

Analyzing transnational strategies, Generation X watches international content. However, while one of them admits to not recognizing the cultural origin of content, the other appreciates local products that have been globalized.

This highlights how these consumers are influenced by the transnational neutralization of products on one hand, while being partially unaware of their standardization on the other.

Looking at algorithms, Generation X is still quite critical of platforms' recommendations.

From the interview, it emerged that while these consumers try to avoid them by consulting other sources to select content, most of the time they use platforms' suggestions due to laziness and lack of time.

Analyzing their Customer Journey, these consumers' exposure to streaming platforms' strategic and digital touchpoints has increased, particularly in terms of the algorithmic bias.

Accordingly, during the pre-purchase phase streaming platforms have more space to activate filters that alter the initial selection: during the interviews, participants admitted to have been stuck into a content loop before.

Their effort of finding alternatives to algorithmic suggestions allows them to maintain a certain degree of decision-making power, that shows during the purchase phase.

However, it also causes a perception of immunity from their influence (this was especially detected in one of the two participants).

During the post-purchase phase, these consumers are characterized by a tendency to share: this boosts engagement and retention. At the same time, in this phase they are highly influenced by narrative persuasion and partially by data-driven algorithms.

Overall, the Customer Journey process of Generation X starts to be more exposed to the algorithmic bias compared to older generations, while still being highly influenced by narrative persuasion.

The numerous contradictions showed that these consumers maintain an illusion of autonomy, which in reality undergoes systematic interference throughout the selection process.

4.3.2 Generational turning point

Interviewing Generation Y resulted in a transition: the older participant (Riccardo) was more in line with Baby Boomers and Generation X, while the younger one (Alessandro) was more in line with Generation Z and Generation Alpha.

The result is a generational breaking-point, presenting two different models of interaction with the Customer Journey process.

Narrative persuasion influences both participants' experiences: they value elements of reality in the type of content they choose.

However, Riccardo elaborates it with consciousness: he remarks the importance of maintaining his critical thought. Alessandro, instead, seems to internalize it without a discerning detachment.

Considering transnational strategies, Riccardo does not appear entirely aware of product standardization: he believes that culture in productions is tangible, and yet he only mentioned United States-based content.

On the other hand, Alessandro perceives content as globalized entertainment, admitting to not recognizing the cultural origin of products.

Going through data-driven algorithms, it emerged that both participants use platforms' suggestions, but they presented two different relationships with them.

Riccardo believes them to be a great tool that allows him to save time. He presented a

similar approach as Generation X in terms of the perception of immunity from their influence: he is not threatened by these digital tools, but his attitude remains critical, he maintains a personal filter.

On the contrary, Alessandro recognizes the influence that algorithms have on his choices and his preferences. He acknowledges the algorithmic bias and accepts it.

According to the results, millennials presented two different Customer Journey models. In the pre-purchase phase, Riccardo allows himself to be guided by the algorithmic filters, but he always maintains his critical thought. Alessandro, instead, presents a high exposure to this touchpoint, which interferes with his choice.

During the purchase phase, Riccardo chooses among suggestions through personal criteria. Alessandro appears to be more impulsive, guided by the initial engagement.

Finally, during the post-purchase phase Riccardo does a deeper reflection on whether or not he liked the content, based on his own preferences. Alessandro, after a watch, tends to share or take advice from others.

Generation Y emerged as a transitional generation. Riccardo demonstrated a more critical approach towards the automation of the Customer Journey process, closer to older generations.

Alessandro presented a fluid acceptance, seamlessly adopting streaming platforms strategies and digital touchpoints in his selection process, unbothered by the bias.

We will see in the next sessions that Alessandro's approach is close to younger generations.

4.3.3 The younger generations

The younger generations under scrutiny, Generation Z and Generation Alpha, presented significant differences compared to older ones.

Their Customer Journey process appears to be severely exposed to the streaming platforms' bias.

Starting with Generation Z, their use of streaming platforms is part of their daily routine: they integrated this service's automation in their everyday life.

These consumers have improved technological skills compared to the previous ones, they understand streaming platforms' digital tools and they seem to accept them passively.

This results in the jeopardy of their decision-making power at all stages of their selection process.

Narrative persuasion impacts several aspects of this generation's relationship with streaming platforms.

First of all, they are victims of binge-watching marketing, both for the platforms' structure and the capturing plotlines that characterize their shows of choice.

Content's narrative has an impact at the educational and persuasive level, but it does not necessarily lead to a further exploration of the topic after the first watch.

This results in a passive engagement: they empathize and share the item they watch, without critically deconstructing the topic (activity pursued by the previous generations).

Looking at transnational strategies, this generation does watch international content, without recognizing their cultural origins.

They recognize the global standardization of products. However, they perceive it as "mainstream" or "commercial" content, which matches their tastes, rather than associating it to cultural neutralization.

With these consumers, streaming platforms' transnational strategies are successful: Gen Z perceives this type of content as local, but enjoys it due to their globalized base. This impacts significantly their selection process.

Concerning algorithms, this generation frequently uses platforms' recommendations. These consumers do not pose active resistance, passively accepting their influence.

Their choices are intrinsically connected with algorithms, which highly influence their selection process.

Analyzing their Customer Journey, it emerged to be highly influenced by streaming platforms' strategies and digital touchpoints.

During the pre-purchase phase these consumers' choices are influenced by tactics of narrative persuasion (particularly binge-watching marketing), transnational strategies are successful and the platforms' suggestions almost entirely substitute their own choices.

As a result, their purchase phase does not consist in content they actively choose: they select what the platform recommends.

Finally, during the post-purchase phase, they share the content they watch without comparing it to their own tastes and preferences.

They are simple to retain, since they base their Customer Journey process on the platform's suggestions and strategies.

Let us unfold the last generational cluster under scrutiny: Generation Alpha.

The latter distinguishes itself from the other generational groups for one factor, highly integrated in their Customer Journey: social media.

These consumers show full digital nativity, streaming platforms' technological innovations are an extension of themselves: there is no barrier between them and the system, they do not doubt the content nor its origin.

Gen Alpha is fully immersed in a Customer Journey dictated by the streaming platforms' system, let us unfold the interviews' results.

Looking at narrative persuasion, these consumers fall for binge-watching marketing techniques, led by the platforms' structure and the captivating narratives.

However, instead of informative, streaming platforms assume a formative role for them: they are attracted to content that they can relate to. There is no critical deconstruction of content, they rather internalize information and spontaneously interpret it.

Hence, the power of narrative persuasion is maximized, without being recognized by Gen Alpha.

Concerning transnational strategies, they are entirely successful with this generation and they interfere with their Customer Journey process.

Similarly to Gen Z, they watch international content without being able to recognize their cultural origin.

They appreciate the transnational standardization of products: they perceive universal content as “custom-made”, being unaware that it is designed for a global audience.

Analyzing Gen Alpha relationship with algorithms, these consumers are die-hard users of platforms’ recommendations, which they integrate with social media.

They do not actively search content, they choose among the automatic suggestions and viral content. This often results in being stuck in clusters of content.

The algorithmic bias is passively accepted, without consciousness of its consequences.

The Gen Alpha Customer Journey process emerged to be externalized and guided by the streaming platforms’ system and by social media platforms.

During the pre-purchase, these consumers’ selection process is entirely based on algorithmic suggestions or social media trends. They observe that often what is viral on social media corresponds to what is mostly shown on the platforms’ homepages.

Their purchase phase consists in an immediate choice, characterized by the absence of comparative criteria.

Finally, during the post-purchase phase Gen Alpha shares and discusses content. However, this merely reinforces consuming behavior, generating a non-critical social loop.

This generation’s Customer Journey can be said to be the most influenced by the streaming platforms’ bias: these consumers do not make choices, they follow a prefabricated model structured by the platform.

This framework is not only compromised, but entirely built upon streaming platforms strategies and digital solutions.

4.4 Conclusive Remarks

After the critical analysis of the interviews, let us answer the proposed research question:

“How do the new touchpoints introduced by streaming platforms - transnational strategies, narrative persuasion and data-driven algorithms – create a bias in the customer journey process ?”

4.4.1 Narrative Persuasion

Starting from the first independent variable under scrutiny, it emerged to particularly influence the older generations, creating a bias in their selection process.

Being more skeptical of data-driven algorithms, Baby Boomers and Generation Y pay more attention to the storytelling of content, compared to the younger generations.

They are more analytical, their Customer Journey process is influenced particularly on an ideological and moral level.

Narrative persuasion and storytelling as core streaming platforms strategies have a deep influence on the post-purchase phase.

At the same time, this variable also has an influence on younger generations.

Despite Millennials, Generation Z and Generation Alpha's Customer Journeys being mostly influenced by algorithms, narrative persuasion still contributes to the bias.

It does so particularly through binge-watching marketing, leading these consumers to extend the time they spend on the platform.

Furthermore, this variable strongly influences the perception of content. These generations changed their opinions and viewpoints after watching streaming platforms' productions.

This highlights the power held by these players in terms of reality interpretation, which contributes to leading consumers towards certain types of content over others.

4.4.2 Transnational Strategies

According to the findings, this variable influences all generation's Customer Journey process, particularly during the pre-purchase phase.

The local responsiveness and global integration typical of transnational strategies leads to a strong product standardization.

Cultural neutralization extremely simplifies the pre-purchase phase: content appears spontaneous, unique and culture-specific, while in reality is adapted to a global audience.

This reduces cultural differentiation and erodes local representation, which is simplified for everyone to like. It has a direct impact on consumers' preferences, and consequently on their choices.

4.4.3 Data-driven Algorithms

From this research, this appears to be the most impactful variable: the algorithmic bias is what mostly jeopardizes the normal flow of the Customer Journey process.

The first signs of bias start showing from Generation X, and they become more intense moving through generations, until Generation Alpha.

It is the most persuasive element, it activates during the pre-purchase phases and continues to operate through the other phases of the Customer Journey.

Through automatic suggestions, consumers have the illusion of retaining their decision-making power, while in reality their choices are guided through an intangible and pre-made path.

While the older generations' Customer Journey is less biased by this variable, due to the instilled skepticism and poor understanding of digital solutions, the younger generations are intensely driven by this system.

Young consumers passively accept the algorithmic mechanism, due to its convenience and time-saving quality.

Furthermore, these individuals presented several contradictions that highlight their unawareness concerning algorithms.

While on one hand they believe that their selection process is personalized, considering that algorithms recommendations are based on their preferences, on the other they admit to often finding themselves stuck in content loops, or barely making choices. They go along with what the platform suggests.

4.4.4 Answering the research question

Through this research, I was able to investigate the influence of streaming platforms on the Customer Journey process.

The data and findings collected allow me to successfully answer the proposed research question.

The three independent variables under scrutiny - narrative persuasion, transnational strategies and data-driven algorithms - all have an active role in creating a bias in the Customer Journey flow.

These variables are brand-based touchpoints that prevent consumer-based touchpoints from happening in each phase of the Customer Journey process.

In the streaming platforms' system, consumers do not actively make choices: their decision-making power is eroded, as they become passive stakeholders that respond to the platforms' stimuli.

Looking at the three phases:

- The pre-purchase phase is dominated by storytelling, product standardization, trends and recommendations.
- The purchase phase is often automatic and immediate, a mere result of the aforementioned touchpoints, rather than an active choice of the consumer.
- The post-purchase phase reinforces the streaming platforms' mechanism, normal actions of sharing and users' interactions boost the already existing homogenization of content.

To conclude, through this research it emerged that Customer Journey is not only biased, but entirely orchestrated by streaming platforms, through their digital and strategic touchpoints.

The user agency progressively declines: the younger the generation, the more powerful the bias to the Customer Journey process is.

4.5 Implications for future research

While conducting this investigation, another implication around the role that streaming platforms have assumed has emerged.

These players, through the introduction of digital tools and the advancement of globalization, have become powerful actors from a socio-cultural, political and economic standpoint.

Through their strategies, they are able to manipulate and shift not only consumers' preferences, but also their interpretation of social issues.

The interviews have shown that the way they represent reality has changed consumers' minds, shifting or forming opinions and causing debates.

Hence, through this thesis, I identified an implication to be carried out in future studies.

A future research agenda can investigate how streaming platforms, through their bargaining power and digital touchpoints, manipulated consumers' perspective on socio-cultural and political issues.

Furthermore, the same study can investigate the extent to which this is exploited or leveraged by global powers (institutions, governments or corporations), in achieving their goals and manipulating public opinion in their favor through the streaming market.

References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- Alforova, Z., Marchenko, S., Kot, H., Medvedieva, A., & Moussienko, O. (2021). Impact of digital technologies on the development of modern film production and television. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 13(4), 1–11.
- Amer, K., & Noujaim, J. (2019). *The Great Hack*. Netflix.
- Anindita, V. (2021). Disruptive strategy in disruption era: Does Netflix disrupt the existing market? *International Journal of Business and Technology Management*, 3(1), 30–39.
- Bolton, R. N., Parasuraman, A., Hoefnagels, A., Migchels, N., Kabadayi, S., Gruber, T., ... & Solnet, D. (2013). Understanding Generation Y and their use of social media: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Service Management*, 24(3), 245–267.
- Cambridge Dictionary. (2024). Meaning of Binge-Watch in English. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/binge-watch>
- Cambridge Dictionary. (2024). Meaning of Storytelling in English. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/storytelling>
- Cambridge Dictionary. (2024). Meaning of Streaming Platform in English. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/streaming-platform>
- Carrillo-Durán, M. V., Ruano-López, S., Fernández-Falero, M., & Trabadela-Robles, J. (2022). Understanding how baby boomers use the internet and social media to improve the engagement with brands. *Comunicação e Sociedade*, (41), 261–284.
- Chalaby, J. K. (2022). Global streamers: Placing the transnational at the heart of TV culture. *Journal of Digital Media & Policy*, 13(2), 223–241.
- Corporate Finance Institute Team. (2024). Multinational Corporation. <https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/management/multinational-corporation/>

Cucco, M. (2009). The promise is great: The blockbuster and the Hollywood economy. *Media, Culture & Society*, 31(2), 215–230.

Achter, P.J. (2025, April 22). McCarthyism. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/McCarthyism>

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (2025, May 7). Camera Obscura. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/technology/camera-obscura-photography>

Euajarusphan, A. (2021). Online social media usage behavior, attitude, satisfaction, and online social media literacy of Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. *Asian Interdisciplinary and Sustainability Review*, 10(2), 44–58.

Frick, S. J., Fletcher, D., & Smith, A. C. (2023). Pirate and chill: The effect of Netflix on illegal streaming. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 209, 334–347.

Gillespie, T. (2014). The relevance of algorithms. *Media technologies: Essays on communication, materiality, and society*, 167(2014), 167.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2019). Have digital communication technologies democratized the media industries? *Media and Society*, 1, 101–120.

Hesmondhalgh, D., Campos Valverde, R., Kaye, D., & Li, Z. (2023). The impact of algorithmically driven recommendation systems on music consumption and production: A literature review. *UK Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation Reports*.

Jha, A. K. (2020). Understanding Generation Alpha.

Jenner, M. (2024). The quantification of diversity: Netflix, visibility politics and the grammar of transnationalism. *Convergence*, 30(4), 1474–1489.

Kim, M. S., & Kim, S. (2025). Why do individuals use online video piracy websites? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 108575.

Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 69–96.

Luo, Y. (2020). The streaming war during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Arts Management & Technology Laboratory*, 18–23.

McCrindle, M., & Fell, A. (2020, July). *Understanding Generation Alpha*. McCrindle Research.

Pauley, A. (2021). The Netflix Effect: Examining the influence of contemporary entertainment media consumption patterns on political attitudes and social perceptions.

Pérez, E. G. A. (2023). Generation Alpha interaction with social media for marketing to effectively reach this cohort.

Priporas, C. V., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2017). Generation Z consumers' expectations of interactions in smart retailing: A future agenda. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 77, 374–381.

Sim, G. (2016). Individual disruptors and economic gamechangers: Netflix, new media, and neoliberalism. In *The Netflix Effect: Technology and Entertainment in the 21st Century* (pp. 185–202). London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Sirkeci, I. (2013). *Transnational marketing and transnational consumers* (p. 75). New York, NY, Heidelberg, London: Springer.

Sturgill, J. (2019). *Beyond the castle: An analysis of the strategic implications of Disney+*.

Teece, D. J. (2010). Business models, business strategy and innovation. *Long Range Planning*, 43(2–3), 172–194.

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2025, January 3). *Camera obscura*. Encyclopedia Britannica.
<https://www.britannica.com/technology/camera-obscura-photography>

The Walt Disney Company. (2024).
<https://thewaltdisneycompany.com/about/>

Zierock, B., Schulze, J., & Angar, S. (2025). From Gen Z to Generation Alpha: Navigating the evolution of communication in a digital age. *SCIREA Journal of Education*, 10(3), 69–80.

Appendix

Transcription of the interviews

R - Researcher

I - Interviewee

Lucia

R: Good evening Lucia, thank you for joining me, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Hello Giulia, yes I allow this interview to be recorded.

R: Amazing, how old are you?

I: I am 71.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I don't know if it can be defined as a routine, but I usually watch content on streaming platforms in the evening, usually once a week.

R: All right, how do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I usually follow my daughter's suggestions and I look at the title or the leading actor.

R: Perfect, how long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a "*watching-marathon*"?

I: If I enjoy a show, I might watch two or three episodes in a row, but only when I really like it. I wouldn't call it a marathon — I just get curious to see what happens next. It's not like I can't stop, I choose to keep going. Especially when the next episode starts by itself, I think: well, why not?

R: Yeah, I get that. Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, I watched "The Handmaid's Tale". Although it is an exaggerated version of reality, based on a book, it made me reflect deeply on the dangers that come with fundamentalism and control over women's bodies. I had to rethink many of my opinions after this watch, it was very intense.

R: Okay that's very interesting. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: Well, for me a story needs to feel real — not too far-fetched. I like it when it's based on true events or when the characters go through things I can relate to, like family problems or moral dilemmas. When the emotions feel authentic, I find myself getting very involved. Sometimes I even talk to the screen! It's strange, I know it's fiction, but it feels like I'm there with them.

R: Okay, have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes, I once watched two different productions about immigration. I have my own opinion about the issue, but I have to admit that after watching the second production I was quite confused: I did not know what was right or wrong anymore.

R: Interesting, have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: My opinions are strong, I don't believe in being influenced by the media. I am a woman born long before they were even created. I might have changed a perspective like it happened for the immigration documentaries, but I do not call that "being led".

R: Okay, I understand. Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, I watched *Narcos* and *La Casa De Papel* on Netflix.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: I only catch elements of the United States, they all look like American movies. So, I would answer yes if a show is set in America. I never really catch the cultural elements, but maybe I am just too old to notice them.

R: Have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: I do not pay too much attention to this, unless it's very obvious. For example, they introduce a character that is very different from the rest or they completely change an existing one.

I do not think that it serves the purpose, it's not done smoothly and it just remarks the difference.

R: Okay, do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: It depends, I watched some really good productions like "The Handmaid's Tale", as I said earlier. However, other times I think that they exaggerate in the narration, real problems are represented as if they were fictions.

R: Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: If I open the streaming platform to watch something, I already know what I want to watch. As I said before, I listen to daughters' or other friends' suggestions. I do not like platforms' recommendations, I do not understand how they work: sometimes I ask myself why it recommended a certain type of movie, how does it know what I like?

R: Yeah, they can be very confusing. What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: I will play it if I really like it, I hate suspense: I want to know how the story ends. Moreover, Netflix plays the next episode automatically.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: No, as I said, I do not like recommendations: I trust my own preferences and my friends' advice.

R: Alright, then maybe the answer to my next question will be similar: have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: Yes, this is why I avoid recommendations. They all look like the same American movies. Maybe I am just old, but I like the old ways better: go look for what you like and watch it!

R: Interesting. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: Yes, it definitely changed. At first I was a bit lost, I did not understand how these platforms work. Now I got better at searching for content, but I still listen to my daughter's and friends' advice: I do not like wasting time scrolling, if something catches my eye, I watch it.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: I would say yes: it often feels like they promote the exact same American movies, all action and drama. This makes me a bit skeptical, do they really think I like this stuff? I wish I knew the criteria by which they suggest content: sometimes they recommend the perfect movie for me, other times they don't.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: I think there is some degree of similarity: my friends and I, who are the same age as me, watch the same things. Sometimes I also watch the same things as my daughter, as I said.

However, my nieces and nephews watch content that I do not even understand, completely different from my likings.

R: Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: Well, I would say it is a mix of both things: I select based on my own tastes, my emotions and my interests, or on my friends' recommendations.

However, I must admit that when a movie or a show is everywhere, I am curious to know what it is about.

R: Okay, makes sense. Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: As I said, a movie can make me emotional, or can make me deeply reflect on issues. However, I am 71, and my opinions have been solid for a long time: I am not going to change them because of a movie.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: I believe that governments can use cinema and the media for propaganda, maybe it can influence people's opinion, but I think it works mostly with the younger generations.

R: Interesting, okay Lucia, one final question. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: Yes, I mean, I personally use streaming platforms to relax. I would not call myself a serial user, but I do believe that their primary use should be leisure.

Antonio

R: Good evening Antonio, thank you for joining me, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Good evening, yes I allow this interview to be recorded.

R: Amazing, how old are you?

I: I am 67.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I use streaming platforms almost every night, I like documentaries or classics.

R: All right, how do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I usually look at the title, or sometimes I choose based on reviews I read in the newspaper. I do not like navigating through streaming platforms, there is too much choice and it stresses me out.

R: Perfect, how long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a "*watching-marathon*"?

I: Well, if I like something I might end up watching two or three episodes in a row, but I wouldn't call it a marathon. It just happens. You finish one and the next one starts, so you think: alright, one more. But I'm in control — I can stop whenever I want.

R: Yeah, I get that. Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, I recently watched a documentary about the Vietnam War. It showed me sides of that event that I had never heard of: I questioned some of my own opinions that I have held for years.

R: Wow, that is interesting. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: To be attractive to me, a story has to be or at least feel like something real. As a matter of fact, I really like watching documentaries or movies based on real events. I want to see people struggling with real problems, I do not like productions set in fantasy worlds.

R: Okay, have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes, I watched two different documentaries about one of my favorite politicians of all time. After watching the second production, I found some of the things he did to be too controversial for me, my perception was not the same.

R: Interesting, have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: I believe in perspectives: a movie can show you sides of a story you didn't know before, so you might expand your point of view to other possibilities. However, entirely changing my opinion at 67 years old, is very difficult. Impossible, I would say.

R: Okay, I understand. Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, absolutely. I watched *The Crown* with my wife. Despite the fact that I prefer movies to series, this became one of my favorites.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: I can catch some cultural elements in these shows, particularly with *The Crown*. However, this is a unique case: most of the time, the movies I watch are quite Americanized.

R: Have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: I do not know, I have never paid attention to this. I am more interested in the events of a story and the protagonists, I do not focus too much on side characters.

R: Okay, do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: I think this is the difference between documentaries and movies: an issue treated in a documentary represents the facts, while a movie needs to fit people's tastes. I believe it is simplified.

R: Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, I do. As I said, I like to make my own choices and I often get informed about what to watch earlier. I don't really trust that the platform knows me better than myself, I choose my own movies.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: If the story is very interesting, I can watch more than one episode in a row. The automatic play tempts me and my wife to play the next one, particularly my wife.

R: I understand that. Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: I am going to be honest, I am not sure. I do not fully understand how the recommendations work, this is why I do not trust them. How can a machine know what I want to watch? Maybe I am just old, but it is something that scares me.

R: Alright, then maybe the answer to my next question will be similar: have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: I tend to be skeptical, as you probably know by now, but I have seen it happen with my daughter. I once accidentally opened her profile on Netflix and all I saw were American dating shows.

R: Oh, wow. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: Yes, I would say it evolved. At first I was curious, I navigated through various genres. Now, I know what I like: I go for my favorite genre and I experiment way less, at least

when I use the service by myself. I am more selective and critical, I hate scrolling the catalogue for too long.

R: Yeah, I understand. Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, I did notice that: certain types of shows are everywhere. I find it to be quite annoying, to be honest, and it does not help my already quite low trust level towards the platform.

R: I guessed so. When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: Well, I would like to believe that what I watch is less popular and cliché: I like niche documentaries and real-event based productions. However, I have to admit that the macro areas of content I like are similar to my friends' tastes.

I cannot say the same about my daughter, I cannot do American dating shows...it seems to be all she watches!

R: That's funny. Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: I think it is personal: I trust my method of selecting content based on my own preferences. I like the old-fashioned way: looking for reviews in the newspaper, or listening to people that have similar tastes to mine.

I have to admit that sometimes I am driven by curiosity to see what the sponsored productions are about...but I mostly try to stay in control and listen to myself.

R: Okay, makes sense. Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: I think that the way we respond to socio-political and cultural issues depends on our own life stories, our values and beliefs. I do not think streaming platforms have the power to interfere with that, at least in my case.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: I believe they can definitely be a vehicle for propaganda. However, as I said I am a bit skeptical about shifting whole opinions.

R: Interesting, okay one final question. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: I think streaming platforms are information vehicles. However, I always watch documentaries rather than movies, especially when speaking of delicate issues. It is very easy to interfere with real events through a bad narrative.

R: Thank you Antonio, the interview is now over.

Elena

R: Good morning Elena, thank you for joining me, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Good morning, yes I allow this interview to be recorded.

R: Amazing, how old are you?

I: I am 55 years old.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I usually use streaming platforms three or four times a week,

R: All right, how do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I work as a teacher, so I like to choose content that helps me relax. I usually choose based on the title and reviews I see online, but sometimes I also use the platforms' recommendations.

R: Perfect, how long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a "*watching-marathon*"?

I: I wouldn't call it a real marathon, but I've definitely ended up watching more than I meant to — especially if the story is well-written. Sometimes I plan to watch just one episode, and before I know it, I'm three in. The way episodes end makes it hard to stop, I'll admit that. But I try to be mindful of it.

R: Yeah, I get that. Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, I changed my mind about abortion after watching a really touching movie. When a story is well-written, it can get under your skin.

R: Okay that's very interesting. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: Personally, I like when the story shows complexity in its characters, without clichés. I want a production to show some reality, even better if I can relate to the story or if it tackles real world problems, without moralizing too much. In this way, it's almost like I am in the story.

R: I totally understand that. Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes, it happened to me before. My daughter is really into crime documentaries, we watched *Making a Murderer* and later *The Confession Tapes* together.

While the first one almost made me lose trust in the justice system, after watching the second one my perspective about innocence and guilt changed: it is not always black or white.

R: Interesting, have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: As I mentioned, I did experience a change of mind after watching productions. I try to stay critical, but if a story is well written and actually proves me wrong, I can't help myself.

R: Okay, I understand. Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, I watched a Korean movie. I cannot remember its name, but it was a romantic comedy.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: To be honest, I think nowadays the content shown on streaming platforms is more universal. In the example I mentioned, I can obviously catch some elements belonging to the Korean, but the movie looked like an American rom-com.

R: Have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: Yes, I noticed it. I think it is a good thing, a lot of young people use streaming platforms and this can be a means for education. However, it depends on how these characters are represented, it should not be done superficially.

R: Okay, clear. Do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: I don't know, I think that most of the time they try to adapt the narration to the audience: it depends who they are trying to reach.

R: Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, they do suggest similar content, and I try to be aware of that. Sometimes it's useful, but I often feel like I'm being boxed in. I use it as a starting point, but I also look for recommendations elsewhere.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: No, it's more about the story itself: if I am curious enough, I will go on; otherwise I will switch off and go to bed.

R: I understand that. Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: Yes, maybe due to laziness: sometimes I really do not feel like scrolling, so I just listen to the platform. I try to resist it and get informed about what to watch in advance, but sometimes I can't help myself.

R: Alright, then maybe the answer to my next question will be similar: have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: I really try to vary, so I never caught myself to this point. If I realize that I am watching the same things over and over, I ask a friend for a suggestion or I research something new.

R: Interesting. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: Yes, I think it did. I think I used to be more spontaneous in my choices, maybe I looked at the cover or title more than I do now. With time, I learn to integrate reviews or suggestions in my selection process.

I try to look for content that helps me relax after a hard day at work...I just want to make sure that I find something I really like - I think I am more selective.

I have to admit that sometimes I allow myself to be guided by the platforms' suggestions.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, I noticed that. I think that what is shown the most are commercial shows...or the platforms' original content. In this way recommendations seem more aimed at selling something to me, rather than improving my experience by finding content that responds to my interest.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: It depends...I like many different things. I share tastes with my friends or colleagues about more deep and serious content, while I watch lighter productions with my daughter. I would say that liking multiple genres is what makes it unique.

R: Interesting. Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: I think it depends: I try to look for content to watch through alternative ways - for example, reviews or friends' advice. However, when I am tired and I want something to watch quickly, I click on whatever the platform suggests.

R: Okay, makes sense. Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: Yes, I believe that they can show you other sides of things that you would have never considered alone.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: I believe that streaming platforms are a powerful vehicle for education and information, but I do not know how global entities might take advantage of it. It is quite a scary thought.

R: Interesting, okay one final question. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: I think I said everything I wanted to, streaming platforms can educate, but we must hold on to our critical thought.

Marco

R: Hello Marco, nice to meet you and thank you for joining me. Do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Nice to meet you too, yes I allow it to be recorded.

R: Okay, perfect. How old are you?

I: I am 48 years old.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I work in the IT sector and I travel a lot for work. For this reason, I do not have a specific routine around using streaming platforms: I watch it between or during flights, or sometimes at lunch break.

R: All right, how do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I normally go for shows or documentaries and I select them through online suggestions or specialized articles. Sometimes I also use the platforms' suggestions.

R: Perfect, how long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a "*watching-marathon*"?

I: As I said, I normally use this service during flights or brief breaks. Sometimes I really would like to watch another episode, but I do not have time.

R: Okay that makes sense. Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, I recently watched a documentary about the conflict between Israel and Palestine. I was moved by what the production showed, I rethought some of my personal opinions about the conflict.

R: Okay that's very interesting. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: I like when what I watch can emotionally reach me: if what I am watching shows me sides of a story I never knew before, that are real, I will definitely feel connected.

R: Right. Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: I don't know if these two treated the same exact topic, but they definitely showed two faces of the same medal: *Green Zone* and *American Sniper*.

The first one shows how the American government tampered the truth about mass destruction and weapons. After the watch, the American army felt like the enemy.

The second one showed what being a soldier means, living through their lens. After the second production, I empathized with the protagonist and my view softened after learning about the other side of the story.

R: Interesting, have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: Yes, as I said I did change my opinion after watching something. About feeling led, I do not know. I am aware about the power of visual language, but I believe that my critical thought is strong enough not to be led or influenced by cinematic content.

R: Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, I recently watched the show *Cassandra* on Netflix. At first I thought it American, but then I realized it was actually German.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: Well, in this case I couldn't even tell it was a German show, so I would say it was more universal. I do catch some cultural elements sometimes, but they mostly all seem to follow the same hollywoodian structure.

R: Okay, have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: I normally do not pay attention to this. Sometimes, it happened that they changed a whole character of a show, most of the time it's their sexuality. I think they do it to be more inclusive and in line with the politically correct.

R: Okay, do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: Well, people get offended by everything nowadays, it is very easy to get canceled: I think they represent social issues in a way that they do not offend anyone, filtering them.

R: Okay, have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, I am quite critical of recommendations, I try to avoid them. I do not fully understand how they work and I do not know how I feel about a platform making decisions for me. However, due to laziness, sometimes I do watch suggestions and I have to admit I enjoyed what I watched.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: More than the platform structure, I am pushed by the curiosity to see what happens next. However, as I said, most of the time I have to switch off due to lack of time.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: No, I have a critical mind and my opinions and preferences are very strong. I do not think I am influenced to that extent.

R: Okay, then maybe I can guess your answer to the next question: have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: I do not know if it was a loop, but the platforms' recommendations are often repetitive and always offer the same content to watch. This is one more reason why I do not like them: as soon as I watch a documentary, it offers a bunch of stuff treating the same exact topic. I like to vary.

R: Interesting. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: Yes, it changed. At first I was more curious, so I allowed myself to be guided by the platform. Now I do not have much time, so I want to maximize it by using them well: I read articles or advice online to identify what I want to watch and I go looking for it.

I find this way to be more efficient, But I admit that, when I do not have time to research, I go for the recommendations.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, it happens frequently and I do not like it. When they recommend the same item for a long time, I start doubting the system's intelligence.

On one hand this lowers my trust, but on the other it is a way to know that I am smarter than the platform.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: It depends, I try to vary not to be stuck in the commercial content's loop. However, when I talk with friends or colleagues, I realize we watch similar productions. My efforts to stay out of that logic doesn't always work, but maybe we just have similar tastes..after all we are friends.

R: Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: I believe it is, I put a lot of effort to stay out of the recommendations logic: I read and I research beforehand, a lot of people don't do that.

However, I do not live under a rock: I am probably influenced in some ways, what matters to me is to be aware and mindful.

R: Okay, makes sense. Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: I think streaming platforms have the power to show us things we do not know, maybe opening our minds to more possibilities and most people are easy to influence.

However, I think we always have a choice about what to believe, my core opinions about socio-political and cultural issues are not going to be influenced by a movie.

R: I understand that. Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: I think that the majority of people can be influenced, I like to use multiple sources of information to avoid being manipulated. I believe that the government can take advantage of that, but it is only successful for people who rely too much on the media as an information vehicle: I am not part of this category.

R: Okay, so one more question: is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: I think I have said everything, thank you for your time.

R: Okay, thank you Marco.

Riccardo

R: Good evening Riccardo, thank you for joining me, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Yes, hi Giulia, nice to meet you. I allow it to be recorded.

R: Okay, perfect. How old are you?

I: I am 34 years old.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I could say that I watch series on streaming platforms twice a week, I am not really a streamer, but I like to take some time for myself during the evening and just be on the sofa and watch movies.

R: All right, how do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I read the title to know what I want to watch and sometimes I watch the trailer on youtube to catch my attention.

R: Perfect, how long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a “*watching-marathon*”?

I: I think two or three hours are the maximum time I spend watching a show. Sometimes I also do watching-marathons but it is not something that I really do, because I do not want to waste too much time in front of the tv.

R: Okay that makes sense. Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, sometimes. It depends on the way it represents a person or maybe a celebrity. An example could be a documentary about the life of Senna, I could go inside a really emotional part of him. It was really exciting for me to see something different about this person.

R: Okay that's very interesting. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: I think that reality and being real is something that really fascinates me when I watch something. When they maybe interview the families or people in the neighborhood in which the protagonists grew up, it creates something real. Everything that is real, I think, could also create some emotions in you (consumer) because the person is more human.

R: Okay, moving on, have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: I watched, I think, the same topic in different productions. It depends on how they decide to represent the topic, through which they can change opinions about it: there are always different sides to every story, I think you need to listen to both in order to have a concrete opinion about that. Sometimes I change my perception about a topic from different points of view. So, yes, I think it happens and I think that it could be easy to change our mind by showing us some different details about a story.

R: Interesting, have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: Yes, I used to watch some personal growth documentaries and after that, I was really hyped about their stories and led by that content. I wanted to realize the same things they realized, in their lives I wanted to have the same energy and the same will to reach

the goals they reached. This is an effect that you may have after watching a movie, like spending a week by acting or thinking the same way as the characters.

R: Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, I come from Italy and I always watch movies from the United States.

There are a lot of movies that I've seen, like *The Wolf of Wall Street* or *American Sniper*, entirely produced in the United States. I think it's a great example of cinema or movies because they have really updated systems to create all the special effects and great actors as well. They are one of my favorite types of movies.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: No, I think I could really experience the life of that type of people.

As I said before, I really love to watch American movies, a really beautiful one was the story of McDonalds and its founder: I was really engaged with his life, his story, the way in which American people used to live the fast food culture in the 1960s. For me it was like being in the country and feeling the things that they felt.

R: Okay, have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: Yes I think that a lot of movies give us the possibility to watch another side of society, maybe a little part of society that sometimes is hidden from our view.

It could be a good opportunity to include them in our way of thinking, and also call our attention to their way of living. I think that in some movies I could see how social minority groups live their life and have problems, it made me reflect about that.

R: Okay, so you believe that streaming platforms are doing a good job in their representation?

I: Yes.

R: Okay, do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: I think that it is adapted and sometimes also simplified because they need to create something that is attractive for people. So, I think that the content and the social issues

could be represented, but in a very reduced way. This is because they also need to catch the attention and the emotion of the people and modify that in a way that it creates interest in people. So, maybe it is a transformation of reality.

R: Okay, have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, I think that they did a great job because I do not want to waste my time to find new films. I use a lot of the recommended choices from Netflix or Prime Video and I trust these suggestions.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: Yes, the platform structure has an influence because, as you know, Netflix starts the next episode right after the end of the previous one. Also, what creates this type of flow, is that episodes always end in suspense in yourself, so that you want to know how it evolves.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: No, I never asked that to myself because sometimes I switch on the TV and I already know what I want to watch, but other times I just want to open and get guided by the platform's choices. For me it is okay, I never doubt myself, I never think about the decision. Maybe they will make the decision for me, but I am fine with that.

R: Okay, then maybe I can guess your answer to the next question: have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: Yes, for sure. Maybe it's also a period of your life, sometimes you are stuck with a topic because you might start watching boxing movies and then you go to football or something else. It depends on the moment of your life, but yes I used to watch just one type of content.

R: Interesting. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: Yes, I think it changed. When I first got streaming platforms services I used to be more curious, I scrolled even for one hour straight to look for something I liked. Now I

use suggestions way more, I have less time and scrolling it's boring and time-consuming. It is a moment to relax for me, I want something I like and I want it fast, without thinking about it too much.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, I did see some content being particularly pushed on the platform. I realize it because I find them everywhere: in the homepage, among suggestions, or even through trailers that automatically play as soon as you open the platform. However, I did not lose trust in the platform because of this: on the contrary, I find it very convenient.

As long as I have the possibility to choose other content I don't see it as a problem.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: I think there is some content we all watch, like the most popular ones, but everyone has its tastes. It often happens that I watch something very different from what my friends like. However, I think there is a common base.

R: Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: I think both: sometimes I know what I want to watch and I go look for it; other times I just let myself be guided by the automatic suggestions. I think we are all a bit influenced, even if we think we make unique choices.

R: Okay, makes sense. Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: I think it is your responsibility to have a critical mind, a critical view of the world. You can watch a movie, but then you need to switch to real life, to be the same person you are, be humble and respect other people.

In my case, I never change after watching specific content.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: I think that they can, but we also have the freedom to choose our content. You can find content showing multiple sides, I think it's really important to have the possibility to see all sides of a story. The moment in which you are only exposed to one story, one

view or one perspective it can be a problem. The most important thing for me is to have journals that speak in a neutral way about what happens in the world.

I: Okay, so one more question: is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

R: I just want to say that I hope that everyone can use these platforms to be better, to improve themselves and maybe relax in a difficult situation of their life, but also do not change their mind after watching a film because the truth is bigger than the one that you can see in the movie.

I: All right, thank you very much.

R: Thank you.

Alessandro

R: Good evening Alessandro thank you for being here, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Good evening Giulia, yes I allow this interview to be recorded.

R: Okay perfect, so how old are you?

I: I am 31.

R: So, how and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I watch content on streaming platforms after dinner and I do not have any specific routine, I just watch it after dinner.

R: How do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I select the content by searching for shows that are going to be streamed or, if I do not have anything to watch I just search on the platform, if the cover is really catchy and the info in the bio is good I am going to watch the show.

R: How long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a “*watching-marathon*”?

I: It depends so, if it is really catchy I am going to watch more than one episode in a row. And yes, of course I did watching-marathons, but only on the weekends when I do not have to work, when I have nothing to do but relax.

R: Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, definitely. I remember watching *Bojack Horseman* and it really shifted how I view addiction and mental health. Before I used to think that people just needed to be disciplined, but this show got deep into how trauma and mental illness can mess with people.

R: Okay, interesting. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: A story to be fascinating and credible must have some elements that can relate to the world we live in. So, people can think that somehow they can experience what they are watching.

R: Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes I did, I watched two different productions treating the same topic, about an Italian politician. One was more on his side, while the other one talked about his controversial sides. Both made me think and now I have a 360 degrees view about this person, which changed after the watch.

R: Interesting, have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: Yes, it happened when I watched two different documentaries about the Chernobyl case. They both talked about the nuclear disaster, but they tell the story in very different ways, influencing my interpretation of how the phenomenon went down.

R: Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, I did. I watched a show entirely set in Japan, *Alice in Borderland*.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: Yes, of course I catch elements of their culture. However, with the current globalization we are living in, I definitely find some common grounds between my society and theirs.

R: Okay, have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: Yes, I did, but most of the time the show does not really do real justice to those characters, they are just treated in a superficial way.

R: All right, interesting, do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: As I said before, most of the time it's forced. So, the answer it's no: often characters do not even fit well in the story, but they must be there.

R: Okay perfect. Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, I did and I extended my trust for the suggestions that Netflix has recently made for me: the content is really similar, if I am really deep into a genre I can watch suggestions.

R: Okay, so you appreciated it?

I: Yes, I appreciated it sometimes.

R: Okay, what pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: Of course the platform structure can be a reason to be influenced, but whether I am going to watch another episode depends on how the previous episode ended.

R: Okay, so it's more about the storytelling?

I: Yeah.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: Yes, it happened to me. Sometimes I feel trapped by the suggestions and it also happened that, for some periods of time, I only watched suggestions.

R: Okay, so maybe I already know the answer to the next question: have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: Yes, for a certain period of time I felt trapped into a loop watching only one genre, related to what I was watching before, it was Japanese Anime.

R: Alright, Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: Yes, I think it changed: I got more lazy. I used to do research about the movie I was going to watch in the evening, but now I almost never do it.

I just watch the platforms' recommendations or whatever pops up first, I think it's more efficient and I save a lot of time.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: I guess so, yes. The most pushed are maybe movies produced by the platforms itself, or the most trendy and commercial genres. Sometimes it is annoying, especially if I end up not liking the movie. However, if the production it's interesting I appreciate it.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: Me and my friends have similar tastes, so we often watch the same things...I find that to be true with people of my age in general. I think it's nice, we get to comment and discuss productions together.

At the same time, I also go in a loop with genres that are more niche: Japanese Anime, for example, are my thing.

R: Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: I don't know about the way I select content, but I think that what I watch is personalized, the platform suggestions are based on my preferences. At the same time, I also watch movies sponsored by the platform for everyone, that have not been suggested based on my preferences.

R: Okay, do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: Yes, it can influence me: maybe I was not informed enough about a topic and after watching more productions about it I can have a real opinion.

R: Okay, do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: Yes of course, an example of this is the documentary “The Great Hack”, which talks about how elections can be influenced by social media or streaming platforms.

R: Have you ever found yourself in a discussion with other people about a movie picturing a socio-cultural or political issue? How did that influence your idea? Provide an example.

I: Of course, it happened. Speaking about me and my friends, usually all of us start by saying our opinion in a very strong way, but after everybody explains their point of view, we all have a more general and wide interpretation of the topic, it makes us reflect about more possibilities or views.

R: Alright, one final question. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: Yes, that my experience with streaming platforms most of the time can be reduced to merely watching tv shows, to get distracted when I have some free time.

But, they can also be useful to get informed about social issues: they must be used in the right way.

R: Okay! Thank you so much for your time.

Luca

R: Good evening Luca, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Hi Giulia, yes I allow it.

R: Sounds good, let's begin. How old are you?

I: I am 20 years old.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I watch content on streaming platforms almost every night, I love shows and short series particularly.

R: How do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I select shows by using the platform's recommendations, it already knows the genre I like and I can talk about it with my friends - their platforms are similar to mine, we have the same tastes. I also look at the actors that play in the show.

R: How long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a “*watching-marathon*”?

I: Yes, I can easily pull all nighters if I am into a show. The last time I did it was to watch the fifth season of *YOU*. I have been waiting for it for so long and I couldn't stop watching it.

R: Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, many times. I recently watched a production that made me reflect deeply about incarceration: the life conditions of the inmates sometimes are degrading and inhuman. I used to not care about the conditions of people who committed a crime, but after that watch I changed my mind.

R: What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: I like when a story allows me to see a human side, I want to be relatable to my life, as if what happens to the characters might happen to me. At the same time, I also like fantasy as a genre, it's nice to momentarily escape my reality.

R: I understand that. Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes, it happened to me so many times and it is always so confusing. After a watch, I finish the production fully convinced of a version; then after the second production I rethink everything. It happens a lot with crime series, but also contemporary issues. Sometimes I even go on youtube or tiktok and I look for creators that analyze both versions.

R: Interesting, maybe you already answered the next question: have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: Yeah, I mean, I think streaming platforms totally lead us. Not only through how they tell stories, but also through what they choose to stream.

R: Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, of course. An example...maybe *Elite*, the Spanish show.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: Well, speaking of *Elite*, I did not catch cultural elements. Initially I had the language set to English, I only realized it was not an American show because when I switched to the original language they started speaking Spanish. I think they really tried too hard to make it look like an American teen drama.

R: Okay, have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: Yes, they often add characters belonging to the LGBT+ community or other ethnic minorities.

I think it can potentially be a good thing, if only they did it the right way. Everytime they either completely change the core of a character to make it more inclusive, or they add a new one but they remain vague on their backstory.

I think in this way it makes no sense, it just feels artificial.

R: Do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: I feel like Netflix original content is made for a global audience, they have to make it in such a way that everyone likes. Hence, I think it's very simplified.

At the same time, on the platforms there are independently produced shows that might represent social issues in a more authentic way.

R: Okay perfect. Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, of course. I mean, I think algorithms are cool: they know me at this point, every time I watch a recommended production I enjoy the watch.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: Totally, the automatic play is evil: I cannot stop watching. I often finish one season in one night: it's like a mix of the curiosity to see what happens next and the automatic play that gets me.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: Yes, but I do not mind it. I use recommendations a lot, sometimes I don't even read the description of a show: if the platform thinks I will like it, I am going to give it a try. After all, I always get positive results.

R: Okay, interesting. Have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: Yes, there was a period of my life where I was obsessed with crime documentaries, it was all I watched.

R: Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: For sure, at first I watched all kinds of stuff. Now the platform knows me way better, I watch only what I like: I never have to search for a movie from scratch, I choose among things that I like. Actually, I barely choose, I just follow the suggestions.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, Netflix sponsors its own original movies. I think it's definitely a marketing strategy, but if the movie it's nice I don't mind it. I wouldn't say it affects my trust towards streaming platforms.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: My friends and I often watch the same things, our algorithms are similar because we also recommend things to each other. It's fun because in this way someone can bring a new genre to the group and we discover something new, in this way it becomes unique.

R: Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: I think it's personalized because the platform knows me and it creates my algorithm based on your preferences. However, I think it is also influenced by external factors, for example a show that goes viral on social media or a production sponsored by Netflix that has nothing to do with my tastes.

R: Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: Yes, 100%. I think I changed my political opinion because of Netflix: I watched a lot of shows and documentaries about socio-political and cultural issues, I learned about several sides of the same stories I had no idea.

Now, I give importance to certain aspects of social life I did not value as much before, so when I have to vote for a candidate, I go for people who support these causes.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: Yeah, I have watched both The Great Hack and The Social Dilemma. I think that global entities can use companies like Netflix to push some ideas, algorithms play a big role too.

R: Alright, I understand that. I have one final question for you. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: Yeah, I mean I think streaming platforms can be like an alternative school: they can educate and show different sides of things, they can promote inclusivity and do good things for social minorities. However, there is still a lot to work on. Moreover, they are powerful, they should be as neutral as possible in order to avoid influencing people's opinion.

R: Right, thank you very much for your time. The interview is over.

Chiara

R: Good evening Chiara, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Yes I allow it.

R: Sounds good, let's begin. How old are you?

I: I am 23 years old.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I use streaming platforms quite often, I watch something every night before bed mostly on Netflix.

R: How do you select content on streaming platforms?

I: I usually click the shows that are on the top 10 on Netflix's home page, or I watch what the platform suggests that I might like. I also like to watch shows that go viral on tiktok.

R: How long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a “*watching-marathon*”?

I: If I really like a show, I can watch it really quickly. I do have self control on weekdays, but on the weekends I can pull all-nighters watching episode after episode. So yes, I definitely did a “*watching-marathon*” before.

R: Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, it happened to me after watching “The Menendez Brothers” show on Netflix. Before watching it I was totally on the brothers’ side, I had watched their trial on tiktok and I felt really bad for what the boys had been through.

However, after watching the show, I was not fully convinced of their version anymore: I started thinking that their father’s will had a role in the motive of the murder.

R: What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: I get really invested in a plotline when I can relate to the characters: when I do, I start to get attached to the show. to the point that when I finish it, I actually feel nostalgic.

R: Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes, I am going to mention the Menendez brothers case again. As I said, after watching the Netflix show by Ryan Murphy I started having second thoughts on their version.

For this reason, I decided to watch their original documentary, on the same platform. After I watched the second production, I went back to my first opinion and I started believing them again.

R: Interesting, maybe you already answered the next question: have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: I guess, about the Menendez brothers' case, I might have been led: my opinion changed three different times according to what I was watching. However, I never really paid attention to it.

R: Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes, I watched Squid Game. It is a Korean show produced by Netflix.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: Yes, there were some elements of the Korean culture, for example the games they played. However, at the same time it also felt pretty universal, I understood every reference they made as an Italian.

Overall, I would say it was more universal than culture-specific.

R: Okay, have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: Yes it happened to me a lot, especially with Disney. They are using actors of color or actors that belong to social minorities to represent disney characters that were not originally of that ethnicity. This always felt really forced and shallow to me.

R: Do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: I think it depends on what issue is being represented, but mostly they do simplify issues to fit everyone's tastes: after all, streaming platforms care about how many people they are able to reach with a film or show.

R: Okay perfect. Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, I am aware of algorithms. I think they are very useful, overall they improve my watching experience and I quite trust the suggestions, even if sometimes they can be repetitive.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: Most of the time it's my curiosity to know what is going to happen next, but also the platform structure has a role, for example Netflix automatically plays the next episode unless you stop it.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: I never put it that way before, I always thought that the platforms' suggestions were based on my preferences. However, my perceptions have been influenced by streaming platforms before, so maybe also my choices and tastes can be.

R: Okay, interesting. Have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: Well, on my streaming platforms' homepage there are definitely genres that I know I like. However, sometimes I feel like the content suggestions are a little repetitive and they can be an obstacle to discovering a new genre I might like.

R: Interesting. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: Yes, absolutely. At first I was more free in my choice, meaning that I used to look for stuff online or by asking people in order to decide what to watch. Now I let myself be guided by what goes viral on Tiktok, or the platforms' recommendations themselves. Actually, often these two things correspond: I see something viral on social media, then I open Netflix and I realize that it is among the top 10 suggestions.

R: Yeah, I get it. Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, as I said some shows are everywhere: I often find the same productions on Tiktok and on the platform's homepage. I think they know what they are doing: some genres do the right numbers for them.

Honestly, it does not affect me...I am pretty basic in my watches so I end up liking the viral shows.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: I often watch the same things of people my age, I think it's because a lot of us watch things that go viral on social media or they follow the platforms' suggestions. We also recommend things to each other, this is a way of discovering something unique and new.

R: Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: I mean I don't know if the process is personalized, since I mainly follow the platforms' recommendations, but what I watch definitely is. It always matches my likings, so it's made for me...even the sponsored shows correspond to my tastes.

R: Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: Most definitely yes, it happens when the production I am watching shows me sides of that issue that I never saw or understood before.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: I believe that today we are all under strong influence by the media, algorithms are very powerful. I think it's foolish to believe that institutions never used it in their favor, especially in terms of propaganda.

R: Alright, I understand that. I have one final question for you. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: Well, I think the interview was very complete and it touched every point. I believe that streaming platforms have become a very powerful tool at the social level and maybe they have a double face. I would say that on one hand they can be used as an information vehicle and spread awareness on social causes that need it, while on the other they can be dangerous, if used to promote an idea over another. People should always be able to maintain their own perception of things.

R: Right, thank you very much for your time. The interview is over.

Alice

R: Good afternoon Alice, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Yes, I do.

R: Okay, perfect. So, how old are you?

I: I am 15 years old.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I don't have a specific routine, but I watch series on Netflix, Prime Video and also Disney+.

R: How do you select the content to watch on streaming platforms?

I: Sometimes by suggestions that my friends give me, or I choose them by looking at the platform.

R: How long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a *"watching-marathon"*?

I: Sometimes when I really like a tv series or a film I watch it all in one day or in a week. I did marathons with *'Harry Potter'* and *'Star Wars'* films.

R: Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: Yes, but I don't really remember a specific time. I watched *'Dahmer'* and other murder cases, but I didn't really change my perception on them.

R: What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: I like when the characters feel really close to you, they show their emotions and how they feel. Also when they struggle with something that I also struggle with.

R: Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes, I watched the *'Yara'* documentary in two different productions, in one it seemed like the murderer was actually the murderer while in the other I changed my perception.

R: That happened to me too. Have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: Yes, that happens a lot to me when I watch documentaries, because that's real stuff I can think about and change my perception.

R: Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes I watched *'La Casa de Papel'* and others.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: In some series everyone can relate to the story, but sometimes there is some stuff that I don't really understand because I am not part of that community.

R: Okay, but which is more prevalent?

I: I think there's more human stuff that we can all relate to.

R: Okay, so it's more universal?

I: Yes, it's more universal.

R: Okay, have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: Yes, there are a lot of films and series where they try to show something about social minorities.

R: Do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: I think that the best series show actual issues of the population, but sometimes they also change it to make everyone like them, or to make their target like it.

R: Okay perfect. Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, I use recommendations a lot. I think they are convenient, most of the time they suggest content that I like. They might be repetitive sometimes, in that case I open Tiktok to see if I find anything interesting or I ask my friends.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: Yes I think it does because if at the end of an episode there is something that you want to know, you will watch the next one.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: I don't know, I think that platforms' suggestions are based on my preferences. I usually like what they propose so I usually trust them and watch what they recommend.

R: Okay, interesting. Have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: Yes, sometimes they give me the same type of shows or documentaries. When I finish one, they suggest the next one and it's often really similar.

R: Perfect, we are almost done. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: I don't think it changed, since I subscribed to streaming platforms most things that I watch come from social media, from my friends or by following the platforms' suggestions. Sometimes I also watch things with my parents.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, particularly popular or viral shows. If I see an edit of a show on Tiktok, when I open Netflix it's always among the top 10 shows.

It doesn't affect my interest, I think it's quite comfortable: I am going to watch it anyway, if I see it as soon as I open the platform it's even better.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: Me and friends watch the same things, we have the same tastes. Often we actually meet at home and watch our favorite shows together. I don't think it's a bad thing, I am unique in other things even if I like the same shows as my friend. Sometimes I also watch things with my mom, which are more niche.

R: Okay I understand. Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: Yes, I think it is personalized. First of all because the platform recommends things based on my tastes, and secondly because I do not only watch viral things. As I said, I also watch stuff with my mom, she is passionate about cinema so it's always unique productions.

R: Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: Yes, but only if they give really good argumentation and they explain the issue really well. Because sometimes they only show the part that they stand for: I would like that they showed the whole problem and then, I can make my own opinion led by them.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: Yes, but I don't really know how.

R: Okay, one more question. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: Not really, I just wanted to say that I think streaming platforms are really good for us to watch films, but also to inform the population about something. However, it has to be well-made and everyone has to understand it.

R: Okay! Thank you very much.

Andrea

R: Good afternoon Andrea, do you allow this interview to be recorded?

I: Yes, I do.

R: Okay, perfect. So, how old are you?

I: I am 14 years old.

R: How and when do you use streaming platforms? Do you have specific routines around this type of service?

I: I like to watch shows when I get home from school, during lunch. My parents are at work so I use streaming platforms while I eat. Otherwise, I watch after dinner, before I go to bed.

R: How do you select the content to watch on streaming platforms?

I: I use tiktok a lot, so I watch whatever goes viral there. I also look at the top 10 shows on Netflix, or the "Things you might like" section. I watch shows that everyone talks about at school, I do not want to be left out so I have to keep track of what's trendy.

R: How long do you take to watch a show that you really like? Have you ever done a "*watching-marathon*"?

I: Yes, I did that many times. I am not allowed to go past 22:00 on school nights, but on the weekends I did it before. Once I sneaked out of bed and I stayed up until 4 am watching a show, luckily I wasn't busted.

R: That's funny. Did you ever change your perception or opinion around a person or an issue, after watching a show? Can you give me an example?

I: I mean, I don't know, probably yes. If I have to think of an example, maybe *The Last Dance*. Michael Jordan used to be my favorite player of all time, I used to idealize him as a perfect being. However, this docu-series showed me dark sides of him that I would have never imagined. I do not see him with the same eyes as before after this watch.

R: Interesting. What makes a story fascinating and credible in your opinion? Can you identify some elements that really make you empathize with the story, as if you were part of it?

I: I like it when a story feels real, I like to watch documentaries of players that I like, or movies and shows where the protagonists are people of my age. I like when a story is relatable for me.

R: Have you ever watched two different productions treating the same topic in two different ways? Did you have the same perception of the topic in each production?

I: Yes, it happened with two movies about bullying. I watched the first one by myself, it was more like a teen drama where everything gets resolved quickly and the characters move on like nothing happened.

I watched the other at school. It was a documentary with real stories from students, and it showed how bullying can have long-lasting and dangerous effects.

The documentary definitely made me take it more seriously, the consequences felt more real.

R: That is very intense. Have you ever felt led by the content you watched? Or have you ever realized you have changed your opinion after watching something?

I: I think yes. Like, after watching something, I started thinking differently about some things. But I don't know if it was the show or if I just hadn't thought about it before.

R: Have you ever watched streaming content that was entirely set and produced in a foreign country? Can you provide an example?

I: Yes for sure, at school everyone was talking about a show named *Young Royals*, it's Swedish.

R: Ok, and when you watch a foreign production, did you catch specific elements of the culture, or did it feel like a universal, neutral experience?

I: I don't know, I never noticed cultural elements. It was set in a school with protagonists of my age. It was my friend Emma who told me it was Swedish, I didn't even realize it since I was watching it in Italian.

R: Okay, have you ever noticed the presence of characters belonging to social minority groups in a show or movie? Do you think that their presence had a meaningful impact on their inclusivity in society?

I: Yes, every show today has a character from the LGBT+ community or from a minority. I don't know if it has a meaningful impact, but I think it's a good thing.

R: Do you think that streaming content successfully represents real social issues? Or do you believe that their representation is adapted or simplified to fit everyone's perspectives?

I: I would say it is represented better in documentaries than in movies. I think that in movies they oversimplify issues in order to make it less heavy to watch and make everyone like it. This is why they show documentaries rather than movies at school.

R: Okay perfect. Have you noticed whether or not streaming platforms recommend similar content for you to watch? To what extent do you trust these suggestions?

I: Yes, I like the suggestions. They know me well, most of the time I like the kind of content they recommend. However, sometimes they are too repetitive and I go on Tiktok to look for new stuff.

R: What pushes you towards playing another episode after you finished the previous one? Do you think that the platform's structure has an influence?

I: I want to see what happens next, and the episode just starts so I keep watching. I don't really think about it, it just keeps going and I like that.

R: Have you ever doubted that what you are watching depends on what is recommended to you, instead of your active choice and preference?

I: I don't know. Usually I find what I like among the platform's recommendations, so I never really think about it and I just watch.

R: Okay, interesting. Have you ever felt like you were stuck in a cluster of contents, as if you were only watching a certain type of shows or movies?

I: Yes, like I said, sometimes suggestions are repetitive. I once watched two crime documentaries and for a week I only had those on my homepage.

R: Perfect, we are almost done. Looking back at your answers, do you think that the way you select the content to watch has changed over time, since the very first time you started using streaming platforms?

I: It only changed since I was allowed to remove parental control and I got my first mobile phone, since then it stayed the same. I mostly follow the platform's recommendations or I watch whatever goes viral on social media.

R: Did you ever have the impression that a certain type of content is pushed or advertised more than others? Did that affect your interest or trust towards the platform?

I: Yes, maybe. A lot of stuff that I see on Tiktok is also sponsored on streaming platforms, but I don't really care, especially if it's something nice to watch: if it's popular, there must be a reason.

R: When talking with your friends or browsing online, do you think that the content you watch is unique compared to others, or do people around you watch similar things as you?

I: I think I have my own tastes, but I also share them with my friends' and other people my age. We all are into sports, or other things that are popular at school, so we often watch the same productions.

It's fun because I get to comment on what I watch with other people, but I also have my own preferences.

R: Do you believe that the process whereby you select content is unique and personalized? Or do you believe it is affected by external factors?

I: It's definitely not only me: my Netflix's homepage is personalized to my tastes, but I look on Tiktok and other social media platforms a lot. I also listen to people at school recommending shows.

R: Do you think that the content you watch on streaming platforms can influence your response to socio-political and cultural issues? If yes, in which way?

I: Yes, it did many times. Mainly by showing all the sides of the story, so I can have a full view and change my opinion accordingly.

R: Do you think that global entities, i.e. governments, institutions or multinational corporations, can use streaming platforms to guide or shift public opinion in their favor?

I: I think they do, I mean they can definitely use streaming platforms in their favor, for things like propaganda maybe. I am not sure how though.

R: Have you ever found yourself in a discussion with other people about a movie picturing a socio-cultural or political issue? How did that influence your idea? Provide an example.

I: Yes, I always talk about shows with friends. I also like to watch creators on Tiktok discuss it, it helps me to make my own opinion, especially when I am a bit confused on what is right and what is wrong.

R: Okay, one more question. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the interview? Any clarification or insight you would like to tell me about your experience with streaming platforms?

I: I think I said everything, for me streaming platforms are a fun way to learn about new things.

R: Okay! Thank you very much.