

Exploring media consumption behavior through the role of social influence and hedonic motivation in anime binge-watching and cosplay participation

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Abstract

Anime binge-watching has emerged as a significant cultural trend, yet the pathway from this activity to active participation in cosplay remains insufficiently studied. This research explores how social influence and hedonic motivation contribute to this transition, offering broader insights into media consumption and fan engagement behaviors. Employing a quantitative survey approach, data were collected from 412 followers of Rafcreative, an Instagram-based community actively engaged in anime and cosplay events. The study utilizes path analysis through AMOS to examine the direct and indirect effects of social influence and hedonic motivation on cosplay participation, with binge-watching behavior as a mediating factor. The findings show that anime binge-watching plays a key mediating role between both social influence and hedonic motivation about cosplay engagement. Social influence positively impacts both binge-watching and cosplay participation, while hedonic motivation exerts an even more substantial influence on binge-watching and indirectly enhances cosplay involvement. These results underscore the importance of enjoyment-driven and socially influenced behaviors in shaping the experiences of anime fans. The study advances our understanding of fan engagement by outlining how media consumption can evolve into participatory practices, offering practical implications for event organizers and media producers seeking to build deeper connections within anime fan communities.

Keywords: media consumption behavior; hedonic motivation; social influence; cultural participation; UTAUT2

INTRODUCTION

The rise of digital streaming platforms has significantly transformed media consumption habits, giving birth to the phenomenon of binge-watching. This behavior, defined as consuming multiple episodes or entire seasons of a series in a short period, has become a global trend (Ort et al., 2021; Podgorelec, 2020). Media consumption behavior, which encompasses how individuals interact with and consume various forms of media, has shifted from traditional, scheduled viewing to on-demand, personalized experiences (Menrisal, 2022). This shift reflects technological advancements and highlights changing preferences driven by convenience, accessibility, and the immersive nature of digital platforms. Anime, a unique form of visual entertainment originating from Japan, has capitalized on this trend, experiencing exponential growth in global popularity (Narulita & Gustiana, 2019). As binge-watching anime becomes a common practice among fans, it raises critical questions about the motivations and social factors driving this behavior and its broader implications, particularly about cosplay participation. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for exploring how modern media consumption shapes cultural and social engagement.

Hedonic motivation plays a central role in binge-watching behavior. This intrinsic drive to seek pleasure and emotional satisfaction is often a key determinant of media choices (Meiranto et al., 2024; Podgorelec, 2020). With its diverse narratives and visually captivating storytelling, Anime offers viewers an emotionally gratifying experience that often encourages prolonged viewing sessions. However, the impact of hedonic motivation extends beyond passive consumption (Bastos et al., 2024). For anime enthusiasts, binge-watching often deepens their emotional connection to characters and narratives, fostering a desire for further engagement, such as participation in cosplay events. This research examines how the pursuit of pleasure through binge-watching anime translates into active involvement in cosplay, highlighting the transformative journey from consumption to cultural participation.

Social influence significantly shapes media consumption patterns and community engagement. Recommendations and interactions within peer groups, families, and online communities are pivotal in encouraging individuals to start binge-watching anime (Lianto & Dewi, 2024; Rahmadiane et al., 2020). Social influence also extends to cosplay participation, where community dynamics and peer encouragement often motivate fans to participate in these creative events. Platforms like Instagram amplify these influences by enabling fans to share experiences, build networks, and find inspiration for cosplay through community interactions. This study explores the dual role of social influence in driving anime binge-watching and cosplay participation, offering insights into the interplay between social dynamics and media consumption.

Binge-watching anime not only satisfies immediate entertainment needs but also acts as a catalyst for deeper cultural engagement (Yusof et al., 2023). Extended viewing sessions allow fans to immerse themselves in the intricacies of anime narratives, fostering a sense of attachment to characters and storylines (Calinao et al., 2023; Ono et al., 2020). This immersion often translates into cosplay participation, where fans bring their favorite characters to life through costumes and performances. By investigating the connection between binge-watching and cosplay, this research sheds light on how media consumption behaviors evolve into active, creative cultural practices.

Cosplay, a vibrant expression of fandom, provides a platform for anime enthusiasts to showcase their creativity and connect with like-minded individuals. These events, often organized by passionate communities like Rafcreative, serve as hubs for social interaction and cultural exchange (Calinao et al., 2023). The link between binge-watching anime and cosplay participation underscores the transformative potential of media consumption, where passive viewing evolves into active community engagement. Understanding this link is essential for appreciating binge-watching's broader social and cultural impact.

Previous studies have explored various aspects of media consumption and social behavior, but have rarely integrated these dimensions in the context of anime and cosplay participation. For instance, Podgorelec (2020) investigated binge-watching motivations, while Pangkey et al. (2023) examined social influence and hedonic motivation in technology use, yet neither addressed anime-specific content or cosplay. Ono et al. (2020) identified social factors among anime audiences but did not delve into cosplay engagement as a participatory outcome. Similarly, Viens dan Farrar (2021) measured social influence on media behavior broadly, without considering the interplay between binge-watching, hedonic motivations, and cultural activities like cosplay. This research bridges these gaps by examining the integrated effects of binge-watching anime, social influence, and hedonic motivation on cosplay participation, providing a comprehensive perspective that builds on and extends the existing literature.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the mediating role of binge-watching anime in the relationship between hedonic motivation, social influence, and cosplay participation. While previous studies have explored these variables individually, this study uniquely positions binge-watching as a bridge between motivational and social factors and active cultural engagement. By analyzing the followers of Rafcreative—a prominent cosplay organizer in Indonesia—this

research offers a localized perspective on global trends, enriching the discourse on media consumption and cultural participation.

This study explores the mechanisms driving the transition from anime binge-watching to cosplay participation, focusing on how social influence and hedonic motivation shape this shift, as outlined in the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) by Venkatesh et al. (2016). By examining the direct and indirect effects of hedonic motivation and social influence on these behaviors, this research contributes valuable insights to media studies, cultural studies, and communication. The findings are expected to inform strategies for engaging anime fans and fostering vibrant cultural communities through targeted interventions and initiatives.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey design to examine the mechanisms driving the transition from anime binge-watching to cosplay participation, employing a cross-sectional design. The population consists of followers of the Rafcreative Instagram account, an active community in the anime and cosplay events. A stratified random sampling technique is employed to ensure a representative sample, with the sample size calculated using the Slovin formula. Based on the population of 24,100 followers and a 5% margin of error, the required sample size is approximately 393. However, 412 respondents participated in this study.

Data is collected using a questionnaire designed to measure the indicators of social influence, hedonic motivation, anime binge-watching, and cosplay participation, with responses rated on a Likert scale. The relationships between variables are analyzed using path analysis with the assistance of the AMOS software. This analysis allows for testing both direct and indirect effects between the variables, providing insights into how social influence and hedonic motivation contribute to the transition from anime binge-watching to cosplay participation. The cross-sectional design facilitates examining these relationships at a single point in time, enabling the identification of patterns and associations among the variables without the need for longitudinal tracking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Measurement Constructs

This study identifies key variables and their corresponding indicators to comprehensively understand the dynamics of binge-watching and engagement in events. Social influence and hedonic motivation are particularly significant, as they shape viewers' experiences and behaviors in both binge-watching scenarios and event participation. Table 1 outlines these variables and their indicators, providing a structured framework for the analysis.

Table 1 presents the assessment indicators for key variables identified in this study, focusing on social influence, hedonic motivation, binge-watching, and participation in cosplay events. Each variable is accompanied by specific indicators that serve as measurable metrics to evaluate its impact on viewer behavior and experiences. For instance, Social Influence includes indicators such as social support and the influence of friends or colleagues, highlighting how interpersonal relationships affect technology usage and viewing habits. Hedonic Motivation encompasses indicators related to enjoyment, entertainment, and emotional satisfaction, reflecting the pleasurable aspects of binge-watching and event participation. In terms of Binge-Watching Anime, the focus is on indicators like frequency and duration of viewing sessions, capturing the extent of engagement in this activity. Lastly, Participation in Cosplay Events includes metrics related to participation level and social interaction, assessing how individuals connect with others and the community during events.

Table 1. Indicators for Key Variables

Variable	Indicator
Social Influence (X ₁)	Social Support
	Influence of Friends and/or Colleagues
	Perception of Usage by Others
	Social Satisfaction
Hedonic Motivation (X ₂)	Enjoyment
	Entertainment
	Positive Experience or Feelings
	Emotional Satisfaction
	Escape from Routine
Binge-Watching Anime (M)	Visual Appeal
	Frequency of Viewing
	Duration of Viewing Sessions
	Emotional Response
Participation in Cosplay Events (Y)	Participation Level
	Pre-Event Behavior
	Post-Event Behavior
	Social Interaction

This structured framework allows for a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing binge-watching behaviors and event engagement, providing valuable insights into the motivations and experiences of anime fans. The indicators in Table 1 are essential for evaluating the impact of social influence and hedonic motivation on these behaviors. By systematically measuring these constructs, the study aims to uncover the relationships between the variables and enhance understanding of the overall experience of anime fans. This framework will guide the data collection and analysis phases, ensuring a thorough exploration of the factors driving engagement in both binge-watching and event participation.

Correlation Analysis and Its Implications for Path Modeling

The correlation analysis, as shown in Table 2, reveals key relationships among the variables of social influence, hedonic motivation, binge-watching anime, and participation in cosplay events. The strongest correlation is observed between binge-watching anime and participation in cosplay events ($r = 0.587$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a moderately strong positive relationship. This suggests that individuals who frequently binge-watch anime are more likely to engage in cosplay events, likely due to shared cultural or thematic interests. Social influence also demonstrates a positive, albeit weaker, correlation with participation in cosplay events ($r = 0.307$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting its role as an external factor influencing such behavior.

Hedonic motivation shows relatively weaker relationships with both binge-watching anime ($r = 0.307$, $p < 0.001$) and participation in cosplay events ($r = 0.219$, $p < 0.001$). While it plays a role in driving enjoyment-oriented activities like binge-watching, its direct impact on event participation appears limited. Meanwhile, social influence exerts a modest effect on both hedonic motivation ($r = 0.274$, $p < 0.001$) and binge-watching anime ($r = 0.249$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that social dynamics slightly encourage these behaviors.

These findings align with potential pathways in a structural equation model or path analysis. For instance, social influence may indirectly affect cosplay event participation through its impact on binge-watching anime and hedonic motivation. Similarly, binge-watching anime emerges as a key mediator, channeling the effects of both social influence and hedonic motivation into cosplay participation.

Table 2. The Correlation Between Variables

		Social Influence	Hedonic Motivation	Binge- Watching Anime	Participation in Cosplay Events
Social Influence	Pearson Correlation	1	0.274**	0.249**	0.307**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
Hedonic Motivation	Pearson Correlation	0.274**	1	0.351**	0.219**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001		<0.001	<0.001
Binge- Watching Anime	Pearson Correlation	0.249**	0.351**	1	0.587**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001		<0.001
Participation in Cosplay Events	Pearson Correlation	0.307**	0.219**	0.587**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	

Assumption Tests Analysis

Table 3 presents the results of assumption tests conducted for path analysis involving the models.

$M = f(X_1, X_2)$ (1)

$Y = f(X_1, X_2, M)$ (2)

The Shapiro-Wilk test for normality of residuals indicates that both models meet the assumption of normality, with p-values of 0.086 for model M and 0.101 for model Y. These results suggest that the residuals do not significantly deviate from a normal distribution, which is a critical assumption for path analysis. Additionally, the Breusch-Pagan test results show p-values of 0.063 for model M and 0.078 for model Y, indicating no significant evidence of heteroscedasticity. This suggests that the assumption of homoscedasticity, or constant variance of residuals, is also satisfied.

Furthermore, the multicollinearity diagnostics reveal that both predictors X_1 and X_2 exhibit tolerance values of 0.883 and 0.968, respectively, along with Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values of 1.184 and 1.320. These values indicate that multicollinearity is not a concern, as tolerance values above 0.1 and VIF values below 5 suggest that the predictors are not highly correlated with one another. Overall, the results of these assumption tests support the validity of the path analysis, indicating that the models are appropriate for further exploration of the relationships among the variables involved.

Table 3. Path Analysis Assumption Test Results

Model	Normality of Residuals Shapiro-Wilk Test		Homoscedasticity Breusch-Pagan test	Predictor	Multicollinearity Collinearity Diagnostics	
	Statistic	P-Value			Tolerance	VIF
$M = f(X_1, X_2)$	0.951	0.086	0.063	X_1	0.883	1.184
$Y = f(X_1, X_2, M)$	0.972	0.101	0.078	X_2	0.968	1.320

Model Fit Analysis

As shown in Table 4, the model fit indices indicate that the path analysis model is valid and provides a strong representation of the relationships among the variables. The default and saturated models show a perfect fit index, with all values at 1.000, suggesting that these models

align perfectly with the data. In contrast, the independence model assumes no relationships among the variables and has a significant CMIN value of 8.032 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that the independence model does not fit the data well, highlighting significant relationships among the variables in the path analysis.

Overall, the significant difference between the independence model and the default model reinforces the validity of the path analysis model. The acceptable values for the GFI (0.962) and AGFI (0.953) further support this conclusion, indicating that the model adequately captures the underlying structure of the data. Therefore, the results suggest that the specified relationships in the path analysis are meaningful and statistically significant, providing valuable insights for understanding the dynamics among the variables in the study.

Table 4. Model Fit Indices

	CMIN	CMIN/DF	P-Value	RMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	TLI	IFI
Default Model	0.000	0.000	-	0.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Saturated Model	0.000	0.000	-	0.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Independence Model	8.032	1.339	0.000	0.038	0.962	0.953	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Path Analysis Results

The path analysis diagram, as depicted in Figure 1, illustrates the relationships between social influence (X_1), hedonic motivation (X_2), binge-watching anime (M), and participation in cosplay events (Y). It provides a visual representation of both direct and indirect effects, highlighting the interconnected pathways through which these variables influence one another. Social influence and hedonic motivation serve as the primary predictors in this model, affecting binge-watching anime directly and participation in cosplay events either directly or through the mediating role of binge-watching anime.

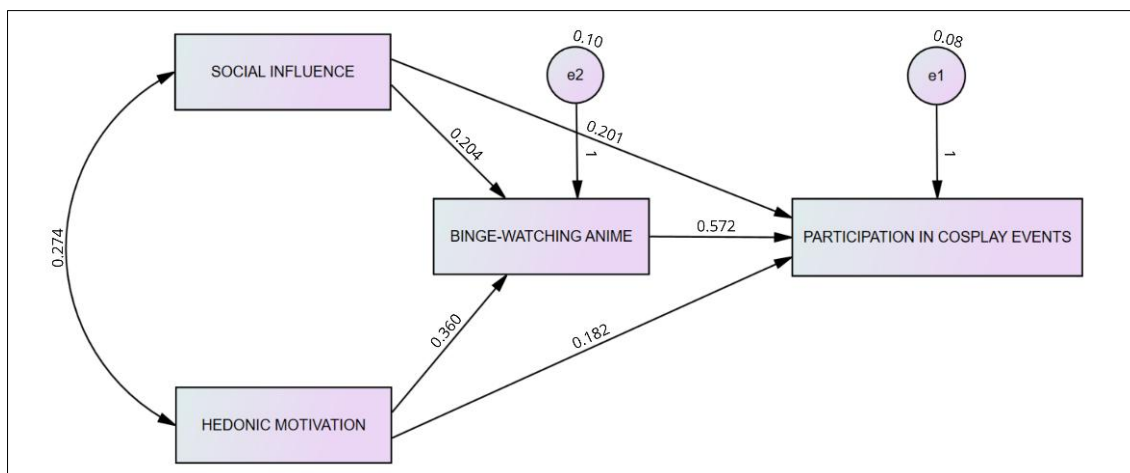


Figure 1. Path Analysis Model Results

Table 5 presents the regression weights of the relationships in the model, with all paths being statistically significant at $P < .001$, supported by robust critical ratio (C.R.) values and low standard errors (S.E.). The high C.R. values, ranging from 3.720 to 10.738, indicate strong statistical significance and a reliable estimation of the relationships within the model. Furthermore, the low S.E. values across all paths reflect the precision of the estimated coefficients, minimizing variability and increasing confidence in the results. This combination of high C.R. and low S.E. underscores the robustness of the model in explaining the relationships between the variables.

Table 5. Regression Weights

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
$X_1 \rightarrow M$	0.204	0.081	4.586	<.001
$X_2 \rightarrow M$	0.360	0.081	6.619	<.001
$M \rightarrow Y$	0.572	0.058	10.738	<.001
$X_1 \rightarrow Y$	0.201	0.063	4.429	<.001
$X_2 \rightarrow Y$	0.182	0.040	3.720	<.001

Table 5 presents the regression weights of the relationships in the model, with all paths being statistically significant at $P < .001$, supported by robust critical ratio (C.R.) values and low standard errors (S.E.). The high C.R. values, ranging from 3.720 to 10.738, indicate strong statistical significance and a reliable estimation of the relationships within the model. Furthermore, the low S.E. values across all paths reflect the precision of the estimated coefficients, minimizing variability and increasing confidence in the results. This combination of high C.R. and low S.E. underscores the robustness of the model in explaining the relationships between the variables.

Direct Effects

As shown in Figure 1, the direct effects are represented by arrows pointing from one variable to another, with accompanying coefficients quantifying the strength of each relationship. For example, both social influence (X_1) and hedonic motivation (X_2) directly impact binge-watching anime (M), while binge-watching anime itself has the strongest direct effect on cosplay participation (Y). Additionally, both predictors, X_1 and X_2 , also have direct pathways to Y , showing their independent contributions to participation in cosplay events.

$$M = 0.204X_1 + 0.360X_2 + e_2 \quad (3)$$

$$Y = 0.572M + 0.201X_1 + 0.182X_2 + e_1 \quad (4)$$

In the first equation, social influence has a direct effect on binge-watching anime with a coefficient of 0.204, indicating a moderate positive relationship. Similarly, hedonic motivation has a stronger direct effect on binge-watching anime, with a coefficient of 0.360. In the second equation, binge-watching anime directly influences cosplay participation with the highest coefficient of 0.572, showing its significant impact. Social influence (X_1) and hedonic motivation (X_2) also directly affect cosplay participation, with coefficients of 0.201 and 0.182, respectively, though their effects are smaller compared to binge-watching anime.

Indirect Effects

The diagram in Figure 1 also captures the indirect effects, which occur when the influence of one variable on another is mediated through a third variable. For instance, social influence (X_1) and hedonic motivation (X_2) indirectly affect cosplay participation (Y) through binge-watching anime (M). These mediated pathways illustrate the role of binge-watching anime as a bridge that amplifies the influence of social and motivational factors on participation behaviors.

$$\text{Indirect effect of } X_1 \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y: (0.204)(0.572) = 0.1167 \quad (5)$$

$$\text{Indirect effect of } X_2 \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y: (0.360)(0.572) = 0.2059 \quad (6)$$

In the third equation, social influence (X_1) indirectly affects cosplay participation (Y) through binge-watching anime, with an effect of 0.1167. This shows that binge-watching anime partially mediates the relationship between social influence and cosplay participation. Similarly, in the fourth equation, hedonic motivation (X_2) indirectly influences cosplay participation (Y) through binge-watching anime, with a stronger effect of 0.2059. This indicates that the enjoyment-driven motivation to binge-watch anime plays a crucial role in explaining how hedonic motivation leads to higher engagement in cosplay events.

Sobel Tests Analysis

The Sobel test results, as shown in Table 6, demonstrate that both indirect effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable through the mediator are statistically significant. Specifically, the indirect effect of X_1 on Y through M yields a test statistic of 2.4402 and a p-value of 0.0147, indicating significance at the 0.05 level. This finding suggests that X_1 exerts an indirect influence on Y , thereby emphasizing the critical role of the mediator M in this relationship.

In addition, the indirect effect of X_2 on Y through M exhibits even greater significance, with a test statistic of 4.0519 and a p-value of 0.0005. This result points to a robust mediation effect, indicating that X_2 has a substantial impact on Y via M . Collectively, these findings highlight the essential function of the mediator in the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, offering valuable insights for future research and practical applications within the relevant field.

Table 6. Sobel Test Results

Indirect effect	a	b	Sa	Sb	Test Statistic	Std. Error	P-Value
$X_1 \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	0.204	0.572	0.081	0.058	2.44020496	0.04781893	0.01467893
$X_2 \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	0.360	0.572	0.081	0.058	4.05198239	0.05081957	0.00005079

Total Effect Analysis

The total effects combine the direct and indirect effects of social influence (X_1) and hedonic motivation (X_2) on cosplay participation (Y).

Total effect of $X_1 \rightarrow Y$:

$$(Direct\ Effect) + (Indirect\ Effect) = 0.201 + 0.1167 = 0.3177 \quad (7)$$

Total effect of $X_2 \rightarrow Y$:

$$(Direct\ Effect) + (Indirect\ Effect) = 0.182 + 0.2059 = 0.3879 \quad (8)$$

Social influence (X_1) and hedonic motivation (X_2) both play significant roles in driving cosplay participation (Y), with binge-watching anime (M) serving as a key mediating factor. In the fifth equation, social influence has a total effect of 0.3177 on cosplay participation, composed of a direct effect of 0.201 and an indirect effect of 0.1167, which is mediated by binge-watching anime. This suggests that while social influence directly encourages cosplay participation, it also amplifies its impact by encouraging binge-watching anime, increasing the likelihood of cosplay involvement. In the sixth equation, hedonic motivation shows a more substantial total effect of 0.3879 on cosplay participation, with a direct effect of 0.182 and an indirect effect of 0.2059, highlighting that the intrinsic desire for enjoyment and fun in anime culture plays a significant role in motivating cosplay participation. The indirect impact of hedonic motivation is notably more significant than the direct effect, indicating that binge-watching anime is a crucial mediator that strengthens the relationship between enjoyment-driven motivation and cosplay participation. Overall, these results underscore the importance of binge-watching anime as a mediating variable that amplifies the influence of both social and motivational factors, facilitating a deeper engagement with cosplay activities.

CONCLUSION

This study offers meaningful contributions to understanding media consumption behavior by examining how social influence and hedonic motivation shape anime binge-watching and cosplay participation. The findings reveal that social interactions significantly impact individuals' decisions to engage with media content, as peer encouragement can lead to increased binge-watching and involvement in cosplay activities. At the same time, the pursuit of enjoyment and emotional satisfaction, or hedonic motivation, plays a central role in driving these behaviors.

Binge-watching not only provides entertainment but also acts as a crucial link that strengthens the effect of both social and motivational factors on cosplay participation. These insights highlight the complex interplay between interpersonal dynamics and intrinsic motivations in shaping how anime fans consume and engage with media. However, the study's scope is limited by using a non-representative sample from a single Instagram community, reliance on self-reported data, and a cross-sectional design that limits causal interpretation. To build on these findings, future research should involve more diverse samples, consider longitudinal and qualitative approaches, and explore additional variables such as cultural context and personal identity. Such efforts will enrich the understanding of fan behavior and support more inclusive, dynamic models of media engagement.

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