Adoptive, Rejective, and Safe Emersion in Netflix Values Among Youth

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Abstract

Netflix has recently gained prominence and sparked controversy among Egyptian youth, thanks to its growing collection of Egyptian content that pushes the boundaries of cultural norms. A substantial debate has emerged between proponents and critics of the Egyptian content available on the platform. This paper, founded on role model theory, investigates the influence of youth watching Netflix shows on their adoption or rejection of values exemplified by these role models. In-depth interviews were carried out with 40 young individuals ranging from 18 to 40 years of age who are avid viewers of Netflix shows. The analysis revealed that young individuals engaged with numerous shows on Netflix, and they primarily responded to the values demonstrated by role models in three distinct manners: (1) Embracing personal traits like ambition, strength of character, independence, determination, and perseverance. (2) Refuting societal values such as explicit crimes, the promotion of homosexuality, short-lived marriages, and sexual content. (3) Disregarding the presented values and beliefs, whether they are positive or negative in nature.

Keywords: Netflix – role model – Egyptian youth, values adoption, values rejection

الملخص :

اكتسبت نيتفليكس مؤخرًا شهرة كبيرة بين الشباب المصري،وهذه الشهرة أثارت جدلاً بفضل المحتوى المصري المُتزايد الذي يدفع بحدود القيم الثقافية جانباً. لذا، نشأ جدل كبير بين مؤيدي ومعارضي المحتوى المصري المُقدم على المنصة. يقوم هذا البحث المستند إلى نظرية نموذج القدوة، بدراسة تأثير مشاهدة الشباب لعروض نيتفليكس على تبنيهم أو رفضهم للقيم التي يمثلها هؤلاء نماذج القدوة. تم إجراء مقابلات متعمقة مع 40 شابًا تتراوح أعمارهم بين 18 و40 عامًا، والذين يعتبرون أنفسهم من المشاهدين الشغوفين لعروض نيتفليكس. وأظهر التحليل أن الشباب المبحوثين تفاعلوا مع العديد من العروض على نيتفليكس، واستجابوا بشكل كبير للقيم التي تبناها نماذج القدوة بثلاث طرق متميزة: (1) اعتناق الصفات الشخصية مثل الطموح وقوة الشخصية والاستقلالية والعزيمة والاصرار. (2) رفض القيم الاجتماعية مثل الجرائم الصريحة وترويج المثلية والزيجات قصيرة المدى والمحتوى الجنسي. (3) تجاهل القيم والمعتقدات المقدمة، سواء كانت طبيعتها إيجابية أو سلبية.

الكلمات الافتتاحية:نموذج القدوة ـ الشباب المصري – تبني القيم – رفض القيم

Introduction

The rise of digital streaming platforms, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, has revolutionized the way audiences consume content, including dramas. These platforms provide a wide selection of dramas with fresh and innovative concepts, enabling them to effectively compete with traditional TV channels for viewers' attention. Digital streaming platforms encompass online services that allow users to watch a variety of video content, including movies, TV shows, series, and documentaries, via the internet, enabling on-demand viewing.

In 1998, Netflix was established as a DVD rental service that operated through mail delivery in the United States. Over time, it has transformed into the world's first truly global internet TV network, expanding its presence to 190 countries (Osur, 2016, p. 2). Netflix stands out as the sole company with direct-to-consumer subscription relationships with 150 million customers worldwide, making it a distinct entity in this aspect (Lobato & Lotz, 2020, p. 132). Today, Netflix is widely recognized as one of the leading streaming platforms globally, offering its users a diverse range of TV shows, movies, documentaries, and original content. As of the first quarter of 2023, the number of paid subscribers worldwide reached approximately 232.5 million, as reported by Statista (2023, para. 1).

Netflix has increasingly become a popular source of entertainment among young people worldwide, and youth make up a significant portion of its subscriber base. According to a 2020 report by Digital TV Research estimated that over 70% of Netflix's global subscribers were under the age of 35. The platform's popularity has led to concerns about its potential impact on youth culture, notably in terms of the cultivation of role models for the younger generation. Critics argue that Netflix promotes unrealistic and potentially harmful ideas about success and popularity, which may influence the beliefs and aspirations of young people.

In the context of this global surge in Netflix's appeal and its implications on youth culture, it is noteworthy to examine how this phenomenon plays out locally, specifically among Egyptian youth. Within Egypt, a diverse spectrum of opinions emerges regarding the influence of Netflix on attitudes and behaviors. On one hand, a segment of Egyptian youth values Netflix for its extensive repertoire of movies and dramas, which introduce novel concepts. This group perceives Netflix as a source of fresh ideas and creative

expression. Conversely, another faction among Egyptian youth expresses concerns about certain Netflix content that appears to clash with Egyptian culture and traditions. This dichotomy of perspectives has given rise to significant controversy within the Egyptian youth community, leading to spirited debates about the compatibility of specific Netflix offerings with the cultural values and norms of Egypt.

In recent years, Netflix has produced several TV series that address significant societal issues. Some of these series, which have garnered strong audience support, include "EL Bahes an Ola," shedding light on the challenges faced by divorced women and their families. "El-Sofara" takes a comedic approach to explore the social challenges confronting the main character and how to overcome life's hurdles. "Grand Hotel" delves into the theme of dealing with crime and bringing criminals to justice. "Ma wara ElTabi3a" is noteworthy as the first Egyptian series to be featured on Netflix, tackling myths and their impact on literate individuals in society. Lastly, "Abla Fahita" presents the tragic consequences of involvement in ethical dilemmas and how they can be addressed (see Figure 1).
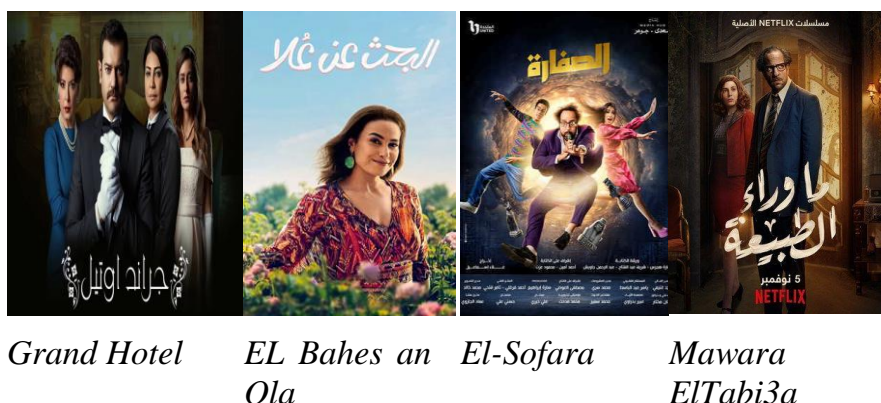

| *Grand Hotel* | *EL Bahes an Ola* | *El-Sofara* | *Mawara ElTabi3a* |

Figure (1)- examples of Netflix shows that addressed significant societal issues

Some other Egyptian TV series and movies presented on Netflix have seemingly contradicted common Egyptian customs and traditions. For instance, Azmet Monatasef EL-Omer" narrates the story of Fayrouz, who engages in a clandestine relationship with her stepdaughter's husband. In "Ashab wala Az," a controversial film, seven friends gather for dinner and play a revealing game where all messages and calls must be visible and audible to everyone. It exposes hidden scandals, including one friend's non-conforming sexuality. In "Leh la2," Sherry, a divorced woman in her forties,

gets engaged to a doctor of the same age. Their relationship is tested when Sherry's son discovers it, prompting Sherry to contemplate a weekend marriage (see Figure 2).

Azmet Monatasef EL-Omer   Ashab wala Az   Leh La2?

Figure (2) examples of controversial Netflix shows.

This paper aims to address the influence of Netflix on the formation of role models for young individuals and to examine the potential consequences of this influence. In doing so, it attempts to scrutinize the ways in which viewing Netflix content can shape the values and behaviors of the youth. Hence, this research aspires to provide a holistic understanding of the interplay between the global landscape of digital streaming platforms and their impact within specific local cultural contexts, such as Egypt.

Literature review

Patterns of Netflix Consumption Among Youth

Several studies have addressed the widespread adoption of Netflix among young people worldwide. For example, Dhiman (2021) found that Netflix is the most popular online video streaming platform among Pakistani students. Likewise, Abdullah (2021) corroborated this finding, establishing Netflix as one of the foremost online streaming platforms among the youth in Pakistan. Furthermore, Salah (2021) discerned Netflix as the primary television viewing platform among Egyptian university students. Mejia (2018) revealed that Netflix is the most favored medium among university students. Additionally, Mishra and Esaimani (2020) unveiled Netflix's high level of popularity among teenagers.

The motivations behind the utilization of Netflix among young individuals have been thoroughly investigated. Panda and Pandey (2017) conducted a study that identified social interaction, escapism, easy access to television content, and advertising as the primary driving factors for college students' use of Netflix. Schaffner et al. (2023) presented compelling evidence illustrating a robust correlation between motivations for watching Netflix and users' proclivity to manage their emotional states. Specifically, their research emphasized the role of escapism and boredom alleviation in influencing user behavior. Furthermore, Castro (2021) explored how motivations for watching Netflix vary throughout the day. His findings indicated that individuals tend to seek relaxation and escapism in the evening and night, while they turn to Netflix for boredom relief in the afternoon and evening.

The widespread adoption of the Netflix platform in the Arab region and the Middle East has brought to the forefront a range of ethical and social conflicts. For instance, Mishra and Esaimani (2020) have underscored the ethical dilemmas and a significant volume of customer complaints stemming from content that is deemed incompatible with Arabic culture. In response to these concerns, Suleman and Zehra (2021) have advocated for the intervention of government authorities in Pakistan, coupled with collaboration from media education experts and policymakers to institute censorship policies and legislation aimed at regulating Netflix content and ensuring their effective implementation.

The criticisms directed at the platform gain substantial traction within society, primarily due to the platform's potential influence on the academic performance of students—an area of particular interest to scholars in the field of communication research. Mansour and Al-Dhobaiban (2022) revealed that the consumption of Netflix dramas may yield a negative impact on the academic performance of university students, attributed to the significant time allocation to watching such content. Moreover, Othman (2022) also explored the repercussions of viewing content on Netflix, noting its potential to affect the academic achievements of young individuals.

One captivating form of engaging with the platform, which bears relevance to both academic achievement and societal impact, while offering insights into how young individuals interpret the ideas presented, is binge-watching. This phenomenon has gained prominence alongside the proliferation of platforms like Netflix. Schweidel and Moe (2016) aptly define binge-watching as the practice of consecutively viewing multiple episodes of a television program in

quick succession. Samy et al. (2022) highlighted the adverse effects of Netflix binge-watching on the cognitive abilities, social interactions, as well as the mental and physical well-being of young people. Additionally, this pattern of viewing has been associated with the decline in conventional television consumption, as referred to by Horeck and Kendall (2018).

The literature has extended its scope beyond usage and culture to explore the platform's influence on the attitudes and behaviors of young individuals. El Adwany and Ebid (2022) have posited that Saudi Arabian audiences who engage with Netflix may be subject to the content's potential influence, which may promote values encompassing violence, homosexuality, betrayal, irreligiosity, alcohol and drug addiction, hatred, and a desire for revenge. Conversely, some studies have underscored the positive impacts of Netflix consumption among youth. For instance, Mostafa et al. (2023) have emphasized its role in educating young individuals and fostering awareness regarding Western human rights values, particularly within the context of Upper Egypt. Additionally, Abdullah (2021) has shed light on how Netflix can facilitate the modification of cultural values among young people while enhancing their historical knowledge.

Media and Role modes

The influence of role models spans various fields, including the media. These individuals wield significant effectiveness, which can be harnessed in politics, the economy, science, sociology, sports, marketing, and more. Consequently, extensive research is commonplace across these domains, seeking to understand how role models impact them. These studies aimed to uncover the characteristics of role models within each field, explore how people interact with these influential figures, and examine the behaviors and values transmitted by them.

However, when it comes to the effects of role models who appear on the media in relation to the adoption of values and behaviors, there are few number of studies. Even fewer number of studies on media role models and their influence on user's attitudes and behaviors. The effects of social media role models are numerous and can include, as mentioned by Jenkins and Jeske (2016), the public's perception of practical and professional aspects of life. They also can include the personal status and identity, as found by Gomillion and Giuliano's (2011) who found that Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual individuals were presented in media as positive role models and sources of inspiration in society.

However, research concerning the impact of media role models on the adoption of values and behaviors remains relatively limited. Even fewer studies focus on the influence of media role models on user attitudes and behaviors. The effects of social media role models are manifold, as highlighted by Jenkins and Jeske (2016). These effects encompass the public's perceptions of practical and professional aspects of life. Additionally, they extend to personal status and identity, as exemplified by Gomillion and Giuliano's (2011) findings that portray Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual individuals as positive role models and sources of inspiration in society.

Furthermore, Gladding and Villalba (2014) discovered that exposure of young people to positive role models in movies can significantly influence their selection of real-life role models. Limilia and Setianti (2017) observed that most adolescents tend to choose media celebrities, micro-celebrities, and sports figures as their role models. Ivaldi and O'Neill (2008) demonstrated that adolescents often opt for famous musicians as their role models, attributing this choice partly to the substantial media exposure experienced by adolescents. This phenomenon extends beyond sports and music, as evidenced by Kristi's (2023) research, which found that social media role models also exert a positive impact on students' entrepreneurial interests in the business world.

However, the impact of role models is not uniform, and there are variations in how they are perceived within society. Nakanishi et al. (2019) revealed that male adolescents often regard media personalities as their role models, while female adolescents more frequently consider family members as their role models.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in role model theory (RMT), an offshoot of social learning theory. RMT has been extensively examined within the fields of psychology and education and has found applications across diverse domains, including sports, business, and healthcare.

A role model is defined by Bricheno and Thornton (2007) as a 'person who is respected, followed, and emulated, whether in the media or on social media platforms, or in personal life, such as within family or among friends. Gauntlett 2002) further elaborates, describing a role model as 'someone to look up to' and a foundation for shaping one's character, values, or aspirations (Limilia & Setianti, 2017).

RMT has shown that role models can have a diverse range of positive effects on individuals. These effects include inspiring individuals to set and achieve goals, boosting their self-esteem, and positively shaping their academic and career aspirations (Bandura, 1977; Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002). Moreover, role models can also act as sources of social support, offering guidance and valuable advice (Lockwood et al., 2002).

However, RMT also suggests that individuals may be influenced by negative role models who exhibit undesirable behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. Negative role models can lead individuals to engage in harmful or risky behaviors, adopt negative attitudes, and develop unhealthy beliefs (Bandura, 1977; Lockwood et al., 2002). Therefore, it is crucial for individuals to be mindful of the role models they choose to emulate. Furthermore, society should actively promote positive role models who exemplify desirable behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs.

According to Bandura (1986), the effectiveness of a role model is influenced by three key components:

(1) Similarity: This component pertains to the extent to which individuals perceive the role model as similar to themselves in terms of characteristics such as age, gender, and ethnicity.

(2) Competence: This component relates to how the individual perceives the role model's proficiency in a specific domain or skill set. It reflects the individual's belief in the role model's capabilities and expertise.

(3) Attractiveness: This component pertains to the degree to which the individual finds the role model physically or socially appealing. It encompasses elements of visual attractiveness as well as interpersonal charm.

In accordance with these three components, the theory posits that the greater the perceived similarity, competence, and attractiveness of a role model, the more effectively they can influence and motivate individuals (see Figure 3). Furthermore, RMT proposes that individuals are more inclined to adopt behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs aligned with those of their role models if they believe that doing so will result in positive outcomes (Bandura, 1977).
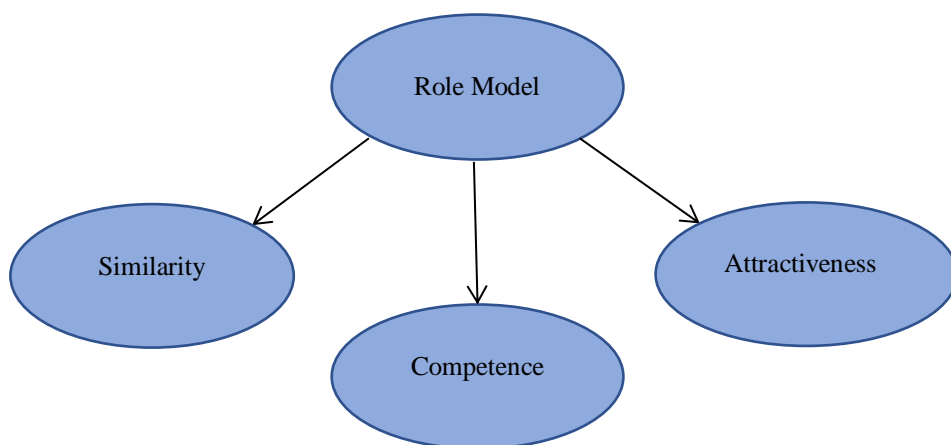
Figure (3): The components of RMT

Based on this theory, this study aims to shed light on the impact of role models presented on Netflix in shaping youth behaviors. Specifically, the study seeks to answer three key research questions:

Drawing upon this theoretical framework, this study endeavors to illuminate the influence of role models portrayed in Netflix content on the behavior of young individuals. To achieve this goal, our research focuses on addressing three fundamental research inquiries:

RQ1: To what extent do youth value and emulate role models portrayed in Egyptian Netflix content?

RQ2: What are the distinguishing attributes of actors who emerge as role models and gain admiration from viewers in Netflix shows?

RQ3: Are the role models depicted in Netflix shows perceived by viewers as having predominantly negative or positive influences?

Methodology

Participants and procedures

The research employed semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method to gather insights and perspectives from Netflix users in Egypt. Participants were selected based on particular criteria, which included their usage of the Netflix platform, having watched or currently watching at least one Egyptian or foreign film or series, and falling within the age range of 18 to 40. Employing a purposive sampling approach, I recruited a total of 40 participants (see table 1 for detailed demographic information). The

interview durations ranged from 15 to 30 minutes. Five interviews were conducted in English with students from private universities who preferred this language, while the remaining 35 interviews were conducted in Arabic and subsequently transcribed for further analysis.

Table (1): Demographics characteristics of participants

Variables		Number
Age	18-25	19
	26-33	11
	34-40	10
	Total	40
Occupation	Employed	19
	Graduated	5
	Student	16
	Total	40
Total	40	

The interviews were strategically conducted in locations relevant to the participants, including universities and designated areas within cafes. To accommodate individuals with time constraints, some interviews were conducted online via platforms such as Facebook Messenger and Telegram. To enhance the depth of these interviews, I incorporated references to specific Arabic series and movies, such as "Azmet montasef El-Omar," "Ashab wala Az," "Leh la2," "Ma waraa EL Tabia," "Grand Hotel," "El-Sofara," and "El-bahes an Ola." This approach not only engaged participants but also facilitated the exploration of their real-time reactions and impressions during the interview process.

The interviews commenced with the explicit consent of the participants, and to ensure accuracy, audio recordings were made of each session. Subsequently, a transcription process was undertaken, encompassing the meticulous documentation of both questions posed and participants' responses. In addition to transcribing the spoken words, detailed notes were taken to capture the nuances and context, providing a deeper understanding of the meaning conveyed within the text. This comprehensive approach facilitated a thorough analysis of the interview data.

Data Analysis and ethical considerations

A thematic content analysis approach, widely recognized and utilized in qualitative research (Jaapar et al., 2022). This method involves three distinct stages: open coding, classification, and theme generation, all geared towards addressing the research objectives. Within this framework, words and phrases are systematically coded and then organized into specific categories to discern recurrent themes of substantial significance within the textual data. This approach ensures a comprehensive and structured analysis.

To uphold ethical standards and safeguard participant privacy, a series of procedures were carefully implemented. Firstly, participants received detailed information outlining the research objectives and were assured of the strict confidentiality measures in place to protect their data and personal information. Additionally, explicit consent was sought from all participants before conducting the interviews. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, participants' full names and any personally identifiable information were redacted within the study, with only their first names used for differentiation. These measures were crucial in ensuring the ethical integrity of the study.

Analysis

The Growing Popularity of Netflix Among Youth

The analysis has unveiled that participants are actively engaging with several digital viewing platforms, including Netflix, Watch It, and Shahed. This increasing preference for Netflix among young people aligns with the findings of Samy (2020), who also observed the growing utilization of Netflix among this demographic. Netflix's appeal can be attributed to the wide variety of captivating Arabic and English content it offers, as well as its portrayal of real-life stories. Remarkably, a significant number of young viewers have enjoyed various series and movies on Netflix or content produced by Netflix, even when accessed through other digital platforms.

Participants' viewing preferences encompass a wide spectrum of Arabic content, featuring shows such as 'Al-Bahes an Ola,' 'Friends,' 'El-Sofara,' 'Leh laa?,' 'Sahar Elyaly,' 'Abla Fahita,' 'Ma waraa ELtabiaa,' 'Farah,' 'Ashab wala Az,' and 'El-Maqpara.' In addition to the Arabic content, participants' viewing repertoire extends to English series and movies, including popular titles like 'Stranger Things,' 'The Crown,' 'The 100,' 'Anne with an E,' 'Emily in Paris,' 'Lupin,' 'Dark,' 'The Night,' 'Agent Series,' 'Skyscraper', 'La Casa de Papel,'

'Vikings,' 'Perfect Strangers,' and 'Bodyguard'. These selections reflect the captivating and diverse content that has held the fascination of young viewers.

It is worth noting that there were interesting variations among youth participants in their viewing habits. The analysis revealed that younger individuals, irrespective of their educational background, tend to watch Netflix more frequently compared to their older counterparts. For instance, participants in the age range of 20-25, such as Noura (a 23-year-old computer science graduate), Mariem (a 22-year-old business college graduate), Menna (a 20-year-old engineering student), and Gillan (a 23-year-old graduate in economics and political science), watch Netflix on a daily basis. On the other hand, participants in the age range of 25-40, like Eng. Aya (a 34-year-old), Nada (a 35-year-old translator), Aliaa (a 35-year-old lecturer), Menna (a 34-year-old graduate in Mass Communication), and Mai (a 38-year-old pediatrician), watch Netflix from time to time when there's a show that interests them.

Role model and watching Netflix

Opinions varied regarding the extent to which using Netflix influences the creation of role models among them. Surprisingly, the majority of respondents believed that actors appearing in different shows on the platform do not significantly contribute to shaping their role models. To precisely examine the impact of role models on youth, three key components were employed: similarity, competence, and attractiveness (See figure 4).

Regarding the *similarity* between the actors and the participants, most participants indicated that there is no significant resemblance between themselves and their favorite characters, who are considered role models for them. However, Aya (35 years old engineer) made an interesting observation, stating, "I can relate to Nelly Kareem's character in 'Leh La2?' series when it comes to her determination to achieve her goals."

For the *Efficacy element*, most respondents agreed that their favorite characters in the movies they watched exhibited efficiency in various aspects. The efficacy noted by participants included several characteristics, such as determination to achieve goals, strong personality, leadership, advocating for minority rights, managing challenges and hardships, courage, friendship, persistence, personal improvement, growth, leadership, intelligence, and emotional stability.

For example, Aliaa (35 years old) mentioned, "Farah's character in the 'Farah' series could serve as a role model for me because she is exceptionally efficient in advocating for gender equality." Mai (38 years old) praised, "Farida Ragab's character in 'Leh La2 series' was efficient in relying on herself and creating a life of her own away from her mother and brother."

Concerning *attractiveness*, participants found themselves drawn to their role models among the actors for various reasons, such as charisma, strong personality, and performance. For instance, Aya (35 years old) stated, "I am attracted to Nelly Kareem in the 'Leh La2' series because of her exceptional acting skills." Similarly, Mai (38 years old) mentioned, "Nelly Karim captured my attention in the series 'Leh La2' with her profound love and dedication to her children." Aliaa (35 years old) expressed, "I am attracted to Farah in the 'Farah' series because she advocates for women's rights, which aligns with my values and drew my attention."
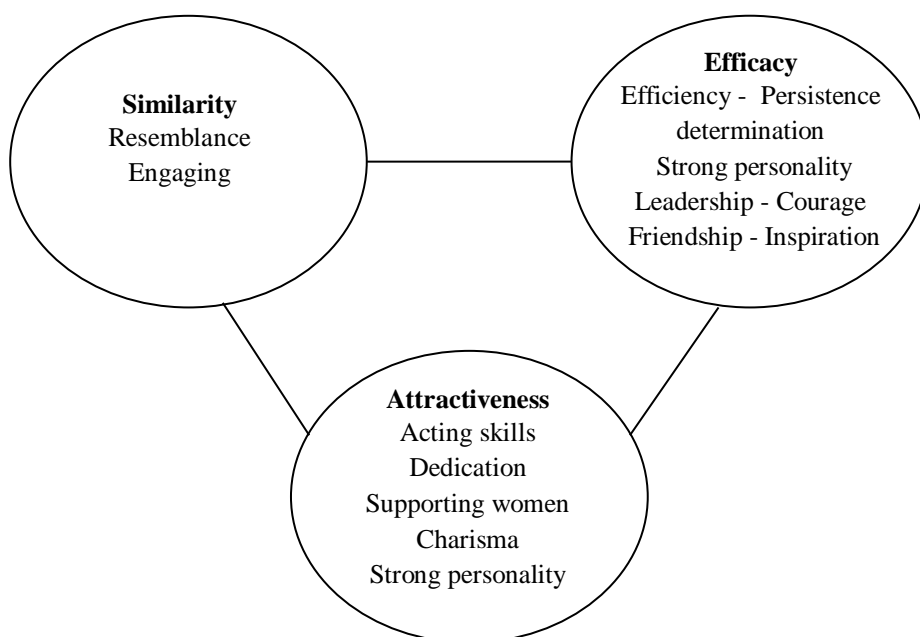

Figure (4) Role model components

In addition to the three elements that explore the qualities of the role models participants admire, the interviews sought to uncover the most significant personal traits that participants have incorporated into their own lives from these role models. Alaa (20 years old) shared, "I have acquired traits of positivity and self-confidence from my role models on Netflix." Gillan (23 years old) mentioned, "Self-development is the primary personal trait I have

adopted from my role model." Aya, aged 34, identified attributes like perseverance towards goals, the willingness to sacrifice for others, the ability to avoid despair, and the maintenance of hope for the future as personal characteristics she gained from her role models on Netflix. Nada (35 years old) attributed politeness and good morals to her role models on Netflix. Menna, also 35, emphasized "positive and innovative thinking are personal traits I have assimilated from my Netflix role models. Marwa, aged 21, emphasized that "transparency, honesty, courage, resilience, determination, optimism, and hope" are personal traits that she acquired from her role models on Netflix. Maged, aged 22, mentioned, "tolerance, altruism, acceptance of diverse opinions, and avoidance of racism" are the personal traits he adopted from his role models on Netflix. Mohamed, aged 23, identified "encouragement" as the primary personal trait he gained from his role models. Merna, aged 25, stated that "dependency, particularly among women," was the sole personal trait she derived from her role models. Mai, aged 39, mentioned that "the pursuit of my dreams and self-reliance" are the personal traits that she got from her role models. Amr, aged 24, mentioned "courage and religiosity" are the personal traits that he acquired from his role models on Netflix.

Netflix: A Mix of Positive Transformations and Disappointments

Several participants confirmed that watching Netflix made a positive change in their real lives. Some of the positiveness includes living life as it comes, seeking happiness, excusing people, getting strong in life situations, and cultivating an independent personality. For instance, Aya (35 years old) said, "I got a positive change in my life after watching 'El Bahes An Ola,' which learned me life sacrifices." Marwa (21 years old) said, "I acknowledge the numerous inspiring stories that influenced me positively, resulting in an increased self-confidence and behavioral changes."

On the other hand, some other participants expressed their disappointment with certain aspects of Netflix shows. Mai, aged 39, stated that "Nelly Karim's methods for resolving conflicts with her son left me feeling let down." Similarly, Aya (34 years old), specifically mentioned Nelly Karim's series and her disappointment in its portrayal of differential treatment between boys and girls in child-rearing. Additionally, Ghadeer, aged 23, conveyed a general sense of disappointment, as she believed that Netflix promotes non-Arab cultures that clash with her values and principles.

It's worth noting that a substantial number of participants, especially those who do not take the content seriously, expressed their belief that the actors in Netflix productions are incapable of instigating positive change in their lives. For instance, Alaa, a 20-year-old participant, stated, "The content on Netflix is so detached from reality that it can never foster any positive transformations." Similarly, Nada and Aliaa (both 35 years old), Mai (38 years old), and Mahmoud (23 years old) concurred that the characters portrayed in Netflix shows have not managed to inspire any positive changes in their lives. Maged (22 years old) also mentioned, "There's no character in Netflix that has affected me, whether positively or negatively." Likewise, some other participants expressed that they did not feel disappointed after watching Netflix shows because they did not engage with the movies and series to the extent that led them to expect something significant from the content presented. Notably, Amr, at 23 years old, Nora (23 years old), Roaa (25 years old), Mazen (20 years old), and Mohamed (24 years old) all shared this perspective.

Netflix effects on values and beliefs

The interviews also delved into the values and beliefs of participants to gain a better understanding of whether Netflix shows have any cultural impact. In this context, some participants focused on the cultural influence experienced by themselves. Nora (23 years old) noted that, "My exposure to diverse cultures and values depicted in shows from other countries has influenced my beliefs and values." Roaa (25 years old) shared, "Netflix shows have affected my beliefs and values, especially in the romantic aspect, but I also recognize that they can have a stronger influence on the beliefs and ideas of teenagers." Gillan (23 years old) affirmed, "Netflix indeed influences my values and beliefs, particularly because the shows on the platform do not censor or filter content, including scenes of sex and crime." Amr (23 years old) expressed, "Netflix has some influence on my beliefs, as certain shows on the platform tend to promote extreme ideas and values throughout their narratives."

In addition to the impacts participants experienced themselves, some other participants highlighted the potential effects that the platform could have on others. For instance, Aya (34 years old) mentioned, "Netflix shows do not personally affect my beliefs and values, but I recognize that they could have an impact on unaware youth." Similarly, Nada (35 years old) stated, "Netflix shows do not directly influence my values, but they can exert a general influence on the values of the youth and society as a whole." Mariem (22

years old) acknowledged, "The characters in Netflix shows can shape people's values and beliefs by portraying different perspectives and experiences."

On the contrary, a diverse group of participants from different educational backgrounds, including Hassan (18 years old), Aliaa (35 years old), Ghadeer (23 years old), Marwa and Mazen (21,22 years old), Maged (22 years old), Mohamed (23 years old), and Mai (38 years old), reached a consensus that Netflix shows do not influence their values and beliefs.

The interviews also explored Netflix's promotion of values that are considered incompatible with Egyptian culture. Omar, Mai, and Mahmoud, aged 23, 38, and 27 respectively, expressed their concerns about Netflix's portrayal of values that clash with their cultural beliefs. Specifically, they objected to the depiction of homosexuality in drama shows like (Ashab wala Az movie) and the inclusion of related advertisements during these shows. Mohamed, also 27 years old, likened Netflix's promotion of these values to "contaminating honey with poison" and criticized the platform for extensively advertising visually captivating series that incorporate elements such as homosexuality and racism. It is worth noting, however, that not all participants share this viewpoint, as some believe that Netflix shows do not endorse any values that are incompatible with their culture.

Conclusion

This study has qualitatively investigated the influence of watching Netflix on the perceptions and adoption of role models among Egyptian youth. Through comprehensive interviews with 40 participants ranging in age from 18 to 40. The analysis provided valuable insights into how youth in Egypt perceive actors from Netflix productions as role models and the subsequent impact on their behaviors and values.

The analysis revealed that the majority of participants are inclined to emulate specific actors due to their captivating style, character, and personal traits. They also tend to mimic particular behaviors depicted in movies and series available on Netflix. However, it is intriguing to note that many participants refrain from explicitly acknowledging having role models in their lives. This finding contrasts with the study by Nakanishi et al. (2019), which observed that many adolescents often regard media figures as role models.

Within the sphere of influences exerted by Netflix shows on audience values, two categories emerge as particularly significant: adoptive and rejective. The adoptive influence pertains to participants' embrace of positive ideas and

beliefs that align with their culture and values, including concepts such as gender equality, women's independence, sacrifice, hard work, and self-confidence. On the other hand, the rejective influence relates to participants' encounters with negative values depicted and emphasized in the shows, which are in conflict with their own values, such as harmful criminal scenes, explicit sexual content, promotion of homosexuality, fleeting marriages, and instances of racism.

In addition to these two categories, there is another category that can be termed 'safe viewing.' In essence, a substantial number of participants do not immerse themselves deeply in Netflix shows, treating them with a more lighthearted approach. This category largely encompasses individuals who watch for entertainment and leisure, without attaching significant importance to the positive or negative ideas and values presented.

The findings significantly enrich our comprehension of the dynamics of media consumption, role modeling, and youth values. They illuminate the nuanced influences that emerge from the active engagement with streaming platforms such as Netflix. Future research is strongly encouraged to dig deeper into the analysis of the three distinct types of influences linked to the cultural consumption of Netflix (adoptive, rejective and safe). This exploration should encompass the cultural consumption of non-Arab content in comparison to Arab content.

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