

An Extensive Assessment of Factors Driving Theatre Audience Loyalty and Engagement

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Abstracts

Background: Theatre audience loyalty is vital to growing appreciation rates and overall consumer satisfaction. This research aims at discovering and understanding the relationship between TEE, PPV, and APQ, TSAT, AL and RTV. The goal of this study is to evaluate theatre audience behaviours and the factors that affect their propensity to revisit the theatre again. In order to look at the relationships between TEE, PPV, APQ, TSAT, AL, and RTV, the study used CB-SEM. To compare high and low groups of TEE, PPV and APQ Mann-Whitney U Test was used; Chi-Square test was utilized to cross-tabulate two variables. Questionnaires were completed by 550 theatre audience respondents, and variables were assessed by a 5-point Likert scale. CB-SEM analysis also showed that TEE has a positive impact on RTV ($\beta = 0.045$) and PPV ($\beta = 0.038$), whereas, APQ has the least impact ($\beta = 0.015$). Analysis indicated that TSAT and AL, respectively, moderated the relationships between PPV and RTV ($r = 0.22$) and TEE and RTV ($r = 0.31$). Mann-Whitney U Tests confirmed the significant relationships for TEE and PPV but not for APQ. Chi-Square Tests exposed that there was a considerable relationship among TEE and RTV [$\chi^2 = 7.89$, $p = 0.005$] as well as between PPV and RTV [$\chi^2 = 5.67$, $p = 0.017$]. Findings of the study show that TEE and PPV are core determinants of RTV, with TSAT and AL being strong intermediaries. Thus, emphasize that APQ does not have a sufficient or significant effect on RTV. Thus, these findings are useful for increasing theatre audience loyalty

and engagement.

Keywords: Audience Loyalty, Theatre Audience Engagement, Perceived Performance Value, Return Theatre Visit.

Introduction

The concept of audience loyalty and engagement has become a critical consideration within the theatre industry, primarily due to shifts in cultural expectations and emergence of streaming media services [11]. These are helpful for managers, marketers, and producers since theatre is dependent on repeat attendance; thus, strategies that promise audiences' devotion are vital to theatre's longevity and financial stability [6].

I. Importance of audience loyalty

Theatre loyalty is defined as the behaviors of patrons in attending performances, advocating for shows, and supporting the theatre's goals [1]. For retaining revenue and for establishing a positive cultural climate, it is highly useful. Loyal customers provide theatre organizations with improved communication, purchase of additional tickets, and strong support [2]. It is crucial to comprehend and distinguish the determinants of loyalty with a focus on the elements like emotions, satisfaction, and perceived value of the theatre [15].

II. Enhancing Audience Engagement

Audience participation in theatres focuses on the affective, cognitive, and social aspect of consumers. Increased interaction can result in fulfilling interactions and enhance the perception of brand fidelity [3]. Engagement elements cover performance quality, interactivity and especially aspects of participatory nature. Theatre organizations can engage and maintain audiences who benefit by advocating for cultural activities, and participating in their society [5].

The aim of this research is to evaluate the factors influencing theatre audience engagement and loyalty, with a focus on how engagement, perceived value, and satisfaction affect repeat visits.

The research's remaining segments are grouped as follows: Section 2 focuses on the hypothesis and addresses the relevant studies. Section 3 examined the methodology, which comprised collecting information, formulating questions, and statistical analysis. Section 4 presents the findings, and Section 5 concludes the investigation.

Literature review

The goal of paper [12] was to identify key demographic characteristics for each group and divide audiences for classic theatre depending on frequency of attendance. An analysis was conducted before a self-completion questionnaire was distributed to the region's population. Six famous theatre moments have been identified by the study's findings.

The historical and modern approaches of digitizing a major theatre chain's audience were examined in study [4]. The study found that loyalty programs, automated point-of-sale systems, and credit cards were instances of prevalent digitization media. An analysis was conducted on the economic logics of audience digitalization, emergent communication, and data gathering methodologies.

The elements of deliberate behavior that influence the notion to watch movies were identified by research [10], which additionally measured the degree of audience engagement in the intended behavior. For that reason, a social media survey was conducted online. The data were analyzed using PLS-SEM. According to the results, the factors that described the need to watch movies were viewpoint, actual spending status, and involvement.

The sociocultural and economic factors impacting movie-going behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic were studied in article [14], along with the connection between younger Flemish adults' movie-going and streaming video watching habits. The findings showed that when returning to theatres, individuals missed the movie theatre. The social component of attending to the movies was not as important to participants as safety, comfort, and accessibility.

The configuration impact mechanism between brand image, customer expectations, and five subjective values toward moviegoer satisfaction was examined in research [13]. Using experience theory of value and the consumer fulfilment index framework as a foundation, an innovative configuration satisfaction indicator model was developed. Furthermore, to investigate the process by which arrangement influences cinema customer happiness, a fuzzy-set qualitative comparison analysis was utilized.

The significance of narrative and experience satisfaction in the context of cinema tourism was examined in study [8]. That made an effort to show how movies may affect travel experiences in addition to the actual travel, with a focus on the importance of narrative and the enjoyment of the cinematic tourist experience.

The purpose of the study [7] was to develop suggestions for the communication strategies of struggling movie chains. The findings demonstrated that occasionally updated movie chain pages lost their audience. As a result of their adherence to social network algorithms, movie chains that consistently publish a minimum of one each three days engage their followers in the conversation and avoid losing visitors.

A performance indicator for movie theatre services was developed by study [9]. First, a conceptual model for the services offered by movie theatres was developed. Second, latent factors such as ambiance, customer satisfaction, social benefit, and physical evidence were identified and confirmed using CFA.

I. Hypothesis development

H1 - Theatre Experience Engagement and Return Theatre Visits (TEE-RTV)
Higher levels of Theatre Experience Engagement (TEE) lead to a greater likelihood of Return Theatre Visits (RTV), with increased engagement enhancing the probability of audience returning to the theatre.

H2 - Perceived Performance Value and Return Theatre Visits (PPV-RTV)
A higher Perceived Performance Value (PPV) is positively associated with an increased likelihood of Return Theatre Visits (RTV), indicating that audience who perceive higher value from performances are more likely to return.

H3 - Artistic Performance Quality and Return Theatre Visits (APQ-RTV)
Artistic Performance Quality (APQ) does not significantly influence Return Theatre Visits (RTV), suggesting that, contrary to previous research, the quality of the artistic performance may not impact audience decisions to return.

H4 - Perceived Performance Value, Theatre Satisfaction, and Return Theatre Visits (PPV-TSAT-RTV)
Theatre Satisfaction (TSAT) mediates the relationship between Perceived Performance Value (PPV) and Return Theatre Visits (RTV), indicating that the perceived value of performances influences return visits through its impact on overall satisfaction with the theatre experience.

H5 - Theatre Experience Engagement, Audience Loyalty, and Return Theatre Visits (TEE -AL-RTV)
Audience Loyalty (AL) mediates the relationship between Theatre Experience Engagement (TEE) and Return Theatre Visits (RTV), suggesting that the engagement with the theatre experience influences return visits through its effect on audience loyalty.

Analysis

I. Demographic characteristics

The Table I categorizes 550 theatre audience respondents by demographic characteristics: Age (18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50+), Gender (Female, Male, Non-binary/Other), Education (High School to Master’s Degree), Occupation (Student, Professional, Managerial, Artistic/Cultural), Income (Less than \$30,000 to \$70,000+), and Theatre Attendance Frequency (Never to Regularly). Fig 1 presents the occupation and income range of participants.

Table I Demographic Characteristic

Demographic Characteristic	Values
AGE	
18-24 yrs	80 (14.5%)
25-34 yrs	130 (23.6%)
35-49 yrs	160 (29.1%)
50+ yrs	180 (32.7%)
Gender	
Female	245 (44.5%)
Non-binary/Other	30 (5.5%)
Male	275 (50.0%)
Education Level	
High School Graduate	80 (14.5%)
Some College	120 (21.8%)
UG Degree	200 (36.4%)
PG Degree or Higher	150 (27.3%)
Occupation	

Student	60 (10.9%)
Professional	280 (50.9%)
Managerial	90 (16.4%)
Artistic/Cultural	120 (21.8%)
Income Range	
Less than \$30,000	100 (18.2%)
\$30,000 - \$69,999	200 (36.4%)
\$70,000 and above	250 (45.5%)
Frequency of Theatre Attendance	
Never	70 (12.7%)
Occasionally (1-2 times per year)	130 (23.6%)
Sometimes (3-5 times per year)	150 (27.3%)
Frequently (6-10 times per year)	120 (21.8%)
Regularly (More than 10 times per year)	80 (14.5%)

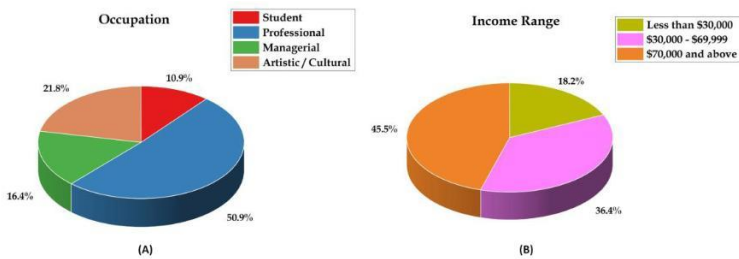


Fig 1 Participants information (A) Occupation and (B) Income Range

II. Theoretical model:

Fig 2 illustrates the theoretical model for theatre audience behavior. It shows that Theatre Experience Engagement (TEE) directly influences Return Theatre Visits (RTV), suggesting engaged audiences are more likely to return. Perceived Performance Value (PPV) impacts Theatre Satisfaction (TSAT), which mediates its effect on Return Theatre Visits (RTV). This indicates that perceived value enhances satisfaction, which drives future attendance. Artistic Performance Quality (APQ) is tested but is hypothesized to have no significant impact on Return Theatre Visits (RTV). Additionally, Theatre Experience Engagement (TEE) fosters Audience Loyalty (AL), which in turn affects Return Theatre Visits (RTV). This model highlights engagement and perceived value as key drivers of audience retention, with loyalty and satisfaction as important mediators.

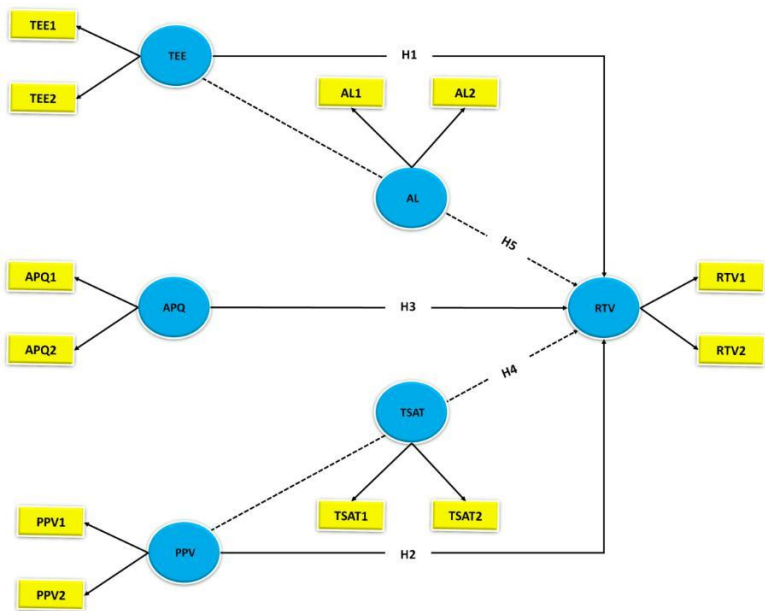


Fig 2 Theoretical model

III. Questionnaire Framework:

Demographic Information: This section collects background details about the respondents, such as age, gender, occupation, and frequency of theatre visits.

Theatre Experience Engagement (TEE): This section includes questions designed to measure the respondent’s level of emotional and behavioral involvement with theatre performances. For example, respondents will rate their agreement with statements about their engagement in theatre experiences.

Perceived Performance Value (PPV): This section assesses how respondents perceive the overall value of theatre performances. Questions focus on entertainment, cultural enrichment, and the perceived worth of attending performances.

Artistic Performance Quality (APQ): Here, respondents evaluate their perception of the artistic and technical quality of theatre performances. Questions address aspects like the quality of acting, production design, and overall performance excellence.

Theatre Satisfaction (TSAT): This section gauges overall satisfaction with the theatre experience. Questions explore how satisfied respondents are with various aspects of their theatre visit and whether satisfaction impacts their likelihood to return.

Audience Loyalty (AL): This section measures the level of loyalty respondents feel toward the theatre. Questions focus on emotional attachment, frequency of visits, and intent to continue attending.

Return Theatre Visits (RTV): This section assesses the likelihood of respondents returning to the theatre for future performances. It examines factors influencing their decision to revisit.

Responses are measured using a 5-point Likert scale:

□ Theatre Experience Engagement (TEE): (1) Not at all engaged to (5) Extremely engaged

□ Perceived Performance Value (PPV): (1) Very low to (5) Very high

□ Artistic Performance Quality (APQ): (1) Very poor quality to (5) Excellent quality

□ Theatre Satisfaction (TSAT): (1) Very dissatisfied to (5) Very satisfied

□ Audience Loyalty (AL): (1) Not at all loyal to (5) Extremely loyal

□ Return Theatre Visits (RTV): (1) Very unlikely to return to (5) Very likely to return

Questionnaires are presented in Appendix A.

IV. Statistical analysis:

The study used CB-SEM, Mann-Whitney U test and Chi-Square test to evaluate the factors that affect theatre audience loyalty and interaction. CB-SEM was employed due to its characteristics of capturing multiple relationships between variables with accurate estimates on direct and indirect effects of TEE, PPV, APQ, PL, and TSAT on RTV. The Mann-Whitney U Test was utilized to contrast the TEE, PPV, and APQ of high and low groups, which indicated that there were significant relationships for the TEE and PPV but not for the APQ. Analysis with the Chi-Square test confirmed the presence of significant relationships between TEE and RTV, PPV and RTV, as well as established the role of TSAT as a mediator. This multiple research design helped in the reliability of hypotheses and thus identifying the influences of audience loyalty and engagement in theatre.

Result

I. CB-SEM results:

Constructs and Loadings: Table II shows the values of CB-SEM results. For TEE, both items have loadings of 0.75-0.78, respectively. This suggests that the items are reasonably well-correlated with the underlying construct. Similarly for PPV, the loadings are 0.80-0.79, indicating a strong association with the construct. APQ and TSAT also show solid loadings of

0.74-0.77, and 0.76-0.77, respectively. For AL and RTV, the loadings are 0.78-0.80, and 0.75-0.77, respectively. Fig 3 presents the results of loading.

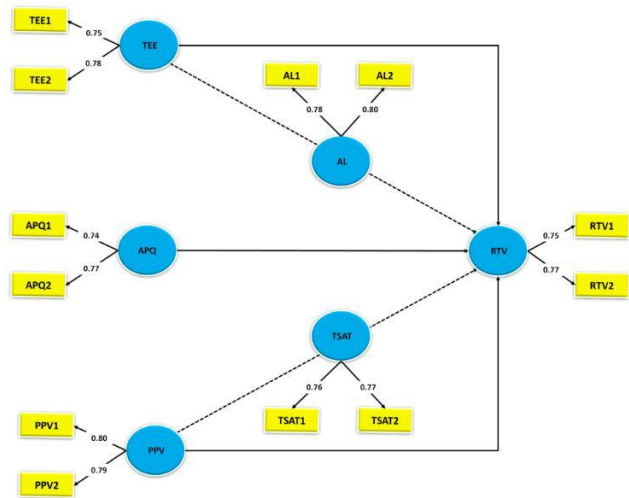


Fig 3 Loading results of constructs

Cronbach's Alpha (α) Values: The consistency of each construct is assessed with Cronbach's Alpha. The α values for TEE, PPV, APQ, TSAT, AL, and RTV are 0.77, 0.79, 0.80, 0.78, 0.80, and 0.77, respectively. These values are above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, representing good inner consistency.

CR and AVE values: CR values for the constructs are 0.85 for TEE, 0.87 for PPV, 0.89 for APQ, 0.86 for TSAT, 0.88 for PL, and 0.86 for RTV. These values are well above the suggested threshold of 0.70, suggesting high reliability. AVE values quantify the difference between the variation that the concept captures and the variance that results from measurement error, 0.61 for TEE, 0.64 for PPV, 0.71 for APQ, 0.65 for TSAT, 0.70 for PL, and 0.62 for RTV. All AVE values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity.

Path co-efficient (β) Values: The β values represent the strength of the relationships between the constructs. For TEE to RTV, $\beta = 0.45$ indicating a positive and moderate effect. For PPV to RTV, $\beta = 0.38$, also showing a positive relationship. The effect of APQ on RTV is minimal, with $\beta = 0.15$. For TSAT mediating the relationship between PPV and RTV, $\beta = 0.22$, and for AL mediating the relationship between TEE and RTV, $\beta = 0.31$. Fig 4 presents the path co-efficient result.

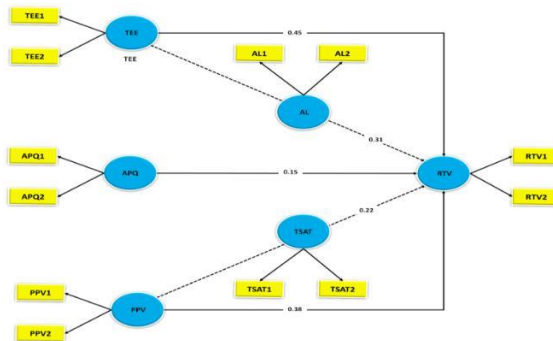


Fig 4 Result of path co-efficient

Table II Results of CB-SEM

Construct	Item	Loading	(α) Value	CR Value	AVE Value	β Value
TEE	TEE1	0.75	0.77	0.85	0.61	0.45
	TEE2	0.78				
PPV	PPV1	0.80	0.79	0.87	0.64	0.38
	PPV2	0.79				
APQ	APQ1	0.74	0.80	0.89	0.71	0.15
	APQ2	0.77				
TSAT	TSAT 1	0.76	0.78	0.86	0.65	0.22
	TSAT 2	0.77				
AL	AL1	0.78	0.80	0.88	0.70	0.31
	AL2	0.80				
RTV	RTV1	0.75	0.77	0.86	0.62	-
	RTV2	0.77				

II. Mann-Whitney U Test

The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to contrast disparities among groups based on variables such as TEE, PPV, APQ, and others. The results are detailed in Table III. For H1, comparing audience with high versus low TEE, the U statistic was 245.67, with $Z = 2.14$ and $p = 0.032$. This suggests that audience with higher engagement levels are significantly more likely to return to the theatre, confirming the positive impact of TEE on RTV. H2 involved comparing groups with high versus low PPV. The U statistic was 312.54, $Z = 1.96$ and $p = 0.050$. This result supports the hypothesis that higher PPV is associated with increased likelihood of RTV, although the effect is marginally significant. For H3, comparing audience with high versus low APQ, the U statistic was 197.32, $Z = 0.78$ and $p = 0.435$. H4 was tested by comparing audience with high PPV and high TSAT versus others. The U statistic was 289.12, the Z-value was 2.10, and the $p = 0.036$. This result indicates that higher PPV and TSAT are associated with increased RTV, supporting the mediating role of TSAT. For H5, the U statistic for audience with high TEE and high AL versus others was 278.45, with $Z = 2.25$ and $p = 0.024$. This finding confirms

that high engagement and loyalty are linked to increase RTV, validating the mediating role of AL.

Table III Result of Mann-Whitney U Test

Comparison	U Statistic	Z-value	p-value
TEE and RT V (High/Low)	245.67	2.14	0.032
PPV and RT V (High/Low)	312.54	1.96	0.050
APQ and RT V (High/Low)	197.32	0.78	0.435
PPV and TSAT (High/Low)	289.12	2.10	0.036
TEE and AL (High/Low)	278.45	2.25	0.024

III. Chi-Square Test

The Chi-Square test was employed to evaluate associations between categorical variables and to evaluate the hypotheses. Table IV exhibits the findings, providing insights into the relationships between TEE, PPV, APQ, and RTV. For H1, the Chi-Square statistic was 7.89 with 1 df and $p = 0.005$. This significant result indicates a strong association between TEE and RTV, the higher engagement leads to a greater likelihood of return visits. In testing Hypothesis H2, the Chi-Square statistic was 5.67 with 1 df and $p = 0.017$. This result demonstrates a positive association between PPV and RTV, indicating that audience who perceive higher value from performances are more likely to return. For H3, the Chi-Square statistic was 2.45 with 1 df and $p = 0.118$. H4, which involved PPV, TSAT, and RTV, yielded a Chi-Square statistic of 8.21 with 2 df and $p = 0.017$. This result indicates that TSAT mediates the relationship between PPV and RTV. Overall, the Chi-Square test results provide robust relationships between theatre experience factors and audience behavior, offering valuable insights into the factors driving theatre audience loyalty and engagement.

Table IV Result of chi-square test

Comparison	χ^2	df	p-value
TEE and RT V	7.89	1	0.005
PPV and RT V	5.67	1	0.017
APQ and RT V	2.45	1	0.118
PPV, TSAT and RT V	8.21	2	0.017

Conclusion

The main intention of this research was to recognize the aspects that determine the loyalty and involvement of theatre’s audience. In the study, the information highlights that both TEE and PPV play an important role in generating RTV. Specially, independent variable TEE has a positive relationship with RTV ($\beta = 0.45$) and dependent variable PPV also shown its significant influence ($\beta = 0.38$). RTV has been influenced by APQ, which has a very small coefficient ($\beta = 0.15$). Moreover, TSAT and AL were significant mediating variables. The TSAT also plays a moderating role between PPV and RTV ($\beta = 0.22$) with AL as the mediating role between TEE and RTV ($\beta = 0.31$). This study implies that targeted audience’s attention and perceived importance for media messages are the key to customer satisfaction and loyalty to the point that they will revisit the theatre. The study also shows that RTV was not much impacted by APQ. These observations provide valuable guidance for theatre management strategies to increase

audience loyalty and satisfaction. The study focuses on a specific theatre audience, limiting generalizability across other entertainment sectors. Future research could explore broader audience demographics, apply longitudinal data, and examine the role of digital experiences in audience loyalty and engagement.

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