

An Evaluation of Consumer Perception & Preference in Watching Movies

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Abstract

People in every part of the world watch movies as a form of entertainment. Besides entertainment, the film industry has been shaping our beliefs and values for a long time. The narrative and representational aspect of a film make it a unique form of art which is a powerful tool for shaping our values and norms. Movies, also known as films, are a type of visual communication which uses moving pictures and sounds to tell stories or teach people something. Prominent change in movies has been noticed in the last decade. In this paper, we have presented what the audience of this age prefer to watch and viewers perceptions on some aspects. A questionnaire-based survey was conducted to know the perception and preferences. The results show that imitation of movie situations, ideals, mannerisms, and modes of conduct. The study highlighted factors in terms of watching films and helped to differentiate the behaviour from the audience of the previous decade. The article carefully points out the gap of changed perspective of the audience and discusses the new aspects of the audiences' preference. This research paper which will aid filmmakers, scriptwriters and producers to understand what the audiences are interested to watch and what is their mindset.

Keywords: Movies, Perception, Changed Values, Audience.

1. Introduction

In modern society, movies are a significant part of people's everyday life. The popularity of movies have grown rapidly and in today's world one of the most common ways to spend free time. People of all ages use movies as a form of entertainment. It must be said that movies are powerful tools that can create a long lasting impact on our values. Movies can change the attitude of a person towards something or highlight the necessity to discuss the issue which was unnoticed before. In the end of the nineteenth century, in the era of the second industrial revolution, falling working hours, rising disposable income, increasing urbanization, and strong population growth resulted in a sharp rise in the demand for entertainment.(The cinema and social science,2020). In the early 1890s, Thomas Edison introduced the kinematograph, which enabled the shooting of films.

History of film spans more than 100 years of our recent history, and during that time movie trends evolved from simple short silent films to the large productions and blockbusters this age. (The History of Motion pictures, 2017). The First few decades of movie history were marked by the popularity of silent black and white movies. Before advanced technology enabled filmmakers to create movies with sound. From the moment sound entered the film industry, it managed to revolutionize this art medium and enabled countless filmmakers to express themselves in the way it was not possible before. Movie industry can be divided by “The Silent Era of movies”, “The Sound era of Movies”, “Early Hollywood” and “Modern Bollywood” which are equally important to bring the movie industry to this huge level. The first 30 years of cinema were characterised by the growth, the establishment of the narrative form, and refinement of technology. The New York Film Academy. (2017). For a large period of time, people had to go to the theatres, which was the only way to watch a movie. With slow modernization and investments in the entertainment sector, numbers of theaters slowly increased. However, only people of high social status and strong economic conditions were the major audience. In the 90s when Hollywood took a modern turn, the theater business bloomed. Sadly, this happy hour of theater did not last long. It was 2007 when Netflix came out with a streaming service. With thousands of movies and TV shows, Netflix has changed the way we watch our favorite entertainment. Netflix has played a vital role in redefining the medium of television. This perception of new forms of television persists not only in promotional discourses but also in academic work. Now watching movies is not a big deal rather, despite age, class, gender or taste, audiences can watch movies wherever or whenever they want. Streaming provides consumers with content which they are interested in, whenever and wherever they want it. Viewing habits have changed drastically in the last few years. More people consume more content on several devices in the easiest and fastest way possible. The younger the audience, the more devices they use to consume content. Besides that, content nowadays is completely integrated in our daily lives and especially in our social media.

2. Objective

Currently, the movie industry has seen a lot of changes than ever before. Change in the behavior/viewpoint of audience in terms of watching films has altered many sectors of the industry. The general objective of the study was to reveal viewer's perception and preference toward the movie. The specific objectives are:

- To find out what type of movie the audience of this age prefer to watch as well as the viewing habit

- To explore the audiences' perception towards new cast, ratings, and social responsibility issues of films
- What factors the audience capitalize when watching a movie
- How the movie industry and audience have meld the change

3. Literature Review

The transformation of audience taste in selecting movies has been noticeable for quite a long time. The age old film industry has seen slow but prominent change in film making due to the changed demand of audience. Tan(2018), in his research paper briefly explained the remarkable intensity of the film experience, the advances now being made in grasping what it is like to enjoy movies, by describing the absorbing and moving qualities of the experience. However, in a rapidly changing era where the audience are exposed to movies of all languages and genres, it is hard to estimate in which motion/direction the film audience is altering. In another book "The Film Book" by Ronald Bergan clearly explains how movies are the most straightforward and understandable way in which a person can perceive information, what human emotions evoke during watching movies and shape their perspective. Several empirical studies show the relationship between audience and film making. In an article titled "Film and TV diversity behind the camera is getting much worse" in "The Conversation" magazine portrays how black, Asians, disable and transgenders are getting lesser chance to showcase their skills.

Nonetheless, there is a lack of robust research on the evolution of the film industry due to the change in audience viewpoint, their new way of thinking. Lack of research on the changing film industry has created a disparity between the audience need and recent films.

4. Research Methodology

The authors have conducted an online survey to discover the various factors of audience that influence the decision making process of choosing a movie. Qualitative research has been conducted by using primary data. Descriptive analysis has been conducted. A survey questionnaire which consists of 15 questions has been emailed to 120 people of various ages, locations, gender, and professions to cover a wide range of samples. Questions were precise to find out the exact points that affect the audience selection of movies. For the purpose of the study relevant data and information collected from

secondary sources, such as national and international journals, newspapers, books, etc. Besides this, the internet has been used as another source of information.

5. Findings

By qualitative research analysis we tried to find out some of the distinctive points for the changed audience perspective and factors filmmakers should focus on to create appropriate movies for this decade which will earn profit for the producer and at the same time loved by the audience. For better understanding, the demographic information and frequency of movie watching regarding the respondents are given below.

Table1: Basic Information of Respondents

Gender	Percent -age	Age	Percent -age	Profession	Percent -age	How often watch a movie	Percent -age
Male	47.6%	Between 18-30	76%	Student	36%	Twice a week	52%
Female	53.4%	Between 30-40	20%	Businessm an	36%	Almost everyda y	36%
		Above 40	4%	Service Holder	28%	Rarely	12%

Source: Survey Conducted by The Author.

According to the survey, the movie industry has grown slowly but effectively. People of all age, mostly adults, are interested in watching movies. Watching a movie is now considered a popular way to spend leisure time. People of all ages watch movies, which was once considered only for young adults. A large percentage of the audience watch movies almost every day which create a huge demand for well-written movies.

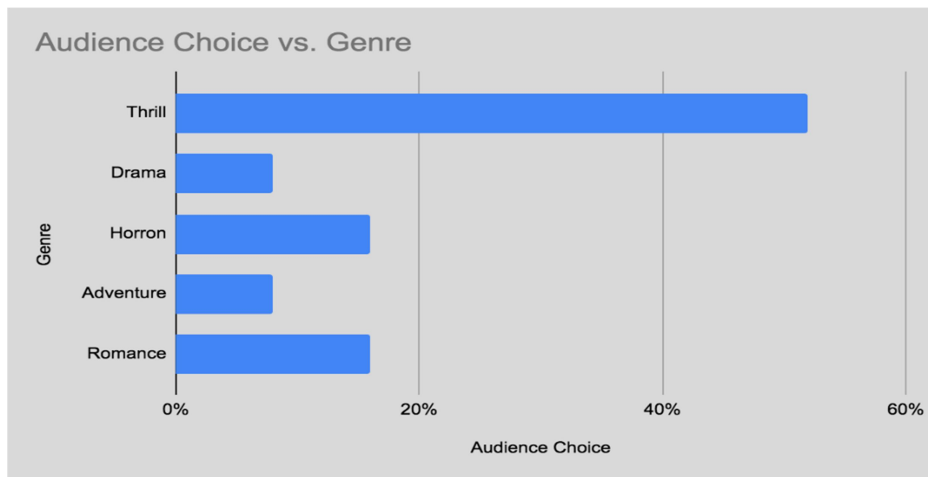


Figure 1: Response on genre choices

Source: Author

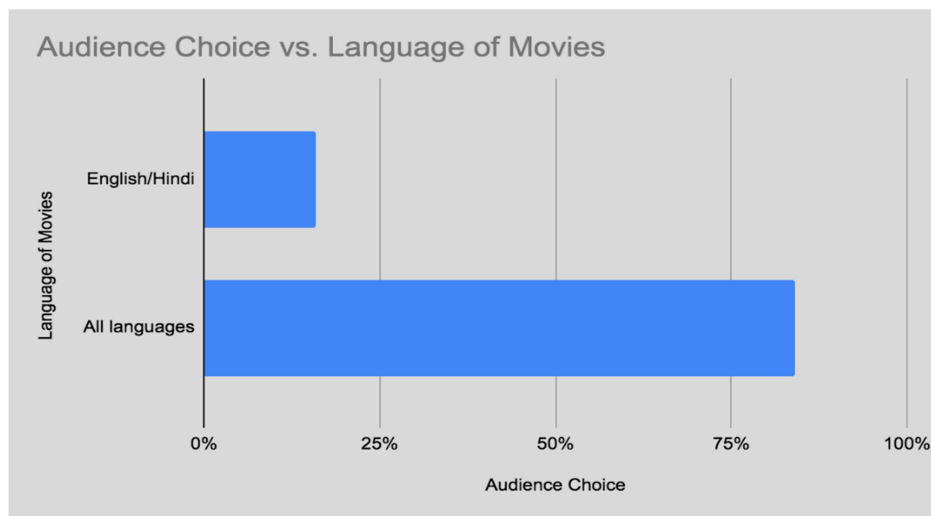


Figure 2: Response on language choices

Source: Author

In the earlier days of films, audience were captive in the hands of movie makers. Mostly love story movies with structured and inflexible climax scenes. Bargaining power of

audience were less and movies were considered a rare form of entertainment. However, from the survey we see distinct change in factors such as movie genre, duration, story, language and context. Audiences today are more knowledgeable, aware in every aspect and hold a lot of power. Audiences of this age are opening up to new contents or genres. They are taking risk of watching a movie of different language or new actor or new type of story.

We see significant rise in the popularity of thrill movies which clearly indicates that audiences don't want to watch the age old romantic movie where the movie climax is conventional with a predefined ending. Audiences now like to enjoy the suspense, twist in movie line rather than the conventional love story movie. Thrill movies give audience excitement, kick to watch til the ending. Also, horror and horror-comedy steadily gaining popularity. The survey conducted on 120 people also reveal the fact that 96% of people prefer realistic movies. As in the figure02 we notice the horror and romance category are head-to-head. Romance movies which were popular and at times were the only category of movie now is losing its glory. In the contrary, horror movies are gaining popularity at an increasing rate. The reason for this alteration in category is people have access to internet that gives them numerous options for entertainmen such as e-bok, podcast, social media, video sharing and photo sharing platforms etc. Therefore, people now consider movies as a means of learning increasing the responsibility of the movie makers to deliver realistic picture of the society. Viewers now prefer romance movie that they can relate to and horror movies to uncover something unseen. There was a time when people loved watching movies with romance, supernatural power and actions which with the course of time has changed. Long gone are the days of love story. Audience desire to watch pragmatic new generation movies which they can relate to.

One of the vital findings from the survey is viewers nowadays have started discovering foreign movies particularly Korean, Turkish, Malayalam, Nigeria and Urdu. This change has widely altered the film industry. Audience of this age enjoy movies of various languages, genre which upgraded their sense of content, movie making, acting skills, sound effects and has opened a vast area of stories and concepts for films. Which has made the job of movie makers hard. Now they cant feed just another story to the audience. Viewers are now comfortable watching movies with subtitles, embracing new culture via movies. By the virtue of the internet, interested viewers can enjoy movies of any language anytime. Movies based on a true story or books, biopics, movies on minorities or highlighting the dark side of the society has been the new demand of the audience, as the conventional predictable love story movies has expired.

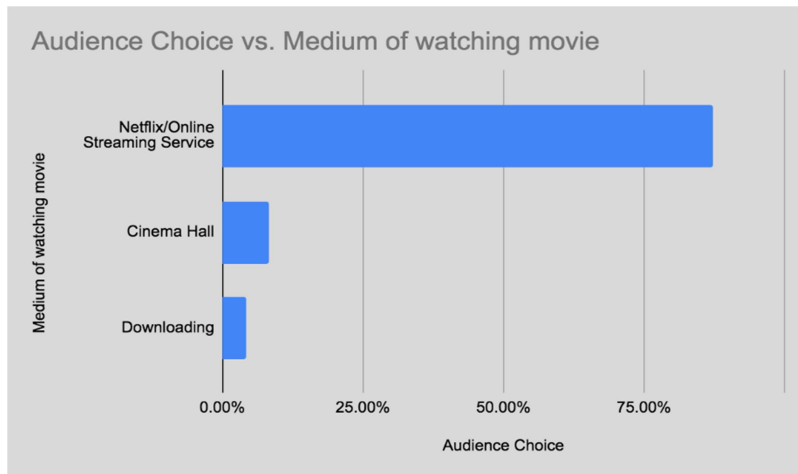


Figure 3: Response on Medium for Watching.

Source: Author.

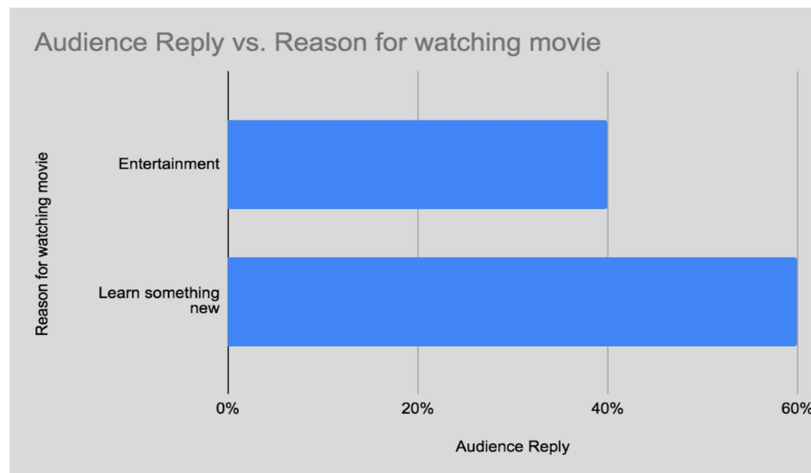


Figure 4: Response on Reasons for Watching.

Source: Author.

The survey data also revealed that audiences nowadays prefer to watch movies online or via online streaming services like Netflix, Amazon prime, and Hulu to watch movies, which has largely amplified the tendency of watching movies. After launching Netflix in 2007 huge change has been seen in the movie industry, audience screen time habits. Cinema hall business is about to extinct. Audience now at home can watch anytime they want. Audience today has the liberty to watch just the twenty minutes of the movie and

leave the rest for other convenient time. Remarkable change is brought by these online streaming stations. One doesn't have to stand in the long queue for movie tickets, wait for weekends to watch a movie at the theatre. Adults today, use online streaming apps on mobile to watch while going to the office or having lunch. The concept of watch has totally changed in recent times. There was a time when Bollywood, Hollywood used to dominate. With the emergence of internet or online streaming platforms Korean, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Malayalam movies has developed and people has swiftly grabbed the good content. This proves the fact that, audiences of this time are hungry to watch good content movies. Movies that will give them a new way of thinking, movies that will encourage them to do something. Movie is not considered as a medium of entertainment now, rather people watch movies to know the unknown. The survey result revealed the motive of watching a movie. Movie makes need to make the right balance between entertainment and education. Audience are interested in modern movies where they can see the world from a different angle, know about the dark side of the society, and movies that are relevant to the audience. Movies now are not mere entertainment tools, audience sit in front of the TV set to learn something new, know about different aspects of life, and journey of others to get motivated and inspired by them. Movie is now considered as a weapon against all social odds and unjust. Ten years ago, people had a pretty solid idea of movies — what they can do, who they're for, and where they're watched. That idea was inflexible and supported by a century of precedent. But now, nautical change has been seen.

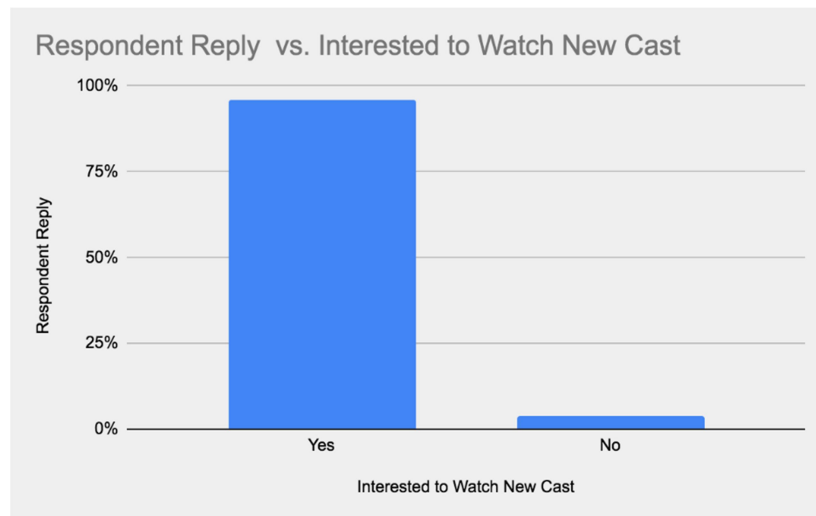


Figure 5: Response on New Casting.

Source: Author

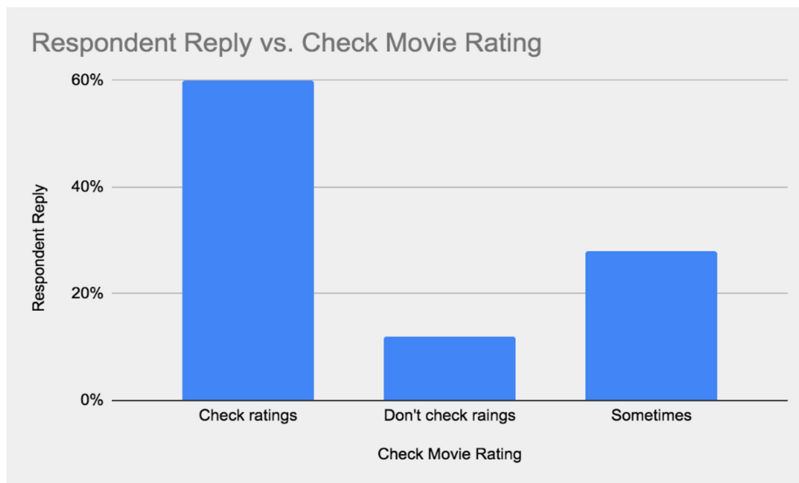


Figure 6: Response on movie rating.

Source: Author

As the above graph represents, diverse answer are collected whether the audience check movie ratings or not. However, it is seen that most people check movie ratings such as IMDB, Rotten Tomatoes to get idea if the movie is worth watching. Which is very new thing in movie industry. Previously, there were no such system of checking rating or reviewing the movie. But now, if the rating is low and bad review no audience will watch the movie. Movie makers, producers, actors need to work hard on every movies to make it a hit otherwise, the easy spread of information will make the production a loss. People prefer the recommendation of friends and family over posters or trailers. Word of mouth has an inevitable impact on movies, and in the age of social media, audiences quickly express themselves which is both good and harmful for the film industry. Duration and music of the movie don't fall in the factors, viewers solely prefer the story and what the movie is trying to say. The survey also suggests that the audience do not have a favourite actor/actress rather, viewers joyfully accepts new face and give a chance to new talents in the industry. As a result, it has increased the competition within the industry and has made headway to some quality films and acting. Audiences acknowledge new faces, concepts and movie-making style from national and international film industry and do not hesitate to express themselves whether they like the movie or dislike it on social media. Easy availability of internet, online streaming service has given the opportunity to audience to explore about movies around the globe. Audience are not hesitant to see new faces on screen, which has opened up the door for talented actors, technicians and movie makers. Audiences prioritize acting skills of

individual rather than their facial structure, appearance. There was a time when audience has rooted idea about how the actor should appear on the screen.

These mentalities of audiences has changed. The survey data reveals that audiences also substantially depend on IMDb, Rotten Tomatoes and online movie reviews from critics to judge whether the movie is worth watching. The Rating system has affected films, now the centre of attention of most directors are to achieve high rating than working on quality. There are numerous blogs, YouTube channels, Facebook groups where movies are strongly criticized. Viewers nowadays are much more conscious and expressive about what they like to watch on screen.

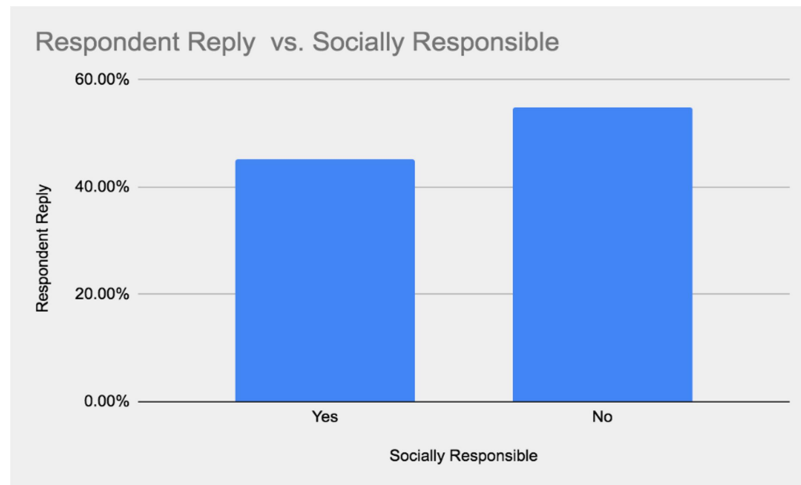


Figure 07: Social Responsibilities of Movies.

Source: Author

Millennials of this age are cautious about society and aware of their responsibilities. Since movies have the capability to reach a vast range of people it should be careful about what it is screening. Issues such as violence, child labour, early marriage, gender discrimination, economic disequality were something common in movies earlier. However, now the audience stands against all these issues shown in movies. Female empowerment, movies based on physically challenged person or dark movies showing social discrimination has won the hearts of the audience. Audience now has shifted their taste from surreal lovestory to relatable movies. Respondent's beloved genre is thriller whereas romance used to be a hit in the earlier years. Audiences are much more open-minded to see fresh concept on the screen which will bring positive change in their life.

Also, they are very much aware of the fact that what impact this movie will leave on society. Before, movies were not taken so seriously which leads to no innovation and improvement in this field. With the change of time, watching movies has been made easy and people are focusing more on the big and small aspects.

6. Recommendations

	Suggestion	Why Should I Implement It?
Generate New Content/ Taking Risk to Generate New Content	To bring in new content the writers are to be nurtured. Writers should be given sufficient time to create and rescript their story, also pay well so that they remain motivated. Movie making is a combined project, so each aspect starting from filming to editing, screenplaying should be given proper significance.	There is always a debate that the industry values their actor/actress however, the thing should be the opposite. By valuing the writers and all big, small technicians working for the industry, their dormant talent will unfold and something incredible can be done with these talents.
Keeping Updated to New Trends and Skills	To keep the millennials involved towards movies directors should have updated knowledge about what's happening around the world, what are the new things that are creating both positive and negative impacts on our society, foresight the future and try to learn latest skills.	Keeping updated and learning new skills will aid directors, producers and scriptwriters do better work. Refined skills are necessary at this age, to create a seamless movie from starting to the end. As, the film industry has competitors round the globe the film makes should keep no stone unturned in respect of directing, editing and

		scripting to make their creation good enough.
Capitalizing on Digital Movie Release	Filmmakers should take digital movie release in consideration as the audience number on online streaming platforms is increasing.	It is cost effective as filmmakers don't need to do promotions to reach people. Filmmakers don't need to wait for weekends to
Collaborating With Foreign Countries	At the age of globalization, where the world is small village movie industry should utilize this to create high content. Film makers can borrow actors, cameramen, musicians or script writers from foreign country.	

7. Conclusion

As the research has demonstrated, with the change of time, advancement in technology and rise in literacy rate the film audience has reshaped. Distinct change in viewpoints of the audience has made the film industry to meld with the change. It is clear from the survey that, films are not an uncommon aspect of peoples life. However, it is considered as the new means of learning. This paper point outs some of the aspect about what the new generation desire to watch in films, how it is different from the previous films and few recommendations how filmmakers can adapt to this change to keep the movie industry rolling.

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