Research on the Influencing Factors of Consumer Movie-Watching Behavior

Kangkang Dai*

College of Business Administration, University of Science and Technology Liaoning

Li Liu

School of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, University of Science and Technology Liaoning

Abstract

In recent years, with the continuous improvement of the national economic level and the continuous increase in the happiness index of people's lives, it has shifted from material pursuit to spiritual pursuit, and movies are the best embodiment of people's pursuit of spiritual life. Therefore, the market prospect of the film industry is very broad, but there are many influencing factors of consumers' viewing behavior. Therefore, this study is based on the influencing factors that affect consumers' viewing. This paper uses a combination of literature review, questionnaire survey, and statistical analysis to explore the factors influencing consumer viewing behavior from four dimensions: personal factors, film factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and service factors. It not only enriches the research in the field of film marketing and consumer viewing behavior at the theoretical level, but also provides guidance on how film enterprises can carry out marketing scientifically and effectively at the practical level.

Keywords: Viewing behavior; Influencing factors; Perceived value; Consumer attitudes

1. Introduction

As a global cultural phenomenon and art form, movies exert a profound and extensive influence. As one of the world's largest movie markets, China's film industry has undergone remarkable transformation and development over the past few decades. In recent years, driven by the rapid advancement of digital technology and the increasingly diversified demands of audiences, the film industry is experiencing unprecedented changes and opportunities, ushering in a brand-new era of development for Chinese cinema.

In recent years, China's movie market has shown a trend of rapid growth. Statistics indicate that the total box office of Chinese movies reached 47.258 billion yuan in 2023, of which domestic movies accounted for 39.927 billion yuan, representing 84.49% of the total box office. However, data in 2024 reveals that despite the impressive performance of key schedules such as the Spring Festival and Summer Vacation, the number of moviegoers and box office revenue declined during certain periods. In the first half of 2024, the total box office of Chinese movies was 26.271 billion yuan, a year-on-year decrease of approximately 10% compared to the same period in 2023. This data not only reflects the challenges facing the market but also highlights the resilience and potential of China's movie market.

As experiential goods, movies involve significant trial-and-error risks, making consumers highly sensitive to their viewing experience. Additionally, with the popularity of various TV programs, audiences' requirements and tastes for film and television works have gradually improved. Audiences who were once influenced by movie promotions and celebrity effects have become less tolerant of low-quality movies and are more likely to spread negative word-of-mouth. With social progress and the enhancement of audience quality, there is an increasing demand for high-quality movie works. How to further improve profitability has become an urgent issue for movie enterprises and cinemas. Producing high-quality movies has become a crucial step in strengthening social

and cultural construction and enriching audiences' spiritual lives. From the perspective of marketing theory, scientifically studying the factors influencing consumers' willingness to watch movies is essential for creating movie products that better meet market demand and promoting the further development of the film industry.

2. Theoretical Basis, Related Concepts, and Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Basis

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), explores the impact of consumers' attitudes on their behavior In the TRA model, behavior is primarily influenced by behavioral intention, which in turn arises from behavioral attitude and subjective norms. Behavioral attitude refers to an individual's anticipated evaluation of the potential outcomes of a behavior. Subjective norms refer to the normative beliefs of a group or the groups surrounding an individual. Under the assumption that humans are rational beings, individuals consider various information comprehensively when engaging in a behavior to predict and judge its significance and potential consequences.

Ajizen proposed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, introducing the variable of perceived behavioral control on the basis of previous research. Wang (2019) explained that the TRA is based on the assumption of rational humans, but practical research has found that this assumption does not always hold. Therefore, adding the variable of perceived behavioral control can better explain the model. In the TPB model, control beliefs and perceived convenience influence perceived behavioral control. The stronger an individual's ability to control external factors, the greater their control over their own behavior.

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory belongs to the field of cognitive psychology. First proposed by cognitive psychologist Reynolds, the human behavior model typically follows the "external stimulus-psychological activity-response" framework (Slama & Tashchian, 1987). It is evident that stimuli trigger consumers' purchasing decisions, and these stimuli can originate from both physiological and psychological factors of consumers as well as external environmental factors. When consumers are stimulated by internal and external factors, they undergo psychological activities, form certain psychological attitudes, and ultimately make purchasing decisions and engage in purchasing behaviors based on these attitudes. Additionally, after the purchase, they evaluate the purchased goods or services, completing a full purchasing behavior cycle.

2.2. Related Concepts

Zhao (2019) pointed out that movie-watching behavior is a interdisciplinary term involving film and television art, psychology, management, and other disciplines. In Chinese, "viewing" means watching, "shadow" here refers to movies, and "behavior" refers to actions driven by thoughts after psychological activities. Movie-watching behavior refers to the psychological, emotional, and physical activities generated by movie consumers to meet their spiritual needs, including the motivation to watch movies, and the subsequent actions of learning about and viewing movie works.

Porter and Millar (1985) argued that perceived value is a customer's assessment of the performance of a product relative to its purchase cost. Woodruff (1997) defined perceived value as a customer's cognitive preference and evaluation of the outcomes of product use, where these outcomes relate to whether the product's attributes can help the customer achieve their goals and intentions. Wu and Fan (2004) stated that perceived value is the overall perception formed by customers through multiple comparisons between gains and losses during the entire shopping process. Building on previous research, this paper defines perceived value as the trade-off customers make between the benefits they can obtain and the costs they will incur during the shopping process (which can be understood as movie-watching behavior in this context).

Freedman et al. (1978) and others proposed that consumer attitude consists of three components: cognition,

affect, and behavioral tendency, known as the ABC Attitude Model. Building on Freedman's work, Sears et al. (1995) and others provided a more specific and detailed description of the three dimensions of attitude. They argued that the cognitive dimension refers to an individual's beliefs and understanding of an object, the affective dimension involves an individual's feelings toward the object, and the behavioral dimension pertains to an individual's behavioral tendencies toward the object. This paper endorses the three-dimensional perspective of consumer attitude, namely cognition, affect, and behavior.

2.3. Literature Review

Personal characteristics such as age, gender, income level, and individual traits are closely related to movie-watching behavior. Ozer et al. (2004) studied two types of factors—movies themselves and the external environment—and concluded that economic factors have the most significant impact on movie-watching behavior. Yan and Zhang (2015) analyzed the current status and driving factors of movie consumption from the audience's perspective through in-depth interviews and questionnaire surveys. They found that social needs are the key driver of movie consumption, as audiences typically choose to watch movies with friends. Wang (2023) used SPSS and Amos software to study the influencing factors and path relationships of audiences' willingness to watch movies during the Spring Festival schedule and conducted cluster analysis on potential consumers. The results showed that social entertainment, movie ticket prices, viewing evaluations, and personal characteristics have a significant positive correlation with the willingness to watch movies during the Spring Festival.

Numerous factors related to movies themselves, such as genre, special effects and visual effects, and cast, are crucial in influencing consumers' purchasing behavior. Weber and Johnson (2009) argued that movie choices are shaped by preferences (tastes), including value judgments—for example, preferring comedies over horror movies. If the supplied movie genres (e.g., science fiction, comedy), categories (e.g., commercial films, literary films), content positioning, visual effects, or other characteristics meet consumers' needs, the match between movie supply and consumer demand is high, and the movie's appeal is strong. Guo et al. (2017) pointed out that the cast of a movie is also an important criterion, and the positive impact of celebrities on consumers' purchasing behavior has been widely verified. Wang (2019) selected index data from Weibo's popularity metric (Weibo Index) and combined it with factors such as movie release time, genre, director and actor influence, and movie quality to measure audience preferences.

Effective marketing and promotion methods can enhance a movie's visibility and influence. Common marketing channels include online word-of-mouth, social media, advertising, and offline activities. Mao (2015) took college students as the research object to analyze the impact of online promotion on their movie-watching behavior. The results showed that online movie promotion and trailers have a significant positive impact on movie-watching behavior. Ding et al. (2017) studied the relationship between audience acceptance and movie box office based on the number of likes on trailers. They found that the number of likes on trailers has a significant positive impact on box office performance. One week before the movie's release, each 1% increase in the number of likes leads to an approximately 0.2% increase in the opening week box office. As the release date approaches, the effect of pre-release likes becomes stronger, indicating that the latest trailer likes can effectively reflect consumer preferences. Du (2018) constructed a research model on the impact of online movie word-of-mouth on consumers' movie-watching decisions. The results showed that the quantity, quality, and polarity of online movie word-of-mouth have a positive impact on consumers' movie-watching decisions, while the professionalism of reviewers has no significant impact. Quan et al. (2020) took Douban ratings as an example to study the impact of online word-of-mouth communication on users' willingness to watch movies by constructing a model of users' viewing willingness, and proposed suggestions to enhance users' willingness to watch movies from the perspective of word-of-mouth communication and promotion.

The geographical location of cinemas, facilities and equipment, ticket prices, and peripheral services all exert an important influence on movie-watching consumption behavior. Ye (2011) proposed that improving comfort and cinema hardware construction can change consumers' motivation to watch movies. For example,

the layout of the cinema lobby (whether it appears elegant and grand), the color of seat covers, seat width, and the distance between front and rear seats. Additionally, service attitude—such as establishing a customer-centric mindset, the taste of popcorn, and a greeting or smile from ushers—can all encourage consumers to watch movies. Yu (2024) found that consumers consider various factors before watching a movie, including the cinema, the movie itself, auditorium configuration, cinema location, and cinema brand. Among these, cinemas with higher hardware configurations and capital attributes, such as IMAX, China Giant Screen, Dolby Atmos, 3D, and 4D auditoriums, are more likely to attract group consumption compared to ordinary auditoriums.

3. Research Design

Based on the four dimensions involved in movie-watching behavior—consumers' personal characteristics, movie products, marketing and word-of-mouth, and environmental and peripheral services—the influencing factors in this study are selected from the previous literature review. For the extracted influencing factors, large-sample data will be collected through questionnaire surveys, and empirical analysis will be used to test each factor to ensure their representativeness and scientific validity.

3.1. Model Design

Based on the identified influencing factors and the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, this study sets personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors as independent variables. Perceived value and consumer attitude are introduced as mediating variables, and movie-watching behavior is the dependent variable. Together, they are used to study the factors influencing consumers' movie-watching behavior.

3.2. Research Hypotheses

Personal factors include not only individuals' motivation to watch movies but also factors such as age, gender, education level, and disposable income. These factors all affect users' attitudes toward movies, thereby influencing their decision to watch. Personal factors mainly stem from the motivation to watch movies; if the motivation is strong, consumers' attitudes will be positively influenced, leading them to engage in movie-watching behavior. Personal factors have an impact on perceived value, consumer attitude, and movie-watching behavior, and the higher the level of personal factors, the more positive users' perceived value, attitude, and behavior. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: Personal factors have a significant positive impact on users' perceived value.

H1b: Personal factors have a significant positive impact on users' consumer attitude.

H1c: Personal factors have a significant positive impact on users' movie-watching behavior.

Movie-related factors refer to the inherent attributes of the movie product itself, such as genre, theme, director, producer, actor popularity, and special effects—factors that do not involve post-release artificial influences on movie-watching behavior. If the director or actors are highly renowned, consumers are more likely to develop a favorable impression of the film, thereby prompting them to watch it. Movie-related factors affect perceived value, consumer attitude, and movie-watching behavior, and the higher the level of movie-related factors, the more positive users' perceived value, attitude, and behavior. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H2a: Movie-related factors have a significant positive impact on users' perceived value.

H2b: Movie-related factors have a significant positive impact on users' consumer attitude.

H2c: Movie-related factors have a significant positive impact on users' movie-watching behavior.

Word-of-mouth and marketing factors mainly refer to marketing methods such as short video marketing and social media promotion that influence consumers' movie-watching behavior. The aforementioned are passive marketing methods, while word-of-mouth is an active channel through which consumers learn about movie details before watching. However, it is also an important part of marketing and plays a crucial role in their movie-watching behavior. Word-of-mouth and marketing factors affect perceived value, consumer attitude, and movie-watching behavior, and the higher the level of word-of-mouth and marketing factors, the more positive users' perceived value, attitude, and behavior. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H3a: Word-of-mouth and marketing factors have a significant positive impact on users' perceived value.

H3b: Word-of-mouth and marketing factors have a significant positive impact on users' consumer attitude.

H3c: Word-of-mouth and marketing factors have a significant positive impact on users' movie-watching behavior.

Environmental and peripheral factors refer to consumers' actual experiences at the movie theater, including the surrounding environment and the theater's internal environment, the variety and taste of snacks available, the service attitude of theater staff, and movie-related derivative products. These factors are highly valued by consumers during the immersive movie-watching experience. For example, a comfortable environment or attentive service can stimulate consumers' movie-watching behavior. Environmental and peripheral factors affect perceived value, consumer attitude, and movie-watching behavior, and the higher the level of environmental and peripheral factors, the more positive users' perceived value, attitude, and behavior. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H4a: Environmental and peripheral factors have a significant positive impact on users' perceived value.

H4b: Environmental and peripheral factors have a significant positive impact on users' consumer attitude.

H4c: Environmental and peripheral factors have a significant positive impact on users' movie-watching behavior.

Perceived value refers to the trade-off customers make between the benefits they can obtain and the costs they will incur during the shopping process (movie-watching behavior in this context), mainly influencing decisions through a "benefit-cost" trade-off. It can be understood as "cost-performance ratio" and is a relatively rational consumption behavior. Factors such as movie ticket prices and movie quality directly affect consumers' perceived value, thereby influencing their willingness to watch movies. Therefore, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Perceived value has a significant positive impact on users' movie-watching behavior.

H6a: Perceived value plays a mediating role between personal factors and movie-watching behavior.

H6b: Perceived value plays a mediating role between movie-related factors and movie-watching behavior.

H6c: Perceived value plays a mediating role between word-of-mouth and marketing factors and movie-watching behavior.

H6d: Perceived value plays a mediating role between environmental and peripheral factors and movie-watching behavior.

Consumer attitude is a persistent psychological tendency of consumers toward specific objects (such as brands, products, and services), consisting of three components: affect, cognition, and behavioral intention. It is a key variable for predicting consumption behavior. In the study of movie-watching behavior, attitude can explain how consumers convert external stimuli (such as movie genre and word-of-mouth) into behavioral intentions (such as ticket-purchasing decisions) through subjective evaluations. Therefore, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

H7: Consumer attitude has a significant positive impact on users' movie-watching behavior.

H8a: Consumer attitude plays a mediating role between personal factors and movie-watching behavior.

H8b: Consumer attitude plays a mediating role between movie-related factors and movie-watching behavior.

H8c: Consumer attitude plays a mediating role between word-of-mouth and marketing factors and movie-watching behavior.

H8d: Consumer attitude plays a mediating role between environmental and peripheral factors and movie-watching behavior.

In the study of consumers' movie-watching behavior, integrating perceived value (rational evaluation) and consumer attitude (emotional evaluation) into a composite model can comprehensively explain how external stimuli (such as movie attributes and marketing strategies) influence viewing willingness through dual paths. When exposed to external stimuli, consumers convert them into emotional and cognitive tendencies (consumer attitude) through rational evaluation (perceived value), ultimately driving behavior (movie-watching behavior). Perceived value is an antecedent variable of consumer attitude. Li and Wang (2025) concluded through empirical analysis that consumers influence their attitudes through perceived value, thereby affecting consumption behavior; Liu (2023) pointed out in the attitude-behavior theory that the perceived value of products or services affects consumer attitude and then influences consumption behavior. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H9a: Perceived value and consumer attitude play a chain mediating role between personal factors and movie-watching behavior.

H9b: Perceived value and consumer attitude play a chain mediating role between movie-related factors and movie-watching behavior.

H9c: Perceived value and consumer attitude play a chain mediating role between word-of-mouth and marketing factors and movie-watching behavior.

H9d: Perceived value and consumer attitude play a chain mediating role between environmental and peripheral factors and movie-watching behavior.

3.3. Questionnaire Design

The scales used in this study include the Consumer Movie-Watching Behavior Influencing Factors Scale and the Consumer Perceived Value, Attitude, and Behavior Scale. After improvement, revision, and pre-testing, the final questionnaire was determined. The variables in this study include antecedent variables and structural variables, totaling 7 variables: 4 antecedent variables, 2 mediating variables, and 1 outcome variable. Existing mature scales were selected and appropriately modified to design the final scales.

To verify the previously proposed influencing factors, this study targeted individuals with social media usage experience. Questionnaires were created and distributed through the online survey platform "Wenjuanxing" (Questionnaire Star) and promoted through channels such as WeChat Moments, WeChat groups, Weibo topics, Douyin, and Xiaohongshu. A total of 562 questionnaires were collected, of which 504 were valid, resulting in an effective response rate of 89.7%. The final number of valid questionnaires exceeded 320, ensuring the validity of the sample and the scientific nature of the research.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Regarding gender, 46.4% of the respondents were male, and 53.6% were female, indicating a nearly 1:1 gender ratio with a slightly higher proportion of females. This is consistent with the gender ratio of mobile social media users.

In terms of age, the majority of respondents were between 18-25 years old and 26-35 years old, accounting for 68.3% of the total. This indicates that social media users are mainly young people. However, social media is also user-friendly for middle-aged and elderly individuals, as the learning cost of using tools such as WeChat is relatively low.

Regarding educational level, the respondents were mainly bachelor's degree holders, accounting for 40.1%. This suggests that mobile social media users generally have a high level of knowledge and literacy and are receptive to new things.

In terms of monthly income, the largest group had a disposable monthly income of 6,001-10,000 yuan, accounting for 35.7%. This group has a certain ability to purchase movie tickets. Another large group had a monthly income of 3,000-6,000 yuan, accounting for 23.8%. Based on the previous age statistics, this group may consist of young people who have just graduated and entered the workforce, with relatively low incomes. However, young people have a strong pursuit of spiritual life and, after meeting their basic daily consumption needs, also have a certain ability to purchase movie tickets.

Regarding annual movie-watching frequency, the largest groups were those who watched 1-4 movies and 5-10 movies per year, accounting for a total of 69.6%. Only 7.5% of respondents had not watched any movies in the past year. This indicates that most people have a relatively strong demand for watching movies, demonstrating the necessity of this study.

4.2. Reliability and Validity Tests

Stata was used to conduct reliability analysis on all 7 research variables and the overall scale. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for all factors was 0.884, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for each variable were all above 0.7, indicating good reliability of the overall questionnaire and each variable.

For validity testing, KMO and Bartlett's sphericity tests were performed on the scales to determine whether the items were suitable for factor analysis. A larger KMO value indicates stronger correlation between items, making them more suitable for factor analysis. Generally, a KMO value greater than 0.8 indicates good scale validity; a value between 0.7-0.8 indicates good validity; a value between 0.6-0.7 indicates moderate validity; and a value less than 0.6 indicates poor validity. Additionally, the items must pass Bartlett's sphericity test, with a corresponding P-value less than 0.05 indicating suitability for factor analysis. Validity analysis was conducted separately for different scales.

4.2.1. Validity Analysis of the Consumer Movie-Watching Behavior Influencing Factors Scale

After conducting KMO and Bartlett's sphericity tests on the valid sample data of the Consumer Movie-Watching Behavior Influencing Factors Scale, the results showed a KMO value of 0.914, greater than 0.8. This indicates that the research data is very suitable for extracting information for factor analysis, reflecting good validity. The approximate chi-square value was 6588.364, with a P-value of 0, further confirming that the scale is highly suitable for factor analysis.

4.2.2. Validity Analysis of the Consumer Perceived Value, Attitude, and Behavior Scale

After conducting KMO and Bartlett's sphericity tests on the valid sample data of the Consumer Perceived Value, Attitude, and Behavior Scale, the results showed a KMO value of 0.859, greater than 0.8. This indicates that the research data is very suitable for extracting information for factor analysis, reflecting good validity. The approximate chi-square value was 2816.588, with a P-value of 0, confirming that the scale is highly suitable for factor analysis.

4.3. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis can be used to analyze the quantitative relationship between variables and identify causal relationships and the degree of influence. Hierarchical regression analysis was adopted in this paper because it not only shows the relationship between variables but also tests the stability of the model, thereby determining the relationships between variables.

4.3.1. Regression Analysis of Influencing Factors of Consumers' Movie-Watching Behavior on Perceived Value

To test the relationship between the influencing factors of consumers' movie-watching behavior and perceived value, this study took gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables. Based on the previous correlation analysis, personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, environmental and peripheral factors, and perceived value were used as 4 independent variables and 1 dependent variable, respectively, for hierarchical regression analysis. The hierarchical regression analysis included two models. The independent variables in the first model were the five control variables (gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency), while the second model added the four independent variables (personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors) on the basis of the first model. The dependent variable in both models was perceived value.

The results showed that when the five control variables (gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency) were used as independent variables and perceived value as the dependent variable, the R-squared value of the model was 0.011, indicating that these five independent variables can explain 1.1% of the variance in perceived value. The model formula is: Perceived Value = 3.519 + 0.051Gender + 0.104Age - 0.063Educational Level - 0.111Monthly Income + 0.077*Movie-Watching Frequency. Observations revealed that all P-values were greater than 0.05, indicating that gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency do not have a significant impact on perceived value.

After adding the four independent variables (personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors) to the second model, the F-value changed significantly, indicating that the addition of these four variables enhanced the explanatory power of the model. Furthermore, the R-squared value increased from 0.011 to 0.213, indicating that personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors can explain 20.2% of the variance in perceived value. The standardized coefficient of personal factors was 0.235 (significant), indicating that personal factors have a significant positive impact on perceived value; the standardized coefficient of movie-related factors was 0.128 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between movie-related factors and perceived value; the standardized coefficient of word-of-mouth and marketing factors was 0.161 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between word-of-mouth and marketing factors and perceived value; and the standardized coefficient of environmental and peripheral factors was 0.114 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between environmental and peripheral factors and perceived value. The order of influence of each variable on perceived value from largest to smallest was: personal factors > word-of-mouth and marketing factors > movie-related factors > environmental and peripheral factors. In summary, personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors have a significant impact on perceived value, which is consistent with the research hypotheses. Therefore, hypotheses H1a, H2a, H3a, and H4a are supported.

4.3.2. Regression Analysis of Influencing Factors of Consumers' Movie-Watching Behavior on Consumer Attitude

To test the relationship between the influencing factors of consumers' movie-watching behavior and consumer attitude, this study took gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables. Based on the previous correlation analysis, personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, environmental and peripheral factors, and consumer attitude were used as 4 independent variables and 1 dependent variable, respectively, for hierarchical regression analysis. The hierarchical regression analysis included two models. The independent variables in the first model were the five

control variables (gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency), while the second model added the four independent variables (personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors) on the basis of the first model. The dependent variable in both models was consumer attitude.

The results showed that when the five control variables (gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency) were used as independent variables and consumer attitude as the dependent variable, the R-squared value of the model was 0.022, indicating that these five independent variables can explain 2.2% of the variance in consumer attitude. The model formula is: Consumer Attitude = 3.633 - 0.101Gender + 0.018Age + 0.011Educational Level - 0.197Monthly Income + 0.259*Movie-Watching Frequency. The coefficient of gender was -0.101 (not significant), indicating that gender does not have a significant impact on consumer attitude; the coefficient of age was 0.018 (not significant), indicating that age does not have a significant impact on consumer attitude; the coefficient of educational level was 0.011 (not significant), indicating that educational level does not have a significant impact on consumer attitude; the coefficient of monthly income was -0.197 (significant), indicating that monthly income has a significant negative impact on consumer attitude; and the coefficient of movie-watching frequency was 0.259 (significant), indicating that movie-watching frequency has a significant positive impact on consumer attitude.

After adding the four independent variables (personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors) to the second model, the F-value changed significantly, indicating that the addition of these four variables enhanced the explanatory power of the model. Furthermore, the R-squared value increased from 0.022 to 0.233, indicating that personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors can explain 21.1% of the variance in consumer attitude. The standardized coefficient of personal factors was 0.172 (significant), indicating that personal factors have a significant positive impact on consumer attitude; the standardized coefficient of movie-related factors was 0.181 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between movie-related factors and consumer attitude; the standardized coefficient of word-of-mouth and marketing factors was 0.139 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between word-of-mouth and marketing factors and consumer attitude; and the standardized coefficient of environmental and peripheral factors was 0.175 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between environmental and peripheral factors and consumer attitude. The order of influence of each variable on consumer attitude from largest to smallest was: personal factors > word-of-mouth and marketing factors > movie-related factors > environmental and peripheral factors. In summary, personal factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, movie-related factors, and environmental and peripheral factors have a significant impact on consumer attitude, which is consistent with the research hypotheses. Therefore, hypotheses H1b, H2b, H3b, and H4b are supported.

4.3.3. Regression Analysis of Influencing Factors of Consumers' Movie-Watching Behavior on Movie-Watching Behavior

To test the relationship between the influencing factors of consumers' movie-watching behavior and movie-watching behavior, this study took gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables. Based on the previous correlation analysis, personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, environmental and peripheral factors, and movie-watching behavior were used as 4 independent variables and 1 dependent variable, respectively, for hierarchical regression analysis. The hierarchical regression analysis included two models. The independent variables in the first model were the five control variables (gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency), while the second model added the four independent variables (personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors) on the basis of the first model. The dependent variable in both models was movie-watching behavior.

The results showed that when the five control variables (gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and

movie-watching frequency) were used as independent variables and movie-watching behavior as the dependent variable, the R-squared value of the model was 0.009, indicating that these five independent variables can explain 0.9% of the variance in movie-watching behavior. The model formula is: Movie-Watching Behavior = 3.329 - 0.036Gender + 0.055Age + 0.063Educational Level - 0.057Monthly Income + 0.086*Movie-Watching Frequency. The coefficient of gender was -0.036 (not significant), indicating that gender does not have a significant impact on movie-watching behavior; the coefficient of age was 0.055 (not significant), indicating that age does not have a significant impact on movie-watching behavior; the coefficient of educational level was 0.063 (not significant), indicating that educational level does not have a significant impact on movie-watching behavior; the coefficient of monthly income was -0.057 (not significant), indicating that monthly income does not have a significant impact on movie-watching behavior; and the coefficient of movie-watching frequency was 0.086 (not significant), indicating that movie-watching frequency does not have a significant impact on movie-watching behavior.

After adding the four independent variables (personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors) to the second model, the F-value changed significantly, indicating that the addition of these four variables enhanced the explanatory power of the model. Furthermore, the R-squared value increased from 0.009 to 0.267, indicating that personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors can explain 25.8% of the variance in movie-watching behavior. The standardized coefficient of personal factors was 0.220 (significant), indicating that personal factors have a significant positive impact on movie-watching behavior; the standardized coefficient of movie-related factors was 0.164 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between movie-related factors and movie-watching behavior; the standardized coefficient of word-of-mouth and marketing factors was 0.179 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between word-of-mouth and marketing factors and movie-watching behavior; and the standardized coefficient of environmental and peripheral factors was 0.171 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between environmental and peripheral factors and movie-watching behavior. The order of influence of each variable on movie-watching behavior from largest to smallest was: personal factors > word-of-mouth and marketing factors > environmental and peripheral factors > movie-related factors. In summary, personal factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, environmental and peripheral factors, and movie-related factors have a significant impact on movie-watching behavior, which is consistent with the research hypotheses. Therefore, hypotheses H1c, H2c, H3c, and H4c are supported.

4.3.4. Regression Analysis of Perceived Value and Consumer Attitude on Movie-Watching Behavior

To test the relationship between perceived value, consumer attitude, and movie-watching behavior, this study took gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables. Based on the previous correlation analysis, perceived value, consumer attitude, and movie-watching behavior were used as 2 independent variables and 1 dependent variable, respectively, for hierarchical regression analysis. The hierarchical regression analysis included two models. The independent variables in the first model were the five control variables (gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency), while the second model added the two independent variables (perceived value and consumer attitude) on the basis of the first model. The dependent variable in both models was movie-watching behavior. Since the impact of control variables on movie-watching behavior was analyzed in detail in 4.4.3, this section will focus on the second model.

After adding the two independent variables (perceived value and consumer attitude) to the second model, the F-value changed significantly, indicating that the addition of these two variables enhanced the explanatory power of the model. Furthermore, the R-squared value increased from 0.009 to 0.216, indicating that perceived value and consumer attitude can explain 20.7% of the variance in movie-watching behavior. The standardized coefficient of perceived value was 0.280 (significant), indicating that perceived value has a significant positive impact on movie-watching behavior; the standardized coefficient of consumer attitude was 0.292 (significant), indicating a significant positive relationship between consumer attitude and movie-watching behavior. The order of influence of each variable on movie-watching behavior from largest to smallest was: consumer attitude > perceived value.

In summary, consumer attitude and perceived value have a significant impact on movie-watching behavior, which is consistent with the research hypotheses. Therefore, hypotheses H5 and H7 are supported.

4.4. Chain Mediation Analysis

In constructing the model, this study proposed using consumer perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables to build a chain mediation model, enabling a more comprehensive and systematic study of the factors influencing consumers' movie-watching behavior. This paper used Model 6 of the SPSS plugin PROCESS provided by Hayes (2013) to conduct analysis. Personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors were used as independent variables, movie-watching behavior as the dependent variable, consumer perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables, and gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables.

4.4.1. Chain Mediation Role of Consumer Perceived Value and Attitude in the Effect of Personal Factors on Movie-Watching Behavior

Taking personal factors as the independent variable, movie-watching behavior as the dependent variable, consumer perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables, and gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables.

The overall regression equation was significant (R^2=0.16, F=16.25, P=0.000). Bootstrap sampling was used to test the mediating effect. The results showed that the indirect effect of the path with perceived value as the mediating variable was 0.08 (95% CI= [0.04, 0.12]), the indirect effect of the path with consumer attitude as the mediating variable was 0.06 (95% CI= [0.03, 0.10]), and the indirect effect of the path with both perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables was 0.02 (95% CI= [0.01, 0.03]). The total indirect effect was 0.17 (95% CI= [0.11, 0.21]). Therefore, the chain mediation role of consumer perceived value and consumer attitude in the positive effect of personal factors on movie-watching behavior is supported.

4.4.2. Chain Mediation Role of Consumer Perceived Value and Attitude in the Effect of Movie-Related Factors on Movie-Watching Behavior

Taking movie-related factors as the independent variable, movie-watching behavior as the dependent variable, consumer perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables, and gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables.

The overall regression equation was significant (R^2=0.32, F=9.20, P=0.000). Bootstrap sampling was used to test the mediating effect. The results showed that the indirect effect of the path with perceived value as the mediating variable was 0.06 (95% CI= [0.03, 0.10]), the indirect effect of the path with consumer attitude as the mediating variable was 0.06 (95% CI= [0.03, 0.10]), and the indirect effect of the path with both perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables was 0.01 (95% CI= [0.01, 0.02]). The total indirect effect was 0.14 (95% CI= [0.09, 0.19]). Therefore, the chain mediation role of consumer perceived value and consumer attitude in the positive effect of movie-related factors on movie-watching behavior is supported.

4.4.3. Chain Mediation Role of Consumer Perceived Value and Attitude in the Effect of Word-of-Mouth and Marketing Factors on Movie-Watching Behavior

Taking word-of-mouth and marketing factors as the independent variable, movie-watching behavior as the dependent variable, consumer perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables, and gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables.

The overall regression equation was significant (R^2=0.13, F=12.43, P=0.000). Bootstrap sampling was used to test the mediating effect. The results showed that the indirect effect of the path with perceived value as the mediating variable was 0.08 (95% CI= [0.04, 0.12]), the indirect effect of the path with consumer attitude as the

mediating variable was 0.06 (95% CI= [0.02, 0.10]), and the indirect effect of the path with both perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables was 0.01 (95% CI= [0.01, 0.03]). The total indirect effect was 0.15 (95% CI= [0.10, 0.20]). Therefore, the chain mediation role of consumer perceived value and consumer attitude in the positive effect of word-of-mouth and marketing factors on movie-watching behavior is supported.

4.4.4. Chain Mediation Role of Consumer Perceived Value and Attitude in the Effect of Environmental and Peripheral Factors on Movie-Watching Behavior

Taking environmental and peripheral factors as the independent variable, movie-watching behavior as the dependent variable, consumer perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables, and gender, age, educational level, monthly income, and movie-watching frequency as control variables.

The overall regression equation was significant (R^2=0.14, F=13.28, P=0.000). Bootstrap sampling was used to test the mediating effect. The results showed that the indirect effect of the path with perceived value as the mediating variable was 0.07 (95% CI= [0.04, 0.10]), the indirect effect of the path with consumer attitude as the mediating variable was 0.06 (95% CI= [0.03, 0.10]), and the indirect effect of the path with both perceived value and consumer attitude as mediating variables was 0.01 (95% CI= [0.01, 0.02]). The total indirect effect was 0.14 (95% CI= [0.10, 0.19]). Therefore, the chain mediation role of consumer perceived value and consumer attitude in the positive effect of environmental and peripheral factors on movie-watching behavior is supported.

Based on the above results, hypotheses H6a, H6b, H6c, H6d, H8a, H8b, H8c, H8d, H9a, H9b, H9c, and H9d are all supported.

5. Suggestions for Promoting Consumers' Movie-Watching Behavior

Consumers' movie-watching decisions are a complex psychological and behavioral process driven by both internal motivations and external stimuli. Based on the interactive influence model of the four dimensions—personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors—To effectively intervene and promote consumers' movie-watching behavior, all stakeholders in the industry need to abandon fragmented promotional methods and instead build a comprehensive, multi-level, and synergistic integrated strategy system. This system aims to systematically act on every key node of the consumer decision-making chain, thereby achieving efficient conversion from potential demand to actual consumption behavior.

5.1. Deepen Individual Insight and Motivation Activation: Construct Dynamic User Portraits and Contextual Trigger Mechanisms

At the level of personal factors, the core of the strategy lies in shifting from static demographic descriptions to in-depth insight and precise response to dynamically changing psychological, emotional, and social needs. Firstly, enterprises should use big data and artificial intelligence technologies to build a dynamically updated user portrait system. This system should not only include users' explicit viewing history and genre preferences but also deeply explore their implicit emotional needs, value recognition, and sense of community belonging. For example, by analyzing social media behavior and content consumption trajectories, identify specific viewing needs that users may be motivated by during specific periods (such as periods of work stress, holidays, or after social hot events), such as stress relief, seeking resonance, or social interaction. Secondly, based on these portraits, implement contextual trigger marketing. Push messages should move beyond generalized statements such as "This is a good movie" and adopt contextual communication strategies such as "This movie can solve your current predicament" or "This is a hot topic in your circle". For example, target workplace professionals with pushes like "A healing movie for strivers" on Friday evenings; target parent-child families with pushes like "An enlightenment movie to start parent-child dialogue" on weekends combined with educational hot topics.

Ultimately, by establishing strong links between emotion and identity, transform movie-watching behavior from a one-time entertainment consumption into a ritual activity for emotional release, social capital accumulation, and cultural identity expression.

5.2. Go Beyond Core Product Value: Build a Multi-Dimensional Value System and Experience Barriers for Movie Products

The strategic focus of movie-related factors should expand from providing a single content narrative to building a multi-dimensional value system including core content, technical formats, and derivative values. At the content level, in addition to adhering to "content is king" and pursuing the ultimateization and narrative innovation of genre films, it is necessary to proactively design topicality—i.e., consider whether the film contains social issues, ethical dilemmas, or cultural symbols that can be discussed by the public during the scriptwriting stage, laying the foundation for subsequent word-of-mouth fermentation. At the technical level, it is necessary to elevate the innovation and differentiation of screening formats to a strategic height. Vigorously promote special formats such as IMAX, Dolby Cinema, CINITY, and ScreenX. Their significance lies not only in enhancing audio-visual effects but also in creating a "scarcity" and "irreproducible" home entertainment experience barrier. This essentially redefines "watching a movie" from consuming "content" to purchasing a unique "sensory event". At the derivative level, it is necessary to implement pre-integrated development of the IP value chain. Plan derivative products, original soundtracks, co-branded merchandise, and even scripted murders and immersive theater experiences in parallel with the development of the movie itself, forming a synergistic promotion and sales matrix. This extends the value of the movie in time and expands it in space.

5.3. Reconstruct Information Dissemination Paths: Establish a Trust Gradient-Based Word-of-Mouth Ecosystem and Circle Penetration Model

In the era of information overload, the role of word-of-mouth and marketing factors is to provide consumers with effective decision-making basis and trust endorsements. The strategy should shift from large-scale hard advertising to building a phased and circle-based trust gradient establishment system. This system can be divided into four consecutive stages: 1. "Value Presetting" during the pre-heating period: Target core fans and film critics by releasing high-information-density in-depth materials (such as worldview analysis, director's elaborations, and technical revelations) to establish initial professional recognition and expectations. 2. "Word-of-Mouth Anchoring" during the preview period: Organize large-scale and structured preview activities, focusing on covering circles with different attributes (such as universities, enterprises, and vertical communities). Guide the first batch of opinion leaders to produce in-depth "dry content" word-of-mouth, setting a high-quality evaluation tone for the film and forming a "word-of-mouth anchor". 3. "Momentum Explosion" in the early release period: Integrate favorable reviews from authoritative media, recommendations from KOLs, and a large number of user-generated short videos (such as "famous scene" clips and emotional reaction videos). Through cross-platform linkage, concentrate the previously accumulated word-of-mouth momentum into widespread public attention and ticket-purchasing behavior. 4. "Community Self-Circulation" during the long tail period: Proactively identify and empower fan communities, encouraging them to conduct secondary creation and meaning reproduction of movie symbols (such as lines, props, and characters), forming a self-sustaining discussion heat and attracting incremental audiences.

5.4. Reshape Terminal Consumption Scenarios: Promote the Transformation of Cinemas from Functional Spaces to Social and Cultural Hubs

The ultimate goal of optimizing environmental and peripheral factors is to upgrade cinemas from a purely functional movie-watching space to a social and cultural hub that meets diverse needs. At the physical environment level, in addition to ensuring basic comfort and technical stability, it is necessary to conduct contextual space design. For example, set up rest areas with thematic decorations, provide characteristic catering that matches the film's tone, and install interactive art installations for taking photos and sharing. These elements collectively transform waiting and rest time into valuable experience links. At the service process

level, pursue full-link digitalization and seamlessness—from intelligent recommendations and frictionless payments to electronic tickets and quick entry—minimizing consumers' time and energy costs. At the strategic positioning level, cinemas must deeply integrate into the local commercial and cultural ecosystem. Enhance their attractiveness and passenger flow capacity as public cultural spaces by co-hosting thematic activities with surrounding commercial complexes, hosting small-scale live performances, art exhibitions, and press conferences. This makes "going to the cinema" a comprehensive leisure choice with rich connotations, rather than a temporary decision solely dependent on the day's showtimes.

Promoting consumers' movie-watching behavior is a complex systematic project involving products, communication, channels, and consumer psychology. The four dimensions—personal factors, movie-related factors, word-of-mouth and marketing factors, and environmental and peripheral factors—are not isolated decision variables but an interdependent and mutually reinforcing dynamic ecosystem. The competitiveness of the future movie market will increasingly depend on whether industry participants can focus on user value, achieve in-depth synergy and innovative integration of strategies in these four dimensions, and thus successfully guide consumers to complete a perfect experience cycle from generating intention to obtaining satisfaction in the fierce competition for attention.

References

Beijing Tuopu Century Information Consulting Co., Ltd. (2024). Research report on China’s film market in the first half of 2024. China Film Market, (08), 4–9.

Ding, C., Cheng, H. K., Duan, Y., et al. (2017). The power of the “like” button: The impact of social media on box office. Decision Support Systems, 94, 77–84.

Du, X. Y. (2018). An empirical study on the impact of online word-of-mouth on users’ movie-watching decisions (Master’s thesis). Central China Normal University.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Freedman, J. L., Sears, D. O., & Carlsmith, J. M. (1978). Social psychology (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Winston Press.

Guo, X. R., & Huang, S. Q. (2017). An empirical study on the celebrity effect and Chinese movie box office. Modern Communication: Journal of Communication University of China, 39(12), 120–125.

Li, S. S., & Wang, L. L. (2025). The feedback path of publishing podcasts to publishing institutions: Emotional transfer and perceived value. Journal of Zhejiang Sci-Tech University (Social Sciences Edition), 54(02), 171–177.

Liu, L. (2023). An empirical study on the impact of e-commerce live streaming on consumers’ repurchase intention of agricultural products. Journal of Yancheng Institute of Technology (Social Science Edition), 36(04), 48–53.

Mao, C. (2015). Research on the influence of internet publicity of movies on college students’ movie-watching behavior. Journal of Media Studies, 11(4), 29–32.

Ozer, S., Park, T. F., Zigmond, D. J., et al. (2004). Tracking viewing behavior of advertisements on a home entertainment system. IEEE Transactions on Consumer Electronics, 31(3), 5–12.

Porter, M. E., & Millar, V. E. (1985). How information gives you competitive advantage. Harvard Business Review, 63(4), 149–160.

Quan, Z. H., & Wang, X. F. (2020). Research on the impact of online word-of-mouth communication on users’

willingness to watch movies: Taking Douban ratings as an example. Southeast Communication, (04), 55–59.

Slama, M. E., & Tashchian, A. (1987). Validating the S-O-R paradigm for consumer involvement with a convenience good. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 15(1), 36–45.

Wang, J. H. (2019). A study on the timeliness of Weibo's impact on movie box office. Contemporary Cinema, (6), 68–74.

Wang, J., & Che, B. (2019). Research on consumers' purchasing behavior of hairy crabs based on the TPB model. Chinese Fisheries Economics, (4), 3–10.

Wang, Y. X. (2023). Research on the influencing factors of consumers' willingness to watch movies during the Spring Festival schedule. Economic Research Guide, (09), 66–68.

Weber, E. U., & Johnson, E. J. (2009). Mindful judgment and decision making. Annual Review of Psychology, 60(1), 53–85.

Woodruff, R. B. (1997). Customer value: The next source for competitive advantage. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 25(2), 139–153.

Wu, Y. H., & Fan, X. C. (2004). An analysis of the integrated model of enterprise competitiveness based on customer value. China Soft Science, (11), 86–92.

Yan, Q., & Zhang, H. G. (2015). Has Chinese cinema entered the "post-cinema" era? A preliminary discussion on the trends of Chinese movie consumption. Contemporary Cinema, (02), 91–95.

Ye, H. (2011). Analysis of cinema brand management strategies. Movie Review, (21), 87–88.

Yu, C. T. (2024). Research on cinema brand construction from the perspective of cultural capital theory: Taking UME Cinemas and Wanda Cinemas as examples. Art Research, (02), 144–147.

Zhang, M. H., & Chen, X. G. (2024). Annual report on China's film industry in 2023. China Film Market, (03), 4–16.

Zhao, C. (2019). Research on movie-watching behavior of brand video website users (Master's thesis). Wuhan University of Technology.

Author Biography

1. Dai Kangkang, bachelor, master's degree candidate, College of Business Administration, University of Science and Technology Liaoning, and main research interests focus on consumer behavior and marketing.

2. Liu Li, doctor, Professor, School of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Liaoning University of Science and Technology, and main research interests include innovation management and education.