

**The effects of a theatre environment and an amateur dramatic production
on theatre patron's enjoyment**

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on theatre patron's enjoyment**

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13380211

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Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to investigate what elements of a theatre production would allow for patron's who visited the theatre to enjoy the performance. The study investigated several aims and hypotheses to investigate the above statement. The study utilised a sample of 84 male and female participants who were watching an amateur dramatic society production in a small town in county Kildare, Ireland. Appropriate statistical analyses were conducted in order to test the participant's responses. The results of the study found no significant differences between the male and female participants when it came to the artistic quality of the play, however there was a significant difference between the genders with regards to levels of empathy with the male participants being significantly more empathetic than their female counterparts. With regards to determining what elements of the production would allow for the patrons to return to the theatre it was found that the patron's general evaluation of the theatre and the play's topic were significantly correlated to frequency of theatre visit. Finally, the study concludes with a discussion of the results and also limitations of the study and recommendations for any future studies.

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Introduction and Literature review

Modern day theatre has gone through many changes since its origins in ancient Greece. From its origins in the 6th century BC to the works of Shakespeare to the modern day, theatre has taken on many different forms including musical and drama theatre. Theatre not only functions by the different productions that are performed, but also from the enjoyment and the reactions that it receives from the people who attend the various performances. The attendance and reactions that the theatre patrons help to contribute to the theatre environment would indeed warrant investigation as to what aspects of theatre cause the variety in levels of enjoyment. It would be interesting to investigate the different reactions that the various forms of theatre would invoke on the patrons, however, this study will focus its attention on one form of theatre, drama. Drama theatre does not necessarily mean that the play would have a serious tone, quite a lot of productions that are done in drama theatre are comedies. This study will focus on a production that has both a light hearted and a serious tone.

According to Bee & Madrigal (2012) the enjoyment one has from viewing entertainment is not based from either the characteristics of the entertainment's content or of the viewer, but is the interaction by both the content and the viewer that allows for a viewing of any form of entertainment to be enjoyable. Their study focuses on the usage of the Affective Disposition Theory developed by Zillman & Cantor (1972) which states that the users of media and entertainment make moral judgements about the characters which effects their enjoyment of the narrative. Zillmann (1996) discusses a seven stage model of moral judgement which further solidifies the Affective Disposition Theory. Zillmann (1996) states that the seven stage model consists of perception assessment (stage 1), moral judgement (stage 2), affective disposition (stage 3), anticipation apprehension (stage 4), and a second perception assessment (stage 5), response to the outcome/emotion (stage 6) and moral judgement (stage 7). In order to test the influence of the Affective Disposition Theory on entertainment viewing, Bee and Madrigal (2012) utilised a sample of 133 college students who were tasked with viewing the speed skating preliminary heat of the 2012 Winter Olympic Games. The results of the study revealed when a particular athlete who was disliked by the participants lost the race, the effect of relief was found to be the same as if an athlete who was liked by the participants won. Other findings from the study state that the structure of affective dispositions was a significant predictor of emotional response and satisfaction with a particular outcome. The results also indicated that suspense had a significantly positive effect on viewer enjoyment. This result would indicate that whether the medium be a sporting event or any other form of entertainment, such as stage shows, the presence of some form of suspense would allow for an increase of viewers.

Based on the research by Bee & Madrigal it would appear that the role of an individual's cognition when viewing any form of entertainment is important and would cause the individual to become more involved in what is unfolding in front of them. The next question that one may ask would be is there any form of interaction between an individual's emotions and their cognitions? This question is investigated in Bartsch & Oliver (2011) who investigated the interplay between emotion and cognition on an individual's entertainment

experience. The research by Bartsch & Oliver allows for the development of a multi-level view of affective processing that contains elements of two models, the reflective model of aesthetic experience (Cupchik, 1995) and the concept of appreciation (Oliver & Bartsch, 2010). The assumption that Cupchik's reflective model of aesthetic experience makes is that the individual's emotional involvement with any form of art can cause the experience of emotions to be associated with high levels of reflectiveness, insight and personal meaning (Cupchik, 1995). Bartsch & Oliver state that there are three affective factors that appear to be the primary elements of an individual's motivation to willingly allow for the engagement in superficial processing or to engage in more reflection. The three factors are arousal, valence and personal relevance. Bartsch & Oliver state that any future research on entertainment should focus more on the interaction that occurs between an individual's emotions and cognitions while also allowing for the individual's to reflect on the information not only about what is occurring in the world around them but also to reflect on themselves in the process. This philosophical approach to the interaction between emotion and cognition is rather interesting and would indeed require further research.

Based on the aforementioned research it would become apparent that investigating the emotional reactions of individuals towards certain media would be necessary for the development of research in the area. However, before any hypotheses can be developed and investigated it would be important to investigate other pieces of empirical evidence to determine if it would be appropriate to investigate the emotional reactions of individuals.

Another study that investigated the importance of the emotional reaction of individuals is Boerner and Jobst (2013) in which they investigate the effects of a professionally produced performance on the patron's enjoyment. Their study investigated the patron's enjoyment by investigating the cognitive, emotional and conative responses that were experienced by the patrons as well as how they felt about the theatre aesthetics and the services provided to them by the employees of the theatre. This study took place at 44 performances in 12 German theatres and 2,795 participants were involved. The study revealed that the patron's cognitive, emotional and conative responses to these performances were significant in determining the overall enjoyment of the patron's visiting the various theatres. However this study was limited to German speaking theatres and the results may not be representative of the other theatres throughout Europe. The results that this study produced was also limited to the theatre patrons as they were attending performances in professional theatres, for any future study it would be interesting to see if the results remain the same within a sample of theatre patron attending amateur performances in a non-professional run theatre. This study was essentially an extension of Boerner, Jobst and Wiemann (2010) in which they investigate the effect of theatre visitors overall enjoyment based on four elements, perceptual, cognitive, emotional and communicative. The study investigated these four elements on 125 visitors who were attending a performance at a German community theatre. The study utilised the four dimensions of theatrical experience as developed by Eversmann (2004). Eversmann (2004) states that the four dimensions are the Perceptual dimension, the patron's experience of the stimuli coming from the stage without interpreting the stimuli, the Cognitive dimension, relates to how the patron's deal with the performance on an intellectual level (in

other words the patron's are influenced by their general and theatre specific knowledge and their own experiences), the Emotional dimension, relates to how the patron's affective reactions to the performance that they are watching, and finally the Communicative dimension, which deals with the interaction between the performance and the patrons. The results of this study showed that of the four elements that were proposed only two of these elements, emotional and cognitive, were shown to have an impact on the overall enjoyment of the visitors.

According to a paper by Cupchik (2011) feelings can also have an impact on how we view media. In the article Cupchik states that feelings and emotions are two completely separate concepts and goes on to define feelings as "an appraisal of everyday events or media products that shape our experience of pleasure and interest which are contemporary". In other words our feelings are affected by our experiences of different events. Cupchik also states that pleasure can be the result of the meaningful interpretation of a form of media entertainment or from the positive associations that it gives rise to. Interest in a certain form of entertainment can be the result of the intellectual engagement one receives from watching entertainment or it can be something as simple as trying to alleviate any boredom that the individual has. Cupchik (2011) goes on to further emphasise that feelings and emotions are two separate concepts, however, he also states that they also operate in tandem with each other by stating that while feelings reflect more expanded responses to the characters or events, emotions can ground individuals by focusing more on the search for meaning behind the events that unfold in front of an audience as well as allowing for the audience to determine what the implications would be should an event similar to what they are witnessing would happen in their own lives.

The previously mentioned research evidence has, so far, dealt with the effect that emotion, as a whole, has on individuals. However, one concept has been overlooked, morality. One piece of research that deals with morality and entertainment is Tamborini (2011). In his study, Tamborini makes reference to the Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) that was developed by Haidt & Joseph (2008) which states that morality is an evaluative response that is governed by moral codes organised into five moral modules. The five modules are harm/care (concern of suffering and empathy), fairness (deals with reciprocity and justice), Loyalty (common good and punitiveness towards outsiders), Authority (negotiating dominance hierarchies) and finally Purity (concerned with sanctity and contamination) (Haidt & Joseph, 2008). These five modules, according to Haidt & Joseph (2008), can combine an individual's previous experiences and emotion to form intuitive mental structures that can have an influence on the moral judgements towards a specific area. Based on the MFT, Tamborini goes on to develop another model of morality, the Model of Intuitive Morality and Exemplars (MIME). This model predicts that, in the long term, repeated exposure to specific modules will combine with noticeable environment experiences to allow for an individual and culture shared module weight patterns. The model states that in the short term patterns of module salience will affect the immediate evaluation of media content or a delayed response in re-evaluation should the content present moral patterns that are ambiguous or complex.

Another study that investigated the appeal of theatre was Ledgerwood (1932). This study investigated the appeal and usage of sensory patterns. In order to test the appeal of sensory patterns, 17 participants were given an overview of 19 acts and were then asked to recall them as accurately and with as much detail as possible and then rank the 19 acts in order of most appealing. The results were averaged and were shown to have a very steady increase ranging from 2.5 to 14.2 across all 19 acts. The results indicated that the more vibrant and musical the act was the more the participants were able to make responses with no difficulty. Although this study shows how appealing sensory patterns are to view in a performance, the sample size was very small, 17 participants, and it would be very difficult to infer these results to the general population. Another study that investigates the appeal of theatre is Heide, Porter and Saito (2012) in which they investigated the ability of theatre to change attitudes towards a certain topic, in this case deer hunting. In the study 171 participants attended a musical theatre performance and were assessed on not only their attitude towards deer hunting but also their engagement. The results of this study indicated that the audience emotional engagement and insight were related to their attitude towards deer hunting. The audience members who reported to having a strong emotional response showed to have a complete change to their attitude towards deer hunting, whereas the audience members who reported complex emotional responses scored significantly higher results on multiple engagement measures. The overall results indicate that there was indeed a change in attitude towards deer hunting.

The majority of the aforementioned research of this literature review has been concerned with the affects of emotions on the audience who are witnessing an event on some form of entertainment medium. One aspect that has not yet been explored is the interaction between the audience and the characters not through their emotion, but through the information that the characters are providing to the audience. This interaction between audience and character is explored in Tsay-Vogel & Oliver (2013). In their study, Tsay-Vogel & Oliver were investigating the effects of the delivery of information in entertainment media. The study consisted of 185 undergraduate university students watching a segment of a reality television show. After watching the segment, the participants were measured for four variables associated with the enjoyment of viewing of a character disclose personal information. The four variables that were chosen were identification, uncertainty reduction, transportation (the holistic and immersive feeling of being lost in a story) and enjoyment. The results of the study show that the overall enjoyment of watching a character fully self-disclose personal information was mediated by identification and transportation. The results also stated that enjoyment was self-disclosed information of a character was present compared to if the information was disclosed by the narrator of the show. In other words, individuals who are watching a show will receive more enjoyment of receiving information about a character, if the character themselves disclosed the information. The study also stated that after the character had self-disclosed personal information, the participants reported that they were more immersed in the show. Although these results are rather interesting, there are some limitations to this particular study. One such limitation is the information that the character disclosed. The information was either positive or neutral .i.e. there was no negative information disclosed. Should there have been any negative information disclosed by the

characters the results would change due to the likability of the characters decreasing. Tsay-Vogel & Oliver also state that previous research has stated that people tend to like others who disclose positive rather than negative personal information. For future research in this area, it would be interesting to see if there are any changes in character likability when both positive and negative personal information is self-disclosed by the characters.

Oliver & Bartsch (2011) state that an appreciation of any form of entertainment is important as it can allow for the audience to contemplate any questions that the medium they are watching raises about the meaning of life. In their article, Oliver & Bartsch (2011) state that enjoyment of a performance is understood to be a form of motivation for the need to be entertained. However, not every person who visits a theatre or views something on television will enjoy what they have watched. Based on this assumption, Oliver & Bartsch set out to attempt to determine if appreciation can assist in accounting for the various limitations that are present on research that focuses purely on enjoyment. The article also states the differences between enjoyment and appreciation stating that enjoyment can be associated with an individual's experiences of both fun and amusement, whereas appreciation is associated with the concerns that an individual has in relation to meaningful entertainment experiences. Oliver & Bartsch also state that, based on their own research on enjoyment and appreciation, some forms of entertainment allow for individuals to display both enjoyment and appreciation, some individuals would display enjoyment but would not display appreciation, others would display appreciation but not enjoyment and some individuals would display neither enjoyment nor appreciation. The article also states that the names of the different genres of entertainment, particularly in films, describes the primary emotions that individuals would experience should they choose to watch a certain genre, for example thrillers would allow the individual to experience fear etc. The conceptualisation of affective responses as genres of entertainment is closely related to sadness more so than happiness as the different themes of entertainment could allow for individuals to contemplate their own lives.

The above research shows the importance of not only the audience reaction to the performance they are watching but also the effect the performance has on the audience with regards to their enjoyment as well as their emotional reactions to the performances. The studies also show that the various performances that the individuals are witnessing allow for the individuals to reflect on the various themes of the performances. The primary connection that all of the above mentioned evidence has in common is that emotion is linked with both audience reactions and enjoyment. This connection will be the main factor that will be investigated in this study. However, there are also several other factors that some of the aforementioned research may have not or did not take into consideration when conducting their original studies. As such a number of hypotheses will be tested in order to determine the role of performance and the theatre environment on theatre patron's overall enjoyment. Firstly, there will be gender differences in enjoyment. Secondly, there will be a difference in enjoyment levels for individuals who are visiting the theatre for the first time compared to individuals who visit the theatre annually. There will be a difference in patron's emotional responses in relation to their levels of enjoyment. And finally the patron's evaluation of the

play will predict both enjoyment and frequency of theatre visits. These hypotheses will be examined using appropriate scientific methodology and measurements. In order to test these hypotheses, the study will take place in a sample of theatre patrons attending an amateur dramatic society performance in a non-professional theatre. The study will also utilise a measurement of theatrical enjoyment as developed by Boerner & Jobst (2013) to allow for analysis of the levels of enjoyment that the participants of this study will produce. The results of this study will be reported and discussed along with any recommendations for future research and any limitations that may arise from this research.

Method

Participants: The participants of this study consisted of 84 male and female theatre patrons (35 male, 49 female) with a mean age of 48 years old. The participants were attending an amateur dramatic society's production of *The Cavaliers* (Roche, 2003). The play had several emotional elements to it which allowed for the researcher to choose to have this study to take place during the play, with permission from the drama society. The performance took place in a small town theatre in county Kildare in early December 2015. The theatre is located in a heritage centre and the auditorium can seat up to 114 people. The participants were approached as they entered the theatre and gave both verbal and written consent to take part in the study. The researcher went to the theatre on the final two nights of the performance to collect the necessary data for the study.

Measures/Materials: The data for this study was collected using a modified version of the Evaluation of Theatre Measure (Boerner & Jobst, 2013). The measure consists of 129 questions on a 5 point likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.. The questionnaire was modified as it consisted of 129 questions, whereas the modified version consisted of 60 questions. The measure was also modified due to this study only investigating the emotional responses of the participants as well as their general response to how they found the theatre. The questionnaire was also modified as some of the elements of the original 129 questions were designed for a professionally run theatre, the theatre that this study took place in was an amateur run theatre. An example of a question would be how the participants found the facilities such as the cloakroom. The modified questionnaire retained the original likert scale (see Appendix A for the modified questionnaire and Appendix B for the original questionnaire). The questionnaires were handed to the participants before the performance commenced and they were collected when the performance had ended as the participants were leaving the theatre.

Design: The current study utilised a quantitative, cross-sectional research design in order to test the aforementioned hypotheses in a between groups sample.

Independent and Dependent Variables: Like all other scientific research this study has several independent and dependent variables that need to be investigated in order to test the hypotheses. The dependent variable that this study will be measuring is the patron's overall enjoyment. The independent variables of the study are the participant's general evaluation of the theatre, the visitor's expectations for the performance, how the participants found the artistic quality and finally the participant's emotional responses will also be measured. The participant's age, gender and frequency of visit to the theatre will also be tested.

Procedures: Once approval was received from the chosen drama society the study was able to take place. The play is set in a cobbler's shop in a small town in county Wexford where four shoe makers form a singing quartet known as the *Cavaladers*. The story centres primarily on a character named Terry who begins to have an affair with a younger woman. The play focuses also on the other three quartet members, each with their own tragic stories. The play shows the affect that these stories have on the quartet as a whole. The play takes

place at two different time periods one set in the present day and another set during the Terry's affair in the past, shown through flashbacks. The cast of the play had 6 members from the drama society playing the main characters of the play. A pilot study was conducted during the dress rehearsal for the play. The participants of the pilot study were members of the drama society who were invited to view the play before the play was open to the public. The researcher chose the final two performances of the production to conduct the study. The final two nights were chosen for the data collection as it would allow the actors to ease into the play with the addition of reactions from the audience. The participants were approached as they entered the theatre to take part in the study. This allowed for both verbal and written consent to be obtained from the participants. The researcher did employ the assistance of front of house staff to assist in distributing the questionnaires. The participants were then given a brief overview of what the study would entail and were also given assistance if they could not understand any of the questions. Once the performances had concluded the questionnaires were collected from the participants as they were exiting the theatre. In order to maintain the anonymity of the participants the consent forms that were attached to the questionnaires were removed and stored separately to the questionnaires. This study did not necessitate the need for the use of any equipment to measure the responses of the participants and as such they were in no danger of any physical harm from the study. There were some exclusion criteria that were enforced in order to protect any individuals who may have been deemed vulnerable. The main exclusion criterion was only the theatre patrons who were aged between 18 and 85 years old would be able to take part in the study. Another exclusion criterion was for the exclusion of any individual with an intellectual or learning disability. The reason for excluding any of the patrons who have an intellectual disability was due to the complex nature of the play's story. These criteria were necessary in order to protect any of the theatre patrons who attended on the final two nights who would be deemed to be members of any vulnerable groups, e.g. children, the very elderly, individual's who have an intellectual disability etc.

Statistical analysis plan: In order to test the hypotheses of this study, statistical analyses will need to be conducted. The first analysis that will be conducted will be a descriptive statistical analysis in order to test the normality of the sample. The next statistical analysis that will be conducted will be an independent samples t-test. This analysis will be conducted to investigate the effects of the performance on gender. A second independent samples t-test will be conducted to test gender differences in emotional responses. Multiple Regression Analyses will be conducted to determine the effects of the participant's frequency of theatre visits on their general evaluation, the visitor's expectations and the artistic quality. A second Multiple Regression Analysis will be conducted on the patron's ratings of their levels of enjoyment and the effects that it has on their general evaluation, the visitor's expectations and the artistic quality of the production. Due to the lack of research into how frequent people visit theatres, the frequency of theatre visit measure will be used as an additional outcome in an explanatory manner.

Results

As stated above, in order to test the various variables it was important to run several statistical analyses to test the variables. Before any statistical analyses could be conducted it was important to generalise the data. Each of the various subsets of questions had various amounts of questions that were to be answered, and as stated in the above method section the original questionnaire had 129 questions, whereas the questionnaire that was used for this study was modified to 60 questions. However none of the subsets of questions were removed. In order to make the data analysis run smoother it was therefor necessary to use total scores for each of the subtests rather than to analyse each individual question.

The first statistical analysis that was used was a descriptive statistical analysis. This analysis was used in order to see how distributed the data was as well as to check the normality of the data.

| | Mean | SD | Range |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Gender | 1.58 | .496 | 1-2 |
| Age | 48.96 | 15.50 | 19-80 |
| Enjoy Rate | 8.33 | 1.42 | 4-10 |
| Total General Evaluation | 7.47 | 2.38 | 5-16 |
| Total Visitor Expectation | 12.78 | 2.20 | 7-17 |
| Total AQ Play | 20.63 | 2.32 | 16-26 |
| Total AQ Topic | 13.85 | 2.29 | 9-19 |
| Total AQ Stage Direction | 13.63 | 2.49 | 8-19 |
| Total AQ Production | 7.47 | 1.39 | 3-11 |
| Total AQ Originality | 7.91 | 1.42 | 5-12 |
| Total AQ Acting | 10.67 | 2.23 | 5-17 |
| Total AQ Stage | 9.33 | 2.03 | 4-14 |
| Total Emotional Involvement | 10.78 | 2.16 | 6-16 |
| Total Empathy | 9.00 | 2.89 | 4-16 |

AQ = Artistic Quality

The descriptive statistical analysis, shown in the above table, shows the mean age of the participants as 48.96 years of age with the youngest participant being 19 years old and the oldest participant being 80 years old. The analysis also shows that, on average, participants answered the Artistic Quality Play question ($M=20.63$, $SD= 2.32$) more than any of the other questions with the General evaluation and Artistic Quality Production being answered the least with General evaluation and Artistic Quality Production both having a mean score of 7.47.

The next analysis that was utilised was an independent sample T-test. This analysis was used in order to determine if there were any differences between males and females in relation to how they found the artistic quality of the play. A second independent samples T-test was also used in order to determine if there were any differences between males and females in relation to their emotional involvement in the play as well as how empathetic they were towards the characters.

The results from the independent sample t-test on gender and performance show that there were no significant differences with regards to gender differences and performance across any of the variables that were measured. The results from the independent sample t-test on gender and emotion showed no significant differences for gender and emotional involvement. However, there was a significant result between the gender groups and levels of empathy, $t(69) = 3.20$, $p < .05$, two tailed with males ($M= 10.24$, $SD= 2.47$) scoring higher than females ($M= 8.14$, $SD= 2.86$). The magnitude in the difference of the means (mean difference= 2.09, 95% CL: .79/ 3.40) was large (eta squared = .78)

The next statistical analysis that was used was a Multiple Regression Analysis. The purpose of a Multiple Regression Analysis is to predict one variable's value based on the values of two or more other variables. For this study two Multiple Regression Analyses were conducted. The first analysis was conducted to investigate the patron's general evaluation, visitor expectations, the artistic quality of the play, the topic, the stage direction, the production elements, the faithfulness to the original work, the acting and the stage setting on associations with frequency of theatre visit. Preliminary analyses were conducted in order to ensure that there were no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. All correlations were moderate ranging between $r = .32$ and $r = .56$. Since no *a priori* hypotheses had been made to determine the order of entry of the predictor variables, a direct method was used for the multiple linear regression analysis. The nine independent variables explained 32% of variance in frequency of theatre visits ($F(9, 49) = 2.57$, $p < .05$). In the final model, of the nine independent variables on two were statistically significant. The two variables were the visitor's general evaluation and the artistic quality of the play's topic, with general evaluation scoring higher beta value ($\beta = .35$, $p < .05$) than the play's topic scoring a lower beta value ($\beta = -.41$, $p < .05$). This result states that as the patron's general evaluation of the theatre increases so does their frequency of theatre visit, and as how the patron's found play's topic decreases so does how often they would visit the theatre.

The second Multiple Regression Analysis that was conducted used the same nine variables as the first Multiple Regression Analysis, however the second analysis was investigating the predictive power of the nine aforementioned variables on the patron's enjoyment rating. Preliminary analyses were conducted in order to ensure that there were no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. All correlations were weak to moderate ranging between $r = .23$ and $r = .49$. For the second Multiple regression analysis none of the predictor variables were significant in predicting the patron's enjoyment ratings.

Discussion

The main aims and hypotheses of this study were there would be gender differences in levels of enjoyment, there will be gender differences in relation to levels of enjoyment and frequency of theatre visit and finally the patron's evaluation of the play will predict both enjoyment and frequency of theatre visits. These aims and hypotheses were analysed by using appropriate statistical analyses.

As seen in the above results section there was no significant differences between gender and the performance. There were also no significant differences between gender and the patron's emotional involvement in the play, however there was a significant difference in relation to gender and empathy with the male participants displaying more empathy toward the characters than their female counterparts. Previous research in empathy has stated that it would be females who would be more empathetic than males. This statement can be reinforced by Eisenberg & Lennon (1983) who conducted a meta-analysis of the literature surrounding empathy and gender. Their results found that there were significant results in favour of females being more empathetic when self-report scales are utilised. This result is particularly interesting when one takes into account the numbers of males and females who took part in the study. The study had 84 participants, 35 males and 49 females. There could be a variety of explanations for a gender difference in empathy in favour of the male participants. One explanation could be due to the cast of the play. The play consisted of a cast of six with the majority of the cast being male (four males and two females). One may come to the assumption that the male patron's empathised more with the male characters as there were more males than females in the play. One may conclude that it would be due to the amount of male participants, however, there were slightly more females than males. This may simply show that the males were more empathetic due to the male majority. It may also be due to the fact that the male characters of the play were subjected to life altering events. An example of which would be the wife of one of the characters was having an affair with another character. The result may also be due to the fact that the study took place during the final two nights of the performance of a six night run. One may wonder if the result would have been different if the study had taken place during the play's entire run. For future research, it would be interesting to see if there are any further gender differences if the play has a female majority as well as if the play had an even number of male and female characters in the play. It would also be interesting for future research to determine if the gender differences are similar across a play's entire run.

The next analysis that was run in this study was a Multiple Regression Analysis. This study utilised two multiple regression analyses which analysed nine predictor variables on frequency of theatre visit and also on the patron's enjoyment rating. The nine predictor variables that were used were general evaluation, visitor expectation, and the artistic quality of the play, the play's topic, the stage direction, the production elements, the faithfulness to the original text, the acting and the stage setting. The first multiple regression analysis on frequency of theatre visit showed that only two of the nine predictor variables, general evaluation and the play's topic, were significant in their measurement of the outcome variable. The patron's general evaluation of the theatre had a positive beta value meaning that

as the patron's general evaluation of the theatre increased so did how often the patrons would visit the theatre. The play's topic had a negative beta value which would mean as how the patron's found the topic decreased so did how frequently they would visit the theatre. This may be due to the fact that there were several other side stories to what was actually transpiring in the play an example of which would be as the main character was in the affair with the young woman, one of the other characters was also having an affair with the wife of another character. This resulted in the characters having very different reactions to their own situation and this may have also had an effect on the patron's response. It is difficult to refer this result to other studies that had investigated frequency of theatre visits as there are no studies that investigate it. For future research in the area of theatre and psychology it would be interesting to see if there are any other factors that would determine how frequently people would visit a theatre.

The second multiple regression analysis, which investigated the effects of the nine predictor variables on the patron's enjoyment rating, showed none of the predictor variables were significant in determining the outcome variable. This result does not mean that the patron's did not enjoy the play, it simply means that the variables were not successful in predicting the outcome variable. It would therefore be necessary for any future research in this area to investigate and determine what variables and factors would allow for determining the patron's enjoyment of a performance. Perhaps a study that utilises the Affective Disposition Theory that was developed by Zillmann (1996) and was further investigated by Bee & Madrigal (2012) in which the participant's affective dispositions were successful in determining satisfaction with certain elements. There may have been many other factors that led to the above results. Many of the patrons who visited the theatre on the night made several comments to the researcher with regards to how often they visited the theatre in which the study took place. It may also be interesting for future research to see if there would be any differences between patrons who are visiting a professionally run theatre compared to those who visit an amateur run theatre and see if their levels of enjoyment differ. This is due to the fact that the theatre that was used in this study did not have some of the facilities that one might see in a professionally run theatre such as a concession stand, an alcohol serving bar or a box office. The theatre foyer also shares its space with the local heritage centre this allows for the patrons to learn about the local area. However, unlike professionally run theatres, the theatre in question does not have any information with regards to upcoming productions such as posters or leaflets. The theatre that was used in the study also had no access to public transport as it is located in a small town, compared to theatres in Dublin city which have access to local taxi and bus services. In many amateur run theatres there is also a lack of car parking facilities. These factors may have had an impact on the patron's mood as some may have entered late due to the lack of parking facilities and having to walk a distance just to get to the theatre. These factors should be considered should any future research take place in any amateur run theatre.

Like many other scientific studies, this study had several limitations which may have had an impact on the results of the study. One of the main limitations would be the questionnaire that was used. The questionnaire that was used was developed by Boerner & Jobst (2013). The

questionnaire was also developed with professionally run theatres in mind, and as such many of the questions had to be removed as they were determined to be inappropriate as the theatre was an amateur run theatre. The original questionnaire was 129 questions, which was deemed too long for the study. As such the questionnaire was modified to have 60 questions. Many of the questionnaires were returned to the researcher incomplete this would be due to the number of questions still being too great. As such one recommendation would be for the development of a questionnaire that is specifically tailored for amateur run theatres. It should also be noted that many of the patrons approached the researcher and stated that they did not complete the questionnaire due to the fact that they went to the theatre to enjoy a night out rather than to complete a questionnaire with a substantial amount of questions. This statement should be taken into account for the development of any questionnaire for both theatre patrons and also for the development of any questionnaires not related to theatre. As stated in the above section on the empathy differences between the genders there was a significantly higher amount of males being empathetic towards the characters than their female counterparts. It would be interesting for future research, be it in a professional or amateur run theatre, to investigate if there are gender differences if the production has a male or female cast majority. It may also be interesting for future research to investigate how the actors felt about the audience and their reactions to certain scenes of the play. As was stated in the frequency of theatre visit section, there is no research that investigates what factors can be attributed to the frequency of which patrons visit the theatre. Future research in the area of theatre and media psychology should investigate these factors. It may also be interesting to see if qualitative research would be able to replicate the same results that have been discussed in this study. Should future research take this approach one may state that a focus on enjoyment factors would be important.

It may also be of interest for future studies to investigate if there are any differences in the frequency of visits and enjoyment levels in people who visit drama theatre versus people who visit musical theatre. This would be of interest as there are various different elements that musical theatre use compared to drama theatre such as the different song and dance numbers compared to a comedy production. Future studies may also benefit in examining the effects of the different types of plays that many drama societies and theatres would have during the theatre seasons. Another question that one might ask with regards to theatre would be if the time of year in which the production is running has an impact on the frequency of visits or the reactions that the patrons may have. This would be of interest not only for researchers, but also for the various theatres and drama societies as it would allow them to plan out what type of play would be suitable for the particular time of year, such as a pantomime in the lead up to Christmas or a comedy in the spring time. One may also wonder if there would be any differences with regards to audience reactions in a cinema environment compared to a theatre. This would be interesting to investigate as there are a variety of factors which may influence the audience's reaction to a performance. One such factor may be the actors themselves. If an actor is very tired this would impact on how they perform, and as such a bad performance would lead to a negative reaction. This would not be the case for the cinema as the performances are recorded and often altered to make the performance more enjoyable.

This aim of this study was to determine what would have an impact on the enjoyment of theatre patrons visiting an amateur dramatic society production. The study determined that the male theatre patrons displayed significantly more empathy towards the character than their female counterparts. The study also investigated which factors would determine both enjoyment levels and frequency of theatre visit. The study was unable to determine what factors influenced enjoyment levels, however, the study was able to determine that the patron's general evaluation of the theatre and the topic of the play were able to determine the frequency of theatre visits. This study also included several recommendations for any future research in the area which included analysing the reactions of theatre patrons who watched a production with a female majority cast. The study also recommended for the development of questionnaires that would be used specifically for amateur run theatres, as well as for the need for studies to be carried out on the various types of productions, such as comedies, as well as the need for the study of the reactions of theatre patrons who watched a musical compared to those who watched a drama.

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Appendix A

The Effects of performance and theatre environment on theatre patron's overall enjoyment

INVITATION

You are being asked to take part in a research study investigating the effects of performance and the theatre environment on theatre patron's overall enjoyment.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

In this study, you will be asked to evaluate the theatre, express what your expectations for the performance are and to evaluate performance you will be watching. You will also be asked about how you felt during the performance. In order to show this you will be provided with a questionnaire. This questionnaire will take roughly 10-15 minutes to complete.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will take place during the performance that you will be viewing. As this study will require you to answer some questions, a questionnaire will be provided. The questions that will be provided in this questionnaire will take roughly between 10-15 minutes to complete.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn/destroyed. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you. You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study's outcome). If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

BENEFITS AND RISKS

There are no known risks for you in this study as you will not be subjected to any physical measurements and the questionnaire that you will be completing will not contain any information or questions that may affect your mental wellbeing. This study will benefit the theatre that the production is being shown in as they can add, remove or improve the services in the theatre should any evidence from this study deem it necessary.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data that will be collected will not contain any personal information about you except for your age and gender. No one will link the data you provided to the identifying information you supplied (e.g., name, address, email). The data that will be gathered for this study may be used in

presentations and may also be used in any publication of this study. Regardless of any presentation or publication of this study, no personal information of any participants will be provided in order to maintain anonymity.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Adam Treacy and Dr. Joanna McHugh will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact him/her at adamtreacy2013@gmail.com and Joanna.McHugh@ncirl.ie. If you want to find out about the final results of this study, a copy of the completed report will be provided to the theatre should you wish to read the completed report.

CONSENT FORM

The Effects of Performance and Theatre environment on theatre patron's overall enjoyment

This study will be investigating the effects of both performance and the theatre environment on the overall enjoyment of the theatre's patrons

By signing below, you are agreeing that: (1) you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet, (2) questions about your participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily, (3) you are aware of the potential risks (if any), and (4) you are taking part in this research study voluntarily (without coercion).

Participant's Name (Printed)*

Participant's signature*

Date

Name of person obtaining consent (Printed)

Signature of person obtaining consent

Please indicate your answer by ticking the appropriate box (1)

| | | |
|--------|------|--------|
| | Male | Female |
| Gender | | |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Please state your age | |
|-----------------------|--|

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Whenever there is a show | Once or twice a year | It is my first time in this theatre |
| How often do you visit this theatre | | | |

| | 1 (Strongly Agree) | 2 (Agree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Disagree) | 5 (Strongly Disagree) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| I have a very high opinion of this theatre | | | | | |
| From my perspective, this theatre performs on an artistically high level | | | | | |
| From my point of view, the theatre plays a role in this town that it should play | | | | | |
| I think that the program of this theatre is generally well arranged | | | | | |
| I am very satisfied with the special events offered in addition to regular performances (e.g., presentations, discussions, parties). | | | | | |
| I had very high expectations for today's performance. | | | | | |
| I did not have high expectations for today's performance (e.g., having read bad reviews). | | | | | |
| I had pleasant anticipations for the performance. | | | | | |
| I arrived at the theatre with an open mind, i.e., without specific expectations | | | | | |
| I had very specific expectations for this performance (e.g., | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| regarding the audience, the play, or the production). | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|

| | 1 (Strongly Agree) | 2 (Agree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Disagree) | 5 (Strongly Disagree) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Before I entered the theatre I was in a good mood | | | | | |
| Before I entered the theatre I was irritated | | | | | |
| Before I entered the theatre I was exhausted | | | | | |
| Before I entered the theatre I was energetic | | | | | |
| Before I entered the theatre I was sad | | | | | |
| I liked the play very much. | | | | | |
| I think the play was very weak | | | | | |
| The play convinced me because of its great language | | | | | |
| The topic of this play appeals to me personally | | | | | |
| The play deals with a relevant and/or interesting topic | | | | | |
| The topic of this play is of no use to me | | | | | |
| I actually do not want to deal with the topic of today's play | | | | | |
| I think it is remarkable how timeless the topic of this play is | | | | | |
| I was impressed with the contemporary connections made in the performance | | | | | |
| I think that the topic of this play greatly affects us | | | | | |
| From my point of view, the contemporary connections were too clear and obvious | | | | | |
| The connection that has been created between the play and current events seemed artificial and false to me | | | | | |
| I think the performance of the director was excellent today | | | | | |
| The production seemed thought-out and conclusive | | | | | |
| The director bored me with this performance | | | | | |
| I found the director's take on the material fascinating | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| I think that the director focused mainly on fulfilling and presenting themselves | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

(2)

| | 1 (Strongly Agree) | 2 (Agree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Disagree) | 5 (Strongly Disagree) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The single elements of the production (actors, stage design, etc.) resulted in a coherent atmosphere on the whole | | | | | |
| I think that the single elements of the production (actors, production, etc.) fit together very well | | | | | |
| I do not think that the scenery and costumes fit the messages of the production very well | | | | | |
| I think that the production expresses the intentions of the author very well | | | | | |
| From my perspective, the director succeeded in highlighting the topic and the message well | | | | | |
| From my point of view, the director deviated greatly from the original work Overall, I think that the actors' performance was excellent today | | | | | |
| I was impressed of how convincingly the actors put themselves in the positions of the different characters | | | | | |
| Overall, I was impressed by the actors' passionateness and enthusiasm | | | | | |
| Sometimes the actors spoke too quickly and/or unclearly | | | | | |
| The cast played off each other brilliantly | | | | | |
| I liked the scenery, costumes, and props of | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| today's performance very much | | | | | |
| I was impressed by the scenery and the costumes of today's performance | | | | | |
| The design of the scenery was not comprehensible for me | | | | | |
| I was impressed by the brilliant ideas of the scene painter | | | | | |

(3)

| | 1 (Strongly Agree) | 2 (Agree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Disagree) | 5 (Strongly Disagree) |
|--|--------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Today's performance moved and touched me | | | | | |
| During the performance I was constantly very anxious to see what would happen next | | | | | |
| Overall, this performance left me pretty cold | | | | | |
| The performance caused me to forget everything around me | | | | | |
| During the performance, I felt with the characters | | | | | |
| In between I watched the characters' destiny with great excitement | | | | | |
| I could understand the characters' feelings very well | | | | | |
| During the performance, I suffered with the characters | | | | | |
| I could identify with one (or more) character(s) very well | | | | | |
| I had no difficulties putting myself in the position of one (or more) character(s) | | | | | |
| During some periods I thought about how I would handle a similar situation myself | | | | | |
| I think some elements in this production crossed the boundaries of good taste | | | | | |
| Some scenes have been presented too drastically and extremely | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| I think sometimes a hint would have been enough | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|

(4)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Please rate out of 10 how you found the evening | /10 |
|---|-----|

Appendix B

General Evaluation of the Theater

I have a very high opinion of this theater.

From my perspective, this theater performs on an artistically high level.

From my point of view, the theater plays a role in this city that it should play.

I think that the program of this theater is generally well arranged.

I am very satisfied with the special events offered in addition to regular performances (e.g., presentations, discussions, parties).

Visitor's Expectations

I had very high expectations for today's performance.

I did not have high expectations for today's performance (e.g., having read bad reviews).

I had pleasant anticipations for the performance.

I arrived at the theater with an open mind, i.e., without specific expectations.

I had very specific expectations for this performance (e.g., regarding the audience, the play, or the production).

Visitor's Mood (Before Entering the Theater, I was . . .)

in a good mood

irritated

exhausted

energetic

sad

Artistic Quality

Play

I liked the play very much.

I think the play was very weak.

The play convinced me because of its great language.

The topic of this play appeals to me personally.

The play deals with a relevant and/or interesting topic.

The topic of this play is of no use to me.

I actually do not want to deal with the topic of today's play.

Play's Topicality

I think it is remarkable how timeless the topic of this play is.

I was impressed with the contemporary connections made in the performance.

I think that the topic of this play greatly affects us.

From my point of view, the contemporary connections were too clear and obvious.

The connection that has been created between the play and current events seemed artificial and false to me.

Stage Direction

I think the performance of the director was excellent today.

The production seemed thought-out and conclusive.

The director bored me with this performance.

I found the director's take on the material fascinating.

I think that the director focused mainly on fulfilling and presenting himself.

Fit Within the Production

The single elements of the production (actors, stage design, etc.) resulted in a coherent atmosphere on the whole.

I think that the single elements of the production (actors, production, etc.) fit together very well.

I do not think that the scenery and costumes fit the messages of the production very well.

Werktreue (Faithfulness to the Original Text)

I think that the production expresses the intentions of the author very well.

From my perspective, the director succeeded in highlighting the topic and the message well.

From my point of view, the director deviated greatly from the original work.

Acting

Overall, I think that the actors' performance was excellent today.

I was impressed of how convincingly the actors put themselves in the positions of the different characters.

Overall, I was impressed by the actors' passionateness and enthusiasm.

Sometimes the actors spoke too quickly and/or unclearly.

The cast played off each other brilliantly.

Stage Setting

I liked the scenery, costumes, and props of today's performance very much.

I was impressed by the scenery and the costumes of today's performance.

The design of the scenery was not comprehensible for me.

I was impressed by the brilliant ideas of the scene painter.

Emotional Involvement

Today's performance moved and touched me.

During the performance I was constantly very anxious to see what would happen next.

Overall, this performance left me pretty cold.

The performance caused me to forget everything around me.

Empathy

During the performance, I felt with the characters.

In between I watched the characters' destiny with great excitement.

I could understand the characters' feelings very well.

During the performance, I suffered with the characters.

Identification

I could identify with one (or more) character(s) very well.

I had no difficulties putting myself in the position of one (or more) character(s).

During some periods I thought about how I would handle a similar situation myself.

Breaching of Norms and Values

I think some elements in this production crossed the boundaries of good taste.

Some scenes have been presented too drastically and extremely.

I think sometimes a hint would have been enough.