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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of participation in social media networks on theatrical movie attendance, with particular attention paid to the fear-of-missing-out (FoMO) and social media social capital. Using an online survey ($N = 472$), it was determined that the direct social utility of the theatrical experience was a better predictor of theatrical attendance than social media FoMO or social capital. However, both bridging social capital and FoMO were predictors of the post-viewing social media sharing of the film experience, with bridging social capital best predicting social media sharing. Furthermore, FoMO did not moderate the relation between bridging social capital and social media sharing, suggesting these traits exert influence on social media behaviors independently. While participation in social networks did not influence theatrical movie attendance, it was an important predictor of social media conversations after viewing, with the opportunity to maintain and build bridging social capital exerting the greatest influence on social media sharing.

Keywords: fear of missing out, social capital, cinema, social media, movies

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The rise of new viewing technology has challenged the theatrical movie viewing experience. Increased entertainment options from streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, rising ticket prices, and startups such as the subscription service MoviePass “threaten to devalue the movie-going experience” (Plaugic, 2018, para. 4; see also Guerrasio, 2018). This has left researchers and industry professionals searching for insights into the driving factors of the decision to see movies in the movie theater. Much attention has been given to the influence of word-of-mouth, with research showing that online word-of-mouth through amateur reviews work alongside critic aggregate scores to contribute to positive box office performance (Duan, Gu, & Whinston, 2008; Kim, Park, & Park, 2013). Beyond digital reviews, other digital buzz is an important predictor of box office revenues, including social media conversations (Doshi, Krauss, Nann, & Gloor, 2010). The value of social media buzz as it relates to theatrical cinema attendance has become increasingly apparent, as recent box office results have shown that the top social media performers are also often the top box office performers (“2017 year in review: Social media recap,” 2018).

Explored via the uses and gratifications framework (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973), media research has long recognized that cinema attendance is driven in part by the social gratifications of the moviegoing experience, fueling direct social interaction and conversations related to movie attendance (Austin, 1986; Palmgreen, Cook, Harvill, & Helm, 1988). However, the rise of social media provides movie consumers with new channels to socially interact regarding their theatrical experiences. To understand the influence of social media on movie attendance, social media interaction needs to be explored. Two theoretical concepts have been

given increasing attention to better understand social media engagement and its influence on media behaviors: the fear-of-missing-out and online social capital.

Driven by social media, the fear-of-missing-out (FoMO) (Cohen, 2013; Przybylski, Murayama, Dehaan, & Gladwell, 2013) is the fear that others may be having a pleasurable experience. Previous research has demonstrated connections between FoMO and television viewing (Conlin, Billings, & Auverset, 2016), with increased FoMO driving media consumption. Social capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Putnam, 2000) describes a social media user's positive social standing among a group of peers. Not only does social capital predict social sharing (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007), social capital can predict whether someone will purchase a specific item (Kwahk & Ge, 2012). Social capital has also been associated with larger numbers of television program viewers (Oh & Yergeau, 2017).

Both FoMO and social capital are important social media concepts that relate to media experiences, and as such, they have the potential to contribute to our understanding of how social media work alongside traditional social gratification seeking to predict theatrical attendance as well as the social media sharing of moviegoing experiences. As social media conversations have been acknowledged as an important source of movie word-of-mouth, this study seeks to understand the role of social media, through social capital and FoMO, as well as traditional social gratification seeking in predicting both theatrical attendance and intentions to generate additional social media conversations around theatrically viewed movies.

Literature Review

The Movie Industry

As it exists today, the movie industry's revenue model is centered around making money through release windows; release windows are the phases of movie viewing that a film passes

through as it makes its way from theater debut to cable television (see Lang, 2018). The earlier windows provide higher revenue for film studios, even down to the earlier weeks that a movie is in theaters providing high profits, as “during the opening weekend of a film, the larger chunk went to the studio, while as the weeks went on, the theater operator's percentage rose” (Zipin, 2019, para. 10). As time goes on, the long-tail of film revenue comes into play through streaming services, on-demand services, and more traditional outlets like cable television and DVD/Blu-Ray sales.

Movie studios and theater chains have been in disagreement for years about the release-window system, as “studios argue that they need to be able to release films on home entertainment platforms earlier as a way to combat piracy and capitalize on expensive advertising campaigns publicizing a picture’s debut in theaters. Exhibitors counter that a shorter window could cannibalize ticket sales and encourage consumers to skip the multiplexes, and wait to see a movie when they can rent or buy it” (Lang, 2018, para. 2). The changing dynamic of the movie industry has been greatly affected by streaming services and the numerous options available to viewers, and social media has played no small role in this shift.

Social media allows viewers to talk about their media choices in ways that were not available to them before. Viewers can spread word-of-mouth movie reviews via social media and can reach friends and acquaintances that might otherwise be hard to find. This is important as word-of-mouth promotion of a film was found to be a determining factor in box-office revenues, both aggregate and weekly (Liu, 2006), “especially in the early weeks after a movie opens” (Liu, 2006, p. 74). Liu found that not only was the amount of word-of-mouth promotion relevant to revenue, but that it did not matter if the messages were positive or negative; as long as people were talking about the movie, revenues increased.

Social Sharing and Social Media

Human beings innately seek to share emotional experiences in order to make sense of their feelings (see Choi & Toma, 2014; Rimé, 2009; Rimé, Mesquita, Boca, & Philippot, 1991). This phenomenon is not strictly related to media or mass communication, but rather forms one of the central tenets of communication and emotion. Simply put, social sharing is “communicating with others about significant emotional experiences” (Choi & Toma, 2014, p. 530). Social sharing takes place after a person has experienced an emotional episode; these individuals “will initiate interpersonal behaviours in which discussing this event and their reactions to it is central” (Rimé et al., 1991, p. 436). In the context of movie watching, the emotional event is the consumption of the movie itself, and the social sharing is either a discussion with another individual, or group of individuals, about the movie. Social media social sharing relates to the decision to post about a movie on social media, or discuss a movie on a social media platform.

The concept of creating buzz about an event or product is not new, and is certainly not limited to social media. However, social media buzz has been acknowledged for playing an important role in creating trends and influencing consumer behavior (Themba & Mulala, 2013; Zhang, Zhao, & Xu, 2015). Social sharing on social media is the idea that a person will post—or share—information or content on social media platforms(s) with the intent of entering into a conversation about that information with a group of peers (Choi & Toma, 2014; see also Brown, Bhadury, & Pope, 2010; Huang, Su, Zhou, & Liu, 2013).

Uses and Gratifications, and Social Gratifications of Movies

Prior to the advent of social media, the social motivations for engaging in mediated behaviors have been examined via the uses and gratifications theory. The uses and gratifications theory suggests individuals seek out media to meet certain psychological needs, including social

needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). The social implications of media usage are inescapable, as media consumption and subsequent need fulfillment takes place in some sort of environment, and there is typically a social context associated with that environment (Swank, 1979). Gratification seeking predicts media consumption (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1982; Rayburn & Palmgreen, 1984), as audiences' evaluation of the needs met by a particular media contribute to their intentions to consume that media.

Recent studies examining the gratifications of cinema have focused on the affective outcomes of moviegoing, especially hedonic (entertainment and excitement) and eudaimonic (meaningfulness and sadness) emotional responses (e.g. Oliver, 2008; Oliver, Ash, Woolley, Shade, & Kim, 2014; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010). This is consistent with previous gratifications identified in earlier research, such as entertainment, escape, and mood control (Austin, 1986; Palmgreen et al., 1988). However, unlike the affective gratification focus of recent research, Austin and Palmgreen et al.'s earlier research also identified social gratifications, including social utility and loneliness relief, as key motivators of cinema attendance, as the cinema facilitates direct social interaction as well as social conversation regarding the movies seen. An action or behavior has social utility when the behavior or action is perceived as beneficial to both the individual engaged in the action and to those affected by the action (Loewenstein, Thompson, & Bazerman, 1989). In the case of the cinema, the social utility of a movie centers around its ability to provide opportunities for positive social interaction and conversation with peers, family, and romantic partners (Palmgreen et al., 1988).

While gratifications research in the twentieth century focused on the use of media to meet social deficiencies, given the increasingly interactive nature of current media, the need to examine the socially purposeful nature of media has been emphasized (Ruggiero, 2000).

Papacharissi and Mendelson (2011) have proposed a model that integrates uses and gratifications with social capital. Specifically, Papacharissi and Mendelson propose that mediated behaviors are also social behaviors that meet both social and psychological needs, and media use has social outcomes, including building social capital. According to Papacharissi and Mendelson, both intentional and ritualistic media use contribute to a user's social capital.

Social Capital

Social capital has been defined as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 14), or, more simply put, as “investment in social relations with expected returns” (Lin, 1999, p. 30). Individuals or groups with increased social capital are able to wield influence within a social group (Adler & Kwon, 2002), making social capital a source of power over the behavior of others.

Regarding communication research, social capital has been identified as a key predictor of audience activity given its ability to capture a sense of the social resources available in an audience's social network (Lee & Sohn, 2016). In other words, audiences consider their social capital when engaging in media related activities. Social capital has the ability to affect the actions of people within a social network. It should be perceived “as the goodwill that is engendered by the fabric of social relations and that can be mobilized to facilitate action” (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 17).

While much social capital research has examined the role media systems play in forming macro-level, societal social capital (Lee & Sohn, 2016), the advent of online networks have provided researchers the opportunity to explore individual social capital resources at the micro

level. Two types of social capital relevant to communication research have been defined: 1) bonding social capital, which is the social capital we have with our close friends and family we depend on to “get by;” and 2) bridging social capital, which is the social capital we have with the weaker tie, acquaintances in our social networks who we depend on to help us “get ahead” (Putnam, 2000). Regarding online social media networks in particular, both forms of social capital have been shown to relate to specific behaviors and outcomes (Mo & Leung, 2015). However, social media use is most useful for building bridging social capital (Ellison et al., 2007; Johnston, Tanner, Lalla, & Kawalski, 2011). Bridging social capital has been associated with intentions to speak up about controversial issues on social networking sites (Sheehan, 2015), continued use and satisfaction with social media sites (Chang & Zhu, 2012), and distant relationship maintenance behaviors (Ellison, Vitak, Gray, & Lampe, 2014). While online social network activity is especially useful for building bridging social capital in the network itself, it has implications for offline relationships as well (Steinfeld, Ellison, Lampe, & Vitak, 2012), contributing to offline life satisfaction and civic participation (Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009).

In regards to consumer behavior, social media social capital has been shown to predict online purchase intentions (Kwahk & Ge, 2012) as well as information sharing (Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, 2006). Not only has online social capital been shown to predict social media word-of-mouth (Chu & Kim, 2011) and brand message sharing (Fu, Wu, & Cho, 2017), consumers’ trust in their social network is an important predictor of consumer behavior, acting as a mediator between online social influence via social media and purchase intentions (Ng, 2013). Beyond online purchasing, social capital has been associated with offline media consumption behaviors. Social media social capital has been associated with the performance of television shows, with higher social media engagement regarding television programs leading to increased viewership

(Oh & Yergeau, 2017). Consumers seek out mediated experiences to facilitate social interactions that boost social capital; media use is social with benefits for social capital (Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2011). As such, it is possible that consumers may consider their social media social capital when seeking other mediated experiences, such as movie attendance.

Fear-of-Missing-Out

While social capital has been shown to relate to both social media sharing and motivations to consume media, another motivating factor associated with social media use is the fear-of-missing-out. The idea of fear-of-missing-out (Cohen, 2013; Przybylski et al., 2013) refers to the feeling that one is missing out on a pleasurable experience which others are participating in. This feeling is often related to a big event, party, gathering, or—increasingly—technology related events and behavior that is referenced and documented on social media (see Bright, Kleiser, & Grau, 2015; Fox & Moreland, 2015).

FoMO drives individuals to continue using Facebook even in the face of negative experiences; social pressure to use the site made people repeatedly check the social network to avoid the experience of FoMO (Fox & Moreland, 2015). This effect is particularly strong among young people, where “adolescents’ need to belong and need for popularity were related with increased FoMO, which, in turn, was associated with increased Facebook use” (Beyens, Frison, & Eggermont, 2016, p. 5). Similarly, college students experience increased anxiety when they do not have access to their mobile devices (Cheever, Rosen, Carrier, & Chavez, 2014).

Viewers can use social media to combat FoMO, and this results in a pleasurable experience; “part of that pleasure is directly derived from what others find pleasurable or, at a minimum, noteworthy” (Conlin et al., 2016). An individual takes pleasure in experiencing what others are also experiencing—whether that is a television program, current event, meme, or

movie. This shared experience takes place on social media, making platforms like Facebook or Twitter an ideal place to combat FoMO by sharing media experiences with others, such as sharing when you watched and enjoyed (or hated) a movie.

Recent research has focused on the idea that mediated experiences—like television and movie viewing—are particularly tied to FoMO. FoMO “is characterized by the desire to stay continually connected with what others are doing” (Przybylski et al., 2013, p. 1841), and social media provide the ideal environment to stay constantly up-to-date with what peers, friends, and people across the globe are doing. Social media and the technology that support it, and the fact that it is socially acceptable to be constantly connected, has led to the ability of social media to affect one’s mood, emotion, and—closely related to movie choices—media decisions (Turkle, 2011). FoMO prompts people to binge-watch some TV programs and TV mega-events (such as the Oscars or Superbowl), likely to avoid spoilers and remain up-to-date with current TV culture (Conlin et al., 2016). FoMO is powerful enough to dictate a user’s behavior, and may work in conjunction with other factors, like social capital, to dictate a person’s movie-consumption.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

FoMO has been shown to predict the binge-watching of TV programs and TV mega-events (Conlin et al., 2016). Likewise, social capital has been associated with consumer and media consumption behaviors (Ng, 2013; Oh & Yergeau, 2017), with bridging social capital serving as the primary driver of social media activity (Ellison et al., 2007; Johnston et al., 2011). While neither FoMO nor social capital has been explored in regards to offline mediated activity, the smartphone-driven, connected nature of social interaction suggests it is possible both traits are drivers of cinematic selection. In addition, the social utility of the cinematic experience has

been identified as an important motivation (Palmgreen et al., 1988), and thus may continue to motivate cinema attendance. As such, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ_{1a}: Does FoMO predict viewing a movie in an earlier release window?

RQ_{1b}: Does bridging social capital predict viewing a movie in an earlier release window?

RQ_{1c}: Does social utility gratification seeking predict viewing a movie in an earlier release window?

RQ₂: Does social utility, bridging social capital, or FoMO best predict viewing a movie in an earlier release window?

Social capital has been associated with increased social sharing, including the sharing of brand messages (Chu & Kim, 2011; Fu et al., 2017), while FoMO has been associated with media decisions (Turkle, 2011) and increased social media activity (Fox & Moreland, 2015). However, how these two concepts relate to each other in regards to social sharing has yet to be explored. As both concepts involve perceptions of a consumer's social network and their need to be involved in that network, it is possible that a moderating relation exists. If bridging social capital predicts information sharing, and FoMO increases social media activity, it may be possible that FoMO moderates the relation between bridging social capital and social sharing. Likewise, it is unclear which concept exerts the most pressure to engage in social sharing. Finally, it may be possible that experiencing a movie in an earlier release window itself is a predictor of social sharing, perhaps working alongside a consumer's FoMO and social capital. As such, the following hypotheses and research questions are proposed:

H₁: Bridging social capital predicts social sharing of a movie.

H₂: FoMO predicts social sharing of a movie.

RQ₃: Does seeing a movie in an earlier release window predict social sharing of a movie?

RQ₄: Does FoMO, bridging social capital, or earlier viewing best predict social sharing of a movie?

RQ₅: Does FoMO moderate the relationship between bridging social capital and social sharing?

Method

To address the research questions and hypotheses, a survey using an online convenience sample was conducted using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (M-Turk) task system. The results of M-Turk samples have been shown to be consistent with samples collected by other common convenience sampling methods, and M-Turk samples may be more socio-economically and ethnically diverse than social media or student samples (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Casler, Bickel, & Hackett, 2013). For this study, participation was limited to M-Turk workers in the United States who had a 97% hit completion rate. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Kansas State University (October 17, 2017, proposal number: 8990).

Films Used in the Study

Films included in the study were released in 2016, as these films had completed their theatrical run and been made available for home viewing via rental as well as through streaming sites such as Netflix or Amazon Prime. A list of the top 100 box office grossing films from 2016 was collected from the website Box Office Mojo (<http://www.boxofficemojo.com>), a website that compiles box office data for domestically released motion pictures. Consistent with previous research regarding movie attendance (Oliver et al., 2014), the current study focused on films

classified as comedy, drama, and action; children's films and horror films were excluded. From the initial list of 100, researchers identified 72 films classified as comedies, drama, and action films by Box Office Mojo and the Internet Movie Database (<http://www.imdb.com>). The top ten box office earning films in each category – comedy, drama, and action – were selected for use in the final study. Since films listed on IMDb and Box Office Mojo are often classified with multiple genres, a pilot study employing a sample of 111 undergraduate students was utilized to confirm the primary genre for each film used in the study. Table 1 presents the thirty films included in the study.

[Insert Table 1 Here]

Procedure

Main study participants accessed the online survey hosted by Qualtrics through a link on the M-Turk website. After viewing informed consent information and agreeing to participate, participants' FoMO and social media bridging social capital were first measured. Participants were then shown the list of 30 films identified in the pre-test and asked to indicate which films they had seen. After respondents indicated which of the films they had watched, they were randomly assigned to answer questions related to one of the films they had viewed. Participants were asked to identify at what point in the distribution cycle they had seen the film, their social sharing behavior for the film, and their pre-viewing social utility gratification expectations for the film. Finally, demographic data and media usage information were collected.

Measures

FoMO. Fear of missing out ($M = 2.22$, $SD = 0.81$) was measured using the 10-item measure developed by Przybylski, Murayama, Dehaan, and Gladwell (2013). Items were measured on five-point scales ranging from "not at all true of me" to "extremely true of me."

Sample statements included, “I fear others have more rewarding experiences than me,” and, “When I miss out on a planned get-together it bothers me.” The measure was reliable, $\alpha = .90$.

Bridging Social Capital. The measure for bridging social capital ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 1.17$) was adapted from Williams (2006). Participants responded to ten items measured on seven-point, Likert scales ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Sample statements included, “Interacting with people on social media makes me want to try new things,” and, “On social media, I come in contact with new people all the time.” The measure was reliable, $\alpha = .92$.

Dependent Variables. To measure the main dependent variable, movie viewing behavior, participants were asked to indicate how they had seen the film randomly assigned to them from the list of films they indicated they had seen: 1) In the theater ($n = 205$), 2) At home, via rental or video-on-demand ($n = 168$), or 3) On cable or a streaming network like Netflix (not a paid rental) ($n = 99$). The other dependent variable, social sharing behavior ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.98$), was measured using a three-item measure (Brown et al., 2010; Huang et al., 2013). Participants were asked, “Upon seeing [movie title] for the first time, I ...” 1) “passed along [movie title] to others on social media,” 2) told others about [movie title] on social media,” and 3) “talked about [movie title] on social media.” All three items were measured on seven-point, Likert scales ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The measure was reliable, $\alpha = .97$.

Social Utility Gratifications. Social utility gratification expectations ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 1.18$) were measured using items drawn from Palmgreen, Cook, Harvill, and Helm (1988). Respondents were asked to respond to six items measured on seven-point, Likert scales ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” A statement informed respondents that researchers were interested in their expectations of the film before they watched it for the first time.

Statements were prefaced with the phrase, “Prior to seeing [movie title], I thought ...” Sample statements included, “Seeing this movie will be a good thing to do socially,” and, “This movie will be something to talk about with others.” The measure was reliable, $\alpha = .89$.

Demographics. Age, gender, and ethnic background information were recorded, along with average movie attendance and social media usage. Participants were asked to indicate how many movies they watched in a theater in the past month as well as a typical month ($M = 1.14$, $SD = 1.39$), how many movies they rented or purchased in the past month as well as a typical month ($M = 1.90$, $SD = 2.56$), how many movies they streamed or watched on cable in the past month and a typical month ($M = 6.13$, $SD = 6.70$), and how many hours they spent on social media yesterday and on a typical day ($M = 1.99$, $SD = 1.84$). For each category, the past month and average month scores were averaged to create their average usage measures.

Results

A total of 503 M-Turk workers completed the online survey. Eighteen cases were removed, as they had seen none of the 30 movies included in the study. For the remaining responses, total survey response time and the even-odd consistency index were utilized to identify careless responses. Thirteen cases were eliminated due to having response times below 1.3 standard deviations of the average response time (which constituted less than two seconds per question) and/or having even-odd, Spearman-Brown-corrected correlations below -1 (Meade & Craig, 2012). The final sample ($N = 472$) was 51.8% male ($n = 244$), 68.2% Caucasian ($n = 321$), 11.2% Asian ($n = 53$), 8.9% black or African American ($n = 42$), 7.4% Hispanic or Latino ($n = 35$), with 4.2% coming from other backgrounds ($n = 20$). The average age was 36.1 ($SD = 10.6$).

Predicting Release Window

RQ1a-c asked if (a) FoMO, (b) bridging social capital, and (c) social utility gratifications predicted viewing a movie in an earlier release window. RQ2 sought to determine which factor (FoMO, bridging social capital, or social utility gratifications) best predicted theatrical attendance. Because these research questions addressed similar variables and a single outcome variable, they were examined using the same model; a multinomial logistic regression was performed.

Average theatrical, rental, and streaming viewing were entered as controls, as was average daily social media usage. In addition, the total screen number for the film users viewed in the study was entered as a control (standardized due to large numbers), as industry data suggests wider releases are associated with greater marketing efforts (Gerbrandt, 2010). Finally, the genre of the film viewed in the study was entered as a control, dummy coded for action and comedy with drama as the reference. Beyond the controls, the social utility expectation, FoMO, and bridging social capital measures were entered into the regression as predictors. The criterion variable, theatrical viewing window, included 1) “In the theater,” 2) “At home, via rental or paid video-on-demand,” and 3) “On a cable or streaming network like Netflix,” which was the reference in the model. Table 2 presents the results of the logistic regression.

[Insert Table 2 Here]

The addition of the predictors to the model containing only the intercept significantly improved the fit between the model and data, $\chi^2(20, 472) = 133.43$, *Nagelkerke* $R^2 = .28$, $p < .001$. When controlling for the other variables, social utility expectations were a statistically significant predictor of theatrical attendance, *Wald* = 21.76, *OR*(472) = 1.85, $p < .001$. As social utility expectations increased by one unit, an individual was 1.85 times more likely to have viewed the film in the theater over streaming viewing. Neither FoMO (*Wald* = 0.00, *OR*[472] =

1.00, $p > .05$) nor bridging social capital ($Wald = 0.00$, $OR[472] = 0.99$, $p > .05$) were significant predictors of theatrical viewing. Social utility ($Wald = 0.17$, $OR[472] = 1.05$, $p > .05$), FoMO ($Wald = 0.01$, $OR[472] = 0.99$, $p > .05$), and bridging social capital ($Wald = 0.03$, $OR[472] = 1.02$, $p > .05$) did not significantly influence rental viewing over streaming viewing.

To answer RQ1, neither (a) FoMO, nor (b) bridging social capital predicted viewing in an earlier release window. However, (c) social utility expectations did predict theatrical attendance. Therefore, the answer to RQ2 is that social utility expectations best predicted release window.

Predicting Social Sharing

H1 and H2 argued that bridging social capital and FoMO predict social sharing of a movie upon viewing, RQ3 asked if seeing movie in an earlier release window predicted social sharing, and RQ4 sought to determine which variable best predicted social sharing. Because these tests utilized a single outcome variable (social sharing), one model was used to test all four; a hierarchical linear regression predicting social sharing behavior was utilized.

The first step of the regression entered the controls: average theatrical, rental, and streaming viewing; average daily social media use; screens in wide release for the film used in the study; and the film's genre, dummy coded as action and comedy with drama as the reference. The second step of the regression entered first-time-viewing, dummy coded as viewing via rental and viewing via streaming with theatrical viewing as the reference. The final step entered the social motivation traits: FoMO and bridging social capital. No tolerance was less than .20 and no variance inflation factor exceeded 4.00 for any variable in the regression, suggesting a lack of multicollinearity. Table 3 presents the results of the regression. The introduction of the controls in step 1 of the regression explained 21% of the variance, $F(7, 463) = 17.54$, $p < .001$. The introduction of the first-time viewing variables in step 2 explained an additional 3% of the

variance, $\Delta F(2, 461) = 9.06, p < .001$. Finally, the addition of the social motivation variables in step 3 explained an additional 6% of the variance, $\Delta F(2, 459) = 30.52, p < .001$.

[Insert Table 3 Here]

H1 predicted that bridging social capital would predict social sharing. This hypothesis was supported ($B = 0.46, SE = 0.07, p < .001$).

H2 predicted that FoMO would predict social sharing. This hypothesis was also supported ($B = 0.30, SE = 0.10, p < .01$).

Addressing RQ3, there were statistically significant negative relations between viewing via rental ($B = -0.70, SE = 0.18, p < .001$) and viewing via streaming ($B = -0.52, SE = 0.21, p < .05$), suggesting those who saw the film in the theater were more likely to share the film socially upon viewing.

To answer R4, standardized betas of the predictor variables were compared. Bridging social capital ($\beta = .27, p < .001$) best predicted social sharing over FoMO ($\beta = .12, p < .01$) and seeing the movie in the theater (rental: $\beta = -.17, p < .001$; streaming: $\beta = -.11, p < .05$).

Moderating Social Sharing

RQ5 sought to determine if FoMO moderated the relation between bridging social capital and social sharing. To address the research question, Model 1 of the PROCESS macro by Hayes (2013) was utilized. As with the previous regression, the model included controls (average viewing, average social media use, screens in wide release, dummy-coded genre, and dummy-coded first-time viewing). The model was statistically significant, $R^2 = .33, F(12, 458) = 22.06, p < .001$; however, it was determined that the relation between bridging social capital and social sharing was not moderated by FoMO, as the interaction was not statistically significant ($\beta = -.06,$

$SE = 0.10, p > .05$). The introduction of the interaction only explained an additional 0.10% of the variance, $F(1, 458) = .36, p > .05$.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to better understand how social motivations, in particular social media factors, influence theatrical movie attendance. While previous research suggests a connection between social media buzz and box office success (Doshi et al., 2010; Liu, 2006), this study sought to understand how social media interactions work alongside social motivations to predict theatrical attendance. In particular, this study was concerned with the roles social-media-driven traits, specifically social capital and the fear-of-missing-out (FoMO), play in the decision to see a movie in the theater. Using an online survey conducted via Amazon's M-Turk system, the survey determined that it was the social utility of a movie that best predicted intentions to see the film in the theater, with FoMO and social capital failing to exert statistically significant influence. However, both FoMO and bridging social capital did influence moviegoers' social media sharing of a movie after seeing the film, with social capital exerting the greatest influence.

Theoretical Implications

In support of previous research, the current investigation found social utility expectations to be a strong predictor of theatrical attendance (Austin, 1986; Palmgreen et al., 1988). Moviegoers who saw a film in theaters were likely expecting to receive gratifications such as social interaction and conversation with their friends and family after seeing the movie. However, the social media driven factors, FoMO and bridging social capital, did not seem to predict whether a person would go see a movie while it was in theaters. It is worth noting that the movie theater is a space generally accepted as being free from the types of computing devices

that would facilitate active social media conversation; theaters that have attempted to usurp this norm have faced fierce consumer backlash (Mondello & Holmes, 2016). While previous research suggests FoMO and social capital can predict entertainment media consumption (Conlin et al., 2016; Oh & Yergeau, 2017), especially television consumption, television consumption often takes place in a home environment where second screen activity is possible—a key distinction from the movie theater. Building social media social capital or participating on social media to alleviate FoMO is not possible during the two-hour runtime of the movie, and thus the experiences may lack a direct connection to social media outcomes in the minds of users. Rather, theatrical exhibition provides the opportunity to do something with friends that is exclusively physical, not driven by online networks. As such, the social utility of a movie exerts influence where social media related traits do not.

The current study suggests care should be taken when suggesting FoMO or social capital as predictors of mediated or offline behaviors. However, given the prevalence of smart devices, social networks, and streaming technologies, there are increasingly fewer domains that are not free from the presence of social media and thus the potential to monitor and share activities via these networks. In the new, social-media-driven media environment, media consumption is tied to social outcomes (Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2011). It is possible that where the presence of social media is allowed and encouraged, FoMO and social media social capital may be an important predictor of behaviors.

In regards to social sharing, both bridging social capital and FoMO did predict the social sharing of the movie experience. This is not surprising considering the ways that bridging social capital is sustained, and the role that FoMO plays in people's decisions to interact on social media. Because bridging social capital is maintained through weak ties, it is not surprising that

interacting with people about common social experiences is a beneficial way of maintaining those ties. The opportunity to build social capital is a motivation to share cinematic experiences to build and maintain weak-tie social media relations.

Likewise, previous research has also demonstrated that FoMO is a primary reason why people choose to interact on social media, as it prompts people to stay up-to-date with what their peers are doing (Przybylski et al., 2013). However, it is worth noting that in comparison to bridging social capital, FoMO was less a predictor of social sharing than social capital; its impact was comparable to merely seeing the movie in the theater, which was another significant predictor, or mere daily social media use. Previous research suggests FoMO is perhaps best associated with social media monitoring (Fox & Moreland, 2015; Przybylski et al., 2013). While FoMO predicts social media posting, it does not exert the same level of influence as bridging social capital. Furthermore, given the lack of moderation between FoMO and bridging social capital, it is safe to say these traits exert influence independently of each other, and perhaps best predict different social media behaviors.

Industry Implications

In 2017, theatrical movie attendance hit a 25-year low (Plaugic, 2018). As such, the ways in which people view movies have increasingly become worthy of discussion as the opportunities to view a movie at home have become more accessible. While social media buzz is associated with the box office success of top performers (“2017 year in review: Social media recap,” 2018), the current study suggests that social media engagement, through increased FoMO and bridging social capital, was not a predictor of theatrical attendance. Rather, it was the opportunity to experience a movie with friends that best explained theatrical attendance.

However, those engaged with social media with higher levels of bridging social capital were willing to share their theatrical experiences within their social networks.

For the film industry, this study suggests that those engaged in their social media networks are willing to talk about their moviegoing experiences; however, consumers must feel films present an opportunity for direct social interaction to warrant theatrical attendance. While social media buzz is important, and identifying consumers who are active participants in social media as a means to promote films has merit, social media buzz may not be enough to generate ticket sales if consumers feel a movie will not provide opportunities for social interaction. As such, theater innovations that encourage consumers to coordinate their attendance and incentivize direct social interaction may positively contribute to theatrical attendance.

Limitations and Future Research

A key limitation of the current study is in its reliance on self-report of past viewing motivations. While the current design allowed the researchers to assess motivations across the distribution window, asking participants to recount past behavioral motivations potentially introduces recall bias into the study. Future research should employ a longitudinal approach to measure motivations and traits throughout the distribution cycle. In addition, future research should seek to improve generalizability by employing a national panel. While M-Turk provides viable social science data drawn from a national sample that is useful for comparing the relations between variables, as a convenience sample, it lacks generalizability.

Future research should more closely examine the relations between FoMO, bridging social capital, and social media behaviors. While this study found support for FoMO predicting social sharing, it was bridging social capital that best predicted social sharing. Future research should determine whether social capital or FoMO better predicts other social media behaviors,

specifically information-seeking and monitoring behaviors. While the current study suggests both FoMO and social capital are distinct traits operating independently of each other, more research is needed to determine how they may work alongside each other to motivate different social media behaviors.

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Table 1*Motion Pictures Used in the Study (2016 release)*

<i>Movie</i>	<i>Box Office Data</i>			<i>Study Data</i>		
	<i>B.O.</i>	<i>Screens</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Views N</i>	<i>Views %</i>	<i>Usage</i>
<i>Rogue One: A Star Wars Story</i>	\$532	4157	Action	223	47.2%	52
<i>Captain America: Civil War</i>	\$408	4226	Action	216	45.8%	29
<i>The Jungle Book</i>	\$364	4144	Drama	145	30.7%	20
<i>Deadpool</i>	\$363	3856	Action	249	52.8%	44
<i>Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice</i>	\$330	4256	Action	151	32%	14
<i>Suicide Squad</i>	\$325	4255	Action	177	37.5%	23
<i>Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them</i>	\$234	4144	Action	121	25.6%	13
<i>Doctor Strange</i>	\$233	3882	Action	160	33.9%	25
<i>Hidden Figures</i>	\$170	3416	Drama	103	21.8%	15
<i>Jason Bourne</i>	\$162	4039	Action	148	31.4%	22
<i>Star Trek Beyond</i>	\$158	3928	Action	131	27.8%	17
<i>X-Men: Apocalypse</i>	\$155	4153	Action	173	36.7%	17
<i>La La Land</i>	\$151	3236	Drama	96	20.3%	9
<i>Ghostbusters</i>	\$128	3963	Comedy	146	30.9%	19
<i>Central Intelligence</i>	\$127	3508	Comedy	83	17.6%	6
<i>Sully</i>	\$125	3955	Drama	82	17.4%	13
<i>Bad Moms</i>	\$113	3215	Comedy	114	24.2%	24
<i>Arrival</i>	\$101	3115	Drama	135	28.6%	15
<i>Passengers</i>	\$100	3478	Drama	105	22.2%	10
<i>Sausage Party</i>	\$98	3135	Comedy	126	26.7%	10
<i>Ride Along 2</i>	\$91	3192	Comedy	76	16.1%	12
<i>Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children</i>	\$87	3835	Drama	75	15.9%	5
<i>The Girl on the Train (2016)</i>	\$75	3241	Drama	72	15.3%	7
<i>Boo! A Madea Halloween</i>	\$73	2299	Comedy	35	7.4%	3
<i>The Boss</i>	\$63	3495	Comedy	47	10%	6
<i>Miracles from Heaven</i>	\$62	3155	Drama	27	5.7%	6
<i>Why Him?</i>	\$60	3008	Comedy	46	9.7%	3
<i>My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2</i>	\$60	3179	Comedy	77	16.3%	15
<i>Fences</i>	\$58	2368	Drama	45	9.5%	5
<i>Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising</i>	\$55	3416	Comedy	91	19.3%	13

Note. B.O. = Total domestic box office in millions. Screens = Total screens in widest release. Box office data retrieved from BoxOfficeMojo.com. Views N = Number of study participants who had seen the film. Views % = percentage of study participants who had seen the film. Usage = Number of times film was randomly selected for study.

Table 2*Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Film Viewing Context (N = 472)*

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Wald</i>	<i>Exp(B)</i>
<i>In the Theater</i>				
Controls				
Average Monthly Theatrical Viewing	0.50	0.15	11.09**	1.65
Average Monthly Rental/VOD Viewing	0.13	0.08	2.51	1.14
Average Monthly Streaming Viewing	-0.09	0.03	13.17 ⁺	0.91
Average Daily Social Media Use	-0.06	0.08	0.61	0.94
Screens in Wide Release (standardized)	0.11	0.20	0.28	1.11
Movie - Action	0.23	0.41	0.31	1.25
Movie - Comedy	-0.32	0.41	0.61	0.73
Social Motivations				
Social Utility	0.61	0.13	21.76 ⁺	1.85
Fear of Missing Out	-0.00	0.18	0.00	1.00
Bridging Social Capital	-0.01	0.13	0.00	0.99
Intercept	-2.40	0.77	9.82**	
<i>At home, via rental or paid video-on-demand</i>				
Controls				
Average Monthly Theatrical Viewing	0.08	0.16	0.28	1.09
Average Monthly Rental/VOD Viewing	0.35	0.08	17.92 ⁺	1.41
Average Monthly Streaming Viewing	-0.04	0.02	4.23*	0.96
Average Daily Social Media Use	-0.08	0.08	0.98	0.92
Screens in Wide Release (standardized)	-0.20	0.19	1.12	0.82
Movie - Action	0.62	0.42	2.19	1.87
Movie - Comedy	0.52	0.39	1.78	1.68
Social Motivations				
Social Utility	0.05	0.12	0.17	1.05
Fear of Missing Out	-0.01	0.18	0.01	0.99
Bridging Social Capital	0.02	0.13	0.03	1.02
Intercept	-0.45	0.72	0.39	

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ⁺ $p < .001$. Reference: **On a cable or streaming network like Netflix.** Model $\chi^2 = 133.4$, $p < .001$. Nagelkerke $R^2 = .28$.

Table 3

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Predicting Social Sharing Behavior (N = 471)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Step 1</i>			<i>Step 2</i>			<i>Step 3</i>		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β
Controls									
Theatrical Monthly Viewing	0.32	0.06	.23 ⁺	0.25	0.07	.18 ⁺	0.19	0.06	.14 ^{**}
Rental Monthly Viewing	0.12	0.04	.15 ^{**}	0.14	0.04	.18 ⁺	0.13	0.03	.16 ⁺
Streaming Monthly Viewing	-0.01	0.01	-.04	-0.01	0.01	-.02	-0.01	0.01	-.03
Daily Social Media Use Screens (Standardized)	0.28	0.05	.26 ⁺	0.28	0.05	.26 ⁺	0.16	0.05	.15 ^{**}
Movie - Action	-0.01	0.12	-.01	-0.05	0.12	-.02	-0.03	0.11	-.01
Movie - Comedy	0.04	0.26	.01	0.04	0.26	.01	-0.05	0.24	-.01
	-0.41	0.25	-.09	-0.32	0.24	-.07	-0.53	0.23	-.12 [*]
First-Time Viewing									
Saw via Rental				-0.78	0.19	-.19 ⁺	-0.70	0.18	-.17 ⁺
Saw via Streaming				-0.63	0.22	-.13 ^{**}	-0.52	0.21	-.11 [*]
Social Motivation Traits									
Fear of Missing Out							0.30	0.10	.12 ^{**}
Bridging Social Capital							0.46	0.07	.27 ⁺

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ⁺ $p < .001$.
 Step 1: $R^2 = .21$, $F(7, 463) = 17.54$, $p < .001$.
 Step 2: $\Delta R^2 = .03$, $\Delta F(2, 461) = 9.06$, $p < .001$.
 Step 3: $\Delta R^2 = .09$, $\Delta F(2, 459) = 30.52$, $p < .001$.