

A typology of theatre audiences based on the impact of various sources of influence and the use of information channels¹

Una tipología de espectadores teatrales en función de la influencia de diversos prescriptores y el uso de canales de información



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Received: 23/09/2019 - Accepted: 25/01/2020

Recibido: 23/09/2019 - Aceptado: 25/01/2020

Abstract:

This study presents a typology of theatre audiences that contemplates the impact of the mass media and other influential agents on the decision to attend the theatre, an aspect that has not been examined in previous research. The study is based on a

Resumen:

Este estudio presenta una tipología de espectadores teatrales que contempla la influencia de los medios de comunicación y otras instancias de prescripción en sus decisiones de asistencia al teatro, un aspecto no abordado por ninguna investigación previa. La investi-

1 This article is based on the results of a doctoral thesis defended at the University of Valencia by the first author and directed by the second author (Logroño, 2018). As in two previous publications (Logroño, 2016; Logroño and Llopis, 2017), this work has its empirical basis in the survey of theatre audiences, and one of the chapters of the aforementioned doctoral thesis is dedicated to its analysis.

How to cite this article:

Logroño Tormo, M. T.; Llopis Goig, R. (2020). A typology of theatre audiences based on the impact of various sources of influence and the use of information channels. *Doxa Comunicación*, 30, pp. 127-143.

<https://doi.org/10.31921/doxacom.n30a6>

survey of 210 spectators in three theatres in the city of Valencia. The application of various multivariate statistical techniques made it possible to identify a typology with four profiles of theatregoers: *informed-alternative*; *documented-receptive*; *distant-independent*; and *conventional-commercial*. This typology reveals that members of the theatre audience are differentially influenced by the media, the thematic content of the representation, the prestige and notoriety of the director and actors, and the intensity with which they search for information and consult opinions and reviews in the media.

Keywords:

Theatre; audiences; cultural communication; mass media; sociology of culture.

gación se basa en una encuesta a 210 asistentes a representaciones teatrales de tres salas de la ciudad de Valencia. La aplicación de diversas técnicas estadísticas multivariadas ha permitido identificar una tipología de cuatro perfiles de consumidores escénicos: los informados-alternativos, los documentados-receptivos, los distantes-independientes y los convencionales-comerciales. Esta tipología pone de manifiesto que los consumidores escénicos difieren en la influencia que sobre ellos tiene la presión mediática, el contenido temático de la representación o el prestigio y la notoriedad de la dirección y el reparto de la obra, así como en la intensidad con la que buscan información y consultan noticias y reseñas en los medios de comunicación.

Palabras clave:

Teatro; audiencias; comunicación cultural; medios de comunicación; sociología de la cultura.

1. Introduction

Knowledge about consumers' cultural activity behaviours is essential in managing the entities that offer these activities because it facilitates cultural planning, guarantees economic viability, and allows audience stimulation strategies to be developed (Colbert, 2007; Cuadrado, 1998; Ramon and Basso, 2010; Sellas and Colomer, 2009). The spectator is placed at the centre of the production cycle (Jiménez, 2010) as a crucial resource for ensuring the sustainability of the different stage proposals (Colombo, 2010, Fernández Torres, 2011). This is especially important in the case of theatre, which also requires the physical presence of the audience (Sánchez de Horcajo, 1999: 30). Hence, adequate knowledge about cultural audiences –their behaviour, characteristics, and typological profile–, makes it possible for managers of these organisations to make informed decisions. Segmentation makes it possible to identify the audiences for whom the cultural activities are designed, and it leads to a better positioning of the offer, a price structure based not only on costs but also on audience perceptions, and an appropriate communication strategy (Berenguer and Cuadrado, 2003).

The existing research has taken a large number of variables into account when studying the behaviour of cultural audiences. However, the role of cultural communication has hardly been analysed in this regard, despite the increase in information channels, the proliferation of specialised publications, the large amount of information offered by the Internet, and the changes in a media ecosystem where the usual flow between sender and receiver has been altered (Quintas and González, 2014). All of these elements have made the search for cultural information an essential variable in the construction of new typologies of cultural consumers.

Drawing on the main studies and existing typologies of consumers of theatre activities, this study examines theatregoers' heterogeneity and proposes a typology based on their use of news, reviews, and reports before buying a ticket, as well as the influence of different media as transmitters of information and creators of a production's notoriety. Some of the

variables examined include factors such as seeking theatrical information in the media, reading theatre critiques and reviews, and the influence of various influential agents who reinforce or inhibit the purchase of a ticket.

In order to carry out the research, an ad hoc questionnaire was used to survey 210 spectators in three theatres located in the city of Valencia. This article is divided into four sections. The first section contains a theoretical proposal that explains the main typologies of theatre spectators in the area of communication and cultural management. The second section is dedicated to the technical and methodological characteristics of the research, specifying the procedures followed for sample selection and statistical analysis. The third section presents the study results, and, finally, the fourth contains the conclusions.

2. Theoretical framework

In recent years, the cultural sector has become aware of the importance of the audience. To a certain extent, spectators have displaced the prominent role of the work of art and captured the attention of cultural managers. The work of art or the cultural product has come to be understood as a social process in which the dimension of artistic creation depends on the public's recognition (Jiménez, 2000; Ramon and Basso, 2010). At the same time, cultural audiences have become more heterogeneous, and it is increasingly difficult to decipher their consumption habits and practices. New technologies and means of communication are also modifying cultural habits and practices. The new digital paradigm is affecting the forms of cultural participation, given that the changes in a society's communication modes –oral, legal, audio-visual, digital– significantly affect the access to symbolic goods, as well as the legitimacy of cultural forms (Ariño, 2010: 11). In this context, it is important to find out how and to what extent the various social, economic, and cultural processes currently taking place are leading to a transformation of the theatre audience (Fernández Torres, 2012). For this reason, it is essential to carry out an in-depth study of behaviours, motivations, and perceptions, as well as the factors that facilitate or hinder attendance at a theatre production, in order to design effective actions to promote audience attendance, build audience loyalty, and develop demands for new products (Azpillaga, 2010; Nantel, 2007).

The experts and professionals interviewed by Sánchez de Horcajo (1999) pointed to the diversification of theatre audiences. The theatre critic of ABC newspaper, Lorenzo López Sancho, stated that the theatre has many different audiences, unlike in the 1950s when there were stable theatre companies and the public went to conventional theatres knowing what type of theatre they were attending. Fernández Torres (1996) also described the lack of one unified theatre audience in Spain. In his opinion, in reality there are very different audiences due to the diversification of the offer.

An initial differentiation of the theatre audience –somewhat simplistic– would consist of classifying it into two large categories: the *theatre-loving audience*, who find aesthetic or educational pleasure in the theatre; and the *occasional audience*, for whom the theatre is a form of entertainment. Urrutia (1991), reflecting on interest in the theatre, stated that “it is necessary to distinguish between the *real spectator*, who comes to the theatre every afternoon or evening, and that other *implicit* (theoretical) *spectator* the author imagines when preparing his/her text, who may never become real”. The *implicit* spectator could be considered equivalent to the *potential* spectator. Thus, Berenguer and Cuadrado

(2003) indicate the need to consider not only present consumers or those attending a cultural activity, but also past and potential consumers. In any case, it is clear that theatre audiences are not a homogeneous group.

Studies on theatre audience segmentation have mainly been based on examining sociodemographic features, lifestyles, cultural values, and the benefits sought, as well as the obstacles that inhibit theatre attendance. With regard to the sociodemographic variables, Sellas and Colomer (2009) propose classifying the spectators according to their educational level, lifestyle, and frequency of theatre attendance.

Frequency of attendance has been the classification criterion in many studies. Ateca-Amestoy (2008) distinguishes non-theatre-goers, differentiating between those who never go to the theatre and those who, despite not attending, might be interested in attending but encounter restrictions such as income level, marital status, or educational level. In addition, López Sintas and García Álvarez (2002) segment the audience into four different types based on consumption and the frequency of attending theatre arts performances: *sporadic*, those who show a pattern of low consumption because they only attend very occasionally, regardless of whether the productions are more popular or more elitist; *popular*, those who have a high probability of attending popular shows but avoid cultural performing and musical arts; *snoobs*, those who show a certain probability of attending, but with patterns contrary to popular consumers because they only attend highly cultural events such as classical music, opera, zarzuela, and dance; and *omnivores*, those who, as some researchers have proposed, have an insatiable appetite for different cultural genres (Ariño, 2010). In turn, Colomer (2013) classifies performing arts audiences according to their consumption stage, distinguishing between audiences with a non-existent demand, audiences with a latent demand, first-time audiences, occasional audiences, regular audiences, and friends or partners.

Other research focuses on the intangible aspect of cultural products and provides a list of reasons for attending the arts, grouping them according to the different needs of the audience. Thus, consumers may attend to satisfy basic needs –to fight boredom, to seek new experiences–, social needs –entertainment, social relations–, personal needs –education, enrichment–, emotional needs –relaxation, escape– and ideals –aesthetics, transcendence–. In this direction, Wright (1962) divided the public into three groups: the escapists, who go to the theatre to forget their responsibilities and daily problems; the moralists, who demand that the theatre teach them a lesson; and the supporters of art for art's sake, a group made up of fans who have a disdain for box office hits and reject popular theatre. Moreover, Bergadà and Nyeck (1995) defined four groups of spectators based on the same variable: those who seek entertainment and find a form of rest, a way to forget everyday life, and pleasure in the theatre; those who seek social differentiation and view the theatre as an artistic experience only accessible to a social elite with certain knowledge; those who seek personal development and expect the theatre to bring them enrichment and intellectual stimulation; and those who seek social hedonism and see the theatre as a form of cultural expression that allows them to communicate with creators, authors, and actors.

On another level, Watson (1971) constructed a typology of spectators based on their level of involvement and commitment, defining six spectator profiles stemming from the intersection between value and the attitude towards the arts. In relation to the appreciation for the arts, Mayaux (1987) segmented audiences into: the intellectuals –who view culture as a social reality and have high cultural capital and a medium economic level–; the bourgeois –who view

culture as tradition and have high cultural and economic capital-; and the aspirants –who interpret culture as class differentiation and have medium cultural and economic capital-.

Several studies have analysed cultural consumption from the perspective of the benefits sought. Haley (1968) and Colbert and Cuadrado (2003) coincide in considering this variable to be a determinant in the decision-making process. Thus, a consumer can pursue benefits such as intellectual pleasure, entertainment, social integration, or learning, among others. Kelly (1987) specified two groups of consumers in the arts sector based on this variable: traditional theatregoers, who have acquired a culturally defined taste through socialization and education; and technological theatregoers, who have received less education oriented towards enjoying highbrow culture and are interested in cultural consumption because they seek to gain status and class differentiation. Later, Cuadrado (1998) grouped the benefits sought by the audiences of cultural activities into three groups: formative, social, and pleasure. The first group is associated with the search for educational ends and personal enrichment values, the second group is related to gaining prestige and social relations, and the third group corresponds to achieving entertainment, fun, enjoyment, and relaxation.

In subsequent studies, this latter author developed another typology that was also based on the benefits sought (Cuadrado, 2000; Cuadrado and Berenguer, 2002). He classified viewers as: aspirants, those who consider theatre activities mainly as a means of personal entertainment and learning –not for social relations-; fans, those who show a more consolidated theatre-going practice with greater attendance at classical music concerts, opera, and ballet; enthusiasts, those who give greater value to the different benefits sought, such as the search for entertainment, intellectual development, and notoriety; and apathetic, those who show apathy toward the performing arts and only seek entertainment. Fans are interested in theatre performances related to their favourite works and artists, and so they mainly attend musical and theatre spaces with a well-known programme. Enthusiasts attend musical productions more, and the apathetics tend to frequent theatres with well-known programmes. Bourdieu (2010) pointed out that the different types of theatres cater to very different audiences, and he differentiated between commercial theatre –with an audience that belongs to the dominant class- and non-commercial theatre –with an audience consisting of what the author calls intellectuals-. In addition, Colbert (2007) showed that classical theatre and classical music produce a feeling of relaxation; musical comedies and popular music provide entertainment; classical and folk dance are stimulating; and opera, experimental theatre, and modern dance contribute to raising the cultural level of the audience.

The growing importance of new technologies in cultural consumption is producing a redefinition of performing arts audiences and greater interest in innovative proposals. Thus, in recent years, the trend towards innovation has become another variable that is often considered. Sellas and Colomer (2009) distinguished between audiences with a classical tendency –fans of consolidated stage languages and formats because they are sure of being able to decode and enjoy them-; audiences with new tendencies –fans of proposals that start from consolidated languages and formats, but seek increasing innovation without changing the interpretative code-; and audiences with an experimental tendency –fans who seek proposals that contain emerging aesthetics and formats and signify a break with the dominant patterns-. Kotler and Scheff (1997), on the other hand, distinguished five profiles based on the time people need to adopt innovations: innovators, who are willing to try out new ideas and take risks; first-time followers, who are opinion leaders in their

communities because they adopt new ideas quickly; cautious people, who adopt new ideas before the majority but without being opinion leaders; sceptics, who adopt an innovation only after a majority has tried it out; and, finally, the part of the population that only adopts an innovation when it becomes a tradition.

However, beyond the aspects mentioned in the aforementioned studies, the present research focuses on the influence of cultural communication on theatre attendance because, as Cantón states, the media's ability to promote or curb cultural consumption through opinion leaders, such as critics, shows that cultural communication and information are "one of the most influential channels of connection between art and society" (Cantón, 2004). More specifically, these aspects include the image and notoriety acquired by a play in the media, knowledge about the play's actors and director, information about the play from reports and commentaries, and the impact of criticism and reviews of the play published in the media.

One study that has addressed these aspects –albeit tangentially– is the one by Sellas and Colomer (2009), who distinguish between three types of audiences. The first type has a proactive attitude; that is, they participate in the theatre event based on an impulse that stems from their personal value system. The second type has a reactive attitude; that is, they attend the theatre in response to an external stimulus, such as a friend's recommendation or the media's influence. The third type has an inactive attitude; that is, they are interested but have never attended the theatre due to factors that hinder attendance. In the first case, this consumption would be motivated by the personal preferences of the audience (Colomer, 2013: 64; Sellas and Colomer, 2009), whereas the second type would be conditioned by the values of the dominant groups that exercise formal and economic power through advertising, stereotypes, and social pressure (Colomer, 2013: 64). In fact, in relation to this aspect, Colbert and d'Astous (2003) constructed a typology for the film industry in which they argue that the degree to which people consult critics depends on four variables: film knowledge, viewer self-esteem, sensitivity to social pressure, and degree of cultural involvement. Their study concluded that people who go to the cinema more often are less influenced by critics, whereas those who attend less often are more likely to reinforce their decisions by searching for information and consulting reviews. In the performing arts sector, however, no typology has been constructed that contemplates the influence of the media on theatre attendance and the role of the media in transmitting information, reviews, and theatre criticism, which is the main contribution of this work.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample

In order to carry out the research, spectators were surveyed in three theatres whose programmes specialise in different theatre genres, which means they have a wide variety of theatre tastes and, therefore, different audience profiles. The first theatre hosts a classical and contemporary theatre audience (Rialto Theatre), the second is directed toward a more commercial theatre audience (Olympia Theatre), and the third receives an alternative theatre audience (Espacio Inestable). A sample of 210 interviews was collected, distributed equally among the three theatres (70 interviews in each) in order to obtain a minimum sample size for each type of theatre programming. The fieldwork was carried out in

the entrance hall of each of the three theatres between the months of February and May 2012. The three-month period for the fieldwork was intended to ensure audience turnover and guarantee a high degree of variety in the sample set.

3.2. Questionnaire

Most of the questions and response options on the ad hoc questionnaire designed for this research were inspired by those usually included in surveys of cultural practices that the Ministry of Culture has carried out or in barometers the Centre for Sociological Research has dedicated to these topics. However, given the scarcity of studies with the characteristics of the present study –that is, focused on the influence of cultural information and the impact of the media on theatre attendance– some of the questions in this research were specifically designed for this purpose. Nevertheless, some studies mentioned in the section on the theoretical framework that address the media's influence on consumption and attendance at cultural productions in sectors such as cinema or music were taken into account.

The questionnaire consisted of four blocks of questions. The questions in the first block were intended to provide information about the cultural and theatrical consumption habits of the person interviewed. The second block included a set of questions designed to obtain information about aspects that facilitate theatre attendance, as well as the search for information on cultural programming and the use of the Internet. The third block of questions focused on the existence of recommendations and the degree of influence they can have on the interviewee. The last block included the usual sociodemographic classification questions.

3.3. Data analysis

In order to obtain a typology of theatre spectators, an analytical sequence was followed that involves the concatenation of various multivariate statistical techniques. First, 18 questionnaire items were selected whose contents were related to the objectives of this research, that is, the consumption of performing arts, the influence of the media on theatre consumption, and behaviours of searching for information and reading theatre reviews and criticism. Second, principal components analysis was applied to the 18 initial items in order to obtain their latent structure. The application of this technique by means of an orthogonal rotation procedure (varimax) guarantees the independence of the components and, therefore, eliminates the possibility of these dimensions being related to each other, which would impede the subsequent application of other statistical techniques to the dimensions obtained. Third, a typology of theatre spectators was obtained by applying the cluster analysis technique to the five dimensions or main components resulting from the previous analysis. Finally, several bivariate analyses were performed in order to identify the main sociodemographic characteristics of each cluster by applying the Chi-square statistic.

4. Results

In order to simplify the information collected about the eighteen variables mentioned above and prepare it for the development of a typology through cluster analysis, a principal components factor analysis was carried out.

The first principal components analysis was performed on the variables related to attendance at six different types of activities, performances, and cultural centres, one of which was the theatre. The aim was to test the possibility that there was a specific component related to theatre consumption. The model obtained (Table 1) showed the existence of three components that together explained 64% of the variance. To carry out the analysis, the components with *eigenvalues* of less than one were not used, and Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalisation was performed. The composition of each of the three components was achieved based on the factorial saturations obtained in the rotated matrix. Scores above 0.45 were adopted as the criterion for factorial saturation. The analysis, with a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy of 0.601, was significant according to the Bartlett test. The first component stemming from this analysis is composed of the variables related to attendance and interest in the theatre, as well as attendance at dance performances. The configuration of this first component and the fact that it obtains the highest variance in the first model (27.1%) clearly shows the existence of an independent dimension related to the performing arts. It has been labelled *cultural performance practices*. The second component is made up of two variables that include attendance at the cinema and musical concerts, and it has been called *modern cultural practices*. This component explains 19% of the variance, one percentage point more than the third component, which includes the covariation of attendance at libraries, museums, and exhibitions and, therefore, has been called *illustrated cultural practices* (see Table 1).

The second principal components analysis was performed on variables containing information about the various aspects that influence theatre attendance. A model with two principal components was achieved that explains 56.2% of the variance. The analysis obtained a sampling adequacy of 0.691 (KMO) and a significant contrast on Bartlett's test. The first of the two components obtained consists of five variables: the importance attributed to the fact that: the play has good reviews in the press or on television; has been seen or advertised in the press and on television; is famous and being talked about a lot; has been recommended or talked about favourably; and has a good plot. Based on the items' content, this component was called *media presence and topic of the play*. The second component of this second analysis was composed of two variables referring to knowledge about and recognition of the actors and the director, and so it was called *notoriety and prestige of the actors and the director*.

Finally, the third analysis was carried out on information related to searching for information and reading theatre reviews, critiques, or reports prior to attending the theatre. The analysis showed the existence of two components that together explained 85.8% of the variance. The result was statistically significant according to the Bartlett Test, and it obtained a sampling adequacy of 0.525 (KMO). In the first of the two components shown in this model, the variables related to the influence of theatre reviews, critiques, and reports on the decision to attend the theatre appeared, and so it has been called *the influence of reviews, critiques, and reports on theatre attendance*. The other component has been called the *search for information and reports prior to attending the theatre* because it groups the variables related to these behaviours.

Table 1: Principal components analysis

<i>First principal components analysis (interest in and attendance at cultural performances)</i>	<i>Factorial saturations</i>	<i>Explained variance</i>	<i>Name</i>
In the past year, how many times have you gone to the theatre?	0.808	27.1%	Consumption and interest in the theatre
In the past year, how many times have you gone to dance performances?	0.803		
In general, how would you rate your interest in the theatre? (from 1 to 10)	0.729		
In the past year, how many times have you gone to the cinema?	0.888	19.0%	Modern cultural consumption
In the past year, how many times have you gone to musical concerts?	0.568		
In the past year, how many times have you gone to libraries?	0.911	18.0%	Illustrated cultural practices
In the past year, how many times have you gone to museums/ exhibitions?	0.484		
<i>Second principal components analysis (aspects that are included in the decision to attend the theatre)</i>	<i>Factorial saturations</i>	<i>Explained variance</i>	<i>Name</i>
Has good reviews in the press or television	0.795	35.9%	Media presence and topic of the play
Have seen it advertised in the press or on television	0.759		
It is famous; people are talking about it	0.741		
They recommended it to me or praised it	0.675		
The topic or plot	0.544		
The actors are well-known	0.848	29.3%	Notoriety and prestige of the actors and director
The director is well-known or I like him/her	0.752		
<i>Third principal components analysis (information and reading reviews)</i>	<i>Factorial saturations</i>	<i>Explained variance</i>	<i>Name</i>
The reviews, critiques, and reports help me decide	0.935	44.2%	Influence of reviews, critiques, and reports on attendance
The reviews, critiques, and reports influence me	0.938		
Before going to the theatre, do you usually get information about what you are going to see?	0.912	41.6%	Search for information before attending
In general, do you usually read theatre reviews, critiques, or reports beforehand?	0.905		

Unit: factorial saturations of the rotated components matrix. Base: total sample.

Source: elaborated by the authors

After identifying the components that condense the main aspects related to theatre attendance, a typology is obtained using cluster analysis, following the suggestions of Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1999) and Levy and Varela (2003). These authors indicate that this analysis should consist of a first phase where the number of clusters is determined and a second phase where these clusters are optimised. Thus, in the first phase, a hierarchical method (Ward's method and Euclidean distance squared) was used to determine the appropriate number of clusters and their initial centres. In the second phase, the k-mean optimization method was followed, based on the initial centres obtained in the first phase. Based on the dendrogram and the theoretical relevance of the clusters resulting from the optimisation phase, we found the four-group solution to be more appropriate.

Second, before examining the characteristics of each cluster, a triple verification of the validity of the classification obtained was carried out by performing an analysis of unidirectional variance, discriminant power, and the distance between the centroids (Euclidean distance). The analysis of unidirectional variance (ANOVA) allows us to check whether the differences each variable makes in the formation of the clusters are statistically significant. The ANOVA of the four-cluster solution revealed that the between-group variability exceeded the within-group variability ($p < 0.001$). Discriminant analysis was also used, a statistical technique that allows us to discover the proportion of people who are correctly classified in the clusters obtained (Diaz de Rada, 2002: 310). In this case, using each person's membership in the four clusters created with the k-means method as dependent variable, and the five variables derived from the principal components analyses as independent variables, the percentage of correctly assigned cases reached 96%. Finally, the examination of the cluster differences, considering the distance between the centroids (Euclidean distance), also showed positive results. Table 2 shows that the most different clusters are clusters 1 and 2, with a distance of 4.922, whereas the most similar clusters are clusters 2 and 4 (2.299) and 3 and 4 (2.307). In any case, all the coefficients are high, which indicates that the clusters are clearly differentiated.

Table 2: Distances between the centres of the final clusters

Cluster	1	2	3	4
1	--			
2	4.922	--		
3	4.074	1.729	--	
4	4.599	2.299	2.307	--

Source: elaborated by the authors

After validating the classification into four clusters, the final centres are presented in Table 3. The first cluster includes a group of theatre spectators who represent 5.1% of the total sample and have a series of well-defined characteristics. It is the group with the most attendance and interest in the theatre, and they are influenced the most by the notoriety and prestige of the play's actors and director in their decisions to attend the theatre. They also search for information more by reading reviews, critiques, or reports before attending a theatre performance, although they recognize that this information has the least influence on their decision to attend. They are also the group least influenced by the presence of a play in the media. All of this suggests that they are theatre consumers who value their own independent criteria, and so it is not surprising that they prefer to attend alternative theatre performances, as Table 4 shows. Table 4 also shows that, unlike in the total sample, there are more men than women in this group, there is a predominance of people under 35 years of age who are actively working, and their educational structure does not differ much from that of the other theatregoers interviewed. In light of the different characteristics mentioned above, this cluster could be called *informed-alternative*.

The second cluster obtains relatively positive scores, close to the overall averages on four of the five components, although it stands out because it gives the most importance to media presence and the topic of the theatre production; in fact, it is the only group that gives this factor a positive value. They also attach high importance to the notoriety of the director and actors. They are at an intermediate level in terms of seeking prior information about the play, reading reviews and critiques of the play, and attending and having interest in the theatre. This cluster groups together nearly half of the theatre audience (45.5% of the sample). In terms of its sociodemographic characteristics, it is the cluster with the greatest presence of women and people with university studies, and it has the most presence in commercially-oriented performances. Taking into account that this cluster includes almost half of the sample, and that none of the five components differentiates them in a special way, they can be considered *conventional-commercial*.

The third cluster contains almost one out of every three theatregoers (30.8%), and it has some similarities with the previous cluster, although its scores do not tend to be as extreme (Table 3). First, it has the second highest rate of attendance and interest in the theatre. In addition, it attributes the least influence to the notoriety of the play's director and actors in the decision to attend the theatre, while recognizing a weak influence of the play's presence in the media, although more than the people in the first cluster. Moreover, this group searches more for prior information about the play by reading reviews and critiques, although the influence of these theatre reviews, critiques, and theatre on their theatre attendance is average compared to the other clusters. The sociodemographic structure of this cluster (Table 4) does not differ much from the characteristics of the theatre audience as a whole, although this group is less attracted to classical and contemporary theatre. Therefore, a name that reflects the differential features of this cluster is *documented-receptive*.

The fourth cluster has low scores on all the components introduced in the analysis. First, it is the group with the lowest theatre attendance and interest. They give little importance to media presence, the topic of the play, or the notoriety of the director and actors as aspects that determine their decision to attend a theatre production. Moreover, they consult information, reviews, critiques, and reports about the play the least, and they are also influenced the least by these reviews and critiques. The cluster groups 18.7% of theatre spectators and is over-represented by men and people aged

20 to 35. This cluster has less presence of consumers of alternative and commercial theatre, and it is over-represented by those who usually attend classical and contemporary performances. The distance of the different influences and the fact that they seek less prior information and give less weight to reading critiques and reviews suggest that a suitable label would be *distant-independent*.

Table 3: Cluster Analysis

<i>Principal components included in the analysis</i>	Clusters			
	Informed-alternative	Conventional commercial	Documented receptive	Distant independent
Consumption and interest in the theatre	2.89024	-0.29032	0.08372	-0.35105
Media presence and topic of the play	-2.45867	0.64595	-0.35996	-0.42333
Notoriety of the actors and director of the play	0.94965	0.40244	-0.63009	-0.25168
Influence of reviews, critiques, and reports on theatre attendance	-1.46085	0.52779	-0.11758	-0.55663
Search for information before attending the theatre	0.56157	0.09338	0.68995	-1.49899
Presence of each cluster	5.1%	45.5%	30.8%	18.7%

Unit: final centres of the clusters. Base: total sample.

Source: elaborated by the authors

Table 4: Sociodemographic characteristics of the clusters

		Clusters				Total	Chi-Square Test	
		Informed alternative	Conventional commercial	Documented receptive	Distant independent		<i>p</i> value	
Sex	Men	60.0	27.8	44.3	54.1	39.4	10.821	< 0.05
	Women	40.0	72.2	55.7	45.9	60.6		
Age	20-35 years	50.0	40.0	37.7	51.4	41.9	12.313	ns
	36-49 years	20.0	28.9	24.6	32.4	27.8		
	50-65 years	10.0	23.3	34.4	13.5	24.2		
	Over 65 years	20.0	7.8	3.3	2.7	6.1		
Education	No university	30.0	19.1	21.3	29.7	22.3	2.078	ns
	University	70.0	80.9	78.7	70.3	77.7		
Job Situation	Works	80.0	58.9	70.5	64.9	64.6	15.103	ns
	Retired	20.0	14.4	6.6	2.7	10.1		
	Unemployed	--	15.6	21.3	21.6	17.7		
	Student	--	7.8	1.3	8.1	5.6		
	Housewife	--	3.3	--	2.7	2.0		
Theatre	Alternative theatre	90.0	25.6	49.2	21.6	35.4	30.764	< 0.01
	Classical/current theatre	--	31.1	23.0	51.4	30.8		
	Commercial theatre	10.0	3.3	27.9	27.0	33.8		

Unit: vertical percentages. Base: total sample.

Source: elaborated by the authors

5. Conclusions

This study aimed to elaborate a typology of theatre spectators that takes into account the influence of the media, as well as other influencers, on their decision to attend theatre performances. This aspect, as can be seen in the extensive bibliographical review in the first part of the paper, has not been addressed by any previous research. For this purpose, an *ad hoc* questionnaire was designed, and a survey was carried out of 210 people who attended theatre performances in three theatres in the city of Valencia with well-differentiated profiles (alternative, commercial, and classic-current). Based on 18 variables containing information about attendance and interest in the theatre, the search for theatre information, and consultation of theatre reviews and critiques, various multivariate statistical analyses were performed that identified a typology with four types of theatre consumers. This typology shows that the theatre consumers in the city of Valencia differ in the influence they assign to media pressure, the thematic content of the play, the prestige and notoriety of the directors and actors in the play, and the intensity with which they seek information and consult theatre news, reviews, and reports in the media.

More specifically, the *conventional-commercial* cluster represents a type of spectator who is not very different from the global average, makes up almost half of the sample, and shows a greater orientation towards theatrical representations of a commercial and massive nature. In addition, three other clusters are identified whose profiles show well-defined edges. Thus, on the one hand, there are the *informed-alternatives*, with high theatre attendance and a clear tendency to search for information about the play before going to the performance. This is a minority group that is especially nourished by alternative theatre. They attend the theatre quite frequently and are well informed, while recognizing little influence from reading reviews and reports or from media pressure to see a certain play. On the other hand, the *distant-independent* cluster has a greater quantitative presence. They are a group of theatregoers who are unaffected by all the influencers considered in the analysis, especially theatre critics and the media. This group is made up of theatregoers who usually frequent the three types of theatres considered in the analysis, although they seem to stand out for their greater presence in performances that have been generically defined as classical and current. Finally, the *documented-receptive* group includes one out of three theatre consumers. Their main characteristic is the attention they pay to criticism, reviews, and reports about plays, the credibility they give to these opinions, and their influence on their decision to attend the theatre.

This classification of theatregoers in the city of Valencia suggests that the audience is diverse, which corroborates the work of other researchers who have suggested that there are different types of spectators, rather than just one type of theatre consumer. The identification of these different types makes it possible to design strategies and actions aimed at each group and make decisions involved in a marketing mix process (Colomer, 2011): the choice of programming content, the pricing system, the sales system, and the communication plan.

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