



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## A study on the popularity of re-releases compared to new movie launches in India

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### Abstract

We are seeing a notable shift in the Indian film industry, where within the same theatrical space, re-released movies are competing with new movie launches. Even though there have been various discussions in existing literature around nostalgia driven consumption, there is very few/little empirical research that does direct comparison between audience preferences and the factors that drive popularity between re-released films and new movie launches in Indian theatrical context. The study attempts to address and bridge this gap by examining the relative popularity of re-releases and new movie launches and identifying key factors influencing choice of audience. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 380 theatre going respondents which were diverse across demographic groups. The reliability of this survey instrument was confirmed with a high Cronbach Alpha value of 0.88, which indicates strong internal consistency. The findings reveal that while new movies benefit from perceived freshness, novelty and marketing driven hype, re-releases strongly leverage nostalgia and emotional connection among audiences. However, both categories are significantly influenced by practical factors and considerations such as screen availability and convenient show timings, etc. The results indicate that over 43% of respondents prioritize show timings that are convenient to them, while around 22% show a higher likelihood of watching a re-released film if presented in premium formats like IMAX. The study highlights that re-releases functions as valuable and strategic assets rather than secondary content and that their success depends massively on emotional positioning, how effective their promotions are and appropriate show exhibition planning. These insights offer important implications for stakeholders like filmmakers, distributors, cinema exhibitors, etc. to further optimize their theatrical strategies according to the release type especially since it's an increasingly competitive entertainment landscape.

**Keywords:** Re-Released Films; New Movie Releases; Cinema Exhibition Strategy; Bollywood Movie Re-Releases; Nostalgia Marketing

### 1. Introduction

The Indian film industry over the years has traditionally relied on new and fresh movie launches to drive audience footfalls in theatres. However, in the past recent few years, we are seeing old movies being re-released in the theatres more and more frequently. Several classic movies have returned to theatres and in many cases have attracted good chunk of audience interest even though they were released with fresh newly launched movies. This trend has created a unique situation where audiences are presented with a choice between past films that they are already familiar with and new cinematic offerings.

From a marketing perspective, this shift raises curiosity on what the audience prefer and how they decide. The success of theatrical release is no longer influenced just by novelty, new offering or presence of a star but also by emotional connection, promotional visibility and accessibility of screenings. Re-released films usually benefit from nostalgia and

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established recall that they offer, while new movie releases depend on marketing communication and perceived freshness of the movie. As a result of this, both categories compete for attention within the same theatrical environment.

Even though we can see lots of discussions happening around nostalgia-driven consumption and changing viewing habits of audience, there is limited empirical research that directly compares the popularity of old movie re-releases with new movie launches in the Indian context. Most existing studies analyses cinema consumption in a broader sense or just focus on individual factors such as marketing, audience behavior, or technological change without offering an actual comparative understanding of these two types of releases.

This study attempts to address this gap by examining and comparing the popularity of re-releases of old movies and launches of new movies among Indian theatre audiences. It also seeks to identify the key factors that influence the preference and interest of audience in each category. By putting major focus on audience responses within theatrical setting, this study aims to contribute to the marketing-oriented insights that are relevant to film producers, cinema exhibitors and distributors.

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## 2. Literature Review

(Jain & Roy, 2019) discusses the important role of various promotional elements like trailers, visuals, music and tone in shaping what the audience expects from the film even before the film is released. When audience is exposed repeatedly to promotional materials, it builds sense of familiarity and confidence towards the film in their mind. This becomes even more relevant especially in the case of re-released films where the audience already knows and recognizes the characters, scenes and/or music. Such familiarity builds a sense of comfort in the minds of viewers, making re-releases easier choices in comparison to the unfamiliar new titles. Through past viewing experiences, emotional recall is generated which thus strengthens the appeal of classic old films when they return to theatres in the form of re-releases.

(Film marketing in the new media environment, 2024) focuses on the impact of digitalization on the modern media environment. It discusses how with the growth of digital platforms; film promotions are no longer just limited to traditional trailers. In the modern landscape, the scope has now widened to various other formats such as reels, shorts, fan edits and viral clips. It is also seen that social media algorithms frequently push content which taps into nostalgia. This helps older films in reviving interest especially since it is seen that younger audiences often discover classic movies through viral social media clips only and not through traditional promotions. This digital buzz helps a lot in generating audience curiosity for both new movies launches and re-released films.

(Research on the Influencing Factors of Movie Popularity, 2023) states that the popularity of movies isn't dependent on one single major influence and is rather driven by combination of factors together. When movies are visible online continuously on digital platforms, they tend to remain relevant in public's minds. The study goes on to highlight how the older films can regain their popularity when reintroduced through discussions on digital platforms or when they are linked to current cultural trends. Especially when we talk about the younger audience, they mostly rediscover older films through social media exposure more leading to increase in interest and engagement. This helps inn explaining why some re-releases perform strongly even though the energy and money spent on their traditional marketing is less/limited.

(The Evolution and Impact of Film Advertising, 2019) examine the role of promotional elements (like color, sound, tone, themes, etc.) in shaping audience's expectations. While advertising the movies, if there is consistency, it builds trust and clarity in minds of viewers whereas if the promotions are misleading, they can backfire and instead reduce interest. Through the study, it is highlighted how powerful tool nostalgia is in reviving older films since it taps into and reactivates emotional memories among the audiences. In case of re-releases, if the films are promoted while positioning them with current trends, it helps maintain relevance and attracts both old and new viewers.

(Film Marketing Strategies in the New Media Environment, 2021) focuses on how publicity and marketing communication play a big role in shaping perception of films in the minds of audiences. Interviews, interaction with media and emotional storytelling are seen to be increasing engagement of audiences. The study suggests that instead of heavy advertising, audiences respond more positively when the marketing communication is rather simple and relatable to them. For re-released films, refreshed yet communication that is emotionally driven can help in attracting more new viewers while reconnecting with the existing old fans.

(Fetscherin, 2010) highlights how emotional connection is often of more importance than just blindly spending high amount of money on advertising, while taking a broader look at the box office performance of films. Even though factors like distribution and pricing do matter, they are effective only when the movie actually aligns with what the audience

expects from it. When characters and themes feel familiar to audience, they tend to revisit theatres, especially in the case of re-released films. The study puts stress on the fact that nostalgia helps in building and supporting long term audience loyalty and encourages audience to re-visit and re-watch.

(What Makes Audience to Watch Bollywood Films in India: An Empirical, 2022) looks at how emotions and cultural familiarity influences movie choices amongst Indian audience. It shows that instead of trying something completely new or experimental, many viewers actually prefer watching such movies instead that feel emotionally safe and familiar to them, thus preferring comfort over excitement and experimenting. Older films often carry some memories that may be linked to viewer's family, childhood or any important life moment/event, which hence makes such films more comforting to watch again in theatres on big screen. Another big aspect highlighted in the study is regarding how age also plays a role in this preference, with older viewers showing a stronger emotional attachment to classic old films. This helps in explaining why re-released movies continue to attract such a big audience even after being available on other platforms already.

(PVR-INOX Industry Coverage Report (November 2024)) takes a look at performance of films from a theatre operator's perspective/point of view. It focuses on the practical decisions and considerations like no of screens a film gets, where it is released and whether it is shown in premium formats (like Imax) or not. The report suggests that when re-released films are treated and promoted as special or event-based screenings, they tend to perform better than how they do when they are just given leftover slots. Especially in urban areas, it is seen that audience respond more positively when older films are presented in premium formats like Imax screen or screens with recliner seats which shows the importance of presentation and experience which strongly influences audience's turnout.

(Screen Density - Creative Draft, 2021) focuses on one of the most important yet neglected factors that help in determining a movie's success i.e. availability. Screen availability and convenient movie timings play a huge role. In dense clusters it is often seen that movies perform better, since it provides accessibility. Hence cities which provide more choices and flexible timings tend to perform better and out beat regions with low screen availability and less flexible show timings. Older movies rely heavily on nostalgia but it's of no use if there are no convenient show offerings. Hence we see higher audience turnout in urban areas for re-releases than rural areas with limited options which indicates the important role geographical accessibility plays.

(Shape the Future: Indian Media and Entertainment Is Scripting a New Story, 2024) discusses the change of Indian audience behavior towards cinema stating how they are becoming more thoughtful regarding what they chose to watch in theatres. Earlier theatre visit was more of an impulsive decision, however it is changing now and viewers are now looking for more emotional depth, cultural relevance and overall experience while making theatre visit decision. This trend of growing focus on meaningful cinema helps explain why re-releases are able to attract audience even though they are released alongside fresh new movie releases. The report also points out the role of viral clips on nostalgic scenes that resurface online in renewing interest of viewers in those films.

(Factors Influencing Cinema-Viewing Behaviour, 2020) takes a look at everyday factors (like age, lifestyle, routine, etc.) to understand the cinema going behavior of audience. It examines and correlates how people choose films, with their emotional needs and time needs at a particular stage of life. For example, younger viewers get drawn to fast paced and fresh new content while older viewers prefer familiar and emotionally comforting films. The Past viewing experiences of audience also plays a part in influencing repeat (re-watch) behavior, which makes re-released films appealing to the audiences who are seeking comfort and predictability instead of novelty.

(PVR Inox ltd., 2024) focuses more on the theatre operations side of the cinema (scheduling, show timing, premium formats, etc.) and how audience turnout for both new movie releases and re-releases is directly influenced. The scheduling decision decides how quickly movie will gain traction upon release. Especially in India, there is a higher audience turnout during special events and festivals especially for older films. The report gives an overview on how operational factors (like show timings, day-wise planning, use of premium screens) have a direct influence on audience turnout. Re-releases are often seen to be performing better when they are allotted convenient time slots rather than limited or off-peak time slots. It also takes an overview over geographical dimension showing how audience turnout starts to vary when we move from one region/city tier to another

## 2.1. Research Gap

By doing the secondary research and reviewing 12 literatures in it, we come to know about various cinema themes. The papers cover various major factors that influence audience like audience behavior, effect of nostalgia, marketing and promotional exposure, screen availability, etc. The effects of digitalization and the changing trends and evolving habits

of Indian film viewers is also covered in these literatures. Impact of factors like nostalgia, promotions and digital visibility is also broadly covered in these literatures. Overall, all these insights are great in understanding audience engagement in cinema context, but however none of the existing literatures have provided us with direct comparison between release categories specifically.

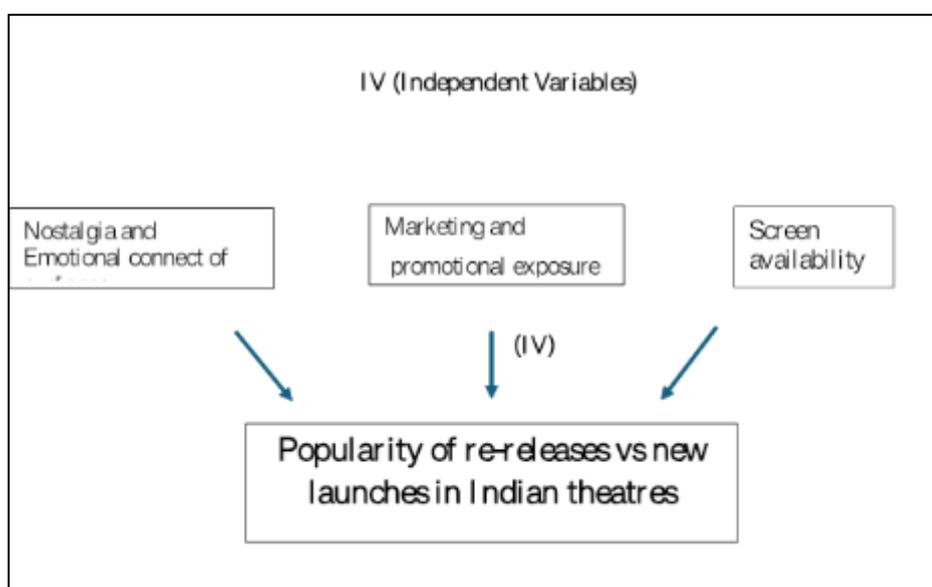
The popularity of films is examining in majority of research in broad manner only without deep diving and comparing re-released films with new film releases directly. Even though Major factors like Nostalgia & emotional connection, Marketing and screen availability & convenience are studied, but they are studied more at an individual level and not together. We still lack the analysis of the influence of all these factors combined. This creates a clear gap between the insights we have already and the actual choices and preferences of audience. The impact of these factors mentioned above is not covered separately across release types yet.

Because of this gap, the preferences of audience cannot be analyzed in a clear manner. We do not know which release type appears more popular today. We also lack understanding of how these three factors shape that difference. Their influence may vary across audiences, but existing research ignores this interaction. A focused comparison can show how each factor affects both release categories. This study aims to address the gap by examining both types together. There is also limited research examining whether these factors influence audiences differently depending on the type of film release.

### 3. Theoretical framework

In theatres, certain movies receive far more attention from audiences than others. When older films return to the big screen with new releases, people react differently based on familiarity. Their reactions also depend on how visible the film appears around them. Audience interest changes with earlier memories, personal feelings and promotional exposure. Accessibility also matters when viewers look for a convenient show to watch. For many viewers, older films revive familiar moments that encourage repeat theatre experiences. In contrast, movies discussed widely or promoted strongly attract quick interest from audiences. Trending content increases curiosity even when people know little about the film. Apart from emotional factors, no of theatre screens available also impacts audience footfalls. Along with this, which movie's show timings are convenient for the viewer is another factor which influences audience/viewers' decision. So when we combine all these factors together, we can see how they all significantly influence the response of audience to different type of theatrical film and release types.

Also, audience's decisions tend to get influenced by which movie's show timings are convenient for them. Taken together, these factors influence how audiences respond to different types of theatrical films... This study examines how nostalgia and emotional connection, marketing exposure, and screen availability operate differently for re-released films and new releases. By comparing these effects across the two categories, the study aims to understand which type of film benefits more from these audience and market-related factors.



**Figure 1** Independent variables and Dependent variables

### 3.1. Problem Statement

In the past few years, we have seen a lot of re-releases in cinemas in India. Across India, we see these movies releasing alongside newer release and giving them tough or at least equal competition. However, some of these re-releases get massive response while some end up getting mild response. Same happens with new movie releases also. However, we still don't know which release type is audience actually grabbing audience's interest more. Also, what is motivating them to go for that certain type is still not known to us. Hence without finding out about these gaps, we cannot understand the changing audience choice across release types well.

The research that exists already discusses few factors that influence overall cinema performance across India. Nostalgia, marketing efforts and screen availability are some of those, but they are more of just overview rather than in depth analysis. Also, no previous work directly compares their influence level comparatively on both types. Hence, this creates a proper research gap in understanding Indian audience's preference when it comes to cinema choices. Also, we need to understand how these factors when combined influence and what are their effects.

Therefore, this study's main focus is to understand re-released movies' popularity across India. We also compare them with new movies releases clashing with them directly. Apart from that, we'll find out how major factors (like nostalgia, marketing exposure and overall theatre availability) influence popularity generally among theatre audiences. Additionally, it is unclear whether these factors influence audience preference differently for re-released and new films. By this comparison we will understand how various influences affect audiences' choices nowadays.

#### *Aim*

- To compare the popularity of old movie re-releases and new movie releases among Indian theatre audiences.
- To examine whether nostalgia and emotional connection, marketing exposure and promotional activities, and screen availability and proximity influence audience preference differently for re-released movies and new movie releases.

#### *Objectives of the Study*

- To compare the popularity of old movie re-releases and new movie releases among Indian theatre audiences.
- To examine whether nostalgia and emotional connection influence audiences differently when choosing between re-released movies and new movie releases.
- To analyze whether marketing exposure and promotional activities create different levels of influence on audiences preferring re-released movies versus new movie releases.
- To study whether screen availability and proximity affect audience preference differently for re-released movies and new movie releases.

### 3.2. Hypotheses / IV-DV relation Statement

- **H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference in the impact of nostalgia and emotional connection between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.
- **H<sub>1</sub>**: There is a significant difference in the impact of nostalgia and emotional connection between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.
- **H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference in the impact of marketing exposure and promotional activities between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.
- **H<sub>1</sub>**: There is a significant difference in the impact of marketing exposure and promotional activities between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases
- **H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference in the impact of screen availability and proximity between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.
- **H<sub>1</sub>**: There is a significant difference in the impact of screen availability and proximity between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.

### 3.3. Data Analysis

Reliability test of Questionnaires - The reliability of all the questionnaires is evaluated using Cronbach Alpha. The values are as below...

**Table 1** Cronbach Alpha Values for Instruments

Sr. No	Details of Questionnaire	Cronbach Value	Acceptance
	A Study on the Popularity of <b>Re-Releases Compared to New Movie Launches</b> in India	0.88	Good

The study uses a structured feedback survey to understand audience perceptions of movie re-releases in comparison to new film launches. The internal consistency of the survey instrument was assessed using **Cronbach Alpha**. The obtained Cronbach alpha's value of 0.88 indicates Good reliability, suggesting that the survey items are consistent and appropriate for further analysis.

**3.4. Demographic Analysis**

Table 2 shows demographic analysis of the samples under consideration. Overall, the demographic data reveals diversified samples based on Gender, age group, occupation and income group.

**Table 2** Demographic Analysis

Sr. No	Variable	Frequency	Chart																		
	Gender	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Your Gender</th> <th>%</th> <th>Frequency</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>29.7%</td> <td>113</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>70.3%</td> <td>267</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Your Gender	%	Frequency	Female	29.7%	113	Male	70.3%	267	<p>The bar chart displays the distribution of gender among the sample. The y-axis represents the count, ranging from 0 to 300. The x-axis lists 'Female' and 'Male'. The 'Female' bar has a value of 113 and is labeled with 29.7%. The 'Male' bar has a value of 267 and is labeled with 70.3%. A legend indicates that the bars represent the 'Total' count for each gender.</p>									
Your Gender	%	Frequency																			
Female	29.7%	113																			
Male	70.3%	267																			
	Age Group	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Your age group</th> <th>%</th> <th>Frequency</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>13 to 18</td> <td>6.1%</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19 to 25</td> <td>42.1%</td> <td>160</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26 to 35</td> <td>12.1%</td> <td>45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>36 to 55</td> <td>25%</td> <td>96</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55 and above</td> <td>14.7%</td> <td>56</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Your age group	%	Frequency	13 to 18	6.1%	23	19 to 25	42.1%	160	26 to 35	12.1%	45	36 to 55	25%	96	55 and above	14.7%	56	<p>The pie chart illustrates the distribution of the sample across different age groups. The legend identifies five categories: '13 to 18' (6.1%, blue), '19 to 25' (42.1%, red), '26 to 35' (12.1%, orange), '36 to 55' (25%, green), and '55 and above' (14.7%, purple). The largest segment is for the 19 to 25 age group.</p>
Your age group	%	Frequency																			
13 to 18	6.1%	23																			
19 to 25	42.1%	160																			
26 to 35	12.1%	45																			
36 to 55	25%	96																			
55 and above	14.7%	56																			

Occupation	Your Occupation	%	Frequency	
	Homemaker	6.31%	24	
	Other	2.36%	9	
	Salaried employee	40.52%	154	
	Self Employed	9.47%	36	
	Student	41.31%	157	
Monthly Income	Monthly Income (INR)	%	Frequency	
	1,50,000 to 3,00,000	16%	59	
	30,001 to 80,000	8%	32	
	80,001 to 1,50,000	14%	52	
	Less than 30,000	9%	36	
	More than 3,00,000	7%	26	
	Not salaried	46%	175	

- The study captures responses from both male and female participants, with a relatively higher representation of **male respondents (267)** in the sample. (Row 1)
- The majority of respondents fall in the **19–25 age group**, indicating that the findings largely reflect the preferences and theatre-going behavior of young adults, who are also the most active cinema-going segment. (Row 2)
- Out of all the respondents, big proportions are **students**, which highlights that the insights captured are from a young audience who are entertainment-driven and hence are exposed to both new releases as well as nostalgia driven content
- Income distribution wise, majority lie in the **low to mid income range** which implies that ticket pricing, the perceived value and emotional appeal play a big role in movie selection decisions. (Row 4)

### 3.5. Data Analysis of Popularity of Re-Releases Compared to New Movie Launches in India

**Table 3** Audience cinema frequency Analysis

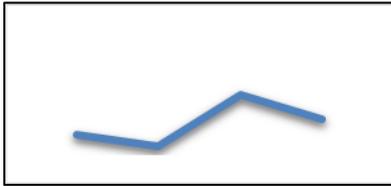
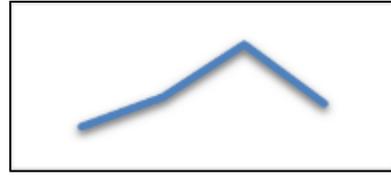
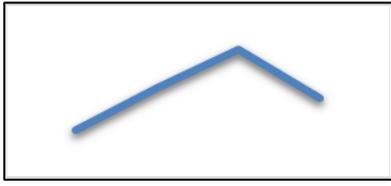
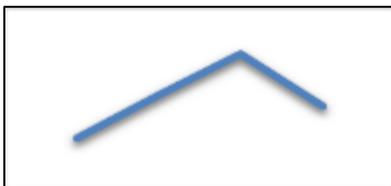
	1	2	3	4	Chart
How often do you visit Cinemas	2.9%	35.8%	47.6%	13.7%	

#### Interpretation

Through this data, we can interpret that a majority of respondents visit cinema on a moderate to frequent basis, with highest concentration falling in the mid to high frequency categories. This suggests that the sample consists largely of regular cinema goers, which makes them relevant for analyzing preferences between re-released films and new movie launches.

3.5.1. *Nostalgia and Emotional Connection*

**Table 4** Nostalgia and emotional connection Analysis

Likely Scale Item	1	2	3	4	Chart
When watching a re-released film you have seen before, how strong is your emotional connection?	15.8%	6.3%	49.2%	28.7%	
Does nostalgia influence your decision to watch a re-released film in theatres?	6.1%	20.3%	44.5%	16.8%	
Do familiar characters, scenes, or music make you choose a re-released movie over a new one?	6.3%	21.3%	43.2%	17.6%	
Compared to a new film, how comforting does a re-released film feel when choosing what to watch?	8.2%	26.6%	43.4%	21.8%	

Interpretation:

- A big proportion of respondents report a moderate to strong emotional connection when they watch a re-released film that they have seen before, which indicates that familiarity plays an important role in enhancing the viewing experience **(Row 1)**
- There is a high influence of nostalgia on the decision to watch re-released films for a significant proportion of respondents, which indicates that past associations and memories meaningfully affect theatre-going choices **(Row 2)**
- It is seen that there is a strong influence on movie selection of factors such as Familiar characters, scenes and music, where we find most respondents indicating a high preference for re-released films, especially because of these recognizable elements **(Row 3)**
- Re-releases are naturally perceived as more emotionally comforting by a large section of people/respondents as compared to newer films. This highlights how important factors like predictability and emotional reassurance are for audiences while selecting content **(Row 4)**

3.5.2. Marketing and Promotional Exposure

**Table 5** Marketing and Promotional Exposure Analysis

Likert Scale Item	1	2	3	4	Chart
How much do online promotions influence your interest in films?	7.6%	23.7%	41.6%	27.1%	
Have you discovered Re-released films because of social media trends or edits?	13.7%	20.8%	42.9%	22.6%	
Do repeated online promotions increase your curiosity about Re-released films in theatres?	14.2%	25.3%	42.9%	17.6%	

Interpretation:

- Through the analysis, we can see that respondents interest in films is highly influenced by online promotions, which signifies the strong role digital platforms play in shaping the audience awareness and engagement. **(Row 1)**
- There is a large proportion of respondents that agree that social media trends and edits do significantly influence their awareness of re-released films which suggest that online content does in fact play an important role in reviving interest for older movies **(Row 2)**
- We can clearly see the importance of consistent digital visibility and exposure in attracting and drawing audience attention since there is a high level of increase in curiosity found when audience are exposed to repeated online promotions. **(Row 3)**

3.5.3. Screen Availability and Convenience

**Table 6** Screen availability and convenience Analysis

Likert Scale Item	1	2	3	4	Chart
Does availability of convenient show timings affect your decision?	7.1%	11.6%	37.9%	43.4%	
If a re-released film gets premium screens like IMAX or recliners, are you more likely to watch it?	13.9%	20.5%	43.9%	21.6%	
Do you prefer watching films in theatres that are closer or easier to reach?	2.4%	8.7%	44.7%	44.2%	

If a re-released film is playing in fewer theatres than a new film, does that reduce your interest?	26.3%	24.5%	34.7%	14.5%	
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- The availability of convenient show timings is found to have a high influence on respondent’s decisions to watch movies in theatres which indicates that scheduling flexible shows plays a key role in cinema attendance. (Row 1)
- Premium screening formats such as IMAX or recliner seating increases the likelihood that respondents chose a re-released movie at a high level, which highlights the importance of enhanced viewing experiences. (Row 2)
- There is a high influence of theatre proximity and ease of access to the theatre, with many respondents preferring to watch films in theatres that are closer or easier to reach. (Row 3)
- It can be observed that limited screen availability for re-released films reduces interest at a noticeable level for a section of respondents, which suggests us that fewer theatre screening re-released films can negatively impact the turnout of audience. (Row 4)

### 3.6. Hypothesis Testing

Based on the study, the researchers wanted to check the significance of the following hypotheses at 95% level of significance.

- Audience preference for re-released movies and new movie releases differs based on nostalgia and emotional connection.
- Marketing exposure and promotional activities influence audience preference differently for re-released movies compared to new movie releases.
- Screen availability and convenience play a differing role in shaping audience preference between re-released movies and new movie releases. Table 7 collectively shows the results of all three hypotheses.

**Table 7** Results of hypotheses.

Sr. No	Hypothesis	Test Used	Resultant value	Decision
	<p>H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the impact of nostalgia and emotional connection between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.</p> <p>H<sub>1</sub> : There is a significant difference in the impact of nostalgia and emotional connection between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.</p>	Two sample single tail T-Test	P-Value- 2.731E-15	As P - value is less than level of significance (0.05), there are evidences to <b>reject Null Hypothesis</b> so it can be concluded that nostalgia and emotional connection significantly influence audience preference between re-released movies and new movie releases. <b>Hence Proved the Alternative hypotheses.</b>
	H <sub>0</sub> : There is no significant difference in the impact of marketing exposure and promotional activities between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.	Two sample single tail T-test	P-Value- 0.012	As P – value is less than significance level (0.05), there is evidence to <b>reject Null Hypotheses</b> , and can be concluded significantly that marketing exposure and promotional activities significantly influence audience preference between re-released movies and new movie releases. <b>Hence Proved the Alternative hypotheses.</b>

	H <sub>1</sub> : There is a significant difference in the impact of marketing exposure and promotional activities between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.			
	H <sub>0</sub> : There is no significant difference in the impact of screen availability and proximity between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases. H <sub>1</sub> : There is a significant difference in the impact of screen availability and proximity between audiences preferring re-released movies and those preferring new movie releases.	Two sample single tail T-test	P-value - 0.008	As the P-value is less than level of significance (0.05), there are evidence to reject Null hypotheses and hence it can be concluded that screen availability and convenience significantly influence audience preference between re-released movies and new movie releases. <b>Hence proved the Alternative Hypotheses.</b>

The results of hypothesis testing revealed significant findings regarding factors influencing audience preferences for re-released movies and new movie releases. The first hypothesis was tested using a two sample t-test and it showed p value of 2.731E-15 which is very less than the level of significance (0.05) and hence we rejected the null hypothesis. This indicates that nostalgia and emotional connection play a big and significant role in shaping preferences of audience

The second hypothesis's focus was on assessing the role of marketing exposure and promotional activities in shaping preferences of audience. A two sample t-test was conducted and the value obtained was of 0.012 which is less than significance level of 0.05. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis, confirming that marketing exposure and promotional activities actually do have a significant influence on audience's preferences for re-released movies vs new movie releases.

The third hypothesis focused on examining the impact of screen availability and convenience on audience preference. The result of 2 sample t-test conducted showed a p-value of 0.008 which again, is lower than the level of significance. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, indicating that screen availability and proximity significantly affect audience preferences between re-released and new movie releases.

Overall, the findings provide evidence that emotional, promotional and accessibility related factors together collectively impact audience decision making in the context of re-releases and new movie releases.

### 3.7. Managerial implications

This study's findings offer several practical implications for the key stakeholders in Indian film exhibition and marketing industry ecosystem (esp. producers, distributors, cinema exhibitors, etc.). As the results of this study clearly indicate substantial differences in how audiences respond to re-released films vs new movie launches, their release strategies should be planned accordingly and catered to align with audience behavior rather than treating all theatrical content in the same way.

### 3.8. Implications for Film producers and rights holders

Since it is proved that Nostalgia and emotional connection has a strong influence on popularity of re-released films, the producers and right holders should stop viewing old content as archives and instead start treating them as valuable assets. The re-releases should be strategically selected based on factors like emotional recall, cultural relevance and audience attachment and not solely on past box office performance. Films that hold strong emotional value will attract audience when they are positioned as experiences and not just another routine screening. For new movie launches, producers should focus on building clear audience expectations through clear and targeted communication that conveys the core appeal of the film. Creating emotional connect and resonance before release can improve audience receptivity and reduce the over dependence on just novelty-based/driven interest.

### **3.9. Implications for Marketing and Promotions Teams**

Even though marketing exposure has significant impact, it varies across release types. In case of new movie launches, consistent and clear marketing efforts need to be done to create awareness and encourage initial audience turnout. For re-releases, instead of spending high amount of money blindly, reminder based communication and targeted marketing to be done along with messaging with focus on nostalgia. Marketing professionals should hence avoid using same generic approaches for both and cater to both release types with their suited style of marketing communication.

### **3.10. Implications for cinema exhibitors and distributors**

The importance of screen availability is stressed multiple times throughout the paper. Cinema exhibitors must therefore understand that re-releases also have equal potential to drive audience, if provided with more number of screens and flexible show timings according to audience's convenience. Distributors and cinema exhibitors can utilize these findings to test different innovative programming approaches like short term re-release to generate sense of urgency, etc. Assigning better suitable time slots for re-released movies could help improve their accessibility for audience and help them in not co-existing and competing with new movie releases.

### **3.11. Strategic Implications for Theatrical Planning**

Overall, the study suggests that the success of movies in theatre depends on aligning emotional appeal, promotional exposure and accessibility with audience's expectations. All the stakeholders must adapt a more audience-centric approach when planning releases of movie and accept the fact that even though re-releases and new releases operate in same theatrical settings, but they both need different strategies catered. By using data driven insights, industry players can improve theatre occupancy and try to sustain the engagement of audience in an increasingly competitive and fragmented landscape of entertainment.

### **3.12. Limitations and Future Research**

Like any empirical study, this research has certain limitations that need to be acknowledged while we interpret the findings. First, the study is based on primary data collected from a little sample size of respondents. Even though full efforts were made to reach theatre-going audiences from different backgrounds, the sample size and composition may not fully represent the diverse movie viewers across India. Audience preferences can vary significantly across regions, languages and cultural contexts which this study may not have been able to capture in proper depth.

Second, the study focuses only on theatrical audiences and does not include the viewers who primarily consume movies through OTT Platforms or television. Since the viewing habits in India are increasingly fragmented across multiple formats, excluding non-theatre audiences limit the broader generalization of the results. The findings therefore just reflect preferences within the cinema hall context and not the overall film consumption behavior.

Third, the study considers a selected set of factors influencing popularity, such as emotional connection, marketing exposure and screen availability. While these factors are relevant to understanding the interest of audience, there may be other influences like word-of-mouth, star image, critical reviews or pricing strategies that may have huge impact but were not examined in detail in this study. The exclusion of these variables may restrict the explanatory scope of the study.

Additionally, the research relies on self-reported responses, which may have been affected by respondent's personal bias, recall limitations or momentary preferences where they selected based on what they felt in that moment but may not necessarily feel the same in general. There is no guarantee that what intention respondent has stated will always translate into how their actual viewing behavior is, especially since their choices may be influenced by situational factors (e.g. peer influence, availability of time, etc.)

There are a lot of ways in which this study can be further built upon. If a larger and more geographically diverse sample is taken in future research, it could improve the representativeness of the findings. Further studies in future may also compare how audience responses vary across diverse regions or language-based film industries within India itself (Tollywood, Mollywood, Bollywood, etc.) The scope of research could also be further extended by including OTT audiences to examine how re-releases perform across platforms.

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## **4. Discussion of findings**

The main objective behind this study is to examine whether there is a clear difference in audience's preference for re-releases movies and newly released movies based on selected factors which include emotional factors, promotional

factors and accessibility related factors. The hypothesis testing results provided clear evidence that just novelty or freshness of the film don't entirely influence the decision making of audience towards their theatre visit choices.

Through the first hypothesis, we examined how nostalgia and emotional connection plays a role in shaping preferences of audience between re-releases and new movie releases. From the two sample t-test conducted, the p-value obtained was extremely low which indicates that there actually exist a strong and statistically big difference between the two categories taken. This finding suggests that when audience choose re-released films over new movie launches, there is a huge role of emotional attachment in their decision making. The audience seem to be connecting with re-released films since they tap into their memories, give them a more comforting viewing experience and provide emotional familiarity which becomes a big factor that significantly differentiates the appeal of re-released films from other newly released films. This finding further strengthens the argument that emotional factor plays an active and not passive role in determining audience turnout behavior for re-released films.

The role of marketing exposure and promotional activities is examined through the second hypothesis. We can see a statistically significant difference in results in extent to which marketing factors influence audience's preferences for both re-released and new films. Although marketing is significant for both, through the results we come to know that its role is different for each. There is a high dependence of extensive marketing and promotional campaigns to generate awareness and initial interest for new film releases. At the same time, re-released films tend to benefit more from targeted and reminder based marketing and promotional activities. This suggests that the effectiveness of marketing activities varies depending on the context and that the same kind of marketing strategies should not be applied/used for both re-released and new film releases.

The role of screen availability and convenience in influencing preference of audience is tested through the third hypothesis. By rejecting the null hypothesis, we confirm that accessibility and convenience related factors do play a big role and have a very significant effect on audience's choices when it comes to re-releases vs new film releases. This finding highlights how important the exhibition and distribution strategy is in determining popularity of movies in theatres. Even if films offer strong emotional appeal or have good promotional support, they may fail or underperform comparatively if they are allocated fewer screens or the show timings allotted are not convenient for audience. Vice versa, if the re-released films get better screen availability, it will enhance the visibility and viability of the film which will help them in competing with new movie releases more effectively.

Taking all the findings together, it can be demonstrated that a combination of emotional, promotional and practical considerations shape audience's preferences in theatres and it does not rely on just a single dominant factor. Across all the three hypotheses, we see a statistically significant difference which indicates that the evaluation of re-released movies and newly released movies are done differently by audiences even though they co-exist within the same theatrical environment. This strengthens the view that re-releases should be treated not as just an occasional or supplementary content but as strategically planned offerings instead.

Overall, the discussion of findings highlights that factors like how well the movie is aligning with audience's emotions, how well they are promoted and how accessible and convenient they are to the audience when they wish to watch the film, influence the popularity of movies in theatres. The study establishes these differences empirically thus providing a more nuanced and better understanding of how audience behavior is in Indian theatrical market context. It also sets a base and foundation for more targeted marketing and screening & exhibition strategies.

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## 5. Conclusion

This paper analyses how the Indian cinema audience react to two increasingly similar patterns of film releases. Especially since in the recent times, the audience has the power to choose between revisiting old classic films in theatres and watching new fresh movie release in the same theatrical setting, it is essential that we examine/analyze the factors that determine popularity and the factors which influence decision making of the audience. The study takes a comparative and exploratory approach, whilst concentrating on theatre audiences.

The results reveal that popularity of films in theatres isn't dependent on novelty/freshness of the movie alone. Even though new releases continue to attract audience by offering freshness, extensive promotion and building anticipation around the film, when it comes to re-releases, their main attraction is by offering familiarity, sense of comfort and continuity with past viewing experiences. The results show that reason why people chose re-releases isn't limited to nostalgia purposes alone, Audiences assess them on similar criteria on which they assess new releases (like visibility, accessibility, value of cinema experience)

This study also reveals that audience preferences are made up of a combination of factors simultaneously and not just a single factor alone. Factors such as Emotional appeal, marketing and promotional exposure and screen availability contribute to decision making of audience for theatre visit whether it is for a re-release or new release. This indicates the changing trend and shifting pattern of decision making of audience for theatre visits, where audience is now considering factors like familiarity and comfort along with excitement and novelty before they make a decision to watch a certain movie in cinemas. Through the study, we come to know that these factors don't have equal effect in every case and differ depending on type of movie i.e. if its re-release or a new release.

Re-releases and new movie releases are directly compared in this study, adding to existing literature on cinema and marketing studies, which traditionally didn't directly compare them and instead studied these two concepts separately. The study shows that re-releases are no longer just a supplementary content that exists with new releases, and are becoming more active players in the theatre market. This is significant since it has implications for the positioning and scheduling of movies in cinema theatres.

The study also builds upon and gives a better understanding of modern theatre going behavior of audiences in India. The study shows that the preferences of audience are shaped by combination of emotional and practical considerations both and that re-releases can benefit from them and gain popularity if marketed well and scheduled appropriately. As we see the preferences of cinema audiences tilting towards movies from different time periods, with re-releases gaining popularity and giving good competition to new releases, studies on audience preferences and popularity become very important and relevant in understanding and maintaining audience engagement and turnout.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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