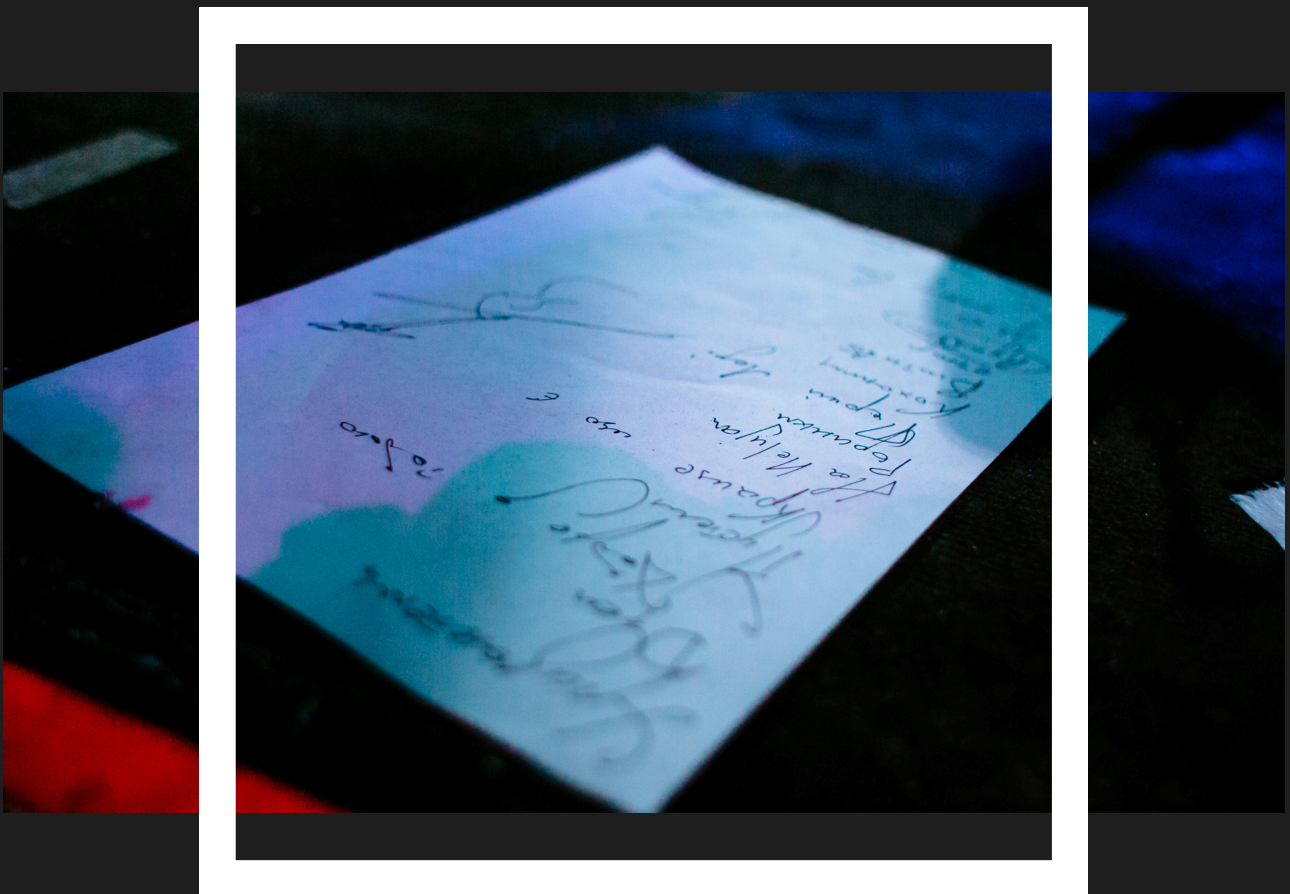


DISSERTATION

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF TASTE: PATTERNS AND INFLUENCES IN CULTURAL CONSUMPTION

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List of Publications

This cumulative dissertation presents six empirical studies. Four studies are published in international peer-reviewed academic journals (Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6). One study is currently under peer review in an international academic journal (Chapter 5, as of October 2025). One study is published as a preprint and is ready for submission (Chapter 7).

The publication details are as follows:

- Chapter 2 Voronin, Y., & Lutter, M. (2024). Educational Mobility and Cultural Omnivorousness in Germany. *Cultural Sociology*, 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17499755241247991>
- Chapter 3 Voronin, Y. (2024). Cultural omnivorousness in Ukraine: Examining relationships with social indicators via literary preferences among readers. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 28(2), 598–628. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13675494241256891>
- Chapter 4 Voronin, Y. (2025). Cultural Omnivorousness in the Domains of Music, Film and Literature: Evidence for a Partial Overlap. *Sociological Research Online*, 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804251356889>
- Chapter 5 [Peer review] Voronin, Y. (2025). *Curtains Up: How Ukrainians Turned to Theater During the War*
- Chapter 6 Voronin, Y. (2025). Detailing social influence in predicting cinema attendance: A vignette approach. *Poetics*, 113, 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2025.102041>
- Chapter 7 Voronin, Y. (2025). *Exploring Personal Recommendations from New Contacts in the Movie Market*. SocArXiv. Preprint. https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/qn8cw_v1

Author contributions: Chapters 3–7 are single-author papers, written by Yevhen Voronin under the supervision. Chapter 2 was co-authored by Yevhen Voronin and Mark Lutter (first supervisor). CRediT author statement is as follows: Yevhen Voronin: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal analysis, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Visualization; Mark Lutter: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing - Review & Editing, Supervision.

Abstract

Given the social embeddedness of economic acts, cultural consumption remains an ongoing subject of sociological interest. By studying preferences and consumption both as a practice and as a decision, this dissertation aims to advance the understanding of cultural consumption and taste by exploring relatively uncharted areas of the social stratification of taste, the alternative meanings attached to cultural consumption, and the role of social influence in cultural markets.

This cumulative dissertation comprises six empirical papers. The first study aims to bridge Bourdieu's (1984) and Peterson's (1992) views on social patterning of cultural taste, using survey data. It empirically shows how cultural omnivorousness systematically depends on patterns of educational mobility. Three groups with the highest omnivorousness are the upwardly and downwardly mobile groups between middle- and high-level positions, as well as those remaining in high-level positions, whereas immobile individuals in the lower segment show the most univorous tastes. The second study addresses a prior claim about the lack of geographical diversity in omnivore-univore studies by investigating the image of cultural omnivorousness in Ukraine. Building upon recent survey data, the findings support the distinctiveness of the omnivore class and indicate a more omnivorous taste amongst highly educated individuals, women, and residents of big cities. The third study examines the homology of omnivorous taste across three cultural domains, underlining differences between omnivorousness in the domains of music, film, and literature. The fourth study presents a case study of theater attendance in Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, providing supportive evidence for an upward trend in theater popularity using digital trace data and outlining new forms of the social significance of cultural consumption during periods of high uncertainty.

The fifth and sixth studies of this dissertation employ vignette surveys on a student sample to study the influence of social information on moviegoers' intentions, paying particular attention to nuances in the interplay between characteristics of cultural products (genres), the surrounding social information (valence of diverse ratings, recommendations), and the characteristics of consumers. In the fifth study, higher ratings by experts, users, and peers are found to be positive predictors, along with personal recommendations from close friends, holding high significance. However, the importance of ratings varies by genre, and certain effects are moderated by individual genre preferences, cultural omnivorousness, trust in friends, and the perceived importance of family. In the sixth study, the results show that recommendations from newly formed contacts who are women and extensively involved in movie watching carry greater value, with a certain degree of in-group favoritism identified among women.

To sum up, this dissertation advances research on the omnivore-univore axis of cultural stratification, on the social and political significance of cultural consumption during periods of heightened uncertainty, and on the ways in which social information shapes decision-making in cultural markets.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Dissertation

Cultural consumption and taste have been a prominent subject of interest in social science research since the second half of the 20th century. Given the economic development, improvements in quality of life, and rise of individual agency in post-war Western societies, social sciences have experienced a “cultural turn”, shifting the attention to the rise of a consumer society, dominated by symbolic values (Warde, 2017, pp. 40–47). In this consumer society, consumption acts become intrinsically meaningful and socially significant (Blue, 2017, pp. 268–270). Further, goods are exchanged as signs that convey meanings with semiotic or symbolic value (Baudrillard, 1998). In recent decades, research has aimed to bridge the divide between culture and social structure, enriching studies of cultural consumption with social and economic factors (Mohr, 1998, p. 347). Among diverse research directions, studies focus on the dynamic logic of social stratification of taste and symbolic distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984; Peterson, 1992) as well as on social influence and striking inequality of success in cultural markets (Watts & Salganik, 2011).

Studies of cultural consumption and taste constitute a considerable part of cultural production studies. As defined by Peterson (1976, p. 672), cultural production encompasses “*the processes of creation, manufacture, marketing, distribution, exhibiting, inculcation, evaluation, and consumption*” and includes the social contexts in which cultural products, their evaluations, and the symbols attached to them are crafted. Establishing fundamental interests in the lifecycle and prevalence of products, this approach considers cultural products to be embedded in their social environment and social conditions (Otte, 2018).

The concept of embeddedness, explicitly introduced by Polanyi (1957) in his study of formal and substantive meanings of “economic” and widely discussed by Granovetter (1985) in his theorization of “undersocialized” and “oversocialized” economic actors, has played a central role in the studies of economic acts in social science. From this perspective, economic actions of individuals are not the acts of independent and autonomous agents (Frerichs, 2023). Instead, economic decisions, including acts of consumption, are embedded in diverse social contexts (Warde, 2022), including social networks, inequality, status, religion, or politics. This implies that consumption is shaped by and interrelated with broader social structure and, therefore, can be analyzed only in consideration of this aspect.

This cumulative thesis investigates the contemporary social embeddedness of cultural consumption and taste, focusing on three dimensions of cultural production: (i) emerging trends in the social stratification of cultural taste (in the context of educational expansion, increased mobility, and the overabundance of cultural products); (ii) alternative symbolic and political meanings attached to cultural consumption, and (iii) social influence shaping choices in cultural markets through various intermediaries. In detail, this thesis makes four key contributions. First, it advances theoretical dialogue between Bourdieu's (1984) highbrow-lowbrow and Peterson's (1992) omnivore-univore views on cultural hierarchy and stratification, providing empirical insights into the relationship between educational mobility and cultural omnivorousness (Chapter 2). Second, it responds to critical points in omnivore–univore studies by extending the geographical scope (Chapter 3) and empirically examining the homology of omnivorous taste patterns across cultural domains (music, film, literature) (Chapter 4). Third, it explores the role of performing arts that goes beyond status-based distinctions in the periods of high uncertainty by analyzing the meanings attached to theater-going in Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war (Chapter 5). Fourth, it investigates social influence in cultural markets beyond status-based preferences for cultural goods, using survey experimental methods to explore the role of diverse intermediaries – such as ratings and recommendations – in markets characterized by singular products (Chapters 6 and 7). In general, this dissertation broadens the understanding of cultural consumption and taste by providing new insights into the current social stratification of taste with a specific focus on the omnivore-univore axis, the alternative symbolic meanings attached to cultural consumption, and the role of social influence in cultural markets.

1.1. General theoretical framework

From a broader perspective, consumption involves three distinct dimensions – the process of acquisition (exchange), appropriation (use), and appreciation (assigning meanings) of commodities (Warde, 2017, p. 19). In sociology, theories of practice present the most prevailing approach to studying consumption in everyday life as a process of appropriation (Rössel et al., 2023; Warde, 2005). Reckwitz (2002, p. 249) defines practice (Praktik) as “*a routinised type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational*

knowledge”. Through the lens of theories of practice, consumption is interpreted as “*a moment in the many practices of everyday life which shifts attention to the appropriation and appreciation, as well as the acquisition, of goods and services*” (Warde, 2017, p. 5). Thus, the multiplicity of diverse practices in the lives of individuals leads to the multiplicity of consumption acts that they entail. Cultural consumption particularly refers to the “*consumption of goods and services with primarily aesthetic functions and only secondarily instrumental uses*” (Rössel et al., 2017, p. 1). One alternative to the theories of practice approach, used particularly in analytical sociology, encompasses individualist theories (Rössel et al., 2023, pp. 493–496). This approach focuses on the acquisition of commodities rather than their appropriation or appreciation. Research in this paradigm aims to explain or predict consumption acts by studying the motivations and concerns involved.

The first part of this dissertation (Chapters 2-5) relies on the perception of cultural consumption as moments of practices, focuses on the appropriation (and partly appreciation) of commodities, and builds mainly upon theoretical approaches that cover the aspect of distinctions through cultural consumption, taste, and cultural hierarchy (Bourdieu, 1984; Peterson, 1992). The second part (Chapters 6-7) interprets consumption as a decision-making process. Following an individualist approach, it aims to explain the behavioral intentions in cultural markets, shedding light on new trends in social influence in cultural markets as well as on the interplay between characteristics of commodities and consumers.

The following subsections present the general theoretical framework of the first and second parts of the dissertation and the main research directions of this dissertation.

1.1.1. Social distinctions and symbolic significance

Cultural consumption and taste are commonly the subject of social distinctions. However, social differences in consumption and taste patterns are far from being random and tend to follow certain logics of social differentiation. In *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Thorstein Veblen (1899/2009) pioneered the idea of status consumption, describing how expensive and noticeable commodities and leisure activities have become a signal of high status to others, and how individuals strive to gain higher status by engaging in conspicuous consumption of them. Veblen (1899/2009) discusses the emergence of a distinctive leisure class that has the privilege of staying out of productive labor, accumulating wealth, consuming honorable and expensive

objects (luxury), and gaining power. Through the “invidious comparison” with the leisure class, individuals in lower social positions resort to bottom-up social emulation through consumption to display the desired wealth, demonstrate elevated pecuniary standing, and distinguish themselves from other social groups (Stebbins, 2009). Thus, conspicuous consumption – “*a means of reputability to the gentleman of leisure*” (Veblen, 1899/2009, p. 53) – entails status consideration as a predominant element of comparison, which is assigned to commodities in the social environment. Further interpretation points to the diluted ability of so-called luxury goods to signal status in contemporary society, discussing the mechanism of inconspicuous rather than conspicuous consumption – a tendency to narrow the target audience and to prioritize sophistication, authenticity, and subtlety (Baudrillard, 1998, pp. 9, 90; Eckhardt et al., 2015).

Working at the intersection of neo-Marxist and (post-)structuralist paradigms, Jean Baudrillard (1998) portrays the consumer society as a society of sign exchange that goes beyond the status symbols. This idea echoes the differentiation between *use value* (i.e., the cost of materials and human labor) and *exchange value* (the market price of commodities) developed by Karl Marx (1887/2019, pp. 41–47). In *Capital*, Marx (1887/2019, pp. 81–95) describes commodity fetishism as one element of capitalist societies, highlighting the misconception of value as attached to the products rather than human labor involved in the production and misleading perception of social relations as relationships between commodities. Baudrillard (2000) adds a third prominent layer of values attached to commodities – *sign value* – and argues that a new fetishism entails excessive concentration on the semiotic or symbolic values of commodities (Koch & Elmore, 2006, p. 558). Rather than consuming objects, individuals start consuming the (interplay of) signs and communicating with others via sign exchange (Baudrillard, 2000). It is what products signify rather than what they cost economically that defines commodities. The move from the use and exchange value to the logic of signification illustrates the transition to consumer societies characterized by simulation processes, reaching the state where objects lack references, and there is even “*no relation to any reality whatsoever: it [image] is its own pure simulacrum*” (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 6). The sign value has become rather independent of the use or exchange value, and it can entail diverse meanings, acting, for example, as symbols of success, hard work, intelligence, or status.

Among the signals conveyed through consumption practices are dimensions of social inequality and social hierarchy. One of the most significant contributions to the studies of cultural consumption, lifestyles, and social stratification was made by French constructivist-structuralist sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. *First*, he analyzed the concept of *distinction*, empirically showing how cultural consumption has become an instrument of symbolic differentiation between social groups or, more precisely, social classes (Bourdieu, 1984). The elasticity of class distinctions is reinforced by considering social positions on the basis of three main types of capital: economic, social, and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Paterson, 2023). In the author's words, capital can be defined as "*accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its "incorporated," embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor*" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 15). Economic capital includes monetary resources and other assets easily "convertible into money" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 16). Social capital is defined in terms of resources that provide access to networks of people and diverse social groups, relationships within them, credentials, and recognition (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 21–24). Cultural capital, which plays the central role in Bourdieu's theory, comprises intellectual and other resources that shape aesthetic judgments, taste, and dispositions in general. Bourdieu categorizes cultural capital into embodied, objectified, and institutionalized forms. The embodied state refers to "*long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body*" (e.g., manners, behavior codes), the objectified state to tangible cultural goods in forms of commodities (e.g., books, musical instruments), and the institutionalized state to educational achievements (e.g., qualifications and diplomas) (Bennett et al., 2008; Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 17–21). Cultural capital is highly recognized and rewarded, but is acquired mostly through formal experiences during socialization in an educated environment and, to some extent, through further educational trajectories. Cultural capital is rather difficult to acquire in later life or to convert from other forms of capital, but it is possible to transmit it from generation to generation. The idea of the unequal distribution of cultural capital and its transmission lies at the heart of cultural reproduction theory, which explains the reproduction, inheritance, and legitimization of social inequalities (Bourdieu, 1973).

Second, Bourdieu (1990) widely used the concept of *habitus* as a mediator between structure (e.g., social class) and agency (e.g., practice) (Osypchuk, 2013). He defines habitus as "*systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as*

structuring structures” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53). In this way, habitus is a system of (long-lasting) dispositions that sets schemes of perceptions of the surroundings and generates actions, making one choice or another more or less appealing, and, in this way, helping to orient in social structure. In *Distinctions*, Bourdieu (1984, p. 101) discusses the *class habitus*, exemplifying it with the unified and homogeneous taste patterns within classes. Given the increased trends in social mobility, further research questions the assumption of durability and unity of dispositions produced by habitus, discussing the divided habitus or habitus clivé. According to Friedman (2016), socially mobile (upward) individuals may experience psychological distress due to the incoherence between the dispositions arising from their social position of origin and their social position of destination, taking into account the range, speed, and direction of mobility. Mobile individuals can even feel culturally homeless, lacking consistent cultural identities to fit into social groups (Friedman, 2012).

Third, lifestyles are considered a product of habitus – a product of the way individuals perceive social worlds. In Bourdieu’s (1984, p. 6) words, “*taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier*”. One of the key aspects embedded in this statement is the assumption of the existence of a cultural hierarchy, which is dominated by individuals with high cultural capital, that gives a certain level of recognition to different taste patterns (Bourdieu, 1984; Jæger et al., 2023; Jæger & Larsen, 2024). Tastes that benefit from a high degree of legitimacy, typically labeled as *highbrow*, dominate the hierarchy, demand certain aesthetic dispositions, and act as standards for good taste, particularly in the educational system. The illustrations of this include preferences for classical music, e.g., Well-Tempered Clavier by Johann Sebastian Bach (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 16), reading philosophy, or going to the ballet (Jæger & Larsen, 2024). At the bottom of the cultural hierarchy, so-called *lowbrow* practices are rather marginalized and classified as simple or primitive, such as listening to heavy metal (Bryson, 1996), reading comics or watching cartoons (Jæger & Larsen, 2024). Alternatively, tastes for the *popular* commodities also tend to have a lower social rank and can be labeled as lowbrow patterns.

Fourth, Bourdieu (1984) argues that the distribution of capital takes place in different autonomous fields. For example, the music field and the literature field are autonomous spaces with distinct capital accumulation processes and unique relationships between individuals within them. Despite their autonomy, Bourdieu (1984, p. 175) assumed the *homology* across fields: “*practices or goods associated with the different classes in the different areas of*

practice are organized in accordance with structures of opposition which are homologous to one another because they are all homologous to the structure of objective oppositions between class conditions". It implies that autonomous fields operate following similar principles of organization and corresponding to the general social structure (class structure) and one's habitus. Accordingly, individuals in higher social positions in one field would be more likely to attain a higher social position in another one. Given the cultural hierarchy, their taste patterns would portray legitimate (highbrow) objects consistently in different fields.

Considering cultural hierarchy as a social fact, the differences in social status are legitimized by the educational system, which reproduces and elevates the high status of practices traditionally considered highbrow (Daenekindt & Roose, 2015). Even in contemporary societies, cultural hierarchy is internalized and also widely shared between actors in different social positions (Jæger et al., 2023). Therefore, the judgment of taste, conditioned by habitus, takes social ranking of practices into account while crafting one's cultural repertoire. The idea of a distinction between consumers of (exclusively) highbrow and (exclusively) lowbrow/popular taste has prevailed in studies of cultural stratification since the late twentieth century.

An alternative perspective on the social stratification of taste was formulated by American cultural sociologist Richard Peterson (1992), who proposed a new dimension of audience segmentation: from elite and mass patterns to the *omnivore and univore* logic of differentiation. Rather than finding supportive evidence for the "elite-to-mass" status hierarchy, his empirical paper outlined a new perspective: higher status occupational groups did engage in non-elite cultural consumption at a higher rate compared to the lower status occupational groups (Peterson, 1992, p. 251). Intrigued by these findings, Peterson (1992, p. 252) calls for an alternative perspective of cultural stratification. In detail, he argues for the obsolete nature of exclusive highbrow taste among high-status individuals, highlighting their ubiquitous trend to combine legitimate and popular/mass taste patterns to gain status (Peterson, 1992, pp. 252–253). In this way, high-status cultural repertoire has become rather omnivore than exclusively highbrow. Later, it is noticed that general "openness to appreciate diversity" has become a prominent indicator of cultural omnivorousness (Peterson & Kern, 1996, p. 906). Individuals in lower social positions remain involved in one or a few cultural forms, supporting the restricted and limited taste patterns – so-called univore taste (Peterson, 1992, pp. 253–254).

An inclination towards cultural omnivorousness among higher social segments has been attributed to various (historical) factors. The first prominent category of factors encompasses structural changes in Western societies, including broader access to liberal education, an increase in living standards, higher migration rates, and an increase in mobility rates, as well as ongoing globalization, which contribute to the rising potential opportunity for mixing of taste patterns (Peterson & Kern, 1996, p. 905). The second group of factors discusses the role of new aesthetic appropriation and value change in rationalizing the new logic of cultural stratification, ascribing a positive connotation to a greater tolerance for diversity (Peterson & Kern, 1996, p. 905). Higher socio-economic positions are associated with stronger postmaterialist (vs. materialist) values, which actually increases the level of one's cultural omnivorousness (Voronin, 2022). In line with this, omnivores are more likely to be more liberal on postmaterialist issues than non-omnivores (Chan, 2019). The next factor addresses the perspective of markets – digitalization and overabundance of content have democratized access to diversity in cultural markets and made systematic exclusion of popular repertoire less feasible (see Johnston et al., 2019 for the discussion).

In the current research agenda, omnivorous taste represents a relatively new instrument of social distinctions, marking and legitimizing differences between social groups (e.g., Warde et al., 2008). However, studies on cultural omnivorousness are riddled with uncertainties. They follow inconsistent conceptualizations and operationalizations of omnivorous taste (de Vries & Reeves, 2022; Hazır & Warde, 2015), use different indicators of social position (Peterson, 2005), lack geographical diversity (Hazır & Warde, 2015), suggest different interpretation of the intersection between Bourdieu's and Peterson's views (Johnston et al., 2019; Lizardo, 2019), employ incompatible analytical strategies (Peterson, 2005) or even biased study design (Brisson, 2019), and find (partly) supporting (e.g., Kunißen et al., 2018; Purhonen et al., 2010; Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009) as well as mixed or even contrasting evidence (e.g., Atkinson, 2011; Rossman & Peterson, 2015; Tampubolon, 2008).

Recent categorization into *weak and strong interpretations* of omnivorousness portrays a significant milestone in dealing with conceptual confusion (de Vries & Reeves, 2022). The weak interpretation holds that individuals in higher social positions show a tendency to embrace a large volume of diverse cultural products, in particular, those classified as “non-elites” cultural forms, and cross symbolic boundaries between highbrow and popular products

(de Vries & Reeves, 2022, p. 293). In addition to this, the strong interpretation assumes a lack of class-based exclusions. Thus, studying strong interpretation requires not only measuring the volume and composition of taste, but also validating that “(social) elites do not tend systematically to reject cultural forms along class lines” (de Vries & Reeves, 2022, p. 302). The proposed interpretations aim to theoretically explain the conflicting visions of cultural omnivorousness in contemporary empirical research. Despite significant progress toward conceptual clarity, omnivore-univore studies are still characterized by a high level of uncertainty due to the inconsistent operationalization, measurement, and theoretical interpretation of findings.

The first part of the dissertation aims to address these issues by exploring three areas of debate and criticism in contemporary studies of social distinctions on the omnivore-univore axis: (i) the compatibility between Bourdieu’s highbrow-lowbrow and Peterson’s omnivore-univore views on cultural stratification, bringing attention to the role of educational mobility and how trajectories that individuals follow can affect cultural repertoire (Lizardo, 2019; Lizardo & Skiles, 2015) (Chapter 2); (ii) the lack of geographical diversity in omnivore-univore studies (Hazır & Warde, 2015) (Chapter 3); (iii) inconsistency in the selection of cultural domains to study cultural omnivorousness (Johnston et al., 2019) and presumed homology across fields (Chapter 4).

Lastly, cultural consumption in postmodern societies goes beyond status-based social distinctions and embraces other meaningful factors and aspects of everyday life that hold significance in understanding consumer practices. These include the role of emotions and imagination (Illouz, 2009), lifestyle-construction practices as an expression of individualism (Featherstone, 1991/2007), expression of new cultural identities (Hall & Gay, 1996), ethical and political concerns (e.g., Bulakh, 2017; Koos, 2012; Warde, 2017). The last contribution of the first part of the dissertation explores social meanings attached to cultural practices that go beyond social distinctions in the case study of cultural consumption in the periods of high uncertainty – in the study of theater attendance in Ukraine at the time of Russian invasion (Chapter 5).

1.1.2. Social influence in cultural markets

Going beyond status-based preferences, individuals' consumption patterns in cultural markets are strongly shaped by social influence (Watts & Salganik, 2011). Instead of relying on the inherent characteristics of cultural products, individual intentions are influenced by various social information available in one's environment. The general preferences of a broad audience, expert evaluations, awards and nominations, as well as informal recommendations from one's network, are just a few examples of social information that can influence the popularity of products. Goldsmith (2015) identified four main types of social influence: (i) imitation from observations, (ii) formal type, (iii) word-of-mouth and informal listening, and (iv) influence from social groups. The first type reflects the principle of herding behavior, observing and imitating the behavior of (visible) others (Banerjee, 1992). In their review of herd behavior, Kameda and Hastie (2015) outlined the prevailing mechanisms, among which are emotional contagion, receptivity to social norms, and rational conformity. The formal type covers influence coming from authoritative sources or as a result of direct advice seeking (Goldsmith, 2015, p. 5). The third category refers to informal social learning from unintentionally acquired knowledge through overheard conversations and spoken communication. The last category encompasses the role of membership in different (commercial and non-commercial) social groups, e.g., getting information through families, colleagues at work, or membership in book clubs.

The prevalence of diverse social information leads to the unpredictability of cultural dynamics (Salganik et al., 2006). Furthermore, social influence can foster the principle of cumulative advantage: products that gain popularity at the early stages are more likely to become even more popular over time, reinforcing the pronounced inequality of success in cultural markets (Adler, 1985; Rossman et al., 2010; Watts & Salganik, 2011). As a result, popularity and success in contemporary cultural markets may be more indicative of social factors than of the inherent qualities of cultural products.

The reason for the striking role of social influence lies in the high level of uncertainty in cultural markets (De Vany & Walls, 1999; Schmidt, 2022), which is relevant for both consumers and producers of cultural products. From the perspective of producers, as highlighted by De Vany (2006) in his overview of the economics of the movies, one of the core principles of the movie industry is that nobody knows anything: the success of upcoming movies is almost impossible

to predict due to the interplay of the vast array of factors. For instance, one of the top-performing movies, *Pulp Fiction* (1994) by Quentin Tarantino and Roger Avary, was originally rejected and harshly criticized by a film studio (Lowe, 2013). Examples of unpredictability are overreaching in different domains, covering also book, TV show, and music markets (see Watts & Salganik, 2011, p. 316 for an overview).

How do consumers act in the context of uncertainty in cultural markets? In such markets, products are rather singular and unique, and the criteria of evaluation are highly heterogeneous (Karpik, 2010, p. 39). As underscored in Karpik's (2010) presentation of the economics of singularities, when looking for desirable products, consumers make judgments rather than simple choices. Judgment is qualitative, entails plurality, and combines value and knowledge, while choices are more likely to follow a general logic of calculation (Karpik, 2010, pp. 35–43). It implies that gaining knowledge about products requires consulting information sources (judgment devices) of various kinds, including those of a social nature. Making the judgment, previously incommensurable products can become comparable based on acquired knowledge about products. Karpik (2010, p. 45) groups main devices into five categories: networks (e.g., personal, practitioner, expert), appellations (e.g., product identities (Healy, 2011), such as brand names), cicerones (e.g., guides and critics), rankings (e.g., hierarchical order of products), and confluences (e.g., marketing and sales). These judgment devices help to reduce cognitive deficits, make reasonable decisions (Karpik, 2010, p. 44), and influence intentions in cultural markets (Schmidt, 2022).

The role of social influence in consumers' decisions was scrutinized by a series of four lab experiments by Matthew Salganik, Duncan Watts, and Peter Dodds (Salganik et al., 2006; Salganik & Watts, 2008, 2009; Watts & Salganik, 2011). Interested in how the social influence on the individual level shapes the collective outcomes in cultural markets, they created a controlled artificial environment – new websites with original and diverse music compositions (Salganik et al., 2006; Salganik & Watts, 2009). In the first three experiments, the experimental design involved grouping participants into two conditions: independent and social-influence conditions (Watts & Salganik, 2011, pp. 321–322). The latter condition provides participants with information about the behavior of others (e.g., download statistics), while in the former, only the performers and titles were displayed without any insights into the behavior of other users. The social-influence condition was then divided into different environments (worlds),

controlling for potential parallel histories in the evolving popularity of songs in socially influenced environments. The results from three experimental studies have provided supportive evidence to the statement that social influence at the consumer level drives inequality and unpredictability of success in markets (Salganik & Watts, 2009). The fourth experiment introduced the control over social influence worlds, where Salganik and Watts (2008) (artificially) inverted the real popularity of songs in (artificial) music markets. The results indicate that most songs were susceptible to the inversion, meaning that initially unrealistic popularity became more than real over time (Salganik & Watts, 2009; Watts & Salganik, 2011).

Contemporary cultural markets are characterized by the proliferation of evaluations coming from various digital sources (Sharkey et al., 2023) and a new, open, and plural ecosystem of evaluations (Chong, 2025). For example, consumers are simultaneously facing social information from multiple digital intermediaries, which can be categorized into three ideal types: (i) expert critics and awards, (ii) ratings, rankings, and certifications, (iii) online aggregators (Sharkey et al., 2023, p. 5). Digitalization has made information from such sources widely available to consumers. Additionally, despite digitalization, personal recommendations still can represent a separate fourth group of intermediaries (Schmidt, 2022). In the movie market, for example, professional reviews and the Academy Awards illustrate the first category; standardized numerical ratings by organizations represent the second; and broad audience ratings and reviews on platforms like IMDb or Letterboxd exemplify the third. These diverse intermediaries can signal a certain quality of the product to individuals, albeit not necessarily in a consistent way. However, these sources of social information can be interdependent: for example, past ratings can influence future evaluations (Lee et al., 2015), and expert evaluations can show conformity to online aggregators (Pang et al., 2022).

Numerous previous studies have investigated the (potential) influence and predictive power of expert reviews (professional critics) on movie performance, highlighting their importance in the decision-making process of consumers (Carrillat et al., 2018; McKenzie, 2023). For example, Basuroy et al. (2003) pointed out the dual role of positive and negative professional critics' reviews, as they can both influence and predict box office performance. In line with this, Thrane (2018) employed experimental methods and showed that higher expert review of a movie increases the likelihood of going to the cinema. Later, studying the running time of movies at cinemas in the USA, Souza et al. (2019) identified a large influence of the expert

reviews on narrowly released films, whereas there was hardly any effect for widely opening releases. Investigating attendances of movies with large weekly movie market data, Dhar and Weinberg (2016) provide a supportive argument for the general positive association between the evaluations of critics and greater box office attendance. Interestingly, the effects of the critics' evaluation increase in the time of economic recessions at the box office and decrease in the period of economic boom (Dhar & Weinberg, 2016, p. 406). Focusing on the temporal dynamics, Huang et al. (2017) underscore the larger positive effect of high expert evaluations on the box office precisely in the initial release time.

Amid global digitalization, broad audience (users) reviews and ratings on online aggregators have gained significant attention in studies of movie success (McKenzie, 2023). Online ratings websites feature high persuasion and can influence box office, especially in the late stage of release (Baek et al., 2017). Using local geographic box office data, Chintagunta et al. (2010) provide compelling evidence of the positive effect of higher valence of user ratings on movie performance. Systematically comparing the role of expert and user evaluations in time-varying data, Basuroy et al. (2020) document that expert reviews are of higher importance for movie revenues in comparison to user reviews – notably, the influence of expert evaluations is even increasing in the case of agreement between user and critics' reviews.

Although many studies have examined the influential role of different information sources in cultural markets (McKenzie, 2023; Schmidt, 2022; Verboord, 2010), few have explored how consumers navigate the new ecosystem of cultural evaluations when confronted with information from multiple sources simultaneously. The second part of the cumulative dissertation addresses this issue and aims to improve the understanding of decision-making in the movie market, employing two original factorial surveys. Chapter 6 investigates the role of expert, broad audience, and peer ratings on intentions to go to the cinema, with attention to the nuances of valence of ratings, genres, and characteristics of consumers. Chapter 7, in turn, investigates the role of personal movie recommendations from new contacts in predicting the intention to watch a recommended movie, shedding light on the interplay between personal characteristics of advisors and consumers.

1.2. Summary of studies

Table 1.1 presents the list of publications, their research focus, used data and methods, along with the year of publication, the corresponding journal, publisher, CiteScore of the journal in 2024 (calculated on 05 May, 2025), and Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) of the journal in 2024. The information was retrieved from the Scopus website as of 18 August, 2025.

Chapter 2 (*Educational Mobility and Cultural Omnivorousness in Germany*) bridges Bourdieu's (1984) and Peterson's (1992) view on social patterning of cultural taste, relying on Bourdieu's points that inherited and acquired (educational) cultural capital affect differently how individuals build preferences for more or less legitimate cultural products, i.e., higher inherited educational capital triggers a taste for less legitimate culture (Lizardo, 2019). Thus, Lizardo (2019, pp. 189–190) proposes that higher cultural omnivorousness is expected to be achieved by those who inherit a high educational level (stayers in an educated stratum), followed by those who inherit but do not acquire high educational levels (downward movers). Then, segments that did not inherit high educational capital tend to show lower omnivorousness. Using German General Social Survey (ALLBUS) 2014 data on music taste (GESIS-Leibniz-Institut Für Sozialwissenschaften, 2018), this chapter empirically tests whether cultural omnivorousness systematically depends on patterns of educational mobility, employing multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), latent class analysis (LCA), and diverse regression models.

The results provide two main insights. The data show supportive evidence for the first claim: parental education is a stronger predictor of higher preferences for less legitimate music genres than respondents' education. In line with this, there are significant differences across mobile and immobile groups, but patterns partially contradict the expectations. Upwardly and downwardly mobile groups between middle and high positions, as well as stayers in the high-level segment, develop higher omnivorousness. The results show that respondents with upward educational mobility who reach a high level of education develop omnivorous taste to a high degree.

Table 1.1: Overview of publications

Chapter	Title	Year	Journal	Publisher	Cite Score 2024	SNIP 2024	Consumption as...	Research focus	Data	Methods
2	Educational Mobility and Cultural Omnivorousness in Germany	2024	Cultural Sociology	SAGE	3.8	1.958	practice	Relations between cultural omnivorousness and educational mobility.	Survey: ALLBUS, 2014	MCA, LCA, Regressions
3	Cultural Omnivorousness in Ukraine: Examining Relationships with Social Indicators via Literary Preferences among Readers	2024	European Journal of Cultural Studies	SAGE	5.1	2.220	practice	Omnivore-Univore Thesis in Ukraine.	Survey: Reading in the context of media consumption and life construction, 2020	LCA, Regressions
4	Cultural Omnivorousness in the Domains of Music, Film, and Literature: Evidence for a Partial Overlap	2025	Sociological Research Online	SAGE	2.8	1.464	practice	Homology of omnivorous taste across cultural domains.	Survey: KuBiPaD I, 2018	LPA, Regressions
5	Curtains Up: How Ukrainians Turned to Theater During the War						practice	Symbolic and political meaning of cultural consumption in Ukraine in the context of war.	Digital Trace Data	Regressions, STM
6	Detailing Social Influence in Predicting Cinema Attendance: A Vignette Approach	2025	Poetics	Elsevier	4.5	1.003	decision	Social component (ratings, recommendation) in predicting cinema attendance.	Original vignette survey	Multilevel regressions
7	Exploring Personal Recommendations from New Contacts in the Movie Market	2025					decision	Social component (recommendations from new contacts) in predicting movie watching.	Original vignette survey	Multilevel regressions

Chapter 3 (*Cultural Omnivorousness in Ukraine: Examining Relationships with Social Indicators via Literary Preferences among Readers*) expands the geographical perspective of omnivore-univore studies by investigating the social stratification of literary preferences in Ukraine, relying on the survey data “Reading in the context of media consumption and life construction” conducted in 2020 (Vološevych & Shurenkova, 2020). First, LCA identifies a distinctive class of omnivore readers in the Ukrainian context. Using the volume of taste as a proxy for cultural omnivorousness, the regression analysis shows a higher propensity towards omnivorousness among highly educated individuals, women, and residents of big cities. This finding provides new insights for further cross-cultural comparisons of cultural stratification patterns.

Chapter 4 (*Cultural Omnivorousness in the Domains of Music, Film, and Literature: Evidence for a Partial Overlap*) aims to contribute to the debates on comparability in omnivore studies (de Vries & Reeves, 2022; Peterson, 2005) by investigating the assumption of overlap of the omnivorous taste between three cultural fields – music, film, and literature. In other words, do omnivores in one domain exhibit a subsequent higher propensity to be omnivores in other domains? Building upon survey data ‘Cultural Education and Cultural Participation in Germany (KuBiPaD I)’ (Otte et al., 2022), this chapter employs latent profile analysis (LPA) of taste patterns to identify five omnivorous classes: (i) omnivore class in music, (ii) selective and true omnivore classes in literature, (iii) true and selective omnivore classes in film, as well as other paucivores and univores classes. The comparison across omnivore classes documents (only) partial overlap across domains. The results show that it is common for omnivores in one domain to develop both paucivorous and omnivorous patterns in other domains. This chapter proposes an alternative formulation of the overlap assumption: omnivorousness in one domain and univorousness in another is rarely combined.

Notably, the socio-demographic characteristics of omnivorous classes share considerable dissimilarities across domains. As an illustration, obtaining higher education increases the probability of being assigned to the omnivore class in music and the selective omnivore class in literature and film, but decreases the probability for the true omnivore classes in these latter domains. The father’s higher education slightly increases the probability of solely being an omnivore in music and a selective omnivore in literature. Furthermore, women are more likely to be omnivorous in music or selectively omnivorous in literature and film, while no significant

gender differences have been identified among true omnivores in film and literature. The results are discussed with particular attention to the cultural hierarchy and the factor of accessibility.

Chapter 5 (*Curtains Up: How Ukrainians Turned to Theater During the War*) addresses meanings connected to contemporary cultural consumption that go beyond status distinctions and embrace other dimensions of significance of cultural practices. This section presents a case study of theater attendance in Ukraine in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The Russian invasion has brought significant restrictions to the theater field, including damage to theatrical infrastructures (Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, 2023), stimulation of internal and external displacement of theater troupes, and new operating restrictions on visiting theaters in cities. Despite the ubiquitous negative factors, journalists and professionals involved in the theater field have reported a new wave of popularity (Chaika, 2024; Hrabchenko, 2022; Kuzmenko, 2024). This study investigates the potential surge in theater attendance in the online environment, using digital behavioral data.

The two research questions are as follows: (R1) What trends in online popularity are observed for theaters in Ukraine, and how have they changed over time? (R2) What are the current thematic focuses of (social media) publications concerning theater-going? For R1, I utilized weekly Google Trends data on search interest for ten selected theaters (average over 5 downloads in separate days) for the time period from 01/12/2019 to 30/11/2024 and employed fixed-effect (FE) regression models with time intervals as independent variables. Addressing R2, Instagram text publications that geotagged one of the ten selected theaters and were published after the start of the full-scale invasion were extracted and analyzed with structural topic modeling (STM), using locations and date as metadata.

As of R1, the results indicate that search interest rates have dropped to the lowest level after the start of the invasion. From the end of 2022, however, all ten theaters benefited from the higher interest compared to the period before 2022, showing supportive evidence for the widely communicated popularity of theaters. Moving to R2, topic modeling outlines 24 topics that can be grouped into several categories: appreciations, impressions, and compliments for performances; reflection on plays' meanings, life during the war, and feelings; solidarity and gratitude to defenders; experiences; reference to the locations, plays, and staff; and other topics.

Additionally, the temporal dynamics of topic prevalence and the interrelations between topics are discussed in the chapter.

Further interpretation suggests that theater-going can also function as a form of coping mechanism, as a form of consumer citizenship or cultural resistance, or as a manifestation or outcome of the reactualization of authentic Ukrainian cultural products by both cultural consumers and producers. Notably, a prominent characteristic of the theater field is its embeddedness in war-related themes. As Bentia and Shopin (2023, p. 61) highlight, theaters in Ukraine create “a safe space for common emotional reliving a new tragic experience”.

Chapter 6 (*Detailing Social Influence in Predicting Cinema Attendance: A Vignette Approach*) adopts an individualist approach and follows Karpik’s (2010) theory of the economics of singularities to investigate the role of movie genres and individual characteristics in how consumers rely on four judgment devices: expert ratings, ratings by the broad audience, peer ratings, and personal recommendations. An original vignette survey among university students was designed to assess the influence of information sources on intentions to go to the cinema to watch a movie across four genres: romance, sci-fi, documentary, and horror. The vignettes were presented in the form of pictures showing low (1.6 out of 5), medium (3.2), or high (4.8) ratings from the broad audience, peers, and experts, along with personal recommendations from close friends, parents, or neither. The analytical sample comprised 1836 respondents. The data were analyzed employing different multilevel regression models.

Rather than drawing a hierarchy in cultural evaluations, this study emphasizes the simultaneous and significant influence of diverse ratings and recommendations across all selected movie genres. However, the effects of three rating types are not strictly linear – the magnitude of increase in intentions when a rating rises from 3.2 to 4.8 exceeds the magnitude of the decrease in intentions when a rating falls from 3.2 to 1.6, signifying the disproportionate benefit of gaining a high rating. Next, this study concludes that the importance of ratings can depend on different individual characteristics of consumers, including genre preferences and the level of cultural omnivorousness. For example, having a strong preference for a genre or developing a higher volume of taste slightly increases the weight of positive expert ratings in driving the intentions to watch a movie in the cinema. Finally, the weight of personal recommendations from friends or family varies according to trust in family and the importance of friends.

Chapter 7 (*Exploring Personal Recommendations from New Contacts in the Movie Market*) continues research from an individualist perspective and investigates how consumers behave when receiving a potential recommendation to watch a movie from a new contact (advisor). The main assumption is that individuals may attach importance to recommendations based on certain characteristics of advisors. Relying on the gender ideology theory (West & Zimmerman, 1987), social learning theory (Mischel, 2015), in-group favoritism (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), and cultural hierarchy approach (Bourdieu, 1984; Jæger & Larsen, 2024; Peterson, 2005), this paper employed a vignette survey among students with real photos of advisors to test seven hypotheses on how such characteristics of advisors as gender, migration background, socio-economic position and patterns of movie watching can shape the value attached to the recommendation to watch action, drama and comedy movies.

The results from multilevel regression models on student data indicate that, across the three studied genres, recommendations from women, individuals in lower SEP, and those extensively involved in movie watching are of higher importance. This lack of gender difference across genres contradicts the expected gender-essentialist beliefs. To some extent, in-group favoritism is evident among women, while men are found to be indifferent. Lastly, a slight degree of in-group favoritism is also observed among omnivores, but not among individuals with migration backgrounds. Overall, the study underscores the importance of advisor characteristics in predicting the importance of recommendations and enhances our understanding of consumer behavior in markets characterized by uncertainty.

1.3. Limitations

The results from this dissertation should be interpreted in light of several important limitations. First, most studies relied on genres as the most ‘natural’ classification system in cultural fields. Although genres continue to function as important sorting and orientation tools (Mohr et al., 2020, p. 72), empirical studies highlight that genre identification is complex and shaped by socio-demographic characteristics and involvement in the cultural field (Brisson, 2023). Moreover, labels of genres can sound particularly vague as cultural products increasingly cross conventional genre boundaries. Enriching research with other levels of culture (e.g., cultural objects) offers a promising framework for future research with the potential to provide new conceptual trajectories and alternative explanations to puzzling findings (see Childress et al., 2021).

Second, five of the six studies in this dissertation measure either self-reported cultural taste or intentions of cultural consumption. Although this is a widely adopted practice, this research design is subject to social desirability bias (Grimm, 2010). Given that cultural hierarchy is widely shared and internalized (Jæger & Larsen, 2024), respondents may have overreported preferences for high-status cultural products and underreported taste for cultural products of lower social rank. In addition to social desirability, current research designs do not account for potential obstacles, autonomy, and other behavioral controls (e.g., Ajzen, 1991), which can weaken the link between actual behavior and reported intentions or taste. Studying behavioral patterns directly rather than relying on self-reported measures offers a more precise and valid approach to researching cultural consumption in sociology.

Third, data constraints highlight the final set of limitations in this dissertation. Most research questions in the first part would benefit from a longitudinal panel design; however, this perspective could not be implemented due to limitations in the available data. Further, the vignette surveys employed in the last two studies of this dissertation are subject to the fatigue effect and to direct comparison of vignettes (Sauer et al., 2014), as each respondent of the survey was asked to evaluate nine vignettes from the first vignette survey and eight vignettes from the second. This may have affected response quality, particularly in the second vignette survey, although the two vignette sections were separated by other question blocks and several filters were applied during data preparation to address this issue and control the quality of the responses (Voronin, 2025). For example, the data analysis excluded respondents who spent less than seven minutes completing the survey (the average completion time was 21.5 minutes), those who reached the final section but spent less than ten minutes in total, and those who provided irrelevant answers to the open-ended question.

Limitations specific to each individual study are discussed in the final section of each chapter.

1.4. Conclusion and discussion

In contemporary societies, consumption exhibits at least three levels of significance (Warde, 2022, p. 26). First, it constitutes a source of hierarchy, privilege, and inequality, encompassing different aspects of social stratification. Second, it functions as a signal, carrying symbolic and political significance. Third, it remains intertwined with individuals' economic actions. This dissertation contributes to the understanding of these three levels of significance, bringing

attention to the uncharted territories left underexplored by prior research and providing new empirical insights.

First, in the current cultural hierarchy, the omnivore-univore axis appears to function as a separate dimension of social stratification, which may co-exist with the conventional highbrow-lowbrow axis. Paying attention to the distinction in taste across different socially mobile groups does not fully correspond to the conventional theoretical mechanisms (Chapter 2). It was expected that the positions of origin play a leading role in developing omnivore taste, meaning that upwardly mobile individuals would be more univorous than downward movers from highly educated groups (Lizardo, 2019, p. 189). However, empirical findings on music taste in Germany document that upwardly mobile educational groups who did not benefit from highly educated habitus at home are capable of accumulating high omnivorousness. Next, the omnivore-univore stratification of taste across educational groups and other socio-demographic characteristics is present beyond the Western Euro-American context, especially in Ukraine, which is characterized by high regional inequality and existential uncertainty due to external aggression (Chapter 3). Notably, the social meaning and extent of omnivorousness can differ between cultural domains, since omnivorous taste only partially overlaps across music, film, and book cultural domains (Chapter 4). It implies that cultural hierarchy follows a distinct logic of stratification in different cultural fields, which should not be neglected by future research.

Second, in times of uncertainty, cultural consumption can acquire new symbolic and political significance. Although exploring the meanings embedded in cultural consumption is ubiquitous in the social sciences, only a few recent studies have focused on the consumption of cultural products in the context of war. Studying theater attendance in Ukraine after the full-scale Russian invasion brings attention to the role of cultural consumption as an instrument of social identity and cultural resilience, solidarity, emotional expression, and authenticity (Chapter 5).

Third, in line with previous research, while making economic decisions, consumers in cultural markets are influenced by social information about cultural products. Nowadays, cultural evaluations represent a new ecosystem (Chong, 2025), where opinions coming from diverse sources, such as broad audience, peers, experts, and personal recommendations from a closed network and new contacts, play an influential role. However, there are considerable social

patterns in how people perceive this information (Chapters 6 and 7). Using the example of the movie market, the importance of ratings varies by genre, holding the lowest importance for the least popular genre (horror). Then, the influence of expert rating valence depends on the characteristics of respondents – both individual genre preferences and the level of cultural omnivorousness tend to intensify the positive effect of high expert ratings. (Chapter 6). Next, when getting recommendations from new contacts, the weight of the recommendation depends on the personal characteristics of both advisors and consumers. A prominent illustration of this is the in-group favoritism identified among women in the movie market (Chapter 7).

The findings from this dissertation have several broader sociological implications. To begin with, this dissertation advances research on the omnivore-univore axis of cultural hierarchy by providing empirical insights that have the potential to improve the consistency of conceptualization and measurement of cultural omnivorousness, which is highlighted as an important research direction by previous studies (de Vries & Reeves, 2022; Hazır & Warde, 2015; Johnston et al., 2019) (Chapters 2-4). In particular, Chapter 4 empirically shows how social stratification of taste at the level of genres differs across cultural domains, which illustrates an important takeaway for future research focused on omnivorous taste within single cultural domains. Furthermore, this provides a new lens for understanding existing research focused on the omnivore-univore thesis, since differences in social meanings of omnivorousness across domains serve as a potential explanation of the contradictory patterns identified in prior research in different cultural domains.

The next broader sociological implication pertains to the understanding of societal transformations in the contemporary dynamic world through exploring the meanings attached to cultural consumption. Chapter 5, focusing on theater attendance in Ukraine during the Russian invasion, demonstrates how the popularity of cultural practices can grow despite severe obstacles. It also outlines the symbolic and political dimensions of cultural consumption, encouraging future research to examine the roles it may play during periods of (extreme) uncertainty. Considering the symbolic and political significance of cultural consumption can lead to a deeper and more holistic understanding of social transformations.

In addition, this dissertation shows that survey experiments can advance the understanding of how social information shapes decisions in cultural markets. The first vignette survey (Chapter 6) demonstrates empirically how the valence of diverse ratings can simultaneously influence

consumers' intentions. Also, it highlights the interplay between characteristics of the product (genre), characteristics of consumers, and the effect size of the valence of ratings, underlining a new logic of rating valence perceptions. Next, the second vignette survey (Chapter 7) extends research on social influence by bringing forward the role of personal advice beyond close networks. It also shows how consumers perceive such recommendations based on the interplay of advisor and consumer characteristics. These findings contribute to understanding how social influence operates in the modern cultural market and consumer society, which may be of interest not only to sociologists but also to scholars in behavioral economics, consumer psychology, and marketing. The main takeaway is that future research would benefit from considering not only the role of social influence but also how it interacts with consumer characteristics and attributes of cultural products. Survey experiments represent a valuable methodological tool for investigating these relationships.

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Chapter 2: Educational Mobility and Cultural Omnivorousness in Germany

Abstract

Cultural omnivorousness is widely studied as a dimension of the stratification of taste, related to class or status positions. However, taste is also structured by patterns of social mobility, especially educational mobility. Building on Lizardo's Bourdieu, Distinction, and Aesthetic Consumption article, we expect that cultural omnivorousness systematically depends on patterns of educational mobility. Specifically, we predict that a higher inherited educational capital triggers a taste for less legitimate culture. Using survey data on tastes in music in Germany, we tested the effects of acquired and inherited cultural capital in predicting tastes for less legitimate cultural forms of taste at the level of genres and the effects of educational mobility in predicting cultural omnivorousness. Our results suggest that, first, the effect of parents' education in predicting taste for less legitimate music genres is larger than the effect of the respondents' own education. Second, the analysis reveals significant differences in omnivorous taste across segments of educational mobility groups. In general, there are three groups that show the highest omnivorousness: upwardly and downwardly mobile groups between middle and high positions, and stayers in the high-level segment, whereas immobile individuals in the lower segment are the most univorous. Contrary to expectations, respondents with upward educational mobility who reach a high level of education accumulate omnivorous attitudes to a high degree. This study shows partial support for the statements of theory and proposes trajectories for future research.

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Preliminary results of this study were presented at the following scientific conferences: ECSR Annual Conference (2023), 5th Conference of the Academy of Sociology (2023).

2.1. Introduction

The field of cultural consumption covers the study of consumers drawing social distinctions based on cultural tastes in everyday life. The homologous distinction, proposed by Bourdieu (1984), between highbrow styles for the upper classes (so-called exclusive elite or legitimate taste) and still exclusive, but lowbrow, popular styles for the lower classes, was widely used in sociological research. Peterson's omnivore thesis shifted the discussion to the new distinction of being either more omnivorous or more univorous in cultural preferences (Peterson, 1992; Peterson & Simkus, 1992). The central idea is that higher-status individuals refrain from rejecting items of popular culture (an attribute of lower-status culture) to constitute hierarchical differences (Peterson & Kern, 1996). Instead, they engage in a wide range of cultural repertoires, expressing omnivorous dispositions. Lower-status groups, on the other hand, maintain their exclusivity of taste and retain a narrow set of preferences. In other words, socioeconomic hierarchical differences point out the omnivorousness of higher segments of the social stratification scale and the univorousness of lower segments.

Numerous scholars have studied differences in cultural tastes in the context of social inequality, delving into the role of social status, class, education, or parental characteristics in explaining the social origins of omnivorousness (for a review, see Johnston et al., 2019). The current empirical focus in social research tends to cover a separate dimension of mobility as an element of contemporary social stratification (Otte et al., 2021). Studying the intersections of mobility and lifestyles expands the perspectives of omnivore studies by investigating the cultural reflection of various mobility patterns.

In Bourdieu's (1984) theoretical framework for the study of musical tastes, educational mobility emerges as an important factor (Lizardo, 2019). In particular, Bourdieu postulated that inherited and acquired cultural capital have different effects on building preferences toward more or less legitimate (cultural) products. Empirical research has looked at the differential impact of inherited vs. acquired cultural capital at the genre level of preferences (e.g., Childress et al., 2021), albeit not necessarily with reference to educational mobility, despite Lizardo's (2019) theoretical exploration of this aspect. As framed by Lizardo (2019, p. 184), the mobility factor “received no theoretical or empirical attention by researchers in the sociology of consumption to date, despite its obvious relevance to key debates,” although it

may serve as an additional explanation for recent trends toward omnivorousness documented in the literature (e.g., Sintas & Álvarez, 2002, 2004; Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009).

For this reason, a separate empirical study investigating the role of educational mobility and its possible trajectories is pertinent. Drawing on data on taste in music from the German General Social Survey 2014 (GESIS-Leibniz-Institut Für Sozialwissenschaften, 2017, 2018b, 2018a), this study aims to examine (i) the differential effects of acquired and inherited educational cultural capital on preferences for less legitimate cultural taste and, subsequently, (ii) differences in cultural omnivorousness across diverse educational mobility groups. We employed different analytical techniques to estimate the proposed relationships at the genre level of music culture: multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), latent class analysis (LCA), and regression analyses.

Germany was selected as a representative case of a Western European country, where prior studies have consistently documented omnivorous characteristics within high social status groups (e.g., Kunißen et al., 2018; Otte, 2009; Voronin, 2022). At the same time, the German education system is characterized by a low level of marketization (Gruijters et al., 2019), making higher education affordable and accessible and, thereby, reducing the importance of parental economic resources. However, upward educational mobility remains at a relatively low level, depending mostly on the cultural and social capital of parents (Hillmert & Jacob, 2010; Stephany, 2019; Tramonte & Willms, 2010). The low importance of economic factors and the high significance of cultural capital make Germany a compelling environment for investigating cultural stratification, specifically the relationships between educational mobility and omnivorous taste.

2.2. Literature review and hypothesis development

Sociological studies that draw upon both Bourdieu's (1984) theory of symbolic exclusion, as well as Peterson's (1992) omnivore-univore thesis, stand on the social origins of cultural taste. Focusing on the different taste patterns, the former one delves into the exclusivity of taste repertoire for different social segments as a function of unequally distributed cultural capital and growing up with certain habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). For instance, the cultural hierarchy encompasses highbrow (sophisticated) taste as a standard for high-social status groups and lowbrow (unpretentious) – for low-social status groups. The omnivore argument posits a shift

from (exclusive) highbrow to (inclusive) omnivore taste patterns among higher segments, while establishing univore trends among lower segments (Johnston et al., 2019; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Prior, 2013).

Both approaches are based on the idea of cultural hierarchy within a society, which assumes that different cultural products are perceived with varying degrees of recognition. Bourdieu, writing about the connection between taste profiles and social stratification, distinguishes three zones of taste that correspond to level of education and class: (1) taste for legitimate products, which increases with the level of education and is highest in fractions of the dominant class with high cultural capital; (2) taste for middlebrow products, which is widespread among the middle class and the intellectual cluster of the dominant class; and (3) taste for popular products, the value of which decreases due to popularization, which is most widespread in the working classes (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 16). A recent study by Jæger et al. (2023) presents arguments supporting the existence and universal recognition of cultural hierarchy on the example of Denmark. In contemporary research, the degree of cultural legitimacy of a product can vary in time and geographically (Katz-Gerro, 2002). Studies that take for granted the position of cultural products on a legitimacy scale (e.g., high vs. low culture) may be potentially biased (Gayo, 2016, p. 113; Nault et al., 2021, p. 720) as they do not address the dynamics and cross-cultural differences.

So far, studies of cultural stratification have widely discussed the role of cultural omnivorousness – the inclusivity of taste or the skill to extend one’s taste – as a status signifier (Johnston et al., 2019; Peterson, 2005). Given that cultural products have various degrees of recognition, individuals demonstrate tastes that align with their social positions (Jæger et al., 2023). Symbolic boundaries between cultural products with different social meanings and, subsequently, one’s lifestyle contribute to the legitimization of social inequality (Bourdieu, 1984). Crossing symbolic boundaries in one’s lifestyle and extending one’s volume of taste serves as an indicator of a high social position or high cultural capital in terms of skills and cultural competencies (Peterson & Kern, 1996).

Generally, the relationships between taste or lifestyle and social position are shaped by the habitus – “systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53). Guided by the perceptual schemes formed by habitus, individuals develop a distinct cultural repertoire in a certain field. Notably,

one's habitus is tailored not only by one's social position but also by social trajectories (Bennett et al., 2009, p. 27; Bourdieu, 1984). Individuals undergoing mobility carry a psychological imprint of the changes, characterized by conflicting structuring dispositions on different levels – a divided habitus (Friedman, 2016), which holds particular significance for those experiencing upward mobility (Paulson, 2018). This, in turn, may result in higher omnivorousness as a by-product of adapting to a new position in the social structure (Friedman, 2012).

In conceptualizing cultural omnivorousness, Lizardo and Skiles (2012) define it as a transposable form of aesthetic disposition whose development is stimulated by early aesthetic education and early socialization experiences. A socialization environment that benefits from high cultural capital allows individuals to learn and “apply an implicit aesthetic scheme to a wide variety of objects” (2012, p. 272). This aspect plays an important role in explaining the empirical results found so far. Noteworthy, by drawing attention to existing relational mechanisms that can either enhance or suppress omnivorous taste, Lizardo and Skiles (2012) point to the theoretical importance of examining social trajectories following early socialization periods.

According to Bourdieu (1984), the educational system and the trajectories of individuals in this system play one of the most important roles in shaping dispositions toward aesthetic consumption. Thus, research has shown that educational capital is important in explaining omnivorous taste (Purhonen et al., 2010, p. 280; Warde et al., 2007, p. 158; Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009, p. 129). Daenekindt and Roose (2014) pay attention to the trajectories and examine the relationship between educational mobility and omnivorous patterns, which result from the mixing of cultural repertoires from the social positions of origin and destination. This study shows that cultural repertoires of upwardly mobile individuals are guided by their social position of destination and can be expanded during the life span, while downwardly mobile individuals are more likely to keep up the cultural repertoire of the environment they were raised in (Daenekindt & Roose, 2014, pp. 92–93). However, the study was limited to a survey in Flanders (Belgium) and did not examine differences in omnivorousness using fine-grained mobility trajectories.

Theoretical grounds for reconsidering the relationship between educational mobility and omnivorousness are described by Lizardo (2019) in his interpretation of Bourdieu's (1984,

1986) ideas. Following this, the omnivorous patterns found in many empirical studies do not contradict the works of Bourdieu. The reason for this is that Bourdieu's idea goes beyond the perception of cultural taste and consumption as a function of status driving. Instead, Bourdieu is concerned with the trajectories that individuals follow in the educated strata and the relative weight that should be given to the two components, parental education in relation to the individual's education, that make up cultural capital and affect aesthetic choices (Lizardo, 2019, p. 180). More precisely, Bourdieu (1984, p. 13) argued that "at equivalent levels of educational capital, the weight of social origin in the practice and preference-explaining system increases as one moves away from the most legitimate areas of culture". Legitimate taste refers to cultural choices "to which the highly educated have affinity" (Warde et al., 2007, p. 150), as the aestheticization of such cultural items usually requires cultural and intellectual competencies and capabilities.

This mechanism operates through a set of socio-cognitive and cultural competencies as a function of unequally distributed educational background, which contributes to the development of schemes of perception and predetermines the apprehension of cultural products (Lizardo, 2019, pp. 182, 186). Individuals from more educated social backgrounds benefit from the habitus at home and have the opportunity to start using these cognitive schemas relatively early, which in turn leads to their thorough mastery in everyday life (Lizardo, 2019, p. 187). Such a social background (i.e., educated habitus at home) not only increases the propensity to develop a taste for legitimate culture, but also extends their aesthetic appreciation to the products located far from the legitimation scale.

Based on the presented aspects, we formulate *Hypothesis H1*:

H1: Taking into account the different components of cultural capital (inherited and acquired level of education), the effect of inherited education (parental education) in predicting aesthetic consumption of less legitimate cultural forms is greater than the effect of acquired education (respondent's education).

Moving from H1 to the next focus of this paper, it is expected that individuals are more or less likely to develop omnivorous tastes – those that are inclusive and extensive – as a result of the differential effects of inherited and acquired educational cultural capital. Specifically, the experience of early socialization in an educated stratum makes them more likely to transfer

their perceptual scheme to less legitimate products. This helps develop a higher degree of omnivorousness. As summarized by Lizardo (2019, p. 189), “the relative likelihood of the ‘educated’ to consume non-elite cultural forms is restricted to those respondents who have ‘inherited’ cultural capital directly by virtue of having been raised by high-education parents”. This means that the most omnivorous are expected to be (1) those who inherit a high educational level (stayers in an educated stratum), followed by (2) those who inherit but do not acquire high educational levels (downward movers). However, the qualitative type of omnivorousness differs between those two groups (Lizardo, 2019, pp. 189–190).

Those who did not benefit from the high educational capital of their parents are expected to display a lower degree of omnivorousness. However, (3) those who do not inherit but acquire high levels of education (upward movers) can express restrained affection for legitimate culture and declare a more extensive taste than (4) those who do not inherit and do not acquire high levels of education (stayers in a low-educated stratum) (Lizardo, 2019, p. 189). Thus, this study assumes that educational mobility can predict the acquisition of an omnivorous disposition and, consequently, the manifestation of omnivorous taste. Based on these aspects, we formulate the following hypotheses:

H2a: The higher the parental educational background of an individual, the more likely they are to develop omnivorous taste, regardless of their own educational mobility trajectory.

H2b: The more individuals with a high parental educational background experience downward educational mobility, the lower their degree of omnivorous taste.

H2c: The lower the parental educational background of an individual, the less likely they are to develop omnivorous tastes, regardless of their own educational mobility trajectory.

H2d: The more individuals with a low parental educational background experience upward educational mobility, the higher their degree of omnivorous taste.

Expanding the argument, Childress et al. (2021, p. 246) argue that the configuration of higher-status tastes in contemporary societies combines omnivorousness (inclusivity) at the genre level and univorousness (exclusivity) at the level of objects. To spell out the effects of cultural capital: inclusivity, particularly at the genre level, is promoted by inherited components of the capital, while acquired capital through formal schooling fosters exclusivity, especially at the

object level (2021, pp. 247–248). In this way, higher-status tastes tend to combine characteristics of inclusivity and exclusivity, but at different levels of culture. In this paper, we analyze the relationships only at the level of genres.

2.3. Data, operationalization, methods

2.3.1. Data

This study draws on the data from the cross-sectional German General Social Survey (ALLBUS) 2014 (GESIS-Leibniz-Institut Für Sozialwissenschaften, 2017, 2018b, 2018a). This is a representative survey of adults in Germany conducted in 2014 (n=3,471). We use information about taste in music and educational attainment. In the dataset, educational mobility cannot be defined for 188 cases because data on educational attainment is missing. In one case, all data on taste in music is missing. The final analytical sample includes 3282 observations.

For testing H2a-H2d, we limit the sample to respondents aged 25 and older in order to eliminate the effect of young age as a reason for downward mobility (n=2990).

2.3.2. Operationalization and methods

2.3.2.1. Dependent variables: less legitimate taste in music

To test H1, we focus on preferences for music genres measured on a 5-point scale. The original wording of the scale points are as follows: I very much like listening to it, I like listening to it, I neither like nor dislike listening to it, I dislike listening to it, I very much dislike listening to it (GESIS-Leibniz-Institut Für Sozialwissenschaften, 2017). Table A1 (Appendix A) presents the questions from ALLBUS (12 genres) to measure musical taste.

We differentiate legitimate from less legitimate music by applying MCA – a statistical technique widely used by Bourdieu (1984) and other researchers in the field of cultural sociology (e.g., Bennett et al., 2009; Coulangeon, 2013; Roose et al., 2012). MCA is used to investigate the underlying structure in the field of music and display relationships between categories of musical taste for different genres. We use the joint method with the principal component normalization and 10 000 iterations to map individual preferences in a music field, and add indicators of educational cultural capital and one subsidiary indicator of social position

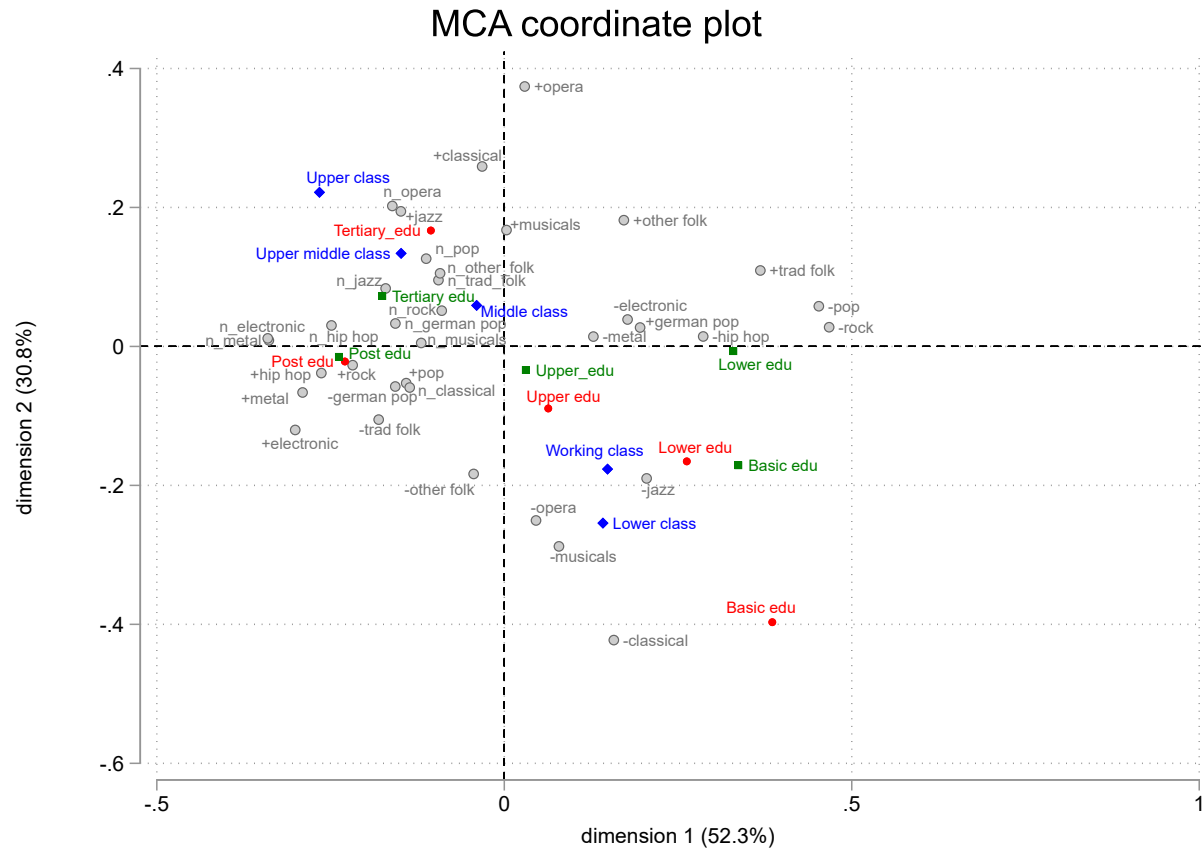
as supplementary variables. The two main and most important principal axes are considered since they account for more than 80% of the variance in Germany. In conducting MCA, we do not expect legitimate and non-legitimate music to be clearly ordered along one axis. However, by mapping auxiliary variables, such as inherited and acquired education, we are able to assess whether educational trajectories are related to taste in music. Following the trend lines provides insight into which genres may be more or less legitimate than others.

Defining legitimate and less legitimate taste in music in Germany

To define more and less legitimate genres in the field of music, we run an MCA of preferences for twelve genres recoded into three scale points, indicating whether respondents liked (+), disliked (-), or neither liked nor disliked (n) listening to certain music genres (Figure 2.1). In this way, we place preferences within the field space and relate them to two indicators of cultural capital (education, parents' education) and one auxiliary indicator of social positions (self-assigned social class). The figure shows that the X-axis, representing the first principal component, accounts for the highest share of variance (52.3%). Most dislikes are located to the right of this axis, with several exceptions for local and traditional genres (e.g., traditional folk or German pop). The left-hand side of the figure mainly collected neutral opinions or likes for music genres. This aligns with findings by Bennett et al. (2009, p. 48) on the space of lifestyles, where the first axis accounted for measures of participation, or, in this case, a lack of negative attitudes to musical tastes or an extended acceptance of diverse music.

The Y-axis, accounting for 30% of the variance, also separates the likes (top) and dislikes (bottom) of genres but follows a specific logic. Thus, preferences for genres that are considered legitimate or highbrow by previous studies are located at the top (opera, classical music, jazz), while dislikes for the same music genres are placed at the bottom. Levels of education and social class increase on the graph from the lower right-hand corner to the upper left zone, indicating the relevance of both axes for social indicators. However, the structuring of values is more closely related to the Y-axis. In this way, defining which genres can be more or less legitimate, we account for the positions of likes on the Y-axis. Three likes at the top (opera, classical music, jazz) are considered examples of more legitimate genres, while three likes below the zero line (pop, metal, and electronic music) as cases of less legitimate genres.

Figure 2.1: MCA of tastes in music, two dimensions, ALLBUS 2014



Supplementary (passive) variables:
 educational attainment (red, circle), self-assigned class (blue, diamond), parent's educational attainment (green, square).
 Coordinates in principal normalization.

Note: plus (+) indicates liking or very much liking listening to a particular genre; minus (-) indicates disliking or very much disliking listening to it; letter "n" indicates neither liking nor disliking listening to it

2.3.2.2. Dependent variables: cultural omnivorousness

Moving on to cultural omnivorousness, previous studies suggest different measures, focusing either on the volume or composition of taste in one or more cultural domains, using the count index or the latent class approach (de Vries & Reeves, 2022; Hazır & Warde, 2015). We conceptualize omnivorousness as an ability or skill to accumulate a broad taste and show inclusivity at the genre level of culture.

To overcome inconsistencies and to allow comparability, we decide to operationalize omnivorousness by implementing two measures. First, an *omnivorousness score* that counts the number of music genres that respondents like or very much like to listen to. It is a widely used index in many studies (e.g., García-Álvarez et al., 2007; Ma, 2021; Purhonen et al., 2010). This approach also worked well in a previous study in Germany, showing similar results to other more complex measures of omnivorousness (Kunißen et al., 2018).

However, the number of genres individuals like accounts for neither boundary crossing nor the distinctiveness of the cluster having shared omnivorous dispositions (a higher relative probability of liking the largest number of genres and crossing symbolic boundaries). Therefore, the second measure refers to membership in the omnivore class, defined by the previous study (Kunißen et al., 2018). Notably, a tendency towards omnivorousness is a characteristic not only of the omnivore class, but also pertains to other classes, but to a lesser extent. As long as omnivorousness is treated as an ability or skill to extend one's tastes gained by different segments to a varying degree, rather than a characteristic of one class, the second measure encompasses the *posterior probabilities of belonging to the most omnivorous class*. Thus, even if the respondent is a member of another class, but demonstrates a relatively high probability of being included in the omnivores, this aspect is taken into account using this measure. One significant limitation is that standard errors for individuals' probabilities are not considered in this type of analysis, implying a potential for biased estimates. To address this concern, bootstrapping with 1,000 replications is applied to correct standard errors to avoid overestimating the coefficients.

LCA is selected as one of the most widely used approaches in classifying audiences based on their taste patterns (see van Rees et al., 1999; Walker et al., 2022). This study defines the number of latent classes based on the results of previous research as well as model fit statistics

such as Akaike Information Criteria (AIC), Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC), Sample-Size Adjusted BIC (SABIC), Lo-Mendell-Rubin Adjusted LRT Test, and Parametric Bootstrapped Likelihood Ratio Test. After that, the omnivore class is distinguished based on posterior probabilities of liking diverse music genres.

Defining the omnivore latent class in Germany

This section replicates the LCA analysis by Kunißen et al. (2018) on a slightly adjusted analytical sample. The six-class solution is preferred (see Table C1, Appendix C) as a parsimonious solution showing a consensus between model fit indicators, semantic meaning, and distinctiveness of the omnivore class. Although adding one extra class to the six-class and even seven-class solutions still significantly improves the model according to the Lo-Mendell-Rubin Adjusted LRT Test and Parametric Bootstrapped Likelihood Ratio Test, it does not considerably modify the omnivore class. The entropy coefficient of 0.797 signifies a good distinctiveness of the selected solution. To unify the results, we use the same labels for the classes that were proposed in the previous study (Kunißen et al., 2018, p. 226).

Table 2.1 shows the posterior estimated probabilities of liking each music genre for the members of the six defined classes. The omnivore class is estimated to be the smallest class (9%), which distinguishes itself from other classes by its members sharing a probability of 50% or higher of liking eight genres out of twelve. A tendency towards omnivorousness is a characteristic not only of the omnivore class. Individuals in other classes can also expand their tastes, albeit to a lesser extent.

Table 2.1: Results of LCA analysis: the conditional probabilities (%) of liking certain music genres for the members of six classes, ALLBUS 2014, MLR estimator

Class	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6
Label	Omnivore	Paucivore: Shallow entertainment	Univore: Excitement entertainment	Paucivore: Integration	Paucivore: Self- actualization	Univore: Harmony
<i>Size based on the most likely latent class membership</i>	9	17	24	14	20	15
Traditional folk music	50	35	0	56	1	73
Folk music of other cultures	46	14	10	54	26	36
German pop music	85	94	2	53	0	80
Pop music, current charts	91	98	75	15	63	17
Rock music	85	73	71	7	84	4
Heavy metal	25	14	27	1	25	0
Electronic music, house, etc.	28	26	37	1	27	1

Class	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6
Label	Omnivore	Paucivore: Shallow entertainment	Univore: Excitement entertainment	Paucivore: Integration	Paucivore: Self- actualization	Univore: Harmony
Hip hop, soul, reggae	47	34	49	6	48	2
Classical music	97	20	14	96	98	20
Opera	63	0	1	74	47	2
Musicals	85	47	30	81	54	32
Jazz	56	20	21	43	60	6

More precisely, individuals assigned to the omnivore class show the highest probability of liking two genres, the second-highest probability of liking nine genres and the third-highest probability of liking one genre. At the same time, the lowest probability (25%) refers to heavy metal, a common genre in symbolic exclusions of musically tolerant individuals (Bryson, 1996). However, it is estimated that only representatives of the third class have a higher probability of liking heavy metal, which is only 2% higher than the probability of omnivores.

2.3.2.3. Independent variables: education and educational mobility

We measure educational mobility as the difference between the highest educational attainment of the respondent and the highest level of education attained by either parent. In order to construct this measure, we need to harmonize educational attainment. Details of the harmonization can be found in Table A2 (Appendix A). In ALLBUS 2014, education is measured on a 5-point scale, with the categories (1) basic education, (2) lower secondary education, (3) upper secondary education, (4) post-secondary education, and (5) tertiary education. To construct the educational mobility variable, each educational qualification is allocated into segments (low-, middle-, and high-level) according to the logic presented in Table 2.2. The educational mobility variable is designed to capture mobility and immobility across educational segments. This creates the following nine groups:

Immobile in:

- (1) low-level segment (down-stayers),
- (2) middle-level segment (middle-stayers),
- (3) high-level segment (upper-stayers),

Downwardly mobile:

- (4) from high- to middle-level segment (down-movers: upper → middle),

- (5) from high- to low-level segment (down-movers: upper → down),
 (6) from middle- to low-level segment (down-movers: middle → down),

Upwardly mobile:

- (7) from low- to middle-level segment (up-movers: down → middle),
 (8) from low- to high-level segment (up-movers: down → upper),
 (9) from middle- to high-level segment (up-movers: middle → upper).

Table 2.2: Educational segments and assigned educational attainment

	Category/Segment	ALLBUS 2014
Educational segments	Low-level educational attainment	Basic education
		Lower secondary education
	Middle-level educational attainment	Upper secondary education
	High-level educational attainment	Post-secondary education
		Tertiary education

Based on the given classification of educational categories, approximately 46% of the full sample experience educational mobility (Table B1, Appendix B). While 17% of individuals move downward, 29% experience upward mobility. The most common steps refer to the upward move from middle- to high-level positions (19%) and vice versa (11%). Approximately 4% remain in lower positions, 29% in middle positions, and 22% in a higher segment. Limiting the sample to respondents aged 25 and over results in a lower rate of downward mobility (Table B2, Appendix B).

In Germany, there are differences observed in the mean omnivorousness score, computed as a number of liked or very much liked music genres, ranging from 0 to 12 (Figure B1, Appendix B). The average score in the analytical sample of respondents aged 25 and older is 4.52 music genres. Whereas down-stayers had an average score of 3.52 genres, middle-stayers preferred 4.21 genres, and up-stayers 4.82 genres. Most mobile groups have a higher mean score than

down and middle-stayers. The highest score is obtained by movers between middle- and high-level segments – 4.81 for downward and 4.82 for upward mobile.

Detailed descriptive statistics are available in Tables B1-B2 and Figure B1 (Appendix B).

2.3.2.4. Control variables

Prior studies have suggested that the tendency towards omnivorousness is also related to other factors, such as other status and class characteristics (Peterson, 1992; Peterson & Simkus, 1992), gender (López-Sintas & Katz-Gerro, 2005; Purhonen et al., 2010), age (Ma, 2021), music education (Elvers et al., 2015), individual values (Voronin, 2022) and, more generally, experiences during one's formative years (Lizardo & Skiles, 2012). To predict taste, we control for some characteristics of the social division in taste, such as sex/gender, age, private music education, parental attendance at cultural events, and self-assigned social class. The list of control variables is presented in Table A3 (Appendix A).

2.3.2.5. Methods

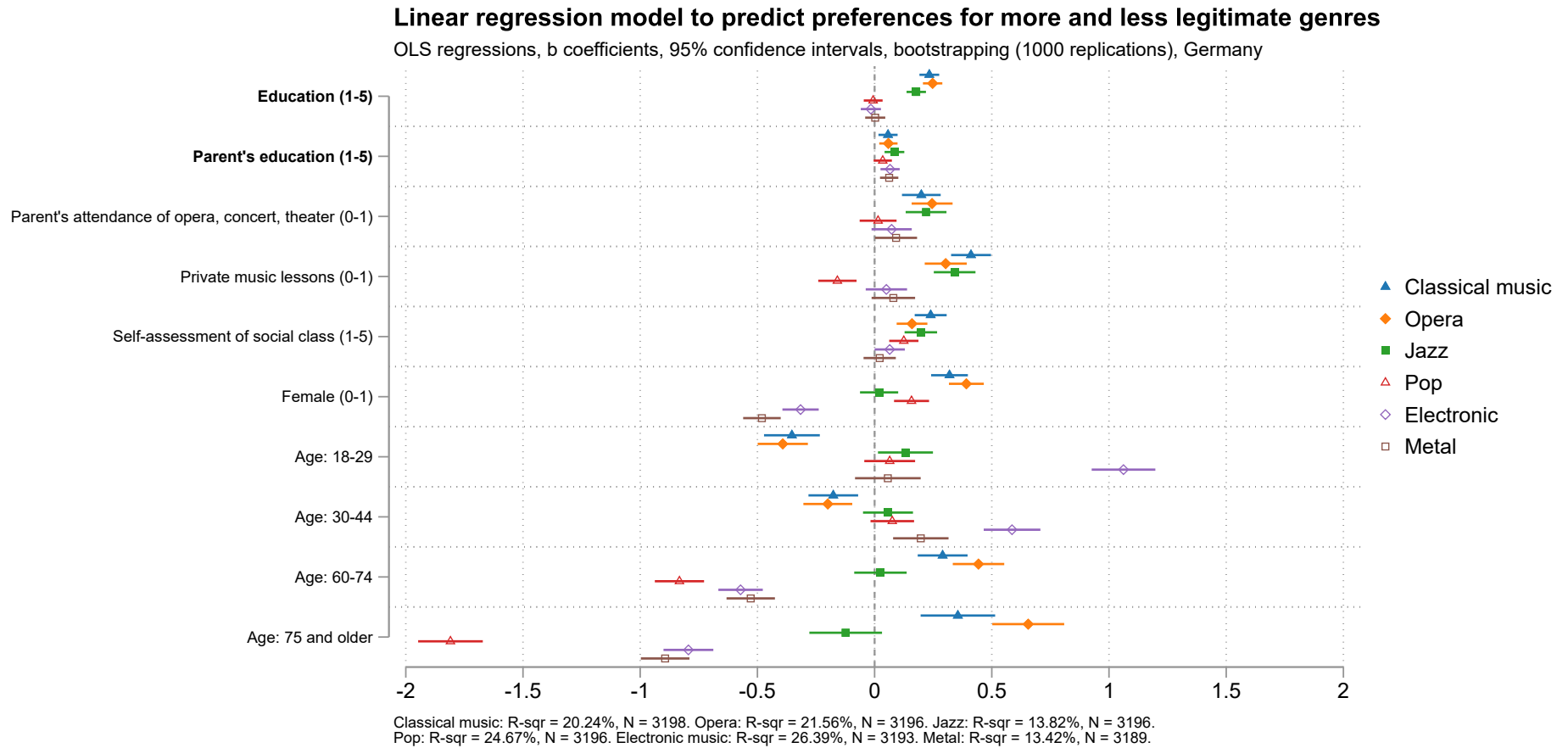
To test our hypotheses, we (1) use OLS and logit regression models with a set of covariates to estimate the effects of inherited and acquired educational capital on preferences for more and less legitimate genres and (2) apply OLS and fractional regression models to estimate the effects of social mobility on the two measures of omnivorousness.

2.4. Results

2.4.1. Predicting preferences for more and less legitimate music genres (H1)

In order to test H1, we calculate six linear regression models (one per music genre, using the original 5-point scale variables) to assess the differential importance of acquired and inherited education capital for liking three more and three less legitimate music genres (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Predicting preferences for liking three more and less legitimate genres, ALLBUS 2014



The positive contribution of respondents' and their parents' education in predicting preferences for more legitimate music genres is significant. However, according to the Wald tests, the coefficient of the respondents' education is higher than that of the parent's education among the three legitimate genres.¹ Considering less legitimate genres, only the parents' education turns out to be a significant positive predictor, providing evidence to support H1. Augmenting the model with control variables enhances its predictive power by accounting for variations in preferences associated with sex, age, private music education, self-identification with a higher social class, and other factors. All predictors together explain a higher percentage of variance for liking classical music (20%) and opera (22%) than for jazz (14%). The model explained only 13% of the variance of preferences for metal, but 25% and 26% for pop and electronic music, respectively.

The coefficients and standard errors are presented in Tables D1 and D2 (Appendix D).

2.4.2. Predicting cultural omnivorousness score by educational mobility (H2)

2.4.2.1. Omnivorousness score as dependent variable

To test H2, we conduct a hierarchical linear regression analysis to evaluate the differential significance of predictors for the cultural omnivorousness score (Table 2.3). Educational mobility explains 2.9% of the variance in the omnivorousness score (Model A1). Adding a set of control variables significantly increases the amount of explained variance to 6.3% (Model A2). Although the rate is relatively small, the model documents a significant difference in omnivorousness across mobility groups.

Table 2.3: Predicting the number of liked genres, ALLBUS 2014

	Model A1		Model A2	
	b	se	b	se
<i>Mobility</i>				
Down-stayers (<i>reference</i>)				
Middle-stayers	0.658**	(0.21)	0.493*	(0.21)
Upper-stayers	1.265***	(0.21)	0.787***	(0.22)
Down-movers: upper → middle	1.259***	(0.24)	1.034***	(0.23)

¹ Wald tests: B coefficient for parental education – B coefficient for respondent's education = 0. Predicting preferences for classical music: $\chi^2(1) = 27.83$, $Prob > \chi^2 = 0.0000$; for opera: $\chi^2(1) = 34.37$, $Prob > \chi^2 = 0.0000$; for jazz: $\chi^2(1) = 7.87$, $Prob > \chi^2 = 0.0050$.

	Model A1		Model A2	
	b	se	b	se
Down-movers: upper → down	0.397	(0.50)	0.217	(0.47)
Down-movers: middle → down	0.605*	(0.29)	0.507	(0.28)
Up-movers: down → middle	0.778**	(0.26)	0.674**	(0.25)
Up-movers: down → upper	0.969***	(0.29)	0.854**	(0.28)
Up-movers: middle → upper	1.287***	(0.21)	0.994***	(0.22)
<i>Control</i>				
Parent's attendance at opera, concert, theater (0-1)			0.197*	(0.08)
Private music lessons (0-1)			0.295***	(0.08)
Self-assessment of social class (1-5)			0.231***	(0.07)
Female (0-1)			0.491***	(0.08)
Age: 25-29			-0.248	(0.13)
Age: 30-44			0.134	(0.10)
Age: 45-59 (<i>reference</i>)				
Age: 60-74			0.049	(0.10)
Age: 75 and older			-0.232	(0.13)
Constant	3.536***	(0.21)	2.714***	(0.27)
N	2919		2919	
R-sqr	0.029		0.063	

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Bootstrapping (1000 replications). Listwise deletion.

Differentiating immobile and mobile groups, a pairwise comparison of predictive margins (Table 2.4) shows that the greatest omnivorousness is demonstrated by those who are mobile and move between the upper and middle segments, regardless of direction. Upper-stayers also display a higher level of omnivorousness by volume. However, the outcome values for other upwardly mobile groups who left the lower segment and for stayers in a high-level segment do not significantly differ from the score of the most omnivorous group. Downwardly mobile individuals who reach the lower segment have the same level of omnivorousness as middle-stayers or even down-stayers, the most univorous group.

These findings offer only partial support for H2a, as some groups with higher parental educational background experiencing downward mobility do not exhibit high omnivorousness, especially compared to other upwardly mobile groups. There is a lack of support for H2b, as certain down-movers do not differ from upper-stayers in omnivorousness. We found evidence to partially support H2c, as a lower level of omnivorousness is observed among groups with the lowest educational background. Nonetheless, as suggested by H2d, upward mobility can compensate for this. The extent of that compensation exceeds expectations in some cases.

Table 2.4: Pairwise comparison of predictive margins (Model A2), ALLBUS 2014

	Margin	SE	Confidence level 95%				Confidence level 99%		
Down-stayers	3.79	0.20	A				A		
Middle-stayers	4.28	0.07	B				A B		
Upper-stayers	4.58	0.08					C		
Down-movers: upper → middle	4.82	0.13					C		
Down-movers: upper → down	4.01	0.44	A	B	C	D	A	B	C
Down-movers: middle → down	4.30	0.20	A	B	C		A	B	C
Up-movers: down → middle	4.46	0.15					B C		
Up-movers: down → upper	4.64	0.20					B C		
Up-movers: middle → upper	4.78	0.08					C		

Note: Margins sharing a letter (A, B, C, D) in the group label are not significantly different at the applied confidence level.

Among control variables, private music lessons, parents' attendance at opera, concert, and theater, and self-assessment of social class emerge as significant positive predictors. Women also show higher omnivorousness scores than men. In terms of age, small differences are observed.

2.4.2.2. The probability of membership in the omnivore class as a dependent variable

This subsection tests H2a–d using an alternative measure of cultural omnivorousness. The fractional logit regression model predicts the probability of ending up in the omnivore class based on educational mobility and a set of control variables (Table 2.5). The results show that educational mobility poorly predicts the outcome variable (pseudo R-square less 1%). Adding control variables increased the amount of pseudo-R-square (2.9%), mainly because of differences in probabilities between gender, age, and class groups.

Table 2.5: Predicting the probability of membership in the omnivore class, ALLBUS 2014

	Model A3		Model A4	
	b	se	b	se
<i>Mobility</i>				
Down-stayers (<i>reference</i>)				
Middle-stayers	0.289	(0.35)	0.137	(0.38)
Upper-stayers	0.473	(0.35)	0.182	(0.40)
Down-movers: upper → middle	0.819*	(0.37)	0.690	(0.40)
Down-movers: upper → down	-2.089*	(0.82)	-2.100**	(0.69)
Down-movers: middle → down	0.510	(0.43)	0.481	(0.47)
Up-movers: down → middle	0.717	(0.38)	0.598	(0.41)
Up-movers: down → upper	0.399	(0.46)	0.310	(0.49)
Up-movers: middle → upper	0.820*	(0.35)	0.624	(0.40)

Control

	Model A3		Model A4	
	b	se	b	se
Parents' attendance at opera, concert, theater (0-1)			0.142	(0.12)
Private music lessons (0-1)			0.016	(0.12)
Self-assessment of social class (1-5)			0.194*	(0.09)
Female (0-1)			0.454***	(0.11)
Age: 25-29			-0.722**	(0.24)
Age: 30-44			0.018	(0.13)
Age: 45-59 (<i>reference</i>)				
Age: 60-74			0.196	(0.13)
Age: 75 and older			-0.629*	(0.25)
Constant	-2.682***	(0.34)	-3.335***	(0.44)
N	2919		2919	
Pseudo-R-sqr	0.009		0.029	

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Bootstrapping (1000 replications). Listwise deletion.

A comparison of predictive margins (Table 2.6) shows support for the previous finding of the highest omnivorousness being among movers between middle and high educational levels. Stayers in the upper segment, in contrast, have a relatively small probability of ending up in the omnivore class, statistically not different from the probabilities of down-stayers with a 95% confidence interval (lack of support for H2a and H2c). Consistent with the previous model, those who are mobile between middle and upper segments in either direction show the highest level of omnivorousness (lack of support for H2b). All upwardly mobile groups have higher predictive margins or do not differ significantly from most of the other groups (support for H2d).

Table 2.6: Pairwise comparison of predictive margins (Model A4), ALLBUS 2014

	Margin	SE	Confidence level 95%			Confidence level 99%			
			A	B	C	A	B	C	D
Down-stayers	0.08	0.03	A	B		A	B	C	D
Middle-stayers	0.09	0.01	A				B		
Upper-stayers	0.09	0.01	A				B	C	
Down-movers: upper → middle	0.14	0.02			C			C	D
Down-movers: upper → down	0.01	0.01				A			
Down-movers: middle → down	0.12	0.03	A	B	C		B	C	D
Up-movers: down → middle	0.13	0.02	A	B	C		B	C	D
Up-movers: down → upper	0.10	0.03	A	B	C		B	C	D
Up-movers: middle → upper	0.13	0.01		B	C				D

Note: Margins sharing a letter (A, B, C, D) in the group label are not significantly different at the applied confidence level.

2.5. Conclusion and discussion

Social patterning of taste is not only a matter of class composition, educational attainment or their boundaries, but also involves the trajectories of mobility in social structure, especially in terms of educational capital. This study aimed to address the uncertainty arising from inconsistencies between theoretical and empirical contributions and examine the relationships between educational mobility and omnivorousness. In detail, we empirically investigated whether Lizardo's (2019) interpretation of Bourdieu's (1984) ideas regarding the impact of parental and acquired education applies to the case of contemporary Germany. To that end, we expanded on previous contributions (Coulangeon, 2015; Daenekindt & Roose, 2014) and investigated (i) the relationships between different components of cultural capital and taste for more and less legitimate cultural products, as well as (ii) the predictive power of educational mobility for cultural omnivorousness.

Is the weight of the parent's education in predicting aesthetic consumption larger for less legitimate cultural forms compared to the respondent's education (H1)? This pattern was supported by the German data (support for H1). Predicting preferences for liking more legitimate genres in Germany shows a positive effect of both acquired and inherited cultural capital, but the effect of the former is greater than that of the latter. As for less legitimate genres, only inherited capital plays a significant role.

An interesting finding from the set of control variables is the positive effect of extracurricular music education on preferences for various genres. Theorizing by Lizardo and Skiles (2012) and empirical findings by Elvers et al. (2015) suggest that the general scheme of value attribution and cultural competencies that promote the aestheticization of diverse cultural products can also be an outcome of exposure to music education (which is more widespread among individuals with high inherited cultural capital) rather than a function of being raised in an educated environment. However, our analysis showed that private music education led to higher preferences for legitimate genres, aligning with nuanced findings by Ho et al. (2021), but the effects on non-legitimate genres were not significant. Further research should directly compare taste at different levels of culture (not only genres but also objects) among individuals with high/low inherited capital but varying exposure to music education. Apart from music education, we cannot neglect the role of other control factors, such as age or gender, that show themselves to have considerable predictive power.

To what extent are different segments of the educated and non-educated strata more and less likely to develop omnivorous taste, based on their educational mobility trajectories (H2a-H2d)? We identified significant differences across mobile and immobile groups, but their patterns differ and, in part, contradict expectations. First, three groups tend to demonstrate the highest omnivorousness: those upwardly and downwardly mobile between middle- and high-level segments (using two measures of omnivorousness) and stayers in the high-level segment (using the omnivorousness score). Although it was expected that downward movers would be more omnivorous than upward movers (Lizardo, 2019, p. 189), a different trend cropped up in the data. Upwardly mobile respondents reaching the high-level educational group can accumulate the same or even greater omnivorous dispositions, showing preferences toward a larger set of music genres and higher probabilities of membership in the omnivore class. In contrast, downwardly mobile individuals who end up in the low-level segment are less omnivorous than some upward movers and stayers. As a novel contribution, this result underscores the capacity of upwardly mobile individuals to accumulate omnivorous tastes at the genre level, even if they do not benefit from growing up in the most highly educated stratum.

Adding further details to H2, results from different models share the general importance of educational mobility when it comes to those movements that make a substantial difference in social structure between medium- and high-levels, showing that the starting point holds significance. Another particularly noteworthy aspect is that when we isolate mobile groups, the difference in omnivorousness between immobile groups becomes more pronounced. Down-stayers, in both cases, exhibit dramatically lower levels of omnivorousness compared to many other groups. Mobile respondents, especially those moving between middle and high positions, may have the opportunity and ability to blend tastes from two social positions, showing a higher propensity to omnivorousness.

According to the mobility effects documented by Daenekindt and Roose (2013, p. 56), a high degree of omnivorousness at the genre level among upwardly mobile individuals can illustrate conformity to the new social context as they carve their way in the social structure, while a high level of omnivorousness of downwardly mobile individuals from the high to the middle segment can be a sign of loyalty to the aesthetic scheme of their educated habitus. In moving through the social strata, people can both adopt new consumption patterns and preserve the

practices they used to have (Daenekindt & Roose, 2014; Friedman, 2012). This shows that both upwardly and downwardly mobile respondents at a certain level can be more omnivorous than non-mobile individuals, albeit for different reasons.

Spelling out the effect of upward mobility, Friedman (2012) examined British comedy taste through a survey and subsequent qualitative interviews, showing that the only social group that exhibits omnivorous characteristics is the upwardly mobile group (2012, p. 485). However, omnivorousness does not have positive implications, as would be expected due to its being perceived as a part of cultural capital. Instead, the omnivorous audience, experiencing upward mobility, needs to adapt to the new context and try to fit into the general image of the cultural repertoire appropriate to higher-status segments (2012, p. 480). As a consequence, individuals tend to feel “culturally homeless”, which has negative implications for social integration (2012, pp. 469, 484). In line with this, van Eijck (1999, p. 326) examines the consumption patterns of the Dutch sample and documents that “individuals carry popular culture upwards along the social ladder,” stimulating a rise of heterogeneous cultural consumption practices in more highly-educated segments. To improve our understanding of how this plays out, one potential trajectory for future research is to broaden this finding by investigating which implications this might have on individuals’ life-cycles, social adaptation, and well-being.

Last but not least, we identified slight variations due to the different measures of omnivorousness. For instance, stayers in the upper segment display a high level of omnivorousness by volume but do not achieve high probabilities of belonging to the true omnivore class. Given that the second measure takes into account the probability of being a member of the class that tends to cross symbolic boundaries to the highest extent, this finding could imply that the expansion of taste for this group primarily occurs on an approximately similar symbolic level. Conversely, the taste of mobile groups moving between middle and high levels is more likely to span various symbolic boundaries. A detailed examination of diverse measures of omnivorousness in relation to mobility may be a valuable subject of future research.

This study is not without its limitations. First of all, the ALLBUS dataset has a relatively small number of mobile respondents moving between the lower and upper segments. It will be useful for future research to test hypotheses on other data with a larger number of mobile respondents.

Secondly, we relied on the MCA to map music genres and categorize them into more and less legitimate, rather than relying on the exogenous validation of cultural legitimacy.

Another limitation concerns the causal directions of relationships. This study treated taste as secondary to social mobility. However, we cannot deny the point of view that taste can act as an instrument for mobility, as people who consume a diverse range of cultural products may be better equipped for social mobility. Longitudinal studies will be required to estimate the causal relationships between the two concepts. In addition, the high omnivorousness of upwardly mobile individuals moving from the middle to the high-level positions may indicate a positive selection factor, meaning that those individuals who climbed up the ladder were better equipped compared to those who remained immobile or experienced downward mobility. As a second point, since we identified slightly different trends compared to the theoretical framework, the research community may benefit from a further geographical expansion of omnivore studies.

Finally, this study relied solely on genre characteristics of music; however, it can be problematic for respondents to identify genres in a similar way, due to their complexity and internal heterogeneity (Brisson & Bianchi, 2022). Along with this, distinctions may be drawn between artists and compositions in the same genre rather than between genres (Nault et al., 2021). As suggested by Childress et al. (2021), omnivorousness (inclusivity) at the genre level is nurtured through inherited educational capital, while univorousness (exclusivity) at the level of objects within genres is promoted through acquired educational capital. Further research is recommended, using complementary dimensions of preferences and consumption and investigating the mobility effects at different levels of culture.

In conclusion, this article's main contribution refers to the partial support of Lizardo's (2019) theorizing based on empirical analysis of music taste at the level of genres, and proposes several modifications for consideration. In general, we advocate for a new perspective in the research of cultural omnivorousness that should consider educational mobility patterns. The difference between downwardly and upwardly mobile groups and the different contributions of inherited and acquired capital are obscured in estimating general socio-demographical predictors of taste. As we are living in a highly mobile time, research should keep up with it. By keeping empirical research siloed from this, we risk bypassing a significant meaningful contribution to the explanation of omnivorous taste.

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Appendix A. Measures in ALLBUS 2014

Table A1: Measuring taste in music in ALLBUS 2014

Data	Taste in music V58-V69: Preferences for 12 genres.
ALLBUS 2014 (English translation)	<p>"I'm going to read out a list of different kinds of music. Using the card, please tell me how much you like listening to each kind of music: (A) Traditional German folk music, (B) Traditional folk music from other cultures, (C) German pop music ("Schlager"), (D) Pop music and today's charts music (E) Rock music, (F) Heavy metal, (G) Electronic music, like house, techno, electro, (H) Hip hop, soul, reggae, (J) Classical music, (K) Opera, (L) Musicals, (M) Jazz".</p> <p>5-point scale:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I very much like listening to it, 2) I like listening to it, 3) I neither like nor dislike listening to it, 4) I dislike listening to it, 5) I very much dislike listening to it. <p>Source: GESIS-Leibniz-Institut Für Sozialwissenschaften, 2017, p. 9.</p>

Table A2: Measuring inherited and gained education in ALLBUS 2014, and harmonization

Data	Parents' education	Respondents' education	Harmonization
ALLBUS 2014 (English translation)	<p>F131-F134: Data providers followed the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 1997 scheme to code education of mother and father with these scale points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Basic education 2) Lower secondary education 3) Upper secondary education 4) Post-secondary education 5) Tertiary education. 	<p>F018-F020B: Data providers followed the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 1997 scheme to code education of respondents with these scale points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Basic education 2) Lower secondary education 3) Upper secondary education 4) Post-secondary education 5) 1st stage tertiary education 6) 2nd stage tertiary education. 	<p>Respondent's education was recoded to 5-point scale following the scheme: Codes 5/6 were combined into one code 5 "Tertiary education".</p>

Table A3: The list of control variables

Control variables	Description
<i>Private music lessons</i>	The survey includes the question on exposure to music education: “In your life, have you ever had private music or singing lessons, not including school lessons?” with the categories: “yes” (coded as 1), “no” (0).
<i>Parents’ attendance at cultural events</i>	Parents’ behavioral practices are measured by means of this question: “If you think back to when you yourself were 15 years old: How often at that time did your parents go to events such as the opera, classical concerts or the theatre: several times a year, less often or never?”. The variable is recorded into a dummy variable, measuring if parents have ever gone to such events (1) or not (0).
<i>Self-assigned social class</i>	The self-assigned social class includes the question: “There is a lot of talk about social class these days. What class would you describe yourself as belonging to?” with the categories: (1) lower class, (2) working class, (3) middle class, (4) upper middle class, and (5) upper class.
<i>Age</i>	Age is recorded in five groups: 18-29, 30-44, 45-59, 60-74, 75 and older.
<i>Gender</i>	A dummy variable indicating whether a respondent is male (0) or female (1).

Appendix B. Descriptive statistics

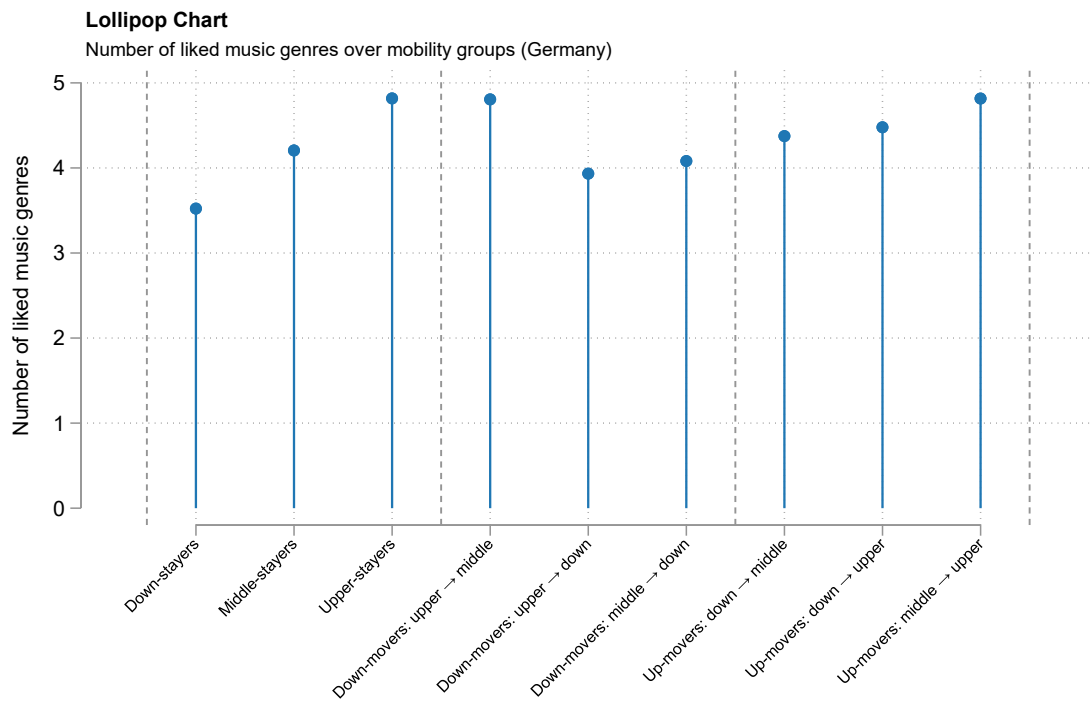
Table B1: Mean of the volume of likes in music by main socio-demographic variables, ALLBUS 2014

	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Number of liked music genres	3282	4.50	2.03	0	12
<i>By social mobility groups (N=3282):</i>					
Down-stayers	119	3.52	2.19	0	12
Middle-stayers	956	4.24	1.97	0	12
Upper-stayers	708	4.82	1.87	0	11
Down-movers: upper → middle	362	4.74	2.15	0	12
Down-movers: upper → down	35	4.06	1.73	1	8
Down-movers: middle → down	147	3.97	1.95	0	12
Up-movers: down → middle	230	4.39	2.24	0	12
Up-movers: down → upper	92	4.48	1.88	0	9
Up-movers: middle → upper	633	4.80	2.01	0	11
<i>By the level of education (N=3282):</i>					
Basic education	33	2.85	2.22	0	10
Lower secondary education	268	3.92	1.98	0	12
Upper secondary education	1548	4.38	2.06	0	12
Post-secondary education	232	4.64	1.90	0	11
Tertiary education	1201	4.82	1.94	0	11
<i>By highest level of education of parents (N=3282):</i>					
Basic education	69	3.77	2.24	0	10
Lower secondary education	372	4.25	2.17	0	12
Upper secondary education	1736	4.42	2.00	0	12
Post-secondary education	80	4.70	1.94	0	10
Tertiary education	1025	4.78	1.96	0	12
<i>By private music lessons (N=3281):</i>					
No	2178	4.31	2.04	0	12
Yes	1103	4.88	1.94	0	12
<i>By parents' attendance at opera, concert, theater (N=3274):</i>					
No	1745	4.30	2.01	0	12
Yes	1529	4.73	2.02	0	12
<i>By self-assigned social class (N=3208):</i>					
Lower class	76	3.72	2.38	0	12
Working class	827	4.05	2.06	0	12
Middle class	1937	4.65	1.97	0	12
Upper middle class	351	4.82	1.93	0	10
Upper class	17	5.18	1.78	2	9
<i>By gender (N=3282):</i>					
Male	1674	4.27	2.04	0	12
Female	1608	4.75	1.99	0	12
<i>By age groups (N=3280):</i>					
18-29	547	4.38	1.85	0	12
30-44	713	4.69	2.09	0	12
45-59	1025	4.55	2.05	0	12
60-74	712	4.51	2.05	0	12
75 and older	283	4.10	1.99	0	12

Table B2: Mean of the volume of likes in music by main socio-demographic variables, ALLBUS 2014, aged ≥ 25

	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
The number of liked music genres	2990	4.52	2.05	0	12
<i>By social mobility groups (N=2990):</i>					
Down-stayers	113	3.52	2.16	0	12
Middle-stayers	866	4.21	1.99	0	12
Upper-stayers	680	4.82	1.88	0	11
Down-movers: upper \rightarrow middle	279	4.81	2.22	0	12
Down-movers: upper \rightarrow down	15	3.93	1.67	1	6
Down-movers: middle \rightarrow down	111	4.08	2.02	0	12
Up-movers: down \rightarrow middle	219	4.37	2.26	0	12
Up-movers: down \rightarrow upper	92	4.48	1.88	0	9
Up-movers: middle \rightarrow upper	615	4.82	2.03	0	11
<i>By the level of education (N=2990):</i>					
Basic education	32	2.84	2.26	0	10
Lower secondary education	207	3.96	2.01	0	12
Upper secondary education	1364	4.36	2.10	0	12
Post-secondary education	211	4.67	1.94	0	11
Tertiary education	1176	4.82	1.95	0	11
<i>By highest level of education of parents (N=2990):</i>					
Basic education	65	3.68	2.25	0	10
Lower secondary education	359	4.26	2.17	0	12
Upper secondary education	1592	4.43	2.03	0	12
Post-secondary education	67	4.97	1.94	0	10
Tertiary education	907	4.79	1.99	0	12
<i>By private music lessons (N=2990):</i>					
No	2027	4.34	2.06	0	12
Yes	963	4.89	1.97	0	12
<i>By parents' attendance at opera, concert, theater (N=2982):</i>					
No	1635	4.31	2.02	0	12
Yes	1347	4.76	2.05	0	12
<i>By self-assigned social class (N=3208):</i>					
Lower class	68	3.76	2.44	0	12
Working class	757	4.07	2.07	0	12
Middle class	1767	4.66	1.99	0	12
Upper middle class	320	4.85	1.94	0	10
Upper class	16	5.19	1.83	2	9
<i>By gender (N=2990):</i>					
Male	1510	4.27	2.06	0	12
Female	1480	4.77	2.00	0	12
<i>By age groups (N=2988):</i>					
25-29	255	4.38	1.93	0	11
30-44	713	4.69	2.09	0	12
45-59	1025	4.55	2.05	0	12
60-74	712	4.51	2.05	0	12
75 and older	283	4.10	1.99	0	12

Figure B1: Mean of the volume of likes in music by social mobility groups, ALLBUS 2014 (N = 2990, aged ≥ 25)



Appendix C. Model fit of LCA models

Table C1: LCA models fit, MLR estimator (N=3282)

Classes (c)	LL	Free Parameters	AIC	BIC	SABIC	Entropy	Tech11	Tech14
Germany (N = 3282)								
2	-23070.08	25	46190.15	46342.56	46263.12	0.764	0.000	0.000
3	-22322.84	38	44721.68	44953.34	44832.59	0.775	0.000	0.000
4	-21990.28	51	44082.56	44393.47	44231.42	0.775	0.000	0.000
5	-21714.12	64	43556.24	43946.40	43743.04	0.809	0.000	0.000
6	-21555.03	77	43264.06	43733.47	43488.80	0.797	0.000	0.000
7	-21447.64	90	43075.27	43623.93	43337.96	0.783	0.000	0.000
8	-21352.66	103	42911.33	43539.24	43211.96	0.782	0.037	0.000

Notes: LL – Loglikelihood H0 value; AIC – Akaike Information Criteria; BIC – Bayesian Information Criteria; SABIC – Sample-Size Adjusted BIC; Tech11 – Lo-Mendell-Rubin Adjusted LRT Test for c-1 vs. c Classes, p-value; Tech14 – Parametric Bootstrapped Likelihood Ratio Test for c-1 vs. c Classes, p-value. Specifications of the analysis in MPLUS: Type = mixture; starts = 1600 400; lrtstarts = 200 200 500 200.

Appendix D. Preferences for more and less legitimate music genres

Table D1: Predicting preferences for more legitimate genres, OLS regression, Germany

	(1) Classical b (se)	(2) Opera b (se)	(3) Jazz b (se)
Level of education (5-point scale)	0.233*** (0.02)	0.248*** (0.02)	0.178*** (0.02)
Highest level of education of parents (5-point scale)	0.057** (0.02)	0.059** (0.02)	0.085*** (0.02)
Parents' attendance at opera, concert, theater (0-1)	0.199*** (0.04)	0.245*** (0.04)	0.220*** (0.04)
Private music lessons (0-1)	0.411*** (0.04)	0.303*** (0.05)	0.341*** (0.05)
Self-assessment of social class (1-5)	0.239*** (0.03)	0.160*** (0.03)	0.197*** (0.03)
Female (0-1)	0.319*** (0.04)	0.391*** (0.04)	0.019 (0.04)
18-29	-0.353*** (0.06)	-0.392*** (0.06)	0.132* (0.06)
30-44	-0.176*** (0.05)	-0.200*** (0.05)	0.057 (0.06)
45-59	0.000 (0.00)	0.000 (0.00)	0.000 (0.00)
60-74	0.290*** (0.05)	0.443*** (0.06)	0.025 (0.06)
75 and older	0.355*** (0.08)	0.655*** (0.08)	-0.123 (0.08)
Constant	1.114*** (0.11)	0.523*** (0.11)	0.983*** (0.11)
N	3198	3196	3196
R-sqr	0.202	0.216	0.138

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. ALLBUS 2014. Bootstrapping with 1000 replications. Listwise deletion.

Table D2: Predicting preferences for less legitimate genres, OLS regression, Germany

	(1) Pop b (se)	(2) Electronic b (se)	(3) Metal b (se)
Level of education (5-point scale)	-0.006 (0.02)	-0.016 (0.02)	0.003 (0.02)
Highest level of education of parents (5-point scale)	0.035 (0.02)	0.066** (0.02)	0.062** (0.02)
Parents' attendance at opera, concert, theater (0-1)	0.015 (0.04)	0.073 (0.04)	0.092 (0.05)
Private music lessons (0-1)	-0.159*** (0.04)	0.050 (0.05)	0.080 (0.05)
Self-assessment of social class (1-5)	0.125*** (0.03)	0.064 (0.03)	0.022 (0.03)
Female (0-1)	0.158*** (0.04)	-0.316*** (0.04)	-0.481*** (0.04)
18-29	0.064 (0.06)	1.062*** (0.07)	0.057 (0.07)
30-44	0.075 (0.05)	0.586*** (0.06)	0.197** (0.06)
45-59	0.000 (0.00)	0.000 (0.00)	0.000 (0.00)
60-74	-0.833*** (0.06)	-0.572*** (0.05)	-0.528*** (0.06)
75 and older	-1.809*** (0.07)	-0.794*** (0.05)	-0.894*** (0.06)
Constant	3.319*** (0.11)	1.884*** (0.12)	2.107*** (0.12)
N	3196	3193	3189
R-sqr	0.247	0.264	0.134

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. ALLBUS 2014. Bootstrapping with 1000 replications. Listwise deletion.

Chapter 3: Cultural Omnivorousness in Ukraine: Examining Relationships with Social Indicators via Literary Preferences among Readers

Abstract

The ability to accumulate extensive tastes, which is known as cultural omnivorousness, can play a significant role in social stratification and marking social groups. The omnivore argument posits that higher-status cultural tastes tend to be broad and diverse (omnivore). In contrast, lower-status cultural tastes are limited and exclusive (univore). This study investigates cultural omnivorousness in Ukraine by (1) examining latent classes of audiences and (2) exploring the relationship between cultural omnivorousness and positions in the social structure, considering educational attainment, financial situation, age, gender, and type of settlement. Relying on the data from the survey ‘Reading in the context of media consumption and life construction’ conducted in 2020, this study focuses on the breadth/volume of behavioral preferences in literary genres among readers in Ukraine (N = 1302). The latent class analysis presents evidence of the distinctiveness of the omnivore class. Subsequent regression analysis shows a strong positive association between higher education and omnivorous taste, whereas the financial situation bears no significant direct effect. Regression coefficients for socio-demographic variables indicate a more omnivorous taste amongst women and residents of big cities. The study concludes by discussing potential limitations and further perspectives for investigating the relationships between cultural omnivorousness and social stratification.

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3.1. Introduction

Studies on the relationship between social inequality and encoded cultural taste tend to encompass the omnivore argument (Ferrant, 2018). The motivation stems from the findings at the end of the 20th century on the propensity of upper classes not to limit their taste to highbrow categories but to engage in other popular cultural repertoires (Peterson, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996; Peterson and Simkus, 1992). Known as “omnivore argument” or “omnivore hypothesis”, it is assumed that cultural omnivorousness can reflect and shape social stratification, meaning that higher positions in the social structure tend to cross cultural boundaries and become omnivores, whereas individuals in lower positions are more likely to demonstrate exclusive taste (Peterson and Kern, 1996).

Currently, the construct of cultural omnivorousness in relation to social stratification is extensively studied across various countries (Lizardo, 2006; Lukas, 2015; Olivos and Wang, 2022; Purhonen et al., 2010; Rossman and Peterson, 2015). Empirical studies have highlighted supportive (to some degree) evidence for the new social division of taste between omnivorousness and univorousness (Bryson, 1996; García-Álvarez et al., 2007; Sintas and Álvarez, 2002). However, later investigations showed contrasting patterns (Atkinson, 2011; Brisson, 2019; Coulangeon, 2013; Lukas, 2015; Rossman and Peterson, 2015) and challenged the role of omnivorous taste in social stratification (Brisson, 2019; Nault et al., 2021), which brought ambiguity to the omnivore argument and questioned its cross-cultural universality.

Although omnivore studies cover many countries, it is still unknown how distinctive the figure of the omnivore audience is in Ukraine and whether the level of cultural omnivorousness can reflect the social structure. This study aims to fill this gap by providing the first attempt at empirically exploring the relationships of cultural omnivorousness with (i) socio-economic indicators (education, financial situation) and (ii) other socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, settlement). Using data collected in 2020 as part of the survey “Reading in the context of media consumption and life construction” (Vološevych and Shurenkova, 2020a, 2020b), this study concentrates on the literary preferences among readers and measures cultural omnivorousness as a breadth/volume of taste, aggregating the number of literary genres in which books have been read during the year. The structure of preferences was investigated via latent class analysis (LCA) in Mplus (Muthén and Muthén, 2012). To estimate social

differences in omnivorous taste, descriptive and regression analyses were conducted using Stata software (StataCorp, 2017).

This paper begins by discussing the theoretical framework of the omnivore argument combined with previous empirical findings. Subsequently, the data, operationalization, and methods are presented. The study proceeds by presenting the latent class, descriptive, and regression analyses. Finally, the findings regarding potential limitations and further perspectives are discussed. This research aims to contribute to the studies on cultural omnivorousness by exploring the concept in a new cultural domain (Ukraine) using current empirical data.

3.2. Theoretical framework

3.2.1. Overview of previous studies

Cultural tastes and positions in the social structure are closely related. This argument, proposed by Bourdieu in his work on the cultural field in France (Bourdieu, 1984, 1990; Prior, 2013), suggests a homology of taste in which people with better education and higher positions in society tend to prefer highbrow cultural categories (e.g., classical music), while people with lower levels of education and social positions – popular ones (lowbrow culture). Thus, taste and lifestyle can play a role in the distinctions that separate social groups from each other through (i) the legitimization of cultural products consumed by people in higher social positions, (ii) the subsequent symbolic violence (social power) of the higher classes, (iii) the role of class habitus (as a structured set of dispositions related to lifestyle decisions, taste, and consumption) in the manifestation and development of taste, and (iv) the unequal distribution of cultural capital and educational opportunities that accompanies highbrow cultural taste (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986, 1990; Weininger, 2005).

Recent studies on the relationships between social structures and cultural taste have shown a challenging trend toward the cultural omnivorousness of highbrow advocates (Peterson, 1992, 2005; Peterson and Kern, 1996; Peterson and Simkus, 1992). Instead of supporting homologous associations between positions in the social structure and certain tastes, scholars demonstrated that the upper class—for example, people with a privileged position in the social structure regarding status and education—are more likely to cross cultural boundaries and partake in diverse cultural repertoires (Peterson and Kern, 1996). In turn, people who occupy lower positions in the social hierarchy are more exclusive in their tastes and manifest univorousness.

This finding contributed to the development of the omnivore–univore thesis (omnivore hypothesis, omnivore argument), which proposes a revised view on the relationship between the social structure and extensive cultural taste.

The competition between Bourdieu's and Peterson's paradigms on the social role of taste is driven not only by empirical findings but also by misunderstanding regarding the concepts used in Bourdieu's theory of taste (Coulangeon, 2016: 91). Instead of a dichotomous interpretation of class structure and description of the dominant class taste as exclusive and highbrow, Lizardo and Skiles (2015: 94-99) pointed out the horizontal and vertical boundary-drawing using exclusivity in taste of each class that operates simultaneously in multidimensional social space. Similarly, a simplified interpretation of Bourdieu's ideas is typical in describing the relationship between education and aesthetic consumption. Thus, Lizardo (2019) emphasized that the own education (archived) and the education of parents (inherited) have different relative weights in the cultural capital of individuals: precisely inherited cultural capital in the forms of parents' education leads to a higher likelihood of the aestheticization of cultural items without institutional legitimation. It means that omnivorous patterns of taste can be partly explained by the differences in one's archived and inherited cultural capital. Thus, ideas of cultural homology and omnivorousness could have compatible relations.

Returning to the origins of the omnivore-univore thesis, the rise of cultural omnivorousness is attributed to various factors. Omnivorousness can be considered a sign of (i) structural change (e.g. an increase in the average level of education); (ii) value change toward postmaterialism (Peterson and Kern, 1996) and high tolerance (Warde et al., 2007); (iii) cultural democratization (Maguire, 2015, 2016), higher consumption, wider access to cultural products, and cultural abundance in a globalized world (Johnston et al., 2019); and (iv) subsequent generational differences in socialization (Eijck and Knulst, 2005) that induce cohort changes in omnivorousness (Ma, 2021).

The omnivore argument encompasses scholars' differing views on the functionality of cultural omnivorousness and debates on the social meaning of omnivorous taste (de Vries and Reeves, 2022; Roose et al., 2012). First, cultural omnivorousness can represent a new method of distinction: an ability to accumulate a wide taste that separates people in the social structure and marks out cultural capital (Chen, 2016; Ollivier, 2008; Warde and Gayo-Cal, 2009). The motivation for this shift stems from macro-level changes and a decrease in the salience of the traditional division of taste that comes with social stratification. For example, the upper class

uses its resources and abilities to extend the volume and composition of its cultural tastes to pursue distinction, whereas the lower class still tends to limit its cultural repertoire. Alternatively, being an omnivore could represent a new direction of cosmopolitan openness and tolerance (which, through acquired capital and education, is most accessible to the upper classes) that substitutes preferences toward limited “sophisticated” cultural products for the upper classes (Chan, 2019). Given these contrasting views, De Vries and Reeves (2022) distinguished two interpretations of omnivorousness—weak and strong—based on whether there is an interest in drawing and supporting class boundaries with taste patterns.

Regardless of which mechanism prevails, from a theoretical perspective, cultural omnivorousness can be defined as a skill for accumulating “transposable aesthetic dispositions that predetermine a propensity to the aestheticization of nonlegitimate potential cultural products” (Lizardo and Skiles, 2012: 277) that emerged under contemporary macro-level conditions (Lizardo and Skiles, 2012: 269) and can be perceived as a visualization of cultural tolerance (Lizardo and Skiles, 2012: 270). Notably, the aesthetic dispositions of omnivores are characterized by the ability to consider and constitute almost everything in the world as an aesthetic form (Bourdieu, 1984; Lizardo and Skiles, 2012: 267). This skill accumulation happens via “early experience in the family environment and enhanced by formal and extracurricular education and occupational experience” (Lizardo and Skiles, 2012: 277). The unequal distribution of cultural capital and educational opportunities can stimulate differences in omnivorousness of taste across social groups (e.g., based on class and status). Hence, cultural omnivorousness can be a relatively new pattern of cultural taste connected with the person’s corresponding position in the social structure.

However, empirical studies have demonstrated contrasting results. Some previous findings have supported a positive relationship between omnivorousness and certain indicators of position in a social structure, such as social class/status (García-Álvarez et al., 2007; Peterson and Kern, 1996) and level of education (Vander Stichele and Laermans, 2006; Warde et al., 2007). However, these relationships cannot be interpreted in a deterministic way, as similarly proposed by Bourdieu’s theory (Weininger, 2005). Instead, researchers assumed that higher positions shape more opportunities and higher subsequent probabilities to obtain or show omnivorous taste. Simultaneously, there is evidence that a still-operational homology exists between certain tastes and social structures (Atkinson, 2011; Coulangeon, 2013, 2013; Domański et al., 2020; Tampubolon, 2008). For example, a recent study published by Nault et

al. (2021) indicated that the omnivorous perspective relates to middle-status individuals, whereas people in the highest social positions maintain an exclusive and narrow taste. Furthermore, modern studies have suggested that the figure of omnivorousness can be considered a methodological artifact (Brisson, 2019; Rossman and Peterson, 2015).

Additionally, there is a variation in cultural omnivorousness across other socio-demographic characteristics. First, despite the assumption that highbrows of all ages are becoming more omnivorous (Peterson and Kern, 1996), middle-aged people tend to manifest the highest level of omnivorousness compared to other age groups (Warde and Gayo-Cal, 2009). Subsequent research confirmed that the peak of cultural omnivorousness is reached “in the mid-to-late stages of adulthood” (Ma, 2021: 10). Second, women are more likely to show extensive preferences and engage in diverse cultural categories (Ma, 2021; Purhonen et al., 2010; Warde and Gayo-Cal, 2009) compared to men. This stems from the finding that women are generally more likely to engage in artistic extracurricular education and cultural activities (e.g., in reading; Volosevych and Shurenkova, 2020b: 13) that theoretically leads to higher aesthetic dispositions toward pluralism in culture (Lizardo and Skiles, 2012). Age and gender-based differences become prominent when evaluating literary taste (Purhonen et al., 2010). Third, growing up in an urban area leads to a relatively higher likelihood of being omnivores (Purhonen et al., 2010). The settlement shapes the socialization circumstances: big cities provide higher access to diverse cultures and greater opportunities to reach higher education levels. Furthermore, big cities require higher income and human capital to meet the difficulties due to higher expenses.

3.2.2. Cultural omnivorousness beyond the Western Euro-American context

So far main empirical and theoretical contributions have been attained to the Western Euro-American context. However, previous cross-cultural studies have indicated that omnivorousness could function differently in various countries (Lukas, 2015) or manifest conflicting trends, such as a general narrowing of taste in Poland (Grodny et al., 2013). Countries can be identified as being more or less omnivorous (Lizardo, 2006), focusing on macro-level differences. Additionally, the role of omnivorousness at the individual level can differ; for example, it can serve either as an identity marker or a status indicator (Lukas, 2015). These findings raised the question of the generalizability of findings outside of the Western context.

Several studies have investigated cultural omnivorousness beyond the Western Euro-American context. Rankin and Ergin (2017) showed the existence of an omnivorous class and the tendency for individuals with high education and income level to show omnivorous taste and consumption in Turkey. The analysis indicated that, in turn, omnivorousness was sensitive to the context and manifested in a distinctive form, with the special symbolic boundary between local vs. global cultural products (Rankin and Ergin, 2017: 1078ff). The pattern of the cultural omnivorous taste and consumption has been examined in the Latin American context. Recent research by Olivos and Wang (2022) identified the cluster of omnivores in cultural consumption in Chile and addressed the structural factor of status inconsistency between objective and subjective social status. The results documented that the objective dimension showed up as a determinant of omnivorousness with a higher value than subjective social status (Olivos and Wang, 2022: 749). One empirical study examining omnivorousness in Ukraine in 2008-2010 has also identified a latent class of individuals who shared a relatively high likelihood to like a broad range of music genres (Domashchenko, 2017: 49–50). However, the taste for a popular culture dominated in the context of Ukraine (Domashchenko, 2017: 51). These studies documented that omnivorous taste could have unique cultural meanings depending on the context, which visualizes the benefit of examining omnivorousness in new environments.

Ukraine can be considered a special case for studying cultural profiles, offering new insights into the current understanding of omnivorousness. First, in terms of social inequality, it is among the countries with the highest inequality across regions in Europe and with limited upward mobility (The World Bank, 2018a). Together with unequal access to high-quality education (The World Bank, 2018b), these circumstances visualized the presence of conditions that may prevent omnivorous tastes from developing. Second, while omnivorousness was found to be associated with postmaterialistic values (Voronin, 2022), prevailing materialistic and survival orientations in Ukraine (Inglehart, 2018) might contribute to the nonfulfillment of sufficient conditions for developing omnivorous patterns. At the same time, the recent report of the World Values Survey in Ukraine indicated a move towards higher secular-rational and self-expression values (Shurenkova et al., 2020: 77) with a parallel increase in the importance of ensuring the country's strong defense forces (Shurenkova et al., 2020: 44) that used to be subsumed as a materialistic priority. Compared with all EU countries, Ukraine is ahead in the percentage of respondents who prioritize the country's strong defense forces among other

goals. The reason is attributed to the Russian military invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and the annexation of a part of its territory. Although external circumstances impose insecurity, Ukraine keeps developing in a postmaterialistic direction.

Another distinguishing characteristic of Ukraine is the case of consumer citizenship and consumer patriotism, that is, consumers follow national sentiments in consumption practices (Seliverstova, 2017). During the EuroMaidan revolution in 2013-2014, consumer activism became a form of civil engagement and has emerged as a form of boycott and buycott of Russian goods and pro-Russian businesses in Ukraine (Bulakh, 2017). As framed by Bulakh (2017: 77), “by boycotting the aggressor and/or supporting national produce, they [citizens] are turning their shopping carts into symbolic front lines”. Such practices added emotional and moral meanings to consumers’ decision-making (Bulakh, 2017: 82), which resulted in a decline in Russian cultural products, e.g., books, in Ukraine and an increase in Ukrainian-language local markets (Achilli, 2022; Bielkina and Baturevych, 2021). Thus, consumption practices could receive new moral and political barriers or, on the contrary, expand due to additional symbolic attention to local and European products.

Despite the fact that cross-cultural omnivorousness studies trace back to the end of the previous century, the role of cultural omnivorousness in Ukraine remains unknown due to the limited number of relevant datasets and studies. However, given that at the macro level countries are more or less prone to omnivorous taste (e.g., based on globalization; Lizardo, 2006), the study of omnivorousness in Ukraine can expand the horizons of the omnivore-univore thesis and contribute to the examination of cross-cultural differences in taste.

Is there a distinct segment of consumers who show omnivorous taste even in a society that places survival values ahead of self-expression, follows national sentiments in consumption choices, and suffers from external aggression (as of 2020) and its consequences? What does it mean to be an omnivore in this context, and how can social positions structure cultural consumption? This study, for the first time, explores the figure of the omnivore audience using up-to-date data in Ukraine. Furthermore, it examines the relationships between cultural omnivorousness and indicators of positions in social structure as well as relevant socio-demographic variables—such as age, gender, and settlement—that play a distinct role in the omnivore hypothesis.

3.3. Data, operationalization, and methods

3.3.1. Data

This study relies on representative² data from the adult survey “Reading in the context of media consumption and life construction” (N = 2147 observations in the unweighted dataset) collected by Info Sapiens LLC for the government organization Ukrainian Book Institute in August-September 2020 (Ukrainian Book Institute, 2020; Volosevych and Shurenkova, 2020a, 2020b). The data provides an opportunity to estimate cultural omnivorousness in literature by focusing on the genre of books reportedly read in the previous year. It provides a sufficient variability of genres (19 items) that allows the differences in the breadth of taste to be captured. Additionally, the survey includes information on the educational level, financial situation, age, gender, and settlement.

The analytical sample comprised only individuals who reported reading any number of books in the previous year higher than 0. Individuals who never read for leisure (“non-readers”) were excluded. Last, 63 respondents who read books but did not select any genre out of the 19 options were also dropped from the analysis. These answers could create ambiguity because they might indicate a lack of thinking about reading in genre categories or a narrow focus on books that do not belong to any of the proposed styles.

By decreasing the sample, this study examines the omnivore argument among people who are at least in some way involved in the relevant cultural field (literature). This allows diminishing potential confounders that affect engagement in a certain cultural field. The final sample size for this study comprises 1302 respondents. As a disadvantage, some social groups might not be sufficiently saturated for a comparative analysis of the level of omnivorousness. Among 872 cases that were excluded, only 21% obtained higher education, 43% had an above-average financial status, 51% lived in rural or small towns/cities (<100t), 45% were women, and the average age was 39 years. Observations in the analytical sample, in turn, were more educated, younger, more likely to live in big cities, had better a financial situation and included more women: 51% had higher education, 59% had higher than average financial status, 36% lived

² Except for the uncontrolled territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

in rural or small cities/towns (<100t), 59% were women, and the average age of respondents was 37 years.

3.3.2. Operationalization

Cultural omnivorousness

The current state of research is far from the consensus on the conceptualization and operationalization of cultural omnivorousness (e.g., Hazır and Warde, 2015; Kunißen et al., 2018; Peterson, 2005; Robette and Roueff, 2014). Different studies imply diverse measures (Hazır and Warde, 2015; Peterson, 2005). This study follows two widespread mechanisms: (1) defining the omnivore latent class and (2) computing the measure (score, index) of cultural omnivorousness. The second approach is implemented following the concept of “omnivorousness by volume” used by Purhonen et al. (2010). Thus, the score of cultural omnivorousness is measured by counting the number of book genres the respondent read in the previous year (behavioral preferences in genres). Genres are of frequent interest because they serve as one of the main mechanisms for classifying cultural items in everyday life (e.g., in music, Rentfrow and Gosling, 2003). As for the benefits of using genres, this categorization of tastes is used to evaluate and share one’s preferences, and can potentially have some consensus in the domain of literature among members of the same culture.

The questionnaire includes the multiple-choice question “What genre books have you read during the year?” with these categories: classic; modern detectives; love novels; modern novels; fiction, fantasy; thriller, mysticism, horror; scientific and popular science publications; professional/business literature; books on psychology and self-development; biographies, memories; religious books; textbooks and manuals; applied literature; literature for children and teenagers; encyclopedias and dictations; comics and graphic prose; art publications; poetry; other (Vološevych and Shurenkova, 2020b: 82). One separate category, “historical books”, was added after coding other mentioned genres by data providers (Vološevych and Shurenkova, 2020a).

The computed index indicates the breadth of taste in the literature focusing on the 19 genres included in the dataset. Thus, attention is paid to the volume of taste rather than its composition. The motivation for this approach stems from its extensive and consistent usage in modern empirical research (e.g., Bryson, 1996; Goldberg, 2011; Kunißen et al., 2018; Ma, 2021; Rossman and Peterson, 2015).

Education and financial situation

The position in the social structure is captured by two indicators: educational attainment and financial situation in the family (financial status). The respondents were asked to indicate their level of education using four categories: (i) incomplete secondary; (ii) secondary; (iii) vocational (specialized secondary education, e.g., by technical schools – “technikum” – or colleges); and (iv) higher or incomplete higher (Volosevych and Shurenkova, 2020a, 2020b: 133). Regarding the level of financial situation, respondents identified whether they: (1) need to save on food; (2) [have] enough for food, but for buying clothes and shoes there is a need to save; (3) [have] enough for food and necessary clothes, shoes, but for buying as a nice suit, mobile phone, vacuum cleaner there is a need to save; (4) [have] enough for food, clothes, shoes, other purchases, but to buy things that are expensive there is a need to save or borrow; (5) [have] enough for food, clothes, shoes, expensive shopping, but for buying a car, an apartment there is need to save or borrow, (6) can make any necessary purchase at any time (Volosevych and Shurenkova, 2020b: 135).

Other socio-demographic aspects

The dataset includes information on age (from 15 to 59), gender (male, female) and size of the settlement (villages, cities/towns with population < 50 000, from 51 000 to 100 000, from 101 000 to 500 000, > 500 000) (Volosevych and Shurenkova, 2020a, 2020b). For the control purpose in the regression analysis, language used at home and the macro-region of residence³ were used to address the historically perceived socio-cultural divide factors in Ukraine.

3.3.3. Methods

First, this study examined the structure of reader segments using LCA (Nylund-Gibson and Choi, 2018). This method is widespread among omnivore studies and allows a separate pattern of omnivorous taste or consumption to be detected (e.g., Coulangeon, 2013; Katz-Gerro and Jæger, 2013; Kunißen et al., 2018). Generally, this analysis can be considered a precondition

³ *Western region: Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Chernivtsi oblasts. Central region: Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Sumy, Khmelnytsky, Cherkasy, Chernihiv oblasts and the city of Kyiv. Southern region: Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson oblasts. Eastern region: Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk, Kharkiv oblasts.*

for discussing the omnivore argument because it provides insights into the figure of omnivorousness in the social structure. In this study, it is used to classify audiences based on their probability of reading books in the list of genres. To determine the relevant number of classes, three information criteria (AIC, BIC, and BIC adjusted), an adjusted Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood-ratio test, and Lo-Mendell-Rubin adjusted LRT test (Asparouhov and Muthén, 2012) were used.

The subsequent analysis presented the mean differences in the cultural omnivorousness scores (with 95% confidence interval) between different educational levels and social positions regarding the financial situation, age, gender, and settlement groups. It was followed by linear regression analysis to estimate the separate effects of the variables on the manifestation of cultural omnivorousness. The analysis and data visualization were performed via Stata software (StataCorp, 2017) and Mplus (Muthén and Muthén, 2012).

3.4. Results

This section presents the descriptive statistics for the measures of cultural omnivorousness, the results of LCA, and how the average number of liked literature genres differs between social groups. It is followed by the estimation of regression models with socio-demographic predictors.

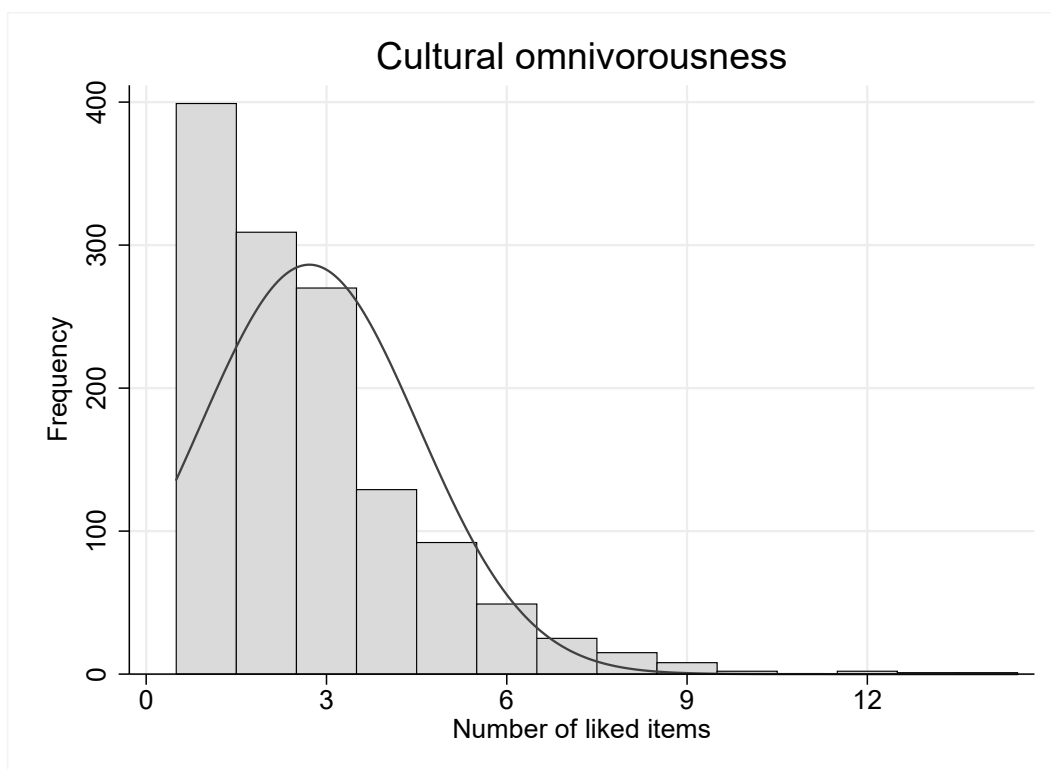
3.4.1. Cultural omnivorousness score

The index of cultural omnivorousness ranged from 1 to 14 and indicated the breadth of taste in literature. The value “1” implies that the respondent reported reading books in one genre in the previous year, while the value “14” indicates reading books in fourteen different genres. Among the readers, there was high variability in engagements with different genres (Appendix A). The most popular genres among readers were classic (32%), modern detectives (27%), books on psychology and self-development (24%), love novels (24%), and modern novels (23%). The lowest preferences belonged to comics and graphic prose (2%), historical books (3%), and art publications (4%). In addition, there were differences in preferences between respondents with different levels of education, financial status, gender, place of residence, and age. For example, reading books on psychology and self-development was more typical for people with higher education, while fiction and fantasy books or textbooks and manuals were more prevalent among respondents with incomplete secondary education. The difference in

tastes became vivid when evaluating the preferences of men and women. As an illustration, compared to women, men read more genres such as fiction, fantasy; scientific and popular science publications; professional/business literature; or thriller, mysticism, and horror. In contrast to men, women showed considerably higher preferences towards love novels; books on psychology, self-development; modern novels; or literature for children and teenagers. For a detailed comparison of differences between social groups, refer to Appendix A, Tables A2-A6.

The mean cultural omnivorousness score was 2.72, with a standard deviation of 1.81. The distribution (Figure 3.1) was heavily right-skewed (Skewness = 1.55, Kurtosis = 6.58), which means a propensity for electivism and a limited number of genres read. It is also attributed to the fact that engagement in diverse genres requires a sufficient number of read books during the year. On the one hand, it is impossible to read books in more than three different genres if a person has read only three books during the last year. On the other hand, one book can still be assigned to more than one genre by respondents. Despite the mentioned limitation, the constructed index allows the breadth of preferences in genres to be estimated using a large scale and consciously reported behavioral patterns.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of cultural omnivorousness in literature among readers, N=1302



Note: author's calculation. The line indicates normal distribution.

The detailed frequencies and descriptive statistics for education, financial situation, age, gender, and settlement are available in Appendix B, Table B1.

3.4.2. Latent class of omnivores

First, four models from two to six classes were estimated. The overview of information criteria (Figure 3.2) demonstrated that the four-class solution implied the lowest values of the BIC and adjusted BIC information criteria compared to other models with a smaller or larger number of classes. AIC indices started leveling off after reaching four classes. In addition, the Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood-ratio test pointed out that adding one class improved the model fit up to the four-class solution⁴. The P-value 0.70 for the five-class solution showed that adding one further class would not result in a significant improvement in the model fit over the four-class model. Thus, a four-class solution was considered the optimal model. This decision was also supported by the Lo-Mendell-Rubin adjusted LRT test⁵. As a result of LCA, the probabilities belonging to each of the four classes were generated for each individual in the sample. Respondents were assigned to the class to which they most likely belonged according to the posterior probabilities.

Table 3.1 presents the probabilities of reading books in a certain genre for each class. The first class had a relative size of 11% in the sample and implied the highest probability to like for 14 genres out of the 19 in the list compared to other classes. The taste of this class could be described by the tolerance for a variety of tastes and engagement in different genres. The higher probability of liking was related to so-called highbrow styles such as “Classic”, “Books on psychology, and self-development” or “Scientific and popular science publications” combined with the popular genre “Modern novels”. Therefore, the first class is a visualization of omnivorous taste. Other classes were characterized by higher selectivity compared to the first one.

⁴ Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood-ratio test for 4 (H0) vs. 5 classes: value = 60.919, $p = 0.70$;
for 3 (H0) vs. 4 classes: value = 167.189, $p = 0.02$;
for 2 (H0) vs. 3 classes: value = 301.129, $p < 0.001$;
for 1 (H0) vs. 2 classes: value = 317.661, $p = 0.03$.

⁵ Lo-Mendell-Rubin adjusted LRT test for 4 (H0) vs. 5 classes: value = 60.497, $p = 0.70$;
for 3 (H0) vs. 4 classes: value = 166.032, $p = 0.02$;
for 2 (H0) vs. 3 classes: value = 299.044, $p < 0.001$;
for 1 (H0) vs. 2 classes: value = 315.461, $p = 0.03$.

Figure 3.2: The comparison of information criteria (AIC, BIC, BIC adjusted) for latent-class models (N = 1302)

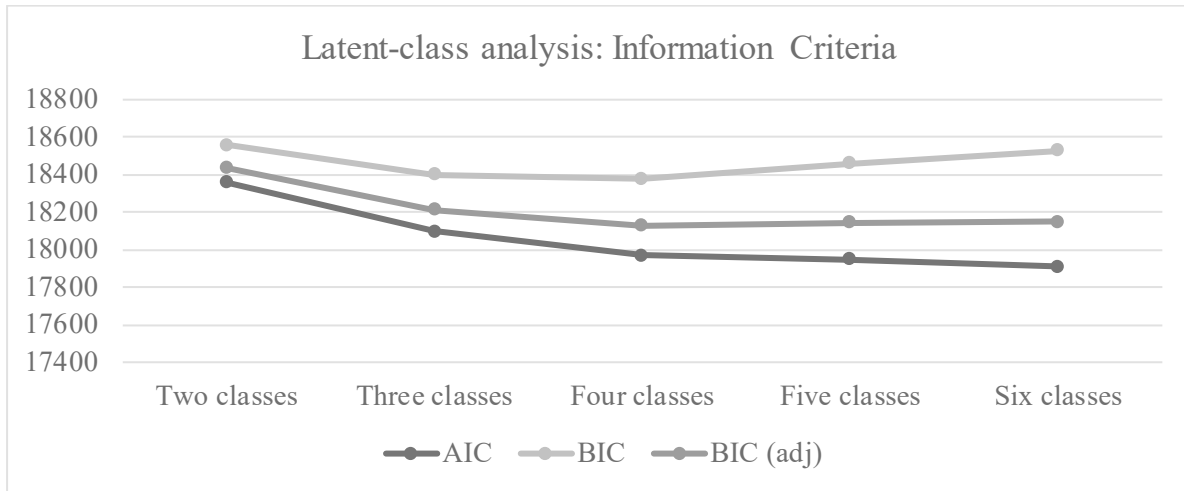


Table 3.1: LCA results, probability scale of liking each genre (N = 1302)

Label	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
	Omnivorous taste	Professional-educational taste	Contemporary-sensitive taste	Adventure taste
Relative size based on most likely membership	11%	35%	35%	19%
Classic	56%	19%	39%	28%
Modern detectives	38%	8%	30%	50%
Love novels	38%	3%	47%	18%
Modern novels	45%	7%	37%	19%
Fiction, fantasy	28%	12%	8%	58%
Thriller, mysticism, horror	21%	1%	0%	43%
Scientific and popular science publications	44%	31%	1%	23%
Professional/business literature	35%	29%	0%	11%
Books on psychology, self-development	47%	31%	13%	14%
Biographies, memories	22%	7%	5%	4%
Religious books	14%	16%	6%	0%
Textbooks and manuals	37%	19%	3%	6%
Applied literature	21%	9%	0%	4%

Label	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
	Omnivorous taste	Professional-educational taste	Contemporary-sensitive taste	Adventure taste
Literature for children and teenagers	19%	8%	14%	3%
Encyclopedias and dictations	37%	6%	1%	2%
Comics and graphic prose	12%	0%	1%	2%
Art Publications	20%	1%	1%	1%
Poetry	29%	0%	4%	2%
Historical books	1%	5%	2%	0%

Note: not weighted. Darker grey indicates higher values.

Other classes accounted for 89% of the sample's relative size. The second class (35%) showed a higher probability of liking only professional-educational genres such as "Scientific and popular science publications", "Books on psychology, self-development", and "Professional/business literature". The third class (35%) focused on sensitive and contemporary literature such as "Love novels" and "Modern novels". The fourth class (19%) was more likely to read non-scientific adventure books such as "Fiction, fantasy", "Modern detectives", and "Thriller, mysticism, horror" genres.

The entropy coefficient of 0.613 showed a sufficient degree of distinctiveness that supported the significant manifestation of the omnivore class. These results allowed speaking about the hypothesis of omnivorousness in Ukraine and progress to establishing connections with the social structure.

By assigning respondents to the most likely belonged one latent class out of four according to the highest posterior probabilities, the omnivore class is distinguished by certain characteristics (Table 3.2). It had the highest percentage of people with higher education and above-average financial status compared to other classes. However, the difference between some classes was minimal, e.g., the percentage of people with high financial status was approximately the same in the first (omnivore) and the fourth (adventure) classes. While the majority in the omnivore class were women and residents of large cities (>100t) with an average age of 36 years old, the adventure class was more prevalent among younger men living in urban areas. Notably, representatives of the omnivore class demonstrated the largest volume of taste, almost two-three times bigger than individuals in other classes.

Table 3.2: Characteristics of the latent classes (N = 1302)

Category/Label	<i>Class 1</i> Omnivorous taste	<i>Class 2</i> Professional- educational taste	<i>Class 3</i> Contemporary- sensitive taste	<i>Class 4</i> Adventure taste
People who obtained higher education level in a class, %	59%	56%	43%	51%
People with the three highest financial levels in a class, %	69%	56%	55%	68%
Female in a class, %	73%	47%	77%	39%
People living in villages and small cities/towns (<100t), %	31%	40%	39%	28%
Average age	36.00	36.95	39.93	34.70
Average cultural omnivorousness score (volume of literary taste) in a class	6.13	2.15	2.07	2.99

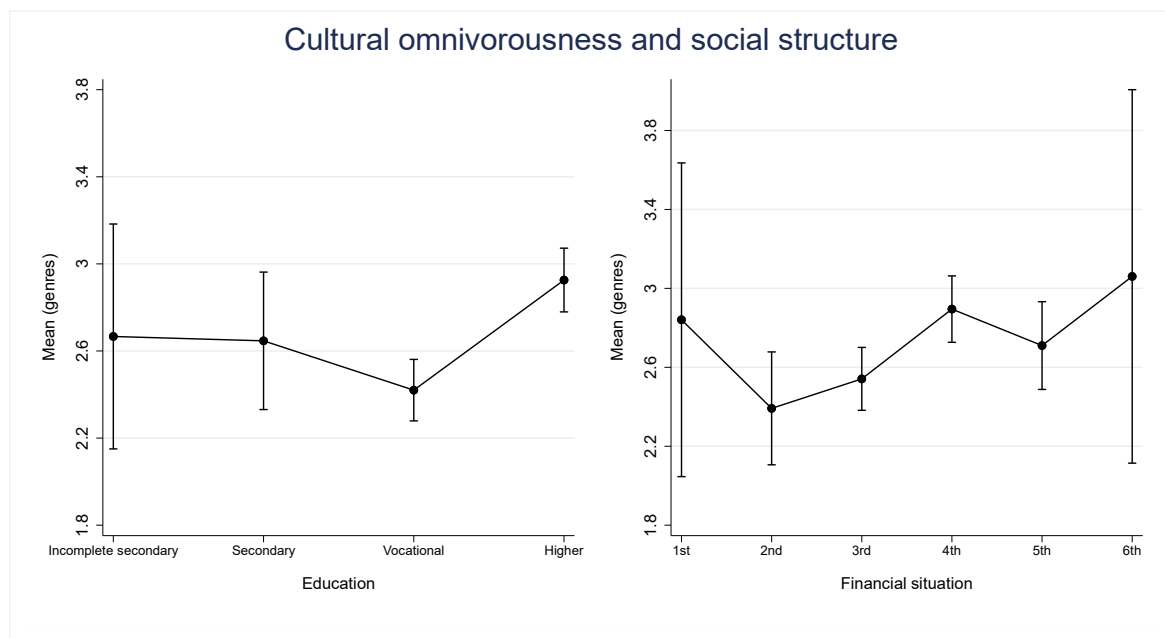
As for other classes, the third class (contemporary-sensitive taste) had the largest share of people with lower education and below-average financial status. The majority of class members were female, and the average age was almost 40 years, which was higher than in other classes. The second class (professional-educational taste) had a share of people with higher education close to the omnivorous class. The main differences from the omnivore class were the predominance of men among the representatives of the second class, a smaller percentage of people with above-average financial situations, and a larger share of residents of villages and small towns.

3.4.3. Descriptive analysis of cultural omnivorousness score by social groups

Focusing on the role of education (Figure 3.3), it was found that the level of cultural omnivorousness varies between groups. However, only one significant difference was identified: higher education implied higher cultural omnivorousness than vocational educational attainment. Moreover, no trend was observed towards a monotonic linear increase in omnivorousness with the growth of the educational level. Instead, it can be attributed to engagement with literature and reading for pleasure already requiring a certain level of

education. However, at the same time, there was a statistically significant difference in the level of omnivorousness between the two constructed groups of respondents with high versus non-high education (t-test = -4.28, p-value < 0.001). The mean score for people with higher education equaled 2.93, whereas individuals without higher education received 2.50 scale points. Thus, primarily reaching the highest educational level accompanied a substantially higher cultural omnivorousness compared to the aggregate group of lower educational attainments.

Figure 3.3: The differences in cultural omnivorousness across educational groups and financial status, N = 1302

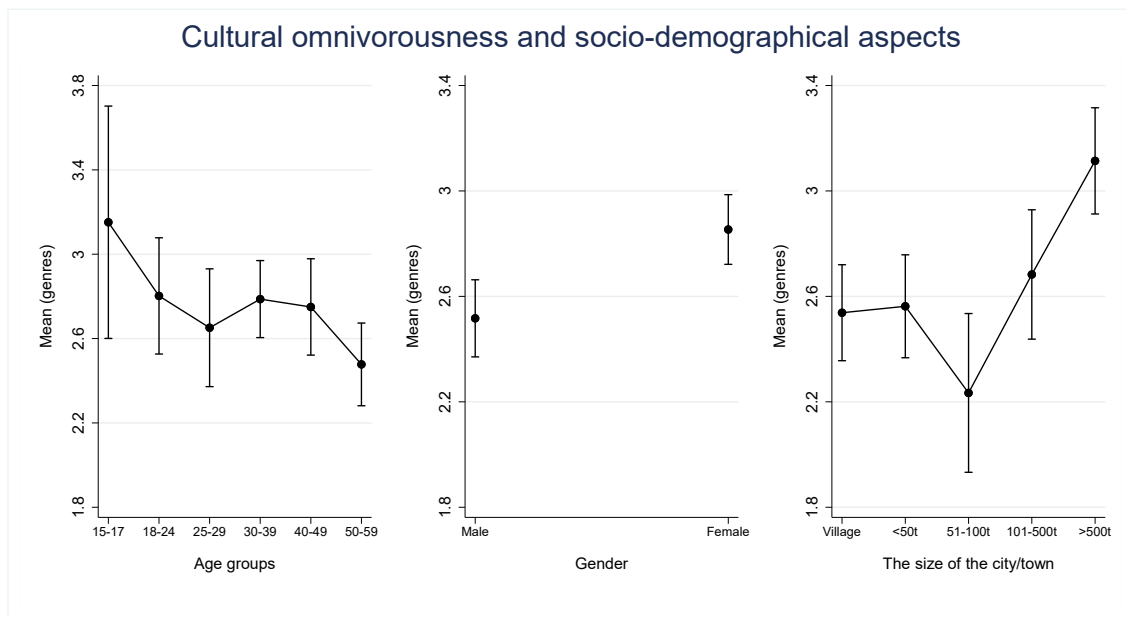


Social positions regarding the financial situation (status) can also make differences in the cultural omnivorousness level. People with a middle-high financial situation (4th group: need to save or borrow only for expensive things) were found to have significantly higher omnivorousness than individuals in the lower groups (2nd and 3rd), whose financial opportunities were limited. Similar to the educational levels, there was no slight increase in omnivorousness with the financial situation's improvement. A significant difference can be observed by aligning six levels into two social position groups (high vs. low). Thus, people in high social positions (4th—6th levels) benefited from the higher omnivorousness, contrary to respondents who occupied lower positions (1st—3rd level). T-test of differences resulted in a value of -3.05 with p-statistic < 0.001. Consequently, higher social positions regarding

financial opportunities, to some degree, implied higher omnivorousness, but mainly comparing middle-high and middle-low levels.

Descriptive statistics by age group (Figure 3.4) revealed a slight trend toward a decrease in omnivorousness with age. However, all differences between groups were found to be statistically insignificant at 5% p-level, so the decrease of omnivorousness with age was not prominent. Simultaneously, consistent with expectations, the gender difference was found to be important: women were more likely to have more extensive taste than men. Similarly, the place of living mattered; people who live in big cities tended to have more extensive tastes than the residents of almost all types of smaller settlements.

Figure 3.4: The differences in cultural omnivorousness across age, gender, and settlement groups, N = 1302



To estimate the simultaneous effect of education and financial situation on cultural omnivorousness with separate control for socio-demographic variables, this study presents results from a linear regression analysis.

3.4.4. Regression analysis for cultural omnivorousness score

The multivariate regression analysis provides an opportunity to estimate the separate effects of variables on the cultural omnivorousness measures by controlling for the role of other factors (Table 3.3). At the preparatory stage, the dependent variable was log-transformed to address

high right-skewness. Additionally, robust standard errors were preferred to avoid overestimating the effects in the sample.

Table 3.3: Results from the regression analysis of cultural omnivorousness score on education, financial status, gender, settlement, age, language used at home, and macro-region

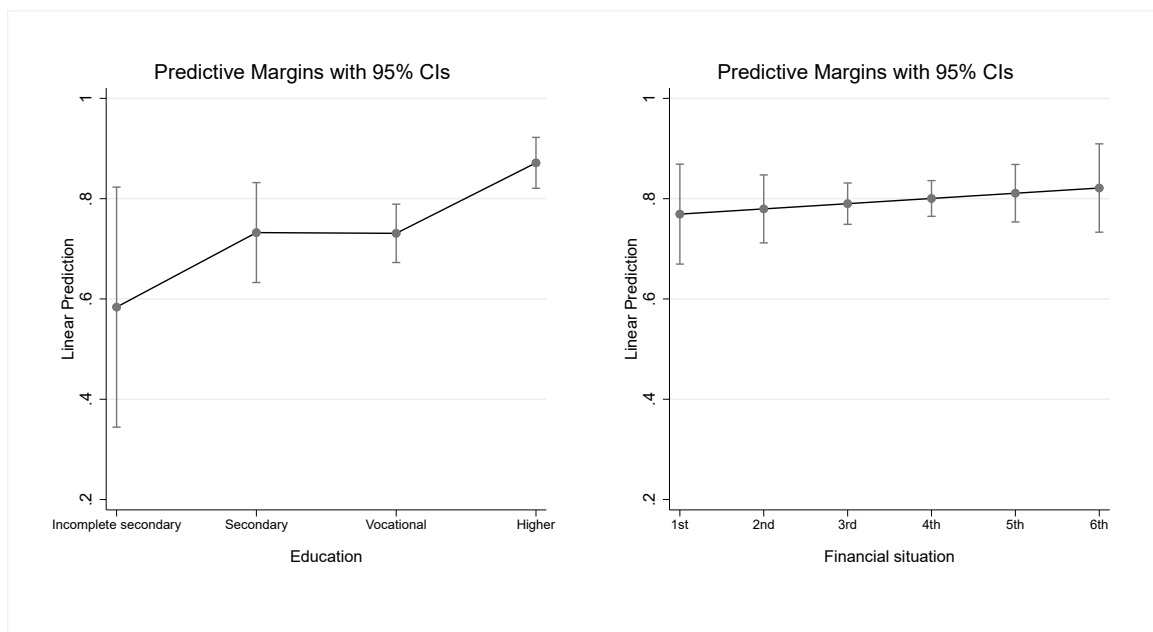
	<i>Cultural omnivorousness, ln</i>		
	<i>b</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>
Education [reference: vocational (technical schools)]:			
Incomplete secondary	-0.15	-0.04	(-1.14)
Secondary	<0.01	<0.01	(0.03)
Higher	0.14***	0.11	(3.59)
Financial situation (status) [scale 1-6]	0.01	0.02	(0.58)
Female [0-1]	0.13***	0.10	(3.58)
Settlement [reference: cities > 500t]:			
Village	-0.20***	-0.14	(-4.00)
City/town, <50t	-0.18***	-0.12	(-3.30)
City/town, 51-100t	-0.29***	-0.11	(-3.99)
City/town, 101-500t	-0.17**	-0.11	(-3.31)
Age groups [reference: 30-39]			
15-17	0.25*	0.09	(2.13)
18-24	0.01	0.01	(0.22)
25-29	-0.06	-0.03	(-1.06)
40-49	-0.04	-0.02	(-0.71)
50-59	-0.10*	-0.07	(-2.11)
Language used at home [reference: mix Ukrainian and Russian]			
Ukrainian	-0.03	-0.03	(-0.59)
Russian	-0.13*	-0.10	(-2.38)
Other	0.16	0.01	(0.86)
Macro-region [reference: East]			
West	-0.10	-0.07	(-1.51)
Centre	-0.02	-0.01	(-0.34)
South	-0.03	-0.01	(-0.42)
Constant	0.88***		(8.38)

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (for b coefficients). $N = 1302$. Robust standard errors. $R\text{-squared} = 6.1\%$

The regression model results supported the high importance of higher education in accumulating extensive taste, but the relationship is nonlinear (Figure 3.5). The greatest omnivorousness was observed among people with high education (*ceteris paribus*)—the score for cultural omnivorousness was 15% higher for individuals with high education than for individuals with vocational-level education. However, all other educational levels did not differ from each other in the omnivorousness score.

Regarding financial status, the factor lost its significance in the regression model. Neither the differences across financial groups nor the linear trend could be identified. One scale-point improvement in financial situation was only associated with a statistically insignificant 1.05% increase in omnivorousness. In turn, the differences in predictive margins (Figure 3.5) illustrate the higher importance of educational qualification compared to the financial situation. This finding suggests that omnivorousness in Ukraine separates people based on a considerably high educational attainment.

Figure 3.5: Linear predictions for the cultural omnivorousness, marginal effects of education, and financial situation, N = 1302



In accordance with the theoretical assumption, the omnivorousness score was 13.40% higher for women than for men. It follows the findings that women are generally more likely to engage in literary activities in Ukraine (Vološevych and Shurenkova, 2020b: 14). The difference in place of residence also remained stable. People from big cities (> 501t) were more likely to be omnivores than individuals from all other types of settlements. For example, the level of cultural omnivorousness was 25% lower in small-middle cities (51–100t) and 18% lower in villages in contrast to big cities. Results regarding age demonstrated a slight trend toward smaller omnivorousness with aging. However, groups aged 18–24, 25–29, 30–39, and 40–49 did not significantly differ from each other. Concurrently, the oldest group (50–59) and the youngest (15–17) were found to be less and more omnivorous, respectively, compared to middle-aged (30–39) people.

Moving to the control factors, regional and language discrepancies were not apparent while predicting the omnivorousness score. One exception refers to the readers who speak Russian at home – they were predicted to have smaller omnivorousness than respondents who used both Ukrainian and Russian languages.

3.5. Conclusion and discussion

Motivated by the lack of empirical investigation of the social division of omnivorous taste, this research empirically explored the role of omnivorous taste in Ukraine. The focus encompassed the relationships between cultural omnivorousness and indicators of positions in the social structure (education, financial situation) and socio-demographic variables (age, gender, settlement). Relying on the data from the adult population survey “Reading in the context of media consumption and life construction” conducted in 2020 (Volosevych and Shurenkova, 2020a, 2020b), this study investigated the latent class of omnivores and the breadth/volume of one’s taste via literary genres of readers by focusing on the number of genres of books read in the previous year.

The findings showed that the figure of cultural omnivorousness in literary taste marks high educational attainment rather than substantial financial capabilities. This result is consistent with previous findings that showed the high importance of education rather than class/status identification (Warde and Gayo-Cal, 2009). In Ukraine, low upward mobility (The World Bank, 2018a) can increase the distance between cultural and economic capital on compatible social positions, as well as increase the importance of inherited cultural capital. Thus, it can be suggested that omnivorous taste might indicate cultural capital as opposed to economic resources. Based on the results, it is impossible to assess how strongly the omnivore hypothesis is incorporated into taste patterns and social inequality in Ukraine.

From a broader perspective, this study supports the distinct identification of the omnivorous pattern in Ukraine. Although the latent omnivore class had the smallest size compared to other classes, it did not lack distinctiveness – members shared high probabilities of reading different genres of books compared to other classes. It adds empirical value to the previous exploratory studies in the music field that have revealed a latent class of omnivores, which most likely includes 12–14% of individuals (Domashchenko, 2017). However, the results still suffer from a lack of validation and examination of social meaning. Hence, further studies on the motivations for taste expansion and the investigation of relationships with more comprehensive

and detailed measures of social stratification and cultural consumption can extensively explore the figure of omnivores in Ukraine.

Additionally, since the development of omnivorous taste is attributed to structural and value change (Peterson and Kern, 1996), survival values that still prevail over self-expression priorities (Inglehart, 2018), an unsustainable education system (The World Bank, 2018b), and insecurity due to the external military aggression may be obstacles to the development of omnivorousness for certain groups. More research in this direction to investigate the role of different factors in the stimulation of omnivorous dispositions is needed. Although we observed a strong effect of higher education, a relatively small share of readers show omnivorous patterns. Besides, the measurement of the education level in the survey is limited to only four categories, which, in turn, does not allow potential differences to be captured, particularly between diverse types of higher education.

As to what other socio-demographic variables structure cultural omnivorous consumption, certain associations with age, gender, and place of the settlement appeared in the analysis. Female propensity toward omnivorousness and a positive effect of urban life (big cities) correspond to the general findings previously proposed by Purhonen et al. (2010). Nonetheless, the age trend contradicts tendencies uncovered in other cultural domains in the Western Euro-American context (Ma, 2021; Warde and Gayo-Cal, 2009) because individuals in our sample did not benefit from higher omnivorousness in middle age. In turn, the results show a slight move toward decreased omnivorousness with age, with a limited number of significant differences between age groups. However, an accurate estimation of temporal trajectories would require differentiation between aging, cohort, and period effects (Ma, 2021) that could not be included in this study due to the cross-sectional data used.

The notable limitations of this study are as follows: (i) the analysis was performed in only one cultural realm (in contrast to the recommendations from Holt, 1998), (ii) only one perspective of cultural omnivorousness measurement was considered named weak omnivorousness (see de Vries and Reeves, 2022), and (iii) the role of social origins were not investigated although educational background contributes to the development of omnivorous dispositions (Lizardo, 2019). For example, engagement in reading for pleasure might already draw a boundary and mark cultural capital. The study of cultural consumption in the UK indicated that the fact of participation in the field of books was “specifically socially located within urban, educated and cosmopolitan populations” (Bennett et al., 2009: 110). However, no strong clusters of taste had

emerged in the field, meaning relatively low stratification in literary consumption. Although previous studies have shown that omnivorousness in various fields tends to have a complementary relationship (Purhonen et al., 2010), research on the omnivore–univore thesis in literary taste can potentially suffer from unreliable conclusions for other cultural realms. Regarding the measurement, this study only ascertained the volume of taste based on reported behavior and captured neither the composition of taste nor emotional preferences/knowledge factors. In addition, it was assumed that the social distinction occurs between genres rather than within them. Therefore, the transferability of the findings to the general arguments is debatable. Despite these limitations, this study is the first of its kind to empirically explore the concept of cultural omnivorousness in Ukraine while considering its complexity. Thus, it provides new insights for further investigation of the omnivore argument and cross-cultural comparative studies within and beyond the Western Euro-American context.

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Appendix A. Statistics

Table A1: Percentage of readers who read book(s) in a certain genre in the previous year (N = 1302)

Literature Genre	%
Classic	31.72
Modern detectives	26.88
Books on psychology, self-development	24.04
Love novels	23.89
Modern novels	23.35
Fiction, fantasy	21.97
Scientific and popular science publications	21.58
Professional/business literature	17.13
Textbooks and manuals	13.75
Thriller, mysticism, horror	11.60
Literature for children and teenagers	10.22
Religious books	9.45
Biographies, memories	7.60
Encyclopedias and dictations	7.45
Applied literature	6.91
Poetry	5.45
Art publications	3.69
Historical books	2.61
Comics and graphic prose	2.23

Note: not weighted.

Table A2: Percentage of readers who read book(s) in a certain genre in the previous year (N = 1302), by education

	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational (technical schools)	Higher
	%	%	%	%
Classic	35	33	28	34
Modern detectives	15	27	30	26
Books on psychology, self-development	6	12	20	31
Love novels	10	27	29	21
Modern novels	15	23	24	24
Fiction, fantasy	31	22	19	23
Scientific and popular science publications	17	16	18	26
Professional/business literature	2	9	12	24
Textbooks and manuals	54	18	6	15
Thriller, mysticism, horror	10	12	12	11
Literature for children and teenagers	17	14	8	10
Religious books	6	8	9	10
Biographies, memories	2	6	6	9
Encyclopedias and dictations	17	11	4	8
Applied literature	13	7	5	8
Poetry	4	5	4	7
Art publications	2	5	2	5
Historical books	2	2	4	2
Comics and graphic prose	8	7	1	1

Note: not weighted. Darker grey indicates higher values.

Table A3: Percentage of readers who read book(s) in a certain genre in the previous year (N = 1302), by financial status

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Classic	27	29	34	34	26	27
Modern detectives	25	26	23	32	23	30
Books on psychology, self-development	14	23	24	24	26	24
Love novels	20	27	24	26	19	30
Modern novels	18	32	20	25	21	30
Fiction, fantasy	23	15	17	26	23	33
Scientific and popular science publications	34	17	21	20	25	21
Professional/business literature	7	6	19	16	23	27
Textbooks and manuals	18	8	13	16	12	12
Thriller, mysticism, horror	14	6	8	13	16	12
Literature for children and teenagers	9	14	10	11	7	3
Religious books	18	8	12	8	8	3
Biographies, memories	16	4	7	8	8	6
Encyclopedias and dictations	9	4	7	9	7	12
Applied literature	9	3	5	7	11	9
Poetry	5	6	3	7	6	6
Art publications	14	3	2	3	5	6
Historical books	0	3	4	2	2	3
Comics and graphic prose	5	3	1	2	3	9

Note: not weighted. Darker grey indicates higher values.

Table A4: Percentage of readers who read book(s) in a certain genre in the previous year (N = 1302), by gender

	Male	Female
	%	%
Classic	30	33
Modern detectives	29	26
Books on psychology, self-development	18	28
Love novels	4	37
Modern novels	13	31
Fiction, fantasy	29	17
Scientific and popular science publications	29	16
Professional/business literature	22	14
Textbooks and manuals	12	15
Thriller, mysticism, horror	16	8
Literature for children and teenagers	4	14
Religious books	8	10
Biographies, memories	10	6
Encyclopedias and dictations	7	8
Applied literature	8	6
Poetry	2	8
Art publications	3	4
Historical books	4	1
Comics and graphic prose	3	2

Note: not weighted. Darker grey indicates higher values.

Table A5: Percentage of readers who read book(s) in a certain genre in the previous year (N = 1302), by settlement type

	Village	<50t	51-100t	101-500t	>500t
	%	%	%	%	%
Classic	31	25	18	37	37
Modern detectives	24	27	25	24	32
Books on psychology, self-development	20	22	16	26	30
Love novels	24	27	17	26	21
Modern novels	23	18	25	20	29
Fiction, fantasy	15	21	22	22	29
Scientific and popular science publications	23	19	22	18	25
Professional/business literature	13	13	10	19	24
Textbooks and manuals	15	14	8	12	15
Thriller, mysticism, horror	10	10	9	11	16
Literature for children and teenagers	10	11	10	10	10
Religious books	11	10	9	8	8
Biographies, memories	7	6	9	9	8
Encyclopedias and dictations	7	11	6	7	6
Applied literature	8	8	4	5	7
Poetry	4	6	6	7	5
Art publications	3	3	5	4	5
Historical books	4	4	1	1	2
Comics and graphic prose	3	2	0	2	2

Note: not weighted. Darker grey indicates higher values.

Table A6: Percentage of readers who read book(s) in a certain genre in the previous year (N = 1302), by age groups

	15-17	18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Classic	36	34	26	27	33	37
Modern detectives	17	24	24	25	28	34
Books on psychology, self-development	14	31	36	27	21	16
Love novels	11	20	24	24	26	26
Modern novels	17	22	24	25	25	22
Fiction, fantasy	33	29	27	24	21	12
Scientific and popular science publications	18	26	14	21	25	22
Professional/business literature	8	17	14	23	19	11
Textbooks and manuals	59	24	10	13	8	6
Thriller, mysticism, horror	17	14	12	13	11	8
Literature for children and teenagers	17	9	18	13	9	4
Religious books	3	4	9	7	9	18
Biographies, memories	8	5	8	6	8	10
Encyclopedias and dictations	21	5	7	8	9	4
Applied literature	15	6	4	9	7	5
Poetry	9	6	5	6	5	5
Art publications	5	3	1	3	5	4
Historical books	2	0	0	3	4	4
Comics and graphic prose	8	2	4	1	2	1

Note: not weighted. Darker grey indicates higher values.

Appendix B. Mean volume of taste by groups

Table B1: Mean number of liked literary genres (cultural omnivorousness) by education, financial situation, gender, age, and settlement groups (N = 1302)

	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
By education:					
Incomplete secondary	48	2.67	1.78	1	10
Secondary	167	2.65	2.07	1	14
Vocational (technical schools)	426	2.42	1.48	1	8
Higher	661	2.93	1.92	1	12
By financial situation (status):					
1 st group	44	2.84	2.61	1	14
2 nd group	125	2.39	1.62	1	10
3 rd group	362	2.54	1.54	1	9
4 th group	486	2.90	1.89	1	12
5 th group	252	2.71	1.79	1	12
6 th group	33	3.06	2.67	1	13
By gender:					
Male	536	2.52	1.72	1	14
Female	766	2.85	1.86	1	12
By age groups:					
15-17	66	3.15	2.24	1	13
18-24	172	2.80	1.83	1	9
25-29	152	2.65	1.74	1	9
30-39	343	2.79	1.72	1	12
40-49	280	2.75	1.94	1	14
50-59	289	2.48	1.69	1	12
By settlement groups:					
Village	342	2.54	1.71	1	10
City/town, <50t	272	2.56	1.64	1	9
City/town, 51-100t	77	2.23	1.33	1	7
City/town, 101-500t	243	2.68	1.94	1	14
City/town, >500t	368	3.11	1.97	1	13

Note: not weighted.

Chapter 4: Cultural Omnivorousness in the Domains of Music, Film, and Literature: Evidence for a Partial Overlap

Abstract

Contemporary research on the social side of cultural taste highlights a notable trend toward cultural omnivorous taste among socially privileged groups. However, social stratification of taste encompasses different cultural domains, such as music, film, or literature. But are omnivores in music also more likely to be omnivores in film and literary taste, and otherwise? Motivated to contribute to the debates on comparability in omnivore studies, this study tests the assumption of overlap of the omnivorous taste, using the KuBiPaD I survey data from Germany. Employing latent profile analysis, this study offers empirical insights revealing a partial overlap. The results show that it is common for omnivores in one domain to be omnivores as well as paucivores in other domains. The co-occurrence of omnivorousness in one domain and univorousness in another one is rare. When comparing the social stratification of omnivorous classes, three domains demonstrate dissimilarities. In the end, the overlap hypothesis is only partially supported, which encourages future research to select cultural domains to study omnivorousness more thoughtfully.

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Preliminary results of this study were presented at the 5th Conference of the Academy of Sociology (2025).

4.1. Introduction

Contemporary studies have provided compelling evidence of the social stratification of cultural taste along the omnivore-univore coordinates (Johnston et al., 2019). The departure point of this theoretical thinking refers to Peterson's (1992) thesis. Analyzing data from the United States, a move from highbrow to omnivorous taste patterns among individuals in high social positions became evident, whereas those in lower positions tended to embrace univore taste (Peterson & Kern, 1996). These results have stimulated a substantial body of empirical research in the realm of cultural omnivorousness characterized by conceptual flexibility, methodological diversity, and, as a consequence, contradictory findings (de Vries & Reeves, 2022).

Studies in this field are criticized for applying "consistently inconsistent" theoretical and methodological approaches (Hazır & Warde, 2015; Peterson, 2005). One of the most prominent examples of inconsistency touches upon the lack of consensus regarding the conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement of cultural omnivorousness. Frequently, omnivore-univore studies are conducted in different cultural domains – music (Daenekindt & Roose, 2014; Kunißen et al., 2018; Rossman & Peterson, 2015), literature (Purhonen et al., 2010; Voronin, 2024), and film (Hanchard et al., 2019; Weingartner, 2021). Scholars also tend to combine data from multiple fields (de Vries & Reeves, 2022; Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009) or focus on participation in a range of diverse cultural activities (Katz-Gerro & Jæger, 2013; Sintas & Álvarez, 2002).

Given the lack of consensus, comparative studies of omnivorousness are frequently based on the measurement of cultural stratification through different cultural forms (Peterson, 2005). Following this, Hazır & Warde (2015, p. 80) raise several substantive questions that should be addressed to understand the incommensurable nature of omnivore studies, one of which is framed as: "Given the profuseness of cultural practices, which cultural domains and items are important?" The variety of approaches raises a conceptual question: in which domains of cultural consumption or taste should we study omnivorousness, and what role does it play? Are patterns of omnivorousness overlapping across different domains, meaning that those who exhibit omnivorous taste in one domain (e.g., music) are also likely to do so in other domains (e.g., literature and film)? This study aims to investigate the measurement of cultural omnivorousness across cultural domains and assess whether the measurement of it through

preferences in music, literature, and film plays a significant role. The selection of music, film, and literature as domains is motivated by their wide accessibility and ubiquitous representation in prior studies of cultural stratification.

Building upon the recent survey “Cultural Education and Cultural Participation in Germany (KuBiPaD I)” (Otte et al., 2022), I analyze taste within these three domains using preferences for a rich set of genres. To model audience segments and identify omnivore patterns, I employ latent class/profile analysis (LCA/LPA). Subsequently, I compare the composition of omnivore classes across the domains of music, film, and literature. For visualizing the findings, Sankey diagrams are presented. Finally, I evaluate whether the composition of these classes differs in terms of socioeconomic characteristics. After that, the main findings are discussed, outlining potential limitations and further perspectives.

4.2. The concept of cultural omnivorousness and its ambiguity

Social patterning of taste, as described by Bourdieu (1984), refers to the long-established homology concept: the hierarchical nature of social positions is reflected in the tendency to like certain genres or cultural objects in an exclusive way. Focusing on cultural capital and habitus, Bourdieu is concerned with individuals’ educational attainment and early experiences connected to cultural and general education that contribute to the development of certain taste patterns (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 13) – e.g., elite or highbrow taste for holders of high educational qualifications (1984, p. 20) and popular or lowbrow taste for lower educated. An appreciation of highbrow products requires certain aesthetic competencies and intellectual resources, whilst lowbrow categories are seen as simple and unpretentious. Individuals in different socio-economic positions tend to draw symbolic boundaries in taste to perform the social distinction (Bourdieu, 1984), as well as judge the social positions of others relying on their cultural repertoire. As shown by prior studies, cultural activities and tastes still carry different status recognitions, with both lower and upper segments recognizing and adhering to these distinctions (Jæger et al., 2023; Jæger & Larsen, 2024).

Relying on Bourdieu’s idea, Peterson & Kern (1996, p. 904) revised the social mapping of taste and documented “strong support for the shift from snobbishness to omnivorousness”, signifying an openness of highbrow consumers to appreciate a variety of cultural repertoire, traditionally assigned to lowbrow or middlebrow categories. Similarly, Peterson & Simkus

(1992) found no evidence of the exclusive inclination to the highbrow culture among high-status individuals. These findings led to the development of the omnivore-univore thesis. Since then, the term “omnivore” has been used to describe the openness to appreciate diverse cultural objects and taste patterns that cross symbolic boundaries, whilst the term “univore” indicates exclusive, predominantly popular or lowbrow, taste. In-between patterns can be referred to as “paucivores” (neither omnivore nor univore).

The original findings have been challenged by reanalyzing the same data by Brisson (2019). He pointed out biased selection of cultural items for analysis, unreliable criteria for capturing the crossing of symbolic boundaries, and weak correlation between emotional (liking) and behavioral (doing) dimensions. Consequently, a tendency towards omnivorousness may be a methodological artifact (Brisson, 2019; Rossman & Peterson, 2015).

The actual sense of omnivorousness, its conceptualization, and operationalization are far from the consensus in contemporary studies (Hazır & Warde, 2015; Johnston et al., 2019). Studies have revealed different audience structures and omnivorous profiles. Disentangling the omnivorous pattern in music, Savage & Gayo (2011) defined such listeners as rather musical “experts” who took leading positions in the musical field, where the rethinking of the boundaries of musical genres took place. Although omnivorousness is related to openness and tolerance, it is only one potential manifestation of them (Roose et al., 2012, p. 508). Omnivorousness can take different meanings and unfold in different taste patterns, as a universal logic of differentiation hardly exists (Villarroya & Llopis-Goig, 2021).

The lack of consensus has led to mixed results in comparative research on omnivorousness (Peterson, 2005). To provide conceptual clarity, de Vries and Reeves (2022) proposed a division into two versions of the omnivore-univore thesis: weak and strong interpretations. This division reflects the ground of the separation between omnivorousness by volume and composition, as suggested by Warde and Gayo-Cal (2009). The weak interpretation suggests that upper social groups are more “culturally engaged” than lower ones (de Vries & Reeves, 2022, p. 293). The strong interpretation suggests that this engagement includes crossing the boundaries between upper- and lower-level cultures and avoiding class-based exclusion (de Vries & Reeves, 2022, pp. 293–295). This distinction adds conceptual clarity to the omnivore-univore thesis and addresses previous concerns about its conceptual flexibility.

Another pitfall inherent in comparative studies lies in the implication of diverse potential cultural indexes of status, e.g., in music, films, books, visual arts, food, etc. (Peterson, 2005, pp. 266–268). The assumption behind this is that the inclination towards tolerance of cultural taste operates on the level of dispositions (*habitus*), structuring tastes in a similar way across domains and producing consistent cultural practices within those domains (Bourdieu, 1990). Assuming a close link between social positions and cultural taste, omnivorous dispositions are visible using different cultural forms to an approximately similar extent, so that omnivores in one cultural domain tend to show extensive taste in other domains. For example, Purhonen (2010) showed a strong correlation between omnivorousness in music and literature by volume, suggesting partial overlap and homology (Purhonen et al., 2010, p. 280). However, the analysis of the overlap was not the central point of the study and relied on additive indices to measure omnivorousness that do not show evidence of the distinctiveness of the omnivorous patterns in each domain. Systematic comparisons of omnivorous taste across domains remain scarce.

A lack of time may challenge the homology assumption between cultural domains, as extensive engagement in multiple fields requires substantial time resources. Simultaneously, different cultural domains vary in terms of time demands. Consequently, consumers may be forced to be selective in time-demanding domains, thereby limiting the diversity of their cultural repertoires. For example, listening to music usually takes less time than watching films, which in turn is less time-demanding than reading books. This suggests that developing omnivorous dispositions in music may be less challenging in terms of time constraints compared to literature or film. However, the time constraint is mainly relevant to consumption acts rather than preferences, as individuals may express preferences even with limited consumption.

Notably, different cultural domains entail distinct levels of access that extend beyond time demands. Feder (2023) suggests conceptualizing access through four layers: rights (formal barriers), opportunity (physical possibility), participation (individual barriers), and reception (ability to appreciate, often shaped by cultural capital). For instance, listening to music online can be considered one of the most accessible cultural activities in terms of opportunity and participation. However, it can involve constraints at the level of reception, as illustrated by the cultural stratification of music genres. In contrast, engagement with literature might require higher levels of intellectual skills, making the participation barrier more prominent, compared to the music domain.

The literature on omnivorousness covers studies that measure taste through both practices and preferences in multiple domains (de Vries & Reeves, 2022; Roose et al., 2012; Warde et al., 2008), capturing a more detailed pattern that goes beyond one cultural form. However, general population surveys rarely measure cultural taste across multiple domains, leading researchers to assume homology and rely on single-domain measures to study omnivorousness (Kunißen et al., 2018; Leguina et al., 2016; Voronin, 2022). This study addresses the potential differences across three selected domains used in previous studies and characterized by different degrees of time devotion – music, film, and literature – and tests whether omnivorous patterns are universal and consistently visible.

4.3. Data, operationalization, and methodology

4.3.1. Data

This paper is built upon the secondary data analysis of the population-representative survey “Cultural Education and Cultural Participation in Germany (KuBiPaD I)” (Otte et al., 2022). The survey investigates patterns of cultural participation and taste in Germany. In particular, preferences for a set of diverse music, film, and literary genres are measured. The fieldwork lasted from July to December 2018. The survey was conducted in the form of computer-assisted face-to-face interviews (CAPI) and employed a multistage probability sampling procedure (Otte et al., 2022). The final sample consists of 2592 respondents. Basic descriptive statistics of employed socio-demographic variables are provided in Appendix B. Details about the survey’s methodology, as well as extensive descriptive statistics, are available in the methodology report (Prussog-Wagner & Sandbrink, 2019).

4.3.2. Operationalization

Taste is measured via preferences for a list of genres (see Appendix A) using a 5-point scale variable (Otte et al., 2022). The list was provided to respondents on a separate sheet of paper. Respondents select whether they do not know, strongly like, like, neither like nor dislike, dislike, or strongly dislike each genre. While questions about music and film tastes were provided to all respondents, those pertaining to book preferences were exclusively presented to individuals who had engaged in reading books or listening to audiobooks within the past

year. Although the measurement of taste is limited to genre categories, the rich number of different genres allows identifying a variety of taste patterns.

4.3.3. Methodology

The current studies on cultural stratification and differentiation involve modeling audience segments that share distinct characteristics. One of the most widespread approaches is to use latent class analysis (LCA) – a finite mixture modeling driven by data to identify groups with the most similar item response patterns (Masyn, 2013). If indicators have a continuous rather than categorical nature, latent profile analysis (LPA) is applied.

LCA/LPA is a statistical method aimed at dealing with unobserved heterogeneity by allocating respondents into latent groups (classes) based on their responses to observed variables (Hagenaars & McCutcheon, 2002; Weller et al., 2020). The goal is to identify a model with the fewest latent classes that adequately fits the data (B. Muthén & Muthén, 2000, p. 883). The number of classes is determined by the researcher using a stepwise technique (class enumeration) to find the best-fit model (B. Muthén & Muthén, 2000; Nylund-Gibson & Choi, 2018). After specifying the number of classes, the results include individual posterior probabilities of belonging to each class, the most likely class membership, and the size of classes. Since Lazarsfeld (1950) introduced this method to the academic community, it has been evolving and developing in different fields.

LCA/LPA is widely used in contemporary studies of cultural audience segments. For example, Alvarez Sintas & Álvarez (2002) analyzed cultural lifestyles in Spain and distinguished four classes: the one with a lack of cultural activity, popular, highbrow, and omnivore classes. Olivos & Wang (2022) relied on the indicators of cultural participation in Chile and classified the audience into omnivore, middlebrow, cinephile, and passive profiles. Coulangeon (2015) modeled music consumption patterns, proposing six classes, including French pop univore, pop, selective omnivorous, rock, youth pop, and extensive omnivores classes. Music preferences were also analyzed in Germany by Kunißen et al. (2018). Scholars used survey data to build six audience segments called omnivore, shallow entertainment (paucivore), excitement entertainment (univore), integration (paucivore), self-actualization (paucivore), and harmony (univore) classes. These examples illustrate the extensive use of LCA/LPA in research on cultural consumption and tastes.

In order to investigate the structure of taste, I begin the analysis by running models of latent profiles for up to eight classes separately in each cultural domain – music, film, and literature – using non-weighted data⁶. Preferences for genres are used as indicators of class belonging. These variables are considered to be continuous variables (5-point scale).

To minimize misclassification errors, multicollinear taste measures within each domain are addressed by eliminating one variable from strongly correlated pairs (>0.5), unless removal would compromise conceptually significant dimensions (Sinha et al., 2021). In the domain of literature, preferences for thrillers (highly correlated with crime), children's and youth books (with fairy tales and legends), classical and modern literature up to 1945 (with sophisticated contemporary literature since 1945), and fantasy (with science-fiction) are excluded. However, drama and poems, as distinct literary forms, are retained. In films, fantasy and action are omitted due to their high correlation with science-fiction. Additionally, preference for film d'auteur is not considered due to the high rate of missing values. Literary adaptations are also excluded due to interpretive ambiguity, as literary adaptations can encompass various styles. In music, preferences for indie rock, alternative, punk (highly correlated with rock and heavy metal, hard rock) and traditional German folk (with German schlager) are removed. Another closely linked pair pertains to classical music and opera; however, both variables are retained due to their well-established highbrow status (Peterson & Kern, 1996) and different social determinants (Ho et al., 2021).

To address the skewed distribution of variables, a maximum likelihood estimator with robust standard errors (MLR) is applied. A numerical integration algorithm is selected. The results are discussed in terms of similarities and differences across domains. Cases with missings on all taste variables in one domain are not considered. The analysis is conducted in Mplus software (L. Muthén & Muthén, 2017).

To identify the minimum sufficient number of classes, I rely on diverse statistical criteria: Akaike information criteria (AIC), Bayesian information criteria (BIC), sample-size adjusted BIC (SABIC), Lo-Mendell-Rubin adjusted likelihood-ratio test (LMR), and parametric

⁶ Non-weighted solutions are preferred due to the limitations of the LMR-LRT test (TECH11) when using sample weights, as well as the computational burden associated with estimating and comparing weighted models.

bootstrapped likelihood ratio test (BLRT) (Nylund et al., 2007; Sinha et al., 2021). The decision is complemented with qualitative criteria such as an interpretative value, the appropriateness of class size, and consistency with previous research. BLRT, BIC, and SABIC are found to outperform other indicators in big samples (Nylund et al., 2007; Sinha et al., 2021; Yang, 2006). In models with a very large degree of separation, LMR can also be an accurate criterion (Tein et al., 2013).

After determining the optimal number of latent classes, I interpret audience divisions based on observed patterns. To identify omnivorous patterns, I use two main criteria: (i) the presence of the largest volume of taste compared to other classes and (ii) the absence of a consistent exclusion of other taste patterns. Key indicators include the average conditional means/median, the number of genres with a conditional mean > 3 , the number of genres with a conditional mean < 2 , and the comparison of conditional means across classes. Respondents are assigned to the most likely class based on the posterior probabilities (means) of liking music, film, and literary genres. I then compare class compositions and test for overlapping omnivorous characteristics using Sankey diagrams (Naqvi, 2022/2023), followed by a description of the socio-demographic structure of omnivore classes.

4.4. Results

4.4.1. Descriptive statistics

The tastes in music, film, and literature vary in the population (as illustrated in Figure 4.1). While the absolute majority show preferences for pop and rock music, less than one-quarter of the population is fond of heavy metal, indie rock, traditional music, or opera. Classical music and musicals are well regarded as more than 40% show such preferences. Other genres are located in between.

Regarding film taste, documentaries and comedies are the most preferred genres. They are followed by other highly liked genres: action, crime and thrillers, historical films, and classics of film history, which are preferred by more than one-half of the population. The popularity of horrors and homeland-films is the lowest. The film genres are, in general, more favorable compared to the music or literature genres. For example, eight out of 17 genres are rated by more than three scale points on average.

Figure 4.1: Tastes in music, books, and films, weighted, KuBiPaD I

	Music	Literature	Films
Mean ≥ 3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop Music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentaries and biographies • Comedies • Action and adventure • Crime and thriller • Historical and period pieces
Mean {3, 3.5}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock • Musicals • Classical music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-fiction and technical literature, guidebooks • Humorous literature, satires • Historical novels • Thriller 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classics of film history • Literary adaptations • Romantic movies and romances
Mean {2.5, 3}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R'n'B, Soul • Country, Folk • German schlager • Jazz • Traditional folk (other cultures) • Traditional German folk • Church music • Hip Hop, Rap • Opera 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biographies and memoirs • Fairy tales and legends • Sophisticated contemporary literature since 1945 • Children's and youth books • Fantasy • Classical and modern up to 1945 • Romance novels and romances • Poems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music and dance films • Dramas and melodramas • Cartoons and animated films • Fantasy • Film d'auteur • Science Fiction • Westerns • Homeland-films
Mean ≤ 2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic music, like electro, house, techno • Indie rock, alternative, punk • Heavy metal, hard rock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science fiction • Dramas, plays • Comics, mangas, graphic novels • Horror novels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horror

The majority of readers have a fondness for crime novels, non-fiction, and technical literature. Such genres as humorous literature, thrillers, and historical novels are also characterized by good popularity. The least preferred are horror novels and comics.

The detailed summary statistics on tastes are presented in Appendix B, Tables B2-B4.

4.4.2. Deciding on the number of classes

In the first step, I run LPA separately for two to eight classes in each domain. Fit indicators are provided in Appendix C. Comparing models that differ by only one latent class, BLRT always supports a better fit of the model with more classes. Adding one class to each model results in decreasing AIC, BIC, and BIC-adjusted values, which signifies that a model with more classes has a better fit. However, the LMR test identifies the five-class solution as optimal for music, film, and literature.

LMR tests also support an eight-class solution for literature and a seven-class solution for film. However, it provides a too-nuanced separation of diverse paucivore taste patterns.

Consequently, the five-class solutions are the most parsimonious. An additional disadvantage of models with more classes is that one of the classes becomes significantly smaller in size. The entropy coefficients of the five-class models exceed 0.8, signifying good distinctiveness.

4.4.3. Interpreting the latent classes

The domain of music

When comparing the posterior mean preferences for music genres across various classes, distinct differences in taste patterns become evident (Table 4.1, Model M). I proceed to interpret the meaning of these classes and assign labels to them. The interpretation relies on identifying similar characteristics among the most (dis)liked genres within each class. Where applicable, I draw upon the four-factor (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003) and the revised five-factor models (Rentfrow et al., 2011) to categorize musical preferences. The analysis reveals one omnivore, three paucivore, and two univore classes.

Table 4.1: Conditional means to like music genres for the members of the five classes (Model M), N = 2590, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted

Class	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Volume of taste	Univore	Paucivore	Paucivore	Paucivore	Omnivore
Label	Traditional	Intense	Traditional & Sophisticated	Popular & Contemporary	Omnivore
Size based on the most likely latent class membership	8.8%	18.4%	13.3%	26.1%	33.4%
Pop Music	2.03	3.60	2.29	4.19	4.04
Rock	1.77	4.51	1.99	3.43	3.93
Heavy metal, hard rock	1.19	4.19	1.17	1.64	2.18
Electronic music	1.39	2.91	1.46	2.92	2.40
Hip Hop, Rap	1.45	2.51	1.57	3.17	2.62
R'n'B, Soul	1.65	2.79	2.34	3.13	3.52
Jazz	1.81	2.49	3.00	2.27	3.52
Opera	1.67	2.00	3.93	1.57	3.31
Classical music	2.27	2.79	4.32	2.23	3.94
Musicals	2.92	2.76	3.91	2.94	3.75
Country, Folk	3.11	2.74	3.30	2.40	3.37
German schlager	3.95	2.11	3.16	2.64	2.80
Traditional folk from other cultures	2.83	2.16	3.24	2.05	2.99
Church music	2.39	2.02	3.53	1.86	3.14
<i>Mean across genres</i>	2.17	2.83	2.80	2.60	3.25
<i>Median across genres</i>	1.92	2.75	3.08	2.52	3.34
<i># genres with a conditional mean ≥ 3</i>	2	3	8	4	9
<i># genres with a conditional mean ≤ 2</i>	7	1	4	3	0

Notes: entropy = 0.827.

The first class (“Traditional”) displays a distinct inclination towards conventional genres, particularly German schlager and country, folk. Notably, the conditional predicted mean for liking those genres is higher than the average preferences in the sample.. Traditional folk music from other cultures and musicals also obtain a relatively high scores. Members of this class show univore traditional taste, rejecting most of the highbrow (e.g., opera), intense (heavy metal), or contemporary (electronic music) genres. The first class stands out as the smallest subgroup, representing 8.8% of the sample.

The second class (“Intense”) signals a clear orientation on intense music, namely rock and heavy metal, hard rock. Interestingly, they still hold moderate preferences for pop and electronic music. However, their strongest aversion is directed to the sophisticated (e.g., opera) and church music. Around 18.4% of the respondents belong to this class.

Members of the next class (“Traditional & Sophisticated”) combine sophisticated genres such as opera, classical, musical, and jazz with traditional or local music. They express strong objections to heavy metal (marginalized intense genre) as well as electronic music and hip hop (contemporary genres). Other genres are rated somewhere in between. Although members moderately like both so-called highbrow and unpretentious traditional genres, they are selective in their choices. This class accounts for 13.3% of the sample.

A strong taste for pop music and moderate preferences for hip hop, electronic, R'n'B, soul, and rock are prominent indicators of the second class (“Popular & Contemporary”). Developing a slightly narrow taste for popular/contemporary music, members unfavor some sophisticated genres (e.g., opera) and marginalized music (e.g., heavy metal). This class is the second largest, comprising 26.1% of the sample.

Omnivore dispositions are evident in the fifth class (“Omnivore”). For nine out of 14 genres, the expected scale value exceeds three, with no genre rated below two, indicating tolerance for diversity. The mean preference score is the highest compared to other classes. Hence, the participants of these classes prefer a variety of music and are not strongly discouraged by lowbrow or unpopular genres, displaying openness towards diversity. It is the largest class, representing 33.4% of respondents.

The domain of film

A distinctive characteristic of the film domain is the audience's greater openness to a much larger number of genres than in the music domain. For example, members of all classes share high posterior probabilities to like historical and period pieces, classics of film history, and documentaries. Nonetheless, the classes in this domain display a diverse range of volume and composition in their taste patterns (Table 4.2, Model F).

Table 4.2: Conditional means to like film genres for the members of the five classes (Model F), N = 2589, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted

Class	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Volume of taste	Univore/Paucivore	Selective omnivore	Paucivore	Omnivore	Paucivore
Label	True comedy-crime	Emotional & Entertaining	Imaginary	Omnivore	Sophisticated & Popular
Size based on the most likely latent class membership	23.4%	37.5%	10.4%	6.3%	22.4%
Horror	1.12	1.15	4.48	4.36	2.61
Science Fiction	2.24	2.25	3.69	3.43	3.46
Crime and thriller	3.35	3.41	3.88	4.31	3.95
Dramas and melodramas	2.25	3.27	2.50	3.74	2.91
Comedies	3.20	4.11	3.76	4.53	3.86
Romantic and romances	2.04	3.84	2.17	3.93	2.70
Homeland-films	1.95	3.01	2.10	2.84	2.15
Westerns	2.35	2.65	2.47	2.71	2.69
Historical and period pieces	3.42	3.71	3.31	3.66	3.54
Classics of film history	3.16	3.74	3.09	3.66	3.53
Documentaries and biographies	3.88	3.96	3.59	3.97	3.83
Cartoons and animated films	2.18	2.80	3.04	3.72	3.21
Music and dance films	2.15	3.46	2.33	3.59	2.76
<i>Mean across genres</i>	2.56	3.18	3.11	3.73	3.17
<i>Median across genres</i>	2.25	3.41	3.09	3.72	3.21
<i># genres with a conditional mean ≥ 3</i>	5	9	8	11	7
<i># genres with a conditional mean ≤ 2</i>	2	1	0	0	0

Notes: entropy = 0.850.

The members of the first class (“True comedy-crime”) accumulate a relatively narrow palette of taste. They display moderate preferences for crime and comedy genres – both commonly blended in modern cinematography (IMDb, n.d.). This crossing of genres is appealing, as comedies often lack intrinsic subject and frequently need to rely on other genres to incorporate humorous elements in their storylines (Leitch, 2002, p. 266). Other moderately preferred genres are sophisticated products. However, members reject other genres, such as horror, homeland, and romance. This class is the second largest, making up 23.4% of the sample.

The second class (“Emotional & Entertaining”) demonstrates a selective omnivorous pattern. Members prioritize genres with entertaining and emotion-evoking elements as well as unpretentious plots (e.g., comedy, romantic, drama, dance films), but also show a strong preference for historical and period pieces, classics of film history, as well as documentaries. However, the latter one is also found to be the most preferred genre in Germany, so it is likely that members of many classes share positive feelings about it. Moreover, documentaries can be classified as a highbrow genre due to their popularity among the highly educated groups (De Rosa & Burgess, 2014), making the fondness for them potentially indicative of a social nature. The members are still averse to horror and sci-fi genres, but are characterized by relatively high medial conditional probability across genres. This class makes up 37.5% of the sample.

The third class (“Imaginary”) is characterized by high conditional probabilities of liking adventure and imaginative genres, e.g., science fiction, horror, crime, and thriller. Since comedic elements can be integrated into any genre-specific stories, they are also highly preferred in this class. Genres featuring whiny stories (e.g., dramas and romantic movies) are highly excluded. This class accounts for 10.5% of the sample.

The next class (“Omnivore”) is the smallest in size, reaching only 6.3%. However, members show true omnivore characteristics, combining popular and sophisticated genres, including highly disliked genres in the population. For 11 genres out of 13, members have considerably high conditional probabilities. The lowest conditional mean refers to the preferences for homeland films and westerns, two genres that are not common in Germany.

The prominent characteristic of the fifth class (“Sophisticated & Popular”) is the combination of sophisticated, imaginative, and popular genres in their repertoire. However, they are less inclusive and more selective than the omnivore class, performing status-based exclusions. For instance, they tend to dislike emotion-evoking (e.g., romantic, drama) and marginalized (e.g., horror) genres. This class makes up 22.4% of the sample.

The domain of literature

Taste in literature displays a division into one univore, two paucivore, and two omnivore classes (Table 4.3, Model B). Notably, nearly all classes show a tendency to like comedy and non-fiction, two of the most popular genres in this domain. However, the taste patterns are more exclusive compared to the domain of film.

Table 4.3: Conditional means to like book genres for the members of five classes (Model B), N = 1929, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted

Class	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Volume of taste	Paucivore	Univore	Paucivore	Omnivore	Selective omnivore
Label	Imaginary & Detective	Non-fiction	True comedy-crime	Omnivore	Sophisticated & Popular
Size based on the most likely latent class membership	10.2%	12.5%	46.2%	10.0%	21.0%
Crime	3.99	2.93	3.68	3.93	3.35
Horror novels	3.88	1.20	1.34	3.76	1.29
Science fiction	3.20	1.85	2.20	3.29	2.18
Historical novels	2.68	2.11	3.40	3.40	3.79
Romance novels and romances	2.19	2.10	2.47	2.73	2.94
Sophisticated contemporary literature since 1945	2.05	1.59	2.90	3.08	3.81
Biographies and memoirs	2.15	2.10	2.99	3.19	3.84
Comics, mangas, graphic novels	2.05	1.63	1.77	2.75	2.02
Fairy tales and legends	2.68	1.92	2.76	3.52	3.44
Humorous literature, satires	2.99	2.34	3.39	3.81	3.80
Non-fiction and technical literature, guidebooks	3.00	3.18	3.53	3.58	3.97
Dramas, plays	1.73	1.37	2.03	3.00	3.43
Poems	1.61	1.48	2.16	3.18	3.96
<i>Mean across genres</i>	2.63	1.98	2.66	3.32	3.22
<i>Median across genres</i>	2.68	1.92	2.76	3.29	3.44
<i># genres with a conditional mean ≥ 3</i>	4	1	4	11	9
<i># genres with a conditional mean ≤ 2</i>	2	7	2	0	1

Notes: *entropy* = 0.805.

The first class (“Imaginary & Detective”), encompassing 10.2% of the sample, develops taste for detective (e.g., crime) as well as fantastic and mysterious genres, e.g., science fiction and horror. The members of this class display a profound distaste for highbrow categories (e.g., sophisticated contemporary literature since 1945, drama, poems).

The second class (“Non-fiction”), which accounts for 12.5% of the sample, is the most univorous one. Conditional means are getting relatively high for a single genre – non-fiction and technical literature, guidebooks. All other genres, particularly the fiction ones, are excluded from the cultural repertoire of the individuals in this class.

The next class (“True comedy-crime”), which accounts for the second largest segment of the sample (46.2%), develops preferences for crime, historical, and comedy products. Imaginary genres, such as science fiction, as well as horror, and comics, are highly rejected. This taste pattern in literature mirrors the preferences of the first class in the domain of film.

The fourth class (“Omnivore”), which is the smallest one (10.0%), shows substantially high conditional means for most of the genres. Only two genres receive a conditional mean lower than the scale midpoint. Members of this class tend to like different genres, combining contrasting repertoire.

The fifth class (“Sophisticated & Popular”) is marked by exceptionally high conditional means for highbrow cultural products, e.g., sophisticated contemporary literature, biographies and memoirs, historical novels, poems and dramas, indicating strong aesthetic competencies. In contrast, marginalized genres such as horrors or science-fiction are usually rejected. Nevertheless, members selectively expand their taste to genres from popular culture (e.g., crime), showing a tendency toward omnivorousness. This class is the second largest one, comprising 21.0% of the sample.

4.4.4. Comparing omnivorousness across domains

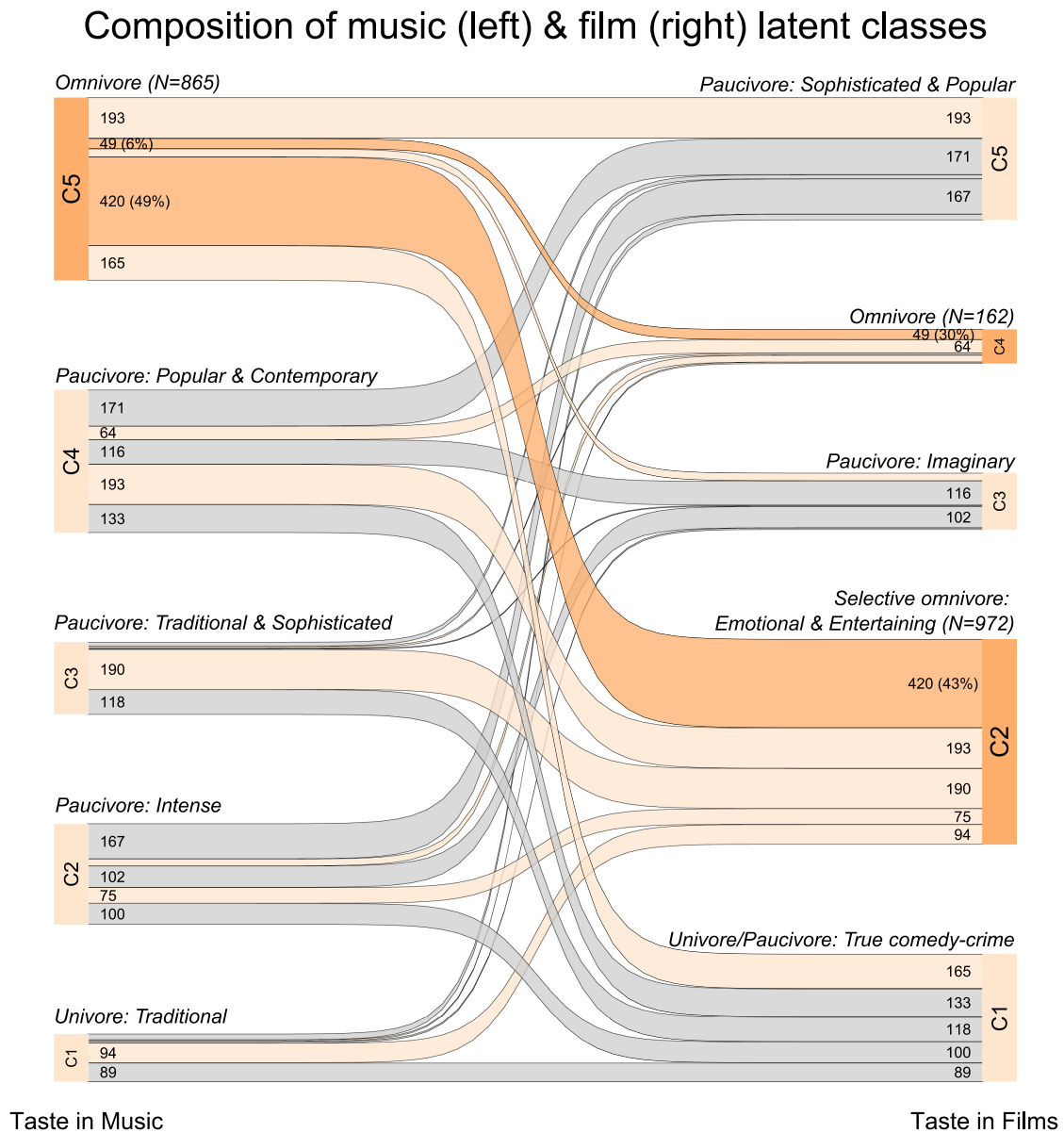
Relying on the assigned classes based on posterior probabilities, omnivorous taste across domains exhibit strong partial overlap (see Appendix B, Table B4 for direct comparison). To visualize multiple flows between omnivore, paucivore, and univore classes, I employ Sankey diagrams.

Music & film

Among the members of the omnivore class in music, approximately 49% and 6% end up in selective and true omnivore classes in the domain of film, respectively (Figure 4.2). Depicting a flow from music to other classes, it becomes evident that a significant share of those classified

as omnivores in music belong to paucivore film classes. It is quite rare for omnivores in music to be univore in the domain of film, taking into account the size of the univore class. A big share of omnivores in the film find themselves in the paucivore music classes. Among omnivores of any kind in the field of films, 41% is assigned to the class of omnivores in music. Similarly, the flow from the univore film class to the omnivore music class is infrequent.

Figure 4.2: Sankey diagram, the domains of music and film, KuBiPaD I

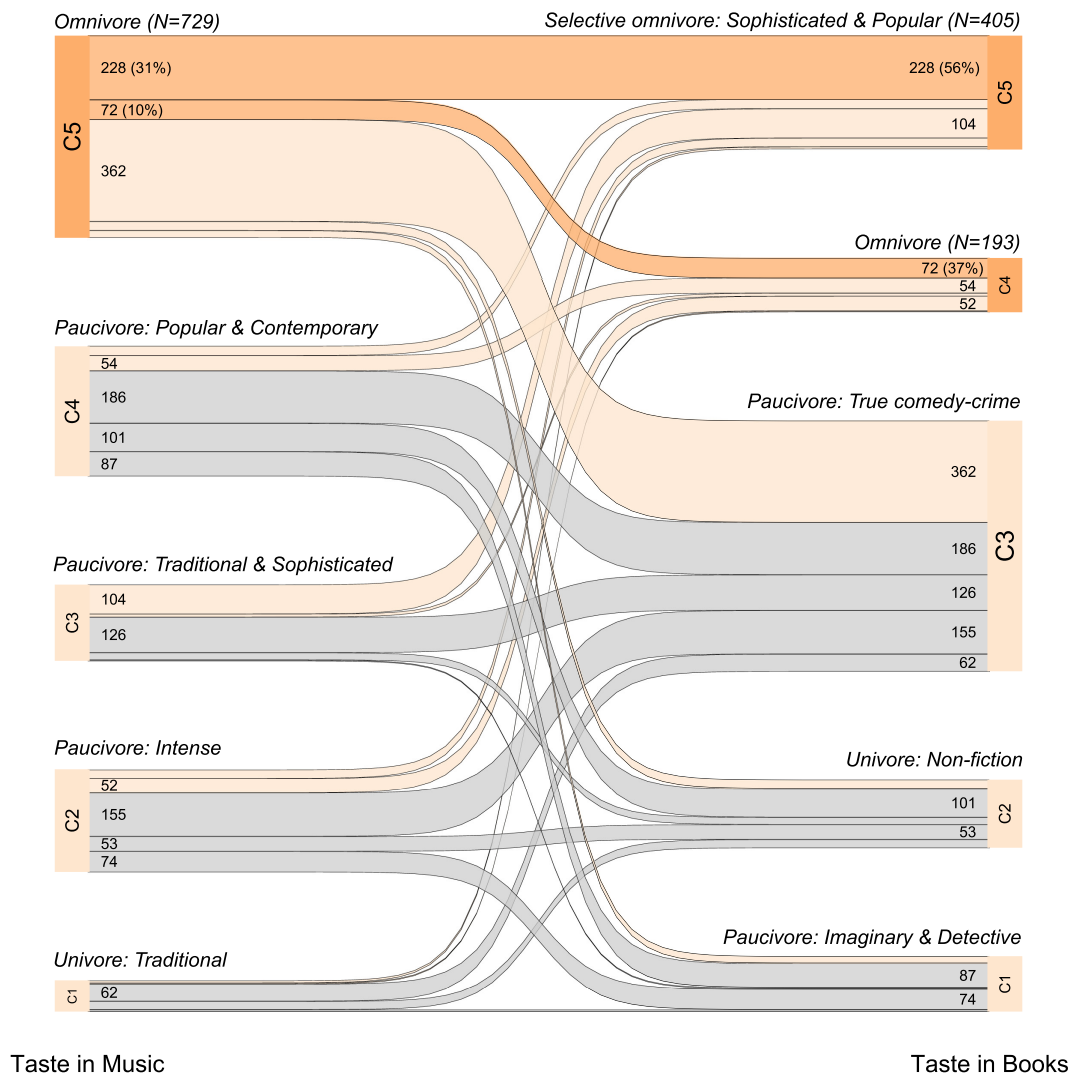


Music & literature

Among selective omnivores in literature, around 56% display omnivorousness in music, whereas in the group of true omnivores, 37% are assigned to the omnivore music class (Figure 4.3). The rest of the omnivores in literature mainly belong to paucivore classes in music. Among the members of the omnivore class in music, approximately 41% are assigned to either one omnivore class in the domain literature. Notably, the combination of univorousness in one domain and omnivorousness in another is a rare occurrence.

Figure 4.3: Sankey diagram, the domains of music and literature, KuBiPaD I

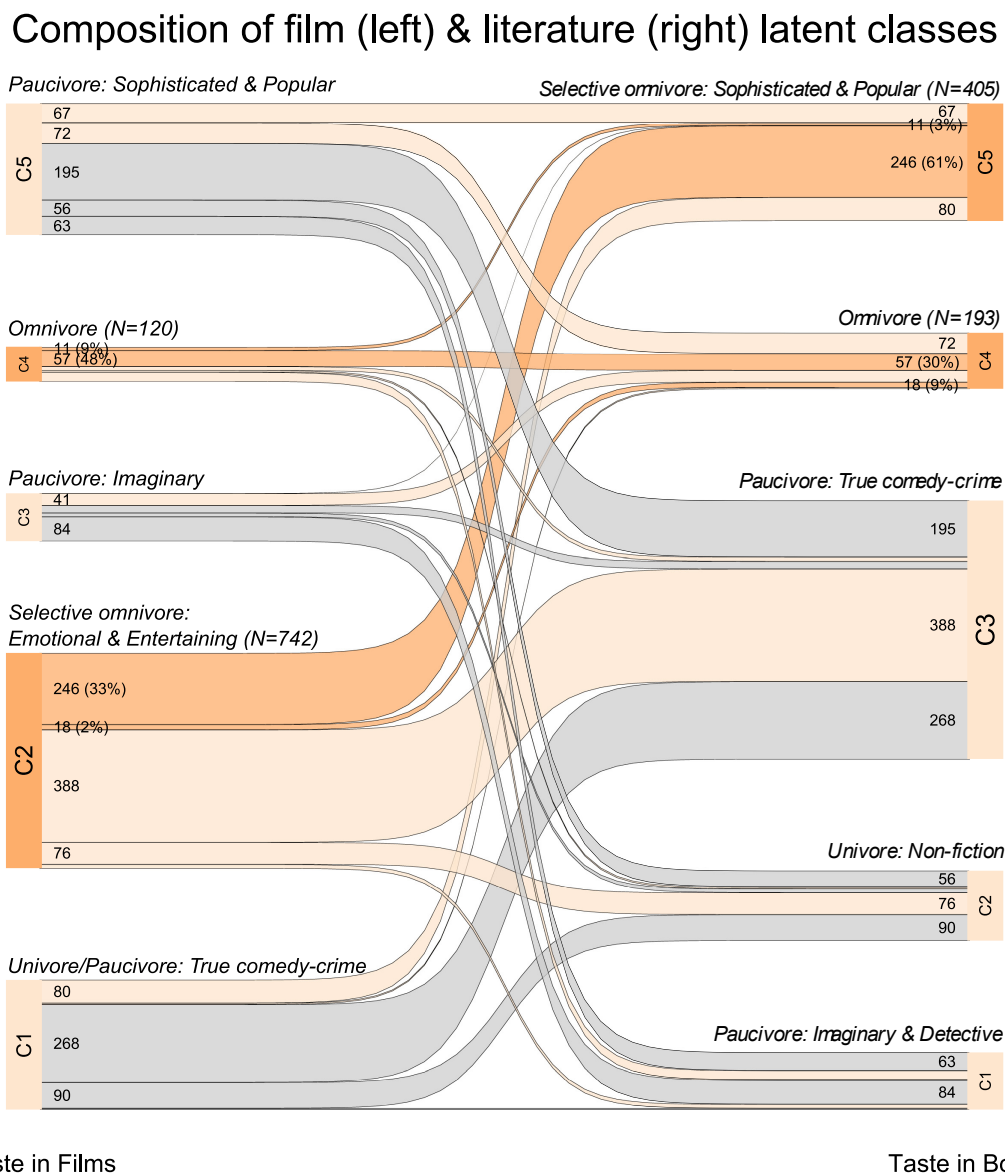
Composition of music (left) & literature (right) latent classes



Film & literature

As illustrated in Figure 4.4, among true omnivores in literature, 39% are assigned to any omnivore class in film. Among selective omnivores in literature, 64% are also classified as selective or true omnivores in film. Among true omnivores in film, 57% are in omnivore classes in literature. Among selective omnivores, only 36% are classified as either selective or true omnivores in the literature. It is common for omnivores in film to be paucivores in literature.

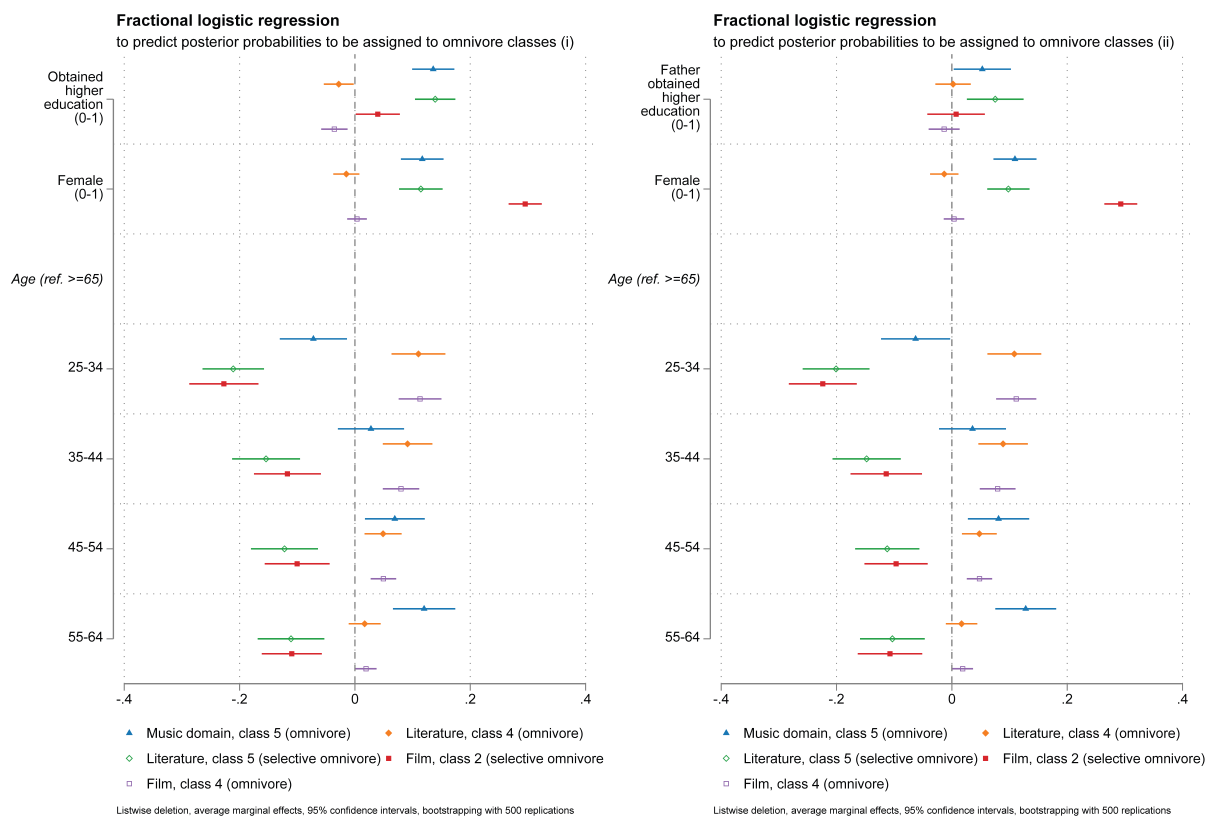
Figure 4.4: Sankey diagram, the domains of film and literature, KuBiPaD I



4.4.5. The socio-demographic characteristics of the most omnivorous classes

The main assumption of the omnivore-univore thesis refers to the cultural stratification of taste (Peterson & Kern, 1996). As a final step, I estimate the social characteristics of omnivore classes. The corresponding descriptive analysis is available in Appendix D. I consider several indicators of socio-economic positions: higher education, father's higher education, age, and gender. For a detailed comparison, I run fractional logistic regressions to predict the posterior probability of assignment to each omnivore class (Figure 4.5, full results in Appendix E). Respondents under 25 are filtered out to avoid bias related to incomplete higher education.

Figure 4.5: Fractional logistic regressions to predict the probability of becoming a member of omnivore classes, average marginal effects, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted



The results indicate notable similarities between omnivores in music and selective omnivores in literature and film, alongside clear contrasts with other classes. Higher education significantly increases the probability of being an omnivore in music and a selective omnivore in literature and film, but decreases the probability for true omnivores in these latter domains. The father's higher education only slightly increases the probability of being an omnivore in music and a selective omnivore in literature.

Next, women have higher probabilities of being omnivores in music or selective omnivores in literature and film, whereas no significant gender differences are found for true omnivores in film and literature. Moving to the age patterns, a higher probability of being omnivores in music is among middle-aged segments, true omnivores in film and literature – among younger adults, and selective omnivores in these domains – among older adults. Generally, the results suggest distinctive social meanings attached to different forms of omnivorousness across domains.

4.5. Conclusion and discussion

The current study has investigated the assumption of overlap of the omnivorous taste at the level of genres between cultural domains, meaning that if individuals are omnivores in one domain (e.g., music), they are also omnivores in another cultural domain (e.g., literature or film). Relying on the KuBiPaD I survey data from Germany, one of the key findings is (only) partial support for the assumption of universal omnivorous dispositions across the domains.

Certainly, achieving complete overlap is highly improbable due to the differing number of stratified genres across the three domains. In the music domain, such genres as classical, opera, jazz, or musicals are regarded to be sophisticated and highbrow genres (Rentfrow et al., 2011). Conversely, in the film domain, such cultural stratification between genres is less common, with several exceptions (e.g., documentaries, see De Rosa & Burgess, 2014). Thus, broadening one's taste in the music domain frequently involves embracing genres with varying social recognition, while in film, this pertains to the increased volume within the same level of cultural stratification. Consequently, taste in film is generally more likely to be extensive than taste in music. In the domain of literature, there is already a social difference between readers and non-readers (Bennett et al., 2009, p. 110) that may weaken the genre hierarchy.

Furthermore, consumers can face time constraints even on the level of preferences, limiting their ability to engage equally in all cultural forms. Consequently, being omnivore in one domain leads to partial selectivity in other domains, since omnivorousness in one (especially time-demanding) domain already requires sufficient resources. Thereby, it is common for omnivores in one domain to be paucivores in other domains. Following this result, I advocate for the alternative formulation of the assumption, so that omnivorousness in one domain and univorousness in another is rarely, if ever, combined. However, it is common to observe individuals who are omnivores in one domain and paucivores in another. This result can serve

as an additional explanation for incommensurable findings by previous omnivore-univore studies.

It is noteworthy that the omnivorous taste pattern and its differences from the paucivore classes are much more distinctive in the domain of music compared to film or literature. The music domain, therefore, offers a particularly appealing environment for omnivore studies. In terms of socio-demographics, music omnivores share significant similarities in education and gender with only selective omnivores in the (less accessible) domains of film and literature, while the most omnivorous classes in these latter domains differ greatly. This intriguing discrepancy can be attributed to the different logic of cultural stratification in these domains. Current omnivore-univore studies that strictly assume homology and direct transferability of findings between cultural domains might be misleading.

Future research should carefully select domains to study cultural stratification of taste at the level of genres, since the results also show that it is advantageous to go beyond one domain. While omnivore studies in music are well-established, studying more than one domain can bring new and unique information in terms of the social stratification of omnivorous taste patterns. The prominence of this pattern in the domain of literature should not be overlooked by future research. Previous studies have also supported the importance of social stratification of cultural taste in music and literature (Bennett et al., 2009; Purhonen et al., 2010).

The current study is not without limitations. First, the measures used in this paper are limited to the self-assessment across a set of various genres. However, genres can represent misleading characteristics for measuring taste (Brisson, 2023; Brisson & Bianchi, 2022). For example, there is a lack of evidence for a common general identification of genres (Brisson, 2023). Also, modern cultural products can go beyond a single genre, combining characteristics from multiple styles (e.g., crime-comedy films or folk-rock music). Second, audience segmentation can take place within genres rather than between them (Nault et al., 2021). The logic of cultural legitimacy can function distinctively at different levels of culture – the level of genres and objects in those genres (Childress et al., 2021). Third, this study focuses on omnivorousness within cultural domains and does not consider the one that spans various cultural forms. Fourth, numerous studies employed cultural practices rather than preferences to measure cultural omnivorousness (e.g., Katz-Gerro & Jæger, 2013; Roose et al., 2012; Sintas & Álvarez, 2002). This study does not address this perspective.

The methodology bears extra limitations. Relying on the LPA, the analysis treated variables to be independent within classes. The violation of this assumption may lead to the misspecification of models. As a second critical point, to evaluate the size of the overlap between domains, individuals were assigned to one class following posterior probabilities. However, this approach accounts for neither the probabilities of belonging to other classes nor for the error terms.

Despite limitations, this study contributes to the debates on comparability in omnivore studies by examining the overlap of cultural omnivorousness across different domains. The extensive coverage of objective and subjective genres in the questionnaire allowed for the consistent identification of distinct audience segments, including the omnivore ones. The findings suggest partial support for the overlap of omnivorousness across domains. However, the complementarity of paucivorousness and omnivorousness between domains is notable. Studying cultural taste at the level of genres in multiple domains brings new information that remains unobserved when solely working in a single domain.

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Appendix A. Genres in the domains of music, film, and literature

Table A1: Music genres, translation

Music genres (German)	Music genres (English)
Pop-Musik	Pop Music
Rock	Rock
<i>Indie-Rock, Alternative, Punk*</i>	<i>Indie rock, alternative, punk*</i>
Heavy Metal, Hard-Rock	Heavy metal, hard rock
Elektronische Musik wie Electro, House, Techno	Electronic music, like electro, house, techno
Hip Hop, Rap	Hip Hop, Rap
R'n'B, Soul	R'n'B, Soul
Jazz	Jazz
Oper	Opera
Klassische Musik	Classical music
Musical	Musicals
Country, Folk	Country, Folk
Deutsche Schlager	German schlager
<i>Deutsche Volksmusik*</i>	<i>Traditional German folk*</i>
Volksmusik anderer Kulturen	Traditional folk from other cultures
Kirchliche Musik	Church music

Note: * indicates those variables that were excluded from the LPA analysis

Table A2: Film genres, translation

Film genres (German)	Film genres (English)
<i>Action- und Abenteuerfilme*</i>	<i>Action and adventure*</i>
Horrorfilme	Horror
Science Fiction	Science Fiction
<i>Fantasy*</i>	<i>Fantasy*</i>
Krimis und Thriller	Crime and thriller
Dramen und melodramatische Filme	Dramas and melodramas
Komödien	Comedies
Liebesfilme und Romanzen	Romantic movies and romances
Heimatfilme	Homeland-films
Western	Westerns
<i>Literaturverfilmungen*</i>	<i>Literary adaptations*</i>
<i>Autorenfilme*</i>	<i>Film d'auteur*</i>
Historien- und Geschichtsfilm	Historical and period pieces
Klassiker der Filmgeschichte	Classics of film history
Dokumentarfilme und Biografien	Documentaries and biographies
Zeichentrick- und Animationsfilme	Cartoons and animated films
Musik- und Tanzfilme	Music and dance films

Note: * indicates those variables that were excluded from the LPA analysis

Table A3: Book genres, translation

Book genres (German)	Book genres (English)
Krimis	Crime
<i>Thriller*</i>	<i>Thriller*</i>
Horrorromane	Horror novels
Science Fiction	Science fiction
<i>Fantasy*</i>	<i>Fantasy*</i>
Historische Romane	Historical novels
Liebesromane und Romanzen	Romance novels and romances
<i>Klassische und moderne Literatur bis 1945*</i>	<i>Classical and modern literature up to 1945*</i>
Anspruchsvolle Gegenwartsliteratur ab 1945	Sophisticated contemporary literature since 1945
Biografien und Memoiren	Biographies and memoirs
Märchen und Sagen	Fairy tales and legends
Comics, Mangas, Graphic Novels	Comics, mangas, graphic novels
<i>Kinder- und Jugendbücher*</i>	<i>Children's and youth books*</i>
Humorvolle Literatur, Satiren	Humorous literature, satires
Sach- und Fachliteratur, Ratgeber	Non-fiction and technical literature, guidebooks
Dramen, Theaterstücke	Dramas, plays
Gedichte	Poems

*Note: * indicates those variables that were excluded from the LPA analysis*

Appendix B. Statistics

Table B1: Basic descriptive statistics of used socio-demographic variables, KuBiPaD I

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Non-weighted					
Obtained higher education	2584	0.27	0.44	0	1
Mother obtained higher education	2432	0.09	0.29	0	1
Father obtained higher education	2316	0.17	0.38	0	1
Age	2585	48.82	18.99	15	96
Female	2592	0.52	0.50	0	1
Weighted					
Obtained higher education	2584	0.21	0.41	0	1
Mother obtained higher education	2432	0.09	0.28	0	1
Father obtained higher education	2316	0.16	0.36	0	1
Age	2585	49.29	19.33	15	96
Female	2592	0.51	0.50	0	1

Note: age is calculated as “2017-year of birth” in case month of birth is later or equal to the month of the interview; if month of birth is earlier then the month of the interview or if the month of birth is unknown, then age equals “2018-year of birth”.

Table B2: Taste in music, KuBiPaD I, weighted

	N	Mean	SD
Pop Music	2574	3.51	1.23
Rock	2573	3.36	1.33
Musicals	2574	3.28	1.23
Classical music	2587	3.13	1.30
R'n'B, Soul	2419	2.97	1.21
Country, Folk	2552	2.97	1.20
German schlager	2578	2.85	1.35
Jazz	2565	2.75	1.24
Traditional folk from other cultures	2491	2.66	1.14
Traditional German folk	2571	2.55	1.35
Church music	2562	2.55	1.24
Hip Hop, Rap	2530	2.53	1.31
Opera	2571	2.50	1.29
Electronic music, like electro, house, techno	2525	2.46	1.35
Indie rock, alternative, punk	2421	2.32	1.27
Heavy metal, hard rock	2517	2.18	1.32
Observations	2590		

Table B3: Taste in films, KuBiPaD I, weighted

	N	Mean	SD
Documentaries and biographies	2573	3.87	1.01
Comedies	2586	3.82	1.04
Action and adventure	2578	3.60	1.28
Crime and thriller	2585	3.59	1.20
Historical and period pieces	2577	3.54	1.11
Classics of film history	2562	3.43	1.08
Literary adaptations	2556	3.19	1.14
Romantic movies and romances	2587	3.03	1.22
Music and dance films	2582	2.94	1.25
Dramas and melodramas	2574	2.89	1.17
Cartoons and animated films	2580	2.85	1.28
Fantasy	2565	2.84	1.39
Film d'auteur	2153	2.73	1.11
Science Fiction	2563	2.72	1.42
Westerns	2575	2.59	1.21
Homeland-films	2555	2.55	1.26
Horror	2570	2.09	1.35
Observations	2589		

Table B4: Taste in literature, KuBiPaD I, weighted

	N	Mean	SD
Crime	1909	3.52	1.30
Non-fiction and technical literature, guidebooks	1910	3.49	1.11
Humorous literature, satires	1903	3.29	1.13
Historical novels	1904	3.18	1.24
Thriller	1901	3.15	1.41
Biographies and memoirs	1889	2.97	1.25
Fairy tales and legends	1907	2.87	1.21
Sophisticated contemporary literature since 1945	1856	2.78	1.20
Children's and youth books	1894	2.69	1.33
Fantasy	1902	2.64	1.42
Classical and modern literature up to 1945	1856	2.58	1.21
Romance novels and romances	1908	2.54	1.29
Poems	1907	2.54	1.30
Science fiction	1884	2.37	1.37
Dramas, plays	1901	2.32	1.11
Comics, mangas, graphic novels	1874	1.99	1.20
Horror novels	1891	1.87	1.22
Observations	1929		

Table B5: Overlap of members between the omnivore classes, listwise deletion, non-weighted

Assigned to...	And also a member of ...	N	%	Total assigned to the class from the first column
Music domain, class 5 (omnivore)	Literature domain, class 4 (omnivore)	72	9.88	729 (100%)
	Literature domain, class 5 (selective omnivore)	228	31.28	729 (100%)
	Film domain, class 2 (selective omnivore)	420	48.55	865 (100%)
	Film domain, class 4 (omnivore)	49	5.66	865 (100%)
Literature domain, class 4 (omnivore)	Music domain, class 5 (omnivore)	72	37.31	193 (100%)
	Film domain, class 2 (selective omnivore)	18	9.33	193 (100%)
	Film domain, class 4 (omnivore)	57	29.53	193 (100%)
Literature domain, class 5 (selective omnivore)	Music domain, class 5 (omnivore)	228	56.30	405 (100%)
	Film domain, class 2 (selective omnivore)	246	60.74	405 (100%)
	Film domain, class 4 (omnivore)	11	2.72	405 (100%)
Film domain, class 2 (selective omnivore)	Music domain, class 5 (omnivore)	420	43.21	972 (100%)
	Literature domain, class 4 (omnivore)	18	2.43	742 (100%)
	Literature domain, class 5 (selective omnivore)	246	33.15	742 (100%)
Film domain, class 4 (omnivore)	Music domain, class 5 (omnivore)	49	30.25	162 (100%)
	Literature domain, class 4 (omnivore)	57	47.50	120 (100%)
	Literature domain, class 5 (selective omnivore)	11	9.17	120 (100%)

Appendix C. Model fit statistics

Table C1: LPA models fit, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted

Classes (c)	LL	Free Parameters	AIC	BIC	SABIC	Entropy	Tech11	Tech14
Music taste								
2	-56413.249	43	112912.498	113164.453	113027.830	0.787	0.000	0.000
3	-55494.570	58	111105.141	111444.987	111260.704	0.813	0.000	0.000
4	-54998.030	73	110142.060	110569.797	110337.855	0.832	0.000	0.000
5	-54565.661	88	109307.322	109822.950	109543.349	0.827	0.009	0.000
6	-54181.381	103	108568.761	109172.281	108845.021	0.821	0.074	0.000
7	-53863.045	118	107962.091	108653.501	108278.582	0.822	0.124	0.000
8	-53673.893	133	107613.787	108393.089	107970.510	0.824	0.069	0.000
Film taste								
2	-51781.708	40	103643.415	103877.776	103750.685	0.922	0.000	0.000
3	-51156.193	54	102420.386	102736.773	102565.200	0.790	0.000	0.000
4	-50829.560	68	101795.120	102193.534	101977.479	0.790	0.002	0.000
5	-50547.658	82	101259.315	101739.755	101479.218	0.850	0.042	0.000
6	-50238.071	96	100668.143	101230.609	100925.590	0.834	0.074	0.000
7	-50037.027	110	100294.055	100938.548	100589.047	0.825	0.004	0.000
8	-49866.482	124	99980.964	100707.483	100313.500	0.830	0.470	0.000
Literary taste								
2	-38655.875	40	77391.75	77614.339	77487.259	0.713	0.000	0.000
3	-38141.666	54	76391.33	76691.828	76520.269	0.804	0.000	0.000
4	-37920.591	68	75977.18	76355.586	76139.549	0.785	0.000	0.000
5	-37714.611	82	75593.22	76049.533	75789.017	0.805	0.000	0.000
6	-37538.036	96	75268.07	75802.288	75497.295	0.814	0.659	0.000
7	-37372.796	110	74965.59	75577.716	75228.244	0.827	0.177	0.000
8	-37237.689	124	74723.38	75413.408	75019.457	0.832	0.045	0.000

Notes: LL – Loglikelihood H0 value; Tech11 – LMR for $c-1$ vs. c classes, p -value; Tech14 – BLRT for $c-1$ vs. c classes, p -value. Specifications in MPLUS: Type = mixture; Estimator = MLR, Starts = 1600 400; Lrtstarts = 200 200 500 200, Algorithm = Integration. Optimal seeds for the five-class solutions: music = 341960; film = 930323; literature = 266038.

Appendix D. The socio-demographic characteristics of the most omnivorous classes, descriptive analysis

Figure D1: Percentage of people with certain socio-demographic characteristics in omnivore classes and combinations of omnivore classes, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted

	Obtained higher education	Mother obtained higher education	Father obtained higher education	Female	Mean age	Total
Omnivore in music (class #5)	38%	11%	18%	61%	51.1	865 (100%)
Omnivore in literature (class #4)	21%	13%	19%	51%	37.9	193 (100%)
Selective omnivore in literature (class #5)	46%	11%	23%	69%	54.3	405 (100%)
Omnivore in film (class #4)	15%	9%	13%	58%	36.7	162 (100%)
Selective omnivore in film (class #2)	29%	8%	16%	74%	53.4	972 (100%)
Omnivore in music (class #5) & literature (class #4 or 5)	44%	14%	23%	65%	49.9	300 (100%)
Omnivore in music (class #5) & film (class #4 or 2)	36%	11%	18%	72%	50.2	469 (100%)
Omnivore in literature (class #4 or 5) & film (class #4 or 2)	37%	11%	19%	72%	50.0	332 (100%)

Note: age is calculated as “2017-year of birth” in case the month of birth is later or equal to the month of the interview; if the month of birth is earlier than the month of the interview or if the month of birth is unknown, then age equals “2018-year of birth”.

Appendix E. Results from the fractional regression

Table E1: Fractional logistic regression to predict posterior probabilities to be assigned to omnivore classes (i) (filter: age \geq 25 and father higher education \neq missing), average marginal effects, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Music domain, class 5 (omnivore)	Literature domain, class 4 (omnivore)	Literature domain, class 5 (selective omnivore)	Film domain, class 2 (selective omnivore)	Film domain, class 4 (omnivore)
Obtained higher education (0-1)	0.14*** (7.37)	-0.03* (-2.16)	0.14*** (7.83)	0.04* (2.05)	-0.04** (-3.16)
Female (0-1)	0.12*** (6.79)	-0.01 (-1.24)	0.11*** (6.29)	0.30*** (19.34)	0.00 (0.40)
<i>Age group</i>					
25-34	-0.07* (-2.55)	0.11*** (5.03)	-0.21*** (-7.37)	-0.23*** (-7.68)	0.11*** (6.05)
35-44	0.03 (0.97)	0.09*** (4.29)	-0.15*** (-4.79)	-0.12*** (-3.92)	0.08*** (4.84)
45-54	0.07** (2.69)	0.05** (3.12)	-0.12*** (-4.14)	-0.10*** (-3.72)	0.05*** (4.35)
55-64	0.12*** (4.23)	0.02 (1.21)	-0.11*** (-3.70)	-0.11*** (-3.82)	0.02* (2.11)
65 and older	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)
Observations	1970	1499	1499	1969	1969

z statistics in parentheses, bootstrapping with 500 replications

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note: age is calculated as “2017-year of birth” in case the month of birth is later or equal to the month of the interview; if the month of birth is earlier than the month of the interview or if the month of birth is unknown, then age equals “2018-year of birth”.

Table E2: Fractional logistic regression to predict posterior probabilities to be assigned to omnivore classes (ii) (filter: age \geq 25 and obtained higher education != missing), average marginal effects, KuBiPaD I, non-weighted

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Music domain, class 5 (omnivore)	Literature domain, class 4 (omnivore)	Literature domain, class 5 (selective omnivore)	Film domain, class 2 (selective omnivore)	Film domain, class 4 (omnivore)
Father's higher education (0-1)	0.05*	0.00	0.08**	0.01	-0.01
	(2.16)	(0.13)	(3.12)	(0.32)	(-0.92)
Female (0-1)	0.11***	-0.01	0.10***	0.29***	0.00
	(6.17)	(-1.06)	(5.17)	(19.77)	(0.39)
<i>Age group</i>					
25-34	-0.06*	0.11***	-0.20***	-0.22***	0.11***
	(-2.24)	(4.61)	(-6.60)	(-7.56)	(5.98)
35-44	0.04	0.09***	-0.15***	-0.11***	0.08***
	(1.29)	(4.05)	(-4.56)	(-3.86)	(4.84)
45-54	0.08**	0.05**	-0.11***	-0.10***	0.05***
	(3.19)	(3.09)	(-3.88)	(-3.82)	(4.05)
55-64	0.13***	0.02	-0.10***	-0.11***	0.02*
	(4.77)	(1.15)	(-3.38)	(-4.16)	(2.12)
65 and older	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)
Observations	1970	1499	1499	1969	1969

z statistics in parentheses, bootstrapping with 500 replications

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note: age is calculated as “2017-year of birth” in case the month of birth is later or equal to the month of the interview; if the month of birth is earlier than the month of the interview or if the month of birth is unknown, then age equals “2018-year of birth”.

Chapter 5: Curtains Up: How Ukrainians Turned to Theater During the War

Abstract

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has brought uncertainty to the lives of Ukrainian citizens. Despite the traumatic experiences caused by the outbreak of the war, Ukrainian theaters got a new life, benefiting from the unprecedented popularity, as noted by representatives of the theatrical community. This paper empirically investigates the (potential) rising popularity of Ukrainian theaters and provides supportive evidence using Google Trends data on search interest. After that, we employ structural topic modeling (STM) on social media data from ten theaters on Instagram to investigate the main thematic focuses associated with theater-going. The main themes include theaters as spaces of passion, fascination, and deep gratitude toward theaters, troupes, performances, and defenders, as well as (self-)reflection, support and solidarity, and socialization/bonding. Furthermore, this paper discusses how theater-going can offer individuals an opportunity to escape the web of negative events, construct civic identities, and embrace authenticity amidst the challenges of wartime.

This chapter presents a revised version of the manuscript currently under peer review in an academic journal. Preliminary results of this study were presented at the following scientific conferences: 5th ISA Forum of Sociology (2025), ECSR Annual Conference (2025), ESA RN05 Midterm Conference (2025), 5th Conference of the Academy of Sociology (2025).

5.1. Introduction

The full-scale Russian invasion has inevitably imposed restrictions on the lives of Ukrainian citizens in various ways, introducing new barriers for cultural practices. Paradoxically, journalists and professionals in the theater field have recently reported a puzzling new wave of popularity (Chaika, 2024; Hrabchenko, 2022; Kuzmenko, 2024). How can this trend persist despite the negative impact of the invasion, or is this coverage perhaps a (slight) exaggeration? This study explores the intriguing (potential) popularity of theaters in Ukraine by drawing attention to the online environment.

A prominent example of a surge in popularity is the theatrical adaptation of *The Witch from Konotop*, a satirical fiction story written by Ukrainian author Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko in 1833. Recently, this story experienced a revival after the tremendous success of its stage adaptation staged by the Ivan Franko Drama Theater in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine (Karmanska, 2023). The play premiered on 28 April 2023, coinciding with yet another Russian airstrike on Ukraine. Since then, the performance has quickly gained popularity, and tickets for this play have become highly coveted. According to the play's director, Ivan Uryvsky, tickets for certain dates sold out within 30 minutes (Karmanska, 2023). In December 2023, the ticket operator's website experienced significant disruptions caused by an unusually high volume of activity (Horlach, 2023). On the morning of 28 March 2024, a large crowd queued outside the theater to purchase tickets for the extra performance, which were available exclusively at the theater's cash desk (Cheliak, 2024a). Later in 2024, the theater warned its audience about fake announcements of the tours, circulated by scammers (Cheliak, 2024b). Meanwhile, the theater used its growing popularity for charitable purposes. The theatrical performance held on 11 December 2023 raised 1,770,000 UAH via the sales of tickets, an unprecedented sum for a single theatrical evening (*Charity Performance of the Play "The Witch of Konotop" [Blahodiinyi Pokaz Vystavy "Konotopska Vidma"]*, 2023). Later in 2024, the theater raised more than 2,300,000 UAH during another charity performance (*The Franko Theater Gathered More than UAH 2.3 Million for the Armed Forces during the Charity Performance "The Witch of Konotop,"* 2024) and even auctioned two private performances for one million US dollars (*1 000 000 \$ for the charitable Konotop Witch [1 000 000 \$ za blahodiinu Konotopsku vidmu]*, 2024). Of particular interest is that the case of *The Witch of Konotop* illustrates only one example of a broader surge in theater attendance observed in media during the Russian-Ukrainian war (Chaika, 2024).

Most contemporary studies on heterogeneous theater attendance, if not all, have been conducted during periods of peace, when the population's existential security could largely be taken for granted (e.g., Ateca-Amestoy, 2008; Walmsley, 2011). Research on cultural production in times of crisis and uncertainty is comparatively rare and refers, for example, to the role of theater during the Second World War, covering, in particular, the topics of aesthetic state propaganda and social control (Balfour, 2001). Such findings, however, are of limited relevance to the Ukrainian context. The case of Ukraine is distinctive, as it represents the experience of a sovereign country facing external invasion within the European digitalized and globalized context of the 21st century. Against the backdrop, this study aims to investigate the role of cultural participation in the time of extreme uncertainty by exploring the potential growing interest in theaters and the meanings associated with theater-going in Ukraine during the ongoing full-scale Russian invasion. The analysis draws on digital trace data from Google Trends and Instagram, using a sample of ten theaters across Ukraine as case studies.

5.2. Sociological lens on theater attendance

Conventional studies on preferences for theater attendance tended to adopt a rather static perspective. In this approach, the audience is divided into segments based on rather stable characteristics, which describe their propensity to attend theaters. For example, aiming to model heterogeneous behavior for theater attendance, Ateca-Amestoy (2008, p. 143) distinguishes two main segments of visitors. The first one represents the inactive category (never-comers), while the second subgroup shares a positive probability of participation – they tolerate the potential theater attendance, albeit to a different extent. The socio-demographic characteristics of these segments are dissimilar. Those with high cultural capital, particularly in terms of general and art education, women, urban residents, and older adults are usually more likely to attend the theater (Ateca-Amestoy, 2008, p. 144). However, recent findings point out to a different perspective – the interest in theaters is cumulative and depends on the past behavior (Throsby et al., 2024). Positive exposure to theater-going accumulates and fosters a new habit, making individuals more likely to look for theaters in the future. This process can, in turn, be reinforced by the wide range of factors.

Prior studies on the predictors of performing arts attendance and the meanings attached to it encompass the focus on social stratification of cultural participation (Bennett et al., 2009; Bourdieu, 1984); various forms of self-identification and collective agency (e.g., Benjamin,

2017; Herburg, 2024); emotional experiences and entertainment (Bouder-Pailler, 1999; Walmsley, 2011), including escapism and captivation (Brown & Novak, 2007; Manolika & Baltzis, 2020); socialization and bonding (Manolika & Baltzis, 2020); learning and exploration (Manolika & Baltzis, 2022; Throsby et al., 2024), among other factors.

Social stratification of the theater audience

Participation in performing arts, including theater, is frequently subject to social stratification. Theater in particular possesses characteristics of high and established culture, benefiting from its legitimate and highbrow status (Bennett et al., 2009; Bourdieu, 1984; Jæger & Larsen, 2024). Consequently, theater-going is often shaped by socio-economic factors. As Bennett et al. (2009, p. 52) found, “higher social class is associated with regular theatre attendance [...] belonging to the lowest social classes tends to be associated with never doing these things”. In line with this, early exposure to performing arts in childhood and access to art education foster the formation of positive preferences (Throsby et al., 2024) and contribute to cultural capital, which in turn structures future cultural practices (Bourdieu, 1984).

Identity, belonging, and agency

Going beyond the perception of cultural hierarchy, cultural consumption is tied to the diverse forms of social and collective identity, as well as a sense of belonging. The identity in postmodern theories is socially constructed, complex, plural, fluid, and directs one’s life (Cerulo, 1997, pp. 391–393). Given its multidimensional structure, the concept of identity can be studied on different coexisting layers, such as individual, relational and collective (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). Collective identity encompasses individuals’ social identification with other broad social groups and categories, as well as with the values, beliefs, attitudes, or other meanings attached to those groups (Vignoles et al., 2011). One of the manifold forms of collective identity is the civic identity, based on citizenship, which plays an important role in stimulating participation in social life and other forms of civic behavior. According to self-completion theory, individuals tend to rely on diverse socially recognized symbols to describe and express their social identity (Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1981). This implies that theater-going may contribute to the construction of visitors’ social identity. In line with this, Meeks et al. (2018), in their research on theater attendance and well-being, highlight a sense of belonging as one of the central characteristics of such involvement.

A distinctive feature prevalent in Ukrainian consumer culture since late 2013 has been the prominent influence of civic identity. Sparked by the Revolution of Dignity (2013-2014) and the Russian invasion of 2014, politicized consumption has particularly surged and taken the form of a social movement (Bulakh, 2017). Shaped by a growing sense of national identity as being Ukrainian and European, consumers have practiced boycotts to undermine Russian and Russian-related companies' economic power, and buycotts to support local and European producers (Bulakh, 2017, pp. 82–87). Consumers' disloyalty has been strongly associated with the country of origin of products, while locally produced items have evoked particularly positive feelings.

Emotional experiences

The relationship between cultural consumption and emotions is a critical area of exploration. According to Illouz (2009, p. 380), “consumption is [...] less about the utilitarian value of objects than it is about their symbolic meaning,” to which emotional connections are inherently attached. By distinguishing between background (structurally embedded) and situational (related to the context) emotions, Illouz (2009) emphasized that they represent an essential part of consumer culture, as both a driver and a product of consumption. For example, economist Scitovsky (1992), in his book *The Joyless Economy*, identified boredom and disappointment as potential motivators for engaging in novel activities. In organizing their lives, individuals' engagement with diverse experiences can be driven by two distinct forces: comfort- and pleasure-seeking (Illouz, 2009; Pugno, 2014; Scitovsky, 1992). While the former is associated with stability, safety, and security, the latter entails a certain level of uncertainty, novelty, and sensation-seeking. Lasting comfort, however, evokes boredom, which in turn stimulates a desire for novelty (Pugno, 2014; Scitovsky, 1992). Theater-going can represent a kind of cultural consumption with the potential to provide a new experience of excitement. Among other background emotions, Illouz (2009, pp. 390–394) points out envy (related to inequality concerns), anxiety (related to status concerns or the need for self-making), and rebellion (related to desublimation). Situational emotions, such as fear of others, love, confidence-seeking, or nostalgia (Illouz, 2009, pp. 394–397), are highly context- and consumer-dependent, but also bear a potential to structure cultural consumption.

A plethora of prior studies has underscored the emotional component as a central factor in the motivation to attend the theater. According to Walmsley (2011), emotional experiences and the

impact constitute key driving forces of theater-going. Similarly, the model of theater-going goals by Boudier-Pailler (1999) incorporates the arousal of emotions as an essential component, encompassing affectionate responses to performances, such as feelings of pleasure or love. Looking at other cultural domains, McIntyre (2007, p. 28) distinguishes emotional drivers of visiting museums and galleries, including moving experiences, nostalgia, and cultural identification. In addition to this factor, a distinct spiritual category is identified within the hierarchy of motivations, combining visitors' needs such as escapism, aesthetic pleasure, contemplation, wonder, and the stimulation of creativity (McIntyre, 2007, p. 28).

Another emotional motive identified in previous studies is escapism. Manolika and Baltzis (2020, p. 3) describe it as “a motive to get away from responsibilities and feel less anxious through cultural consumption”. Escapism has been shown to play a prominent role in driving attendance of art galleries (Slater, 2007) as well as theaters (Walmsley, 2011). Slater's (2007, p. 155) operationalization of escapism builds on the Beard & Ragheb (1983) approach and incorporates different subdimensions, including the motive to rest and unwind, to escape the hustle and bustle of daily activities, to relieve stress and tension, to relax mentally, to get away from responsibilities of everyday life, to make a nice change from one' daily routine, and to relax in a nice environment (Slater, 2007, p. 155). More generally, escapism can be understood as a desire to distract from unpleasant reality to an imaginary world. A further emotional impact of art performances, which in certain respects resonates with escapism, is captivation. According to Brown & Novak (2007, p. 11), “captivation is the lynchpin of impact” and is defined as the feeling of being engrossed and absorbed in the performance (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2013, p. 227). Strong captivation is exemplified by visitors living only in the flow of the performance, and having “lost track of time and forgot about everything else” (Brown & Novak, 2007, p. 11).

Cognitive growth and edutainment

The stimulus for attending theaters encompasses intellectual factors, including cognitive and aesthetic growth, along with an entertaining component (Walmsley, 2011). For example, Manolika & Baltzis (2020, 2022) distinguish a cognitive motive of attending cultural events, which accounts for learning, curiosity, and cultural exploration. For theater-going, cultural exploration was found to be of high importance (Manolika & Baltzis, 2022). Similarly, McIntyre (2007, p. 28) outlines intellectual motives, comprising factors associated with

learning and self-improvement. Studying the formation of preferences, Throsby et al. (2024) underline one of the leading roles of intellectual motives in driving demand for theater.

Socialization and bonding

The preferences for theaters can also be derived from membership in social groups. McIntyre's (2007, p. 28) scheme of motivation accounts for the social category, covering motives oriented toward socialization, entertainment, inclusion, access, and comfort. Manolika & Baltzis (2020, 2022) also underscore the role of the social category, which covers motives oriented toward socialization and family togetherness. General socialization needs and bonding within families reflect the factor named social hedonism in the model of theater attending goals by Boudier-Pailler (1999).

5.3. The context of war

The war-imposed damages and operating restrictions present obstacles rather than favorable conditions for the flourishing of Ukrainian theater. The use of explosive weapons and attacks from the sky made most Ukrainian cities no longer safe, and individuals, even those living far from the front lines, have experienced (severe) decline in life quality from the earliest days of the invasion (ABC News, 2022b). Life in such conditions is commonly associated with traumatic experiences and daily stressors. In addition, citizens have faced adverse economic and environmental consequences, including rising prices (*Ukraine Inflation Rate*, n.d.) and ecological damage (Neumann, 2025; Rawtani et al., 2022), which created new barriers to the consumption of cultural goods and services.

The Russian invasion has changed the rules of the game in the theater field from multiple perspectives. Firstly, Russia is accused of damaging the theatrical infrastructure. The bombing of the Mariupol drama theater, being used as a shelter by local citizens, is a notable case (Tondo & Koshiw, 2022). In September 2022, rocket attacks damaged the building of the Mykolaiv Academic Drama Theater (Hurova & Svystukha, 2022). Later, in January 2023, the Kherson Puppet Theater also suffered damage (Bilous, 2023). The Russian missile strike on Chernihiv caused the destruction of the Chernihiv Music and Drama Theater in August 2023 (Query, 2023; Waterhouse & Wright, 2023). The list could be further extended, as damage to theater buildings and other cultural infrastructure continues to be a major consequence of the hostilities (Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, 2023).

Secondly, the occupation of Ukrainian territories by Russia triggered the internal and external displacement of theater troupes and audience. The Mariupol theater troupe has partly relocated to Uzhhorod, the city in the western part of Ukraine near the border with Hungary and Slovakia (Kakissis, 2022). In March 2023, the troupe performed the symbolic play “Mariupol drama” in the local theater (Popp & Hostiuk, 2023). As part of the play, actors and actresses shared their experiences of life in Mariupol after the full-scale invasion, particularly during the bombing of the theater, and how they managed to evacuate from the city. Generally, internally displaced individuals have either become a part of various existing theatrical projects in different cities or established new initiatives (Bodenchuk & Panchenko, 2023; Rudenko, 2022). These cases highlight how external circumstances can foster cultural exchange between artists from diverse backgrounds and bring fresh blood to existing theater productions. However, external displacement of individuals encompasses difficulties in preventing the outflow of talent. In addition to displacement, conscription and voluntary military mobilization affect the composition of theaters.

The war has also driven substantial changes in the theaters’ repertoire (Veselovska, 2022) and a new reading of canonical plays (Bentia & Shopin, 2023). Firstly, performances based on works by Russian authors, as well as other Russian-language plays, have been replaced. For example, the Theater on Podil suspended the Russian-language play *A Young Doctor's Notebook*, an adaptation of stories by Mikhail Bulgakov. Similarly, performances involving artists associated with the aggressor’s country or those who have expressed support for the invasion have also been replaced by a new repertoire (Veselovska, 2022). As for the new reading of canonical plays, some performances acquire new semantic accents (Bentia & Shopin, 2023, p. 68), e.g., via the reflection of war-related topics. However, updating repertoires usually requires both material and intellectual significant resources.

Moreover, there are new operating restrictions on visiting theaters at the institutional level. In many regions, theaters are required to have shelters available within walking distance for the number of people corresponding to the theater's capacity. Theater performances are frequently interrupted by air raid sirens and, therefore, may last longer than planned or be cut short. The curfew in most cities (*What Is the Curfew in Different Regions of Ukraine in 2024?*, 2024) puts extra restrictions on the durations and starting times of plays, as they need to be finished before the curfew starts, and theaters need to consider the time visitors need to return home. While in

Kyiv and Kyiv region, the curfew lasts only from midnight to 5 am, in Kherson, and in the Ukraine-controlled Kherson region, it lasts 10 hours, from 8 pm to 6 am.

Given the ubiquity of barriers, the public survey of youth in Ukraine documented that the majority reported a decrease in cultural participation in 2022 (Kozhekina et al., 2023). Later on, journalists and professionals involved in the theater field communicated a new (unexpected) wave of popularity (Kuzmenko, 2024). Considering the provided aspects, the potential surge in theater attendance is a compelling phenomenon in wartime Ukraine, which in turn has the potential to contribute to the broader studies of the role of cultural consumption and meanings attached to theater-going in times of highest uncertainty. To explore this trend and provide empirical insights, I begin by comparatively investigating the online popularity of theaters, proposing the first research question (RQ1): *What trends in online popularity are observed for theaters in Ukraine, and how have they changed over time?* After that, I address how visitors communicate their experience. For this, I turn to social media, a powerful platform for sharing cultural experiences, to address the subsequent research question (RQ2): *What are the current thematic focuses of communication concerning theater-going?* The findings are expected to shed light on the role that theater-going plays in Ukraine during the war, the motivations of visitors, as well as the meanings associated with this cultural practice.

5.4. Methodology and data collection

5.4.1. Selection of theaters

As of the end of 2023, the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education reports 113 non-private operating theaters in Ukraine, of which 105 were communal and 8 were state-owned (“Barrier-free [Bezbariernist],” 2024). To study the theater attendance, we impose several selection criteria for theaters: the locations of theaters should have been available as a place on Google Maps and Instagram. In accordance with the selection criteria and taking into account ongoing challenges with collecting data from social networks (McCrow-Young, 2021), a sample of ten operating theaters is selected. Although the sample size is highly restricted, the included theaters represent geographical diversity to ensure the diversity of publications. The summary of the theater sample is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Sample of ten theaters

#	Title on Google Trends	Founding year	Instagram location	Geographical location
1	Ivan Franko Drama Theater	1920	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/514581199014383/	Kyiv, northern part of Ukraine
2	Theatre on Podil	1987	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/857898030984481/	Kyiv, northern part of Ukraine
3	Shchepkin Theatre	1933 (founded in Lubny), 1939 (moved to Sumy)	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/1027449639/ https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/1024768051/ https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/171479306745428/	Sumy, northeastern part of Ukraine
4	The Theatre of Coryphaei (<i>Kirovohrad Academic Regional Ukrainian Music and Drama Theater named after M. L. Kropyvnytskyi</i>)	1882	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/107981235091293/	Kropyvnytskyi, central part of Ukraine
5	Mariya Zankovetska Theater	1842	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/102229238034766/	Lviv, western part of Ukraine
6	Lviv National Opera	1900	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/103986417834974/	Lviv, western part of Ukraine
7	Dnipro National Academic Ukrainian Theatre of Music and Drama	1918	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/934434953356226/	Dnipro, central-eastern part of Ukraine
8	Les Kurbas Academic Theater	1988	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/347002893/	Lviv, western part of Ukraine
9	Poltava Hohol Theatre of Music and Drama	1818	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/615131751/	Poltava, central part of Ukraine
10	Kyiv Academic Theatre of Drama and Comedy	1979	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/1017118579/	Kyiv, northern part of Ukraine

5.4.2. RQ1: sample selection and analytic strategy

To address RQ1, I rely on publicly available Google Trends data for the selected ten theaters (as locations) (*FAQ about Google Trends Data - Trends Help*, n.d.). These data provide search interest in Ukraine for the time period from the week of 01/12/2019 to 30/11/2024, which is used as a proxy for the measurement of theaters' popularity in the online environment. Search interest represents how often selected theaters appear in Google search queries. The score is measured on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 implies the lowest relative search popularity and 100 indicates the highest relative search popularity – the peak popularity for one location for the defined time period. To explore temporal trends, I present fixed-effect regression models to predict interest rates for different time periods, complemented by descriptive analysis. The search interest was limited to Ukraine only in order to avoid the potential misleading influence

of externally displaced individuals. Then, to ensure the reliability of search interests and recently raised concerns on inconsistencies of samples (Franzén, 2023; Hölzl et al., 2025), the interest rates for each location were collected five times (on 15, 21, 24, 26 July and 01 August 2025) for the same time period. The final indicators used in the analysis are the weekly average search interest across the five data collection points.

5.4.3. RQ2: sample selection and analytic strategy

The second part of the analysis encompasses topic modeling – a method that uses text as data to extract recurring patterns of words into separate themes to represent the textual reality and uncover latent patterns in texts (see Barde & Bainwad, 2017 for the overview). For this, I relied on Instagram data and collected text descriptions from photo and video publications that were posted in the timeframe from February 24, 2022, to October 24, 2024 (inclusive), and tagged the theaters' locations from the aforementioned list as the geotags of the publications. The choice of Instagram is motivated by the fact that the theater creates an audio-visual product that fits particularly well with the features of this social network. In addition, Instagram is in the top three most popular social networks in Ukraine (*General Overview of Social Media in Ukraine - April 2024 [Zahalnyi Ohliad Sotsialnykh Merezh v Ukraini - Kviten 2024]*, 2024).

Data cleaning consists of several steps to ensure the appropriateness of the analysis. First, publications without textual elements and duplicates based on identical textual content were removed from the analysis. The next step aimed to address the issue of publications unrelated to theaters, e.g., with an advertising or commercial component. Based on a detailed examination of the text corpus, the list of keywords was created to identify relevant publications (see supplementary files). Within the selected content, certain publications were dropped, relying on the developed list of keywords and hashtags to identify irrelevant publications. The latter list included such terms as manicure, pedicure, delivery, Viber, etc. (see supplementary files). After that, the principal investigator removed publications that were not linked to the theaters but could not be identified with the help of keywords (75 cases). At the end of the cleaning stage, we addressed the issue of promotional posts that could bias topic modeling. Therefore, if one account had more than 40 publications in the dataset, all posts from this account were removed from the dataset. These accounts are the pages of the theaters themselves or ticket operators. Table 5.2 visualizes the construction of the analytical sample and changes in the number of posts in the dataset by theaters.

Table 5.2: Data cleaning and filtering

Locations	Date of data collection	Collected unique and non-empty posts	Selected based on keywords	Selected after filtering out based on keywords + manual	Selected after dropping posts by accounts that have more than 40 entries
Dnipro National Academic Ukrainian Theatre of Music and Drama	01.11.2024	699	398	363	196
Ivan Franko Drama Theater	26.10.2024	209	140	139	139
Kyiv Academic Theatre of Drama and Comedy	10.11.2024	856	614	589	446
Les Kurbas Academic Theater	26.10.2024	322	217	214	124
Lviv National Opera	01.11.2024	1,113	314	279	278
Mariya Zankovetska Theater	01.11.2024	1,147	754	732	487
Poltava Hohol Theatre of Music and Drama	28.10.2024	3,046	624	429	380
Shchepkin Theatre	02.11.2024	2,108	279	180	180
The Theatre of Coryphaei	01.11.2024	415	237	217	105
Theatre on Podil	26.10.2024	1,249	739	699	627
Total by column		11,164	4,316	3,841	2,962

The final analytical sample comprises 2,962 textual posts related to the field of theaters in various ways. The full list of included publications in the form of links is available in the supplementary files.

For the topic analysis, the structural topic modeling (STM) package in R was applied. STM is a type of topic modeling based on the co-occurrence of words with incorporated metadata that aims to identify thematic focuses (Roberts et al., 2019). Over recent years, topic modeling has become a prevalent tool to uncover broader topics in cultural consumption (e.g., Light & Odden, 2017) and general meanings of culture (e.g., Sirkka et al., 2024). To ensure correct text processing, posts were translated from Ukrainian into English using the Deepl API beforehand. To improve the translation, 44 posts containing the Ukrainian homonym for *tryvoha*, which can have different meanings, such as air alarm or anxiety, and one post containing the abbreviation *VPO* (IDP – internally displaced individuals), were translated using ChatGPT.

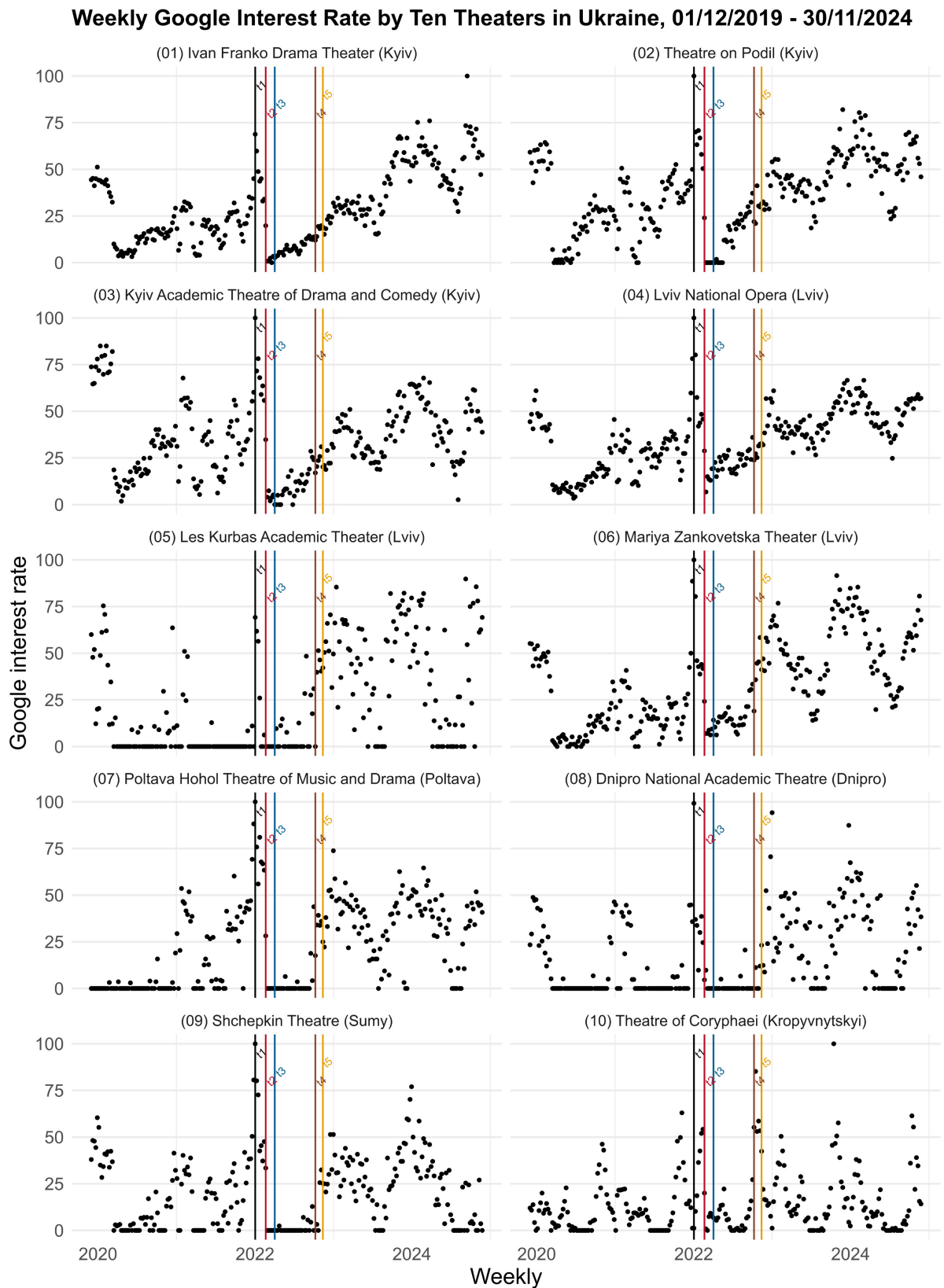
The data processing included stemming, removing punctuation, non-character elements (e.g., emojis), numbers, stop-words (using a list from *stm* package), and words consisting of one or two letters, and converting text to lowercase. For STM, only words that appear in at least 9 documents (0.3%) are considered. The model also incorporated the date of publication and the post's location, corresponding to one of the ten theaters, as metadata. The final corpus has 2955 documents, 1336 terms, and 57836 tokens, with a mean of 23.62 words per document and a median of 13.

The appropriate number of topics in the corpus is identified using the function *searchK* in R (Roberts et al., 2019) as the best tradeoff between held-out likelihood values, residuals, semantic coherence, and the lower bound, while also considering the parsimony of the model. The quantitative topic modeling is complemented by the further interpretation of findings that offers a more in-depth analysis of the content and meanings attached to topics.

5.5. Results: search interests underline the relatively high popularity of theaters (RQ1)

Figure 1 shows the (average) weekly search interest of the theaters from the week of 01/12/2019 to 30/11/2024. In the figure, five vertical lines indicate significant events that took place in 2022 with the potential to shape the temporal dynamics of cultural interest. The first line indicates that, since 2022, an improved way of data collection has been introduced by Google, which might have influenced the comparability of rates across time periods. The second line denotes the week of the Russian full-scale invasion. The third line indicates the significant event in defensive operations – deoccupation of the Sumy region in the northeastern part of Ukraine, the fourth – the first massive missile attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure. The fifth indicates the liberation of the city of Kherson in the east of Ukraine, the culmination of the counteroffensive operations in 2022. The figure shows that the search interest has dramatically decreased after the full-scale invasion in 2022, reaching its lowest value. However, after a certain period, search interests have been restored, gaining one of the highest levels of popularity over five years.

Figure 5.1: Google Interest Rates of Theaters, weekly, 01/12/2019 to 30/11/2024

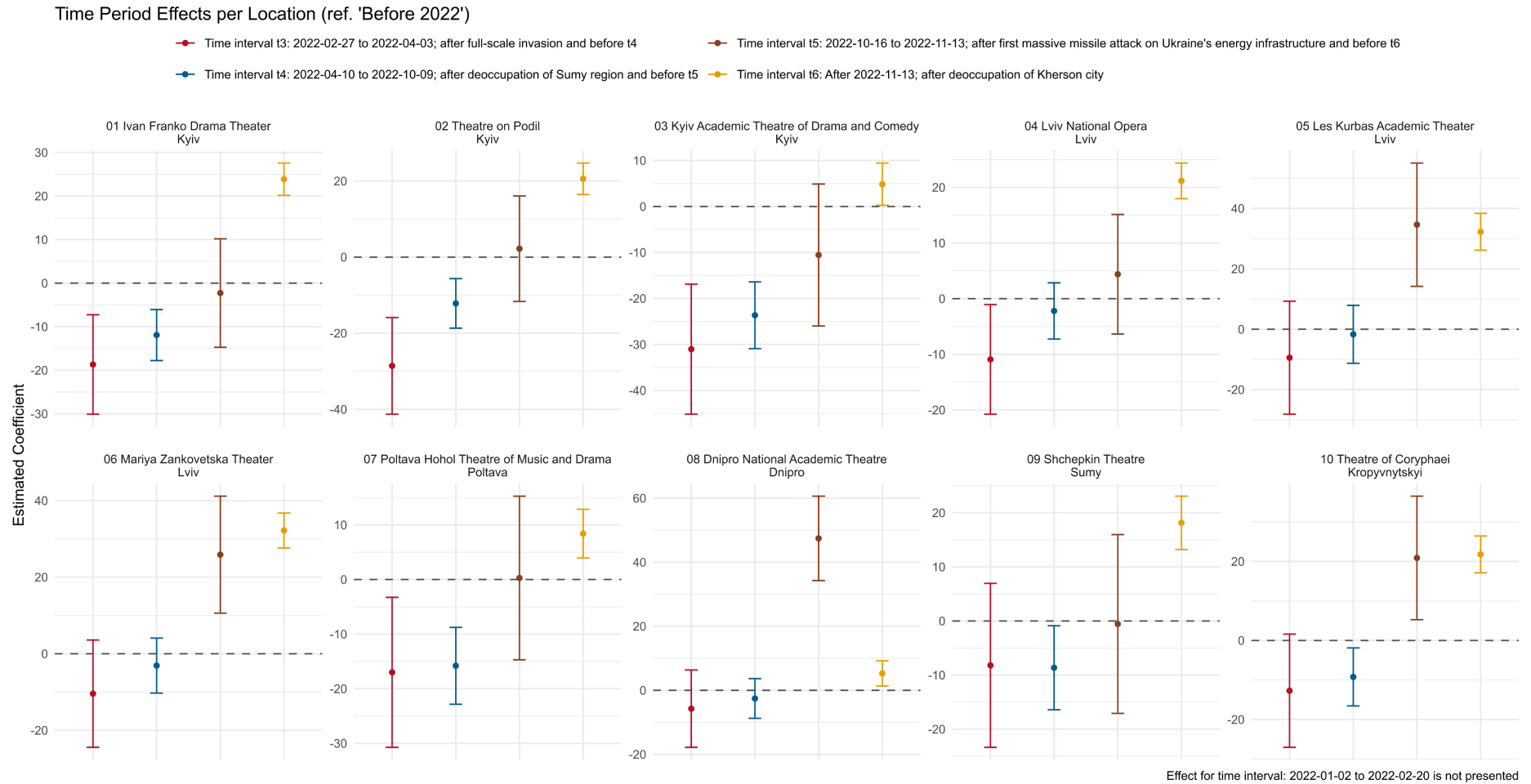


t1: improvement of the data collection; t2: full-scale invasion; t3: deoccupation of Sumy region; t4: first massive missile attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure; t5: deoccupation of Kherson city

To begin with, a fixed-effect model on pooled data to predict interest rate by a dummy variable indicating time interval after the full-scale invasion showed a significant positive effect ($b = 9.775$, $P < 0.001$) with R-squared 5.2% (Appendix A, Table A1). Spelling out the effects by theaters (Appendix A, Table A2), positive significant binary time-effects were identified in seven theaters out of ten. In three theaters, the regression coefficient was not significant.

For the next step, we incorporate five time periods from the figure above (Appendix A, Table A3) to improve the modeling of the temporal dynamics. Due to the uncertainty introduced by the new way of data collection from 2022 and unexpected spikes in search interest happening in the first weeks of 2022, I compare the search interest in different post-invasion time periods to the period before 2022. The results show a general trend that interest rates have dropped to an ever-lower level after the start of the invasion, but significantly increased, especially after the liberation of territories (particularly, Kherson city). Investigating the differences between theaters (Appendix A, Table A4), from the end of 2022, all ten theaters benefit from the higher interest compared to the period before 2022, albeit to a different extent. Figure 5.2 shows the effect of time points on weekly interest rates. Notably, some theaters have reached the highest level of interest compared to the time before 2022 after the liberation of significant cities.

Figure 5.2: Effect of time periods on the Google interest rates, fixed effect, weekly, 01/12/2019 to 30/11/2024

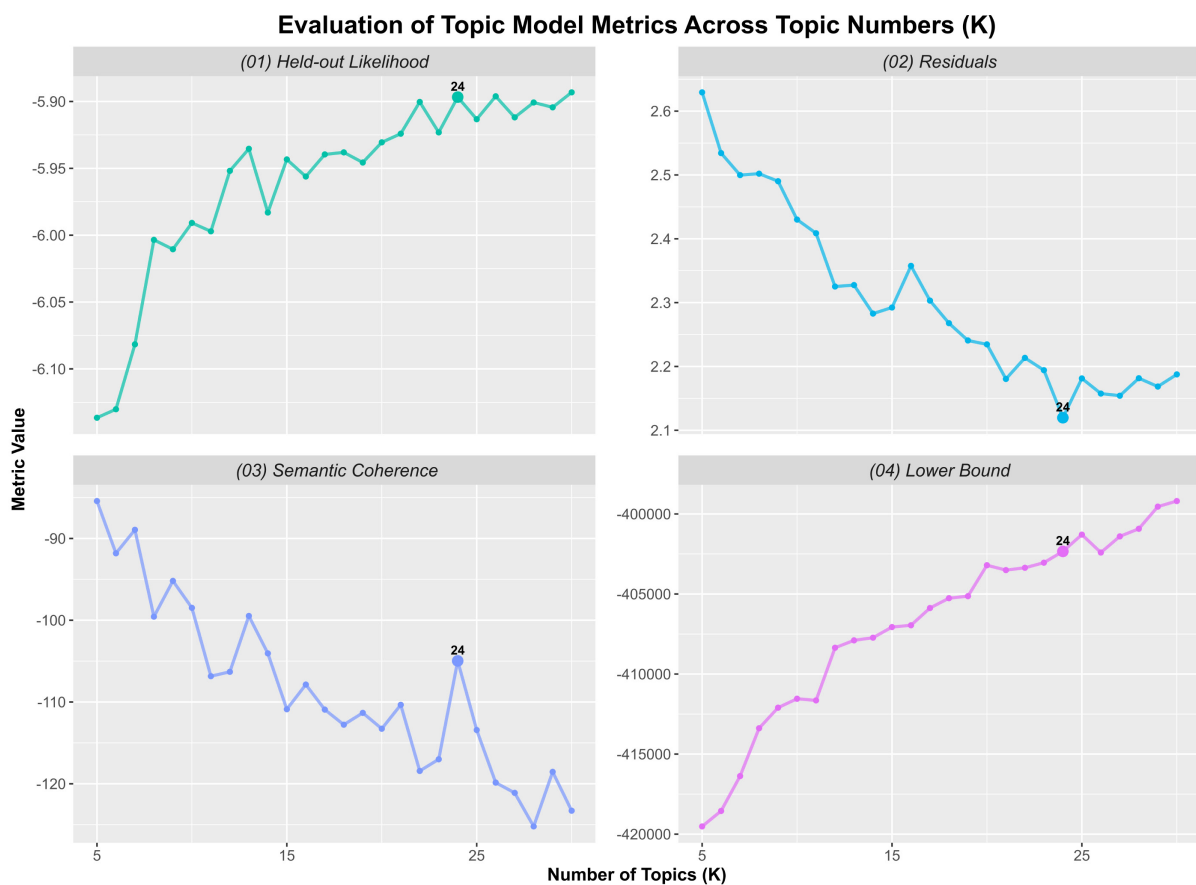


5.6. Results: topic modeling (RQ2)

5.6.1. Identifying the number of topics

The next part of the analysis aims to identify thematic focuses in textual discourse. For this, STM was applied to the previously defined sample of posts. Aimed to define an appropriate number of topics, models with topics (k) from 5 to 30 are compared based on held-out likelihood values, residuals, semantic coherence, and lower bound. According to the results (Figure 5.3), a model with 24 topics is an appropriate parsimonious solution, showing a relatively high held-out likelihood value, low residuals, and high semantic coherence. Additionally, models with more topics experience a considerable cut in semantic coherence, making them less favorable options.

Figure 5.3: Diagnostic values by number of topics ($k = [5;30]$)



5.6.2. Interpreting the topics

The results of the model with 24 topics revealed the main thematic focuses of the semantic discourses. Figure 5.4 reports the ten highest word probabilities for each of the 24 topics, along with their prevalence and custom labels. Next, we proceed with interpretation and, if possible, grouping of topics into overarching themes.

Category 1: Appreciations, impressions, and compliments for performances (#9, #6, #13)

The first prevailing topic (#9) refers to passion (“love”) and appreciation for the theaters and their performances. Representative documents also highlight the topic of bonding (“family”, “trip”) and spending free time (“meet”, “weekend”, “coffee”).

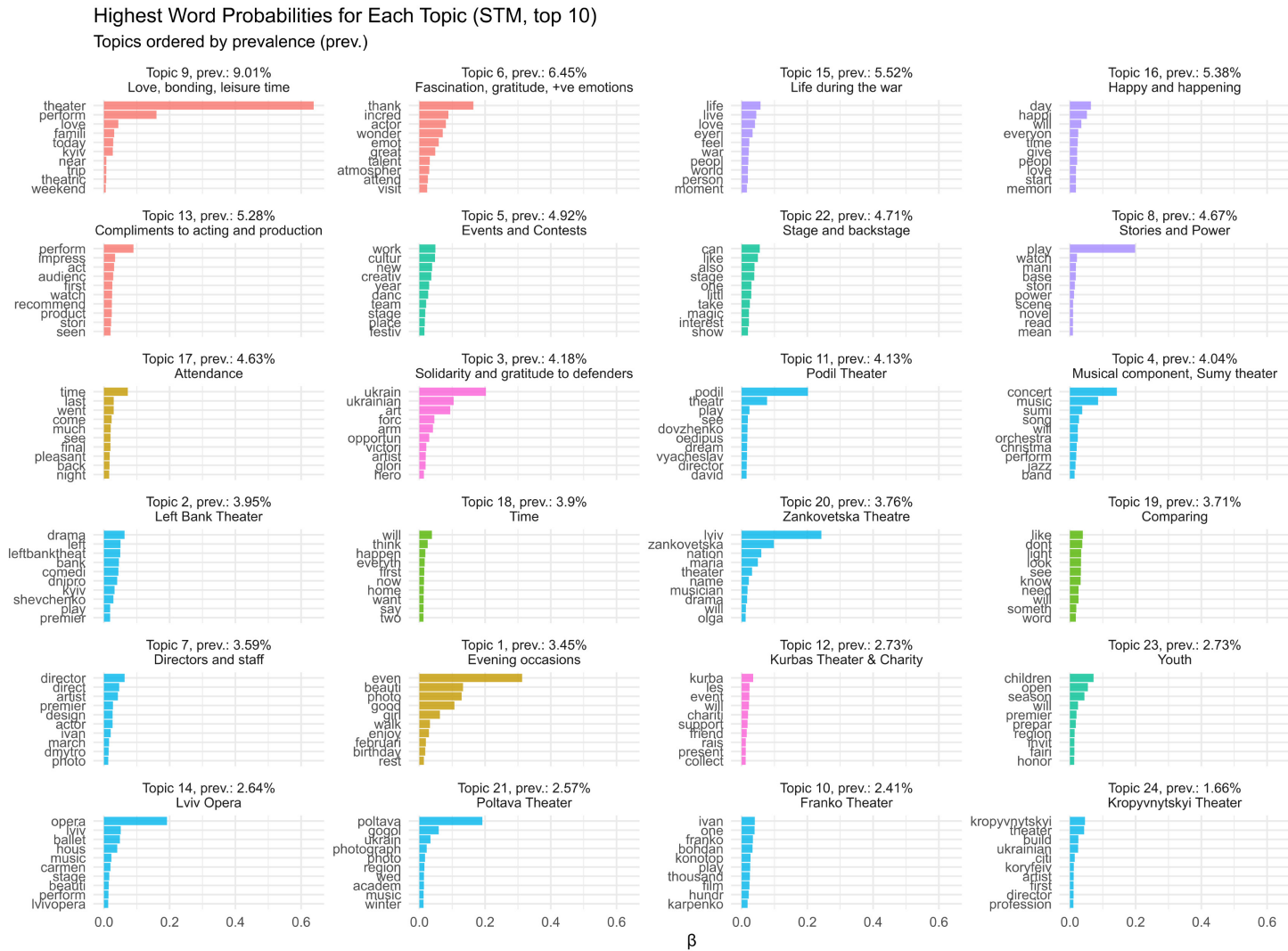
The second most widespread topic (#6) covers fascination with and gratitude to particular plays, performances, staging, and acting, expressing positive feedback and emotions from theater-going (“incredible”, “thank”). Users also appreciate the work of theaters as institutions and highlight their fascination with the experience of theater-going. Among the most popular publications related to the topic are the following phrases: “incredible, talented, sincere”, “thank you for these emotions”, “after such a terrible night, such a wonderful evening”, “as always, mega-cool actors, incredible performance and a pleasant atmosphere”, “wonderful evening in good company”, “positive emotions”.

Topic #13 covers the thematic focus of impressions with performances and related aspects, for example, acting, first-time visiting theaters, and meeting actors and actresses in person (“perform”, “impress”). This topic also includes the recommendation of performances or theaters to others (“recommend”).

Category 2: Reflection on plays’ meanings, life during the war, and feelings (#15, #16, #8)

The third prevailing topic (#15) encompasses a reflection on theater and the play's plots with parallels to life in Ukraine in the time of the war (“life”, “live”, “people”, “war”, “world”). Representative documents for this topic contain references to the plays that are used as a basis for the reflection. For example, posts outline works by George Orwell, William Shakespeare, and Mykola Khvylovyi. There are also other references to the performances mirroring modern life after the invasion.

Figure 5.4: Thematic focuses of publications



The thematic focus #16, the fourth prevailing topic, is loaded by keywords “day”, “will”, “happi”, “everyon”, “time”. This theme includes a reflection on what has happened in a certain moment (“despite how bad yesterday was, this evening had to happen”, “sunday, day off”, “a long day, a happy day, a day full of joy despite the air alarm and storm”), the feeling of happiness in the moment, but also in the retrospective way (“... happy and full of energy”, “happy and grateful that I had such a Teacher”), as well as expression of wishes (“happy holidays”, “happy birthday”).

Topic #8 covers the interpretation of plays and novels on which plays are based (“play”, “watch”, “novel”, “read”). The image of power in plots is of high importance (“power”). The top ten representative documents entail references to different novels, including 1984 by George Orwell, and the play *Butterflies Are Free* by Leonard Gershe.

Category 3: Solidarity and gratitude to defenders (#3, #12)

Topic #3 covers an expression of sincere gratitude and solidarity with Ukrainian defenders. Users frequently acknowledge the role of the Armed Forces in making such cultural experiences possible: “in support of the Armed Forces”, “help the Armed Forces of Ukraine”, “glory to the heroes who defend our Ukraine”, “donated to the Armed Forces”, “support and inspire each other”, “charity concert”. Representative documents contain a component of support or solidarity, visualized by calls for charity fundraisers for theater members and their friends or family, or fundraising campaigns organized by representatives of the theaters. In addition to topic #3, topic #12 covers the focus on the Kurbas Theater and also includes the aspect of charity events organized there.

Category 4: Experiences (#1, #17)

The words with the highest loadings in topic #1 disclose the focus on evening experiences – good and beautiful evenings in or around the theater (“even”, “beaut”, “good”). This thematic focus also entails a component of socialization and bonding in the form of photo shooting to capture moments (“photo”), walking around theaters (“walk”), and other sharing experiences (“girl”, “birthday”, “rest”). Topic #17 emphasized the communication about the time of visiting theaters, especially in a retrospective way (“last night”, “last time”, “spent time looking”).

Category 5: Reference to the locations, plays, and staff

Topic #4 concentrates on the aspects of music – concerts in theaters and musical parts in performances. Representative posts discuss jazz and pop concerts, as well as the Ukrainian cultural heritage of singer Volodymyr Ivasyuk (1949-1979).

Topic #7 covers the communication about theater directors and other staff (“designer”, “actor”, “honor” in the sense of honored artists), mainly in a positive sense. The play *Caligula* and its director Ivan Uryvskiy from the Franko Theater stand out in the keywords. Except for Ivan Uryvskiy, the top ten representative documents mention Petro Bogomazov (theater designer), Mykhailo Urytskyi (director), Serhiy Pavliuk (director), and others.

Following the highest word probabilities in topics, at least ten thematic focuses are grouped based on references to specific theaters and their corresponding performances in texts. As an illustration, topic #11 refers to the Theatre on Podil in Kyiv and group publications that elaborate on cultural experiences in this theater. Among other semantic focuses, topic #2 describes thematic focus related to the Kyiv Academic Theatre of Drama and Comedy, topic #20 to Mariya Zankovetska Theatre in Lviv, topic #12 to Les Kurbas Academic Theater in Lviv (with a focus on charity events organized there), topic #14 to Lviv National Opera, topic #21 to Poltava Hohol Theatre of Music and Drama, topic #10 to Ivan Franko Drama Theater in Kyiv and topic #24 to the Theatre of Coryphaei in Kropyvnytskyi. In addition, topic #4, which was previously discussed in relation to the musical component, contains references to the theater in Sumy.

Other topics

Topic #22 (“can”, “like”, “also”, “stage”) primarily focuses on the image of the stage and backstage. Representative documents discuss the stage in diverse contexts – “magic of the stage”, “touching the backstage”, “interesting character on the big stage”, “events on stage”.

Topic #5 covers the thematic focuses related to the occasion – communicating competitions, classes, and other events. It also concentrates on the expression of experience related to the forum “Creative Ukraine”, an event “for discussing state policies in the field of culture and creative industries” (“CREATIVE UKRAINE” 2024, n.d.). Topic #23 encompasses the

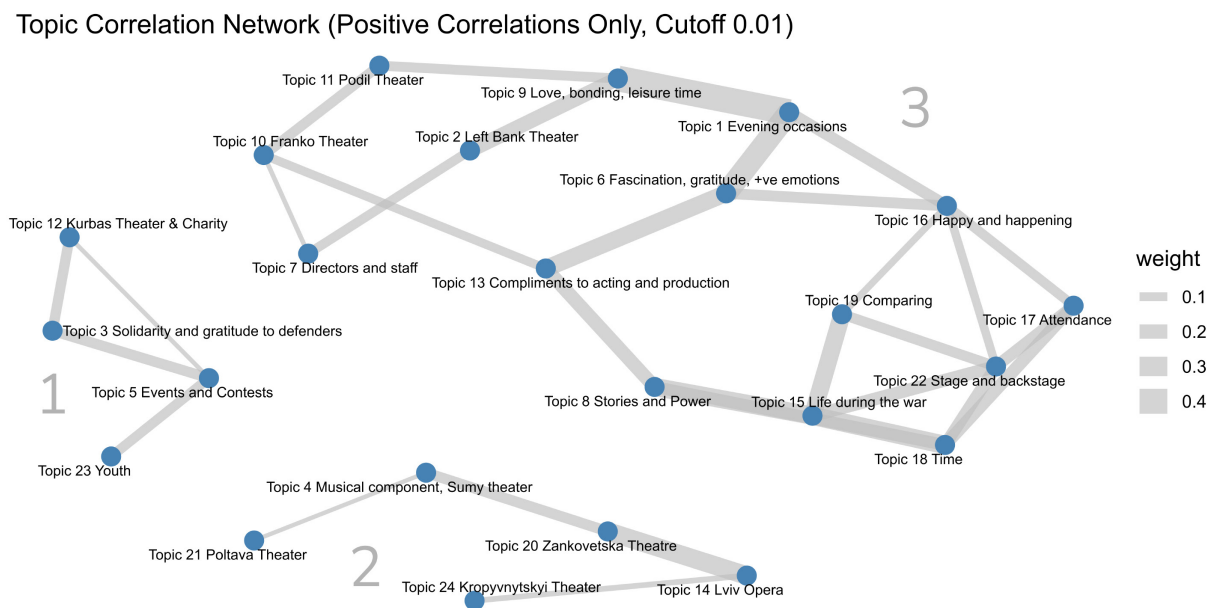
experiences and offers for children for art engagement, cultural projects about children, as well as young characters in plays (e.g., Romeo and Juliet).

Topic #18 among the keywords has references to the communication of the time of different events (“happen”), e.g., future (“will”) or present (“now”). Representative documents entail narrative communication and include communication of thoughts (“think”, “want”, “say”). Topic #19 includes mainly the elements of comparison (“like” in meaning “like a flower”, “like a last call”) and negotiations (“don’t”).

5.6.3. Correlation of topics

The correlation matrix of topics (Figure 5.5) established a grouping into three clusters. The first cluster covers topics that have a social component and focus on helping others and organizing social events. The second cluster groups topics that have direct references to five theaters and their repertoire, including the prevalence of musical components in their programs: Poltava Hohol Theatre of Music and Drama (#21), Mariya Zankovetska Theatre in Lviv (#20), Lviv National Opera (#14), Theatre of Coryphaei in Kropyvnytskyi (#24), and Shchepkin Theatre in Sumy (#4). The third cluster unites other topics into one interconnected network, grouping topics with positive connotations to the theater experience and references to other locations.

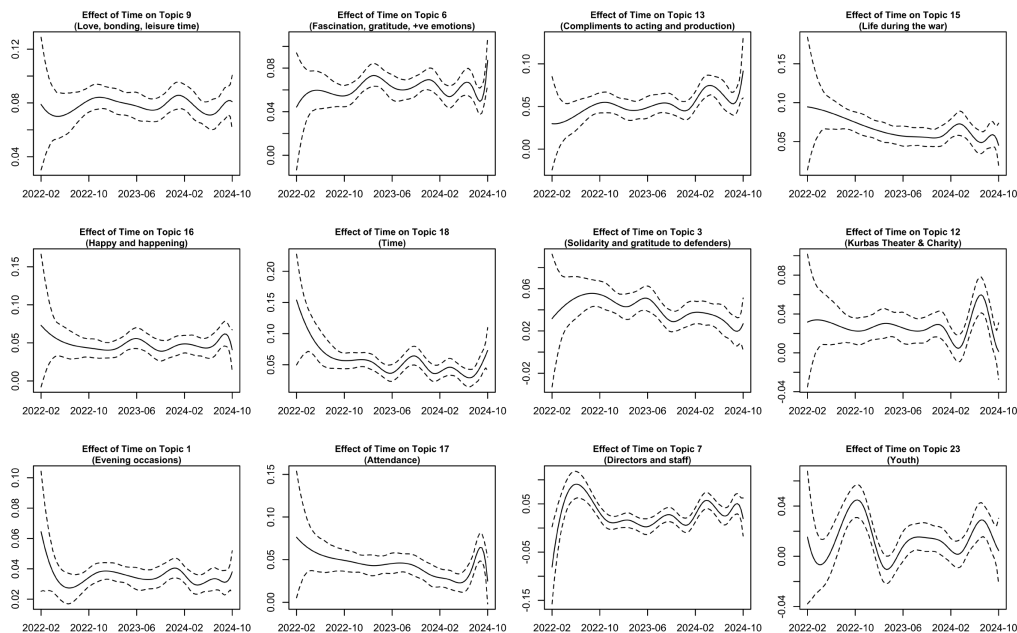
Figure 5.5: Correlation matrix of topics (huge method, positive correlations, cutoff 0.01)



5.6.4. Time effect on expected topic proportions

Does the prevalence of prominent topics remain stable over time? Figure 5.6 shows the smoothed effect of time on 12 selected topics identified through structural topic modeling. Overall, most time changes are rather insignificant. Among the first category, the prevalence of the most popular topic, #9 (“love, bonding, leisure time”), remains rather stable over time. Topics #6 (“fascination, gratitude, positive emotions”) and #13 (“compliments to acting and production”) show a slight increase in late 2024, possibly reflecting the rising popularity of theaters. In the category of reflections, the prevalence of topics also remains rather consistent over time, taking into account the confidence interval. However, topic #15 (“life during the war”) shows a slight decline from the beginning of the invasion until late 2024, albeit with two noticeable peaks occurring in 2024. The prevalence of topic #18 (“time”) decreases from the beginning of the invasion before stabilizing. In the following category, the prevalence of topic #3 (“solidarity and gratitude to defenders”) is relatively stable over time. However, topic #12 (“Kurbas Theater & charity”) shows a marked increase in prevalence during the summer of 2024. A similar trend applies to topic #1 (“evening occasions”) in the next category, while topic #17 (“attendance”) shows a rather stable trend over time. The prevalence of topics #7 (“directors and staff”) and #23 (“youth”) appears to mirror seasonal fluctuations in theater attendance.

Figure 5.6: Effect of time on expected topic proportions, structural topic modeling, 12 selected topics



5.6.5. Further interpretation: theater attendance as escapist coping patterns?

In the face of physical and mental insecurity, theaters can offer Ukrainians a new way to escape from war-related experiences, providing a similar experience to the pre-war live cultural entertainment. Unlike other types of cultural escapism (like movie-watching), theaters allow visitors to immerse themselves in the emotions of a live performance and, at the same time, support the Ukrainian cultural field during the war.

Although escapism is not directly represented as a separate thematic focus in topic modeling, its traces are still present in other thematic focuses. The topics of gratitude and appreciation of theaters and direct references to theaters are ribbed with the expression of diverse forms of escapism. For example, some posts emphasize distracting from the web of negative events (the most prevalent topic #10) and dealing with stress (#22). One publication also underlines metaphorically the healing power of theaters (#3), whilst another highlights positive emotional contribution to well-being (#13). Also, publications put the theater experience in direct opposition to reality, saying that no alarms could ruin the pleasure of visiting the theater (#16).

5.6.6. Further interpretation: a new wave of consumer citizenship?

External aggression and increased feelings of insecurity can mobilize citizens in diverse ways and activate the salience of civic identity in economic activities and cultural consumption. One manifestation of it refers to fostering consumer citizenship (Bulakh, 2017), meaning that even everyday consumption practices can become a political action and stem from national sentiments. Generally, consumers tend to engage in consumption acts to raise their voices to highlight ethical, political, and other concerns (Koos, 2012).

The Russian full-scale invasion in 2022 and its severe negative influence on everyday life in Ukraine might have catalyzed consumer citizenship. Although from 2014 to 2022 the availability of Russian products was strongly limited, concert tours of Russian artists to Ukraine have decreased but not disappeared (*Russian touring artists in Ukraine: which artists have announced concerts [Rosiiski hastrolery v Ukraini: khto z artystiv anonsuvav kontserty]*, 2021). The online consumption of Russian cultural products was also remarkable in the rating of top-performing music tracks (e.g., Mishchenko, 2021). Since the beginning of full-scale military aggression, the supply and demand for Russian cultural goods have considerably decreased, providing new space for Ukrainian cultural products to develop and gain popularity

(e.g., *What Music Ukrainians Listened to in 2022 [Yaku Muzyku Slukhaly Ukraintsi u 2022 Rotsi]*, n.d.). In addition to this, consuming Ukrainian might become an act of solidarity and support with the cultural field hardly influenced by the war. In line with this, several posts publish calls to support Ukrainian theater during the time of war.

5.6.7. Further interpretation: reactualization of authenticity?

Russia is considered the largest successor to the Soviet Union. According to public opinion surveys, the Russian population still tends to attach positive feelings to various elements of Soviet times. For instance, the persona of Joseph Stalin is consistently reported to evoke positive attitudes in most of society (Grushetsky, 2023; Masci, 2017). In modern Ukraine, the regime of the Soviet Union was held responsible for systematic crimes targeting the Ukrainian population. Among them are the execution and conviction of Ukrainian cultural artists (*Remembering the Talented Ukrainian Minds Killed by the Soviet Union and Now, Russia*, 2024) and the Famine, which is recognized as genocide of the Ukrainian people by numerous countries (Holodomor Museum, 2019). The time of the Soviet Union is also characterized by extensive industrialization of the economy and standardization of culture. A new wave of aggression from the successor to the Soviet Union could trigger the reactualization of Ukrainian cultural figures and their anti-regime contribution. Theaters tend to adopt such pieces as the basis for their performances and provide consumers with a chance to dive into authentic experiences.

According to Gerosa (2024), such a paradigm of aesthetic consumption as hipsterism has become a prominent driver of Western capitalist societies. In the author's words, “authenticity became a fundamental logic orienting taste and aesthetic discernment horizontally to single fields for the past 40 years” (Gerosa, 2024, p. 19). Compared to the industrial time, we all have become more “hipsters”, but especially those identified as middle class. Theatrical performances can accompany the search for authenticity in manifold ways. In particular, theaters adapt works by Ukrainian writers spanning diverse art movements, including works by anti-regime activists and victims of the Soviet regime. For example, Ivan Franko Drama Theater in Kyiv includes in its repertoire plays of Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi (1864-1913, impressionist), Ivan Karpenko-Karyi (1845-1907, realism), Olha Kobylianska (1863-1942, modernist and activist in the Ukrainian women’s movement), and others. Kyiv Academic Young Spectators Theater on Lypky adapted the novel *Misto* (The City, 1928) by Valerian

Pidmohylny (1901-1937, modernist), a representative of the Executed Renaissance – generation of cultural figures who were executed by the Soviet regime in 1920x-1930x. Such performances are frequently communicated with (in)direct opposition to the past aggressors' cultural heritage, for example, “reclaiming culture from Russia” (Chaika, 2024).

Several publications refer to the works by Ukrainian figures, including poets Serhiy Zhadan (1974-) and Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861), modernist writer Olha Kobylanska (1863-1942), and poet and writer Lesya Ukrainka (1871-1913). Additionally, users mention the adaptation “Chervona Ruta” (Red Rue), picturing life and contribution to the Ukrainian cultural heritage of singer Volodymyr Ivasyuk (1949-1979), whose influence on modern Ukrainian identity illustrates the anti-Soviet turn in popular culture (Wojnowski, 2023). Among other themes, topic #10 (reference to the Franko Theater) covers positive references to the play *Hundred* based on a piece by Ivan Karpenko-Karyi (1845-1907) and *The Witch of Konotop* by Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko (1778-1843).

5.7. Conclusion and discussion

This study investigated theater-going during a period of extreme uncertainty, exploring the role of theaters in Ukraine amid the Russian-Ukrainian war and the (potential) surge in attendance highlighted by theater representatives. Addressing RQ1 concerning theater popularity, the study has provided supportive evidence for a widely communicated upward trend, based on an analysis of online activity in Ukraine using Google Trends data. On average, interest increased significantly over time in the period after the invasion.

How do visitors perceive the theater during wartime? By analyzing thematic focuses in social media publications to address RQ2, this article argues that the unexpected boom in theater interest unfolds through various meanings. Firstly, in line with previous studies (e.g., Boudier-Pailler, 1999; Walmsley, 2011), the findings reveal that meanings attributed to theater-going encompass a strong emotional component, including feelings of love and gratitude toward theaters. In general, theater is perceived as a space for passion, fascination, and gratitude not only toward theater as an institution or a cultural field, but also toward theater troupes and performances. Secondly, amidst the Russian-Ukrainian war, the social solidarity component appears to play a prominent role – visitors tend to express gratitude to defenders, communicate support, and show signs of solidarity, linking the theater performance to contemporary life and

showing national identity. Thirdly, visitors also perceive the theater as a space for (self-)reflection on life during the war and interpretation of stories, which may illustrate a new dimension of the cognitive motive outlined in previous studies (cf. Throsby et al., 2024). Last but not least, the communication of theater-goers shows traces of a social component, covering aspects of socialization and bonding (cf. Boudier-Pailler, 1999; McIntyre, 2007). Further interpretation suggests that theater-going can also function as a coping mechanism (escapism), as a form of consumer citizenship, or as a manifestation or outcome of the reactualization of authentic Ukrainian works by both cultural consumers and producers. This implies that individuals may adore the live performances as a means of escape from the web of negative events, but at the same time craft their civic (digital) identity and embrace authenticity.

Treating the theater audience as active social agents whose consumption acts are embedded in the contemporary social and political context, going to the theater in Ukraine can take on a new form of social significance – cultural resistance. First, themes of fascination, gratitude, and appreciation for various elements of theater and its representatives stand out as prominent topics. Notably, the discourse predominantly revolves around topics with positive or neutral connotations, lacking negative perspectives. None of the identified thematic focuses include criticism, negative attitudes toward theaters, status distinctions, or similar concerns. Thus, online communication about theater-going during the war, particularly on Instagram, is characterized primarily by positive sentiments within the analyzed sample. Second, although some theater-goers acknowledge the escapist function of theaters, another prominent characteristic of the theater field is its deep embeddedness in war-related themes. Social media data reveals a thematic focus on gratitude and solidarity with the Armed Forces. Theaters do not stand aside and contribute to the broader resistance efforts in diverse ways, for example, by creating an experience that provides individuals with an opportunity to engage with calls for solidarity and shape their (digital) identity. Moreover, this study highlights that visitors tend to engage with theatrical performances as a means of (self-)reflection on contemporary life.

In the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war, national self-identification has significantly strengthened in Ukraine, which can also be expressed via theater attendance. According to public polls, in 2022-2023, on average, 81% of Ukrainians consider themselves to be in the first place citizens of Ukraine, with minimal regional or linguistic differences (Grushetsky & Paniotto, 2025, p. 187). By contrast, this figure was 62% between 2014 and 2021, and only 51% from 2005 to 2013. The rise in national self-identity, coupled with the outflow of foreign

cultural products, might have stimulated a new wave of consumer citizenship. Theaters that continue operating despite the challenges of wartime and engage in acts of solidarity may have become desirable objects for cultural consumption as signals of national self-identity. Furthermore, the emphasis on the authenticity of plays and adaptation of Ukrainian-language works from past centuries may have transformed the theatrical repertoire into desirable cultural products for constructing civic (digital) identities. This suggests that authenticity may function as an expression of opposition to past patterns of conformity with Russian influence in cultural markets.

How to interpret the rising interest in theaters from the perspective of social stratification remains an open question. On the one hand, it may indicate a weakening of status distinction in theater-going during wartime, where new social groups engage in performing arts. On the other hand, this growth in interest could align with existing cultural hierarchies, where those already inclined toward theater in the past simply attend more frequently during times of uncertainty. Investigating the interpretations of this trend and audience composition is a prominent avenue for future research.

This study bears several significant limitations. First, the data selection did not account for numerous alternative channels of theater-goers' communication, including thematic forums, websites, other social media platforms (such as Facebook and X), and offline interactions. The sample is strictly limited to textual content from Instagram posts that geotagged ten specific theaters as locations, which are located in large and medium-sized Ukrainian cities. The dataset includes neither a complete list of operating theaters nor other forms of Instagram activity – original stories, reposts in stories, likes, or comments. This implies that the results may be prone to selection bias. Second, the study presents findings relevant to the one selected textual reality, and the transferability of findings to other settings requires further investigation.

Further limitations of this study concern the methodology. The analysis of RQ1 relied exclusively on search interest as a proxy to measure the popularity of theaters in the online environment and did not incorporate more substantial behavioral traces, such as purchasing tickets or visiting theater websites. Extending the analysis with more precise behavioral traces can provide a better estimation of cultural dynamics. Also, RQ1 addresses only the temporal dynamics of search interests but cannot argue for any causal relationships. The temporal dynamics of popularity can at least partially be attributed to various structural factors, such as

the introduction of new plays by theaters or changes in the perception of security within the audience. Moving to RQ2, the selection criteria for defining the number of topics relied on conventional quantitative indicators but incorporated neither qualitative assessments nor additional evaluation tools (Chang et al., 2009; Roberts et al., 2019, pp. 38–39).

As the Russian war in Ukraine continues while writing this article, it remains crucial to monitor the changing experiences of the Ukrainian population and the coping mechanisms employed to navigate the uncertainty. Ukrainian theater is visible in times of war, remains active, and sparks interest among the audience (Chaika, 2024). Moreover, theaters have not been reluctant to change and have withstood the test of invasion – theaters, together with their audiences, create a link between the performances and contemporary issues. Thus, theater-going has not only persisted during wartime but has also become an integrated aspect of wartime urban life, in part due to theaters remaining anchored in the broader war context. As Bentia and Shopin (2023, p. 61) highlight, theaters in Ukraine create “a safe space for common emotional reliving a new tragic experience”. Guided by the positive communication of the visitors, the need for sustainable institutional support of theaters to provide this safe space in such times of uncertainty cannot be underestimated.

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Appendix A. Tables

Table A1: Regression to predict interest rates in ten theaters

	DV: Weekly interest rates
IV: time period after the Russian invasion (==1 if first day of the week > 20.02.2022)	b = 9.847*** (se = 0.806)
Num. Obs.	2610
R2	0.054
R2 Adj.	0.051
AIC	23158.1
BIC	23169.8

⁺ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. DV: dependent variable, IV: independent variable. Syntax: `fe <- plm(interest ~ timepoint, data = append_data, index = c("place", "week"), model = "within")`

Table A2: Regressions to predict interest rates over ten theaters

	(01) Ivan Franko Drama Theater (Kyiv)	(02) Theatre on Podil (Kyiv)	(03) Kyiv Academic Theatre of Drama and Comedy (Kyiv)	(04) Lviv National Opera (Lviv)	(05) Les Kurbas Academic Theater (Lviv)	(06) Mariya Zankovetska Theater (Lviv)	(07) Poltava Hohol Theatre of Music and Drama (Poltava)	(08) Dnipro National Academic Theatre (Dnipro)	(09) Shchepkin Theatre (Sumy)	(10) Theatre of Coryphaei (Kropyvnytskyi)
IV: time period after the Russian invasion (b)	12.860***	9.425***	-4.691 ⁺	12.794***	23.015***	21.324***	-0.243	3.563 ⁺	9.671***	10.757***
se	(2.315)	(2.490)	(2.517)	(1.896)	(3.160)	(2.638)	(2.426)	(2.029)	(2.564)	(2.736)
Num. Obs.	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
R2	0.106	0.052	0.013	0.149	0.170	0.201	0.000	0.012	0.052	0.056
R2 Adj.	0.103	0.049	0.009	0.146	0.167	0.198	-0.004	0.008	0.048	0.053
AIC	2268.6	2306.6	2312.3	2164.4	2431.0	2336.8	2293.0	2199.7	2322.0	2355.8
BIC	2275.8	2313.8	2319.4	2171.6	2438.2	2344.0	2300.1	2206.8	2329.1	2362.9
RMSE	18.53	19.93	20.15	15.18	25.29	21.12	19.42	16.24	20.52	21.90

⁺ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. IV: independent variable. Syntax: `fe_results_by <- plm(interest ~ timepoint, data = .x, index = c("place", "week"), model = "within")`

Table A3: Regression to predict interest rates in ten theaters by five timepoints

	DV: Weekly interest rates
IV: Timepoints (<i>ref. T1: before 2022</i>)	
T2: Weeks 2022-01-02 to 2022-02-20 (after Google improved data collection, but before full-scale invasion)	b = 30.939*** (se = 2.037)
T3: Weeks 2022-02-27 to 2022-04-03 (after full-scale invasion)	b = -15.270*** (se = 2.332)
T4: Weeks 2022-04-10 to 2022-10-09 (after deoccupation of Sumy region)	b = -9.092*** (se = 1.196)
T5: Weeks 2022-10-16 to 2022-11-13 (after the first massive missile attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure)	b = 12.235*** (se = 2.544)
T6: Weeks after 2022-11-13 (after deoccupation of Kherson city)	b = 18.855*** (se = 0.759)
Num. Obs.	2610
R2	0.303
R2 Adj.	0.299
AIC	22371.1
BIC	22406.3

⁺ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. DV: dependent variable, IV: independent variable. Syntax: `fe <- plm(interest ~ week_group, data = append_data, index = c("place", "week"), model = "within")`

Table A4: Regressions to predict interest rates in ten theaters by five timepoints over ten theaters

	(01) Ivan Franko Drama Theater (Kyiv)	(02) Theatre on Podil (Kyiv)	(03) Kyiv Academic Theatre of Drama and Comedy (Kyiv)	(04) Lviv National Opera (Lviv)	(05) Les Kurbas Academic Theater (Lviv)	(06) Mariya Zankovetska Theater (Lviv)	(07) Poltava Hohol Theatre of Music and Drama (Poltava)	(08) Dnipro National Academic Theatre (Dnipro)	(09) Shchepkin Theatre (Sumy)	(10) Theatre of Coryphaei (Kropyvnytskyi)
IV: Timepoints (<i>ref. T1: before 2022</i>)										
T2 (b)	23.753***	34.315***	31.623***	30.393***	18.028*	33.044***	40.373***	18.338***	24.867***	54.659***
se	(5.091)	(5.663)	(6.303)	(4.390)	(8.342)	(6.248)	(6.121)	(5.383)	(6.752)	(6.383)
T3 (b)	-18.680**	-28.585***	-31.019***	-10.907*	-9.422	-10.439	-17.002*	-5.729	-8.200	-12.716+
se	(5.828)	(6.483)	(7.215)	(5.026)	(9.549)	(7.152)	(7.007)	(6.162)	(7.730)	(7.308)
T4 (b)	-11.917***	-12.156***	-23.649***	-2.200	-1.689	-3.102	-15.809***	-2.544	-8.640*	-9.219*
se	(2.988)	(3.324)	(3.699)	(2.576)	(4.895)	(3.667)	(3.592)	(3.159)	(3.963)	(3.746)
T5 (b)	-2.267	2.215	-10.552	4.393	34.618**	25.874**	0.278	47.458***	-0.553	20.884**
se	(6.356)	(7.071)	(7.869)	(5.481)	(10.415)	(7.801)	(7.643)	(6.721)	(8.431)	(7.970)
T6 (b)	23.876***	20.601***	4.842*	21.174***	32.270***	32.198***	8.396***	5.277**	18.139***	21.773***
se	(1.896)	(2.109)	(2.347)	(1.635)	(3.106)	(2.327)	(2.280)	(2.005)	(2.515)	(2.377)
Num. Obs.	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
R2	0.509	0.443	0.297	0.482	0.343	0.491	0.276	0.209	0.253	0.416
R2 Adj.	0.499	0.432	0.283	0.472	0.330	0.481	0.262	0.194	0.238	0.405
AIC	2120.4	2176.0	2231.8	2043.1	2378.2	2227.3	2216.6	2149.5	2267.8	2238.5
BIC	2141.8	2197.4	2253.2	2064.5	2399.5	2248.7	2238.0	2170.9	2289.2	2259.9

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. IV: independent variable. T2: Weeks 2022-01-02 to 2022-02-20 (after Google improved data collection, but before t3); T3: Weeks 2022-02-27 to 2022-04-03 (after full-scale invasion and before t4); T4: Weeks 2022-04-10 to 2022-10-09 (after deoccupation of Sumy region and before t5); T5: Weeks 2022-10-16 to 2022-11-13 (after first massive missile attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure and before t6); T6: Weeks after 2022-11-13 (after deoccupation of Kherson city). Syntax: `fe_results_by <- plm(interest ~ week_group, data = .x, index = c("place", "week"), model = "within")`

Appendix B. Keywords

Keywords to filter publications (R syntax, case-insensitive, Ukrainian language)

```
relevant_<- c('театр',  
             'вистав',  
             'мистец',  
             'митец',  
             'виступ',  
             'концерт',  
             'веч(і|о)р',  
             'режисер',  
             'актор',  
             'актрис',  
             'артист',  
             'артіст',  
             'персонаж',  
             'геро(ї|ї)',  
             'глядач',  
             'класик',  
             'музи(к|ч)',  
             'муз(и|а)',  
             'пое(з|т)',  
             'творч',  
             'сцен',  
             'квит(к|о)',  
             'спектак',  
             'прем'єр',  
             'опер',  
             'культур',  
             'браво',  
             'академ',  
             'калігул',  
             'відьм',  
             'перед волею',  
             'гастрол',  
             'трупа',  
             'роман',  
             'оркестр',  
             'вражен',  
             'інтерпрет',  
             'адапта',  
             'афіш',  
             'дебют',  
             'сезон',  
             'карпенко',  
             'stage',  
             'theate',  
             'theatr')
```

Keywords to filter out publications (R syntax, case-insensitive, Ukrainian language)

```

filter_out <- c('парфум',
  'мак(і|и)яж',
  'салон(краси|краси)',
  'вартість',
  'весілля',
  '(у|в) д(і|и)рект',
  '(у|в) direct',
  'свічк',
  'доставк',
  'знижк',
  'акц(і|и)я',
  'косметолог',
  'замовленн',
  'smarhome',
  'eventphoto',
  'в асортименті',
  'цін(а|о)',
  'ціна:',
  'консультаці',
  '(#|)тату',
  'tattoo',
  'космети(к|ч)',
  '(брови|брів)',
  'нарощуванн',
  'ламінуванн',
  'шугар',
  'лазерн',
  'пребіотик',
  'одягжіночий',
  'вінтажукраїна',
  'жіночеплаттяукраїна',
  'дівчача сукня',
  'barbie',
  'лосьйон',
  'посудомийк',
  'spf',
  'сироватка',
  'бургер',
  'оксидування',
  'забудовник',
  'Starlight',
  'мокасини',
  'SVARGA',
  'джинси',
  'нігті',
  'сметана',
  'kerastase',
  'музиканти_світу',
  'ферментац',
  'ефірні олії',
  'руки майстра',
  'манікюрполтава',
  'процедур',
  'водійське',
  'барменысумы',
  'Viber',

```

'WhatsApp',
'ІММТ',
'альгінатн',
'автошкола',
'Чай у пакетиках',
'Massimo',
'ботокс',
'ботулізм',
'когерентнедихання',
'itarena',
'одягльвів',
'жіночийодяг',
'екошкіра',
'applewatch',
'обробкафото',
'езотерика',
'аренда',
'пірсинг',
'велюр',
'брошка',
'синтепон',
'аквагрим',
'ростові фігури',
'двунитка',
'нейлон',
'barista',
'підощва',
'гелевікульки',
'makeupartist',
'юриспруденція',
'гітарapolтава',
'візажполтава',
'фастфудполтава',
'Pecher',
'марשמеллоу',
'раскладтаро',
'фасон',
'готелітуреччини',
'брендинг'

Chapter 6: Detailing Social Influence in Predicting Cinema Attendance: A Vignette Approach

Abstract

The movie market is full of incommensurable products, encouraging consumers to rely on various judgment devices of a social nature (e.g., ratings and recommendations) to make choices. However, the role of movie genres and individual characteristics in relying on judgment devices remains uncertain.

Drawing upon Karpik's theory of the economics of singularities, this study examines social influence in a movie market by employing a factorial survey to investigate the role of movie ratings and recommendations in predicting the likelihood of going to the cinema to watch a movie across four genres: romance, sci-fi, documentary and horror — genres distinguished by their varying levels of social stratification and popularity. The vignettes are presented in the form of pictures, depicting either low, middle or high ratings by movie experts, broad audience and peers, as well as personal recommendations from close friends, parents or neither.

First, the results reveal that the ratings by experts, broad audience and peers emerge as positive predictors; the gain from each rating's increase from the middle level to the highest level is greater than the loss from a decrease from the middle level to the lowest level among all movie genres. Second, personal recommendation by close friends, rather than parents, holds the highest significance regardless of the genre. Third, orientation toward specific judgment devices depends on individual characteristics of respondents, such as trust in family and importance of friends, genre preferences and the level of cultural omnivorousness.

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Preliminary results of this study were presented at the following scientific conferences: 16th ESA Conference (2024), IMEBESS (2024).

6.1. Introduction

The economic market for cultural products is characterized by a high level of uncertainty (Karpik, 2010), making it a subject of interest for sociological research (Beckert, 1996). To make decisions in such markets, consumers rely on socially constructed quality indicators, such as ratings or recommendations. The influence of social factors, along with other factors such as available budgets or marketing strategies, results in extreme inequality and unpredictability of success (Salganik et al., 2006; Watts & Salganik, 2011).

One notable example of such markets is the global movie market. Since movies are commodities of experience (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), and only undergoing the experience allows one to judge their quality or attractiveness, consumers face uncertainty. For example, the complete content of a movie remains a mystery to consumers until the final moments of the picture. In addition, the market entails a high degree of uncertainty for producers. As an illustration, Bob Gale, the producer and co-writer of the movie *Back to the Future* (1985), revealed in a CNN interview that “the script was rejected over 40 times by every major studio and by some more than once” (Hanks, 2010). However, the movie eventually became a remarkable success story, holding a place in the top 200 most popular movies of all time, according to the Internet Movie Database (IMDb), with an average rating of 8.5 out of 10 (*Back to the Future* (1985) - IMDb, n.d.). While *Back to the Future* was an unexpected success, *Son of the Mask*, released in 2005, did not live up to expectations. Despite following the plot of the famous comedy *The Mask* (1994), starring Jim Carrey, this case was a financial failure and received negative reviews from broad audiences worldwide, gaining an IMDb rating of only 2.2 out of 10 points (*Son of the Mask* (2005) - IMDb, n.d.). *Back to the Future* and *Son of the Mask* serve as two illustrations of the unpredictability of consumers’ feedback in such markets characterized by a high level of uncertainty.

To orient themselves in the movie market, consumers deliver trust to various sources of information known as judgment devices, such as recommendations, ratings, rankings, brand names and diverse advertising (Karpik, 2010, pp. 44–46). These devices are used to construct the quality indicators by producers and consumers. Empirical studies have shown that depending on whether a movie is a blockbuster or an arthouse, and on what type of movie consumers prefer, devices have different weights for predicting behavioral intentions (Schmidt,

2022). However, the role of movie genres and individual characteristics in the prioritization of certain judgment devices remains uncertain.

Drawing upon Karpik's (2010) theory of the economics of singularities and a recent empirical contribution by Schmidt (2022), this study places emphasis on different genres of movies and two leading devices that illustrate social influence in a movie market – personal networks and ratings. Employing a factorial survey among students, this research aims to investigate the role of these sources of knowledge in predicting behavioral intentions to go to the cinema to watch a movie in one out of four genres — romance, sci-fi, documentary and horror — distinguished by their varying levels of stratification and popularity. The vignettes portray movies through images depicting either low, middle or high ratings by movie experts, broad internet users and peers along with personal recommendations from close friends, parents or neither. Additionally, the question of why consumers rely on certain devices to a different extent remains relatively unexplored. Thus, a potential explanation of the effects of the selected ratings and recommendations is investigated by examining the role of preferences to genres, trust in/importance of friends and family, and cultural omnivorousness as moderators.

6.2. Literature review and hypothesis development

The contemporary movie market is oversaturated with products. The development of movie production is inseparably linked to technological advancements. Innovations in technology have introduced new ways of movie consumption: cinemas have benefited from improved quality and expanded services, while audiences have shifted their viewing habits from large screens to smaller ones, thanks to streaming services. Looking back at history, it is clear that distribution practices have undergone dramatic changes since the 1970s. In 1976, just over 40 years ago, the Video Home System (VHS) was invented, bringing new viewing experiences to households and driving the development of related technologies (Smits, 2017). Over the span of two decades, the market experienced a rapid transition with the introduction of Digital Video Discs (DVDs). The demand and supply of videotapes considerably decreased, being replaced by digital video formats in the early 2000s (Smits, 2017, p. 118). The last VHS tape was produced in 2016, signaling the end of the production business (Keating, 2016).

In the contemporary digital age, consumption patterns in the movie industry are constantly evolving, resulting in customized consumption and content abundance across both small and

big screens (Pardo, 2015). According to Statista (2023), in 2018, the number of movies released in the United States and Canada reached its highest point since 2000, with 873 new releases. To watch all of them, one person would need more than two months of non-stop viewing. In 2022, influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of releases decreased to 449 movies. Both figures indicate a significant flow and an increase in the amount of available content. The movie industry continues to grow and has managed to overcome the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (BoxOfficeMojo.com by IMDbPro, n.d.). However, the cinema industry in Europe is facing challenges in its recovery, characterized by a dramatic decrease in cinema admissions and a higher concentration among top-performing pictures (Kanzler & Simone, 2022, pp. 7–8). The overabundance of content and its accessibility due to digitalization are of particular interest in predicting consumer behavior. Given such a vast array of choices, the following question arises: which movies deserve our attention?

6.2.1. Social influence in the movie market

The movie market serves as an example of a market for singular goods (known as singularities), i.e., a market of unique and incommensurable products and services (Healy, 2011; Karpik, 2010). Developing a theory of the economics of singularities, Karpik (2010) argues that consumers in such markets, characterized by high uncertainty, rely on various judgment devices. Consumers seek relevant information to decrease the level of uncertainty and use different sources to familiarize themselves with a product. Judgment devices, functioning as knowledge operators and guiding principles for action, aim to deal with the cognitive deficit. Karpik (2010, pp. 44–46) identifies five main categories of these devices: network (e.g., interpersonal relations), appellations (attributes and meanings such as brand names), cicerones (criticism and guides), rankings (expert and buyer hierarchical arrangements of singularities) and confluences (techniques used to channel buyers, such as advertising). Subsequent research by Bialecki et al. (2017) reveals that people can still tolerate a certain level of uncertainty and intentionally refrain from acquiring extensive knowledge to “avoid learning too much about a film before viewing it” (2017, p. 63).

Social influence appears to play a prominent role in explaining consumer behavior and market performance (Watts & Salganik, 2011). Prior research has asserted that individuals can follow the past behavior of others, assuming that they have additional important information, to better justify their decisions (Banerjee, 1992; Bikhchandani et al., 1992). Later, Podolny (2005)

underscored the influential role of social signals related to the perception of status in gaining market success. Salganik et al. (2006) emphasized that exposure to information on preferences of others influences one's music preferences and behavior in cultural markets. Judgment devices such as various ratings and recommendations describe the social component that drives the puzzling nature of the products' success.

In his recent review of the economics of movies, McKenzie (2023) points to the studies that signal the positive explanatory power of both expert and broad audience ratings in explaining a movie market performance. As an illustration of the latter, Chintagunta et al. (2010) have documented a strong positive influence of the valence of broad audience reviews on the box office outcomes at the level of designated market area in the US. In their study, valence is operationalized as the mean user rating for a movie in a local market at the time of its release (Chintagunta et al., 2010, p. 946). Their finding also indicates that a higher mean user rating considerably increases box office revenues, while other review metrics, such as volume or variance of reviews, bear little effect.

Illustrating the role of expert ratings, Reinstein and Snyder (2005) have highlighted that positive reviews from even two prominent movie experts significantly increase movie performance, particularly in terms of demand for narrowly released and drama movies. In contrast, their influence was minimal for comedies, action movies, and wider release pictures, signifying that the genre and release categories can moderate the impact of expert reviews (Reinstein & Snyder, 2005, p. 45). Later, Huang et al. (2017) investigated the role of expert ratings across a particular set of diverse movies and found that the valence of expert reviews is particularly influential during the initial release period, but the positive effect tends to decrease over time. Comparing the role of broad audience and expert reviews, Basuroy et al. (2020) underscore that expert evaluations have a stronger impact on movie revenues. Interestingly, expert and broad audience ratings may not be entirely independent, with some evidence suggesting that experts can exhibit conformity to broad user evaluations (Pang et al., 2022).

Given the prevalence of diverse ratings and other intermediaries, Sharkey et al. (2023) highlight the recent rise of markets characterized by multiple intermediaries. In such markets, expert and broad audience ratings play influential roles and possess different features. Comparing the process of evaluation, expert ratings tend to be more selective and periodic, while broad audience ratings are characterized by a low degree of selectivity and continuous updates

(Sharkey et al., 2023, p. 9). Turning to the characteristics of evaluators, broad audience ratings often cultivate organizational identities in the user-generated content, but expert evaluations develop individual identities, reflecting the importance of personality. Finally, the legitimacy of each type of evaluation is rooted in distinct sources: in the case of expert ratings, the legitimacy stems from well-informed and professional evaluations, while broad audience ratings gain legitimacy through the perceived trustworthiness of aggregated, first-hand user experiences.

Looking into the role of diverse intermediaries, Schmidt (2022) recently conducted a factorial survey among students to explore how different types of available information shape the likelihood of watching a movie. The dimensions included personal network, star participation, expert and user / broad audience criticism (low vs. high rating), expert and buyer rankings, and entrance fees. These factors correspond to the primary judgment devices outlined in Karpik's (2010) theory of the economics of singularities. One of the results indicates that both expert and user evaluations were found to influence preferences, albeit with varying degrees of influence depending on the movie type preferences (arthouse versus blockbuster). In addition, personal recommendation consistently shapes the intentions to watch a movie across different types of audiences (Schmidt, 2022).

To summarize, previous studies highlight a variety of social factors that can help predict or explain movie performances, including the valence of expert and broad audience ratings and personal recommendations. Building upon these findings, the present study explores the social influence in the movie market by employing a vignette survey that more strategically and realistically captures the multiple intermediaries consumers encounter. It further focuses on how these intermediaries interact with individual characteristics to shape consumer intentions.

6.2.2. Hypotheses

This study proposes seven hypotheses derived from five key areas of debate, aimed at enhancing the understanding of consumer intentions in the movie market. These areas include: (i) preferences for film genres and their potential moderating effect on the influence of expert ratings (H1, H2); (ii) the role of personal recommendations (H3, H4); (iii) the effect of broad audience ratings (H5); (iv) peer-level evaluations (H6); and (v) the potential moderating role of cultural omnivorousness in shaping the importance of expert ratings (H7).

First, genres function as means of orientation and sorting within cultural fields (Mohr et al., 2020, p. 72). According to Bourdieu's (1984) theory of symbolic exclusion and cultural reproduction of inequality, judgments of taste are linked to social positions and act as a tool for drawing symbolic boundaries between social groups. The unequal distribution of cultural capital enhances and reinforces the cultural reproduction of inequality, attributing positive qualities to individuals with higher cultural capital and legitimizing their taste (M. Jæger & Karlson, 2018). Illustrating a social distinction of taste, Bourdieu (1984) exemplifies this by dividing cultural products into highbrow, middlebrow and lowbrow categories. Genre classifications serve as one of the guidelines for the social construction of taste (DiMaggio, 2019). From a cultural stratification perspective, genres such as horror and documentary can have a different degree of social recognition and, therefore, be distinctively preferred by social groups. For example, documentary can be considered a more sophisticated or legitimate genre than horror, as it is highly preferred among highly-educated audiences (De Rosa & Burgess, 2014).

Similarly, the sources of information (e.g., ratings) can entail various degrees of legitimacy. Drawing attention to the hierarchical nature of ratings, prior research has identified variations in the cultural legitimacy of them in evoking interest among different audience segments (Verboord, 2010). For instance, when the opinion of experts (critics) is institutionalized and benefits from the high position in the social hierarchy, ratings by broad audience or peers can be perceived as more informal (Verboord, 2010). Comparing the perception of highbrow and popular artworks at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Shrum (1991, p. 369) documents that "expert judgments are relevant to consumer participation and perceptions in legitimate genres but unnecessary in popular genres", highlighting the interplay between perceived legitimacy of products and ratings. In line with this, the study conducted by Schmidt (2022) looked at the difference among audience segments and found that the blockbuster audience relies more on broad user ratings, whereas arthouse lovers prioritize expert opinions. Since highbrow or sophisticated culture symbolically represents a privileged social position, it is anticipated that the value placed on reviews in highbrow genres is expected to reflect its high legitimacy level and support hierarchical distinctions, placing greater emphasis on highly institutionalized sources (e.g., experts and critics) compared to other sources. Then, for unpretentious or lowbrow genres, the opinion of experts is expected to carry less significant value.

H1: The value of sources differs across genres. When choosing a movie to watch, the value of an expert rating is higher for highbrow/sophisticated genres (e.g., documentaries) compared to lowbrow/unpretentious genres (e.g., horror).

When constructing personal cultural repertoire, consumers internalize patterns typical of their social group and develop aesthetic codes during socialization. This implies that consumers can pay attention to their social position and align taste with shared ideas about the cultural repertoire of particular social groups, supporting social congruence (M. M. Jæger et al., 2023). Then, cultural preferences can be used to construct and sustain social networks (Lizardo, 2006), where consumers tend to share tastes as well as distaste. A feeling of attachment to particular genres in a social group can be linked to in-group favoritism, leading to reduced symbolic value and lower legitimacy of negative ratings and criticism coming from the outside (e.g., experts and critics). External extensive criticism from traditional hierarchical sources can be viewed as a threat to one's cultural repertoire and undermine the coherence in the group around cultural taste. Therefore, it is anticipated that the likelihood of watching a movie in a favorite genre may be less influenced by negative expert ratings compared to genres that are neutrally liked or disliked.

H2: The negative impact of low expert ratings on the likelihood of watching a movie weakens with the higher preference for its genre.

Second, recommendations from personal networks, including both friends and family together, emerge as the most important factor when selecting a movie to watch (Schmidt, 2022, p. 190), signifying that the system of value attribution has a relatively low level of hierarchy. This aligns with Karpik's (2010, p. 185) framework, which suggests that "every choice is the expression of the joint action of network and actor". Information received via personal networks is usually absorbed instantly, requiring no further evidence or validation, and is valuable in itself. Such recommendations simplify the final choice in the market (Karpik, 2010, p. 184). Moreover, cultural tastes can shape social relations within a group (Lizardo, 2006), highlighting the importance of exchanging opinions about cultural products to maintain group membership. Therefore, recommendations from personal networks are expected to play a substantial role in shaping choices within the movie market.

However, the judgment device of personal networks operates through word of mouth, typically involving recommendations from family, friends or colleagues (Karpik, 2010, p. 183) –

individuals who occupy diverse roles in one's life. Individuals may maintain different types of relationships with these contacts. Consequently, the significance of recommendations from personal networks can vary depending on the role of the person making the suggestion (e.g., close friends or parents). This relationship can be moderated by the level of trust in these roles or their significance in one's life (e.g., the trust in family and the importance of friends). As an illustration, individuals who prioritize friendship in their lives and show complete trust in their friends can be more likely to place a higher value on the opinions of friends and rely on them when making movie choices. Conversely, those who prioritize family may be more inclined to follow the recommendations of their parents or relatives.

H3: Compared to movie ratings, a recommendation from personal networks has the highest effect on the likelihood of watching a movie, regardless of its genre.

H4: The positive influence of recommendations from personal networks on the likelihood of watching a movie gets stronger with higher trust in this role and with the higher importance of this role in one's life.

Third, ratings by broad audience are easily accessible on the Internet (e.g. IMDb, Moviepilot) and function as an indicator of popularity. This form of communication has a significant impact on box office revenue predictions (Liu, 2006; McKenzie, 2023). When consumers face uncertainty regarding the quality of multiple products, they tend to follow the behavior of others and treat popularity as a sign of quality (Watts & Salganik, 2011). Therefore, the hypothesis is as follows:

H5: A higher rating from broad audience leads to a higher likelihood of watching a movie, regardless of its genre.

However, the presence of a normal distribution of ratings indicates a wide spread of mean-scale scores. When individuals are in the process of selecting a movie to watch, they encounter not only high and low ratings but also ratings clustered around the average scale values. For instance, movie ratings on IMDb were found to be normally distributed with a slight left-skewness and a median value of 6.3 (de Mondragon, 2021). By leveling out the prevalence of mean rating, studies impose additional restrictions on presenting realistic scenarios.

Fourth, movie ratings today function not solely among a broad audience on the Internet or experts/critics; they also operate within smaller circles. Social media platforms like Meetup offer an opportunity to create a network of movie lovers to organize social gatherings to watch movies and exchange opinions. Platforms like Facebook allow users to set up groups based on shared interests and experiences, e.g., similar tastes or university affiliations, and make it possible to quickly get to know the opinions of others from one's network. The rise of the Internet has made it more feasible to compile unique ratings and share reviews within small groups (for example, see Psychmovies, n.d.; Student Film Reviews, n.d.). One type of such personalized evaluation, known as peer-produced criticism, introduces an extra dimension to the realm of cultural evaluation (Verboord, 2014). The effect of such personalized ratings remains largely unexplored. However, factors such as a smaller social distance and the level of personalization can contribute to the meaningful consideration of this information source.

H6: A higher peer-produced rating leads to a higher likelihood of watching a movie regardless of its genre.

Fifth, last but not least, the question of why people follow different judgment devices remains relatively uncertain. As mentioned previously, the significance of factors like genres, taste and the roles within personal networks can shed light on the preference for certain devices. Another anticipated factor considered in prior research is the level of cultural omnivorousness (Verboord, 2010).

Cultural omnivorousness refers to a skill or an ability to develop dispositions of openness to appreciate diverse cultural products and cross symbolic boundaries (Peterson, 1992, 2005; Peterson & Kern, 1996). This disposition is more widespread among individuals in higher social positions (e.g., Johnston et al., 2019), shaped during early socialization in a highly educated environment (Lizardo, 2019) and intensified by further educational and occupational involvement (Lizardo & Skiles, 2012). Verboord (2010) discusses the rise of omnivorousness as a potential explanation for the decreasing legitimacy of established authorities (e.g., experts in the field) to provide symbolic value, using the book market as an example. However, there was little empirical evidence of this among the segment of book readers. Instead, Verboord (2010) documents that omnivorous taste patterns lead to higher tolerance towards criticism coming from different sources – including all experts, broad audience and peers. Omnivores tend to express interest in the opinions and recommendations of a wide range of sources.

However, the study by Verboord (2010) does not investigate scenarios when individuals can encounter evaluation of cultural products from multiple sources not separately but rather simultaneously, e.g., recommendations from personal networks, ratings from a broader audience and experts. The next hypothesis tests Verboord's (2010) assumption of decreasing legitimacy of established authorities for omnivores in new scenarios where consumers need to take review scores from different sources into consideration. In a nutshell, the openness of omnivores to appreciate diversity is expected to reduce the significance of institutionalized criticism that has a hierarchical nature (e.g., movie experts) due to the lower importance of established legitimacy.

H7: The positive influence of a high expert rating on the likelihood of watching a movie weakens with a higher level of omnivorousness (having a larger volume of taste).

It is worth noting that the range of judgment devices covers a variety of knowledge sources that cannot all be addressed in a single study. As it is demanding for consumers to consult multiple devices, Bialecki et al. (2017) argue that individuals can intentionally tolerate a certain level of uncertainty.

6.3. Design, data and methods

6.3.1. Design of the factorial survey

Treating the legitimacy of opinions toward cultural products as a relevant social phenomenon, a factorial survey (experimental vignette study) is designed in order to investigate which situational factors (i.e., certain judgment devices) can influence the likelihood of engaging in certain cultural practices (Auspurg & Hinz, 2015b). This research method allows for estimating respondents' responses to hypothetical scenarios while controlling and manipulating different contextual variables within these scenarios (Aviram, 2012). Additionally, information about the consumers, such as preferences for genres, trust in family and the importance of friends in their lives, is collected and used to explain the potential effects of the situational factors.

The movie market was selected as a suitable cultural domain for this study because this is the area with a low entry consumer threshold, distinct behavioral practices that require significant time contribution (e.g., going to the cinema), and where people are likely to encounter reviews and recommendations from others.

By replicating real-world problems, a factorial survey provides an opportunity to treat a certain number of characteristics of movies as a whole image without being forced to indicate the influence of each individual vignette characteristic explicitly (Alexander & Becker, 1978). To eliminate the effect of previously gained experience, this study derives fictional, but at the same time, realistic scenarios. Respondents are asked to indicate their likelihood of going to the cinema to watch a movie based on its characteristics, including genre and three review scores: by experts (movie critics), broad audience (users on the movie database website) and peer-group (the students of one's cohort at the university). Additionally, a recommendation from the personal network is considered (by close friends, parents or neither by close friends nor by parents). Detailed descriptions of the situations are provided to ensure high standardization.

Focusing on the elimination of background effects from the likelihood of watching the movie with different characteristics, I framed the situation in this way: *“You choose a movie to watch at the new cinema opening nearby in your free time. You know the genre, review score on a 5-point scale by movie critics, by users on the movie database website, by students of your cohort at the university“*. The judgment device of price is fixed in the description of all vignettes to the ca. 70% of the average price in Germany to account for students' lower rate. In 2021, the average price was 8.9 EUR (Kanzler & Simone, 2022, p. 24), and the value used in the vignette corresponds to 6 EUR. Other judgment devices, e.g., ranking, star participation, awards or advertising, remain unknown.

To select the set of movie genres, I relied on the preferences of the German population and selected four dissimilar cases that characterize the palette of tastes: a genre that is highly popular in Germany (documentary movie), above average (romantic movie), below average (science fiction movie), and highly disliked (horror movie) (*Ergebnisse | FILM | Kulturpartizipation*, 2021). Additionally, four selected genres are differently gender-colored. Thus, science fiction and horror movies were presumed to be and actually found to be more preferred by men, while romantic movies are more likely to be assigned to and liked by women (Wühr et al., 2017). As for documentaries, there is no evidence of gender stereotypes in Europe. However, in Canada, the audience of this genre was found to be predominantly female and highly educated (De Rosa & Burgess, 2014). Based on this, a documentary is also considered an example of a sophisticated or highbrow product. Horrors, in turn, are accepted as elements of unpretentious and lowbrow culture, usually preferred by lower-education groups (Veenstra et al., 2020).

Turning to other vignette levels, review scores by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of the same cohort at the university cover three levels characterizing the low (1.6 out of 5), average (3.2) and high scores (4.8). To provide a better fit of the artificial situations to the real-world image, a star rating is used to visualize the score. Additionally, for each option, it is indicated whether a certain movie is personally recommended by close friends, parents or neither by close friends nor by parents.

Among the whole spectrum of behavioral practices, this vignette set settled on a social one that requires significantly higher effort as well as time and monetary resources than others – going to the cinema. Also, while you can stop watching a movie at home at any time, leaving the cinema is a more significant action that requires thoughtful reflection. Thus, the consideration of reviews can be more relevant for this behavioral practice, the one that has substantial entry and exit characteristics.

The question for each vignette is framed as *“In your opinion, how likely are you to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics? It would be...”* with an 11-point scale, where 0 – “very unlikely” and 10 – “very likely”.

Moving to the design details (Table 6.1), a between-subjects design is preferred for the genre of movies and a within-subjects design for rating scores and recommendations. It implies that each respondent is randomly assigned to estimate vignettes for one genre of the movie. This decision is motivated by the potentially different effects of review scores on movies in diverse genres and operating stereotypes of different genres (e.g., gender-colored categories, social recognition).

Table 6.1: Description of factors and levels in the factorial survey

Factor (or Dimension):	Level (or Value):
Genre of the movie (between-subjects):	Documentary movie Romantic movie Science fiction movie Horror movie
Review score by movie critics (V1X1):	1.6 out of 5 3.2 out of 5 4.8 out of 5

Factor (or Dimension):	Level (or Value):
Review score by users on the movie database website (V1X2):	1.6 out of 5 3.2 out of 5 4.8 out of 5
Review score by students of your cohort at the university (V1X3):	1.6 out of 5 3.2 out of 5 4.8 out of 5
Personally recommended by (V1X4):	Close friends Parents Neither close friends nor parents

The vignette universe (excluding the between-subjects level) consists of $3^4 = 81$ cases per genre, which is too large for mentioning the whole range in the questionnaire, so D-efficiency values to generate the decks or samples should be considered (Dülmer, 2007, 2016). Following a goal to reduce the number of vignettes, the quota design for the sample offers an appealing solution in our case – “quota sampling tries to cover the vignette universe in central aspects by constructing only one vignette set” (Dülmer, 2007, p. 385). This selection is derived from a motivation to obtain higher efficiency, higher reliability, and higher statistical power (Dülmer, 2016). Another advantage relates to the fact that the quota sample reduces the number of images that need to be prepared for the visualization of vignettes. One main disadvantage refers to the lack of possibility to estimate the interactions between vignette levels and their effect on the final evaluation (Auspurg, 2018; Czymara & Schmidt-Catran, 2018).

In order to investigate a minimum number of vignettes that ensures a high-quality orthogonal design, I estimate D-efficiency values (Auspurg, 2015; Auspurg & Hinz, 2015a) for all numbers that increase the minimum required degrees of freedom for model estimation. A quota sample with nine vignettes provides an appealing solution. Interaction effects between vignette levels are not assumed. For practical reasons, two quota samples with nine vignettes are created per genre and then divided into two decks of nine vignettes per genre. It implies that each deck represents a quota sample with a D-efficiency value of 100, signifying orthogonality and level balance. In total, this study offers two decks per genre, which means eight decks overall (Table 6.2). Each respondent is randomly assigned to one deck for one movie genre.

Table 6.2: Decks 1 and 2 for each genre

Deck 1. Quota sample. Orthogonal design, D-efficiency = 100				
Vignette	Experts	Broad audience	Peers	Recommended by
2	3.2	1.6	1.6	Close friends
15	4.8	3.2	3.2	Close friends
25	1.6	4.8	4.8	Close friends
36	4.8	4.8	1.6	Parents
37	1.6	1.6	3.2	Parents
50	3.2	3.2	4.8	Parents
58	1.6	3.2	1.6	Neither close friends nor parents
71	3.2	4.8	3.2	Neither close friends nor parents
75	4.8	1.6	4.8	Neither close friends nor parents
Deck 2. Quota sample. Orthogonal design, D-efficiency = 100				
Vignette	Experts	Broad audience	Peers	Recommended by
9	4.8	4.8	1.6	Close friends
14	3.2	3.2	3.2	Close friends
19	1.6	1.6	4.8	Close friends
31	1.6	3.2	1.6	Parents
39	4.8	1.6	3.2	Parents
53	3.2	4.8	4.8	Parents
56	3.2	1.6	1.6	Neither close friends nor parents
70	1.6	4.8	3.2	Neither close friends nor parents
78	4.8	3.2	4.8	Neither close friends nor parents

Examples of vignettes in each genre are available in Appendix A and B.

6.3.2. Data

This study relies on the original dataset collected among students of an average-sized German university via an online survey operated through the Lime Survey from December 2023 to January 2024. Students represent a youth demographic group that is considered to be a key audience for cinemas (FFA, 2024; Follows & Michlin, 2019; SPIO e.V., 2024).

Participants were invited via email, using randomly generated identification numbers. The final number of unique invitations sent reaches 26,341, which includes enrolled and recently graduated students with still active email addresses. The number of partially and fully completed responses equals 2,390 (response rate 9%). All participants provided informed consent. After data cleaning, the final sample comprised 1836 respondents. Data collection, processing and cleaning are described in the documentation published in the data repository (Voronin, 2025).

Among 1836 respondents in the final sample, 425 of them estimated vignettes in romance, 450 in sci-fi, 472 in documentary and 484 in horror genres. Only 11% of respondents report disliking or highly disliking going to the cinema. Among four genres, documentaries are highly preferred (56% like or strongly like this genre), followed by sci-fi (54%) and romance (47%). Horror movies are the least preferred by the respondents (28%). Detailed descriptive statistics are presented in Table D1, Table D2 in Appendix D.

6.3.3. Methods

I employ multilevel regression analysis with a random slope and random intercept (meaning that each individual has a different intercept) to predict the likelihood of going to the cinema to watch a movie by (i) vignette factors, (ii) respondent characteristics (iii) interaction between vignette and respondent levels. The Restricted Maximum Likelihood (REML) estimator is preferred. For the analysis, listwise deletion on the respondent level is selected. The analysis is conducted in Stata 17 (StataCorp, 2021) using the addon MLMR2 to compute the proportion of total outcome variance explained by all predictors via fixed slopes and random slope variation ($R2_{fv}$) (Gambino, 2023).

On the respondent level, I control for preferences in genres, preferences for going to the cinema, parental education (an indicator of inherited cultural capital) and whether the respondent is male or female. Those who reported other genders are not considered for the regression analysis due to the low number of cases (<1%). For the model with interaction effects, I rely on the information about trust in family and the importance of friends (adapted from Haerpfer et al., 2022), preferences for genres and compute an additive index of cultural omnivorousness in genres (as the volume of taste – log-transformed number of liked movie genres). A detailed operationalization of individual-level variables is presented in Table C1 in Appendix C.

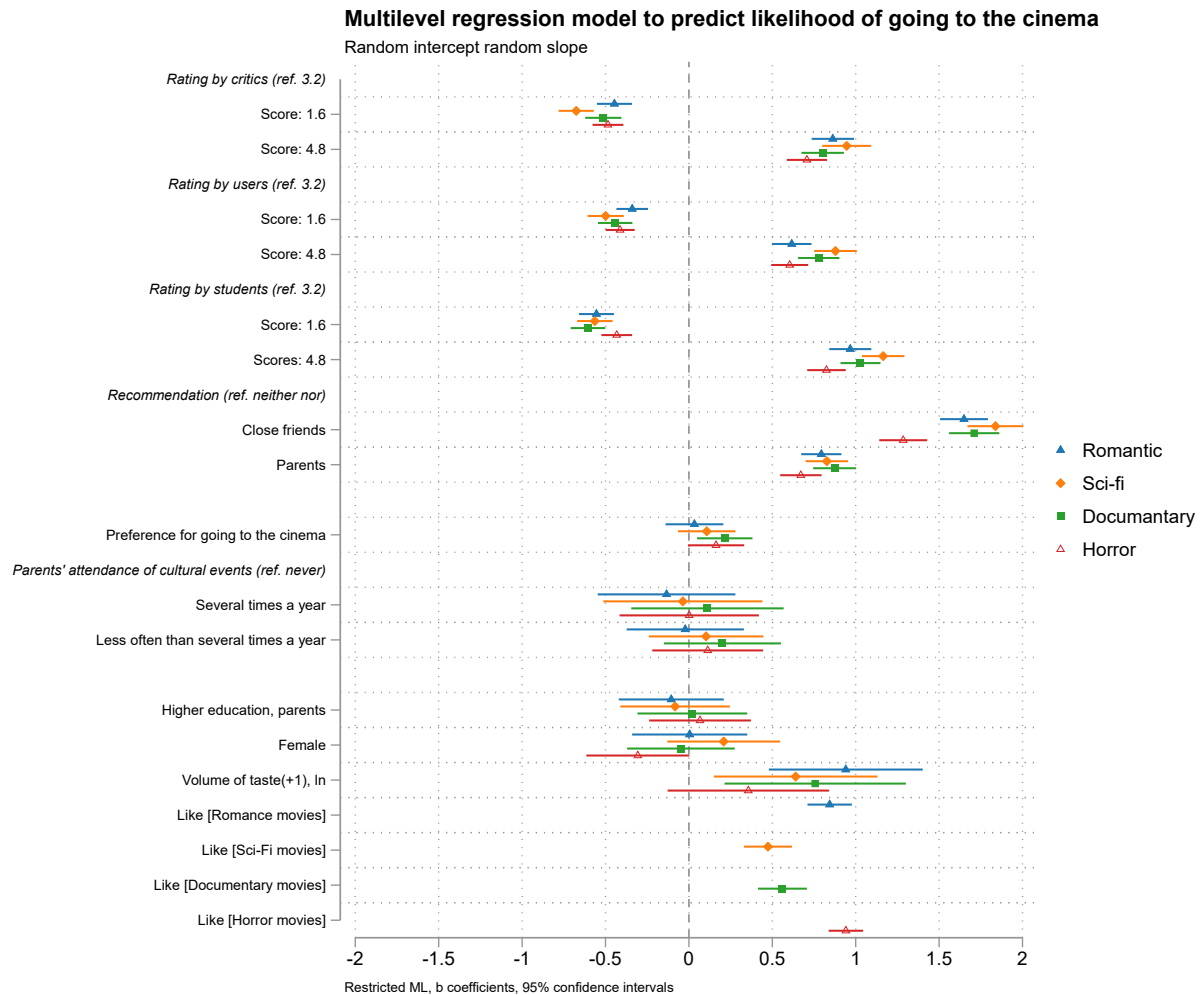
6.4. Results

The results of the multilevel linear model for the dependent variables (likelihood to go to the cinema) generally document the great importance of both individual and vignette levels for each genre. The unconditional empty models with random intercept (Appendix E, Table E1) show that the highest share of variance is attributed to the individual characteristics for only the horror genre (60%), whereas the highest variation on the contextual level is observed among romantic (52%), documentary (69%) and sci-fi (61%) genres. It implies that ratings and

recommendations play a smaller role in drawing the likelihood of going to the cinema to watch the horror genre – the least preferred genre in Germany – compared to all other genres. Contrary to this, the likelihood of watching sci-fi or documentary genres is highly dependent on the ratings and recommendations. Adding four vignette factors in the next model with random intercept results in a significant increase in the explained variance of the models: from 10% (horror) to 26% (sci-fi) (Appendix E, Table E2). Proportional change of the variance on the vignette-level ranges from 29% (horror) to 39% (sci-fi). Enriching the model with random slopes for factor-leveled vignette characteristics shows significant slope variance in each model (Appendix E, Table E3). The R^2_{fv} values for models with random slopes range from 26% (horror) to 38% (sci-fi).

Figure 6.1 presents the main effects of the vignette and individual variables on the dependent variable in the model with random intercept and random slope (Appendix E, Table E4). The R^2_{fv} values reach the value of 50% for romantic, 44% for sci-fi, 41% for documentary and 52% for horror movies. The detailed results are presented in Appendix E, Table E4.

Figure 6.1: Multilevel regression models with vignette and individual variables, random intercept random slope, by genre



6.4.1. Vignette level

To test H1, the effects of movie critics' ratings are compared between one highbrow/sophisticated genre (documentary) and other popular (sci-fi, romantic) or lowbrow (horror) genres. The results show a lack of supporting evidence. An increase in critics' ratings leads to a significantly higher likelihood to go the cinema to watch pictures of any genre. For example, increasing the independent variable from 3.2 to 4.8 leads to a 0.81 scale point increase in the likelihood to go the cinema to watch a documentary movie, a 0.71 scale point increase in the likelihood of watching a horror genre, to a 0.86 scale point in the likelihood of watching a romantic movie and to a 0.94 increase in the likelihood of watching sci-fi genre. It is evident that the opinions of experts are important for consumers not only of documentaries but also of other genres.

Subsequently, the findings reveal that personal recommendation by close friends rather than parents holds the highest significance regardless of the genre. When a sci-fi picture is recommended by close friends (vs neither close friends nor parents), it increases the expected score by 1.83 scale points. Recommendation from parents also emerges as a positive predictor, but the effect is weaker. These results are in favor of H3, as the value attribution system has, to some extent, a relatively low level of hierarchy.

The rating from broad internet users also emerges as a positive predictor, supporting H5. In line with H6, an increase in the peer-produced rating leads to a higher likelihood of choosing a movie across four genres. Although the ratings by experts, users and peers lead to a higher likelihood, the gain of each rating from an increase from the middle level to the highest level is greater than the loss from a decrease from the middle level to the lowest level (Table E5 in Appendix E presents testing the equality of coefficients). Compared to the average rating, the highest rating is a strong advantage. The lowest rating, in turn, can be compensated, for example, by a recommendation from friends or parents.

6.4.2. Respondent level

Switching to the individual level, preferences for genres turn out to be significant predictors in all models. To illustrate, strongly liking the romance genre increases the likelihood of watching this genre in cinema by more than 3 scale points. Preference for going to the cinema plays a positive role in predicting behavioral intentions to watch horrors and documentaries – genres that receive coverage in cinemas relatively rare. Parental education does not affect the likelihood across four genres. Last but not least, the gender difference is identified for one genre only. In line with other studies, horrors are highly preferred by men. Surprisingly, the likelihood of watching a romantic and sci-fi movie does not differ between men and women, signifying the lack of functioning gender-essential beliefs in the sample.

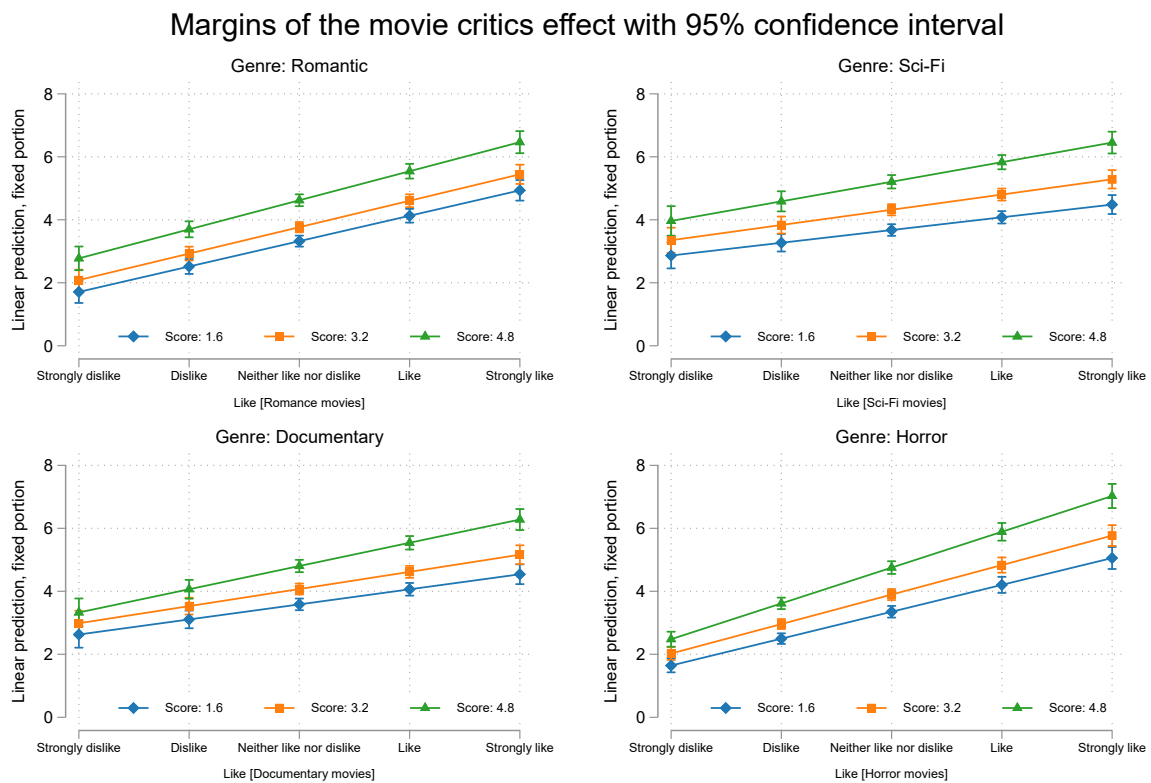
A consistent pattern observed in regression models is a positive contribution of cultural omnivorousness. Measured by the number of liked and strongly liked genres, it universally appears as a solid positive predictor. Respondents who declare a large volume of taste share significantly higher behavioral intentions to go to the cinema to watch a movie, regardless of its characteristics. One exception refers to the insignificant positive effect for horror movies ($p = 0.20$).

6.4.3. Interactions between vignette and respondent levels

As a next step, new models with interaction effects test if the orientation on certain judgment devices depends on individual characteristics of respondents, such as genre preferences (H2), trust in family and importance of friends in one's life (H3-H4) and cultural omnivorousness (H7). The full results are available in Tables E6-E9 in Appendix E.

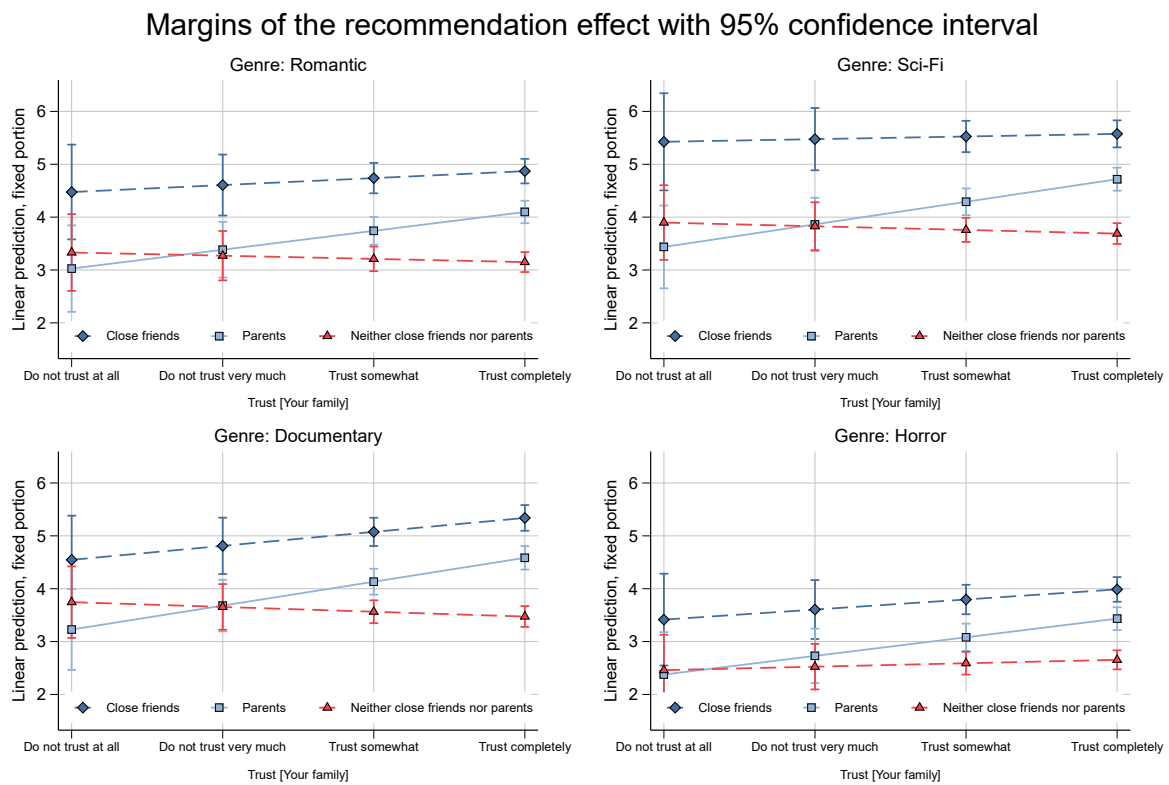
Testing H2 requires adding the interaction term between preferences for the vignette's genre and rating by movie critics (Figure 6.2). In contrast to expectations, individual preferences cannot suppress the negative impact of low ratings (lack of support for H2). In some cases, these preferences can even intensify the weight of both low and high ratings. In the case of horror movies, a stronger preference for this genre increases the strength of the positive effect of a high expert rating and the negative impact of a low rating. For documentaries, a stronger taste positively influences the strength of the high expert rating. For sci-fi movies, the negative effect of a low critic rating becomes more pronounced with higher genre preferences. The moderation term for romantic movies emerges as an insignificant predictor in this context.

Figure 6.2: Margins, interaction effect, preference for genres and expert rating



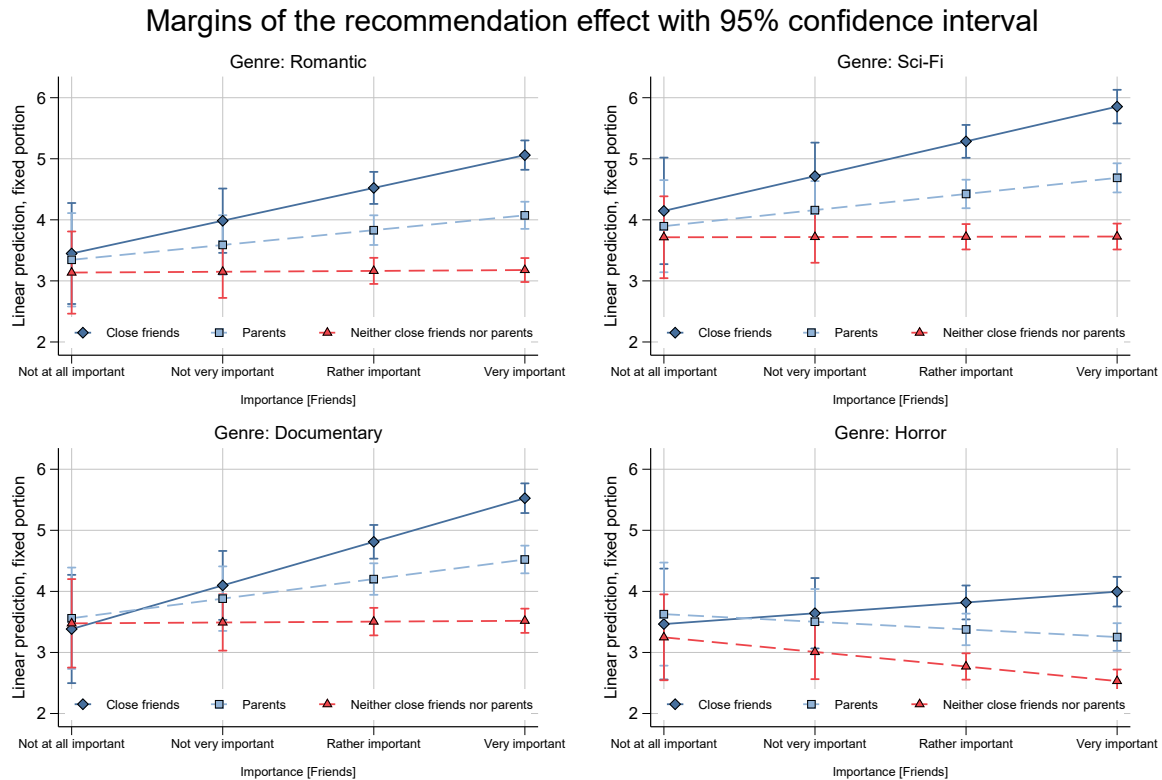
Incorporating the interaction between personal recommendation and trust in the family into the main model provides evidence that the level of trust in the family moderates the effect of the personal recommendation by parents (Figure 6.3). The marginal effect of the recommendation from parents is more pronounced for respondents who completely trust their family compared to those who declare lower levels of trust. The significance of the interaction term holds consistency across four genres, underlining a universal pattern in correspondence with H3.

Figure 6.3: Margins, interaction effect, personal recommendation and trust in family



Enriching the main model with the interaction term of personal recommendation and the importance of friends in one's life documents a notable moderation effect (Figure 6.4). Across all genres, the moderation effects hold their significance, implying that the value of recommendations from close friends grows with the importance of friends in a person's life, supporting H4.

Figure 6.4: Margins, interaction effect, personal recommendation and importance of friends in one's life

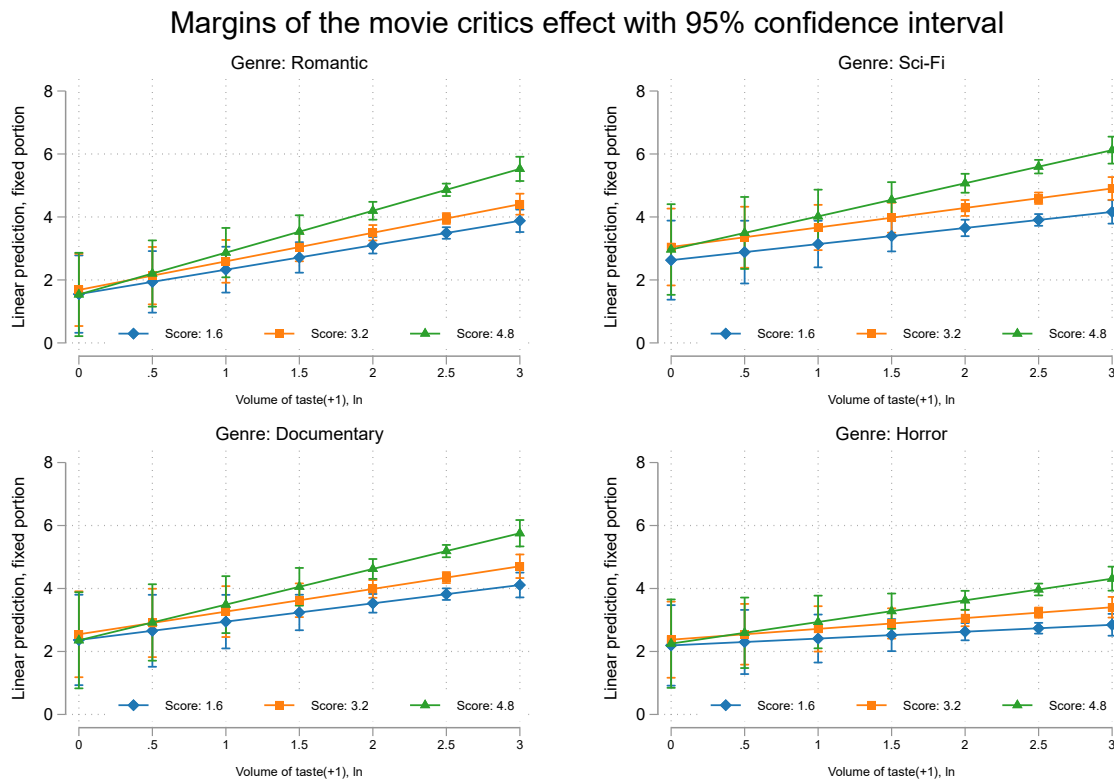


In contrast to H7, a higher volume of taste did not lead to a lower importance of the expert ratings (Figure 6.5). In turn, the reversed trend crops up in the data. For horrors, documentaries and romances, the influence of the high expert rating increases with a larger volume of taste. At the same time, increasing the volume of taste does not intensify the negative effect of low expert ratings. This pattern aligns with findings by Verboord (2010), highlighting the willingness of omnivores in genres to take into account various ratings, even those coming from hierarchical structures.

6.5. Conclusion and discussion

By investigating the ways consumers rely on personal recommendations and ratings while choosing a movie in a certain genre to watch at the cinema, this study illustrates new details of social influence in movie consumption, highlighting the interaction between judgment devices, individual characteristics, and genre-specific aspects.

Figure 6.5: Margins, interaction effect, the volume of taste and expert rating



The analysis of the original dataset collected among students underscores the influential role of ratings and recommendations as social drivers of intentions to go to the cinema to watch movies in diverse genres. Across four genres (documentary, romantic, sci-fi, and horror), three types of ratings – by experts (critics), broad audience (users on the Internet) and peers – prove to be important factors. In contrast to expectations, the expert evaluations are of high importance not only for legitimate but also for popular and unpretentious genres. In line with the study by Sharkey et al. (2023), which emphasizes “the rise of markets with multiple intermediaries”, individuals do not deliver trust solely to personal networks or established experts in the field, but also place significant value on a broad audience. In addition, peer-level evaluations, as Verboord (2014) highlights, represent a distinct dimension of cultural evaluation alongside expert and broad audience ratings. Rather than proposing a hierarchy of review sources, this study emphasizes the simultaneous and significant influence of diverse forms of evaluation across movie genres.

However, the importance of movie ratings still varies by genre, as those compose a much higher percentage of the total variance in documentary or sci-fi movies compared to horror movies. Horror, in turn, is typically associated with lowbrow culture (Veenstra et al., 2020) and

represents the most disliked genre in the sample, signaling that in case of low preference to a genre, the weight assigned to valence of ratings and recommendations may decrease. What also stands out is that the positive effect of a high rating of any kind compared to the average is consistently stronger than the negative effect of a low rating compared to the average, regardless of the genre. This suggests that while the limiting effect of low ratings on cinema attendance is present, it is overshadowed by the driving force of high ratings.

In some cases, consumers who highly prefer a particular genre tend to place greater weight on expert opinions than those without such a preference. Having positive expectations from the genre, individuals can be more selective and, therefore, deliver trust to the opinions of experts to a greater extent to discover an appealing movie within the genre. In line with prior findings by Verboord (2010), the larger volume of taste also amplifies the importance of experts for documentary, horror and romantic movies. On the one hand, it can be a sign of cosmopolitan openness (Ollivier, 2008) and willingness to consider ratings coming from hierarchical sources. Drawing the counterargument from Childress et al. (2021), higher status can lead to inclusive genre tastes and exclusive tastes for objects in these genres. The generality of genres and the specificity of objects contribute to this differentiation (Childress et al., 2021). Thus, the stronger influence of expert opinions may indicate that omnivores' tastes are exclusive when they look for appealing (“with right recognition”) cultural products within genres.

When studying the differences in sources of personal recommendations among youth, recommendations from close friends emerge as a primary influence, whereas recommendations from parents are of secondary importance. Actually, the influence of the recommendations depends on the trust in one’s family or the importance of friends in one’s life. The value of a parent’s recommendation is higher when one documents complete trust in family, and otherwise. The importance of friends, in turn, moderates the positive effect of close friends' recommendations.

This study design has limitations with respect to (i) inclusion of only four genres and exclusion of hybrid genres (e.g., crime comedy, sci-fi romantic movie), (ii) relying on two quota samples of vignettes that do not allow for interaction between vignette levels, (iii) simplifying the expert rating without distinguishing their genre specialization, and (iv) tolerance of the high degree of uncertainty by avoiding various judgment devices (e.g., cast, prizes, posters, trailers, etc.) and movie features (e.g., duration, budget, whether a movie has a happy end). Another limitation

of the study concerns its limited external validity, as the survey was conducted exclusively among students. As a result, some findings may reflect specific characteristics of their life course—for example, placing greater value on friends' recommendations than on parental recommendations. Additionally, the sample may be subject to self-selection bias, given the relatively low response rate. It is also worth noting that the distribution of some demographic characteristics in the sample is skewed. For example, the percentage of women in the sample is slightly higher than in the general population. Besides, this study assumes a shared understanding of the four selected genres in the sample and does not test the usability of genre labels (see Brisson, 2023; Brisson & Bianchi, 2022).

Additionally, this vignette study did not distinguish between different reasons to watch a movie in a certain genre. Measuring behavioral intentions to watch a movie, the focus did not cover the actual meaning-making underlying these intentions. As suggested by Childress et al. (2021, p. 254), there is a distinction “between liking the “right” cultural object and liking the “right” cultural objects the “right” way”, which is related to the social stratification of taste. Elaborating on cases from this vignette study, higher intentions to watch horror movies with high ratings in cinema can signify the preferences for one new unpretentious and fear-evoking object in the sake of evoking a feeling of scary as well as an appreciation for novel stories that can open up new horizons in self-discovery. Exploring the meaning-making of preferences as different modes of (dis)liking and choices in the interplay with reliance on certain judgment devices and social positions is a valuable endeavor for future research.

Despite the limitations, this study details the decision-making process of youth in the movie market and expands the existing perspective of social influence in consumer studies, with attention to nuances in the valences of ratings and genres. The study can also be of interest to interdisciplinary scholars in the field of cultural consumption, as it focuses on judgmental intentions rather than final decisions in cultural markets and intentionally puts consumers in a position where they need to consider information from different sources. In addition, the identified relationship between ratings and personal characteristics can be used as a basis for systematic research on social inequality in cultural markets in terms of not only changes in product and market attributes, but also in consumer characteristics.

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Appendix A. Example of vignettes, English language

Figure A1: Example of the vignette depicting romantic movie

Section 2 [genre: romantic, deck 1, random order]

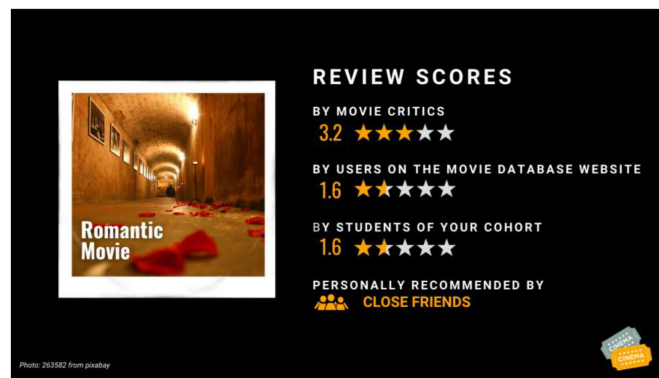
The picture used for the visualization: 263582 from pixabay, link: <https://pixabay.com/photos/cellar-tunnel-rose-marriage-pink-1228659/>

On the following pages, you will find 9 similar, but not identical situations in which you choose a movie to watch at the cinema opening nearby in your free time.

All movie options are in the same genre. For each option, you know a unique combination of review scores on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university. You also know if your close friends or parents have recommended this movie. The price of the ticket is 6 EUR and it is the same for all options.

Please evaluate the following situations on the answer scale below. The scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 means you are very unlikely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics and 10 means that you are very likely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics. With the numbers in between, you can grade your answers. It is important that you answer all the questions.

V1d1r2. You choose a movie to watch at the new cinema opening nearby in your free time. In the picture, you can see the characteristics of the movie – genre, review score on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university:



In your opinion, how likely are you to go to the cinema to watch a movie with these characteristics? It would be...

Very unlikely 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very likely

Image source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/cellar-tunnel-rose-marriage-pink-1228659/>

Figure A2: Example of the vignette depicting science-fiction movie

Section 2 [genre: science-fiction, deck 1, random order]

The picture used for the visualization: prettysleepy1 from pixabay, link: <https://pixabay.com/photos/alien-backdrop-background-3233076/>

On the following pages, you will find 9 similar, but not identical situations in which you choose a movie to watch at the cinema opening nearby in your free time.

All movie options are in the same genre. For each option, you know a unique combination of review scores on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university. You also know if your close friends or parents have recommended this movie. The price of the ticket is 6 EUR and it is the same for all options.

Please evaluate the following situations on the answer scale below. The scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 means you are very unlikely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics and 10 means that you are very likely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics. With the numbers in between, you can grade your answers. It is important that you answer all the questions.

V1d1sf2. You choose a movie to watch at the new cinema opening nearby in your free time. In the picture, you can see the characteristics of the movie – genre, review score on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university:



In your opinion, how likely are you to go to the cinema to watch a movie with these characteristics?
It would be...

Very unlikely 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very likely

Image source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/alien-backdrop-background-3233076/>

Figure A3: Example of the vignette depicting documentary movie

Section 2 [genre: documentary, deck 1, random order]

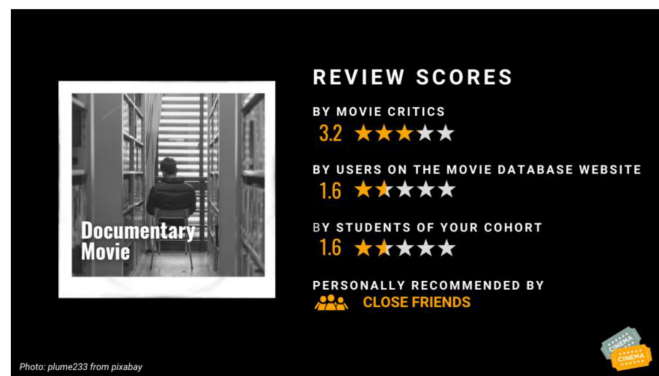
The picture used for the visualization: plume233 from pixabay, link: <https://pixabay.com/id/photos/dokumenter-hitam-dan-putih-nikon-1276187/>

On the following pages, you will find 9 similar, but not identical situations in which you choose a movie to watch at the cinema opening nearby in your free time.

All movie options are in the same genre. For each option, you know a unique combination of review scores on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university. You also know if your close friends or parents have recommended this movie. The price of the ticket is 6 EUR and it is the same for all options.

Please evaluate the following situations on the answer scale below. The scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 means you are very unlikely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics and 10 means that you are very likely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics. With the numbers in between, you can grade your answers. It is important that you answer all the questions.

V1d1d2. You choose a movie to watch at the new cinema opening nearby in your free time. In the picture, you can see the characteristics of the movie – genre, review score on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university:



In your opinion, how likely are you to go to the cinema to watch a movie with these characteristics? It would be...

Very unlikely 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very likely

Image source: <https://pixabay.com/id/photos/dokumenter-hitam-dan-putih-nikon-1276187/>

Figure A4: Example of the vignette depicting horror movie

Section 2 [genre: horror, deck 1, random order]

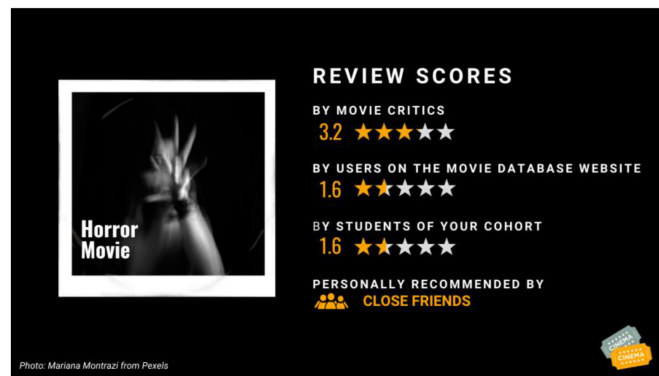
The picture used for the visualization: Mariana Montrazi from Pexels, link: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/blurred-motion-of-woman-with-her-hand-up-and-reaching-towards-the-camera-8337691/>

On the following pages, you will find 9 similar, but not identical situations in which you choose a movie to watch at the cinema opening nearby in your free time.

All movie options are in the same genre. For each option, you know a unique combination of review scores on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university. You also know if your close friends or parents have recommended this movie. The price of the ticket is 6 EUR and it is the same for all options.

Please evaluate the following situations on the answer scale below. The scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 means you are very unlikely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics and 10 means that you are very likely to go to the cinema to watch the movie with these characteristics. With the numbers in between, you can grade your answers. It is important that you answer all the questions.

V1d1h2. You choose a movie to watch at the new cinema opening nearby in your free time. In the picture, you can see the characteristics of the movie – genre, review score on a 5-point scale by movie critics, users on the movie database website and students of your cohort at the university:



In your opinion, how likely are you to go to the cinema to watch a movie with these characteristics? It would be...

Very unlikely 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very likely

Image source: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/blurred-motion-of-woman-with-her-hand-up-and-reaching-towards-the-camera-8337691/>

Appendix B. Example of vignettes, German language

Figure B1: Example of the vignette depicting romantic movie (German)

Section 2 [genre: romantic, deck 1, random order]

Das für die Visualisierung verwendete Bild: 263582 from pixabay, link: <https://pixabay.com/photos/cellar-tunnel-rose-marriage-pink-1228659/>

Auf den folgenden Seiten finden Sie 9 ähnliche, aber nicht identische Situationen, in denen Sie einen Film auswählen, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit im neuen Kino in Ihrer Nähe ansehen möchten.

Alle Filmoptionen gehören zum selben Genre. Für jede Option kennen Sie eine eindeutige Kombination von Bewertungen auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala von Filmkritikern, Nutzern der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studenten Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität. Sie wissen auch, ob Ihre guten Freunde oder Eltern diesen Film empfohlen haben.

Der Preis der Eintrittskarte beträgt 6 EUR und ist für alle Optionen gleich.

Bitte bewerten Sie die folgenden Situationen auf der unten stehenden Antwortskala. Die Skala reicht von 0 bis 10, wobei 0 bedeutet, dass es sehr unwahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen, und 10 bedeutet, dass es sehr wahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen. Mit den Zahlen dazwischen können Sie Ihre Antworten einstufen. Es ist wichtig, dass Sie alle Fragen beantworten.

V1d1r2. Sie wählen einen Film aus, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit in einem neuen Kino in der Nähe ansehen möchten. Auf dem Bild sehen Sie die Merkmale des Films - Genre, Bewertung auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala durch Filmkritiker, Nutzer der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studierenden Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität:



Wie wahrscheinlich ist es Ihrer Meinung nach, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um einen Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen? Es wäre...

Sehr unwahrscheinlich 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 **Sehr wahrscheinlich**

Image source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/cellar-tunnel-rose-marriage-pink-1228659/>

Figure B2: Example of the vignette depicting science-fiction movie (German)

Section 2 [genre: science-fiction, deck 2, random order]

Das für die Visualisierung verwendete Bild: prettysleepy1 from pixabay, link: <https://pixabay.com/photos/alien-backdrop-background-3233076/>

Auf den folgenden Seiten finden Sie 9 ähnliche, aber nicht identische Situationen, in denen Sie einen Film auswählen, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit im neuen Kino in Ihrer Nähe ansehen möchten.

Alle Filmoptionen gehören zum selben Genre. Für jede Option kennen Sie eine eindeutige Kombination von Bewertungen auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala von Filmkritikern, Nutzern der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studenten Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität. Sie wissen auch, ob Ihre guten Freunde oder Eltern diesen Film empfohlen haben.

Der Preis der Eintrittskarte beträgt 6 EUR und ist für alle Optionen gleich.

Bitte bewerten Sie die folgenden Situationen auf der unten stehenden Antwortskala. Die Skala reicht von 0 bis 10, wobei 0 bedeutet, dass es sehr unwahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen, und 10 bedeutet, dass es sehr wahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen. Mit den Zahlen dazwischen können Sie Ihre Antworten einstufen. Es ist wichtig, dass Sie alle Fragen beantworten.

V1d2sf9. Sie wählen einen Film aus, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit in einem neuen Kino in der Nähe ansehen möchten. Auf dem Bild sehen Sie die Merkmale des Films - Genre, Bewertung auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala durch Filmkritiker, Nutzer der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studierenden Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität:



Wie wahrscheinlich ist es Ihrer Meinung nach, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um einen Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen? Es wäre...

Sehr unwahrscheinlich
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
Sehr wahrscheinlich

Image source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/alien-backdrop-background-3233076/>

Figure B3: Example of the vignette depicting documentary movie (German)

Section 2 [genre: documentary, deck 2, random order]

Das für die Visualisierung verwendete Bild: plume233 from pixabay, link: <https://pixabay.com/id/photos/dokumenter-hitam-dan-putih-nikon-1276187/>

Auf den folgenden Seiten finden Sie 9 ähnliche, aber nicht identische Situationen, in denen Sie einen Film auswählen, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit im neuen Kino in Ihrer Nähe ansehen möchten.

Alle Filmoptionen gehören zum selben Genre. Für jede Option kennen Sie eine eindeutige Kombination von Bewertungen auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala von Filmkritikern, Nutzern der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studenten Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität. Sie wissen auch, ob Ihre guten Freunde oder Eltern diesen Film empfohlen haben.

Der Preis der Eintrittskarte beträgt 6 EUR und ist für alle Optionen gleich.

Bitte bewerten Sie die folgenden Situationen auf der unten stehenden Antwortskala. Die Skala reicht von 0 bis 10, wobei 0 bedeutet, dass es sehr unwahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen, und 10 bedeutet, dass es sehr wahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen. Mit den Zahlen dazwischen können Sie Ihre Antworten einstufen. Es ist wichtig, dass Sie alle Fragen beantworten.

V1d2d9. Sie wählen einen Film aus, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit in einem neuen Kino in der Nähe ansehen möchten. Auf dem Bild sehen Sie die Merkmale des Films - Genre, Bewertung auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala durch Filmkritiker, Nutzer der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studierenden Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität:



Wie wahrscheinlich ist es Ihrer Meinung nach, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um einen Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen? Es wäre...

Sehr unwahrscheinlich
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
Sehr wahrscheinlich

Image source: <https://pixabay.com/id/photos/dokumenter-hitam-dan-putih-nikon-1276187/>

Figure B4: Example of the vignette depicting horror movie (German)

Section 2 [genre: horror, deck 2, random order]

Das für die Visualisierung verwendete Bild: Mariana Montrazi from Pexels, link: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/blurred-motion-of-woman-with-her-hand-up-and-reaching-towards-the-camera-8337691/>

Auf den folgenden Seiten finden Sie 9 ähnliche, aber nicht identische Situationen, in denen Sie einen Film auswählen, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit im neuen Kino in Ihrer Nähe ansehen möchten.

Alle Filmoptionen gehören zum selben Genre. Für jede Option kennen Sie eine eindeutige Kombination von Bewertungen auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala von Filmkritikern, Nutzern der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studenten Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität. Sie wissen auch, ob Ihre guten Freunde oder Eltern diesen Film empfohlen haben.

Der Preis der Eintrittskarte beträgt 6 EUR und ist für alle Optionen gleich.

Bitte bewerten Sie die folgenden Situationen auf der unten stehenden Antwortskala. Die Skala reicht von 0 bis 10, wobei 0 bedeutet, dass es sehr unwahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen, und 10 bedeutet, dass es sehr wahrscheinlich ist, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um den Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen. Mit den Zahlen dazwischen können Sie Ihre Antworten einstufen. Es ist wichtig, dass Sie alle Fragen beantworten.

V1d2h9. Sie wählen einen Film aus, den Sie sich in Ihrer Freizeit in einem neuen Kino in der Nähe ansehen möchten. Auf dem Bild sehen Sie die Merkmale des Films - Genre, Bewertung auf einer 5-Punkte-Skala durch Filmkritiker, Nutzer der Filmdatenbank-Website und Studierenden Ihres Jahrgangs an der Universität:



Wie wahrscheinlich ist es Ihrer Meinung nach, dass Sie ins Kino gehen, um einen Film mit diesen Merkmalen zu sehen? Es wäre...



Image source: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/blurred-motion-of-woman-with-her-hand-up-and-reaching-towards-the-camera-8337691/>

Appendix C. Respondent-level variables

Table C1: List of respondent-level variables

Label	Operationalization
Preference for going to the cinema	[English] <i>In general, how much do you like going to the cinemas or other public venues for movie screenings? (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like.</i> [German] <i>Wie gerne gehen Sie im Allgemeinen in Kinos oder andere öffentliche Einrichtungen für Filmvorführungen? (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gerne noch ungerne, (4) gerne, (5) sehr gerne.</i>
Higher education, parents	The variable equals 1 if the mother or father has completed a university degree, otherwise 0.
Gender / Female	[English] <i>Please indicate your gender: male, female, other: _____</i> [German] <i>Bitte geben Sie Ihr Geschlecht an: männlich, weiblich, sonstiges _____</i>
Like [Romance movies]	[English] <i>Please indicate how much you like watching these movie genres from the list: (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like or if they are unknown to you. ... [Romance movies]</i> [German] <i>Bitte geben Sie an, wie gerne Sie die Filmgenres aus der Liste sehen: (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gerne noch ungerne, (4) gerne, (5) sehr gerne oder ob sie Ihnen unbekannt sind. ... [Liebesfilme]</i>
Like [Sci-fi movies]	[English] <i>Please indicate how much you like watching these movie genres from the list: (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like or if they are unknown to you. ... [Sci-Fi movies]</i> [German] <i>Bitte geben Sie an, wie gerne Sie die Filmgenres aus der Liste sehen: (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gerne noch ungerne, (4) gerne, (5) sehr gerne oder ob sie Ihnen unbekannt sind. ... [Sci-Fi-Filme]</i>
Like [Documentary movies]	[English] <i>Please indicate how much you like watching these movie genres from the list: (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like or if they are unknown to you. ... [Documentary movies]</i> [German] <i>Bitte geben Sie an, wie gerne Sie die Filmgenres aus der Liste sehen: (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gerne noch ungerne, (4) gerne, (5) sehr gerne oder ob sie Ihnen unbekannt sind. ... [Dokumentarfilme]</i>
Like [Horror movies]	[English] <i>Please indicate how much you like watching these movie genres from the list: (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like or if they are unknown to you. ... [Horror movies]</i> [German] <i>Bitte geben Sie an, wie gerne Sie die Filmgenres aus der Liste sehen: (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gerne noch ungerne, (4) gerne, (5) sehr gerne oder ob sie Ihnen unbekannt sind. ... [Horrorfilme]</i>
Trust [Your family] (adapted from Haerpfer et al., 2022)	[English] <i>Please indicate for each social group in the list whether you trust people from this group (4) completely, (3) somewhat, (2) do not trust very much or (1) do not trust at all? ... [Your family]</i>

Label	Operationalization
	<p>[German] <i>Bitte geben Sie für jede soziale Gruppe in der Liste an, ob Sie Menschen aus dieser Gruppe (4) völlig, (3) ziemlich, (2) kaum oder (1) gar nicht vertrauen?... [Ihrer Familie]</i></p>
<p>Importance [Your friends] (adapted from Haerpfer et al., 2022)</p>	<p>[English] <i>Please select, for each item from the list, how important it is in your life. [Your friends]</i> Scale: 1 = not at all important, 2 = not very important, 3 = rather important, 4 = very important.</p> <p>[German] <i>Bitte geben Sie an, wie wichtig folgende Elemente jeweils in Ihrem Leben sind: [Freunde]</i> Skala: 1 = überhaupt nicht wichtig, 2 = nicht so wichtig, 3 = ziemlich wichtig, 4 = sehr wichtig.</p>
<p>Cultural omnivorousness / Volume of taste</p>	<p>The volume of taste in films is used as a proxy for cultural omnivorousness. It is computed as a sum of liked or strongly liked film genres, getting values from 0 to 23. The list includes 11 subjective genres (action, adventure, comedy, crime, drama, fantasy, horror, mystery, romance, sci-fi, thriller) and 12 objective genres (animation, biography, documentary, family, film noir, history, musical, short, sport, superhero, war, western). Those genres correspond to the main categories used by IMDb to categorize products, excluding one genre that were found to be problematic during the pre-test (music movies).</p> <p>To address non-normality, the computed variable is transformed by taking the natural logarithm. Since logarithm of 0 is undefined, all values were increased by one point before the transformation.</p>

Appendix D. Descriptive statistics

Table D1: Summary statistics of used variables

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Preference for going to the cinema	1836	3.75	.94	1	5
Like [Romance movies]	1828	3.24	1.29	1	5
Like [Sci-Fi movies]	1792	3.45	1.23	1	5
Like [Documentary movies]	1820	3.52	1.07	1	5
Like [Horror movies]	1830	2.42	1.45	1	5
Trust [Your family]	1778	3.60	.62	1	4
Importance [Friends]	1784	3.55	.60	1	4
Number of liked genres	1836	10.49	3.48	0	23
Higher education, parents	1774	.46	.50	0	1
<i>Gender</i>
Male	1766	.37	.48	0	1
Female	1766	.63	.48	0	1
Other	1766	.01	.08	0	1

Table D2: Mean values per vignettes

Deck 1					Vignette response [Romantic]		Vignette response [Sci-fi]		Vignette response [Documentary]		Vignette response [Horror]	
Vignette #	Experts	Broad audience	Peers	Recommended by	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
2	3.2	1.6	1.6	Close friends	213	3.69	226	4.18	227	3.86	229	2.87
15	4.8	3.2	3.2	Close friends	212	5.33	226	6.00	226	5.47	229	4.26
25	1.6	4.8	4.8	Close friends	213	5.54	224	6.44	227	5.97	229	4.53
36	4.8	4.8	1.6	Parents	213	4.55	226	5.46	227	4.74	226	3.82
37	1.6	1.6	3.2	Parents	212	2.93	226	3.12	227	2.98	229	2.11
50	3.2	3.2	4.8	Parents	212	4.61	225	5.43	226	4.79	229	3.66
58	1.6	3.2	1.6	Neither close friends nor parents	212	1.84	226	1.95	227	1.99	229	1.36
71	3.2	4.8	3.2	Neither close friends nor parents	212	3.34	226	3.98	227	3.82	227	2.91
75	4.8	1.6	4.8	Neither close friends nor parents	212	4.32	225	5.05	227	4.33	229	3.42
Deck 2												
Vignette	Experts	Broad audience	Peers	Recommended by	Vignette response [Romantic]		Vignette response [Sci-fi]		Vignette response [Documentary]		Vignette response [Horror]	
					N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
9	4.8	4.8	1.6	Close friends	213	5.43	226	6.42	244	6.09	256	4.47
14	3.2	3.2	3.2	Close friends	212	4.42	226	5.16	244	4.99	255	3.65
19	1.6	1.6	4.8	Close friends	212	4.54	226	4.96	245	5.07	255	3.53
31	1.6	3.2	1.6	Parents	212	2.47	226	2.76	243	3.05	256	2.18
39	4.8	1.6	3.2	Parents	213	3.96	226	4.35	244	4.59	256	3.31
53	3.2	4.8	4.8	Parents	211	5.23	226	5.99	246	6.15	255	4.55
56	3.2	1.6	1.6	Neither close friends nor parents	212	1.81	226	2.19	245	2.07	256	1.45
70	1.6	4.8	3.2	Neither close friends nor parents	213	3.03	225	3.69	245	3.59	256	2.50
78	4.8	3.2	4.8	Neither close friends nor parents	212	4.69	225	5.47	245	5.31	255	4.07

Appendix E. Regression tables

Table E1: Unconditional multilevel regression models, random intercept, by genre

	Vignette response [Romantic]		Vignette response [Sci-fi]		Vignette response [Documentary]		Vignette response [Horror]	
Constant	3.98**	(0.10)	4.61***	(0.08)	4.39***	(0.09)	3.28**	(0.11)
var(_cons)	3.77	(0.15)	2.39	(0.10)	2.92	(0.11)	5.50	(0.19)
var(Residual)	4.02	(0.05)	5.23	(0.06)	4.61	(0.05)	3.65	(0.04)
Observations	3670		3792		4037		4149	
Respondents	409		422		449		462	
ICC	0.48		0.31		0.39		0.60	
R2_fv	0		0		0		0	

Standard errors in parentheses

Random intercept

*For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Table E2: Multilevel regression models with vignette variables, random intercept, by genre

	Vignette response [Romantic]	Vignette response [Sci-fi]	Vignette response [Documentary]	Vignette response [Horror]
<i>Rating by movie critics: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.45*** (0.06)	-0.68*** (0.07)	-0.51*** (0.07)	-0.48*** (0.06)
Score: 4.8	0.86*** (0.06)	0.94*** (0.07)	0.81*** (0.07)	0.71*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by broad audience: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.34*** (0.06)	-0.51*** (0.07)	-0.44*** (0.07)	-0.41*** (0.06)
Score: 4.8	0.62*** (0.06)	0.88*** (0.07)	0.77*** (0.07)	0.60*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by students: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.55*** (0.06)	-0.56*** (0.07)	-0.60*** (0.07)	-0.43*** (0.06)
Scores: 4.8	0.97*** (0.06)	1.16*** (0.07)	1.04*** (0.07)	0.83*** (0.06)
<i>Recommended: (ref. neither nor)</i>				
Close friends	1.65*** (0.06)	1.83*** (0.07)	1.71*** (0.07)	1.27*** (0.06)
Parents	0.79*** (0.06)	0.84*** (0.07)	0.89*** (0.07)	0.66*** (0.06)
Constant	2.80*** (0.13)	3.31*** (0.12)	3.17*** (0.12)	2.37*** (0.13)
var(_cons)	3.94*** (0.15)	2.63*** (0.10)	3.10*** (0.11)	5.62*** (0.19)
var(Residual)	2.56*** (0.03)	3.17*** (0.04)	2.94*** (0.03)	2.58*** (0.03)
Proportional change of the vignette-level variance compared to the unconditional model in Table E1				
	1-2.56/4.02 = 36%	1-3.17/5.23 = 39%	1-2.94/4.61 = 36%	1-2.58/3.65 = 29%
Observations	3670	3792	4037	4149
Respondents	409	422	449	462
ICC	0.61	0.45	0.51	0.69
R2_fv	0.17	0.24	0.20	0.10

Standard errors in parentheses

Random intercept

*For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Table E3: Multilevel regression models with vignette variables, random intercept random slope, by genre

	Vignette response [Romantic]	Vignette response [Sci-fi]	Vignette response [Documentary]	Vignette response [Horror]
<i>Rating by movie critics: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.45*** (0.05)	-0.68*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.05)	-0.48*** (0.05)
Score: 4.8	0.86*** (0.06)	0.94*** (0.08)	0.81*** (0.07)	0.71*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by broad audience: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.34*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.05)	-0.44*** (0.05)	-0.42*** (0.04)
Score: 4.8	0.62*** (0.06)	0.88*** (0.07)	0.77*** (0.06)	0.60*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by students: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.55*** (0.05)	-0.56*** (0.05)	-0.60*** (0.05)	-0.43*** (0.05)
Scores: 4.8	0.97*** (0.06)	1.16*** (0.07)	1.04*** (0.06)	0.83*** (0.06)
<i>Recommended: (ref. neither nor)</i>				
Close friends	1.65*** (0.07)	1.83*** (0.09)	1.71*** (0.08)	1.27*** (0.07)
Parents	0.79*** (0.06)	0.84*** (0.07)	0.89*** (0.07)	0.67*** (0.06)
Constant	2.80*** (0.10)	3.31*** (0.10)	3.17*** (0.10)	2.37*** (0.10)
var(1.V1X1)	0.46 (0.05)	0.19 (0.04)	0.40 (0.05)	0.45 (0.04)
var(3.V1X1)	0.99 (0.06)	1.43 (0.08)	0.95 (0.06)	1.14 (0.06)
var(1.V1X2)	0.21 (0.04)	0.26 (0.05)	0.29 (0.04)	0.34 (0.04)
var(3.V1X2)	0.77 (0.05)	0.83 (0.06)	0.82 (0.06)	0.84 (0.05)
var(1.V1X3)	0.41 (0.05)	0.21 (0.05)	0.30 (0.05)	0.42 (0.04)
var(3.V1X3)	1.01 (0.06)	0.78 (0.06)	0.71 (0.05)	0.98 (0.05)
var(1.V1X4)	1.52 (0.09)	2.14 (0.11)	1.71 (0.10)	1.95 (0.09)
var(2.V1X4)	0.85 (0.06)	0.79 (0.07)	1.04 (0.08)	1.30 (0.08)
var(_cons)	3.25 (0.13)	2.53 (0.11)	2.74 (0.11)	4.06 (0.16)
var(Residual)	1.05 (0.05)	1.52 (0.06)	1.43 (0.06)	0.86 (0.05)
Observations	3670	3792	4037	4149
Respondents	409	422	449	462
ICC	0.76	0.62	0.66	0.82
R2 fv	0.31	0.38	0.33	0.26

Standard errors in parentheses

Random intercept random slope

*For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Table E4: Multilevel regression models with vignette and individual variables [main model], random intercept random slope, by genre

	Vignette response [Romantic]	Vignette response [Sci-fi]	Vignette response [Documentary]	Vignette response [Horror]
<i>Rating by movie critics (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.45*** (0.05)	-0.68*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.06)	-0.48*** (0.05)
Score: 4.8	0.86*** (0.06)	0.94*** (0.08)	0.81*** (0.07)	0.71*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by broad audience: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.34*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.06)	-0.44*** (0.05)	-0.42*** (0.04)
Score: 4.8	0.62*** (0.06)	0.88*** (0.07)	0.77*** (0.06)	0.60*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by students: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.55*** (0.05)	-0.56*** (0.05)	-0.60*** (0.05)	-0.43*** (0.05)
Scores: 4.8	0.97*** (0.06)	1.16*** (0.06)	1.04*** (0.06)	0.83*** (0.06)
<i>Recommended: (ref. neither nor)</i>				
Close friends	1.65*** (0.07)	1.83*** (0.09)	1.71*** (0.08)	1.27*** (0.07)
Parents	0.79*** (0.06)	0.84*** (0.07)	0.89*** (0.07)	0.67*** (0.06)
Respondent level:				
Preference for going to the cinema	0.03 (0.09)	0.09 (0.09)	0.23** (0.08)	0.18* (0.09)
Higher education, parents	-0.13 (0.15)	-0.09 (0.16)	0.08 (0.16)	0.07 (0.15)
Female	0.01 (0.18)	0.21 (0.17)	-0.03 (0.16)	-0.31* (0.16)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.94*** (0.23)	0.69** (0.25)	0.79** (0.28)	0.31 (0.25)
Like [Romance movies]	0.84*** (0.07)			
Like [Sci-Fi movies]		0.48*** (0.07)		
Like [Documentary movies]			0.56*** (0.07)	
Like [Horror movies]				0.94*** (0.05)
Constant	-2.11*** (0.59)	-0.38 (0.62)	-1.48* (0.65)	-1.06 (0.60)
var(1.V1X1)	0.42 (0.04)	0.21 (0.04)	0.38 (0.05)	0.35 (0.04)
var(3.V1X1)	0.95 (0.06)	1.37 (0.08)	0.88 (0.06)	1.08 (0.06)
var(1.V1X2)	0.20 (0.04)	0.27 (0.05)	0.24 (0.04)	0.25 (0.04)
var(3.V1X2)	0.72 (0.05)	0.80 (0.06)	0.79 (0.06)	0.81 (0.05)
var(1.V1X3)	0.40 (0.04)	0.22 (0.04)	0.26 (0.05)	0.35 (0.04)
var(3.V1X3)	0.93 (0.06)	0.75 (0.06)	0.68 (0.05)	0.94 (0.05)
var(1.V1X4)	1.42 (0.08)	2.09 (0.11)	1.60 (0.09)	1.77 (0.09)
var(2.V1X4)	0.77 (0.06)	0.76 (0.07)	0.93 (0.07)	1.18 (0.07)
var(_cons)	1.91 (0.09)	2.07 (0.09)	2.14 (0.09)	2.02 (0.09)
var(Residual)	1.13 (0.05)	1.54 (0.06)	1.52 (0.06)	1.01 (0.05)
Observations	3670	3792	4037	4149
Respondents	409	422	449	462
ICC	0.63	0.57	0.58	0.67
R2_fv	0.50	0.44	0.41	0.52

Standard errors in parentheses

Random intercept random slope

*For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Table E5: Wald tests of linear equations in the main models

Model for the ... genre	Test	chi2(1)=	Prob > chi2 =
Romantic	$1.V1X1 + 3.V1X1 = 0$	19.65	0.0000
Romantic	$1.V1X2 + 3.V1X2 = 0$	9.97	0.0016
Romantic	$1.V1X3 + 3.V1X3 = 0$	19.58	0.0000
Sci-fi	$1.V1X1 + 3.V1X1 = 0$	6.27	0.0123
Sci-fi	$1.V1X2 + 3.V1X2 = 0$	13.97	0.0002
Sci-fi	$1.V1X3 + 3.V1X3 = 0$	37.97	0.0000
Documentary	$1.V1X1 + 3.V1X1 = 0$	9.69	0.0019
Documentary	$1.V1X2 + 3.V1X2 = 0$	11.53	0.0007
Documentary	$1.V1X3 + 3.V1X3 = 0$	21.85	0.0000
Horror	$1.V1X1 + 3.V1X1 = 0$	6.83	0.0090
Horror	$1.V1X2 + 3.V1X2 = 0$	5.36	0.0206
Horror	$1.V1X3 + 3.V1X3 = 0$	21.46	0.0000

Table E6: Main model with interaction between preferences for a genre and rating by movie critics: multilevel regression model, random intercept random slope, by genres

	Vignette response [Romantic]		Vignette response [Sci-fi]		Vignette response [Documentary]		Vignette response [Horror]	
<i>Rating by movie critics: (ref. 3.2)</i>								
Score: 1.6	-0.34*	(0.14)	-0.41*	(0.16)	-0.30	(0.18)	-0.31***	(0.09)
Score: 4.8	0.61***	(0.17)	0.46*	(0.23)	0.13	(0.20)	0.25*	(0.11)
Like [Romance]	0.84***	(0.07)						
Score: 1.6 # Like [Romance]	-0.03	(0.04)						
Score: 4.8 # Like [Romance]	0.08	(0.05)						
Like [Sci-Fi]			0.49***	(0.08)				
Score: 1.6 # Like [Sci-Fi]			-0.08	(0.05)				
Score: 4.8 # Like [Sci-Fi]			0.14*	(0.06)				
Like [Documentary]					0.54***	(0.08)		
Score: 1.6 # Like [Documentary]					-0.06	(0.05)		
Score: 4.8 # Like [Documentary]					0.20***	(0.06)		
Like [Horror]							0.94***	(0.05)
Score: 1.6 # Like [Horror]							-0.08*	(0.03)
Score: 4.8 # Like [Horror]							0.20***	(0.04)
<i>Rating by broad audience: (ref. 3.2)</i>								
Score: 1.6	-0.34***	(0.05)	-0.51***	(0.06)	-0.44***	(0.05)	-0.41***	(0.04)
Score: 4.8	0.62***	(0.06)	0.88***	(0.07)	0.77***	(0.06)	0.60***	(0.06)
<i>Rating by students: (ref. 3.2)</i>								
Score: 1.6	-0.55***	(0.05)	-0.56***	(0.05)	-0.60***	(0.05)	-0.43***	(0.05)
Scores: 4.8	0.97***	(0.06)	1.16***	(0.06)	1.04***	(0.06)	0.83***	(0.06)
<i>Recommended: (ref. neither nor)</i>								
Close friends	1.65***	(0.07)	1.83***	(0.09)	1.71***	(0.08)	1.27***	(0.07)
Parents	0.79***	(0.06)	0.84***	(0.07)	0.89***	(0.07)	0.67***	(0.06)
Preference for going to the cinema	0.03	(0.09)	0.09	(0.09)	0.23**	(0.08)	0.18*	(0.09)
Higher education, parents	-0.13	(0.15)	-0.09	(0.16)	0.08	(0.16)	0.07	(0.15)
Female	0.01	(0.18)	0.21	(0.17)	-0.03	(0.16)	-0.31*	(0.16)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.94***	(0.23)	0.69**	(0.25)	0.79**	(0.28)	0.31	(0.25)
Constant	-2.10***	(0.59)	-0.41	(0.62)	-1.42*	(0.65)	-1.05	(0.60)
var(1.V1X1)	0.41	(0.04)	0.20	(0.04)	0.37	(0.05)	0.34	(0.04)
var(3.V1X1)	0.94	(0.06)	1.33	(0.08)	0.83	(0.06)	0.99	(0.05)
var(1.V1X2)	0.20	(0.04)	0.27	(0.05)	0.24	(0.04)	0.24	(0.04)
var(3.V1X2)	0.72	(0.05)	0.80	(0.06)	0.79	(0.06)	0.81	(0.05)
var(1.V1X3)	0.40	(0.04)	0.22	(0.04)	0.26	(0.05)	0.35	(0.04)
var(3.V1X3)	0.93	(0.06)	0.74	(0.06)	0.68	(0.05)	0.94	(0.05)
var(1.V1X4)	1.42	(0.08)	2.09	(0.11)	1.60	(0.09)	1.76	(0.09)
var(2.V1X4)	0.77	(0.06)	0.76	(0.07)	0.93	(0.07)	1.18	(0.07)
var(_cons)	1.91	(0.09)	2.06	(0.09)	2.14	(0.09)	2.02	(0.09)
var(Residual)	1.13	(0.05)	1.55	(0.06)	1.52	(0.06)	1.01	(0.05)
Observations	3670		3792		4037		4149	
Respondents	409		422		449		462	
ICC	0.63		0.57		0.58		0.67	
R2_fv	0.50		0.44		0.42		0.53	

Standard errors in parentheses. Random intercept random slope. For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table E7: Main model with interaction between trust in family and recommendation: multilevel regression model, random intercept random slope, by genres

	Vignette response [Romantic]	Vignette response [Sci-fi]	Vignette response [Documentary]	Vignette response [Horror]
<i>Rating by movie critics: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.45*** (0.05)	-0.68*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.06)	-0.48*** (0.05)
Score: 4.8	0.86*** (0.06)	0.94*** (0.08)	0.81*** (0.06)	0.70*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by broad audience: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.34*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.06)	-0.44*** (0.05)	-0.42*** (0.04)
Score: 4.8	0.62*** (0.06)	0.88*** (0.07)	0.77*** (0.06)	0.60*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by students: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.55*** (0.05)	-0.56*** (0.05)	-0.60*** (0.05)	-0.43*** (0.05)
Scores: 4.8	0.97*** (0.06)	1.16*** (0.06)	1.04*** (0.06)	0.82*** (0.06)
<i>Recommended: (ref. neither nor)</i>				
Close friends	0.95* (0.45)	1.40** (0.50)	0.42 (0.43)	0.87 (0.45)
Parents	-0.72 (0.37)	-0.95* (0.37)	-0.81* (0.36)	-0.38 (0.39)
Trust [Your family]	-0.07 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.13)	0.08 (0.13)
Close friends # Trust [Your family]	0.19 (0.12)	0.12 (0.14)	0.36** (0.12)	0.11 (0.12)
Parents # Trust [Your family]	0.42*** (0.10)	0.50*** (0.10)	0.48*** (0.10)	0.29** (0.11)
Preference for going to the cinema	0.03 (0.09)	0.09 (0.09)	0.23** (0.08)	0.19* (0.09)
Higher education, parents	-0.14 (0.15)	-0.09 (0.16)	0.07 (0.16)	0.09 (0.15)
Female	0.01 (0.18)	0.23 (0.17)	-0.02 (0.16)	-0.28 (0.16)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.94*** (0.23)	0.68** (0.25)	0.80** (0.28)	0.31 (0.25)
Like [Romance movies]	0.84*** (0.07)			
Like [Sci-Fi movies]		0.48*** (0.07)		
Like [Documentary movies]			0.56*** (0.07)	
Like [Horror movies]				0.95*** (0.05)
Constant	-1.86* (0.74)	-0.11 (0.76)	-1.26 (0.80)	-1.38 (0.76)
var(1.V1X1)	0.41 (0.04)	0.21 (0.04)	0.38 (0.05)	0.37 (0.04)
var(3.V1X1)	0.95 (0.06)	1.37 (0.08)	0.88 (0.06)	1.08 (0.05)
var(1.V1X2)	0.20 (0.04)	0.27 (0.05)	0.25 (0.04)	0.26 (0.04)
var(3.V1X2)	0.72 (0.05)	0.80 (0.06)	0.79 (0.06)	0.81 (0.05)
var(1.V1X3)	0.40 (0.04)	0.22 (0.04)	0.26 (0.05)	0.37 (0.04)
var(3.V1X3)	0.93 (0.06)	0.74 (0.06)	0.68 (0.05)	0.94 (0.05)
var(1.V1X4)	1.41 (0.08)	2.08 (0.11)	1.57 (0.09)	1.79 (0.09)
var(2.V1X4)	0.73 (0.06)	0.68 (0.07)	0.87 (0.07)	1.17 (0.07)
var(_cons)	1.92 (0.09)	2.07 (0.09)	2.14 (0.09)	2.02 (0.09)
var(Residual)	1.13 (0.05)	1.55 (0.06)	1.52 (0.06)	0.99 (0.05)
Observations	3670	3792	4037	4140
Respondents	409	422	449	461
ICC	0.63	0.57	0.59	0.67
R2_fv	0.50	0.44	0.41	0.53

Standard errors in parentheses

Random intercept random slope

*For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Table E8: Main model with interaction between importance of friends and recommendation: multilevel regression model, random intercept random slope, by genres

	Vignette response [Romantic]	Vignette response [Sci-fi]	Vignette response [Documentary]	Vignette response [Horror]
<i>Rating by movie critics: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.45*** (0.05)	-0.68*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.06)	-0.48*** (0.05)
Score: 4.8	0.86*** (0.06)	0.94*** (0.08)	0.81*** (0.07)	0.71*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by broad audience: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.34*** (0.05)	-0.51*** (0.06)	-0.44*** (0.05)	-0.42*** (0.04)
Score: 4.8	0.62*** (0.06)	0.88*** (0.07)	0.77*** (0.06)	0.61*** (0.06)
<i>Rating by students: (ref. 3.2)</i>				
Score: 1.6	-0.55*** (0.05)	-0.56*** (0.05)	-0.60*** (0.05)	-0.43*** (0.05)
Scores: 4.8	0.97*** (0.06)	1.16*** (0.06)	1.04*** (0.06)	0.83*** (0.06)
<i>Recommended: (ref. neither nor)</i>				
Close friends	-0.21 (0.42)	-0.18 (0.49)	-0.74 (0.46)	-0.26 (0.47)
Parents	-0.02 (0.36)	-0.04 (0.37)	-0.22 (0.40)	0.22 (0.41)
Importance [Friends]	0.01 (0.13)	0.01 (0.13)	0.03 (0.14)	-0.24 (0.14)
Close friends # Importance [Friends]	0.52*** (0.12)	0.58*** (0.14)	0.69*** (0.13)	0.43*** (0.13)
Parents # Importance [Friends]	0.23* (0.10)	0.25* (0.11)	0.31** (0.11)	0.13 (0.11)
Preference for going to the cinema	0.02 (0.09)	0.08 (0.09)	0.21* (0.08)	0.19* (0.09)
Higher education, parents	-0.14 (0.15)	-0.07 (0.16)	0.08 (0.16)	0.08 (0.15)
Female	0.94*** (0.23)	0.66** (0.25)	0.79** (0.27)	0.37 (0.25)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.00 (0.18)	0.19 (0.17)	-0.05 (0.16)	-0.29 (0.16)
Like [Romance movies]	0.84*** (0.07)			
Like [Sci-Fi movies]		0.47*** (0.07)		
Like [Documentary movies]			0.56*** (0.07)	
Like [Horror movies]				0.94*** (0.05)
Constant	-2.08** (0.71)	-0.28 (0.76)	-1.50 (0.78)	-0.37 (0.71)
var(1.V1X1)	0.42 (0.04)	0.21 (0.04)	0.38 (0.05)	0.36 (0.04)
var(3.V1X1)	0.95 (0.06)	1.37 (0.08)	0.88 (0.06)	1.08 (0.06)
var(1.V1X2)	0.20 (0.04)	0.27 (0.05)	0.23 (0.04)	0.25 (0.04)
var(3.V1X2)	0.72 (0.05)	0.80 (0.06)	0.79 (0.06)	0.81 (0.05)
var(1.V1X3)	0.40 (0.04)	0.22 (0.05)	0.25 (0.05)	0.35 (0.04)
var(3.V1X3)	0.93 (0.06)	0.74 (0.06)	0.68 (0.05)	0.94 (0.05)
var(1.V1X4)	1.34 (0.08)	2.00 (0.11)	1.46 (0.09)	1.73 (0.09)
var(2.V1X4)	0.77 (0.06)	0.75 (0.07)	0.90 (0.07)	1.18 (0.07)
var(_cons)	1.91 (0.09)	2.06 (0.09)	2.12 (0.09)	2.02 (0.09)
var(Residual)	1.12 (0.05)	1.55 (0.06)	1.53 (0.06)	1.01 (0.05)
Observations	3670	3783	4037	4140
Respondents	409	421	449	461
ICC	0.63	0.57	0.58	0.67
R2_fv	0.50	0.44	0.42	0.52

Standard errors in parentheses

Random intercept random slope

*For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Table E9: Main model with interaction between rating by critics and volume of taste: multilevel regression model, random intercept random slope, by genres

	Vignette response [Romantic]		Vignette response [Sci-fi]		Vignette response [Documentary]		Vignette response [Horror]	
<i>Rating by movie critics: (ref. 3.2)</i>								
Score: 1.6	-0.13	(0.38)	-0.40	(0.38)	-0.16	(0.44)	-0.17	(0.36)
Score: 4.8	-0.13	(0.45)	-0.05	(0.52)	-0.19	(0.51)	-0.10	(0.47)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.91***	(0.24)	0.67**	(0.26)	0.76**	(0.29)	0.30	(0.25)
Score: 1.6 # Volume of taste(+1), ln	-0.13	(0.16)	-0.12	(0.16)	-0.14	(0.18)	-0.13	(0.15)
Score: 4.8 # Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.42*	(0.19)	0.42	(0.22)	0.42*	(0.21)	0.33	(0.19)
<i>Rating by broad audience: (ref. 3.2)</i>								
Score: 1.6	-0.34***	(0.05)	-0.51***	(0.06)	-0.44***	(0.05)	-0.42***	(0.04)
Score: 4.8	0.62***	(0.06)	0.88***	(0.07)	0.77***	(0.06)	0.60***	(0.06)
<i>Rating by students: (ref. 3.2)</i>								
Score: 1.6	-0.55***	(0.05)	-0.56***	(0.05)	-0.60***	(0.05)	-0.43***	(0.05)
Scores: 4.8	0.97***	(0.06)	1.16***	(0.06)	1.04***	(0.06)	0.83***	(0.06)
<i>Recommended: (ref. neither nor)</i>								
Close friends	1.65***	(0.07)	1.83***	(0.09)	1.71***	(0.08)	1.27***	(0.07)
Parents	0.79***	(0.06)	0.84***	(0.07)	0.89***	(0.07)	0.67***	(0.06)
Preference for going to the cinema	0.03	(0.09)	0.09	(0.09)	0.23**	(0.08)	0.18*	(0.09)
Higher education, parents	-0.13	(0.15)	-0.09	(0.16)	0.08	(0.16)	0.07	(0.15)
Female	0.01	(0.18)	0.21	(0.17)	-0.03	(0.16)	-0.31*	(0.16)
Like [Romance movies]	0.84***	(0.07)						
Like [Sci-Fi movies]			0.48***	(0.07)				
Like [Documentary movies]					0.56***	(0.07)		
Like [Horror movies]							0.94***	(0.05)
Constant	-2.04***	(0.61)	-0.35	(0.64)	-1.40*	(0.68)	-1.03	(0.61)
var(1.V1X1)	0.41	(0.04)	0.21	(0.04)	0.38	(0.05)	0.35	(0.04)
var(3.V1X1)	0.93	(0.06)	1.35	(0.08)	0.87	(0.06)	1.07	(0.06)
var(1.V1X2)	0.20	(0.04)	0.27	(0.05)	0.24	(0.04)	0.25	(0.04)
var(3.V1X2)	0.72	(0.05)	0.80	(0.06)	0.79	(0.06)	0.81	(0.05)
var(1.V1X3)	0.40	(0.04)	0.22	(0.04)	0.26	(0.05)	0.35	(0.04)
var(3.V1X3)	0.93	(0.06)	0.75	(0.06)	0.68	(0.05)	0.94	(0.05)
var(1.V1X4)	1.42	(0.08)	2.09	(0.11)	1.60	(0.09)	1.77	(0.09)
var(2.V1X4)	0.77	(0.06)	0.76	(0.07)	0.93	(0.07)	1.18	(0.07)
var(_cons)	1.91	(0.09)	2.06	(0.09)	2.14	(0.09)	2.02	(0.09)
var(Residual)	1.13	(0.05)	1.55	(0.06)	1.52	(0.06)	1.01	(0.05)
Observations	3670		3792		4037		4149	
Respondents	409		422		449		462	
ICC	0.63		0.57		0.58		0.67	
R2_fv	0.50		0.44		0.41		0.52	

Standard errors in parentheses

Random intercept random slope

*For regression coefficients: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Chapter 7: Exploring Personal Recommendations from New Contacts in the Movie Market

Abstract

Cultural markets are characterized by uncertainty, prompting consumers to rely on various forms of social information. Personal recommendations, particularly from close networks, stand out as an important component. However, in different social settings, consumers may encounter recommendations from advisors outside their close network. Focusing on the movie market, this study investigates how different characteristics of such movie advisors influence the value placed on their recommendations. A factorial survey among students is employed to investigate the role of gender, migration background, socio-economic position (SEP), and patterns of movie consumption (voraciousness) in drawing the intentions to watch movies in three genres – action, comedy, and drama. The results show that recommendations from women and individuals extensively involved in movie watching hold higher value. There is a lack of evidence supporting gender-essentialist beliefs about advisors, since genre-based differences remain minimal. In-group favoritism is observed among women, whereas men are found to be indifferent. This study underlines the importance of advisors' characteristics in predicting the weight of recommendations.

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Preliminary results of this study were presented at the IMEBESS (2025).

7.1. Introduction

In cultural markets, individual choices are shaped not only by the objective characteristics of products but also by social influence, leading to the unpredictability of product performance and inequality of success (Watts & Salganik, 2011). In the movie market, for example, consumers tend to rely on sources of information such as reviews, ratings, rankings, awards, star participation, brand names, and advertising (Karpik, 2010; A. Liu et al., 2014; Y. Liu, 2006; McKenzie, 2023; Schmidt, 2022). Meanwhile, recommendations from personal networks remain one of the most prominent manifestations of this social component. A recent factorial study by Schmidt (2022) has shown that recommendations from close networks, such as family and friends, are among the most influential sources of information that impact behavioral intentions in the movie market. Such recommendations typically require minimal extra validation or verification, as the personal network is generally considered to be a credible source (Karpik, 2010). However, recommendations of cultural products also occur in everyday interactions with even new acquaintances at social gatherings. Yet, the influence of personal recommendations from new contacts in cultural markets remains uncertain.

Focusing on the movie market, this study aims to investigate the logic behind how individuals perceive recommendations from new acquaintances and their role in shaping behavioral intentions to watch a recommended movie. In detail, it is assumed that individuals can attach value to a recommendation based on certain characteristics of advisors. Thus, the present study investigates how these different characteristics of advisors contribute to shaping the value assigned to the recommendation. A factorial survey with real photos of movie advisors was employed to investigate the role of gender, migration background, socio-economic position (SEP), and the voraciousness of taste in determining the value of the recommendation. The dataset was collected among students at one German university from December 2023 to January 2024.

To specify the role of individual characteristics, I test hypotheses drawing on the gender ideology theory (West & Zimmerman, 1987), social learning theory (Mischel, 2015), in-group favoritism (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), and cultural hierarchy (Bourdieu, 1984; Jæger & Larsen, 2024; Peterson, 2005). Motivated to provide a detailed analysis, three differently gender-colored genres are considered – action (rather masculine), comedy (neutral), and drama (feminine) (Schwab, 2010; Wühr et al., 2017). The results aim to improve the understanding

of the social influence in the movie market by exploring the intersection of movie advisor and consumer characteristics as a valuable element of the decision-making process in cultural markets.

7.2. Social influence in the movie market

Oversaturated with numerous unique products, cultural markets are challenging to orient. Theoretically, products in the movie market can be compared based on their objective characteristics such as the duration of the picture, its budget, assigned genres by the producers, language, and others. However, the market competition is highly influenced by the social component (Salganik et al., 2006).

The Kissing Booth, a literary adaptation of Beth Reekles's book, released in 2018 on Netflix, has gained unexpected popularity among users of the streaming service (Rao, 2018). Although this romantic teen comedy was highly criticized for its cliché plot and a representation of sexual harassment and other sexist behavior as a regular element of teens' everyday life (*The Kissing Booth*, n.d.), it has achieved international recognition (Kaufman, 2018), made a huge breakthrough and become "one of the most-watched movies" in 2018 in the US, according to the interview with Ted Sarandos, a chief content officer of Netflix (Adalian, 2018). Despite a tremendously low rating by critics, the movie has received two sequels so far. *The Kissing Booth* has become a highly discussed movie on social networks and websites due to its controversial messages and clichés, which contributed to its increasing popularity.

The model of herd behavior predicts consumers to rely on the behavior of others while making up with own decisions (Banerjee, 1992). In sociology of consumption, herding typically involves aligning with others through different conscious mechanisms, such as receptivity to social norms and rational conformity (Kameda & Hastie, 2015). To avoid negative social consequences, individuals tend to adhere to the perceived expectations of others.

In extension to herding, the principle of cumulative advantage serves as a rigid illustration of the social influence in cultural markets (Watts & Salganik, 2011, p. 319). It implies that, benefiting from rapid initial popularity (with a positive or negative connotation), the products will only become more popular afterward, creating a gap between top-performing products and the rest. In line with this, Liu (2006) points out the ability of word-of-mouth in the online

environment to explain and contribute to the movie's success. Due to the cumulative advantage stemming from the herding behavior and uniqueness of cultural products, such markets are characterized by the unpredictability of success and high inequality (Watts & Salganik, 2011). The rapid popularity of *The Kissing Booth* on Netflix is a relevant illustration of this phenomenon.

Theorizing the behavior of consumers in markets of unique and incommensurable products, Karpik (2010) asserts that they tend to resolve a problem of cognitive deficit to make their own judgment with the help of judgment devices – knowledge operators and guiding principles for individual actions, most of which have a social component. The movie market is a vivid example of markets of singular products, where consumers can feel perplexed and have to rely on certain judgment devices to gain sufficient information (Schmidt, 2022). Karpik (2010) denotes five main categories of these devices. Among them are appellations (attributes and meanings such as brand names), cicerones (guides), rankings (expert and buyer hierarchical arrangements of singularities), confluences (techniques used to channel buyers, such as advertising), and networks (interpersonal relations) (Karpik, 2010, pp. 44–46). Empirical research has emphasized the prominent effect of particularly personal recommendations in predicting consumers' choices (Schmidt, 2022).

7.2.1. Personal network and digitalized environment

The movie market has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, promoting on-demand culture and increasing access to movies for small-screen consumers through streaming services (Pardo, 2015). The industry is being actively digitalized, forcing both producers and consumers to adapt to new technological advances (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2021). In parallel, consumers can get access to new sources of information about movies coming from internet users in the form of ratings or reviews (e.g., IMDB, Letterboxd, MoviePilot) and contribute to them, influencing the reputation of pictures. Prior research has documented the capacity of user-generated evaluations to influence the movie performance (e.g., Basuroy et al., 2020; Chintagunta et al., 2010; McKenzie, 2023). Additionally, algorithms built into streaming services and movie websites constantly recommend new content based on viewers' prior behavior and other available information (e.g., Gao et al., 2025; Ziaee et al., 2024).

Despite large-scale digitalization, the close network still stands out as one of the most important judgment devices that helps to reduce the level of quality uncertainty in the market (Schmidt,

2022). Operating by word of mouth, consumers acquire information about the products via interpersonal communication (Karpik, 2010). In this way, the received information is easily accessible and perceived as credible. It requires little validation and evidence, so it can be rapidly digested, avoiding the burden on one's shoulders.

Relying on the personal experience of close others, consumers benefit from valuable recommendations that make their choices in the market relatively simpler and help them to go through with their decisions. However, the high value of recommendations from close networks stems from shared commonalities in experiences and shared life circumstances. Thus, their recommendation is perceived as trustworthy and valuable, albeit to some extent redundant (Karpik, 2010). Additionally, strong ties like friends or parents can have extensive knowledge about one another, resulting in more personalized and credible recommendations.

At the same time, cultural consumption can contribute to group coherence. By building up unique attributes of the group, individuals can align their cultural repertoire with other group members. Therefore, cultural tastes can shape and help maintain social relations within diverse groups (Lizardo, 2006), making the exchange of opinions about cultural products an important instrument for membership in groups of different kinds.

Unlike recommendations from close networks, movie recommendations from distant networks or weak ties (such as colleagues or new contacts) may be more frequent in one's life, but do not necessarily hold intrinsic value. For instance, colleagues at work tend to exchange superficial information about their lives, providing a lack of solid basis for meaningful recommendations. Similarly, new acquaintances at social gatherings can engage in casual conversations about movies without considering the personalities of each other while suggesting the next picture to watch. Karpik (2010, p. 184) suggests that a personal device ensures the circulation of speech, which makes it more effective than any impersonal device for all types of networks. However, in the case of a lack of personal contact and shared experiences, specific characteristics of an advisor may influence the value of these recommendations. This study focuses on the role of gender, migration background, SEP, and taste patterns of a movie advisor (new contacts) in predicting the perceived value of such recommendations.

7.2.2. Genres and gender-essentialist beliefs

Cultural products are found to be socially stratified by gender (e.g., Wühr et al., 2017). Gender ideology theory posits that individuals tend to align their preferences with gender beliefs prevailing in the social environment (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Through mechanisms of sanction for deviant behavior and approval for norm compliance, children internalize gender roles and corresponding social norms during socialization in one's environment and learn the behavioral patterns corresponding to one's gender (Mischel, 2015). In the context of decision-making in the movie market, individuals can rely on existing gender norms and stereotypes to orient in such markets and construct their own cultural repertoire. For example, men are more inclined to consume products depicting typically masculine behavior and elements such as action, violence, status, or power, while women are more attached to films revolving around social relationships and romantic attributes (Hust & Brown, 2008; Oliver et al., 2000; Schwab, 2010). Moreover, genres stereotypically associated with men are more likely to feature protagonists of the same gender, and vice versa. The portrayal of a specific gender as the protagonist influences the perception of products (Greenwood & Lippman, 2010).

Contemporary research supports that people, first of all, have gender stereotypes about movie genres, which is reflected in the difference in consumption of various products between men and women, although their perception may be exaggerated (Wühr et al., 2017). A consistent finding underscores the greater appeal of action movies among men and drama movies among women (e.g., Schwab, 2010; Veenstra et al., 2020; Wühr et al., 2017). Facing recommendations from a movie advisor in a certain genre, individuals can derive the value of this recommendation, considering gender stereotypes. Consequently, adhering to social norms, recommendations from men are expected to hold higher value for those genres perceived as more masculine than feminine (e.g., action). In contrast to this, women's recommendation gets higher importance for typically feminine genres (e.g., drama).

H1a: Men's recommendations in the action genre carry more weight than women's recommendations.

H1b: Women's recommendations in the drama genre carry more weight than men's recommendations.

7.2.3. Cultural hierarchy and status perception

Sociological studies of cultural preferences assert that cultural taste is socially stratified, which implies that cultural products vary in terms of the social recognition attached to them. According to Bourdieu (1984), individuals in high social positions benefit from higher economic, social, and cultural capital. Through symbolic power and cultural dominance, their cultural repertoire acquires the legitimate status and tends to be considered highbrow. Contrary to this, individuals from lower social positions lack the social recognition of their taste. Following the taste patterns of different social groups, cultural products can be sorted into more and less superior to others (lowbrow and highbrow). As documented by Jæger and Larsen (2024), the perception of the cultural hierarchy is still widely shared in contemporary society. Since the taste of individuals from high social positions can be perceived as located in the upper segment of the cultural hierarchy, the next hypothesis reads as follows:

H2: Recommendations from individuals in high social positions carry more weight than recommendations from individuals in low social positions, regardless of the movie genre.

7.2.4. In-group favoritism: gender and migration background

Individuals belong to various social groups based on their characteristics, perceiving others as either in-group (us) or out-group (them) members. In-group favoritism is known as a tendency to prefer in-group social relations over out-group ones, even in cases of lack of previous interactions and artificially created groups (Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). In social life, group segregation can be based on diverse broad categories, such as gender (e.g., Leach et al., 2017) or migration background (e.g., El-Bialy et al., 2021). Under different circumstances, people tend to express in-group bias by having a more positive attitude, showing higher trust, and being more helpful to members of the in-group compared to out-groups (Fu et al., 2012; Halevy et al., 2012). In line with this, it is hypothesized that movie recommendations have higher value when they come from within the in-group:

H3a: Men's recommendations in all genres carry more weight than women's recommendations for men.

H3b: Women's recommendations in all genres carry more weight than men's recommendations for women.

H4a: Migrants' recommendations in all genres carry more weight than non-migrants' recommendations for migrants.

H4b: Non-migrants' recommendations in all genres carry more weight than migrants' recommendations for non-migrants.

7.2.5. Extensive involvement and diversity of taste as a sign of expert taste

The term cultural omnivorousness, introduced by Peterson and Simkus (1992), has been used to describe the empirical findings that people in high socioeconomic positions (SEPs) tend to extend their taste from highbrow (sophisticated and legitimized) to the products of popular culture, making their cultural repertoire more diverse and extensive. Influenced by various aspects such as the expansion of liberal education, value change, and democratization of art, the salience of cultural categories for social distinctions has decreased (Peterson & Kern, 1996). Contrary to this, lower socioeconomic status groups keep following univorous patterns in their cultural repertoire, being less open to appreciating diversity compared to individuals in higher SEPs. Numerous empirical studies have identified omnivorous taste on different levels of culture as an attribute of higher socioeconomic status groups or, particularly, highly-educated groups (e.g., Purhonen et al., 2010; Rankin & Ergin, 2017; Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009). According to Peterson (2005, p. 264), cultural omnivorousness has become “a standard of good taste” in modern societies.

However, omnivorousness can be attributed to diverse levels, such as emotional (likes/dislikes) and behavioral (practices) (Hazır & Warde, 2015; Johnston et al., 2019). The meaning of omnivorousness also encompasses two other perspectives: weak and strong interpretation (de Vries & Reeves, 2022). The former expects individuals in upper SEPs to develop a broad taste, including popular forms of culture in their cultural repertoire. The latter, in turn, assumes that those individuals are also averse to class-based exclusivity in taste. To separately underline frequency and range of taste, scholars coined a complementary term, *cultural voraciousness*, to pay attention to the extent of participation in leisure activities of higher-status individuals, namely, pace and pattern of engagement, rather than the position of taste in cultural hierarchy (Katz-Gerro & Sullivan, 2010; Sullivan & Katz-Gerro, 2007). Therefore, the next hypothesis covers these perspectives and focuses on the extensive involvement in terms of both frequency and volume/diversity of taste as a sign of good taste that can make the recommendation more appealing:

H5: Recommendations from individuals with characteristics of extensive and diverse involvement in movie consumption carry more weight than recommendations from individuals without these characteristics, regardless of the movie genre.

Lastly, a high level of omnivorousness, conceptualized as the transposable skill to extend one's taste, is more easily achievable for individuals who benefit from educated habitus and high cultural capital during the first stages of socialization (Lizardo, 2019; Lizardo & Skiles, 2012). In everyday interactions, omnivorous consumers might attach positive connotations to the omnivorousness or voraciousness of others and can treat this characteristic as an indicator of high cultural capital. Thus, omnivores can prioritize recommendations from other omnivores or voracious individuals, since they share similar cultural dispositions in terms of diversity of taste, at least to some extent.

H6: Compared to consumers with univorous tastes, recommendations from individuals with characteristics of extensive and diverse involvement in movie consumption carry more weight for consumers with omnivorous tastes than recommendations from individuals without these characteristics, regardless of the movie genre.

7.3. Study design

A factorial survey is employed to investigate the role of personal recommendations in the movie market. In order to reduce background noise and potential bias, artificial scenarios are constructed when respondents receive a recommendation to watch a movie in communication with a person they meet for the first time. Certain characteristics of movie advisors are provided: gender, migration background, SEP, and characteristics of involvement in the movie market (including both the frequency and volume of engagement). For standardization, the age is fixed in each scenario to one value (28). The respondents are asked to answer the following question: "In your opinion, how likely are you to watch the movie recommended by this person? It would be...", where 0 – "highly unlikely" and 10 – "highly likely".

Three movie genres are selected for this study – one rather gender-neutral and two cases of gender-colored genres. Following the results by Wühr et al. (2017), drama and action genres are picked out as cases of gender-colored genres – rather feminine and masculine, respectively. The comedy genre is considered an example of gender-neutral movies, according to Wühr et

al. (2017), although people tended slightly to stereotype comedies as a women’s genre, based on personal preferences, it appeared rather neutral.

A between-subjects design is employed for the level of genres, and a within-subjects design is used for the personal characteristics of advisors. It means that each respondent estimates vignettes for one genre only. The within-subject levels account for gender, migration background, social position, and voracious characteristics. Gender and migration background are visualized with images. The SEP is also partially visualized in distinct photos and accompanied by a distinct description of a profile. The profile of a person of a rather lower-middle social position includes reference to semi-routine occupations, vocational education, and popular taste, which go together as one value: “shopping assistant, studied retail at the vocational school, likes listening to pop in the free time”. Despite the potential tendency toward cultural omnivorousness, the perception of popular music does not gain a degree of legitimization, which suits the description of the profile (e.g., Špaček, 2024). The social profile of a person of rather upper social position, in turn, is illustrated by professional occupation, high academic education, and established legitimate taste pattern: “business manager, studied business administration at the university, likes listening to jazz in the free time”. The voraciousness of taste is also presented with text. All factors and levels are provided in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Factors and levels of the vignette study

Factor (or Dimension):	Level (or Value):
Genre of the movie (between-subject):	(1) Drama movie (2) Action movie (3) Comedy movie
Gender [image]:	(1) Female (2) Male
Migration background [image]:	(1) With migration background (2) Without migration background
Social-economic position (SEP) [description+partially in images]:	(1) Rather in the direction of lower-middle social position [“Shopping assistant, studied retail at the vocational school, likes listening to pop in the free time”] (2) Rather in the direction of upper social position [“Business manager, studied business administration at the university, likes listening to jazz in the free time”]

Factor (or Dimension):	Level (or Value):
The extent of involvement in the movie market / Voraciousness [description]:	(1) Low voraciousness [“Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres”] (2) High voraciousness [“Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres”]

Illustrations for movie advisors’ profiles were purchased from the iStock image database. I focus on people aged 24-35 years old to avoid the confounding effect of age. Migration status is visualized by photos of people from the Middle East or South Asia. The photos were edited to ensure a proper correspondence to the description of profiles. The full set of vignettes is available in the questionnaire. The list of used iStock photos is provided in Appendix A, Table A1. The vignettes are available in the questionnaire shared via the data repository (Voronin, 2025) and in Appendix E.

The vignette universe (within level) consists of 16 cases. To reduce the number of vignettes for one respondent, I split 16 vignettes for each genre into 2 decks with 8 vignettes (see Table 7.2). To do this, I followed the D-efficiency criterion (orthogonal and balanced designs). Respondents are randomly assigned to one deck, meaning 8 vignettes that belong to one genre. It implies that respondents estimate only 8 vignettes in a random order, where advisors recommend movies in one genre.

This study is built upon the original dataset collected among students at one German university in 2023-2024 (N = 1836). The young audience is known to be the demographic group with the highest cultural engagement (*Spielen, Lesen, Kino - Neun Stunden Kultur pro Woche*, 2024). Students were invited to participate in the survey via randomly generated email addresses. In total, more than 26,000 emails were sent. All participants provided informed consent. Participation was completely voluntary. The anonymized dataset, as well as data documentation, are available in the data repository (Voronin, 2025). 605 respondents estimated vignettes in the comedy genre, 564 for action, and 631 for drama movies. Respondents who report non-binary gender identification are excluded from the analytical sample due to the low number of cases (12 respondents – “Other”). The analytical sample includes 1824 respondents.

To test hypotheses, multilevel regression analyses with random intercept, random slope, and maximum likelihood estimator with clustered standard errors are employed. The list of predictors includes vignette factors and individual characteristics. On the individual level, the analysis includes gender, higher education of parents, preferences for genres, migration

background and omnivorous taste patterns. Appendix B provides operationalization for the respondent-level measures.

The descriptive statistics for the included individual-level variables and complete results of regression models are presented in Appendix C. Models with random intercept but fixed slopes are provided in Appendix D – the coefficients are consistent in terms of significance and direction of effects. For the robustness check, I adjusted for multiple hypothesis testing using the Holm method. The adjusted p-values for regression coefficients are available in Appendix C, Table C7.

Table 7.2: Decks of the vignette survey

Deck 1. Orthogonal design, D-efficiency = 100				
<i>Vignette</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Migration background</i>	<i>Social position</i>	<i>Voraciousness</i>
1	Female	Without migration background	Lower	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
4	Male	With migration background	Lower	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
6	Male	Without migration background	Upper	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
7	Female	With migration background	Upper	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
10	Male	Without migration background	Lower	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres
11	Female	With migration background	Lower	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres
13	Female	Without migration background	Upper	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres
16 ⁷	Male	With migration background	Upper	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres
Deck 2. Orthogonal design, D-efficiency = 100				
<i>Vignette</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Migration background</i>	<i>Social position</i>	<i>Voraciousness</i>
2	Male	Without migration background	Lower	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
3	Female	With migration background	Lower	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
5	Female	Without migration background	Upper	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
8	Male	With migration background	Upper	Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres
9	Female	Without migration background	Lower	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres

⁷ Due to a visualization error in the survey tool, the evaluation of the vignette 16 for action movies is not included in the analysis.

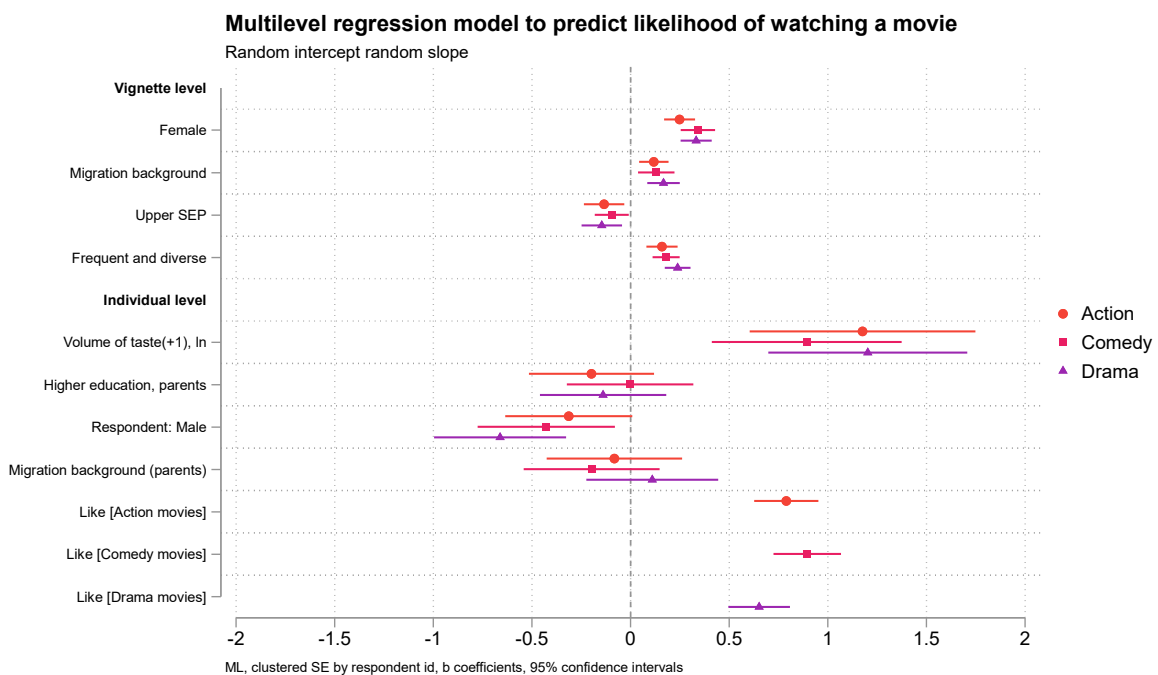
12	Male	With migration background	Lower	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres
14	Male	Without migration background	Upper	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres
15	Female	With migration background	Upper	Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres

Three measures are computed to evaluate the model fit using `addon mlmr2` (Gambino, 2023): proportion of vignette-level variance explained by the vignette-level predictors via fixed slopes (R^2_{f1}), proportion of vignette-level variance explained by the vignette-level predictors via random slopes variance (R^2_{v12}), proportion of respondent-level variance explained by the respondent-level predictors via fixed slopes (R^2_{f2}).

7.4. Results

The analysis of empty models reveals the high importance of movie advisor characteristics in predicting behavioral intentions in our scenarios. For each genre, the variance in the level of vignette characteristics (ICC) exceeds 70%. To assess the differential impact of four vignette characteristics and individual-level variables, I fit multilevel regression models separately per genre. Figure 7.1 presents the main effects of vignette- and individual-level predictors.

Figure 7.1: Results of the main model (Model A)



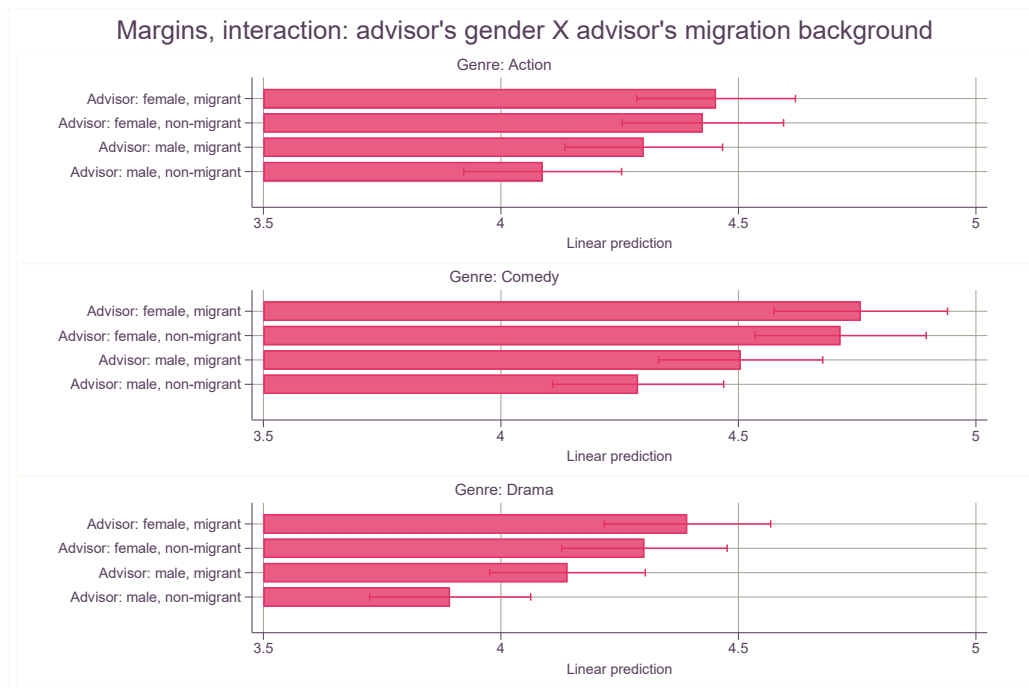
The results from the main model show strong support for H1b, as women’s recommendations in the drama genre carry more weight than men’s recommendations. However, the same applies

to action and comedy movies – the female gender turns out as a positive predictor, contradicting H1a. It means that in case a female advisor recommends a movie in any genre, the respondents are more likely to follow recommendations compared to the scenario when a recommendation is coming from a male advisor.

Contrary to H2, the profile description of the upper-SEP leads to a lower weight of the recommendation compared lower-SEP profile. This effect is rather small but consistent across three genres. Next, extensive involvement in movie watching has a strong positive effect on the likelihood of watching a recommended movie, providing support for H5. Another positive predictor is the migration background. Here, the migration background of an advisor leads to a higher likelihood of watching the recommended movie.

Enriching the main model with an interaction between the advisor's gender and migration background provides evidence for a reinforcement effect (Figure 7.2). Recommendations from female migrants hold the highest value, whilst recommendations from male non-migrants are of the lowest importance. This trend is observed across all genres, albeit to a different extent.

Figure 7.2: Predictive margins, interaction between advisor's gender and migration background (Model B)



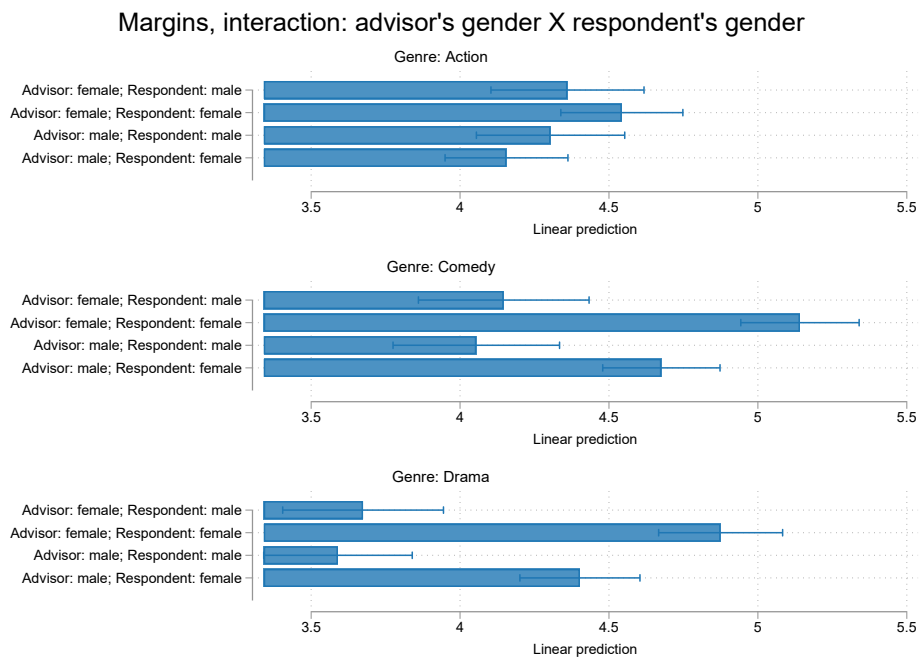
Of the remaining individual-level variables, women show a higher likelihood of watching a recommended movie compared to men across three genres. Next, those who reported a strong

preference for a genre are considerably more likely to watch a recommended movie in this genre. Similarly, the volume of taste, measured as a log-transformed number of liked movie genres, has a striking effect on the likelihood of watching a movie across three genres. The rest of the individual-level variables, the education of parents and migration background, bear no significant effect.

7.4.1. Moderation effect: advisor’s gender # respondent’s gender (H3a, H3b)

Predicting intentions to watch a so-called masculine genre (action), women and men are not influenced differently by the gender of a movie advisor (Figure 7.3). However, when considering a gender-neutral (comedy) or a traditionally feminine genre (drama), female respondents are found to be more likely to follow the recommendation in case they are coming from women compared to men. This finding provides partial support for H3b. Unlike women, men remain mostly indifferent regarding the advisor’s gender, giving a lack of support for H3a. Nevertheless, the predictive margins for male respondents are considerably lower than the predictive margins for female respondents for comedy (gender-neutral) and drama (traditionally feminine) genres. For action movies, predictive margins are on a similar level.

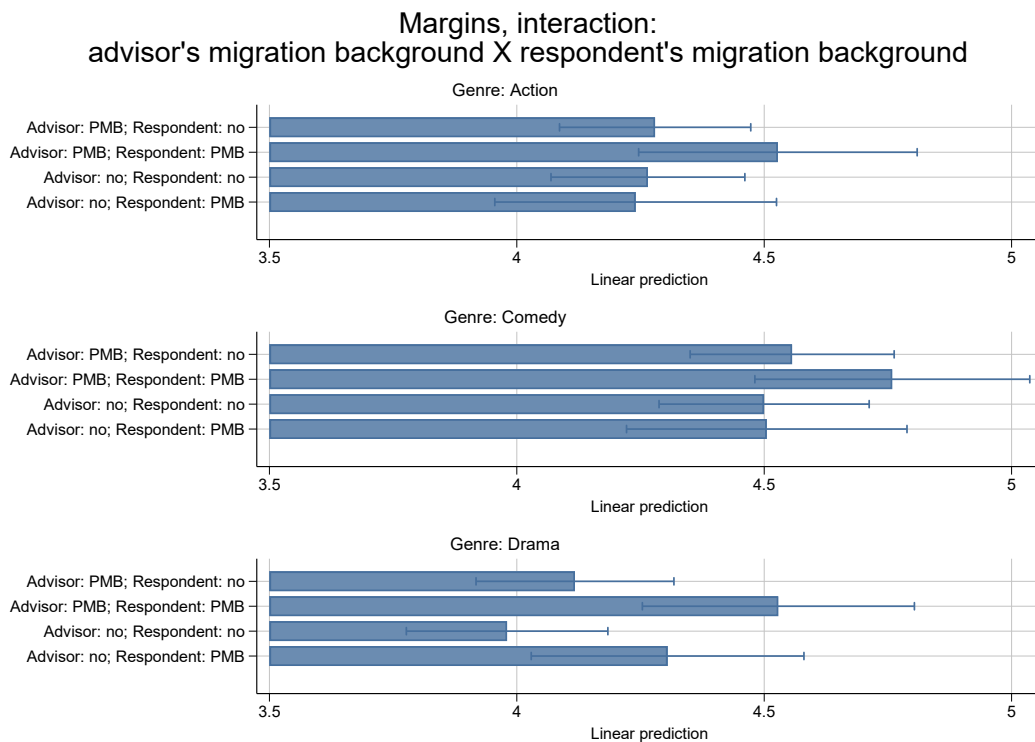
Figure 7.3: Predictive margins, interaction between advisor’s gender # respondent’s gender (Model C)



7.4.2. Moderation effect: advisor's migration background # respondent's migration background (H4a, H4b)

Next, as illustrated in Figure 7.4, individuals whose both parents were born in Germany assign similar value to the advisor's recommendations regardless of one's migration background, thereby contradicting H4a. Predictive margins indicate that PMB slightly prioritizes recommendations from PMB when thinking about movies to watch, albeit not significantly different from other groups, showing again a lack of support for H4b.

Figure 7.4: Predictive margins, interaction between advisor's migration background # respondent's migration background (Model D)

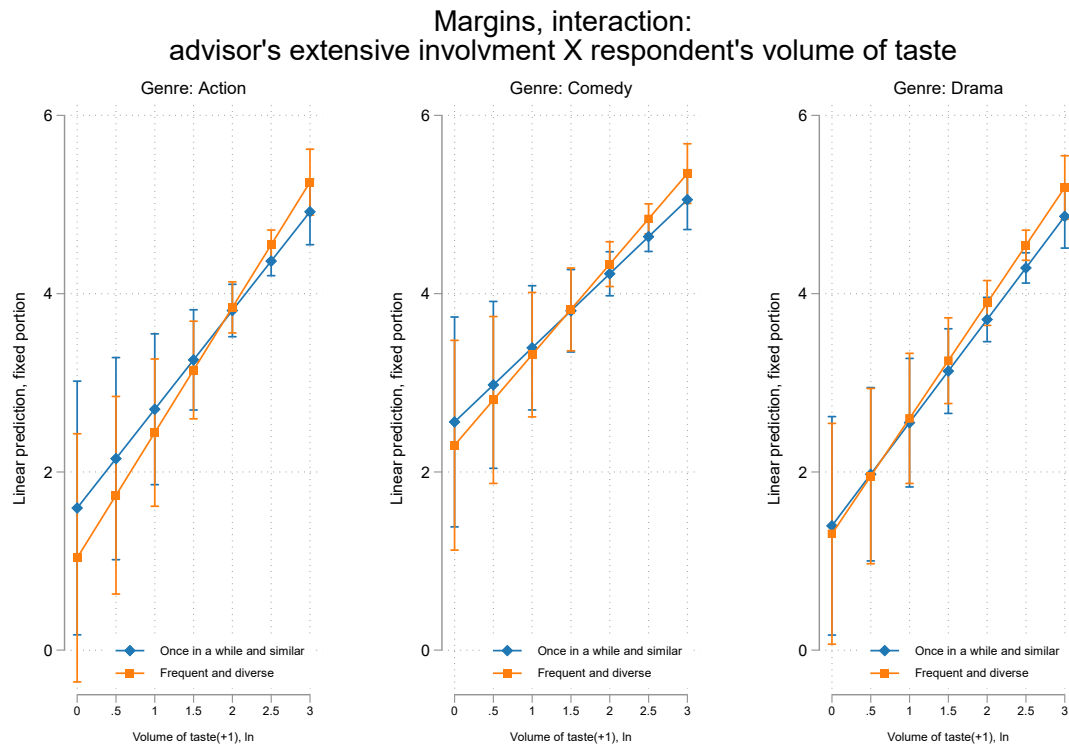


7.4.3. Moderation effect: advisor's involvement in the movie watching # respondent's omnivorousness (H6)

Entering the interaction between the advisor's involvement in movie watching and the respondent's genre omnivorousness provides only partial support for H6 (Figure 7.5). For action movies, the interaction term signifies that omnivores prioritize the recommendations from advisors with extensive engagement in movie viewing ($p=0.01$). The moderation effect is also significant in the model for the comedy genre ($p=0.02$). However, the data provide weak

evidence for the same pattern for drama movies ($p=0.16$). Across three genres, the differences in terms of predictive margins are minimal.

Figure 7.5: Predictive margins, advisor's involvement in the movie watching # respondent's omnivorousness (Model E)



7.5. Conclusion and discussion

A high level of quality uncertainty pervades cultural markets, so consumers need to find different ways to gain a solid basis for making informed decisions (Karpik, 2010). In this context, social influence plays a prominent role, making success only partially determined by the quality of products (Salganik et al., 2006). In the digitalized world with an overabundance of diverse information, the influence of offline recommendations can be easily overlooked. However, personal recommendations still stand out as an important driver of behavioral intentions, as shown in previous studies (Schmidt, 2022). In the case of casual interactions with new contacts, individuals tend to assess the quality of recommended movies based on the personal characteristics of the advisor. This study paid specific attention to the role of gender, migration background, SEP, and patterns of movie consumption in predicting the behavioral intentions to watch action, comedy, and drama movies, employing a vignette survey that incorporates real photos of advisors.

First, the results indicate that recommendations from women carry greater weight across action, comedy, and drama genres than recommendations from men. At this point, there is a lack of evidence supporting gender-essentialist beliefs in our scenarios, as the effects across genres show minimal differences. Second, extensive involvement and diversity of taste are treated as favorable characteristics that can positively influence consumers' behavioral intentions. Watching movies frequently and in diverse genres can be considered a sign of expertise or a marker of competence, making consumers more likely to follow the recommendations. Alternatively, such patterns can illustrate the standard for "good" taste among young educated audiences (consistent with Peterson, 2005). Third, our sample slightly prioritizes recommendations from advisors in lower-middle over upper social positions, regardless of the movie genre. However, this finding may be a function of the social position of students, as they are currently in the process of (full-time) education and tend to work mainly part-time with the leading motivation to cover living expenses (Kroher et al., 2023), and, likely, in less prestigious jobs than those of people with high status. Thus, students may feel closer to a profile describing a lower-middle social position than to one describing a high social position.

Remarkably, only certain segments of consumers exhibit in-group favoritism. Probably the most interesting finding of this study is that women place a higher value on recommendations from individuals of the same gender for neutral and traditionally feminine genres, while men appear to be indifferent, which also partially explains the overall prioritization of women's recommendations in the sample. Women's in-group favoritism is evident across drama and comedy movies. According to previous studies, the reason for such favoritism may be rooted in the higher perception of trustworthiness or sociability (Brambilla & Leach, 2014; Leach et al., 2017). Next, contrary to expectations, individuals with a migration background display approximately the same propensity to follow the recommendations from migrants and non-migrants, showing a lack of in-group favoritism and openness to diverse opinions. This may also indicate, for example, the relatively low importance of migration status in shaping in-group and out-group divisions in movie taste, especially among students, who are more distinctly divided by other characteristics, such as field of study. On the other hand, this can be interpreted as a manifestation of the heterogeneity of the migrant group or, on the contrary, the homogeneity of cultural tastes within and between groups. Regarding taste patterns, the results show that omnivores tend to attach a slightly higher value to the recommendations from

voracious advisors, implying that omnivores might be slightly more likely to treat extensive involvement as an important positive characteristic of advisors.

The design of the study bears significant limitations. Firstly, the number of pictures for the visualization of advisors was limited, creating room for potential bias and unobserved heterogeneity. Respondents may also have evaluated vignettes based on other visible characteristics, such as eye color or hairstyle. Thus, the further interpretation of the results should take this important limitation into account. In addition, the selected design of the vignette study is subject to the fatigue effect and social desirability (Maas & Shi, 2024; Sauer et al., 2014). Secondly, since the respondents were students in a higher education institution, they might have self-controlled their responses and aligned them with the core liberal education values of equality and tolerance. For this reason, it is recommended to replicate studies in different cultural domains and social environments, using a more complex design that incorporates additional advisors' characteristics. Thirdly, the vignette characteristics did not include other social components, such as the popularity of movies among the broad audience, experts, and peers, as well as various rankings and awards. This might have led to the extensive exaggeration of the social influence coming from personal recommendations.

The broader implication of the findings is that, even in the time of extensive digitalization and overabundance of cultural evaluations in online aggregators, spontaneous interpersonal interactions still have the potential to shape the propensity to watch a certain movie, albeit to varying degrees, depending on both advisors' and consumers' characteristics. The perception of recommendations is hardly random, but follows the logic of the perception of advisors. This implies that this can also impact market dynamics and success factors, contributing to inequality in cultural markets and the overconcentration of resources among top-performing products. One valuable endeavor for future research would be to investigate the influence of social networks and spontaneous interpersonal interactions on actual behavior rather than intentions, taking into account various aspects of trust and credibility of advisors, contextual factors, diversity of cultural products, and psychological mechanisms underlying the findings of this study. Along with this, future research should also focus on not only positive but also negative recommendations in cultural markets and explore their influence on the decision-making process.

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Appendix A. Photos used in the vignette studies

Table A1: Links to original photos purchased on iStock

Woman, migration background, upper SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/de/foto/muslimische-frauen-mit-l%C3%A4chelndem-gesicht-gm1189081468-336540450
Woman, no migration background, upper SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/portrait-of-a-successful-and-self-confident-business-woman-in-a-business-suit-gm1562984297-527324058
Woman, migration background, lower SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/de/foto/mode-shop-betreiber-und-ihre-assistentin-gm942141012-257470299
Woman, no migration background, lower SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/en/photo/portrait-young-woman-worker-seller-in-a-vegetable-section-supermarket-standing-in-gm1354932356-429553939
Man, migration background, upper SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/de/foto/gl%C3%BCcklicher-indischer-gesch%C3%A4ftsmann-der-am-laptop-im-b%C3%BCro-arbeitet-und-am-gm1420975120-466764032
Man, no migration background, upper SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/de/foto/zuversichtlicher-h%C3%BCbscher-junger-gesch%C3%A4ftsmann-gm1146840594-309151085
Man, migration background, lower SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/indian-college-boy-showing-diary-on-white-background-gm1388499911-446122869
Man, no migration background, lower SEP	https://www.istockphoto.com/de/foto/freundlich-entspannter-junger-gesch%C3%A4ftsmann-im-b%C3%BCro-gm1146627237-309024219

Final visualization of vignettes is available in Appendix E.

Appendix B. Respondent-level variables

Table B1: List of respondent-level variables

Label	Operationalization
Like [Action movies]	<p>[English] Please indicate how much you like watching these movie genres from the list: (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like or if they are unknown to you. ... [Action movies]</p> <p>[German] Bitte geben Sie an, wie gerne Sie die Filmgenres aus der Liste sehen: (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gern noch ungerne, (4) gern, (5) sehr gern oder ob sie Ihnen unbekannt sind. ... [Action-Filme]</p>
Like [Comedy movies]	<p>[English] Please indicate how much you like watching these movie genres from the list: (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like or if they are unknown to you. ... [Comedy movies]</p> <p>[German] Bitte geben Sie an, wie gerne Sie die Filmgenres aus der Liste sehen: (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gern noch ungerne, (4) gern, (5) sehr gern oder ob sie Ihnen unbekannt sind. ... [Komödien]</p>
Like [Drama movies]	<p>[English] Please indicate how much you like watching these movie genres from the list: (1) strongly dislike, (2) dislike, (3) neither like nor dislike, (4) like, (5) strongly like or if they are unknown to you. ... [Drama movies]</p> <p>[German] Bitte geben Sie an, wie gerne Sie die Filmgenres aus der Liste sehen: (1) sehr ungerne, (2) ungerne, (3) weder gern noch ungerne, (4) gern, (5) sehr gern oder ob sie Ihnen unbekannt sind. ... [Drama-Filme]</p>
Cultural omnivorousness / Volume of taste	<p>The variable counts the number of liked and strongly liked movie genres from the list of 11 subjective genres (action, adventure, comedy, crime, drama, fantasy, horror, mystery, romance, sci-fi, thriller) and 12 objective genres (animation, biography, documentary, family, film noir, history, musical, short, sport, superhero, war, western).</p> <p>Next, the variable is increased by one point and log-transformed (Volume of taste(+1), ln).</p>
Migration background	The variable equals 1 if the mother or father was born outside the current or former territories of Germany, otherwise 0.
Gender / Female	<p>[English] Please indicate your gender: male, female, other: _____</p> <p>[German] Bitte geben Sie Ihr Geschlecht an: männlich, weiblich, sonstiges _____</p>
Higher education, parents	The variable equals 1 if the mother or father has completed a university degree, otherwise 0.

Appendix C. Statistics

Table C1: Descriptive statistics, respondent-level variables (n=1824)

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Like [Action movies]	1818	3.56	1.10	1	5
Like [Comedy movies]	1817	3.90	1.04	1	5
Like [Drama movies]	1811	3.49	1.07	1	5
Number of liked genres (Volume of taste)	1824	10.5	3.47	0	23
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1824	2.39	0.35	0	3.18
Higher education of parents	1762	0.46	0.50	0	1
Migration background	1753	0.36	0.48	0	1
Female	1754	0.63	0.48	0	1

Table C2: Multilevel regression model A, main effects

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Vignette level:			
Female (V2X1)	0.25*** (6.19)	0.34*** (7.66)	0.33*** (8.26)
Migration background (V2X2)	0.12** (3.09)	0.13** (2.76)	0.17*** (3.97)
Upper SEP (V2X3)	-0.13** (-2.58)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Taste frequent & diverse (V2X4)	0.16*** (3.94)	0.18*** (5.13)	0.24*** (7.16)
Respondent level:			
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.18*** (4.03)	0.89*** (3.64)	1.20*** (4.67)
Higher education, parents	-0.20 (-1.23)	-0.00 (-0.02)	-0.14 (-0.86)
Male	-0.31 (-1.91)	-0.43* (-2.41)	-0.66*** (-3.88)
Migration background	-0.08 (-0.47)	-0.20 (-1.12)	0.11 (0.64)
Like [Action movies]	0.79*** (9.51)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.90*** (10.26)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.65*** (8.19)
Constant	-1.29* (-2.06)	-1.03 (-1.69)	-0.90 (-1.43)
var(1.V2X1)	0.44** (-3.06)	0.65 (-1.74)	0.54*** (-3.60)
var(1.V2X2)	0.37*** (-3.99)	0.76 (-1.07)	0.60* (-2.11)
var(2.V2X3)	1.04 (0.27)	0.64* (-2.50)	1.18 (1.18)
var(2.V2X4)	0.45** (-3.20)	0.24*** (-3.77)	0.23*** (-4.90)
var(_cons)	3.21*** (19.16)	3.55*** (20.93)	3.64*** (22.21)
var(Residual)	0.72*** (-3.34)	0.95 (-0.59)	0.87 (-1.31)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.02	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.43	0.37	0.41
R2f2	0.22	0.23	0.19

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept random slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table C3: Multilevel regression model B

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Vignette level:			
Female (V2X1)	0.34*** (7.33)	0.43*** (8.00)	0.41*** (8.14)
Migration background (V2X2)	0.24*** (5.27)	0.22*** (4.07)	0.24*** (4.61)
Female (V2X1) # Migration background (V2X2)	-0.21*** (-3.95)	-0.17** (-2.80)	-0.16** (-2.71)
Upper SEP (V2X3)	-0.12* (-2.33)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Taste frequent and diverse (V2X4)	0.17*** (4.27)	0.18*** (5.13)	0.24*** (7.16)
Respondent level:			
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.17*** (4.02)	0.89*** (3.63)	1.20*** (4.67)
Higher education, parents	-0.20 (-1.23)	-0.00 (-0.02)	-0.14 (-0.86)
Male	-0.31 (-1.91)	-0.43* (-2.41)	-0.66*** (-3.87)
Migration background	-0.08 (-0.47)	-0.20 (-1.13)	0.11 (0.64)
Like [Action movies]	0.79*** (9.50)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.90*** (10.26)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.65*** (8.18)
Constant	-1.35* (-2.15)	-1.07 (-1.76)	-0.93 (-1.50)
var(1.V2X1)	0.44** (-3.06)	0.65 (-1.73)	0.54*** (-3.60)
var(1.V2X2)	0.37*** (-4.01)	0.77 (-1.06)	0.60* (-2.10)
var(2.V2X3)	1.05 (0.29)	0.64* (-2.49)	1.19 (1.20)
var(2.V2X4)	0.45** (-3.20)	0.24*** (-3.78)	0.23*** (-4.92)
var(_cons)	3.22*** (19.20)	3.55*** (20.96)	3.64*** (22.25)
var(Residual)	0.72*** (-3.43)	0.94 (-0.65)	0.87 (-1.35)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.03	0.03	0.04
R2v12	0.43	0.37	0.41
R2f2	0.22	0.23	0.19

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept random slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table C4: Multilevel regression model C

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Advisor: Female	0.38*** (7.32)	0.47*** (9.30)	0.47*** (9.31)
Respondent: Male	-0.24 (-1.45)	-0.35 (-1.92)	-0.57*** (-3.35)
Advisor: Female # Respondent: Male	-0.33*** (-4.15)	-0.38*** (-3.82)	-0.39*** (-4.85)
Advisor: Migration background	0.12** (3.11)	0.13** (2.75)	0.17*** (3.96)
Advisor: Upper SEP	-0.13* (-2.57)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse	0.16*** (3.96)	0.18*** (5.13)	0.24*** (7.17)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.17*** (4.02)	0.89*** (3.63)	1.20*** (4.68)
Higher education, parents	-0.20 (-1.23)	-0.00 (-0.02)	-0.14 (-0.85)
Respondent: Migration background	-0.08 (-0.47)	-0.20 (-1.12)	0.11 (0.65)
Like [Action movies]	0.79*** (9.50)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.90*** (10.26)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.65*** (8.19)
Constant	-1.32* (-2.10)	-1.06 (-1.73)	-0.93 (-1.49)
var(1.V2X1)	0.42** (-3.22)	0.62 (-1.83)	0.51*** (-3.96)
var(1.V2X2)	0.37*** (-3.99)	0.76 (-1.07)	0.60* (-2.11)
var(2.V2X3)	1.04 (0.28)	0.64* (-2.50)	1.18 (1.18)
var(2.V2X4)	0.45** (-3.19)	0.24*** (-3.77)	0.23*** (-4.90)
var(_cons)	3.21*** (19.17)	3.55*** (20.92)	3.64*** (22.23)
var(Residual)	0.72*** (-3.33)	0.95 (-0.59)	0.87 (-1.31)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.03	0.03	0.04
R2v12	0.43	0.36	0.40
R2f2	0.22	0.23	0.20

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept random slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table C5: Multilevel regression model D

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Advisor: Female	0.25*** (6.18)	0.34*** (7.66)	0.33*** (8.26)
Advisor: Migration background	0.01 (0.38)	0.06 (1.13)	0.13** (3.19)
Respondent: Migration background	-0.16 (-0.88)	-0.24 (-1.30)	0.09 (0.52)
Advisor: Migration background # Respondent: Migration background	0.30*** (3.36)	0.20 (1.87)	0.09 (0.90)
Advisor: Upper SEP	-0.13* (-2.57)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse	0.16*** (3.96)	0.18*** (5.13)	0.24*** (7.16)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.18*** (4.03)	0.89*** (3.64)	1.20*** (4.67)
Higher education, parents	-0.20 (-1.23)	-0.00 (-0.02)	-0.14 (-0.86)
Respondent: Male	-0.32 (-1.92)	-0.43* (-2.41)	-0.66*** (-3.88)
Like [Action movies]	0.79*** (9.51)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.90*** (10.26)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.65*** (8.19)
Constant	-1.26* (-2.02)	-1.02 (-1.66)	-0.89 (-1.42)
var(1.V2X1)	0.44** (-3.06)	0.65 (-1.74)	0.54*** (-3.60)
var(1.V2X2)	0.35*** (-4.17)	0.75 (-1.08)	0.60* (-2.13)
var(2.V2X3)	1.04 (0.27)	0.64* (-2.50)	1.18 (1.18)
var(2.V2X4)	0.45** (-3.19)	0.24*** (-3.77)	0.23*** (-4.90)
var(_cons)	3.21*** (19.18)	3.55*** (20.92)	3.64*** (22.21)
var(Residual)	0.72*** (-3.33)	0.95 (-0.59)	0.87 (-1.31)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.03	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.43	0.36	0.41
R2f2	0.22	0.23	0.19

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept random slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table C6: Multilevel regression model E

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Advisor: Female	0.25*** (6.19)	0.34*** (7.66)	0.33*** (8.26)
Advisor: Migration background	0.12** (3.10)	0.13** (2.76)	0.17*** (3.97)
Advisor: Upper SEP	-0.13* (-2.57)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse	-0.56* (-2.00)	-0.26 (-1.41)	-0.09 (-0.38)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.11*** (3.73)	0.83*** (3.34)	1.16*** (4.43)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse # Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.30* (2.52)	0.18* (2.25)	0.14 (1.34)
Higher education, parents	-0.20 (-1.23)	-0.00 (-0.02)	-0.14 (-0.86)
Respondent: Migration background	-0.08 (-0.47)	-0.20 (-1.12)	0.11 (0.64)
Respondent: Male	-0.31 (-1.91)	-0.43* (-2.41)	-0.66*** (-3.88)
Like [Action movies]	0.79*** (9.51)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.90*** (10.26)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.65*** (8.19)
Constant	-1.13 (-1.76)	-0.88 (-1.42)	-0.79 (-1.24)
var(1.V2X1)	0.44** (-3.06)	0.65 (-1.74)	0.54*** (-3.60)
var(1.V2X2)	0.37*** (-3.99)	0.76 (-1.07)	0.60* (-2.11)
var(2.V2X3)	1.04 (0.27)	0.64* (-2.50)	1.18 (1.18)
var(2.V2X4)	0.44** (-3.25)	0.23*** (-3.82)	0.23*** (-4.90)
var(_cons)	3.21*** (19.17)	3.55*** (20.93)	3.64*** (22.21)
var(Residual)	0.72*** (-3.35)	0.95 (-0.59)	0.87 (-1.31)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.03	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.43	0.36	0.41
R2f2	0.22	0.23	0.19

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept random slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table C7: Adjustment of p-values for multiple hypotheses testing using Holm method,

Model	Genre	Test	Chi ²	p > chi ²
A	Action	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	38.36	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	6.65	0.0099
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	15.53	0.0002
A	Comedy	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	58.66	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	4.75	0.0293
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	26.26	0.0000
A	Drama	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	67.46	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	7.91	0.0049
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	50.67	0.0000
C	Action	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	53.59	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	6.58	0.0206
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	15.70	0.0002
		(4) 1.V2X1 # 1.Q7i11 (advisor: female # respondent: male) = 0	17.18	0.0001
		(5) 1.Q7i11 (respondent: male) = 0	2.09	0.1478
C	Comedy	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	86.37	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	4.74	0.0294
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	26.26	0.0000
		(4) 1.V2X1 # 1.Q7i11 (advisor: female # respondent: male) = 0	14.53	0.0004
		(5) 1.Q7i11 (respondent: male) = 0	13.94	0.0004
C	Drama	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	85.72	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	7.91	0.0049
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	50.72	0.0000
		(4) 1.V2X1 # 1.Q7i11 (advisor: female # respondent: male) = 0	23.54	0.0000
		(5) 1.Q7i11 (respondent: male) = 0	18.07	0.0000
D	Action	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	38.20	0.0000
		(2) 1.V2X2 (migration background) = 0	0.14	0.7075
		(3) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	6.60	0.0305
		(4) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	15.64	0.0004
		(5) 1.V2X2 # mig_parent (advisor: migration background # respondent: migration background) = 0	11.27	0.0031
		(6) mig_parent (respondent: migration background) = 0	0.78	0.7571
D	Comedy	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	58.65	0.0000
		(2) 1.V2X2 (migration background) = 0	1.28	0.5176
		(3) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	4.75	0.1173
		(4) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	26.27	0.0000
		(5) 1.V2X2 # mig_parent (advisor: migration background # respondent: migration background) = 0	3.50	0.1842
		(6) mig_parent (respondent: migration background) = 0	0.86	0.3544
D	Drama	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	67.46	0.0000
		(2) 1.V2X2 (migration background) = 0	10.18	0.0057

Model	Genre	Test	Chi ²	p > chi ²
		(3) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	7.90	0.0148
		(4) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	50.67	0.0000
		(5) 1.V2X2 # mig_parent (advisor: migration background # respondent: migration background) = 0	0.74	0.3893
		(6) mig_parent (respondent: migration background) = 0	1.32	0.5013
E	Action	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	38.26	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	6.61	0.0304
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	4.00	0.0455
		(4) 2.V2X4 # lnCO (advisor: frequent and diverse # respondent: volume of taste+1, ln) = 0	6.35	0.0235
		(5) lnCO (respondent: volume of taste+1, ln) = 0	13.88	0.0008
E	Comedy	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	58.65	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	4.75	0.0585
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	2.00	0.1574
		(4) 2.V2X4 # lnCO (advisor: frequent and diverse # respondent: volume of taste+1, ln) = 0	5.07	0.0730
		(5) lnCO (respondent: volume of taste+1, ln) = 0	16.33	0.0002
E	Drama	(1) 1.V2X1 (female) = 0	67.46	0.0000
		(2) 2.V2X3 (upper SEP) = 0	7.91	0.0147
		(3) 2.V2X4 (frequent and diverse) = 0	0.19	0.6657
		(4) 2.V2X4 # lnCO (advisor: frequent and diverse # respondent: volume of taste+1, ln) = 0	2.01	0.3134
		(5) lnCO (respondent: volume of taste+1, ln) = 0	44.40	0.0000

Appendix D. Regressions with random intercept and fixed slope

Table D1: Multilevel regression model A, main effects, fixed slope

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Vignette level:			
Female (V2X1)	0.24*** (5.89)	0.34*** (7.65)	0.33*** (8.25)
Migration background (V2X2)	0.13*** (3.31)	0.13** (2.75)	0.17*** (3.97)
Upper SEP (V2X3)	-0.13* (-2.45)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Taste frequent & diverse (V2X4)	0.17*** (4.19)	0.18*** (5.12)	0.24*** (7.19)
Respondent level:			
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.30*** (4.53)	1.03*** (4.38)	1.26*** (4.99)
Higher education, parents	-0.13 (-0.82)	0.06 (0.35)	-0.02 (-0.14)
Male	-0.32* (-2.03)	-0.59*** (-3.41)	-0.72*** (-4.29)
Migration background	0.02 (0.13)	-0.02 (-0.13)	0.20 (1.22)
Like [Action movies]	0.75*** (9.14)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.87*** (10.05)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.67*** (8.57)
Constant	-1.50* (-2.42)	-1.29* (-2.16)	-1.16 (-1.91)
var(_cons)	3.11*** (19.87)	3.44*** (20.77)	3.56*** (22.56)
var(Residual)	1.40*** (4.84)	1.62*** (6.50)	1.62*** (7.01)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.02	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.00	0.00	0.00
R2f2	0.24	0.27	0.24

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept fixed slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table D2: Multilevel regression model B, fixed slope

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Vignette level:			
Female (V2X1)	0.34*** (7.33)	0.43*** (7.99)	0.41*** (8.14)
Migration background (V2X2)	0.25*** (5.43)	0.22*** (4.07)	0.25*** (4.61)
Female (V2X1) # Migration background (V2X2)	-0.23*** (-4.12)	-0.18** (-2.81)	-0.16** (-2.71)
Upper SEP (V2X3)	-0.12* (-2.25)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Taste frequent and diverse (V2X4)	0.18*** (4.46)	0.18*** (5.12)	0.24*** (7.19)
Respondent level:			
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.30*** (4.53)	1.03*** (4.38)	1.26*** (4.99)
Higher education, parents	-0.13 (-0.82)	0.06 (0.35)	-0.02 (-0.14)
Male	-0.32* (-2.03)	-0.59*** (-3.41)	-0.72*** (-4.29)
Migration background	0.02 (0.13)	-0.02 (-0.13)	0.20 (1.22)
Like [Action movies]	0.75*** (9.15)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.87*** (10.05)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.67*** (8.57)
Constant	-1.57* (-2.53)	-1.33* (-2.24)	-1.20* (-1.97)
var(_cons)	3.11*** (19.88)	3.44*** (20.77)	3.56*** (22.56)
var(Residual)	1.39*** (4.76)	1.62*** (6.47)	1.62*** (6.99)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.03	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.00	0.00	0.00
R2f2	0.24	0.27	0.24

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept fixed slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table D3: Multilevel regression model C, fixed slope

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Advisor: Female	0.37*** (6.97)	0.47*** (9.29)	0.47*** (9.31)
Respondent: Male	-0.15 (-0.92)	-0.40* (-2.26)	-0.53** (-3.16)
Advisor: Female # Respondent: Male	-0.32*** (-4.06)	-0.38*** (-3.81)	-0.39*** (-4.86)
Advisor: Migration background	0.13*** (3.34)	0.13** (2.75)	0.17*** (3.97)
Advisor: Upper SEP	-0.13* (-2.44)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse	0.17*** (4.22)	0.18*** (5.12)	0.24*** (7.19)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.30*** (4.53)	1.03*** (4.38)	1.26*** (4.99)
Higher education, parents	-0.13 (-0.82)	0.06 (0.35)	-0.02 (-0.14)
Respondent: Migration background	0.02 (0.13)	-0.02 (-0.13)	0.20 (1.22)
Like [Action movies]	0.75*** (9.14)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.87*** (10.05)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.67*** (8.57)
Constant	-1.57* (-2.54)	-1.35* (-2.28)	-1.24* (-2.03)
var(_cons)	3.11*** (19.89)	3.44*** (20.77)	3.56*** (22.56)
var(Residual)	1.39*** (4.76)	1.62*** (6.47)	1.62*** (6.99)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.03	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.00	0.00	0.00
R2f2	0.24	0.27	0.24

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept fixed slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table D4: Multilevel regression model D, fixed slope

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Advisor: Female	0.24*** (5.88)	0.34*** (7.65)	0.33*** (8.25)
Advisor: Migration background	0.02 (0.58)	0.06 (1.14)	0.13** (3.19)
Respondent: Migration background	-0.12 (-0.67)	-0.12 (-0.69)	0.16 (0.90)
Advisor: Migration background # Respondent: Migration background	0.30*** (3.31)	0.20 (1.87)	0.09 (0.90)
Advisor: UpperSEP	-0.13* (-2.45)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse	0.17*** (4.21)	0.18*** (5.12)	0.24*** (7.19)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.30*** (4.53)	1.03*** (4.38)	1.26*** (4.99)
Higher education, parents	-0.13 (-0.82)	0.06 (0.35)	-0.02 (-0.14)
Respondent: Male	-0.32* (-2.03)	-0.59*** (-3.41)	-0.72*** (-4.29)
Like [Action movies]	0.75*** (9.15)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.87*** (10.05)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.67*** (8.57)
Constant	-1.46* (-2.35)	-1.25* (-2.10)	-1.15 (-1.88)
var(_cons)	3.11*** (19.88)	3.44*** (20.77)	3.56*** (22.56)
var(Residual)	1.39*** (4.78)	1.62*** (6.47)	1.62*** (7.00)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.03	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.00	0.00	0.00
R2f2	0.24	0.27	0.24

z statistics in parentheses

Random intercept fixed slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table D5: Multilevel regression model E, fixed slope

	(1) Vignette response [Action movie]	(2) Vignette response [Comedy movie]	(3) Vignette response [Drama movie]
Advisor: Female	0.24*** (5.88)	0.34*** (7.65)	0.33*** (8.25)
Advisor: Migration background	0.13*** (3.33)	0.13** (2.75)	0.17*** (3.97)
Advisor: UpperSEP	-0.13* (-2.44)	-0.10* (-2.18)	-0.15** (-2.80)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse	-0.49 (-1.76)	-0.26 (-1.42)	-0.09 (-0.38)
Volume of taste(+1), ln	1.17*** (3.98)	0.94*** (3.92)	1.19*** (4.65)
Advisor: Taste frequent and diverse# Volume of taste(+1), ln	0.27* (2.32)	0.19* (2.26)	0.14 (1.35)
Higher education, parents	-0.13 (-0.82)	0.06 (0.35)	-0.02 (-0.14)
Respondent: Migration background	0.02 (0.13)	-0.02 (-0.13)	0.20 (1.22)
Respondent: Male	-0.32* (-2.03)	-0.59*** (-3.41)	-0.72*** (-4.29)
Like [Action movies]	0.75*** (9.15)		
Like [Comedy movies]		0.87*** (10.05)	
Like [Drama movies]			0.67*** (8.57)
Constant	-1.20 (-1.87)	-1.07 (-1.77)	-1.00 (-1.61)
var(_cons)	3.11*** (19.87)	3.44*** (20.77)	3.56*** (22.56)
var(Residual)	1.39*** (4.82)	1.62*** (6.49)	1.62*** (7.00)
Observations	4078	4691	4882
Respondents	544.00	587.00	611.00
R2f1	0.02	0.03	0.03
R2v12	0.00	0.00	0.00
R2f2	0.24	0.27	0.24









z statistics in parentheses













Random intercept fixed slope. ML, clustered SE by respondent ID

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Appendix E. Illustration of vignettes

Table E1: Eight vignettes from the deck #1 that illustrate all photos of advisors employed in the study, English language, comedy movies

<p>Woman, migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin-top: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a business manager • Studied business administration at the university • Likes listening to jazz in the free time • Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres </div> </div>
<p>Woman, no migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin-top: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a business manager • Studied business administration at the university • Likes listening to jazz in the free time • Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres </div> </div>

<p>Woman, migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>Comedy Movie</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin-top: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a shopping assistant • Studied food processing at the vocational school • Likes listening to pop in the free time </div> </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres </div> </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p>
<p>Woman, no migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>Comedy Movie</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin-top: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a shopping assistant • Studied food processing at the vocational school • Likes listening to pop in the free time </div> </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres </div> </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p>
<p>Man, migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>Comedy Movie</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin-top: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a business manager • Studied business administration at the university • Likes listening to jazz in the free time </div> </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres </div> </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p>



























<p>Man, no migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> ▶ 👤👤👤 </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a business manager • Studied business administration at the university • Likes listening to jazz in the free time • Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres </div> </div>
<p>Man, migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> ▶ 👤👤👤 </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a shopping assistant • Studied food processing at the vocational school • Likes listening to pop in the free time • Watches movies once in a while and in similar genres </div> </div>
<p>Man, no migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> ▶ 👤👤👤 </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Photo (left): minanfotos from pixabay</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">RECOMMENDED BY</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • Works as a shopping assistant • Studied food processing at the vocational school • Likes listening to pop in the free time • Watches movies frequently and in diverse genres </div> </div>

Table E2: Eight vignettes from the deck #2 that illustrate all photos of advisors employed in the study, German language, drama movies

<p>Woman, migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Drama-Film</p> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): geralt, pixabay</p> <div style="text-align: right;"> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiterin • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an </div>
<p>Woman, no migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Drama-Film</p> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): geralt, pixabay</p> <div style="text-align: right;"> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiterin • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich hin und wieder Filme ähnlicher Genres an </div>
<p>Woman, migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Drama-Film</p> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): geralt, pixabay</p> <div style="text-align: right;"> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Verkäuferin • Hat eine Ausbildung im Einzelhandeln gemacht • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Popmusik • Sieht sich hin und wieder Filme ähnlicher Genres an </div>

<p>Woman, no migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div>  <p>Drama-Film</p> </div> <div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">EMPFOHLEN VON</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Verkäuferin • Hat eine Ausbildung im Einzelhandeln gemacht • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Popmusik • Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): geralt, pixabay</p>
<p>Man, migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div>  <p>Drama-Film</p> </div> <div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">EMPFOHLEN VON</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiter • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich hin und wieder Filme ähnlicher Genres an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): geralt, pixabay</p>
<p>Man, no migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div>  <p>Drama-Film</p> </div> <div> <h3 style="margin: 0;">EMPFOHLEN VON</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiter • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): geralt, pixabay</p>

Man,
migration
background,
lower SEP



Foto (links): geralt, pixabay

EMPFOHLEN VON



- 28 Jahre alt
- Arbeitet als Verkäufer
- Hat eine Ausbildung im Einzelhandeln gemacht
- Hört in der Freizeit gerne Popmusik
- Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an



Man, no
migration
background,
lower SEP



Foto (links): geralt, pixabay













EMPFOHLEN VON















- 28 Jahre alt
- Arbeitet als Verkäufer
- Hat eine Ausbildung im Einzelhandeln gemacht
- Hört in der Freizeit gerne Popmusik
- Sieht sich hin und wieder Filme ähnlicher Genres an



Table E3: Eight vignettes from the deck #1 that illustrate all photos of advisors employed in the study, German language, action movies

<p>Woman, migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div>  <p>Actionfilm</p> </div> <div> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div>  </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiterin • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich hin und wieder Filme ähnlicher Genres an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels</p>
<p>Woman, no migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div>  <p>Actionfilm</p> </div> <div> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div>  </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiterin • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels</p>
<p>Woman, migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div>  <p>Actionfilm</p> </div> <div> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div>  </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Verkäuferin • Hat eine Ausbildung im Einzelhandeln gemacht • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Popmusik • Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels</p>

<p>Woman, no migration background, lower SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>  <p>Actionfilm</p> </div> <div> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div>  </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Verkäuferin • Hat eine Ausbildung im Einzelhandel gemacht • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Popmusik • Sieht sich hin und wieder Filme ähnlicher Genres an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels</p>
<p>Man, migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>  <p>Actionfilm</p> </div> <div> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div>  </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiter • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels</p>
<p>Man, no migration background, upper SEP</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">   </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>  <p>Actionfilm</p> </div> <div> <h3>EMPFOHLEN VON</h3> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div>  </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jahre alt • Arbeitet als Betriebsleiter • Hat Betriebswirtschaft an der Universität studiert • Hört in der Freizeit gerne Jazz • Sieht sich hin und wieder Filme ähnlicher Genres an </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels</p>

Man,
migration
background,
lower SEP



Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels

EMPFOHLEN VON



- 28 Jahre alt
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Man, no
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Foto (links): Thilo Lehnert, Pexels

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- Sieht sich häufig und in verschiedenen Genres Filme an



Acknowledgement

This work would not have been possible without the unconditional support and love of my wife Kateryna Sytkina. Thank you for being there for me! I am also thankful to my family and friends, who supported me.

My academic journey started in 2014 at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in Ukraine – my everlasting love. This is the place where I learned to think critically, analyze information, protect my values, and defend my rights. I am infinitely grateful to the Department of Sociology, which opened doors for me to the world of social science. In particular, I am thankful to Anna Osypchuk, whose course in cultural sociology and contemporary social theory shows me what it actually means to theorize and think from a broad perspective. I also want to thank Alexander Vinogradov, my first teacher in truly quantitative social science, and Mykhailo Bratyk, the math teacher who joyfully introduced me to probability theory. Thank you, my Alma Mater!

In 2018, I started my Master's Degree at the University of Cologne. I am very thankful to the Department of Social Sciences for strengthening my love of quantitative sociology. I was thrilled to write my final thesis under the supervision of two incredible researchers – Eldad Davidov and Daniel Seddig. Thank you for all the knowledge you shared with me during the courses and the supervision of my thesis. Meanwhile, I got a chance to gain sociological experience by working at GESIS in Cologne under the supervision of Alexia Katsanidou and Libby Bishop. Thanks for all your support! Thanks should also go to all my GESIS colleagues, who helped me on my way, in particular, to Ann-Kathrin Reinl, Esra Akdeniz, Pascal Siegers, and Johannes Breuer.

In 2022, the University of Wuppertal entered my life. I would like to thank my first supervisor, Mark Lutter, for believing in me, providing academic freedom, and offering valuable opportunities to build an internationally visible profile in sociology by supporting more than ten of my presentations at international conferences. I am also grateful to the research fellows and student assistants at the University of Wuppertal, particularly Naomi Pech, Linus Weidner, Isabel Habicht, Emilia Blank, Lisa Wunsch, Lucas Ferl, and Frederik Jahn, for supporting me in this PhD journey. Of course, special thanks go to my second reviewer (Gutachter), Johannes Breuer, for your willingness to support in complex times.

Honestly, the three years at the University of Wuppertal were no walk in the park. I would not make it without long-term psychological therapy (thank you, German health system!), filter coffee, and cakes from local coffee shops and cafes in Cologne – particularly, Sattgrün, Zwo kaffeeröster, Tulpe & Toast, Anguli, Meinstein, Rotkehlchen, Heilandt, and Einbrandt!

And most importantly, I was writing this work during the full-scale Russian invasion of my beloved country. Two articles from this dissertation are devoted to the study of social processes in contemporary Ukraine. I am grateful to all defenders and call on everyone reading these lines to be socially active and express their agency in everyday life.

My colleague, Sergiy Bogdanov, who defended his PhD dissertation at the University of Wuppertal in April 2025 (<http://doi.org/10.25926/BUW/0-844>), was killed in Ukraine by Russian forces in July 2025. RIP...

**The Social Life of Taste:
Patterns and Influences in Cultural Consumption**

The field of **cultural consumption** covers the study of **consumers** drawing social distinctions based on cultural tastes in everyday life. The homologous distinction, proposed by Bourdieu (1984), between highbrow styles for the upper classes (so-called exclusive elite or legitimate taste) and still exclusive, but lowbrow, popular styles for the lower classes, was widely used in sociological research. Peterson's omnivore thesis shifted the discussion to the new distinction of being either more omnivorous or more univorous in cultural preferences (Peterson, 1992; Peterson & Simkus, 1992). The central idea is that higher-status individuals refrain from rejecting items of popular culture (an attribute of lower-status culture) to constitute hierarchical differences (Peterson & Kern, 1996). Instead, they engage in a wide range of cultural repertoires, expressing omnivorous dispositions. Lower-status groups, on the other hand, maintain their exclusivity of **taste** and retain a narrow set of preferences. In other words, socioeconomic hierarchical differences point out the omnivorousness of higher segments of the social stratification scale and the univorousness of lower segments. Numerous scholars have studied differences in cultural tastes in the context of social inequality, delving into the role of social status, class, education, or parental characteristics in explaining the social origins of **omnivorousness** (for a review, see Johnston et al., 2019). The current empirical focus in social research tends to cover a separate dimension of mobility as an element of contemporary social stratification (Otte et al., 2021). Studying the intersections of mobility and **lifestyles** expands the perspectives of omnivore studies by investigating the cultural reflection of various mobility patterns. In Bourdieu's (1984) theoretical framework for the study of musical tastes, educational mobility emerges as an important factor (Lizardo, 2019). In particular, **Bourdieu** postulated that inherited and acquired cultural capital have different effects on building preferences toward more or less legitimate (cultural) products. Empirical research has looked at the differential impact of inherited vs. acquired cultural capital at the genre level of preferences (e.g., Childress et al., 2021), albeit not necessarily with reference to educational mobility, despite Lizardo's (2019) theoretical exploration of this aspect. As framed by Lizardo (2019, p. 184), the mobility factor "received no theoretical or empirical attention by researchers in the **sociology of consumption** to date, despite its obvious relevance to key debates," although it may serve as an additional explanation for recent trends toward omnivorousness documented in the literature (e.g., Sintas & Álvarez, 2002, 2004; Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009). For this reason, a separate **empirical study** investigating the role of educational mobility and its possible trajectories is pertinent. Drawing on data on taste in music from the German General Social Survey 2014 (GESIS-Leibniz-Institut Für Sozialwissenschaften, 2017, 2018b, 2018a), this study aims to examine (i) the differential effects of acquired and inherited educational cultural capital on preferences for less legitimate cultural taste and, subsequently, (ii) differences in cultural omnivorousness across diverse educational mobility groups. We employed different analytical techniques to estimate the proposed relationships at the genre level of music culture: multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), latent class analysis (LCA), and regression analyses. Germany was selected as a representative case of a Western European country, where prior studies have consistently documented omnivorous characteristics within high **social status** groups (e.g., Kunißen et al., 2018; Otte, 2009; Voronin, 2022). At the same time, the German education system is characterized by a low level of marketization (Grujters et al., 2019), making higher education affordable and accessible and, thereby, reducing the importance of parental economic resources. However, upward educational mobility remains at a relatively low level, depending mostly on the cultural and social capital of parents (Hillmert & Jacob, 2010; Stephany, 2019; Tramonte & Willms, 2010). The low importance of economic factors and the high significance of **cultural capital** make Germany a compelling environment for investigating cultural **stratification**, specifically the relationships between educational **mobility** and omnivorous taste. Social patterning of taste is not only a matter of class composition, educational attainment or their boundaries, but also involves the trajectories of mobility in social structure, especially in terms of educational capital. This study aimed to address the uncertainty arising from inconsistencies between theoretical and empirical contributions and examine the relationships between educational mobility and omnivorousness. In detail, we empirically investigated whether Lizardo's (2019) interpretation of Bourdieu's (1984) ideas regarding the impact of parental and acquired education applies to the case of contemporary Germany. To that end, we expanded on previous contributions (Coulangeon, 2015; Daenekindt & Roose, 2014) and investigated (i) the relationships between different components of cultural capital and taste for more and less **legitimate** cultural products, as well as (ii) the predictive power of educational mobility for cultural omnivorousness. Is the weight of the parent's education in predicting aesthetic consumption larger for less legitimate cultural forms compared to the respondent's education (H1)? This pattern was supported by the German data (support for H1). Predicting preferences for liking more legitimate genres in Germany shows a positive effect of both acquired and inherited cultural capital, but the effect of the former is greater than that of the latter. As for less legitimate genres, only inherited capital plays a significant role. An interesting finding from the set of control variables is the positive effect of extracurricular music education on preferences for various genres. Theorizing by Lizardo and Skiles (2012) and empirical findings by Elvers et al. (2015) suggest that the general scheme of value attribution and cultural competencies that promote the aestheticization of diverse cultural products can also be an outcome of exposure to music **education** (which is more widespread among individuals with high inherited cultural capital) rather than a function of being raised in an educated environment. However, our analysis showed that private music education led to higher preferences for legitimate genres, aligning with nuanced findings by Ho et al. (2021), but the effects on non-legitimate **genres** were not significant. Further research should directly compare taste at different levels of culture (not only genres but also objects) among individuals with high/low inherited capital but varying exposure to music education. Apart from music education, we cannot neglect the role of other control factors, such as age or gender, that show themselves to have considerable predictive power. To what extent are different segments of the educated and non-educated strata more and less likely to develop omnivorous taste, based on their educational mobility trajectories (H2a-H2d)? We identified significant **differences** across mobile and immobile groups, but their patterns differ and, in part, contradict expectations. First, three groups tend to demonstrate the highest omnivorousness: those upwardly and downwardly mobile between middle- and high-level segments (using two measures of omnivorousness) and stayers in the high-level segment (using the omnivorousness score). Although it was expected that downward movers would be more omnivorous than upward movers (Lizardo, 2019, p. 189), a different trend cropped up in the data. Upwardly mobile respondents reaching the high-level educational group can accumulate the same or even greater omnivorous dispositions, showing preferences toward a larger set of music genres and higher probabilities of membership in the omnivore class.