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Terhi-Anna Wilska – Leena Haanpää (eds.)

LIFESTYLES AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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PREFACE

This book is a collection of articles, which are based on presentations in two research seminars organised by Economic Sociology of TSEBA in 2005. The first seminar was an International Summer School held in Turku, 30th May-3rd June. The seminar was organised in co-operation with the Nordic Network for Consumer Culture, and supported by NorFa. The other seminar was the traditional annual summer seminar of Economic Sociology, held in Seili, August 9th-10th.

Since 2002, the annual seminars of Economic Sociology have produced collections of presented papers for publication. This publication is already number five in succession. In this book, the uniting theme of the selected articles is the effect of social change in people's lifestyles. This theme is approached from various angles, and therefore the articles of the book are divided thematically into three parts. In the first part, changing lifestyles are analysed from the perspective of social structures. In the second part, the articles focus on lifestyles from the viewpoint of consumption and identity-formation. In the third part, lifestyle changes are analysed from comparative perspective using international data. Most articles are based on empirical research, but all of them are also theoretically informed. The majority of the writers come from TSEBA, but there are also contributions of researchers from the University of Turku, STAKES, and Vaasa Polytechnic. International contributions come from the University of Antwerp, Belgium, and the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Denmark.

In the first part, in Chapter 1, Jani Erola and Pasi Moisio look at short-term impact of the economic crisis in the 1990s on social mobility in Finland, using the Longitudinal Census Data Sample File 1970-1995 of Statistics Finland. In Chapter 2, Timo Toivonen finds socio-economic explanations for the decrease of the time used for reading books, using Finnish time use studies from 1979, 1987, and 1999. In the third chapter, Taru Virtanen looks at the consumption of cultural products as indicators of potential social distinction among young European adults. The data used here is the Eurobarometer 56.0.

In the second part, in Chapter 4, Annemette Nielsen presents examples of how self-control and freedom is exercised in the context of food shopping among young people who want to loose weight. The data for the article is created through participatory observation. In Chapter 5, Pekka Mustonen and Antti Honkanen challenge postmodern theories, which state that social divisions are based on identity and lifestyle. Using tourism consumption as an example, the writers analyse two surveys, "Finland 1999" and Finland 2004".

In Chapter 6, Jeremi Van Gorp develops a theoretical framework for a research approach towards consumption and identity-formation in teenage. The main aspects under consideration are identity and the influence of peers. In Chapter 7, Terhi-Anna Wilska focuses on the different position of young girls and boys as consumers in family and society. The writer refers to both literature and recent empirical studies.

In the third part, in Chapter 8, Leena Haanpää focuses on between-country variances and national variations in environmental concern and citizen-consumer consciousness towards environmental problems. The data used is the International Social Survey Program 2000. In Chapter 9, Antti Kouvo and Pekka Räsänen examine how the frequency of the Internet use affects two forms of sociability: civic engagement and interpersonal involvement. The data utilised is the European Social Survey 2002–2003. In Chapter 10, Markus Vinnari and co-authors test the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) hypothesis, according to which the environmental burden decreases when income levels rise. The article analyses the EKC in the case of food consumption. The data are gathered from the FAO database of the United Nations, and from the International Energy Agency 2002 datasets.

All articles in this book have gone through a cross-referee –process (comments given to each other among the writers of this book), in addition to comments given to the original papers in the seminars. The editors' work is divided such that Terhi-Anna Wilska was responsible for the structure and the content of the book, and Leena Haanpää was responsible for practical matters and for the formal editing process. I wish to thank my co-editor for her challenging work. I also thank all the contributors for articles of exceptionally high standard.

Turku, 23.11. 2005

Terhi-Anna Wilska

CONTENTS

A. LIFESTYLES AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES

1. THE IMPACT OF THE 1990S ECONOMIC CRISIS ON SOCIAL MOBILITY IN FINLAND

Jani Erola & Pasi Moisio

Abstract
Finland experienced a deep economic recession in the first half of the 1990s. In this paper we utilise this as a natural experimental setting for studying the short-term impact of an economic crisis on social mobility. Using the Longitudinal Census Data Sample File 1970-1995 of Statistics Finland, we compare the social class of 31- to 35-year-old Finns in 1990 and 1995, hence before and after the recession, to the social class of the head of their childhood family. Men and women were analysed separately. Neither the absolute rate of mobility nor social fluidity has changed much during the economic crisis.

Keywords: social mobility, class structure, social change, economic recession, Finnish society

1.1. Introduction

Finland experienced a deep economic crisis in the first half of the 1990s. The seeds of the crisis were laid in the 1980s when the financial markets were swiftly deregulated. Poorly designed deregulation of the capital markets led to a lending boom and overheated the stock markets, especially the real-estate markets. The vulnerable economic situation was then hit by two external jolts, the decline of the Western markets and the collapse of the Soviet markets. (See Heikkinen & Kuusterä 2001.) The Finnish economy dived into a recession that is characterised as one of the most severe any OECD country has experienced during peacetime. The volume of GDP stopped growing in 1990 and diminished for a three year period after that, only beginning to grow again in 1994. The low rate of unemployment, 3.2 percent in 1990, began to rise quickly and was highest in 1994, at 16.7 percent, being the second highest of the OECD countries at the time (OECD Employment Outlook 2002, 304).

When the recovery started in 1994, Finnish society in general had changed. When we compare Finnish society in 1990 with Finnish society in 1995, we are actually comparing a society of full employment with a society of mass unemployment. The unemployment rate has declined since but is still around 9 percent. This change was accompanied by other changes in sector sizes and working-time flexibility. Together, these changes can be labelled as some kind of ‘revolution’ of the labour market. The changes were also accompanied by a change in orientation of the welfare state politics; the Nordic welfare state with prioritised universal rights of equality and opportunity was replaced with a Nordic version of the ‘third way’ politics. Integration with the EU changed the scope of politics and legislation more towards that of other European Union countries (Kosonen 1994, Julkunen & Nätti 1999, Drøpping *et al*. 1999, Kiander 2001).

Social mobility is seen to be very persistent against societal changes and time. It is recognised that only specific historical and cultural events or sequences of events, such as societal revolt or crisis, can have an impact on social mobility (e.g. Goldthorpe 2000, 253). The early 1990s economic crisis in Finland can be seen as a severe crisis that might have changed the social mobility in Finland. The simultaneous but milder economic crisis in Sweden did not have a substantial effect on social mobility (Jonsson 2004). The Finnish results might be different from the Swedish, since the economic crisis was deeper in Finland than in its western neighbour.

If the economic crisis caused a relevant short-term change in social mobility in Finland, it should be possible to detect this change by comparing mobility tables before and after the recession. For this we constructed mobility tables for 31–35-year-old Finnish men and women in 1990 and in 1995 using the Longitudinal Census Data Sample File 1970-1995 of Statistics Finland (Statistics Finland 1996). The possible changes in absolute mobility are studied first by comparing the outflow percentages. Then, possible changes in social fluidity are studied with log-linear models of the layered mobility tables.

1.2. Social classes and social mobility

The labour structure and the pattern of how people move between different labour positions is considered to be one of the basic characterizations of the connection between the actor and the macro-social structures in industrialized societies (Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992, Blau & Duncan 1967, Grusky & Weeden 2001, Wright 1997, 1-4). Changes in this micro-macro link are considered to be crucial evidence of more overall social change (e.g. Durkheim [1893]1964, Weber [1920]1978, 938, Parsons 1937, 448-449).

For the purposes of social mobility research the occupations are categorized into social classes. There are currently two major streams of class conceptualisation that are widely used in class-related social analysis. The '(neo-)Marxist' tradition emphasises the importance of the conflict of class interests as a major source of class formation (e.g. Wright 1997). The 'neo-Weberian' point of view emphasises the differences in life chances and market positions (Breen 2005). It has been noticed that these widely used classifications seem to produce more or less similar results (Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992, Wright 1997, Grusky & Weeden 2001, Sørensen 2000). However, in recent years, the Weberian approach has become the dominant means of classification.

There are two types of mobility studied in mobility studies: absolute and relative mobility. Relative mobility is usually called social fluidity. Absolute and relative mobility can be separated analytically, but they are different aspects of the same phenomenon. Absolute mobility refers to the absolute number of people having different origins and destinations, compared to non-mobile people. Most of the absolute mobility is caused by proportional changes in the occupational composition of society. For example, the decline of agriculture in past decades has caused mobility towards other labour positions. This kind of situation in which mobility is caused by a structural change is sometimes also referred to as forced or exogenous mobility. (Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992, 58-59.)

A part of the absolute mobility is caused by the social fluidity that can be described as the 'odds' of a person from a certain occupational origin ending up in the same or another occupational destination. Fluidity has an important property; it describes how much the selection mechanisms in the society are based on ascription compared to meritocracy. To put it simply, in a society in which social status is solely dependent on the merits of an individual, there prevails also an equality of opportunity. The latter can be understood as a normative goal of the modern democratic societies. Ascription refers to the situation where better positions in the labour market are more or less 'inherited' (Bell 1973, Breen & Goldthorpe 2001, Swift 2000). This is also the reason why social mobility is usually studied as an inter-generational phenomenon. Intra-generational changes would be much harder to combine with the concept of equality of opportunity.

The probability of a person ending up in one occupation rather than another is still very much related to a person's origin even in the most liberal and equal societies (such as Nordic countries). Although social fluidity may be affected by both structural causes as well as by political interventions, the prevailing distribution of power and advantage is shown to be remarkably resistant to these factors. The selection mechanism for desirable social positions is meritocratic in the sense that reaching these positions from 'below' is possible, for example, by recruiting through an even educational system. However, boundaries also still exist. The boundaries can be caused by anything from a lack of economic capital to achieve the best education possible, to a lack of social capital and the right personal contacts (Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992, Goldthorpe 2000, Yaish 2000, Breen & Goldthorpe 2001, Kivinen *et al* 2001).

A recession may have an impact on social mobility. Because the forms of inequality, such as poverty and unemployment, usually increase during a recession, it may be expected that the same thing can be observed in intergenerational social mobility. For example, the high rate of unemployment may be reflected as reduced social mobility, because it means that the possibilities in the labour market are reduced, and thus the opportunities to try different types of professions are narrowed.

However, the impact of economic recession on social mobility is hard to anticipate, even in the case of unemployment. For example, Goldthorpe and Payne (1986) found that the impact of unemployment on social mobility during the seventies in the UK was rather small, even thought the unemployment was concentrated in persons with a working-class background. Thus, although the inequality between the classes increased, it was due to current class positions more clearly than because of intergenerational class inequality. A high unemployment rate can even increase social mobility because the willingness to accept work of a different type and even work that is less esteemed or requires fewer qualifications might increase because of the fear of unemployment. Economic recession is also likely to be followed by strong structural changes in the labour market because of political decisions (for example, due to changes in labour market regulation), which may have effects on social mobility which are hard to anticipate.

1.3. Social mobility in Finland before the 1990s

The dominant feature of the changes in occupational structure in Finland after the Second World War has been the late but rapid diminishing of the agricultural sector. It was only in the 1960s that the size of the population in agriculture became smaller than that of industry. However, the modernisation process that had begun in the 1950s was already over by the seventies. This structural change caused a high rate of mobility that was probably enforced by the construction of the welfare state, applying strong principles of equality between all social groups. Like other Nordic countries, Finland was found to be a fairly 'open society' (See Pöntinen 1983, Erikson & Pöntinen 1985, Jäntti 2002).

On the basis of the usual survey-based, population representative data from 1986, Pöntinen (1991) predicted, at the beginning of the nineties, that the amount of social mobility was likely to be reduced in Finland. The main reason for this was that the flow from agricultural occupations to other occupations was expected to become smaller. There were no reasons to expect the society to become more equal in a way that would compensate for the diminishing flow from agriculture. Despite the openness of the society, marked inequality was still to be found, for example, in education. In addition, there were no guarantees that the middle classes would continue to grow. This would mean stronger inheritance of middle class positions. If these processes were to come about, they would also decrease social mobility (Pöntinen 1991).

Many, however, believed that the middle classes would still continue to grow in the 1990s. Finland was assumed to follow Bell's post-industrialisation thesis; the service sector was assumed to continue to grow and the industrial sector was assumed to decrease (See Alestalo 1991, Kortteinen 1991, Melin 1999, Blom & Melin 2004).

No population representative mobility studies were conducted during the nineties in Finland[1]. This means that before the current research project there has been no research on social mobility in Finland after the 1980s. Thus, there is no information about the impact of the recession on social mobility, even if there has been research on, for example, income (Jäntti & Österbacka 1995, Österbacka 2001, Österbacka 2004), education (Kivinen et al. 2001), area (Jolkkonen et al. 2001) and poverty mobility in Finland during the nineties. The common denominator of the results of these studies is the strengthening of inequality in Finland during the recession.

On the basis of these research findings, it could be anticipated that inequality of opportunity, which can be observed through social mobility, may also have increased due to the financial crisis. Taking together Pöntinen's prediction about the congealing of social mobility and the increased inequality due to the recession, we might expect that social mobility slowed down in the early nineties.

[1] For example, there were few descriptive studies with datasets restricted to certain occupational groups only (see Blom & Melin 2002).

1.4. Data and class schema

Our data consist of the Longitudinal Census Data Sample File 1970-1995 of Statistics Finland, a register-based dataset gathered every fifth year by combining information from the population register, tax register and several other official registers (see Statistics Finland, 1996). The mobility tables were constructed by contrasting the social class of 31–35-year-old Finns in 1990 and 1995 to the social class of the head of the childhood family in 1970[2]. For 1990, the data provide 13 280 cases for the men's and 10 876 cases for the women's mobility tables. For 1995, the data provide 12 733 cases for the men's and 10 631 cases for the women's tables.

Usually, studies on social class structure in Finland apply the socio-economic status classification of Statistics Finland, which somewhat differs from what will be used here[3]. However, in order to make the results comparable to the major part of mobility research done elsewhere, we coded occupations into the Erikson and Goldthorpe (EG) classification. The EG classification was last utilised in Finnish mobility studies in the beginning of the eighties (see Pöntinen et al. 1982).

As a starting point we used Ganzeboom's and Treiman's (1992) occupation coding keys. The pairing of Finnish occupation labels with ISCO labels was also checked with the 'ISCO88 (COM) User Guide' (Birtch & Elias 1994). The original eleven-class EG-classification was collapsed into seven classes. In order to properly differentiate the managerial status of white-collar workers, we did not collapse groups I (high-grade professionals, major managers and large proprietors) and II (lower-grade professionals, administrators, officials, supervisors etc.). This is where the differences in Finnish labour markets inside the original EG class schema are supposed to be seen, especially in terms of gender segregation and growing income differences between the rich and the poor (see Julkunen & Nätti 1999, Ritakallio 2001, Mustonen 2004).

Because we took the coding key of Ganzeboom and Treiman as our starting point, the primary group IIIa+b (routine non-manual workers) is not split into two, as has sometimes been done in order to underline gender differences. This is not an issue here since we analyse men and women separately. The petty bourgeoisie without the farmers is analysed as one group, IVa+b,

[2] Since the observation year for the occupation of the head of the childhood family is the same for both samples, the result is that, in the 1995 sample, the heads of childhood families were, on average, five years younger in 1970 (average age 39 years) than the heads of the 1990 sample in 1970 (average age 44 years).

[3] The socio-economic classification of Statistics Finland is designed more for sorting occupations according to line of work, than for distinguishing social classes. It is more sensitive to the distinction between the public and private sector, and it seems to put more weight on any managerial status than on the level of expertise needed in different occupations. (See Erola & Moisio 2002.)

containing both small proprietors and artisans with or without employees. The farmers are analysed as group IVc. Following the usual analysis method, groups V (lower-grade technicians, supervisors of manual workers) and VI (skilled manual workers) are also analysed together. Semi-skilled manual workers and agricultural labourers are also analysed as one group, VIIa+b, because the latter group is very small in Finland. The unemployed are coded according to their last occupation. The Erikson-Goldthorpe class schema used in the analysis can be summarised as follow;

The Class Schema

I	*Higher-grade professionals, large proprietors*
II	*Lower-grade professionals*
III	*Routine non-manual workers and employees*
IVa+b	*Petty bourgeoisie: small proprietors and artisans*
IVc	*Farmers and other self-employed in primary production*
V+VI	*Skilled workers: technicians and supervisors of workers*
VIIa+b	*Semi- and unskilled manual workers*

It should be noticed that the social class of origin is usually coded according to the occupation of the father. In our data this was so in 92% of the cases. When studying the mobility of women, we have to take into consideration the fact that the Finnish labour markets are strongly gender segregated. This will necessarily have an effect on women's social mobility, and should be kept in mind when interpreting the results.

1.5. Absolute mobility in Finland in 1990 and 1995

If we cross-tabulate the social class of the childhood family with the current class position we get the standard mobility table. We follow the usual way of presentation where the origin classes are presented as rows and the current destination of social classes as columns. Mobility tables for men and women in 1990 and in 1995 are presented in Tables 1 and 2. Instead of absolute cell frequencies, the tables show the row percentages, or outflow rates, that describe how children from a certain social class will locate in the social class schema in their adulthood. Also the marginal distributions of origin and destination are presented in the Total rows and columns as well as the total Ns by rows.

When observing differences between the marginal distributions of social classes in Total rows and Total columns in tables 1 and 2, we can see that the agricultural sector was still decreasing swiftly during the 1970s and the 1980s. In 1990, only 8 percent of men and 6 percent of women made their living from small farming or other self-employed agricultural activity, whilst on the other hand, over a quarter of them (29%) had their childhood roots in agriculture. Five years later, in 1995, the share of agriculture had decreased even further, to 7 percent among men and 4 percent among women. The share of industrial employment has remained relatively high among Finnish men: a quarter of men were skilled workers and one-fifth semi-skilled workers in 1990 and 1995. Partly, this might be a consequence of the unique characteristics of Finland's small, export-oriented economy, which leans heavily on manufacturing and industry.

In line with the postmodernisation thesis, the net receiver of labour force seems to be the service sector. For women, the service sector is the most obvious sector of employment. Over a third of the 31- to 35-year-old women have routine non-manual work (IIIa+b), and over a quarter have a lower grade profession (II) already in 1990. The recession did not seem to change these figures, and so, in 1995, altogether 67 percent of the women were classified into either the II or IIIa+b classes. Quite a small proportion of women worked in manual occupations, either as skilled (V+VI) or as semi-skilled workers (VIIa+b), especially if compared to men. This is one of the fundamental characteristics of the Finnish gender segregated labour markets (see Julkunen & Nätti 1999).

Naturally, a part of these structural changes is due to semantics, as occupational titles change over time and the trend is usually 'upwards'. The rise in the general level of education is exerting pressure to change old titles to correspond better with the higher educational titles employees now have. This is probably most accurate among women in the lower grade professional class, who are rarely in a superior or executive position, unlike lower grade professional men (Erola & Moisio 2002). However, a decline in agricultural employment and, especially for women, a rapid increase in service employment seemed to take place in the Finnish labour market during the 1970s and 1980s, before the early 1990s recession (see also Erikson & Pöntinen 1985, Julkunen & Nätti 1999).

By observing the outflow rates, we can see that men and women from the same origin have different patterns of mobility. Women seem most likely to find occupations from the lower-grade professional or routine non-manual classes, if they are not from a higher-grade professional family. Men, on the other hand, seem to locate into the same social class, or a class nearby the one they come from. For example, almost a quarter of men coming from a sole trader or small entrepreneur family (IVa+b) are also found in the same class. However, the spirit of entrepreneurism does not seem to pass on to daughters.

Moreover, working-class occupations seem to pass from 'father to son': around 62-63 percent of men from skilled or semi-skilled worker families have become manual workers themselves in 1995. In the same way, the higher-grade professional status seems to pass from generation to generation: 30 percent of men, and 19 percent of women from the higher-grade professional class are already found in the same class I, despite the fact that they are still at an early stage of their career. The flow from other social class origins to the higher-grade professional class is clearly smaller, especially among women. There is also a substantial flow from non-manual classes into skilled and semi-skilled worker classes among men.

The structural change in the Finnish labour market caused absolute mobility that can also be seen from the high total mobility rates. Men's absolute mobility rate was 70.1 percent in 1990 and 70.2 in 1995. Women's absolute mobility rate was 83.7 percent in 1990 and 82.9 in 1995.

Hence, there does not seem to be too strong a change in either absolute mobility or the pattern of mobility between 1990 and 1995.

Table 1. Outflow percentages for 31–35-year-old men and women in 1990

MEN	*I*	*II*	*IIIa+b*	*IVa+b*	*IVc*	*V+VI*	*VIIa+b*	*Total*	*Total*	*N*
I	29.9	37.0	9.1	3.8	3.3	10.0	6.8	100.0	4.1	548
II	19.3	34.8	9.9	7.7	1.1	16.5	10.7	100.0	9.2	1220
IIIa+b	13.5	25.3	11.5	7.9	1.2	23.6	16.9	100.0	5.7	762
IVa+b	8.4	15.3	9.3	22.0	2.0	21.7	21.3	100.0	7.6	1006
IVc	6.4	12.7	4.8	6.7	24.2	24.5	20.7	100.0	29.2	3872
V+VI	7.2	16.0	6.7	7.0	1.2	41.8	20.0	100.0	24.5	3250
VIIa+b	6.5	14.5	6.7	7.5	1.7	33.6	29.5	100.0	19.7	2622
Total	9.4	17.8	7.0	8.1	8.2	28.9	20.6	100.0	100.0	13280

WOMEN	*I*	*II*	*IIIa+b*	*IVa+b*	*IVc*	*V+VI*	*VIIa+b*	*Total*	*Total*	*N*
I	17.0	38.8	31.3	4.5	2.2	2.6	3.7	100.0	4.3	464
II	10.7	42.1	32.0	4.0	2.6	2.8	5.9	100.0	9.0	979
IIIa+b	6.0	32.1	42.5	5.7	1.3	3.7	8.6	100.0	5.7	616
IVa+b	4.3	27.8	41.9	7.1	4.2	5.0	9.7	100.0	7.9	862
IVc	4.1	21.6	36.4	5.2	12.6	6.4	13.8	100.0	29.0	3149
V+VI	3.0	21.8	43.2	5.0	3.4	7.5	16.2	100.0	25.0	2718
VIIa+b	3.3	22.7	41.5	4.4	3.3	7.7	17.1	100.0	19.2	2088
Total	4.9	25.5	39.2	5.0	5.9	6.2	13.3	100.0	100.0	10876

Table 2. Outflow percentages for 31–35-year-old men and women in 1995

MEN	***I***	***II***	***IIIa+b***	***IVa+b***	***IVc***	***V+VI***	***VIIa+b***	***Total***	***Total***	***N***
I	30.2	30.2	11.5	6.0	1.1	12.0	8.9	100.0	4.8	616
II	17.8	33.6	10.8	7.4	0.8	16.5	13.1	100.0	11.0	1395
IIIa+b	10.3	22.9	13.4	7.9	1.2	25.4	19.0	100.0	6.7	852
IVa+b	7.3	15.1	9.9	23.0	1.7	21.6	21.4	100.0	7.4	946
IVc	7.5	11.8	4.7	7.3	24.7	24.6	19.4	100.0	24.3	3090
V+VI	7.2	15.3	7.8	6.1	0.8	39.5	23.3	100.0	25.3	3220
VIIa+b	5.7	15.0	7.3	7.4	1.6	33.3	29.6	100.0	20.5	2614
Total	9.5	17.6	8.0	8.2	6.9	28.5	21.4	100.0	100.0	12733

WOMEN	***I***	***II***	***IIIa+b***	***IVa+b***	***IVc***	***V+VI***	***VIIa+b***	***Total***	***Total***	***N***
I	18.6	40.1	27.8	5.9	1.6	2.5	3.5	100.0	4.8	511
II	10.4	44.3	32.0	3.9	1.6	3.3	4.6	100.0	10.9	1159
IIIa+b	6.9	29.2	47.2	3.4	0.9	4.2	8.1	100.0	6.3	667
IVa+b	5.5	29.0	38.2	9.6	2.3	5.5	9.9	100.0	7.2	769
IVc	4.0	25.5	35.6	6.2	10.0	6.8	11.7	100.0	23.4	2486
V+VI	3.6	25.0	41.8	5.0	1.7	7.3	15.7	100.0	26.2	2784
VIIa+b	2.5	24.9	41.1	5.1	2.2	8.1	16.2	100.0	21.2	2255
Total	5.3	28.5	38.5	5.5	3.7	6.3	12.2	100.0	100.0	10631

1.6. Social fluidity in Finland 1990 and 1995

Interpreting the pattern of mobility by observing only marginal and outflow percentages is quite straightforward. However, studying social fluidity from the outflow or inflow rates is tenuous, because they are affected by different marginal distributions. The deep economic crisis in Finland in the early 1990s caused substantial structural changes in the labour markets and society in general. The recession did not seem to have an immediate impact on the absolute mobility rates or on the pattern of mobility. Did the recession, however, have an impact on the social fluidity?

In order to study whether changes occurred in social fluidity during the recession we turn to log-linear modelling. In log-linear modelling, the pattern of relative and absolute mobility is modelled using a theory and empirical knowledge. In this way, a linear model is constructed for testing different hypotheses. The mobility tables for men and women that were presented in Tables 1 and 2 can be combined into two mobility tables with separate layers for the years 1990 and 1995. We continue to analyse men and women separately, because the pattern of social mobility is quite different among men and women, as we saw from the absolute rates. If we indicate the time (1990 or 1995) as T, the origin social classes as O and the destination classes as D, we can write the mobility tables for men and women as TOD.

A log-linear model writes the expected frequency *F* of each cell of a multidimensional frequency table as a function of a constant term, as functions of the main effects for each variable, and interactions between them. The log-linear model for our TOD tables can be presented as

$$\log F_{ijk}^{TOD} = \theta + \lambda_i^T + \lambda_j^O + \lambda_k^D + \lambda_{ij}^{TO} + \lambda_{ik}^{TD} + \lambda_{jk}^{OD} + \lambda_{ijk}^{TOD} \quad \text{E1}$$

where subscripts i=1,..,I indexes the categories of variable T, j=1,..,J indexes the categories of the O and k=1,..,K indexes the categories of the D. θ is the constant, i.e. the reflection of the sample size N. The equation is not identifiable without some restrictions. The usual way of making a log-linear model identifiable is to set the parameter corresponding to the last category of variables as equal to zero, i.e. as a reference class (Agresti 1990, Powers & Xie 2000). Observed cell-frequencies are reproduced with the log-linear equation using some iterative estimation method, for example, the iterative proportional fitting (IPF) or EM algorithm (Dempster et al., 1977). Estimated cell counts are then compared to the observed ones and goodness-of-fit statistics are mobilised to estimate whether the model fits the data. To test the goodness-of-fit of the log-linear model, the most widely used test is the likelihood ratio chi-square test (G^2), analogous to the Pearson chi-squared test, with the difference that the former is calculated using logarithms from the ratios between observed and expected frequencies. Analyses were conducted using the LEM program (Vermunt 1997).

Three well-known models are presented in Table 3 (see Erikson & Goldthorpe 1992, p. 87, 384). They are used for studying possible changes in fluidity between 1990 and 1995. The first model is the Conditional Independence model {TO,TD} that assumes that the origin O and destination D have no association, allowing only the marginal distributions to vary across time. The model tests the hypothesis that there is no structural inequality in Finland that could be observed as inheritance of social class either in 1990 or 1995. In the Conditional Independence model, the terms λ_{jk}^{OD} and λ_{ijk}^{TOD}, that describe the associations between the origin and destination and their third level interaction in the categories of T, are excluded from the equation E1.

Table 3. Comparing social fluidity of 31-35-year-olds in 1990 and 1995 with log-linear model. Degrees of freedom (df), likelihood ratios (G^2), statistical significance (p) and percentage of misclassification (Δ). Separate log-linear models for men and women.

		MEN			WOMEN		
Model	df	G^2	p	Δ	G^2	p	Δ
TO,TD (condit. ind.)	72	6232.5	<0.001	17.1	1918.6	<0.001	10.1
TO,TD,OD (CnSF)	36	47.4	0.096	1.5	34.3	0.549	1.3
Unidiff by T	35	47.4	0.078	1.5	32.0	0.612	1.3

The Conditional Independence model has poor fit, as expected. With 72 degrees of freedom, the model has a likelihood-ratio (G^2) value of 6232.5 in the men's table and 1918.6 in the women's. The dissimilarity index (Δ) indicates that the model misclassifies 17.1 percent of all cases in the men's table and 10.1 percent in the women's. By introducing the OD term in the Conditional Independence model we turn the model into the Constant Social Fluidity model (CnSF). The CnSF model tests the hypothesis that social fluidity is constant between 1990 and 1995. As can be seen from the model fit diagnostics, the CnSF model has good fit. In both the men's and women's tables, the estimated frequencies do not differ in a statistically significant way from the observed ones. With 36 degrees of freedom, the G^2 value is 56.0 (p-value 0.072) for men and 39.21 for women (p-value 0.540). In other words, social fluidity seems to have remained unchanged between 1990 and 1995.

Absolute mobility rates indicated some minor change in the level of absolute mobility, especially in the women’s table. We might also want to test whether there is a small change in the level of fluidity. We can loosen up the strict restriction of constant social fluidity by allowing for the strength of fluidity to differ by a uniform amount across time. This can be done with the Unidiff model that posits that the pattern of association (OD) is the same, but the association parameters differ by a uniform amount, indicated by the Unidiff coefficient *B*. In the log-linear equation E1, the term λ_{ijk}^{TOD} is set to be equal to $\lambda_{jk}^{OD} B_n$ (see Whelan et al. 2000). In our TOD tables, the Unidiff coefficient will indicate whether there is more or less social fluidity in 1990 than in 1995. The year 1990 is set as the baseline and standardised to one. The Unidiff coefficient takes one degree of freedom more than the CnSF model, but it does not statistically significantly reduce the G^2 value (compared to the reduction of one degree of freedom) either in the men's or in the women's tables. Hence, the strength of fluidity has not changed.

The social fluidity seems to have remained at the same level in 1990 and 1995. The result may seem surprising considering the increased inequality in the aftermath of recession and Pöntinen’s predictions. However, the results are parallel with the earlier study in the same research project (see Erola & Moisio 2002), and they are also in line with the findings that social fluidity has not shown signs of decreasing in Sweden in the 1990s (Jonsson 2004).

1.7. Summary

Despite the fact that large structural changes took place in Finland during the economic crisis of the early 1990s, both absolute mobility and fluidity seem to have remained unchanged between 1990 and 1995. Similar results have been reported from Sweden, which also underwent its own economic crisis at the same time, though it was more modest than in Finland (see Jonsson 2004).

Finland is considered to be a relatively open society and according to our analysis, this has not changed in the 1990s. In 1995, around 70 percent of men and 83 percent of women are found to be in a different social class from their childhood family in 1970. In the international comparison of Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992), only in Sweden and in Hungary was total mobility shown to be as high. Women's higher mobility can be partly explained by the fact that the father's occupation usually determines the class of origin. In this way, the highly gendered Finnish labour market affects the mobility rates of women. There are also differences in the patterns of mobility between men and women. Men tend to locate more often into the same social class, or a class close to the one they come from. Women tend to locate into white-collar employment in such a way that those coming from a service class family usually become lower-grade professionals, and those coming from a working class family become routine non-manual employees. Thus, there still seem to be intergenerational mobility barriers in Finland maintaining inequality of opportunity.

Despite the sudden and pervading societal changes that took place in Finnish society during the recession in the early nineties, they did not have an immediate effect on social mobility. However, the recession may have changed the selection mechanisms of social mobility. These changes were not yet detectable with the used data that was collected only a few years after the recession. We know that the recession almost instantly increased the observable inequality in the forms of, for example, poverty and unemployment. Thus, the recession enforced the mechanisms that may later lead to deeper intergenerational inequalities.

The result also has policy implications elsewhere. What we have learned here is that social mobility does not change quickly, even during a rapid and deep economic crisis. Instead, changes in social mobility always seem to be slow and phased. The result also suggests that once achieved, the openness of society is unlikely to be reversed by sudden economic instability.

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2. THE TIME OF DE-READING: EXPLANATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS ON THE BASIS OF FINNISH TIME USE SURVEYS 1979–1987–1999

Timo Toivonen

Abstract

Time spent on reading has decreased in many countries in the past decades. In Finland, the time devoted to reading decreased from 49 minutes to 42 minutes between 1987 and 1999. The purpose of the study was to find explanations for this decrease. Data under scrutiny was derived from the Finnish time use studies from 1979, 1987, and 1999. It was found that trends in reading time between socio-economic groups were not analogous. In younger age groups there was a strong downward trend, but in older age groups the trend was upward. Especially in the group of young unemployed people the drop in the time used to reading was dramatic. Men spent more time on reading than women in 1979, but in 1999 the situation was opposite. Also the average proportion of leisure time devoted to reading was shrinking as well as the percentage of people who had read something. However, among those, who were readers in late 1980s and among those, who were readers in the change of millennium, the time spent on reading did not drop. These facts indicate that there were polarization tendencies in respect of reading. It must also be mentioned that the time spent on reading and the time spent on watching TV were not contradictory alternatives, but they correlated slightly. This indicates that people who are seeking information from one source are seeking it also from another source.

Keywords: age and reading, education and reading, reading, sex and reading, time use

2.1. Introduction

On the basis of time use surveys of Finnish Statistics Finnish people spent time on reading 48 minutes per day in 1979, 49 minutes in 1987, and only 42 minutes in 1999. The diminishing time devoted to reading could not be explained by diminishing supply of reading. The number of book titles published in Finland in 1980 was 6 511. In 1990, the corresponding figure was 10 153, and in 2000, 11 764 (SYF 2004, table 556). In the collections of public libraries there were 23 350 000 books in 1980, 32 768 000 books in 1987, and 36 925 000 books in 1999 (SYF 2004, table 558). The circulation of newspapers was 3 359 000 in 1980, 4 080 000 in 1990, but by the year 2000 the circulation fell somewhat,t and it was 3 255 000. (SYF 2004, table 553). In any case, people have had enough reading. *Therefore, in this paper we try to study, if the observed general falling trend occurred analogously in all socio-economic groups. We also try to find out what has been the role of television rivalry with reading.*

2.2. Theoretical background

Studies on reading activity have long traditions in empirical sociology. It has been found already a long time ago that reading is dependent on age and education. Young people read more than adults, and more educated people read more than less educated (Berelson 1957, 120–121; Allardt – Jartti – Jyrkilä – Littunen 1958, 71–75). The impact of age on reading is connected with education. Traditionally each successive cohort has been more educated than its predecessors. On the other hand, younger people are often students, and students have a habit of reading already because of their studies. But why do educated people read more than less educated people? One explanation is that educated people have more *competence* to read than less educated people. Another explanation is that people with long education have adopted a certain way of life according to which it is typical to read much. This can be formulated also á la Bourdieu (1984): well educated people read more, because they want to make a distinction from less educated people. Some people read also more than some others, because they have *socialized* to read (Knulst – Kraaykamp 1998, 36): This means, for instance, that people, whose parents read, have got used to reading in their childhood. We can also suppose that the cohorts which did not have television in their childhood are more inclined to use their leisure time for reading than those, who had possibility to watch television in their childhood. We can talk about “TV watchers’ generation (cohort)" and "non-watchers' generation", i.e. about people, who did not experience TV in their childhood.

There has been observed also a gender difference in reading in favour of females. However, this is a more recent phenomenon and one explanation to this is that leisure time among females has increased more than among males (see Gershuny 2000).

The decline of reading books in the past decades has been documented in several studies in several countries (Knulst – van den Broek 2003; Knulst – Kraaykamp 1998; Minkkinen – Pääkkönen – Liikkanen 2001; ,Sauri 2005). For instance, in Finland the proportion of those who had read al least one book during the last 12 months declined from 82 % in 1991 only to 73 % in 1999. The decline was larger among males (from 79 to 67) than among females (from 85 to 79) (Minkkinen – Pääkkönen – Liikkanen 27). Also the decreasing interest in reading is evident on the basis of Finnish time use data (Niemi – Pääkkönen 2002;Toivonen 2004b). However, according to some studies, international trends in reading are not all similar. As preliminary results of Warde, Southerton, Olsen, and Cheng (2004) show, the declining time devoted to reading is not a common international trend. Warde and colleagues compared time use in UK, USA, the Netherlands, and Norway and found that there was some increase in time devoted to reading in UK and Norway and some decrease in USA and the Netherlands.

However, according to Finnish data, the culture of reading books is still quite strong in Finland. According to "Leisure Study of Finnish Statistics", still in 2002 70 % of Finnish people aged 10 or over had read at least one book during the last half year. In 1991 the corresponding figure was 75 (Sauri 2005, 34). According to some other studies, reading books was even rising in the last years of 1990s. For instance, in the age group 60 and over the percentage of people, who had read at least some pages of a book during previous day rose from 28 to 42 (Minkkinen 2001, 23). The figure mentioned last seems to be high. This may be due to the fact that people try to respond to these kinds of questions in a socially desirable manner (Philips 1973). Reading is regarded as positive activity, and therefore people claim they read more than they actually do. This social desirability can be avoided when indirect methods are used in measuring, like the time diary method, (Niemi 1993, 232) instead of direct methods, like asking about reading.

In a Dutch study based on time budget data it was found firstly, that a shrinking proportion of the population read on a regular basis. Secondly, the decline was steeper for men than for women. Thirdly, every entering cohort spent a lower percentage of leisure time on reading than its immediate predecessor (Knulst – Kraaykamp 1998). In addition, if the general decrease has been found in reading, like in Finland, already preliminary inspections have revealed that there are simultaneous patterns of convergence and divergence in time used to reading between socio-demographic groups (Toivonen 2004b).

One of the explanations to the decrease of reading is by Knulst and Kraaykamp the diversification of leisure activities. Diversification means that people have nowadays many other alternatives to spend their leisure time than reading. In fact, it has been found in a previous study that this was the case with cultural consumption in general (Toivonen 1992).

Also television is generally supposed to be a cause of withering reading habits. Traditionally television watching has not been a high-esteemed way to use leisure time. According to Frank and Greenberg (1980, 21), many have argued that watching television is a wasteland. Supposedly, attitudes have changed during past decades, but still in 2000 Gershuny, for instance, classified television watching as “passive leisure at home” (2000, 207), and the attitude of late Bourdieu was stark: television is a threat to intellectual knowledge production (Bourdieu 1999). Also the results of the analysis of Knust and Kraaykamp seem to support the hypothesis of television watching as a cause of the decline in time used for reading. Knulst and Kraaykamp write that their figures “clearly illustrates that all groups increased their television viewing and decreased their time spent on reading” (37).

But why TV and reading has seen or are alternatives? The first possible reason is natural: the time is limited and, if one watch a lot TV, he/she do not have time to read. But it can also be some other reasons. We can also argue according to Jackson, Beeck and Robinson (1981, 356), that non-viewers differ from viewers in their substitution of “functionally equivalent” communication activities for television viewing like reading. Non-viewers in a sense shun television in order to use their time to higher quality of activities like reading. But there can be also alternative reason for non-viewing. It can happen that at least a part of non-viewers are not non-viewers by choice, but it is alcoholism, drugs etc. that limit their abilities to buy or repair television receivers. In fact the results of Jackson, Beeck and Robinson refer to this direction, because non-viewers were disproportionately represented among people without high school education and family (357). We can add to this that obviously there are also mental reasons, alcohol, drugs etc. which prevent from watching television. Therefore, we can not assume self-evidently that readers are more often non-watchers.

2.3. Data and variables

This study was based on the three Finnish Time Use Surveys covering population aged from 10 to 64. Samples from 1979 and 1987 were stratified random samples according to region, gender, and age. The data collection period was from the beginning of September to the end of November in 1979. The collection period of the second data was from the 1st of April 1987 to the end of March 1988. The respondents were asked to fill in a diary for two days (one weekday, one weekend day) running. They were asked to record, in their own words, their primary activity, and what else they were doing at the same time. Records were kept on a 10 minute-basis (Niemi – Pääkkönen 1990, 11 – 12, 97 – 101). The number of cases (days investigated) was approximately 8 100 in 1979 and 15 400 in 1987/88 over the whole year.

The data of the study of 1999 – 2000 was collected essentially in the same way, but the sample design was a little different from the design of the study of 1987 – 1988. The earlier study was based on stratified random sample. In the later study there was two phases. In the first phase the random sample from persons living in Finland aged 15 and over was drawn. In the second phase also all other persons, who were at least 10 years old and belonging to this selected person's household, were included in the final sample. The collection was completed over the period between March 1, 1999 and March 12, 2000. (Niemi – Pääkkönen 2002, 111). The number of cases (days) was 10 500.

However, we could not use the total number of time diaries from 1987/88 and 1999/2000 because the first time budget survey covered only September, October, and November in 1979. As seasonal variations in time use are great, especially when leisure time is in question, only the autumn data from 1987 and 1999 was used. Therefore, we limited also the inspection of diaries from 1987 and 1999 to those months. Thus, the number of diaries was from 1987 only 8 500 and from 1999 2200, and this means that the number of cases in cells of multidimensional tables were often only a few. The cells with cases fewer than 5 were therefore left out from the analysis by signifying them "-" (no observation) or ".." (information too unreliable for presentation). Data used was weighted by demographic characteristics of population.

We were not able to include reading as a secondary activity in this study, because data was available only from 1999. When reading as a secondary activity, e.g. at breakfast table, is included, the time used for reading goes up "by ten or so minutes" (Niemi – Pääkkönen 2002, 39). We must leave *away* also *reading at work*, because it is included to working time. This is not a bad thing because leisure reading reflects voluntary choices of time use. Reading of web versions of papers, periodicals or books was not included, either. The web versions had surely an impact on reading time in 1999, but it can be assumed that Internet reading is quite tedious lasting hardly more than a couple of minutes. Otherwise texts are printed, if possible.

Five explaining variables were taken into the study on the basis of previous studies. Variables were age, cohort, education, gender, and economic activity. In earlier studies it was found that reading time varies between age, education, economic activity and gender (Niemi – Pääkkönen 2002, Toivonen 2004b, 181–182). It is a pity that we could not find a better classification of educational groups than basic all-round education or “comprehensive”, “middle school”, and “graduate”. However, these educational levels have experienced inflation. In 1979 only few people were graduated, and it indicated in most cases university student or being in academic position, but in 1999 a half of young people were graduated, and then the impact of the indicator of education used her is strongly suppressed by age.

An ideal data for the study of change of time use would be panel data, i.e. data where the persons of surveys from different periods are the same. It is impossible. It means that studied populations are not closed, which is a crucial requirement for cohort analysis (Glenn 2005, 44). Representative samples from different periods are always different by structure: there are always movement into population and out of population. In the Finnish case the “into movement” is not a serious problem, because the number of immigrants has been small. Instead the “out of movement” is more serious problem because of deaths. We may observe, for instance, that when people are over 60, they read more than ever. We don’t know if this is a sign of a cohort effect, or simply a sign of survival of the fittest? *However, the “out of movement” -problem concerns panel data, too*

2.4. Results

As mentioned above, the average time spent on reading in different years by different socioeconomic characteristics is presented in table 1. In 1979, the time was 48 minutes, and it was practically the same in 1987. In 1990s a clear reduction happened, and the time devoted to reading was on average only 42 minutes. However, we can see that the changes were not evenly distributed by socioeconomic characteristics. In the 1980s, at least 40 year-olds increased the time spent on reading, as did women and homemakers.

In the 1990s, the decrease in time devoted to reading was visible in all socio-demographic groups of this study except the age group 50–59 and economic activity group "unemployed".

The clear reduction happened in age groups under 40. An explanation to this can be the socialization of birth cohort to television watching. In 1979, the age group 10–19 had been born between 1960 and 1969, the age group 20–29 in 1950–59, and the older cohorts before 1950. Public television broadcastings started in Finland in 1956, when some 3 000 families own television receiver. Ten years after in 1966 already 822 000, almost 60 % of all households, owned a receiver (IS 6.8. 1956 and Sinkko 1980, appendix 1).

Table 1. Time spent on reading among population aged 10 – 64 by age, education, sex and economic activity in September - November 1979, 1987 and 1999 (min per day)

Age	1979	1987	1999	change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	change 79–99 79=100
10–19	49	42	32	87	75	65
20–29	44	39	30	88	77	68
30–39	43	42	32	97	77	75
40–49	49	54	40	110	74	81
50–59	53	64	64	119	100	119
60–	65	78	73	120	94	113
Education						
Comprehensive	47	50	45	107	90	96
Middle school	49	45	36	91	81	74
Graduate	52	51	45	98	87	85
Gender						
Men	52	50	39	97	78	76
Women	45	48	45	106	93	99
Economic activity						
Employed	44	45	39	103	85	87
Unemployed	66	67	73	101	110	111
Student or pupil	48	42	32	87	77	67
Homemaker	46	57	35	123	61	75
Other	74	78	68	105	88	93
Total	48	49	42	102	86	87
N=	8111	8497	2002			

If we look the table 1 from the perspective of cohorts we see that in the age cohort 30–39 the time devoted to reading was 43 minutes in 1979. 20 years later, in 1999, when the cohort was 50–59 years old, the time they spent on reading was already 64 minutes, i.e. it had been grown by almost 50 %. The age cohorts 30 and over in 1979 had learned to read before the expansion of television, and therefore they did not reduce their reading activities, on the contrary, they increased their reading time. However, the exact impact of cohort on figures is impossible to estimate for various reasons. Firstly, age, cohort, and period (in this study year) are logically dependent on each others.

For instance, if we know the age of a person and the study period, we can say when this person was born or her/his birth cohort. This is called identification problem. Secondly, we can usually not observe all birth cohorts in all age groups. For instance, we can not know, how much persons aged 40–49, who were 10–19 years old in 1979, read now, because they were only 30–39 years old in 1999 (Glenn 2005, Toivonen 2004a).

Also the position of genders changed. Men were more active readers than women in 1979 (52 vs. 45 minutes) but in 1999 the situation was changed in the contrary (39 and 45 minutes). Coincidentally, the reduction in the time devoted to reading among men was 13 minutes which is exactly same as the increase in males' domestic work!

Table 2. Percentage of leisure time used in reading

Age	1979	1987	1999	change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	change 79–99 79=100
10–19	14	12	8	85	73	62
20–29	16	14	9	85	67	57
30–39	17	15	12	88	81	71
40–49	19	18	14	97	79	76
50–59	17	19	19	109	102	112
60–	16	18	18	111	100	111
Education						
Comprehensive	16	15	13	96	87	84
Middle school	17	15	12	90	81	72
Graduate	18	17	14	91	87	79
Gender						
Men	17	15	12	92	79	72
Women	16	16	14	97	92	89
Economic activity						
Employed	18	17	14	95	85	81
Unemployed	15	14	15	90	112	101
Student or pupil	14	12	9	81	80	65
Homemaker	14	16	13	115	82	94
Other	16	16	15	103	91	94
Total	16	16	13	95	85	81

The decrease in the time spent on reading was not due to the decrease in leisure time because also the percentage of leisure time spent on reading decreased in 1990s from 16 % to 13 % (table 2). The ups and downs in reading follow the same shape as in the table 1. Table 2 indicates also that among younger age groups this relative decrease in reading has been more remarkable than the absolute decrease. For instance, the age group 10–19 used only 8 % of their leisure time to reading in 1999 (vs. 14 % in 1979). From cohort perspective we see that the cohort born 1940–49 increased their percentage of time spent on reading from 1979 to 1999 from 17 to 19 percent. Polarization between cohorts was evident.

We can also see that the diminishing male leisure time was not explained by the decreasing male leisure time, but males used only 12 % of their leisure time to reading in 1999. In 1979 the percentage was 17. On the basis of the data of this study we are not able to say what is then the reason for men's declining time used to reading. Something has happened to men already in early childhood? In any case, a same type of phenomenon is the increasing female majority in all literary affairs, such as in university studies.

Table 3. Percentage of people who have devoted time to reading

	1979	1987	1999
Age			
10–19	74	69	53
20–29	76	73	50
30–39	77	74	68
40–49	82	82	69
50–59	84	87	79
60–	84	93	83
Education			
Comprehensive	78	79	69
Middle school	77	74	63
Graduate	81	77	66
Gender			
Men	78	77	62
Women	79	78	69
Economic activity			
Employed	79	77	66
Unemployed	84	81	78
Student or pupil	74	70	55
Homemaker	82	84	69
Other	83	91	81
Total	78	77	66

The percentage of people aged 10–64, who had devoted time to reading during a day was unbelievably low 78 % already in 1979, taking into account that according to the official records, 100 % of the Finnish people can read. And the time dropped to two thirds (66 %) in 1999 (table 3). Only a half of the age group 20–29 had read at least one 10 minutes period in 1999. Maybe the result can not be interpreted such that 50 percent of age class 20–29 does not read at all, but it should be interpreted that they read in very short periods, or reading was a secondary activity. In the case of age group 60 and over, the explanation for higher figures may be the fact that it is more difficult for older people to read as a secondary activity than it is for younger people.

An implication of polarization among population groups is evident also on the basis of table 4. People, who read increased their reading time somewhat (from 62 to 64 minutes per day) during the period 1979–1999, contrary to the general de-reading trend. The trend was most obvious in oldest age groups and cohorts. Also in the period 1987–1999 their reading time increased remarkably. By cohorts this increase was more dramatic. For instance, the cohort born 1930–1939 (40–49 by age) increased their reading time from 1987 to 1999 21 minutes per day (from 60 to 88 minutes) or 47 %! Simultaneously, younger cohorts, who read, did not decrease their reading time: We can also see that people aged 20–29 in 1979 read 58 minutes per day. When this group was 40–49 years old in 1999 they read still the same 58 minutes. A convincing cohort effect!

Table 4. Time used in reading among people who had devoted time to reading (min)

Age	1979	1987	1999	change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	change 79–99 79=100
10–19	66	61	60	93	98	91
20–29	58	53	59	91	112	102
30–39	55	56	47	102	83	85
40–49	60	66	58	110	88	96
50–59	64	73	81	114	111	126
60–	77	84	88	109	105	115
Education						
Comprehensive	60	63	66	105	104	109
Middle school	64	61	58	95	96	91
Graduate	65	67	68	103	101	104
Gender						
Men	66	65	63	99	96	95
Women	57	61	65	107	106	113
Economic activity						
Employed	56	59	58	105	99	104
Unemployed	79	82	94	104	114	118
Student or pupil	65	60	60	92	99	91
Homemaker	56	68	50	120	74	89
Other	89	85	84	95	99	94
Total	62	63	64	103	101	104

On the basis of previous tables it seemed evident that unemployed people read more than other economic activity groups. They also seemed to have increased their reading time. However, the young unemployed have to be mentioned as a passive "lost generation". Therefore an elaborated analysis was conducted by cross-tabulating period, economic activity, and age (table 5). Results are controversial. On the one hand, the unemployed in the age group 10–29 spent time on reading more than did people in the same age group in other economic activity categories (36 minutes per day) still in 1999. But on the other hand, the decrease of time spent on reading was dramatic both among the unemployed and among 10–29 year-olds: the time spent on reading in 1999 was only 50 % of the reading time in 1979.

We can see that the increase of time spent on reading among unemployed was mainly due to the oldest age group (50–64) who have increased their time spent on reading from 1979 to 1999 even 144 %. Thus, people who had not the possibility to watch TV in their childhood, are more and more hooked to reading, when they have time to do it without employment.

An explanation for these different tendencies among different age groups of unemployed may be that the age group 10–29 of the unemployed include more people, who never have had a touch of normal working life, because of the lack of suitable skills or profession, unlike the group of unemployed aged 50–64. In other words, the age group 50–64 of the unemployed include more people, who have skills and capacity (e.g. in manufacturing and services), but whose skills have become unnecessary in the change of society.

Table 5. Time used in reading by economic activity and age (min.)

Employed	1979	1987	1999	change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	change 79–99 79=100
10–29	42	38	28	91	72	66
30–49	44	44	34	100	78	78
50–64	49	61	55	124	91	113
Unemployed						
10–29	73	59	36	81	62	50
30–49	64	75	53	117	121	83
50–64	56	64	120	114	188	214
Student or pupil						
10–29	48	41	32	85	78	67
30–49	47	73	33	154	45	70
50–64	58	-	-	-	-	-
Homemaker						
10–29	40	35	29	88	83	73
30–49	41	54	39	133	72	96
50–64	54	83	42	152	51	77
Other						
10–29	75	..	..	..	..	
30–49	80	80	42	101	52	53
50–64	72	78	74	108	95	102
Total	48	49	42	102	86	87

\- = nil ..= data not available or too uncertain for presentation

As documented in table 1, the time spent on reading decreased most strongly among younger age groups and males. Therefore, we asked, to which amount the decrease was due to young men? On the basis of table 6, the decrease was strongly due to young men who read in 1999 only a half of the time they devoted to reading in 1979. The decrease in reading among young men started already in the 1980s. There was also a decrease in reading among young women, but not as strong as among young men. There seems to be a clear polarization development between these groups: older females read in 1999 more than ever, and young men less than ever. One possible explanation to this decrease in reading among young men is that information technology (incl. games and plays) take their time. However, there was a positive correlation between time spent on reading and time spent on information technology among young men (10–22 years old) in 1999, although it was very low .013. Among young women the correlation was slightly negative (-.026). Thus, the use of IT was not explanation to the decrease of time devoted to reading among young men.

Table 6. Time used in reading by gender and age (min.)

Male	1979	1987	1999	Change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	change 79–99 79=100
10–29	49	38	25	78	65	50
30–49	49	50	33	103	66	68
50–64	64	71	66	112	93	104
Female						
10–29	44	43	36	97	85	82
30–49	42	44	39	104	90	92
50–64	51	65	67	127	103	131
Total	48	49	42	102	86	87

Reading books is perhaps the most appreciated form of reading in comparison with reading periodicals and newspapers, because reading books demands more persistent concentration than other forms of reading. According to so called Postman hypothesis, television programme formulas have had effect on peoples’ pattern of expectations of all information channels (Postman 1992). People expect information to be based on spectacular fragments or in other words, a message must amuse. That means that we can assume that the persistence needed in book reading has been vanishing, and therefore the diminishing in reading is especially salient in the case of reading books.

Table 7. Time used in reading books

Age	1979	1987	1999	change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	change 79–99 79=100
10–19	27	28	11	106	40	42
20–29	21	18	8	86	43	37
30–39	14	17	8	115	47	54
40–49	13	18	8	139	47	66
50–59	12	15	14	132	91	119
60–	15	17	15	116	88	103
Education						
Comprehensive	60	63	66	105	104	109
Middle school	64	61	58	95	96	91
Graduate	65	67	68	103	101	104
Sex						
Men	16	15	7	93	45	42
Women	18	22	13	121	58	71
Economic activity						
Employed	14	16	8	113	53	59
Unemployed	23	27	20	114	74	84
Student or pupil	26	26	11	101	41	42
Homemaker	14	21	8	151	38	57
Other	21	20	13	94	68	64
Total	17	19	10	107	54	58

If we compare tables 7 and 1, we can see that the decrease in time spent on reading books is steeper than the decrease in time spent on reading in general. In 1999, the time spent on reading books was only 10 minutes per day or only 58 % of time spent on reading books in 1979 (17 minutes). In fact the time used for other reading has remained same or 31 minutes in 1979 (48–17) and 32 minutes 1999 (42–10). We can also see that for reading books the polarization between age classes was more dramatic than it was for reading in general. The 20–29 year-olds read only 8 minutes per day in 1999 or 37 % of the time spent on reading books in 1979 (21 minutes). During the same period the age group 50–59 increased their book reading time by 19 %, and the time devoted to reading books was 14 minutes in 1999. One can also notice that the drop in time spent on reading books was very big among men in the 1990s.

Table 8. Percentage of people devoted time to reading books

	1979	1987	1999
Age			
10–19	28	28	15
20–29	21	18	13
30–39	16	19	15
40–49	15	19	16
50–59	15	17	20
60–	17	20	18
Education			
Comprehensive	78	79	69
Middle school	77	74	63
Graduate	81	77	66
Gender			
Men	16	15	12
Women	22	26	19
Economic activity			
Employed	17	18	14
Unemployed	22	24	28
Student or pupil	27	26	16
Homemaker	21	28	13
Other	19	21	18
Total	19	20	16

According to table 8, only 16 % of people had used time for reading books. The figure seems small, if it is compared with figures from table 3. Table 8 tells also the same story about growing differences between age groups: In younger age groups there was less and less people who devote time to reading books, whereas in older age classes the percentage of readers was growing. The percentage of book readers was growing also among the unemployed. Evidently, the unemployed have time to concentrate, and that is needed in reading books. Time spent on reading books among book-readers has diminished, too, but not as much as among total population (table 9). An interesting detail is that one group which increased their reading time among book-readers was the age group 10–19. There was an increase from 70 minutes to 76 minutes between 1987 and 1999. Only 15 % of this age group were book- readers any more in 1999, but those who were had become diligent readers.

Table 9. Time used in reading books among people who have devoted time to reading

Age	1979	1987	1999	change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	change 79–99 79=100
10–19	71	70	76	99	108	107
20–29	73	71	60	98	85	83
30–39	68	66	53	96	80	77
40–49	69	77	54	112	70	70
50–59	66	77	71	117	92	108
60–	75	78	83	104	107	111
Education						
Comprehensive	70	76	61	108	81	87
Middle school	72	69	66	96	96	92
Graduate	70	69	64	99	93	92
Sex						
Men	78	79	55	101	69	70
Women	65	68	70	105	102	107
Economic activity						
Employed	67	69	58	104	84	87
Unemployed	89	92	71	104	77	80
Student or pupil	71	71	69	100	98	98
Homemaker	56	63	61	114	96	109
Other	92	85	78	93	91	85
Total	70	72	64	102	89	91

On the basis of the tables presented above we have seen that in Finland the decrease in reading has not been straightforward. One can ask then, what is the relation between watching TV and reading? First of all, in all years under examination:1979, 1987, and 1999 the correlations between the times devoted to TV watching and reading were positive, correspondingly .102, .118, and .042. Secondly, cross-tabulations reveal that among TV-viewers there were more readers than there were among non-viewers (table 10).

Table 10. Time used in reading according to TV –viewing, non-viewing and age

Nonviewers	1979	1987	1999	change 79–87 79=100	change 87–99 87=100	Change 79–99 79=100
10–29	42	38	29	90	77	69
30–49	41	34	31	83	93	77
50–64	50	61	63	121	104	127
Total	43	40	37	93	93	86
TV viewers						
10–29	49	41	31	85	76	64
30–49	47	50	37	106	74	78
50–64	59	69	67	118	96	114
Total	50	51	43	102	84	85
Total						
10–29	47	40	31	87	76	66
30–49	45	47	36	104	77	79
50–64	57	68	66	120	97	117
Total	48	48	42	102	86	87

In 1979, TV -viewers spent approximately 7 minutes per day more on reading than did non-viewers (50 vs. 43). In 198,7 the difference grew to 11 minutes, and in 1999 it was reduced to 6 minutes (43 vs. 37). Then watching television and reading were not each other's substitutes in time use. In general, it seems to be so that individuals, who take information from one channel, are also inclined to take information from another one. In any case, the speculation in the beginning of this paper on the possibility that at least a part of non-watchers are some kind of dropouts seems to be true.

However, there were again interesting and controversial trends between age groups. First of all, in every period in every age groups television watchers use more time for reading than non-watchers. However, as the correlations above indicate, the differences were shrinking, and the shrinking development was evident especially in the 1990s. For instance, in 1987 among the age group 50–64 TV-watchers read 8 minutes more per day (69 minutes) than did non-watchers (61 minutes). In 1999, the difference was only 4 minutes in favour of the watchers. We can also see that the growth in reading-time in the oldest age group (50–64), registered already in table 1, was mostly due to the non-viewers. However, until now there has not been much evidence about a situation where people are divided into two groups: "readers-non-watchers" and "non-readers watchers". The group whose members were both readers and watchers has grown year by year. In 1979 37 % of population 10–64 years old belonged to it, in 1987 43 % and 1999 even 58 %.

It is also worth mentioning that the time spent on reading and the time used with IT were correlated slightly negatively: -0.037. But this is due to the fact that young people read less and spent more time with computers than did other people. Separately, the correlation between reading and using IT was positive in each age group. Therefore, our earlier observation that people, who take information from one channel, are also inclined to take it from another channel gets additional support.

2.5. Summary and discussion

The observations above have revealed that although the general trend in time used in reading has been decreasing in the 1990s, there were differences in trends between population groups. The time spent on reading had decreased especially among young people. When we elaborated further, the decrease seemed to concentrate on young men and young unemployed men in particular. On the contrary, older age groups seemed to have increased their time used in reading. Therefore, the gap between age groups was also increasing. Also the gap in reading time between genders was growing in favour of females. A polarization was observable between readers and non-readers. The time devoted to reading among readers increased scantly in the 1990s. The same trend occurred among young readers. In the age group 20–29 the growth was even 12 % from 1987 to 1999.

All reasons for these mainly polarization tendencies in time used to reading were not possible to find out from this data. The reason could neither be the lack of leisure time nor the rivalry in time use with television or computers. This indicates that people, who are seeking information from one source are seeking it also from another source. Some impact television surely has, because those cohorts, who were experienced their childhood before television, were more active readers than television generation. A cohort impact was evident.

One possible reason to the decrease in time spent on reading is the increase of the alternatives in spending leisure time. It is clear that in 1979 there were fewer leisure time alternatives to reading than in 1999, but the use of these alternatives was not possible to include to this study (for research economic reasons). It may be so that also young people still appreciate reading, but they do not have time to read, because they want to use all leisure omnivorously (Peterson 1992) or even voraciously, which term has been used by Sullivan and Katz-Gerro (2004). Because the number of activities has increased, according to the voracious thesis, the time used in various activities has decreased.

Time use surveys do not tell how effectively people use their time. Maybe, people read in 1999 as much as they did in 1979. They may be only more effective 20 years later. Maybe also the reading is nowadays as hectic as the life style in general. Perhaps today there are as many reading periods as there were in earlier times, but they are shorter? This is suggested by the observation that people spend as much time reading newspapers and magazines as they did earlier.

If the habit of reading is marginal or at least becoming marginal in some population groups, can we say that the content of leisure time of these groups will become also emptier than in past? This can be speculated, if these observed divergence trends also indicate a kind of polarization in the quality of time use among people. Of course, we must be careful in these kinds of normative statements, because for instance TV and Internet can be used in various ways. Reading, TV, and computers are not exclusive in time use[4]. However, it can be argued that "reading has been indispensable for acquiring cognitive competence and skill", as Knulst and Kraaykamp (1998, 23) put it. Without literary skills it is difficult achieve a reasonable position in society. Therefore, does the deepening division of people to readers and non-readers mean also the growth of social inequalities?

[4] However, some latest commercial surveys from 2002 and 2004 seem to indicate that Internet has begun to eat time from TV watching (HS 1.2004)

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3. THE MEASURABLE INTERNAL LOGIC OF CULTURAL CHOICE PATTERNS[1]

Taru Virtanen

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is derived from the conditions which have to be met when unveiling the essence of patterns presented by van Rees and colleagues (1999). Most of the recent studies have failed in meeting the proposed conditions either by concentrating too much on a single cultural sector or form of consumption, or addressing preferences rather than actual behaviour. Moreover, the fluctuation within pattern's content according to time and to the society in question has proven to be a difficult task to overcome. The motivation here is to concentrate more in defining the pattern, which has been almost non-existent task in previous research.

Here, cultural consumption patterns are shed light on. The primary interest in this paper is to form an applicable measurement for pattern in order to determine the consumption of cultural products. The universe in which the research is carried out comprises of the young European adults (20–35 years) residing in the European Union (as in the year 2001). As indicators of potential social distinction, consumption items such as cultural activities, musical and preferences and artistic hobbies are used in forming the patterns. The article scrutinizes the structure of taste and its relation to cultural consumption patterns.

Keywords: taste, pattern, cultural consumption, pattern construction

[1] An abstract based on this article's previous version (Virtanen 2005) is published in conference proceedings of 7th ESA (European Sociological Association) Conference. The author would like to express her deepest gratitude to everybody who has commented the work along the process.

3.1. Taste assumptions

A key phenomenon and concept to be described in the course of this paper is taste. Taste has been described for example to derive from one's social class i.e. some scholars even see class position as an equivalent to taste (Bourdieu [1979]1984; Peterson 1983; Van Eijck 2000). The definition of taste depends greatly on the purpose and the approach. Taste can be a characteristic or value embedded in all goods, items and objects of consumption, which can be detected via personal appreciation. A more sophisticated taste on the particular field needs to be applied in the case of consumption of the objects of high aesthetic value on that field. Taste can be considered to include most of the other key concepts needed in the study of cultural leisure consumption; by taste we can define for example consumption patterns, cultural capital and consumer typologies. Thus, taste is a vital determinant of cultural consumption and it can be considered providing a holistic view on both cultural preferences and actualized consumption.

Scitovsky (1976, 225) stresses the importance of training and time investment in the process of appreciating the objects of cultural consumption. "[A]ll these [enjoying tennis or appreciation of literature and the arts] require a lot of practice and its careful sequencing from the easy toward the more difficult." (ibid.) This core idea is also shared by Bourdieu's notion on the formation of cultural capital (Bourdieu [1979]1984).

Bourdieu ([1979]1984; 2002) utilizes his concept of cultural capital, which has – at least among cultural sociologist – become more widely cited than writings of Scitovsky. Similar objects of cultural taste and similar conditions are expressed by Scitovsky (1976) as are present in Bourdieu's writings, too. Cultural capital shapes taste, and cultural capital is produced in favourable conditions, such as socialization provided by family, peer group and education (Bourdieu 1984; 2002; Alasuutari 1997, 5–6).

Taste assumptions oftentimes go logically down the social ladder so that those who have more volume on their capitals (both economic and cultural) are assumed to dominate thus also have a dominant taste, that which is considered to surpass all forms of tastes. Members of dominated classes have on the other lesser volume of capital and thus they are assumed to have a taste orientation of middle-brow or popular. Middle-brow or popular orientation is "a preference for less legitimate cultural goods or practices lacking prestige". (Van Rees et al. 1999, 350.)

According to Peterson and Simkus (1992, 196), elite taste has been "redefined as an appreciation of the aesthetics of every distinctive form along with an appreciation of the high arts" whereas before the only legitimate form of taste was that of higher end of aesthetic spectrum. Van Eijck (2000, 211) on the other hand argues that depending on the choice of the cultural discipline under examination relativity in terms of socio-demographics varies greatly. For example, audience for the high arts is quite homogenous whereas music interest wider spectrum of people with multiple backgrounds. Music is stated to be easily accessible (via tapes, CDs and media) and one can also choose the time and place for these kinds of activities (i.e. listening to music, being a consumer of music, be it high or low in aesthetic value) in rather low costs. (ibid.)

The motivation for writing this paper is derived from the conditions which have to be met when unveiling the essence of patterns presented by van Rees and colleagues (1999). Most of the recent studies have failed in meeting the conditions proposed either by concentrating too much on a single cultural sector or form of consumption, or addressing preferences rather than actual behaviour. Moreover, the fluctuation within pattern's content according to time and to the society in question has proven to be a difficult task to overcome. The motivation here is to concentrate more in defining the pattern, which has also according to López Sintas and García Alvarez (2004, 465–466) been almost non-existent task in previous research.

3.2. Pattern definitions in the existing literature

Quite often cultural consumption is empirically analysed in the form of patterns (e.g. Peterson – Simkus 1992, Peterson – Kern 1996; Katz-Gerro – Shavit 1998; López Sintas – García Alvarez 2002; 2004). This helps to bring forward the predominant features of consumption and its objects, as well as consumers' relationship to those objects. When defining consumer this way by his cultural taste, we are interested in range of the consumption preferences. In addition to the consumption repertoire, we also like to know the relation between tastes and socio-economic features.

Peterson defines a pattern as a set of items, which has some kind of general, constant character even though the actual items within the pattern may change over time (Peterson 1983, 424). A pattern can be identified with its "intellectually coherent" feature that can be expressed "as a single system of beliefs and values." (ibid., 422.) As Van Eijck (2000, 210) states, certain interests or schemes occur in all the combinations presented by distinct researches, and "that leisure activities are not independent but rather structured by certain interests that are in part specific for certain status groups." The tendency for all these studies is that they attempt to understand the relationship between various leisure activities and socio-demographic variables.

Arguments for construction and analysis of cultural consumption have been put forward. One stream stems from Bourdieu's renowned book Distinction (1984), which is mainly based on the argument on homology. This argument assumes that structures of cultural stratification are based on the same logic and mechanisms as structures of social stratification. This means, that following the logics of social hierarchy we can explain the variation in cultural consumption. (See for example Chan – Goldthorpe 2005.) López Sintas and García Álvarez (2004, 465) present two propositions based on the literature on cultural consumption. Firstly, individuals consume patterns of products, also termed a "lifestyle" (Bourdieu's homogeneity). Secondly, there will be a link between consumption patterns and social status (homology). As they present an example: "[…] classical formulation of the homology thesis, [is that], members of the upper social class show a distinctive pattern of legitimate cultural practices, whereas middle and low social classes consume low status cultural products." (ibid.) By this logic we can assume that patterns can be found by tracing consumers' social status. This examination however does not allow for individual construction of suitable items for one's lifestyle, but rather consumer's lifestyle is predetermined by his/her social status.

In a bit same vein, Peterson and Simkus (1992) attempt pin down the bases of inequality by ranking tastes and occupational statuses simultaneously. Musical preferences have been used ever since in many studies as a main determinant of taste (Bryson 1997, Peterson 1992, Van Eijck 2001); sometimes they have even been considered as an equivalent for taste. One of the reasons for this stream of research might be that Bourdieu has argued that the differences in taste occur and can be detected most easily in musical preferences (Bourdieu 1984; Rahkonen 1995, 13). These statements have been adopted rather widely regardless of the critic that preference does not automatically reflect action.

Sometimes the research carried out on cultural consumption patterns seem to concentrate more on the mechanisms and explanation than the actual patterns and their construction. For example Bihagen and Katz-Gerro (2000) have approach operationalization of patterns by factor analysis. The method enables to some extent to reflect upon the theoretical idea that each patterns has its own internal logic, thus the factors formed in the data sharing some statistical, internal similarity should be consider as patterns as well. The outcome of their results presents patterns of highbrow, lowbrow and outdoors. However, the list of consumption objects they used in definition of patterns is far from exhaustive and even to some extent incoherent. The advantage is that they have used items which have been rarely included in the field of cultural consumption, and most of them are relevant. However the results leave reader to a state of wanting to know more on the subject. The subsequent analysis on the mechanisms behind the patterns is nonetheless more elaborate and thorough.

3.3. Research design and the objective

In this article the field of cultural consumption pattern is attempted to be characterized among the target group of young adults residing in the EU. Here we try to look whether the objects of cultural consumption form internally coherent dimensions. Several propositions for operationalization of the taste patterns are provided. The essence and “place” of each item are tried to fit into the composition of broader consumption orientations; forms of taste are thus addressed. Thus, research question and its sub-questions can be posed as follows:

Can we find dimensions of cultural consumption objects?

a) What characterizes distinct cultural consumption items?

b) Do items form dimensions of internal logic which clearly differs from others?

Here an attempt on presenting one tentative pattern is made. The purpose is to enlighten a potential way to construct cultural consumption taste pattern. The focus is on describing the method how taste pattern can be approached, and thus suitable fractions of data are used. This is why the whole of target group is not studied and thus the aim is not give a holistic and detailed picture of all young Europeans in the data. The emphasis on this paper is thus not in the discussion over results but rather in the strengths and weaknesses that the present operationalization possesses. The contribution of this paper is hoped to prove useful when applying the constructed pattern in the future studies. As a result an exemplar of potential model for pattern to be applied in future research will be presented.

Cultural consumption is studied in form of cultural activities and artistic involvement, i.e. cultural hobbies. In addition, media preferences, i.e. taste for TV programs, radio programs and types of internet use are included as potential contents of the overall patterns. Leisure reading and listening to music is also included; the former is considered in the amount of books read per year and the latter includes both the type of music preferred and participated (a specific activity of concert-going).

3.4. Sample

A Eurobarometer data (Eurobarometer 56.0; Christensen 2001) on information and communication technologies, financial services, and cultural activities in respect of cultural consumption is used in the attempt on operationalization, and the sub-group of young adults, aged 20–35. The data set covers the 15 member countries of the collection year 2001 and 4747 young consumers are included in total.

The consumers and their patterns can be reflected upon their socioeconomic characteristics such as education, occupational status (class), income, gender, marital status and age, but here any of the background variables are not referred other than in the description of data presented in the appendix table A1.

Consumption items. Cultural consumption patterns can be measured with several kinds of variables. The first set of variables ("activities") asks the respondents "Did you go to any of the following cultural activities within the past twelve months?" Also the number of times the consumer has gone to these activities per year is measured and applied. The second set measures for respondents' general tendency for cultural hobbies ("hobbies"). There are also variables referred as "supportive cultural consumption items" of which TV documentaries (watched) and leisure reading (yes/no in general) are referred in this paper. Both music type (genre) preferences and actualized tastes are studied. Music taste actualized is measured with musical concerts participated within last 12 months. Cultural consumption can also be studied in form of media preferences, i.e. taste for TV programs, radio programs and types of internet use, but since the scope of this paper is illustrative, these items are omitted in the example.

Table 1. Proportions of the variables in the data set of young adults (n = 4747)

Dimension	Cultural item	%	Dimension	Cultural item	%
Activities	Ballet	13.7	Type of music listened	Classical	20.6
	Cinema	80.2		Opera, operetta	5.0
	Theatre	29.7		Rock, pop	75.8
	Concert	41.7		Hard rock/ heavy metal	18.5
	Library	41.8		Easy listening	35.0
	Historical monuments	46.9		Dance/house	32.0
	Museum	33.0		Techno	19.5
	Museum abroad	21.2		Rap	1.7
	Archaeological sites	17.8		Jazz, blues	21.5
Hobbies	Instrument	16.7		Folk, traditional	20.2
	Singing	23.1	Type of concert gone	Classical	4.8
	Acting	5.6		Opera, operetta	1.6
	Dancing	28.5		Rock, pop	27.6
	Writing	19.2		Hard rock/ heavy metal	4.4
	Photographing	37.1		Easy listening	2.3
	Sculpture, painting, drawing etc. other	19.5		Dance/house	3.0
Supportive	TV documentaries	61.1		Techno	1.9
	Read for leisure	52.3		Rap	1.4
				Jazz, blues	4.7
				Folk, traditional	4.1

Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001.)

3.5. Pattern as an internally coherent logic

When we refer to pattern, or better yet are willing to address it time and time again, we need to be aware of the limitations and expectations that are interfaced with it. In order to look up for a pattern in a data set, whatever it is called, some sort of internal logic needs to be applied in the exploration process, as the definition itself describes. Thus, we need, at least to some extent, disassociate ourselves from the previous assumptions in the literature related to the fixed status or value of each item or consumer.

There are many possible alternative and simultaneously applicable ways to refer and measure consumption tendencies, of which some are presented below. Applied together they can at least to some extent add some dimensionality in consumption patterns, as they attempt to measure divergent aspects. Next, I will provide some propositions, how to gain more in-depth knowledge on cultural consumption patterns. The propositions are first put forward in the list below, and then they are all discussed individually in detail. In order to gain a broader view on cultural choice patterns, we can:

1) measure the general activity index in order to determine the active and passive consumption (countries in this context). This leads to better understanding of general tendency, regarding the intensity/breadth of which items, or eventually patterns, are consumed.
2) rank the consumption items in order to determine the relative value of the items. This will enable the reference to “browship” (highbrow/lowbrow) or quality of consumption items, and it also enables comparison between societies, in which status differentiation might occur.
3) measure the means on the volume of activities consumed in order to determine heavy-users and others. This leads to better understanding of intensity of consumption.
4) construct a multi-item presentation in order to determine the breadth of consumption, which also enables to isolate potential “vorousness” types.
5) explore the linkage between intensity and breadth, e.g. heavy-user and multi-liking vs. light-user and multi-liking vs. heavy-user and narrow taste. This leads to a possibility to create several patterns with multidimensionality.

Next, all but the fifth proposition of the above-mentioned aspects are empirically explored. The last proposition extends far beyond the limits of this paper, thus it is left for the future research. Illustrative examples are presented using the available Eurobarometer 56.0 data set (Christensen 2001). In the beginning of each illustration the above-mentioned numbering is referred.

(1) (Table 1.) **Activity in general** is an aspect that relates closely in scrutinizing pattern. When making comparative attempts over cultural boundaries (i.e. cross-cultural) we need to take into account the fact that the overall tendency of participation and activity regarding cultural consumption varies greatly from country to country. There might be several differing reasons for this fluctuation, but nevertheless addressing activity (versus passivity, or perhaps other-orientation) is relevant. In order to solve the problem of activity I constructed **general activity index** by summing up the proportions of each 15 countries of every given aspect of cultural consumption.

Here the activity on cultural participation is measured individually for each EU member countries, and countries are presented in the order of their index for overall intensity in all the measured cultural activities. When forming the index the number of yearly participation of all the activities (9 in total) are summed up. For example, in Denmark (first in order) attendance in the activities on yearly basis for cinema averages almost 5 times, and going to library almost reaches up to 6 times per year. Since some of the activities are participated less than once a year and some considerably more often, the index is able to tell only of general participation rate in each country.

Table 2. General activity index (n= 4747), **(1)**

DK	SWE	SPA	FIN	NET	LUX	IT	IRE	GB	FRA	BE	GER	AUT	GRE	POR
20.0	17.9	16.6	16.1	16.0	15.8	15.5	14.2	13.3	12.7	12.6	11.5	11.4	10.9	9.9

Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001.)

(2) Relative value or the quality of items can be expressed in the form of **popularity**. Here, I provide with two examples of the hierarchy that exists in the universe of cultural consumption objects. The first one (Example i. in Table 3.) presents the ranking order based on the **general consumption proportion** (consumed or not) first among all the Europeans, then among the young Swedes (one of the most active ones in multiple terms). Several cultural consumption domains with differing contents and internal logics are presented.

Table 3. General consumption proportion among all the young adults and among the Swedes, ranked in popularity order within the category, %, **(2i.)**

Cultural activeness item	All EU	**Cultural activeness item**	**Sweden**
Cinema	80.1	Cinema	90.2
Historical sites	47.3	Library	74.8
Library	42.3	Historical sites	69.8
Concert	42.1	Concert	51.1
Museums in own country	32.9	Museums in own country	48.9
Theatre	29.4	Theatre	37.4
Museums abroad	22.1	Museums abroad	24.9
Archaeological sites	18.1	Archaeological sites	12.5
Ballet	14.0	Ballet	11.8
Cultural awareness item		**Cultural awareness item**	
Watching TV documentaries	62.3	Watching TV documentaries	81.0
Reading books for other purpose than education or work	53.4	Reading books for other purpose than education or work	72.8
Cultural hobby item		**Cultural hobby item**	
Photographing or filming	35.4	Photographing or filming	61.0
Dancing	27.9	Singing	41.3
Singing	22.8	Dancing	37.0
Other (sculpture, painting, drawing, designing…)	19.4	Writing	35.7
Writing	18.5	Other (sculpture, painting, drawing, designing…)	30.8
Playing an instrument	17.1	Playing an instrument	29.5
Acting	5.6	Acting	10.2
Type of music listened		**Type of music listened**	
Rock, pop	76.9	Rock, pop	86.2
Easy listening	38.6	Easy listening	44.9
Dance/house	32.8	Hard rock/ heavy metal	36.1
Jazz, blues	22.2	Dance/house	31.5
Folk, traditional	21.9	Classical	30.2
Classical	21.5	Folk, traditional	23.9
Techno	18.6	Techno	23.3
Hard rock/ heavy metal	18.3	Jazz, blues	23.0
Rap	16.4	Rap	18.0
Opera, operetta	5.1	Opera, operetta	7.9
Type of concert gone		**Type of concert gone**	
Rock, pop	67.9	Rock, pop	77.6
Classical	11.6	Hard rock/ heavy metal	16.4
Jazz, blues	11.3	Jazz, blues	12.5
Folk, traditional	11.3	Classical	9.2
Hard rock/ heavy metal	10.4	Folk, traditional	5.9
Dance/house	8.1	Rap	5.3
Easy listening	6.4	Dance/house	5.3
Techno	4.3	Easy listening	4.6
Opera, operetta	3.8	Techno	2.6
Rap	3.5	Opera, operetta	2.6

(Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001)

As we can see in the table on general consumption proportions similar items tend to be placed either in the most popular or least popular forms of music genre preferred, for example both in general EU level and single society's level, here Sweden. As we can anticipate, popular music seems to be the most popular genre universally, whereas opera and operetta is in the bottom of the popularity hierarchy among young adults. The same happens in the case of the activities, and hobbies. The order is not exactly similar between the compared categories (EU/Sweden) but the ends tend to remind each other.

The practical reason why there seems to be some discrepancy between the music preference (music type listened) and actualization (type of concert gone) lies in availability. There probably is less supply in some areas or genres than others, plus for some music genre events the ticket prices can create boundaries, which is not that evident in the case of listening to a record at home.

The second example (ii.) (Table 4.) is based on the volume of which each individual item is consumed on a yearly basis, and we are able to apply fewer items than in the previous, since not every consumption object here can be measured as this type of intensity. Thus, we are able to compare the results depending on the varying approaches applied in measuring. For this example's purpose only six countries are selected (due to space limitations). The selection represents both ends of the volume scale, Denmark, Sweden and Spain having the greatest relative value based on activities, whereas the three remaining countries (Austria, Greece and Portugal) scored lowest in regards relative value of all 15 EU countries.

Table 4. Example on relative value (based on intensity in participating) of cultural activities within some countries, **(2ii.)**

	DK		SWE		SPA		AUT		GRE		POR
Library	5.8	Library	5.6	Cinema	7.0	Cinema	4.6	Cinema	4.6	Cinema	3.8
Cinema	4.3	Cinema	4.5	Library	3.0	Library	1.6	Historical monuments	1.2	Library	1.4
Historical monuments	3.0	Historical monuments	2.6	Historical monu-ments	1.9	Historical monu-ments	1.3	Library	1.1	Historical monuments	1.4
Concert	2.1	Concert	1.8	Concert	1.4	Concert	1.0	Archaeological sites	0.9	Concert	1.3
Museum	1.7	Museum	1.3	Theatre	1.0	Museum	0.9	Theatre	0.8	Museum	0.8
Museum abroad	1.1	Museum abroad	0.8	Museum	0.9	Theatre	0.9	Concert	0.8	Theatre	0.4
Theatre	0.9	Theatre	0.8	Archaeo-logical sites	0.6	Ballet	0.5	Museum	0.7	Archaeological sites	0.4
Archaeo-logical sites	0.7	Archaeo-logical sites	0.3	Museum abroad	0.5	Museum abroad	0.4	Ballet	0.4	Ballet	0.3
Ballet	0.3	Ballet	0.3	Ballet	0.3	Archaeo-logical sites	0.3	Museum abroad	0.3	Museum abroad	0.2

Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001)

(3) (Table 5.) We can use the means for yearly attendance also as a basis in determining roughly the **heavy-users** and the others. We need a point of reference for each single item in given society in order to define a line between a heavy-user and a regular-user or light-user. We can also have a category of zero-users (referred as ostravorousness in my previous writings, Virtanen 2004; 2005b; see also below in section (4)) in order to gain more understanding on the patterns.

Table 5. Means and standard deviations for participation volume by cultural activity of all young adults (n = 4747), **(3)**

	Mean	**Std. Deviation**
Ballet	0.3	1.1
Cinema	4.7	4.3
Theatre	0.8	1.8
Concert	2.5	3.9
Library	1.3	2.4
Historical monuments	3.0	4.7
Museum	1.8	2.9
Museum abroad	1.0	2.1
Archaeological sites	0.6	1.7
Ballet	0.5	1.3

Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001)

The standard deviations tell of the similar or differing popularity of given activity between countries. It seems that in general going to ballet, as unpopular – or rarely attended – it is, is universally shared feature. Whereas on the other end of the popularity the cinema-going varies greatly from country to country in terms of volume of attendance. Overall, young adults go see a movie approximately 5 times a year, where as ballet is an activity consumed less than once in a three years' period. For example the Spaniards go to movies 7 times a year in average, as the lowest nation to engage this activity are the Finns with 2,8 yearly mean. When it comes to ballet the variation of attendance goes from 0,2 (Germany and Ireland) of the least active to 0,6 of the most active ones, the Dutch.

(4) (Tables 6. and 7.) Taste typologies can be constructed by **summing up** consumer's **breadth of consumed cultural items**. In other words, here the number of different activities participated by one consumer is calculated and consumers can be regarded in terms of their **vorousness** i.e. the repertoire or multi-liking. We can anticipate four categories of 'vorousness' according the classical vorousness writings: univorous, omnivorous, voracious and, what I have decided to address here (and in previous papers Virtanen 2004; 2005b) as ostravorous. Ostravorousness refers to ostracism, which means that one has aversion towards all the cultural consumption items studied here. The consumer pattern of an ostravore is rather interesting theoretically, since it is laden with some sort of marginality. The non-consumers have also been studied previously, by for example López Sintas and García Alvarez (2002) or Bryson (on disliking see 1999), and they do form a sociologically interesting sub-group worth wider consideration.

In multi-item construction, total number of cultural activities attended and cultural hobbies possessed were utilized. In addition, a third category for determining patterns was formed using the previously mentioned items plus those, which are referred as 'supportive' above. Those, who have not taken part in a single activity during the last 12 months or do not have a cultural hobby, fell in the first category of ostravorous accordingly. 10 percent of young adults regarding activities and even 44 percent when it comes to hobbies belong to this marginality. In case of all the cultural items the proportion of non-consumers is about 3 percent. For other patterns, I defined measurements based on means and standard deviations as presented in table 6 below.

Table 6. Means and standard deviations for items, and suggestion for pattern cut-points (n= 4747), **(4)**

	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Univorous**	**Omnivorous**	**Voracious**
Sum activities	3.30	2.4	1–3	4–6	7–9
Sum hobbies	1.30	1.5	1	2–3	4–6
Sum activities + hobbies + supportive	5.70	3.6	1–5	6–9	10–17

Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001)

As we can determine the average number of different items engaged to, we can use this in helping to determine the categories of "vorousness", which is more scrutinized and justified than just assumptions and "nice-looking" categories that are presented above. Thus we can decide, that the mean consumer in given dimension is a cutting point, whereas the one's consuming less are defined univorous (and in the case of not consuming at all ostravorous) and the ones consuming more are either omnivorous or voracious. The latter ones can be defined with standard deviation. The omnivorous comprise of those who consume items an amount between mean and mean plus one standard deviation. The ones consuming even more, in the case of activities for example more than 5,7 items (=6) are voracious.

As is visible in the next table (7.), and what can be gathered by common knowledge and from previous literature, different amount of items consumed by one consumer is applicable in each different cultural context. In other words, some cultural domains require more time devotion than others, and thus the scope becomes limited and not as many items can be included in one consumer's repertoire as in other, less time-consuming domains. Here we can see roughly what separates for example omnivorous from voracious in cultural activities and cultural hobbies. What remains to be solved, is whether there are some distinctive items that make the substantial difference, that is to say, whether consumption of a given item is a good predictor of belonging to some particular group.

Table 7. Type of “vorousness” measured by sum variable of cultural activities, of cultural hobbies plus supportive consumption (n = 4747), **(4)**

Activities	**%**	**Tentative type of “vorousness” in activities**	**Hobbies**	**%**	**Tentative type of “vorousness” in hobbies**	**Activities + hobbies + supportive**	**%**	**Tentative type of “vorousness”**
none	9.9	ostravorous 10 %	none	43.6	ostravorous 44 %	none	3.2	ostravorous
one item	18.3	univorous 49 %	one item	20.5	univorous 35 %	1–3 items	29.1	univorous
2 items	17.1		2 items	14.2	omnivorous 16 %	4–9 items	51.4	omnivorous
3 items	13.8		3 items	10.8		10–17 items	16.3	voracious
4 items	11.5	omnivorous 29 %	4 items	5.8	voracious 5 %	Total	100.0	
5 items	10.2		5 items	3.5				
6 items	7.6		all items	1.3				
7 items	5.9	voracious 12 %	Total	100.0				
8 items	3.3							
all items	2.4							
Total	100.0							

Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001)

3.6. Explanations for taste pattern structuration

After some attempts in operationalization of taste patterns, it is good to review some of the reasons the scholars have presented on the reasons of why cultural consumption seems to be having such diversity in its forms. These issues are important to keep in mind, even though the scope in this article is not to scrutinize the reasons and conditions shaping the cultural consumption. There seems to be few issues that keep surfacing when explaining the consumption patterns regardless of the period of time or the angle of approach. One of these issues is the role of social class. Studies concerning cultural consumption often reflect on social inequality or social stratification, and they mainly focus on consumption of highbrow culture. Typically the findings show that the higher educated people attend more on the items in the field of highbrow culture such as literary reading, museum visits, ballets, operas and theatre (Van Eijck 2000, 208).

Katz-Gerro and Shavit (1998) claim, that in post-industrial societies no single important factor determines one's cultural tastes. Whereas position in the labour market has seized to be the topmost definer of an individual, more stress has been laid on such characteristics as ethnicity, religion and gender. We can further argue that educational credential seem to play an important role in cultivating taste for cultural orientation. As social class, education and income all are both intertwined and very important in the process of producing the taste for cultural consumption, we can see why there has been several, sometimes differing explanations for this practice.

Post-modern reasoning stresses other alternative determinants of cultural consumption patterns than the traditional approach of 'class and culture consumption', which has been criticized for over-simplification (Bihagen – Katz-Gerro 2000, 329). These options include complementary factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, and religious orientations to mention a few (cf. Toivonen 1992; 1996; Katz-Gerro – Shavit 1998; Wilska 1999; Räsänen 2003). Solid evidence have been found in several studies across the western world that those who are well educated and have high status jobs are in fact more inclined to omnivorous patterns of consumption (Peterson 2004). Similar circumstances seem to influence on the omnivorous and voracious consumption. Both are equally tied up with educational qualifications, occupational status, age and gender, according to Sullivan and Katz-Gerro (2004).

In Katz-Gerro's (2002) cross-cultural study, it seems that same variables affect the consumption of highbrow lifestyle in the same direction in all the countries, regardless of the social and other disparities. Older persons, the more educated, women, the more affluent, and urban residents tend to be leaning more towards the highbrow. There are some disruptions in the pattern in the case of some particular youngsters, which also makes age an important factor worth considering. The main determinant for highbrow cultural consumption is education along with classes fluctuating impact between countries.

Individualisation argument stands as an opposite for the traditional homology argument being a product of postmodernist frame of mind. The argument is briefly that, cultural taste and consumption have lost their grounding in social hierarchies; consumption cannot be explained by issues related to one's status. (Chan – Goldthorpe 2005). The more strict stream suggest that structures of any kind can not be predicted to shape consumption, whereas the weaker versions suggest that other structural bases has come to replace class in explanation of consumption. For example Erickson (1996, 218–219) has argued with her empirical support, that in the case of advantaged people (for example in high labour market positions or with high income or features related to omnivorousness) there is no one kind of taste profile that they share.

Cultural competency is generally thought to be reproduced both within families and formal education systems, and inequality is a by-product of this development (see e.g. Kesler 2003, 469). Cultural competence is closely related to distinctive consumption, of which Bourdieu's (1984) analysis is undoubtedly most renowned. Distinction becomes visible in the processes of all kinds of consumption where symbolical power is used in order to achieve or maintain one's status. Cultural competence is thus a part of the mechanism where also cultural capital is included. Cultural capital is one of the three resources used in status struggle, according to Bourdieu (Holt 1998). Although all these resources are being implemented in every aspect of life, in the field of consumption, which is relevant in the light of this study, cultural capital operates in form of tastes. Those tastes become visible in consumption practices (ibid., 4).

According to Erickson (1996, 219), "the most widely useful form of cultural resource is cultural variety plus the (equally cultural) understanding of the rules of relevance." This means that a wide spectrum of knowledge on all sorts of cultural phenomena gives an individual a possibility to adopt this knowledge to his favour in changing social situations. This will naturally give the most advantage thus it proves to be useful to have both wide range of interest and an understanding on the ways of conduct (i.e. rules) in differing situations. She continues with a statement on the limited importance of cultural capital. For some time a person well-stocked on cultural resources is under positive influence of this quality. For example some choices related with marriage or education are directed by cultural capital. (ibid., 221.)

The logic of high culture and popular culture boils eventually down to taste. Even though the logic of some object to be asserted the qualities of high culture is to say at least complex and illogical we can find a phenomenon that helps to disentangle and interpret the ways of high, low and popular. This phenomenon is fashion, a mechanism that has been thoroughly studied by many scholars both in the field of sociology and other disciplines. One of the most influential writings on fashion is that of Georg Simmel, who scrutinizes fashion and its essence in the essay “The Philosophy of the Fashion” (1986 [Philosophie der Mode 1905]) the way, which is fully applicable in today’s world.

One sociological explanation for cultural consumption is family socialization. Values and practices are formed within family and they are shaped in an intergenerational mechanism. This has been argued to reassert upholding of class status. Arts appreciation can be trained, say some researchers. One must learn to read the work of art in order to appreciate it, in the same manner as we learn to decipher a language. This is achieved with a lot of training, but of course it becomes less hard if one was born in right kind of supporting surroundings. Thus we might assume that the children of visually or musically sophisticated families are greatly advantaged. Other place for training is naturally school. These both realms have been mentioned together with cultural capital; by definition cultural capital is created both in family socialization and schooling. The literature and research regarding cultural consumption has proved that in fact, education is a critical predictor of consumption of high arts but not the popular ones, suggesting that education is only important for understanding the more complex codes that prevail in highbrow arts. (DiMaggio – Useem 1978.)

DiMaggio and Useem (1978) have presented a proposition on class cohesion improvement, which has to do with social solidarity of those who attend the same type of events. This of course increases the possibility of exclusion in the pursuit of inclusion. The members of upper-middle or upper classes would like to maintain their position by erecting boundaries, which might by impossible by those of lower class members to surmount. Thereby ideological unity is reinforced, and the class homogeneity of the participants ensures that social unity is also perpetuated. Also, the opportunity for the upper-middle class member to identify with upper class can be one reason for arts audience participation. It can be called status maintenance or in some cases status elevation/promotion. (DiMaggio – Useem 1978.)

3.7. Discussion

Several approaches were presented above in empirical terms. These presentations need to be elaborated, and some of their information needs to be merged. The linkage between intensity and breadth (proposition 5) was not provided within the examples, and it will remain as future challenge. However, some classifications regarding general consumption activity, the relative value of cultural consumption items embedded in target society and also patterns were offered. Intensity, scope, quality and breadth of consumption were approached. The next effort will be contributing to creating a multi-dimensional view on patterns and their construction.

What needs to be answered by the future research is the proportion of each type and how they are related to socioeconomic variables traditionally used in explanation. The effect of class is also disputed according to previous literature, so that will be tested, too. I believe that when applying several approaches when trying to define a pattern, we can come much closer to a solution and/or a plausible explanation what causes the emergence of patterns. As several propositions have been put forward, it would be easier to address relevant explanations when we have scrutinized the structure of the consumption pattern, and maybe even that of taste.

It can be argued that musical preferences cannot be utilized as such when measuring over all taste, but if we consider the aspects of various "vorousness" theses, a tendency to like what ever music genre is sufficient measurement to be used in sum variables. If for example in one country multiple genres are appreciated to at least moderate extent and in another country more genres are dismissed, we could (with some reservation) refer the former country more omnivorous than the latter. Thus a total proportion of various genres can reveal some sort of internal logic of given society in the case of music preferences, i.e. taste for musical genres.

In constructing a pattern there is also another reason than relative value why the **volume of consumption** is of major importance. An orientation which is able to reveal not only the taste for certain objects but also the strength of that taste towards its consumption is relevant in several cases. For example, we can form a more vivid picture of a consumer, if we know that the taste for domestic museums is not only restricted to one visit per year. We are able to construct a more coherent pattern, if we are aware that a consumer visits rather often a given consumption venue or venues, and if we are in addition able to combine that information, say, with the knowledge or his/her tendency of read a lot of books and engaging a supportive creative hobby, we are very close to a rich view to a pattern.

An aspect worth consideration within the concept **heavy-usage** is to refer to popularity. Popularity includes explicitly (or implicitly) in the idea of social approval of highly valued i.e. legitimate consumption objects. Consumption objects that provide their consumer with social advantages can be considered to be of higher value than those, which are commonly used, popular, and thus their relative social i.e. distinctive value is lesser. Even though heavy-user-ness does not simply and only refer to distinctive and socially elevating consumer behavior, it has certain advantages when forming patterns and trying to solve their internal logic. An empirical attempt to define heavy-user can be based on general popularity. If we take consumption object's proportional popularity (i.e. consumption percentage) within the whole population of potential consumers we are able to determine the mean consumption rate. We can expect the potential *heavy-users* to be above the mean, and the ones considerably below the mean can be dubbed for example *light-users* (if we wish to be consistent) or non-consumers, if they turn out to be considerably lower consumer than the average. Here I have also used the term semi-users to describe the ones who portray the average consumer ("The Joneses"). Intensity takes into consideration the volume that one item (or set of items) is consumed by an individual. This broadens the view on consumer and allows interpretations on the values (and meanings?), which are attached in item in question. We must bear in mind that the intensity which produces heavy-users varies in given circumstances. For example libraries are visited typically far more often than operas. Thus, we must set the boundaries individually for each item.

The variables selected in the pattern construction form only a fragment of all possible items to be considered as cultural consumption (see Peterson 2004). This is partially due to the reality that there is a vast repertoire of cultural items which consumers can choose from in the contemporary commodity culture (Warde et al. 1999, 106).

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Appendix. Background variables

Table A1. Background variables in the data set of young adults (n = 4747)

Background	Values	%
Education		
(age at completion)	23 – yrs	21.0
	20 – 22 yrs	23.0
	17 – 19 yrs	32.9
	– 16 yrs	22.1
Gender	Male	47.6
	Female	52.4
Age	28–35 years	52.2
	20–27 years	47.8
Income quartile	Highest IV	19.0
	Second highest III	17.0
	Second lowest II	16.3
	Lowest I	14.6
	DK	33.2
Class	Service	12.5
	Entrepreneurs	7.7
	Non-manuals	25.8
	Manuals	19.6
	Students	15.6
	Unemployed	18.8

Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 data (Christensen 2001.)

Education. The variable measuring respondent's educational credentials is the age at completing full-time education. The measurement is rather coarse, but quite valid both in respect of differing schooling systems across the Europe, and since the years of schooling has been as direct reflection of the amount of cultural capital (e.g. Bourdieu 1984). The variable has four categories: age at completion 16 years or less; from 17 to 19 years; from 20 to 22 years; 23 years and over. The category including those, who are still performing their education, and thus they cannot yet be situated in any of the above-mentioned categories are represented in the class category of students. They have been included in the education variable by replacing their current status as their equivalent achieved status in future, i.e. student aged 20 to 22 are included in category 3 and students older that in category 4.

Class. The variable was constructed in accordance with López Sintas and García Álvarez (2002), who have studied omnivorousness in Spain. The original construction is based on Erickson–Goldthorpe schema, but variations from it has been used in several studies on cultural consumption (Katz-Gerro & Shavit 1998; Bihagen & Katz-Gerro 2000; cf. Erola 2004, 201–202 for three-class construction). Here, 6 categories are used: (1) service for professionals and managerial positions; (2) entrepreneurs and self-employed; (3) employed non-manuals; (4) manual workers; (5) unemployed and economically inactive and (6) students.

Income. The variable is measured on the harmonized scale which cut respondents into four groups depending on their income. Even though the variable is constructed and applied for the whole sample and not just the sub-sample of young adults, the income is quite evenly distributed. A drawback in using this variable is the great amount (33 percent of respondents) of unattained information ('DK' in the table). In addition also respondents can be compared in terms of their age.

B. LIFESTYLES, CONSUMPTION AND IDENTITIES

4. EXERCISING FREEDOM AND CONTROL IN THE SUPERMARKET FROM AN OVERWEIGHT PERSPECTIVE[1].

Annemette Nielsen

Abstract
The consumption of goods plays a central role in modern identity formation. As consumers, we are told we are free to decide how we look, what we eat, where we shop, what kind of individuals we want to be etc. However, the identity we hold on to or strive for; continuously poses demands on our choices. We cannot consume anything if we want to be or become *someone*! Thus consumption of goods may be described as an arena, where the freedom of choice is enacted alongside self-control over what and how to consume. This paper provides examples of how self-control and freedom is exercised in the context of food shopping among young people who want to loose weight. The data is created through participatory observation. The findings are discussed in relation to results from other studies of identity formation.

Keywords: identity, control, consumption, food

4.1. Introduction

In the analysis of identity formation in modern, western societies at least two points seem to have become broadly recognized by social scientists. One is that the consumption of goods in our society plays a core role for identity formation (Micheletti 2003; Warde 1997). It follows from this that the avoidance of certain forms of consumption can play just as central a part in identity formation as consumption itself. The other point is that perceived

[1] This draft paper was originally presented at a PhD course entitled *Explanation of consumption and consumer culture*.

individual freedom[2] is pivotal to the way we define and try to achieve the goals we pursue (lit.).

I take my point of departure in the assumption that as creator of identity consumption is enacted in the field of tension between the exercise of self-control in relation to what and what not to buy and the exercise of freedom of choice. As has been shown e.g. in Anna Willets study on meat-eating vegetarians in London, this tension is not at all clear cut. People who identify as vegetarians may take the liberty under certain self defined circumstances to eat meat without being affected in their self perception as vegetarians (Willetts 1997). Also the two concepts – freedom and control - are intertwined to some degree. The enactment of self-control may be understood as an expression of freedom. This understanding is expressed in theoretical concepts such as empowerment and governmentality developed among others within the field of Health studies (Petersen & Lupton 1996;Rose 1998).

The aim of this paper is to give examples of how self-control and perceived individual freedom is exercised in a concrete context of food shopping among young individuals, who conceive of themselves as overweight. The data for this study is still under creation, but the main share of data collection has taken place. It consists of qualitative semi-structured interviews with 25 participants in a dietary intervention trial study carried out at the Department for Human Nutrition[3] and of observational field notes from a total of 15 meetings with five of these participants in situations of shopping and cooking. Often observations included both.

4.2. The dietary intervention study

The comparison of different shopping practices, which my study population has used during the course of the study, is central to my analysis. I therefore begin by describing the design of the dietary intervention study in some detail. The people participating in the intervention trial were all defined as overweight or obese according to WHO standards. They all had a Body Mass Index (BMI) above 28. For the participants, a major reason for participating in the intervention trial was a self image of being overweight and a major motivation was the guaranteed weight loss which participation included. The

[2] Inspired by the works of theorists such as Michel Foucault, Thomas Ziehe and Nicholas Rose, I prefer to use the term ‘perceived individual freedom’ stressing the situatedness of individuals within larger structures of power, which to some extent determine their possibilities of acting and thinking even if they are not themselves aware of this. I may not have managed to use the term through the whole of this text. Nevertheless this should explain, what I mean, when I write ‘individual freedom’ or the like.

[3] The study is called the MUFObes-study (Mono Unsaturated Fatty acids in Obesity).

intervention trial, which is still running at the time of writing, is carried out as a randomized, controlled, long term ad libitum dietary intervention study. That the study is *randomized* means that the participants do not themselves choose which of the three dietary types they are to follow. That the study is *ad libitum* means that there is no restriction on the amount of food intake among participants. That it is *controlled* on the other hand means that for a certain period of time *all* food is provided to the test-persons by the study, and that consumption is registered both by the study personnel and by the test persons themselves.

The study population consisted in the beginning of 125 participants who were divided into three groups. These groups were then encouraged to follow three different types of dietary regimens for ideally four years. In the case of this intervention trial, a diet composed according to a set of new recommendations, called “The MUFA diet” was tested against the currently recommended diet: “the NNA diet”. The third dietary group functions as the control group, and was encouraged to eat a diet composed according to the “average Danish diet” (in the study called “the Control diet”). The scientific aims of the study are to examine the long-term effect of the new type of diet with respect to weight maintenance (not weight loss!), and its effect on risk factors in the metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease and type-2 diabetes[4].

The study began with a pre-study intervention period of eight weeks during which all the participants were put on a substitution diet. Only those who were able to shed at least 8% of their body weight were accepted as participants for the real study. The real study then began with a “shop accustomization period” of two weeks, during which all participants ate according to the “control diet”, while baseline examinations are carried out (measures of body fat, fat biopsies and blood tests etc.). But also a period in which the participants are taught how the trial shop functions.

After these 10 weeks the three different groups began to follow the dietary regimens to which they were randomly selected. The group following the MUFA diet aims at a dietary composition of 40 fat energy % rich on plant oils, less than 40-50 E% carbohydrate and 15-20 E% protein. The group following the present recommendations (NNA) aims at an intake of 25 E% fat, 55-60 E% carbohydrate and 15-20 E% protein and the control group, following aims at an average composition of macronutrients in their diet: 35 E% fat, 48 E% carbohydrate and 13 E% protein.

[4] The study is planned to run until 2007, but may for lack of funding be terminated already in 2005.

4.3. The university store

All participants “shopped” or collected all their food products in a special store build for this purpose at the university department. During the accustomization period the participants were trained to use the store. This involved the ability to read the different signs put up for the various groups and to understand the registration procedure taking place by the “cash register”. At the cash register all products, which the participant had chosen was scanned into a computer system and the composition of macronutrients calculated. If the dietary composition did not fit the defined standard of the specific dietary type, the participant was instructed to add specific types of products to her shopping basket or to remove some products. The participants were also instructed to calculate and register quite accurately whatever they did not eat from their purchase (the “waste” and the “leftovers”) and whatever they ate which did not come from the university shop (the “forbidden products”). According to their needs, the participants received continuous guidance in their shopping by dieticians and other staff members working on the project. They also received individual counselling by dieticians and each group was offered a cooking course once.

The store itself in some respects looked like an ordinary supermarket and in other respects it did not. Apart from alcohol and soft drinks, the shop contained all kinds of products which an ordinary food store would contain. This means that it did not only contain products which are considered healthy from a nutritional science perspective or only products which were needed to follow the composition of macro nutrients as defined for the different dietary groups. On the shelves one would also find e.g. different kinds of cakes, pastry, candy as well as frozen ready made dishes and semi-fabricated dishes. On a daily basis the actual availability of different products would depend on different factors, such as the ability of the study personnel to get sponsorships from different firms, on the calculations made by the scientific staff on what was necessary to meet the requirement of the different dietary types and finally on wishes expressed by the participants.

However, the “costumers” were aided in their shopping by different signs put up on freezers, shelves and refrigerators. These signs would remind them of the nutritional compositions of the different dietary groups and would inform them on different products with respect to these. For instance it would say on the refrigerator containing mayonnaise and plant oil that these were “mostly for the MUFA group” and on the freezer with red meat that this was mostly for the control group. There would also be guidelines in the form of posters with pictures e.g. of food pyramids for the MUFA and the NNA diets and of schematic presentations of various products and their content of macronutrients. On a shelf, a variety of cook books was put on display, for the costumers to study.

Another thing that made the shop different was the possibility of the customers to decide on the portion sizes of certain product types themselves. Not only fruit and vegetables were shopped according to a pick-and-weigh-yourself principle as in “normal” food stores, but also dried products like rice, oat, beans, lentils, corn flakes and nuts were accessible in this way. In the frozen meat counter it was possible to take only a small piece of fish or meat or a hand full of french fries. Plastic gloves were placed on the counter for the purpose of self service.

On one of the walls a big notice board gave information to the costumers e.g. of the date of the “cooking school” sessions or reminded them to make appointments for their next meeting with their dietician. Also pictures from a newspaper article about the intervention study were put up showing some of the scientists running the project as well as a few of the participants after their initial weight loss.

4.4. University shopping routines

As a costumer in the university store, the design of the store alone as described above, implied a somewhat different shopping behaviour than an ordinary supermarket. Even though as a costumer you were free to move around in the store with your shopping basket as you wished and in principle pick out any food product you wanted, you were confronted with different images, information and tasks compared to an ordinary food purchaser. The differences also included certain routines which the project required from the participants when doing their shopping. Outside the university store a big white board was put up with a calendar drawn upon it. For each participant the board contained a magnetic button with the number of the test person. Before leaving each shopping session the test person was supposed to move her button to the date of her next shopping session. By the study personnel this system was used to keep track of how often each test person showed up and to plan the opening hours of the store. If a test person did not show up as indicated and had not telephoned to cancel her visit, she would eventually be contacted by the study personnel and asked to make a new shopping appointment.

As the test person entered the store the first thing she was supposed to do was to get on a scale placed right by the entrance. For each session she should inform the personnel at the “cash register” of her present weight and this information would then be put into the computer system. When all her groceries had been scanned into the computer, she was informed by the staff whether or not her purchase lived up to the required standard and would then either be instructed by the staff or decide for herself what changes to make in order to make the right balance before she left the store. At the cash register the costumer would also hand in her list of waste, leftover and forbidden products, which would then be calculated into the new purchase.

As in other stores the registering process would sometimes lead to the formation of a line of waiting costumers in front of the one or two working “cash registers”. During the first month of the 6 months shopping period, the costumer would be allowed to see her balance sheet after each shopping session. Here she could see how much her purchase amounted to with relation to the optimal energy requirement which had been calculated by the study based on information on her level of daily physical activity, gender, height and weight. After one month this information was concealed from the test persons. A reason for this was the ambition to prepare the test persons for real life shopping later on, where they would have to base their food intake not on calculated intake and output figures but on a bodily feeling of need for food and satiety and on a knowledge about how to compose concrete meals based on the dietary guidelines, they were randomized to follow. Finally, in order to comprehend the test persons’ perceptions of the shopping sessions, it is important to stress that no exchange of money took place at the university store.

After 6 months of shopping all their food products at the university store, the participants were “set free” to conduct most of their own shopping. Due to lack of funding the intervention study from this point on only provide 20% of the participants average nutritional needs for free. These 20% consists of food products of central importance to the various dietary types, meaning that the MUFA group receives products such as oil and beans, the NNA group poultry meat and bread and the control group receives red meat and high fat cheese.

4.5. About the observations and interviews

I began carrying out my observational studies on shopping practices as the test persons entered into “period two” of the dietary intervention study. During this period, which lasts for one year, the test persons have to shop and pay for the majority of the food they consume themselves.

During my study, I had the opportunity to go shopping with 5 different test persons. Various factors influenced who they were. In the very beginning of my study, I conducted interviews with 25 test persons, selected according to their sex, the size of their house holds, the dietary groups and their employment status. I planned to ask each of these informants for permission to follow him or her in situations of eating, shopping or cooking over the next three months. However, as already the first two informants agreed to my request right away, I began to select the rest of the test persons I asked more carefully. My hope was to enter into such sessions of participant observation with test persons of both sexes, of all three dietary groups and of different house hold sizes. In reality, I managed to fulfil the first two ambitions. Only in one of the five cases did my informant live in a shared household[5]. This of course affects my data on shopping practices considerably, as shopping for or as a family differs substantially from shopping by and for oneself. The analysis below, however, also draws upon data derived from qualitative interviews with 25 test persons half of whom were members of shared households. In these interviews questions about attitudes and practices related to shopping were also asked[6,] and as we shall se below differences between shopping at the university store and in "real life" were pointed to by informants.

Out of a total of 15 observations, 12 included shopping events. Each of these lasted between 10 and 35 minutes with an average of 20 minutes. The shopping place was chosen by the informant exclusively and led to the larger proportion of them taking place in supermarkets. One informant, however, also took me shopping for food in a small grocery shop. Each time, the informant was asked to "think aloud" as much as possible while conducting his or her shopping. In addition, I would ask question along the way. I tried out different styles of note taking. Most of the times, I would simply make a list of the foods being looked at and bought. Other times I would also make notes on statements and behaviour of the informant as we went through the shop. Finally, at times I would not take out my notebook until after the session was finished. After each shopping event, however I would sit down and make detailed notes within 15 minutes after I had left the informant.

My observation guide was structured according to five different dimensions (Spradley 1980) (Place, Products, Actors, Time and Context), each containing sub-questions I had defined beforehand[7]

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[5] Test persons living in shared households were considerably harder to arrange interviews with. They were more likely to express an experience of stress in their everyday life and often made me feel unable to ask them for more of their precious time.

[6] As the first round of interviews was conducted at a time when most test persons were still in "period 1" I will have to await the next round of interviews in order to ask questions about shopping experiences in real life with the aim of living up to the dietary standards.

[7] Examples of these are: <u>Place</u>: According to which criteria is the place for shopping picked? Where does shopping take place? Where does shopping not take place? How are different shopping places described and evaluated?

4.6. Supermarkets as a locus of freedom

The supermarket in large cities, where my informants, mainly carried out their everyday shopping for food products, in many ways represents the ultimate opportunity for people in our society to enact their perceived freedom of choice concerning the consumption of food. Compared to the smaller grocery shops, specialized shops like butchers and green grocers etc., the supermarket provides an opportunity to carry out shopping under highly individualized and anonymous conditions. As a costumer one may move freely with one's trolley or basket between the aisles of goods and take the time one needs to study the different offers. Of course one may be severely limited in one's choices and product investigations by other factors such as money or a hungry and tired child in the trolley, but one's choice is not controlled, evaluated or put under surveillance by others from outside ones private sphere (Sellerberg 1978). One may go through a total shopping event without making eye contact or exchanging words with a single person. Only in the line before the cash register does the possibility for public control still exist. At least in Denmark, the so-called "line of discretion" has not yet been introduced in supermarket as we know them from e.g. banks and ticket offices. Nor has a technology by which the cash register itself is to become superfluous been introduced yet[8].

Within such institutionalized frameworks for freedom-of-choice enactment, in which most forms of social control as we know them from other contexts of food consumption, has been eliminated, this control is mainly left to the individual consumer herself[9].

People who want to loose weight by changing the way they eat belong to a group to whom the freedom of choice offered by supermarkets may be described as representing a risk in their everyday life. As I shall illustrate below, controlling this risk was a matter of great concern for the participants in the dietary intervention trial. At the same time, however, the attitudes and practices, which these people expressed, also clearly showed the importance of holding on to and nursing an image of being free both in the eyes of one self and others.

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[8] I read in a paper, that a technology was under development, supplying the trolley with a scanner which would enable the costumer to simply pay the trolley with her credit card before she left the supermarket.

[9] The development towards greater freedom of choice in the supermarket is interestingly paralleled by the development of still more advanced system, by which the costumers are put under surveillance and control in the shape of electronic registration of costumers' patterns of purchase, of analysis made of costumer segments with the aim of refining marketing techniques.

4.7. Importance attributed to control over food shopping practices

When asked to compare the situation of shopping at the university store to the way a trial participant usually shopped for food, different kinds of answers were given, which put focus on the embedded possibilities for controlling food consumption deriving from shopping at the university store.

One great advantage conceived by shopping at the university store, was the fact that your intake of food in a way had already been controlled for you once you left the supermarket. Even if this is only true for the composition of the macronutrients in the food brought home, it was pointed to as a major comforter for the test person, who was able simply to eat everything in her cupboard without feeling bad about it because the study personnel had authorized it. In this way even the things normally perceived as forbidden fruits by an overweight person, would obtain status as legitimate and controlled intake. Through my observations, I noted how this process of legitimization was transferred into the real life shopping situation.

> After looking around for a bit Bryan (who is in the control group) asks a service assistant, who is filling up shelves, for directions to find the instant chocolate "Nesquick". The young man shows us where it is (…). Due to the shopping for instant chocolate, we have broken the "natural" route through the supermarket, which we have followed so far. We are now almost back in the section through which we entered. Gazing further ahead, Bryan suddenly cheerfully makes his way deeper into the shop, explaining to me that from the study [that is the intervention trial] he has learned that "biscuits do not make you fat". We reach the section with cakes and sweet biscuits and he tells me that he is looking for the type called "Prinzenruller". He takes a two pack and says: "four of these a day. That is nice!" He laughs.
>
> (Fieldnote 1.1)

Being controlled by the study could be conceived as one of the primary benefits by entering the trial as a test person. The registration of weight and food intake one or several times a week was often described as the "push" one needed to stop gaining weight. Several times I heard test persons describing themselves as in lack of will power, possessing a "weak backbone" explaining their need for someone else to control them. The study was also regarded as an opportunity to commit oneself to something important (scientific research), thereby ensuring extra pressure on oneself not to abandon ones responsibility towards the scientists who depended on the data.

The personal contact with the staff at the university store and the regular encounters with other test persons could also motivate the participants to control their shopping. One participant, however, described how this feeling changed after a while. In the beginning she was very concerned that the staff at the store should disregard her choice of food products and took care not to buy anything "unhealthy", but after a while she realized that they did not mind such purchases at all. In fact the personnel encouraged the test persons to get something for the sweet tooth in order to avoid being too tempted and get something from somewhere else (i.e. to loose control).

This is one example of how the study personnel would help participants control their consumption of food while in period 1. But the study also aimed at preparing the participants for their shopping in real life after the end of period 1. Especially by the dieticians, test persons if they showed an interest were trained to make shopping lists before going shopping and to calculate their exact needs on a meal by meal basis. They were encouraged to continue shopping for food only ones or twice a week. While the advantages of making shopping lists and of limiting ones shopping frequency was acknowledged to a wide extent by my informants the calculation of one's needs on a meal by meal basis was not regarded as practicable in real life. In an ordinary supermarket, most goods are simply not sold on a choose-and-weight-it-yourself basis and also economic rationality often requires that costumers go for the big offers, implying that you buy a lot for less. To several of the people I interviewed, this was a cause for considerable worries when thinking about their possibilities for maintaining their weight through period 2. This is reflected in the following observation.

> Laura, who is in the MUFA group, grabs a bag of walnuts and explains to me that half of it is for snold (i.e. candy) this week and half is for next week. She states the opinion that being "forced" to buy such large amounts at the time (the bag is one of 150 g.), leads her to eating more. She gives an example from last weekend, where she had bought some candy for her friends who visited her. Normally, she would eat an avocado for supper when she got home from work Monday night [her long day at work, where she also has dinner at work], but because there was still some candy left over from the weekend, she ended up eating both the avocado and the candy.
> (Field note 4.2)

Making private rules for ones consumption of food products is common among the participants I have interviewed. As the case above illustrate the conditions of shopping sometimes enhances the necessity of bringing those rules to one's own house. In other cases, rules or strategies can be implemented, which prevent the food from entering one's house in the first place. The people I followed used various strategies. One was drinking a lot of water before entering the supermarket in order not to feel hungry. Another was to avoid entering different parts of the supermarket, where candy bars were placed. Other kinds of behaviour which I recorded allows for a discussion of whether or not they may be described as techniques. At least they did not seem to be implemented consciously. One of these techniques may be described as *avoidance through explication*. Some of the people I followed would talk a lot about things that they would like to buy as we went through the supermarket, but then not buy them anyway. Becoming conscious of ones eating pattern is regarded as an important technique in order to achieve weight loss or avoid regains. Hence, such explication may be regarded as a technique of bringing forth consciousness. Another type of behaviour, almost worked opposite. Rather than dwelling with one's wants and wishes, two informants seemed to limit their confrontations with the products on the supermarket shelves as much as possible[10]. One rushed through the supermarket, only buying products for the one meal to be prepared later that day. Another led his girlfriend plan and carry out the larger part of the shopping, knowing that she wanted to help him stick to the dietary prescriptions.

4.8. Importance attributed to freedom of choice in food shopping practice

While aiming to control their intake of food through various shopping practices, it is also clear from the interviews and observational data that the maintenance of an image of not being too controlled in one's eating and consumption practices was important to the test persons. In the interviews several informants described people, who they did *not* want to be like. Such people were described as "hysterical" or "fanatic" persons, who would only eat salad even when they were skinny and count calories all the time. Informants also expressed the concern that other people would find them impolite if for instance they did not eat, whatever food was offered to them in social contexts. In general there was a strong wish among the test persons to reach a level of balance or harmony, where "healthy behaviour" related to eating practices became so bodily embedded that they reached the level of unconsciousness thereby making control superfluous[11].

Quite a lot of the test persons whom I interviewed compared their participation in the intervention study to former experiences of joining weight loss programs such as the Danish Weight Watchers or the Weight Consultants. Often these comparisons stressed the feeling of having more freedom under the intervention study design, a freedom which they appreciated. The study

[10] I asked this woman several times if this was the way she usually did her shopping and she confirmed this. Still, I cannot exclude the possibility, that her focus and shopping for one meal at the time was influenced by the fact that she also let me cook with her after each shopping event.

[11] I am uncertain whether such a state is best described in terms of perceived freedom… However this problem about the relation between the importance of consciousness and unconsciousness for successful dietary change is something I plan to work on in another paper.

design did not put up limits to how much one was allowed to eat a day. It did not put up any demands on what kind of dishes to make and the range of food products one was allowed to eat was described as considerably more varied. Informants described how they experienced an even greater freedom of choice when shopping at the university store than they did when they shopped in ordinary supermarket. As products were free of charge, the university store provided the opportunity to try out all sorts of new food products that they would usually not risk spending their money on, because they did not know if they would like them or know how to prepare them properly. No limitations to one's possibilities of experimenting with unknown food products or dishes were conceived, since one could simply put the products one did not eat on the list of "waste". Many people – especially students – also appreciated the opportunity to get food products, which were too expensive for them to buy under normal circumstances. Especially fish, shell fish, meat and avocado were appreciated.

Still, this was a feeling that did not last for everyone during the entire 6 months of period 1. Test persons complained in the interviews that they got fed up with the selection of foods at the university store. They longed to shop around among a wider selection of products in a bigger supermarket, where they could find new products as well as the well known brands they missed. They were also tired of registering everything and not being able to buy for longer than one week at the time.

As opposed to my description above of the supermarket as a space free of social control, a few informants noted that they actually felt more free shopping among other overweight people in the university store. They would reflect on, how they had the habit of watching the shopping baskets of fat people in the supermarket themselves, thinking: "perhaps she should have gotten something else", and reflecting on how others might think the same about them. Being a part of the intervention study could on the other hand lead to perceiving the university store as a free space were "we are all in the same boat" as one described it.

Through my observations and conversations with people while they shopped, I was struck by the complexity of choices that people deal with on the spot and by the great speed with which choices are made. Even when my informants brought a shopping list with them, which in most cases they did not, alterations were often made in the face of a concrete shopping situation. The observation below illustrates this.

> It is 4 pm and I have just arrived at Kirsten's apartment. We have made an appointment for a combined shopping/cooking and eating session. Kirsten (who belongs to the NNA group) tells me right away that she has decided that we are going to make "Jordskokke-suppe" (Soup of Jerusalem artichoke). As she as already bought the Jerusalem artichoke

> at the green grocers on the way home from school, she explains that we are only going to buy onion and milk at the supermarket along with "some accompaniments, which I have not yet decided on", she says. (…). The first shelf she approaches at the supermarket is the bread shelf. She says to me that she finds that the bread in this particular store is always "boring" and that she therefore "never buys it". Nevertheless she pays attention to some baguettes which lie on the shelf. It is a three pack. At a first glance, the baguettes look more whole grain like than the other types of white bread on the shelf, and their toppings, in the form of spices, are all different colours. Kirsten grabs a bag and searchingly squeezes the bread a little. She then puts it back on the shelf. I ask her why. She takes the bread once again and explains to me that she thought it looked interestingly at first, that perhaps it was different than the other types of white bread in the store, but when she looked closer she thought that it was just ordinary white bread with some spices on the top. She now reads the list of ingredients on the package, and comments that one of the baguettes contains dried tomatoes. She does not believe that she will like the taste of this. (We get the other products and she decides on chicken for accompaniment to the soup) (…). On the way towards the cash register, she stops by a tall mounting of different types of products: Christmas decorations and chocolate but also some bags with "Nan bread". She shortly glances at one of them and says: "they usually taste fine". She puts the bread in her shopping basket. I ask her if she has tried this type of bread before. She says that she has tried something that looks the same from another supermarket, and that she usually likes the taste of the spices being used for it.
>
> (Field note 2.2)

The possibility of changing one's mind, of giving in to sudden temptations, of breaking usual routines when something new comes up and of including other elements in the meal than those planned for seemed highly utilised by the test persons I followed around. I will argue that the realization of such possibilities signals the importance of experiencing a liberty to choose freely what to eat.

Whereas two of the test persons I followed, like Kirsten above, did not seem to try to limit her enactment of free choice in the context of shopping, others as mentioned above seemed to do this, through different strategies of control. It seemed, however, that even those who most consciously aimed at e.g. at avoiding temptations managed to obtain a feeling of freedom in their shopping practices. Laura as well as Bryan (see the first two observations) both mentioned as their most favoured place in the supermarket, the "mess department", a section in one of the most successful Discount supermarkets in Denmark, Netto, devoted to special bargins of all sorts of products, lying arbitrarily around on the area it seems, from clothes over electric equipment to food products which do not belong to the standard repertoire of the store. Here shopping lists simply ceased to function and it seemed fully legitimate to let oneself be tempted to go for an irresistible offer. This reaction is comparable, I will argue, to the incident where Kirsten decides to buy the nan-bread even if she had already decided on chicken as accompaniment for the soup. It is also comparable to the incident where Bryan in the observation cited above chooses to buy the chocolate biscuits. In all cases, what we see is that the order of things is disturbed. Either the food products are placed out of a well defined category or the costumer finds himself in a part of the store, in which he had not planned to be. In these situations the possibility of changing plans, of giving way to temptation seem more likely to be enacted.

Finally, the need for freedom was also expressed in the refusal by some informants to stick strictly to the dietary standard.

> Laura has told me several of times that she has a big weakness for cheese, which she refuses to live without. As we reach the cheese refrigerator, she points out two kinds that she especially prefers from this supermarket: “Port Salute” and a garlic crème cheese. She knows quite a lot about cheese as she works in a food shop herself. She explains to me about the different kinds and tells me, that she bought a “delicious gorgonzola” at her work and kept it sealed in her fridge. She used it as a treat to celebrate her finishing of period 1 in the trial. She is sceptical towards most of the cheeses in this supermarket, which she describes as “rubbery”. She points to a hard cheese, which she likes, but will not buy because it is too big “not a single cheese”, as she expresses it. She also points to an Alp-cheese which she likes “though I know that many people don’t”. She bought one of these last week, however. Today she buys a parmesan cheese, which I notice, is also listed on her shopping list. It is to be used to make a new type of Pesto from, which she just found a recipe for in a ladies’ magazine. Making pesto is one of the ways in which she manages to consume all the olive oil, which the MUFA diet prescribes. As we return to her apartment she unpacks her goods. She puts the cheese into the special cheese box in the very bottom of the fridge. The gorgonzola lies on one of the shelves. Laura explains to me that the cheese box is a good thing because it keeps her from eating the cheese. She has made a rule, that she is only allowed to eat from the gorgonzola once a day, and that she has to finish the gorgonzola before she opens another cheese in the box.

(Field note 4.2)

Like in the case of Bryan, Laura legitimizes her consumption of the foods she likes, but in some way conceives as not-allowed, by inscribing them in systems authorized by the intervention study pesto being a recommended way of achieving the high intake of fat in the MUFA group. However, she also consciously breaks the rules of not eating cheese, because she refuses to derive herself of her favourite food. Laura did the same with red meat, which the MUFA group is also supposed to limit to a minimum. As in the case of cheese, her “solution” to her dilemma, was to get the foods she wanted, and then make hard restrictions on her intake of them at home. While she puts her cheese in a box and observes strict rules of daily intake, she splits the red meat up into small portions of 200 grams, which she then contains in her freezer. Regarding the meat; she observed the rule that every time she made a meal with the meat; the portion should last for two days. She found it very hard to stick to this rule, she told me.

4.9. Discussion

The British anthropologist Daniel Miller, speaks of shopping as sacrifice (of women to the family and society) and of *the treat* as the "linchpin in associating consumption with the self (Miller 1998, 47). Whereas my material does not enable me to speak of the role of shopping for family relations, I think that Miller's view on the role of the treat in identity building may be useful to my analysis. At least if we regard the treat as an expression of the enacted need to express freedom of choice in order to counterbalance the constant strive for control over unwanted food consumption habits and desires. However, my data on shopping practices also prompt me to look sceptically at Miller's analysis as a general theory of shopping.

Miller claims that the function of the treat is to link consumption and the self. It is a way of legitimizing the sacrifice that doing the shopping is by ensuring that the shopper also gets something out of it herself. Miller also claims that the existence of the treat proves that shopping in general is "anything but a treat". He then connects this 'anything' to the role of the family, as he states: "The treat is an important piece of evidence behind the suggestion that most shopping is directed to people other than the shoppers themselves". I think that what my analysis shows, compared to Miller's, is that this is not necessarily true in any case. Shopping may contain other elements apart from the treat which serves to connect consumption to the self. One of these elements is self-control. Miller also operates with a concept which I would argue includes an element of control, namely 'thrift'. Thrift, is by Miller seen as an expression of "the normative ethos of shopping" linked to the household needs. Against this, the treat is seen as an expression of 'extravagance' which serves to separate out the individual from the household. What I think my analysis shows in comparison is that such a distinction between thrift and treat is not always the most productive one to make. In stead I would claim that in my case both treat and thrift – both freedom and control – are part of a normative ethos of shopping, if not on the analytical level of the family, where Millers' analysis is based, then on the level of society as a whole, where the exercise of freedom as well as control are important constituents.

Finally, it is also useful to return to my initial note on Ann Willetts's study of meat eating vegetarians in London and to compare my material with this in terms of identity formation. We may ask how the liberties taken in the two different cases may affect the self image of the people under question. I will end this paper by pointing to two points of comparison which seem of importance.

When the vegetarian takes the liberty to eat meat, it may be easier for her to forget about her "misdeed" afterwards than for an overweight person who takes the liberty to indulge in a special treat. Nobody else but people in her physical vicinity at the moment of intake, will necessarily know what she has done the next day. Nor will she in normal circumstances be reminded by physical changes in her body – at least if she eats meat on a rather regular basis (!). All in all these circumstances may enable her to retrieve her self image as a vegetarian quite quickly – or her self image may not be affected at all because she can account for her intake in other ways.

Differently with the overweight person, who is constantly confronted with the mirror, the figure on the scale and the gaze of others. Liberties taken in the form of "forbidden eating" may therefore work to reinforce their self image in terms of who they do not want to be.

This leads us to the second point of comparison, namely the difference of identity goals in the two cases. Whereas at least some vegetarians seek to obtain and maintain a somewhat deviant identity, the test persons I followed all had the ambition of achieving normality, not only what weight itself concerns, but also what concerns eating practices as they relate to the risk of becoming overweight and unhealthy. As mentioned above, they seemed to equate this "normality" with the ability to eat in a controlled manner without having to think about it. That is to act controlled, automatically, in a way liberated of thought.

Concerning eating, the analysis and comparison of the two cases, may therefore indicate two points about identity formation. Firstly, that the status of being "normal" seems to require a recognized ability to balance freedom of choice against self control. Secondly, that the status as abnormal, whether actively strived for as something to attain or something to escape from, may be obtained by breaking this balance either exercising too much freedom of choice (giving in to temptations) or too much control.

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5. TOURISM CONSUMPTION - MODERN STRUCTURES AND POSTMODERN LIFESTYLE[12]

Pekka Mustonen & Antti Honkanen

Abstract

Postmodern theories state that instead of demographics, social divisions are based on identity and lifestyle. In this article, the effects of these both were examined. Tourism consumption was divided into two dimensions, “actual tourism” and “desire to travel more”. Analysis was based on two nation wide surveys, “Finland 1999” and Finland 2004”. Sociodemographic factors were assumed to influence more on actual tourism than on desire to travel more. The results were somewhat parallel with the hypothesis. However, both demographics and lifestyle should be taken into account. The effects have remained quite stable regardless of the finding that “desire to travel more” has decreased while “actual tourism” has increased.

Keywords: postmodern, consumption habits, lifestyle, desire to travel, Finland.

5.1. Introduction

After spending money on compulsory necessities, people are left with many alternatives. Tourism is one of those discretionary alternatives competing with numerous other leisure activities. However, it is widely agreed that tourism holds an important part in people’s life in western societies. The growing importance of tourism can also be seen in the media. For example new

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television series concerning tourism are born regularly. Nevertheless, there are remarkable differences between consumers' travelling habits (Honkanen 2004). Some people are willing to spend more money and leisure time on tourism than other people. For these "real tourists" tourism has become part of their *lifestyle*.

In tourism research, the concept of lifestyle has been mainly taken into account when destination choices or activities during the trip have been concerned (see Chandler and Costello 2002; Cleaver and Muller 2002; Rajasenan and Kumar 2004; Reisinger et al. 2004). In this article, the main focus is on how consumption habits representing lifestyle and, on the other hand, demographic background variables influence on consumption and willingness to consume on tourism. The first refers to actual behaviour. Here people's own perceptions of their consumption comparing to other people is used as an indicator. The latter refers to desire to travel in an ideal situation where financial restrictions were non-existent.

The fundamental aim of this study is to utilize empirical data and find rules and normalities behind consumer behaviour when tourism consumption is concerned. The effects of background variables and consumption habits are examined. According to postmodern theories, the importance of traditional structures has diminished. Here, empirical results are mirrored to these often exaggerated theories (see e.g. Agger 1991; Lash 1990, 2; Ritzer 1999, 72) and it is assumed that social background still at least to some extent has effect on how people behave. It might however have more effect on actual behaviour than consumption preferences.

5.2. From modern to postmodern

The discussion on postmodernization can be generalized to concern the shift from producer driven to consumer driven society. In the new world, older paradigms of social life have weakened and this has created a need for new viewpoints and concepts (Bauman 1996, 191–215; Beck 1995, 27–31; Best and Kellner 1997, 21–23). Changes and new phenomena must be taken into account when new explanations and theories of social life are created. There are several new questions, such as: What is the structure of postmodern society and how does it differ from modern society? Should these modern-postmodern comparisons be forgotten and totally new approaches created? What are the causes behind the changes?

In postmodern society demand structures are more complicated than in modern societies. Individual desires finally create the demand which somehow must be satisfied. Suppliers and producers must immediately respond to this demand which is constantly changing (compare to Bauman 1996, 193–201). According to Bauman (1996, 191–215; also Beck 1995, 27–31), postmodern world can be interpreted as a natural continuation to modern. In general, the discussion is based on the observation that the modern, secure and structured project has failed and new postmodern project, born in the grounds of modernity, is searching for its position and role. The result is a system, which has been called, for example, postmodern (Bauman 1996), reflexive modern (Beck 1995; Lash 1995) and late modern (Giddens 1995). Despite the differences between these concepts, they all describe basically the same phenomenon – the system where security and predictability of modernity have been lost. This reflexive modern is contingent (e.g. Bauman 1996) and postmodern freedom forces actors to make choices and reflect their own existence (Beck 1995, 28). Importance of metanarratives (Lyotard 1985) has receded; former dividing elements like the class and the nation have lost their meanings (e.g. Featherstone 1991; Lash 1995, 153; Miles 1998; Toivonen 1992; 1997; Urry 1995).

At the same time, contrary to postmodern ideas, consumption has traditionally been structured by social differences between consumers (e.g. Bocock 1993, 21–22). Numerous empirical studies show that traditional factors still affect people's behaviour (Räsänen 2003), also when consumption of tourism is concerned (Honkanen 2004; Mustonen 2003; Räsänen 2000; Toivonen 2001). Even when envisioning the post-industrial society, the conceptual predecessor of postmodern, Bell (1974, 127) admits that life is never one-dimensional and traditional elements do remain.

Regardless of the numerous disagreements concerning postmodern theories, it is evident that tourism as a social phenomenon has been changing and these changes are not solely due to demographic changes. New divisions and barriers must be taken into account (compare to Bauman 1996, 203, 294; Lash 1995, 176; Scott 2002, 23). According to Bocock (1993, 27–28; also Mackay 1997), these new divisions are based on identity formed largely by consumption rather than on traditional social factors. Consumers are said to be living in the consumer society, where consumption is the main factor behind lifestyles and culture (Miles 1998). Lifestyle is something which is absorbed through socialization process but still, it can also be chosen, for example through consumption behaviour. According to Miles (2002, 137), lifestyle is a material expression of person's identity.

Bourdieu (1984) uses the concept of habitus when he discusses the systems of attitudes and dispositions which people adopt and which finally induce the way how people behave. According to him, the taste which constructs one's habitus, reveals the social differences. Thus the taste finally places individuals in the society and defines how individuals classify themselves and how they are classified. Nevertheless, the taste is not a static concept. Instead, it is continuously produced and reproduced and in addition to this, there is a continuous battle about who can define the good taste. In the formation of individual taste, economic and cultural capitals are equally important. The latter refers to an ability to create and understand distinctions between different social phenomena. By comprehending these distinctions, individuals reveal and may improve their status in the society (Bourdieu 1984; see also Bauman 1996, 203–204). Nevertheless, it is worth keeping in mind, that everyone has not abilities and possibilities to recognize all the alternatives and make all the choices she/he would desire. Therefore, lifestyle is not only a question of adoption or choice. Instead, lifestyle choices are also connected to the traditional background factors such as economic resources (Wilska 2002, 197).

Toivonen (1998, 163) finds a difference between a lifestyle and a way of life. According to him, the way of life can be understood as a complex system formed by individual's personal attitudes, emotions and ways to behave, whilst lifestyle is socially inherited and at least partly due to unconscious choices (see also Wilska 2002, 198). However, in this study both of these concepts and to some extent also Bourdieu's habitus are generalized to mean the same thing, namely a network of learned, adopted and chosen meanings which finally construct individual's visible self.

Lifestyles or ways of life are not static and they are not born endogenically. Wilska (2002, 196) refers to the postmodernists and states that formation of identity is a lifelong process. People are all over again forced to make choices between different lifestyles and thus choosing the group where they want to identify themselves (Lash 1995). Instead of traditional social factors, these groups, *neo-tribes* (Maffesoli 1995) are based on individual's choices which social groups heavily influence. Traditional formation process of class differences has turned upside down; in postmodern consumer culture, behaviour is the dominant factor behind group differences, whilst in modern society belonging to certain group indicated consumption choices (Räsänen 2003, 39).

5.3. Consumption of tourism

Although construction of a clear idea of postmodern consumer is quite a challenging task, many features of postmodern can be found from the idea of the "tourist" who has even been seen as a metaphor of a postmodern actor (Bauman 1993, 240–244; Featherstone 1995, 126; Jokinen and Veijola 1997). This is connected to the fact that tourism as a phenomenon has no doubt changed a lot during past decades. However, many of these changes lie deeper in the social world than postmodern theories claim. People are looking for personal experiences and ways to fulfill their own desires, which are often created socially. Tourism is a social phenomenon and tourists search for communal experiences. Thus especially in the case of tourism consumption choices depend on social environment, which in western societies is very consumption driven (Sharpley 2002, 307–311). Bell's (1974) discussion of post-industrial society was not based on consumption *per se* but rather on increased importance of service sector. Tourism is an excellent example of this. Although tourism is closely connected to all the sectors of economy, the service dimension is emphasized. The birth of large scale tourism coincided with the more general change to which the growth of service sector perfectly joins. Similarly occurred growth of immaterial consumption and interest in postmaterial issues is also considered one important feature of postmodern (see e.g. Inglehart 1977; 1997; Scarbrough 1995). Whilst in modern societies material values are traditionally more important, in postmodern societies people are said to be more interested in personal quality of life.

It is only recently that the importance of tourism as a specific part of consumption has been fully understood (Sharpley 2002, 310). In modern societies, tourism was regarded as a separate part of social activities. Tourism consumption created divisions and reflected the social differences between consumers (ibid., 311). Now tourism, too, must be focused through a new postmodern lens. Tourism and touristic practices have rapidly gained importance in behaviour of contemporary consumers during the past two or three decades. In addition to this, due to vertical de-differentiation (Uriely 1997; Uriely et al. 2003; see also: Lash and Urry 1994; Urry 1990; 1995) touristic practices can be found in other dimensions of consumption as well as in actual tourism, which by definition requires movement from one place to another (World Tourism Organization 1995). Although Munt (1994) has states that "tourism is everything and everything is tourism", this "touristization" of the society does not mean that all the people are tourists (Sharpley 2002, 311). First of all, in the "postmodern" western consumer societies, everyone does not want to travel. In addition to this, travelling habits may change remarkably according to one's phase of life (e.g. Hall 2005, 77–98).

Anyway, people now have more leisure time and resources than ever before (see Harrison 2003, 28). Consumption of tourism is not compulsory and large scale international tourism is mainly possible only in wealthier nations. Therefore the discussion around postmodern consumption concerns primarily western countries which generate the bulk of tourist flows globally. People from the first world can, in principle, travel anywhere. Due to changes in consumer culture the kind of travelling behaviour which earlier was possible only to real forerunners, the *allocentrics* (Plog 1974), has become more common in today's world. In fact, when contemporary tourism is discussed, it is difficult to think of a truly alternative form of tourism. For example, backpackers or so called "ecotourists", who are often considered alternative tourists, are actually representing just another dimension of mass tourism (Cohen 1995; Mustonen 2005; Ryan et al. 2003; Scheyvens 2002; Wearing et al. 2002). Taking this further, those people who do not travel at all even if they could are the most alternative "tourists". Postmodern tourists do not necessarily even want to be different. The individual's possibilities to do something do not necessarily lead to similar behaviour. The increased amount of possibilities may even have a contrary effect. Traditions and practices from the past may become important again.

5.4. Description of the data

The empirical part of the article was based on two surveys, "Finland 1999" and "Finland 2004" which were carried out as postal questionnaires by researchers of University of Turku (Department of Sociology) and Turku School of Economics and Business Administration (Department of Marketing, Economic Sociology). The population of survey consisted of all Finnish citizens with the exception of people living in Åland Islands. The sample sizes were 2417 and 3574, and the response rates 61 % and 62 %, respectively. For example Erola (2004), Räsänen (2003) and Wilska (2002) have written several articles based on these data which concern mainly themes around consumption, lifestyles, attitudes and every day activities. (For more information on the survey, see Erola and Räsänen 2000; Erola et al. 2005).

In this article two different dimensions of tourism were looked into. Actual tourism refers to respondents' evaluation of their own consumption of tourism comparing to the average consumer. Other dimension is "desire to travel more" in case of no monetary restrictions. Both were measured using likert scale (1–5) where value "1" means total disagreement and value "5" total agreement. These two dimensions are different sides of the same coin but this does not mean that respondents give parallel answers to the questions. For example someone who according to her/himself travels less than regular consumer is not necessarily willing to travel more. She/he may find other ways of consumption more appealing.

Usually quantitative research is concentrated on actual tourism. The questions like "how many trips have you made during the last year?" are common. From qualitative perspective, feelings and desires towards tourism are often more interesting than actual tourism. When lifestyles are under the scoop, both actual tourism and desire to travel must be equally taken into account. The differences between these two are most probably due to the differences between traditional social background factors whilst postmodern “freedom of choice” may be seen through lifestyles and willingness to travel.

Distributions of dependent variables are shown in Table 1. When actual tourism was concerned, lower classes (1–3) were emphasized. Thus according to themselves, respondents generally spend less than on average on tourism. This was not a surprise because people often tend to underestimate their consumption (Wilska 2002, 199). Nevertheless, respondents would like to travel more. When desire to travel more was examined, the share of respondents in classes 3–5 was remarkably greater. By interpreting the table, also some changes between the years can be found. These changes have occurred in two dimensions. First, comparing to 1999, in 2004 more people have estimated their tourism consumption similar to the average consumer. Second, desire to travel has considerably diminished.

Table 1. Cross-tabulation for actual tourism and desire to travel more (%)

		1	2	3	4	5	**Total (N)**
Actual	1999	30.9	26.0	23.6	14.7	4.9	100 (2317)
tourism[a]	2004	27.3	24.9	27.4	15.6	4.8	100 (3470)
Desire to	1999	7.7	6.6	16.8	30.5	38.4	100 (2341)
travel[b]	2004	12.3	7.9	38.3	13.3	28.2	100 (3506)

a) χ^2 = 15.37, df = 4, p = .004; b) χ^2 = 502.39, df = 4, p = .000; 1=totally disagree, 5=totally agree

Following statistical analysis deepens these descriptive results. The main research question was how lifestyle or consumption attitudes and on the other hand demographic background influence on consumption on tourism (actual tourism) and willingness to consume more on tourism (desire to travel more). The purpose was to examine principles behind these two dimensions of tourism consumption. Which one gives better explanation, lifestyle or demographic background? Based on the above discussion on lifestyles it was assumed that traditional social background variables would have more effect on actual tourism than on desire to travel. Accordingly when desire to travel was concerned, it was assumed that the importance of lifestyle would be greater. Does examination of the data give answers to the question of what kind of consumers are most likely to be tourists? On the other hand, are the demographic background factors connected to people’s desire to travel more?

In addition to trying to find answers to these main questions, also changes were examined. It is also discussed whether occurred changes can be explained by increased importance of lifestyles and postmodern features often connected to them. At the same time it was examined whether changes in actual tourism consumption and desire to consume more on tourism are due to the changes in respondents distributions to the sociodemographic classes and on the other hand to the changes in consumption patterns.

5.5. Background variables and consumption patterns

Taking lifestyle into consideration in tourism studies is not a new idea. As early as in 1980's a few studies in which tourism was examined through lifestyle were published (e.g. Bernard 1988; Mayo and Jarvis 1981). Nevertheless, usually lifestyles have been connected to the way how tourists behave and consume during their trip, and on the other hand to the destination choices (see Dolnicar et al. 1998). Unlike in the case of the widely used typologies like The Eurostyle System (ibid.) and 'VALS' (e.g. McIntosh et al. 1995, 426–467; Shih 1986; Skidmore and Pyszka 1987), in this study consumption patters have been created using more limited data. Here the concept of lifestyle was based on consumption habits or rather attitudes of consumers. The aim was to examine how consumption attitudes are connected to tourism consumption. Although consumption attitudes and habits represent only one dimension of lifestyle, according to postmodern theories, they should be amongst the most important and dominant ones. However, it is important to notice Veal's (2000) review which points out the multitude of lifestyle concepts.

In Table 2 different attitudes concerning consumption were examined utilizing principal component analysis. Several questions from the original data were left outside the analysis. The questions concerning the different consuming habits between generations and the effects of economic cycles were ignored due to theoretical reasons; these were not connected with attitudes to private consumption. A few questions were also ignored because of too low communalities. Finally six quite clear components ("factors" onwards) were found. They together explained 51,5 % of the variance. The first factor was named as *environment* due to a clear emphasis of the questions concerning the environment, issues around food and on the other hand critique against consumption based lifestyle. Among the factors of this study, this factor represents best the ethical dimension of consumption. In the second factor, *pleasure*, the questions were linked with restaurants and impulse purchases. The third factor, *saving*, describes goal-directed activity whilst the fifth factor (*price*) represents the group of consumers to whom the main intention is to consume commodities which are as cheap as possible. For the people who represent the price-factor, saving for some particular goal is not important. This is the main difference between these two. The questions concerning fashion, appearance and interior decoration loaded most strongly to the fourth factor, which was accordingly named as *fashion*. For fashion-oriented people consumption habits are connected to the aesthetical values. The last factor, *culture*, was composed around the questions about “high class” consumption like classical music and wines.

Table 2. Consumer styles: Principal component analysis

	Factor 1 Environment	**Factor 2 Pleasure**	**Factor 3 Saving**	**Factor 4 Fashion**	**Factor 5 Price**	**Factor 6 Culture**	**h²**
I worry about the environmental effects of my consumption	.724						.55
I worry about the origins and health risks of the food sold to consumers	.699						.50
I consciously do environmentally friendly consumption choices	.659						.57
There are too many commodities available and life is too much concentrated on consumption	.516						.38
I often eat out		.744					.62
I often go to bars, pubs etc.		.726					.59
I want to gain pleasure by consuming		.529					.40
I often do impulse purchases		.499					.46
I tend to save money for future purchases			.702				.53
Everyone should save money for the ”bad day”			.676				.50
I live economically		-.340	.601				.52
Raising loans should be avoided			.570				.37
I do not care about fashion at all				-.728			.56
I often read fashion and/or decoration magazines				.679			.52
I take good care of my appearance				.646			.47
I often make purchases from fleamarkets and second hand stores					.714		.56
I often make purchases utilizing bargain sales					.704		.59
I prefer quality to price	.431				-.611		.59
I enjoy listening classical music						.675	.53
I enjoy drinking wine when dining		.322				.639	.53
So called high culture is snobbery				-.367		-.593	.48
Eigenvalues	3.0	2.4	1.7	1.5	1.2	1.0	
% of variance	14.5	11.3	7.9	7.0	5.9	4.9	51.5

Extraction method: Principal component analysis. Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .761; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 16375.244; df = 210; sig. = .000

For the forthcoming analysis, six variables named accordingly with the factors, were built using the factor scores. Factor scores were calculated by choosing the option regression included in the principal component analysis of SPSS11. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was chosen for the further analysis shown in Table 3. The method was chosen because comparing to ANOVA, it was possible to add continuous variables as covariates (see Tabachnick and Fidell 2001, 275).

Totally five variables were chosen to represent the sociodemographic background of the respondents. These were the form of family, age, identifying to the social class, income and region of residing. The family variable was coded into three classes. Families with at least one child under seven years belonged to the first class and families where all the children were of age 7 to 17 belonged to the second class. The rest of the families, including those consisted on one person, belonged to the third class.

Respondents were asked to choose a social class to which they most preferably identify themselves. These were upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, working class and the group nothing/else. The variable "social class" was conducted from this question. The quesStion, on which income variable was built, concerned net incomes of households. Incomes announced by the respondents were divided by the number of members of the household. The final variable was conducted by using weight variable so that one adult of every household got a multiplier "1" whilst other adults got a multiplier "0.7". The children of age less than 18 got a multiplier "0.5". This method utilized here is widely used in official statistics although usually instead net incomes, gross incomes are used (see Statistics Finland 2005). After weighting procedure, the variable was divided into five classes.

5.6. Actual tourism and desire to travel more – study results

In Table 3 the effects of sociodemographic background variables and consumption styles on actual tourism and desire to travel were examined using the data from the year 1999. In the first two models, the dependent variables, "actual tourism" (At) and "desire to travel more" (Dt) were explained using only sociodemographic variables as independent variables. It can be seen that both identification to a certain social class and income explain actual tourism quite well. Respondents who had identified themselves to the higher social classes were more likely to think that they travel more than on average. Also the effect of income level was similar. These both variables are traditionally linked with economic resources and thus the result was expected. Also variables concerning the number of children and residential area were statistically significant but their Partial Eta squared -values were small. Sociodemographic variables altogether explained 16,7 % of the variance, which was quite a remarkable result.

Table 3. Actual tourism (At) and desire to travel more (Dt) in 1999: main effects

		N At	N Dt	Model 1 At	Model 2 Dt	Model 3 At	Model 4 Dt	Model 5 At	Model 6 Dt
F	**Children**			*4.03**	*.01*(nfs)			*5.72***	*.31*(nfs)
Partial Eta^2				*.005*	*.000*			*.007*	*.000*
β	No Children	1003	1013	-.21**	(nfs)			-.25**	(nfs)
β	0-6 years	291	291	-.21*	(nfs)			-.20*	(nfs)
β	7-17 years	316	317	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Age**			*.74* (nfs)	*9.84****			*4.41***	*4.27****
Partial Eta^2	**Category**			*.002*	*.023*			*.011*	*.011*
β	- 28	293	295	(nfs)	.53***			-.33***	.28**
β	29 – 40	407	408	(nfs)	.58***			-.36***	.39***
β	41 – 50	355	356	(nfs)	.42***			-.25**	.31**
β	51 – 60	301	302	(nfs)	.41***			(nfs)	.35***
β	61 -	254	260	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Class**			*20.22****	*3.10**			*8.25****	*1.58* (nfs)
Partial Eta^2				*.046*	*.007*			*.020*	*.004*
β	Upper	20	20	.80***	(nfs)			.77***	(nfs)
β	Upper middle	364	364	.45***	(nfs)			.30***	(nfs)
β	Lower middle	472	480	(nfs)	(nfs)			(nfs)	(nfs)
β	Working	470	474	-.21**	-.20*			(nfs)	(nfs)
β	Nothing/else	239	283	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Income**			*29.69****	*8.42***			*14.95****	*9.47****
Partial Eta^2	**(€)**			*.067*	*.020*			*.036*	*.023*
β	-499	210	213	-1.15***	.51**			-.78***	.57***
β	500-999	715	721	-.98***	.76***			-.67***	.82***
β	1000-1499	458	462	-.51***	.75***			-.36**	.76***
β	1500-1999	155	154	(nfs)	.59***			(nfs)	.62***
β	2000-	72	71	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)

F	**Residential**			*8.03***	*18.06***			*1.30(nf)s*	*6.06**
Partial Eta^2	**Area**			*.005*	*.011*			*.001*	*.004*
β	Urban area	1260	1268	.19**	.30*			(nfs)	.17*
β	Rural area	350	353	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Pleasure**	2170	2195			*217.70****	*89.26****	*121.14****	*44.86****
Partial Eta^2						*.091*	*.039*	*.071*	*.027*
β						.33***	.23**	.29***	.20***
F	**Saving**	2170	2195			*16.73****	*16.74****	*7.80***	*6.62***
Partial Eta^2						*..008*	*.008*	*.005*	*.004*
β						-.10****	-.10***	-.08**	-.08**
F	**Fashion**	2170	2195			*47.90****	*64.86****	*30.41****	*39.06****
Partial Eta^2						*.022*	*.029*	*.019*	*.024*
β						.16***	.20***	.14***	.18***
F	**Price**	2170	2195			*78.33****	*23.30**	*19.78****	*3.27(nfs)*
Partial Eta^2						*.035*	*.011*	*.012*	*.002*
β						-.21**	.12***	-.13***	(nfs)
F	**Culture**	2170	2195			*124.06***	*28.51***	*28.56****	*33.50****
Partial Eta^2						*.054*	*.013*	*.018*	*.021*
β						.26**	.13**	.15***	.17***
	R²*100			16.7	5.9	18.3	9.3	25.3	12.6

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001; (nfs) p > 0.05; (a) reference category

In the case of another dependent variable, desire to travel more, the effects of sociodemographic variables were generally weaker. However, some interesting exceptions can be seen. Persons living in the urban areas tend to desire more consumption on tourism than persons living in the countryside. In addition to this, comparing to actual tourism, the age had more effect on desire to travel. Persons belonging to the highest age-category were less likely to want to travel more than persons in other categories. This observation was predictable. Consumers of higher age might find other less hectic forms of consumption more appealing. Comparing to younger respondents, those belonging to the highest class might also have restrictions like health problems (see Mustonen et al. 2004).

An interesting finding was that the highest income category was the only one which differed from the other classes. Person belonging to the highest class do not want to travel more as often as the others most probably because these people are wealthy enough to travel as much as they want. Of course there are other restrictions like time which affects on willingness to travel. Anyway, the question pattern did not contain any questions on these. Nevertheless, despite these few significant findings, the social backgrounds variables explained only 5.9 % of the variance. This is remarkably less than in the case of actual tourism.

In the third and fourth model, only the factors, which here indicate the consumption habits, were analyzed. In these models, the difference between actual tourism and desire to travel more was considerably smaller than in the first two models. Nevertheless, independent variables were still better explanants in the case of actual tourism, but it must be noticed that when desire to travel more was concerned, factors explained 9.3 % of the variance, which is remarkably more than in the second model.

Effects of the explanants were quite parallel in the both models 3 and 4. Only exceptions were factors culture and price, which both had more effect on actual tourism than on desire to travel more. In the case of price, this is easy to interpret. Travelling is relatively expensive and despite the fact that people in every social classes travel a lot, it can still be considered as luxury. People to whom price is important think that they travel less than average consumers and they would like to travel more if they had more money. Thus the reason restricting their travelling is the cost. Consumption on tourism can be seen as a substitute to many other cheaper ways to consume, and in the case of less wealthy people these other alternatives are often chosen. The effect of the factor “saving” instead was negative in the both cases. Consuming tourism products is not obligatory and thus for those people who save money it is easier to reduce travelling than many other alternative leisure activities. If consumer prefers saving to travelling, she/he most likely does not even want to consume more on travelling even if there were no monetary restrictions.

The factor "environment" did not effect on either actual tourism or desire to travel more. This was the reason why the factor was excluded from the analysis. Even though travelling almost without exception is environmentally harmful, those people who are worried about environmental aspects when they do consumption choices did not differ considerably from the other consumers. Actually, there are many studies which state that the rise of alternative forms of tourism and so called "new tourism" (Poon 1993) is exaggerated (Honkanen 2004). Environmentally friendly tourism is often associated with these. Environmental consciousness and ethical issues which are often connected to postmodern (e.g. Bauman 1996; Beck 1995) do not necessarily imply the growth of "good" or more sustainable ethical behaviour (compare to Sharpley 2002, 305–306). It must be also mentioned that contrary to postmodern ideas, from 1992 to 1999 environmental concern amongst Finnish citizens had diminished (Statistics Finland 2000) although somewhat risen again from 1999 to 2002 (Statistics Finland 2004).

The fifth and sixth models contained both sociodemographic variables and factors indicating consumption habits. The analysis strengthens the conclusions drawn earlier. Sociodemographic background had more effect on actual tourism than on desire to travel more. However it must be noticed that also consumption styles (factors) affected strongly on actual tourism and on the other hand highest income and age classes differed from the others on the case of desire to travel more. It is also interesting to notice the direction of the effect of age variable in the case of actual tourism. Younger respondents seem to consider their travelling behaviour lesser to older respondents. In contemporary "postmodern" consumer societies, especially younger people are expected to travel and even though in reality they would travel a lot, they may think that other people travel more. For example media plays a major role when these pressures are born. This same phenomenon can be a reason why older people think that they travel more than on average. The older cohorts have absorbed travelling as a part of their lifestyle (Mustonen et al. 2004; Toivonen 2001) and therefore they might think that they travel more than on average. Further investigation of this interesting finding could be possible for example by testing the significance of factors separately in all age groups. Nevertheless, this is beyond the scope of thus study, although well worth studying.

As a conclusion, it can be stated that actual tourism is strongly connected to the resources and class status but also to lifestyle whilst desire to consume more on tourism is connected mainly to the lifestyle manifested here by the factors. When compared to the other models, in the fifth and sixth models the direction of the effect was parallel but the absolute values are generally smaller. After all, actual tourism was best explained in the fifth model where both sociodemographic background variables and consumption factors were included in the analysis. Also in the case of desire to travel more the last model gave the best explanation although including sociodemographic variables improved the model only little.

Similar models for the year 2004 can be seen in Table 4. The results concerning the sociodemographic variables were quite parallel with the ones from the year 1999; economic resources affected positively on actual tourism. The greatest difference could be found in the effect of income classes, which in the case of desire to travel more were significant in 1999. When the data from 2004 were examined, there were no differences between respondents in the lowest and highest classes. Respondents from the lowest class wanted to travel as much as respondents from the highest class. This was a remarkable finding considering that the less wealthy people consider their actual tourism clearly lesser when compared to average consumer.

The lack of economic resources did not seem to affect on desire to travel more. This finding does not follow Bourdieu's (1984) idea that the taste of lower class citizens leads to choosing the "necessary". Thus the observation of the influence of sociodemographic class-variables on actual tourism must be considered, at least to some extent, separated from the "taste". One reason behind this interesting observation could be the position of tourism in Finnish society (e.g. Mustonen et al. 2004; Selänniemi 1996). Of course it must be noticed that the question in the questionnaire concerned only desire to consume more on tourism in general. Bourdiean taste differences would have been revealed within more detailed data.

The influence of consumption habits remained almost unchanged. There were some slight differences in R-squared values and some parameter estimates had changed a little. However it can be stated that the effects are quite static. This is in line with the assumption that the postmodernization process, which is here generalized to mean increasing importance of lifestyle and decreasing importance of social background, has become somewhat stable. Economic resources and social class together with consumption habits influence on actual tourism whilst in the case of desire to travel more, consumption factors are better explanants and the effect of traditional background factors is less significant.

Table 4. Actual tourism (At) and desire to travel more (Dt) in 2004: main effects

		N At	N Dt	Model 1 At	Model 2 Dt	Model 3 At	Model 4 Dt	Model 5 At	Model 6 Dt
F	**Children**			*8.16****	*3.62**			6.13**	*4.18**
Partial Eta^2				*.006*	*.003*			.005	*.003*
β	No Children	1795	1810	-.21***	-.19**			-.21***	-.20**
β	0-6 years	430	431	-.29***	(nfs)			-.21**	(nfs)
β	7-17 years	472	475	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Age**			*.72$^{(nfs)}$*	*28.46****			*1.43*	*9.43****
Partial Eta^2	**Category**			*.001*	*.039*			*.002*	*.014*
β	- 28	480	481	(nfs)	.83***			-.19*	.49***
β	29 – 40	620	621	(nfs)	.69***			(nfs)	.43***
β	41 – 50	558	562	(nfs)	.60***			(nfs)	.45***
β	51 – 60	593	597	(nfs)	.38***			(nfs)	.28***
β	61 -	446	455	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Class**			*19.82****	*.87$^{(nfs)}$*			*8.70****	*2.43**
Partial Eta^2				*.028*	*.001*			*.013*	*.004*
β	Upper	23	23	.56*	(nfs)			(nfs)	(nfs)
β	Upper middle	562	563	.43***	(nfs)			.30***	-.18*
β	Lower middle	761	770	(nfs)	(nfs)			(nfs)	(nfs)
β	Working	887	894	(nfs)	(nfs)			(nfs)	(nfs)
β	Nothing/else	464	466	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Income**			*59.25****	*.90$^{(nfs)}$*			*35.61****	*1.33$^{(nfs)}$*
Partial Eta^2	**(€)**			*.079*	*.001*			*.051*	*.002*
β	-499	222	226	-.97***	(nfs)			-.76***	(nfs)
β	500-999	760	767	-.98***	(nfs)			-.77***	(nfs)
β	1000-1499	989	998	-.53***	(nfs)			-.41***	.18*
β	1500-1999	421	420	-.17*	(nfs)			(nfs)	(nfs)
β	2000-	305	305	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Residential**			*21.82****	*25.32****			*8.53***	*14.02****

Partial Eta^2	**Area**			*.008*	*.009*			*.003*	*.005*
β	Urban area	2090	2101	.23***	.29***			.15**	.21***
β	Rural area	607	615	(a)	(a)			(a)	(a)
F	**Pleasure**	2195	3356			*175.58****	*179.27****	*91.10****	*70.70****
Partial Eta^2						*.050*	*.051*	*.033*	*.026*
β						.26***	.29***	.22***	.22***
F	**Saving**	2195	3356			*28.77****	*19.62****	*11.51***	*1.84*(nfs)
Partial Eta^2						*.009*	*.006*	*.004*	*.001*
β						-.10***	-.09***	-.07***	(nfs)
F	**Fashion**	2195	3356			*53.93****	*71.545****	*23.45****	*67.57*
Partial Eta^2						*.016*	*.021*	*.009*	*.024*
β						.14***	.18***	.10***	.19***
F	**Price**	2195	3356			*103.93****	*49.965****	*19.18****	*15.16****
Partial Eta^2						*.030*	*.015*	*.007*	*.006*
β						-.19***	.15***	-.09***	.10***
F	**Culture**	2195	3356			*165.65****	*9.23***	*33.36****	*20.22****
Partial Eta^2						*.048*	*.003*	*.012*	*.007*
β						.24***	.07**	.13***	.11***
	R²*100			15.6	6.6	13.6	8.7	20.4	11.6

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001; (nfs) p > 0.05; (a) reference category

Both data-sets were combined to create a pattern where the occurred changes could be interpreted. The results of the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) are seen Table 5. The analysis was conducted by utilizing all the independent variables shown in Tables 3 and 4. The variable indicating the period (year) was also added to the matrix. Only F-values, partial Eta squared –values and essential parameter estimates were presented because of economic reasons. Comparing to the analyses conducted before, the additional aim was to test the interactions between the year and background variables.

Now in the case of actual tourism, the year was not amongst the significant independent variables (model 1). This is interesting in the respect that in the simple cross-tabulation presented in Table 1 the differences of actual tourism between the years were significant. When income variable was dropped out of the analysis, the parameter estimate of year happened to be significant (model not shown here). In year 2004 more responders seemed to belong in middle and higher income classes. This is probably the reason why more people consider their tourism consumption equal to average consumer. There were no significant interactions between the year and other variables.

When desire to consume more on tourism was considered (model 2), the changes could not be explained by changes in sociodemographic variables or consumption habits. The year was significant predictor and the parameter estimate was fairly high. This evidently leads to the conclusion that from 1999 to 2004 desire to travel more has decreased even when the sociodemographic variables and consumption habits are taken account.

The last model was similar to second one. Only difference was that also significant interactions were examined. Now it could be seen that the variable indicating the year was no more significant. The explanation to the remarkable change in desire to travel (see Table 1) could be found by examining the income classes. By interpreting the significant Income*Year –interaction (parameter estimates not shown here) and also comparing the results of Table 3 (model 6) and Table 4 (model 6) it seemed that in 2004 particularly respondents belonging to the middle income classes preferred other discretionary forms of consumption instead of tourism. Also the interaction between age and the year was significant. However, in general it seems that the effects of sociodemographic background and consumer styles have remained quite stable for both actual tourism and for desire to travel.

Table 5. Actual tourism and desire to travel more in 1999 and 2004

	Model 1 Actual tourism		Model 2 Desire to travel		Model 3 Desire to travel	
	F	Partial Eta^2	F	Partial Eta^2	F	Partial Eta^2
Children F	11.51***	.005	3.65*	.002	3.73*	.002
Age Category	4.41***	.004	12.91***^{s}	.012	10.54***	.010
Class	16.97***	.016	3.00*	.003	2.92*	.003
Income (€)	49.57***	.044	5.34***	.005	7.52***	.007
Residential area	8.15**	.002	20.28***	.005	20.04***	.005
Year	.10$^{(nfs)}$ [β=.01$^{(nfs)}$]^a	.000	120.73*** [β=.42***]^a	.027	44.00*** [β=.76$^{(nfs)}$]^a	.010
Pleasure	209.18***	.047	117.79***	.027	119.32***	.027
Saving	21.19***	.005	6.17**	.001	6.69**	.002
Fashion	52.53***	.012	110.55***	.025	108.81***	.025
Price	39.01***	.009	17.27***	.004	17.95***	.004
Culture	61.40***	.014	47.84***	.011	48.47***	.011
Age*Year					2.49*	.002
Income*Year					3.73**	.003
R²*100		22.4		14.6		14.9

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001; (nfs) p > 0.05; [a] Reference category for Year is 2004

5.7. Conclusions

Postmodern social theory has paid attention to the increased importance of lifestyles and on the other hand to the diminished importance of sociodemographic structures in consumption choices. In this study, this idea was evaluated in the light of tourism consumption which was divided into two dimensions. "Actual tourism" was based on respondents' own estimates of their own consumption compared to average consumer. "Desire to travel more" instead was based on respondents' views of the possible change in tourism consumption in case of no monetary restrictions.

The main hypothesis was a presumption that sociodemographic factors have more influence on actual tourism than on desire to travel more. In other words, postmodern features are most likely more visible in consumption desires than in actual consumption. This hypothesis was based on the fact that there are still many restrictions connected basically on resources which affect on actual consumption habits.

The empirical analysis strengthened the hypothesis. Consumption habits had effect on both, actual tourism and desire to travel more. In addition to this, the effects of social class (class-identification) and income were remarkably strong in the case of actual tourism whilst when desire to travel more was concerned, the effect of consumption habits was stronger than the effect of sociodemographic variables. However, when either of these two sides of tourism is concerned, both lifestyle issues and sociodemographic factors should be taken into account. Hence the assumed postmodern change has not totally wiped away the significance of modern structures.

The influence of background variables was examined using the data from two different years, 1999 and 2004. Although some little differences were found, the results in general were quite stable. Thus it cannot be assumed that travelling habits would be now more postmodern than say five years go. Instead the postmodern change might have happened earlier. It must be also mentioned that sociodemographic variables might influence on travelling habits through consumption patters. However, these kind of causal examinations were beyond the scope of this study.

Comparing to year 1999 in 2004 more respondents considered their tourism consumption equal to average consumer. This is due to arisen income levels. In the case of desire to travel more, the direction of the change was opposite. The desire to travel more has diminished. It seemed that in 2004 respondents belonging to the middle income classes were less willing to consume in tourism than in 1999. In the literature the greatness of tourism is often exaggerated and it is assumed that together with growing international tourism also the desire the travel must rise. The fact that tourism has grown globally (World Tourism Organization 2005) can however be explained for example by growing tourism demand in other than most common tourism generating countries. On the other hand travelling is now cheaper than before and domestic tourism might have lost its share to international tourism. However, it must be stated that the rise of tourism presented in statistics is far beyond the change that was observed in this study.

Consumption of tourism competes with the other discretionary forms of consumption. In postmodern consumption cultures people are sometimes expected to travel. However the rise in people’s desire to travel more cannot be taken for granted. When making consumption choices consumers must take their resources into account. Hence in many cases, other forms of consumption might be more interesting options. As noticed in the empirical part of this study, actual tourism has increased, but only very little. Maybe the saturation point has been reached and people simply travel enough?

To conclude, lifestyles are connected to the consumption of tourism. On the other hand, the importance of lifestyle issues cannot be emphasized. Structural factors such as income and sociodemographic background create restrictions and on the other hand incentives which are connected to consumption choices. Thus when the consumption of tourism in general is under scrutiny, it must be considered which one, actual tourism or desire to travel more is more interesting and worth studying in the particular case. These two dimensions are connected to each others, but even in the postmodern world, desire to travel does not necessarily realize for example due to lacking resources.

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6. YOUTH, IDENTITY AND CONSUMPTION

Jeremi Van Gorp

Abstract
One of the most important applications of the “new” communication function of consumption is situated in processes of distinction and identification. Consumption is used to stress these differences and similarities that have become crucial in the development of identity in contemporary society. Contrary to traditional societies, identity in contemporary societies is almost permanently under construction and nearly unlimited possibilities of vertical and horizontal mobility seem to exist. People are now more than ever the constructors of their own "self". This construction of identity is a life-long project, but especially in teenage years, it is of major importance. Youth is the phase par excellence to experiment with possible identities, guided by feed-back from their peers, in preparation for an adult life. In this article, a theoretical framework for a research-approach on consumption is being developed. Two general aspects are scrutinized. The first aspect under consideration is identity, about how a teenager sees him/herself. Second, aspects of peers are discussed that try to get a hold of the social surroundings of a teenager that might influence his or her identity and consumption patterns. In both previous aspects, the importance of consumption is never far away.

Keywords: consumption, young people, identity

6.1. Introduction

6.1.1. Consumption Research – a sociological approach

The relation between individuals and consumption has become a real sociological subject of research from World War II onwards (Miller, P. – Rose 1997). Reasons for this growing attention are to be found in the fact that the (artificial) economic boom following this war separated the views on consumption from those on production. Production and consumption have always been and will always – at least for a part – be a game of supply and demand. In the "golden sixties" however, supply was assured of. This shed the light almost exclusively on consumption. Another important reason for the rising attention is the fact that consumption became rooted in discussions on the construction of subjectivity in general and of self in particular (Miller et al. 1998).

Research on consumption has not always focussed on the same aspects. In a so-called pre-scientific period some works are certainly to be cited, as they were rare exceptions in a largely economic approach on consumption. In these works, one took an often philosophical viewpoint, critical of the social structure in which consumption was embedded. To be cited are the famous works by Thorstein Veblen (The Theory of the Leisure Class – 1899) and Gabriel Tarde (Les Lois de L'Imitation – 1890 and La Psychologie Economique – 1902). For a long time, these works in which some kind of sociological approach (or better: a not merely economical approach) was made, stood alone. Until the 1940s, mainly economic argumentations were made and corresponding models were elaborated. After World War II, the focus shifted slowly but surely in the direction of individual motivations. At first, only plain concepts like personality, perceived risk and cognitive dissonance were used. Using these concepts, researchers tried to explain a part of consumer behaviour. Later on, the simple constructs were integrated in larger schemes and models. During the 1970s and 1980s, the information-processing of consumers and the role of affect and emotion became the focal point of attention and even later, the attention shifted to symbolic meanings of consumption and the expressive value of goods and products (van Raaij – Antonides 2002).

In contemporary sociological theories, the consumer is considered a problematic entity. He is not a puppet, hopelessly subjected to manipulations of advertisers. He is not an ever rationally reasoning computer-like human being. He is someone with his own feelings and strivings, passions and desires that have to be known in detail to predict some kind of behaviour, e.g. consumption behaviour. Consumption has become a main part of people's lives (Miller – Rose 1997). To live in the contemporary consumer society includes looking at life as a series of problems that have to be solved in a consumption-related way. Thus, keys to solutions can always be found in consumption and there are no problems for which there are no keys sold in stores. The opposite however does exist. There are keys to seemingly non-existing problems and one task of advertisers is to make these problems manifest, but that is a story that is not elaborated here.

6.1.2. The rational – irrational debate

In classical economic theories on consumption, a rational view on the consumer is found (Aldridge 2003; Douglas – Isherwood 1980; Gabriel – Lang 1995). Essential in this viewpoint is that the individual makes independent choices. By definition, rational individuals are not driven by fears or emotions. They choose products based on objective qualities that can not be explained by post hoc rationalizations (Miller – Rose 1997) with one single aim: maximizing the use (Erickson – Johansson, 1985). As soon as the individual has decided to buy something, he starts comparing products and brands, keeping price and income level in mind, as a guidebook in consumption would proscribe. Primary use value of products is central, individual tastes and preferences are assumed given. They are axioms that can not be changed by persuasion (Stigler – Becker 1977) and thus have to be approached in a non-evaluative way as empirical data (Slater 1997). Choices are assumed consistent with each other and only limited by the cost of things (Antonides 1989). A lower price or a higher income is answered by a readiness to buy more of the specific product and vice versa. Furthermore, the use of a product diminishes when the individual has more and more of it (Law of Engel). In other words, a rational approach assumes an atomised individual, driven by an aim at maximizing use, whose behaviour can be written down in mathematical formulas and derivatives. Explaining the use value of products themselves seldom was the object of research (Antonides 1989).

Deciding about things to buy can cost not only money, but also a lot of effort. Therefore, buying things is considered unpleasant by a lot of people, in first instance because it takes a lot of trouble in gathering and analyzing information on which the ultimate buying decision is based. People have created routines and habits because they do not want to go through the whole process every time. These routines are rather solid, because even when small changes in the social environment occur, the behaviour of individuals often stays the same. The gathering of habits, routines and analyzed information can be seen as some kind of capital. This capital can make people holding on their preferences until they are really made to change. The fact that young people change their habits regarding consumption more frequently and more easily can be explained based on the fact that they have not yet gathered a lot of this kind of capital (Stigler – Becker 1977).

Analyzing consumption behaviour of individuals would be rather easy if they would always make rational choices on the basis of preferences for objective and clearly discernable qualities (Miller – Rose 1997). Rationally speaking, the use of a product is dependent on the quantity of it and on the knowledge of the consumer about the true or supposed characteristics of it.

This knowledge can not be measured in an accurate way, but it is known that it is often imperfect. This also makes that ads can change behaviour of people, which would be impossible if people knew everything about a certain product and the competing brands. The proposition that consumers compare all alternatives before making a decision goes under the term “irrational assumption of rationality” (Van Praag in: Antonides 1989). It may be clear that in our research, we do not opt for a rational approach on consumption behaviour, even though some aspects of the behaviour of individuals are mainly guided by rational motives.

At the end of World War II, as said before, economic frames of thought lost power in favour of sociological approaches. Consumption was no longer seen as a merely rational approach to rational goals (MacRury 1997). Propositions as if the consumption behaviour of individuals was independent of the behaviour of others were abandoned. Henceforth, consumption was seen as socially shared process and one had to take into account the transformations that it embedded. The rational consumer was seen as a too abstract approach to social life. Researchers became sensible for cultural boundaries in populations, for culturally mediated pressures to consume and for social emulation as a universal principle (Douglas – Isherwood 1980). What people needed was no longer seen as rational. Needs got transformed to preferences and those were seen as arbitrary (Slater 1997). The *natural* link between products and their use became a *cultural* link (Firat and Venkatesh 1995).

6.2. Theoretical Framework

In our research project, the consumer is seen as handling consumption in an often extremely self-conscious way, carefully building is own “me”. Building an own self is a life-long project, but one group is said to take a particular place in it, namely youth. In the contemporary consumption based societies we live in (in the Western world), one central building stone of identity is often supposed to be the goods and products that are being bought, often visual to other people. Consumption is considered to have become an important means of communication. This article presents some major aspects of the theoretical framework of a research model that aims at exploring the role of consumption in the identity-work of teenagers. The article consists of two main parts. In a first paragraph, the role of identity in general and in consumption related research in particular will be discussed. The role of consumption in processes of distinction and identification will be elaborated in a second paragraph.

6.3. Identity

Central to recent sociological theories about consumption is that they carry the self-reflexive consumer in their hearts (Lury – Warde 1997). Following this approach, the consumer is seen as carefully shaping his own identity, constantly subjecting it to reflexive evaluation (Solomon 1983). Consumption is seen as taking a special role in these identity processes with which individuals communicate aspects of themselves to others. What are concerned the most, are the consumption activities and products that are visual to others. In terms of Goffman this is called the consumption *on stage*. In what happens *off stage* individuals know they are not really all the time visible to others and thus they often do not let them be lead by demands of society (Burnkrant – Cousineau 1975). It is important to know that the construction of the own self does not happen in the societal void, but is always accompanied by an expression of this self to others and is thus only a result of social interaction (Bem 1967; Goffman 1959; Waugh 2001). Experiences and feedback play extremely important roles in these (Craib 1998; Snyder, 1992; van Raaij – Antonides 2002). The self of individuals is sometimes called a performing self, because of the importance attached to *impression management* (Entwistle 1997; Goffman 1959; Malhotra 1988; Schau – Gilly 2003; van der Loo 1990; Wouters 1990). In all everyday activities, self presentation plays an important role as tangible component of the own identity (Schau – Gilly 2003). However, it remains important that the way individuals try to sell their own selves, has to remain recognizable to other people (Schlenker 1975; van der Loo 1990). In this, marketing and advertising play important roles (Firat – Venkatesh 1993). The cultural research trend of recent years focuses on the role of material goods in describing and manifesting the self.

6.3.1. Defining identity

Sociological and socio-psychological literature is teemed with research about identity and its social construction, but there is no agreement on what exactly is meant by identity (Abdelal et al. 2003). The use of the term “self” goes back to ancient Greek times, but as psychological construct, it dates from the twentieth century (Malhotra 1988). Research on identity in the 1960s and 1970s looked at the role of one’s profession, religion and political ideology. Later on, also interpersonal relations, ethnicity and possible conflicts between these domains were taken into account (Grotevant – Cooper 1998). The “ego” was also seen as based on four pillars of academic, social, emotional and physical self-image (Waugh 2001). Nowadays, also consumption has taken a special role in one's identity (Holt 2000) and identity has become an important concept in interpretations about sociological interpretations of social life (Englis – Solomon 1995; Lury – Warde 1997), but still, it is not clear what identity exactly is.

It is agreed on that identity is some kind of abstract, intangible concept, organised in a hierarchical way (Deaux 1993). Grotevant and Cooper (1998, 6) state: "Identity has traditionally referred to one's sense of coherence of personality and continuity over time; it is the meshing of personality with historical and situational context. Thus, the construct of identity stands at the interface of individual personality, social relationships and external context." Abdelal et al. (2003) make it even more abstract when they talk of an identity as an individual's self-understanding about his traits and characteristics as member of a certain social category. An important aspect in this is that the realization of an individual about his own identity is decisive (Adams – Montemayor 1983).

Identity then, is something that connects the own personality with the (social) environment over time. What this something is, is seldom made concrete and it remains a question whether or not identity can be concretized. Therefore, it is sometimes put forward to not use the concept identity anymore in sociological research. Brubacker and Cooper for example, state that it would be better to work with alternatives, like identification or categorization, individual self-knowledge or communality, connectedness or group status (in: Abdelal et al. 2003). These methodological problems will be dealt with later on. Here we just want to make the remark that a definition of identity often occurs in view of a certain operationalization. It would be impossible to state a-priori what will be considered as one's identity in a certain research project. Thus, different theories have also approached identity in different ways. Sometimes it is seen as an object of knowledge. Symbolic interactionism focuses on the development of identity in function of social interaction. From Freudian perspective, an individual's identity is seen as tormented by conflicts, enduringly aching for the reservation of integrity and personality. An organic approach focuses on the needs of people in identity. A phenomenological approach scrutinizes the study of identity from the viewpoint of the perceiving individual and a cognitive approach sees the self as an information processing system (Malhotra 1988).

Identity is mainly an ungraspable something because as an abstract whole, it forms a kind of dome over several concrete parts. The ego organizes certain parts into a coherent personality which is seen by others as the same and continu (Adams 1998). As other parts may be stressed in different roles, individuals are also said to have more than one identity, although it must be added that by saying this, we refer more to the subparts of the general and abstract whole. These parts are often referred to as the fragmented identity (Blustein – Palladino 1991; Firat – Venkatesh 1993; Fournier 1998). This is more a contemporary approach, but it is not stated that in past days identity was an absolute unity (Mandel 2003; Smee 1997). People would also not strive for unity (Fournier, 1998), but for some consistency in their identities (Blustein – Palladino 1991; Schlenker 1975; Snyder 1992). The idea of the fragmented identity is funded in the fact the people's identity is first and for all a social identity (Craib 1998) and people are in several social fields, always wandering which identity must be chosen (Mandel 2003). When talking about identity, we refer in a way to the aggregated and less concrete level. "Social identities come and go, but my identity goes on as something which unites all the social identities I have had, have or will have" (Craib 1998, 4). Other terms for this fragmented identity are partial identities (Vanmarcke 1996, 109), multiple selves (Grotevant – Cooper 1998, 25) and chewing gum identity (van der Loo 1990, 110).

6.3.2. Constructing Identity

Identity is seldom seen as fixed, but as a continuing project that is being constructed. One of the reasons for the fact that identity is not fixed is again to be found in the social nature of it. Constructing identities is a recent theme. An identity can be ascribed or chosen, but the ascribing of identities is most often situated in past societies (Adams 1998). In past times, the life of individuals was arranged a-priori. A place in society was ascribed, not reached (Mason 1981; Wouters 1990). Building identity was not under discussion. In contemporary societies however, identities are considered to be under permanent construction (Adams 1998; Craib 1998; Hammer 1998). Class based identities have made place for other sources of identity (Holt 2000; Hooks 2000; Miller et al. 1998; Smee 1997). Choice authority has moved from outside to inside the individual (Elchardus – Glorieux 2002) and making choices is sometimes even equated with building identity (McCracken 1988).

Studies on identity have gained importance because identity is linked with several kinds of functions. Identity makes people have a certain structure to understand who one is. Identity also directs commitments, values and goals and makes these aspects show some degree of consistency, coherence and harmony. Identity also makes people have a feeling of personal control and free will. And finally, it makes people acknowledge what they can and it gives them a feeling of being able to explore other possibilities and to make other choices in the future (Adams 1998).

6.3.3. Types of identity

Individuals are often said to have three kinds of identities (Malhotra 1981, 1988). The first kind is the real or actual identity, which is the identity persons (believe to) have. The second kind is the identity one has in the eyes of others which can only be found out in interpersonal interaction. This is the social self. Actually, a person could be seen as having many of these social identities, namely one for each "other". However, this social identity can also be seen as a kind of generalization of opinions of others (Solomon 1983). In 1902, Cooley named this the "looking glass self" (in: Wichstrom 1998). The third kind of identity is the identity one would very much like to have. This ideal identity can be seen as a mental picture of the perfect "me" (Ogilvie 1987). On the one hand, this ideal identity provides people with a certain goal in life. On the other hand, it can cause also a lot of psycho-social problems when the contrast between the ideal and the real identity is considered to be too high (Adams 1998; Ogilvie 1987; Wichstrom 1998). As a kind of refining, Wichstrom (1998, 114) introduced the "possible self" next to this "ideal self". The second is what one would like to be, the first is what is considered to be practically attainable. Often, a fourth kind of identity is added in this categorization, namely the not wanted self. Ogilvie (1987) even states that the real counterpart of the ideal identity is not the real self but the not-wanted self.

In consumption theories, the ideal identity is considered to be of prime importance. The products one buys are said to reveal more about one's wanted identity than about one's real identity (Schau – Gilly 2003) although financial interferences may be at stake (Richins 1994). Individuals however must be cautious. They are motivated to enhance positive evaluations about them (Berzonsky 1994), but when they would deviate too much from expectations about them, they take social risks that can damage the self. Social risks can have positive and negative outcomes. A negative outcome for example is being put ashamed for friends or even being ejected from a certain social group. In every act of self-presentation, people make themselves vulnerable (Schau – Gilly 2003). In view of the social risks they take, they often choose those activities of which the possible negative outcomes are as light as possible (Mandel 2003; Schlenker 1975). One of these activities is consumption (Tian et al. 2001).

Other distinctions between different types of identities have also been made. A quite known differentiation has been made by Mead, who has contrasted the "me" and the "I". The first one is the definition of one's self one gets from the outside world, the second is defined as the answer to this. It is the source of creativity and combines several "me's" in one whole (Craib 1998; Solomon 1983).

Personal identities are sometimes contrasted to collective identities. Some call these collective identities the social identities (Deaux 1993), but this can be a confusing terminology. A collective identity refers to the group one belongs to, characterised by a certain label and distinguished by all kinds of rules regarding group membership and related traits. Expectations and normative standards of significant others individuals are charged with are also said to belong to this collective identities (Berzonsky 1994). A personal identity on the other hand is a collection of convictions, desires and principles of which an individual thinks it makes him different from others in a socially relevant way (Abdelal et al. 2003; Berzonsky 1994). Personal and collective identities do not always stand distinct from each other. A personal identity is partly explained by collective elements and social categories always have a kind of personal sense (Deaux 1993).

Another important contrast is the one between the independent and the interdependent self (Mandel 2003). These go also by the names individual and affiliated self (Schau – Gilly 2003) or existential and categorical self (Hoare et al. 1993). An independent person makes choices as he wants, also in consumption. An interdependent person knows himself situated in a network of social ties and he considers himself less free when choosing. The main aim of an interdependent person is the conservation of bonds and harmony with others. An independent person strives for uniqueness and being different from others members of the same group (Mandel 2003; Snyder 1992). Again, the contrast between these two types is not absolute. Often it is a matter of which aspect gets priority in a certain situation.

6.3.4. Teenagers and identity

At a certain age, children are for the first time in their lives confronted with decisions they themselves have to make, whereas before all these decisions were made by their parents. Later on, teenagers are even expected by society to engage in some kinds of life-long-commitments after a certain period of searching and exploring of different alternatives (Adams – Montemayor 1983). This has to bring them to a relatively stable self-definition (Adams 1998). Three steps in this process are to be discerned: exploring alternatives, constructing the chosen options and communicating the choices to others (Fournier 1998). The importance of consumption is above all notable in this last step.

Constructing identity is a life-long project (Deaux 1993; Grotevant – Cooper 1998), but it is initiated in childhood (Hoare et al. 1993; Wichstrom 1998). The first ideas about one's own identity would get form around the age of six and would develop stronger and stronger in the years to come (Hoare et al. 1993). The most appropriate period for real identity construction is determined by the society one lives in (Adams – Montemayor 1983), but often the teenage years or more specific puberty are considered to be an important stage in the psychological development of individuals (Wichstrom 1998). The development of an identity would be initiated by a kind of feeling of crisis, “a necessary turning point, a crucial moment, when development must move one way or another, marshalling resources of growth, recovery and further differentiation” (Erikson in: Adams 1998, 3). From this moment on the often young individual starts his journey of exploring and comparing several alternatives until commitments can be made. This journey is of course far less organised than might seem from the outline made here. The aspects of a feeling of crisis and commitment have led to four stages in the development of an identity, as identified by Marcia in 1966 (see: Adams 1998; Adams – Montemayor, 1983; Adams et al. 1978; Bennion – Adams 1986; Berzonsky 1989, 1994; Deaux 1993; Soenens et al. 2005). Someone who has not yet had a feeling of crisis and has not made commitments regarding identity is said to be in a diffuse stadium. From this stage on, there are two possibilities. The individual can make commitments without any feeling of crisis and such a person is said to be foreclosed. The other possibility is that the individual comes into a kind of psychological crisis and then he is in the stadium of moratorium, from where he can continue to a stadium where he has made commitments. This final stadium is called the achieved stadium. From this stadium one can again go to the stadium of moratorium and someone in a foreclosed stage can also move to moratorium. The stadium of achieved identity does not indicate that no further adjustments can be made. The content of the personality continues to change, also when people have grown up (Ball and Tasaki 1992). It is sometimes even said that the process of identity construction will never find its completion (Fournier 1998).

Based on this model of stages in identity development, Berzonsky (1989) has created a classification of identity styles. He makes a threefold distinction between information oriented, normative oriented and diffuse oriented persons. These styles are said to be determining identity (Soenens et al. 2005). Information oriented individuals are sceptical of their own identity and are prepared to revise aspects of it. Therefore, they search, process and evaluate relevant information before making any decisions. Normative oriented persons conform to certain normative standards and prescriptions, held by significant others. They are reluctant of being confronted with information sources that would undermine their identity as found in values and beliefs. Diffuse persons are not engaged in any kind of identity related decisions and move away from it as long as possible (Berzonsky 1989, 1994). The informational as well as the normative approach can be seen as two types of social influence. Information oriented people use information of others to shape their own identity; normative oriented persons only conform to it (Burnkrant – Cousineau 1975).

As said before, identity construction is mainly youth business. During teenage years, exploring and experimenting with identities is crucial. The acceptance of people towards teenagers trying out different options is higher than for other persons (Grotevant – Cooper 1998; Hammer 1998; Marcia 1998). This means that social risks are reduced. In society, teenagers are looked upon as learning and orienting citizens (Bouverne-De Bie 1996) in contrast with adults who are expected to have made the most important choices and having kind of settled in life, based on the foundation created in adolescence. Not everyone agrees with this viewpoint and again it is important to stress that changes can be made, people can "reformulate" themselves (Grotevant – Cooper 1998). The social field par excellence to experiment with identities is leisure time. Leisure time is sometimes called a therapeutic relief after work (or school) (Turner – Edmunds 2002). For teenagers, also consumption is seen as an important pastime among their leisure time activities.

6.3.5. Identity and Consumption

There is a lot of agreement on the proposition that individuals use consumption in general and products and brands in particular to define, form and keep their identities (Ball – Tasaki 1992; Belk 1988; Englis – Solomon 1995; Firat – Venkatesh 1993; Kleine et al. 1995; Muniz Jr. – Hamer 2001; Schultz et al. 1989; Snyder 1992; Solomon 1983). Consumption has both a self-defining and a self-expressive function. Bauman (2001) even refers to consumption as an expression of the most inner "me". People choose those products and brands that are relevant to the own self and that accentuate some aspects of that self. Belk (1988) grasps the possessions and the consumer objects of a person together with his identity in his term "extended self". In consumption, people make some aspects of their own self tangible and more concrete. In this way, individuals create a unique personality, meant for public consumption (Schau – Gilly 2003). This link with identity is a rather new value of products (Wallendorf – Arnould 1988), more specifically of products owned by the individual (Ball – Tasaki 1992; Richins 1994). In creating an own identity and by accentuating some aspects of it, people distinctively move away from other identities (Kleine et al. 1995). People also form their personalities by the products they deliberately do not consume (Muniz Jr. –

Hamer 2001). All these theories fall under the heading of material culture, which is not elaborated here.

6.3.6. Measuring identity

Measuring identity is one of the main problems in identity research. Identity is an abstract something that can not just be calculated. Even if a researcher would limit himself to some tangible aspects that can be related to identity, like choices in consumption, problems keep arising. For example, individuals are limited in what they can buy to express their identity. Also, some aspects of people's identity may not be suitable for expression by consumption (Schau – Gilly 2003) and we must keep in mind that people may not want to express everything of their own identity. Another problematic factor is the fact that people have different identities in different situations. Some even say that situational variables have more explanation power than person related variables (Belk 1975), but in research it is difficult to grasp all the possible situations people can be confronted with.

All methodological approaches in identity research have their benefits and disadvantages. Generally it is said that no technique is able to grasp the richness of the specific identity process (Richins 1994). On the one hand, there are qualitative techniques like experiments, interviews and discourse analysis; on the other hand there are quantitative techniques using large sample surveys, but both have their specific shortcomings. The biggest critique on large sample surveys is that they are not able to grasp the specific character of certain social situations, like peer pressure and crisis situations. Therefore, researchers using these techniques are obliged to remove contexts from a lot of processes, including consumption (Abdelal et al. 2003). Another well-known problem when using large samples is that even the smallest differences become statistically significant (Hoare et al. 1993). The biggest critique on discourse analyse is that they are extremely labour intensive and thus, they must be limited in design (Abdelal et al. 2003), probably having to miss a lot of interesting and relevant aspects.

Because of the fact that identity itself, in its abstract form, is hardly measurable, sometimes partial aspects of identity are put together to provide some kind of measure of identity. One important part of identity in that way is self-esteem (Adams 1998; Deaux 1993; Eiser et al. 1995; Hoare et al. 1993; Kleine et al. 1995; Wichstrom 1998). In measuring self-esteem, many scales have been created, tested and used. This self-esteem is closely related to self-evaluations, based on the ratio between being able and willing to be able with regard to a certain domain in life. Examples of such domains are school competence, social acceptance, physical competence, physical appearance, external behaviour, job competence, romantic appeal, close friendship and global self worth (Wichstrom 1995). Another possible aspect of identity is locus of control (Robinson et al. 1991). This locus measures to what extent people are convinced that they themselves are responsible for their own lifes. Also shyness, feelings of conformity, involvement in activities, thoughts about their own social influence and many family related aspects can be parts of this own identity (Adams 1998). One can also focus on self-presentation (Schau – Gilly 2003) or on the extent to which individuals want to feel unique. This need for uniqueness is defined as a positive striving to be different from others (Snyder – Fromkin 1977). Also ideas about the own body and body image can be of importance in mapping a part of one's own identity. Body image has long time been solely associated with weight problems and research in this area was mainly performed from a medical-psychological angle (Thompson 1995). Comparing one's ideas about his own current body image and his ideal body image, a measure can be created to map a kind of dissatisfaction with the body and this can be used in identity research. A lot of aspects of one's own identity can be distorted, but one can almost never lie about his own body. Thus, the body can be seen as the undeniable covering of the more personal and psychological aspects that have to be grasped using other techniques.

Measures of identity are in way grouped measures of different constructs of identity and not everyone agrees with this approach (Wichstrom 1998). In surveys, these aspects are mostly measured using scales. The biggest advantage of scales is to be found in the comparability between different individuals. However, concerning the degree in which they can map variations and idiosyncratic ways of being unique, they score rather weakly (Adams 1998). One of the biggest problems when measuring identity is that it is by definition a social and relational concept that is extremely fluid. When adding scores on different scales to create one big measure, it also has to be taken into account that people build their identities mainly on those areas they find important themselves (Ball – Tasaki 1992; Eiser et al. 1995; Trent et al. 1994; Wichstrom 1995, 1998) and that these weights are often lacking in the sum that is made. The "why" behind the choices also always stays unclear (Adams 1998). And it must also not be forgotten that most tested and used scales are American in origin and they can not be used elsewhere just like that, even not in other Western societies (Wong et al. 2003).

The remarks on the measurement of identity bring us back to the definition of identity and a major aspect of it, which has been mentioned before. The definition of identity involves two ideas: on the one hand, an absolute sameness and on the other hand, a lasting distinctiveness (Craib 1998 4). Identity plays a crucial in ideas about identification and distinction and consumption plays an important role in the expression of it (Holt 2000). Therefore, we now turn to that discussion.

6.4. Distinction and Identification

6.4.1. A new function of consumption

The basic function of consumption is to be found in the providing for food, clothes, etc. so that people can live. The second important function of consumption is situated in communication. This second function has gained a lot of importance in our contemporary Western society and some might even say that it has become more important than the basic function. This evolution can also be told using product values. Generally, it is said that products have three values: use value, exchange value and sign value. The use value relates to the aspect the product is useful for in a practical way. A pan is designed to fry; a printer is used to print. In this way, objects do not have much in common, although there are products that have similar uses as for example a ballpoint pen and a pencil, that both serve to write. Exchange value is related to the base material and labour time that are put into the production of the object and connects products in an economical way, mostly by their price. One can say that product A has three times more value than product B. In a capitalist society, exchange value became more important than use value. Not the use of a product but its price had become value number one.

In contemporary society, a third value of products has stepped forward and has pushed the other two into the background, although they still have (some) importance. This new value is called sign value. A sign stands for a certain meaning when the thing the meaning is derived from is not present (Derrida 2000 {1972}). These meanings are constructed and continually have to be decoded and questioned (DuCille 2000) as these meanings do not stay the same forever (Baudrillard 1970; Dant 1999). As the sign value often can not be read from the product itself in a straight way, but instead has to be derived from associations, which means that the message is indirect, one can also use the term symbolic value for it.

This symbolic value is of prime importance because the primary value of products is not in use or price anymore, but in communication (Baudrillard, 1970). People buy things for three reasons: material welfare, psychic well-being and expression (Douglas – Isherwood 1980) and it is the last one that contains this important communication function. All products now have an inherent communicative status (Vigneron – Johnson 1999) and people are symbol-using beings (Craib 1998). In a consumer society, the meanings consumers create and find in consumer goods are on the front stage (Belk 1995). The basic needs of consumers are no longer the classic needs like drinking, eating and finding shelter but social needs. The chosen signs necessarily refer to other signs (Vanmarcke 1996) and in this way even a new language is constructed.

> "Within the available time and space the individual uses consumption to say something about himself, his family, his locality, whether in town or country, on vacation or at home" (Douglas – Isherwood 1980, 68).

> "It has become quite usual for sociologists to suggest that when individuals in contemporary society engage with consumer goods they are principally employing them as 'signs' rather than as 'things', actively manipulating them in such a way as to communicate information about themselves to others" (Campbell 1997, 340).

People who live in the contemporary consumer society know that this kind of communication has come to the front. Products are continually scanned and read by people who know the code (Douglas – Isherwood 1980) and also in a more general way, people are often thought of as having a kind of built-in radar with which they scan the society for this kind of information (van der Loo 1990). Consumption as communication however, is not without problems. It is not always easy to interpret signs and miscommunication may occur. With an ever growing number of products and brands this even becomes more and more likely. One also is never sure about the effect of this kind of communication. Nevertheless, miscommunication and communication without effect are also seen as communication (Fauconnier 1995). Other possible problems are that information can get lost and that sometimes interpretations are made where it was not really intended to. Consumers are not always necessarily communicating (Campbell 1997; Warde et al. 1999). Added to this remains the fact that it is often said that one can not communicate details with products but that instead, one is limited to communicate using stereotypes. And also, the language of consumption in a way contains multiple languages, like the language of money, lifestyle, identity, sexuality and it is crucial that all individuals engaging in a communication process have enough competence to speak that specific language, which is a supposition that is heavily doubted. A final critique on this "consumption as communication"-hypothesis, is that it has never been really and adequately tested (Campbell 1997).

6.4.2. Inside and outside a social group

One of the most common applications of the communication value of consumption can be found in distinction and identification. It is stated that everyone wants to be different in some kind of way to give value and meaning to one's own life (Wouters 1990). That's what the word individual refers to (Grotevant – Cooper 1998). This need to be unique has grown since the network of interdependence of people has become more and more closed (van der Loo 1990; Vigneron – Johnson 1999). People feel threatened in their individuality when they resemble others and therefore they engage in anti-conformistic behaviours (Snyder – Fromkin 1977; Tian et al. 2001). However, this does not mean that no communalities can be found anymore. People do want to be different from others on the one hand, but on the other hand they also want to resemble to (aspects of) others. Individuals constantly balance between individuality and interdependence (von der Lippe 1998).

It is considered a fact that people do not only buy the products they need in provision of their livelihood, but also in view of other reasons as distinguishing themselves from people and other social groups and imitating certain groups to get a sort of identification (Bourdieu 2003 {1986}; Burke 1993; Crompton 2003; Tian et al. 2001). These reasons are often called the "new needs". In a classical view, these "new needs" often remained unexposed.

> "Economists have to recognize that the needs of human beings fall into two-classes – those needs which are absolute in the sense that we feel them whatever the situation of our fellow human beings may be and those which are relative only in that their satisfaction lifts us above, makes us feel superior to, our fellow" (Keynes in: Mason 1981, 13).

Today, it is commonly accepted that people are continuously building their own prestige (Marshall 2000{1977}). What this "prestige" exactly is largely depends on the individual and his socio-economic background (Vigneron – Johnson 1999). Nevertheless, belonging to certain social groups is an important part of it. Not all social groups play a role in this process. Most important are the reference groups, which fall apart in two categories. The first contains the social groups one is a member of. These groups "comprise those associations of people to which a person necessarily or voluntarily belongs and which impose a set of norms regarding the behaviours of members" (Mason 1981 24). The second category encloses those groups of which one is currently no member, but one would like to become a member of. They also have certain norms to impose to their members. When one does not belong to a certain group, one can choose to already adopt the norms and values of the group, to make a possible admission or acceptance in the group easier. It has to be remarked that people often have more than one group they would like to become a member of and that conflicts in norms and values to adopt are possible, also with those norms and values currently held as member of other social groups. To these two categories, often a third is added and this category contains the groups one deliberately does not want to become a member of. The norms and values of those groups also guide the individual, because he will avoid adopting them.

In distinction and imitation theories of products, their symbolic value is of prime importance (McCracken 1988; Rocamora 2002). In consumption, products are being transformed to signs of distinction (Bourdieu 2003 {1986}). "Being different from others or becoming distinctive among a larger group often results from signals conveyed by material objects that consumers choose to display" (Tian et al. 2001, 50). Constructing and keeping walls around social groups, but also breaking them, is a major function of consumption in contemporary society.

> "Goods are neutral, their uses are social; they can be used as fences or bridges. [...] Goods are used for marking in the sense of classifying categories. […] Consumption habits, deemed natural as skin, are criteria for membership and become weapons of exclusion" (Douglas – Isherwood 1980, 12, 74, 85).

In a way, consumption has always served as a means to reproduce differences in social class so it is not a new fact (Holt 2000), but now more than ever, the symbolic communities one belongs to, provide the individual with his strongest identity (Lury – Warde 1997). Individuals want to protect this identity by emphasizing it and by clearly outlining group membership. In both processes, consumption is crucial. In a way, all products can be used as social markers and it is not easy to make a difference between products used as markers and products that combine a certain marker-function with a certain degree of practical efficiency (Douglas – Isherwood 1980). What can be judged as stressing identity using differentiating products could also be merely a coincidental or secondary consequence of motives or efforts to satisfy other needs (Tian et al. 2001). A girl wearing a heavy yellow shirt can be seen a (would-be) member of a girls' club of which yellow shirts are a group symbol, but she can also wear this shirt to be seen well in traffic on her bike. A bald boy can be judged a would-be hooligan, but it can also be a young cancer patient receiving chemo therapy. One must always be cautious when categorizing people. For some people, this categorization into a certain group is what they aim for intentionally, for others it is not.

Also in processes of social mobility, the moving from one group to another, a central role is ascribed to consumption. Social mobility can occur in two directions, vertically and horizontally. In traditional societies, vertical mobility was of primary importance, in which a special position was taken by socially distant reference groups (Mason 1981). This vertical mobility goes under the term “between-group mobility”. Following this theory, individuals strive for higher places on the social scale. In contemporary Western societies however, the horizontal mobility has come to the front. In this approach, individuals stay on the same societal layer, but move from one group to another. In a levelling society, most social mobility is horizontal as there are no real vertical layers left. At first sight, identification and distinction are two processes that are opposed to each other. Nevertheless, they can fit in perfect harmony when they are placed in a society that is divided in a horizontal and vertical way. Real hierarchies in society are less present than they used to be, but they have not disappeared and their influence on consumer behaviour has neither (Mason 1981). However, the vertical dividing lines (between horizontally ordered groups) have gained much power. One must not loose himself in a kind of thinking in closed cages. Borders between different groups of people are running through each other and individuals do not belong to merely one social group (Rocamora 2002). The contemporary society is one of loose boundaries (Warde et al. 1999, 106) and structures in it are never definitively fixed (Smee 1997), but this does not mean that no structures are left.

The fact that products can be seen as discriminatory markers, should include that when there are more societal (sub-)groups, more product varieties should exist (Douglas – Isherwood 1980). On the other hand, the more product varieties there are, the weaker the concentration of preferences in one group will become. In the end, it would be nearly impossible to communicate group belonging and group distinction (Holt 2000; Warde et al. 1999). And even though individuals always deny the social aspect when they stress the self (Podilchak 1991), in an extreme situation every person would become a group of his own, and no real social groups would remain. On the other hand, also the fact that groups are not mutually exclusive may cause problems in distinction. “With interacting groups multiplying and in constant flux, it becomes exceedingly difficult to develop stable consensus goods that represent the group” (Holt 2000, 215).

According to Bourdieu (1979), an important marker of social distinction are tastes (see also: Bourdieu 2000 {1979}; Holt 2000; Rocamora 2002; Smee 1997; Turner – Edmunds 2002; Warde et al. 1999).

> “Taste […] functions as a sort of social orientation, a 'sense of one's place', guiding the occupants of a given place in social space towards the social positions adjusted to their properties, and towards the practices or goods which befit the occupants of that position. It implies a practical anticipation of what the social meaning and value of the chosen practice or thing will probably be, given their distribution in social space and the practical knowledge the other agents have of the correspondence between goods and groups” (Bourdieu 2003 {1986}).

For Bourdieu, tastes were fixed. He passed over the fact that individuals have an evolving need for distinction. Nevertheless, it is sometimes stated that choices of individuals are more often a consequence of tastes and desires than it would be strategic actions (Holt 2000). In consumer theory, there would be no existing conceptual scheme to map the different tastes and activities of consumers (Douglas – Isherwood 1980).

6.4.3. Clothes and Fashion

All possessions and activities can be symbols of distinction (Holt 2000; Warde et al. 1999), but clothes are considered among the most important ones. Some even state that the body would be merely a carrier of clothes as markers of distinction and identification (Rocamora 2002), although also the body can have quite some impact in itself (Thompson – Hirschman 1995; Thompson 1995). Clothes can be understood as a manifestation of cultural categories and principles that are encoded and actively transmitted to third parties (Aldridge 2003). In gaining "identity through practices of dress" (Rocamora 2002, 356), the consideration of the ever present others (Miller 1995) is always at stake.

> "When I rummage through my wardrobe in the morning, I am not merely faced with a choice what to wear. I am faced with a choice of images: the difference between a smart suit and a pair of overalls, a leather skirt and a cotton dress, is not just one of fabric and style, but one of identity. You know perfectly well that you will be seen differently for the whole day, depending on what you put on" (Williamson 1991, 91).

As wardrobe engineering, clothing is one of the most important technologies of the self (Entwistle 1997). For children for example, their clothes are who they are because they do not have much else to express their "status" (Kotlowitz 2000). Clothes are sometimes even seen as a language, although McCracken (1988) does not agree on this. He states that syntactic and paradigmatic principles of language can not be used on clothes just like that. Clothes are said to be rather conservative, whereas language is very variable. Language is more capable of framing and communicating nuances. Communication through clothing would also be much more closed and less conscious than with real language. Furthermore, there are differences in universality. In one language area, many clothing codes can be possible and vice versa. Finally, with clothes it is impossible not to communicate, while one can shut up in real language. With clothes, one is constantly repeating himself (Campbell 1997). Therefore, clothing as a language must be understood as a metaphor. Clothes remain one of the means par excellence to socially define, distinguish and group one's self. Kotlowitz (2000) describes this process with the phrase “dress to impress”. The idea that clothing marks social distinction is not new, as it can already be found in the trickle-down theory of Georg Simmel from 1904 (see: Simmel 1957 {1904}).

6.4.4. Conspicuous Consumption

One of the most well-known distinction processes is conspicuous consumption, a term introduced by Thorstein Veblen in 1899. It is defined as a pattern of conduct that is intended to realize the goal of maintaining or enhancing an individual's social position” (Campbell 1995a, 38). There is some serious doubt whether the work of Veblen should be read as a satire or as an objective social analysis (Aldridge 2003, 66). Nevertheless, as defined, conspicuous consumption still has some actual value. Consumer behaviour is one of the most important expressions of status in a community (Holt 2000) and one of the most notable means to appropriate group membership (truthful or not) (Mason 1981). In the history of consumer society, conspicuous consumption too plays an important role (Burke 1993), even though in traditional societies, excessive consumption was seen as a social disease and as a symptom of economic decline. Conspicuous consumption was considered suspicious (van Rossem 1990); “wealthy man” was an insulting term (Mason 1981, 39). The pleasure of consumption and leisure time radically opposed to the dominating atmosphere of working hard and frugality (Bouverne-De Bie 1996; Weber 1976).

Today, consumption is not seen in that negative way anymore, although some critique will always remain, for example from an ecological approach (de Geus 2003). Nevertheless, a central aspect of conspicuous consumption is that it is based on social grounds and no longer solely on economic or physiological grounds, although there is no fully satisfactory way of discriminating conspicuous consumption from more rational consumer reactions (Mason 1981). Veblen himself stressed the manifestation of pecuniary strength (Veblen 1899) (see also: Veblen 2000 {1899}, 2003 {1899}). Prices of products were inseparably connected to their quality (Vigneron – Johnson 1999) and this quality gave off on their buyers. In contemporary Western societies, more general symbolic communication has taken the place of money, by which it is not stated that money would not play any role anymore. Consumer practices will always stay connected in one way or another to economical class-positions (Crompton 2003). Prices of products will keep a distinctive value, even though this would be more relational and not really substantial anymore (Rocamora 2002). Nevertheless, besides wealth, income and prices, a lot of other factors play a crucial role in the conspicuous consumption in society today (Holt 2000).

Although most contemporary human beings are constantly worrying about their status (de Botton 2004) and even though status and symbolic capital are sometimes used as synonyms (Turner – Edmunds 2002), creating status does not always have to be considered as the central motive of conspicuous consumption. Other aspects like not being indebted to anyone and generosity can also be motives (Campbell 1995a). Furthermore, consumption does not have to be conspicuous to be symbolic (Bourdieu 2003 {1986}) or to put oneself in a positive light of day (Burke 1993). It is also not easy to check whether a certain kind of consumption is conspicuous or not (Burke 1993, Veblen 2000 {1899}). The theory reduces all things to signs of differentiation, but things are more than mere representations of something else (Dant 1999) and consumption can be merely functional too (Lipovetksy in: Rocamora 2002). Finally, one can not state that everyone engages in playing the game (Mason 1981). Added to this is the critique that the symbolic value of things does not stay the same for ever. They loose a lot of their distinctive power when they are generally spread in the population (Baudrillard 1970; Tian et al. 2001). New status symbols were continuously devalued through the process of imitation and emulation (Laermans 1993, 99). Some people engaging in conspicuous consumption do not want products anymore than have become affordable by the mass. This is what the snob-effect is about (Mason 1981).

The theory of Veblen was never tested, nor generally, nor to the extent of whether or not a specific form of consumption reaches this goal. This is difficult because people are probably reluctant to admit that this kind of motives moved them to a certain consumption pattern (Campbell 1995a; Mason 1981; Wouters 1990). One must also raise the question why people would want to impress others they hardly know in a society that is gaining anonymity by the minute. It is not the anonymous mass that provides people of status (Campbell 1995a). On the other hand, it is stated that people are much more socially conscious than ever before and that the rising anonymity also advances the importance of watching and being watched (de Botton 2004). It is just because we don't know each other anymore that conspicuous consumption can work. With people we know well, we would rapidly fall short to a large extent. Nevertheless, the evidence showing that people adapt their consumption choices to the social environment they live in and more specifically to their family, peers and other significant others, is constantly growing (von der Lippe 1998). For youngsters for example, peers are their primary source of reference (Mason 1981). They are haunted by the look of others and endlessly occupied with being seen in a good light (Bourdieu in: Rocamora 2002, 354). They have an immediate need to conform and react to small face-to-face groups, certainly when visible products are involved (Mason 1981, 125). Therefore, it is suggested that young consumers have a greater chance of being a conspicuous consumer.

6.4.5. The game of teenagers and consumption

When talking about youth, one must realize that a definition of youth is always socially constructed (Turner – Edmunds 2002). In the fifteenth century in Western Europe for example, childhood ended approximately at the age of seven. From these days on, "children" entered adult life. Later on, childhood days were extended and thus the period in which children could explore their world without adult restraints was extended too (Wouters 1990). Today, an opposite movement can be discerned, in which the world of adults on the one hand and children and teenagers on the other hand are distinct, but in which children and teenagers start to take over elements from adult life sooner. In a way, we could see teenagers as crossing the ocean from childhood to adult life, which is both physically and mentally a giant journey. For example, teenagers are already supposed to make individual choices as if they were adults. This is true in the fields of education when they have to choose what to study and what to become later. It is also true for media access, mobility, relations and consumption (Bouverne-De Bie 1996). Concerning studies, one of the biggest choices in Belgium for example, has to be made at the age of 12. At later age there is no clear distinction between young adults and "not-just-yet-adults", apart from some arbitrary limitations in age that are socially and culturally constructed (Hammer 1998), lumping all teenagers together in categories created by laws, not taking into account individual mental and physical conditions.

Choices in the field of consumption also slowly grow to become a teenagers' business. This can become a tricky adventure. On the one hand, teenagers want to become more independent, but on the other hand they have more need than adults to continuing confirmation by their peers and therefore, they attach more importance than anyone else to activities of watching and being watched like consumption. Those social influences have a lasting effect on their personality, even when this keeps developing (Mason 1981). Teenagers' feeling of self-worth is even determined by peers' acceptance in the second place (after physical attraction) (Harper in: Wichstrom 1998). Teenagers have a growing autonomy of choosing whom they want to spend their leisure time with and as a consequence of their choices, the youth period is largely situated in a network of peers (Bouverne-De Bie 1996). On one side, teenagers can be themselves among peers, but on the other side, this peer group can also work in a compulsive way. If one wants to stay in a group, he will have to communicate the right signals. Opposing the group spirit and its prevailing values and norms, is just not done. The consequences of those actions can be a social disaster (Marcia 1998). Therefore, consumption often is the comparing of consequences of the decisions to be taken as it is one of the activities mostly situated within a group of friends, communicating information about one's self or lifestyle to the people that witness it (Campbell 1995b). Consumption is often considered a key to communication, but for children and teenagers, this link would be even stronger (Aldridge 2003). Therefore, teenagers are considered the research subjects par excellence in studies on the link between consumption, identity and peer-related behaviour.

6.5. Towards a research model

Based on theories that have been elaborated to some extent on the previous pages, steps are now taken to construct a research model that incorporates several of the discussed aspects. The model will consist of three main parts. The first part tries to map some aspects of identity, as not all aspects of identity can be grasped and not all of them are relevant to the model. The second part is about the role of the peer group. As consumption is considered to be communication, the most important senders and receivers of this communication for teens have to be taken into account. The third part schedules the consumption activities that will be under consideration. Shopping, the most visual act of consumption (Warde 1994), will be one of them. Some other possible relevant aspects will be included. First, there is the role of upbringing by the parents, and the role of the attitudes and values of fathers and mothers. Second, the role of the school has to be taken into consideration. As teenagers spend quite a lot of time among their peers at schools, the influence of school policy regarding consumption activities has to be included. Third, there is the economic role of money. Consumption often means buying and to buy, one needs money. The sources of money of teenagers (pocket money and money from own jobs) have a possible intervening influence that cannot be left out of the model. Fourth, advertising may have an important role as pointed out before. Therefore, also advertising-related issues have to be taken into consideration, although they will be reduced to aspects of media use, because of methodological reasons.

The aim of the research project is to test several existing theories on identity and consumption, as outlined above, using a large sample survey among students in secondary schools in Flanders (Belgium), theoretically having an age between 12 and 18. Hopefully, more evidence will be gathered on the truthfulness or falseness of the often supposed links between identity and consumption.

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7. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE CONSUMPTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN FINLAND

Terhi-Anna Wilska

Abstract
In this article I focus on the position of young girls and boys as consumers in family and society. The consumption of young girls, in particular, has been a subject of heavy discussion recently, as well as the nature and content of the advertising targeted to young girls. Feminist consumption criticism sees a woman as an object, which has to maximise its desirability with a right set of products and lifestyles. This is why marketers and advertisers believe in women's and girl's purchase power. However, in families women's and girls' economic position is not equal with men's and boys' economic position. Women's and girls' needs are typically belittled and their purchases are regarded as vanities. This may originate from the historically secondary position of women as economic decision-making in families. According to recent Finnish studies, girls get less pocket money than boys from their parents and girls also earn less from work. Girls are less brand- and trend-conscious consumers than boys, and they are also more ethical and economical consumers, contrary to common beliefs. The roles of genders as consumers in family and society have not been studied much empirically. Therefore this issue requires a lot of further research.

Keywords: consumption, gender, young people, children, economic decision-making

7.1. Introduction

Numerous stereotypes usually appear in everyday discourse about men and women as consumers. According to the most common stereotypes, women and girls are hedonistic shoppers who fall in vanities, and who should feel ashamed about their impulse purchases. In stereotypes, men and boys do not do recreational shopping. Instead, they make useful purchases, usually technical ones, when they need to, (see Wilska, 2001). Also brand-awareness and stylisation are traditionally connected to women and girls, who keep filling their wardrobes and beauty boxes. However, men's and boys' consumer cultures have also been changing recently. Especially in Anglo-Saxon countries men and boys have become more concerned about their looks, and the amount of marketing directed to men and boys has been increasing for several years (Edwards 2000). Also in Finland, the attitudes of young men and boys are changing, and men have begun to invest more in their appearances. Yet the idea of men and boys as consumers, who are more reasonable than women and girls, persists. However, fairly little academic studies have been conducted about the differences in the consumer cultures of men and women although there are a large number of studies on feminine consumption (see Lury 1996; Ganetz 1995; Russell – Tyler 2002).

During the past few years, marketers have become more and more interested in girls' and women's roles as consumers in families. Commercial market studies estimate that women are responsible for as much as 80 per cent of the purchase decisions of the household. Thus the marketing of the activities which are related to leisure time is nowadays directed primarily to women. Also young girls are targets of the advertisers' special attention. Especially the “tween-age” -target group of 9–12-year-old girls (who are *beTween* childhood and youth) has become more and more popular during the past decades (e.g., Quart 2003; Schor 2004; Cook - Kaiser 2004). Today young girls are considered an important consumer group, but in the marketers' minds, there is also an image of a future mother, who makes most of the important purchase decisions in families (Russell - Tyler 2002). However, according to several studies, women and girls are more critical, economical, green and ethical consumers than men and boys. Girls are also being socialised as caring consumers who make purchases to their boyfriends already at young age (Autio – Wilska 2003; Wilska 2001; 2003; Lintonen et. al. 2005**)**. Against this background, it is interesting that girls' and women's consumption is generally looked at more critically than men's and boys consumption. Girls are not only regarded as more irresponsible consumers than boys, but they are also seen as more vulnerable and impressionable targets of marketing and advertising. This applies to very young girls, in particular.

In this article I examine the roles of Finnish girls and boys as female and male consumers inside the family on the one hand, and in society on the other. First I will analyse the economic significance and position of girls and boys in both families and society. Then I will look at girls' and boys' general attitudes towards consumption and money, and finally I focus on brands and their significance to girls and boys.

7.2. Girls and boys as economic actors in families

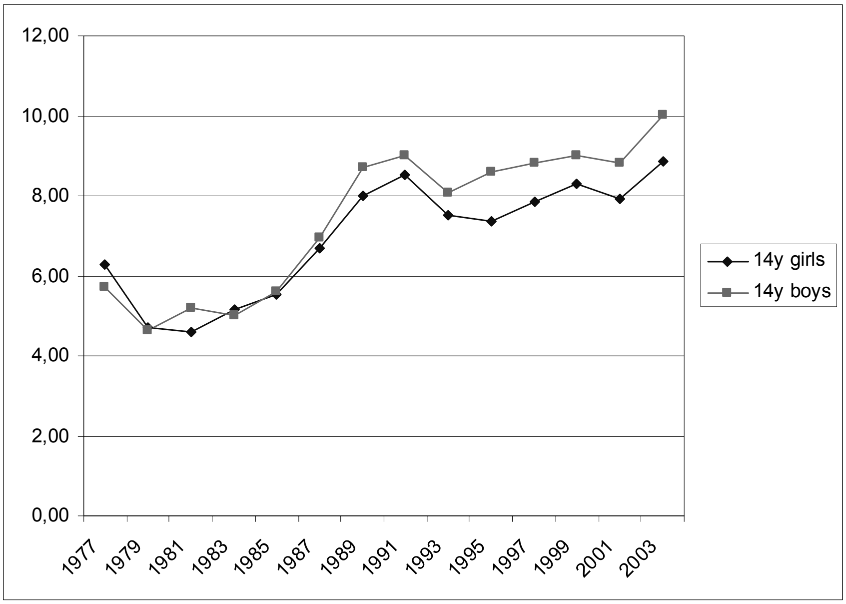
In the old agrarian Finnish society the birth of a girl meant economic loss for the family. A boy was seen as an old age economic protection for his parents, but a girl married and took her work contribution to another house. A girl also had to be provided with dowries when she married. Furthermore, Finnish women were entitled to inheritance already in the Middle Ages, which for its part reduced the wealth of the house (see Utrio, 1986, 394). The thought of a child as a person in need of care and as a subject of consumption rather than a producer and a protector of welfare of the family begun gradually with the industrialisation of Western countries (see e.g. Zelitzer 2002; Buckingham 2000). A gradual equalisation of genders begun at the same time, although economic discrimination of girls and women has continued up to the present day, both in societies and in families.

According to Per Simonsson, who studied the consumption of Swedish families using the Swedish Household Surveys 1913, 1952 and 1992, economic inequality between genders was greatest in the middle of the century. In 1952, families who had one son, spent considerably more on everyday products, such as food, clothes, living, leisure and traffic compared to families who had one daughter. If there were a girl and a boy in the family, the birth of the girl increased the consumption of the family only marginally. However, the second son in the family increased the consumption of the family much more. The expenditures of two-girl families were considerably lower than the expenditures of two-boy families. Simonsson explains this with the housewife-culture of the 1950's. Boys were expected to be educated and to become the supporters of the family in the future, whereas girls were predicted to become housewives. Therefore it was not worthwhile to invest as much in girls (for instance in their education). In 1913, the general level of education and the expectation of social rise were low for both genders. Also the general level of expenditures was low, and thus there were no big differences in consumption between families with girls and families with boys. By the 1990's, the differences between genders in education and work participation had levelled out, and thus there were no more notable gender-based differences in the consumption of families, either. However, Simonsson suspects that although there are no more differences in the main expenditure categories, in more specific consumption differences in families' "investments" in girls and boys might still persist (Simonsson 2004).

It is obvious that in the past the differences in spending on girls and boys have been based on rational thinking. Many international studies suggest that rationality like this still exists in families, especially in the economic decision-making between spouses. According to Gary Becker (1981), sub-conscious economic optimisation would take place even when choosing a spouse. In several Western countries, a so-called resource theory of power applies as well. According to the theory, the spouses' economic decision-making power is directly dependent on their incomes. Because the men usually earn more, their decision-making power is therefore higher (Vogler 1998; Pahl 1989). The theory contradicts with commercial market studies which emphasise women's role in the purchase decisions of the family (see Lury 1996). In Finland however, the resource theory of power has not been verified. According to a study of Takala (2003), the economic decision-making in Finnish families is usually quite equal and democratic although it also varies a lot in different families (Takala 2003). However, according to Finnish Household Expenditure Surveys, the personal consumption of mothers is generally lower than the consumption of fathers in households with children (Sauli 1997). Women's consumption is typically “caring consumption”. In other words, the wife’s “own” money is easily spent on the needs of other members of the family, whereas the husband’s extra money usually remains at his own disposal (see Thompson, 1996). However, extensive studies have not been conducted on the subject in Finland.

In the Finnish Family Expenditure Survey 1998, only small differences between the money spent on boys and girls were found. Money was spent more on boys when they were under 7 years old. At the age of 6-7 the balance changed to girls’ favour. The difference was greatest at the age of 13-14, when about eight per cent more was spent on girls than on boys. Later the difference narrowed, and at the age of 15-17, only four per cent more was spent on girls than on boys. The structural difference in the expenditures between teenage boys and girls was fairly traditional: girls spent more on clothes, hygiene and travelling, and boys spent more on sports, hobbies and other activities, respectively (Kartovaara - Sauli 2001, 85). In the latest Family Expenditure Survey 2001, there was no information available about the personal consumption of the household members. However, it is likely that the boys' share of the family budget has grown, because during the past few years the boys’ expenditures in clothes, jewellery and beauty products have increased considerably (Suosikki Nuorisotutkimus, 2000). Moreover, spending on information technology has grown in families. This has probably increased the boys’ share of the family consumption, because personal computers, for instance, are purchased primarily to boys. Sometimes is difficult for a household to determine to which family member each good is purchased, and technical products, such as computers, are typically collective goods in the family. However, even if a computer is a collective commodity, it is considerably more often placed in the boy's room than in the girl's room (see Suoninen, 2002).

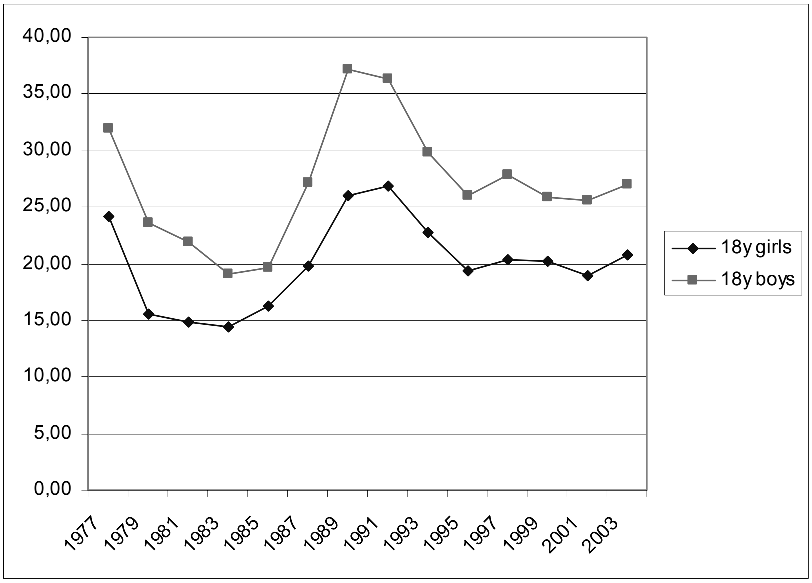
Another interesting fact is that boys have distinctly more "own" money at their disposal (weekly pocket-money, earned income, presents etc.) than girls. According to the Finnish Adolescent Health and Lifestyle Survey[1], the difference between boys and girls in disposable income starts to grow at about the age of 12 and continues growing along with age, until the difference is nearly 30 per cent at the age of 18. The size of the difference in the disposable income between girls and boys has even increased since the year 1977 and the difference also appears among younger children than before (see figures 1 and 2) (Lintonen et al. 2005).



Source: Adolescent Health Study 1977–2003. (Lintonen, Wilska et.al. 2005)

Figure 1. Weekly disposable income of 14-year-old girls and boys 1977-2003

[1] In Adolescent Health Survey, comparable mailed surveys with two reminders to non-respondents have been conducted from 1977 onwards every other year; the latest data in this present study are from 2003. Nationally representative samples were acquired from the Finnish Population Register Centre. The respondents were 12, 14, 16 and 18 year-olds and the numbers of respondents by study year ranged from 2832 to 8390 persons (see Lintonen, et. al 2005).



Source: Adolescent Health And Lifestyle Survey 1977-2003. (Lintonen, et.al. 2005)

Figure 2. Weekly disposable income of 18-year-old girls and boys 1977–2003.

Also other Finnish studies indicate that the difference in disposable income is about 20-30 per cent in boys' favour among teenage or tween-age girls and boys (see Wilska, 2002; IRO Research 2004). This suggests that in families, boys are regarded as more independent consumers than girls. On the other hand, it is also possible that money is given to boys as present more often than to girls, because many people think that buying presents to boys is more difficult. On the other hand, boys' requests of money are easily regarded as more acute than the requests of girls, because the general idea still is that boys buy for need and that girls squander for vanities. According to Campbell (1997), the traditional consumer type men are thought to represent is need-oriented. It is also likely that the traditional model of the boy as the future supporter of the family still persists. The division of money between mothers and fathers as well as their actual consumer behaviour also have an effect. If a "mother spends, father earns" –attitude is present in the family's consumption practices and in the general discourse about consumption, it is conveyed also to the girls' and boys' treatment as consumers, at least unconsciously.

7.3. "Boy's colours" and "girl's colours" –doing gender with consumption

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of female consumption is sociability. For girls, shopping is social action much more often than it is for boys. Also external factors such as friends, idols, parents and siblings affect girls' purchase decisions more than they affect boys' purchase decisions (Gunter – Furnham 1998, 31). The consumption styles of girls and boys begin to differ from each other already before the school-age. The most important socializing agents for gendered consumption are parents, but carefully targeted marketing and product segmentation have an increasingly important role. As I mentioned above, especially the “tween”- market of pre-adolescent girls has considerably enlarged during the last few years. The tween- market sells teenagers’ clothes and leisure time products to 9-12-year-old children. In public discourse, both the products (especially clothes, music videos, magazines etc.) and their advertising are regarded as too “juvenile”, also containing sexual hints. This phenomenon has caused a lot of criticism and discussion about children's too early entrance to adulthood. (Schor 2004; Cook - Kaiser 2004; Quart 2003; Anttila 2004; Näre - Näre 2004; Autio 2004)

The tween - phenomenon is not new. In the United States, already at the end of the 1940's, the marketers identified the desire of children on the threshold of teenage to imitate young people in their teens, especially with regard to clothing (Cook-Kaiser 2004, 207). However, tween-age children became a globally significant target group only in the early 1990's. In Finland it happened at the beginning of the new Millennium. Particularly young girls as targets of marketing are subjected to public worry, since their image of female adulthood is determined more and more by consumer goods on the market. The main messengers of the female images and their demands are women’s magazines, young girl’s own magazines (in Finland e.g. Demi) as well as tweenage versions of established women's magazines (e.g. CosmoGirl, ElleGirl, TeenVogue).

The central purpose of the women's and girls' magazines is to help women with the incessant work of femininity (see Winship 1983). The aim of the work of femininity is to reach the desired appearance and lifestyle with certain products and practices, such as clothes, cosmetics, natural products, and techniques of self-development. According to John Berger (1972), “the publicity image steals a woman’s love of herself as she is and offers it back to her for the price of the product” (cit. Lury 1996, 135). In other words, a woman is never good enough, but her body, mind and lifestyle have to be in constant change. According to Winship (1983), the market of feminine products is presented as an arena of “options” which women can selectively choose in order to express their own unique sense of self. This is done by transforming commodities form their mass-produced forms into expressions of individuality and originality (cit. Lury, 1996, 134). Furthermore, the woman has the main responsibility of everyday needs and emotional welfare of the family. The woman is also responsible of the aesthetics of the environment, such as the interior decoration in households (Lury 1996; Ganetz 1995).

How about the consumption of boys and young men, then? The expenditures of young men and boys in clothes, jewellery and cosmetics have multiplied during the past few years (Wilska 2001). For instance, what was sub-cultural stylisation in the past, such as skateboarding, has now become almost mass youth culture. Trend-consciousness has also become a more and more important demand for boys and their clothing. Traditionally, quality and price have been the most important determinants for the purchase decisions of boys and men (Ruohonen 2001, 167). Today international male idols, such as David Beckham, mix styles, play with appearances and even with gender images. To today's young men, bodily appearance is a much more important matter than it was for earlier generations. However, even if there are lifestyle magazines available also for men, usually the main message of the advertising directed to men is not changing the self. Instead of being an object, the male image in lifestyle magazines is more clearly a consuming subject.

According to Kathy Myers (1986), men search for their identity and purpose for their life from consumption just like women do, but the essential difference between genders is that girls' upbringing determines them as both consumers and as images to be consumed by the gaze of men. In that context, consumption is almost a kind of cannibalism. According to the social criticism of today, younger and younger girls have become both subjects and objects of marketing communication. This is manifested especially in children's clothing industry, advertisements and TV- and music entertainment. According to Sari and Lena Näre (2004), advertising with sexual content leaves its trace to children's sub-conscious memory and may function as a kind of imaginary compulsion, which models the ideals of self.

Advertising directed to young people also creates ideals of beautiful and suitable dressing. In Finland, special attention has been paid to young girls' half-length tops, which many adults disapprove and which some schools in Finland have even forbidden. In this case one can discuss, however, whether the adult-like clothing style is trying to make young girls grow up too early, or whether this kind of imitation of adults is a natural part of the building process of womanhood. Young girls have always constructed their femininity with their mother's wardrobe and beauty box. What is different today, is that young girls do not have to use the mother's products any more, because the commercial supply of products that imitate adult styles are targeted directly to young people (see Autio, 2004, 37). However, one must bear in mind that the adult-like products are not the only products available to children and "tweens", but the supply of clothes, toys, games, books and other products is quite versatile nowadays.

Clothes and accessories socialise children as girl consumers and boy consumers very efficiently. Even baby boys and girls are being dressed in pink and blue. Also later, little girls' toys are mostly pink, glittery and aestethicised, whereas toys for boys have dark or metallic colours and they are also more robust and less aesthetic in traditional terms. In the UK, the ultimate example of hyperaestheticised girlhood is a store chain called "Girl Heaven" which mainly sells hair and beauty products and accessories for 3-13-year-old girls. Inspired by the theme of Girl Power, the business idea is that everything should be pink and glittery with heart shapes. Shopping in Girl Heaven should be a magical experience, with the products, music in the store and the performance of the staff (see Russell - Tyler 2002).

Glittery aesthetics and pink colour have not always been feminine things, though. The culture and the historical period determine which colours are regarded as colours of girls or boys. For example, in the 1700's it was perfectly normal for men to dress in glittery silk shirts and pink velvet coats. In fact, pink became an established women's colour as late as in the 1920's (Ruohonen 2001, 129). Ruohonen's study on the clothing styles of adolescents revealed that teenage girls used girl's colours and other feminine elements quite strategically in their clothing. At school and in other professional contexts, girls frequently tried to hide their femininity, in order to be taken more seriously. This led to dark or neutral colours and long trousers in the girls' clothing at school. However, in leisure time occasions, such as parties, girls wanted to emphasise their femininity, and used brighter colours, respectively. Boys, however, did not change their style in the same way, which suggests that they do not have to adjust their clothing style to the situation or company as much as the girls do (mt. 167). According to Daniel Miller (2004), the increasing popularity of black colour and minimalist style in clothing (which is symbolised by "the little black dress") effectively dispels individuality and also protects from over-femininity and childishness (which is symbolised by the dress with floral patterns). However, nowadays young girls have begun to break traditional dressing codes in formal contexts both in style (half-length tops and strings) and colour (pastels bright colours and glitters). Nowadays also adults imitate teenage styles in their clothing, and thus it's not only the girls' innocent childhood that is threatened, but also women's serious adulthood. For the clothing of boys and men, no such worry is usually expressed.

7.4. Gender, consumption attitudes and brands

Many studies on young people's consumption patterns reveal that boys are more conscious about the quality of products than girls are, whereas girls are more concerned about price and style. Girls go shopping more often than boys, but boys buy more at a time and more expensive products. Boys also have more materialistic attitudes than girls, and economic matters are more important for boys than for girls (Wilska 2003; Ruohonen 2001; Saarela 2001; Gunter - Furnham 1998). The consumption styles of young boys are characterised by a great emphasis on technology and leisure time equipment. These technology-oriented consumption styles of boys also reflect indifference to environmental and ethical issues (Wilska 2003). According to survey "Consumer Cultures of Young People in the Changing Information society"2, the difference between the attitudes of girls and boys towards environmental matters was even surprisingly big. Moreover, girls who were interested in environmental values were the most suspicious to technology. Yet, during the past few years, political discussion in Finland has specifically emphasised the possibilities of new technology in the promotion of sustainable development (Autio - Wilska 2003; Autio - Heinonen 2003; Wilska 2003).

The consumption of new technology and attitudes towards the information society divide young people very clearly according to traditional gender roles. Boys are typically enthusiastic about technical devices and about the possession of them. Boys also regard themselves as skilful users of the information technology much more often than girls do (Wilska 2003). Especially the digital entertainment technology, such as computer games are clearly "boys' stuff". Approximately until the school age (6-7 years), girls and boys are equally interested in computer games but then the girls' interest fades (Kangas 2002). The result that the attitude towards technology is linked to the general consumption style is also interesting. According to the study "Consumption Cultures of Young People in the Information Society", those 15-19-year-olds who were enthusiastic about new technology, were also trend-conscious consumers. Economical consumption and indifference to the latest trends was connected to economical mobile phone use and indifference to technology, respectively. Indifference to both trends and technology were also distinctly more typical of girls (Wilska 2003). The result is contradictory with the general assumption that particularly girls are running after trends and boys

[2] The study focused on Finnish young people's attitudes towards consumption and new media. The study was carried out in Finnish schools in the spring of 2001. The target group of the survey was young people aged 16-20 in upper secondary schools, vocational schools, and other middle-level educational institutes throughout Finland. The schools were located in cities, small towns, and the countryside, in both wealthy and deprived areas. The sample size was 637 (see Wilska 2003).

are thrifty and rational consumers. For instance, boys spend almost as much as girls on clothing, but the clothes boys buy often relate to sports activities and thus boys (and their parents) often regard the clothes as leisure time equipment (Ruohonen 2001, 167).

Very similar results were found among 10-13-year-old children in a study “Children As Consumers and Targets of Marketing”[3]. For boys, recreational shopping and wandering around stores in shopping malls was not nearly as agreeable as it was for girls. As mentioned earlier, a common opinion is that boys and men only go shopping when they have specific acquisitions in mind. For girls, shopping is both social and aesthetic action in which girlhood and womanhood are produced and processed (Russell - Tyler 2002, 629-630). Also toy companies have noticed this learning-by shopping -process. Mattel, for example, has launched interactive *Diva Startz* –dolls, which are targeted to about 6-11-year-old girls. As Virginia Carrington analyses in her article (2003), the dolls talk and have a repertoire of more than 10 000 pieces of conversation. In their dialogues, the five different dolls carry instructional information on how to be a consumer and a girl. The dolls model girlhood just slightly older than the little girls who are their target market, and they also offer demonstrations of how to be older. Divas also demonstrate how to use many of the accessories of the modern childhood –mobile phones, stereos, diaries, and also consumer activities such as malls and shopping. They even manage to invoke the theme of “retail therapy”: “I’m in a bad mood, let’s go shopping” and “I’m so sad. I so need a new school outfit” (Carrington 2003, 88-90). They also operate as style experts and shopping guides:

> “I just love your taste. Don’t you think this outfit makes my eyes look blue --- lets go to the mall with our friends and find something we can wear to parties. Do you like shopping? What’s your favourite store?”.(Carrington 2003, 89).

In spite of the more efficient consumer socialization of girls, boys believe more in happiness brought with money. According to “Children as Consumers and Targets of Marketing” –survey (e.g. Wilska 2004), parents buy things to boys as presents or rewards more often than to girls. Boys are also more

[3] In this study the attitudes of Finnish young adolescents and their parents towards consumption, advertising and brands were explored using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data was derived from two surveys: one to children in primary schools (N= 379) and another to their parents (N= 188). The research sample was collected in spring 2003 in seven primary schools, in both urban areas and the countryside all around the country except the very North of Finland. Furthermore, focus group interviews were carried out among the children who filled the questionnaires, and also among their parents. A total of 15 groups of children (60 informants) and four groups of parents (12 informants) were interviewed (see Wilska 2004).

interested in product advertising and collectibles sold as by-products (Table 1).

Table 1. Consumption attitudes of 10–13 -year-old girls and boys (agree %)

Argument	Girls	Boys
I like recreational shopping	90	66
Buying something helps if I feel bad	15	19
I believe that my family would be happier, if we had more money	50	61
My parents often reward me by buying me something	13	29
Advertisements give useful information	35	56
I often buy a product to get a collectible which is sold with the product (e.g. cereals)	8	14

Source: Children as consumers and targets of marketing –survey 2003 (Wilska 2004)

Table 2 shows that brands are more important to boys than to girls with regard to all the product categories asked in the questionnaire. The group interviews of the study gave the same result: girls kept repeating the importance of style, appearance and good price, especially with regard to clothes. Brands of clothes were of secondary importance to girls. The result is surprising, because most international studies regard girls as more "branded" than boys (e.g. Schor 2004; Quart 2003; Russell - Tyler 2002). In this context, boys are usually looked at as members of "brand communities" that are formed around certain sports brands, Nike as a classic example. (e.g. Klein 2000; Jorgensen - Østergaard 2003).

Table 2. The importance of brands to 10–13 -year -old girls and boys (%)

	Girls		Boys	
Product Importance	**High**	**Moderate**	**High**	**Moderate**
Clothes, shoes	13	43	31	34
Sports equipment	10	37	36	38
Game consoles	4	24	36	33
Other games and toys	4	25	22	34
Mobile phone	48	35	55	31
Sweets, crisps	12	39	19	35
Soft drinks	15	45	28	38
Computer	13	30	33	36
TV, VCR, DVD-player	8	39	23	40
CD-player, Hi-fi	11	36	27	33

Source: Children as consumers and targets of marketing –survey 2003 (Wilska 2004)

7.5. Conclusions

In this article I have focused on the position of young girls and boys as consumers in family and society. Particularly the consumption of young girls has been a subject of discussion and criticism recently, as well as the advertising targeted to young girls. The discussion is based on feminist consumption criticism, which sees a woman as an object which has to maximise its desirability with a right set of products and lifestyles. The consumption of girls is also more under control than the consumption of boys, and girls have less own money at their disposal. Furthermore, girls' and women's needs in families are typically underrated which may originate from the traditional secondary position of women as consumers and economic decision-makers. The persistent 20 per cent salary difference between women and men is a generally known social and economic inequity in Finland. However, economic discrimination inside families is less known. The reasons for this inequality certainly need further investigation

Despite the economic inequality between genders, marketers and advertisers believe in women’s economic power in the purchase decisions of the family. This is based on the fact that women manage most of the everyday purchases in families. Furthermore, women go shopping more frequently, whereas men make bigger, more expensive purchases at a time. For women and girls, shopping is also often a social and aesthetic experience. Instead, acquiring things and possessing them is more important for boys and men. This makes boys and men seem more materialistic a traditional sense. Girls have more ethical consumption attitudes than boys, and they are more environmentally conscious and more economical consumers. This is controversial to the traditional economic-sociological idea of a man as a producer and a woman as a consumer. Also brands and clothes which generally have been regarded as “girls' stuff” proved to be surprisingly important especially to “tweenager” boys in a Finnish study. According to Campbell (1997, 175), nowadays also men are pressured to shift towards to refined aesthetic consumption styles from traditional need-oriented male consumption practices. Otherwise men may fall on the margin of the consumer society.

It is likely that the majority of today’s boys and young men do not have a problem of falling on the margin of the consumer society. The amounts of money boys spend on style and fashion have grown very fast recently, and boys and young men are very capable of joining in the social and cultural game of fashion and brands. However, less educated boys with limited economic resources are more likely to fall on the margin of the consumer society (Ruohonen 2001, 167). Moreover, since technology is also a central element of boys' consumer cultures, it is likely that the lack of technical competence may marginalise some boys and young men.

In the future, an increasingly large part of all marketing will be directed to young people, both girls and boys. This sets new challenges to marketing communication and to the gender images it creates. Will femininity of the future culminate in the correct lipstick colour, trendy accessories and the right diet? Will masculinity manifest itself in multimedia –mobile phone, computer and branded skateboard shoes? These are questions which only young people can answer –in time.

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C. COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES IN CHANGING LIFESTYLES

8. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN WORLDWIDE: AN EXAMINATION OF TWO-WAY THESIS OF ENVIRONMENTALISM AND NATIONAL VARIATION

Leena Haanpää

Abstract

Current sociological research of environmental questions has focused on concern for global environmental change, yet mainly concentrating on one country and its citizens. However, worries about environmental hazards are problems of a growing collective consciousness; environment is collective property. Thus, comparative research about between-country variation is needed. In this study both macro- and micro-level effects are explored by analysing concern (perceptions, attitudes, behaviour) of environmental issues focusing on both national level factors (independent variables: GDP, country) and on individual level factors (independent variables: age, sex, social class, income, education). This paper addresses firstly, whether between-country variances exist in perception of global and local environmentalism and secondly, whether macro- and micro-level factors are valid variables to explain the degree of environmental concern and citizen-consumer consciousness towards environmental problems.

The results suggest that consistent elements influencing environmental consciousness can be found from both macro- and micro-level factors across countries. Particularly education and social class are significant explanatory variables.

Keywords: environment, concern, global, local, attitudes, micro-level, macro-level

8.1. Introduction

Widely accepted is that the global environmental[1] change the modern industrial societies are facing, such as ozone layer depletion and deforestization, are caused by human agencies (Spaargaren 1997, 5; Barry 1999, 7; Brechin 2003, 106; Dunlap et al. 2000, 426). Along with these environmental problems public concern has developed rapidly after 1960s. Previous research has pointed out that there exists a general level of concern among people world wide (Inglehart 1995; Brechin 1999; Inglehart – Abramson 1999). In words of Derksen and Gartrell (1993, 434), “Concern for the environment has become almost a cultural constant or norm in western society. Environment attitudes are now socially acceptable and desirable, but may not have much intrinsic meaning.” People are worried about different global environment problems, for example global warming. This kind of worry shows the concern for global level problems. The concern can also be local. This means that individuals are concerned about their own surrounding environments, the nature close to their own living areas. Thereby, the environmental concern divides into two levels: global and local.

Furthermore, the level of concern varies greatly among countries and their citizens, thus both between-country and within-country variation exists. Between-country variation is often explained especially by the economic situation of one country; the more affluent the country the higher the level of environmental concern (Inglehart 1995; Kidd – Lee 1997). However, current research has argued that this traditional way of explaining the level of environmental concern by measuring environment-economic trade-offs is neither accurate nor acceptable since residents of poorer nations are inherently disadvantaged (Dunlap – Mertig 1995). The most common indicators of within-country variation, i.e. individual-level differences, are socio-demographic factors, such as age, gender, and education (Diamantopoulos et al. 2003). In addition, expressive life styles, postmaterialist values and ideals, are often connected to high level of environmental worry (see e.g. Panula 1999, 33–37).

Conceptually environmental concern relates to individual’s social psychological factors, such as attitudes, values, opinions and worldviews. A broad definition includes besides these attitude objects also intended behaviour.

Therefore, the key interest in this paper is divided into two parts: firstly, whether between-country variances exist in perception of global and local environmentalism is examined and secondly, whether macro- and micro-level

[1] Here the terms environment and green are used as synonyms meaning the biophysical environment.

factors are valid variables to explain the degree of environmental concern and citizen-consumer consciousness towards environmental problems. By analyzing the linkages between individual respondents' attitudes and institutional level features, explanations are provided for improved interpretation of the relationship between society and environment.

Here, the notion of environmentalism is used to refer to the two-way thesis of global environmentalism presented in the environmental literature. The central theme of the thesis is that there are two basic varieties of global environmental concern, divided between advanced (Northern) and developing (Southern) societies. This thesis is discussed in the forthcoming chapters more closely and it is also tested empirically by analysing environmental arguments from a world wide survey data, ISSP 2000 (International Social Survey Program 2000).

8.2. Environmental concern

The notion that environmental problems are very much social in nature is in the focus of this study. Consequently, green concern can be seen as a manifestation reflecting citizen's attitudes and opinions towards environmental issues. People's awareness of environmental problems has grown during the last three decades on the coattails of environmental movements (e.g. Dunlap – Catton 1994; Konttinen 1999; Brechin 2003, 106–107). The materiality of environmental problems, for example the influence of consumption habits towards the environment, has largely been acknowledged by general public. This is becoming common understanding also in sociological research as the environmental sociological perspectives become closer related to the wider sociological debates on the character of contemporary society and especially modernity (cf. Mol – Spaargaren 2000, 25).

Recent cross-national surveys – although limited in the number – have shown that people are personally concerned about environmental problems (Brechin 2003; 1999; Dunlap et al. 2000) but in the same time they are largely uninformed about the causes of these problems (Brechin 2003). For example, according to the studies of Statistics Finland (Tulokas 2002, 19), the Finnish citizens are mostly concerned about global and national environmental problems and regard themselves as greatly involved with environmental issues. Quite optimistic arguments have been presented according to which the positive environmental attitudes and social norms related to the protection of the environment would enhance Finnish citizen-consumers also to behave in ecologically responsible way. People feel that they are in moral responsibility for the environment's state and this concern is reflected clearly to the consumption patterns. (Moisander 1996.) It is however likely that the barriers, for example situation specific factors, against green behaviour influence strongly attitude-behaviour relationship (cf. Dunlap et al. 2000, 428; Diamantopoulos et al. 2003, 467). Therefore, despite the pro-ecological orientation and high level of environmental concern, the causes and effects of environmental attitudes are to be interpreted with caution. This is especially the case when exploring cross-national differences.

Environmental concern as a concept and by definition is basically founded on the concept of environmental consciousness. That, in turn, is a concept through which the growth of environmental significance in Western societies has been described (Rannikko 1996, 58). The three theoretical components of environmental consciousness domain are knowledge about green issues, attitudes towards environmental issues and environmentally sound behaviour (Diamantopoulos et al. 2003, 466). To a certain extent environmental concern is connected to knowledge and understanding about environment's state and its anthropogenic[2] causes, "in order to be 'green', it may be argued that individuals require an understanding of the consequences of their behaviours" (Bohlen et al. 1993, 417). The awareness about global environmental change also affects one's attitudes but it must be taken into account that one can be very concerned about land pollution for example, but still pose quite low understanding about the very causes of the environment change itself (cf. Diamantopoulos et al. 2003, 467).

8.3. Two-way thesis of environmentalism

Environmental concern and environmental consciousness construct are domains that are influenced by many factors. One thing that essentially affects the level of concern is the real existence of the problem. This so called NIMBY, 'not in my backyard'-effect refers to human impulse for self-preservation, those at risk from environmental problems are presumably more willing to find out about the causes of environmental nuisance (Diamantopoulos et al. 2003, 477). The effect describes also the space dimensionality, local-global aspects of environmental problems. In the 1990s "global environmentalism was discovered" (Brechin – Kempton 1994). This finding implied that there existed a worldwide environmental concern. What was new in it was that public was concerned both in poor and rich countries

[2] Understanding of how human activities actually contribute to environmental problems.

alike. At the time, over a decade ago, theories had argued that public concern for the environment was a consequence of economic wealth, thus environmentalism was considered as a Western phenomenon exclusively (Brechin 2003, 107–108.) This meant that only people in rich countries, basically in North America, Europe and Japan, were and could afford to be worried about environment's state. This argumentation referred as post-materialist values thesis emphasised that green concern was typically a postmaterial ideal.

The two-way thesis of global environmentalism presented in environmental literature aims at explaining the global differences with regard to environmental issues from a mainly cultural or economic point of view (cf. Yuchtman-Ya'ar 2003, 119). The central theme of the thesis is that there are two basic varieties of global environmental concern, divided between rich (Northern) and poor (Southern) societies (Guha 2000; Guha – Martinez-Alier 1997). The first is explained with *post-materialist values thesis*, according to which global environmentalism is seen as a derivate of post-materialist syndrome. Environmental concern is manifestation of typical post-material (-modern) values in wealthy countries, such as self-expression and quality of life (Inglehart 1995; Martinez-Alier 1995; Guha 2000, 98; Brechin 1999; Lee – Kidd 1997; Dunlap – Mertig 1997). The second, *objective problems thesis subjective values*, suggest that the citizens' real experiences of environmental hazards in poor countries motivate them to protect the environment (Inglehart 1995; Brechin1999; 2003).

8.3.1. Post-materialist values thesis

Industrialization and the consequences of it – the economic growth and achievement motivation – have traditionally been seen as core elements of modernity, whereas postmodernity de-emphasizes the instrumental rationality. "Postmodernization is a shift in survival strategies. It moves from maximizing economic growth to maximizing survival and well-being through lifestyle changes." (Inglehart 1997, 66.) Connected to these need-based aspects the shift from materialist values (economic and physical security) to postmaterialist values (freedom, self-expression and quality of life) becomes crucial in postmodernity (Inglehart 1995, 57; Inglehart 1997, 4–6; Inglehart – Abramson 1999, 665).

Inglehart's post-materialist values thesis presents one dimension on cultural change continuum. As Inglehart points out, cultural changes occur in numerous fields of life, from sexual norms to religious outlook (1997, 109). During last decade scholars roused a debate on whether this thesis was useful in explaining global environmentalism (Martínez-Alier 1995; Abramson 1997; Dunlap – Mertig 1997; Brechin – Kempton 1997; Kidd – Lee 1997, Lee – Kidd 1997; Abramson 1997; Brechin 1999). The key feature in this debate concerns whether environmentalism is a product of cultural values and thus, connected to post-materialist values thesis. This brings to the main argument of the debate suggesting that environmentalism, if a postmaterial value, is typical of the affluent countries. The affluent Western countries are characterised by high environmental concern, which has been explained by "decreasing marginal utility" (Martínez-Alier 1995, 2), i.e. in affluent, post-industrial societies environmental movements are post-materialist expressions, although the environmental degradation is not directly life threatening. Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs it has been argued that once either in individual or in national level a certain stage of economic wealth has been reached, less basic needs, environmentalism for example as one dimension of quality of life, becomes valuable (Brechin – Kempton 1997, 17; Kidd – Lee 1997, 3; Guha 2000, 99). Consequently, developing, low-income societies are mainly still in modernization phase and people in these countries therefore hold materialist values, which then again, are achviement-oriented (Inglehart 1997, 108–130). Therefore, according to the post-materialist values thesis, rich and poor countries differ in their stage of environmental concern.

The question is not only of attitudes but also behaviour and its materialist dimensions. In postmodern sociological views of consumption has many fragmented forms. The "production model of self" (Shove – Warde 2002, 235) involves that consumption is more than a pursuit of use-values and fulfilling of basic needs. In other words, the higher standards of living the more people redesign their selves by purchasing and consuming goods. The search for personal identity can be seen as adoption of green behaviour and commitment to environmental issues. If this theoretical reasoning is correct, it means that people who have lower standards of living can not "afford" consuming in a green, environmentally responsible way, because their basic needs, such as hunger and safety, must be fulfilled first. For that reason possibilities for self-development and self-growth through consumption are limited if acknowledged at all.

This assumption has been object of the critique directed on postmaterialist values thesis (Brechinn – Kempton 1997; Brechin 1999; Dunlap – Mertig 1997, 24). Explaining environmental concern in terms of change in cultural values towards self-expression and quality of life – non-material consumption – is not apt according to the critics of the thesis.

8.3.2. Objective problems-subjective value thesis

The broadly accepted consensus that economic wealth and security would explain environmental concern perceived either on national or individual level was challenged in the beginning of the 1990s. The notion of Brechin and Kempton *conventional wisdom* – “that only rich people and nations are environmentally concerned” (1997, 16) was impugned by several studies, which brought data from low- and middle-income countries (see Brechin – Kempton 1997, 794; Guha 2000, 99). These studies clearly pointed out that people from poor countries were as, or even more, concerned about environmental threats as citizens in rich countries. Thus, according to these results, a nation needs not to go through the changes (improvements) in economy in order to generate high level of concern for nature. As Dunlap and Mertig state (1997, 24) national wealth is rather negatively than positively related to people’s environmental awareness and concern. According to these scholars, environmental concern is a universal value, which is not bound up to economic development of one country but rather to perception of direct, real environmental threats (Brechin 1999, 794).

Proponents of postmaterial thesis have then shown that environmentalism is to a certain extent “a function of actual environmental conditions” (Abramson 1997, 21) and that people are motivated in environmental protection by direct experiences. Acknowledging that not only the people of affluent countries are capable in perceiving environmental concern has emerged a new explanation: *objective problems thesis*, which proposes that in poor countries (South) environmentalism is spawn by citizen’s direct experiences of environmental hazards (Inglehart 1995; Brechin 1999, 794–795). The environmental concern is thus seen as a subjective value (Inglehart 1995) caused by real environmental degradation. According to the objective problem-subjective value (OPSV) thesis, southern and northern environmental concern should differ from each other.

However, the description of environmentalism as combination of the objective problems and postmaterialist orientation (or subjective values) has not been sufficient in the current debate over global environmentalism. Different explanations have been offered ranging from the support of postmaterialist values thesis to other explanations. Firstly, Inglehart (1995) has documented that the relationship between postmaterialism and the degree of environmental concern varies from society to society according to the economic development. Abramson (1997) and Kidd and Lee (1997) are in step with Inglehart suggesting that postmaterialist values contribute to support for environmental protection with different levels of economic development.

Guha (2000, 104) uses an umbrella term “the environmentalism of the poor” to indicate the varied forms of social action in struggles against environmental degradation in low- and middle-income countries. Guha’s central assumption is that global environmentalism varies between rich and poor. The Northern environmentalism is characterised by value change (postmaterialism) while Southern environmental movements are rooted in material, natural resource-based conflicts (2000, 122).

Lastly, Brechin (1999), Brechin and Kempton (1997) and Dunlap and Mertig (1997) see the use of postmaterialist values thesis (Rich, North) as too simplistic and objective problems thesis (Poor, South) in describing environmental concern. Rather than this dichotomy Dunlap and Mertig suggest concentrating on revealing the ways people perceive environmental problems (1997, 27).

The empirical part of this study is inspired by recent studies on global environmentalism. We concentrate in this study on both testing the two-way thesis of global environmentalism by comparing the national differences in the level of environmental concern and by revealing other factors that could offer a possible explanations for between-country variation.

8.4. Data and methods of analysis

A study was conducted to test empirically the two-way thesis in the context of environmentalism and green concern. In his study (1999) Brechin has pointed out that if this thesis holds true difference should by found firstly, from attitudes towards local environmental problems so that developing-country respondents were more concerned of them. Secondly, respondents of affluent, welfare countries should manifest higher concern for global problems because of their post-material values basis. Thirdly, GDP/capita is positively related to the environmental concern and fourthly, Nordic welfare countries should have higher levels of environmental attitudes and values than respondents of other countries. (Brechin 1999, 795.)

In seeking to uncover cohesions in environmental concern of people worldwide, between-country variation was analysed and linkages between macro- and also micro-level were scrutinized by including socio-demographic background variables into analysis. In this way the study aims at revealing the latent patterns of environmental concern among countries with different economic status. The effects of macro- and micro-levels were tested using GDP and country as macro-level variables and age, sex, social class, income, and education as micro-level variables. The concept ‘environmental concern’ was operationalized using items evaluating environmental attitudes and behaviour, which were measured on a five-point Likert scale.[3] Two separate question sets were utilised to measure environmental concern and consciousness (see appendix). The first set was used to highlight the differences between countries (per capita GDP) and the second to explain perceived greenness of people in more detail. The cases have been weighted by using weighting variable in each analysis so that each country would be represented respectively.

The data utilized are from the *International Social Survey Programme 2000: Environment* (ISSP 2000), which consists of altogether 25 countries around the world. These countries are Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany[4], Great Britain, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland[5], Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United States.

The survey was carried out between 2000 and 2001 and it was collected either by mail or interviews. The age of respondents varied from 18 years and above. The total number of respondents was 31042. In 2000, the theme of the survey was the environment and the respondents were asked to express their opinions and attitudes concerning environmental issues. Besides attitudes the questionnaire consisted also of questions which measured both respondents' behavioural aspects and awareness of environmental problems. Such questions related to, for example, sacrifices made for environment, changes in private motoring and knowledge of the causes of the climate change. Some of these items were included in the analysis.

For the study, the GDP per capita in year 2000 was used as marker of the economic stage of the country. An index which measures environmental concern was presented. Also, a factor analysis (Maximum Likelihood) was conducted and the factor scores were evaluated using analysis of variance (General Linear Model).

The first table, Table 1, clusters the countries based on their economic level into low- or middle-income countries and high income-countries. The criterion for the division was 20 000 USD/capita in year 2000. Besides this, the countries could be divided in many alternative ways based on for example, different cultural factors. However, because of the limited size of the paper

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[3] 1 = "not dangerous at all", 5 = "extremely dangerous for the environment"; 1 = "Strongly disagree", 5 = "Strongly agree"; 1 = "Very unwilling", 5 = "Very willing"

[4] In the original data the sample collection in Germany was divided into two parts: between eastern and western states. Because all of Germany is taken as the unit of analysis weighting variable is necessary.

[5] The Northern Ireland survey was conducted separately from Great Britain and for this reason is was also analysed separately.

and its scope, no other major clusters are formed. Twelve of the countries belong to relatively affluent countries and fourteen to developing ones.

Table 1. The categorization of countries into low-/middle-income and high-income countries by GDP/capita/year

Country	GDP per capita in 2000 (USD)	Low-/Middle-Income Countries	High-Income Countries
Austria	28 024	Bulgaria	Austria
Bulgaria	1 474	Chile	Canada
Canada	28 286	Czech Republic	Denmark
Chile	4 922	Israel	Finland
Czech Republic	13 869	Latvia	Germany
Denmark	29 647	Mexico	Great Britain
Finland	25 321	New Zealand	Ireland
Germany	25 871	Philippines	Japan
Great Britain	24 640	Portugal	Netherlands
Ireland	30 133	Russia	Northern Ireland
Israel	19 004	Slovenia	Norway
Japan	37 436	Spain	Sweden
Latvia	3 016		Switzerland
Mexico	5 957		United States
Netherlands	23 425		
New Zealand	13 294		
Northern Ireland	24 640		
Norway	37 164		
Philippines	977		
Portugal	10 537		
Russia	1 779		
Slovenia	9 528		
Spain	14 092		
Sweden	26 970		
Switzerland	33 329		
United States	34 003		

8.5. Descriptive analysis

The descriptive analysis presented in the coming sections are modeled according to the examples found in the texts of some of the most known supporters and opponents of post-materialist and objective problems thesis, Ronald Inglehart (1995) and Steven Brechin (1999). Environmental concern is measured here by comparing the attitudes of people from twelve low- to middle-income countries with those of fourteen high-income countries using an independent sample t-test, (Table 2). The questions dealt with air, water and soil pollution and rise of world's temperature (see appendix, part A). The distribution of means within the questions measuring both global and local environmental threats reveals that across all six questions the means of answers are higher among respondents of low- and middle-income than high-income countries. This result means that people in low- and middle income countries seem to be generally more worried about pollution and environmental change than their fellows in high-income countries. The finding, thus, supports the objective problems thesis, i.e. the citizens of relatively poor countries tend to view the quality of both local and global environment as more concerning than their counterparts in affluent countries.

Kidd and Lee (1997, 2) have argued that using GDP per capita to separate countries to wealthy and not wealthy is over generalizing of postmaterialist thesis. However, in national-level data GDP/capita has been employed as an independent variable in pointing out the relationship between economic development of countries and materialist/postmaterialist values (Ingelhart 1997, 151). So, employing the same logic it seems to be appropriate use GDP also to indicate the relationship between environmental concern and economic development.

Table 2. Attitude items measuring perceived danger of environmental hazards (means and standard deviations)

	Low-/Middle-Income (N = 12)			**High-Income (N = 14)**				
Questions	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	*t*	sig.
Global air pollution caused by cars	13993	**3.94**	0.865	16167	3.54	0.855	39.656	0.000
Local air pollution caused by cars	13941	**3.78**	0.955	16014	3.19	0.921	53.814	0.000
Air pollution caused by industry	14010	**4.16**	0.792	16175	3.86	0.810	32.286	0.000
Pesticides in farming	13875	**3.93**	0.900	16101	3.63	0.876	29.152	0.000
Water pollution	14000	**4.12**	0.852	16117	3.71	0.909	40.128	0.000
Rise in world's temperature	12541	**3.94**	0.900	15279	3.66	0.955	25.613	0.000

Test of normality: Kolmogorov-Smirnov, for all the six questions sig. = 0.000

The same attitude items are next (Figure 1) presented as relative shares in national level. We can see in the figure that between-country variation is very strong, for example, people's attitudes towards car produced air pollution for themselves and their family varies from three (Finland) to 52 percent (Philippines) and pollution of water areas from six (Netherlands) to 63 percent

(Russia). It seems evident that despite the disparate concern for environmental hazards among nations there exists an explanatory factor in institutional level, which is the economic status of the country. Next, we shall scrutinize more deeply this argument by forming an index of environmental concern.

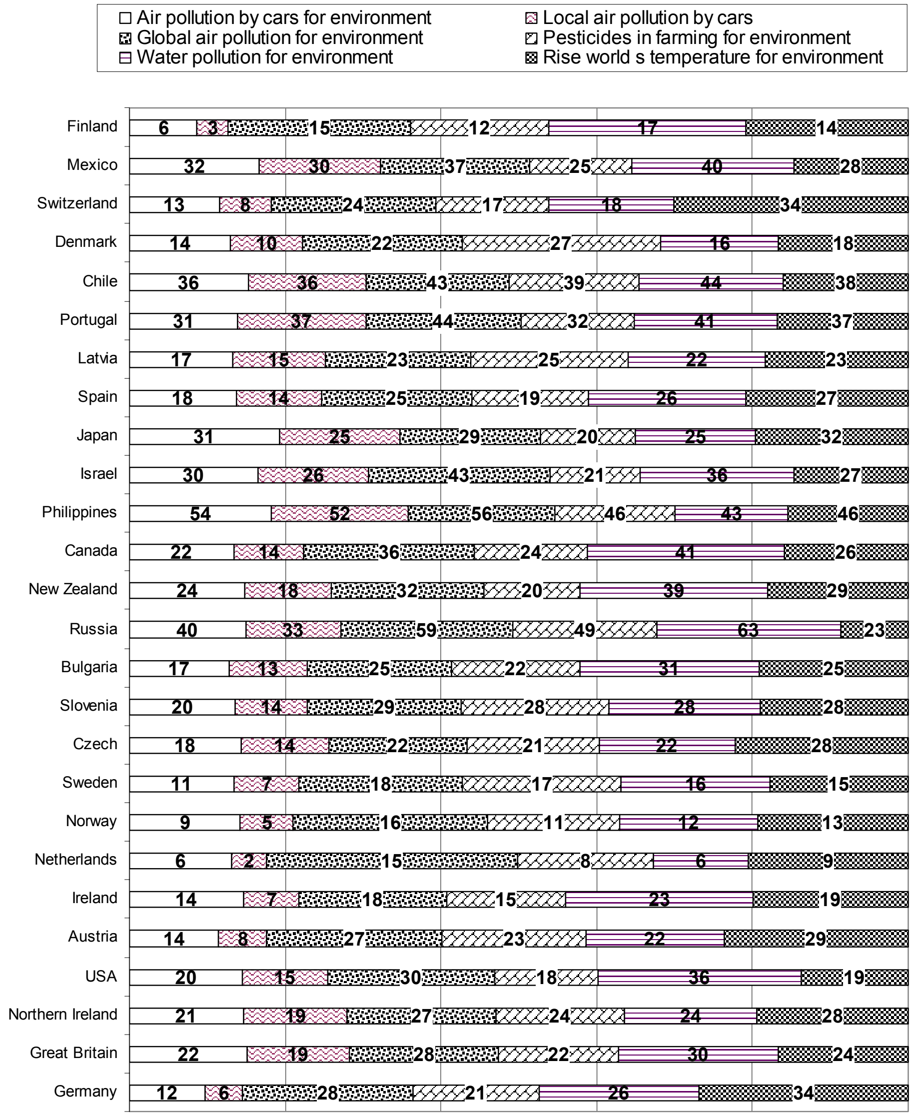

Figure 1. National differences of environmental concern. Relative shares (%) of the responses “Extremely dangerous or very dangerous to the environment” to six concern related items. Source: International Social Survey Programme: Environment II, 2000.

In the following Table 3 occurrences of positive (5 = “extremely dangerous” and 4 = “very dangerous”) values within variables measuring local (dangerous to family and myself) or global environmental concern (dangerous to environment in general) were added up and an index of environmental concern was formed (cf. Research Methods Web Resource 2004). The information given by six variables[6] are summed up so that they show the amount of positive responses given to each question.

Comparison of relative proportions of high concern reveals that also measured in this way low-/middle-income countries exhibit evidently greater worry in respect to those of high income-countries. The first six countries represent such nations where the economic status is modest while the last five countries belong to so called Nordic welfare countries. The results show that there is a clear difference in perception of environmental hazards expressed most strongly by low- and middle income countries. This does not support post-material values thesis in general and in particular the claim according to which Nordic countries having both the cultural post-material effect and representing high economic levels should express higher environmental concern than other countries. On the contrary, income per capita seems to be negatively correlating with high concern for environmental issues. The citizens of low- and middle GDP tend to view environmental pollution threats more dangerous than those of other countries, since concern of respondents in Chile, Portugal and Philippines rises over 50 percent whereas in Norway, Netherlands and Finland it remains under 10 percent. Altogether, environmental attitudes related to both direct and indirect environmental threats and concern are evidently higher among the respondents of poorer nations than among respondents of high GDP countries.

[6] Respondents are classified as ”high” in concern for environmental problems if they answered “very dangerous” or “extremely dangerous” to the following questions: (1) Air pollution caused by cars for the environment AND (2) Air pollution caused by cars for you and your family AND (3) Air pollution caused by industry for the environment AND (4) Pesticides in farming for the environment AND (5) Pollution of rivers, lakes and streams for the environment AND (6) Rise in world’s temperature for you and your family.

Table 3. Public concern for environmental threats

Percentage scoring ”high” on environmental concern index			
Nation	**%**	**Nation**	**%**
Chile	54	Slovenia	21
Portugal	53	Bulgaria	20
Philippines	52	Germany	20
Spain	37	Switzerland	19
Mexico	32	United States	17
Russia	31	Austria	17
Japan	31	Ireland	16
Czech Republic	25	Latvia	15
Canada	24	Denmark	13
New Zealand	24	Sweden	12
Northern Ireland	24	Norway	9
Israel	22	Netherlands	6
Great Britain	21	Finland	5

When thinking about different explanations of environmental concern the results above suggest that both in local and global level of environmental concern low-income nations are in fact much more worried about different kinds of environmental threats. This result fits partly with the findings of the proponents of subjective – objective values thesis as it comes to environmental attitudes of low- and middle-income countries (Inglehart 1995; cf. Brechin 1999). The kind of mass support for green issues matches with the theory of OPSV according to which real experiences of environmental pollution encourage publics to give high support for environmental subjects.

Reflecting back on the theory and the two-way thesis, at least global environmental concern should be higher among the citizens of high-income countries, since according to the theory, “countries that have relatively Postmaterialistic publics, rank relatively high in their readiness to make financial sacrifices for the sake of environmental protection” (Inglehart 1995, 57). This has not been the case as Table 3 and Figure 1 have pointed out. As wealthier societies have more of post-materialists it should be reflected to this analysis as well.

Since the two-way thesis has only partially explanation power other explanatory factors are studied. In order to analyze more in detail the ways people form environmental perceptions and how these can be explained, another set of questions concerning environmental attitudes were included in the study. These results are discussed in the following chapter.

8.6. Determining dimensions of green concern

National differences within environmental attitudes and concern do not provide adequate insights into the ways people value environmental issues. Therefore, a more detailed analysis was carried out where environmental attitudes were examined and explained by background variables using firstly, factor analysis after which the factor scores were put into further analyses, that of General Linear Model (GLM). The starting point for the following analysis has emerged from the literature, which suggests that revealing the different ways in which people form environmental perceptions tells more about environmental concern than trying to explain global environmentalism with (only) postmaterialist thesis (Dunlap – Mertig 1997, 27). What we do here is a micro-level variables analysis, where the effect of background variables into environmental concern is tries to unveil.

For these purposes another set of questions in five-point scale were examined by confirmatory factor analysis (see appendix, part B, for the questions)[7] The item set consisted altogether of six variables related to environmental worry (e.g. "We worry too much about the future of the environment and not enough about prices and jobs today") and behavioural support ("How willing would you be to pay much higher prices in order to protect the environment?"). Dimensions of green attitudes were formed by Maximum Likelihood as an extraction method and Direct Oblim as a rotation method. A three-factor solution was found to be best fitting and it explained 48 per cent of the total variance (Table 5)[8].

[7] Only items with communalities over .3 were included in the analysis. In the original setting the amount of items was altogether 21. Also principal component analysis was alternatively tested as an extraction method and this analysis produced communalities over .3 with all the 21 items. However, maximum likelihood was chosen as factor analysis method as it represents a theory based method.

[8] Factor points saved as standardised values.
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .797; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity 84998.230; Sig. = .000
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

Table 4. Dimensions of environmental concern

	Concerned	Unwilling	Non-concerned	h^2
Air pollution by cars for environment	.796			.635
Air pollution by cars for you and family	.794			.627
Air pollution by industry for environment	.702			.491
Water pollution for environment	.609			.373
Pesticides in farming for environment	.598			.356
Rise world's temperature for environment	.563			.347
Protect environment: pay much higher taxes		-.847		.693
Protect environment: pay much higher prices		-.817		.655
Protect environment: cut your standard of living		-.635		.446
We worry too much progress harming environment			.657	.410
We worry too much about future environment			.634	.411
Many claims about environment exaggerated			.529	.337
Eigenvalue	2.890	2.015	1.391	
Explained (%)	24.815	15.325	8.045	48.186

In the first factor, named as Co*ncerned,* attitudes reflecting high environmental concern were loaded. This factor consisted solely of statements already tested in the above sections. All the questions were related to environmental threats caused by pollution. High concern factor explained well environmentalism, since it explained almost 25 percent of total variance. The second factor, labelled *Unwilling* consisted of "willingness to pay" type of questions and can be seen as reflecting citizen's readiness to make behavioural sacrifices for the environment. The negative loadings tell in fact that people are not willing to make any personal sacrifices. What is interesting is that despite the criticism towards this kind of questions, according to which people easily respond positively to such statements because of social pressure (Brechin 1999, 804) this has not been the case in this analysis. On the contrary, the present attitudinal dimension demonstrates that in the individual level people are not ready to economic sacrifices and to changes in their consumption habits. Neither does the social pressure hinder them to admit that. Not all the scholars, however, accept the use of monetary-based trade-off questions, such as “willingness to pay” item because it might bias the results in favour of the respondents of affluent countries, given that the test emphasizes more “ability to pay” than willingness.[9] (ibid.) This could, therefore, explain the low willingness to environmental protection. The explained share of Unwilling dimension is also quite high with its 15 percent and eigenvalue was 2.015.

The last factor, *Non-concerned* was loaded by three items. As the previous factor, also this dimension is pointing towards negative end of the attitude scale. One could speculate whether the results express a certain kind of frustration and tiring of environmental talk. It is evident that in the values of the respondents who support these ideas, the environment is not in the first place but they are more worried about economy and modern life and do not see any contradiction between the environment and economics. However, the last factor did not explain very well environmentalism; the share was only eight percent and eigenvalue 1.391.

In Table 5, the results of GLM analysis of variance are presented. This analysis method was used to assess the comparative significance of background variables; whether those explain global environmentalism either in individual or in institutional level. These independent variables were used to testing their explanation power on the variance of the factor scores in different green attitude dimensions. The differences in effects between subjects were measured by a comparison of parameter estimates (B) and in the bottom of table the shares of the total variance (100 R^2) are presented. Although some information may be lost, family income was transformed into categorical variable in order to be able to analyse the effect of different income levels on perception of environmental issues.

All three factors were explained well by almost all background variables. Only the second factor was not influenced by all variables; age, gender and GDP/country were not statistically significant. The first factor, ‘Concerned’, was explained well by all background variables. In this international data set the young and women are more environmentally concerned than older citizens and men. Education’s role seem to be remarkable, interestingly those still at school[10] are the most concerned also compared to highest educated, the category which usually expresses most concern. Fascinatingly the results tell

[9] The reason to include this kind of measure items to the analysis is simply that the factor analysis found especially these questions relevant while most of the other questions were not having big enough communalities and were thus excluded from the final model.

[10] The alternative ‘still at school’ within education meant in the questionnaire also university studies and in some countries no education at all. The results also suggest that those at school could be university or higher-degree students, since lower educated are less green conscious.

that the lower the social status[11] the more worried the individuals are about environmental threats. This trend is supported by family income level, which has very strong effect. This means that lower earning indicates higher level of concern. 100 R^2 was quite good, 13.1 percent. To sum up, it could be argued that age, gender and education together have a remarkable effect on perception of environmental problems. But the results also show that in macro-level the GDP has explanation power as well. Already the descriptive analysis revealed that poorer nations are obviously more worried than people in affluent countries.

The second factor, 'Unwilling' is explained by three determinants: education, family income and subjective class. The most significant determinants are education and subjective class. 100 R^2 was 4.9, which means that although significant the variables do not explain much of the variance of the factor in question. The analysis shows that educational status functions in this context in opposite way than it did in the 'High concern' factor; those still at school, and in general all not having university degree, seem according to these results, to be unwilling to cut down either their standard of living or to pay more taxes and higher prices to protect the environment. The most unwilling are also those belonging to the lowest social class while income gives hints of different division of willingness, since unwillingness appears to be strongest among the income level of USD 1000–5000.

All the chosen independent variables have influence on the last factor, 'Low concern'. This factor was explained best, all the effects were statistically very significant ($p<0.001$) and 100 R^2 was satisfactory 11.2 percent. Senior male respondents who belong to lower class and have relatively small family income are characteristically the lowest motivated by environmental protection. When it comes to age classes the same effects can be found than with the first factor. The oldest age group, people over 65 years of age express lowest concern for environmental problems and the younger the respondents the bigger worry becomes. Low environmental concern is explained also by GDP/country and paradoxically low- and middle-income status points towards low concern.

[11] Social class is based on subjective valuation.

Table 5. Environmental attitudes explained by certain background variables

		Concerned	Unwilling	Non–concerned
		Adjusted parameter estimates (B)		
Age class	N		nfs[1]	
25–34	4822	.122		-.200
35–44	3384	.115		-.189
45–54	3041	.034		-.189
55–64	2198	.005		-.086
>65	1905	0(a)		0(a)
F		11.271***		27.261***
Education				
still at school	295	.014	.447	.369
primary	3567	-.067	.422	.373
secondary	7084	-.121	.304	.249
semi-higher	1960	-.019	.208	.123
university	2444	0(a)	0(a)	0(a)
F		10.170***	63.899***	81.314***
Sex			nfs	
Male	7515	-.125		.107
Female	7835	0(a)		0(a)
F		67.733***		72.136***
GDP/Country			nfs	
low-/middle	7716	.353		.230
high	7634	0(a)		0(a)
F		278.447***		170.493***
Subjective class				
lower class	1420	.163	.450	.074
working class	5922	.058	.289	-.019
middle class	7736	.049	.078	-.087
upper class	272	0(a)	0(a)	0(a)
F		5.671**	78.478***	18.291***
Family income (USD)				
<1000	2068	.498	-.030	.061
1000–5000	3028	.430	.012	.229
5000–10000	1916	.325	-.040	.164
10000–15000	1343	.286	-.079	.105
15000–25000	2067	.195	-.042	.028
>25000	4928	0(a)	0(a)	0(a)
F		67.819***	2.356*	22.010***
$100R^2$		13.1	4.9	11.2

(a) This parameter is set to zero because it is a redundant
p<0.001*** p<0.01** p<0.05*, 1= not significant

The results suggest that there exists a clear consistency with respect to socio-demographic predictors of which education has the strongest effect. In sample of 25 countries higher educated exhibit greater worry about the current state of environment and behavioural intentions compared to other groups. Based on the findings of this analysis it can be argued also that there is interaction between education, age and gender, since younger citizens are in current world more likely better educated than older ones. Environmental concern is, on the other hand, very gendered, like several previous studies show (Diamantopoulos et al. 2003; Autio – Wilska 2003).

8.7. The inconsistent global environmentalism

This study has examined the levels of environmental concern both in national and individual level. The theoretical discussion was based on alternative views of two-way thesis of global environmentalism; that of post-material values thesis and OPSV-thesis. Neither of the two approaches has received unanimous support, because it is not a simple task to explain environmental concern by refering to national indicators of wealth only; by dividing nations into wealthy (high-income/Northern) or poor (low-income/Southern) societies. As sympathizers of two-way thesis suggest, high- and low-income countries alike have as well post-materialists and materialist individuals, which value different aspects in their lives. But explaining environmental attitudes solely in terms of post-materialism or direct experiences (OPSV) of environmental problems, i.e. by macro-level factors, we cannot provide exhaustive or even satisfactory solution. As the results show, in fact people in low-income countries are more worried about pollution and related items than people of wealthy countries.

One explanation to this has been that in low-income countries direct experiences of environmental hazards, ie. local problems motivates people to rank high green issues. Based on the results on this study, people in poorer countries exhibit stronger concern also towards more global environmental problems. This suggests that it is not only question about NIMBY kind of attitude, being concerned only of local issues, but evidently people are aware of the global aspects of environmental problems. But as Brechin puts it “Few individuals, if any at all, have experienced direct effects from a truly global problem.” (1999, 807). Rather, green attitudes and environmental concern form a complex social phenomenon, a mixture of regional environmental perceptions and international influences. In low- and high-income countries alike, support for environmental attitudes vary. Therefore, the aim in this paper was to uncover the latent dimensions of environmental consciousness, formed by environmental attitudes and to reveal whether any consistent structures existed that helped to explain environmentalism.

The first section of empirical part focused on national differences of both global and local environmental concern. This analysis underscored that environmental issues are valued very heterogeneously, but the results showed also clearly that GDP explains significantly the level of environmental worry. All the tests made gave the same result: citizens in low- and middle-income countries demonstrated a strong attitudinal worry of environment's state. This was confirmed in the second part, multivariate analysis of the data, where GDP/country was used as an explanatory background variable. Therefore, it can be argued, that macro-level comparisons have explanation power, for example, GDP explains strongly the concern for environment. Some support can be found also to the OPSV-thesis; it seems logical and natural explanation that the presence of real environmental problems – as known to be the case in developing world – is manifested in the levels of concern.

What is of remarkable importance is that two out of three environment dimensions referred to negative or reluctant attitudes towards environment. One possible explanation for this is that monetary–based questions rarely get strong support from respondents whose economic standard of living is low. This is the case also in this study with many respondents belonging to low- and middle-income countries. Environmental questions are just one among many other important problems that the people in developing world are facing.

However, the analysis of micro-level socio-demographic variables point to remarkable consistent effects regarding the concern for the environment. All the socio-demographic variables, education, age, gender, social class, and family income did explain the three formed dimensions of environmental concern. Education was the most significant factor; it explained well all three factors. Overall, the more educated an individual is the higher his/her green concern and also willingness to personal behavioural sacrifices. This result points to education's important role in making positive environmental change in societies.

The results of this study are naturally in some sense indicative because the analysis conducted did not include within-country analysis. In order to get a more comprehensive view of global environmentalism, a comparative study of within-country effects should be conducted.

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Appendix

A) Scale items for dependent variables analysis of concern and factor analysis

In general, do you think that air pollution caused by
cars is ...

V33 Air pollution caused by cars for the environment

V34 Air pollution caused by cars for you and your family

V35 Air pollution caused by industry for the environment

V36 Pesticides and chemicals used in farming for the environment

V37 Pollution of <R’s country’s> rivers, lakes and streams for the environment

V38 A rise in the world’s temperature caused by the ’greenhouse effect’ for you and your family

B) Scale items for dependent variables in factor analysis and analysis of variance

V11 We worry too much about the future of the environment and not enough about prices and jobs today.

V13 People worry too much about human progress harming the environment.

V19 How willing would you be to pay much higher prices in order to protect the environment?

V20 How willing would you be to pay much higher taxes in order to protect the environment?

V21 How willing would you be to accept cuts in your standard of living in order to protect the environment?

V26 Many of the claims about environment threats are exaggerated.

9. DOES THE INTERNET HAVE AN IMPACT ON SOCIABILITY? A COMPARISON OF FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Antti Kouvo & Pekka Räsänen

Abstract
It is often assumed that the increased use of the new information and communication technology (ICT) can displace traditional face-to-face sociability. At the same time it has been argued that the new ICT can also strengthen traditional forms of sociability. The article evaluates these opposite views by examining how the frequency of the Internet use affects two forms of sociability, civic engagement and interpersonal involvement. Empirical interest is narrowed down to four European countries. The data utilised is the Finnish, British, French and Italian sections of the European Social Survey 2002–2003 (N=6762). The findings indicate that the frequent Internet use is positively associated with sociability in all countries. However, there are also cross-country differences in the strength of these associations and also in the effects of socio-demographic control variables. The findings thus suggest that the contemporary information society revolution has different implications for different types of societies.

Keywords: Internet, civic engagement, interpersonal involvement, social capital, comparative research

9.1. Introduction

During the last few years people have become familiar with the new information and communication technologies (ICTs). The proliferation of the new appliances has generated many visions about changes in social practises. Basically, the new ICT is argued to influence not only people's use of leisure time, but also their community involvement and social networks. It is often assumed that the generalising use of the new technology can displace traditional forms of face-to-face sociability. Simultaneously, however, some consider that technology can also increase interaction and the number of social contacts.

In general, sociological research on the Internet has focused on its possible effects on social bonds between people (Cummings – Kraut 2002; DiMaggio et al 2001). It is not surprising that also many recent studies on 'social capital' have indicated that the Internet is often associated with such activities as community involvement and participation in voluntary organizations (e.g. Shah et al. 2001; Wellman et al. 2001; Uslaner 2004). Despite the disagreement of the exact definition among scholars, the elements social capital are often defined and measured with are trust, norms of reciprocity and social networks (Putnam 1993; Hooghe – Stolle 2003). In this sense, the term social capital provides a feasible framework for studying various dimensions of social interaction.

This article addresses the impact of the Internet on civic engagement and social involvement. It is asked whether the use of the Internet is negatively or positively associated with the social bonds between people. In other words: does the Internet keep people inside their homes and away from friends, relationships and other social activities? Or does the Internet strengthen the traditional forms of sociability?

In the theoretical part we shall discuss social impacts of the Internet. This discussion relies on the opposite views concerning the possible advantages and side-effects of the ICT use. The empirical interest of the article is narrowed down to four European countries: Finland, the United Kingdom, France and Italy. It is examined whether the Internet use frequency affects civic engagement and interpersonal involvement in these countries. The effects of the key socio-demographic factors are also controlled in the analyses. The data utilised is the European Social Survey 2002–2003. Civic engagement is measured by means of participation in voluntary organizations and voluntary work, and interpersonal involvement as the frequency of taking part in social activities.

The four European countries are selected to represent different types of institutional contexts, for example, on the basis of their family, schooling and social policy systems. In this sense, the purpose of the article is to compare whether the effects of the Internet use and the key socio-demographic factors differ between different institutional settings. The findings presented in the article reveal certain discrepancies in the Internet's impacts on sociability between the countries, and point to the importance of acknowledgment of cross-cultural differences in the ICT research.

9.2. Social impacts of the Internet

It has been argued that access to the new ICT influences people's social practices either directly or indirectly. The Internet is seen as the most powerful and the most important technology in this sense (e.g. Lievrouw 2001, 22–23; Dickson 2000). First, it has become one of the key media of news, information and entertainment. There is almost an infinite number of websites, online games and other services devoted to everything related to news, indoor entertainment and leisure activities. Secondly, besides being a noteworthy mass medium and a commercial force, the Internet is also an effective communication tool. Email, distribution lists, chats and other related applications are among the most generally utilised functions of the Internet.

In practice, the Internet can be seen as the key digital media to be used for many purposes. It may thus have various impacts on social life. However, the most widely discussed impacts relate to the positive and/or negative associations with sociability. It has been suggested that the Internet may contribute to a decline of social life and personal communication. On the basis of American cross-sectional surveys and a longitudinal household interview study, for example, it has been argued that those who use the Internet regularly have generally less social contacts than others (e.g. Nie – Erbring 2000; Kraut et al. 1998; see also King – Kraemer 1995).

While the Internet is predominantly used for interpersonal communication with such applications as email or chats, its intensive use has also been associated with a decline in communication with friends and family members and with an increase in feelings of loneliness. Particularly the World Wide Web (WWW) has been interpreted as providing asocial entertainment that competes with social contacts in time use category (Kraut et al. 1998, 1017–1018). In other words, these arguments imply that the frequent Internet use turns people into socially isolated 'nerds' who will be cut off from genuine social relationships.

Others have argued for the opposite. They have concluded that the Internet, in fact, increases the number of social relationships and betters the possibilities to communicate. For example, on the basis of a cross-sectional survey, collected in Switzerland, it has been presented that Internet use neither decreases individuals' social networks size nor the time spent with friends (Franzen 2000). Similar findings have been presented also on the basis of time use surveys and time diary studies, conducted both in the United States and in the United Kingdom (e.g. Robinson – Kestnbaum 1999, Robinson et al. 2002; Gershuny 2003).

In general, a decline in watching television, listening to the radio and other mass media activities has been found among the Internet users (Robinson et al.

2002, 22–23; Robinson – Kestnbaum 1999). In this sense the Internet has a clear effect on the patterns of leisure time use. Since individuals have a limited amount of temporal resources available, spending time on the Internet takes it away from other activities. Surprisingly, however, the effects of the Internet use on meeting friends and other forms of sociability have been found to be weak or even nonexistent in many countries (Franzen 2000, 428–429; Gershuny 2003, 164–166). Moreover, if the purposes for primary use are concentrated on communication with other people through email and chats, for instance, it may supplement to traditional ways of keeping up social contacts (e.g. Shah et al. 2001, 154–155; Lievrouw 2001). These interpretations suggest that the social uses may also be an important part of the new technology.

The two interpretations discussed above have received substantial attention also in the context of social capital. As already mentioned, many definitions exist for the term. However, on individual level social capital typically refers to the ability to benefit through a membership in networks and other social structures (Portes 1998, 6). On community level, the term may be defined as a societal resource that connects citizens to each other and enables them to pursue their common objectives (Stolle 2003, 19).

Since the question is about important collective or individual resource, there is a concern that the Internet erodes social capital. In other words, research on social capital also suggests that the Internet use can be negatively associated with such activities as social involvement and participation in voluntary organizations.

The fact is that the more time people spend on the Internet means necessarily less time spent on other forms of communication (Nie – Erbring 2000), including community participation and other associational activities. This argument related to social involvement and participation, or ‘civic engagement’, lies in the core of empirical research since various associations are often seen to generate social capital. However, the simple association-centered interpretation has also received critique. Thus, even though the Internet use would decrease participation in associations, it may also become a new source of social capital itself. In addition, it is argued that other aspects of social life, such as family or friendship networks, have greater impact on the formation of social capital than formal associations (e.g. Stolle 2003; Putnam – Goss 2002).

In the light of many empirical findings, the impact of the Internet use on civic engagement is far from being straightforward. In fact, according to many studies, it seems that the frequent Internet use increases or supplements civic engagement of individuals (e.g. Wellman et. al 2001; Shah et al. 2001) even though time devoted to Internet use should decrease the possibilities of spending time on other activities. Naturally, it is likely that the impact depends greatly on the purpose the Internet is used for. For example, those who use the Internet only for recreational purposes and entertainment are not necessarily active citizens in terms of participation in associational activities (e.g. Shah et al. 2001; Uslaner 2004). On the other hand, some Internet forums, such as bulletin boards or chats, may be primary reasons why one starts a new hobby or otherwise participate in certain social activities.

Now, it should be stressed that according to most empirical findings, the effects of the Internet on sociability are rather weak. This means that the patterns of Internet use do not necessarily have any impact on typical social activities. Moreover, it has been found that other factors are strongly correlated with the patterns of Internet use and also with participation in social activities. But which factors should be considered relevant when examining Internet use and its associations with civic engagement and social involvement?

9.3. Effects of socio-demographic and institutional factors

Many preceding studies have shown that the patterns of Internet use differ considerably across population groups. Naturally, the differences are affected by a number of factors. In general, the questions why individuals use technological appliances are linked with the prices of the products and their relative benefits and suitability for particular purposes. The relationships between these types of factors are of course multidimensional and continually changing. This is why the Internet use differences are often characterised by socio-cultural and economic factors (e.g. Rice – Katz 2003, Robinson – Kestnbaum 1999).

A constant finding has been that particularly the young and highly educated individuals are likely to use the Internet more than others (e.g. Franzen 2000, Nie – Erbring 2000; Gershuny 2003). Younger people are more willing to try new products and services than older ones (Harrigittai 1999, 704). It can also be claimed that the effective use of any new technology requires at least some education. But in addition, it has also been suggested that there is a general gender difference related to the use of computers, the Internet and other communication technologies. In other words, men often use the Internet more frequently than women and for different purposes (e.g. Henderson et al. 2002, Cummings – Kraut 2002). Following this, in addition to income or wealth, also age, education and gender enable important control variables for the examination of differences in Internet use. However, there are also other factors that affect the Internet use.

By the new millennium the Internet had become widespread in the Western world. In 2001–2002, for example, the proportion of individuals using the Internet in the OECD countries as a whole was nearly 50 percent. Despite this, however, the use rates differed considerably between countries. Within Europe, the Internet was commonly used in the Nordic countries and in the Netherlands, while its use in Southern Europe was relatively insignificant. There were almost 180 Internet hosts per 1000 inhabitants in Finland and Sweden, but less than 20 per 1 000 in Portugal and Poland. The United Kingdom and Switzerland, on the other hand, had about 70 connections per 1 000 inhabitants (OECD 2002.) Relatively similar pattern of cross-country variation can be observed also from Figure 1.

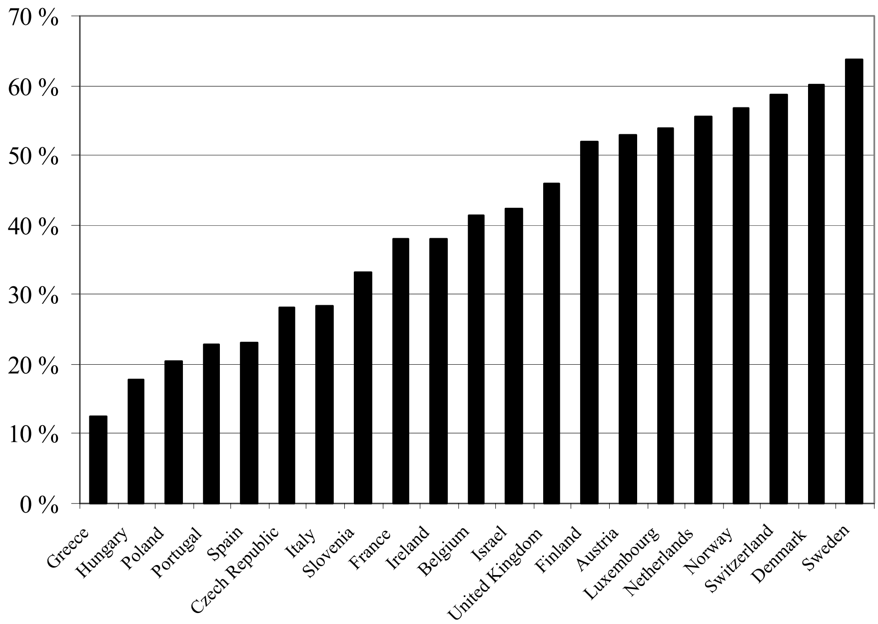

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents using Internet for personal purposes at least once a month. Source: European Social Survey (ESS 2003a).

Figure 1 displays the percentages of respondents in ESS 2002–2003 data who report using the Internet for personal purposes at least once a month. These observations are fairly consistent with official statistics from 2001 and 2002 based on both the number of Internet hosts and percentages of regular web-users (cf. OECD 2002, Nordic Information Society Statistics 2002). This suggests that various macro differences between countries play generally an important role in the analysis of Internet use.

Macro differences of national gaps between countries can, of course, be interpreted in many ways. One feasible explanation, however, lies in certain 'institutional' characteristics of the countries. Basically, institutional differences between societies mean that there are political, economic and/or social differences between countries that can be understood in the light of certain broader normative or cultural features (Esping-Andersen 1990, 26–28). A typical way of classifying institutional characteristics is in terms of the position of the country on a continuum describing the degree of industrialism. In this way, we are able to distinguish 'pre-industrial', 'industrial' and 'post-industrial' economies from each other. Industrial manufacturing and technological development in general are assumed to have restructured many societies since the Second World War. International comparative interpretations have been put forward referring, for example, to 'information societies' and 'new economies' (e.g. Castells 1996, 18–19, 201–202; Dickson 2000).

The use of the new ICT itself is often included among the most important factors in the information society comparisons. In this sense it is important to notice that the use of the Internet is probably multidimensionally connected with various socio-demographic, economic and institutional factors. Moreover, the patterns of sociability and thus different aspects of social capital are influenced by these same factors.

Civic engagement and interpersonal involvement in socio-demographic and institutional context

It has been noticed that the basic socio-demographic factors have an impact also on sociability between people and thus on the formation of social capital. On individual level, in particular, information indicating which group or category a given person belongs has been among the most important explanatory resources of personal social capital. In the empirical studies, personal resources, such as educational attainment or income are simply used as the predictors of social capital. Basically, the role of education, for example, has been interpreted as capability to further open-mindedness and therefore bridging contacts with others. In this way, citizens with higher education are more oriented towards other people than the less-educated. In similar fashion, men and women or people of different ages are often oriented towards different types of social activities. For example, a middle-aged widow who lives alone has completely different daily routines from a 25-year-old family man with two children. This is why not only education or income, but also age and gender relations have a particular significance in the analysis of various forms of sociability. (Brehm – Rahn 1997, 1011–1016; Shah et al. 2001, 149–52.)

There are also between-nation differences in the amount of macro-level social capital as measured, for instance, by trust between people and associational density, which are the traditional indicators (e.g. Inglehart 1997; Curtis et al. 2001; Newton 2001). These differences appear also to be connected with the overall use of the Internet. The relationship between the Internet and social capital probably depends on the macro-level region-specific factors. For example, it has been suggested that the amount of state-level social capital has a positive impact on the overall amount of online activities in the United States (Matei 2004). However, there are no comprehensive international comparisons on this field.

When measuring social capital with the indicators such as interpersonal involvement and civic engagement at the micro- or macro-level, the results may depend a lot on which forms of sociability we are interested in. However, it is not clear which types of sociability are really important for the generation of social capital. Besides the membership or activities in formal associations we should also pay attention to more informal types of social interaction (Putnam and Goss 2002, 9–10). Thus, in this study sociability is measured with both informal (interpersonal involvement) and formal (civic engagement) indicators.

It can be assumed that both socio-demographic characteristics and macro-level factors may be linked with the patterns of Internet use and thus predict also informal and formal types of sociability. Also, it is reasonable to assume that there are country-specific differences also in the amount and distribution of social capital. Of course, the answers to these assumptions must be considered primarily empirical. The next section deals with our empirical research questions and hypotheses.

9.4. Research questions, data and methods

The question approached in this article is whether the Internet use frequency and socio-demographic factors are important in the interpretation of sociability in Finland, in the United Kingdom, and in France and in Italy. While there are differences among these countries in terms of the Internet use, they all fall between the extreme groups of countries presented in Figure 1. In this sense the countries represent the 'middle level' of the ranking and they can be compared to each other somewhat unambiguously.

In the analyses, it is tested how the selected explanatory factors are actually connected with different types of sociability, social involvement and civic engagement, including an evaluation of which factors appear to be the best predictors. In addition, it is compared whether the countries show similar differences in the patterns of sociability in general, and in different types of sociability in particular. On the basis of these tasks, the following three research questions can be formulated:

1. Does the Internet have an effect on two types of measured sociability?
2. Do the detected effects remain significant when socio-demographic factors are taken into account?
3. What kind of differences in the effects can be observed between the countries selected?

The data used in the analyses is based on Finnish (N=2000), British (N=2054), French (N=1503) and Italian (N=1207) sections of the European Social Survey (ESS 2003a) collected in the year 2002. These countries were selected to represent different types of European societies. In general, countries are relatively different on the basis of their general institutional foundations, such as the labour market or income distribution.

Finland is of course a typical Nordic welfare society, which is characterised by commitment to a full-employment, equality, and universal social benefits. The United Kingdom is a liberal country characterised by commitment to full-employment but many social insurances and social benefits are not universal. In practice, the benefits are restricted to a clientele of low-income state dependents. (Esping-Andersen 1990, 12–13; Norlund 2003.) France, on the other hand, is characterized by a commitment to full employment but many forms of social security are not universal. In addition, family benefits also encourage motherhood and the persistence of a male ‘breadwinner’ culture. Italy is in many respects similar to the British society, but has certain unique features associated with the Catholic culture. (Esping-Andersen 1990, 12–13, 26–29.) This is why it is often considered that the Mediterranean culture emphasizes significantly the family’s capability to serve its members (cf. Ferrera 1996). In this sense, Italy provides its own kind of society for our cross-cultural comparison.

Class and educational divisions, for example, have long had a crucial role in the social consciousness of the British society. In Finland, on the other hand, these kinds of differences have been interpreted to be weak or even non-existent. In Italy, for example, family relations and age may have more important effect on daily activities compared to other countries. Following these broad assumptions, we can argue that there should be socio-demographic differences concerning both the patterns of Internet use and sociability between the countries. This is because the countries are different with each other in terms of the primary economic and cultural institutions. In this sense the effects of socio-economic factors on different forms of social capital should also differ from each other.

Dependent variables consist of measures on interpersonal involvement and civic engagement. The independent variables used in the analysis are the frequency of Internet use, education, gender and age. A detailed description of questions presented in the ESS questionnaire and the coding of variables is presented in Appendix.

The first dependent variable (interpersonal involvement) indicates the frequency of social activities. It is measured by asking how much respondent takes part in social activities compared to other same-aged people. Activity here does not necessarily mean the activities organized by any formal associations, but also typical leisure-time activities such as meeting friends and spending time with family members. We decided to include this 'loose' indicator of sociability in the analysis since also the unorganized networks and social ties are as important forms of sociability as formal associations.

The second dependent variable (civic engagement) is an indicator of associational activity. It is measured by summing up the self-reported activity in numerous different associations presented in the questionnaire. However, trade unions and religious organizations were excluded because it is typical for many citizens to be passive members in these organizations (e.g. Janoski 1998, 132–133; Curtis et. al. 2001, 789). It is possible to criticize the wide-ranging measure of associational activity for its heterogeneity. On the other hand, as for example Granovetter (1973) had pointed out it is especially 'the strength of the weak ties' from various overlapping networks that are important for the cohesion of society. Strong ties in limited number of networks might even erode cohesion.

The frequency of Internet use is used as the primary independent variable. It is measured as frequency of WWW or email use for personal purposes. It should be noticed that the variable does not differentiate more diverse types of net uses; it simply reports WWW and/or email usage. At the same time, however, the advantage of this variable is that it is restricted to the use for personal purposes. The variable is categorized between infrequent users (less than once a month) and frequent users (at least or more often than once a month). The proportions of Interpersonal involvement, civic engagement and Internet use frequency in Finland, in the United Kingdom, in France and in Italy are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Interpersonal involvement, civic engagement and Internet use frequency by country

	Finland	United Kingdom	France	Italy
Interpersonal involvement				
About the same or more	61.3 %	60.8%	75.1 %	50.3 %
often than most	38.7 %	39.2%	24.9 %	49.7 %
Less than most				
Civic engagement				
Does participate	37.6%	47.0 %	42.4 %	20.9 %
Does not participate	62.4 %	53.0 %	57.6 %	79.1 %
Internet use frequency				
At least once a month	52.1 %	46.1 %	37. 9 %	28.4 %
Less than once a month	47.9 %	53.9 %	62.1 %	71.6 %

Source: European Social Survey (ESS 2003a).

The other independent variables are *country*, *education*, *gender* and *age*. It is well-known that these factors determine at least to some extent the patterns of sociability themselves, but they are also included into analyses with an intention to control the impact of the Internet use frequency on the forms of sociability. Education was dichotomized into 'tertiary educated' and 'secondary or less'. This was done on the basis of our implicit assumption that the tertiary-level educated are the most typical associated with the Internet use. Also age was categorized into four age groups. In this way, the variable enables us to observe possible non-linear impact of age cohorts or generations.

The methods of analysis include logistic regression models, which are used to evaluate the effect of the selected independent variables. Throughout the empirical analysis, multinomial logistic regression (MLR) procedure is utilised. In general, MLR can be recommended for the analysis of dichotomous dependent variables as well, since in most contemporary software applications it has many options not available in the binary procedure (e.g. Tabachnick – Fidell 2001, 521–523; Stevens 1992). The effects of the independent variable(s) in the models are presented with the odd ratios (Expß). The odds ratio is the probability of being in one group divided by the probability of being in the other group. The statistical significances of the models are indicated in the table by changes in chi-squares (χ^2 change). Also the pseudo-coefficients of the determination (Nagelkerke Pseudo R^2) of the models are reported.

In the following section, interpersonal involvement is examined by country, education, gender, age and the Internet use frequency. The analyses are carried out in two parts. First, the unadjusted effect of each independent on the dependent variable is tested. After that, the effects of other variables are tested by adding each new variable at a time into the model. As the ESS authorities suggest, the 'design' weights that correct the sampling differences between the countries are applied in each analysis (cf. ESS 2003b).

9.5. Effects on interpersonal involvement

Table 2 shows the results of logistic regression tests for interpersonal involvement in four European countries. The unadjusted effects shown in the second column of the table reveal that all independents except gender are statistically associated with dependent variable. When the odds ratios are used to compare the relative strength of the independent variables, we can observe that country, age, education and Internet use all seem to have rather prominent effects. It appears that the French are the most active socially, whereas Italians seem to be the least active.

Table 2. Interpersonal involvement in four European countries, logistic regression models

	N	Unadjusted effects	Model 1, Expβ	Model 2, Expβ	Model 3, Expβ	Model 4, Expβ	Model 5, Expβ
Country							
Finland	1979	1.56***	1.56***	1.56***	1.56***	1.47***	1.36***
France	1488	2.97***	2.97***	2.97***	2.98***	2.81***	2.79***
United Kingdom	2042	1.55***	1.55***	1.55***	1.57***	1.49***	1.41***
Italy (a)	1157	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gender							
Male	3165	(ns)		(ns)	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)
Female (a)	3502	1		1	1	1	1
Age							
15-29 years	1520	1.70***			1.82***	1.80***	1.40***
30-44 years	1782	1.28***			1.30***	1.24**	(ns)
45-59 years	1781	(ns)			(ns)	(ns)	(ns)
60 years and over (a)	1583	1			1	1	1
Education							
Tertiary	1425	1.58***				1.42***	1.22**
Secondary or less (a)	5242	1				1	1
Internet use							
At least once a month	2876	1.76***					1.56***
(a) Less often	3790	1					1
χ^2-reduction (b)			181.21***	(ns)	69.66***	26.81***	51.20***
df			3	4	7	8	9
Pseudo R^2			0.04	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.07

Note: *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.01$; * = $p < 0.05$; (ns) = $p > 0.05$; (a) = reference category; (b) = Indicates the difference in the chi square statistic between the model and previous model; in the first model the statistic indicates the difference between the reduced model and a model with the intercept term. *Source:* European Social Survey (ESS 2003a).

The differences by age indicate that the younger the individual, the more likely she or he is to take part in social activities. However, the difference between the oldest and the second oldest group is insignificant. Differences by education show that respondents with tertiary qualifications socialize more than respondents with lower education. Perhaps the most interesting finding is that the frequent users appear to take part in social activities more than those who use the Internet less than once a month. The odd is approximately 1.8 for those who use the Internet regularly (at least once a month).

Model 1 shows that the country can explain four percent of the variance in interpersonal involvement. The second model adds gender and the third age. As in the case of unadjusted effects gender remains insignificant. In the fourth model, we may see that the impact of education slightly decreases when the impact of country, gender and age are taken into account. Internet use frequency is a significant variable in these models as well (model 5). A closer examination of parameter estimates indicates that the respondents in the youngest age group are more than 1.4 times as likely to take part in social activities as the oldest age group. In the case of education the odd is about 1.2 for those with tertiary education. Internet use frequency is clearly among the strongest predictors in the final model with the odd of 1.6. It should be noticed that χ^2-change is significant in each model, except in the second one, which adds gender. The final model can explain seven percent of total variance. In short, the results suggest that interpersonal involvement can best be predicted by country differences, but Internet use, age and education have also a considerable impact.

We have already found out that country is a significant predictor of interpersonal involvement. To gather more precise information of the country differences we analysed interpersonal involvement in each different country (Table 3). The most notable difference is that the effects are considerably weaker when between-country differences are not taken into account. The Internet use frequency is certainly the strongest significant predictor of interpersonal involvement, but it is that only in Finland and United Kingdom. However, the models could explain only from one to six percent of the variation of interpersonal involvement. Other independent variables, gender, age and education appear to be only almost or non-significant.

Table 3. Interpersonal involvement in four different European Countries, logistic regression models

	Finland Exp*ß*	France Exp*ß*	United Kingdom Exp*ß*	Italy Exp*ß*
Gender				
Male	(ns)	1.31*	(ns)	(ns)
Female (a)	1	1	1	1
Age				
15-29 years	1.39*	1.70**	(ns)	1.54*
30-44 years	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)
45-59 years	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)
60 years and over (a)	1	1	1	1
Education				
Tertiary	1.27*	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)
Secondary or less (a)	1	1	1	1
Internet use				
At least once a month	1.92***	(ns)	1.75***	(ns)
(a) Less than once a month	1	1	1	1
Pseudo R^2	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.01

Note: *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.01$; (ns) = $p > 0.05$; (a) = reference category. *Source:* European Social Survey (ESS 2003a).

The examination of differences in interpersonal involvement revealed that participating in social activities is affected to certain degree by the Internet use frequency. However, cross-country differences are the strongest determinants of this informal form of sociability. Simultaneously, it was also found that compared to France and Italy, the Internet use is considerably a strong predictor in Finland and in the United Kingdom. This last-mentioned finding can be held as somewhat surprising in the context of European welfare institutions. In these countries it appears that the use of the Internet has visible social indications. This leads us to compare the effects of the Internet use on civic engagement.

9.6. Effects on civic engagement

Table 4 shows the results of logistic regression main-effect tests for civic engagement in all four countries. The first column indicates a relatively similar pattern of variance with the analysis of interpersonal involvement. This time, however, the British seem to be the most active joiners of the selected type of associations. The unadjusted effects of gender, age, education and Internet use are also significant. Differences by Internet use, age and education appear to be noteworthy, while gender has only a marginal effect. The pattern is that those who use the Internet frequently are more likely to do voluntary work or to take part in voluntary organizations compared to infrequent users. Differences by age show that younger respondents participate more than older respondents. Also the younger respondents with tertiary education participate more than those with only secondary education or less.

Model 2 of Table 4 indicates that the effect of gender is significant when differences by country are taken into account. However, the pseudo-coefficient of the determination reveals that this variable explains only marginally the participation in associations. When age is added (model 3) the model becomes slightly better. But education is clearly a stronger predictor as displayed in model 4. Model 5, on the other hand, shows that only country and education remain significant when a considerably strong source of variation, Internet use, is added. Despite this, the final model can explain eleven percent of the total variance. That may be regarded as a sufficient share in this field of research.

Table 4. Civic engagement in four European countries, logistic regression models

	N	Unadjusted effects	Model 1, Exp*β*	Model 2, Exp*β*	Model 3, Exp*β*	Model 4, Exp*β*	Model 5, Exp*β*
Country							
Finland	1993	2.28***	2.28***	2.27***	2.30***	1.99***	1.81***
France	1501	2.79***	2.79***	2.79***	2.81***	2.42***	2.42***
United Kingdom	2048	3.43***	3.43***	3.41***	3.50***	3.13***	2.93***
Italy (a)	1201	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gender							
Male	3199	1.15**		1.14**	1.14**	1.16**	(ns)
Female (a)	3545	1		1	1	1	1
Age							
15-29 years	1534	1.48***			1.54***	1.47***	(ns)
30-44 years	1797	1.37***			1.42***	1.25**	(ns)
45-59 years	1805	1.33***			1.37***	1.26**	(ns)
60 years and over (a)	1607	1			1	1	1
Education							
Tertiary	1435	2.43***				2.17***	1.78***
Secondary or less (a)	5308	1				1	1
Internet use							
At least once a month	2894	2.22***					1.82***
(a) Less often	3850	1					1
χ^2-reduction (b)			251.70***	(ns)	40.30***	154.36***	94.99***
df			3	4	7	8	9
Pseudo R^2			0.05	0.05	0.06	0.09	0.11

Note: *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.01$; * = $p < 0.05$; (ns) = $p > 0.05$; (a) = reference category; (b) = Indicates the difference in the chi square statistic between the model and previous model; in the first model the statistic indicates the difference between the reduced model and a model with the intercept term. *Source:* European Social Survey (ESS 2003a).

Table 5. Civic engagement within countries, logistic regression models

	Finland Exp*ß*	France Exp*ß*	United Kingdom Exp*ß*	Italy Exp*ß*
Gender				
Male	(ns)	(ns)	1.25*	1.46*
Female (a)	1	1	1	1
Age				
15-29 years	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)	2.21***
30-44 years	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)
45-59 years	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)	(ns)
60 years and over (a)	1	1	1	1
Education				
Tertiary	1.26*	1.92***	2.14***	2.41***
Secondary or less (a)	1	1	1	1
Internet use				
At least once a month	1.79***	1.89***	1.96***	1.64**
(a) Less often	1	1	1	1
Pseudo R^2	0.03	0.08	0.09	0.07

Note: *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.01$; (nfs) = $p > 0.05$; (a) = reference category. *Source:* European Social Survey (ESS 2003a).

Table 5 shows the differences in civic engagement in each country. The models explain from three to nine percent of the variation of civic engagement. Shortly, education and Internet use can be considered as the strongest predictors of civic engagement. But there are also differences between countries. The impact of education is strongest in Italy and the United Kingdom whereas the effect of frequent Internet use is the most visible in France and in the United Kingdom. Gender has a relatively modest impact of in the United Kingdom and in Italy. Also the effect of age remains somewhat weak in Italy. In this respect we can conclude that even though the strengths of socio-demographic variables vary, the frequent Internet has similar impact on civic engagement in each country. What kind of interpretations do these findings suggest?

9.7. Conclusions: Internet in different institutional settings

In this article, the impact of the Internet on civic engagement and social involvement was addressed. It was asked whether the use of the Internet is negatively or positively associated with the social bonds between people. The results indicated that the frequency of the Internet increases sociability in both countries. Despite this, it should be noticed that the results do not allow to make any conclusions of direction of causal arrow.

In some cases, the findings may of course result from the fact that the Internet use is, for instance, a result of participation in associations and organizations. Voluntary work and participation, for example, often requires the use of communication technologies. The Internet use is also associated with informal social activities in a similar sense. In this way it is not always necessary to make conclusions on definite causal relations between phenomena that are explained and the phenomena that are believed to explain them. What is often of more importance is simply to know which kinds of phenomena are associated with each other.

When comparing the impact of different variables, we can notice that the Internet use frequency is usually a stronger predictor of sociability than age or gender. In fact, the effect of age is relatively insignificant when Internet use becomes controlled. It generally appears that the Internet use is a more significant predictor of civic engagement than interpersonal involvement. It also seems that civic engagement is more clearly a type of social activity which connects to educational qualifications than interpersonal involvements. Perhaps, education itself develops the skills required in associational life, and vice versa?

In addition to positive associations with the Internet use and the examined forms of sociability, significant differences between the analysed countries were found. Country is thus a relevant factor that can be used to distinguish the differences in the patterns of civic engagement and interpersonal involvement. All in all, the differences between countries suggest that the contemporary information society revolution has different implications for different types of societies. It is thus possible to conclude that while the Internet represents the key digital media for many individuals it probably has different social effects between population groups, and between countries. The Internet use and sociability can be affected by a variety of macro factors.

Our comparison between countries indicates that a feasible method for evaluating the differences at the macro level is to investigate how the basic findings at the micro level (i.e. between the basic socio-demographic factors) differ from each other. Therefore, by combining the micro and macro levels we are not only able to explore how the patterns of sociability are connected with the differences between Internet users and population groups, but also to demonstrate how institutional contexts can facilitate these differences.

Naturally, we must be careful when making conclusions on the basis of our findings. The measures of the Internet use included only one type of indicator, that is, use frequency based on subjective reporting. Also the measures on the examined forms of sociability are somewhat problematic on similar grounds. In any case, the findings presented in the article provide unambiguous evidence that the personal Internet use in general is positively associated with both informal and formal forms of sociability. This association is clearly visible in all countries.

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Appendix. Measures, original questions presented in the questionnaire and the coding of variables

	Measure	Question	Coding
Dependent variables	Interpersonal involvement	Compared to other people of your age, how often would you say you take part in social activities?	About the same, more than most, or much more than most = 1; Less than most or much less than most = 0.
	Civic engagement	For each of the voluntary organizations I will now mention, (please use this card to tell me) whether any of these things apply to you now or in the last 12 months, and, if so, which. Participated, and/or voluntary work in: a) Sports club or club for out-door activities; b) Organization for cultural or hobby activities; c) Business, professional, or farmers' organization; d) Consumer or automobile organization; e) Organization for humanitarian aid, human rights, minorities, or immigrants; f) Organization for environmental protection, peace or animal rights; g) Political party; h) Organization for science, education, or teachers and parents; i) Social club, club for the young, the retired/elderly, women, or friendly societies.	If participated and/or voluntary work in at least one organization listed = 1; If not = 0. (From the original list of variables, trade unions and religious organizations were excluded)
Independent variables	Internet use	How often do you use the Internet, the World Wide Web or e-mail – whether at home or at work – for your personal use?	At least once a month = 1; Less often = 0.
	Age	Year of birth	Calculated from year of birth. Number of years old from 15 to 96 years. Four categories: 29 years or less = 1; 30-44 years = 2; 45-59 years = 3; and over 60 = 4.
	Gender	Sex of respondent	Male = 1; Female = 0
	Education	What is the highest level of education you have achieved?	Secondary or less = 0; tertiary = 1
	Country	The respondent lives in this country (yes)	1 = Finland; 2 = United Kingdom; 3 = France; 4 = Italy

Source: European Social Survey (ESS 2003a).

10. ANIMAL BASED FOOD CONSUMPTION IN THE EU: DO WE DECREASE OUR MEAT CONSUMPTION WHEN INCOME LEVELS RISE?

Markus Vinnari, Jarmo Vehmas, Jyrki Luukkanen

Abstract
Food consumption and its environmental impacts have been discussed widely. There are analyses which show that a vegetarian diet causes a smaller environmental burden than an animal based diet. A hypothesis known as the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) is a systematic relationship between income changes and environmental quality. The hypothesis is that the environmental burden decreases when income levels rise. This study analyses the EKC in the case of food consumption. The paper analyses the animal based calories and the animal based protein consumed, the total meat consumption and the bovine meat consumption in EU-15 countries between the years 1961 and 2001 per GDP per person. Usually the relationship between a consumption decision and its environmental effects is very difficult for the consumer to observe. In the case of food consumption, ethical issues such as animal welfare can support the changes. This analysis reveals that in the case of animal based calories and protein consumption, food consumption has decreased in relative terms but not in absolute values. In the case of bovine meat consumption, the environmental Kuznets curve hypothesis seems to hold. Meat consumption seems to apex at the income level of 15 000 USD per person in EU-15 countries.

Keywords: environmental Kuznets curve, meat consumption, income, food

10.1. Background

Consumption and lifestyles in the world's richest countries are a significant cause of global environmental problems. Consumerism is increasingly recognized as a major drain on global resources and the search for sustainable consumption is emerging as a key policy issue. (Cohen and Murphy 2001) Food consumption is a major part of consumption. The total effect of food consumption and animal farming are manifold. Their effect on the environment can be divided into direct impacts such as gas emissions, pollution, and soil degradation, and indirect impacts such as the production of grain and animal feed required for cattle nutrition. Direct effects are related to the production of the food consumed and the indirect effects are related to for example the food produced for the animals to eat.

The dimensions of cattle production in the modern world are huge. In 2004, there were some 1.33 billion heads of cattle, 0.94 billion pigs and 16 billion chicken on this planet. (FAOSTAT 2005) These animals cover a third of the planet's total surface area and use more than two-thirds of its agricultural land. (de Haan et al. 1997) It has been estimated that the global agricultural land base in 2050 will be 18 percent larger than at present. (Tilman et al. 2001) The growing area needed for agriculture can lead to the loss of about a third of the remaining tropical and temperate forests, savannas, and grasslands. (Schlesinger 1997)

It is well known that the efficiency with which various animals convert grain into protein varies widely. With cattle in feedlots, it takes roughly 7 kilograms of grain to produce a one-kilogram gain in live weight. For pork, the figure is close to 4 kilograms of grain per kilogram of weight gain, for poultry it is just over 2, and for herbivorous species of farmed fish (such as carp, tilapia, and catfish), it is less than 2. If the market shifts production to the more grain-efficient products, it raises the productivity of both land and water. (Brown 2003) A cow consumes nearly 1 300 kg of grains (wheat, oats, barley, corn, dry peas, soybean meal and other small grains), 7 200 kg of roughages (pasture, dry hay, silage and other roughages), 24 cubic meters of water for drinking and 7 cubic meters of water for servicing. This means that to produce one kilogram of boneless beef, about 6.5 kg of grain, 36 kg of roughages, and 155 litres of water (only for drinking and servicing) is used. (Chapagain and Hoekstra 2004)

Producing the volume of feed needed by the cow requires on average 15 340 litres of water globally. (Chapagain and Hoekstra 2004) Currently, there are nearly a billion people around the world that do not have access to clean drinking water. In a world where water is a diminishing resource, this is also an ethical factor. Water that could be used by the people is used to fatten the cows. The share of agriculture in the global water footprint is 85 percent. The higher we go up in the product chain, the higher will be the virtual water content (water embedded in the commodity) of the product (Chapagain and Hoekstra 2004).

Meat production has also important consequences on our climate. A comparison of four meals with equivalent nutritional values, composed of the food items under analysis, showed that a meal of tomatoes, rice and pork produces nine times the amount of greenhouse gas emissions than a meal composed of potatoes, carrots and dry peas. Pork had the highest effect. (Carlsson-Kanyama 1998) Worldwide, agriculture is responsible for 70% of all global methane emissions. After carbon dioxide, methane is ranked as the second largest cause of global warming. Animal livestock, and especially cattle, produce large quantities of methane through belching, flatulence, and dried animal waste. This is a significant issue because methane is over 20 times more effective in trapping heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide and it causes nine percent of the global greenhouse effect, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (Brower and Leon 1999)

According to Pimentel and Pimentel (1996), the standard diet in the United States, with two thirds of the nutritional energy obtained from animal products, demands an energy input of 51 GJ per person per year. A lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet requires a corresponding input of 29 GJ, and a pure vegetarian diet 15 GJ of energy.

With every step of food processing we lose a part of the material as a result of selection and inefficiencies. Currently, at least 70 percent of the grain produced in Western industrialized countries is sold as feed for farm animals (Tilman et al. 2001). In general, livestock products have also higher virtual water content than crop products. This is because a live animal consumes a lot of feed crops, drinking water and service water in its lifetime before it produces any output. For beef produced in an industrial farming system, it takes on average three years before the animal is slaughtered to produce about 200 kg of boneless beef. (Chapagain and Hoekstra 2004)

The environmental burden of meat eating is an important moral aspect when valuing food choices. Food consumption is one of the most polluting everyday activities when impacts during product life cycles are considered (Carlsson-Kanyama et al. 2003). Dietz el al. (1996) state the following: “Patterns of food production and consumption are at the core of all human ecology”. So from an environmental point of view, it should be clear that on average the lower in the food chain consumers choose their food, the lower the environmental burden will be.

10.2. Method

A Kuznets curve is a graph with measures of increased economic development on the horizontal axis and measures of income inequality on the vertical axis, hypothesized by Simon Kuznets (1955) to have an inverted-U-shape. Kuznets made the proposition that when an economy is primarily agricultural, it has a low level of income inequality and that during early industrialization, income inequality increases over time and then after some critical point it starts to decrease.

In the case of environmental quality instead of economic inequality, a hypothesis can be constructed where environmental degradation increases with the growth of the economy up to a threshold level beyond which the quality of the environment improves with economic growth. This idea has been labeled as the "environmental Kuznets curve (EKC) hypothesis" (Panayoutou 1993, Grossman and Kruger 1995, Rothman and de Bruyn 1998). Over the last decade, theoretical as well as empirical grounds for the existence of a negative relationship between income and environmental degradation have attracted considerable scientific interest (Arrow et al. 1995, Munasinghe 1999, Bruvoll 2003, Roca 2003). More than a hundred scientific articles have been written about the existence of the EKC (Yandle et al. 2004).

The linking process refers to the relationship between the trend of environmental degradation and the trend of economic development during a certain time period. In the previous literature, de Bruyn and Opschoor (1997) have defined five different stages of the linking process, which is usually called as N-shaped curve. If the last stage of re-linking does not take place, the result is a genuine inverted U-shaped curve or environmental Kuznets curve (see below).

The concept of de-linking (or de-coupling) refers to a situation where aggregate economic activity increases but environmental stress (ES) decreases during the same time period. De Bruyn (2000) has separated two forms of de-linking in a growing economy: weak and strong de-linking. For de-linking to be called weak, the ES intensity must fall. Hence, using the difference (Δ) between the values of environmental intensities at two moments in time, a sufficient condition for weak de-linking is

$$\Delta(ES/GDP) < 0$$

Weak de-linking implies that the ES intensity of the GDP decreases over time. However, environmental stress can still increase, but at a lower rate than the growth of the economy. For de-linking to be called strong, environmental stress must decrease over time (de Bruyn 2000). This strong de-linking rule implies in difference terms that

$$\Delta ES < 0$$

Some supporters of economic growth may argue that such transformation processes are enhanced by economic growth, and hence ΔES can turn into a non-positive function of ΔGDP. The EKC hypothesis states that economic growth first increases environmental stress, but at a certain level of income, environmental stress starts to decrease endogenously or "automatically", e.g. through positive income elasticity for environmental goods, technological progress and shifts towards less environmentally intensive activities. Strictly speaking, the existence of an inverted U-shaped EKC does not tell anything about the reasons for decreasing environmental degradation. Thus, some authors have stressed the early stage of development in the theoretical EKC framework (de Bruyn 2000, Magnani 2001, Dinda 2004).

Assuming that the EKC hypothesis holds, there are still doubts as to whether the observed improvements in environmental efficiency can be extrapolated into the future. There may come a time, or an income level, where weak or strong de-linking conditions do not hold any more because the possibilities for improving environmental efficiencies may have a technological (e.g. thermodynamic) or an economic upper limit (de Bruyn and Opschoor 1997, de Bruyn 2000). From that point onward, the economic growth component may become more dominant and ES and GDP will be re-linked again, at least until further technical, social, political or other innovation breakthroughs. This prediction is called the re-linking hypothesis (de Bruyn and Opschoor 1997, de Bruyn 2000). It can be defined as the empirical validation of a process in which ES intensity has been stabilized or starts to rise again, thus in difference terms

$$\Delta(ES/GDP) > 0$$

This situation can be termed as re-linking, and it implies that the ES intensity of the GDP increases over time. In this situation, environmental stress can decrease, but only in the case of an economic decline. This situation can be called weak re-linking. For re-linking to be called strong, environmental stress must increase over time. Thus, strong re-linking rule implies in difference terms that

$$\Delta ES \geq 0$$

The de-linking and re-linking issue deals with a change in environmental stress (ΔES), a change in the environmental intensity of GDP, $\Delta(ES/GDP)$ as well as a change in GDP (ΔGDP). If we assume two possible directions for all three changes, i.e. a decreasing and an increasing direction, we are in principle able to define eight different combinations of these three changes, each of them with a decreasing or an increasing direction (table 1). In practice, however, only six combinations are logically possible because the relationship Δ(ES/GDP) is determined by ΔES and ΔGDP: An increasing ES and a decreasing GDP cannot provide a decreasing ES/GDP during the same time period, and similarly a combination of a decreasing ES and an increasing GDP cannot result an increasing ES/GDP. The six possible combinations of changes in ES, GDP and ES/GDP can be interpreted as the different degrees of the linking process (table 1).

Table 1. Degrees of the linking process (Vehmas et al. forthcoming 2006)

Degree of linking	**Change in ES ΔES**		**Change in activity ΔGDP**		**Change in intensity Δ(ES/GDP)**	
	<0	>0	<0	>0	<0	>0
Weak de-linking		●		●	●	
Strong de-linking	●			●	●	
Recessive de-linking	●		●		●	
(Impossible)		●	●		●	
Weak re-linking	●		●			●
Strong re-linking		●	●			●
Expansive re-linking		●		●		●
(Impossible)	●			●		●

In the definition of the degrees of de-linking and re-linking, the ES intensity of the economic activity (ES/GDP) is the decisive element. When the change of the ES intensity of GDP is negative, Δ(ES/GDP)<0, it is a question of different degrees of de-linking. When the change in GDP is positive, the change in ES negative, and the change in ES/GDP negative, the situation can be defined as strong de-linking. In practice, this means that economic growth is achieved by more efficient technology with decreased environmental stress. Positive changes in both GDP and ES with a negative change in ES/GDP can be defined as weak de-linking by following the rules by de Bruyn (2000). In practice, weak de-linking means that despite efficiency improvements, environmental stress increases within GDP growth. The third degree of de-linking, where changes in all variables (GDP, ES and ES/GDP) are negative, can be defined as recessive de-linking. In this case, decrease in GDP causes also a negative change in environmental stress, but some efficiency improvements may take place at the same time. This is a new concept, because de Bruyn (2000) and others have usually left out the possibility of a decreasing GDP.

When the change of ES intensity is positive, i.e. ES intensity increases during the studied time period, we speak of different degrees of re-linking. In relation to the analysis provided by de Bruyn (2000), three new concepts emerge here because he deals with re-linking without any prefixes. When the change of GDP is negative, the change in environmental stress (ES) is positive, and the change in ES/GDP is positive, $\Delta(ES/GDP)>0$, we speak of strong re-linking. Here, environmental stress increases despite of decreasing economy because of the increasing environmental intensity of the GDP. Negative changes in GDP and ES but a positive change in ES/GDP can be defined as weak re-linking. Here, environmental stress decreases due to decreasing GDP, although environmental intensity increases. When changes both in GDP and ES are positive and change in ES/GDP is positive as well, we speak of expansive re-linking. In practice, economic growth is performed by more inefficient technology with increasing environmental stress.

Generally speaking, the EKC-related discussion has concentrated on the macroeconomic level and rather on production than on consumption. Thus, the discussion has not taken into account an important insight from the sustainability point of view, i.e. the fact that increasing efficiency may encourage increasing consumption either directly or indirectly. These phenomena are known as different kinds of rebound effects (Ekins 1997, Herring 1999).

The description of the EKC can be simply stated as: “EKCs are statistical artifacts that summarize a few important aspects of collective human behavior in two-dimensional space” (Yandle et al. 2004). Yandle et al. (2004) point out that the EKC approach is not limited to environmental quality; increasing emphasis on issues such as human rights, feminism and animal rights has appeared in industrial economies only when societal income has risen to a certain level. *The main research question in this study is whether consumers decrease their animal based food consumption and their meat consumption at higher income levels.* This change could be supported by the combined influence of animal rights issues and the environmental degradation caused by food consumption that could influence animal based food consumption. The existence of the strong EKC hypothesis will be tested first for different time series and if it does not hold, then the weak EKC will be tested.

10.3. Data analysis

Data for the analysis has been gathered from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations database and Gross Domestic Product and population information has been gathered from the International Energy Agency 2002 datasets. Analysis has been conducted for the EU-15 countries. In the case where separate country data is used, Belgium and Luxemburg are excluded because there is no systematic time series available for them in the FAO time series. Time series for the period1961–2001 were used.

The share of animal based calories was about 30 percent on average in the EU-15 countries in 2001. The variation was quite high, ranging from about 22 percent in Greece to 39 percent in Denmark. (FAOSTAT 2005) The growth rate animal based calorie consumption has slowed down in every country except in Portugal, where growth is still considerable, being over 556 calories per person per day between the years 1981 and 2001. In five of the countries, the growth rate has been negative during the time period of 1981–2001. The fastest decline has taken place in the United Kingdom and in Ireland, where the animal based calorie consumption per person per day has lowered respectively by 212 calories and 331 calories during the period 1981–2001. In the United Kingdom, the development in animal based calorie consumption was negative already during 1961–1981. (table 2.)

In three of the countries, Finland, Ireland and United Kingdom, the change in animal based calorie consumption was decreasing for the whole study period of 1961–2001 (see table 2.). In Finland, the change was negative mainly because Finns have lowered their milk consumption considerably during the research period from about 350 kilograms per person per year to about 200 kilograms (FAOSTAT 2005).

Table 2. Changes in animal calorie consumption in the EU-15 countries (GDP values in USD 1995 PPP) (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2002)

	1961 Animal based calories Cal/Cap/Day	1981 Animal based calories Cal/Cap/Day	2001 Animal based calories Cal/Cap/Day	per capita values								
				1961-1981			1981-2001			1961-2001		
				Δ Calories consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Calories/GDP	Δ Calories consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Calories/GDP	Δ Calories consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Calories/GDP
Austria	1020	1213	1235	193	8169	23.63	22	8211	2.68	215	16380	13.13
Belgium-Luxembourg	969	1147	na*	178	8455	21.05	na*	7867	na*	na*	16322	na*
Denmark	1145	1203	1339	58	6346	9.14	136	7947	17.11	194	14293	13.57
Finland	1289	1294	1178	5	7855	0.64	-116	8414	-13.79	-111	16269	-6.82
France	1014	1310	1362	296	7913	37.41	52	6610	7.87	348	14523	23.96
Germany	944	1144	1043	200	7207	27.75	-101	7279	-13.88	99	14486	6.83
Greece	373	674	801	301	7605	39.58	127	3165	40.12	428	10770	39.74
Ireland	1193	1445	1114	252	5273	47.79	-331	17656	-18.75	-79	22929	-3.45
Italy	452	829	947	377	7974	47.28	118	6792	17.37	495	14767	33.52
Netherlands	918	1045	1208	127	7194	17.65	163	8351	19.52	290	15544	18.66
Portugal	346	538	1094	192	5634	34.08	556	7207	77.15	748	12841	58.25
Spain	355	727	923	372	5824	63.87	196	7394	26.51	568	13218	42.97
Sweden	1035	1079	1062	44	6596	6.67	-17	7170	-2.37	27	13766	1.96
United Kingdom	1275	1228	1016	-47	4159	-11.30	-212	8458	-25.07	-259	12616	-20.53
European Union (15)	855	1060	1076	205	6751	30.37	16	7406	2.16	221	14157	15.61

*na data not available

The variation in the EU-15 countries in the share of animal based calories of the total calories was from about 28 percent to 33 percent in the research period.

In the case of the share of animal based calorie consumption, the environmental Kuznets curve hypothesis seems to hold for EU-15. The share of animal based calorie consumption starts to decline after income levels of 17,000 USD are reached (see figure 1). It is important to notice that we are observing share of animal based consumption, not the absolute values. In this case, the strong EKC hypothesis is valid and the explanation value is high, 88 percent.

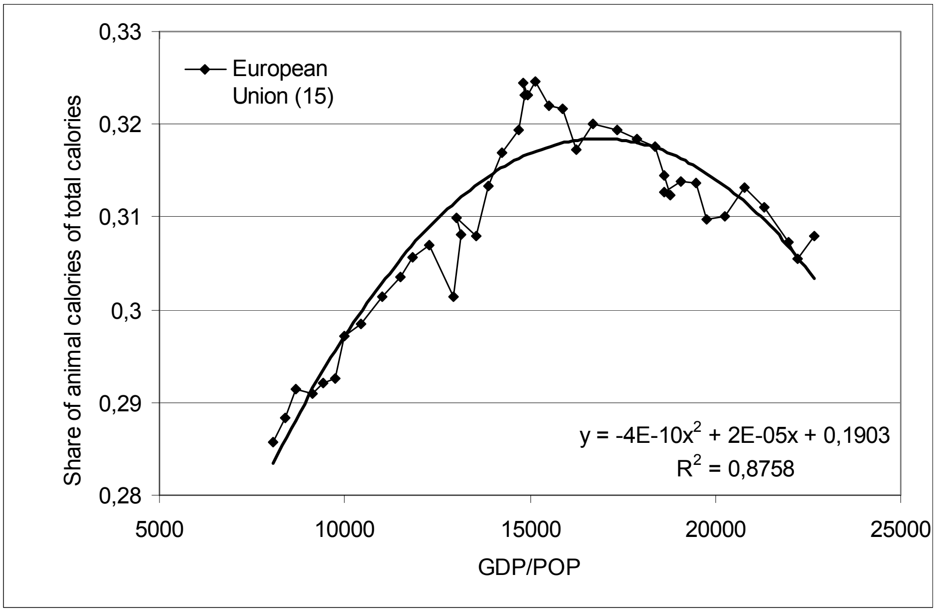

Figure 1. Test of the strong EKC hypothesis for the share of animal based calories of the total calories consumed. Share of animal based calories of the total calories plotted against GDP per capita in EU-15 countries combined data 1961-2001 (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2003)

It seems clear that the share of animal based calorie consumption starts first to go up when income levels rise but when a certain income level is reached then the share of animal based consumption starts to decline.

Even though the share of animal based calorie consumption seems to start to decline when the income levels rise (see figure 1), the share of the animal based protein consumption does not seem to be lowering at the same speed (see table 2). This can be partly caused by the fact that the animal based food contains much less fat than it used to. There can be more protein per one kilogram of animal based food now than there was forty years ago.

Table 3. Changes in animal protein consumption in the EU-15 countries (GDP values in USD 1995 PPP) (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2002)

	1961 Protein/Capita/Day (gr)	1981 Protein/Capita/Day (gr)	2001 Protein/Capita/Day (gr)	per capita values								
				1961-1981			1981-2001			1961-2001		
				Δ Protein consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Protein/GDP	Δ Protein consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Protein/GDP	Δ Protein consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Protein/GDP
Austria	48.6	63.0	68.9	14.4	8169	1.76	5.9	8211	0.72	20.3	16380	1.24
Belgium-Luxembourg	49.1	62.0	na*	12.9	8455	1.53	na	7867	na	na	16322	na
Denmark	47.3	56.1	72.2	8.8	6346	1.39	16.1	7947	2.03	24.9	14293	1.74
Finland	53.4	60.0	63.3	6.6	7855	0.84	3.3	8414	0.39	9.9	16269	0.61
France	57.4	75.6	78.2	18.2	7913	2.30	2.6	6610	0.39	20.8	14523	1.43
Germany	45.0	59.5	58.3	14.5	7207	2.01	-1.2	7279	-0.16	13.3	14486	0.92
Greece	27.2	51.3	61.4	24.1	7605	3.17	10.1	3165	3.19	34.2	10770	3.18
Ireland	55.6	73.2	71.6	17.6	5273	3.34	-1.6	17656	-0.09	16.0	22929	0.70
Italy	28.6	52.9	62.0	24.3	7974	3.05	9.1	6792	1.34	33.4	14767	2.26
Netherlands	48.8	61.2	76.9	12.4	7194	1.72	15.7	8351	1.88	28.1	15544	1.81
Portugal	27.4	36.7	71.8	9.3	5634	1.65	35.1	7207	4.87	44.4	12841	3.46
Spain	26.4	54.7	70.6	28.3	5824	4.86	15.9	7394	2.15	44.2	13218	3.34
Sweden	57.4	66.7	69.2	9.3	6596	1.41	2.5	7170	0.35	11.8	13766	0.86
United Kingdom	54.7	53.1	57.5	-1.6	4159	-0.38	4.4	8458	0.52	2.8	12616	0.22
European Union (15)	43.9	59.0	65.2	15.1	6751	2.24	6.2	7406	0.84	21.3	14157	1.50

*na=data not available

Animal based protein consumption has declined only in two of the fifteen EU countries during the research period of 1981–2001, in Germany and Ireland. In the United Kingdom, the growth rate was already negative between the years 1961–1981 (table 3). In the case of United Kingdom development can be partly caused by early high animal based food consumption, they have had more time to adjust.

The share of animal based protein consumption was between 50 percent and 60 percent during 1961–2001 in the EU-15 countries. At the income level of about 15,000 USD per capita (in 1995 purchasing power parity USD values), the rise in the share of animal based protein consumption seems to stop. On the higher income levels, there is no change in the shares and the consumption level-off to about 60 percent. The strong EKC hypothesis does not hold in the case of the share of animal based protein consumption (figure 2).

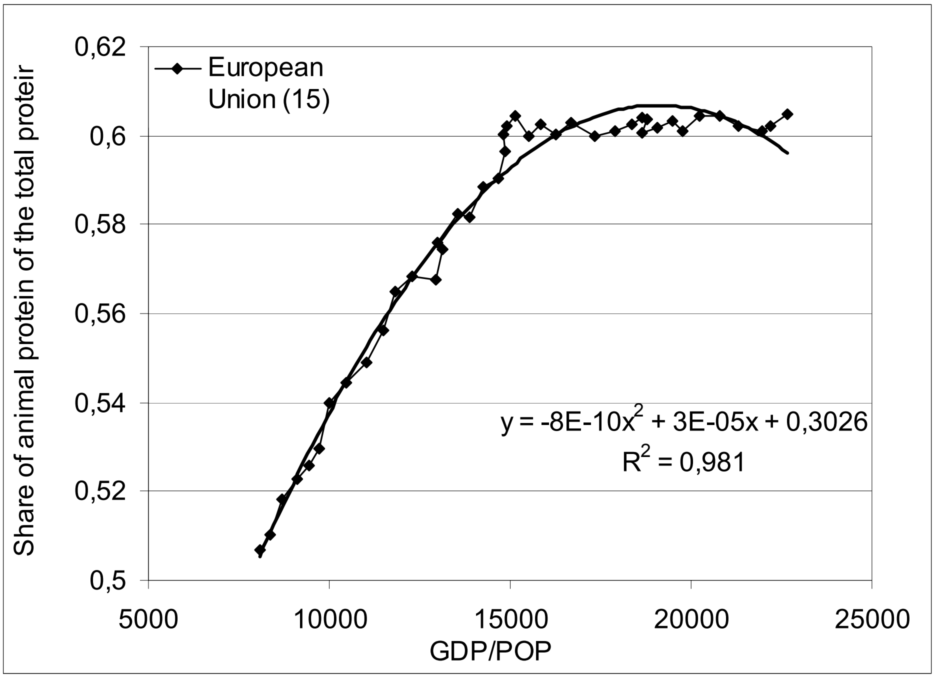

Figure 2. Test of the strong EKC hypothesis for the share of animal based protein of the total protein consumed. Share of animal based protein of the total protein consumed plotted against GDP per capita in EU-15 countries combined data 1961-2001 (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2003)

Especially during the 1970s, the changes towards animal based food consumption were notable in the EU countries. This change is still taking place even in many highly industrialized countries. For example in Japan, animal based food consumption is still growing quite rapidly (FAOSTAT 2005).

The variation in total meat consumption (bovine meat, pork, chicken meat, and other meat products) is quite high. The largest meat consumption in the EU-15 countries took place in Spain in 2001 with over 115 kilograms per person per year. Over 100 kilograms per person per year were also consumed in Austria, Denmark and France. Least meat was consumed in Finland, 65 kilograms per person per day (table 4).

Meat consumption is still growing in most of the EU-15 countries. Between the years 1981-2001, meat consumption decreased only in Germany by 13.7 kilograms. The fastest growth during that time period took place in Portugal with 44 kilograms per person per year. On the EU-15 level, the growth rate has slowed down from 28.2 kilograms between 1961–1981 to 9.7 kilograms between 1981–2001 (table 4).

Table 4. Changes in meat consumption in the EU-15 countries (GDP values in USD 1995 PPP) (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2002)

				per capita values								
				1961-1981			1981-2001			1961-2001		
	1961 Consumption kg/capita/year	1981 Consumption kg/capita/year	2001 Consumption kg/capita/year	Δ Meat consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Meat/GDP	Δ Meat consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Meat/GDP	Δ Meat consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Meat/GDP
Austria	65.7	100.2	109.6	34.5	8169	4.22	9.4	8211	1.14	43.9	16380	2.68
Belgium-Luxembourg	60.9	87.2	na	26.3	8455	3.11	na	7867	na	na	16322	na
Denmark	61.2	74.8	114.0	13.6	6346	2.14	39.2	7947	4.93	52.8	14293	3.69
Finland	34.7	55.8	65.9	21.1	7855	2.69	10.1	8414	1.20	31.2	16269	1.92
France	77.1	98.5	102.2	21.4	7913	2.70	3.7	6610	0.56	25.1	14523	1.73
Germany	64.3	96.5	82.8	32.2	7207	4.47	-13.7	7279	-1.88	18.5	14486	1.28
Greece	21.1	61.1	88.1	40	7605	5.26	27.0	3165	8.53	67.0	10770	6.22
Ireland	55.0	81.5	90.3	26.5	5273	5.03	8.8	17656	0.50	35.3	22929	1.54
Italy	30.5	75.1	91.4	44.6	7974	5.59	16.3	6792	2.40	60.9	14767	4.12
Netherlands	44.2	72.7	91.4	28.5	7194	3.96	18.7	8351	2.24	47.2	15544	3.04
Portugal	20.0	46.7	90.7	26.7	5634	4.74	44.0	7207	6.11	70.7	12841	5.51
Spain	21.8	75.7	115.3	53.9	5824	9.25	39.6	7394	5.36	93.5	13218	7.07
Sweden	50.7	63.0	70.3	12.3	6596	1.86	7.3	7170	1.02	19.6	13766	1.42
United Kingdom	70.5	70.2	79.0	-0.3	4159	-0.07	8.8	8458	1.04	8.5	12616	0.67
European Union (15)	53.6	81.8	91.5	28.2	6751	4.18	9.7	7406	1.31	37.9	14157	2.68

na data not available

On average, meat consumption has varied in the EU-15 countries from about 50 kilograms to over 90 kilograms during 1961-2001. The growth rate has been quite rapid between the GDP levels of 7,000 USD to 15,000 USD per person (purchasing power parity values in 1995 USD). The total meat consumption does not however start to decline even at income levels as high as 20 000 dollars per year (figure 3). Income levels explain very well the variations in meat consumption, as the R^2 value is 0,99, when the strong EKC is tested.

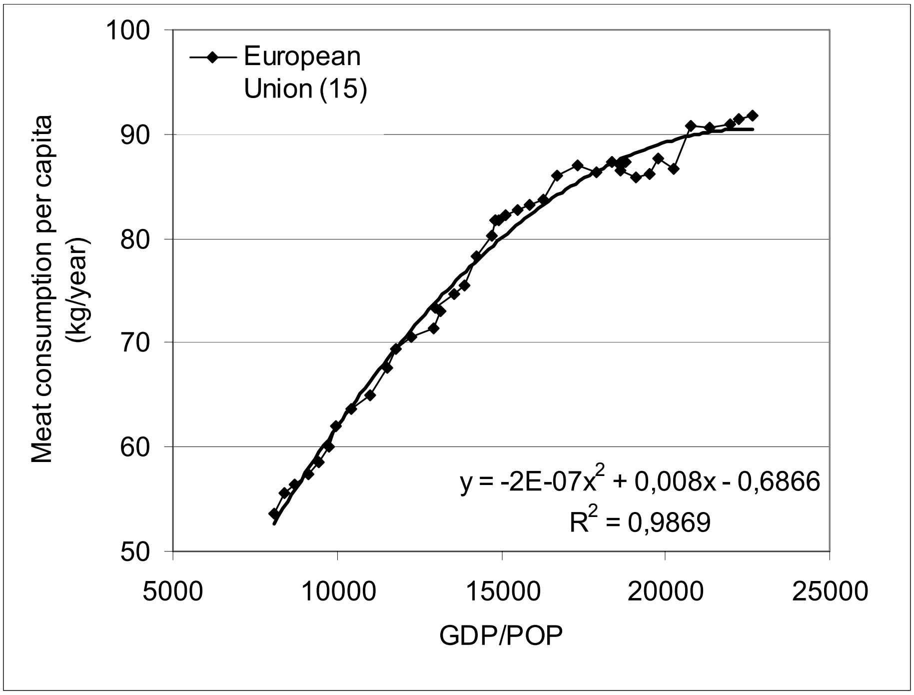

Figure 3. Test of the strong EKC hypothesis for meat consumption. Meat consumption per capita plotted against GDP per capita in EU-15 countries combined data 1961-2001 (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2003)

Continuing growth in meat consumption can be explained by the fact that people are currently consuming large amounts of chicken and pork in the EU countries. However, the weak EKC hypothesis holds in the case of total meat consumption. In the case of the weak EKC hypothesis test, the R^2 value stays high at 99 percent when the weak EKC hypothesis is tested.

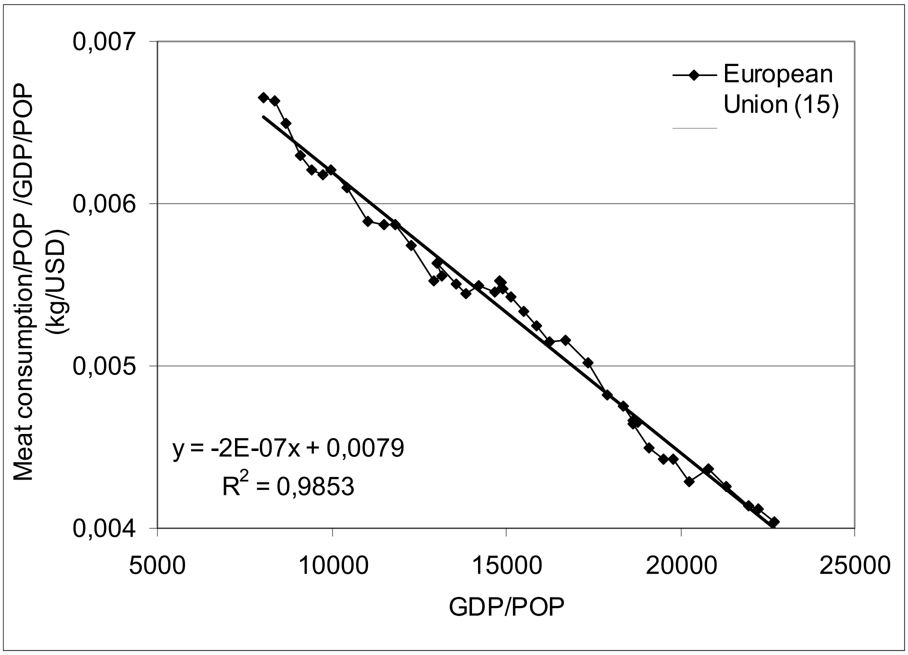

Figure 4. Test of the weak EKC hypothesis for meat consumption. Meat consumption per capita per GDP per capita plotted against GDP per capita in EU-15 countries combined data 1961-2001 (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2003)

In many publications, production of bovine meat is considered to be the most polluting of human food supplements that is used on a larger scale (Rifkin, 1992, Pimental et al 1997). Cows are inefficient in changing plant proteins to animal proteins and they consume a considerable amount of water in the process. Already almost twenty years ago, Francis Moore Lappe (1977) called them "protein factories in reverse".

Bovine meat consumption decreased in three of the fifteen countries between the years 1961 and 2001, Denmark, Sweden and United Kingdom. In most of the other countries, consumption still grew rapidly during that time period. The largest growth rate took place in Italy with more that 11 kilograms per person per year. During the period 1981-2001, consumption decreased in eight of the fifteen countries. The fastest decline took place in Germany, where during those twenty years, consumption per person per year declined by almost thirteen kilograms. In the EU-15 countries, consumption decreased in total by 4.5 kilograms (table 5).

Table 5. Changes in bovine meat consumption in the EU-15 countries (GDP values in USD 1995 PPP) (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2002)

				per capita values								
				1961-1981			1981-2001			1961-2001		
	1961 Consumption kg/capita/year	1981 Consumption kg/capita/year	2001 Consumption kg/capita/year	Δ Meat consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Meat/GDP	Δ Meat consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Meat/GDP	Δ Meat consumption	Δ GDP	Δ Meat/GDP
Austria	18.2	25.7	18.5	7.5	8169	0.92	-7.2	8211	-0.88	0.3	16380	0.02
Belgium-Luxembourg	23.6	26.8	na	3.2	8455	0.38	na	7867	na	na	16322	na
Denmark	16.6	13.8	24.4	-2.8	6346	-0.44	10.6	7947	1.33	7.8	14293	0.55
Finland	17.6	21.6	18.1	4.0	7855	0.51	-3.5	8414	-0.42	0.5	16269	0.03
France	28.6	31.6	27.5	3.0	7913	0.38	-4.1	6610	-0.62	-1.1	14523	-0.08
Germany	20.1	23.2	10.5	3.1	7207	0.43	-12.7	7279	-1.74	-9.6	14486	-0.66
Greece	5.1	15.9	20.2	10.8	7605	1.42	4.3	3165	1.36	15.1	10770	1.40
Ireland	15.5	26.6	18.2	11.1	5273	2.11	-8.4	17656	-0.48	2.7	22929	0.12
Italy	14.6	25.8	22.8	11.2	7974	1.40	-3.0	6792	-0.44	8.2	14767	0.56
Netherlands	19.2	20.6	20.5	1.4	7194	0.19	-0.1	8351	-0.01	1.3	15544	0.08
Portugal	6.2	12.5	14.5	6.3	5634	1.12	2.0	7207	0.28	8.3	12841	0.65
Spain	6.0	12.0	14.6	6.0	5824	1.03	2.6	7394	0.35	8.6	13218	0.65
Sweden	19.6	18.1	20.4	-1.5	6596	-0.23	2.3	7170	0.32	0.8	13766	0.06
United Kingdom	25.3	22.9	17.6	-2.4	4159	-0.58	-5.3	8458	-0.63	-7.7	12616	-0.61
European Union (15)	19.1	23.0	18.5	3.9	6751	0.58	-4.5	7406	-0.61	-0.6	14157	-0.04

na data not available

On average, bovine meat consumption has varied quite much in the EU-15 countries, from about 18 kilograms to over 23 kilograms between the years 1961-2001. The Environmental Kuznets Curve hypothesis seems to hold for the EU-15 countries in the case of bovine meat consumption. Above the GDP/POP level of 15,000 USD, bovine meat consumption seems to start to decline (see figure 4.). This is a good example of the strong EKC. The income levels explain a large part of bovine meat consumption, as the high R^2 value of 0,79 indicates.

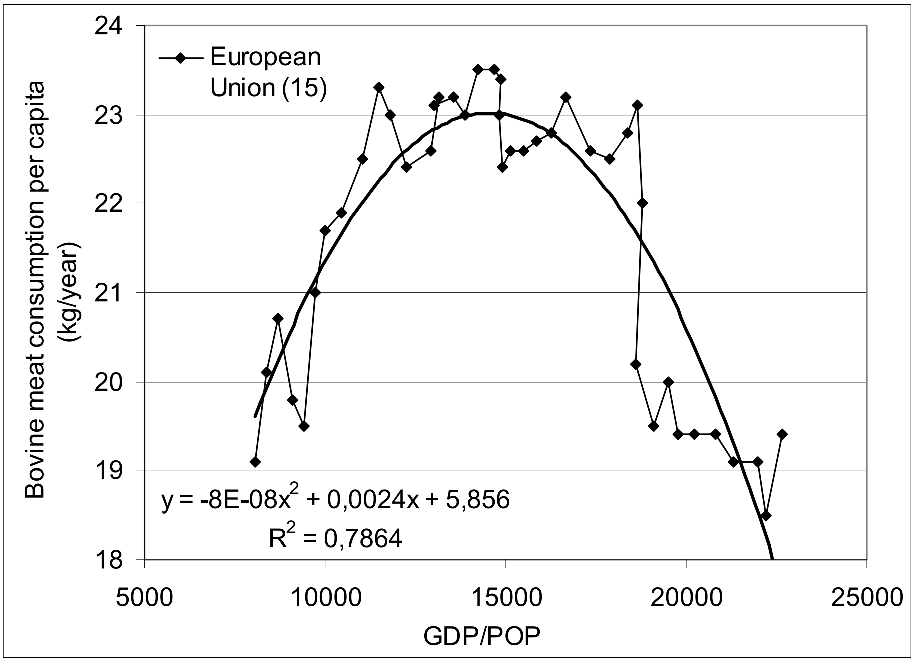

Figure 5. Test of the strong EKC hypothesis for bovine meat consumption. Bovine meat consumption per capita plotted against GDP per capita in EU-15 countries 1961-2001 (data from Faostat 2005 and IEA 2003)

There can be many explanations to why this change is taking place in Europe. The mad cow disease has had its impact on food consumption and also preference changes in health and environmental issues related to food may have had an impact.

10.4. Conclusions and discussions

The share of animal based calories consumption seems to start to decline when higher income levels are reached in the EU-15 countries. This can be partly because meat and milk products contain much less fat than they used to. For example, only twenty years ago in Finland, most consumed milk sold contained 3,5 percent of fat when it now contains one percent. Changes in food stuff structure have affected also animal based protein consumption. In the EU-15 countries, the animal based protein consumption has not started to decline even though it has leveled-of to about 60 percent of the total protein consumption.

In this research, the authors noticed that the bovine meat consumption expressed in kilograms per capita seems to start to decline after a certain income level is reached (in this research 15 000 USD per capita). However, when the total animal based calories and protein consumption are considered, the changes are not as evident. People have started to consume more pork and chicken in the EU-15 countries when their income levels have risen. The overall consumption of meat seems to be still growing and changes even in bovine meat consumption are taking place at quite high income levels.

According to the EKC theory, GDP growth creates the conditions for environmental improvement by raising the demand for improved environmental quality and offers the resources available, such as technical and socio-economic resources, for supplying it. In the case of food consumption, GDP growth can mean that people have more possibilities to choose their food and the selection of foods can be much wider. The decrease of the share of the food costs of household budget at higher income levels provides also possibilities for increased freedom of choice. People have the possibility to eat vegetarian foods with much less effort and it is easier to make healthy vegetarian based foods.

According to this study, there might be some changes in progress in the developed countries away from the animal based food consumption at higher income levels but when the global scale is considered, these changes are not taking place quickly enough. A study by Delgado et al. (1999) suggested that the global production and consumption of meat will continue to rise from 233 million metric tons in the year 2000 to 300 million tons in 2020, as will that of milk, from 568 to 700 million tons over the same period. Egg production will also increase further by 30%. If consumers in well “developed” countries will not start to change their eating habits, there is a big risk that consumers in “less developed” countries will follow their destructive way of consumption.

One possible way to change the future food structure to more environmentally sustainable direction is to introduce incentive systems.

Goodland (1997) proposed a tax system to guide consumption to favour food products lower in the food chain to minimize the environmental consequences. This type of system could be used to guide people to adopt a more vegetarian based diet. This type taxation system could increase the speed of the changes and help the environmental improvements to take place at a faster pace.

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THE AUTHORS AND THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION

PhD Jani Erola
Tutkija / *Researcher*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
Taloussosiologia / *Economic Sociology*
jani.erola@tukkk.fi

MA, MSc Leena Haanpää
Assistentti / *Research associate*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
Taloussosiologia / *Economic Sociology*
leena.haanpaa@tukkk.fi

Dr (Sc) Antti Honkanen
Yliopettaja / *Principal Lecturer*
Vaasan ammattikorkeakoulu / *Vaasa Polytechnic*
Liiketalous ja matkailu / *Business Economics and Tourism*
antti.honkanen@puv.fi

MA Antti Kouvo
Tutkija / *Researcher*
Turun yliopisto / *University of Turku*
Sosiologia /*Sociology*
ansako@utu.fi

PhD Pekka Räsänen
Yliassistentti / *Assistant professor*
Turun yliopisto / *University of Turku*
Sosiologia / Sociology
pekras@utu.fi

PhD Timo Toivonen
Professori / *Professor*
Varttunut tutkija / *Senior scientist*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
Taloussosiologia / *Economic Sociology*
timo.toivonen@tukkk.fi

MA Jeremi Van Gorp
Jatko–opiskelija / *PhD student*
Department od Sociology
University of Antwerp
jeremi.vangorp@ua.ac.be

Dr Jarmo Vehmas
Erikoistutkija/ Senior researcher
Tulevaisuuden tutkimuskeskus / *Finland Futures Research Centre*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
jarmo.vehmas@tukkk.fi.

DTec Jyrki Luukkanen
Vanhempi tutkija/ Senior researcher
Tulevaisuuden tutkimuskeskus / *Finland Futures Research Centre*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
jyrki.luukkanen@tukkk.fi

MA Ethnography and Social Anthropology Annemette Nielsen
Jatko-opiskelija / *PhD student*
Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University
Department of Human Nutrition
anmn@kvl.dk

MA Pekka Mustonen
Tutkija / *Researcher*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
Taloussosiologia / *Economic Sociology*
pekka.mustonen@tukkk.fi

PhD Pasi Moisio
Erikoistutkija / *Senior researcher*
STAKES / *National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES)*
pasi.moisio@stakes.fi

MSc Taru Virtanen
Tutkija / *Researcher*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
Taloussosiologia / *Economic Sociology*
taru.virtanen@tukkk.fi

PhD (Soc) Terhi-Anna Wilska
Professori / *Professor*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
Taloussosiologia / *Economic Sociology*
terhi-anna.wilska@tukkk.fi

MSc (econ.), MSc Markus Vinnari
Jatko–opiskelija / *PhD student*
Tulevaisuuden tutkimuskeskus / *Finland Futures Research Centre*
Turun kauppakorkeakoulu / *Turku School of Economics and Business Administration*
markus.vinnari@tukkk.fi

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