Copenhagen Business School
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

THE IMPACT OF THE SHORTENING AND THE NON-EXCLUSIVITY OF THE THEATRICAL WINDOW ON MOVIEGOING BEHAVIOUR: A COMPARISON BETWEEN ITALY AND DENMARK

Master Thesis

MSc in Social Science in

Management of Creative Business Processes

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Student number: 133032

Number of pages: 67

Number of characters: 100204

Submission date: 17/01/22

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Before proceeding, allow me to write some lines to all those who have been close to me during these times of isolation

A heartfelt thank you to my supervisor Popp Andrew for his infinite patience, availability and kindness.

To my mother and father, I hope you feel repaid somehow for all those missed calls, to Giulia and Valerio, and Aunt Laura. You all understood me and trusted me. It meant a lot to me. Thanks to my uncles and cousins, those family moments and love warmed my heart even if I didn't talk much.

Thanks to Clara, Irene, Marta, Mario and Morten for marking my moments of happiness here in CPH. Even commuting from Albertslund does not seem so bad thanks to you. And speaking of Albertslund, thanks to Michelle and Lin, who made me fall in love with jogging in such a breathtaking place.

Jul, David, Tere, Maja, Michał and Angelo, it was the most restrictive period in Lille, and yet, among self-declarations masks and curfews, it was beautiful and will continue to be so with you.

Thanks also to Vic, Giorgia, Erika, Elisabetta and Veronica that, despite all my efforts to not be a good friend, they were there for me whether it was for a phone call, a two-hour coffee, a discussion about surveys, one of my dramatic ranting, or *a car ride*. I'll be there for you

I wish I could change something in my life, but I wouldn't change any of you, from Senpai Gab, Alessio, Enrico, Dario, Ciccio and Jan, till Alberto, thanks guys, your friendship means more than I demonstrate; I wish I'll be physically closer to all of you, but in any case you'll still hear me complaining

To Maria Chiara, who literally carried my lazy ass from the bachelor to the master, never been happier and grateful

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to study the impact of the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window on moviegoing behaviour and to what extent. Moreover, this paper seeks to investigate if the country of residence impacts these outcomes; the countries taken into consideration are Italy and Denmark. This research question characterised the research process of the theory and the data collection method. The data collection method consisted of a 20 questions survey. Examining the existing researches on the subject was crucial to build the survey and formulate several hypotheses. Two hundred ninety-four individuals answered the bilingual questionnaire. However, only 206 were studied as they were completed. The analysis results highlighted that the shortening and the non-exclusivity impact moviegoing behaviour. However, some distinctions must be made to measure the extent of such impact. If the abovementioned factors were caused by the availability of movies on a TVOD platform, the impact is shallow. By contrast, the impact is significant if caused by an SVOD platform. Such repercussions differ based on the country of residence. This was because respondents who live in Denmark are more price-sensitive than those living in Italy.

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INTRODUCTION

Choice of Industry

Thanks to the director Tornatore, I started thinking about cinema not only as a passion but also as a dream job, which brought me to Copenhagen to study the business and management aspects behind the creative industries. Then, COVID-19 happened, and movie theatres were closed and reopened, and so on. By then, there were new factors to evaluate in the decision-making process about moviegoing, such as the availability – or the soon-to-be availability - of the film on streaming platforms. It aroused my interest which led me to investigate how moviegoing behaviour was affected by the radical decision of more and more streaming services to release movies simultaneously (or almost) in movie theatres and on their platforms.

Problem Identification

The motion picture industry is witnessing a radical transformation in the film market that is challenging the conventional business models due to the spread of streaming platforms and changes in consumer behaviours. The advent of VCR was probably the first challenge that the film industry faced, then it took on DVDs. Since then, there have been many technological disruptions in the movie industry. After the abovementioned ones, the movie industry has now a new threat: the most prominent market disruptors, namely video-on-demand (VOD) services. The main consequences of the technological revolution are the new consumption of movies and the creation of digital streaming platforms; the film industry is desperately trying to re-adapt itself to this new scenario (Crisp, 2015).

The window release system is the sequential and chronological scheme for exploiting the film, which takes place through the sale of rights by the owner to the actors in the various windows. Since the commercial revenue is the sum of the rights sold, each studio maximises a film's profits by managing the releases in the various channels as best as possible. Usually, the movie stays in each window for a limited and exclusive period; typically, the order between the windows is as follows: theatrical, then DVD and Blu-ray simultaneously with TVOD, Pay TV, SVOD, Free TV. Moreover, the positioning and the exclusive character of the different exploitation windows can be related to the level of contribution of various players to the financing of films, as it influences their negotiation power[1]. The traditional system of sequential exclusivity is supposed to allow every version to maximise the revenues derived by the right holders, which "ultimately grows the pie"[2], as Christopher Nolan stated.

However, establishing a smooth distribution strategy requires many insights and hides serious risks. In order to do that, it is necessary a continuous balancing exercise between the effect a release in one window could have on another one. "Different effects may play a role in this, including the perishability of audience demand, the success-breeds-success effect, or the possibility of multiple purchasing" (Ranaivason et al., 2014). According to the report of UNIC, movie producers and distributors should also consider that, whilst the average revenue per view on a subscription-based VOD service is around €0.20, the average price for a cinema ticket in the EU is €6.74[3]. Though, it has to be noted that producers take a "*slice*" of the price ticket since it is redistributed between different actors in the movie industry. When planning the release strategy, producers and distributors must consider all these factors to find a solution.

McPhillips et al. (2008) explained how technology disruptions are changing the market and how customers are involved and affected by this new environment. Consumers, indeed, can decide nowadays

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[1] Ravaison et al. 2014. https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/system/files/ged/analysisofthelegalrulesforexploitationwindows.pdf
[2] Lang. (2017) https://variety.com/2017/film/news/christopher-nolan-dunkirk-oscars-movies-tv-spielberg-1202607836/
[3] UNIC. (2018) European Cinema Facts and Figures https://www.unic-cinemas.org/fileadmin/user_upload/UNIC_Impact_brochure__1_.pdf

the content they want to enjoy, where and when they want to consume it (ibid). The audience's demand is customised and adapted to home entertainment, with high freedom of choice, flexibility in use and unlimited access at a low price (Tapscott, 2009).

Although digitalisation has changed how audiovisual content is consumed, audiences still appreciate the cinema experience. According to a recent study conducted in the United Kingdom by Cinema First (2021), "cinema is something that cannot be recreated at home, with two-thirds of respondents favouring the spectacular big-screen experience, immersive sound, special effects, and access to a wide range of new films that only cinema can offer". However, it also indicates that consumption patterns are changing, as consumers often decide to watch a movie at home using a VOD platform.

Academic literature does not pay the deserved attention to the movie consumer, who is the ultimate destination of the motion picture value chain. Considering that the customer is supposed to drive the business from a marketing point of view, more studies are needed in consumer behaviour concerning movies. Understanding the moviegoing behaviour in all of its shades would be crucial, among other things, for planning the distribution strategy. The knowledge obtained could be helpful to set their strategies to present the right audiovisual products to the right audience.

Problem Formulation

The research question defines the structure of the overall research and provides the guidelines that will be followed throughout the research process (Kross & Giust, 2019). The research question that this thesis intends to answer and will guide us throughout the entire process is the following:

Do the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window affect moviegoing behaviour, and, if so, how much?

Below there is the research sub-question that help understand which specific aspects of the topic were further studied and developed:

Are these outcomes impacted by country of residence (Denmark vs Italy)?

As to provide an answer to such research question, the first step is to examine the existing research on the subject. Moreover, hypotheses have been formulated based on existing research, theory, and data. In order to test hypotheses, a quantitative method has been used. A quantitative survey, consisting of 20 questions, was constructed to gather knowledge about the effects of the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window on the cinema audience. The survey investigates the audiences' attitude towards what encourage and discourage them from going or not to go to the movie theatre.

Although the survey analysis can only shed light on the chosen surveyors' behaviours, thanks to the combination of extant theory and research, the results point out particular patterns that will be important for feature films producers, distributors, and movie exhibitors. This thesis's primary use of theory lies in hypothesis formulation and survey building.

Research Overview

This thesis aims to provide movie producers, distributors, streaming platforms, and exhibitors of feature films with knowledge about the effects of releasing strategies on moviegoers' behaviour. Moreover, this paper could offer a great insight into policy-makers to see how the public perceives the theatrical window and re-evaluate the laws for film funding, the majority of which is based on the exclusive theatrical window.

This thesis is based on survey data and desk research: the former includes data obtained by a survey distributed to more than two hundred people across Denmark and Italy. The latter contains further insights from newspapers on release strategies and reviews of existing studies. The theory was used to establish the appropriate topic of research and research question and as ground for preparing the survey and collecting qualitative data. Research on the subject and theories will inspire several hypotheses that will be tested using the data collected through the survey. The approach is pragmatic and practical: hopefully, the knowledge produced would be helpful to plan the releasing strategy.

Delimitations

In this section, the boundaries of the research will be defined. This paper aims to shed light on the effect of the shortening and the non-exclusivity on moviegoing behaviour, thereby providing information to the film industry's distributors and exhibitors. However, obtaining knowledge about moviegoing consumer behaviour is a delicate matter, especially after two years in which movie theatres have been repeatedly shut down and reopened; therefore, this research is closely tied to this particular historical period. Moreover, another difficulty in investigating such matters regarding moviegoing behaviour is that there can be several complex motivations involved in the decision-making process and different hierarchies of motivation that even some individuals may not be aware

Trailers, actors, directors, reviews, and word of mouth can affect their behaviour and weighting different kinds of influence is complicated. The research does not aim to analyse each one of the elements that impact moviegoing behaviour in-depth. Numerous factors influence an individual's moviegoing decision-making process; it is beyond the scope of this thesis to study all of them. These topics could be studied in further research as well. The theory chosen for this thesis was crucial since it permitted the formulation of some hypotheses; however, this could represent a delimitation since different theories would have inspired other hypotheses. The analysis of the survey's answers is related to the specific empirical data gathered, and simplifications of the Italian and Danish cinema audience must be made with caution.

Definitions

As it may have already been apparent, several acronyms have been used, and they will be often utilised throughout the research. Below are the definitions for the most common ones, which indicate new ways of consuming and releasing movies, as explained by the European Audiovisual Observatory in the report for the European Commission (Greece, 2014).

- VOD (Video on Demand): All the services let the audience view a catalogue of movies or other audiovisual content on demand. All the following services explained below are VOD services.
- SVOD (Subscription Video on Demand): Audiences subscribe to the service in exchange for a periodical fee paid that guarantees them access to a whole catalogue of content that they can watch on-demand.
- TVOD (Transactional Video on Demand): Customers can buy or rent a single title through these services. The content can be accessed through the platform and cannot be downloaded.
- PVOD (Premium Video on Demand): It is a version of TVOD in which customers can access VOD content sooner than they would have been able to otherwise during or right after its release cinema, but at a much higher price point.

BACKGROUND

This chapter aims to present the film industry's main traits, the characteristics of the traditional release system, a general outline regarding the Italian and Danish movie markets, before and "*after*" the pandemic, an overview of the distribution strategies, with some examples of their application, and their consequences.

Movie Industry and the Windows System

First, the movie industry is divided into three sub-sectors: production, distribution, and exhibition (Silver and Alpert, 2003). In the production sector, the producer handles all the processes for bringing a film to life. Then, a distribution company acquires the film rights and exploits it through different sales channels; finally, movie exhibitors take care of the film's screening.

However, the movie theatre is not the only way films can be enjoyed. They can also be accessed on SVOD, on DVD. Each of them is a version that allows distributors to sell the same product, provided exclusively for a limited period, at different prices. "*Versioning* is the economic concept that supports the release windows system which is the chronological organise of film exploitation in *windows*" (Ranaivason et al., 2014). Usually, the window system follows the highest revenue generated over the least amount of time. Traditionally, a movie would be distributed through these channels in this order: movie theatre, DVD, VOD, PPV, Pay TV and Free TV. The organisation of release windows is dealt with at the national level, which means that the length and sequence of different windows may vary across countries. According to the EU Analysis (Ranaivason et al., 2014), local preferences, diverse infrastructures, and the historical development of the audiovisual sector and related regulations in each country all play a role in defining these differences.

Italian movie industry

As regards the Italian movie industry's status, according to CINETEL data, 2019 has seen its earnings rise by 14.35% and admissions by 13.55% compared to a rather unfortunate 2018, reaching €635.4 million, while admission numbers level out at 97.5 million. This was possible thanks to a greater diversification of the films on offer and better programming of movie releases throughout the summer months, too, during which the Italian box office usually struggles. Summer months are not the only challenge that the Italian movie industry has to face. In the study "I cittadini e il cinema" conducted by ISTAT (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, that is National Institute of Statistic), there are data concerning people's preferences who decide not to go to the cinema. It clearly shows a trend towards the small screen, to the detriment of the big one.

In 2015, when Netflix entered the Italian market, 2.5% of people claimed to prefer watching films via streaming rather than watching them at the cinema already. The new way of watching films seems to be particularly popular among young people: about 20% of 14–24 year-olds and more than 15% of 25-30-year-olds said they watch films on their PC more than once a week. As a direct consequence of such behaviour, the Minister for Cultural Heritage Alberto Bonisoli signed a decree implementing a 2016 law that obliges new Italian films to be released first in cinemas and only after 105 days on platforms.

Danish Movie Industry

From 2016 to 2019, there has been a slight increase in the number of cinemas in Denmark, passing from 163 to 169 and the rise of cinema screens from 444 to 484. Over the same period, the share of Danes who watch conventional TV every week has fallen by five percentage points, and the number of Danes who stream films, series and programmes at least weekly has increased by six percentage points.

The central insight is that consumers are changing how they approach audiovisual products, both in terms of device use and content. The availability of the internet and new and cheap devices is, then, strongly affecting the transition from traditional TV channels to online videos and streaming or download of TV series or films. The results prove that streaming is more common than traditional TV in Denmark, Sweden and Norway among the population considered between fifteen and twenty-five years old (Figure 11).

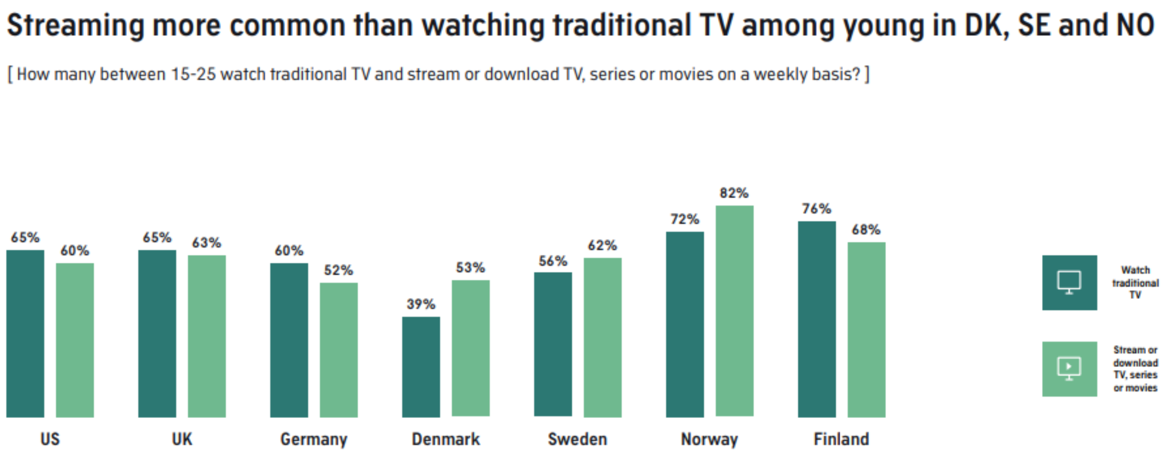


Figure 1 – (AudioProject: Insights 2019 - Traditional TV, online video & streaming, p. 38)

The impact of COVID-19 on the cinema industry

Most cinemas across Europe were officially closed by Government orders from mid-March 2020, apart from Italy, where almost 50% of movie theatres closed from 23 February. According to the UNIC report, European cinemas saw a 70.6% drop in the box office in 2020, equal to a total decrease of €6.2 billion in revenues compared to 2019. Numbers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which had caused months of complete closure and restrictions across Europe, after a very successful 2019 when European cinemas grossed over €8.8 billion at the box office and attracted more than 1.34 billion moviegoers[4]. However, the film market and the audiovisual sector were already facing slower growth figures and stagnation before 2020.

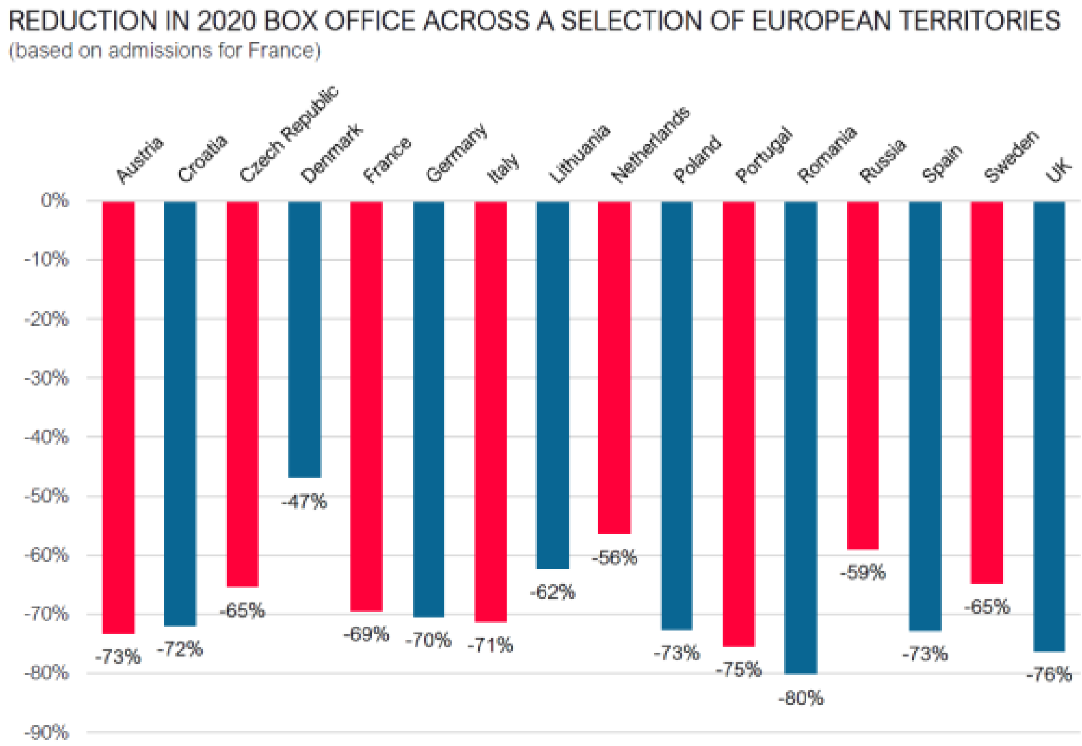


Figure 2 – (UNIC, 2021)

Regarding the restriction in Italy, the first corona wave caused the closure of 48% of Italian cinemas, and after a few weeks, all cinemas closed. Cinemas were allowed to reopen from 15 June. As

[4] UNIC. (2021) Annual Report 2021 https://www.unic-cinemas.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/AR2021_lay04_B.pdf

COVID-19 spread again, the Italian Government decided to close cinemas from 26 October. In May 2021, 10- 15% of local sites reopened. In June, approximately 50% of Italian cinemas had reopened, and they can now have a 100% capacity.

Concerning Denmark, cinema operators decided to close from 12 March 2020, and they were allowed to reopen from 21 May. The same events happened again for the second wave, with the closure ordered on 16 December and the allowance to reopen from 6 May. Afterwards, Denmark lifted all remaining coronavirus restrictions on 10 September. However, a third lockdown was introduced on 19 December 2021, resulting in the closure of local cinemas until at least 17 January 2022.

The recovery of the movie industry depends hugely on the availability of new film content and having a solid and robust film slate. The lack of major studio releases in 2020 and the first half of 2021, combined with the need to respond to ever-changing official recommendations – very often given at short notice – resulted in massive uncertainty. By contrast, during the first three months of 2020, there were 15.7 million new subscribers to Netflix at the global level. By mid-May, Netflix shares were worth 40 % more than New Year.

New ways of releasing movies

A few years ago, the real difference between TV and film productions was the quality, which was much higher for movies destined to the big screen. Netflix has entirely revolutionised this concept, launching itself on the market of the original production of high-quality films. While Amazon Prime Video decided to follow the canonical distribution path, making the film available on its platform after about 100 days, Netflix has tried to disrupt the traditional theatrical window with a day-and-date strategy. New ways of distributing film have been developed and more and more used, despite cinema admittance reaching an all-time high in 2019. It is possible to distinguish different release strategies that impact the theatrical window:

- **Day-and-date strategy**: a release in different channels on the same day or in very close proximity to each other
- **Reverse windowing**: a release on a streaming platform before the release in theatres.
- **Premium video-on-demand release**: a release on VOD during the theatrical window at higher prices than during the later VOD window.

These strategies and their applications have led to one of the most debated changes: the theatrical window's shortening and non-exclusivity. The emergence of VOD platforms is challenging the traditional movie distribution model, but not only that. The theatrical window was most affected by the COVID-19 measures in 2020; the closing of cinemas during the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the changes. As a solution, movie distributors decided to postpone the theatrical window or release their film directly on-demand by skipping the exclusive release to the cinema to opt for a day-and-date strategy.

If Netflix is not new to these kinds of strategies since Ted Sarandos' company already applied for movies like *The Irishman*, *Roma*, *The Annihilation*, *Don't look up*, *The Hand of God*, *On My Skin*, the pandemic represented an opportunity for some companies that were investing in their streaming platform to experiment such strategies. For instance, Disney decided to release *Black Widow* and *Mulan* on both cinemas and its streaming platform using a premium strategy, triggering much controversy. The animated film *Turning Red* will also skip the theatrical release, just like *Soul* and *Luca*, coming directly to Disney+. Likewise, thanks to its new policy, HBO Max subscribers will be able to watch the latest blockbuster from Warner Bros just after 45 days from the theatrical release starting this year in the Nordic countries; it is the case of *Dune* and *The Matrix Resurrections*.

However, movie theatres have often prevented experiments from fully rolling out by boycotting films that did not adhere to the traditional windows system. They claim to retain the theatrical window's exclusivity to offer its unique experience. Without it, they argue cinemas are going to be severely damaged. Such effects could have severe consequences even to Europe's economy. As a matter of fact, according to UNIC, movie theatres are an essential component of Europe's cultural and creative industries, employing 7 million people and generating 4.2 % of the EU GDP[5]. Moreover, going to the cinema has above-average multiplier effects on neighbouring commercial activities, contributing to urban regeneration by creating new jobs and attracting investors, small businesses, and new residents[6].

These releasing strategies, especially if not agreed upon at the outset, are contested not only by movie exhibitors but also by the actors themselves. The reason lies in the bonuses since they are paid for achieving specific box office goals and with a non-exclusive theatrical window. Some studios agreed to renegotiate them. The new fees were calculated assuming that each film was a major box office success to avoid situations like the Scarlet Johansson's lawsuit against Disney for the loss of around $50 million bonuses caused by the film's hybrid distribution.

[5] UNIC. (2017). European Cinema Facts and Figures https://www.denvbf.nl/files/20180523-unic-impact-brochure-european-cinema-facts-figures.pdf
[6] UNIC. (2017). European Cinema Facts and Figures https://www.denvbf.nl/files/20180523-unic-impact-brochure-european-cinema-facts-figures.pdf

THEORY

It is essential to review the literature on the factors influencing consumer behaviour and individuals' decision-making process when choosing a movie or going to the cinema. However, to better understand moviegoing behaviour, it is necessary to understand its type of products. It will be helpful to step back first to the broader concept of cultural industries and then focus on the experiential products. This research aims to use such information to build a survey and comprehend how the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window could affect consumers in Italy and Denmark and the extent to which they affect moviegoing behaviour.

Cultural Industries and Goods

. "They are a subset of the creative industries and deal primarily with the industrial production and circulation of texts, which are heavy on signification and tend to be light on functionality and are created mostly with communicative goals in mind" (Caves, 2000). They deal with cultural goods, defined as "non-material goods, directed to a public of consumers for whom they generally serve an aesthetic and expressive, rather than utilitarian function" (Hirsch, 1972, p. 127), which are the products of symbolic creativity, that is "the manipulation of symbols for purposes of entertainment, information and perhaps even enlightenment" (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p. 9). Cultural products differ in the degree of quality that cultural consumers see in them. Consumers' tastes play a crucial role, so cultural consumption should be addressed carefully.

Besides being symbolic, cultural goods have also been described as experience goods (Caves, 2000), meaning that the consumers will not assess the value before consuming the cultural good. It is hard for audiences to predict in advance the satisfaction they will receive from cultural consumption because of the abovementioned experiential nature of these goods (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). This phenomenon relates to the "nobody knows property": there is always high uncertainty about how consumers will perceive a new cultural good (Caves, 2000). It means that producers know a lot about past successes in the industry, but their ability to predict the future exits of a new film is almost absent (Goldman, 1984).

Experience Goods

"Experiential products are defined by their dominant emphasis on the consumption experience" (Cooper-Martin, 1992) and "contrast with goods and services that primarily fulfil utilitarian functions" (ibid.). Regarding their consumption, what consumers spend in a transaction is time rather than money, according to Holbrook and Hirschmann (1982). This characteristic leads consumers to go beyond the utilitarian aspect of a good due to the increasing need for its intangible and experiential features.

Experience plays a decisive role in cultural consumption, mainly because cultural goods are often consumed in a social context (Caves, 2000). Thus, sociality is crucial in shaping the cultural experience because people like to talk about common cultural interests. Experience affects cultural consumption through the rational addiction effect, too: people consume more of a creative good because they assume that this will increase their future capacity of enjoying its consumption (Caves, 2000; Stigler & Becker, 1977). Thus, the interest in the cultural good rises according to their possibility of consuming it, which is often related to their income and education (ibid.).

The "Typology of Human Capability" framework was developed by Korn and Pine (2011) to study how the interaction between digital technology and human experience can increase customer value:

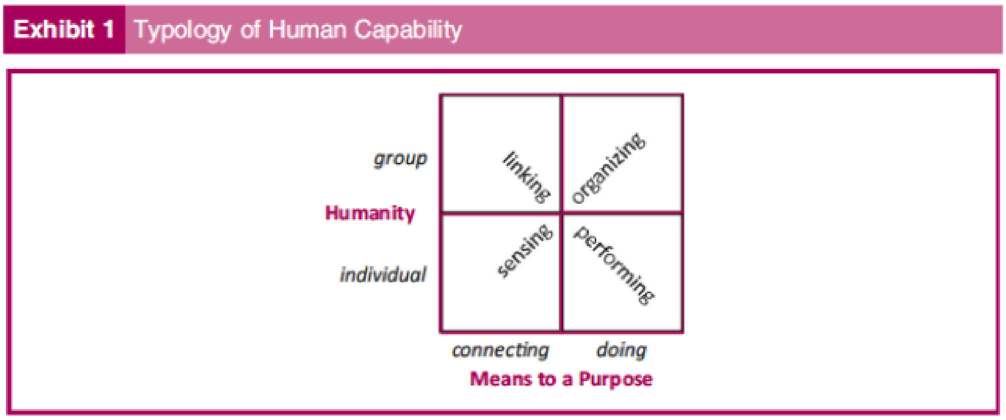


Figure 3 – (Korn & Pine, 2011, p. 36)

According to this framework, individuals and groups use digital technology for two main reasons: to connect and to do. They connect with the world or others by sensing or linking; they undertake actions by performing and organising (ibid.). As shown by the figure above, the table outlines digital technology's utility across these four different human dimensions. Authors stated that the specifics of digital technology make it "the technology of experiences (p. 38): it enables countless possibilities to offer experiences, and it does so by using a wide range of techniques that engage human senses in unprecedented ways (ibid.). Regarding the movie industry, the experience would undoubtedly differ depending on the different viewing means, whose number today is increasingly growing. Every frame represents a diverse way of interacting with the movie. For instance, watching a film in a movie theatre is undoubtedly a profoundly experiential activity, a collective ritual facilitating the psychological identification of the audience (Morin, 1956). In this regard, it is fruitful to mention Fanchi's (2007) distinction between immersive and performative frames. The first ones (e.g., movie theatres) are characterised by a deep emotional involvement of the audience, through mechanisms such as projection and identification; the latter allows the individual to intervene more freely on the text and times of the movie (e.g., pausing a movie on a mobile device or TV).

By their nature as experience products, movies are part of the products that offer emotional experience. Through watching activity, consumer hopes the film can bring unique feelings such as love, surprise, happiness, anger, sadness, deeply moved, frightened (Fowdur et al., 2009). At the consumption and evaluation stage, the affective component is very considered. Satisfaction will be obtained based on the movie-watching experience if the film attracts incredible attention and creates strong emotions (Bassi, 2010: 58). "A feature film is an experience good, and by its nature, the quality cannot be fully assessed before being consumed" (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). "The dominant benefit of these products is hedonic consumption, that is the feelings, emotions and sensations experienced during product usage" (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982).

Literature review on moviegoing behaviour

Consumer behaviour is "the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires" (Solomon et al., 2010). Yadin (2002) suggests that consumer behaviour is the observation of the public's decision-making, purchasing patterns, and habits. Kotler and Keller (2011) highlight the importance of understanding consumer behaviour and how customers choose their products and services can be extremely important for manufacturers and service providers as this provides them with a competitive advantage over their competitors in several aspects. Due to the unique nature of experiential products, their consumer behaviour will probably differ from that of other products.

However, regarding movies as experience goods, existing research may vary a lot on the subjects and the methods. For instance, some studies have analysed movie selection consumer behaviour (Eliashberg et al., 2000; Eliashberg & Shawney, 1994). Many have used econometric models with regression analysis, using data of released movies to estimate the earnings of future ones (Elberse & Anand, 2007; Ravid, 1999;) or even new patterns regards moviegoing behaviour.

In "Discovering Audience Motivations Behind Movie Theater Attendance", the author used a quantitative method based on box office data. He compiled a list of the top box office films of all time and a list of the top box office films within the past six years. His goal was to compare them to determine differences and similarities between the most popular films of all time and films that are currently considered popular, thus comprehending how cinema audience preferences have changed.

Other studies (Rodríguez-Rabadán, 2014; Cuadrado et al., 2008) have utilised surveys that provided direct information regarding the consumer's decision-making process to study the factors that motivate consumers in movie selection. The same method, which consists of a quantitative approach using the consumer as a direct source of information, will be used in this research project.

Bruce Austin realised the first insight about cinema audience behaviour from a marketing perspective. Applying a quantitative method in his research "Motivation for Movie Attendance", he investigated college students' reasons for cinema attendance and the link between the motivations and frequency of attendance. Four hundred ninety-three students completed his survey; the respondents matched various motivations for moviegoing with their reasons for attendance and indicated the extent.

Thurau et al. (2001) created one of the most comprehensive models. They built a model that explains the factors that influence service innovation success, especially for cinema, based on the literature review that recommends three factors: film characteristics, structure quality, and film communication. Film characteristics include genre and symbolisation. Factors like individuals involved (director, actor, producer), cost, country of origin, duration, language determine structure quality. The third factor is film communication that comprises advertising, publicity, film review, award, and word of mouth. However, this model did not support empirical evidence.

In "Identifying Key Factors Affecting Consumer Decision Making Behaviour in Cinema Context: A Qualitative Approach", the author Dyna Herlina (2012) pursued to assess decision-making factors through qualitative research. She recognised the pattern of more general consumer behaviour. She identified the inclination of those surveyed to choose a variety of information sources to trust regarding movie choice. According to her, several vital factors affect consumers' decisions of choosing a film in theatres, which are:

- Marketing communications: (advertising, publicity)
- Source of neutral information: film review, word of mouth
- Film characteristics: genre, director, remake production, country of origin, actor, adaptation works, production house, title
- Content: story, objectionable content, technology
- Ease: screening schedule, title

Moreover, Herlina (2012) provides a particular movie theatre audience segmentation divided into film consumer and place consumer shown in table 1.

Segment	Watch movie purpose	Mainly decision making source	Behaviou after watching
Movie consumer (Home)	• new experience • get moral message • life values	• their own taste according to intensive information search • willing to watch movie alone	Becoming movie communicator by writing opinion/ recommendation/ criticism in blog, social network, forums e –communication.
Place consumer (Cinema/theatre)	• new experience • entertainment • spare time with friends	• group/ pair decision • maximize movie watching enjoyment	Talking about movie with friends, interpersonal communication.

Figure 4 – Cinema audience. Herlina (2012)

Different authors have analysed motivational factors of moviegoers behaviour from different perspectives, and some of them, like Eliashberg & Sawhneey (1994), Cepeda (2005) and Hennig-Thurau et al. (2006), agree upon classifying them into the following groups:

• Internal factors: intrinsic factors to the film, from the moment of its conception or production, such as the story, genre, actors, director (Hennig-Thurau, Houston & Walsh, 2006).

• External factors: factors created separately from the movie, which impact the way information reaches the consumers and how they participate in their decision-making process, like those related to the advertising campaign.

.• Experiential factors: factors derived from the movie-watching experience, like reviews, word of mouth and recommendations in social media.

Hierarchical Decision Making

Individuals usually plan the activity of watching a movie at the cinema, which can be explained using the experiential hierarchy concept (Assael, 2004: 219). The consumer's primary motivation is to anticipate the consuming product experience. Movie theatre consumers are considering film stories as the most crucial aspect. Consumers utilise move story information to anticipate their experience during and after watching a movie. Genre and movie player are other symbols used to estimate experience. This model explains that decision-makers prioritise when determining a choice (Nedungadi, 1987 Dalam Shocker et al., 1991:182).

Theory of Collective Spectatorship

Formulated by Julian Hanich, who believed that watching a film was solely an individual experience, regardless of the medium, the collective spectatorship theory states that audiences "can enjoy watching a film collectively without being fully aware of this fact" (Hanich, 2014). Essentially, the theory suggests that watching a film should be seen as a joint action. Even though audiences may believe they are paying full attention to a film, the collective spectatorship theory proposes that the viewer has not forgotten the other spectators present. Audience awareness levels reach the very edges of one's consciousness because a viewer is usually not actively thinking about those around them but rather focusing on the film. However, the idea of joint viewing is especially prevalent in moments of high emotion during a film, as it becomes easier to sense a shared emotion such as deep sadness or happiness (Hanich, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces the methodology applied to the research, outlining the approaches, methods, and techniques used throughout the process. This chapter structured how Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) explain research as an onion with different layers. It starts with the thick outer layers of the philosophy that has been as a guide in this research and the research approach, followed by thinly layers that represent the research design regarding methodological choice, strategy, time horizon, techniques, and procedures (see figure 1). The logic behind methodological choices and the different techniques applied will be provided for each section.

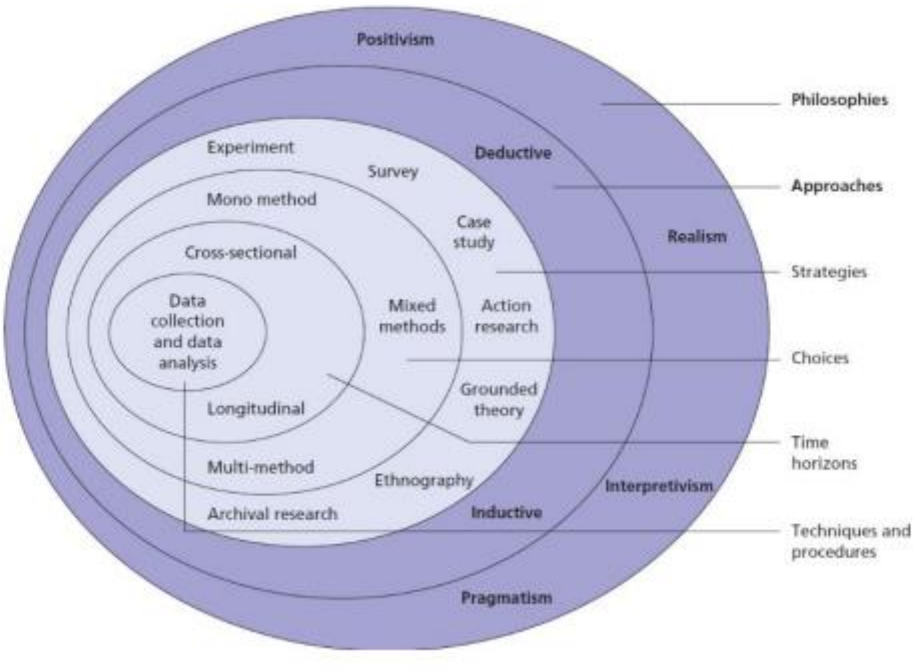


Figure 5. The research 'onion' (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 124)

Research Philosophy

The philosophy of science is part of the sense-making process of research. In every study, assumptions are made which lead the process. Therefore, research philosophy is essential for understanding the research question, the methods used, and how findings are interpreted. The philosophical approach is a helpful way to commit to one's research path throughout the different stages of the process. It has a significant impact on the way we look at results. (Saunders et al., 2019)

Research philosophy is the "system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge" (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 130). The researcher does not believe in the total objectivity of reality nor its total subjectivity, but rather in a middle way. Therefore, from a philosophical point of view, Positivism and Interpretivism have been discarded because they lie, respectively, at the most objective and most subjective ends of the spectrum. Considering how the approach was shaped and the knowledge developed, the philosophy behind this thesis is Pragmatism. This approach traces its origins in the early 1870s thanks to John Dewey; an American philosopher considered its main precursors. He believed in the uncertainty characterising our world, thus stating that reality can never be determined. Reality is complex and constantly changing, and actions are decisive in defining these dynamisms (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

Furthermore, pragmatisms' epistemology focuses on what constitutes adequate knowledge must be "practical". Therefore, the knowledge produced successfully interprets the phenomena of interest; Pragmatism would consider it valid (Saunders et al., 2019). Pragmatism considers "theories, concepts, ideas, hypotheses and research findings not in an abstract form, but in terms of the roles they play as instruments of thought and action" (Saunders et al., 2019, p.151). In short, Pragmatism as a research paradigm tends towards solving practical, real-life issues. Thus, the pragmatic reflection insists on the nature of the problems and their possible solutions and likely actions to undertake (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

The guide of this research was the abovementioned philosophy of science. Discovering an undeniable truth is not the goal of this thesis, given the impossibility of predicting how moviegoing behaviour will evolve after the pandemic and the changes applied by different players in the sector. However, it will be possible to highlight some trends and measure their potential evolution in the future, although it has to be considered that it is based on relatively small sample size.

Research Approach

The approach used to integrate the theory with the collected data is an essential methodological aspect. There are two logics to follow when conducting research: deduction and induction.

Deduction means drawing logical consequences from premises so that if those premises are true, the conclusion will also be true (Saunders et al., 2019). It has not been chosen as the approach to theory development because it presumes that the answers one is looking for are within the premises – they need to be arranged in logical hypotheses. Instead, the researcher believes that his role is to search for a pattern and categorise data to create a hypothesis. A critical limitation of deductive reasoning is that it does not generate new knowledge; instead, it verifies or falsifies existing theories (Yu, 1994).

Induction works the other way around, generalising from the specific case to the generic: this approach means generating untested conclusions from known assumptions (Saunders et al., 2019). Inductive reasoning can be helpful to observe a phenomenon, discover its themes and patterns and build a theoretical framework after reaching a universal conclusion (ibid.). However, it has its limitations too: it leads to empirical conclusions, but not theoretical ones (Yu, 1994); it presumes that there is one general answer or correct behaviour that can be extended to the whole movie industry. In addition to that, induction has been criticised for being inconclusive in infinite time; this means that there will always be new cases and new evidence, making it inconceivable to take all of them into consideration when creating a new theory (ibid.).

Pragmatism typically starts from abductive reasoning, which was used throughout the research. Using this approach permits merge deduction and induction to study an unknown subject by analysing both the theory and empirical research. One of the reasons researchers use abduction so widely is because the abovementioned two approaches can appear incomplete if used separately. The main feature of abductive reasoning is that it moves back and forth between data and theory: it takes place at every stage of the research process. It is based on the "continuous interplay between concepts and data" (Van Maanen et al., 2007, p. 1149). In this way, what 28 Peirce (1932) describes, qualified guesses have been provided: prior knowledge from the field was developed, trying to discover new knowledge but without the aim of proving its universal truth. A relevant feature of abductive reasoning is that it often results in explanations that are not always possible to prove, but that can still be seen as probable (ibid.). Abduction usually begins with detecting a surprising phenomenon, whose patterns will be explored through the data collection (Saunders et al., 2019).

Abductive reasoning can be very advisable when there is much information on the research's topic in one context but less into the situation she is researching (ibid.). For this reason, abductive reasoning was particularly suited for this research, which aims at observing a widely studied phenomenon such as moviegoing behaviour in an unprecedented context, as the pandemic is. Thus, this was the method used throughout the research process, often going back and forth to redesign the project and reformulating questions and options. To conclude, the nature of a research project can also be defined with its purpose.

Research Design

Each consumer is not unique; multiple segments have different socio-cultural, economic, and motivational profiles. The generational aspect is a fundamental factor since cinema-going decreases proportionally as age increases. Young people have consistently demonstrated their loyalty to the big screen in cinema history; among the reasons for this phenomenon are the free time available, the obligations to juggle and the cultural conditions, which have progressively encouraged more significant participation in hedonistic activities concerning the past. Understanding the differences between frequent attendees and more general moviegoers is also critical. Therefore, it was chosen to collect data using a survey.

When planning, designing and conducting a research study, the researcher needs to be careful in areas where there may be ethical decisions. In the first stage of the research design process, it was evaluated to offer an incentive to the people invited to fill the questionnaire to get a higher response rate. Offering respondents financial incentives for their participation is a common practice that boosts response rates and raises ethical concerns. Eventually, considering that offering incentives may harm the quality of feedback and respondents may be more likely to superficial responses if they were provided with a prepaid incentive or maybe only providing feedback to get the incentive, it was decided not to use it.

Surveys enable the researcher to obtain data about practices, situations or views at one point in time through questionnaires or interviews. Then, quantitative analytical techniques are applied to draw assumptions from this data regarding existing relationships. The use of surveys allows a researcher to study more variables at one time than is typically possible in laboratory or field experiments, whilst data can be collected about real-world environments. A fundamental weakness is that it is complicated to realise insights relating to the causes of or processes involved in the phenomena measured. Moreover, there are several sources of bias: the possibly self-selecting nature of respondents, the point in time when the survey is conducted, and the researcher himself through the survey's design.

Most studies analysing the effects of information on the demand for movies have been conducted based on aggregate data. However, this analysis does not reveal individual consumer behaviour without considering the box office results of any specific movie. This thesis aims to bridge this methodological gap by analysing the effects of each variable involved in movie selection and cinema-going from the consumer's perspective. This paper used a quantitative method to obtain information directly from the consumers regarding their behaviour.

For this purpose, a questionnaire with 20 closed-ended questions was designed on Qualtrics. since it was destined for consumers living in two different countries, the author decided to make it bilingual. The two chosen languages were English and Italian. The Danish language was not included since the author does not have the required knowledge to build a survey in this language, and it would have excluded most of the surveyed international students. Neither international students nor Danish individuals would have had any issue filling it using English. The author decided to include the Italian language because, unlike the Danish, it would not have required many resources. The main goal was to facilitate the filling of individuals in Italy that could have wasted more time than the expected one risking not to complete it.

Each question was adequately structured to provide accurate information about the influence of each of the variables identified as motivating the consumers' decisions. To provide clarity and depth to the responses and thus obtain more detailed knowledge about each of the variables involved in the moviegoer's decision-making process, most of the questions have been categorised through multiple-choice options, using a 5-point Likert scale.

The survey was distributed on the social network Facebook on different groups, such as "International Student at CBS" and "Expats in Copenhagen". It was also posted on the LinkedIn profile of the author of this paper, exploiting his network of Italian students and early workers and international students based in Denmark's capital. It was also sent privately to individuals in the preferred age segment, which sent it to their social circle. The number of respondents amounts to 294. In the following paragraph, the considerations for survey building are described.

The first part of this survey asked respondents about their general movie preferences and media consumption behaviour on different means, such as the cinema and the streaming platforms. The answers to the first five questions will indicate whether the respondent is a strong user of streaming platforms and the frequency of movies watched at the cinema. The genre questions intend to discover a pattern between the preferred genre and the genres more suitable to the cinema. The question about which factors matter in movie selection is meant to reveal any differences with their weight to the moviegoing behaviour and how they are related to the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

In the following section, respondents are asked to rank five factors from the most important to the least important regarding their choices to watch a movie at the cinema instead of streaming and watch a movie in streaming instead of going to the cinema. Then, the last section, which consists of 6 questions, is divided into two parts: one regarding the TVOD services, the other concerning the SVOD platforms. Both parts aimed to assess consumer sensitivity on moviegoing behaviour about two different factors: the time factor and the economic factor.

Questions regarding employment, income, gender, ethnicity and relationship status were not asked. Since the survey had already 20 questions and required much time to be filled, the author decided to exclude the questions concerning employment and income. The reason behind this choice is that these data could not have been relevant since the distribution method entails that the majority of the respondents were students and early workers aged between 18 and 30. Moreover, although there could be differences between singles, individuals in a relationship and families, such question was not included in the survey.

About gender and ethnicity, these questions were not included because they would not have provided valuable insights.

Almost the same evaluations have been made regarding respondents' place of origin since cultural factors are not considered in this paper. Nevertheless, since this thesis aims to compare the moviegoing behaviour of individuals living in two different countries, different reasons need to be considered before including the question about the place of origin in the survey. The author of this thesis has lived in Italy until the conclusion of his bachelor, and he has only lived in Denmark for two and half years during the COVID-19 outbreak; the consequence of this is that his network of contacts that have been used for this survey is mainly composed of Italians, some internationals, and few Danes. This could be of relevance for this thesis because it affects the finding of this thesis.

Concerning the analysis of the data collected, they were processed on the same software used to construct the questionnaire, namely Qualtrics. This choice was based on the functionalities offered. It allows a user-friendly visualisation of the data and metadata, such as the filling time obtained for each answer. Furthermore, thanks to the "Filter" and "Breakout by" functions, it was possible to break down people by country of residence and age, if necessary, or even preferences expressed in other questions. Finally, based on the data obtained and the functions mentioned above, it is also possible to create graphs of different types used in the "Results" chapter.

Hypotheses

Based on the abovementioned theories and the data obtained through desk research, shown in the previous chapter, some hypotheses have been formulated.

H1. Individuals who stated they are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window do not have or have a few subscriptions to streaming platforms.

H2. Moviegoing behaviour will be more affected by SVOD platforms than TVOD ones.

H3. Frequent moviegoers, who value very importantly stories they are already familiar with in the decision-making process, are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

H4. Frequent moviegoers, who value importantly the social experience of moviegoing in their decision-making process, are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

H5. Frequent moviegoers, who value importantly the cinematic experience of moviegoing in their decision-making process, are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

H6. Consumers with more than two subscriptions to streaming platforms will be heavily affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

RESULTS

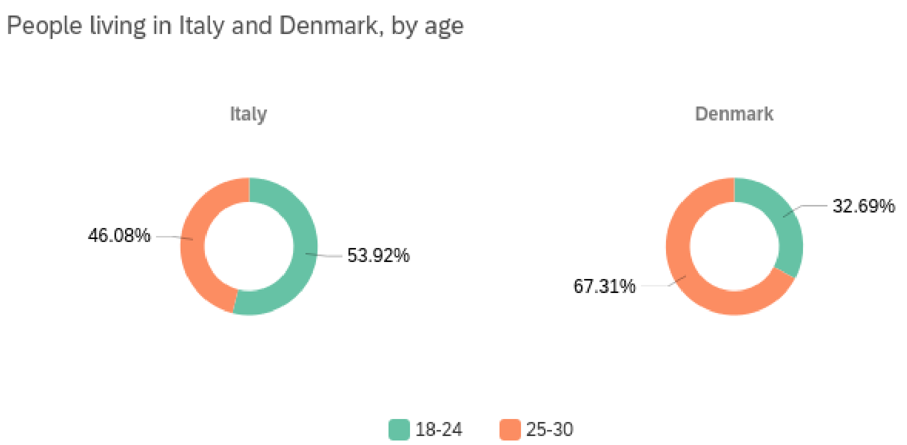
This chapter describes a structured and coherent compendium of the data collected through the survey. Paragraphs will follow the same order of survey's sections at first, and afterwards, results of some questions will be breakout using data obtained in the first part of the questionnaire. This chapter aims to offer the big picture of the data gained and underline what is essential and significant for this thesis while building a framework for further analysis.

First, it is necessary to analyse respondent characteristic information related to age, country of living and origin. Then, data about movie watching frequency on different means will be analysed with other preferences about moviegoing and online video services. After that, the focus will be on the factors that impact the consumer's decision-making process regarding movie choice, moviegoing over online videos services, and streaming platforms over movie theatres. Finally, the data analysis will show if the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window impact moviegoing behaviour and, if there is one, how it affects the whole decision-making process.

Demographics

Based on Hair's rule of thumb (Hair et al. 2010: 101), the research needs 225 respondents. The survey was distributed to 294 respondents: most of them were bachelor students and master students, the fewest respondent were high school students, followed by early workers. Based on these pieces of information, it can be deduced that the respondent is an educated consumer. Only 206 out of 294 are considered for this research since the surveys filled entirely were 206 respondents, the thus are analysed.

Out of 206 surveys taken into consideration, the respondents were divided into two age brackets: 43.20% of respondents are "18-24" years old, and 56.80% is 25-30. Regarding the place of living, data obtained are almost the same: 49.51% stated that they live in Italy whereas 50.49% in Denmark. Based on these pieces of information, it is possible to know consumer demography as shown by the two pie charts below:



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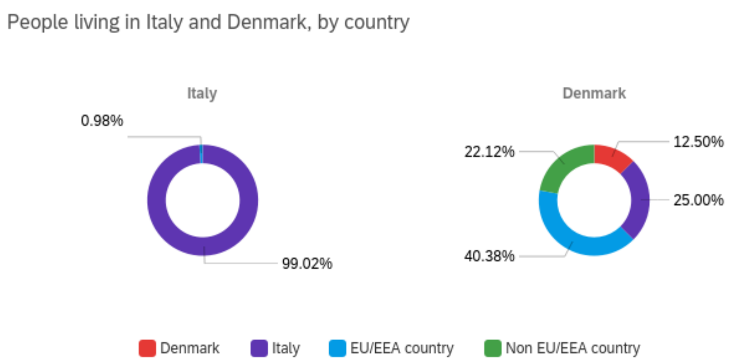
Concerning gender and ethnicity, it has been evaluated during the survey-building process to include these questions in the demographic section of the questionnaire, and it has been decided that they were not of interest for this research and would not have given any helpful insight into moviegoing behaviour. Moreover, those questions would have increased the length of the survey and the time of filling, which could have decreased the number of respondents that entirely filled the survey. Below, two pie charts show the difference between the places of origin of respondents living in Italy and Denmark.



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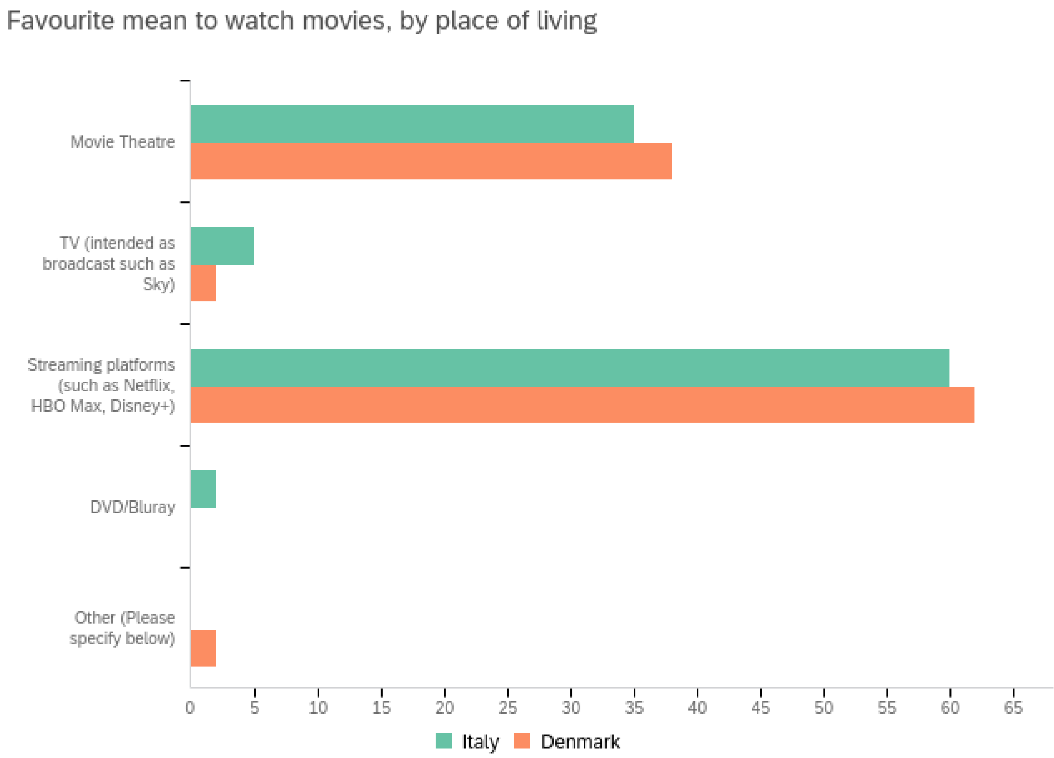
Consumer habits and preferences

After demographics, it is necessary to investigate habits and preferences. The first questions after the demographic section were about consumers favourite mean of movie watching and their favourite online video services between SVOD and TVOD.



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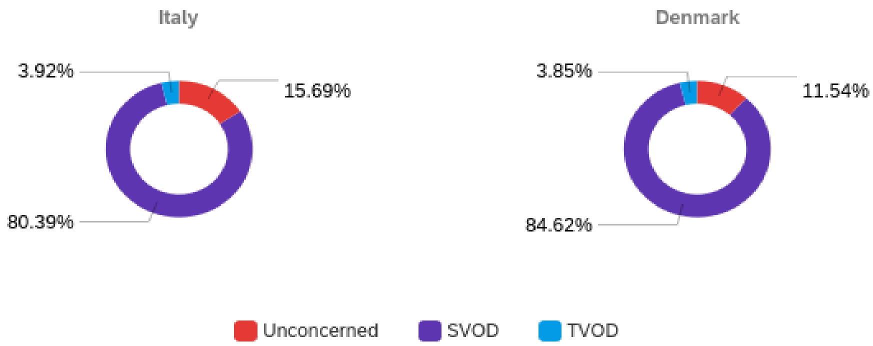
As the bar table shows above, the hierarchy is the same, whether the consumer lives in Italy or Denmark. Consumers definitely prefer streaming platform as their favourite mean to watch movies, followed by the movie theatre, then TV (intended as broadcast such as Sky)., finally DVD and free streaming website as stated in the last option of the question by consumers themselves. The slight difference that emerges from the figure above is that people in Italy prefer TV and DVDs, only to a small extent. In contrast, those living in Denmark prefer either movie theatres or streaming platforms.

Since streaming platforms or VOD services are such broad definitions and the concept of TVOD and SVOD are recurring in the survey, it was decided to explain the difference between TVOD and SVOD by giving a definition and showing some examples, this way those surveyed could knowingly choose whether they prefer TVOD or SVOD.



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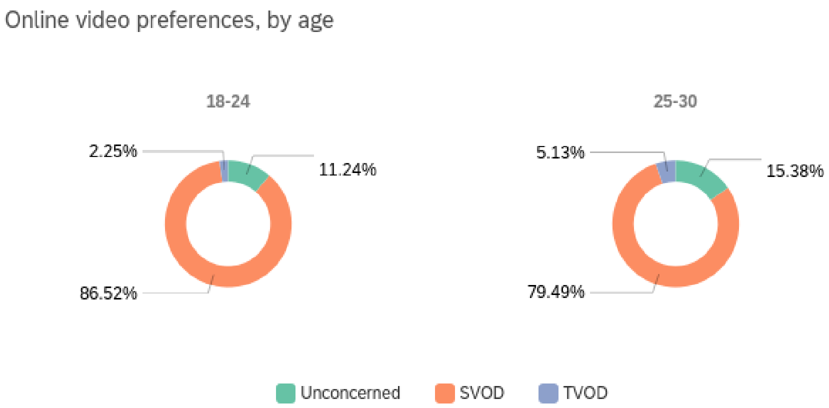
What stands out from these two pie charts is that consumers, whether they live in Denmark or Italy, heavily prefer SVOD services over TVOD ones. The pie charts almost look the same; the only difference lies in a tiny percentage of individuals in Italy who are more "Unconcerned" than those living in Denmark.



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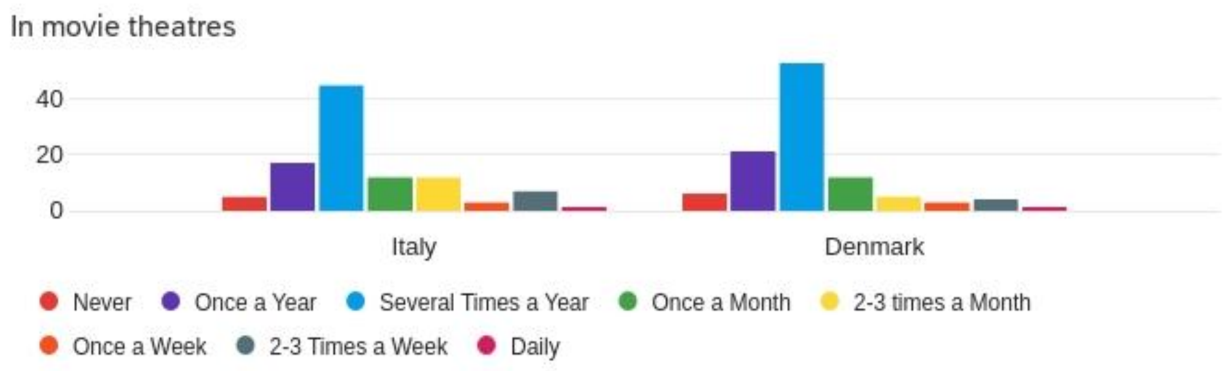
Above, the data obtained by the same question but using the age as discriminant, instead of the place of living. Even in this case, the pie charts are almost the same, but there are a few differences like the fact that people aged between 25-30 are more "Unconcerned" and some of them prefer TVOD more than the people aged between 18-24, but only to a small extent. After consumers' preferences, it is now time to analyse their movie-watching frequencies on different means, by place of living.



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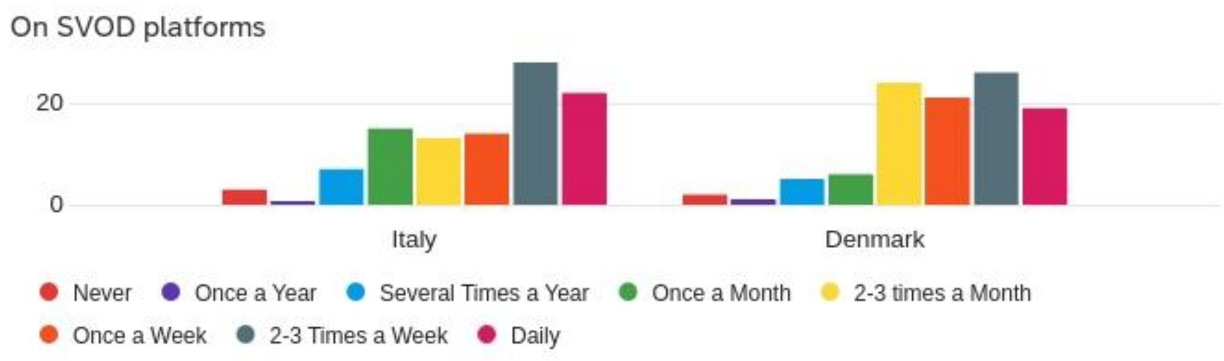
The graph above shows that the annual frequency of cinema-going spectators was analysed by dividing them by their living country. The majority of them, in both countries, choose this type of entertainment at least once a year up to several times. However, what stands out is that in Denmark, there are more occasional moviegoers, while in Italy, the number of frequent moviegoers is superior. More than 40 of those surveyed experience the cinema experience between twelve to twenty-four times a year.



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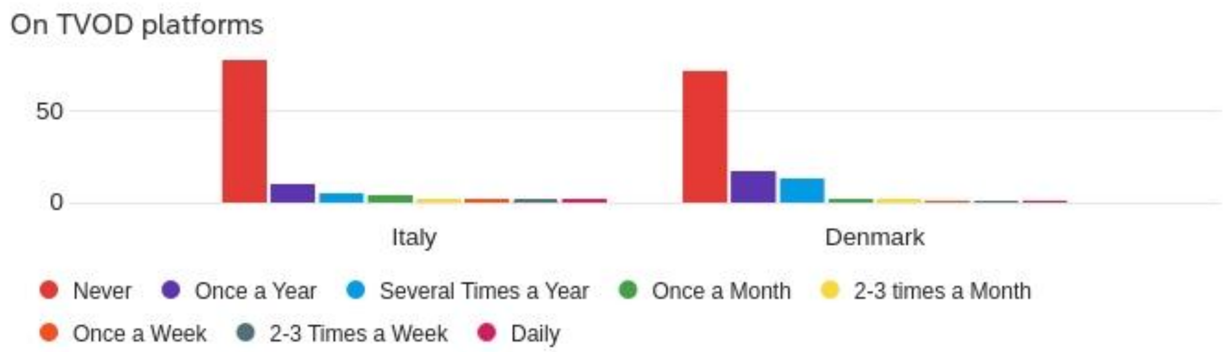
The movie-watching frequency on SVOD platforms is almost the opposite of mentioned above in the previous paragraph. Despite the individuals with the highest frequencies living in Italy, but only slightly, there are more occasional movie watchers in Italy that only enjoy one film per month, whilst people in Denmark use SVOD platforms to watch movies regularly.



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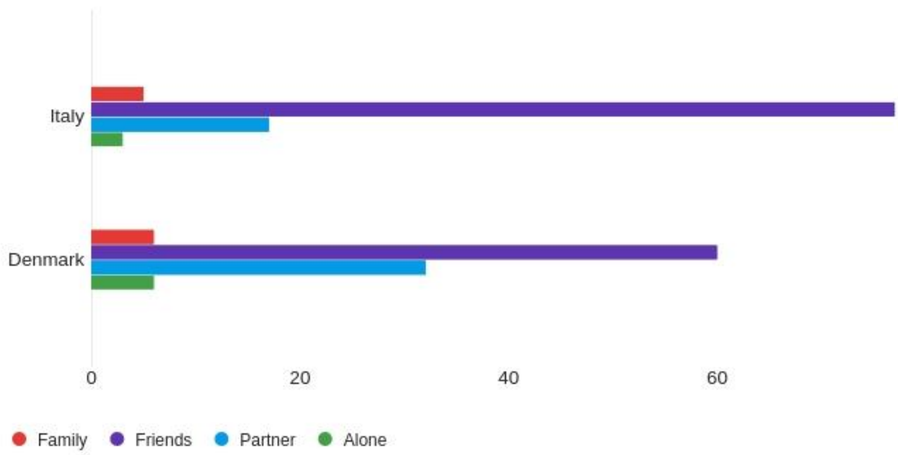
Regarding VOD platforms, the frequency of use is practically the same in both countries. However, it should be noted that consumers in Denmark seem to be more accustomed to using these platforms, albeit to a small extent. Returning to the topic of cinema-going habits, the following graph will show how respondents answered the question "Who do you usually go to the cinema with?". More than half of those surveyed declared that they go to the cinema in the company of friends, a good percentage with their partner, more in Denmark than in Italy. Instead, it is rarer to go to the cinema with the family or alone.



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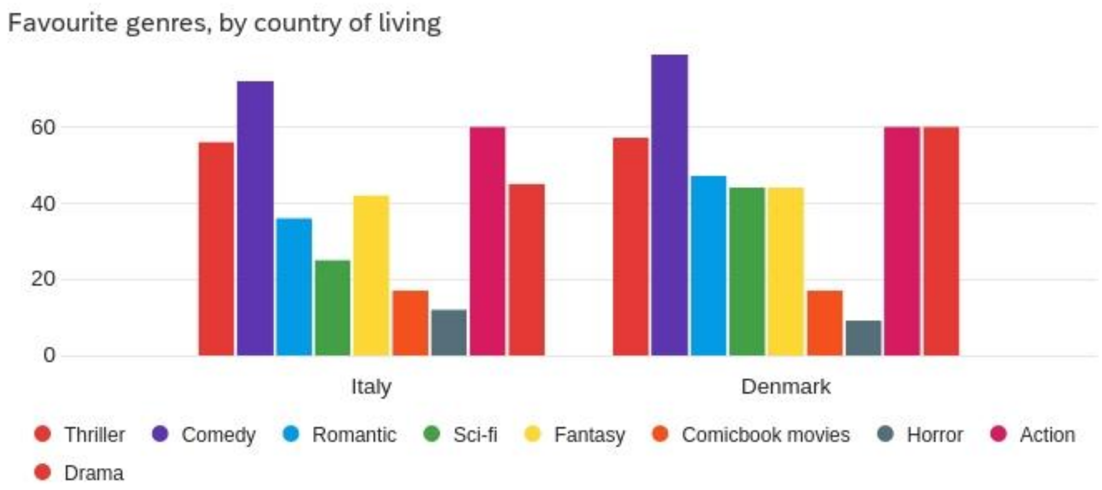
At this point, those surveyed are asked two closely related questions. The first one asks them to indicate their favourite film genres; the second one asks them to indicate the genre of the films they watch most often at the cinema. The purpose of these two questions was first to ascertain whether there were different genre preferences between respondents in Italy and Denmark, and then if there were differences in the genres they prefer and the genres they usually go to the movie theatre to watch.



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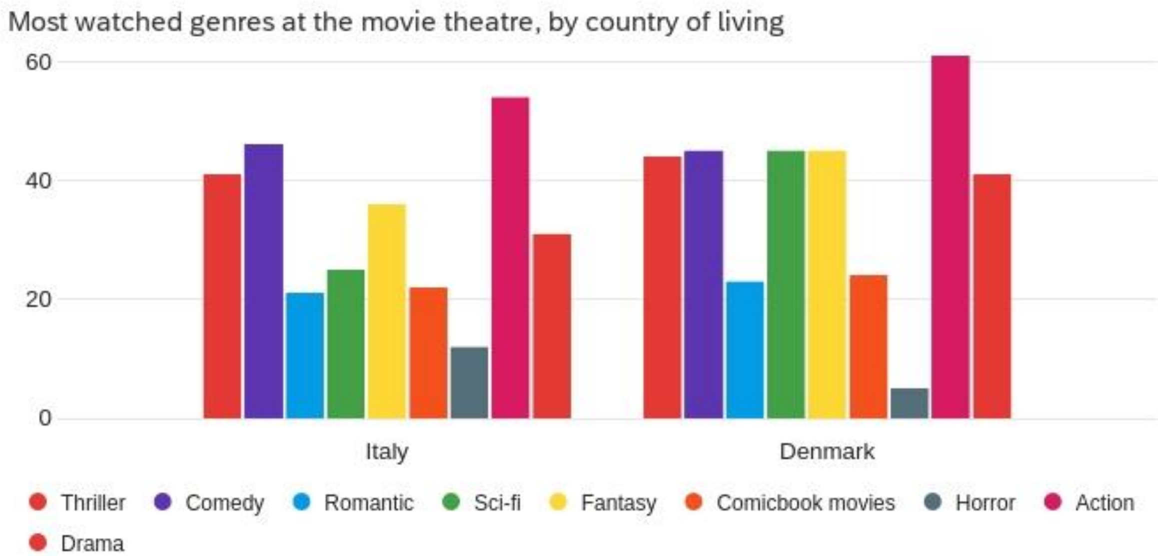
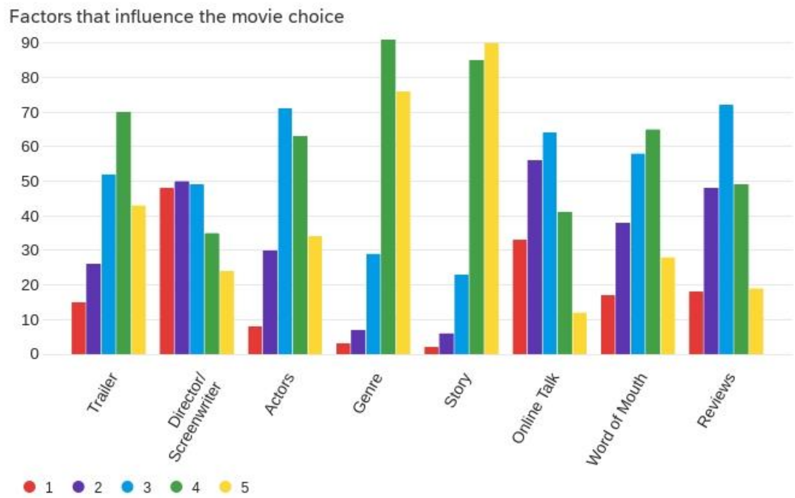


Source: author's own source

The first bar graph shows that the Comedy genre is the most popular, followed by the Action genre. The genre "Drama" occupies the second position with "Action" for those living in Denmark, while for those living in Italy after "Action" there is "Thriller" and then "Drama". "Comics' and 'Horror' occupy the last positions in both countries. In Denmark, the "Romantic" genre, the "Fantasy" and "Sci-fi" genres are well received, while in Italy, except "Fantasy", they are slightly less popular. What emerges from the second graph is action movies are generally the most viewed films in both Italy and Denmark. Although "Thriller", "Comedy" and "Drama" remain at the top of the chart, there is a clear difference in quantity compared to the first chart. Fantasy and Sci-fi films do not decrease, unlike all other genres, such as romantic films. Comic book movies and horror films still occupy the last places, even though there is a slight increase at a quantitative level for the formers. Comparing the two graphs, although specific genres are appreciated more than others, they do not have the same appeal when going to the cinema, such as romantic and dramatic films. The opposite is true for other genres that seem to convince spectators to go to the movie theatres, such as action, fantasy, and sci-fi films.

Moviegoing behaviour

After demographics, habits, and preferences have been analysed, it is necessary to investigate further the factors that influence consumers' decision-making process regarding movie choice first, then concerning going to the movie theatre and finally to use streaming platforms instead of going to the cinema.



Source: author's own source

Concerning the motivational value of the elements intrinsic to the movie, different factors have been considered and included in this part of the survey, such as the story, genre, director or screenwriter, actors, and whether it is based on a book or book another movie. Several authors indicate the genre of the movie variable as a discriminatory value in selecting a movie (; Deniz & Hasbrouck, 2012; Redondo & Holbrook, 2010). As shown by the finding of the study conducted by Gil Martin and Blasco, concerning the question about the sources of information, "trailers are the element providing the greatest value of information about the movie, making it the source of the greatest influence on the decision-making of consumers" (Gil Martin & Blasco Lopez, 2019),

As already demonstrated by other studies, the "Story" and the "Genre" are crucial for movie selection. Of those surveyed, more than 80% indicated the abovementioned factors as quite and very important, whilst less than 1% regarding the story and 1.5% regarding the genre revealed that they have no influence whatsoever. In the results obtained, 54.85% of respondents state that "Trailers" are a source of information that is quite or very important on their choice to see a movie, after the story and the genre, 25% that trailers are important while 7.28% and 12.62% respectively stated trailers are irrelevant and not so important.

This thesis wanted to investigate whether actors' prestige becomes a relevant factor for consumers when choosing a movie. Concerning it, 47.08% of respondents indicated that the actors are either very or quite important as a factor in their decision-making process. In contrast, they are irrelevant or have little importance for 18.44% of those surveyed.

Concerning the motivational value of the experiential factors, 45.14% of those surveyed state that comments by friends and family, the so-called word of mouth, are quite or very important to their decision to choose a movie, whereas reviews indicate a medium level of impact, it is not a surprise that the data about reviews follow a normal distribution.

Among the factors that impact the least the consumers' decision-making process regarding movie selection is "Online Talk" and "Director/Screenwriter". In particular, the director/screenwriter is either irrelevant or has little importance for respectively the 23.30% and 24.27% of those surveyed. After that, it is possible to notice how "Online Talk" is the second least important factor because 43.20% of the respondents stated it does not have any or negligible influence on their decision.

Factors that influence the movie choice in Denmark

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
Trailer	6.73%	14.42%	25.96%	31.73%	21.15%
Director/Screenwriter	26.92%	24.04%	20.19%	15.38%	13.46%
Actors	3.85%	13.46%	40.38%	29.81%	12.50%
Genre	1.92%	0.96%	15.38%	46.15%	35.58%
Story	0.00%	2.88%	12.50%	43.27%	41.35%
Online Talk	22.12%	25.00%	27.88%	18.27%	6.73%
Word of Mouth	8.65%	15.38%	21.15%	33.65%	21.15%
Reviews	5.77%	18.27%	34.62%	27.88%	13.46%

Source: author's own source

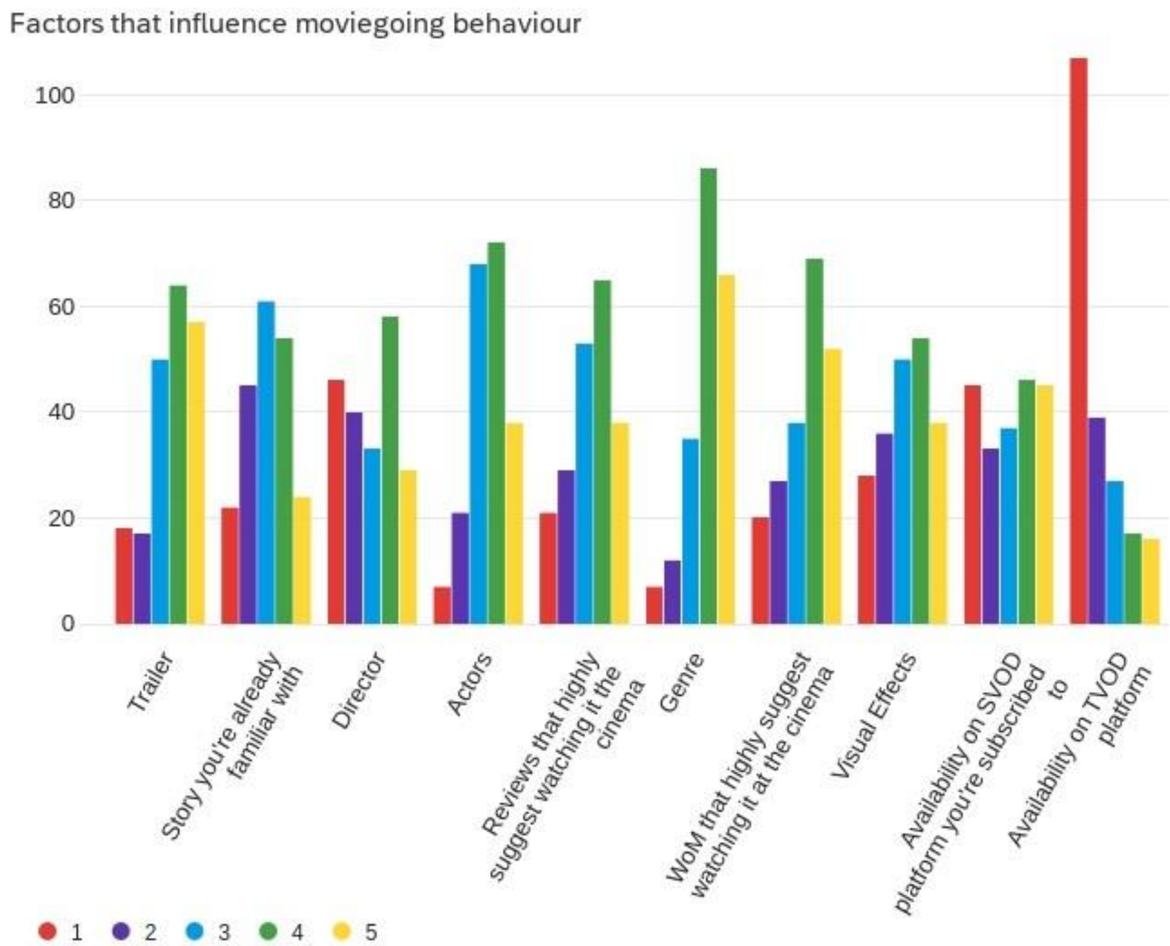
Factors that influence movie selection in Italy

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
Trailer	7.84%	10.78%	24.51%	36.27%	20.59%
Director/Screenwriter	19.61%	24.51%	27.45%	18.63%	9.80%
Actors	3.92%	15.69%	28.43%	31.37%	20.59%
Genre	0.98%	5.88%	12.75%	42.16%	38.24%
Story	1.96%	2.94%	9.80%	39.22%	46.08%
Online Talk	9.80%	29.41%	34.31%	21.57%	4.90%
Word of Mouth	7.84%	21.57%	35.29%	29.41%	5.88%
Reviews	11.76%	28.43%	35.29%	19.61%	4.90%

Source: author's own Source

Still referring to the previous question, let us analyse the differences in the importance of the various factors between the respondents in Italy and Denmark, using the two tables above. Concerning trailers, more people in Italy consider them quite crucial compared to those in Denmark who do not consider trailers as a relevant element, albeit in a small way. In Denmark, there seems to be a more pronounced polarisation regarding the importance of the director/writer. For some, it is a factor that exerts a significant influence; for others, it has no influence whatsoever. Although less polarised, also in Italy, this factor does not exert much influence overall. While on the one hand, more than a fifth of respondents in Denmark consider 'online talk' to be a decidedly irrelevant factor. In Italy, there is a little more consideration for it.

The opposite is true for word of mouth and reviews: of those surveyed in Denmark, 54.80% consider word of mouth to have a significant influence on their decision-making process, compared to 35% of those living in Italy; the same applies to reviews, which are considered quite or very important by more than 40% of respondents living in Denmark compared to just over 25% of those surveyed who live in Italy.



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The graph before was used to analyse the factors involved in the movie selection, while this bar graph above shows the influence each factor has on every individual on his or her choice to go to the movie theatre or not. What stands out is that the availability on the TVOD platform has no influence whatsoever if consumers choose to go to the cinema or not, and the same can be said about the director's influence. Even here, the "Genre" looks like a discriminant factor when it is about cinema-going and "Trailer", even if to a small extent. Surprisingly, the factor "Story you are already familiar with" is among the ones that do not have a significant impact on moviegoing behaviour. Also, "Word of Mouth that highly suggests watching a movie at the cinema" has a more significant impact on the choice of whether to go to the cinema than the choice of film, and the same can be said about reviews that strongly recommend seeing the film on the big screen.

Factors that influence moviegoing behaviour in Italy

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Trailer	9.80%	5.88%	23.53%	31.37%	29.41%
Director	18.63%	20.59%	20.59%	25.49%	14.71%
Actors	5.88%	4.90%	35.29%	33.33%	20.59%
Story you're already familiar with	11.76%	23.53%	26.47%	29.41%	8.82%
Genre	3.92%	3.92%	18.63%	40.20%	33.33%
Visual Effects	15.69%	16.67%	30.39%	21.57%	15.69%
Reviews that highly suggest watching it at the cinema	12.75%	14.71%	34.31%	29.41%	8.82%
WoM that highly suggest watching it at the cinema	11.76%	18.63%	25.49%	27.45%	16.67%
Availability on SVOD platform you're subscribed to	22.55%	16.67%	20.59%	18.63%	21.57%
Availability on TVOD platform	50.00%	18.63%	15.69%	7.84%	7.84%

Source: author's own source

Factors that influence moviegoing behaviour in Denmark

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Trailer	7.69%	10.58%	25.00%	30.77%	25.96%
Director	25.96%	18.27%	11.54%	30.77%	13.46%
Actors	0.96%	15.38%	30.77%	36.54%	16.35%
Story you're already familiar with	9.62%	20.19%	32.69%	23.08%	14.42%
Genre	2.88%	7.69%	15.38%	43.27%	30.77%
Visual Effects	11.54%	18.27%	18.27%	30.77%	21.15%
Reviews that highly suggest watching it at the cinema	7.69%	13.46%	17.31%	33.65%	27.88%
WoM that highly suggest watching it at the cinema	7.69%	7.69%	11.54%	39.42%	33.65%
Availability on SVOD platform you're subscribed to	21.15%	15.38%	15.38%	25.96%	22.12%
Availability on TVOD platform	53.85%	19.23%	10.58%	8.65%	7.69%

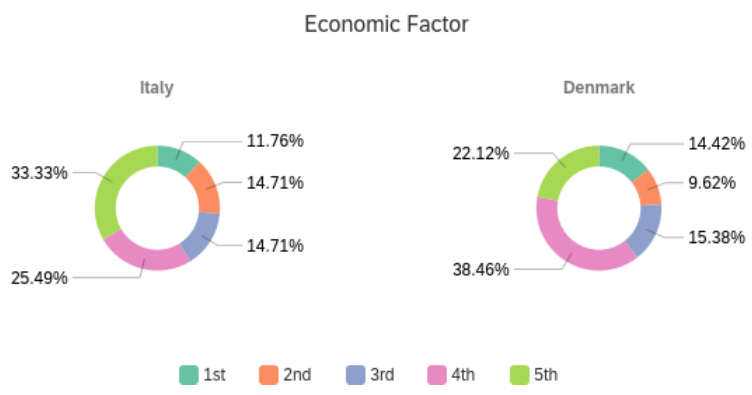
Source: author's own Source

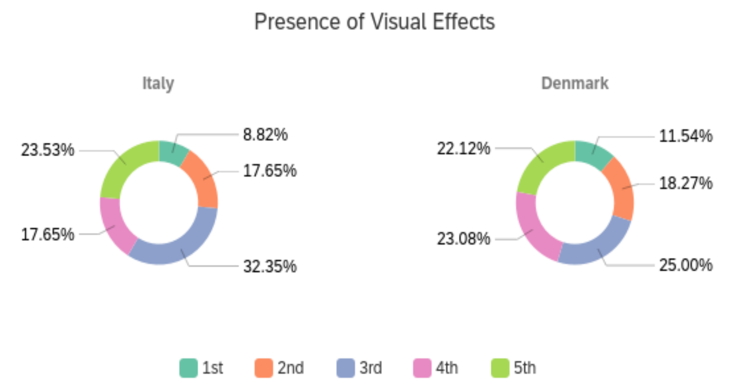
As it was possible to notice in the aggregated figure, there is no clear pattern between consumers regarding which factors might influence their behaviour and to what extent. This could be because movie theatres have been closed and reopened continuously in the last two years, causing a sense of confusion among viewers. Some of them may have postponed the decision to go to the cinema for when circumstances are safer, while others may have included in their decision-making process factors concerning the safety of going to the cinema given the risk of having to stay indoors for a couple of hours with strangers who may not fully comply with security provisions.

However, some interesting facts can be noted when comparing consumers' answers in the two countries covered by this study. Although this is not a significant difference, consumers feel that trailers have a slightly greater influence in Italy. In contrast, in Denmark, this is the case for directors. However, in Denmark, a quarter of respondents consider the figure of the director to be irrelevant in the choice of whether to go to the cinema. A significant difference lies in the importance of visual effects. In fact, in Italy, the response figures follow a normal distribution, whereas, in Denmark, one in two viewers considers them to be pretty or very important. Furthermore, respondents living in Denmark considerably give more weight to both "Word of Mouth", with around 73%, and reviews, with more than 60%, which highly recommend seeing this film at the cinema, while in Italy the percentages are lower, respectively. 44% and 38%.

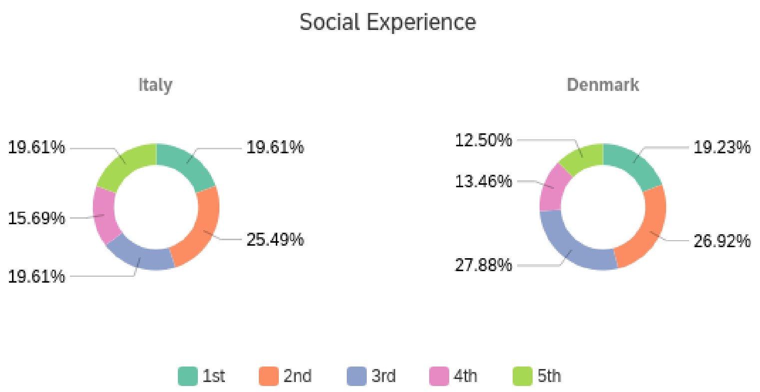
After having asked the respondents to express their opinion on the importance of the single factors in the choice of the film and in the choice of going to the cinema or not, the questionnaire asked them to put in order from the most important (1st) to the least important (5th), five factors that impact on the decision process of whether you want to see a film at the cinema instead of on streaming platforms, which are: the economic factor, the presence of visual effects, social experience, cinema experience, unavailability on streaming platforms in the short term.

The first one to be analysed is the economic factor. As the two pie charts beside show, whether the individual lives in Italy or Denmark, it is considered of minor importance by 58.82% and 60.58% respectively; however, it must be said that about 25% in both countries put this factor in first or second place, although in a different way.

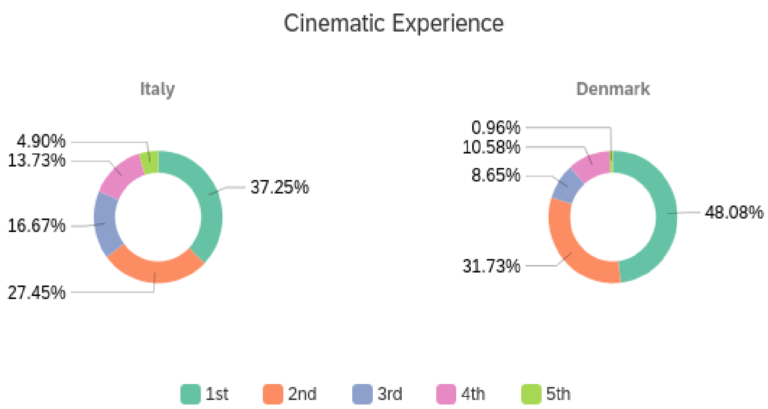




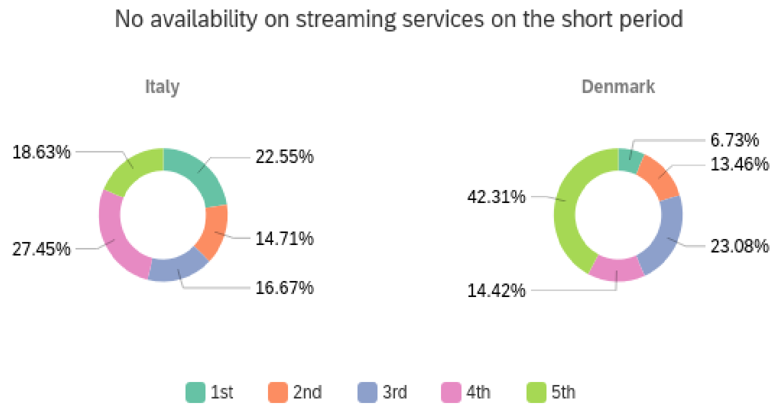
The analysis continues by looking at the presence of visual effects in the film they will see in the cinema. Although more than 45% of respondents in Denmark and 40% of those in Italy placed this factor in the last two positions, more than 25% of respondents in the Bel Paese and almost 30% placed it in the first two positions. However, these differences do not look significant.



Focusing now on the social experience, it is interesting to note that the percentages of respondents in Italy and Denmark who consider this factor to be the most important, or nearly so, are virtually the same at over 45%. Nevertheless, it is worth noticing that a fair number, 35.3%, of people in Italy consider it among the least significant.

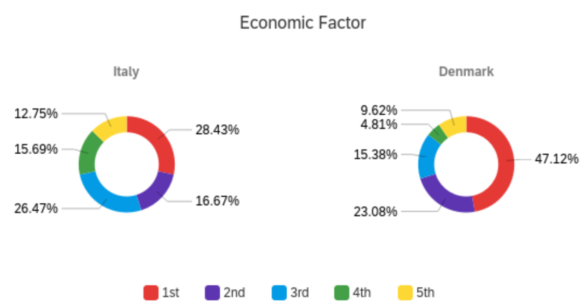


Concerning the cinematic experience, the pie charts seem to be relatively straightforward. Amongst those who live in Denmark, for almost one surveyor out of two, this factor is the most important, and for almost one third, it deserves the second-highest step, for a total of 79.81%. In contrast, in Italy, this percentage is 64.7%.

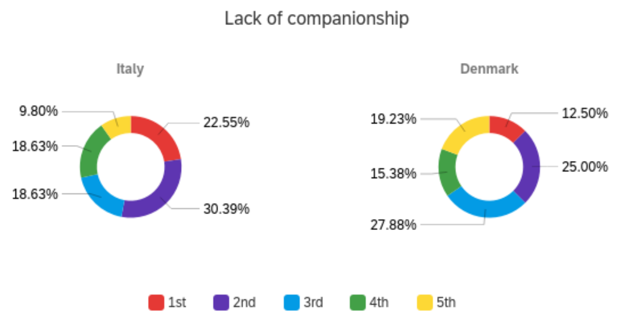


The last factor of the five remaining to be analysed concerns unavailability on streaming platforms in the short term. This does not seem to affect people in Denmark in any way, with only a fifth believing it to be a significant factor and the rest relegating it to lower rungs, over 40% in last place. In Italy, on the other hand, the discourse is slightly different: the percentage of people for whom the unavailability of the title on streaming platforms in the days or weeks following its release at the cinema encourages people to go to the cinema is so crucial as to place it either in first or last place is equal to 37.26, of which 22.55 in the highest step. On the other hand, the percentage of those who placed it in last place is much lower, at 18.63%, unlike the respondents in Denmark.

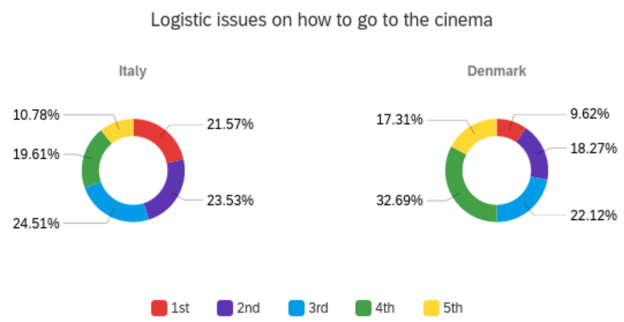
The next question of the questionnaire, along the same lines as the previous one, asked respondents to rank in order of importance the factors that encourage them to watch a film using streaming platforms instead of going to the movie theatre. The factors are the following: the lack of companionship, logistic issues, economic factor, the possibility of watching in the original language or with subtitles or dubbed in the language the consumers prefers, the lack of visual effects.



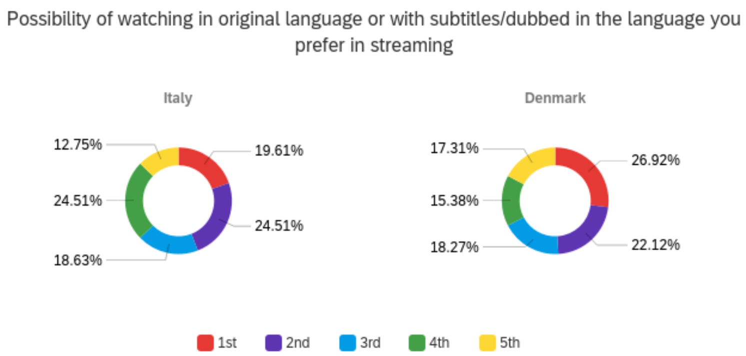
As was the case with the previous question, the economic factor is the starting point. The 47.12% who live in Denmark put it in the first place and the 23.08% in the second, for a total of 70.2%, showing how the economic factor is decisive for them to use the streaming platform instead of going to the cinema. In Italy, the percentages of those who place this factor in the first and second position are 28.43% and 16.47%, definitely lower than in the Nordic country.



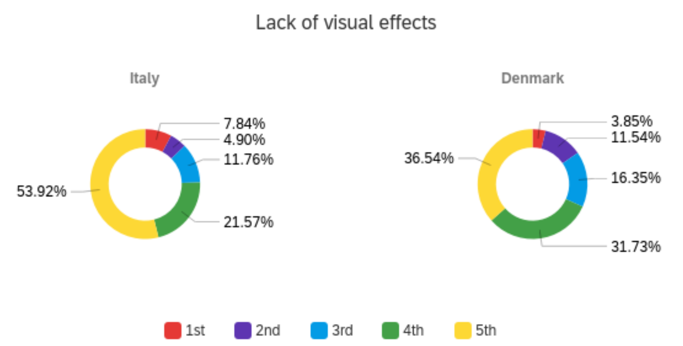
The "lack of companionship" is a factor that pushes people to see a film in streaming instead of in the cinema for at least 52.94%, adding up the percentages of those who placed it in first and second place, for respondents in Italy. While in Denmark, using the same method, this percentage stands at 37.50. However, it should be noted that almost one in five of those living in the Scandinavian country placed this factor in the last place.



Regarding the logistical issues that going to the cinema entails and that encourage consumers to make greater use of streaming platforms, about 45% of Italian respondents agree that this factor has enough influence to place it in first or second place among the factors given. This is not the case in Denmark, where the percentage is just under 30%; these logistical problems seem to have less impact in the Scandinavian country, with higher percentages of those who have relegated this factor to the last two steps.



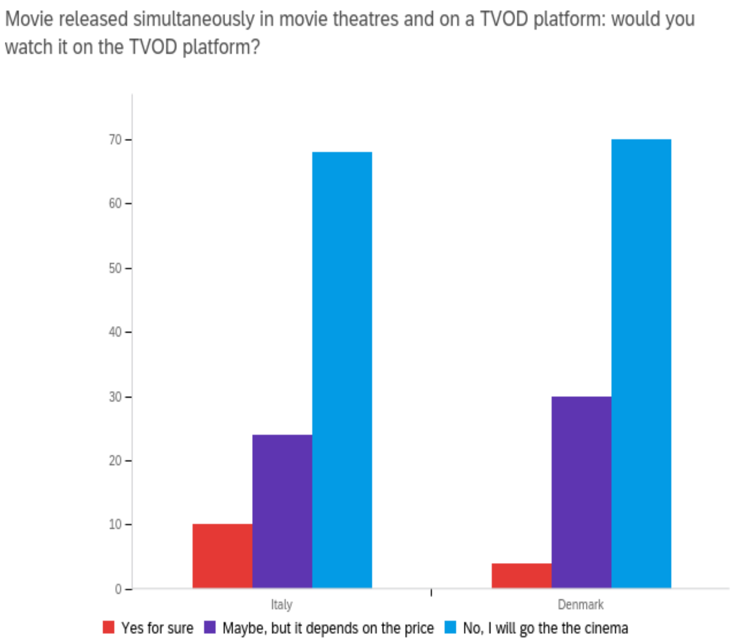
Focusing now on the possibility of watching in the original language, or with subtitles, or with dubbing in the language of one's choice, a feature often offered by streaming platforms, it can be seen that this factor, which encourages people to watch a film in streaming instead of going to the cinema, is slightly more appreciated in Denmark. Almost 27% put it in the first place, and just over 22% in second, for a total that is almost 50%, for those who live in the southern country these percentages are respectively 19.61% and 24.51% for a total of 44.12%.



The last remaining factor to be analysed is the "lack of visual effects". This seems irrelevant or the least important of those proposed in this question. Whether they live in Denmark or Italy, the percentages of respondents who placed this fact either in last or penultimate place were respectively about 68% and 75.5%.

The last part of the questionnaire was divided into two parts concerning TVOD platforms' impact and SVOD platforms' impact on moviegoing behaviour.

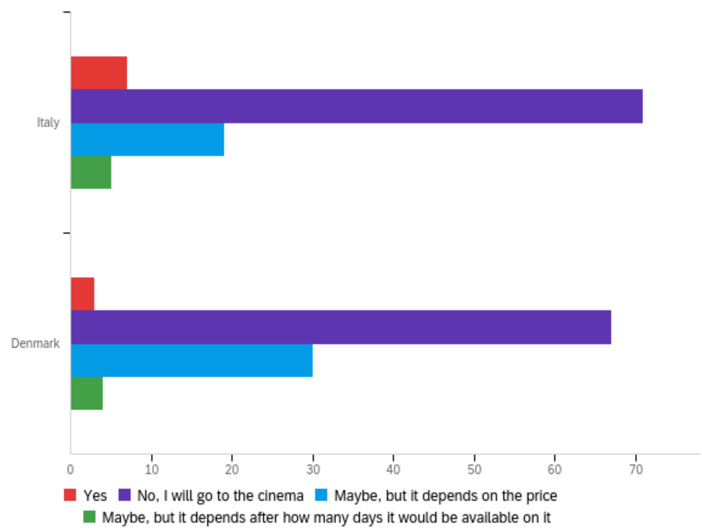
TVOD



Starting from TVOD platforms, it is possible to see from the graph that most of the respondents' behaviour in Italy and Denmark would not change if the film were released simultaneously in the cinema and on a TVOD platform. However, it is possible to notice that a fair amount of people would consider the idea depending on the price of the film in streaming. In

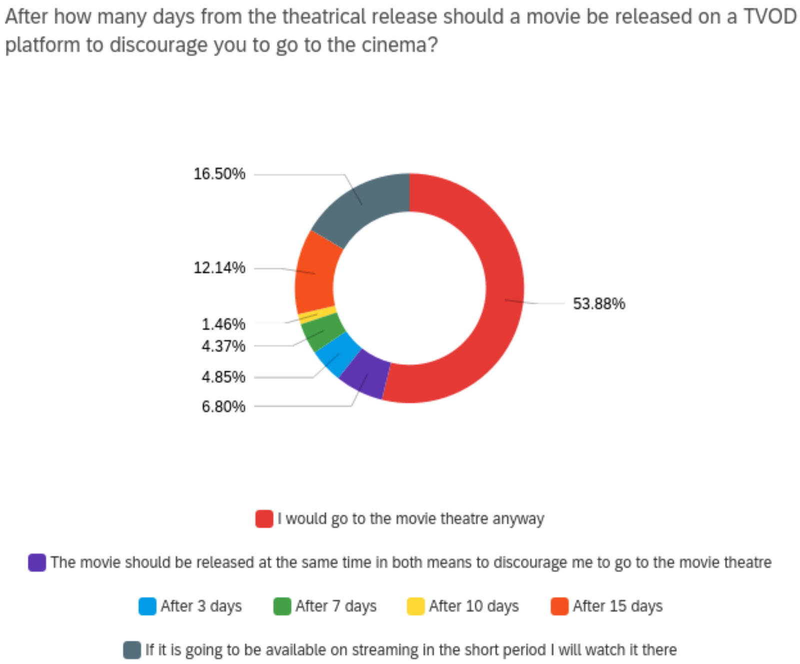
Denmark, they seem to be more price-sensitive in this respect, while in Italy, the percentage of people who would see such a film in streaming regardless of the cost is higher.

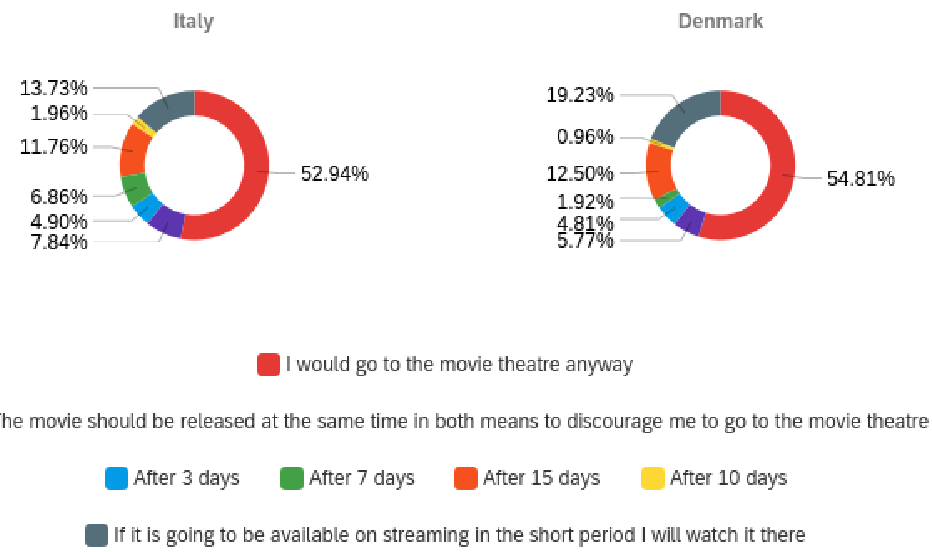
Movie available on a TVOD platform after some days from the theatrical release: would you watch it on the TVOD platform?



The second question in this questionnaire section is slightly different from the previous one. While the first question referred to a simultaneous release on both channels, the release on the TVOD platform is slightly postponed from the release in the cinema. As could be expected from the answers to the previous question, the amount of people who would continue to go to the cinema regardless of the price and the difference in days is still very high. Moreover, in this question, it is possible to notice similar answers of those surveyed between Italy and Denmark: the former would watch the film in streaming regardless of other variables. The latter seems to be more sensitive to the price. Almost similar is the number of answers in both countries, stating that the discriminating factor in this choice is the time factor, i.e., after how many days the film will be available on the TVOD platform.

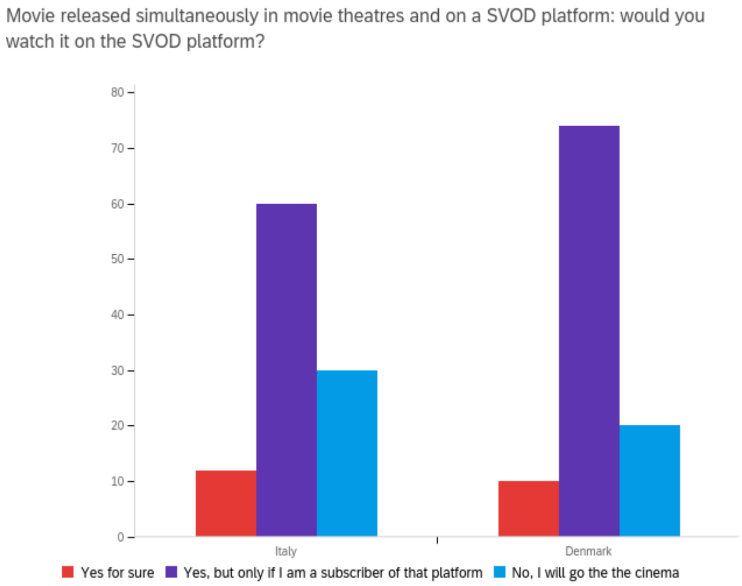
In the last question of this section on TVOD platforms, respondents were asked about their "sensitivity" to the time factor, i.e. how much time should elapse from cinema release to TVOD streaming release. Focusing on the aggregate data, what emerges from the pie chart is that more than half of the respondents do not care when the film is available on streaming; they will still watch it at the cinema. The opposite opinion is held by 16.50% of those surveyed, who do not care about the time factor; they will watch it in streaming. A similar percentage would be discouraged from going to the cinema if the film was available on streaming after one week, ten days and even 15 days. For a tenth of the respondents, however, the film would have to be released simultaneously in both channels or after three days at the latest to impact their behaviour.



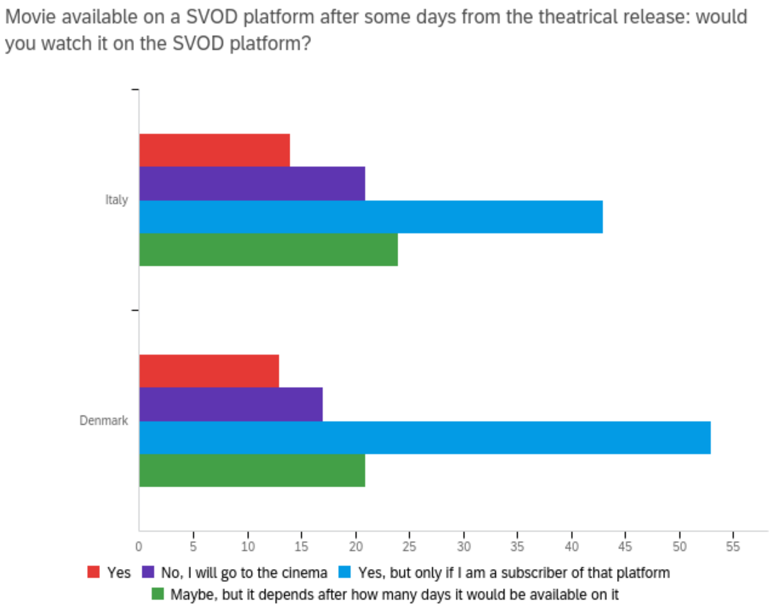


Shifting our attention now to the data divided by country of residence, the percentages do not differ significantly from the graph of the aggregate data. The only substantial difference is that a higher number of people residing in Denmark would be discouraged from going to the cinema if the film was available in the short term on the streaming platform TVOD, while for a higher percentage of people residing in Italy, to be discouraged from going to the cinema, the film would have to be released simultaneously, or within a maximum of 3 and 7 days.

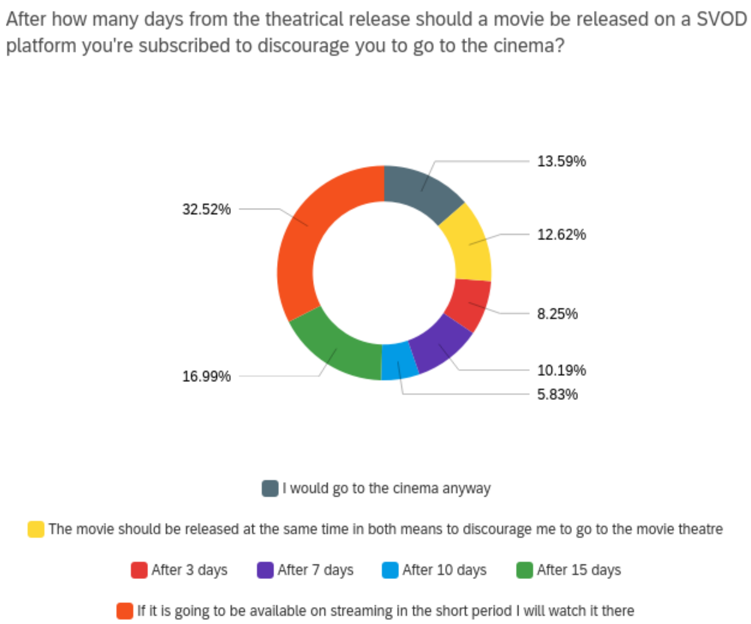
SVOD



Respondents were asked the same questions concerning the impact of SVOD platforms on moviegoing behaviour. In contrast to TVOD services, the percentage that would go to the cinema in case of simultaneous release in the cinema and on the SVOD platform is significantly lower. The number of people who would watch on the SVOD platform even if they did not subscribe is practically the same in both countries. In contrast, the number of people who would watch the film on the SVOD platform only if they already subscribed to it is higher in Denmark.

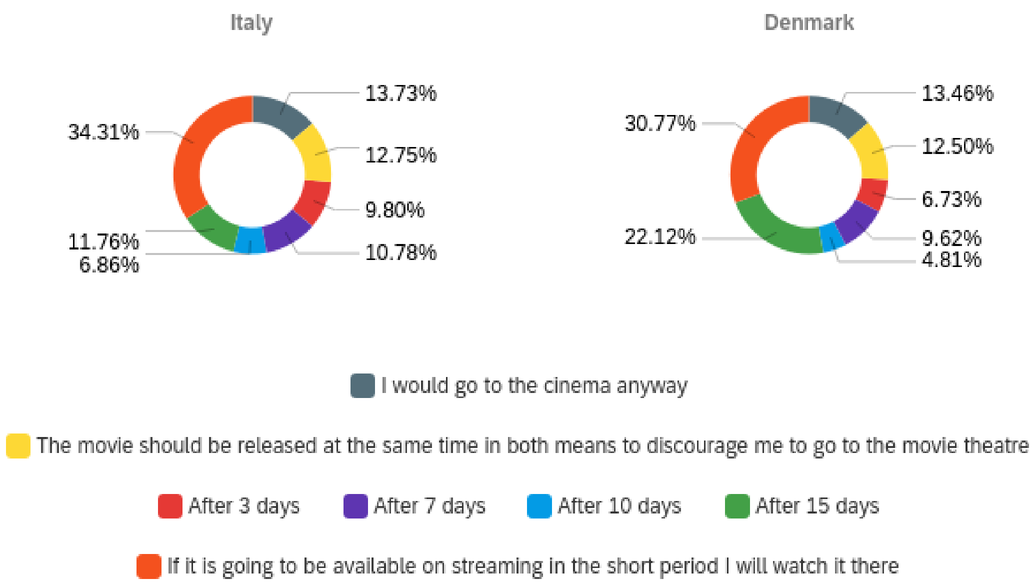


If, on the contrary, the release does not take place simultaneously in both channels, but only after a few days the audiovisual product is available in the catalogue of the SVOD platform, the discriminating factors would be two: the time factor, that is, the number of days from the release in the cinema to the release in streaming, and the economic factor, the cost of the platform if one does not subscribe. In both graphs, the majority of respondents would watch the film on the platform only if they had already subscribed, whilst the second most chosen option is the one in which the discriminating factor is the time factor, followed by the answers of those who would go to the cinema regardless and, finally, those who would watch the film in streaming regardless. Although the graphs between the two countries are similar, there are subtle differences to highlight. Amongst those who would watch the film in streaming only if they already subscribed to the platform, the number of answers is higher among the inhabitants of Denmark, while in Italy, the time discriminant seems to have a slightly higher weight than in Denmark.



As in the previous section, in the last question, respondents were asked about their "sensitivity" to the time factor, i.e. how much time should elapse from cinema release to SVOD streaming release. Focusing on the aggregate data, the pie chart shows that SVOD platforms significantly more influence respondents than TVOD platforms. As the data show, the percentage of people who would go to the cinema, in any case, is decidedly lower, standing at 13.59%.

To be discouraged from going to the cinema, 12.62% said that the film should be released simultaneously on both channels. On the other hand, one third said they would watch it on streaming if it were available in the short term. While for a quarter, the time factor would already influence their decision-making process if the film were available after seven days, with a percentage of 10.19%, after ten days 5.83%, or even after fifteen days for 16.99%.



Shifting our attention now to the data divided by country of residence, the percentages do not differ significantly from the graph of the aggregate data. The only substantial differences are the two. The first one is that the percentage of individuals living in Italy that would watch the movie, if available on the streaming platform regardless of other facts, is slightly higher than those living in Denmark, 34.31% versus 30.77%, respectively. The second is that, compared to the corresponding figure for the inhabitants of the Mediterranean peninsula, the percentage of people who would be discouraged from going to the cinema if the film were available even after 15 days is double in Denmark.

DISCUSSION

This chapter involves a discussion of the key findings of this paper in order to test hypotheses and answer the research question.

Hypotheses Discussion

H1. Individuals who stated they are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window do not have or have a few subscriptions to streaming platforms.

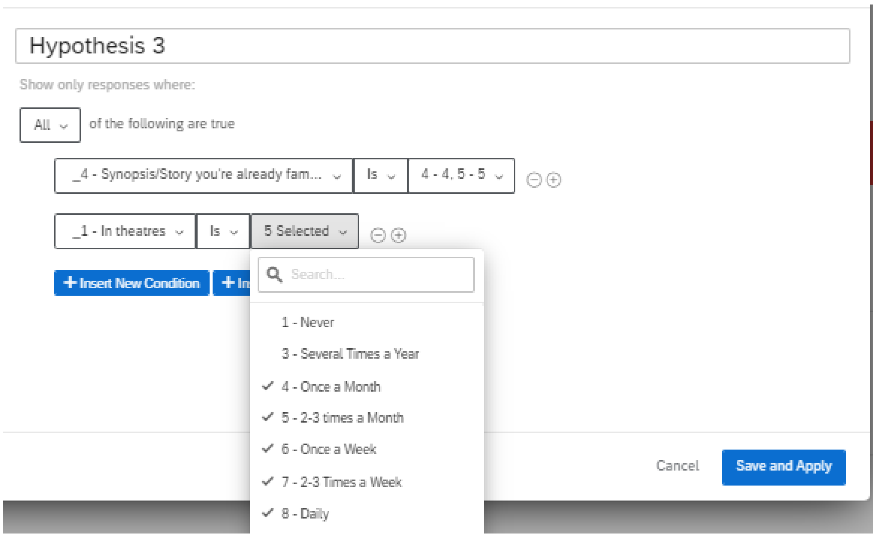
It is necessary to use the Filter function offered by Qualtrics to identify the desired segment. The two questions examined concern TVOD and SVOD platforms impact on moviegoing behaviour, specifically their sensitivity to the time factor on their decision-making process. To both answers, the desired segment answered: "It does not matter, I would go to the cinema anyway". Twenty-five respondents meet these requirements, 40% are 18-24-years-olds, and 56% live in Denmark. Most of them also defined factors regarding availability on TVOD and SVOD platforms as irrelevant or unimportant in their choice of whether or not to go to the cinema. However, the data is not so obvious, checking their answers regarding the number of streaming platforms they subscribe to: 44% of this segment subscribe to 3 or more platforms, a significant proportion. On the other hand, 40% subscribe to 1 or 2 platforms, and only 16% do not subscribe to any platform at all. Looking at these data, there seems to be no correlation between the number of platforms subscribed to and the influence of the abovementioned factors, or rather the lack of them, on moviegoing behaviour. Therefore, the hypothesis is false.

H2. Moviegoing behaviour will be more affected by SVOD platforms than TVOD ones.

Although TVOD platforms are expanding in Europe, their weight does not seem significant. On the other hand, SVOD platforms are at the heart of the changing of consumer habits, and it is almost inevitable that such platforms influence moviegoing behaviour to a greater extent. This can be seen by comparing the various graphs and their analysis in "TVOD" and "SVOD" in the Results chapter. Thereby, the hypothesis is true.

H3. Frequent moviegoers, who value very importantly stories they are already familiar with in the decision-making process, are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

Using the function "Filter" on Qualtrics, it is possible to filter every answer for desired discriminants. To test this hypothesis, it is necessary to establish a definition for "frequent moviegoer": frequent moviegoers are people who go to the cinema at least once a month. Concerning the second part, "individuals that value importantly stories they already familiar with", questions regarding the variables that influence moviegoing are considered; this segment consists of those surveyed that answered with a four or a five to "stories you are already familiar with". By combining these two answers, the desired segment of the hypothesis can be obtained.



Source: author's own source

To test the hypothesis, the answers to the questions in the last section were analysed, asking about the impact of the availability of films on streaming platforms, either TVOD or SVOD, on their moviegoing behaviour. Although they are considered frequent moviegoers and highly value the story factor in their decision-making process, their answers are not homogeneous. Regarding TVOD platforms, 52.94% do not care about the temporal factor; they would go to the cinema either way. However, since this is a specific segment that includes frequent moviegoers, it is not a significant percentage, especially if compared to the aggregate data, which was even higher, at 53.88%. Concerning SVOD platforms, only 25% would go to the cinema in any case, while the rest is influenced by the time factor of the availability of the film in streaming. Therefore, the hypothesis is false.

H4. Frequent moviegoers, who value importantly the social experience of moviegoing in their decision-making process, are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

It is possible to easily identify the segment required by the hypothesis using the Qualtrics filter. As mentioned above, frequent moviegoers are defined as people who go to the cinema at least once a month. Concerning the second part involved, it is necessary to filter the answers regarding the question that specifically asked respondents to order the various factors influencing moviegoing behaviour from the most to the least important, and choose those who put "Social Experience" as the first or at least second most crucial factor. Combining these answers with the frequency of visits to the cinema, we obtain the desired segment, which amounts to 29 individuals, whose 55.17% belongs to the 18-24 age group.

To test the hypothesis, it is necessary to look at the questions used in Q1 to obtain the desired segment. Analysing the data, it is possible to state that almost 70% are not affected by TVOD platforms on moviegoing behaviour; however, switching the focus on SVOD platforms, the percentage drops to just under 30%. Therefore, the hypothesis is false.

H5. Frequent moviegoers, who value the cinematic experience of moviegoing in their decision-making process, are not affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

To identify the segment required by the hypothesis, it is necessary to use the Qualtrics filter. As mentioned above, frequent moviegoers are defined as going to the cinema at least once a month. Regarding the second part required, it is essential to filter the answers concerning the question that asked respondents to order five factors influencing moviegoing behaviour from the most to the least important, and choose those who put "Cinematic Experience" in the first or second place. Combining these answers with the frequency of visits to the cinema, we obtain the desired segment, which amounts to 45, whose twenty-six belong to the 25-30 age group and twenty-four live in Italy.

Regarding the impact of TVOD platforms, almost 75% of frequent moviegoers who prefer the cinematic experience stated that they are not affected by the temporal factor. Concerning SVOD platforms, the percentage of those not affected almost halves to 37.78%. Therefore, the hypothesis is false.

H6. Consumers with more than two subscriptions to streaming platforms will be heavily affected by the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window.

In order to identify the desired segment, in this case, it is necessary to filter the answers to the question concerning subscriptions to SVOD platforms by those who have more than two subscriptions. Those respondents are 69; 42 of them belong to the 25-30 group age, and 37 live in Denmark.

Subsequently, data concerning the impact of SVOD platforms on moviegoing behaviour are analysed to test the hypothesis.

The answers show that moviegoing behaviour is influenced by the time factor by slightly more than 50%, to a different extent, though, i.e. the number of days from the movie release in theatres to the release of the film on the SVOD platform. On the other hand, 30% stated that if the picture is available on streaming in a short time window, they will watch it there. In contrast, only 17% stated that they would not be influenced at all and would go to the cinema anyway. Therefore, the hypothesis is true.

Research Question

In order to verify if the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window had an impact on moviegoing behaviour, it was first necessary to investigate the decision-making process of movie selection and cinema-going. Therefore, the survey was divided into different parts: one concerning demographic data, another one concerning their consumption habits and preferences, lastly, one about the weight of the variables in the decision-making process. In this section, respondents could rate the weight that streaming availability, distinguishing between TVOD and SVOD platforms, had in their decision-making process. Subsequently, by giving five factors and asking to rank them according to the order of importance, the focus was on the discriminating factors that led individuals:

- to choose whether to go to the cinema instead of watching the movie on streaming;
- to choose whether to watch the movie on streaming instead of going to the cinema.

Finally, in the last part, the questions aimed at understanding the weight of the availability in streaming as a variable in the moviegoing behaviour, whose direct consequence is precisely the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window. In order to better understand the weight and offer valuable insights, a clear distinction was made between TVOD and SVOD platforms. There was also another distinction among the possible discriminating factors:

- the economic factor: i.e. the movie price on the TVOD platform or the subscription price to a new SVOD platform;
- the time factor: how short must be the theatrical window to influence moviegoing behaviour, or better said, how soon must be available the movie in streaming.

Quantitative empirical findings and respective analysis have been conducted to answer the following research question:

Do the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window affect moviegoing behaviour, and, if so, how much?

In the following paragraphs, the empirical findings of each section will be listed to answer the research question. Regarding the section about movie habits and preferences, the main findings are:

- 59.22% of surveyors prefer to watch movies on streaming; by contrast, 35.44% prefer to watch them in theatres
- More than 80% prefer SVOD services over TVOD
- 2/3 of surveyors go to the cinema with their friends, almost ¼ with their partner
- 1/3 of those surveyed have three or more subscriptions to SVOD platforms
- Although they are appreciated more than others, Romantic and Dramatic movies do not have the same appeal when going to the theatre.
- By contrast, some genres convince spectators to go to the cinema, such as Action, Fantasy, and Sci-fi.

Regarding the weight of factors in the moviegoing decision, two elements could help answer the research question: a) availability on the TVOD platform, b) availability on an SVOD platform you're subscribed to. The former has been rated as the most irrelevant, while the latter as the third most important, right after genre and trailer; however, many respondents have rated it as not very important or irrelevant.

The reasons behind the choice to watch a movie in streaming instead of going to the theatre are:

- Watching it in the original language, with subtitles or even dubbed in the preferred language;
- The economic factor;
- Logistic issues on going to the cinema;

In the last part of the survey, the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window have been isolated from the others to see their impact on moviegoing behaviour. Thanks to its analysis in the "Results" chapter, it is possible to answer the research question: the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window do impact moviegoing behaviour. However, distinctions must be made to answer the second part of the research question: if the shortening and the non-exclusivity are caused by the availability of the movies on TVOD platforms, their impact is shallow; by contrast, if they are caused by the availability of the movie on SVOD platforms, their impact is significant, as the graphs have shown in the "Results" chapter.

Are these outcomes impacted by country of residence (Denmark vs Italy)?

The country of residence has an impact on these outcomes. The only difference that emerges from the data analysis is that people that live in Denmark are more price-sensitive than those living in Italy, whether it is SVOD or TVOD platforms. As a matter of fact, the main driver of watching movies on streaming instead of going to the theatre for people living in the Nordic country is the economic factor; it is decisive for 70% of them against the 44.90% of those surveyed that live in Italy.

Managerial Implications

This thesis aims to provide valuable insights and practical suggestions, as stated in different chapters. Regarding this matter, movie exhibitors should consider different factors that emerge from the data analysis. Action, Fantasy and Sci-fi movies naturally attract people to the cinema; however, surveyors stated that they prefer Romantic and Dramatic movies; therefore, cinemas could apply a "discriminating" pricing technique based on the genre of movies. This could incentivise cinema admissions for those genres the audience prefers the most. Secondly, a factor that discourages many people from going to the cinema is the logistic issues. Other than focusing on car parking, movie exhibitors should also take into account public transport timetables and plan movies viewing times based on this.

On the other hand, the "Social Experience" is a factor that encourages moviegoing behaviour; therefore, it should be more supported, i.e., through group discounts. By contrast, the preferences about the original language, dubbing and subtitles, are a strength for streaming platforms. Theatres could do something about this by offering screenings in original language with English subtitles at off-peak times or on less frequented days, in order to attract those who are excluded for reasons of language or similar.

Movie producers and distributors should not expect great returns from TVOD platforms, especially if the release in this channel happen during the theatrical distribution. They could consider a PVOD release instead. Policy-makers should consider that more and more movies will be released on streaming platforms and movie theatres simultaneously or nearly so. As a direct consequence, considering movie exhibitors' interests and behaviour, it will be challenging to maintain an exclusive theatrical release for more than one month. Cinemas will screen franchise movies or movies starring big names that people are willing to pay for even if they are already, or soon to be, available on streaming platforms. Competing with such titles could heavily affect their revenues, and they may opt for a day-and-date strategy. They should not be penalised, thereby countermeasures must be taken.

CONCLUSION

Through this thesis, I discovered and explored a world of notions that I was totally ignorant of, and in the same way, I found myself studying myself. Although I am a frequent movie-goer, before starting this journey, I never stopped to reflect on the variables that influenced my decision-making process. I started to reflect more on my actions and to analyse them. I realised the multitude of factors that come into play in a decision that seems so simple. The existing research on the subject came to save me. The theory was fundamental to the formulation of the hypotheses, especially to the construction of the survey. I must admit that it was a fun activity, a kind of logical exercise that consisted of asking the right questions, how to ask them and how to get the desired data. The data analysis was equally enjoyable. To be able to compare one's own answers with those of others, to be able to compare the answers of different groups of people, to notice differences and similarities between groups of people living in two different countries surprised me much more than I expected. To see, for instance, that the story and the genre are among the essential factors in the choice of a movie, as other studies had already pointed out, was also interesting.

Do the shortening and the non-exclusivity of the theatrical window affect moviegoing behaviour, and, if so, how much?

This was the research question that has guided me into the whole process, despite it having been into some changes. However, the sub-question has characterized even more the features of this paper since investigating if the country of residence could also impact was quite challenging. These questions marked the data collection method, which consisted of a 20 questions survey. The analysis results highlighted that the shortening and the non-exclusivity impact moviegoing behaviour. However, some distinctions must be made to measure the extent of such impact. If the abovementioned factors were caused by the availability of movies on a TVOD platform, the impact is shallow. By contrast, the impact is significant if caused by an SVOD platform. Such impacts differ based on the country of residence. This was because respondents who live in Denmark are more price-sensitive than those living in Italy.

Limitations

The first limitation is related to the subject itself. Obtaining knowledge about moviegoing consumer behaviour is a delicate matter, especially after two years in which movie theatres have been repeatedly shut down and reopened; therefore, this research is closely tied to this particular historical period. Moreover, another difficulty in investigating such matters regarding moviegoing behaviour is that there can be several complex motivations involved in the decision-making process and different hierarchies of motivation that even some individuals may not be aware of.

The second limitation is linked to the fact that this paper aims to study individuals living in two different countries. The author of this thesis has lived in Italy until the conclusion of his bachelor, and he has only lived in Denmark for two and half years during the COVID-19 outbreak; the consequence of that is that his network of contacts that have been used for this survey is mainly composed of Italians, some internationals, and few Danes.

This could be of relevance for this thesis because it affects the finding of the thesis itself. The repercussions can be easily explained by referring to the population sample under study: while the interviewees in Italy are almost all in their homeland, where the movies in theatres are transmitted dubbed in almost all cases, except for a few independent cinemas, on the other hand in Denmark the movies, if not those for children, are all shown in the original language, with Danish subtitles –that is if the film is not already in Danish itself. However, if the film is already in Danish, it is more difficult for internationals to find a theatre showing the movie with English subtitles. If you do not speak Danish, you are likely to watch it at home with the option of seeing it either dubbed or subtitled in your preferred language. In addition, some respondents may be unable to fully enjoy the film in English without the aid of subtitles, either because the English language has not been mastered or because they may prefer to understand and fully enjoy the movie. Therefore, it should come as no surprise, given that non-Danish speakers completed 95% of the questionnaire, that there is a preference for streaming platforms offering the above functionality.

As mentioned before, movie theatres have been closed and reopened continuously in the last two years, causing different feelings among viewers. This is the third limitation. Some viewers may have postponed the decision to go to the cinema for when circumstances are safer, while others may have included in their decision-making process factors concerning the safety of going to the theatres given the risk of having to stay indoors for a couple of hours with strangers who may not fully comply with security provisions. Covid-19 affected and probably still affects moviegoing behaviour.

Further Research

Future studies might be of interest to focus on the Social Experience for movies consuming at home. For some, the consumption of audio-visual products is a collective experience, and it does not necessarily have to take place in a theatre. As the consumption of films at home has increased disproportionately, consumers may have adopted countermeasures to enjoy the collective consumption experience.

Another study of interest would be the utility perceived between PVOD audio-visual products and TVOD ones. The main difference is that PVOD movies remain at their disposal forever, whereas TVOD films have an "expiration date" of usually 48 hours. However, TVOD movies have prices way lower than the PVOD ones. Understanding the consumer perception of these types of products and the expected utility would help the TVOD and PVOD platforms.

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APPENDIX I – SURVEY

English - United Kingdom

How old are you?

- 18-24
- 25-30

Where do you live?

- Italy
- Denmark

Where are you from?

- Denmark
- Italy
- EU/EEA country
- Non EU/EEA country

→

English - United Kingdom

Where do you prefer watching movies?

- ◯ Movie Theatre
- ◯ TV (intended as broadcast such as Sky)
- ◯ Streaming platforms (such as Netflix, HBO Max, Disney+)
- ◯ DVD/Bluray
- ◯ Other (Please specify below)

Do you prefer SVOD platforms or TVOD platforms?
SVOD (Subscription Video on Demand): Audiences subscribe to the service in exchange for a periodically paid fee that guarantees them access to a whole catalogue of content they can watch on demand.
TVOD (Transactional Video on Demand): Through these services, customers can buy or rent a single title. The content can be accessed through the platform and cannot be downloaded

- ◯ Unconcerned
- ◯ SVOD
- ◯ TVOD

How often do you watch movies?

	Never	Once a Year	Several Times a Year	Once a Month	2-3 times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily
In theatres	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
on TVOD platforms such as Chili	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
on SVOD platforms such as Netflix, HBO Max	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

How many SVOD (Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+...) platforms do you have?

- ◯ None
- ◯ 1
- ◯ 2
- ◯ 3
- ◯ 4 or more

→

English - United Kingdom

Who do you usually go to the cinema with?

- ◯ Family
- ◯ Friends
- ◯ Partner
- ◯ Alone

Which movie genres do you prefer? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Thriller
- ☐ Comedy
- ☐ Romantic
- ☐ Sci-fi
- ☐ Fantasy
- ☐ Comicbook movies
- ☐ Horror
- ☐ Action
- ☐ Drama

What movie genres do you usually watch at movie theatre? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Thriller
- ☐ Comedy
- ☐ Romantic
- ☐ Sci-fi
- ☐ Fantasy
- ☐ Comicbook movies
- ☐ Horror
- ☐ Action
- ☐ Drama

→

English - United Kingdom

How important from 1 (irrelevant) to 5 (very important) are these factors **on how you choose to watch a movie**?

	1	2	3	4	5
Trailer	○	○	○	○	○
Director/Screenwriter	○	○	○	○	○
Actors	○	○	○	○	○
Genre	○	○	○	○	○
Story	○	○	○	○	○
Online Talk	○	○	○	○	○
Word of Mouth	○	○	○	○	○
Reviews	○	○	○	○	○

How important from 1 (irrelevant) to 5 (very important) are these factors on how you choose to watch a movie **at the cinema**?

	1	2	3	4	5
Trailer	○	○	○	○	○
Director	○	○	○	○	○
Actors	○	○	○	○	○
Synopsis/Story you're already familiar with	○	○	○	○	○
Genre	○	○	○	○	○
Visual Effects	○	○	○	○	○
Reviews that highly suggest watching a film at the movie theatre	○	○	○	○	○
Word of Mouth that highly suggest watching a film at the movie theatre	○	○	○	○	○
Availability on SVOD platform you're subscribed to	○	○	○	○	○
Availability on TVOD platform	○	○	○	○	○

Rank these factors from the most to the least important based on the impact on your decision-making process whether you want to watch a movie at the cinema instead of watching it on streaming

- Economic Factor
- Presence of Visual Effects
- Social Experience
- Cinematic Experience
- No availability on streaming services on the short period

Rank these factors from the most to the least important based on the impact on your decision-making process whether you want to watch a movie on streaming instead of watching at the cinema

- Economic Factor (e.g. price too expensive)
- Lack of companionship
- Logistic issues on how to go to the cinema
- Possibility of watching in original language or with subtitles/dubbed in the language you prefer in streaming
- Lack of visual effects

If a movie you want to watch is being released simultaneously in the movie theatre and on an SVOD platform, would you watch the movie on the SVOD platform?

- ◯ Yes for sure
- ◯ Yes, but only if I am a subscriber of that platform
- ◯ No, I will go the the cinema

If a movie you want to watch is being released simultaneously in the movie theatre and on a TVOD platform, would you watch the movie on the TVOD platform?

- ◯ Yes for sure
- ◯ Maybe, but it depends on the price
- ◯ No, I will go the the cinema

If a movie you want to watch is being released at the movie theatre, but there is the possibility to watch on a SVOD platform after some days, would you watch the movie on the SVOD platform?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No, I will go to the cinema
- ◯ Yes, but only if I am a subscriber of that platform
- ◯ Maybe, but it depends after how many days it would be available on it

If a movie you want to watch is being released at the movie theatre, but there is the possibility to watch on a TVOD by renting it after some days, would you watch a movie on the TVOD platform?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No, I will go to the cinema
- ◯ Maybe, but it depends on the price
- ◯ Maybe, but it depends after how many days it would be available on it

After how many days from the theatrical release should a movie be released on an SVOD platform you're subscribed to discourage you to go to the movie theatre?

- ◯ After 3 days
- ◯ After 7 days
- ◯ After 10 days
- ◯ After 15 days
- ◯ The movie should be released at the same time in both means to discourage me to go to the movie theatre
- ◯ It doesn't matter, if it is going to be available on streaming in the short period I will watch it there
- ◯ It doesn't matter, I would go to the movie theatre anyway

After how many days from the theatrical release should a movie be released on a TVOD platform to discourage you to go to the movie theatre?

- ◯ After 3 days
- ◯ After 7 days
- ◯ After 10 days
- ◯ After 15 days
- ◯ The movie should be released at the same time in both means to discourage me to go to the movie theatre
- ◯ It doesn't matter, if it is going to be available on streaming in the short period I will watch it there
- ◯ It doesn't matter, I would go to the movie theatre anyway