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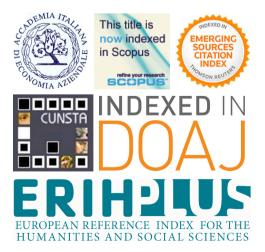
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# Museum, culture and digital innovations

## Culture and the youngest. Insights for the future of cultural consumption from an Italian sample\*

Giovanna Segre\*\*, Andrea Morelli\*\*\*

#### Abstract

The paper explores the cultural consumption of teenagers, seen as consumers not yet independent from an economic point of view, but already independent in the choice and tastes. Our results apply to a sample of about 350 students living in the Cuneo province, in North-West of Italy, through a cluster analysis approach. Young consumers can be segmented into four homogeneous groups according to the level of consumption in five cultural sectors (music, cinema, museum, performing art, books) and the degree of direct engagement in cultural practices. There are significant differences in their cultural consumptions, family and individual cultural capital, school results and sports engagement. The cultural expenditure is differentiated accordingly. The existence of different cultural

\* Although this paper is the result of a joint work, \$ 1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2 and 6 are to be attributed to Giovanna Segre; \$ 2, 3.1, 3.2 and 4.1 are to be attributed to Andrea Morelli.

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consumption clusters highlights the need, both for policy-makers and cultural industries, to better understand the next generation of adults, thus suggesting the importance to start a proper data collection at the national level.

In questo articolo vengono presentati i risultati di una prima indagine volta ad analizzare la partecipazione culturale degli adolescenti in Italia, in quanto consumatori non ancora indipendenti dal punto di vista economico, ma già indipendenti nelle scelte di consumo. Le riflessioni sono tracciate esplorando i dati di un'indagine su circa 350 studenti residenti a Cuneo, nel Nord-Ovest d'Italia. Attraverso una analisi cluster, sono stati individuati quattro gruppi indagati attraverso cinque settori culturali (ascolto di musica, visite al cinema, ai musei, alle arti performative e lettura di libri) e lo svolgimento diretto di pratiche culturali, alcune caratteristiche socio-demografiche, la spesa in prodotti culturali e l'utilizzo di dispositivi digitali. L'esistenza di diversi cluster di consumo culturale evidenzia la necessità, sia per i decisori politici che per le industrie culturali, di comprendere meglio quella che sarà la prossima generazione di adulti, suggerendo l'importanza di prevedere una mirata raccolta di dati a livello nazionale.

#### 1. Introduction

Scholars and cultural producers are increasingly interested in adolescents' cultural consumption. Young consumers of culture of today are the constituent both of the society and of the cultural markets of tomorrow. Understanding their cultural participation and preferences is essential to address policies and to envisage the market structure of cultural consumption in the years to come. In cultural consumption studies, however, children and adolescents are typically seen as passive individuals, influenced by their parents' preferences in terms of cultural consumption, and cultural consumption is often just intended to be passed on from the parents to the children. Only recently has the trend in such studies started to change, although not without difficulties given the lack of specific data and information both at the national and international level on young cultural consumers. The EU Youth Report<sup>1</sup> examines the results of two Eurobarometer surveys, conducted in 2011 and 2014, on the young people's participation in various cultural activities. The emerging trend is that of a general decline in cultural participation of young Europeans in all the member States. On average, the highest decline rate is registered in the attendance to theatre, dance performance and opera (-14%), followed by cinema and concerts (-9%), and visiting historical monuments, museums and galleries (-6%). The declining cultural participation trend is similar to the trend detected for practicing amateur artistic activity. In this scenario, Italy is among the countries experiencing this decline with a particularly significant rate. However, according to the Flash

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> European Commission 2016.

Eurobarometer on European Youth<sup>2</sup>, in 2017 "creativity and culture" were most likely to be indicated as an area where the EU should take action in Italy (47%), followed by Poland (44%) and Greece and Spain (both 41%).

Culture is universally acknowledged to be a distinctive factor for Italy, a country rich in cultural heritage and cultural expressions. The literature studying its cultural supply and cultural demand in various cultural sectors is growing since the seminal work by Santagata (2009), inspired by the KEA report on the economy of culture in Europe<sup>3</sup>. However, the characteristics of young cultural consumers in Italy have not yet been investigated. Only fragmented and relatively scarce information are available from national statistics when the focus is on adolescent consumers, and the framework for the analysis is still unclear.

The most important effort aimed at investigating young cultural consumers from childhood to late adolescence is due to the French Ministry of Culture, where at the beginning of the 2000s a large-scale longitudinal survey which followed the same children from the age of 11 up to 17 was designed. The results of the analysis underline that the culturalization of identities takes place when entering adolescence<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, with the increasingly important role of digital technologies for the generation of digital natives, cultural practices and cultural products become of autonomous interest and reachability. Diverse cultural and creative sectors are involved in this path, ranging from engaging in individual music listening and reading books to visiting museums with friends, from practicing artistic activities to playing videogames, from attending theatre live performance to going to cinema. The hierarchy of cultural consumption sectors is discussed, negotiated and shared within the group of peers more than within the family or the school.

The study we present here intends to contribute to this strand of literature, briefly summarised in section 2, by offering a deeper understanding of the cultural consumption of Italian adolescents. The aim is to test a set of information which is wider than the information available through the Italian national statistics Multipurpose Survey on Households<sup>5</sup>. Among other information about the daily life of households, the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) publishes, indeed, cultural consumption data for some cultural sectors by age classes, including 15-17 and 18-19.

For the purpose of this paper, original data were collected through a survey constructed and administered by the Santagata Foundation to a sample of about 350 students in the Cuneo province, in the North-West of Italy, in 2018. The survey allowed us to investigate numerous cultural consumption habits, together

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> European Commission 2018a.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> KEA 2006.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Octobre 2009; Octobre, Berthomier 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> ISTAT 2019.

with the type of school and the school results, the family cultural capital and the use of leisure time dedicated to sports and to videogames play, as described in section 3 dedicated to data and methodology. A cluster analysis based on a posteriori approach was implemented, identifying four clusters of adolescent cultural consumers. The results are presented in section 4.1, where the clusters are described according to 5 cultural sectors (music, cinema, museum, performing art, books) and also taking into consideration the direct engagement in cultural practices of the sample. In section 4.2 we further investigated the profile of each cluster through a number of socio-demographic characteristics. To complete the study, in section 5 two focuses are developed. The first is dedicated to music listening and the preferred device among smartphone, computer, tablet, and radio; the second is dedicated to books reading and the preferred method between paper books, and e-books. Section 6 sketches some conclusion trying to open a debate about the importance and need of further research on young cultural consumers, in order to better understand the cultural participation and preferences of the next generation of adults.

#### 2. Adolescent cultural consumption in the literature

The general literature on cultural consumptions is strongly influenced by Peterson works on cultural omnivorousness<sup>6</sup>. The omnivore thesis, which emerged in contrast to Bourdieu's formulation of homology in cultural stratification (i.e. upper-class groups consume highbrow culture while lower class groups prefer lowbrow culture), caught the attention of a number of scholars who demonstrated its applicability and its variations in diverse cultural fields in different countries<sup>7</sup>. While there is a growing interest on the concept of omnivorousness among adult cultural consumers, the literature on adolescent cultural participation is still not extensive. A review of the literature shows that the youngest, in consumption theories, are traditionally thought of as mere passive actors in the adults' consumption patterns<sup>8</sup>, briefly mentioned in studies concerning consumer behaviour or made look as an implied presence. In his theory of social reproduction, Bourdieu stated that cultural capital is passed down from generation to generation through the habitus formed within the family of origin, therefore young's cultural participation is mostly determined by the family background<sup>9</sup>. Bourdieu identified three different forms of cultural capital: embodied, which concerns provisions and practices (i.e. tastes and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Peterson 1992, 1997; Peterson, Simkus 1992; Peterson, Kern 1996.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> As referred in Sullivan, Katz-Gerro 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Bourdieu 1984; Campbell 1987.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Bourdieu 1984 and 1986.

cultural participation), institutionalized, which relates to the level of education, and objectified, which includes the possession of cultural goods<sup>10</sup>. In this scheme, the presence of all three forms of cultural capital in the family can be assumed to have an impact on the cultural participation patterns of adolescents. Starting from this theory, many studies have found a strong link between parental and adolescent participation in highbrow cultural activities<sup>11</sup> as well as in popular music tastes<sup>12</sup>. For example, focusing on the dynamics of cultural preferences' transmission from a generation to another, the active involvement of parents in the cultural participation of their children has been demonstrated to be a significant variable in the definition of a culture-prone mentality in children<sup>13</sup>. In particular, a positive model in terms of cultural consumption is relevant; however, it is the actual participation of parents with their children in cultural activities that creates the children's own interest in cultural goods and services<sup>14</sup>. Furthermore, some other researchers have found significant effects of parental educational level on literary reading and attending cultural events<sup>15</sup>. From these studies, it has become clear that there are two main determinants of cultural participation, which are cultural participation in the family of origin and the attained educational level. Anyway, most of these theories regarding the cultural consumption of minors so far revolved around the relationship with the parents and their direct influence on children's behaviour. Only recently it has been theorized that many other variables can influence children and adolescents' cultural consumption and preferences, starting from their parents and siblings' behaviour, to media, to commercial activities, to school environment and peers<sup>16</sup>. Indeed, with the digital revolution, cultural practices are evolving, particularly among the generations of young people known as digital natives, i.e. those who are familiar with information and communication technologies. As a result, cultural practices and cultural products are increasingly of autonomous interest and reachability for young consumers<sup>17</sup>. These processes lead to rethink the functioning of intergenerational transmission, both in terms of family transmission and in terms of the link between culture and knowledge.

The attention payed to the consumption of cultural products by adolescents as autonomous consumers has recently started to rise. Specific national statistics are, however, missing, except for statistics on household consumption and habits generally related to the use of free time, from which some partial data can be derived.

<sup>17</sup> Octobre, Berthomier 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Mohr, DiMaggio 1995; van Eijck 1997; Nagel 2010; Kraaykamp, van Eijck 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Siongers 2007; ter Bogt et al. 2011; Willekens, Lievens 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Van Hek, Kraaykamp 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> van Eijck 1999; Kraaykamp, Nieuwbeerta 2000; Kraaykamp et al. 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Šramová 2017.

The most important effort aimed at specifically investigating young cultural consumers from childhood to late adolescence is due to the French Ministry of Culture, through its Département des études, de la prospective et des statistiques (DEPS), where a large-scale longitudinal survey which followed the same children (a sample group of almost 4000) from the age of 11 (in 2002) up to 17 (in 2008) was designed. This study describes the frequency and diversity of adolescent practices, uses and consumption, and the influence of transmission agents (parents, family, school, cultural institutions, etc.) in the cultural field. The results of the analysis underline that the culturalization of identities takes place when entering adolescence, when the typical role to be either a child or a scholar gives way to the logic of identity which favours the passage to affiliation rather than filiation<sup>18</sup>. The survey investigated questions like: How do children acquire an appreciation for culture, and how does this change over the period which takes them from childhood to late adolescence? What part does engage in such activities as watching television, listening to the radio and to music, reading books and magazines, playing video games, using computers and surfing the internet play in the daily lives of young people, and to what extent does it contribute to the construction of their identity? Therefore, various cultural and creative sectors are involved, ranging from the engaging in individual music listening and reading books to visiting museums with friends, from practicing artistic activities to playing videogames, from attending theatre live performance to going to cinema. The adopted research method is aimed at collecting more detailed information than the typical percentages of male and female consumers available from the statistics on household consumption. Moreover, the role of the family and the school is also investigated thanks to the appropriate data collected.

In Italy, cultural consumption data are collected by ISTAT every year inside the Multipurpose Survey on Households – Aspects of Daily Life, where a breakdown by age is provided for age classes 15-17 and 18-19. The picture depicted for 2018 shows a high percentage of young consumers from 15 years to 19 years old never attending theatre performances (69%) and music concerts (59%); on the contrary, most of them went to cinema  $(83\%)^{19}$ . In terms of engagement in reading books, the percentage of young not reading any books is 44.5%, and, among the young who reads, only 10.5% declare to read more than 12 books a year.

<sup>18</sup> October 2009; Octobre, Berthomier 2011.<sup>19</sup> ISTAT 2019.

#### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Data

The study of cultural consumption of teenagers, seen as consumers not yet independent from an economic point of view, but already independent in the choice of their own consumption and with developed and precise tastes, deserves a specific data collection, since not all the relevant variables are available in the typical dataset provided by ISTAT, as already discussed in the previous section.

The survey conducted by ISTAT on Italian households is not conceived in order to specifically investigate the young cultural consumers. An *ad hoc* survey was therefore constructed by the Santagata Foundation with the collaboration of the authors, and in 2018 a questionnaire was administered to a sample of adolescent students living in the Cuneo province, in the Piedmont region (North-West of Italy). In particular, the size of the sample was determined by an optimal criterion based on the number of students attending secondary school in the province. The objective was to guarantee the widest possible diffusion of the questionnaire to the selected age group and the territorial coverage by type of school, observing a principle of maximum heterogeneity and differentiation. A quantitative approach has been adopted, choosing the method of the structured interview in the form of a questionnaire self-filled by the students at school with the support of their professors.

The resulting sample is composed of 334 teenagers (197 girls and 137 boys) aged between 15 and 20, attending different types of high school. From a quantitative point of view, we can assume that the students are representative of the student population of the province.

The questionnaire was built as an update of the model of the survey proposed to French children and teenagers by the DEPS at the beginning of the 2000s, which, as briefly described in section 2, had given rise to one of the most detailed research on the cultural practices and behaviours of children and teens. Accordingly, the variables investigated in our research relate to the adolescents' engagement in listening to music, reading books, going to the cinema, going to museums and attending performing arts. The picture of cultural consumption is then completed by considering also the level of direct practicing of cultural activities. Respondents were asked how often they attended, in the last year, the above cultural consumptions and the responses were categorised within a range from 1 (never) to 4 (very often). The adopted approach to measure cultural consumption activities differs from ISTAT<sup>20</sup>, in particular about music and books. In our questionnaire, the chosen question aims at measuring the importance of the music listening for the adolescents, whereas the question by

ISTAT relates only to music concerts attendance. As far as books are concerned, we measured the frequency of the act of reading, and not the number of books read. Quite similar and comparable are, however, the questions about going to the cinema, to museums, and attending performing arts. Are not available, within the ISTAT survey, the data about the direct practicing of cultural activities which we measured. Finally, we collected information about the money the adolescents allocate to the investigated categories of cultural consumption.

Following the literature on the factors that influence the young cultural consumption, we included relevant additional information, for each individual, about the family cultural capital, measured with the number of books at home<sup>21</sup> and parents' education<sup>22</sup>. Furthermore, a section of the questionnaire was dedicated to the type of school attended and to the school results<sup>23</sup>, were the students could classify themselves in four categories (bad, sufficient, good, excellent results). Lastly, we investigated the use of leisure time, where sports and videogames were measured asking to the respondents how often they practice these activities.

#### 3.2 Method

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, we implemented a variety of methods and statistical analyses. First, segmentation was done using cluster analysis based on *a posteriori* approach. This technique allows individuals to be clustered in such a way that those in each group are more similar to each other than those in other groups, thereby creating homogeneity within a cluster and heterogeneity between clusters. The segmentation variables include six cultural consumption items measured on four-point Likert scale. The number of segmentation variables is in line with the number of observations<sup>24</sup>. Multicollinearity is not an issue with the variables; thus, following Dolnicar suggestion, no principal components analysis was conducted to reduce it<sup>25</sup>.

The clustering method was the hierarchical Ward's algorithm, since the dataset is not very large and thus unsuitable for non-hierarchical clustering<sup>26</sup>. In our case, there were elbows at four, six and eight segments, thereby four to eight segments were tested. We then identified four segments as consistent and interpretable. Discriminant analysis was adopted to determine which predictor variables best classified cases into each of the clusters.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Bourdieu 1986.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Bourdieu 1986; Nagel 2010; Willekens, Lievens 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Nagel 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Mooi, Sarstedt 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Dolnicar 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Dolnicar 2003.

Second, we sought to establish the profile of each group through the characteristics of cultural consumption and the socio-demographic characteristics of students involved in the survey. Statistical tests have been applied to achieve this goal, based on the nature of the variables (metric and non-metric). The analysis of variance (ANOVA) and chi-square tests were used to ascertain if there were significant differences between the clusters and the other variables in the study.

#### 4. Results

#### 4.1 Cluster segmentation

The ambition of this study is to efficiently use cluster analysis to segment adolescents based on their cultural consumptions. Thus, the variables measuring cultural consumptions became the variables used within the cluster analysis. First hierarchical cluster analysis with Ward's linkage was performed, to define an appropriate number of clusters. The first step suggested a four to eight clusters solution as appropriate for the data set. After examining multiple tests on respondents, four clusters were optimally proposed, which were found to be 91 (Cluster 1), 90 (Cluster 2), 65 (Cluster 3) and 88 (Cluster 4), accounting respectively 27.2% for the first Cluster, 26.9% for the second, 19.5% for the third and 26.3% for the fourth.

In order to assess the validity of the four clusters proposed, discriminant analysis and ANOVA were performed. The discriminant analysis was run on the four clusters by the clustering variables, revealing that 96.3% of cases were correctly classified within the clustering procedure.

		Predicted Group Membership						
	1	2	3	4	Total			
Cluster 1	88	0	0	2	90			
	97.78%	0.00%	0.00%	2.22%				
Cluster 2	0	90	1	0	91			
	0.00%	98.90%	1.10%	0.00%				
Cluster 3	0	2	59	4	65			
	0.00%	3.08%	90.77%	6.15%				
Cluster 4	2	0	0	86	88			
	2.27%	0.00%	0.00%	97.73%				
Total	90	92	60	92	334			

Tab. 1. Results of discriminant analysis (Source: own calculations)

As presented in Table 1, of those included in Cluster 1, 97.78% were correctly classified; among those who were included in Cluster 2, 98.90% were correctly assigned; at the same time, 90.77% of those in Cluster 3 were correctly classified; finally, in Cluster 4, 97.73% of those were correctly assigned.

Then ANOVA was performed on variables mean scores to determine significant group differences, followed by a cross-tab analysis with chi-square on socio-demographic variables. Results of the ANOVA and mean scores analysis are presented in Table 2. The analysis revealed significant mean differences in all the cultural consumption variables across the clusters.

Variables	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Tot	F-value
Listening music	3.90	3.56	3.88	3.68	3.75	6.74
Going to cinema	3.67	3.64	3.12	3.14	3.39	11.87
Going to museum	3.29	3.29	2.54	2.00	2.80	44.14
Attending performing arts	3.37	3.21	1.55	1.19	2.35	254.56
Reading books	2.54	2.27	2.22	1.36	2.12	22.69
Practising artistic activities	3.53	1.53	2.98	1.13	2.31	236.38

Tab. 2. Clusters in cultural consumption activities and practices of young consumers (Source: own calculations)

According to the results of our cluster analysis, young cultural consumers can be classified according to their level of consumption in cultural activities. In Table 2, such activities are presented in a decreasing order, defined according to the overall level of consumption (column Tot). Music consumption is intense in all the clusters; however, Cluster 1 and 2 show high levels of consumption in all the cultural activities, while Cluster 3 and Cluster 4 are characterised by lower levels in all the other domains, in particular in performing arts and museums. We can identify the young consumers belonging to our first two clusters with the consumers defined by the literature as exhibiting omnivorous and voracious behaviour, i.e. combining a diverse range of cultural activities with a high frequency of participation<sup>27</sup>. Our results are consistent with the main findings of the literature on omnivorousness, which identifies as omnivorous in particular the younger cultural consumers<sup>28</sup>, and specifically the younger and highly educated cultural consumers<sup>29</sup>. Cluster 1 and 2 can be further differentiated according to an additional variable introduced in our study: the level of artistic practices presented in the last row of Table 2. Cluster 2 reveals indeed significant lower artistic practices participation, and slightly lower level of cultural activities in the examined sectors.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Sullivan, Katz-Gerro 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Peterson, Kern 1996.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Warde *et al.* 1999; van Eijck 2001; Holbrook *et al.* 2002; Lopez-Sintas, Garcia-Alvarez 2002.

Cluster 3 and 4, both characterised by a generalised lower level of consumption in all the tested cultural activities, show a noticeable reduction in museum and performing arts. Cluster 4, especially, identifies a group of young people scarcely involved in cultural consumptions and in artistic practices.

Additional relevant characteristics, further distinguishing the four clusters, are presented in Table 3 in the following section.

#### 4.2 Cluster profiles: socio-demographic characteristics and cultural expenses

A cross-tab analysis with chi-square was performed on a number of socio-demographic variables in order to test whether the four clusters differ accordingly (Table 3). Chi-square test revealed differences across the clusters based on gender ( $\chi^2 = 28.97$ ; p = 0.000), age ( $\chi^2 = 27.28$ ; p = 0.007) and school ( $\chi^2 = 95.83$ ; p = 0.014), as well as school results ( $\chi^2 = 15.42$ ; p = 0.004) and time spent doing sports ( $\chi^2 = 25.74$ ; p = 0.015) and playing videogames ( $\chi^2 = 17.70$ ; p = 0039). There were also differences across the clusters based on the cultural environment of the family, including number of books at home ( $\chi^2 = 46.97$ ; p = 0.004) and parents' education ( $\chi^2 = 24.96$ ; p = 0.024).

The socio-demographic features of the young consumers significantly contribute to the understanding of the main characteristics of the four clusters. The starting point is the well-established idea that children and adolescents are somehow influenced in their consumption of cultural goods and services by the environment they are exposed to, and that minors belonging to high-income and high-education environments are more likely to experience and consume high cultural content than those of lower socio-economic status. The results presented in Table 3 allow us to highlight that Cluster 1 and 2, where a high level of consumption in all the cultural activities was measured, mainly differ between them because of a different gender distribution. In Cluster 1 around 72% are young women, while in Cluster 2 young men are the majority (56%).

The uneven gender distribution is even greater between Cluster 3 and 4, because in Cluster 3 women are more than 74%. This result can be difficultly compared with the main findings of the literature on the role of gender in cultural consumption and leisure activities, since this issue was not strongly investigated and, among the studies that have paid attention to it, findings provide equivocal theoretical and empirical insights. For instance, in a study based on a sample of consumers aged between 16 and 65, men appear to be more voracious than women, but individuals with higher levels of human, economic and cultural capital are more voracious than others, regardless of gender<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Katz-Gerro, Sullivan 2010.

	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Tot	χ2-value
0 1	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	20.07
Gender	71 70	12.04	74.40		50.00	28.97
Female	71.79	43.96	74.19	44.44	58.98	
Male	28.21	56.04	25.81	55.56	41.02	
Age						27.28
16	7.69	7.69	11.83	13.89	10.18	
17	23.08	28.57	40.86	45.83	34.43	
18	34.62	45.05	27.96	27.78	34.13	
19	24.36	15.38	11.83	11.11	15.57	
20	10.26	3.3	7.53	1.39	5.69	
School						95.83
Professional training	10.26	8.79	51.61	59.72	32.04	
Technical school	17.95	23.08	8.60	25.00	18.26	
High school	71.79	68.13	39.78	15.28	49.70	
School results						15.42
Bad results	1.28	2.2	1.08	6.94	2.69	
Sufficient results	29.49	34.07	26.88	45.83	33.53	
Good results	46.15	49.45	60.22	43.06	50.3	
Excellent results	23.08	14.29	11.83	4.17	13.47	
N. of books at home						46.97
None	1.43	1.27	5.88	15.00	5.44	
Less than 50	17.14	20.25	41.18	36.67	28.91	
Between 50 and 250	28.57	44.30	35.29	23.33	33.67	
More than 250	52.86	34.18	17.65	25.00	31.97	
Parents education						24.96
Middle school	22.03	22.86	52.70	35.09	33.85	
High school	47.46	44.29	31.08	47.37	41.92	
University	30.51	32.86	16.22	17.54	24.23	
Sport						25.74
Almost never	16.67	15.38	31.18	34.72	24.25	
1 per month	20.51	13.19	10.75	13.89	14.37	
1 per week	42.31	56.04	49.46	38.89	47.31	
Almost every day	20.51	15.38	8.60	12.50	14.07	
Videogame						17.70
Almost never	57.69	40.66	46.24	31.94	44.31	
1 per month	15.38	29.67	21.51	19.44	21.86	
1 per week	14.10	18.68	19.35	25.00	19.16	
Almost every day	12.82	10.00	12.90	23.61	14.67	

Tab. 3. The role of socio-demographic characteristics in the clusters (Source: own calculations)

In our sample, young consumers omnivorous and voracious in Cluster 1 are mainly students in high school and have excellent results in greater proportion, are relatively older, play frequently sports and are scarcely interested in playing videogames. In Cluster 2, students are as well mainly in high school, but with more ordinary school results, less frequent sports activity and more time allocated to videogames. At this regard, we have to underline that playing videogames may suffer of underreporting since the questionnaire was distributed through schools. In both the clusters, parents' education is the highest, but the number of books at home is bigger for Cluster 1.

Cluster 3 and 4 show lower levels in cultural activity and practices than Cluster 1 and 2, apart from music, and are characterised by a larger presence of students attending professional and technical schools with parents mainly not university graduated. Cluster 3, where the students with parents not highly educated concentrated, differs from Cluster 4 in particular because of the school results. In Cluster 3 people with good and excellent results have a higher share. Quite the reverse, the lowest presence of students with excellent results is in Cluster 4, where the highest rate of people never doing sports and playing videogames almost every day concentrates. This is probably the effect of a typical vicious circle.

In Table 4 some additional information about the economic dimension of the cultural consumption are investigated by considering the percentage of adolescents who allocated some budget to four cultural sectors (music, book, cinema, and theatre) and to videogames and smartphones. The sectors are presented in decreasing order following the results obtained in the column Tot. In the table the results are presented separating the cultural sectors from the videogames and smartphones.

	Cluster 1 (%)	Cluster 2 (%)	Cluster 3 (%)	Cluster 4 (%)	Tot (%)
Cinema	58.06	48.65	42.68	40.00	47.25
Book	51.61	33.78	35.37	7.27	32.97
Theatre	40.32	22.97	15.85	7.27	21.61
Music	29.03	10.81	15.85	3.64	15.02
Videogames	9.68	18.92	10.98	29.09	16.48
Smartphone	27.42	41.89	50.00	40.00	40.66

Tab. 4. Cultural expenses among clusters (Source: own calculations)

The cultural expenses allocation confirms the results previously obtained as the main characteristics driving the cluster analysis. The percentages presented in Table 4 allow us to further highlight that cinema is the cultural activity that absorbs cultural expenses for the highest percentage of young consumers in all the clusters; for music the opposite occurs. This implies that, even though the activity of music listening is the most often practiced activity in all the clusters, except for Cluster 2 where it is slightly less practiced than cinema, from an economic viewpoint it is the activity that, for the young consumers, absorb economic resources in less occasions.

Smartphones are an important tool in today adolescents' life. In all the clusters, a high percentage of adolescents incurs in expenses for smartphones, except for cluster 1, where brilliant students, omnivorous cultural consumers, are described.

Among the cultural sectors investigated, for the generation of digital natives it appears of autonomous interest to develop a focus on the device most frequently used for the music listening, which is the most practiced activity in our sample, as shown in Table 2. Reading books, which is the less practiced activity in our sample, deserves for this reason some further investigation too.

In the following session, music and book consumption activities are further analysed by considering the digital dimension in terms of the frequency of the method used for the consumption activity.

#### 5. Insights for the future consumption of music and books

#### 5.1 Listening to music

The digital shift, and in particular the arrival of music streaming in a scenario of increased competition from global players, has led to fundamental changes in the way music is created, produced and performed, distributed and consumed. In our sample, the cultural activity related to the music listening is the most diffused and it is the highest in all the four clusters. Table 5 shows that on average more than 80% of adolescents listen to music every day (86% are women, 77% are men) and only few men and no woman specified that they almost never listen to music (2.1%).

	Listening to music						
Device	Almost never (%)	1,2,3 times a month (%)	1,2,3 times a week (%)	Almost every day (%)	Tot (%)		
Smartphone	14.29	50.00	85.40	93.33	84.13		
Computer	14.29	12.50	37.78	54.38	50.30		
Tablet	14.29	25.00	24.44	36.50	34.13		
Radio	42.85	37.50	31.10	27.37	28.40		
Total	2.10	2.40	13.47	82.04			

Tab. 5. The music listening by frequency and preferences in listening music device (Source: own calculations)

In the music listening activity, new technologies are one of the main driving forces changing the way in which people interact with music<sup>31</sup>. Music listening is no longer restricted to live performance, physical recordings or radio broadcasts, but can instead be accessed through several new ways, typically digital methods, such as smartphones, tablets and computers. As a result, advances in music

<sup>31</sup> Nill, Geipel 2010.

technology offer the opportunity for music to become increasingly present in people's daily lives<sup>32</sup>. For these reasons, among the preferred music device involved in everyday listening, not surprising, in our sample smartphones are the most diffused (84%), followed by computers (50%), tablets (34%) and radio (28%), as shown in Table 5.

This result is consistent with the main findings of the literature on music listening which identifies the students as the frequent early adopters of new technologies<sup>33</sup> and support the hypothesis that younger people are more likely to use mobile and computer devices to access music, whereas older use more traditional formats, such as radio and, at the time of the publication of the various studies, CD<sup>34</sup>. Our results are also consistent with data published by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) according to which the radio is still the most widely used device for listening to music; however, among young people, 44% listen to music only on smartphones and 74% would choose the smartphone if they could only have one device<sup>35</sup>.

Finally, analysing the distribution between frequency in music listening and device preferences, we can see how the percentage of those who listen to music through their smartphone increases as the frequency of this activity increases. On the other hand, among those who say they almost never listen to music, in most cases (42.8%) they do so through the radio.

#### 5.2 Reading books

In our sample, the less diffused cultural activity is reading books. More than 52% of young male consumers never read books, and, on average, the totality of young people reading scarcely (either never or up to three times a month) is more than 66%. In general, our results show that young male consumers read significantly less than young female ones.

The percentage of Italian children and adolescents, aged between 15 and 19 years, who read books in 2018 was estimated by ISTAT to be around 55%. Among them, over 10% read more than 12 books in a year<sup>36</sup>. In our sample, the percentage of strong readers is quite the same, and it is particularly low when we separately consider the presence of strong young readers within the male consumers' group.

Reading books is an activity mainly done on paper books (Table 6). Nonetheless, the young age, technological innovation in the reading activity is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Krause et al. 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Tepper, Hargittai 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Nielsen Company 2012; Smith 2012; Krause et al. 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> IFPI 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> ISTAT 2019.

not diffused among the young consumers of our sample, since 7.6% uses only e-books, even though the 21.8% uses both paper books and e-books.

However, from this first analysis it is interesting to note that the use of e-books increases with increasing frequency in reading practice. In fact, 42% of those who say they read almost every day affirm to do so through both devices, showing that there could be a complementary relationship between reading on paper books and e-books (Table 6).

		Reading books						
Device	Almost never (%)	1,2,3 times a month (%)	1,2,3 times a week (%)	Almost every day (%)	Tot (%)			
Paper-books	68.35	68.32	84.29	55.26	70.49			
E-books	16.46	6.93	1.43	2.63	7.64			
Both	15.19	24.75	14.29	42.11	21.88			
Total	33.53	32.63	21.86	11.98	100.00			

Tab. 6. The books reading by frequency and preferences in reading method (Source: own calculations)

#### 6. Conclusion

The cultural consumption literature mainly focuses on adults' demand, investigating the role of income, gender and other socio-economic variables. The youngest are traditionally thought of as mere passive actors in the adults' consumption patterns. Nevertheless, we are persuaded that the knowledge regarding children and teenager's cultural consumption deserves specific attention. They, not only are the future consumers and citizens, but are likely to represent a new cohort of cultural consumers embracing new practices and products, given the increasingly important role of digital technologies for the generation of digital natives. The issue becomes even more challenging in the light of the recent international health emergency due to Covid-19 disease, whose impacts have been having strong influence on human behaviour and cultural consumptions. We can expect 2020 to be a turning point, and it is important to also portray a picture of the young cultural consumers' characteristics before that critical phase.

Our findings suggest, through a cluster analysis approach, that young consumers can be segmented into at least four homogeneous groups. There are significant differences in their cultural consumption, family background, and individual cultural capital. In particular, two clusters (Cluster 1 and 2) can be described as a group of young consumers with high cultural capital within the family, a breadth of cultural tastes, and high frequency of participation in

different leisure activities, confirming the omnivorousness and voraciousness thesis<sup>37</sup>. As a consequence, also the allocation of cultural expenditure of these two groups is higher than in other groups. Our results are consistent with the main findings of the literature on omnivorousness, which identifies as omnivorous in particular the younger cultural consumers<sup>38</sup>, and specifically the vounger and highly educated cultural consumers<sup>39</sup>. What differentiates the two clusters is the level of artistic practices. Cluster 2 reveals indeed significant lower artistic practices participation, and slightly lower level of cultural activities in the examined sectors. This group is made by students with more ordinary school results, although mainly in high school, allocating more money to videogames and smartphones, and being older. We can probably consider them as more "passive" young cultural consumers, more externally driven by the education policies and by the market offers. Hence, we can identify the real profile of the "strongest" young cultural consumer (Cluster 1) with a group of teenagers mainly female, in high school, with excellent results in greater proportion, not allocating much time and money to videogames and smartphones. They represent the best target for the producers of cultural contents and services. However, they are not the only ones. A wider overview of the different types of young people involved in the cultural domains is crucial.

At the European level, policy recommendations on culture clearly target the creativity of young people and their innovation potential in the digital age. In the frame of the European Union Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022<sup>40</sup>, in particular, a growing need to focus on young people's participation in culture, in order to foster their creativity and develop skills that are important for their future employability, active citizenship and social inclusion, is recalled. In order for this vision to be implemented, special attention has to be payed towards teenagers at risk to be excluded from such a perspective of design of the future European society. In our study, two clusters in a similar situation emerge. Cluster 3 and 4 show a generalised lower level of consumption in all the tested cultural activities and practices. Cluster 4, especially, identifies the group of young "poor" cultural consumers, scarcely involved in any cultural consumption, with the highest rate of adolescents playing often videogames and never doing sports. This is probably the effect of a typical vicious circle. Similarly, Cluster 3 identifies "scarce" cultural consumers, but with a higher rate of students with good and excellent results, attending professional and technical schools, and in a higher proportion being female.

The existence of different clusters among the young consumers analysed in our research contributes to highlight the need, both for policy-makers and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Sullivan, Katz-Gerro 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Peterson, Kern 1996.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Warde *et al.* 1999; van Eijck 2001; Lopez-Sintas, Garcia-Alvarez 2002; Holbrook *et al.* 2002.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> European Union 2018.

cultural industries, to better understand desires and weaknesses of the various groups within the teenagers, targeting policies and strategies accordingly. Starting from the changing user behaviour due to digitalisation, ageing and culturally diverse societies in Europe, the need of a better understanding of different audiences, and a stronger emphasis on interests and desires of specific groups, such as young people, is mentioned as one of the priorities for cohesion and well-being through culture in the New European Agenda for Culture<sup>41</sup>. A strategic approach related to young people's participation in culture, in order to foster their creativity and develop skills that are important for their individual empowerment and future employability, democratic consciousness and active citizenship, and social inclusion, is invoked. The Agenda seeks to foster the cultural capability of all Europeans by supporting culture-based creativity in education and innovation and making available a wide range of cultural activities and providing opportunities to participate actively.

Within this scenario, our paper contributes to underline how the young European citizens should not be considered as a homogeneous group just because of the age. A significant difference may arise both among them, in terms of cultural activities and active participation, and towards the real use of their common digital knowledge. For the generation of digital natives, in our sample, reading books is, for instance, an activity mainly done on paper books, whereas, among the preferred music device involved in everyday listening, smartphones are the most diffused, but the radio still play an important role.

Culture in the digital age is perceived as a tool potentially able to shape new models of access to culture, in particular engaging young people, their creativity and self-expression possibility, fostering innovation capacity and skills for cultural and creative industries, and reinforcing culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations. Further research is, however, needed, to better understand how really culture is passed down from previous generations, and it becomes a resource for sustainable cultural, social, environmental and economic development of the future. Our study aims at contributing to shed some light on this ambitious vision. However, our results still suffer from a limited amount of data. Our sample, and the conducted analysis, should be considered a first step towards a deeper understanding of the cultural consumption of adolescents in Italy, trying to open a debate about the importance of this kind of research, and, even more critically, about the need of more specific and nation-wide database specifically designed to study young cultural consumers. Further research and data are needed, in order to cover the Italian national territory, and to allow international comparisons, at least at the EU level.

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