

# Disentangling 'Cultural Capital': The Consequences of Cultural and Economic Resources for Taste and Participation

Meir Yaish and Tally Katz-Gerro

Most studies of the determinants of cultural capital have used taste or participation as interchangeable indicators of embodied cultural capital. In this article, we propose to treat the two concepts separately. Specifically, we argue that participation is constrained to a larger degree by financial resources than by tastes and to a lesser degree by cultural resources (parental cultural capital, father's education, and respondent's education); we further argue that tastes are shaped to a greater degree than participation by socialization processes and through the habitus and, to a lesser degree, by financial resources. This article contributes to two aspects of the literature on cultural stratification. First, it deepens our understanding of the association between individuals' tastes and their cultural participation, an issue that has rarely been addressed before. Second, it raises a discussion of the relative influence of cultural versus economic resources on tastes vs. participation, which have not yet been modelled simultaneously. Data for this research was purposely collected by the authors in a survey that was conducted in 2007 in Israel. As expected, we find that cultural participation is constrained by tastes and economic resources, while tastes are constrained by cultural resources but not by income.

## Introduction

Bourdieu's (1987 [1979]) theorization of cultural capital treats attitudes, preferences, and behaviour as forms of embodied cultural capital.<sup>1</sup> Preferences and behaviour in particular have received different empirical manifestations in various works (Lamont and Lareau, 1988), and are often seen as operationally equivalent. Scant attention is paid to the implications of choosing one operationalization of cultural capital over another. Based on a critical evaluation of the literature that has developed Bourdieu's notions and studied mainly preferences and behaviour in the

context of cultural stratification, we argue that there are important differences between preferences and behaviour. We maintain that preferences are antecedents of behaviour and that the two elements are shaped by different determinants. In the empirical analysis, we focus on two dominant measures of cultural capital in research on cultural consumption: cultural tastes, which represent preferences, and cultural participation, which represents behaviour.

In his influential work, Bourdieu (1984) uses the concept of cultural capital to describe a model of class structure and class reproduction. He argues that class and cultural competencies are hierarchical in mutually

reinforcing ways. As such, cultural capital is a signal that is used to maintain class domination and to shape individuals' life chances. The dominant classes have distinct cultural tastes, which they use as both an indicator of their cultural capital and as a way to maintain their advantage in social, economic, and cultural arenas. Cultural capital of the legitimate kind creates advantages in the educational system, in the work place, in class mobility, in social interaction and partner selection and in other life outcomes. An understanding of the way cultural capital is shaped is important because it plays a crucial role in various spheres: cultural preferences are initiators and sustainers of identities and group boundaries (Warde, 1994; Lamont and Molnár, 2001); they mark and maintain social distinction (Peterson and Kern, 1996; Katz-Gerro, 2002); and they reflect and create symbols and symbolic meanings (Bryson, 1996).

In his theory of taste, Bourdieu (1984) describes the dialectical relationship between the way individuals construct reality and the social conditions that constrain them. The process by which individuals classify cultural preferences, hence themselves, implies that cultural preferences must be related to hierarchical social structures. The *habitus* is a key mechanism in this process as it denotes cognitive structures through which individuals deal with the social world. The *habitus* is a manifestation of internalized, embodied capacities, symbolic abilities and tastes that contribute to the legitimization of privilege and facilitates the selection of the next privileged generation. Through the mediation of the *habitus*, individuals internalize their class position and express it in cultural choices that reproduce the very class structure itself.

The manner in which preference and behaviour were employed in research on cultural consumption can be described as falling into three main categories: first, studies that have used either cultural tastes or cultural participation as interchangeable indicators of embodied cultural capital (e.g. Peterson, 2005; Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007); second, studies that have used tastes and participation in tandem as indicators of embodied cultural capital without expecting them to perform differently (e.g. DiMaggio, 1982; Lamont, 1992; Erickson, 1996; Kraaykamp, 2002, special issue; Warde, 2008); and third, more recent discussions that favour treating taste and participation as two distinct dimensions of cultural capital (Lahire, 2004; Silva, 2006; Rössel, 2008).

While most studies ignore the distinction between tastes and participation, some have indeed discussed the implications and advantages of using either tastes

or participation in measuring cultural capital. Consequently, two views have emerged. The first argues in favour of using taste, claiming that it represents a category of engagement that is more refined than participation (Silva, 2006). Taste, it is argued, speaks more directly to Bourdieu's notion of cultural disposition as a form of aesthetic appreciation that depends on a trained capacity cultivated by the family and the educational system. Bourdieu's empirical approach includes many more indicators of taste than indicators of participation (Bourdieu, 1984, Appendix 1), and, in his theoretical approach, symbolic knowledge plays a more important role than conspicuous consumption. The most enthusiastic advocate of taste over participation is Peterson (2005), who argues that taste is a direct measure of cultural self-construction, while cultural activities are filtered through the availability of arts, which varies widely by size of locality, life stage, and economic resources. Analysis of stated preferences avoids confounding participation with possible limits imposed on participation by availability and affordability (Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Peterson, 2007). Another reason for preferring tastes over practices is that the latter may be instigated by obligations such as mandatory school activities or professional pressures (Lahire, 2008).

The second view favours using cultural participation for two main reasons. First, cultural participation is a public manifestation of social boundaries (e.g. Veblen, 1960 [1899]), which 'makes visible the categories of culture' and contributes to their stability (Douglas and Isherwood, 1979). This manifestation is even more salient in contemporary society, where cultural hierarchies are becoming increasingly blurred by the globalization of culture and where the distinction between highbrow and popular culture is being eroded (Holt, 1997). Consequently, active involvement in the arts is more meaningful than cultural preferences or aesthetic knowledge in facilitating class solidarity and exclusivity (Ostrower, 1998). Second, participation is a form of social action that signals commitment, while taste is merely a statement (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Thus, reports on what individuals actually do are a more reliable measure than self-reported cultural tastes (Van Rees, Vermunt and Verboord, 1999; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2002). In addition, overt cultural choices are more closely related than tastes to the concept of lifestyle (López-Sintas and Katz-Gerro, 2005). In considering the temporal dimension of cultural behaviour, for example, cultural choices are thus truer to Bourdieu's emphasis on the *way* individuals consume in addition to *what* they

consume (Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007; Sullivan, 2008).

The literature is dominated by studies that have employed measures of taste, possibly because since Bourdieu, research in this field has developed theoretically and empirically around the study of tastes. For example, research on the omnivore thesis (Peterson and Kern, 1996) has focused almost exclusively on musical tastes (Bryson, 1997; Emmison, 2003; Garcia-Alvarez, Katz-Gerro and López-Sintas, 2007; Katz-Gerro, Raz and Yaish, 2007). It is interesting to note that most survey research conducted by national agencies focuses predominantly on measures of tastes. Studies employing measures of participation are less prevalent. Such studies have used measures of leisure activities and cultural participation in the visual arts, the performing arts, and the fine arts (Warde, Martens and Olsen, 1999; Holbrook, Weiss and Habich, 2002; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007; Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007; Bennett *et al.*, 2009) as well as measures of involvement with arts organizations (Ostrower, 1998).

### The Proposed Model

While the notion of habitus is central in Bourdieu's writing on taste, consumption and inequality, its underlying mechanisms remain unspecified and open for various interpretations in the theoretical sense. In some places, Bourdieu argues that the habitus constitutes dispositions that are translated into cultural tastes (preferences) that condition behaviour: 'habitus is converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions' (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 170). In other writings, Bourdieu (1995 [1977]) sees the habitus as a set of rules, values, and dispositions, representing principles of regulated improvisations. These two different interpretations of the mechanisms that produce behaviour are echoed, for example, in dual process theories in social psychology (Fazio, 1990; see also Kroneberg, Yaish and Stocké, 2010). Accordingly, under certain conditions behaviour is guided by rules, norms, principles and the like (Etzioni, 1988), while under other conditions behaviour is planned and rational (Ajzen, 1991). The theory of planned behaviour, an extension of Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action, aims to predict behaviours from attitudes and explains the process through which the two are linked.

Our model emphasizes the latter point of view, suggesting that tastes antecede participation. This claim is supported by extensive research that has established that attitudes or preferences antecede behaviour and

that this relationship applies to a variety of social phenomena (Ajzen, 1991). Additional support to our model is drawn from sociological literature that emphasizes the ways that dispositions and practices are differently organized and how this can shape consumption research (Reckwitz, 2002; Warde, 2005).

To sum, we propose a theoretical framework in which cultural tastes antecede cultural participation. Specifically, we apply an integrative analysis of tastes and participation and the way that cultural resources—parental characteristics and educational attainment—are converted through the habitus into dispositions generative of meaningful practices (Bourdieu, 1984).

We are not the first to think of tastes as antecedents of participation. For example, Silva (2006) studied preferences and tastes as two separate realms and showed that liking certain artists or genres in painting does not necessarily mean going to museums to see works by those artists or in those genres. Similarly, Rössel (2008) argued that social action is constrained by preferences and showed that cultural participation is also largely dependent on cultural preferences. In addition, Peterson and Simkus (1992) argue that patterns of arts attendance generally follow a pattern of expressed preferences.

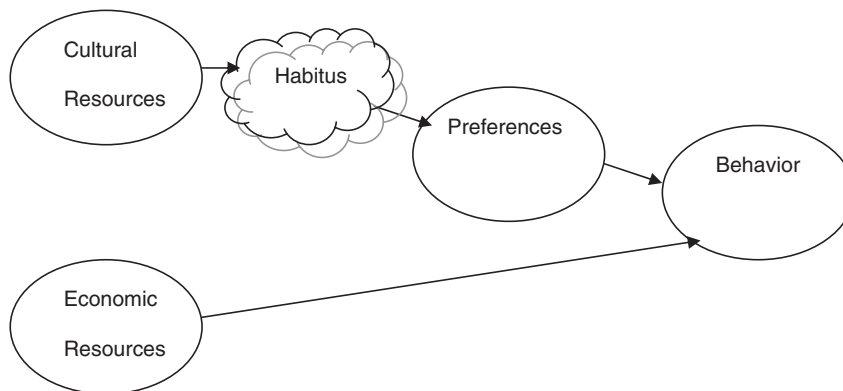
So far we have discussed various points of view regarding the equivalence or difference between tastes and participation. We have asserted that while tastes antecede participation, they should be viewed together as part of a complex depiction of cultural capital. Next, we wish to elaborate on the way in which determinants of tastes and participation may differ. Findings in the literature point to two major types of variables that shape cultural capital (whichever way it is operationalized): economic resources (e.g. income, class) and cultural resources (e.g. education, parental cultural capital). In addition to the consistent centrality of these variables, other factors emerge as significant depending on the social context of the investigation (e.g. age, gender, race/ethnicity). In light of our discussion of the conceptual differences between tastes and participation, and the studies we reviewed above that characterize the dominant correlates of these two dimensions of cultural capital, we propose to also think of participation as more heavily constrained by economic resources (e.g. Lahire, 2004; Peterson, 2005; Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007) and of tastes as more significantly shaped by cultural resources, through the habitus (e.g. Bourdieu, 1984; Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Ostrower, 1998; Silva, 2006). As stated above, habitus is shaped both in the family and at school.<sup>2</sup> Parents pass on to their children cognitive

capacities and cultural competences that shape cultural dispositions (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Lamont and Lareau, 1988; Farkas, 1996; Asschaffenburg and Maas, 1997; Dumais, 2005). These dispositions are translated into cultural preferences which may or may not transform into practices, depending on availability and affordability.<sup>3</sup> While the habitus disposes actors to do certain things and provides a basis for the generation of practices (Bourdieu, 1984), it operates within specific limits on practices (Jenkins, 2002), for example, the economic field. Therefore, Bourdieu proposes that material wealth (economic capital) is a resource that individuals draw upon to make their place in society. In other words, individuals adopt strategies that are the result of an ongoing interaction between the dispositions of the habitus and the constraints and possibilities which are the reality of a given social field (Jenkins, 2002).

To summarize, our theorization of the processes by which cultural capital is produced comprises the following three statements: (i) preferences (cultural tastes) are antecedents of behaviour (cultural participation); (ii) behaviour, more than preferences, is constrained by economic resources (e.g. income); and (iii) preferences, more than behaviour, are shaped by cultural resources, through the habitus (parental education, parental cultural capital, and respondents' education). Previous research has paid little, if any, attention to these three features in theorizing the process through which cultural capital is produced. As discussed above, studies do not view taste and participation as two complementary aspects of the concept of cultural capital. As a result, taste and participation are not perceived as driven by different determinants (but see Katz-Gerro, Raz and Yaish, 2007). Furthermore, studies observing the effects of parental cultural capital have mainly focused on

children's educational attainments (see DiMaggio, 1982; Aschaffenburg and Maas, 1997; Van Eijck, 1999; De Graaf, De Graaf and Kraaykamp, 2000; Sullivan, 2001; Dumais, 2002; Van Wel *et al.*, 2006; Jaeger, 2009). Only a few studies have looked at the intergenerational transmission of cultural capital as well (Mohr and DiMaggio, 1995; Van Eijck, 1997; Kraaykamp, 2001, 2003; De Graaf and De Graaf, 2002; Tieben, 2006).

Figure 1 presents a schematic depiction of our theorization. It reiterates our argument that different social mechanisms may be responsible for tastes and participation. More to the point, we hypothesize that cultural tastes mediate the effect of cultural resources (parental characteristics and educational attainment) on participation, but that they do not mediate the effect of economic resources on participation. In other words, the process through which parents transfer cultural advantage to their children occurs through education and tastes, which, together with economic resources, shape participation. This emphasizes once more the proposed distinction between tastes and participation. This distinction is important because of the contrast between signals that are learnt unconsciously through family socialization and incorporated as dispositions or preferences (Bourdieu, 1984), and actual (sometimes conspicuous) consumption which relies heavily on economic resources (Veblen, 1960 [1899]). Although we argue that for individuals, behaviour is anteceded by preferences, this is not necessarily the case in intergenerational transmission of cultural capital. For example, a child's taste for classical music is likely to be developed through activities she shares with her parents, such as listening to classical music and going to classical music concerts. In this example, participation antecedes preferences. In fact, the theoretical model we propose allows for such



**Figure 1** Schematic model of the production of cultural capital

intergenerational effects but due to data limitations we cannot model them empirically.

When coming to test our expectations in a formalized model, we articulate the following two hypotheses:

*H1: The effect of cultural resources on participation is mediated by tastes.*

*H2: The effect of economic resources on participation is not mediated by tastes.*

Embedded in these two hypotheses are a number of bivariate associations between cultural resources, economic resources, tastes, and participation: tastes and participation are associated; economic resources and participation are associated; respondent's education and tastes are associated; parental education is associated with both respondent's education and tastes; and parental cultural participation is associated with both respondent's education and tastes.

## Data and Variables

Data are based on a telephone survey that was conducted in 2007 using a nationally representative sample of the Israeli Jewish population ( $N=1005$ ).<sup>4</sup> The survey was specifically designed by the authors for this project and was carried out by the survey research facilities of the University of Haifa by means of a computerized telephone interviewing system.

### Measures of Respondent's Cultural Capital

Cultural capital theory underlines the importance of adopting institutionalized, high status cultural signals, like having an interest in art and classical music, attending the theater and museums, and reading canonic literature (Lamont and Lareau, 1988). However, more recent developments of cultural consumption theory show that it is eclectic and varied cultural competencies that serve for cultural distinction. A prime example is Peterson's (2005) concept of omnivorous cultural consumption patterns and its role in cultural stratification. While the theory has developed in ways that suggest an inclusive definition of cultural competencies, empirical research did not always follow. Reviews of the literature have emphasized that most studies adopt a narrow theoretical and operational definition of cultural capital as pertaining to participation in, or familiarity with, 'highbrow' cultural styles (Lareau and Weininger, 2004). In light of this point, we employ a more inclusive measure of

cultural capital by utilizing indicators of both highbrow and lowbrow tastes and participation. This also applies to measuring parental cultural capital, which is frequently studied with a focus on highbrow cultural participation. This limited focus disregards the possibility that non-highbrow cultural socialization may have a significant role in shaping cultural consumption. We also utilize indicators that span a wide range of cultural domains, such as cinema, theatre, and music. In doing this we follow Bourdieu's view of the social world as a multi-dimensional space, differentiated into relatively autonomous fields. Within each of these fields, individuals occupy positions determined by the quantities of different types of capital they possess. These positions generate certain dispositions and interest and thus produce similar practices and stances (Bourdieu, 1991). Our indicators of cultural capital are based on factor analyses of specific items relating to these domains. We should emphasize here that previous research has already established the factor structure of these indicators for Israel (Katz-Gerro and Shavit, 1998; Katz-Gerro, Raz and Yaish, 2007, 2009). Given this, we use the factor scores as variables in the following analyses.

### Respondent's cultural taste

This measure pertains to 23 questions about how much the respondent likes or dislikes various genres in theater plays, cinema, and music. Respondents were asked to report, on a scale of one to five, the degree to which they like each genre (1—dislike very much, 2—dislike, 3—mixed feelings, 4—like, 5—like very much). These items were the input of a factor analysis that yielded four factors.<sup>5</sup> Table 1 lists the items that were entered into the factor analysis together with their factor loadings and the mean of the distribution for each item. Each item in the table is indicated by a capital letter in parenthesis representing the domain to which it belongs: performances (P), cinema (C), and music (M). The first factor, which we labelled 'highbrow', includes items pertaining to music such as classical music, blues, and opera; items pertaining to cinema such as independent movies and documentaries; and performances, which includes dance shows and ballet. This factor explains 17.4 per cent of the variance and the reliability score of the items in this factor reaches alpha Cronbach's of 0.82. The second factor, 'popular music', includes four music genres such as dance, pop, rock, and hip hop, and the horror and fantasy genres in film. This factor explains 13.5 per cent of the variance and the reliability score of the items in this factor reaches alpha Cronbach's of 0.69. The third factor, 'popular variety', is dominated

**Table 1** Factor loadings, means and standard deviations of indicators of cultural taste in the domains of performances (P), cinema (C), and music (M)

Variable	Highbrow	Popular music	Popular variety	Folk culture	Mean (SD)
Independent film (C)	<b>0.37</b>	0.14	-0.08	0.10	3.03 (1.40)
Documentary (C)	<b>0.52</b>	-0.10	0.12	0.07	3.52 (1.29)
Classical (C)	<b>0.67</b>	-0.21	0.24	0.08	3.35 (1.38)
Classical (P)	<b>0.73</b>	-0.15	0.17	-0.05	2.94 (1.43)
Dance/ballet (P)	<b>0.67</b>	0.03	0.02	0.04	2.83 (1.51)
Classical (M)	<b>0.77</b>	-0.03	-0.15	0.01	3.08 (1.46)
Blues/jazz (M)	<b>0.58</b>	0.41	-0.03	-0.14	2.85 (1.39)
Opera (M)	<b>0.74</b>	0.03	-0.11	0.01	2.34 (1.42)
Action/horror/fantasy (C)	-0.13	<b>0.56</b>	-0.04	0.10	3.12 (1.51)
Dance/electronic (M)	0.00	<b>0.71</b>	0.01	-0.01	2.20 (1.26)
Pop (M)	0.05	<b>0.68</b>	0.29	0.04	2.90 (1.26)
Rock/heavy metal (M)	0.14	<b>0.63</b>	0.05	-0.08	2.47 (1.40)
Hip hop/rap (M)	-0.13	<b>0.67</b>	0.17	0.05	2.39 (1.33)
Comedy (P)	0.02	0.16	<b>0.68</b>	0.00	3.83 (1.17)
Drama (C)	0.34	-0.11	<b>0.54</b>	-0.03	3.85 (1.14)
Stand-up comedy (P)	-0.31	0.27	<b>0.56</b>	0.14	3.35 (1.38)
Comedy theatre (P)	-0.02	0.11	<b>0.73</b>	0.09	3.71 (1.20)
Musical (C)	0.36	-0.06	<b>0.44</b>	0.30	3.22 (1.36)
Israeli (C)	-0.03	0.09	0.19	<b>0.40</b>	3.35 (1.19)
Contemporary Israeli (M)	-0.04	0.15	0.35	<b>0.49</b>	4.02 (1.12)
Old-time Israeli (M)	0.29	-0.24	0.11	<b>0.65</b>	3.87 (1.28)
Oriental/Mediterranean (M)	-0.10	0.11	-0.02	<b>0.79</b>	2.97 (1.39)
Religious (M)	0.21	-0.10	-0.28	<b>0.58</b>	2.52 (1.45)
Explained Variance	17.4	13.5	9.1	6.8	
Reliability	0.82	0.69	0.65	0.59	
N	870	874	896	917	

The highest loading for each indicator is marked in bold font.

by comedy genres, though it also includes movies belonging to the genres of drama and musicals. This factor explains 9.1 per cent of the variance, and its reliability score is 0.65. Finally, the 'folk culture' factor includes the genres of Israeli music and movies, and represents the traditional forms of culture associated with Israeli society. It explains 6.8 per cent of the variance and its reliability score is 0.59.

#### Respondent's cultural participation

This measure pertains to 17 questions on participation in cultural activities outside the home which include eating out (E), social events (SE), sports (S), various performances (P), and visual arts (V).<sup>6</sup> On a scale of one to five, respondents were asked to report frequency of participation during the last 12 months (1—never, 2—once or twice, 3—three or four times, 4—once in 2 months, 5—at least once a month). These items were the input of a factor analysis that yielded three factors. Table 2 lists the items together with their factor loadings and the mean of the distribution for

each item. The first factor, which we labelled 'highbrow', includes performance items such as theatre and the opera. It also includes participation in social activities such as lectures, sing-along evenings, and visiting museums.<sup>7</sup> This factor explains 20.4 per cent of the variance and the reliability score of the items in this factor reaches alpha Cronbach's of 0.72. The second factor, 'popular participation', includes items such as attending rock concerts, eating out in restaurants and cafes, and going to the movies. Explained variance of this factor is 11.6 per cent and its reliability is 0.59. The third factor is labelled 'sport' and it includes all sporting activities along with going to stand-up comedy shows. Explained variance for this factor is 7.6 per cent and its reliability score is 0.54.

#### Cultural Resources

When referring to cultural resources, which are filtered through the habitus, we specify three commonly used components: parental cultural capital, parental education, and respondents' education (Sullivan, 2007).

**Table 2** Factor loadings, means and standard deviations of indicators of cultural participation in the domains of eating out (E), social events (SE), sport (S), various performances (P), and visual arts (V)

Variable	Highbrow	Popular	Sport	Mean (SD)
Musical (P)	<b>0.51</b>	-0.02	0.23	1.41 (0.82)
Theatre play (P)	<b>0.67</b>	0.18	0.08	2.11 (1.35)
Ballet/dance (P)	<b>0.50</b>	0.33	-0.11	1.23 (0.65)
Classical concert/opera (P)	<b>0.56</b>	0.11	-0.19	1.35 (0.87)
Sing-a-long (SE)	<b>0.49</b>	-0.10	0.07	1.48 (0.99)
Lecture by novelist/artist (SE)	<b>0.62</b>	0.10	0.02	1.58 (1.09)
Lecture on travel in exotic places (SE)	<b>0.57</b>	-0.01	0.25	1.25 (0.73)
Museum/gallery (V)	<b>0.54</b>	0.33	-0.04	2.02 (1.11)
Rock/pop concert (P)	-0.02	<b>0.59</b>	0.13	1.32 (0.81)
Fast food restaurant (E)	-0.24	<b>0.52</b>	0.34	3.02 (1.66)
Pub or café (E)	0.10	<b>0.69</b>	0.22	3.78 (1.51)
Blockbuster movie (V)	0.26	<b>0.61</b>	0.08	2.18 (1.46)
Art house movie (V)	0.32	<b>0.49</b>	-0.11	1.32 (0.88)
Soccer match (S)	-0.07	0.03	<b>0.72</b>	1.37 (1.03)
Basketball match (S)	0.09	0.00	<b>0.70</b>	1.23 (0.79)
Other sports events (S)	0.04	0.18	<b>0.44</b>	1.25 (0.83)
Stand-up (P)	0.16	0.20	<b>0.55</b>	1.64 (0.98)
Explained variance	20.4	11.6	7.6	
Reliability	0.72	0.59	0.54	
N	983	985	999	

The highest loading for each indicator is marked in bold font.

**Table 3** Factor loadings, means and standard deviations of indicators of parental cultural participation in the domains of various performances (P), visual arts (V), and reading (R)

Variable	Highbrow	Popular	Prop. (SD)
Theatre and classical music show (P)	<b>0.81</b>	0.14	0.45 (0.50)
Season ticket to theatre/concert (P)	<b>0.64</b>	0.02	0.19 (0.39)
Book reading (R)	<b>0.59</b>	0.07	0.78 (0.41)
Museums (V)	<b>0.76</b>	0.06	0.46 (0.50)
Night clubs (P)	-0.14	<b>0.79</b>	0.16 (0.36)
Light entertainment/comedy show (P)	0.20	<b>0.73</b>	0.42 (0.49)
Cinema (V)	0.45	<b>0.52</b>	0.64 (0.48)
Explained variance	35.5	17.6	
Reliability	0.70	0.51	
N	924	937	

The highest loading for each indicator is marked in bold font.

### Parental cultural capital

This measure pertains to seven questions on participation (1—yes, 0—no) in cultural activities outside the home by the respondent's parents when the respondent was in high school. These items span various performances (P), visual arts (V), and reading (R). A factor analysis of the items yielded two factors, which we labelled 'highbrow' and 'lowbrow'. Table 3 lists the items that were entered into the factor analysis together with their factor loadings

and the proportion of the distribution for each item. The 'highbrow' factor includes theater and classical music shows, holders of season tickets to the theatre or to classical music orchestras, book reading, and museum visiting. The 'lowbrow' factor includes going to nightclubs, attending light entertainment shows, and going to the movies. The explained variance of the highbrow factor is 35.5 per cent and its reliability score is 0.70. The explained variance of the lowbrow factor is 12.6 and its reliability is 0.51.

### Parental education

This was measured as the highest number of years of schooling attained by either the respondent's mother or father (mean = 11.84, SD = 4.95).

### Respondent's education

This was the total number of years of schooling attained by the respondent (mean = 14.21, SD = 3.08).

### Economic Resources

Our measure of economic resources is based on the respondent total net household income (mean = 9206.83, SD = 5901.12). We use its natural log in the analyses.<sup>8</sup>

## Results

### Bivariate Analysis

Table 4 presents a correlation matrix that includes all the variables discussed above. In interpreting the matrix, we first discuss bivariate associations between our groups of variables (economic and cultural resources, taste, and participation).

The general pattern is that tastes affect participation. More specifically, factors that are considered highbrow on both taste and participation are positively associated, while factors that are non-highbrow are negatively associated with the highbrow factors. Factors that are non-highbrow on both taste and participation are positively associated, with one exception of a negative association between folk taste and popular participation.

Second, income is positively associated with all three factors of cultural participation, and two of these correlations are statistically significant. It is worth noting, however, that income is not statistically significantly associated with three out of the four factors representing cultural taste. Third, respondent's education is significantly associated with tastes. It has a positive significant association with the highbrow factor and negative associations with the non-highbrow taste factors. Fourth, parental education has a positive significant association with respondent's education. However, it does not have a significant effect on tastes. An exception is a negative association with the folk taste factor. Finally, parental highbrow cultural participation has a positive and statistically significant association with respondent's education. It also has a positive association with highbrow taste, and a negative association with folk taste. We can also see that

**Table 4** Correlation matrix of all the variables in the analysis

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
(1) Parental education											
(2) Parental highbrow	0.443**										
(3) Parental lowbrow	0.036	-0.046									
(4) R's education	0.311**	0.211**	-0.006								
(5) Household income	0.141**	0.119**	0.115**	0.280**							
(6) Highbrow taste	0.014	0.281*	-0.090*	0.245**	-0.027						
(7) Popular music	0.029	0.035	0.146**	-0.169**	0.025	-0.009					
(8) Popular variety	0.061	-0.059	0.207**	-0.080**	0.059	-0.059	-0.001				
(9) Folk culture	-0.242**	-0.195**	-0.025	-0.159**	-0.103**	0.011	-0.043	-0.037			
(10) HB participation	0.050	0.151**	-0.011	0.262**	0.072	0.399**	-0.184**	-0.049	0.050		
(11) Popular participation	0.279**	0.166**	0.097**	0.140**	0.224**	-0.074*	0.237**	0.106**	-0.307**	-0.017	
(12) Sport participation	-0.082*	-0.094**	0.197**	-0.135**	0.096**	-0.294**	0.210**	0.155**	0.127**	-0.023	-0.006

\* $P < 0.05$ , \*\* $P < 0.01$ .



parental lowbrow cultural participation has a positive significant association with popular music taste and popular variety, and a negative significant association with highbrow taste.

To summarize, the analyses in Table 4 indicate that tastes and participation are associated; that income mainly affects participation; and that cultural resources affects tastes. Table 4 also shows that cultural resources are significantly correlated with both indicators of taste and participation, as has been repeatedly reported in the literature. In light of our theoretical discussion, it is of prime concern to explore the process of cultural capital production in a multivariate analysis. More specifically, we expect that the effect of cultural resources on participation will be mediated by tastes (H1) and that the effect of income will not (H2).

In order to test these hypotheses empirically, we now present a structural equations model that estimates path coefficients. In this analysis we elaborate on Figure 1 to estimate the association between cultural and economic resources, tastes, and participation. In this analysis, cultural resources are represented by highbrow and lowbrow parental cultural participation, parental education, and respondent's education; economic resources are represented by household income; tastes are represented by the four factors discussed above; and participation is represented by the three factors discussed above.<sup>9</sup>

## Multivariate Analysis

Table 5 presents fit statistics for three models which we devised according to the following rationale. We start with estimation of the *theoretical* model as presented in Figure 1. This model states that tastes are affected by cultural resources, through the habitus, and that participation is affected by economic resources and tastes.<sup>10</sup> This model does not fit the data well.

Next, we estimate a model that includes all possible effects of cultural and economic resources on tastes and participation and all possible links between tastes and participation. This model, labelled *inclusive*, echoes research that does not differentiate between the determinants of taste and participation. As can be seen in Table 5, this model does not fit the data well

either. Building on Model 2, we estimate an additional model, which removes from Model 2 non-significant links (i.e. a *trimmed* model). This model achieves good fit to the data—RMSEA = 0.049, CMIN/DF = 3.422, CFI = 0.954, PCLOSE = 0.533—and resonates well with our theoretical formulation. A schematic presentation of this model, together with the standardized coefficients, is presented in Figure 2, and also in Table 6 for readers who prefer this more conventional format.

The model presented in Figure 2 is consistent with our expectations that the association between income and participation is not mediated by taste and that the association between cultural resources and participation is mediated by taste. More specifically, regarding the effect of income, our model removes three out of the four possible direct links between income and tastes, while keeping all three links between income and participation variables. Regarding the effect of cultural resources, our model allows them some direct link with participation. Although this specification seems to deviate from our theoretical model, we note that only 6 out of 12 possible links are specified, and, more importantly, as we show below, much of these effects are mediated by taste. Finally, this model removes few (6 out of 16) possible links between cultural capital and taste, namely, those which return insignificant effects.

In Table 6 we show standardized coefficients derived from a path analysis representing the trimmed model (Model 3 in Table 5). We shall first describe the lower right box, which refers to the associations between taste and participation. As can be seen, there are positive path coefficients between highbrow taste and highbrow participation and between popular taste (music or variety) and popular participation (popular or sport). Unsurprisingly, highbrow taste is negatively associated with popular participation (popular or sport), and popular taste (only music) is negatively associated with highbrow participation. The folk taste factor works both ways, where it has a positive association with highbrow participation and with sport participation (which we noted earlier to be negatively associated with highbrow taste), but is negatively associated with popular participation.

**Table 5** Fit statistics of path models

	Model	Chi-square	DF	CMIN/DF	P	RMSEA	PCLOSE	CFI
1	Theoretical	181.294	27	6.715	0.000	0.075	0.000	0.895
2	Inclusive	65.349	11	5.941	0.000	0.070	0.019	0.963
3	Trimmed	95.806	28	3.422	0.000	0.049	0.533	0.954

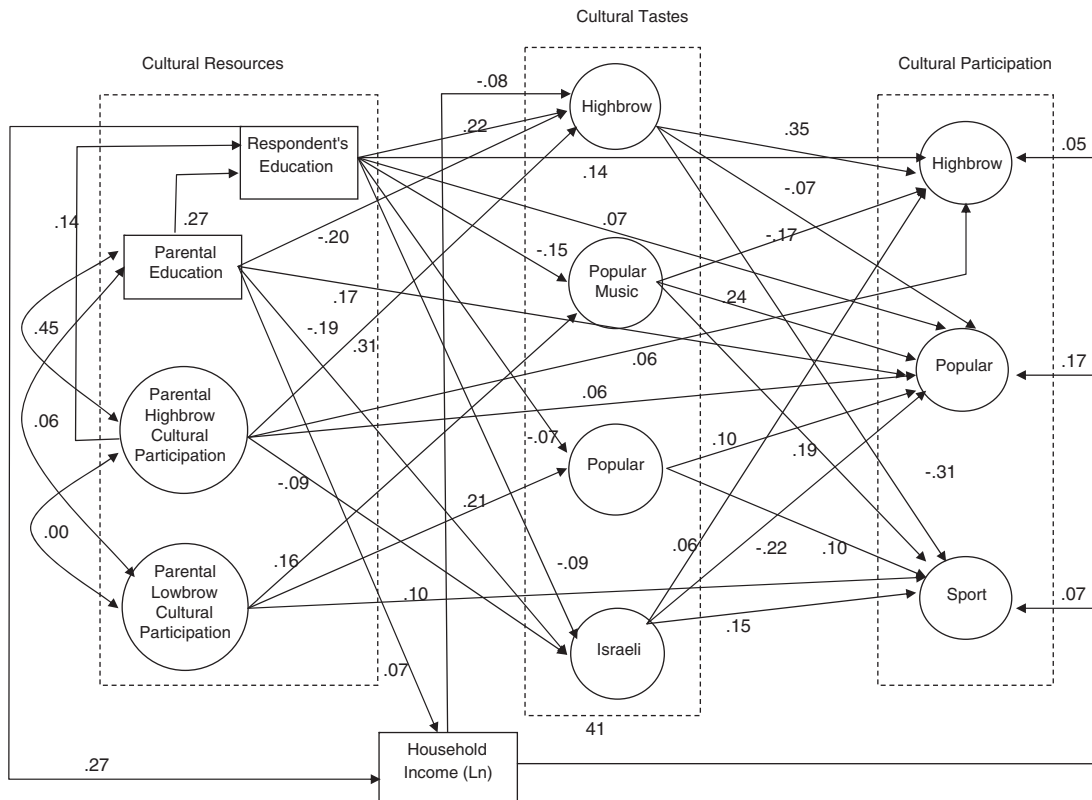


Figure 2 Structural equation modelling path model results

Table 6 Standardized coefficients of structural equation model predicting cultural participation (derived from the trimmed model)<sup>a</sup>

Exogenous variables	R's Educ.	Income	Cultural taste			Cultural participation			
			Highbrow	Popular music	Popular variety	Folk culture	Highbrow	Popular	Sport
Cultural resources									
Parental education	0.272	0.073	-0.196	-	-	-0.190	-	0.169	-
Parental highbrow	0.139	-	0.308	-	-	-0.093	0.064	0.061	-
Parental lowbrow	-	-	-	0.157	0.205	-	-	-	0.097
R's education	-	0.270	0.218	-0.150	-0.067	-0.092	0.140	0.070	-
Economic resources									
Household income	-	-	-0.076	-	-	-	0.055	0.175	0.075
Cultural taste									
Highbrow taste	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.346	-0.073	-0.307
Popular music	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.170	0.241	0.190
Popular variety	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.097	0.105
Folk culture	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.059	-0.222	0.152
R <sup>2</sup>	0.127	0.091	0.130	0.046	0.046	0.085	0.226	0.244	0.199

<sup>a</sup>All coefficients are significant at the P<0.05 level.

This might mean that the folk factor is heterogeneous and therefore less distinctive.

Turning next to the effect of economic resources on taste and participation, the results presented in the fifth row of Table 6 replicate, to a large extent, those presented in Table 4, and are consistent with our expectations. That is, income has a direct effect on cultural participation but not on cultural taste. An exception to this general pattern is the existence of a negative and statistically significant direct effect from income to highbrow cultural taste. This negative effect implies that economic resources alone are not sufficient in order to generate highbrow cultural taste. At the same time, economic resources have positive and statistically significant direct effect on highbrow cultural participation. Overall, then, these results are consistent with our theoretical expectations that cultural taste operates in a realm that is to a large extent independent of economic resources.

Finally, when we examine the effect of cultural resources on cultural participation, in the upper right box, we can see that when such an effect exists, it is positive and that overall the effects are low to moderate. In the upper left box we can see the sizes of the effects of these variables on taste variables, which are much larger. Respondent's education is positively associated with highbrow taste and negatively associated with popular forms of taste (music, variety, and folk). Parental highbrow cultural capital is positively associated with highbrow taste and negatively associated with folk taste, while parental lowbrow cultural capital is positively associated with respondent's popular taste (music and variety). Contrary to cultural capital theory, parental education is negatively associated with highbrow taste. In an analysis not shown here we controlled for age and found that the effect of parental education is positive for the younger group (younger than age 37 years) and negative for the older group (older than age 36 years). We suspect that this reflects a more complex relationship between parental education and older respondents' highbrow taste which involves additional variables and mechanisms that have not been accounted for in our model, such as the influence of spouse's and children's cultural tastes, or ascending professional mobility that is associated with a new set of cultural affinities. For the younger group the effect is more straightforward and is untainted by later life experiences and characteristics.<sup>11</sup>

At the foot of Table 6, we present the multiple correlation coefficients ( $R^2$ ). As expected, the variance explained for cultural participation is much higher than for cultural taste. This is partly because

participation is also predicted by taste. Indeed, the explained variance of cultural participation in a model (not shown here) that excludes tastes is between 5 and 15 per cent and similar to the explained variances of tastes (see Table 6). This indicates again the strong association between tastes and participation and the need to model them simultaneously, as our model posits.

To recap, the results presented in Table 6 suggest that some of the association between cultural resources and participation is indeed mediated by tastes, and that the association between income and participation is not mediated by taste. To achieve a clearer quantification of these mediation effects, we next decompose the direct and indirect effects of cultural and economic resources on the participation variables.

Table 7 presents the total, direct, and indirect effects of our economic and cultural resource variables on highbrow participation, popular participation, and sport participation. Starting with the mediating role of cultural taste on the association between cultural resources and participation, results indicate, as already discussed above, that in 5 out of 12 possible associations between cultural resources and cultural participation there are no direct effects of the former on the latter. The remaining seven possible associations are mediated by taste to various degrees, ranging between 13 and 100 per cent. For example, the total effect of parental education on sport participation is fully mediated by taste, as the indirect effect is 100 per cent. However, taste mediates only ~31 per cent of the effect of parental education on popular participation. The effect of respondent's education on popular participation is only slightly mediated (14 per cent) by taste, whereas taste mediates 42 per cent of the effect between respondent's education and highbrow participation.

When we move to the decomposition of the total effect of income on participation, we start by noting that Table 6 has already shown income to be mainly associated with participation, though it is potentially mediated by highbrow taste due to the significant effect of income on highbrow taste. Table 7 shows that the effect of income on popular participation is not mediated by taste as the direct effect of income on this variable accounts for 97 per cent of the total association. The effect of income on sport participation is partially mediated by taste, as the direct effect of income on this variable accounts for only 77 per cent of the total association. Finally, we see once again that highbrow taste suppresses the effect of income on highbrow participation. Recalling that Table 6 shows that the effect of income on highbrow taste is negative,

**Table 7** Decomposition of direct and indirect standardized effects on highbrow participation, popular participation, and sport participation<sup>a</sup>

Variables	Highbrow participation			Popular participation			Sport participation		
	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect
Cultural resources									
Parental education	–	–	–	0.246	0.169	0.092	0.014	0.000	0.014
				100%	69%	31%	100%	0%	100%
Parental highbrow	0.199	0.064	0.135	0.070	0.061	0.009	–	–	–
	100%	32%	68%	100%	87%	13%			
Parental lowbrow	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.148	0.097	0.051
							100%	66%	34%
R's education	0.243	0.140	0.103	0.081	0.070	0.011	–	–	–
	100%	58%	42%	100%	86%	14%			
Economic resources									
Household income	0.029	0.055	–0.026	0.180	0.175	0.006	0.098	0.075	0.023
	100%	189%	–89%	100%	97%	3%	100%	77%	23%

<sup>a</sup>Percentages refer to the proportion of direct and indirect effects out of the total effect, which is set to 100%.

in Table 7 we can see that the effect of income on highbrow participation increases once taste is controlled for.

To summarize the results of this decomposition, we have strong evidence in support of Hypotheses 1 and 2 that taste mediates the effect of cultural resources on cultural participation while it does not mediate the effect of income.

## Discussions

The literature on cultural stratification conceptualizes cultural capital in two different ways. One addresses cultural capital in terms of tastes that express the social self, while the other addresses it in terms of cultural participation that expresses social action. While the majority of studies conceptualize cultural capital in one of the definitions outlined above, some combine them without paying much attention to potential differences between them. In this article we argue that tastes and participation are shaped by different factors. We also provide a reading of Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital which posits that taste is an antecedent of behaviour. Our analysis implements a comprehensive theoretical model which considers the effect of cultural and economic resources on both tastes and participation, while also considering how tastes shape participation. These dimensions have never before been looked at simultaneously.

Our findings suggest that although tastes and participation are closely related through the notion of cultural capital, there are important differences between them that merit separate conceptualizations.

Specifically, cultural resources shape tastes more than they shape participation, while economic resources shape participation more than they shape tastes. Although cultural resources and participation are directly associated, these associations are largely mediated by tastes. Finally, we find that tastes only very slightly mediate the effect of income on participation.

How do these results square with the existing literature? As we noted in the Introduction section, previous studies have shown the importance of cultural resources (parental education, respondent's education, and parental cultural capital) and economic resources in predicting both cultural taste and cultural participation. In this respect, our results are in line with such depictions of the relationship between social background and aspects of cultural capital. However, as our study shows, because taste and participation are the end result of different processes, it would be misleading to lump them together. This conclusion has eluded previous studies that found a strong association between economic resources and taste or between cultural resources and participation. We argue that the failure to simultaneously control for taste and participation may have generated such results. Without taste as a mediating factor, the effect of cultural resources on participation is wrongly perceived as a direct one.

What are the implications of these findings for future research? First and foremost, our analysis has an important relevance for the discussions in the literature on cultural consumption. Our proposition that tastes and participation are distinctly different aspects of the

concept of cultural capital means that although research has shown that they tend to correlate with similar socio-demographic and economic variables, they should be nevertheless treated as the products of different mechanisms.

Another important implication of our study runs through the core of the cultural stratification literature, specifically, the question of cultural reproduction vs. cultural mobility. This question pertains to the strength of the association between cultural resources and indicators of cultural capital. We acknowledge that the adjudication between these approaches should rely on a longitudinal research design rather than the type of cross-sectional data used here. However, we can speculate as to the implications of our results on the question of reproduction versus mobility. In this context, our results can be interpreted as ambivalent. On the one hand, when cultural capital is measured as cultural tastes, we appear to support the reproduction argument. On the other hand, when cultural capital is measured as participation, we appear to support the mobility argument. If we accept that reproduction is the null hypothesis and mobility is the alternative hypothesis, students of cultural stratification should prefer indicators of cultural capital that would make it harder to refute the null hypothesis, namely, taste. However, as discussed above, a significant part of cultural stratification scholarship prefers indicators of participation because it reflects overt social action.

So should we choose taste because of the hypotheses testing procedure, or participation because of its relevance to social action? Our answer is that an estimation of the degree of social reproduction and the intergenerational transmission of advantage must rely on an analysis that differentiates between taste and participation but includes both. Thus, we argue that tastes and participation are the end results of different processes. Tastes are mainly the results of socialization, while participation is affected by the end product of the socialization process, namely taste, and by opportunities as conditioned by income.

Another important implication of our results pertains to the process by which cultural resources are converted into cultural capital. In our analyses we distinguished a specific effect for each of the cultural resource variables and estimated their direct and indirect effects. We show that parental education and cultural capital have direct effects on respondent's tastes. They also have indirect effects on taste that go through respondents' education. We propose to think of the direct effect as representing socialization processes, through the habitus, in which parents transmit their advantages to their offspring in the

form of social emulation and the encouragement of particular activities. We also propose to think of the effect that goes through respondent's education as representing an aspect of cognitive ability. On the one hand, parental cultural and cognitive resources are assets in the educational attainment process of their offspring, and on the other hand, respondent's education provides the competence to appreciate what is considered the legitimate culture. Accordingly, we assert that studies that have used respondent's education as a proxy measure for cultural resources or cultural capital have missed the important direct effects of parental resources that constitute the process of socialization. Specifically, we argue that failure to account for the direct and indirect routes through which cultural capital is produced may result in underestimation of the significance of cultural reproduction.

Finally, we wish to discuss three additional issues that emerge from our analytical framework. First, the need to differentiate between highbrow and lowbrow cultural capital at the level of parents and respondents and in realms of taste and participation. Most research on cultural stratification tends to concentrate on measures of highbrow culture. This leaves the associations that characterize lowbrow culture and measures of stratification obscure. We show that the associations between cultural resources, economic resources, and tastes and participation are as expected by our theoretical model, even though we allowed cultural capital to represent more than just highbrow culture. This is not trivial, and we believe that when studying a phenomenon, researchers cannot afford to concentrate only on one aspect of it, important as that aspect may be.

Second, and related to the above, there is also the issue of emphasizing the correspondence of specific genres when measuring the association between tastes and participation. It is possible, for example, to construct taste indicators that are directly related in content to participation indicators (e.g. taste for classical music and attendance at classical concerts) in order to better depict the association between cultural resources, taste and participation. In this article we were less concerned with specific genres, and more concerned with the general pattern of association between cultural resources, clusters of tastes, and clusters of participation. Nevertheless, we see much merit in pursuing the analysis of genres in future research.

Third, there is the issue of the social context in which the study is conducted. In this article, we advanced a theoretical model and tested it on data

from Israeli society. The question is whether we can generalize from this specific case study or whether the results are specific to Israel. We would argue that, as far as cultural stratification is concerned, there is no special reason to believe that Israel is different from other Western societies. Despite the fact that Israel is sometimes depicted as having unique features, research in the field of cultural consumption has repeatedly reported results that are similar to those found elsewhere (Katz and Gurevitz, 1973; Benski, 1989; Katz, 1992; Katz-Gerro and Shavit, 1998; Katz-Gerro, 2002; Katz-Gerro, Raz, S. and Yaish, 2007). But more importantly, this article has outlined a model that draws on and develops existing literature in the field, and we urge scholars to test its validity in different contexts.

## Notes

1. Two other types of cultural capital are the objectified, i.e. transmittable goods and the institutionalized, i.e. degrees and credentials.
2. Although it could be hypothesized that education is affected by one's own cultural capital, sociological theory and research on cultural stratification tends to favour the position that education shapes cultural preferences (De Graaf, 1986; Mohr and DiMaggio, 1995; Kraaykamp and Nieuwbeerta, 2000; Kraaykamp, 2001). Not only that, higher educational attainment is in part associated with an initial selection process dependent on parental background characteristics (De Graaf, 1986) making it difficult for education to shape cultural consumption.
3. For example, Zimdars *et al.* (2009) report that while cultural knowledge is a significant predictor of admissions in arts subjects at the University of Oxford, cultural participation is not related to educational attainment.
4. Response rate was ~40 per cent, which is the standard rate in telephone interviews in Israel. We excluded Israeli-Arabs from the data collection because the limited size of the sample did not allow a meaningful analysis of this sub-population.
5. In all factor analyses herein we used principal component with varimax rotation and substituted missing values with the mean value of the factor score.
6. When respondents were asked to report their activities, especially going to theatre plays and

musicals, it was made explicit that they should exclude children's activities. Also, with regard blockbuster movies and stand-up comedies, specific examples were provided to make sure the respondents interpreted the items in a similar way.

7. Sing-along events are an established pastime in Israel. It involves gathering in a concert hall or club, the distribution of lyrics of songs, and a lead singer accompanied by a pianist or a small band. This activity is popular beyond a specific age or social background group.
8. Similar results were obtained when we employed other measures of economic resources, such as parental SEI, respondents SEI (both based on Semyonov *et al.*, 2000) and a measure of respondent's standard of living, based on household possession of goods.
9. Our model does not exclude the possibility that individuals' participation in cultural activities in their parents' household shaped their future cultural tastes. The latter then shapes participation. The point to be made here is that our model allows for cultural participation to shape cultural tastes.
10. In this and other models we also include links between parental and respondent's education and income.
11. To assess the intervening effect of age, we performed a group comparison where our model was fitted simultaneously to the younger and to the older age groups. We have an indication that age is part of an explanation of the negative parental education effect. Indeed, the literature on cultural consumption reports that age is a major determinant, second only to education (Katz-Gerro, 2000). However, this issue is not central to our theoretical argument and we therefore do not elaborate on it.

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## Authors' Addresses

Meir Yaish (to whom correspondence should be addressed), University of Haifa, Mount Carmel, Haifa 31905, Israel. Email: [myaish@univ.haifa.ac.il](mailto:myaish@univ.haifa.ac.il)  
Tally Katz-Gerro, University of Haifa, Mount Carmel, Haifa 31905, Israel. Email: [tkatz@soc.haifa.ac.il](mailto:tkatz@soc.haifa.ac.il)

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