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Culture and Creativity Management



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# **Why do we go to the cinema?**

*A qualitative study of cinema attendance motivation  
in Sweden and Korea*

Master's thesis 30 credits

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## **Abstract**

Due to COVID-19 and the penetration of OTT services, the cinema industry is suffering from audience loss. With this contextual change, the question of whether the cinema industry will survive is constantly rising. As motivation is known as the driving force for behaviour, this thesis focuses on the audiences who still visit the cinema and explore their motivations for cinema attendance to find what cinema should be providing to remain competitive in the market. The Uses and Gratifications Theory and A priori dimension of the motive concept form the framework for understanding motivations and interpreting the analysis. Empirical data from 13 semi-structured interviews help us to grasp the perception of cinema today and the motivations for cinema visits. Further comparing two countries showing different industry prospects, Sweden and Korea, adds insight to the findings. The findings indicate that audiences perceive cinema as an experience and that entertainment, escape, and socialisation are the prominent motivations for cinema visits nowadays. Further, this study suggests that there are some external factors influencing cinema visits that need to be researched in the future.

**Keywords:** motivation, cinema, cinema attendance, experience, experiential consumption, cultural consumption, Uses and Gratifications Theory, OTT, entertainment, escape, socialisation

## **Acknowledgement**

Writing this thesis has not always been an easy journey. It was a difficult challenge in many ways. I felt confused and lost and sometimes even had to fight constant self-doubts. But now, at the end of the journey, I could see myself a little mature through these processes. Without the help and support of many people, I would never have gotten this far. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to them.

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# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgement.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Table of Contents.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Background .....	2
1.1.1. OTT Dominant Market and the Audience .....	2
1.1.2. Cinema Industry in Sweden and Korea .....	3
1.2. Problematisation.....	6
1.3. Aim and Research Questions .....	7
1.4. Structure of the Thesis.....	8
<b>2. Contextual Background .....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1. OTT Services and the Cinema Industry .....	9
2.2. Influence of COVID-19 Pandemic.....	9
<b>3. Literature Review .....</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1. Experience and Experiential Consumption .....	11
3.1.1. The Experience Perspective.....	11
3.1.2. Perspectives in Consumer Experience.....	12
3.1.3. Consumption of Experiential Products .....	14
3.2. Motivation .....	15
3.2.1. Defining Motivation.....	15
3.2.2. Motivation in Experiential Consumption.....	16
3.3. Previous Research on Cinema Attendance Motivation.....	17
3.4. Research Rationale.....	19
<b>4. Theoretical Framework.....</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1. Uses and Gratifications Theory.....	19
4.2. The A Priori Dimensions of the Motives .....	21
4.3. Applying the Theories.....	22
<b>5. Methodology .....</b>	<b>23</b>
5.1. Research Approach .....	23

5.2.	Data Collection.....	24
5.2.1.	Sampling .....	24
5.2.2.	Research Method: Semi-Structured Interview.....	25
5.2.3.	Interview Process.....	26
5.3.	Data Analysis .....	27
5.3.1.	Transcriptions .....	27
5.3.2.	Coding and Analysis .....	28
5.4.	Methodological Limitations .....	28
5.4.1.	Sampling .....	29
5.4.2.	Interview .....	29
5.5.	Ethical Consideration .....	30
5.6.	Research Quality: Trustworthiness .....	31
<b>6.</b>	<b>Findings .....</b>	<b>31</b>
6.1.	Influence of OTT on Cinema Consumption.....	31
6.2.	The Offers of the Cinema.....	33
6.3.	The Motivation.....	36
6.4.	Other Findings.....	39
<b>7.</b>	<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>41</b>
7.1.	Cinema Perception: What is Cinema?.....	41
7.2.	Understanding Cinema Attendance Motivation.....	43
7.3.	If not Motivation, then what?.....	44
7.4.	Practical implications .....	45
7.5.	Limitations .....	46
<b>8.</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>46</b>
	<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>48</b>
	<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b>Appendix 1. Information Sheet .....</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b>Appendix 2. Interview Consent Form.....</b>	<b>56</b>
	<b>Appendix 3. Interview Guide.....</b>	<b>57</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1-1 Scope of OTT Services (created by author) .....	1
Figure 1-2 Total Cinema Admissions in Sweden 2016-2020 (modified from Svenska Filminstitutet, 2021) .....	4
Figure 1-3 Comparison of Admissions in June 2019-2022 (created based on KOBIS) .....	5
Figure 4-1 Uses and Gratifications Model (modified from Dyring, 2017) .....	20
Figure 4-2 The A priori Dimensions of the Motives (modified from Boudier-Pailler, 1999, p.8) .....	21
Figure 4-3 Framework for the Thesis (created by author) .....	23
Figure 7-1 Motivation for OTT and Cinema (created by author) .....	44

## List of Tables

Table 3-1 Economic distinctions in Service and Experience (modified from Pine and Gilmore, 2013) .....	13
Table 5-1 Interviewee Information .....	25

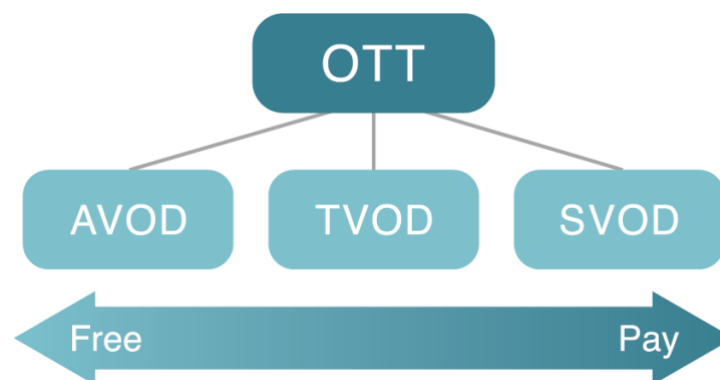
## List of Abbreviations

AVOD	Advertising-based video on demand
CCIs	Culture and Creative Industries
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
IPTV	Internet Protocol Television
MCU	Marvel Cinematic Universe
OTT	Over the top
SVOD	Subscription-based video on demand:
TVOD	Transactional video on demand

## 1. Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, consumption pattern changes have been shown in various sectors. According to Arora et al. (2020), more than 60 per cent of global consumers have changed their consumption behaviour due to COVID-19. Many consumers shifted toward low-contact or digital-based consumption due to the lockdown, implementation of restrictions and concerns about outdoor activities (ibid.). According to Kim and Sung (2021), this emerging behaviour of people to minimise physical interaction can be described with the new term ‘untact’, which combines the prefix ‘un-’ with ‘contact’. As the customers’ demands for untact services grow with the COVID-19 pandemic, the condition of the business world has changed considerably.

The Culture and Creative Industries (CCIs) are one of the sectors that have witnessed the most dramatic changes. As a result of the increasing demand for untact services, Over-The-Top (OTT) service businesses proliferated. OTT refers to the online streaming services that offer video content to the customer through the internet. OTT includes an advertising-based video on demand (AVOD), subscription-based video on demand (SVOD) and Transactional video on demand (TVOD) (Gupta & Singharia, 2021; Jain, 2021; Sadana & Sharma, 2020). Netflix, YouTube, Amazon Prime and HBO are well-known examples of OTT service platforms. According to Adgate (2021b), more than 200 streaming services are available worldwide, and the average number of SVOD service consumers is constantly increasing.



*Figure 1-1 Scope of OTT Services (created by author)*

However, while OTT service thrived during the COVID-19 pandemic, the theatre and venues operated based on physical attendance suffered from the shutdown. Many theatres worldwide have temporarily or permanently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in a steep decline in the

number of audiences<sup>1</sup>. According to Dager (2021), there has been a 70.7 per cent decline in cinema admission in 2020 in the European Union and the United Kingdom when compared to 2019.

Although the number of cinema admissions decreased extensively during the COVID pandemic, the cinema industry has long struggled with a declining audience. As Silver and McDonnell (2007) state, the decline in movie attendance has been observed several times in cinema history. For instance, with the development of TV, cinema admission decreased sharply in the 1950s (in the US), and with the expansion of the internet and portable devices, many audiences shifted towards streaming services rather than going to cinemas (Silver & McDonnell, 2007; Tefertiller, Maxwell & Morris, 2020). According to Silver and McDonnell (2007), technological convergence has created a challenge for movie theatres. However, they also argued that new technologies and creative use of assets could offer a countermeasure and bring the audience back to cinemas (p.491). Yet, there are growing concerns about the future of the cinema industry that a sudden decrease in cinema admissions will cause serious financial difficulties and result in a massive shutdown (Adgate, 2021a; Grimes, 2021). Furthermore, the radical changes in movie-watching habits due to the COVID-19 exacerbate these concerns.

## **1.1. Background**

With the concerns stated above, this thesis departed by questioning what will cinemas' future be like. This section will briefly describe two phenomena in the cinema industry that served as the starting point of the thesis. The first section focuses on the dominance of OTT services in movie viewing in recent years and the recent recovery of audiences in the cinema. The second part will explore the current cinema situation in Sweden and Korea, depicting the similarities and differences that will further be developed into a research aim and research question through the problematising process.

### **1.1.1. OTT Dominant Market and the Audience**

Penetration of OTT service coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic is changing the movie viewing behaviour and thus threatens the cinema industry with declining admissions. As shortly mentioned in the introduction, the movement toward OTT service is not a new phenomenon. With the internet and technology development, the shift towards digital media consumption has been widely witnessed in the past 20 years. Many researchers concluded that OTT service, with its high-quality video, easy access and broader content choices, is becoming a preferred choice for consumers of the media and entertainment industry (Dasgupta & Grover, 2019; Gupta & Singharia, 2021; Herbert et al., 2019; Jain, 2021; Sadana & Sharma, 2020). Besides, the cinema

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<sup>1</sup> Audience in this thesis is following the definition provided in the [Cambridge dictionary online](#): the group of people together in one place to watch or listen to a play, film, someone speaking etc.



industry is losing its competitive advantage of being the first-released market and the primary medium for watching films on a large screen. Technology such as home cinema and smart TV brought the cinema experience into people's homes, and premier on-screen no longer acted as an advantage as OTT services released movies almost simultaneously to the cinema (Silver & McDonnell, 2007).

Technological convenience brought by the OTT platforms changed how people watch films (Steiner & Xu, 2020). During the pandemic use of OTT platforms increased significantly. There were concerns that the audience would not return to the cinema as they had already experienced the OTT's convenience (Korean Film Council, 2022a). However, despite the concerns, the audience returning to the cinema has been observed in a few countries (Korean Film Council, 2022a; Roy Morgan Research, 2022). Regarding this phenomenon, many questions arise. Why are they coming back to the cinema? What does cinema offer that cannot be replicated in the OTT service? Today, OTT is clearly a dominant movie viewing platform. However, as mentioned above, audiences are also going to the cinema. There might be a possibility to find ways for cinemas to be competitive in the market by investigating these audiences and why they go to the cinema.

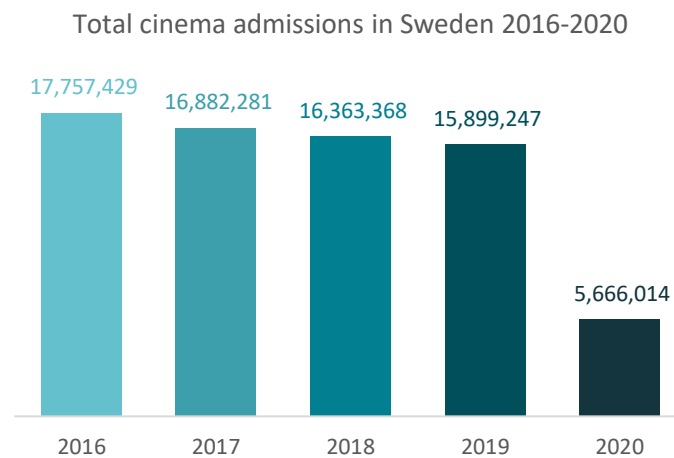
### **1.1.2. Cinema Industry in Sweden and Korea**

As mentioned above, cinema started to regain audiences after restrictions were eased. However, despite this, the recovery of the cinema industry is not promising in all countries. Sweden and Korea are examples of countries that shows two different prophecies of the cinema industry. This section will briefly describe the current situation of cinema industries in Sweden and Korea. The second phenomenon, the different propensity in cinema attendance, will be addressed through this. Note that a detailed rationale for choosing these countries will be presented in section 5.2.1.

#### ***Swedish cinema industry***

Unlike many other countries, Sweden did not introduce a complete shutdown policy during the pandemic. Sweden's largest cinema chain Filmstaden, decided to close operations as a precaution, while Folkets Bio and Svenska Bio remained open, adhering to the government guidelines (The Local, 2021). However, even with some cinemas remaining operating, the number of cinema admissions has declined radically since the COVID-19 pandemic (Svenska Filminstitutet, 2021). In 2020, cinema admission had decreased by 64 per cent compared to the number in 2019. Considering that the COVID-19 pandemic's influence on the Swedish cinema industry would not be as severe as in other countries that shut down completely, there seems to

be a clear challenge in the Swedish cinema industry in motivating the audience to come to the cinema.

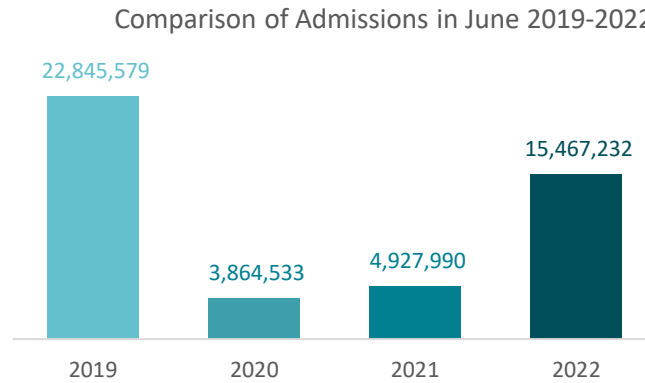


*Figure 1-2 Total Cinema Admissions in Sweden 2016-2020 (modified from Svenska Filminstitutet, 2021)*

Navarro (2021) notes that the number of cinemas in Sweden has decreased continuously from 2009 to 2014. It has increased slightly in 2015 and 2018, but not by a significant amount. Moreover, as shown in Figure 1-2, the total cinema admissions in Sweden have constantly declined since 2016. Although the latest survey from Swedish Film Institute shows a slight recovery in cinema admission, only 6 per cent increased from 2020. Moreover, even with the increased audience, only 3 per cent of the total film viewing is through cinema, while 65 per cent of the consumption is through OTT services (Svenska Filminstitutet, 2022). This indicates OTT platform is becoming more and more preferred over cinema in Sweden.

### ***Korean cinema industry***

While the cinema industry in the western world grew fast from the 1920s to the 1940s, it was only in the late 1990s that film culture showed explosive growth in Korea (Cho, 2019). According to Cho (2019), the introduction of multiplex cinema integrated into shopping malls has changed audience behaviour by changing the method of consumption. He states, “watching a movie was no longer a special event. Rather, it became an imperceptible, ordinary part of consumer culture, much like buying groceries for dinner (p.57-58)”. As more people perceived cinema-going as a regular part of consumption, the number of screens also increased (ibid., 2019). Compared to 507 screens in 1998, 3,254 screens were available in 2021 (Korean Film Council, 2022b). According to the Korean Film Council (2018, 2022a), the number of audiences roughly doubled in 2005 compared to 2004 and peaked in 2019 at 226,678,777 admissions.



*Figure 1-3 Comparison of Admissions in June 2019-2022 (created based on KOBIS<sup>2</sup>)*

Although the number of entries decreased significantly during COVID-19 due to the closedown policy by the Korean government, it is recovering fast as the restrictions were eased. For example, as shown above (Figure 1-3), the number of cinema admissions in June tripled in 2022 compared to 2020. Although it is still two-thirds of the number in 2019, it is increasing explosively.

Similar to the Swedish situation, the use of OTT in Korea is also consistently increased. According to the Korean Film Council (2022a), the share of OTT in the movie-related market doubled between 2019 to 2021. Also, OTT sales increased 35.6 per cent from 2020 to 2021 (ibid.). This indicates the shift toward the OTT platform is also observed in the Korean film industry. Furthermore, unlike many other countries, Korea shows a unique pattern in which IPTV and OTT service subscribers increase simultaneously.

One notable aspect of the Korean cinema industry is the specialised theatres. Along with the extreme growth in the industry, specialised theatres increased with new offers. Four types of specialised theatres are available depending on their offer: Screen and sound, 4D, seat, and premium. The well-known types are 4DX and IMAX, but they could be extended to services such as watching movies while food is served and watching movies on a bed. Currently, over 400 specialised theatres are available in Korea, composing 13.7 per cent of the total screen. This type of theatre increased by 16.5 per cent between 2020 and 2022 (Korean Film Council, 2022b).

### ***Differences between the two countries***

Even though both countries share the similarity in increasing OTT service and a severe decrease in cinema admission during COVID-19, significant differences were also shown. The cinema industry in Sweden was regarded as a downward industry as they showed a slow decline in

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<sup>2</sup> Data from [Korea Box-office information system](#)

admission past decade, even before the pandemic. Also, the admission recovery was relatively slow as most of the movie viewing in Sweden is said to be through the OTT platform. However, the case in Korea is completely different. Korea's cinema industry showed growth until 2019, and even after the COVID pandemic, it is recovering quickly.

The differences can also be confirmed by the changes in the cinema screens available. Sweden has shown a decline in cinema screens for most of the past ten years (Navarro, 2021), while Korea showed a 14.3 per cent increase in cinema screens between 2020 and 2021 alone (Korean Film Council, 2022b). Additionally, the specialised theatres had also increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, when it was considered the most difficult time (ibid.). As data from the two countries are not comparable, a direct comparison of the situation is impossible. However, from what has been described above, it is inferred that there is a difference in the audience recovery, how fast and how many audiences are returning to the cinema.

## **1.2. Problematisation**

Until today, extensive research on cinema audiences has revealed several motivations for cinema attendance. However, despite the number of research available, there seems to be no consensual understanding of cinema audiences. Suwanto (2012) pointed out that some studies have reached contradictory conclusions. Furthermore, the motivations and decision-making process identified in the previous research does not seem to explain why people go to the cinema nowadays due to contextual changes. Most existing studies do not consider alternative means of watching films, such as OTT and IPTV. Accordingly, they only focus on the movie as content rather than cinema activity. This indicates that the motivation listed in the previous studies provides insights into why people consume movies and choose a movie over another rather than why they decide to watch a movie at the cinema. With most of the population having OTT services as a content viewing platform, there exists a knowledge gap on what makes people go to the cinema over watching movies through OTT services.

In addition, most of the research on consumer motivation, specifically in cultural consumption, takes a quantitative approach to confirm motives for cultural consumption from the pre-existing motivation scale (Manolika, Baltzis & Tsigilis, 2015). This approach contributed to identifying the important motives. However, using a quantitative approach and pre-existing motive scale inevitably limits obtaining a more comprehensive understanding as it does not provide space for audiences' subjective and intrinsic perspectives to enter. Further, it ignores the fact that there could be underlying motives that audiences are not aware of (Durmaz & Diyarbakırılıoğlu, 2011). Therefore, research from a qualitative approach will provide a deeper understanding of cinema attendance motivation in the modern context as well as a chance to discover motivation that has not been explicitly shown in previous studies.

Lastly, although contrasting trends in the cinema industry are seen in several parts of the world, academic explanations of where the differences originated were not found. As understanding motivation for going to the cinema in the current context is at the core of this study, comparing the cinema attendance motivation from the two countries with different propensities might as well bring additional explanation on what creates the differences.

### **1.3. Aim and Research Questions**

As the OTT services grew, watching movies was no longer considered an exclusive offering at the cinema. In fact, watching movies over the OTT services is understood as the new norm after going through the COVID-19 pandemic. Especially with its accessibility, cheaper cost, and convenient services, audiences started to appreciate OTT service platforms increasingly. For the cinema industry to break through the stagnant and find ways to overcome the threat of OTT services, it is essential to understand audience motivation. Unfortunately, existing studies on cinema attendance motivation no longer explain why people choose to attend the cinema. In particular, it will be difficult to anticipate a positive future without reflecting on the recent contextual changes in streaming services and cinema. Consequently, examining cinema attendance motivation more profoundly within the new context will be necessary.

This research sprang from the curiosity of why people go to the cinema when they can watch the same content at home with OTT service at a lower cost. What about cinema is unique that appeals to the audience? Starting from this curiosity, the study seeks to provide a more in-depth understanding of the motivations of cinema attendance. Primarily focusing on the context where OTT services are flourishing and the pandemic is reshaping the whole movie-watching behaviour, this study attempt to understand what motivates audiences to go to the cinema today. Further, this study seeks to discover where different propensities of cinema attendance in the two countries (Sweden and Korea) are created by comparing the differences in audience motivation. In doing so, the study attempts to provide some clues on what future cinema could focus on to attract the audiences and, thus, break through from the stagnant described in the previous chapters.

Based on the rationale presented above, this study will focus on answering the following questions:

- (1) How do audiences perceive cinema in the present context?*
- (2) What motivates the audience to the cinema nowadays?*
- (3) How can the different behaviour of audiences between Sweden and Korea be understood?*

Before going further, it is necessary to clarify what the audience in the research question represents. Although it is stated as ‘audiences’, the participant in this study is limited to people who use both cinema and OTT services and who are resident of Sweden or Korea. As will be mentioned in the

methodology, this thesis is not intended to generalise the finding to all audiences. Instead, it attempts to provide a starting point to understanding today's cinema audiences.

#### **1.4. Structure of the Thesis**

The thesis consists of a total of 8 chapters. In Chapter 1, a brief introduction to the research topic, research background, research gap and research question was presented. Chapter 2 (Contextual background) offers a short demonstration of the current situation in the cinema industry concerning OTT services and the COVID-19 pandemic. The literature review (Chapter 3) outlines the previous research, concepts, and notions related to experience product consumption and motivation. The chapter is divided into four subsections. The first part will focus on the experience consumption in which cinema fits in. The second part will concentrate on motivation, presenting the definition of motivation and what motivations were identified, especially in relation to experience and cultural consumption. The third section will thoroughly explore previous cinema attendance motivation research, and the last section will briefly summarise the chapter and present the rationale of the research. This will be followed by the theoretical framework (Chapter 4). This chapter presents the theoretical framework in three subsections. The first section presents the Uses and Gratifications Theory as a lens to interpret the research findings. The second part will present the A priori dimensions of the motives from Bourgeon-Renault (2000). This frame captures the importance of extrinsic motivation, which is often ignored in cultural consumption. The last section will shortly describe how the theory and frame presented above will be applied in this study. Chapter 5, Methodology, is divided into six subsections: research approach, data collection, data analysis, methodological limitations, ethical consideration, and research quality. Each part will demonstrate how this research was conducted, focusing on the processes, methodological choices, and rationale for the decision. Then, the findings and analysis of the interviews will be presented in Chapter 6. The chapter consists of four subsections: the influence of OTT services on cinema consumption, the offers of the cinema, the motivation, and other findings. These subsections will focus on addressing all necessary information that will become the basis of the discussion. This will be followed by a discussion (Chapter 7) where findings were interpreted concerning the theoretical framework to answer the research questions. Further, this chapter will present the contribution of this study to academic knowledge and practice. Also, reflection on the limitation of the research will be given. In Chapter 8 (Conclusion), a summary of the research will be given, along with the proposal for future studies.

## **2. Contextual Background**

This chapter provides background information on the influence of OTT service and COVID-19 on the cinema industry and demonstrates the current challenges. In the first subsection, the scope of OTT service will be defined as well as how it acts as a threat to the cinema. The second subsection will focus on the influence of the COVID pandemic on the radical decrease in cinema audiences and concerns around it.

### **2.1. OTT Services and the Cinema Industry**

As briefly mentioned in the introduction, OTT services refer to video streaming content services accessible through the internet. OTT services enable customers to watch media content on their smartphones and other gadgets through the internet, bypassing the traditional distribution method (Patel, Khadia & Awasya, 2020). This convenient service platform offers a quality-of-service experience by posing no-commercial interruptions and geographical freedom at an affordable price (Herbert, Lotz & Marshall, 2019).

Tripathi (2020) states, “there is no doubt that the (OTT) industry has had a transformative effect in the sense people have been in the habit with respect to the consumption of media (p.1291)”. Likewise, Patel et al. (2020) state that people have gained a new kind of viewing experience through OTT channels and that this dynamic watching experience of OTT will affect the cinema industry for a while. It is believed that the trend of OTT service is threatening the traditional means of media distribution, such as TV and cinema (Patel et al., 2020; Sadana & Sharma, 2020; Silver & McDonnell, 2007).

Research by Patel et al. (2020) presented that 79.8 per cent of the respondents found OTT service cheaper and more convenient than other traditional mediums (p.18). Furthermore, 46.1 per cent responded that they prefer watching movies on OTT as they can receive the same quality with maximum comfort and minimum cost (ibid, p.18). Hence, with its cost-effectiveness and convenience, OTT is clearly becoming a threat to the cinema industry.

### **2.2. Influence of COVID-19 Pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of quarantine and lockdowns have created a surge in demand for media consumption at home (Gupta & Singharia, 2021; Tripathi, 2020). According to the survey conducted in India, 88.8 per cent of the total respondents feel that OTT watching increased during the COVID-19 lockdown (Patel et al., 2020). Moreover, according to the European Audiovisual Observatory yearbook 2021/2022 (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2022), the COVID-19 strike on the theatrical market in the EU and UK was severe in 2020,

resulting in 70.2 per cent of cinema admission decrease. Furthermore, 100 screens were permanently closed in the EU and UK (p.38-39).

As in the rest of Europe, COVID-19 led to a dramatic decrease in cinema visits in Sweden. The general recommendation to stay home and the restrictions were limiting cinema visits resulted in a 64 per cent decrease in admission in 2020 (Svenska Filminstitutet, 2021). Although cinema admission increased in 2021, OTT (including SVOD, AVOD and TVOD) is still the dominant means of Swedes' movie viewing (Svenska Filminstitutet, 2022). Similarly, Korean cinema admissions decreased by 73.7 per cent compared to the previous year. Korean Film Council (2022a), states that during the two years of COVID-19, the Korean cinema industry has returned to the size it was 20 years ago.

There are diverse perspectives on the prospect of the cinema industry. Some question whether the tradition of going to the cinema will continue. Hornaday (2020), a film critic, states, "Film as an art form may be able to adapt when it migrates to the home screen. But as a collective experience, it is in the process of morphing, if not disappearing entirely". As to support this perspective, a survey in the US shows that a significant proportion of the audiences are not eager to return to public events, including cinema (Vary, 2020).

Furthermore, there are concerns that it is difficult to predict the impact of COVID-19 in the future. Shah, Yaqoub and Wu (2020) state that the actual damage done to cinemas is still being determined. As mentioned earlier, COVID has accelerated the transformation of the video content industry into a digital order and the viewing habit of the consumers. Further, as the operating rate and admission decrease, cinemas have no choice but to raise the admission fee in order to cover the minimum cost (Korean Film Council, 2022a), which will also influence the audience's decision-making. Consequently, a vicious circle that may exacerbate a downturn in the cinema industry might be created.

However, there are optimistic views as well. According to Aftab (2020) on BBC, "history suggests that cinema will adapt and bounce back". He points out that there were multiple crises in cinema history, such as other pandemics, wars and technological development. Yet, cinema managed to adapt and survive. Furthermore, the audience will appreciate the cinema experience after long oppression during COVID-19 as "the experience of seeing a film in cinemas the way they were meant to be seen will be all the more magical" (ibid.).



### **3. Literature Review**

In the previous section, the current cinema industry was given to provide the contextual background of this study. In this chapter, an exploration of previous studies will be followed to understand the research topic thoroughly and identify the areas that need further clarification. The literature review will highlight important concepts, notions, and theories by synthesising the previous research on the topic. This chapter is designed in four subsections: Experience and experiential consumption, motivation, previous research on cinema attendance motivation, and a brief chapter summary with research rationale.

#### **3.1. Experience and Experiential Consumption**

As the thesis aims to understand cinema attendance motivation, the first step is to identify what cinema consumption is. Departing from the experience concept and its characteristics, this section will position cinema into experiential consumption. The section is divided into three subsections. The first part will discuss the experience concept by stressing its relevance to today's world. Then, diverse perspectives on consumer experience will be presented in the second part. These perspectives will help place this study into the service realm, especially in CCIs. The highlight will be on how experience can be considered similar to services but also completely different. Further, the last part will focus on experiential consumption and its unique characteristics, which will enhance the understanding of cinema as an experiential product.

##### **3.1.1. The Experience Perspective**

According to Lemon and Verhoef (2016), customer experience recognition dates back to 1955. Abbott, an economist, states in his book 'Quality and competition' that "what people really desire are not products but satisfying experiences" (Abbott, 1955, p.40 in Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Similarly, Levitt (1981) notes that customers buy promises of satisfaction, not just a product. Over the years, scholars and practitioners in the marketing and service management field have emphasised the importance of the customer aspect in business. Especially with the increased competition in the market, understanding customer and customer satisfaction became an essential element for the success of a business (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Thus, the experience perspectives are important for their affection towards customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Pine and Gilmore (2013) emphasise the importance of experience by stating, "focusing on goods and services alone leads down the road of economic austerity. Experiences are a distinct form of economic output and as such hold the key to promoting economic prosperity (p.22)". Furthermore, practitioners started to recognise customer experience as a powerful means for companies to remain competitive (Johnston & Kong, 2011; Meyer & Schwager, 2007; Pine &

Gilmore, 1998). According to Homburg, Jozić and Kuehnl (2017), the importance of the customer experience is increasingly emphasised with the challenges of digitalisation associated with increasingly transparent, empowered, and collaborative consumer markets.

### **3.1.2. Perspectives in Consumer Experience**

As described in the section above, many scholars and practitioners agree that the concept of consumer experience is important. The notion of experience was coined in 1982 by Holbrook and Hirschman, in their article *'The experiential Aspect of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun'*. This pioneering article offered a new way of understanding consumers. In contrast to the conventional belief that customers make rational decisions (information processing model), they focus on irrational buying needs. They argue that customer behaviour largely depends on the customer experience rather than rational analysis of functionality (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

However, there seems to be no consensus on what customer experience is and what it entails. Many researchers point out that theories relating to consumer experience are fragmented and entail some sort of confusion due to a lack of clear definition and categorisation (Becker & Jaakkola, 2020; Carù & Cova, 2003; Nilsen & Dale, 2013). Even with a few decades of research on the subject, some researchers claim that the concept of experience is still said to be ill-defined or even ideological (Carù & Cova, 2003, p.267)

#### ***Experience vs Service***

According to Pine and Gilmore (1998), experience is a distinct economic offering different from goods and services. They strictly differentiate the experience from goods and services, stating that unlike goods and services, which exist outside the individual buyer, experience happens inside them (Pine & Gilmore, 2013, p.27). Table 3-1 below summarises the differences between service and experience in a few aspects. The memorable nature of the offering, individualised characteristics and market through sensation are the key attributes Pine and Gilmore stressed.

However, not all scholars agree on this strict division. For example, Nilsen and Dale (2013) disagree with Pine and Gilmore's distinction (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; 2011; 2013) and state there are commonalities between service and experience. According to them, non-material/non-storable aspects and requiring the simultaneous presence of producer and consumer are the characteristics that are shared by both service and experience. Accordingly, they conclude that service and experience as commercial products have similarities while acknowledging the apparent differences that justify separating them (Nilsen & Dale, 2013, p.74).

Table 3-1 Economic distinctions in Service and Experience (modified from Pine and Gilmore, 2013)

Economy	Service	Experience
Primary Economic offering	Services	Experiences
Economic Function	Delivered	Created
Nature of offering	Intangible	Memorable
Extent of Use	Consumed at delivery	Experienced over a duration of time
Character	Customised	Individualised
Marketed Attributes	Benefits	Sensation
Observability	Perceivable	Sensorial
Primary flows	Informational	Social

### ***Experience economy vs experience industry***

Another point Nilsen and Dale (2013) depict is the need to understand the *experience industry* separately from the *experience economy*. They argue that the experience economy should be understood in a more general process in the economy. In contrast, the experience industry should be delimited to economic activity where ‘experience’ is the main product (p.65). Consequently, the experience industry covers a limited number of industries. According to Nielsén (2004), the categorisation of these industries has been modified and is still ongoing. Currently, this categorisation includes 13 categories: architecture, design, film/photography, visual art, literature, advertising, media, fashion, music, culinary art and meals, performing arts, tourism and experiential learning (p.46).

Comparable to Nilsen and Dale (2013), Becker and Jaakkola (2020) also present two perspectives existing in the consumer experience study. According to their research, customer experience tradition has two approaches: (1) responses to managerial stimuli or (2) responses to the consumption process (p.631). The first perspective emphasises that customer experience is an offering that producers can stage and manage, thus controlled by the firm. Whereas the other perspective defines consumer experience as consumers' responses and reactions to the consumption process, meaning customer experience is not necessarily under the firm’s control (p.636-637). The main difference between these perspectives is where the research’s purpose lies. While managerial stimuli focus on how firms can stage consumer experience by managing different elements, the consumption process perspective tries to understand and interpret consumers' responses to the experience.

### 3.1.3. Consumption of Experiential Products

In the previous section, the experience industry was mentioned to describe the sector that offers experience as the main product. According to Nielsén (2004), many terms are used to describe ‘experience industry’ depending on the location. For example, in the UK word ‘creative industries’ is used, while the European Commission uses both ‘cultural sector’ and ‘cultural industry’, all referring to the experience industry (p.6). Thus, in this study, cultural consumption will be understood synonym for experiential consumption.

Colbert and d’Astous (2022) define cultural consumption as “cognitive, emotional and physical activities of consumers when they select, buy, consume and dispose of goods and services related to art and culture (p.7)” and state that “consumers engage with these kinds of activities and processes because they seek to satisfy their needs and desires (p.8)”. Many researchers in cultural consumption agree that consuming art and culture-related goods and services involve *utilitarian* (functional and practical benefit), *hedonic* (experiential and emotional), and sometimes even *symbolic* needs (Colbert & d’Astous, 2022; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Solomon et al., 2016). Moreover, due to these affective components, experiential consumption should be treated differently from traditional goods (Bassi, 2010; Bourgeon-Renault, 2000). As consumption of the experiential (cultural) product puts hedonism as the primary motive, it is also termed hedonic consumption.

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) presented the notion of hedonic consumption, focusing on the consumption of entertainment goods that conventional consumer research cannot fully explain. Bassi (2010) summarised the unique nature of experience goods scattered in various studies into the following four aspects. First, experiential goods are primarily intangible, looking into the symbol and multisensorial perception. Second, the motivation for the choice depends on more subjective criteria than utilitarian ones. Third, it focuses on the psychological reaction brought by using. Fourth, experiential goods refer to both cognitive components and affective components, such as emotional and sensorial stimuli (p.53). In other words, experiential goods are consumed not for practical benefit or possession of goods. Instead, it is mainly to seek pleasure and entertainment. Therefore, in consuming experiential goods, utilitarian needs are often overruled by affective and intangible considerations (Bouder-Pailler, 1999; Lofman, 1991).

The recognition of the peculiar nature of experiential goods allowed scholars to think of experiential goods as a process and understand through the responses of consumers. Although it is expressed differently in different pieces of literature, the process of experiential (cultural product) consumption usually involves four stages. According to Colbert and d’Astous (2022), these stages are described as the select, buy, consume, and dispose stages. According to the

description from Arnould, Price and Zinkhan (2002, in Carù & Cova, 2003, p.271), the processes are pre-consumption experience, purchase experience, core consumption experience, and remembered consumption. After comparing instrumental and hedonic consumption, Lofman (1991) concluded that “hedonic consumption involves experiences which seem to diffuse through the consumer’s extended experience world (p.732)”. This indicates that regardless of what each phase is called, the main idea is that the consumption of experience is spread over a period of time rather than happening at a specific time of purchase.

Although not so much research exclusively focuses on the cinema consumption, the cinema, as stated above, has always been considered an experiential product (Colbert & d’Astous, 2022; Nielsén, 2004). The cinema is experienced using multiple senses and brings emotional responses, which are typical characteristics of experiential goods. Thus, cinema consumption also entails utilitarian, hedonic, and symbolic motivations. These motivations will be further discussed in the following section.

### **3.2. Motivation**

For several decades, scholars and practitioners in the marketing and service management field emphasised the importance of the customer aspect in business. Especially with the increased competition in the market, understanding customers and customer satisfaction became an essential element for the success of a business. According to Crompton and McKay (1997), motivation, experience (consumption), and satisfaction is a series of process. Therefore, motivation does not only explain why consumers do what they do (as in academic understanding) but also helps understand the consumer decision-making process, which can be used in practical settings to enhance performance. In the following section, definitions and conceptualisations of motivation will be presented. Then, I will take a more in-depth look at the motivation for cultural consumption where cinema consumption fits in.

#### **3.2.1. Defining Motivation**

*“Motive: an emotion or desire operating on the will and causing it to act.”*

*- Merriam-Webster, online*

The definition of motivation can be found in many kinds of literature. Solomon et al. (2016) state that motivation is the process that causes people to behave in a certain manner (p.199). Likewise, Boudier-Pailler (1999) notes motivation as a driver for the behaviour. Therefore, recognising motivation is important to understanding the underlying reasons for a specific behaviour (Slater, 2007).

According to Pincus (2004), the concept of motivation has a long history in both psychological theory and consumer research. He summarised previous theories on motivation and stated that “motivation played many roles over time, but the central concept ‘*motivation is the result of unmet needs*’ has never changed throughout different theories and systems (p.35)”. In other words, unmet needs act as motivation. Agreeing with the statement, Solomon et al. (2016) state that “motivation occurs when a need is aroused that the consumer wishes to satisfy. Consequently, many researchers in motivation also discuss the *needs*. Well-known theories in motivation, such as Maslow’s human need hierarchy, Herzberg’s Motivation Hygiene Theory, and McClelland’s Need Theory, are used in the diverse field to explain and make sense of human behaviour.

There are different ways to conceptualise motivation. One way is to look at extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Ryan and Deci (2000) define these motivations as “the intrinsic motivation is doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation is doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (p.55)”. Consumer motivation research, however, uses utilitarian and hedonic motivation approaches more frequently (Cai, Wohn, Mittal & Sureshbabu, 2018a). According to Solomon et al. (2016), utilitarian needs are the desire to achieve functional or practical benefits, while hedonic needs focus on the experiential needs involving emotional responses (p.193).

There are also completed different approaches. Iso-Ahola’s escape-seeking dichotomy, for example, divides motivation into two categories: escape and seeking. In this dichotomy, *escape* is a desire to leave the ‘everyday life’ behind, and *seeking* is a desire to obtain psychological reward through going to a contrasting environment (Iso-Ahola, 1982 in Crompton & McKay, 1997). According to Manolika et al. (2015), the escape-seek dichotomy is frequently used in cultural consumer motivation research along with Maslow’s human need hierarchy (1943) and Dann’s push and pull factor (1977,1981).

### **3.2.2. Motivation in Experiential Consumption**

As mentioned earlier, cultural products have peculiar characteristics that the conventional information processing model could not fully explain, such as sensory pleasure, aesthetic experience, and emotional reactions (Bourgeon-Renault, 2000). Eliashberg and Sawhney (1994) state that consumers engage in movies, music, and other types of experience products for fun, enjoyment, and leisure (p.1152). These elements are typical examples of what Solomon et al. (2016) suggested as hedonic needs. As mentioned in section 3.1.3, *utilitarian*, *hedonic*, and *symbolic* needs are often discussed in the context of cultural consumption.

In addition to these needs, aesthetic motivation also frequently appears in consumer research on art and cultural consumption (Gazley, Clark & Sinha, 2011; Manolika et al., 2015; Manolika

& Baltzis, 2022; Swanson, Davis & Zhao, 2008). According to Gazley et al. (2011), some researchers perceive hedonism as interchangeable with aesthetics, while some state they are different as “aesthetic is the appreciation of the art and beauty whereas hedonism is about pleasure (p.854)”. Either or, both aspects seem to lead to a hedonistic response.

There were several attempts to specify these needs. However, according to Manolika et al. (2015), motivation for cultural consumption has not yet been studied thoroughly. Most research on cultural consumption motivation does not rely on theoretical conceptualisation, making it still exploratory and descriptive. In the context of festival attendance, a number of researchers concluded that escape, excitement, event novelty, socialisation and family togetherness are the five motivations for festival goers (Uysal, Gahan & Matin, 1993; Yolal, Çetinel & Uysal, 2009). Similarly, Crompton and McKay (1997) revisited the festival motivation and identified six motivation domains such as cultural exploration, novelty/ regression, recovery equilibrium (rest & relaxation/ escape), known group socialisation, external/internal socialisation, and gregariousness (family togetherness).

According to Hawes (1979, in Boudier-Pailler, 1999), no one has the same needs for leisure as the nature of perceived benefits and the source of satisfaction vary from person to person. Therefore, numerous motivations for leisure activities will drive people to participate. Relaxation, self-knowledge, personal development, pleasure, creative expression, intellectual stimulation, and socialising are a few examples from the list of motivations Hawes listed (ibid., p.5).

As can be understood from the above, many motivations are identified across different domains, and there have been a few attempts to offer a clearer view of motivation in cultural consumption. Manolika et al. (2015) reviewed 94 research articles on the subject and presented four core motives in cultural consumption as follows: *Socialisation, Family togetherness, Escape and novelty*. However, although some similarities could be found regardless of the specific field, there is still more to be investigated and organised.

### **3.3. Previous Research on Cinema Attendance Motivation**

Historically, audience motivation research has been carried out with diverse approaches. Some research focused on the type of films, commercial and art films, to identify different motives behind watching a specific type of movie (Cuadrado, Filimon, Kerrigan and Rurale, 2013). Some research approaches took off from the difference between frequent and occasional visitors (Austin, 1986). As many methods exist, many motivations were revealed for cinema attendance (Cuadrado-Garcia et al., 2013).

One of the early studies revealed the intellectual, aesthetic, and religious motivation for cinema-going (Deshaias, 1951 in Austin, 1986), and Haley (1952) described escapism as the primary motive for cinema. Although each research took a different approach to identify the motivation behind cinema attendance and the term used varies, there seem to be a few overlapping components: aesthetic, education (learning and new information), escape (getaway), recreation (entertainment and pleasure), self-esteem enhancement (learning about self), social interaction (socialisation) are the most frequently mentioned motives for cinema attendance (Austin, 1986; Cuadrado-Garcia et al., 2013; Manolika & Baltzis, 2022; Slater, 2007; Tefertiller, 2017; Tefertiller, Maxwell & Morris, 2020).

Further, several studies were conducted to locate the differences in motivation depending on the audience types. Austin (1983, 1986), for example, focused on the frequency of the cinema visit and concluded that motivation for cinema differs between the frequent visitor, occasional visitor, and infrequent visitor. According to his research, frequent movie-goers recognise more motivations for attending movies, and this group are more likely to perceive movie experience as satisfying their needs (Austin, 1986, p.124). Some studies further segmented the audience types according to the motivation or purpose of cinema-going. For example, in Cuadrado-Garcia et al. (2013) and Cuadrado-Garcia, Filimon and Montoro-Pons (2018), audiences are categorised into cinema attendees, elitist filmgoers, cinema lovers, and original filmgoers. In this division, the first type of audience has leisure and pleasure as the primary motivation, while elitist filmgoers have a more aesthetic motive (ibid.).

Besides, the division by Vahemetsa (1970) appears in several articles on cinema audience research. According to Vahemetsa's classification, there are four types of audiences (Chuu et al., 2009). First is the *cultural prestige type*, who thinks the film is a specific cultural expression. The second type is named the *first cognitive type*, which views the film as an essential source of information. The Third group is the *second cognitive type*, whose primary motive is escapism. Lastly, the *aesthetic type* views the film as a creative product and thus focuses more on the movie itself (ibid., p.217). Some studies focused on this artistic versus the commercial aspect of film types. Chuu et al. (2009) describe art film audiences as "more serious about movies (p.215)" and that these audiences go to the cinema because they like movies rather than to fulfil other needs, such as socialisation.

Interestingly, despite the changes in the context mentioned in chapter 2, not much research on cinema attendance motivation reflects these changes. Research by Tefertiller (2017) considers the OTT service to have an influence on cinema attendance and sought the motivation to watch the movie at the cinema. He concluded that affective gratification expectations have the biggest influence on cinema attendance and cognitive gratification is not as significant as suggested in the previous research. However, as with much other research on cinema motivation, this research took



a quantitative approach, so not much explanation was given on what these affective motivations are and how it is perceived by audiences.

### **3.4. Research Rationale**

This chapter presented research on experiential consumption and motivation. From what has been said, cinema can be positioned in experiential consumption, which seeks entertainment and pleasure rather than having practical benefits. Also, cinema it was stated that cinema attendance should be perceived as a series of stages instead of a fragmentary part of watching movies. Further, to understand what drives audiences to go to the cinema, the research on motivation was reviewed. As presented in the section above, motivation in experiential consumption has not yet been researched thoroughly and still needs to be organised. Numerous motivations were discovered in diverse context within experiential consumption that needs to be categorised and reviewed.

Further, cinema attendance motivations conducted were observed. Previous research suggested that there are six motivations for cinema attendance: aesthetic, self-esteem, escape, entertainment, cognitive, and social (Austin, 1986; Manolika & Baltzis, 2022). And from those motivations, affective (emotion/entertainment) motivation is found to be prominent today (Tefertiller, 2017). However, most of the research on this topic took a quantitative approach, which inevitably limits new perspectives to enter. With the contextual changes, it might be necessary to revisit the motivations again and explore if there are motivations that have not been explicitly shown in the previous studies. Thus, this thesis approaches motivation from a qualitative approach to understand what motivations can be found and how it is expressed by audiences today. Moreover, by understanding the current motivation for cinema visits, this thesis will be able to offer some suggestions on what future cinema industry should consider attracting audiences.

## **4. Theoretical Framework**

This chapter will demonstrate the theoretical framework of the thesis. The first section of this chapter will briefly summarise the Uses and Gratification Theory and how it is viewed. In the second section, the dimensions of the motives for going to the cinema presented by Boudier-Pailler (1999) will shortly be discussed. This thesis will apply this theory and frame to seek and understand the motivation for cinema attendance in the recent day, which will be explained in the last section.

### **4.1. Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Like many other researchers in cinema motivation research, this thesis applies the Uses and Gratifications Theory to understand the motivation for cinema visits. The *Uses and Gratifications Theory* was first developed in the mass communications research field. As opposed to the traditional understanding of media, where media delivers messages to the passive audience (magic

bullet theory), the uses and gratifications approach views the audience as an active participant who purposively selects and uses media to satisfy their needs and desires (Austin, 1986; Gogan, Zhang & Matemba, 2018; Tefertiller, 2017). By locating the audience in the centre, this approach focuses on how people use media to satisfy their needs.

The origin of the notion date back to the 1940s (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1973; Ruggiero, 2000), but the Uses and Gratifications as a theory was published by Blumler and Katz in 1974. They expanded the theory linking Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and focused on how people use media for uses and gratification (Katz et al., 1973). They suggest that there are five audience needs: cognitive (information/knowledge), affective (emotion), personal integrative (self-esteem), social integrative (socialisation) and tension-free needs (escape and relaxation) (Katz et al., 1973; Tefertiller, 2017). Similar to these categories, McQuail, Blumer and Brown proposed four categories such as surveillance (information), personal identity (self-esteem), personal relationship (socialisation), and diversion (escape, pass time) (Katz et al., 1973; Rubin, 1983; Ruggiero, 2000).

Further, they presented five core elements of user gratifications theory as follows: (1) the audience is active, and its media use is goal oriented (2) the initiative in linking need gratification to a specific medium choices lies with the audience (3) the media compete with other sources of need satisfaction (4) people are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interest and motives (5) value judgement of media content can only be assessed by the audience (Katz et al., 1973; Mejía-Trejo, 2021).

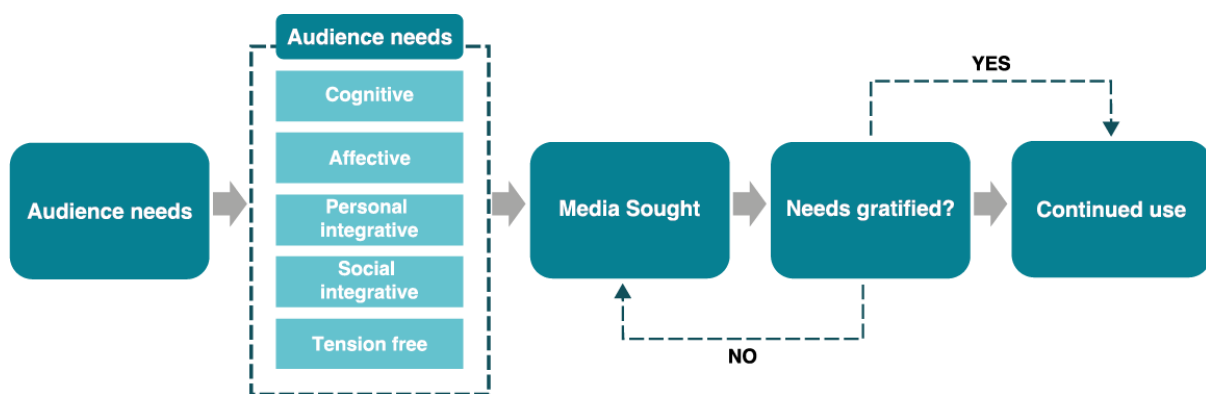


Figure 4-1 Uses and Gratifications Model (modified from Dyring, 2017)

The core idea is that audience, as active participants, select media and use it to fulfil their needs, and if needs are gratified, they will continue to use it. If not, they will seek other media until they are satisfied. Figure 4-1 shows how the Uses and Gratifications model works. This theory attempts to understand why (motivation) people choose certain media over alternatives (Gogan et al., 2018). According to Kuyucu (2015), this approach examines the gratification obtained from media systematically by asking, “what do people use media for?” (p.292). Accordingly, Kuyucu describes the main agendas of the Uses and Gratifications Theory as followings (p.293):

- to explore how people use mass media to satisfy their needs
- to discover the underlying motives for using mess media
- to identify the positive and negative outcomes of individual use of mass media.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory has been applied in diverse research for different purposes. Some studies used this approach to compare different media, and some within a specific medium, mostly television (Austin, 1986; Tefertiller, 2017). In cinema audience research, Austin (1986) focused on the ‘uses’ and ‘gratification sought’ aspects to better understand cinema consumption, such as discovering motives for movie-going.

There are criticisms about the legitimacy of the theory. According to Ruggiero (2000), scholars question the theory “for lack of empirical distinction between need and motivation and the obstacles of measuring the gratification of needs (p.26)”, also that this approach will not serve to decode popular culture consumption. However, the theory advocate stresses that applying the uses and gratifications approach to how and why individuals use media will offer a clue to understanding their needs, where they originate and how they are satisfied (ibid., p.27).

#### 4.2. The A Priori Dimensions of the Motives

In research by Boudier-Pailler (1999), ‘*the A priori dimensions of the motives for going to the theatre*’ was presented (Figure 4-2). In this dimension, goals for going to the theatre were divided into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic. According to her descriptions, extrinsic goals depend on external factors, where an event is seen as a tool to attain an ultimate goal. On the other hand, the intrinsic goal is where the experience is sought for its own sake. In other words, extrinsic value focuses on the utilitarian aspect, while intrinsic value emphasises non-utilitarian aspects such as pleasure. In the literature review, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were described separately from utilitarian and hedonic motivation. However, in the sense that utilitarian motivation comes from outside individuals and hedonic from the inside, it could be considered comparable.

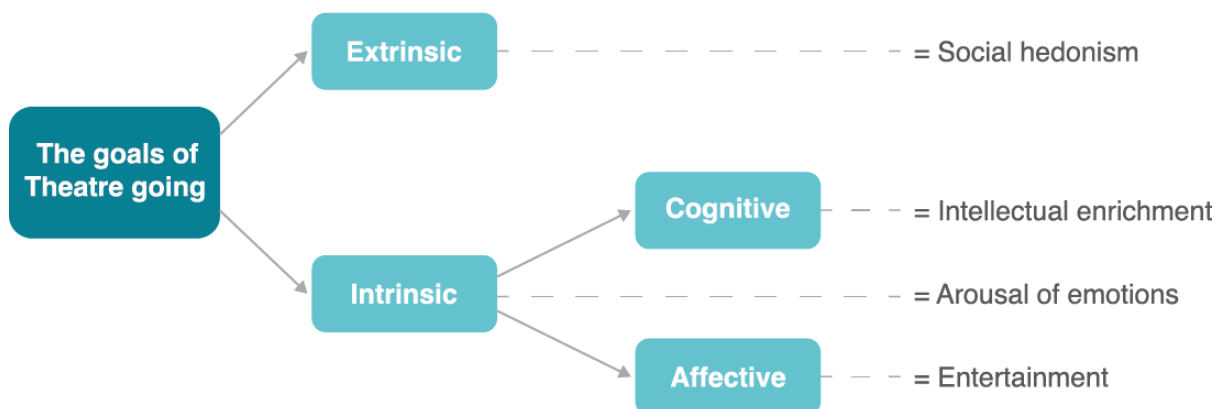


Figure 4-2 The A priori Dimensions of the Motives (modified from Boudier-Pailler, 1999, p.8)

Looking into the elements in Figure 4-2, the extrinsic goal is related to social hedonism. Boudier-Pailler gives an example of an extrinsic goal as “where social interaction is more attractive than the activity itself (p.7)”. This indicates that the reason for consumption lies beyond the actual product consumed. Thus, the social component is considered important. The intrinsic goals are further divided into cognitive, emotional, and affective. These motives are similar to what has been mentioned in section 3.3 and partly in section 4.1. Although intrinsic motivations were stressed in cultural consumption, Boudier-Pailler (1999) argues that extrinsic goals should not be ruled out as cultural experience can give rise to both extrinsic and intrinsic values (p.7). Consequently, she concluded that “the gratification sought in going to the theatre may be derived from the contents of the play, from structural and technical factors (intellectual enrichment, arousal of emotion and entertainment), or from the social context (social hedonism) (p.9)”.

### **4.3. Applying the Theories**

This thesis seeks to understand the motivation for going to the cinema. As mentioned in section 4.1, one of the main agendas of the Uses and Gratifications Theory is to discover the underlying motives for using mass media. As this thesis aims to understand why people go to the cinema in the context where many alternatives (OTT services) can be found, it would be reasonable to view from the Uses and Gratifications Theory. Consequently, this thesis is grounded on the perspective that audiences are active participants who purposively use cinema to fulfil their needs.

By having it as the basis, this study mainly focuses on the first two phases of the uses and gratifications model (Figure 4-1). In these phases, the audiences recognise their needs and desire and select a medium to fulfil these needs. The first two phases of the process will guide us to focus on the underlying motives in the cinema attending activity and how the audience chooses which medium to use.

In addition, to get a more comprehensive understanding of the motivations, the dimensions that Boudier-Pailler (1999) presented were combined into the uses and gratifications models. Adding her perspective will help to distinguish various motives and categorise them. Further, it will help to consider extrinsic motivation that is often ignored in cultural consumption research. Hence, this thesis is based on the framework in the figure (Figure 4-3) below.

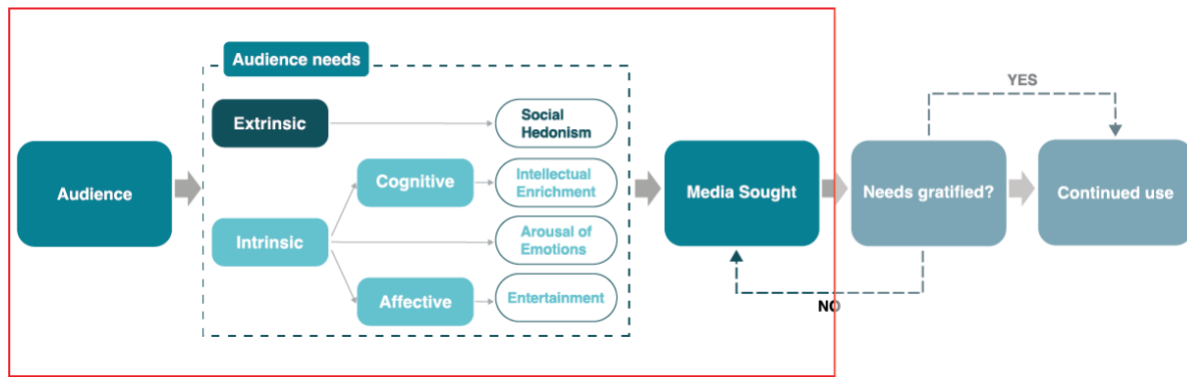


Figure 4-3 Framework for the Thesis (created by author)

## 5. Methodology

In this chapter, the rationale for the research approach and process will be presented with a rationale for methodological decisions. The chapter is divided into six subsections. In the first section, the philosophical grounding of the research will be presented along with a justification of the qualitative research approach. In the second section, the data collection process will be presented with detailed information for each step: sampling, interview preparation and interview. It will be followed by the data analysis section, where the transcription, coding and analysis process will be given. The fourth section will reflect on the methodological choice and limitations of the chosen method. The fifth section is ethical consideration, where research ethics and participant protection will be discussed. This section will also present how reliability and validity are considered during the research.

### 5.1. Research Approach

Philosophical grounding in research is important as it frames how the researcher views the world and what adequate knowledge is (Bryman, 2016). This study adopts interpretivism as an epistemological stand, as the research intends to understand and explore the motivations for cinema attendance from participants' perspectives and generate constructive meaning through interpretation (ibid.). As this thesis seeks to understand, people visiting cinema today by interpreting what has been said by the participant. In the study of motivation, it is important to consider what is not explicitly expressed, as not all participants are aware of their deeper motivations (Durmaz & Diyarbakırlıoğlu, 2011). This study takes this into consideration and interprets not only what has been verbally expressed but also what has been indirectly articulated. Thus, it is reasonable to think that this thesis is grounded on the interpretive perspective. Based on the philosophical ground, this study employs a qualitative approach.

As has been evident from the previous chapters, motivation for the cultural and experiential product is highly personal and subjective. In exploring this subjective and individualistic aspect of motivation, a qualitative research approach was selected. According to Creswell and Poth (2018),

a qualitative approach allows researchers to understand phenomena based on the perspective of participants. Thus, by applying a qualitative research approach, this study attempts to obtain a more profound understanding of the audience's perception of cinema and what motivates them to visit it. More specifically, as mentioned in section 3.4, the majority of the previous research took a quantitative approach, which inevitably excludes motivation that has not been explicitly shown in the previous studies. This study, by applying a qualitative research approach, allows exploring if there are motivations that have not been presented in previous studies, as well as an in-depth understanding of existing motivations.

## **5.2. Data Collection**

### **5.2.1. Sampling**

As for many social science research studies, this study was conducted using purposive sampling. The goal of the purposive sampling method is to strategically select participants so that the selected samples are relevant to the research question (Bryman, 2016, p.409). Three criteria were established to select the participant relevant to the research question. Firstly, as this study aims to understand why people go to cinemas even though they have OTT service platforms that also provide a 'movie watching' experience, participants must have visited a cinema recently. Secondly, all participants must have access to at least one OTT service. As understanding the influence of OTT service on cinema attendance motivation is part of the research aim, all interviewees needed to experienced watching movies on the OTT service platform. Lastly, as this study intends to compare the motivation and cinema visits of Sweden and Korea, participants should be residents of either Sweden or Korea.

The decision to compare the two countries was based on the fact that these two countries showed a complete difference in cinema industry growth before the COVID pandemic. The Swedish cinema industry declined slowly, while Korean cinema constantly increased until the COVID-19 outbreak. There were other countries showing a similar tendency, but as a Korean studying and living in Sweden, I am familiar with both contexts and had access to information and participants. Therefore, convinced that this would lead to an improvement in the quality of empirical data, the personal background of the author had an influence on the selection. The initial plan was to go to the cinema with a prequestionnaire with the listed criteria above and recruit interviewees. However, as will be discussed in detail in the later section (section 5.4.1), two limitations were found shortly after initiating data collection. Thus, the snowball sampling method was combined.

As snowball sampling helps a researcher to reach the target when it is challenging to locate the people suitable for the research (Bryman, 2016; May, 2011), this thesis combined this method

with purposive sampling. Snowball sampling is a technique in which the researcher initially samples a small group of people relevant to the research, and the participant suggests other participants that meet the criteria (Bryman, 2016). Following this method, I contacted two initial participants from Sweden and Korea and asked interviewees for recommendations for suitable candidates. This led me to 28 potential interviewees. Among them, 11 people (excluding the two initial interviewees) were selected by applying the purposive sampling method. A total of 13 samples that met the study’s purpose were selected and interviewed for the thesis.

*Table 5-1 Interviewee Information*

NAME	GENDER	RESIDENCE	OTT service	DURATION	MODE
Sofie	Female	Sweden	More than one	51:54	Zoom
Agnes	Female	Sweden	More than one	52:56	Zoom
Nadine	Female	Sweden	More than one	36:22	In-person
Abduljabbar	Male	Sweden	More than one	35:14	In-person
Benny	Male	Sweden	More than one	44:48	Zoom
Amy	Female	Sweden	One	1:12:55	Phone
Jimmy	Male	Sweden	One	37:39	Zoom
Jiheee	Female	Korea	One	30:51	Zoom
Munsuk	Female	Korea	One	51:16	Zoom
Eunsul	Female	Korea	More than one	1:01:56	Zoom
Aeji	Female	Korea	More than one	1:10:16	Zoom
Jaehyuk	Male	Korea	One	1:08:22	Zoom
Sukyeong	Female	Korea	More than one	57:32	Zoom

### **5.2.2. Research Method: Semi-Structured Interview**

According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), qualitative research interview “attempts to understand the world from the subjective point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experience, to uncover their lived world (p.3)”. As this study seeks to understand motives for

movie attendance today from the audience's perspective, an interview is chosen as the data collection method. Specifically, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. This method allows the interviewer to have more freedom to explore beyond the answers and gather rich and detailed data (Bryman, 2016; May, 2011). Further, unlike unstructured interviews, this approach uses specified questions that are prepared in interview guides but in a flexible manner (May, 2011). This helps in-depth information while remaining focused on the topic that is relevant to the research.

A focus group interview was also considered as the study addresses the different tendencies in the two countries, Sweden and Korea. However, as the main purpose of the study is to understand the motivation of audiences, diving into subjective and experiential aspects of participants' experiences was considered more important. An individual interview seemed more appropriate than a focus group interview to create a conversation from what could be seen as personal and emotional. Therefore, a Semi-structured interview was conducted to best achieve the research aim. Furthermore, the application of a semi-structured interview allowed the possibility to explore the participants' views extensively with less bias from the interviewer as interviewees answered in their own terms and flows while remaining focused on the topic (Bryman, 2016; May, 2011).

### **5.2.3. Interview Process**

Information sheets and consent forms (See Appendix 1 & 2) were sent to the participant prior to the interview to ensure participants were aware of the research topic and how the interview would be handled. Furthermore, before initiating the interview, an interview guide was created to orient the interview to the research topic. Two pilot interviews were conducted to test the interview guide and determine if the questions were designed to address the interviewees' perspectives on the research topic. This process was essential to ensure that all necessary aspects would be covered in future interviews. After the first pilot interview, I recognised that some adjustment was needed to avoid overly abstract answers and elicit more intrinsic answers. The second pilot was used to test the flow and ensure that the revised interview guide was sufficient. In the end, I landed on the final interview guide (See Appendix 3) with five topics: opening questions, cinema visits including motivation aspects, movie viewing in relation to OTT services, cinema experience, and COVID-related.

By having the interview guide in mind, interviews were conducted in a more flexible manner to engage interviewees to share their thoughts more actively. However, the opening questions about the 'recent visit to cinema' was used strategically as interview starter to give participant time to recall the cinematic experience and help answer the following questions more easily.



Also, it helped build rapport with the interviewee, which Creswell and Poth (2018) stated as assisting in getting good data.

Interviews were carried out in multiple forms. The majority was done online, through the Zoom platform. However, one interview was inevitably shifted to a phone interview due to an unexpected internet connection problem. Two interviews were carried out in person since participants agreed to meet. The online interviews were chosen because it allows time and space flexibility (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As half of the participants were from the other side of the world, no other options were available. Yet, to minimise the downside of online interviews in limiting observation of facial and body expressions, all interviews were done in video conference form.

I avoid using specific terms and scientific language, such as OTT, during the interview. Also, diverse question types mentioned by Bryman (2016, p.476-748) were used throughout the interview to help participants extend their answers. The interviews took between 30 minutes to 1 hour and 13 minutes, excluding 5 minutes of explanation and icebreaking in the beginning. All interviews were recorded using the auto transcription app 'otter.ai'. Further, interviews were recorded on Zoom as a backup. In the case of the interview done in person, the otter.ai was used as the main recording and the 'voice memos' tool on the phone as a backup.

### **5.3. Data Analysis**

#### **5.3.1. Transcriptions**

The interviews were transcribed with the help of two apps: 'otter.ai' and 'clovanote'. As this study entailed interviews in English and Korean, two different apps were used. For interviews conducted in English, an app called otter.ai was used for both recording and transcription, as the app provides real-time recording and transcription. For interviews conducted in Korean, an app called 'clovanote' was used for the transcription. However, as 'clovanote' does not provide a recording function, interviews were recorded using 'otter.ai' and then transferred to 'clovanote' for transcription.

Once the interview and primary transcription was done, all interviews were reviewed line-by-line while listening to the record file to correct all the errors from the auto-generated transcription and add details of facial expression and pausing notes if necessary. Then, before deleting the recorded file, I went through the transcription again to ensure all parts were correctly transferred.

Regarding the interview conducted in Korean, I decided not to translate the transcript into English after getting confirmation from the supervisor that it was not necessary. There are two reasons behind this decision. Firstly, it was to minimise the use of unnecessary time and effort

in translating a massive amount of text. Secondly, to prevent my personal views from entering and being reflected through the translation process. However, for the analysis, all relevant quotations were selectively translated. The translation was initially done by the author and checked by one other Korean to avoid potential bias.

### **5.3.2. Coding and Analysis**

A thematic analysis approach was applied to analyse the empirical data gathered from the interviews. According to Braun and Clarke (2006, in Flick, 2014), this approach helps identify, analyse, and report patterns within the data. They present six steps of thematic analysis as follows: (1) familiarising yourself with data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming the themes, and (6) Producing the report (ibid.).

Applying these six steps, the first step, getting familiar with the data, was already accomplished during the transcription process. Thus, I took one extra step and went through the transcript thoroughly and highlighted what was deemed important. Afterwards, the transcript files were uploaded to data analysis software ‘NVivo’. Using NVivo, 131 initial codes were identified. These codes were reviewed, combined, and sorted to search the themes. As this study sought to explore underlying motives that were not explicitly mentioned, the coding process considered not only verbal expressions but also the interpretation of what is expressed by the statement. For example, even if the participant did not use the word ‘socialisation, or social intension’, if the statement entails a social element, such as a sense of belonging or shared feeling, it was coded as socialisation. Several primary themes were identified in the process, which were further categorised into the final themes: core offer, subsidiary offer, purpose, constraints, other factors, OTT, and others. Despite the attempt to have a clear division following code guides, some elements were difficult to define. Thus, some adjustments were made later in the process.

### **5.4. Methodological Limitations**

The research process and methodological choices were made under careful and thorough consideration. However, some limitations identified during the research process should not be overlooked. First, qualitative research, by nature, is impressionistic and subjective (Bryman, 2016, p.398). Thus, this study intends to provide a better understanding of cinema motivation rather than offering generalised knowledge. Also, as grounded on interpretivism, the possibility of the researcher’s perspectives and understanding entering the interpretation should be acknowledged. Last but at least, the limitation in timeframe and competence of the author should also be directed.

### **5.4.1. Sampling**

As mentioned earlier (Section 5.2.1), the initial plan was to recruit participants at the cinema. The reason behind this was that recruiting at the cinema would automatically satisfy one of the selection criteria, to have been to the cinema recently, and intended to minimise the potential bias in the selection process by offering equal interview opportunities to the unspecified people. However, due to COVID, not many people were visiting the cinema, and even those who were at it, finding people willing to participate in an hour interview voluntarily was not easy. Furthermore, I could not conduct data collection in Korea due to cinema closedown as COVID restrictions during the intended period of stay. These limitations constrained me from finding eligible participants, and thus using snowball sampling was inevitable.

I managed to recruit 13 participants through snowball sampling, but as was relied on recommendations from participants, it resulted in uneven distribution. Only four male participants were available, and not enough participants were from Korea. As this thesis does not intend to generalise results, having uneven distribution was not the most critical weakness of the thesis. Especially as this thesis took purposive sampling to gather samples that were relevant to the research, the distribution will not significantly alter the result. However, it could have benefited from having more male participants as different perspectives could have entered from them.

In terms of sample size, although it was recommended to have approximately 15 interviews for a single methodology, only 13 interview was carried out due to the availability of participants and lack of time. As not much additional information was found after the 13 interviews, it was considered to achieve data saturation (Bryman, 2016). However, as the snowball sampling method was used for the sampling, it should also be considered that data saturation might have been easily achieved due to the similarities in the participant. Thus, it should be considered that a larger sample size with more participant diversity out of the circle could have added an interesting aspect to the research.

### **5.4.2. Interview**

As mentioned in the interview process (Section 5.2.2), most of the interview was conducted online. The choice was to provide time and space flexibility. However, conducting interviews on Zoom also caused some difficulties that could not be controlled. Firstly, there were several occasions when the interview was stopped and resumed due to an unstable internet connection. One interview was changed to a phone interview due to the same issue. Secondly, it was impossible to provide a quiet and comfortable environment for the interviewee (Bryman, 2016). In a few interviews, interruptions from family or friends and unexpected background noise occurred. Lastly, it was difficult to catch the wording on Zoom, mainly when the interviewee

and interviewer unintentionally spoke simultaneously. This was due to the technical issue on Zoom that only one speaker was recognised and heard. Also, the audio file recorded on zoom had much reverberation that there were some difficulties in transcribing.

In addition, language barriers could also be worth mentioning as a limitation. As none of the participants and the interviewer were native to English, there were times during the interview when both interviewee and interviewer struggled to find the correct term. This indicates that there might be unexpressed thoughts and perspectives due to the language barrier.

## **5.5. Ethical Consideration**

As Bryman (2016) states, ethical issues cannot be ignored in research as it is directly linked to the integrity of the research and disciplines (p.120). This thesis took ethical principles (see Bryman, 2016, p.125) into consideration during the entire process of the thesis.

Firstly, although it is not easy to predict and prevent all potential harm from participation, diverse efforts were made to ensure that participants did no physical or psychological harm. Interviews and analysis were conducted cautiously, not to include any discrimination or judgemental elements. Also, participants were informed that they were eligible to refuse to answer any questions without stating a reason. Furthermore, participants were guaranteed the withdrawal of participation at any time.

Secondly, informed consent was received before initiating the interview. Information sheets and contents forms were sent out to the participant to ensure participants were fully aware of the nature of the research and the implications of their participation (Bryman, 2016, p.131). This document entailed information on data handling, voluntary participation, participants' rights, and the right to withdraw from participation. Consents were received before the interview, and to ensure the participant read and understood all information delivered, it was verbally confirmed again at the beginning of the interview.

Thirdly, to avoid invasion of privacy, participants were guaranteed a choice of anonymity. However, as all participants chose to be identifiable with their names for this thesis, thus use of pseudonyms was not necessary. Regarding the recordings, video and audio recordings were used solely for transcription purposes and were deleted as transcriptions were finished.

Lastly, information sheets were made and revised to ensure that all information included was accurate to avoid deception. Also, participants were assured that they would be informed in case of any changes in the information provided.

## **5.6. Research Quality: Trustworthiness**

According to Bryman (2016), trustworthiness is often used as an alternative way to evaluate research qualitative research. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are the four aspects of attaining trustworthiness (Bryman, 2016, p.49). These aspects were considered throughout the research. The interview was carefully designed and carried out to ensure that the research was credible. All vague statements in the interview were confirmed with follow-up and interpreting questions to ensure the interviewer's understanding synced with the interviewees (Bryman, 2016). Also, transcriptions were triple-checked to ensure that all wordings were an exact match to the recordings. Although confirmation with the participant after completion was not obtainable, all possible precaution was made to minimize bias and stay true to what had been said. In terms of transferability, it is said that it could be attained by a thick description of the process (Bryman, 2016; Flick, 2014). This study attempted to track all processes, considerations and decisions by keeping a note of each step. Although keeping a complete record of the research process was not fulfilled due to the extensive amount of data, some notes were made in each process, and these descriptions were partly used in the methodology chapter to provide detailed information on the research process. In addition to the notes, all data gathered for this thesis and the drafts made in the process were stored to increase dependability. Lastly, using the theoretical framework to interpret the findings, an attempt was made to secure confirmability.

## **6. Findings**

### **6.1. Influence of OTT on Cinema Consumption**

Consistent with previous studies, participants of this study perceived that there were changes in how they watch movies due to OTT. A great number of interviewees stated that easy access to numerous and diverse content at a fixed price is the big merit of using OTT services. The OTT was perceived to serve more than the conventional role of a movie viewing platform. For example, a few respondents mentioned educational functions such as language learning and self-exploration, as well as being able to watch artistic movies that are not available on the screen. They claimed that diverse content available from different parts of the world, which you would not have access to otherwise, helps you understand different cultures and languages and discover new films.

Most participants agreed that using OTT services has changed how they watch movies. Out of 13 interviews, ten interviewees pointed out that they go less to the cinema after subscribing to the OTT services. This was expressed in diverse ways, but the main reason was that audiences started to feel that OTT services were a convenient alternative to the cinema. In the interviews, it was expressed that although the experience may differ from the cinema, OTT can cover a considerable amount of desire that encourages to go to the cinema.

*“if you pay 10 for the cinema and get 30 out of it, on OTT, I can pay 2 and take away 5~6. [...] It’s so convenient to use OTT services to watch movies now. I don’t feel the urge to go to the cinema as much because watching movies on the OTT platform satisfies such a desire. I mean to a certain level” (Aeji)*

Specifically, interviewees mentioned that watching movies through OTT services feels less pressured as they can always stop watching or switch to another movie if it is not interesting. Especially, interviewees with kids stated that going to the cinema with children is always tricky. If the kids do not like the movie, it might lead to a waste of money leaving the cinema after paying the fee. Not all cases were this extreme, but a few other respondents have also pointed out that they have become more cautious and defensive in decision-making regarding cinema visits. The audiences are no longer willing to take a chance to watch random movies at the cinema, and they tend to visit the cinema on more specific occasions.

*“...without Netflix, I probably will go to the movie, [...] but if I have Netflix, I very randomly would like to take a risk to go to the cinema to watch whatever” (Amy)*

*“I used to watch films from more diverse genres, but after having streaming services, I watch limited genres in the cinema. I mean, I only watch blockbusters or something from MCU (Marvel Cinematic Universe) in the cinema now because I know I will enjoy it there, but also because I know that I can always watch other genres in OTT” (Eunsul)*

It was inferred from the interviews that audiences nowadays go to the cinema selectively for the movie they define as cinema-type movies. A few common features of the cinema-type movie were revealed through the interviews. Movies from Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and James Bond series were frequently mentioned as movies for cinema, and as for genre, action and blockbusters were considered cinema-type. Summarising what has been said in the interviews, the movies that specifically emphasise sound and visual elements were referred to as movies for cinema. Respondents have highlighted a huge difference between watching these types of movies at the cinema and on OTT. They claimed that the difference is the technical support you get from the cinema, such as a big screen and audio system.

*“If the movie is story-focused, it will be for OTT, I guess [...], but for the movie that visual or sound are important, I go to the cinema” (Aeji)*

*“I think certain movies are more maybe exciting to go to the cinema and to watch. Like, if it’s a Marvel movie that you know, there are a lot of special effects. I always feel like it’s nicer to watch in a cinema than to watch it at home” (Nadine)*

Further, fiscal aspects were also raised in the interviews. Several respondents pointed out that watching movies on OTT services is more cost-efficient. One visit to the cinema is equivalent to a month's subscription on the OTT platform, which elevates the hesitation to go to the cinema. One of the interviewees expressed that going to the cinema feels more luxurious, as watching movies at home has become much easier. In recent years, the increase in cinema ticket prices has deepened the hesitation. Most of the interviewees responded that they felt the movie ticket was a little bit expensive and that it acted as a constraint when deciding to go to the movies. With the circumstances, respondents agreed that going to the cinema depends on whether it feels worth paying.

*“Before, I used to go to the cinema more spontaneously with friends without hesitation. But now I started to think again before going to the cinema. if it is too expensive or not and if it’s worth the money.” (Munsuk)*

*“It’s still expensive. So, you still need to think [...] You can’t really do that as Oh, yeah, that’s fun. Let’s do that. It’s more of a like, do we actually have the money to do it? So, you can’t really do it more than once every second month.” (Agnes)*

The interviews suggested that, with the advent of more convenient OTT services, audiences (participants) started to view cinema as an activity requiring time, money, and effort. Accordingly, they consciously compare OTT service and cinema and decide to go to the cinema when there are elements that cannot be fulfilled on OTT. The following section will identify and discuss these elements that the audience perceives to be exclusive to cinema.

## **6.2. The Offers of the Cinema**

During the interviews, it was revealed that there is confusion on ‘what’ offered and ‘why (motivation)’ audiences are going to the cinema. The main reason for this is that these two are interrelated. For example, many respondents mentioned that they go to the cinema to watch action movies because it is more exciting to watch at the cinema. In this case, an action movie is the core product (offer), and the excitement motivates the cinema visit.

As Durmaz and Diyarbakırlıoğlu (2011) state, identifying motivation is not a simple task as audiences might not be aware of their deeper motivation. Therefore, approaching the audience’s perception of what is offered at the cinema could help presume underlying motivations that individuals might not be aware of. From the 13 interviews, a few common characteristics of the core offering were found. These characteristics were coded as the movie, facility, cinematic experience, and atmosphere.

The first offering is the movie itself. As mentioned in the previous section, the interviews suggested that the audiences in this study tend to watch a substantially narrow range of movies at the cinema.

Thus, the movie in this category is very specific. Interviewees affirmed that the movies that are available exclusively in the cinema and cinema-type movies attract them to visit the cinema.

*“I think interesting movies [...]and that are not shown on the streaming [...] will make me go to the cinema” (Benny)*

*“When a movie is on the cinema, and I cannot find it on OTT, I get really curious about the story. Then I go the watch it at the cinema.” (Aeji)*

Exclusive offer on cinema seems to trigger curiosity and invite the audience to the cinema. On the other hand, a cinema-type movie is more complex to define as everyone has a different perspective on what is important. While many agreed that movies with lots of effects, such as action and blockbusters, are the type of movies they seek, some respondents stressed the importance of being able to enjoy the spectacular nature of the movie on a full screen, which another respondent specified by the term *mise-en-scène*. According to her, the film is an art of the director. Therefore, to fully seize the director’s intentions, it should be watched in the cinema where it is intended to be shown.

*“People say drama is an art of the writer, performance as an art of actors. But the film is an art of the director. So, it’s all about mise-en-scène. So that’s what I am after (when going to the cinema)” (Sukyeong)*

The pulling effect seems to increase when a movie can be categorised into both exclusive and cinema types. As shown from the two quotes below, when a cinema-type movie meets exclusivity, it is expressed as a desire to watch it before others.

*“The marvel movies, you know you want to watch it early because you know people are going to start to talk about them, and also you’ve been like longing for the next movie” (Agnes)*

*“When a new movie is on from Marvel, although I know that it will be on Disney plus in 45days, I always end up going to the cinema paying all the money. I don’t know why, but I guess it’s because I want to watch before everybody else” (Eunsul)*

The second offering is the facility. This category includes both technical elements, expressly the technical specifications, such as screen and audio system, and the other components in the venue, such as seats and the size of the auditorium. 11 respondents referred to the big screen and good sound system as essential aspects when deciding to go to the cinema. One of the interviewees emphasised that technical support is the main reason for cinema visits as it provides an experience that cannot be attained from home.



The last two offers depicted from the interviews were atmosphere and cinema experience. When describing the cinematic experience and the atmosphere, the respondents focused on aspects that cannot be obtained from other means. The following quote captures the core meaning of atmosphere.

*“It’s like the difference between ordering takeout and going to the restaurants. It’s the same food, but it’s very different eating it from the little thing at home or eating it in a room full of people” (Agnes)*

This indicates that although the movie is an essential element of cinema, going to the cinema is not just about consuming the movie. The important point is the mood that comes along in the cinema. Respondents acknowledged that all tangible and intangible elements across the whole phase of the cinema visits comprise the atmosphere. For example, interviewees mentioned elements such as the smell of popcorn, other people in the cinema, the staff, and the temperature to illustrate what the atmosphere means to them.

*I think going to the cinema means, I’m buying the space and the moods that come along with watching the movie. so basically, I am paying for the mood which is different from watching at home” (Jihee)*

Lastly, the interviewees stressed that cinematic experience is an important component of cinema. All 13 interviewees mentioned that they are going to the cinema for the ‘experience’. The experience was expressed using various adjectives, such as better, different, memorable and stimulus. Parallel to the atmosphere, respondents reflected that although the movie is important, it is a part of the cinematic experience.

*“I don’t think I went to the cinema with a single purpose of watching a movie. going there, going out, watching people, eating popcorn...all that was just part of my experience” (Aeji)*

*“It’s a different experience. It’s an experience that we don’t do every day. It’s again the environment, the place, the people around you, the popcorn, the food, going out and buying the ticket and showing the ticket in front of the gate of the cinema theatre. It’s the big screen. It’s the sounds from the great and amazing speakers, the light, and the darkness in the cinema theatre. It’s the experience itself.” (Abduljabbar)*

The quote above shows how the experience is comprised of different elements. From the quotation, it can be interpreted that although four core offers were addressed, the former three: movie, facility, and atmosphere, seem to be components that build up the cinema experience. Further, it was implied that interviewees perceive all the processes of cinema consumption, such as going to the

cinema, having popcorn, and buying tickets, as part of the cinema experience. From what has been stated above, it can be inferred that audiences understand cinema as an experience and seek a cinematic experience that could not be replicated in other means of movie viewing.

Apart from what has been discussed above, some additional elements building up the experience were determined. Unlike the core offers, which are situated in or around the movie, additional elements are extra offers that would assist in improving the experience. This study identified a few notable elements, namely services and other attractions. Some respondents commented that services like popcorn are also an important element in the cinema experience. Jimmy expressed that it is almost a tradition to have popcorn at the cinema. Similarly, Nadine described having popcorn as part of the cinema-going culture. The two comments demonstrate how serious popcorn can be in the cinema experience.

*“Having snacks at the cinema brings the whole experience to another level. It’s not like I won’t go to the cinema because I can’t have popcorn, but it’s a fact that it will take away one fun factor” (Eunsul)*

Also, some other in-house events were mentioned as triggers. One of the respondents from Korea stated that Guest Visit (GV), where movie critics come and give explanations, is one of the fun events at the cinema that brings her to the cinema. And promotion events such as having a photo zone, original tickets and stage greetings were pointed out by several interviewees as an element provoking cinema attendance. In brief, this study suggests that audiences nowadays view the experience as the core offering of cinema, and the experience is enhanced by additional elements found at the cinema.

### **6.3. The Motivation**

In the previous section, the experience aspect of cinema was highlighted as the core product of cinema. However, it was not specified what audiences seek from this experience. This section will deem into the underlying motivations depicted in the interviews. as stated in the method chapter, underlying motivations were interpreted from what has been stated by the interviewees. As stated in the literature review, motivation is what drives behaviour. Thus, investigating the purpose of the cinema visits will assist in identifying the motivation behind them. The interviews suggested that having fun is one of the main reasons for cinema attendance. Although it was expressed in different words, such as enjoyment, entertainment, excitement, joy, and pleasantness, most respondents considered that going to the cinema was mainly for entertainment reasons.

*“(going to the cinema) is to have a nice time and see a good movie [...] it’s more fun to be in movies (cinema). It’s a better feeling than (when) you’re at home” (Jimmy)*

*“It’s a fun thing to do with other people [...] it’s always an exciting experience, [...] (I go to the cinema because) it’s a fun activity to do with other people and because it’s easier to focus on the movie” (Nadine)*

*“Personally, I think going to the cinema is to enjoy and to seek some kind of pleasure [...] also, it’s a good way to have a good time with people I care about” (Jaehyuk)*

In extension to the above, several interviewees mentioned specialised theatres (for instance, 4DX, IMAX) experience as their primary purpose of a cinema visit, stating specialised theatres maximises the fun aspect by stimulating the senses. The quote below can be interpreted that the motivation behind the specialised theatre is also to be entertained by the sensory experience attained at the cinema. Interestingly, only Korean interviewees mentioned specialised theatre, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

*“I used to go to 4DX a lot because you can really experience the movie with all five senses. The sound, heat, smell, and movement, it really makes going to the cinema more exciting” (Eunsul)*

*“I watched Avatar in 3D, it was really fun. It really felt I entered the world in the movie. It was just a different level of entertaining” (Jihee)*

Focusing on the movie was also frequently mentioned as the purpose of going to the cinema. Two different aspects were brought up in the interviews. The first relates to the facility and atmosphere mentioned in the previous section. Respondents believed that these components create the condition where they can fully focus on the movie, which helps them enjoy it more.

*“...the dark auditorium, surrounding sound system and the screen, it helps dive in the movie. So, I go to the cinema when there is the movie I really want to focus and enjoy every part of it” (Sukyeong)*

The other is being disconnected from the outside world. This aspect is more related to the escape motivation addressed by Haley (1952). Two respondents specifically used the term ‘escapism’, emphasising that being able to disconnect from life and entirely focus on the movie is a prominent reason for cinema attendance.

*“to have like two hours where you sit down and like focus on the movie and you completely like maybe it’s an escapism thing as well where you kind of forget about your own life for like two hours and I think I really liked that” (Nadine)*

*“It’s kind of an escapism a little bit. Like you go in, they turn the lights off and then you have, like, two to two and a half hours for yourself. Like your phone is*

*off, your only job is to watch the movie and enjoy it. So, it's kind of relaxing. I think that's the main reason why I go" (Sofie)*

An interesting aspect of escape motivation in cinema is that it entails both physical disconnection from the outside world and a mental disconnection from one's life and situation, as can be seen in the quotes above. In the interviews, respondents expressed that being physically disconnected from the outside world by entering the auditorium enables them to be absorbed in the movie and concentrate without being disturbed by external elements. This aspect was mostly mentioned in comparison to the movie consumption on the OTT platform stressing that focusing on the movie using OTT services was very challenging.

*"When we go to the cinema, we are completely disconnected from the world, having nothing but the movie to focus on [...] watching a movie on OTT, means checking the message every now and then and so on. I really can't focus on the movie" (Eunsul)*

*"On OTT, you can just have something played and do other things, but in cinema, you are really separated from other things outside and be fully engaged with the movie. I think it's just really different" (Jaehyuk)*

Another feature of escape is towards the individuals and mental disconnection from their own life. This was described as seeking relaxation, stress relief, and a sense of healing.

*"I think cinema for me was some kind of comfort, being able to forget about the difficulties in real life and enjoying the movie helped me release stress" (Aeji)*

Many interviewees pointed out that they go to the cinema to bring some change in life. Some respondents even felt that cinema was similar to an event, something special to do. According to Abduljabbar,

*"(Going to the cinema) it's kind of a change because it's one of the things that we don't do all the time. [...] it's having fun but in a different way."*

The above quotation views cinema as an event that does not happen every day. This can be interpreted as escapism in the sense that it disconnects the audiences from reality and create a sense of change from daily life. However, entertainment motivation can also be found in that statement. In fact, the desire to have fun and a good time was shown in all comments related to escapism. This implies that there might not be much difference in escape and entertainment motivation in the cinema context.

Further, by relating the event aspect to the activity for dating or activity to do with friends, respondents emphasised the social part of the cinema visit. Social integrative motivation is one of the main motivations shown in this study. The interviewees recognised cinema as an activity to do

with other people, to meet and communicate, which is a clear sign of motivation for socialising. The social aspect of the cinema was deemed important, specifically because having other spectators in the auditorium is exclusive to cinema. The interviewees state that watching the same movie with other audiences offers a sense of belonging, which could be purely from the existence of other audiences but also from seeing how they react the same as I do.

*“You feel like you are a part of the society, you’re connected with other people, although you didn’t talk to them” (Amy)*

*“When you go to the restroom after the movie is over, you can hear people discussing the movie. As I listen to it, I go like, ‘oh, I like that part as well, or I thought it was fun in that scene too’. I mean, they are complete strangers, but you somehow feel very close to them just because you share the same feeling” (Aeji)*

Eleven interviewees mentioned shared feeling is one of the unique aspects of a cinema visit. They note that empathizing with others not only generates a sense of belonging but also acts as an amplifier of emotions. Respondents pointed out that this shared feeling enhances their experience of the movie and makes it more fun. Thus, both social and entertainment motivations are also closely connected.

*“If they’re laughing at the joke that you’re laughing at the same time? It’s like you feel like I don’t know. It’s almost like yours sharing this happy feeling with other people, and it just feels better” (Nadine)*

Finally, despite the use of the qualitative approach to identify underlying motivation that might not be highlighted in the previous studies, there was no significant new motivation discovered in this study. Rather, it suggests that in the context where OTT services are dominant, only a few cinema attendance motivations seem to appeal to the audience. From what has been discussed above, three motivations seemed prominent in cinema consumption: entertainment, escape, and socialisation. Of the three, entertainment and socialisation motives were interspersed in most of the processes mentioned by the interviewees. Apart from what has been pointed out above, there were also a few comments regarding curiosity. A desire to know the director’s intention behind the screen and curiosity about the new genre was mentioned by the interviewees. This could be recognised as cognitive motivation. However, this motivation did not appear significantly in this study.

#### **6.4. Other Findings**

There were some findings that appeared important but were not able to fit in the three sections above. This section will briefly describe these findings. From the interviews, it was suggested that cinema attendance could be influenced by some factors. First, the ticket price was repeatedly

mentioned by the respondents. Respondents stated that ticket price is too high nowadays, especially compared to OTT services.

*“There is obviously too expensive to go simply for killing time” (Sukyeong)*

This indicates the price is clearly a factor influencing the decision. Nadine stated that the value of the experience and the amount willing to pay for the experience is always in question. In relation to this perspective, there was a distinctive point only observed in the Korean participants. As shortly mentioned above, many Korean respondents mentioned watching movies at the specialised theatre is one of the reasons for cinema visits.

*“I think the cost efficiency really matters [...] I’d rather pay a little more for the specialised theatre than go to the normal theatre because I know the experience will be totally different. I think it’s worth paying. Otherwise, it will be just OTT” (Aeji)*

As from the quotation, many respondents agreed that they prefer specialised theatre over normal cinema because it is a distinctive experience from the OTT. They pointed out that they are willing to pay more for a better and unique experience but not for something you can find at home.

In addition, Amy pointed out that there are not so many discount promotions in Sweden, which would attract more people to the cinema. The case of Korea was a little different. While agreeing that ticket prices were high, many Korean interviewees also mentioned the diverse benefit programs that make cinema more affordable, such as member benefits from cinema brands and telecommunication member discounts. And that sometimes they go to the cinema to fulfil the minimum requirement to retain membership benefits. This indicates that the marketing and promotion strategy of the cinema could also influence cinema visits.

*“When you become VIP, you can get ten movies for free, plus some snacks and even a few specialised theatre tickets annually. The benefit is quite good, so I sometimes just go a little extra to remain in the VIP group” (Eunsul)*

Apart from the price, some mentioned that availability of other leisure activities influences cinema attendance. Respondents from Sweden described that they go to the cinema more in the winter and less in the summer as they have access to other leisure activities in the summer. In comparison, interviewees from Korea pointed out that there are not so many alternative leisure activities available in the city in general.

*“In winter it’s very hard to find outside activity because of the weather, [...] a good option for us as a family is to go to a cinema” (Abduljabbar)*

## 7. Discussion

The aim of this study was to understand why audiences go to the cinema. To explore this, the study was designed to investigate how participants of the study perceived cinema and what was exclusive to cinema attendance that motivated them to visit.

- (1) *How do audiences perceive cinema in the present context?*
- (2) *What motivates the audience to go to the cinema today?*
- (3) *How can the different behaviour of audiences between Sweden and Korea be understood?*

By applying the Uses and Gratifications Theory and the dimension of the motives presented in chapter 4, this chapter will try to answer the questions above. However, as suggested in the previous chapter, cinema offers and motivations are complexly shaped around cinema consumption. Also, it was evident that cinema consumption motivation is difficult to separate from the OTT service since OTT has a tremendous influence on cinema consumption. Therefore, understanding the motivation for cinema inevitably includes a comparison to the OTT services.

In the first section of the chapter, audience perception of the cinema will be discussed in relation to the OTT services. Also, by reflecting on the previous research, the current position of the cinema will be discussed. In the second section, the motivation depicted in the findings will be addressed in regard to the uses and gratification theory. This will highlight the main motivation and, thus, provide some insight into what the future cinema industry should be focusing on offering. The third section will recapture the first two parts of the chapter and discuss the difference between Sweden and Korea.

### 7.1. Cinema Perception: What is Cinema?

*'It should be worth the price of the movie just to go into the theatre.'*  
(Jim Loeks, in Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p.100)

The results of the study above indicate that the perception of cinema has changed significantly due to the OTT services. As mentioned in the contextual background section, this phenomenon has already been viewed by many scholars in the media communication disciplines. However, while acknowledging that there are changes, how and why these changes occur has not been thoroughly discussed.

The finding of this study suggests that audiences have become more cautious regarding cinema consumption. This can be explained by the competitive advantage of OTT, offering a more accessible and cheaper alternative to watching movies. Audiences have realised that many of the elements exclusively offered at the cinema could now be replaced by OTT service. Especially with the cost efficiency of OTT, audiences seek more specific and exclusive offerings in cinema attendance. In section 6.2, movies, facilities, atmosphere, and cinematic experience were seen to

be the exclusive offerings of the cinema, and the former three elements construct the cinema experience. Moreover, the findings suggest that audiences look for a holistic experience rather than just watching movies. Participants of the study expressed that although the movie is an important element of the experience, the facility, atmosphere, services, and other spectators you meet at the cinema all together build up the cinema experience.

This view matches the experience consumption mentioned in the literature review. According to Pine and Gilmore (2013), experience sets in over a duration of time. Especially when it comes to experiential products, consumption should be understood through the process and by consumers' responses (Colbert & d'Astous, 2022). The finding of this study also implies that the audience perceives cinema as a process rather than a product consumed at a specific point in time. This indicates that everything that occurs between the four experience consumption phases (pre-experience - purchase experience - core consumption - remembered consumption, see Section 3.1.3) should be considered cinema experience.

One of the participant's quotations in the finding captures the core of the experience. She pointed out that although the food may be the same, there is a clear difference between eating at the restaurant and ordering takeout (p.35). This is what cinema is offering to the audience. Although the movie will be the same, the auditorium, the smell of popcorn, and the excitement while buying the ticket and sharing feelings with complete strangers are the elements that constitute the experience.

Thus, audiences in this study perceive 'experience' as the core offer of the cinema and that the experiences comprise diverse elements the audience meets and feels during the process of experience. Therefore, cinema cannot be defined in a fixed frame but as more subjective to individuals. This flexibility could be an excellent opportunity for cinema as more distinctive elements can be added that will differentiate themselves from the OTT services. As Pine & Gilmore (1998) states, by acknowledging that it is an experience, there will be numerous ways to stage the experiences and attract consumers.

The quotation at the top of this section seems a little dramatic but encapsulates what cinema could offer. One of the main findings of the present study is that what audiences are looking for in the cinema are experiences that are different from the OTT service. This finding indicates that for cinemas to remain competitive in the OTT dominant market, they should see themselves as experience providers and focus on staging an experience that could not be replicated in the OTT platform.



## 7.2. Understanding Cinema Attendance Motivation

To answer the second research question, this section applies the Uses and Gratifications Theory to interpret what motivates people to go to the cinema. As mentioned earlier, cinema nowadays cannot be thought of separately from OTT services. Therefore, this section will start by illustrating what motivations are found in cinema and what has shifted to OTT services.

As briefly mentioned in the analysis section (Section 6.1), OTT services were found to serve a wider range of functions. Apart from the entertainment and escape motivation that was commonly mentioned for both cinema and OTT, the interviews showed that OTT services were used for educational purposes, such as learning new cultures and languages, developing personal tastes as well as watching less commercialised movies that cannot be found elsewhere. Placing these functions into the movie attendance motivation from previous studies mentioned in Section 3.3, OTT services seem to fulfil five of the six motivations: aesthetic, cognitive, self-esteem, escape and entertainment needs. All of these five motivations are hedonic motivations which Bassi (2010) describes as what experiential products are consumed for. However, in the presence of OTT services, not all motivations seem to lead to cinema consumption. In the findings (Section 6.3), only three of the six motives were frequently mentioned: entertainment, escape, and socialisation. Further, of the three motives found in cinema attendance, the escape and entertainment motives were mutual in OTT and cinema.

As mentioned in section 4.1, the Uses and Gratifications Theory is often used to explore how people use media to satisfy their needs and to discover underlying motivations for media use (Kuyucu, 2015). The theory suggests that once audiences fulfil their needs through media, they will continue to use the media (Katz et al., 1973). From the lens of the Uses and Gratifications Theory, it is inferred that the probability of the need to be gratified will be higher for the OTT, as a large portion of the offer that cinema had is now covered by the OTT services. It was also observed from the analysis that audiences feel that OTT provides a sufficient level of satisfaction. Given this, it is not surprising that audiences are using OTT services to a higher degree.

However, as Boudier-Pailler (1999) states, extrinsic motivation should not be ignored as cultural products (here, the movies) can foster both intrinsic and extrinsic values (p.7). Applying this perspective to the current situation, only cinema attendance seems to touch the social aspect of experience consumption. Further, it is shown as the only motivation that is exclusive to the cinema. Although it is premature to jump to the conclusion that socialisation is the most important motivation in cinema attendance, it clearly is an aspect that should be highlighted. This study showed that audiences perceive socialisation as one of the prominent motivations for cinema. Especially, the formation of sympathy with other spectators while watching a movie was recognized as an extraordinary experience given at the cinema. In line with Boudier-Pailler's

perspective, this study suggests that extrinsic motivation is an important element in cinema consumption today.

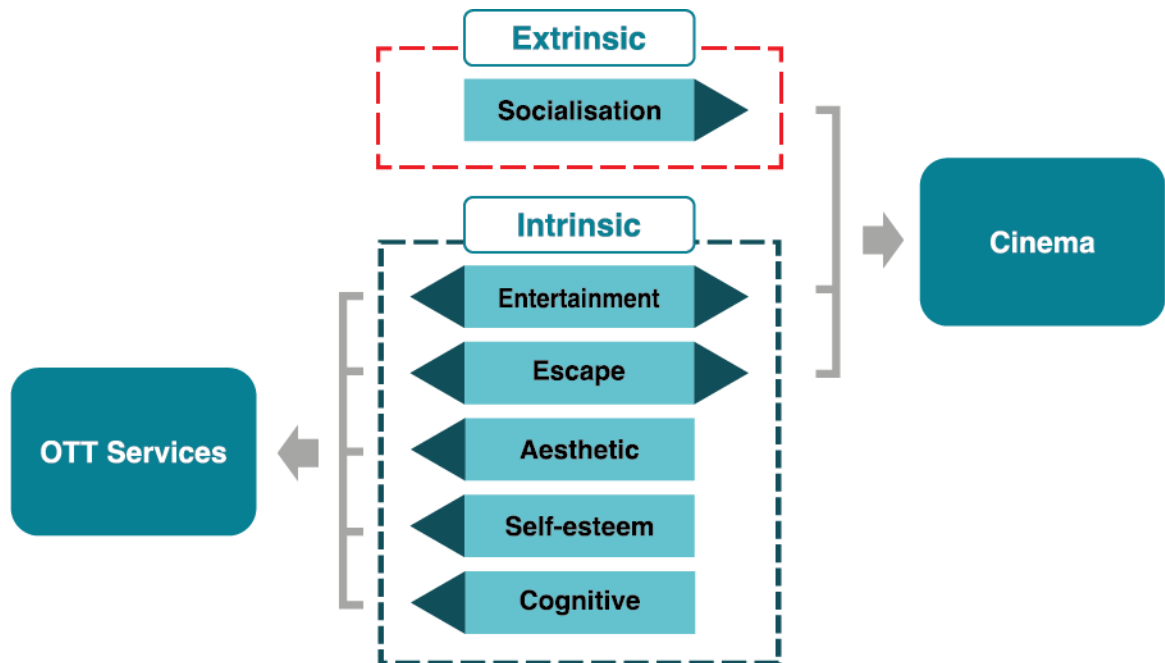


Figure 7-1 Motivation for OTT and Cinema (created by author)

### 7.3. If not Motivation, then what?

The third research question was to find an explanation for the difference in cinema recovery between Sweden and Korea. As motivation is viewed as a driving force for behaviour, the question was formulated with the assumption that there might be a motivational difference in these countries. However, during the analysis, no significant difference in motivations was found. Participants from both countries had a similar idea that cinema is more of an experience for them and that they are going to the cinema to have fun. Further, respondents from both countries pointed out that the offerings described in the findings, such as facilities, atmosphere, and interaction with others at the cinema, help them to focus on the movie and enhance the experience. Instead, there were some differences shown from external elements described in section 6.4. the accessibility to the specialised theatre, the availability of promotions and discounts, and the existence of other leisure activities.

The first aspect is the specialised theatre. While Korean interviewees frequently mentioned specialised theatre (4DX, IMAX, 3D, comfort), none of the interviewees from Sweden mentioned it. As mentioned in section 1.1.2, the specialised theatre takes up a large proportion of Korean cinema, with 13.7 per cent (445 screens) of the total screens (Korean Film Council, 2022b). Considering the size of the country, the number of specialised theatres guarantees easy access to

such theatres. The urge to have a unique experience coupled with the accessibility of specialised theatre seems to contribute to the exclusivity of the cinema experience discussed in section 7.1. This also explains why Korean interviewees express their preference for specialised theatres.

Second, the availability of promotions and discounts was pointed out to be different. Although many Koreans complain that the cinema is expensive, there are different discounts and benefit programmes that can be easily attained, which was not the case in Sweden. In the circumstance where most of the interviewees felt cinema is expensive, having a discount or free tickets to the cinema encouraged cinema visits for Korean respondents. Lastly, access to other leisure activities was mentioned as a factor influencing cinema attendance. While respondents from Sweden reflected on the seasonality, Korean participants suggested that cinema is a leisure activity that can easily be done while other activities need more time and money. They claimed that there are less of leisure activities that could replace the cinema. From what has been discussed, it is inferred that in Korea, there is more exclusive cinema (specialised theatre) offers that could be easily accessed at a cheaper cost which draws audiences. Adding to this, not having much alternative leisure available makes cinema a more attractive activity.

The factors described are not directly related to the motivations discussed in the previous sections. Yet, the findings of the present study suggest that these factors, to some extent, influence cinema attendance. As this study was not focusing on the external elements influencing cinema attendance, only three aspects were pointed out. However, there is a possibility that there are more factors that influence cinema visits. The Uses and Gratifications Theory may be useful in how audiences use media to fulfil their motives. However, although motivations are thought to drive the audience to go to the cinema, other factors might also have an influence on the decision. Therefore, to fully understand what brings people to the cinema, these factors should also be identified and considered.

#### **7.4. Practical implications**

This study took a qualitative approach to explore motivations that were not investigated in the previous studies. Although the result of present study failed to introduce a new motivation that has not been recognised from previous research, the study expanded our understanding of how audiences perceive cinema today and what motivates them to go to the cinema. In particular, this thesis offers insights into the audience's perception of cinema as an experiential product. From a practical perspective, this result could be used by the cinema industry to understand their audience and hence develop a sufficient market strategy. Specifically, locating themselves as experience providers and focusing on staging the experience that is exclusive to the cinema will help the cinema industry to find solutions to the current stagnant. Further, as the finding of the study indicated that entertainment escape and social motivations trigger audiences to cinema, the focus should be on how cinema could stage cinema experience around these needs. Understanding the

motivation and what audiences seek from the cinema will open up a great opportunity for the cinema industry to differentiate itself from other means of movie viewing and thus remain competitive.

### **7.5. Limitations**

As this study only involves a limited number of participants, the informant cannot represent ‘the audience’ in general. Thus, this study should be understood as the initial study of today’s audience but should not be generalised. Also, to capture the motivation for cinema in comparison to OTT services, this study limited the informants to people who use both OTT services and cinema. However, this study was not able to consider audience types (mentioned in section 3.3) in the research process, which could have led to different motivations. By taking audience type into consideration, this study would have benefited in providing a more comprehensive understanding of the cinema audience today. Furthermore, as this study primarily focused on motivation, it reluctantly disregarded some important factors that could influence cinema visits. The study would have benefited from having a more multifaceted approach to capture a holistic view of cinema consumption.

## **8. Conclusion**

This thesis departed from the current situation of the cinema industry suffering from audience decline. COVID-19, coupled with the OTT domination, led to dramatic audience loss and threatened the existence of the cinema industry. As motivation was said to be the driving force for behaviour (Bouder-Pailler, 1999), this thesis focused on the audiences who still visit the cinema while using OTT services to identify cinema attendance motivations that could help find ways for the cinema industry to survive. Further, by comparing two countries that showed the different situations of cinema recovery, Sweden and Korea, this thesis seeks to find what cinema should be in the future to be competitive.

The findings illustrated that audiences nowadays go to the cinema seeking experiences that they cannot find through OTT services. These exclusive experiences were expressed in four features: movies, facility, atmosphere, and cinematic experience. In fact, the cinematic experiences were comprised of the movie, facility and atmosphere and other elements that the audience met in the process of consumption. The big screen, good sound system, and the reaction of other spectators were mentioned to enhance the experience of cinema and to have that enriched experience was what drove the audience to the cinema. To conclude, audiences perceived cinema as experience rather than just movie viewing activity and thus expects to have a better, different experience than watching movie through OTT service.

Furthermore, from the six movie attendance motivations (aesthetic, self-esteem, entertainment, escape, cognitive and social) identified in the previous research, only three motivations were found to be

dominant today, and no additional motivations were found: entertainment, escape, and social motivation. On the other hand, OTT services seem to serve five hedonic motivations (cognitive, self-esteem, escape, entertainment and aesthetic). The domination of OTT services was explained by applying the Uses and Gratifications Theory, that as more motivation can be satisfied through the OTT service, audience shift to OTT was natural. However, with the lens of the 'A priori dimension of motives', extrinsic motivation is considered as important as hedonic motivation, especially in cultural (experiential) consumption. Therefore, as audiences define cinema as experience, extrinsic motivation should also be considered. In this frame, the major difference between cinema in comparison to OTT was that it fulfilled socialisation motivation. Hence, this study suggests that future cinema could benefit from emphasising the social aspect of the cinema visit.

Moreover, by comparing Sweden and Korea, the study indicated that there could be other factors influencing cinema visits. Although not many factors were shown in this study, as this thesis was primarily focused on motivation, some factors seem significant in cinema visits. Thus, to have a more comprehensive understanding of cinema visits, future research should also consider the factors that lay outside the cinema. In addition, as mentioned in the limitation (Section 7.5), the findings of this study cannot be generalised to all audiences as the informant of the study are not representative. Therefore, future research could provide more concrete knowledge of cinema attendance motivation today, by having more extensive participants.

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## APPENDICES

### **Appendix 1. Information Sheet**

#### **Research Study Title:**

*Why do we go to the cinema? A qualitative study of cinema audience motivation in Sweden and Korea*

**Researcher:** Da ok, Jung (da5433ju-s@student.lu.se)

**Supervisor:** Cecilia Fredriksson (cecilia.fredriksson@ism.lu.se)

You are invited to participate in an interview for a study I am conducting as a part of the master's programme, Service management, at Lund University. Before deciding whether to participate in this interview or not, please read the following information. Please contact me if you have any questions or unclear information while reading.

#### **Purpose:**

This study aims to gather a deeper understanding and explore why people go to the cinema nowadays. You will be asked to answer questions regarding your cinema experience, motivations for going to the cinema, and your watching habits and expectations. The focus will be on COVID-19 and streaming services and how they have influenced motivation in going to the cinema in the past few years.

#### **Do you have to participate?**

Participating in this study is entirely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate or answer any question. You can also withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

#### **What does it mean to participate?**

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be invited to a semi-structured interview over a digital platform such as Zoom or in-person, depending on the circumstances. The interview duration will be around 45-60 minutes, varying on your availability and the level of information you would like to share.

#### **How will information be handled?**

The interview will be recorded upon your agreement and will be transcribed. All information gathered will not be identifiable if you wish to remain anonymous. All personal data will be coded upon request.

All recordings and transcribed documents will be stored confidentially. No one other than the researcher and supervisor will have direct access to the recordings or documents. The recordings will be erased once the transcription is completed. The data will be used for the thesis, which can result in some quotes being shared during the thesis examination.

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If you have any further questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact me at any time.

Thank you for reading this information and considering participation.

**Appendix 2. Interview Consent Form**

**Research Study Title:**

*Why do we go to the cinema? A qualitative study of cinema audience motivation in Sweden and Korea*

This form is to confirm that you have understood the purpose of the study and what is involved in the interview you agree to participate in. Please read carefully and check each box to indicate your agreement.

Question	Check upon agreement
I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project.	
I have had sufficient time to consider the presented information and asked for further information. I am satisfied with the information I have received about this interview.	
I understand who will have access to the interview and how and for how long the data will be stored.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.	
I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purpose of this research study. I understand that such information will be treated with strict confidentiality.	
I agree to be recorded and understand that recorded interview will be used for research analysis.	
I understand that my words may be quoted in publication (in this case, the thesis).	
I agree to be identifiable with my real name.	
I do not agree to be identifiable with a name and prefer to be anonymised.	
Hereby, I agree to take part in the above research study	

Participant's Name:  _____  Date:  _____	Participant's Signature:  _____
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### **Appendix 3. Interview Guide**

#### Prequestionnaire

How old are you? Which age group do you belong to?	a. I belong to millennials or generation Z (Born between 1981-2005) b. I was born before 1981
How often do you go to the cinema?	a. Once a week b. A few times a month c. Few times a year d. Once every few years
How many OTT services do you subscribe to?	a. None b. 1 c. More than 1

#### **Section 1. Opening questions**

1. When was your most recent visit to the cinema?
2. Why did you decide to go to the cinema on that specific occasion?
3. Whom did you go with?
4. Did you enjoy the visit? Why?
5. What was the most memorable part of that experience?
6. Do you remember your first visit to the cinema? How did it make you feel?

#### **Section 2. Cinema visits**

1. On what occasion do you think you are going to the cinema?
2. Who are you going with mostly?
3. When do you feel like going to the cinema?
4. Why do you think you like going to the cinema?  
How would you describe your purpose for going to the cinema?  
Why do you go to the cinema?
5. What does your process look like when deciding to visit the cinema?
6. What are the things you consider when you decide to go to the cinema?
7. What would you say is important to make you consider going to the cinema?

8. Do you think you have certain expectations when you go to the cinema? What kind of expectation is it?

### **Section 3. Cinema motivation and changes in motivations**

1. When was the time you most frequently went to the cinema? Why?
  - a. Why do you think it was important to go to the cinema then?
  - b. Does the reason for going to the cinema different from now? How?
  - c. Why do you think it changed?
2. Do you feel your motivation has changed over time? How?
3. When did you start subscribing to streaming services? Why?
4. What type of content do you watch most on the streaming services platform? Why?
5. How often do you watch movies on streaming services?
6. Have you noticed any difference in how you watch movies on streaming services compared to the cinema? How?
7. Do you think the purpose of watching a movie on streaming services is different from going to the cinema? How?
8. What do you think is the difference between streaming services and cinema? Where do you think these differences come from?
9. What do you think is the most significant difference between these two channels?
10. How do you decide what movies to watch in the cinema and what to watch on streaming services?
11. Why do you think you decided in that manner?
12. Why do you think people go to the cinema to watch movies that they can watch on streaming services?
13. What kind of influence do streaming services have on the cinema-going decision?
14. What are the unique aspects of cinema/streaming services that you cannot gain from the other? How does it influence?
15. What are the things that restrain you from going to the cinema? (time/money...)
16. What would make you go to the cinema more (frequently)?

### **Section 4: Cinema experience**

1. A most memorable experience at the cinema?  
What about this experience was special? What made it memorable/enjoyable?
2. What are the things that you think are important in the cinema?
3. What other elements than the movie do you think are influencing your cinema experience?



- Why do you think it influences you? And how?
4. What are the things restraining you from going to the cinema? (Time? Money? Other elements?)
  5. When you Compare the movie-going experience in the past and now, what do you think changed the most?
  6. How do these changes make you feel?
  7. Is there something that you specifically like?  
How does it improve your experience?
  8. Are there some changes that you feel like you are missing?  
Why do you think you miss it?
  9. Do you usually buy snacks at the cinema?  
What do popcorn and soda add to the cinema experience?
  10. What are your thoughts on social engagement from (experiencing) the existence of other people?
  11. What do you think is a good movie experience?

### **Section 5 Cinema during COVID time**

1. Have you been to the cinema during the COVID time?  
[yes]
  - a. Why did you decide to go to the movie on that occasion?
  - b. Did you have any concerns?
  - c. Was the experience any different from pre-COVID?
  - d. Were there other audiences in the hall?  
[no]
  - e. What was the reason that you did not go to the movies during that time?
  - f. Does it still influence you?
2. Do you think COVID changed the way you watch movies? What is the biggest difference?
3. Do you think there are any changes in how you decide to go to the movie after the COVID?

### **Closing questions**

1. Why do you think you are going to the cinema?
2. What satisfaction do you get from going to the cinema? What does going to the cinema mean to you?
3. Any questions or comments that you would like to add?