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**PROCEEDINGS**

Editors

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Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade, 2023

# Cultural Habits of Music High-School Pupils in Serbia Before, During, and After the COVID-19 Lockdown

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## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown measure that followed affected all areas of life in Serbia, including culture. Earlier studies have shown that cultural participation in Serbia is generally low (Krnjaić et al., 2011; Mrđa, 2011; Opačić & Subašić, 2016). This study aimed to gain insight into the cultural habits of music high-school pupils in Belgrade Before, During, and After the COVID-19 lockdown. A questionnaire was constructed for data collection, which took place in February 2022. The participants were 46 music high-school pupils in Music School *Davorin Jenko*, Belgrade. They were instructed to determine how often they engage in several cultural activities, to evaluate them, and to assess how often they used the Internet for cultural purposes Before, During, and After the lockdown. Cinema attendance was the most frequent cultural habit. The Internet was mostly used for watching films and listening to popular music during each of the 3 periods. High achievers, pupils of higher economic status, girls, and pupils living in more urbanized areas reported higher attendance and positive attitude toward high-brow cultural events. Internet usage for information-seeking dropped significantly During the lockdown but subsequently rose to its usual level. Attendance at theatre plays, museum exhibitions, and public lectures was significantly lower After the lockdown, possibly because the respective cultural institutions reopened with limited capacity. All scheduled cultural events were cancelled or postponed During the lockdown, which might explain the lower use of the Internet as a source of information During this period. The connections between cultural consumption and variables such as gender, academic achievement, social status, and accessibility of cultural venues have been registered in other studies (Brook, 2016; Nagel, 2010) and shed light on the importance of lifestyle in developing cultural habits.

## Introduction

According to the 2009 UNESCO Framework of Cultural Statistics, cultural participation is defined as “the activities of audiences and participants in consuming cultural products and taking part in cultural activities and experiences (book reading, dancing, participating in carnivals, listening to radio, visiting galleries)” (UIS, 2009, p. 20). The primary focus of this paper was on the cultural consumption habits of a group of pupils in a music high-school in Belgrade.

A study conducted on a representative sample of the general population in Serbia (Opačić, & Subašić, 2016) found that the education level and the degree of urbanization of the place of residence determine one’s readiness for cultural participation. The active cinema, concert, and theatre audiences are younger, highly educated people from more urbanized neighborhoods. Classical music concerts are most frequently attended by older, highly educated women from more urbanized settings. People who often visit museums and libraries are highly educated women from more urbanized areas. Folk music attracts participants from all educational and other backgrounds. The majority of the participants attended movie projections. The rest of the cultural activities included in the study were much less frequently attended.

Another study was conducted on a representative sample of Serbian high-school pupils (Mrđa, 2011). These were the most relevant findings:

- 51.6% of high-school pupils in Serbia attend music concerts very frequently, frequently, or from time to time.

- 77.8% of the pupils never or rarely visit the theatre (art-school pupils attend theatre plays more regularly than others).
- 71.3% of high-school pupils never or rarely go to the movies (mostly art school pupils).
- 42.4% of high-school pupils never visit museums, and 43.4% do 2 or 3 times a year.
- 45.1% of the participants never visit galleries, and 33.9% visit them 2 or 3 times a year.
- 88% of the participants read at least from time to time; namely, 21% read the required literature, 40% of them read the required literature and some other books from time to time, 20% read the required literature and other books equally, and 7% are passionate readers.

The most frequent reasons for not engaging in a certain cultural activity are a lack of interest, free time, and a poor selection of cultural events in one's location. The study also covered internet usage. The pupils spent 53.9% of their online time on entertainment or social media platforms and 20.9% on information-seeking (29.7% of this time is spent looking for information about cultural events).

A study about reading habits (Krnjaić et al., 2011) found that Serbian high-school pupils are less likely to spend their time reading when they have free, unstructured time, and that reading habits are associated with higher school achievement and parental education.

Cultural participation is affected by the cultural habits of one's parents, according to a study conducted in the Netherlands (Nagel, 2009). The parents' cultural participation had a more significant effect on forming one's cultural habits than the parents' education level from early adolescence to young adulthood.

A study conducted in the UK (Brook, 2016) determined that improved access to museums and galleries has a strong positive link to attendance. Highly educated people are the most likely visitors; however, improved access motivates less qualified individuals to attend museums and gallery exhibitions. The study also found that individuals who are the least likely to attend museum and gallery exhibitions tend

to take their children to such events to give them an experience they did not have in their childhood. Taking children to museums and galleries (by either parents or schools) will have a long-term effect on their cultural habits.

This study deals with the cultural consumption habits of pupils in a music high-school. The state of emergency was introduced in Serbia on March 15, 2020, 9 days After the first case of COVID-19 was registered and stayed in effect until May 6, 2020. During this period, a curfew was imposed, significantly limiting Serbian citizens' freedom of movement. Schools were immediately closed, so various platforms for remote learning replaced direct instruction. Employers were advised to enable personnel to work from home wherever possible. Cultural participation was one of the areas of life in Serbia that suffered the most under the given circumstances. All upcoming events were either canceled or postponed since cultural institutions and venues were closed to the public. This situation directly affected the lives of youngsters, among others. They were mostly confined to their homes, unable to go out with their friends and attend cultural events.

This study aims to discern the cultural consumption habits of pupils in a music high-school in Belgrade Before, During, and After the COVID-19 lockdown. We hypothesized that:

- based on the results of earlier studies in the field of cultural participation, high achievers, girls, pupils from households with a higher economic status, pupils who live in more urbanized areas, and pupils whose parents have a higher education level will show a greater preference and appreciation for so-called highbrow cultural practices;
- there will be a significant rise in internet usage for cultural consumption (watching recordings of theatre plays, listening to music, watching films, taking virtual tours of museums and galleries, etc.) During the lockdown;
- Internet usage for cultural purposes will be significantly higher After the lockdown than Before it;

- the frequency of book reading will be significantly higher During the lockdown.

The latter three hypotheses were based on the assumption that the participants would compensate for the lack of opportunities to attend cultural events by using the Internet to satisfy these interests; these patterns of behavior caused by the circumstances During the COVID-19 lockdown could have given rise to new cultural consumption habits.

## Method

### Participants

We used a convenience sampling method. The participants were 46 music high-school pupils of the Music School *Davorin Jenko* in Belgrade.

A brief description of the sample according to the sociodemographic variables follows:

- gender: 33 girls, 13 boys;
- grade: 15 second-grade pupils, 17 third-grade pupils, 14 fourth-grade pupils (from 15 to 19 years of age);
- average school achievement: 35 excellent pupils, 9 very good pupils, and 2 good (mediocre) pupils;
- parental economic status: 30 pupils – high economic status, 15 pupils – average economic status, one pupil – low economic status;
- degree of urbanization: 34 pupils in urban areas, 10 pupils in suburban (rural) areas, 2 pupils in rural areas;
- mother's education level: five pupils – master's or doctoral degree, 17 pupils – graduate degree, 7 pupils – associate degree, 17 pupils – high-school diploma;
- father's education level: five pupils – master's or doctoral degree, 16 pupils – graduate degree, five pupils – associate degree, 18 pupils – high-school diploma.

### Measures

A Questionnaire for measuring cultural habits Before, During, and After the COVID-19 lockdown, 69 items, was constructed for the

requirements of this study. It included cultural practice habits items for assessing the frequency of attendance at classical, popular, folk music concerts, theatre plays, museums, galleries, cinemas, and public lectures and forums, reading books. A five-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 – representing no attendance (or no practice), 2 – representing attendance (or practice) up to 3 times a year, 3 – representing up to 2 times in 3 months, 4 – representing up to 3 times a month, to 5 – representing attendance (practice) one or more times a week.

The questionnaire also included scales for determining the participants' attitudes toward the 9 essential cultural practices: pupils' *Interest, the Importance of the cultural practice for education, Availability of time, Quality of content, Physical accessibility, and Affordability*. A five-point Likert scale was used from 1, representing strong disagreement, to 5, representing strong agreement. The questionnaire also covered internet usage for cultural purposes: seeking information about cultural events and booking tickets. Other aspects of internet usage included listening to classical music, listening to popular music, listening to folk music, watching theatre play recordings, making virtual museum and gallery tours, and watching movies.

### Procedure

The data were collected in February 2022. The assessments were made for 3 periods: Before, During, and After the lockdown. We counted on the pupils' memory of the 2 earlier periods, making the data less reliable. Most items were parallel for the period Before and After the lockdown. Book reading was the only cultural activity included in our study that could be practiced During the lockdown, so the data from this period are not missing.

### Data analysis

Since the sample was small and a normal distribution could not be assumed, the following non-parametric statistical tests were used for data analysis:

- Wilcoxon signed rank test for comparing scores of the same group of participants in different periods;
- Mann-Whitney test for comparing scores of different groups of participants in the same period;
- Kruskal-Wallis test for comparing scores of more than 2 groups of participants in the same period;
- Pearson Chi-Square for comparing values of categorical data;
- descriptive statistics for quantitative data.

## Results and Discussion

### Data Description

These are the most important properties we detected within the sample:

- there is a strong relation between school achievement and gender – girls are better pupils than boys (85.7% of excellent pupils are girls, 33.3% of the very good pupils are girls, and only 2 good pupils are boys,  $\chi^2 = 15, p < .01$ );
- there is a connection between gender and the degree of urbanization of the place of residence – most of the girls live in urbanized areas (90.9%), while the majority of the boys live in suburban areas (69.2%),  $\chi^2 = 18.23, p < .01$ ;
- there is a relation between gender and the mother's education level – the mothers of 72.7% of the girls hold an academic degree (at least 2 years of post-secondary education), while the mothers of 61.5% of the boys have no post-secondary education,  $\chi^2 = 4.70, p < .05$ ;
- there is a positive relation between school achievement and the degree of urbanization of the place of residence – 80% of excellent pupils live in more urbanized parts of Belgrade, while all of the good (mediocre) pupils live in suburban areas,  $\chi^2 = 16.09, p < .01$ ;
- there is a positive connection between school achievement and the mother's education level – the mothers of 74.3% of excellent pupils hold an academic degree, the mothers of 33.3% of very good pupils hold an academic

degree, and the mothers of the only 2 mediocre pupils have no post-secondary education,  $\chi^2 = 8.72, p < .05$ ;

- there is also a connection between school achievement and the father's education level – the fathers of 69.7% of excellent pupils hold academic degrees, the fathers of 22.2% of very good pupils hold academic degrees, and one of the fathers of the 2 mediocre pupils holds an academic degree,  $\chi^2 = 6.66, p < .05$ ;
- there is a positive relation between a mother's education level and the degree of urbanization of the place of residence – 73.5% of pupils whose mothers hold an academic degree live in more urbanized areas, while 66.7% of pupils whose mothers have no post-secondary education live in less urbanized areas,  $\chi^2 = 7.30, p < .05$ .

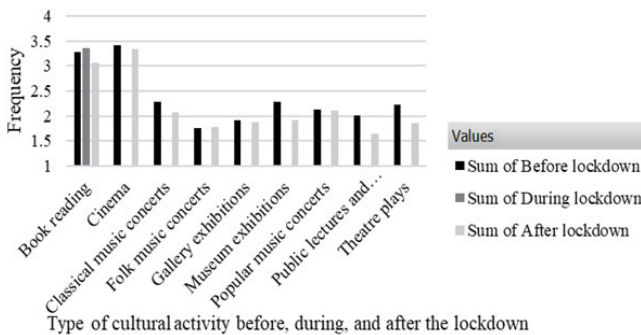
### The Frequency of Cultural Practices

The 2 cultural practices participants engaged in the most were book reading and cinema attendance. The general rating of cinema attendance was  $M = 3.41, SD = 1.11$  Before the lockdown, and  $M = 3.33, SD = 1.25$  After the lockdown (attendance up to 2 times in 3 months). The data for the lockdown period are missing since cinemas were closed and there was no opportunity for the participants to attend. The difference is not statistically significant (Wilcoxon signed rank test,  $z = -0.27, p = .79$ ), and suggests that the habit of going to the movies remained stable over 2 years. The frequency of book reading was rated similarly:  $M = 3.28, SD = 1.20$  Before,  $M = 3.35, SD = 1.27$  During, and  $M = 3.07, SD = 1.32$  After the lockdown (on average, pupils read 1 to 2 books in 3 months). The pupils' reading habits did not change significantly Before and During the lockdown. However, After the lockdown, there was a small but significant drop in the frequency of book reading.

An interesting result was the frequency of classical music concert attendance, which was low Before and After the lockdown, considering that our participants were music high-

school pupils ( $M = 2.28$ ,  $SD = 1.0$  Before the lockdown, and  $M = 2.07$ ,  $SD = 1.04$  After the lockdown – on average up to 3 times a year). Notably, 21.7% of our participants had never attended classical music concerts Before the lockdown. This percentage rose to 34.8% After this period. Most of the pupils (43.5%) reported listening to classical music concerts 1 to 3 times a year Before the lockdown. The percentage of pupils in this category dropped to 37% after this period, suggesting that some pupils who did not attend classical music concerts very often Before the lockdown stopped attending these events altogether After the lockdown. Similar frequencies of attendance were registered for the rest of the cultural practices included in our study, as shown in Figure 1.

It was also interesting to note that girls, high achievers, and pupils who lived in more urbanized areas practiced so-called highbrow cultural activities (attending classical music concerts, theatres, museums, galleries, reading books)



**Figure 1. The frequency of engaging music high-school pupils in cultural activities.**

more frequently than boys, less successful pupils, and pupils from suburban areas Before the lockdown. The significance of most of these differences dwindled After the lockdown due to a small but significant decline in the frequency of attendance among girls, successful pupils, and pupils who live in cities (Figure 2). This could be because the cultural institutions and venues in which these events occurred did not open at full capacity yet. Regarding book reading, the small but significant decline in the frequency

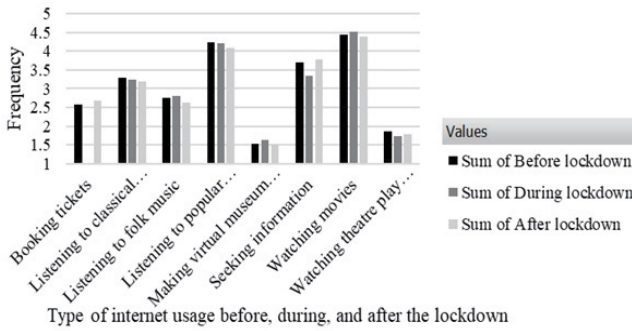
of this activity can be attributed to a sudden change of circumstances. The pupils returned to school at the end of the second semester, trying hard to catch up with their regular schoolwork. They had much less time to engage in this activity (this reason can be applied to other high-brow activities as well).

It appeared that boys seemed to prefer folk music and go to folk music concerts more often than girls before the pandemic. A similar trend was present among pupils who live in less urbanized areas and pupils whose mothers have a lower education level. This difference stayed significant After the lockdown only between boys and girls. Let's take into account that the majority of the boys happen to live in less urbanized neighborhoods and have mothers with a lower education level.

### The Frequency of Internet Usage

The participants used the Internet most frequently to watch films, listen to popular music, and seek information about cultural events and performers (Figure 2). The least frequent activities on the Internet were taking virtual tours of museums and galleries, and watching recordings of theatre plays. The frequency of these activities did not rise even During the lockdown period, which means that this kind of compensation for actual attendance to cultural events never took root among our pupils. There was also a small but significant drop in internet usage for information seeking During the lockdown period, which rose back to its levels before the pandemic when safety measure was lifted. This could have been caused by the absence of cultural events During the lockdown. All cultural events were canceled or postponed, so our participants were not motivated to seek information. Girls, high achievers, and pupils from more urbanized settings were the most inclined to use the Internet for information seeking (the trend mentioned above





**Figure 2. The frequency of different types of internet usage for cultural purposes Before, During, and After the lockdown.**

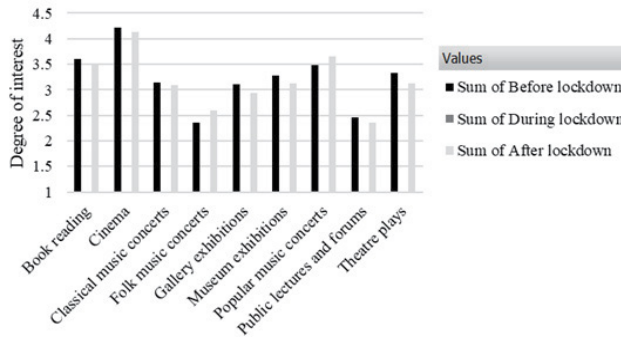
was also present in these groups of pupils).

Interestingly, girls used the Internet to listen to classical music more than boys did During the lockdown ( $M = 3.55, SD = 1.35$  and  $M = 2.46, SD = 1.45$  respectively;  $\chi^2 = 4.97, p < .05$ ), and this difference remained significant After the lockdown ( $M = 3.48, SD = 1.28$  and  $M = 2.46, SD = 1.45$  respectively;  $\chi^2 = 4.77, p < .05$ ). The girls did not change their habits much during the 3 periods. However, the boys used the Internet less for listening to classical music During, and After the lockdown. Similar differences were found between high achievers and less successful pupils. Girls used the Internet more than boys for listening to pop music After the pandemic. A similar difference was found between successful pupils and their less accomplished peers during all 3 periods. Boys used the Internet to listen to folk music more than girls. This difference was also observed between pupils living in suburban areas and those living in more urbanized settings. The mother’s education level was also associated with internet usage. Pupils whose mothers had a lower education level (no post-secondary education) used the Internet to listen to folk music significantly more than pupils whose mothers had at least 2 years of post-secondary education. During the lockdown, a small but significant rise in internet use for watching films was observed among the girls.

### Degree of Interest in Cultural Practices

Cinema attendance was assessed as the most interesting pastime (Figure 3), regardless of sociodemographic background ( $M = 4.22, SD = 1.03$  Before, and  $M = 4.13, SD = 1.13$  After the lockdown); it was also the most frequently practiced cultural habit. The rating of the degree of interest in book reading was fairly high as well ( $M = 3.61, SD = 1.50$  Before, and  $M = 3.48, SD = 1.52$  After the lockdown), which coincides with the frequency of this cultural activity. Attending popular music concerts was rated with a high average score concerning interest; however, this cultural activity was not practiced very frequently. Cultural consumption habits such as visiting museums and galleries and attending theatre plays have moderate ratings concerning the degree of interest but are not practiced often. We can assume that the participants’ interest in these activities is more passive; they do not dislike them; however, they are not motivated enough to invest the time and effort to attend to them.

Girls, high achievers, pupils who live in urban areas, and pupils whose parents hold an academic degree are generally more interested in highbrow cultural activities. The same categories of pupils showed more interest in popular music (Figure 3). Although pupils from more urbanized settings were among the least interested in attending folk music concerts, it is important to mention that the interest in this kind of music increased slightly After the lockdown. The change is small but significant, suggesting that the pupils have become more tolerant. We do not think this change is associated with the situation During the COVID-19 lockdown since it is characteristic of adolescents to be open to influences from their peers and the media.



Type of cultural activity before, during and after lockdown

**Figure 3. The degree of interest in different types of cultural activity Before, During, and After the lockdown.**

**Importance of Cultural Practices for Education**

We were interested in whether participants make a difference between cultural practices that benefit their education and entertaining ones. Book reading was rated the highest concerning importance for education. Attending classical music concerts also stands relatively high on this scale ( $M = 3.87, SD = 1.24$  Before, and  $M = 3.74, SD = 1.24$  After the lockdown). Let’s compare this result with the frequency of attendance and the degree of interest. We can assume that our participants are aware of classical music’s value for their education but find it moderately entertaining, and are not motivated to attend concerts often. Visiting museums and attending theatre plays are also relatively highly rated cultural consumption habits on the *Importance for education* scale. However, they are not practiced often, and are moderately attractive to our participants.

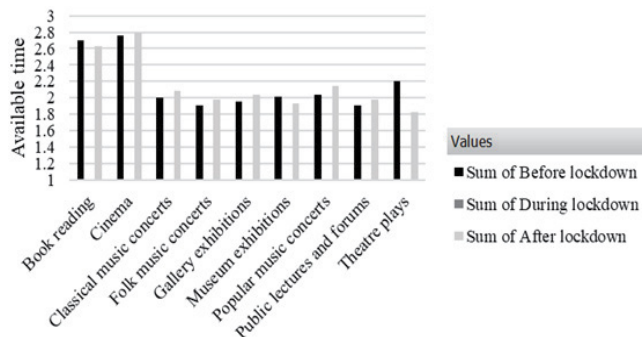
On the other hand, going to the movies and attending popular music concerts are activities participants find entertaining, but they give them an average educational value. The distinction between what has educational benefits, and what is entertaining is clear. These criteria overlap to a greater or less-

er extent depending on the specific cultural activity.

A surprising finding is that pupils from categories that show the least interest and appreciation for cultural events involving folk music (girls, high achievers, pupils from households with a higher economic status, and pupils whose parents have a higher education level) evaluated folk music concert attendance higher according to its importance for education After the lockdown. The increased appreciation for such cultural events was not high but should be commented upon because it is statistically significant. It does not show a sudden burst of respect for folk music but a slightly increased tolerance of this genre. This result could also be a consequence of how we categorized music genres in our survey. There is a significant difference between traditional folk music, and contemporary folk music (turbo-folk). Pupils might not have had the same definition of folk music on their minds while they were filling out the questionnaire.

**Available Time for Cultural Practices**

The ratings of available time for various cultural activities were generally low, as shown in Figure 4. Most of our participants think they do not have enough time to engage in any of the



Type of cultural activity before, during, and after the lockdown

**Figure 4. Available weekly time for different types of cultural activity Before, During, and After the lockdown.**

activities included in our study. Considering the time they spend at school attending classes, and the time they have to invest in studying and practicing at home, this assessment is fairly realistic.

The majority of our participants reported that they have the most time for attending the cinema and reading books ( $M = 2.76, SD = 1.29$ , and  $M = 2.70, SD = 1.23$  Before the lockdown, respectively;  $M = 2.80, SD = 1.31, M = 2.63, SD = 1.32$  After the lockdown, respectively). This is an average rating of available free time. The ratings of the rest of the activities by this criterion were lower. One of the reasons for such a result could be that our participants were more motivated to make free time for activities they find the most interesting.

Girls, successful pupils, and pupils from more urbanized areas tended to give higher ratings, especially for the available time for attending classical music concerts, popular music concerts, museum and gallery exhibitions, and reading books, which coincides with their level of interest and appreciation for such cultural activities.

**Program Quality**

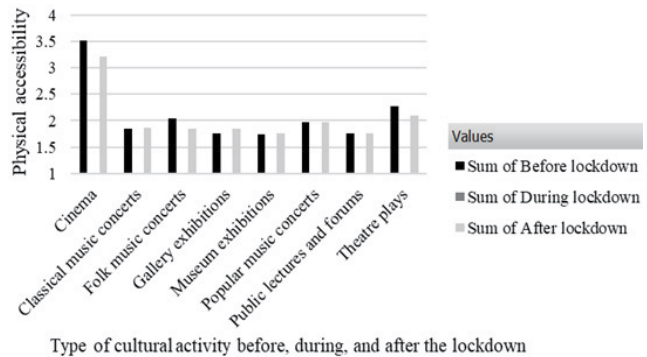
In this study, what we meant by program quality was the content standard according to the participant’s opinions. Overall, the highest ratings were around 3.5 on the *Program quality* scale (for example, classical music concert attendance:  $M = 3.61, SD = 1.04$  Before the lockdown, and  $M = 3.67, SD = 1.17$  After the lockdown). The cultural practices rated similarly are cinema attendance, museum exhibition attendance, and theatre play attendance.

Girls, high achievers, and pupils from more urbanized areas tended to rate program quality better for highbrow cultural activities, as well as popular music concerts. For example, girls rated classical music concerts higher than boys did Before the lockdown ( $M = 3.82, SD = 1.01$  and  $M = 3.08, SD = 0.95$ , respectively) and After the

lockdown ( $M = 3.91, SD = 1.07$ , and  $M = 3.08, SD = 1.26$  respectively).

**Physical Accessibility of Cultural Events**

The only cultural activity our participants found relatively easy to engage in was cinema attendance (Figure 5). The rating of this activity on the *Physical accessibility* scale was  $M = 3.41, SD = 1.11$  Before the lockdown, and  $M = 3.33, SD = 1.25$  After the lockdown. The rest of the cultural practices included in our study were primarily graded below 2, which indicated that the pupils in this particular music high-school find it difficult to engage in various cultural activities regularly. The Music School *Davorin Jenko* is located in the Municipality of Rakovica, a part of Belgrade that is mostly urban, albeit relatively far from the city center where all the major cultural institutions and venues are.



**Figure 5. Physical accessibility of different types of cultural activity Before, During, and After the lockdown.**

There was a tendency among the pupils who live in more urbanized areas to rate cultural events slightly higher on the *Physical accessibility* scale than the pupils from suburban neighborhoods. For example, pupils who live in urban areas rated classical music concerts with 2 (out of five) by this criterion After the lockdown, and pupils who live in suburban neighborhoods rated them with 1.5. Both scores are low; however, there is a small, statistically significant difference between them. Both categories of participants find it difficult to practice

this cultural activity regularly, especially the ones living farther away from the city center.

### Affordability of Cultural Events

All the included cultural activities were rated with average to higher average scores on the *Affordability* scale, which means that the family's financial situation was not perceived as a significant obstacle in the practice of cultural habits. Most of our participants were from households with a high economic status or homes with an average economic status. The pupils from the first category tended to rate the affordability of cultural practices significantly higher than those from the second. An example is cinema attendance. Pupils with a high household economic status rated the cinema with a high score ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ ). After the lockdown, while pupils with an average household economic status gave lower ratings ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ). The financial situation of the pupils' families affected their cultural lives to an extent, which was an expected result.

### Limitations

Since our participants were pupils from one school, the results of our study cannot be generalized. Less successful pupils were underrepresented. There were no pupils with failing grades or pupils with marginal school achievement. The vast majority (76.1%) of our participants were excellent pupils. Boys were also underrepresented, as well as pupils living in less urbanized areas and pupils from households with a low socioeconomic status. Due to these biases, there were correlations between the various sociodemographic variables in our study which might not have been present had we included pupils from other music schools and other types of high-schools.

### Conclusion

The relationship was found between sociodemographic variables (gender, school achievement, degree of urbanization of the place of residence, parental education level) and frequency

of practice, preference, and higher appreciation for highbrow cultural activities, which is consistent with the results of other studies dealing with this topic (Brook, 2016; Nagel, 2009; Opačić & Subašić, 2016). Highbrow cultural activities included in this study are classical music concert attendance, museum and gallery exhibition attendance, theatre play attendance, public lecture and forum attendance, and book reading. Girls, excellent pupils, pupils who live in more urbanized parts of Belgrade, and pupils whose parents have at least 2 years of post-secondary education tend to engage more in such activities, are more interested in them, believe that they are beneficial for their education, and have relatively good quality. Public lectures and forums are an exception, as our participants found this kind of cultural event the least interesting, and hardly ever attended. There is also a tendency among boys, pupils from suburban neighbourhoods, and pupils whose parents have a lower education level to visit folk music concerts more frequently, to express a higher interest in them, and to rate them as beneficial for their education. Biases within our sample probably lead to such a result, namely, boys from more urbanized parts of Belgrade are underrepresented, as well as boys whose parents have a higher education level. Furthermore, a greater percentage of participants whose parents have more than 2 years of post-secondary education live in more urbanized neighborhoods. Parental education level correlates positively with school achievement, which is an expected result and can be attributed to a more intellectually stimulating environment in which the pupils were brought up.

The cultural practices were assessed according to 6 criteria. Generally, the 2 criteria by which the cultural practices were rated the lowest were *Available time* and *Physical accessibility*. The activity rated the highest by these criteria is cinema attendance which is the most popular cultural practice regardless of the participants' socioeconomic milieu. The general results do not deviate from the findings of earlier studies (e.g., Opačić & Subašić, 2016). Participants, generally, found it very hard to invest time and

effort to attend most of the cultural activities included in this study. Most of them live in the part of the town which is predominantly urban but quite far from the city centre where most important cultural institutions and venues are located, which clearly affected the answers of pupils who live in suburban parts of Belgrade because they are even farther away from the city center.

Changes in internet usage for cultural purposes During the lockdown were temporary and mostly insignificant. The habits our participants had in internet usage were stable. Virtual tours of museums and galleries were the rarest form of internet usage in all 3 periods. It was available to the pupils During the lockdown and in the period that followed but was never taken up to compensate for the lack of opportunity to attend in-person exhibitions. Considering internet usage for information seeking, there was a small but significant decline During the lockdown that we explained as a change caused by the circumstances. As no cultural events occurred, the participants were not motivated to look for information. This form of internet usage rose back to its usual levels as soon as cultural institutions reopened. Including various social platforms like Instagram or Facebook in our study would have probably given some interesting insights into how our participants used the time they spent online During the lockdown. If internet usage for cultural purposes did not change much During the lockdown, perhaps using social platforms to maintain contact with schoolmates and friends did.

There was no significant rise in the frequency of book reading During the lockdown. In the first 2 periods covered by this study, the reading habits of our participants remained stable. Those pupils who had good reading habits did not read more. This coincides with the results of other studies showing that when high-school pupils have a lot of free, unstructured time, they use it for social activities rather than reading books. In the period After the lockdown, there was a small but significant decline in the frequency of book reading, probably caused by a

change of circumstances when they came back to school at the end of the second semester.

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