

School of Business and Governance

Maija Hakanen

**THE ROLE OF REVIEWS IN CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS
THEATRICAL FILM RELEASES IN FINLAND**

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Supervisor: Katrin Arvola, MA

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

The document length is 9581 words from the introduction to the end of the conclusion.

Maija Hakanen.....

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ABSTRACT

This paper is conducted to acquire knowledge on how critic and user reviews influence the consumer attitudes towards film releases. In current situation consumers are most likely intentionally or unintentionally exposed to critic and consumer generated film reviews this paper aims to discover which reviews consumers find relevant and believe to influence their attitudes towards films.

This paper includes theoretical background of forming and changing consumer attitudes and the attitude-behavior relation as well as word-of-mouth marketing. In addition, this paper includes background information of film marketing in order to understand the industry the concepts are applied. For data collection, an online survey was conducted with convenience sampling method. In total of 123 applicable respondents filled in the survey.

The main findings of this paper suggest that reviews generated by other consumers are more influential to consumer attitudes than professional critic reviews. In addition, the existing prejudice of a film formed based on pre-release materials influences how much consumers feel reviews impacting their attitudes. The most frequently used sources are movie databases such as IMDb, Rotten Tomatoes, and social media platforms such as YouTube and TikTok. The findings highlight the importance of especially electronic word-of-mouth on influencing the consumer attitudes towards films but also the importance of creative pre-release materials.

Keywords: Consumer attitudes, Film reviews, Word-of-mouth, Film marketing

INTRODUCTION

In Finland there are approximately 200 domestic and international films released yearly and in total there was over 5 million tickets sold in 2022 in cinemas across the country (SES, 2023). The films usually make biggest revenues from the ticket sales when the film is played in cinemas which obviously makes the time the films have in cinemas the most valuable (Tamminiemi, 2018). Since there are so many releases, average consumer doesn't go to cinema to watch each film, even all the movies they would want to see. This means films targeting the same audiences compete to win over the consumer and to be chosen over other releases. In addition, theatrical film releases face a rather new competitor since streaming services such as Netflix have become widely popular. (Binkyte & Vas, 2018). Thus, this study focuses on theatrical film releases, meaning the films which premiere on first exclusively on cinemas and are later released to possible streaming services.

Marketing each individual film could be compared to launching a new product (Ravid, 1999). It requires testing and marketing research to identify the target groups and the selling points of the film. Usually, the marketing and PR activities of a film start when the film is announced, and the names of cast and production team are revealed. Based on this information alone, consumers can start to form their attitudes and expectations towards the upcoming film. The first materials released to the public are most commonly the trailers which give information for the consumer about release date and highlight the parts of the film studios believe to be most attractive for the consumers. Majority of the marketing activities are done before the film premieres and it can include static and video advertisements for example on social media, outdoor and TV. (Tamminiemi, 2018).

Producing and marketing a film is expensive and usually the amount of money spent on the production correlates with the marketing budgets as well (Tejada, 2015). Yet the money spent on production and promoting a film with traditional channels does not automatically guarantee success. Previous studies suggest that positive critic reviews and positive word-of-mouth increases the consumers desire to see the film and that WOM has positive influence on the Box Office results

(Yu et al. 2019). Critic reviews are an indirect promotion method since usually the studios offer early press screenings of films to critics, hoping to get positive reviews of the upcoming release (MTV, 2010). For the consumer, the critic reviews are usually the first non-commercial content of the film released to the public before the film is released or at the premiere date (Liu, 2006).

The more traditional word-of-mouth is defined to be non-commercial communication of a product or a service in private conversations, but due to the rise of internet the communications are no longer limited to few people. The online platforms have opened a space for electronic word-of-mouth and also for online consumer reviews. (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009). For films, there are designated online platforms for reviews such as IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes where basically anyone can leave a review. Goods like films are evaluated based on the experience which makes it hard for the consumers to evaluate the product before making the purchase decision. This makes film reviews highly important, because they give information of the film from a consumer who has seen the film to a consumer who might still be debating whether to go see a film or not (Delre & Luffarelli, 2023).

Consumer attitudes are generally defined as the perception of a certain objects and placing them on a scale from unfavorable to favorable (Ajzen, 2001). Attitude objects can be products, services, places, people, and so on (Fabrigar et al. 2018). There are multiple factors and stimuli that affect the formation of attitudes such as experiences and observations of the object, learning and conditioning and social factors. (Cherry, 2023). As stated, films are usually introduced as a new product to the market (Ravid, 1999), which means consumers most likely base their attitudes on the pre-release materials (stimuli, observation) and reflect their experiences with similar films. Understanding how the attitudes influence behavior, is beneficial in many aspects. For example, if marketers understand the attitude-behavior relation, they can exploit it by influencing consumer attitudes with efficient marketing in order to also affect the buying behavior. (Bechler et al. 2021).

Although are previous studies about the role of reviews in film industry, there is still lack of knowledge on the role of critic and consumer reviews have influencing the consumer attitudes towards film releases, especially in the consumers perspective. The previous studies have focused for example on the impact of reviews on Box Office results, consumer behavior or only on the influence of word-of-mouth without considering the critic reviews. In addition, many of the previous studies have been made quite some time ago, meaning that the dynamics of for example

social media have changed since. The knowledge on which type of reviews consumers find relevant can help the distributors to market the films on correct channels.

The research problem of this paper is the lack of knowledge on how the consumer attitudes towards films are influenced by critic and/or consumers reviews in the current situation where consumers are most likely intentionally or unintentionally exposed either type. The aim of this paper is to discover which sources and reviews consumers find relevant and believe to influence their attitudes as well as does the existing attitude play a role on how much the reviews have influence. In order to fill the aim of the research and solve the problem, the following research questions were composed:

1. What are the sources consumers are most frequently using to search for reviews and/or on which platforms are they most frequently exposed to reviews?
2. Is there a difference on how consumers feel influenced by reviews based on if they are generated by critics or other consumers?
3. How are the consumer attitudes towards films influenced by different reviews by their own perception?

In order to acquire knowledge to this research problem this paper consists of theoretical background of marketing theories relevant to this paper which are consumer attitudes as well as word-of-mouth marketing. In addition, film marketing in general is introduced in this paper to provide deeper understanding of the factors relevant for the research. This paper suggests that the consumer attitudes are formed based on the information acquired from pre-release materials such as trailers and those existing prejudices are taken into account when discussing the role reviews have in influencing the consumer attitudes. For collecting data, an online survey was conducted to seek answers to the problem introduced previously and in total of 123 applicable respondents filled in the questionnaire.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter focuses on the theory and previous literature of the concepts relevant to the topic. First the concept of attitudes and how they are formed and changed is covered. In addition, the relationship between attitudes and behavior is briefly explained with the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991). Next the concept of word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth are introduced in this chapter.

1.1. Consumer attitudes

There have been multiple discussions and definitions for attitudes in the past. In 1935 Allport stated that the core element of majority of definitions for attitudes is readiness for response. Meaning that attitude would not something a person does but more a preparation for behavior. (Allport, 1935). Nowadays the relationship between attitudes and behavior are seen separate matter from defining attitude (Albarracin and Shavitt, 2017). The general definition of attitudes is a perception of certain object as favorable or unfavorable (Ajzen, 2001). The term “attitude objects” means all the matters people might have attitudes of such as people, products, places, situations, groups, and so on (Fabrigar et al. 2018). Attitudes can be divided into two types of attitudes. The first are general attitudes toward objects such as places and the second type are attitudes towards behavior. The second type refers to how the person evaluates the object behavior from positive to negative. (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005).

The tri-component model of attitudes suggests that attitudes consist of three components which are cognitive, affective, and behavioral (or conative). The cognitive component means the information and beliefs consumers have of the attitude object. The information and beliefs are acquired either from experiences or gathered from different sources and observations. The affective component means the reflection of consumers feelings and emotions to attitudes. The behavioral component explains the reflection of the attitudes to one’s behavior. (Asiegbu et al. 2012).

1.1.1 The formation and change of attitudes

In the simplest way forming an attitude means going from having no attitude to having an attitude towards an object. There are multiple other factors that affect the formation of attitudes such as experiences and observations of the object, learning and conditioning and social factors. (Cherry, 2023). According to Katz (1960) there are four main attitude functions which can further explain why attitudes are formed. These functions are:

1. Instrumental function
2. Value-expressive function
3. Ego-defensive function
4. Knowledge function

The instrumental, (or adjustive or utilitarian) function in terms of attitudes means that some attitudes are simply formed by evaluating if the objects are going to cause pleasure or pain. In addition, this applies to forming positive and negative attitudes towards objects in basis of if the object rewarding or not. The value-express function means that consumer forms attitudes based on the values they have as a person. The third function, Ego-defensive means the attitudes that are formed to protect the consumers identity and feelings from external forces. The knowledge function is based on persons need to create order and structure to their surroundings. The attitudes formed to understand the human life and the differences between people, individuals and groups form stereotypes. (Katz, 1960).

Objects we don't have attitudes of might be something we have no previous encounters with or something we have never considered to be something to have an opinion about. (Oskamp and Schultz, 2005). Psychological processes such as attitudes require some sort of stimulus to influence the creation of such and this means that most often the formation of attitude starts from having a feeling based on some type of information of the attitude object (Wegener et al. 2019). In film marketing, new upcoming film is something that consumers most likely have no attitudes of before it has been announced and some sort of materials have been released to the public. Materials such as trailers are introduced to the consumers before the film is released in order to give information of the film, highlighting the parts of the film that the studio believes to be attractive and to create positive expectations (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009). Thus, in the case of a sequel, prequel or saga, people do have some sort of existing attitudes since the basic concept of the saga has already been

introduced to the consumers when marketing the previous films (Bahruddin & Yurisma, 2017) Many theories suggest that majority of the attitudes we have are learned for example from our past experiences with the attitude object (Oskamp and Schultz, 2005) meaning that consumers might base their attitudes for the upcoming release on the experience they had with the previous films.

Some theories suggest that attitudes are stored in memory as part of knowledge structure. This means that attitudes are then quite enduring, and they are not lightly changeable. Thus, it does not apply to all attitudes as newly formed and attitudes towards matters that are seen less important are easier to be changed. Previous studies indicate that people tend to form enduring attitudes overtime especially on matters they see important. (Oskamp and Schultz, 2005). Nevertheless, there are alternative theories that suggest attitudes would be formed in the moment at any point, meaning they are easily and constantly changing. Seemingly attitudes are some kinds of combination of both, so in other words, attitudes are probably partly stored in a memory and partly temporarily formed. This means that the “hybrid” model suggests that there are attitudes that are easier to alter and attitudes that require more work to change. (Albarracin and Shavitt, 2017).

Simplest way to explain change in attitudes is the object moving on the favourable-unfavourable scale. The same factors that influence the formation of attitudes can also be a reason for them to change. (Cherry, 2023). The changes on attitudes occur when consumers are exposed to new stimuli, which in some cases can alter their existing attitudes. The tri-component model suggests that if one of the attitude components is altered, it will most likely result in change of the other components as well. In addition to attitudes being quite stable, the relationship between attitudes and the behavior they reflect is enduring as well. When the attitudes are altered, most likely the reflected behavior changes as well. As an example, if the marketers target the cognitive component, they can focus on strengthening the existing consumer attitudes. When targeting the behavioral component, samples are a common strategy to encourage a consumer to try a product they might have a neutral or a negative attitude towards. When targeting the affect component, the focus is to make the product more attractive in the eyes of consumers. This can be achieved from creative advertisements or just increasing the amount of visibility the product gets (Asiegbu et al. 2012).

1.1.2 Attitudes and behavior

Understanding the attitude-behavior relation and how do attitudes influence one’s behavior has been the focus on multiple studies in the past. Understanding the relation is rather important in for many parties. For example, if marketers understand the relation, they can exploit it by influencing

consumer attitudes with efficient marketing to also affect the buying behavior. (Bechler et al. 2021). Consumer attitudes reflect how they evaluate attitude objects and certain behavior, meaning attitudes also have motivational qualities. Attitudes can either encourage consumers to behave in a certain way or vice versa. (Asiegbu et al. 2012). The tri-component model of attitudes suggests that attitudes consist of three components which are cognitive, affective, and behavioral (Howard and Sheth, 1969). The cognitive component means how the object makes a person feel, the affective describes the individuals' beliefs of the object and behavioral (or conative) indicates how the attitude influences one's behavior (Cherry, 2023).

The theory of reasoned action by Ajzen & Fishbein (1975) suggested that if persons attitude towards a behavior object is positive and they think others will react positively to their behavior they are more motivated performing a certain behavior. (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991) follows the theory of reasoned action. This theory suggests people's behavior follows their intentions which are formed according to one's attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Intentions are central in guiding individuals' behavior since it's considered to be the motivation factor to performing a certain action. The perceived behavioral norms refer to individuals' evaluation of their own ability to perform a certain behavior and the evaluation of the outcome being positive or negative. Subjective norms are the factors that surround the individual such as other peoples assumed reactions to certain behavior. The figure 1.1 below visualizes the structure of theory of planned behavior.

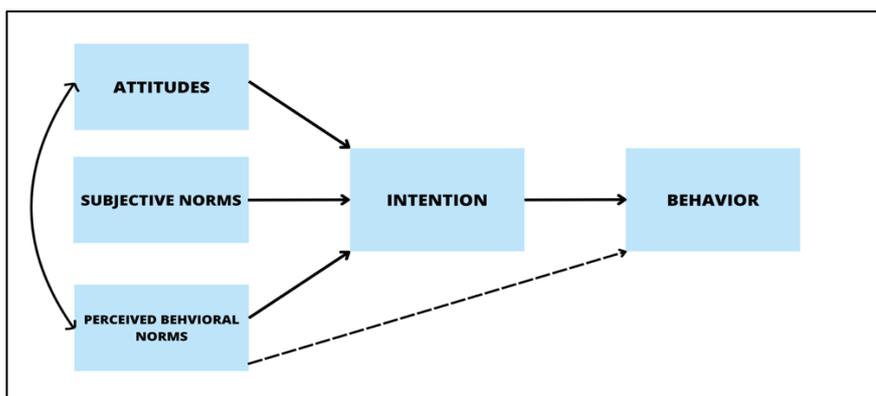


Figure 1.1 Structure of theory of planned behavior
 Source: Ajzen (1991). Composed by author based of the theory of planned behavior.

As mentioned, there are two types of attitudes 1) attitudes toward physical objects, 2) attitudes towards certain behavior. The attitude individual has towards behaving a certain way and the

attitudes towards related objects influence one's motivation to behave. (Ajzen, 1991). The attitudes do not always correlate with behavior, since previous studies have suggested that people might act against their own attitudes. When acting against their attitudes, people might experience cognitive dissonance which might lead them to change the attitude to match the behavior. (Cherry, 2023).

1.2 Word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth

Traditionally, word-of-mouth or WOM means communication of the product or service between individuals in informal and non-commercial conversations based on their experiences with a product or service. (Liu, 2006). Traditional WOM is usually face to face conversations, whereas electronic word-of-mouth or eWOM means such non-commercial communication about a product or service that takes place on the internet platforms (Tiinus, 2017). Previous studies indicate that satisfaction with a product or a service result in positive WOM whereas dissatisfaction leads to negative WOM (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009). The benefit of WOM is that people tend to trust the information and recommendations received from people they know. Previous studies indicate that many consumers tend to seek recommendations for films to watch from their friends and family but in addition tend to seek online recommendations as well (Yu et al. 2019). In addition to WOM being a very powerful marketing tool it's usually also very low cost or free (Ponggeng & Mulia, 2020).

The electronic word-of-mouth in many situations takes the form of consumer reviews since people communicate their experiences with products or services on online platforms. In film marketing the word-of-mouth in form of reviews can be generated by critics or consumers. (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009). According to Yu et al. (2019) majority of the electronic word-of-mouth is acquired from online platforms such as social media, review sites and online news. (Yu et al. 2019) The online consumer reviews are especially important to goods like films since the product can be fully evaluated only after the consumer has seen the film. This means that reviews give information based on experiences of others to the people still trying to decide whether to watch a certain film or not. (Delre & Luffarelli, 2023). It is shown that word-of-mouth information influences consumer attitudes and that online recommendations have a clear influence on the success of the product since people are more likely to purchase a product, they see positive reviews of. In addition, reviews by critics can also be found on multiple online sources such as news websites and review platforms. (Yu et al. 2019).

In situations when marketers need to introduce a new brand to the markets, WOM has shown to be an important boost for the awareness (Liu, 2006). It is argued that WOM can't directly be influenced, but if the target audience is identified and exposed to pre-release materials, they will most likely generate positive communication. (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009) Thus, some films are part of an existing franchise, hundreds of films with no existing audience are produced each year. This means that film distributors constantly need to build a customer base and awareness for a new the new releases. Many films acquire a lot of attention and cause discussion before the release trough advertising and PR. In case the traditional and electronic word-of-mouth is positive, it has most likely beneficial effect on the consumer attitudes towards the upcoming release. (Liu, 2006).

Previous studies indicate that the amount or volume of WOM correlates with the performance of the product (Liu, 2006). In terms of films, recent example of a film that had a great success because of viral WOM is a Paramount title "Smile" which premiered in 2022. The film was produced with a low budget, but after a very successful marketing strategy it started to circulate in social media creating viral videos, reviews and other WOM. The social media "trends" boosted posts and discussions of the film and that created unexpected ticket sales for the film. (Insider, 2022). As social media brings the campaigns from around the world and the word-of-mouth to Finnish consumers as well, the film performed great in the Finnish markets as well selling over 80.000 tickets. As a comparison, "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" – which is a part of a successful Marvel brand – sold approximately 85.000 tickets in Finland. (SES, 2022).

2. MARKET OVERVIEW & CONDUCTED RESEARCH

This chapter provides important background information for the topic and of the actual research. Firstly, this chapter includes information about film marketing and how films are generally advertised. Next this chapter includes the plan of the research conducted in this paper. Lastly this chapter includes information about the data collection and the methodology of the paper.

2.1. Film marketing

There are hundreds of films released yearly worldwide. In USA and Canada there were 449 films that premiered in 2022 (Statista, 2023) and the largest cinema chain in Finland states in their website that approximately 200 films premiere in their cinemas across Finland each year (Finnkino, n.d). The internet has shaped many industries and forced them to adapt to new type of competition. For film and cinema industry the new competition has risen from streaming services and VOD (video-on-demand) platforms such as Netflix. (Binkyte & Vas, 2018). Especially during Covid-19 pandemic the cinemas suffered a lot when cinemas like many other forms of entertainment were closed and cancelled (Moon, 2020). In addition to cinemas the film makers suffered losses as well, since usually films are first distributed exclusively to cinemas mostly due to financial reasons (Tamminiemi, 2018). During the pandemic, some films premiered directly in the streaming services or were exclusively in cinemas for a very short period before being released in streaming due to the changing Covid-19 restrictions (Quartz, 2021). Now looking at the slate set up for the year of 2023, it seems that the film industry is slowly coming back to the old model, where blockbuster films are first distributed exclusively to cinemas before released in any streaming services (CNBC, 2023).

Without a doubt there is a lot of competition between films targeting the same audiences which means that efficient marketing campaigns are important in order for the film to succeed. The most expensive step of the film process is usually the production (Tamminiemi, 2018) but in addition it's common that studios spend millions of dollars on promoting each film and the marketing budgets are spent for advertisement materials, placements, public relations, and market research

(Finsterwalder et al., 2012). The amount money spent on the marketing is usually in correlation with the money spent on production of the film which means that smaller independent films with low production budgets usually have a smaller campaign as well (Tejada, 2015).

Majority of the actual marketing activities of films are executed before the film is released and the first PR activities are usually done when the film is announced to the public. In this state usually only the name of the film, cast and production team are released. Films that have famous actors or directors usually can already create interest among consumer and they can start to base their attitudes towards a film based on such information. (Tamminiemi, 2018). As an example, if it is announced that Christopher Nolan is releasing a new film, consumer who like his previous films might be excited for the film solely based on the director. In order to create a successful marketing campaign, studios usually do marketing research for the upcoming film. For example, trailers are usually released before the film is completed to give information about the upcoming release for the consumer. In addition, studios gather information on what kind of reactions and expectation consumers have towards the film based on the trailer. The studios usually show a template version of the film to test audiences to identify the target audiences and the information is later used when the marketing campaigns are created. (Tamminiemi, 2018).

According to previous studies trailers have high influence on consumers decision to watch a certain film (Ponggeng & Mulia, 2020). For many films, the first trailer is so called “teaser trailer” which is short and will reveal only very little of the film. Teaser trailer is usually followed later by another trailer which is longer and contains more clips of the film and gives a brief introduction to the characters and plot. Trailer is usually cut to different versions which are then displayed in different channels and to different audiences. (Tamminiemi, 2018). In addition to trailers, the film can be promoted with short film clips, interviews of the cast, behind the scenes -clips and static materials such as posters (Liu, 2006). The pre-release materials are usually displayed on TV, social media, and other online platforms, outdoor as well as in cinemas. (Tamminiemi, 2018). The pre-release materials such as trailers are made for a reason, which is to give information of the upcoming film, increase awareness and to create expectations for the film. Trailers and other materials usually consist of the parts of the film that is expected to be most exciting and attractive for the consumers in order to increase the positive expectations of the film. (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009).

In film marketing like many other, social media platforms are widely used in marketing. According to research conducted by Tejada (2015), consumers stated that they find a lot of

information about the films from social media. (Tejada, 2015). As discussed earlier in this paper, multiple sources have highlighted that WOM is in significant role in success of a film and the volume of word-of-mouth usually predict the Box Office results as well (Yu et al. 2019). Successful marketing campaign and the pre-release materials can increase the motivation for the consumers to go out to watch a film, but after the release, word-of-mouth and reviews play an important role making sure that the film reaches the correct audiences and keeps the film going. Since the word-of-mouth in the internet platforms have created a space for user generated reviews, it is important to highlight that consumer reviews have high impact on how the film performs. (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009).

2.2 Data collection and methodology

Considering the topic, people might have different views and opinions of how much they think reviews influence their attitudes. In addition, the survey topic does not require specific knowledge or background from the participants other than occasional exposure to film reviews of some sort. Due to these reasons, the data was collected from an online survey to allow participants with different viewpoints fill in the survey. Before the survey was distributed to the public, it was first tested on test group if the structure and questions were understandable. There were six people who answered the test survey, and they gave feedback on the questionnaire and the survey was edited according to the feedback.

The sampling method used in this paper was convenience sampling. This is a non-probability sampling method where the data is collected from population available to reach through personal connections and the population is reached without additional requirements. (BRM, 2012). The online questionnaire was distributed in various social media channels such as Facebook and by email to the authors connections. In addition, some of those connections also shared the survey on their own social media platforms. The responses were gathered in 7 days period during which in total of 145 people participated in the survey. After the data was collected, it was retrieved from the Google Forms platform to Microsoft Excel where the data was checked and analyzed. The results are presented in the third chapter of this paper.

The questionnaire was designed to seek answers to all of the research questions which were presented in earlier in this paper. The survey was divided into three parts. The first part consisted of the limitative questions and the respondents were also asked to state their ages. The second part

of the survey was designed to acquire knowledge if the respondents actively searched for critic and/or user generated reviews before watching a film. In addition, the second part included questions to determine the most frequently used sources for reviews. The second part consisted of four five-point Likert Scale questions from “Highly Disagree” to “Highly agree”, one multiple choice and one open-ended question. The third and last part of the survey was designed to discover if and how the user and critic reviews can influence the existing attitudes consumers have. It consisted of three sets of questions where each set represented a hypothetical film, and the respondents were asked to choose how much they agreed that different reviews would influence their attitude towards the film. All these questions were asked on a five-point Likert scale, from Highly disagree to Highly agree. In addition, the last part included two open-ended questions where the respondents were asked to answer why they either feel influenced or do don't feel influenced by critic and user reviews.

Questions number one and two were asked to limit the respondents only to those that fit the requirements of the study. Since this study was conducted focusing only to Finnish residents and to those who have experiences of critic and/or user reviews, questions about these were asked first in the survey. In case the respondent stated to never have encounters with reviews or are not living nor have been living in Finland, they were not directed to complete the survey. The first question was “Do you live in Finland or have you lived in Finland in the past 5 years.” Only 1,4% of people who started responding were limited from filling in the rest of the survey based on this question. The purpose of this question was to limit the respondent to only to those that live or have lived in Finland since the study focused on the attitudes Finnish residents have. The five years was added for those who for example might study abroad but still have been involved with the Finnish markets in the near past. The reason it was limited only to past five years is that Finnish people living abroad for long-term are not consumers of the Finnish theatrical markets. The second question was “Are you exposed to film reviews and/or search for reviews of **theatrical film releases?** *Including any type of reviews i.e., on rotten tomatoes, social media, IMDB, magazines, blogs etc.*“. The point of this question was to limit the respondents only to those who are intentionally or unintentionally exposed to critic and user reviews. From all the people who started to fill in the survey 84.8% were exposed and/or searched for reviews. After these limitative questions the qualified consumers were directed to fill in the rest of the survey. In total of 123 applicable respondents were directed to fill in the rest of the survey about their experiences to film reviews. The survey results and analysis are presented in the following chapter.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this chapter the results of the second and third part of the survey are presented and analyzed. The results of the second part of the survey are presented with figures and explanations. As it was explained in the previous chapter, the third part of the survey was designed to indicate the influence of different reviews to hypothetical films. The results are presented and analyzed with descriptive statistics to simplify the complexity of the results. In addition, the differences between critic and consumer reviews are tested with t-Test. The limitations of the research are presented after the results and analysis. In chapter also includes discussion based on the results of the survey and the main findings are presented.

3.1. Results and analysis

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the survey was divided into three parts. The first part was designed to limit the respondents to applicable for the research and the results were presented in the previous chapter as well. The results of the second and third part of the survey are presented in this chapter. In addition, the analysis of the data collected from the third part from the questions 10-12 is presented as well.

The question number four designed to was determine whether the respondents searched for critic reviews before watching a film. To the statement “I tend to seek reviews from critics before watching a film” 33% of the respondents agreed and 11% highly agreed. This means that in total over 44% seem to actually try to find reviews by film critics when deciding whether to watch a film or not. Nevertheless, 20% disagreed and 12% people highly disagreed with the statement. This means that 32% of the respondents do not try to find critic reviews before watching a film. As a contrast the respondents were also asked “I tend to seek reviews from other consumers before watching a film”. To this statement 38% of the respondents agreed and 24% highly agreed which means that in total 62% of the respondents seems to search for reviews from other consumers before watching a film. From the respondents only 11% disagreed and less than 5% highly

disagreed with this statement. The figure 3.1 below shows the responses to the statements and helps to visualize the differences between these two.

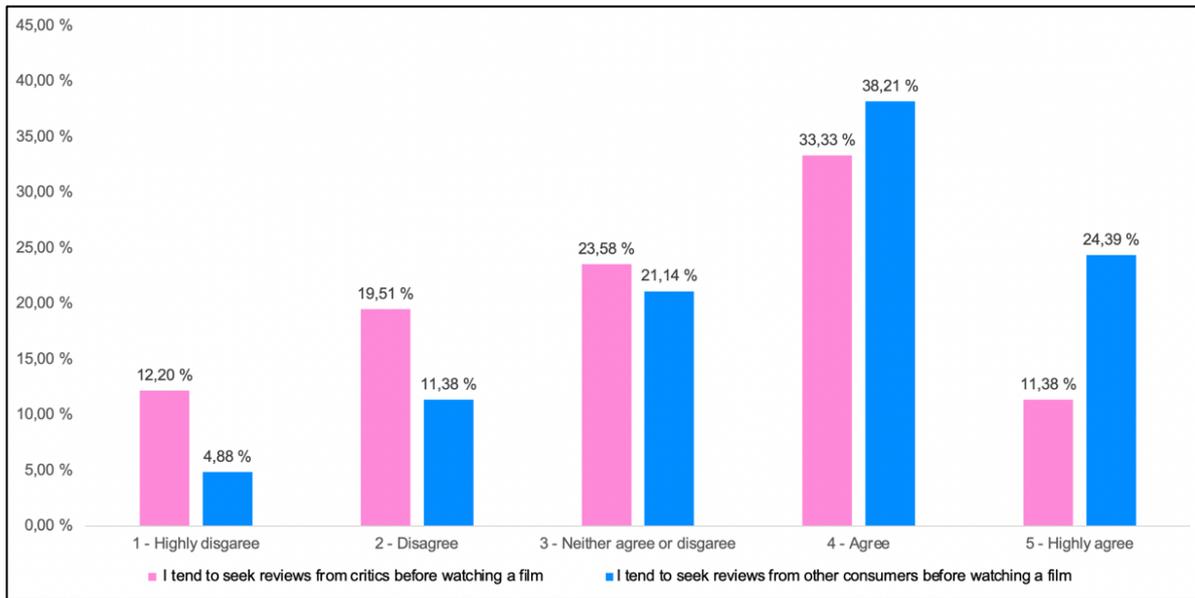


Figure 3.1 How much respondents agree with statements about searching for reviews.
Source: Hakanen (2023), on the basis of data shown in appendix 1 compiled by the author

The respondents were next asked to choose how much they agree with the statement “I think critics often have similar opinions about films as me”. The purpose of this question was to help indicate the reason why the respondents either search or do not search for critic reviews. In addition, the question helps to reveal if the respondents think that they can reflect to the reviews and if they most likely will enjoy the same films as critics. 40% of respondents did not agree or disagree with the statement. Less than 24% of the respondents either agreed or highly agreed that they feel as they can reflect to the critics. Approximately 36% of the respondents disagreed or highly disagreed with the statement.

The seventh question was “I often have similar opinions about films as the mass audience” and the purpose of this question was similar as the purpose of the previous question. The information was gathered to find out if the respondents felt as they usually have similar opinions of films as the mass audience. Almost 48% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 4% highly agreed. Only 14% either disagreed or highly disagreed. Similar as the previous question, quite a high percentage of the respondents did not agree or disagree with the statement with 34% choosing that option. The results of these two questions indicate that quite small percentage of the respondents think that they have similar opinions as critics and a quite large majority agrees that

they often can reflect to the opinions of the mass audience. The figure 3.2 below visualized the deviation of the responses for these two statements.

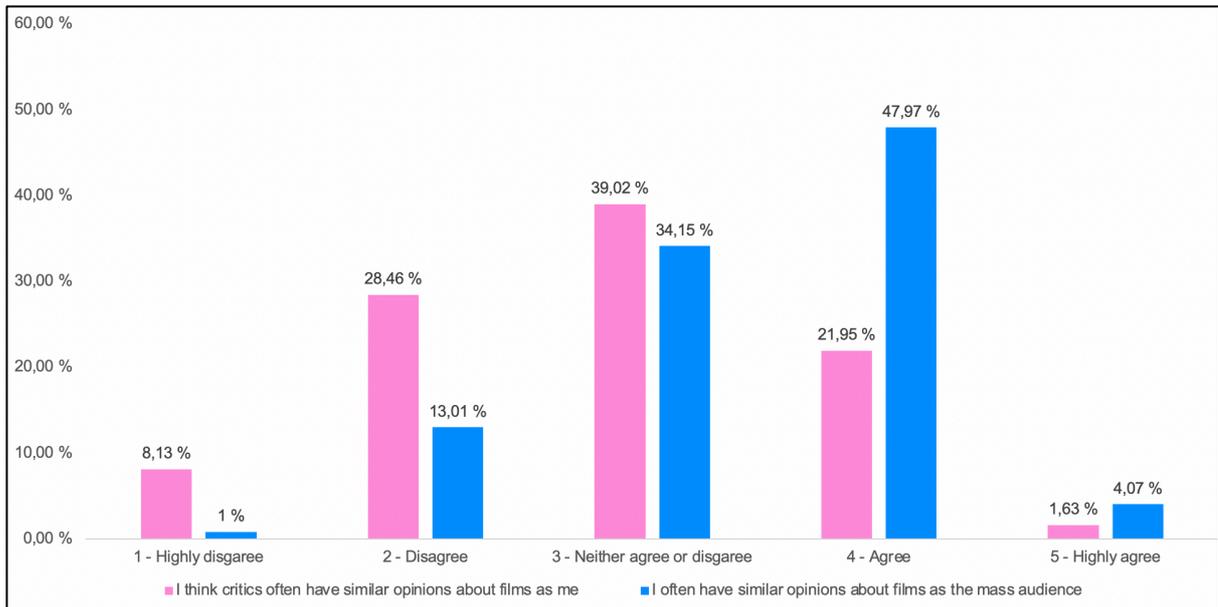


Figure 3.2 How much respondents agree with having similar opinions as critics and other consumers.

Source: Hakanen (2023), on the basis of data shown in appendix 1 compiled by the author

The question eight was “Where do you most often find reviews from?”. This question was a multiple-choice question, where people had the opportunity to choose all the sources they use when searching for film reviews. The most commonly used review sources were IMDb and social media platforms. Rotten Tomatoes and papers and magazines were also chosen frequently. Since in this question social media and papers were included as one, the respondents were asked to also name the most frequently used source. In addition to the sources below, respondents stated in the open-ended question that they hear a lot of recommendations from their friends. The most commonly named sources were:

- IMDb
- Rotten Tomatoes
- Helsingin Sanomat (Paper and digital)
- TikTok
- YouTube

The habits of consuming reviews, especially the sources might vary between age groups. The figure 3.3 visualizes the most frequently used sources between age groups. As we can see also from the figure, majority of the respondents were under the age of 35 which limits the accuracy of the results for people over the age of 35.

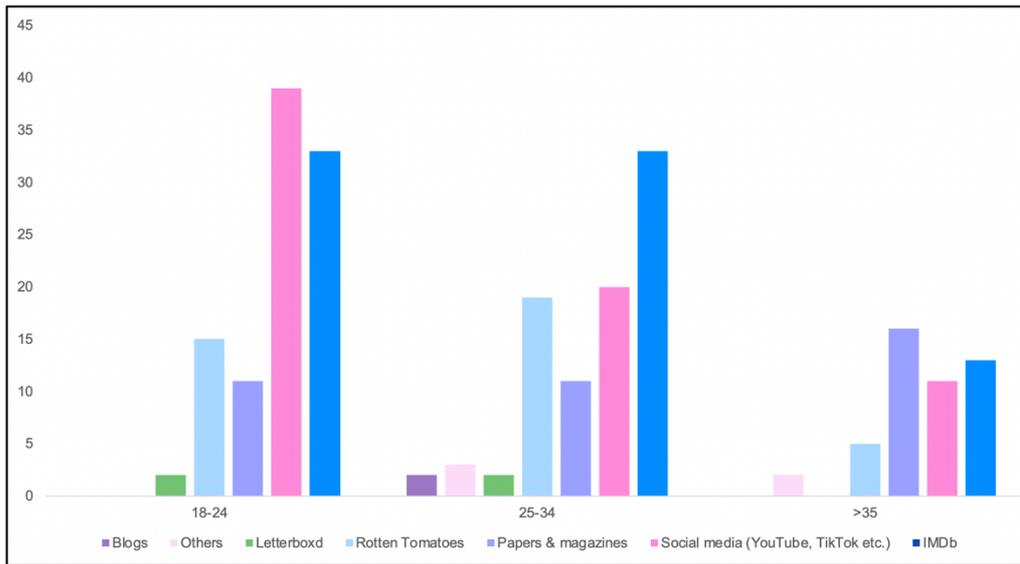


Figure 3.3 Most frequently used review sources between to age groups.

Source: Hakanen (2023), on the basis of data shown in appendix 1 compiled by the author

Within the age group of respondents from 18 to 24, social media seems to be the most used source for reviews and IMDb the second most used. For the respondents of age from 25 to 34 IMDb seems to be by far the most used source for reviews with social media as second and Rotten Tomatoes as third. For the oldest age group for people over the age of 35 papers and magazines (digital and physical) seems to be the most frequently used source to find reviews. IMDb and social media are the next most used sources for this age group to find reviews. Thus, it is worth a note, that the range of this age group is rather big and therefore the results are limited. Between the age groups the most frequently named sources were:

- 18-24: TikTok & IMDb
- 25-34: IMDb
- >35: Helsingin Sanomat (Digital and Physical)

The last part included two open-ended questions which were “Please explain why you feel or do not feel influenced by critic reviews” and “Please explain why you feel or do not feel influenced by

reviews from other consumers”. The intention was to find some type of support and explanations for the responses presented in the paper. Seemingly, the responds were both with and against for both critics and user reviews. Since the questions were open-ended the most commonly appeared, themes were collected to present those responses.

The most commonly appeared reasons as why consumers do feel influenced by critics were that critics are professional, and respondents felt as they could trust their opinions and evaluation of a film. In addition, the respondents stated that critics tend to evaluate the films on many aspects and give positive reviews to “quality” films. The most commonly occurred themes as why respondents do not feel influenced by critics are that critics tend to focus on the art aspects on films, which consumers do not necessarily find as important. In addition, the respondents seemed to think that critics tend to give negative reviews also solely based on the evaluation made from the art perspective and the simplicity of enjoying a film is neglected. Respondents also stated to trust their own evaluation of film they have made based on for example the trailer. The respondents trust to know which films they will enjoy, and they are not interested in other’s opinions.

The most commonly mentioned reasons for why the consumers feel influenced by other consumers is that it is easier to find other consumers that share the same taste in films. This makes it easier for the respondents to reflect the opinions of other consumers and trust the reviews. Another commonly occurred theme, was that respondents think other consumers are mostly satisfied with less and don’t focus on small details or solely on the art perspective. The respondents seemed to think that other consumers give good reviews if the film is simply entertaining. Reason as why the respondents do not feel influenced by other consumers reviews was that people have different taste in films. In addition, the respondents stated that they trust their own evaluation of films based on the pre-release materials and are therefore not that interested in other’s opinions.

The last part of the survey was composed to discover how the user and critic reviews can influence the attitudes consumers might already have towards films based on the pre-release materials. In the last part there was three sets of questions, and each set represented a film which the respondents were asked to think they have either positive, neutral, or negative attitude towards before watching the film based on for example trailers. They were then asked to read different review possibilities and answer how much they feel that the reviews would influence in the appeal of the hypothetical films. All the questions were asked on a five-point Likert scale, from Highly disagree to Highly agree.

In each set, the following statements were presented:

- Negative reviews by critics make the film less appealing
- Negative reviews by other consumers makes the film less appealing
- Positive reviews by critics make the film more appealing
- Positive reviews by other consumers makes the film more appealing

As stated, the respondents were asked to select how much they agreed with the statements from a five-point Likert scale. The data collected was analyzed with descriptive statistics to help simplify the complexity of these responses and for us to conclude which scenarios are most influential to their attitudes. The table 3.1 below shows the results of descriptive analysis.

Table 3.1 Descriptive statistics analysis of the responses

POSITIVE PREJUDICE	Mean	Md	Mo	SD
Negative reviews by critics make the film less appealing	2,67	2	2	1,113749145
Negative reviews by other consumers make the film less appealing	3,37	4	4	1,089430397
Positive reviews by critics make the film more appealing	3,64	4	4	1,049043915
Positive reviews by other consumers make the film more appealing	3,95	4	5	1,193243675
NEUTRAL PREJUDICE	Mean	Md	Mo	SD
Negative reviews by critics make the film less appealing	3,30	3	4	1,070735609
Negative reviews by other consumers make the film less appealing	3,67	4	4	1,012187494
Positive reviews by critics make the film more appealing	3,56	4	4	0,933408538
Positive reviews by other consumers make the film more appealing	3,87	4	4	1,007832845
NEGATIVE PREJUDICE	Mean	Md	Mo	SD
Negative reviews by critics make the film less appealing	3,64	4	4	1,187725138
Negative reviews by other consumers make the film less appealing	3,97	4	5	1,115721918
Positive reviews by critics make the film more appealing	2,92	3	2	1,098385521
Positive reviews by other consumers make the film more appealing	3,42	4	4	1,086490289

Source: Hakanen (2023), based on the data shown in appendix 2 compiled by the author

Looking at the hypothetical film with positive prejudice it seems that especially critic reviews seem to have less influence on the respondents' attitudes as we can see from the figure above the mode was 2 and mean 2,67. As a comparison negative review from other consumers seem to have more influence on the existing positive attitude. The mode is 4 which means that most frequently

chosen option was “agree” to the statement that negative reviews by other consumers make the film less appealing. When the film is already seen appealing, positive reviews from other consumers seem to convince the respondents even more. This conclusion can be drawn from the mode which is 5. This means that the most frequently chosen option was “highly agree” that positive reviews make the film with positive prejudice more appealing.

When the hypothetical prejudice of the film is neutral the differences between the scenarios are not so noticeable. It seems that when the attitude towards a film is neutral both negative critic and consumer reviews make the film less appealing for the consumers. Vice versa, it seems that both positive reviews from critics and consumers make the film more appealing. The mode in all the responses is 4, meaning that to all the presented statements the most frequent response was agree.

As a contrast to the neutral, when the hypothetical prejudice of a film is negative there seem be more differences between the different reviews. Negative reviews seem to make the film even less interesting to the respondents according to the analysis. In addition, it seems that especially when other consumers review the film negatively it decreases the interest even more since the mode for the responses is 5 which means that the most frequent answer to the statement “negative reviews make the film less appealing” was highly agree. It seems that when the respondents are not interested of film positive critic reviews don’t seem to have that much influence in making the film more appealing. The mode is only 2 which indicates that the respondents stated most frequently to disagree with the statement “Positive critic reviews make the film more appealing”. Although, when the positive reviews come from other consumers, they seem to be more influential to the respondents when the prejudice is negative.

Out of all based on the analysis, it seems that the most influential reviews are positive consumer reviews when the prejudice is also positive and negative consumer review when the prejudice is also negative. In contrast it seems that the least influential reviews are critics reviews when their opinions are against the existing attitudes the respondents have towards the film. In addition, since both critic and consumer reviews seemed to be as influential when the prejudice is neutral, it seems that critic reviews don’t have the power to turn the attitudes upside down.

After the data was analyzed with the descriptive statistics it seemed that there was a difference on the influence between consumer and critic reviews. Since the differences between means are hard to evaluate as significant or not solely based on looking at the number, it was tested with t-Tests.

T-Tests are used to find out if there is a significant difference between means of two groups (Investopedia, 2023). The t-Tests were done by pairing the data from each set to two pairs. “Difference of means between negative reviews by critics and reviews by consumers in making the film less appealing” and “Difference of means between positive reviews by critics and reviews by consumers in making the film more appealing” The table 3.2 below indicates the P found P values for the paired means. The difference of the results can be considered significant if the found P-value is less than 0,05. According to the t-Test all the found mean differences are significant.

Table 3.2 t-Test results

POSITIVE PREJUDICE	P(T<=t) one-tail
Difference of means between negtive reviews by critics and reviews by consumers in making the film less appealing	0,000000003
Difference of means between positive review by critics & Positive reviews by consumers in making the film more appealing	0,000707792
POSITIVE PREJUDICE	P(T<=t) one-tail
Difference of means between negtive reviews by critics and reviews by consumers in making the film less appealing	0,000025205
Difference of means between positive review by critics & Positive reviews by consumers in making the film more appealing	0,000092261
NEGATIVE PREJUDICE	P(T<=t) one-tail
Difference of means between negtive reviews by critics and reviews by consumers in making the film less appealing	0,000029744
Difference of means between positive review by critics & Positive reviews by consumers in making the film more appealing	0,000001485

Source: Hakanen (2023), based on the data shown in appendix 2 compiled by the author

Note: If P value is less than 0,05 the mean difference is significant

There are few limitations regarding this research and the results. The results are based on a data collected from an online survey, which means that there is a chance of results not being completely honest and/or accurate since filling the survey was not supervised. In addition, since the survey was posted on online platforms and other users were able to share the platforms, choosing the participants was not possible, but the respondents who have filled the survey have been exposed to the survey and they have made the decision to fill it themselves.

In addition, since the survey was mainly responded by younger consumers, the results are limited in terms of people above the age of 35. The data collected indicated differences between age groups, but due to the limited number of responses and wide age range, the full accuracy of the suggested results for consumers above the age of 35 are limited. The other two age groups had more equal number of respondents, meaning that they are more likely to represent the accurate results. Another limitation is that the definition of “film critic” is not defined in this paper or in the survey. Especially social media content creators could be considered as “film critics” based on if they have access to the early press screenings. It is not clearly defined where is the line of critic reviews and consumer reviews, meaning that the responses reflect the respondents individual understanding of both. Lastly, in each question there was some percentage of respondents who did not agree nor disagree to the statements, which limits the actual useful responses. Thus, those responses from which the key findings were drawn, the percentage of such answers were quite small compared to the useful responses.

3.2. Discussion & recommendations

The results indicate that IMDb was the most frequently used source among the participants of this research. IMDb (Internet movie database) is a popular source for information about films, TV shows and celebrities. One of the most familiar features of IMDb are the user reviews found on the platform which are generated from ratings from consumers. In addition to the user rate, on films pages there is also critic rate score “Metascore” which is provided by Metacritic.com. The critic reviews found in IMDb are gathered from other sources and is not organic in that platform. (IMDb, n.d). Another frequently used source was Rotten Tomatoes which is quite similar to IMDb. On Rotten Tomatoes on each film page consumers can find a review rate both from critic and consumers. Common source to find film critic reviews from are digital and physical newspaper and magazines. Helsingin Sanomat (Digital & physical newspaper) was named as a frequently used source among the oldest age group of this paper, but due to a wide age range and limited number of respondents on this age group the result might not be completely accurate. In addition, as one might expect, social media was the second most frequently used source for reviews among all respondents. The most commonly named social media platforms were TikTok and YouTube. On social media, there probably is a combination of totally average consumers and content creators generating eWOM and reviews. It is worth a note, that since some content creators can be considered to be “film critics”.

The reason why the most frequently used sources were discovered in this paper, is that we can reflect the knowledge on what type of reviews do consumers find relevant. According to the it seems that since both IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes were commonly used, people enjoy when the reviews are presented numerally. In IMDb the user rate is 1 to 10 and Metascore from 0-100. On Rotten Tomatoes, both consumer and critic reviews are presented as a percentage out of 100%. In addition, what we can conclude from the sources, is that the people using the designated film information platforms, seem to actively search for the reviews, whereas people using social media might be also unintentionally exposed to the reviews.

Overall based on the results, it seems that consumers find reviews generated by other consumers more influential to their attitudes than critic reviews. The respondents of the survey were asked to reflect how much they agreed that they often had similar opinions of films as critics and if they often had similar opinions about films as other consumers. The difference of the results was quite noticeable, since 51% either agreed or highly agreed to have similar opinions as the mass audience and only approximately 24% agreed or highly agreed to have similar opinions about films as critics. In addition, more respondents stated to actively search for reviews generated by other consumers before watching a film rather than from critics. The open-ended questions might provide an explanation for this since theme that commonly occurred was that people think critics might focus on more detailed matters when other consumers might evaluate the film simply based on the entertainment qualities. Nevertheless, there were also respondents who stated to trust the critic opinions because they usually give positive reviews to “quality films”.

Based on the survey results, negative reviews seemed to have the most influence on consumer attitudes on those films, the consumers already have a negative prejudice of. Meaning, that negative reviews from critics and other consumers probably strengthen the negative evaluation of a film. In contrast, the results indicate that if the existing attitude of a film is negative, the positive reviews might not have that much influence. In this case, the respondents seemed to think that positive reviews from other consumers have more influence in changing the attitude than critics. In addition, the survey results indicated that if consumer has a neutral prejudice, the attitude was easier to change to either direction. When the existing attitude is neutral, positive reviews from both consumers and critics seemed to shift the attitude to positive direction. Vice versa, the negative reviews both from critics and consumers seemed to have a negative influence on the attitude. Based on the results if consumers have existing positive attitude toward a film, majority did not seem to think that negative critic reviews make the film less appealing whereas the negative

reviews from other consumers seemed to have slightly more influence on their attitudes. In case of positive reviews, both consumer and critic reviews seemed to have positive influence on the attitude, meaning that positive reviews most likely strengthen the existing attitudes.

The key finding for the distributors and film marketers is the importance of user reviews and electronic word-of-mouth. In the contrast, the results indicate that consumers don't seem to think that the critic reviews are as influential to their opinions. Some argue, that WOM is hard to predict, but in case the marketing is creative and targeted to the identified audiences there a good chance that the consumers generate positive word-of-mouth (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009). As it is common to show the film for the critics and press on early screenings, the suggestion for marketers is to shift the focus more also to consumers that the word-of-mouth and consumer reviews can be generated also before the release. Usually, the volume of word-of-mouth is quite small before the release (Liu, 2006), inviting more average consumers and content creators to see the film before the release help boost the positive eWOM. Thus, it is worth to note, that distributors do host premiere screenings for local celebrities or influencers to get visibility for example on social media. In addition, as the results indicate that the influence of reviews seems to depend to some extent on the existing attitude, the importance of creative and good pre-release materials is highlighted. A great example of a creative promotion activity is a very recent Barbie poster generator which went viral on social media. Warner Bros. Pictures launched the generator at the same time as the new poster and trailer was released to promote their upcoming film "Barbie" With the generator everyone can create their own Barbie poster, which then resulted in wide reach and visibility for the upcoming film on social media. (Independent, 2023). The creative methods which include the internet users to participate on the trends is also a method to create positive expectations and word-of-mouth before the film is even close its release. As a suggestion for further research, the survey results might be a good foundation to future studies for more methods to impact and generate electronic word-of-mouth. Especially the rise of TikTok has already shown examples of the power that social media word-of-mouth has for films, such as the example presented earlier in this paper.

CONCLUSION

Successful films generate great revenue, but film industry includes a lot of risks since the production and marketing of films is expensive, but it does not automatically guarantee good Box Office results (Yu et al. 2019). The film industry is also highly competitive since yearly there are hundreds of films released and most of the revenue is made during the time films are scheduled in the cinemas (Tamminiemi, 2018). This means that the films targeting the same audiences compete to win over the consumer and to be chosen over the other releases.

Previous studies suggest that positive critic reviews and positive word-of-mouth increases the consumers desire to see the film and that WOM has positive influence on the Box Office results (Yu et al. 2019). Traditionally, word-of-mouth means informal communication of a product or a service in private conversations, but due to the rise of internet the communications are no longer limited to few people. The internet platforms have opened a space for electronic word-of-mouth and also for online consumer reviews. (Kerrigan & Yalkin, 2009). The importance of reviews is highlighted with experience goods like films which can't be evaluated until the film has been watched. Reviews give important information of the film from a consumer who has seen the film to a consumer who has not to support their decision making (Delre & Luffarelli, 2023).

The research problem of this paper was the lack of knowledge on how the consumer attitudes towards films are influenced by critic and/or consumers reviews in the current situation where consumers are most likely intentionally or unintentionally exposed either type. The aim of this paper was to discover which sources and reviews consumers find relevant and believe to influence their attitudes as well as does the existing attitude play a role on how much the reviews have influence.

Based on the results of the study most frequently used review sources are TikTok, YouTube, designated movie databases IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes and certain newspapers and magazines. One of the main findings of the study indicates that the consumers attitudes seem to be more influenced by reviews generated by other consumers than critics. More respondents actively

searched for consumer reviews than critic reviews and more people agreed to have similar opinions as the mass audience compared to having similar opinions as critics. The conclusion that consumer reviews are more influential to consumer attitudes was also supported by the result drawn from the data analysis. The findings also indicate that the existing prejudice of films which is formed based on the pre-release materials also influences how much the consumers think reviews can influence their attitudes. When the existing attitude is neutral, positive reviews from both critics and consumers seem to make the film more appealing. Vice versa, if the reviews are negative, both type of reviews make the film less appealing. However, in case the consumers already have formed a positive attitude towards a film, negative reviews don't seem to influence their attitudes that much. Thus, when the negative reviews come from other consumers the influence was slightly higher than if the negative reviews are by critics. When the existing attitude was negative, positive consumer reviews did have influence in making the film more appealing, whereas the critic reviews did not seem to convince the consumers to change their mind. If the existing attitude is positive or negative, the similar critic and consumer reviews seemed to strengthen the attitude. To conclude, it seems that critics have less power in changing the attitudes when they are opposite as the reviews and consumer reviews have more power in those cases. When the message of the reviews is the same as the existing attitude, both critic and consumer reviews seem to strengthen the existing opinions.

The main findings of the paper are the importance of user reviews and electronic word-of-mouth and that consumers don't seem to think that the critic reviews are as influential to their opinions. As it is common to show the film for the critics and press on early screenings, the suggestion for marketers is to shift the focus more also to consumers and fan screenings that the word-of-mouth and consumer reviews can be generated also before the release. In addition, as the results indicate that the influence of reviews seems to depend to some extent on the existing attitude, the importance of creative and good pre-release materials is highlighted.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Survey

Part 1

1. Do you live in Finland or have you lived in Finland in the past 5 years? *

Yes

No

2. Are you exposed to film reviews and/or search for reviews of **theatrical film releases**? *Including any type of reviews i.e. on rotten tomatoes, social media, IMDB, magazines, blogs etc.* *

Yes

No

3. Please state your age *

Oma vastauksesi _____

Takaisin Seuraava Tyhjennä lomake

Appendix 1. Continued

4. I tend to seek reviews from critics before watching a film *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Highly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Highly agree				

5. I tend to seek reviews from other consumers before watching a film *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Highly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Highly agree				

6. I think critics often have similar opinions about films as me *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Highly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Highly agree				

7. I often have similar opinions about films as the mass audience *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Highly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Highly agree				

Appendix 1. Continued

8. Where do you most often find reviews from? *

Papers & magazines

Blogs

IMDB

Rotten Tomatoes

Social media (YouTube, TikTok etc.)

Muu: _____

9. Please name your most frequently used review source *

Teie vastus

Appendix 1. Continued

Part 3

Let's pretend that there are three films premiering on Friday and you have the following opinions:

- Film A is a movie you are interested in after seeing content of it (such as trailers, posters, etc).
- Film B is a film you have no special opinion about after seeing content of it (such as trailers, posters, etc).
- Film C is a film you are not interested in after seeing content of it (such as trailers, posters, etc).

10. Consider film A (*you have a positive attitude towards the film before seeing it*), read the statements and answer how much you agree. *

	Highly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Highly agree
Negative reviews by critics makes the film less appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Negative reviews by other consumers makes the film less appealing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive reviews by critics makes the film more appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive reviews by other consumers makes the film more appealing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix 1. Continued

11. Consider film B (*you have no specific attitude towards the film before seeing it*), read the statements and answer how much you agree. *

	Highly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Highly agree
Negative reviews by critics make the film less appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Negative reviews by other consumers makes the film less appealing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive reviews by critics make the film more appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive reviews by other consumers makes the film more appealing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix 1. Continued

12. Consider film C (*you have a negative attitude towards the film before seeing it*), read the statements and answer how much you agree. *

	Highly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Highly agree
Negative reviews by critics make the film less appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Negative reviews by other consumers makes the film less appealing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive reviews by critics make the film more appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive reviews by other consumers makes the film more appealing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix 1. Continued

13. Please explain why do you feel or do not feel influenced by critic reviews: *

Oma vastauksesi

14. Please explain why do you feel or do not feel influenced by reviews from other * consumers:

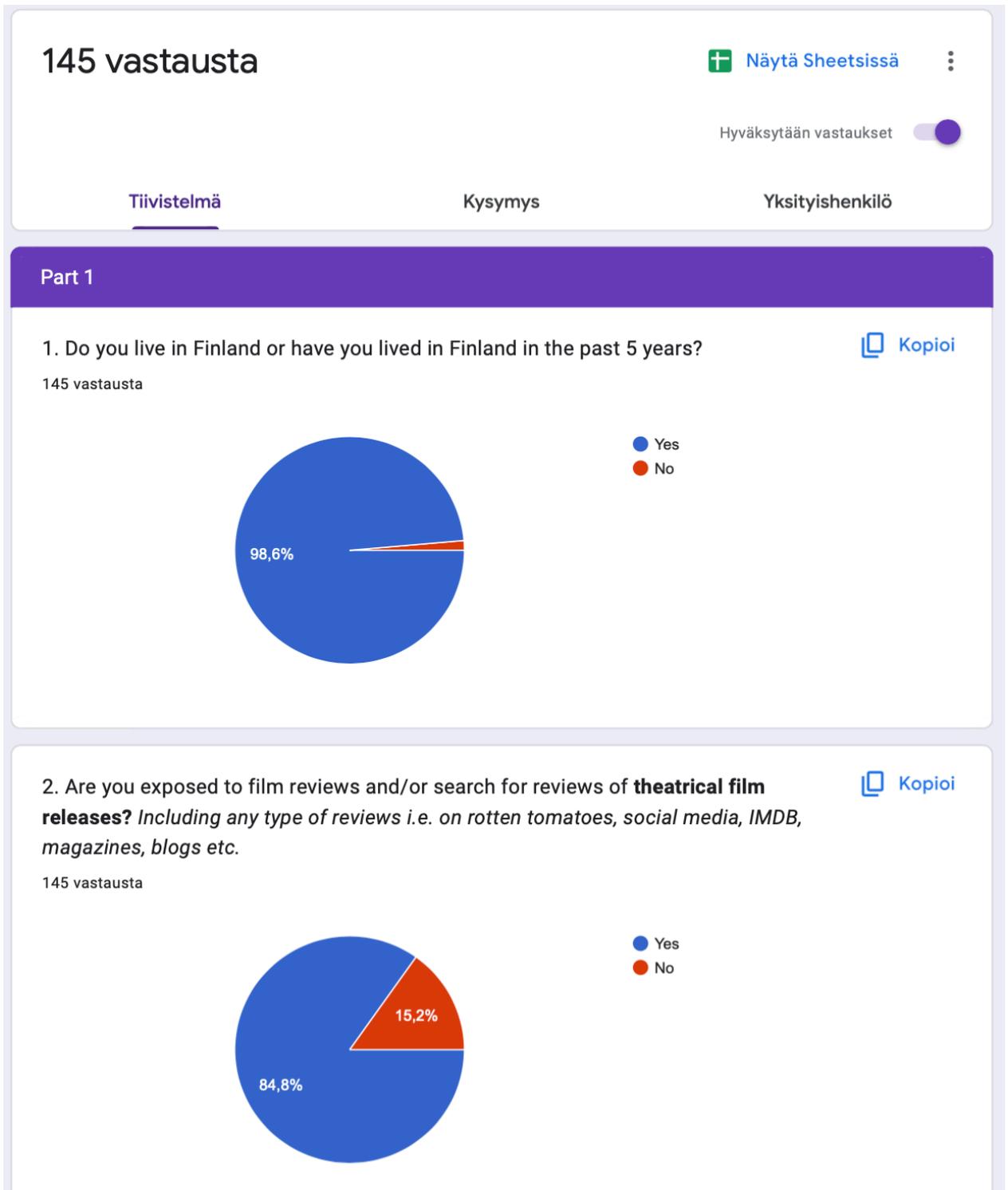
Oma vastauksesi

[Takaisin](#)

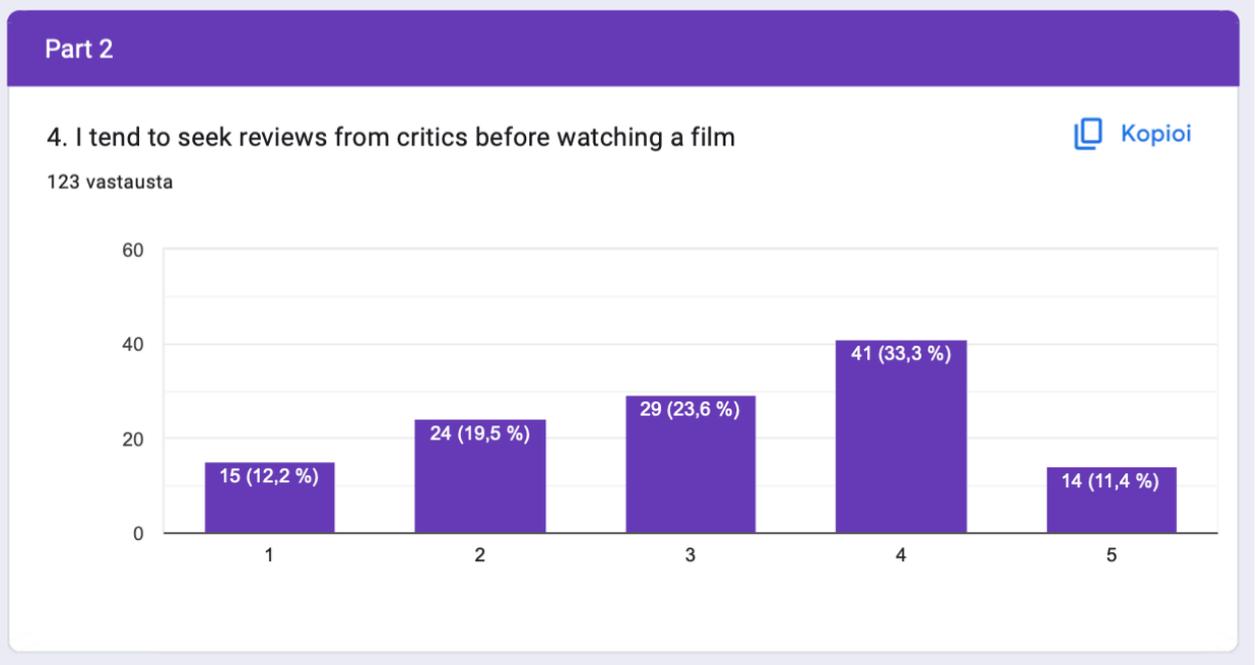
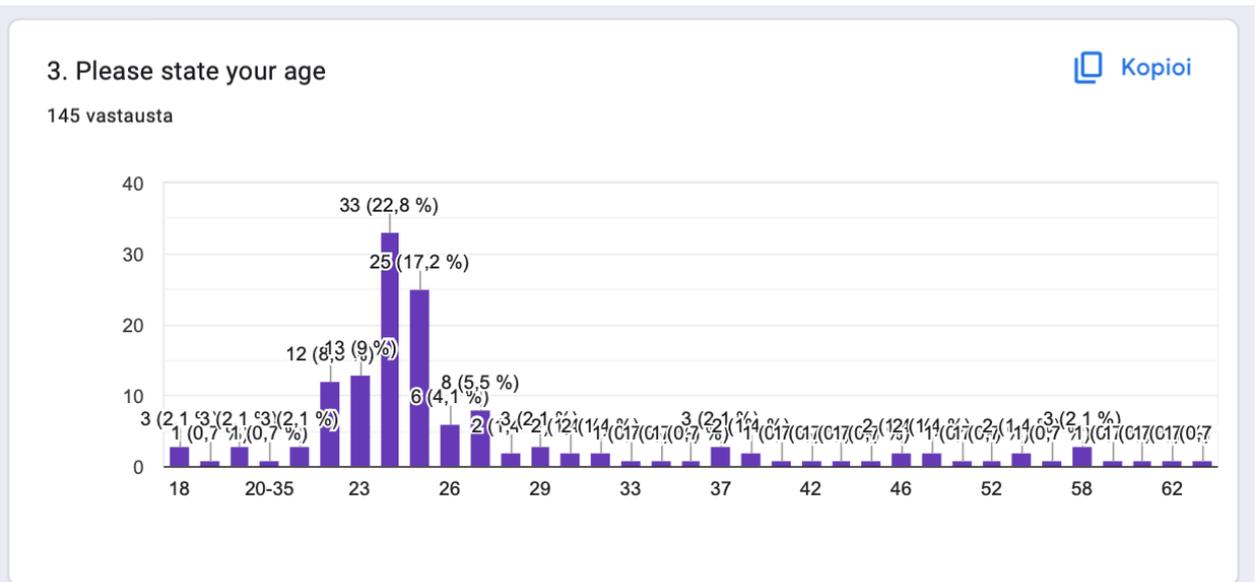
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[Tyhjennä lomake](#)

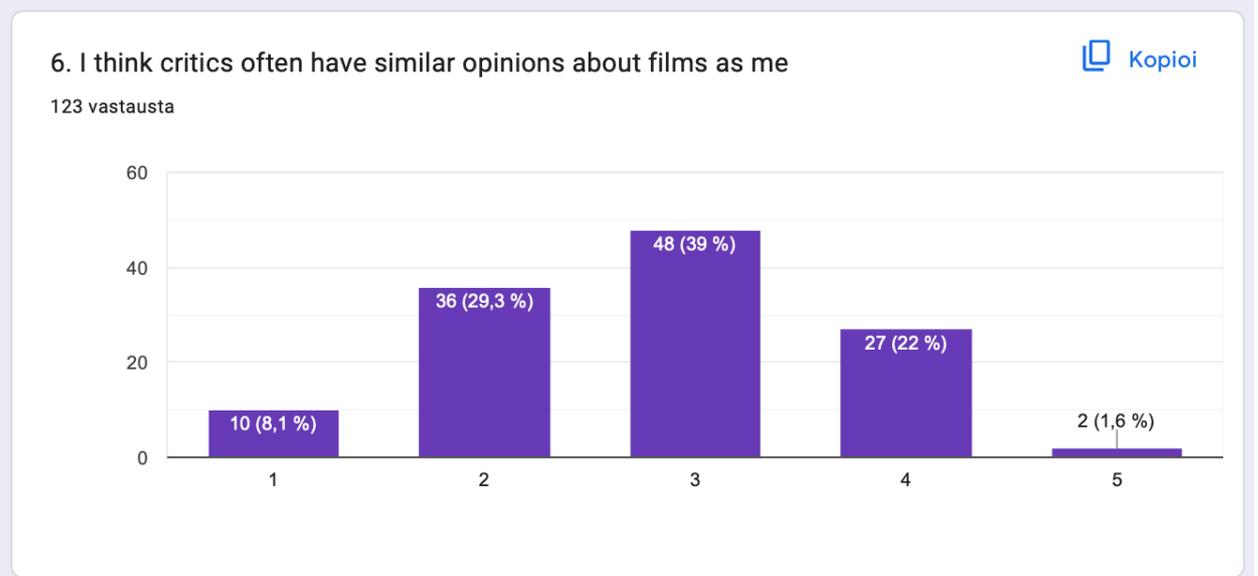
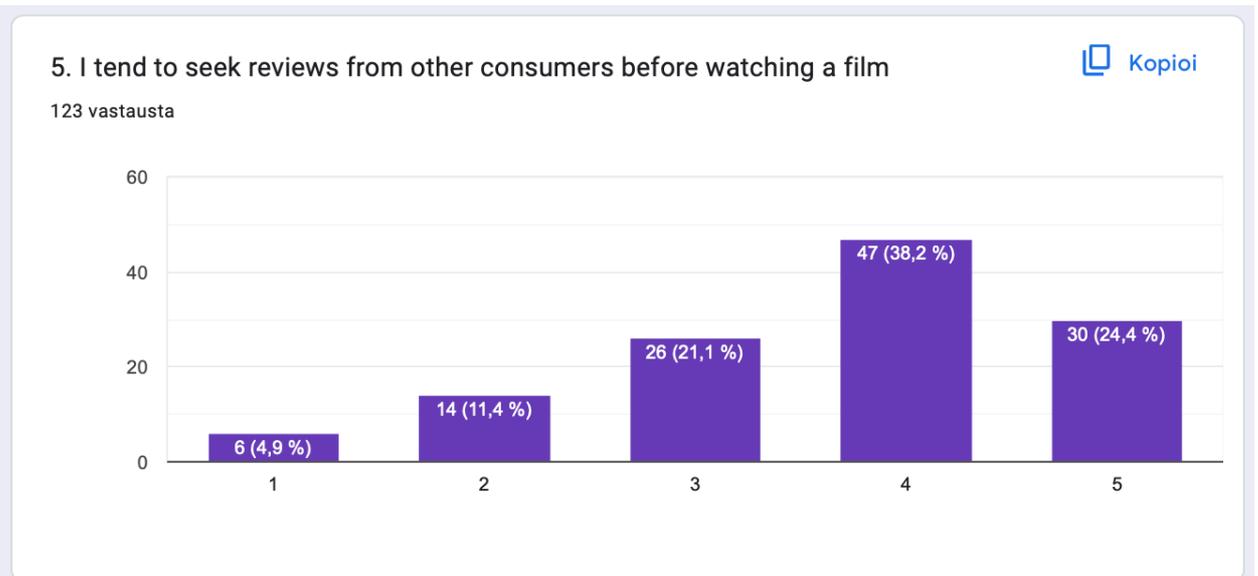
Appendix 2. Survey results



Appendix 2. Continued



Appendix 2. Continued

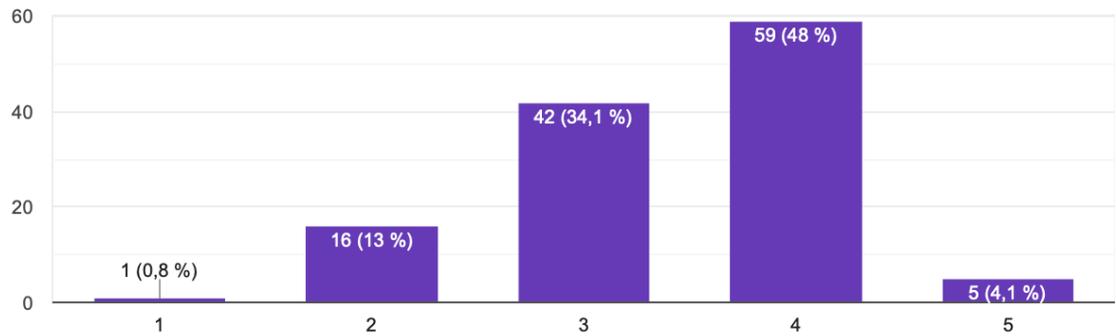


Appendix 2. Continued

7. I often have similar opinions about films as the mass audience



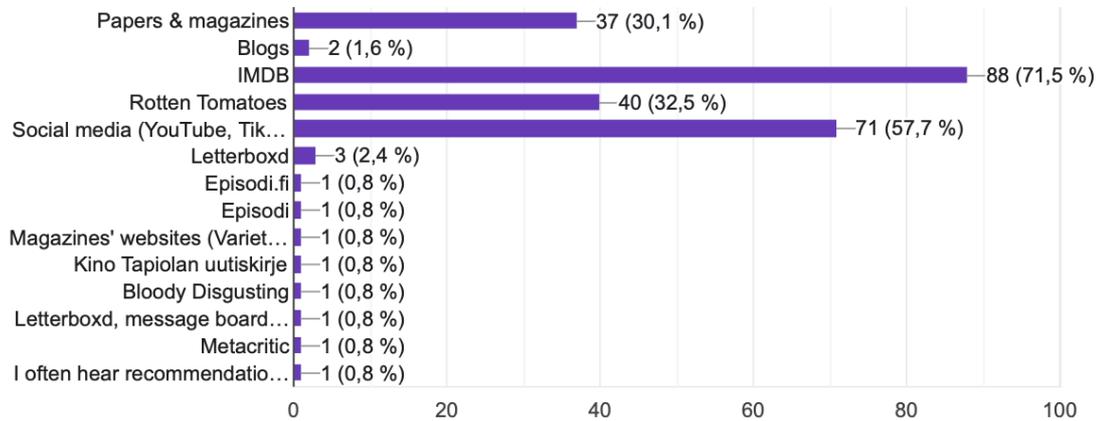
123 vastausta



8. Where do you most often find reviews from?



123 vastausta

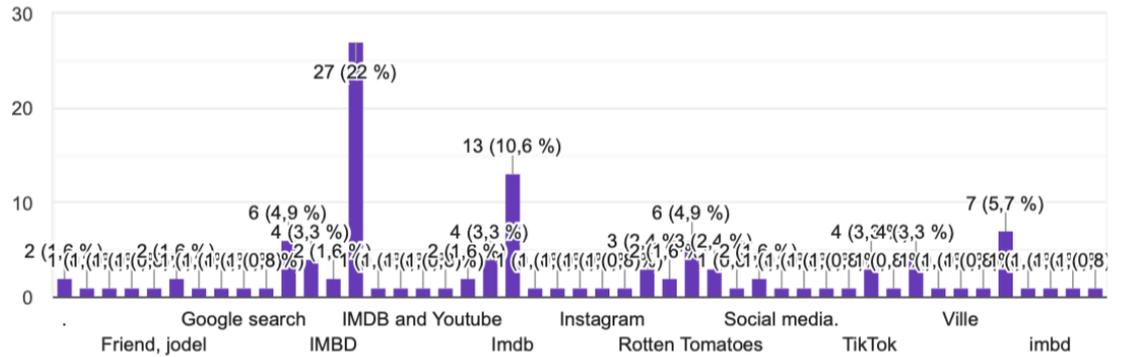


Appendix 2. Continued

9. Please name your most frequently used review source

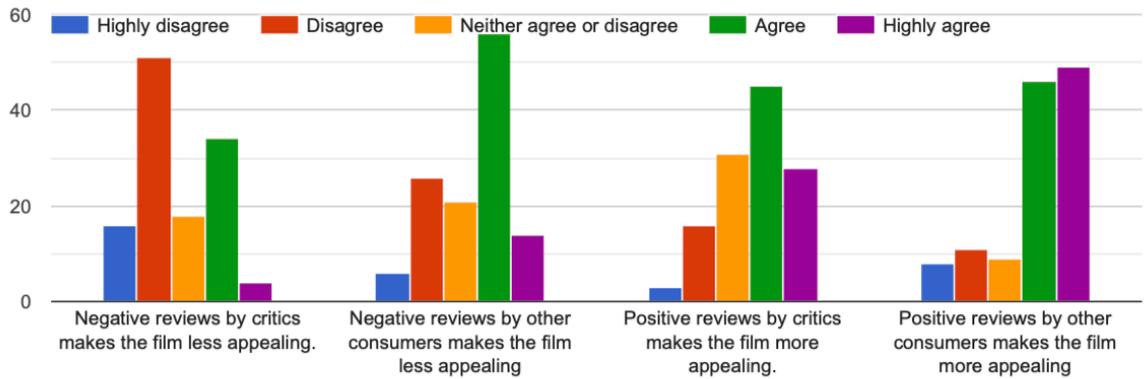


123 vastausta



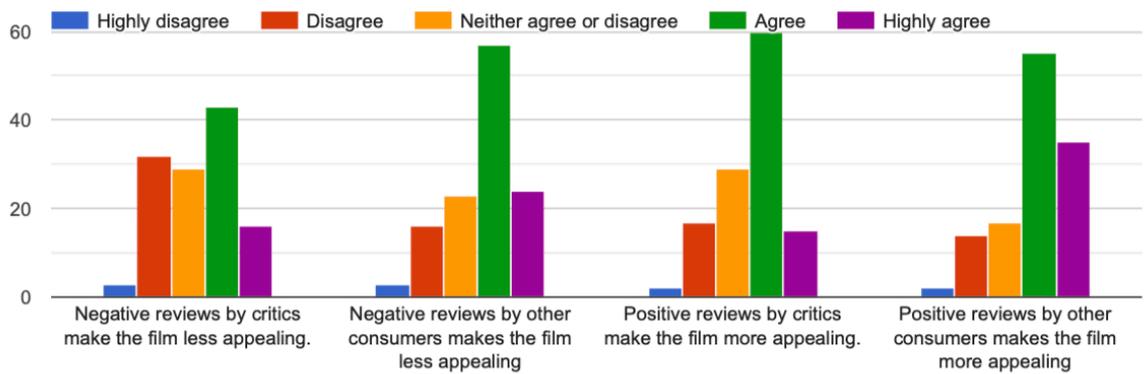
Part 3

10. Consider film A (you have a positive attitude towards the film before seeing it), read the statements and answer how much you agree.

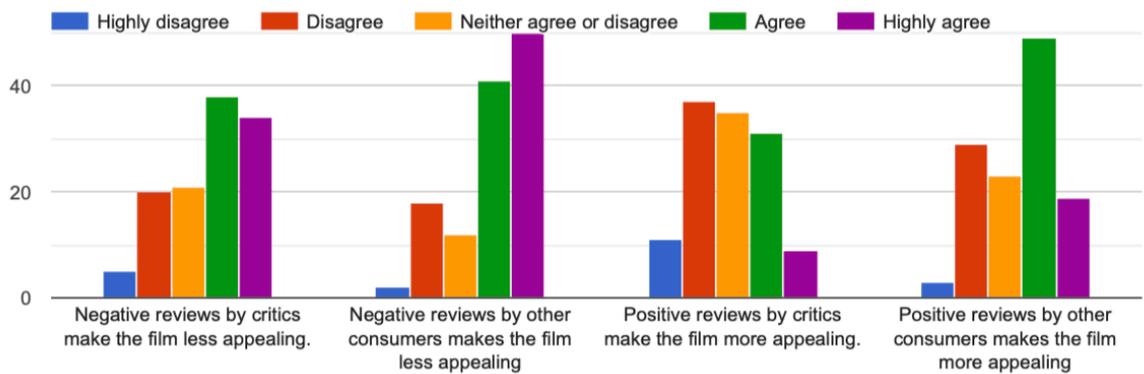


Appendix 2. Continued

11. Consider film B (you have no specific attitude towards the film before seeing it), read the statements and answer how much you agree.



12. Consider film C (you have a negative attitude towards the film before seeing it), read the statements and answer how much you agree.



Appendix 2. Continued

13. Please explain why do you feel or do not feel influenced by reviews from by critics:

Critics focus on art value etc

Because critics usually appreciate different things in a movie than I do.

Reviews by critics often seem pretentious and i've noticed that i often disagree with them, one way or another. In other words, i've learned that i value different things in movies than critics.

Critics tell why film is good or bad in their opinion. If that reason is important to me that influences my choice to see the movie

Kaikilla eri maku

I think that the critics have had their own opinion of the movie and I think that I really have the taste of my own

I don't often like the same things as critics

I feel like these days critics try to get as much attention as they can with their reviews and likely over exaggerated reactions generate more interest towards what they have to say.

Insight from a professional affects me since I want to know what I am spending my money or time on. Also, reading critics might give me another perspective to watch the movie from.

I feel influenced by critic reviews because o often feel about the movie like them

It strengthens the attitude towards the film

Critics' reviews doesn't influence my opinion as much as consumers as often I have disagreed with their opinion after watching the movie.

I am already so old, that I know what kind of movies I like

I usually agree with them

I feel some critics are biased, and do not think their reviews are that meaningful as individual opinions

Critics are often wrong

I often make my own mind about what I like.

I like to build my own review and critique of films and art in general.

I dont feel influenced because I'm not that artistic

Critics might often appreciate other factors than I do. Also a critic is just one individual with their personal taste.

Usually critics dont have any sense of humor

Everyone has different taste in movies. Critics like boring films

They have different interests

I often disagree with them

Critics reviews seem pretentious

Critics have fallen of the grid (are not relatable)

I don't like most "highly praised" movies

Appendix 2. Continued

I only care about my own experience about the film

I feel like film critics have a more sophisticated understanding of films that is not in line with my personal preferences.

Critics look at the movie through a certain lense that i do not find relevant for the average consumer

Critics often review films with specific criteria, and it seems that they do not consider if the film is entertaining, rather they focus on artistic elements which in my opinion does usually not correlate with entertainment value of the film.

I want to experience the film without reviews.

I do not feel Critic's review influences always much because they have a professional view, mine is more emotional

Critic seem to like different type of films and appreciate more the "art"

I do not think that the word of a critic review holds much power over my attitude towards a movie. If anything I've often found myself feeling the complete opposite.

They are suppose to be experts

I often like movies critics don't like and dislike movies they praise.

I do not feel influenced by critic reviews, because I rarely look at them. In addition to not knowing the critics personally

Because of past experiences

I feel like I don't trust my own opinions plus I want to know wether to waste money to a movie ticket/streaming services or not. Sometimes critics are too harsh and I decide to give a movie a chance before criticising it myself. I have more trust on film critics.

Sometimes I do not trust critic reviews because they might be looking into different things in the movies than I am. I mostly want to be entertained and therefore all else becomes less important

They often turn out to be correct to my mind

I don't want to waste my money or time, so I want to be sure that I am not wasting either.

I feel influenced by them because I assume critics have seen a lot of movies and can criticize them without being influenced by other people's opinions or general presumptions. On the other hand I feel that some critics appreciate movies that I think are boring and that's why I do not take their opinions too seriously.

I consider some critic reviews very highly and give them more weight but sometimes if I havent heard of the critic before and disagree with their review it might not influence me at all.

Critics seem to have very specific taste

They are professionals and I usually like well reviewed films.

Watching a movie is an individual experience

Koska kriitikoiden arviot yleensä antavat oikeanlaista suuntaa elokuvan todellisesta tasosta. Pyrin huomioimaan monien eri kriitikoiden arvostelut ja suhteuttamaan ne suuren yleisön arvioihin elokuvasta. Kokemukseni mukaan kriitikoiden ja muun yleisön arviot monesti sulautuvat melko hyvin yhteen, ja näiden pohjalta on hyvä muodostaa käsitys elokuvan tasosta. En ikinä katso elokuvaa katsomatta etukäteen sen saamia arvioita, sillä en halua tuhjata aikaani paskaan. Toki on olemassa myös poikkeustapauksia, joissa oma arvioni elokuvasta on isostikin ristiriidassa muun yleisön ja kriitikoiden arvioiden kanssa.

I think i view a lot of films differently to others and i'm quite simple minded so enjoy simple movies. Usually the movies

Appendix 2. Continued

that receive praise have a lot more complex reviews and might be more serious. I like feel good movies and if i've watched a trailer and it seems good, i'll usually watch it regardless of what people have said about it

Reviews by critics I know or trust can affirm the thoughts I have about the film

I don't trust critic reviews as they sometimes measure different parts and objectives of movies than I believe I do

I think they think differently than i do.

I often like movies that get high reviews and are considered as "high quality" movies.

I read reviews by certain critics as I have noticed to share taste with them.

If both the critic and consumer review is not good, I will not watch the movie. However, if the consumer review is good, but the critic review isn't, I might still watch the movie. In my latest experience, a critics bad review doesn't necessarily mean a bad movie.

i think it is because there is so much to watch and i don't have time to always do my own research and then i have to trust someone else. i know the genre i like and that's why sometimes critics opinions doesn't affect me if genre is not preferred. also artistic films sometimes receive great reviews from critics but a "regular" watcher can't understand the hype.

I prefer viewer reviews

Luen arviot aina vasta nähtyäni leffan. Jos en aio katsoa elokuvaa, luen arvion ensi-ilta viikolla

I don't trust that one persons opinion always matches mine

I feel like the critics often have different opinions compared to me and they way they rate movies don't relate to the way I rate movies.

It is only one persons opinion

I feel that a movie which has received positive reviews from critics is generally good in my opinion. However, if a movie has been reviewed poorly, it is not usually bad in my opinion.

Sometimes they are opinions, not reviews

I watch certain reviewers on youtube and I have to admit their opinions really affect the the feeling I have on a film before watching. Sometimes I prefer not looking up reviews before watching the film to get a non biased experience.

When I was younger, I didn't care about the reviews but nowadays I do. I think many reviews have similar opinions about films as I do.

Most likely if I am not interested of a film critic reviews will not change my mind

I'm not influenced because They tend to focus on either extremely small details that the regular viewer does not understand or their only criteria is how inclusive or lgbt the movie was and if it wasn't, the movie is bad in their opinion. Also i don't believe that they don't have a monetary incentive

Those give indication about the quality of the movie

I'm interested in critic reviews overall so it's just interesting to understand what they have seen in the film.

Kriitikot pitävät yleensä täysin erilaista elokuvista.

I try not to read anything before going.

They are experts

Critics tend to have more range and more weighted opinions than a person who just casually watches films, or who is just a "fan boy", meaning: "Every. Next. Marvel. Movie. Is. A. Masterpiece."

International prizes or filmmakers matter more than opinions.

Appendix 2. Continued

I often believe the certain or specific critic/media more easily than the other consumers but it really depends on the media

They have seen the film and therefore have something to say about it. If the points are good, I can evaluate how much it affects my decision on watching it. Sometimes critics can be bad or biased in some way, I want to keep the freedom of experience to myself and keep space for seeing the things I see.

Critic reviews have quite strong influence for the films/movies. But they quite often far from the mass audience.

It is a subjective matter.

They have a lot of experience of films as art form

When there is a large group of people saying the film was good there is a better chance it actually is worth watching, no matter if they're critics or regular ppl

Different perspective, education

My criteria for a decent movie is significantly lower than the criteria a critic might have

Usually they do that for living. They know what appeals to audience and have developed good taste for movies.

I feel that a movie critic is just one person after all and rarely is it really told what qualifications the movie critique has. Also we may just have different opinions about the movie even though the movie might not be academically or artistically good.

I think that overall critic reviews are too artistic for me. Meaning that they tend to pay attention to different things than I do.

They are employed by respected papers so I trust their word.

Niillä on aina iha ihmeellisiä mielipiteitä joista oon poikkeuksetta erimieltä

En mene elokuvaan kriitikon mindsetillä, meen sinne vaan viihtymään enkä ylianalysoi asioita. Omasta mielestä kriitikot kiinnittää elokuvissa huomiota epärelevantteihin asioihin tällasen perus kuluttajan näkökulmasta.

Arvostelut ei niinkään kiinnosta ja siksi en pidä niitä tärkeinä

If I'm interested in a certain film, then I want to watch it despite the reviews

Kriitikot kiinnittää leffoissa eri asioihin huomioita kuin itse, joten en aina "usko" niiden arvosteluihin, varsinkaan jos kyse negatiivisesta arvostelusta.

Good reviews spark my intrest... but if reviews are bad I can easily lose my intrest.

I dont feel as influenced by critic reviews because critics have more experience and get paid for writing reviews. So they have to watch every aspect of the movie really closely. I dont do that

Based on my experience, the critics and I don't always share the same taste when it comes to films

They often concentrate on criticizing the film based on the wrong things

I do not feel influenced by critic reviews because every individual has their own taste in movies so what a critic thinks doesn't interest me. It also is their job to have an opinion which makes me doubt theirs. I also feel they value different things in movies than I do.

I do have my own opinions. I dont get easily influenced.

I dont

I dont care about them|

I don't usually like what critics like

If i think I don't like a certain film critic is not gonna change that

Critics tend to focus on different things then what i value in a movie. But overwhelmingly positive or negative reviews from multiple sources are often an indicator of the movies quality

Appendix 2. Continued

They are other peoples opinions

Their and my opinion might be different, they are professionals and I am consumer.

Kritiikistä voi usein rivien välistä lukea kritikon omaa maailmankatsomusta ja minkälaisista elokuvista hän pitää. Sen perusteella voin päättää otanko kritiikin tosissani vai en.

Critics often have based opinions about film regarding their social status, current political or social situation or based on a person involved in making of the film.

Their opinions differs from mine most of the times anyway.

If there is a film I want to see, I go to see it regardless of what critics thinks about it

Critics' opinion and review can be based on a different perspective, what you want from the film.

Critics tend to enjoy very different type of films and I find it hard to trust their judgement especially of a film that does not interest me at all

Different taste, I know if I am going to like something or not

I don't see my opinions to be similar as critics so I trust my own evaluation more

Appendix 2. Continued

14. Please explain why do you feel or do not feel influenced by reviews from other consumers:

I feel i have the same taste as majority

Everybody has their own taste in movies, therefore I like to see the movie myself before making conclusions.

Customers aren't writers and they have more obvious bias towards people and franchises which make it harder to evaluate the movie

Tykkään eri genreistä kuin osa kavereista

Well I do think if majority of people my own age like or dislike something it might be the opinion of me as well but I would still make my own opinion of the specific movie

I often like to watch movies with my friends and i know they like the same things

It depends. Sometimes I want to know what other amateurs have said but sometimes I don't feel consumers' opinions are valid.

The review can impact my opinion

I usually find my own opinions similar with other consumers and therefore their opinion about movies influence me

Same answer

I don't always share the opinion

Other consumers are more often correct than critics

I like to learn from the points of my friends when it comes to films

I believe that since there are a lot of consumers that on average they are correct and with masses the bias of individuals is managed.

Other consumers aren't as picky and niche abt films. So i tend to get influenced by their opinions more

Usually not very biased

I often agree with them more

I relate more to consumers' opinions

I only care about my own experience about the film

I feel like average consumers are more in line with my opinions

Completely depends on the person

Highly commended films are usually entertaining with some exceptions such as films with childish writing such as Guardians of the Galaxy

I usually make my own choice and do not get Influenced by other consumers.

Everyone has the own taste in films. Other people's opinion affect me when I can see that they are really speaking from their heart and have a vivid way of speaking about the film

I think I most often have similar opinions with as the average consumer

I think consumer reviews are more honest and fair. Personal opinions are always just that, personal, but I do find them to be more trustworthy.

We often share similar taste

Appendix 2. Continued

I do feel influenced if i dont have a strong positive feeling towards the movie. Just like with everything in life, if many people praise a hairproducts I will probably try it and try to like it

I feel more influenced by reviews by other consumers if I know them personally. I think that is because oftentimes we have a same kind of taste and there is mutual trust.

Mass opinions from consumers usually give more reliable data about the film vs one specific critic. I'm way more influenced by other consumers, though most of the time I get tricked to watch boring movies after seeing a lit of hype from social media. I still have less trust on other consumers.

I am more interested in what other consumers say about a movie than what critics say because other consumers feel more like my peers

Someone similar to my age and preferences tends to influence me

I feel influenced because i specifically seek influence from the reviews to avoid wasting my time. I have found that i often enjoy the films with good reviews more.

I feel influenced from other consumers opinions because I often like movies that are generally though of being good.

Consumers are not biased mostly

What i saidd

Ei merkittävää lisättävää edelliseen vastaukseen.

Some people have terrible taste in films.

I trust others opinion as they propably think likewise

I think I think like they do.

The other consumers I interact with (my friends, for example) like different kind of movies, so I usually don't get influenced by their opinions.

I hate Marvel movies etc. which the General Audience loves. :D

If the consumer review is bad, it generally means that the movie is in fact, very bad.

similar answer to why critics, consumers opinions feel more authentic sometimes

If there are plenty, it often is trustworthy

Kollegoideni mielipiteellä on väliä, kaverini mielipiteellä ei (koska heillä on surkea leffamaku!)

Other consumer can be more like me so I may trust them more. Also I value opinion of ten people more than just ones.

Most of the time the consumers think more a like when it comes to my opinions since they don't think about the movie in a critic way. That's why I feel like I "trust" their reviews more than the critics.

I usually agree with other consumers' opinions on movies, and usually there are more consumer reviews than critic reviews.

Other consumer's oppinnions affect me if the critique/praise comes from mass from lots of sources.

It depends on people. Some people only watch hollywood movies so I don't really care about their opinions to be honest. But I do care about reviews if they were made by people who have good movie taste.

I think consumer mostly evaluate more simple things such as entertainment instead of focusing on the "art"

They dont have monetary incentives and dont care about racial or lgbt motives and such. They look at the same things in a movie as i

I feel other consumers being my close circle (Possibly similar age, interests etc)have more similar opinions about films

Appendix 2. Continued

than critics, and critics can go overboard / value different kinds of aspects of films than I sometimes do

If I'm in doubt, I want to listen others but if I'm sure I want to see the movie, I just don't care what other consumers think.

I listen to people who I respect and who know me

Many people like me

Audience consists too many people. They make their opinions with a feeling and don't care about how good something actually is. "I laughed to Luokkakokous. I enjoyed it, because I find Aku Hirviniemi funny, Sami Hedberg is a comic genius and Jaajo is Äijä."

Normally i don't want to talk a lot about films because i want to experience them without expectations. Also emotion is more clear from other consumers.

I dunno maybe based on experience, difference in taste

Consumers don't necessarily pick up nyances in the same way or do not have the ability to articulate their thoughts too well.

Other consumers often have average opinion from the film/movie that gives an indicative opinion from a film

They share my views often on other things.

It may be that other consumers have not seen movies very broadly and have thin reference level to the film art

When there is a large group of people saying the film was good there is a better chance it actually is worth watching, no matter if they're critics or regular ppl

Can relate more to their reviews

Due to the feeling of having a similiar point of view with just another consumer when watching the movie

Usually my friends, for example, have kinda the same taste as me when it comes to movies or even food. I trust my friends' suggestions.

I tend to follow people who have the same taste in films as me, so I gravitate towards their opinions and I'm rarely dissappointed.

Other consumers are easier to relate to so therefore I tend to believe them more. Whether it is negative or positive reviews

I dont

Vuosien varrella oon vaan huomannut, että samaistun normikuluttajien mielipiteisiin. Ei muuta syytä oo :)

Arvostan esim kavereiden mielipiteitä enemmän

Don't really care other people's opinions

Kavereiden arvosteluihin luottaa enemmän kuin kritikoiden, koska kavereilla yleensä samanlainen leffamaku mikä itselläkin on.

Critics might not always agree with my toughts... so it is good in my opinion to hear what other people, who like similar movies than i do, think about movie beforehand.

As I am one of them, we have a more similar starting point. Most consumers watch movies to enjoy, not to pinpoint every detail

Other consumers I ask from are my friends, whose opinions I trust, since we are alike

They are my peers and will likely have a more down to earth opinion about the film

I feel slightly more influenced by reviews from other consumers than critics because they often are "normal" people who

Appendix 2. Continued

just tell what they feel. Often these people are people I know personally.

I dont

They are more relatable

I feel I can reflect more to their opinions

I usually like the same as other consumers

Same as above, many negative or positive reviews are often a good indicator of the quality.

They are consumers like me.

Opinion of the consumer is often more controlled by emotion rather than sense since the consumer does not have the same burden of knowledge as professionals. Consumer does not have to think beyond their own opinion when making a review about movies or any form of art where professionals always have issues to consider when making a statement.

Other consumers represents opinion of a bigger audience, so it's more reliable to me than opinion of couple of critics.

If there is a film I want to see, I go to see it regardless of what others thinks about it

I find other consumers have more similar opinions with me

Mass audience usually speaks the truth but I still trust my own evaluation the most

I think the audiences usually speak the truth and usually appreciate more simple things so i relate more to them

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RELEASES IN FINLAND
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supervised by Katrin Arvola,

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