CultureCase

The different ways that education and income influence arts attendance

This research was conducted by **Sara Suarez-Fernandez, Juan Prieto-Rodriguez,** and **Maria Jose Perez-Villadoniga** at the **University of Oviedo, Spain**

Summary

This paper disentangles the relationship between income and education in the way that both influence the likelihood of engaging in the arts. Consistent with other research in this area, increases in both education and income were associated with increased levels of attendance at the cinema, live performances and sites of cultural interest. However, ‘although the effect of income is significant, it is much lower than that of education’.

The study used data from the 2006 and 2015 modules of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions in Spain

The survey asked about ‘going to the cinema, attending live performances (concerts, opera, theatre, ballet, dance) and visiting sites of cultural interest (monuments, museums, archaeological sites and galleries)’ and contains a sample of more than 25,000 people in each module. This particular analysis grouped the frequency of attendance at each event into three categories: ‘zero attendance, between one and three times and more than three times in the previous 12 months’.

Education and income had different influences on increasing arts attendance

‘Higher education levels are associated with a greater probability of participating in the three cultural activities, and the magnitude of the effect increases with the education level achieved’, meaning that more educated people are not only more likely to attend, but are also more likely to attend more frequently. By contrast, ‘individuals with higher income are more likely to participate in cultural activities, although at a diminishing rate’.

Cinema was affected differently from more ‘highbrow’ activities

Although having a higher income made people more likely to engage in cultural activities, income alone did not seem to increase individuals’ demand for highbrow activities (like attending live performances and visitng sites of cultural interest).

Keywords

survey **income** **spain** **education**

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