

INTRODUCTION

- Gender differences and stereotypes as a popular research topic (e.g., Hyde, 2016)
- However, not much research addressing gender stereotypes in media preferences compared to actual gender differences
- Wühr, Lange, and Schwarz (2017) conducted such research regarding film genre preferences. They examined women's and men's actual preferences for 17 film genres, as well as the gender stereotypes for those genres. They found that numerous substantial gender differences as well as gender stereotypes exist regarding such preferences and that gender stereotypes for the majority of genres match actual preferences, but overestimate them by a large margin. Thus, they confirmed other findings that gender stereotypes can be correct in that they correspond to actual gender differences (e.g., Jussim, Cain, Crawford, Harber, & Cohen, 2009), even though overestimations may occur (Halpern, Straight, & Stephenson, 2011).
- Comparable research on digital games yielded similar results (Lange, Wühr, & Schwarz, 2021).
- We investigated how generalizable the results by Wühr et al. (2017) are to other media phenomena and chose TV series preferences: What TV genre preferences do women and men have? And what do people think women's and men's TV genre preferences are?

METHOD

Similar to Wühr et al. (2017; see also Lange et al., 2021), we conducted a two-part study (11-point scales each):

- Study 1: women's and men's actual preferences for 17 TV series genres ($N=184$; w: 105; age $M=27.1$)
- Study 2: $N = 180$ participants (w: 100; age $M=27.63$) were asked whether each of the same genres was more preferred by women or men
- Gender differences and stereotypes: evaluated and compared with each other to determine the correctness of the stereotypes

RESULTS

Preferences (see Fig. 1):

- genres more preferred by women (Cohen's d): romance (1.32), musical (0.83), family (0.65), fantasy (0.34), historical (0.33), mystery (0.29), drama (0.22)
- genres more preferred by men (d): action (-0.75), war (-0.65), western (-0.65), science fiction (-0.59), adventure (-0.48), animation (-0.41)

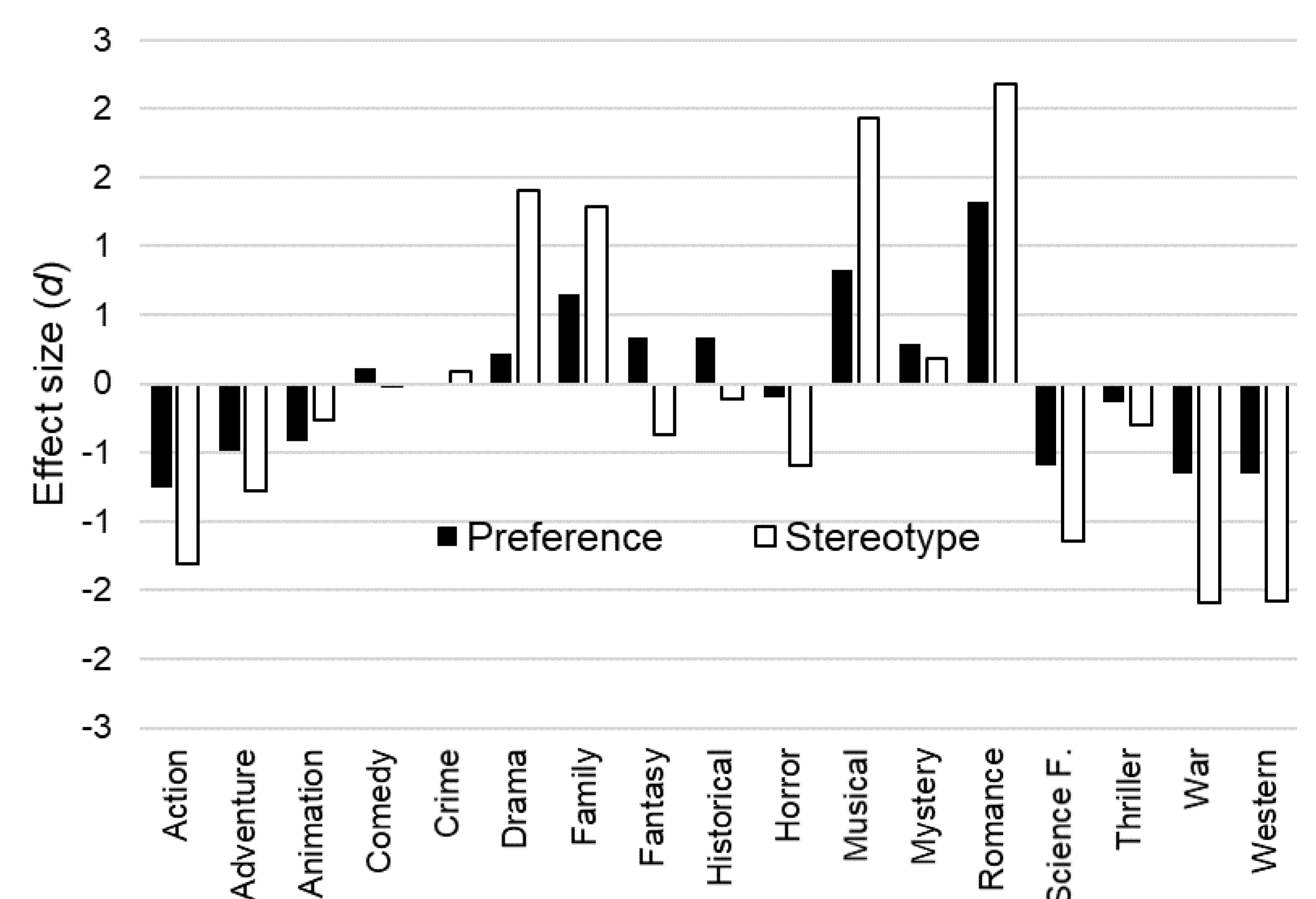
Gender stereotypes (see Fig. 1):

- genres assumed to be favored more by women (d): romance (2.18), musical (1.93), drama (1.41), family (1.29)
- genres assumed to be favored more by men: war (-1.59), western (-1.58), action (-1.30), science fiction (-1.15), adventure (-0.78), horror (-0.59), fantasy (-0.37), thriller (-0.30), animation (-0.26)

Stereotype accuracy (cf. Fig. 1):

- 13 stereotypes matched the real preferences in terms of direction
 - strong overestimation for 5 genres ($d > 0.8$), moderate o. for 3 ($d > 0.5$), slight o. for 2 ($d > 0.2$); relative correct estimation only for 3 genres ($d < 0.2$)
- for 4 genres, direction of stereotype did not match that of the true difference

Figure 1. Comparison between true and assumed gender differences in TV genre preferences.



Note. Negative values indicate a larger (assumed) male preference.

DISCUSSION

- Our results are in line with the corresponding ones on movies (Wühr et al., 2017) as well as on digital games (Lange et al., 2021).
- They also fit with the literature on gender stereotype accuracy: Gender stereotypes are not entirely wrong, although they often overestimate (and sometimes even underestimate) the actual gender differences by a relatively large margin (see Halpern et al., 2011)
- Among other things, our results could help to reduce media-related gender stereotypes, as they show that true gender differences are sometimes substantially smaller than the respective stereotype assumes.

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