

CULTURAL INDICATORS OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING IN MEXICO, SPAIN AND GERMANY: A PROPOSAL FOR CONSTRUCTION THROUGH FEEDBACK NETWORKS

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Abstract

The present article discusses the main proposals for constructing cultural indicators in Mexico, Spain and Germany, and contrasts them to the indicators used for gathering cultural statistics. It became clear that individual indicators of development and wellbeing have not been developed, or at least not at a level plausible for their application, though two decades have passed since Pattanaik proposed them for the area of culture. This paper offers a distinct development proposal for addressing this problem, one that is more feasible for the entities responsible for culture in their territories, that has the capacity to measure the impact of the cultural actions implemented on individuals, and that has a higher probability of obtaining results that will allow the analysis and evaluation of such actions.

Keywords: public cultural policies, cultural indicators, wellbeing, human development.

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Introduction

Measuring cultural indicators using a utilitarian approach does not provide sufficient elements to understand the effects that cultural actions exert upon the people they target. Their effects on awareness, self-esteem, social interaction, improving cognitive and manual abilities, and developing potentialities are not even visible in such a vision. Nonetheless, this is the predominant focus in the field of cultural statistics in most –if not all– countries. If private and government institutions really wish to determine the effects of cultural actions, a distinct paradigm must be found. The proposal presented herein is based on theories of wellbeing and development that set out from Amartya Sen’s Quality of Life approach and other currents of thought on wellness.

The first part of the paper establishes variables based on the most current visions of cultural indicators. After that, we analyze cultural statistics from three countries –Mexico, Germany and Spain– to contrast their visions and identify the indicators of individual wellbeing and development that are excluded from the statistics they consider. Finally, an alternate measurement strategy is proposed that will allow cultural institutions to evaluate their actions using the theories proposed by Sen and Pattanaik.

1. Culture and its complexity

Few topics today are as complex as that of public cultural policies, due to the fact that their basic component –culture– is a representation abstracted from the objects of knowledge that encompass it and assume it to be a totality that contains a multitude of diverse and interdependent components in continuous interaction that enter and exit the concept at amazing speeds, depending on the paradigms of the present in which it is studied.

When one wishes to relate a topic like this to some other complex system, such as public policies, it entails making entities of public administration interact in a given territory whose population, clearly, is constructed in a collective, multidimensional and integral manner by elements that are in constant interaction. This results in an exponential increase of the complexity involved in analyzing culture itself. If this complexity is expressed in such characteristics as the plurality of dimensions, uncertainty, unpredictability, conflict, ambivalence, and multiple spaces and times (Cuervo, 2010) and if, moreover, one sets out from the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture’s Universal Declaration –the most widely-accepted conception of this subject– which declares that “culture must be considered the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and affective traits that characterize a society or a social group and that encompasses, in addition to the arts

and letters, lifestyles, ways of co-existing, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO, 2001), then it becomes possible to appreciate, from the outset, the dimensions of the monumental task that public cultural entities face in their labors.

2. Cultural indicators and statistics: evading the complex

Salvador Carrasco (1999), argues that three schools have proposed distinct visions of how to classify cultural indicators. The first, attributed to the Swede Rosengren, holds that cultural indicators measure ideas and values, especially basic ones about what is good or bad. As a result, his methodological approach enumerates three types of analysis: of satisfaction, of individuals’ values, and of individuals’ actions. A second school, according to Carrasco, focuses exclusively on values, using surveys to show the differences in value judgments in a specific nation, in different periods, or in different countries. Currently, Geert Hostede (2017) in Finland has developed an extremely extensive study following this school of thought. The third focus, finally, studies cultural indicators within the process that runs from the creation to the consumption of cultural goods and services. According to Carrasco, this approach is more interested in the process of producing, disseminating and consuming cultural goods and services than in values or content analysis.

The development of the visions generated by these schools has resulted in diverse constructions of cultural indicators. The ones most widely-used today, according to Carrasco (1999), Bonet (2005), Fernández (2012), Planas and Soler (2012), Serrano et al. (2014) and the UNESCO (2014) are as follows:

Table 1. Cultural Indicators

Variable	Explanation
Economic development	the capacity of cultural actions to generate wealth that will produce and maintain the economic and social wellbeing of a certain territory
Personal development and wellbeing	the capacity to improve the awareness and identity of individuals so they can develop abilities and potentialities that will lead to improvements in their quality of life

Cultural heritage	the cultural legacy of a community's past, conserved into the present and transmitted to current and future generations
Communication	access to available cultural knowledge, and the timely knowledge by society of existing cultural events
Education	the level of cultural training of educators, the number of hours devoted to teaching in the field of culture, and the percentage of people with access to such education
Governance	the normative, political and institutional framework of culture in a given territory
Social participation	intervention by citizens in decision-making that impacts the cultural development of their communities
Freedom and cultural rights	the degree to which all people enjoy the same cultural freedom and rights before society and State

*Elaborated by the authors

The governments of UN member countries tend to elaborate cultural statistics based on the indicators issued by the UNESCO, but the adaptations made during their application are simplified even more by the complexity they face when measuring the more unintelligible parameters of the aforementioned proposals. The following chart illustrates this situation using the cases of Spain and Germany (two countries that conduct annual surveys on cultural statistics) and Mexico, which has only carried out one or two surveys of its indicators in this century.

Cultural indicators	Mexico	Spain	Germany
Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation of total current trimestral expenditures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satellite count of culture in Spain (GNP) • Employment in the cultural field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public spending on culture in Germany by years and business groups

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation of expenditures on cultural and recreational goods and services • Average trimestral expenditure on cultural and recreational goods and services by household • Expenditure on cultural and recreational goods and services as a percentage of total current expenditures per decile of income • Average trimestral expenditures on cultural and recreational goods and services by household and size of locality • Average trimestral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household expenditures in the cultural field • Enterprises in the cultural field, exploitation of the Central Directory of enterprises • Cultural tourism • External commerce in the cultural field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public spending on culture in Germany by years, business groups, and cultural spaces • Public spending on culture by states, years, and cultural areas
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	expenditures on cultural and recreational goods and services by decile of household income		
Development and personal wellbeing	Does not exist	Does not exist	Does not exist
Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assets inscribed in UNESCO's List of World Heritage sites Map of archeological zones open to the public List of archeological zones open to the public Population of indigenous language-speakers by state Indigenous languages by number of speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics on cinematography: productions, exhibitions, distribution, and promotion Archival statistics Statistics on museums and museum collections Statistics on musical editions in Spain listed in the ISMN Statistics on books published, with ISBN Statistics on bullfighting Statistical exploitation of the database on the protection of Historical Spanish Heritage sites 	<p>Number of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Castles and castle museums Art museums Natural history museums Heritage and national patrimony museums Special historical museums Historical and archeological museums Natural and technical museums Other museum installations Federal archives Political archives of the federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs

		<p>(movable and immovable properties)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical exploitation of databases on music and dance resources (entities, professionals and premieres) • Exploitation of databases on scenic arts resources • Statistical exploitation of intellectual property rights data by management entities • Statistical exploitation of the intellectual property registry • Statistics on editorial production • Statistics on libraries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secret archives on the status of Prussian Cultural Heritage • Other national archives • Movies produced by type
Communicati on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics on printed media, movies, radio, television and new technologies • Time spent watching television • Time spent listening to the radio 		<p>Diffusion time of television broadcasts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informative • Fiction (without kids' shows) • entertainment • sports • kids' shows • presentation of program • publicity • transferences

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concerts and theatrical performances • public broadcast educational shows • sponsorship <p>Broadcasting time of national radio transmissions</p>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average books read by school level • Time spent reading (in hours) • Percentage of the population that reads such materials • Average books read by age group • Average books read by socioeconomic strata • Source of publications read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching in the cultural field, exploitation of statistics on non-university and university teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in national or state music schools: total and by age group
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public libraries in operations per state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics on financing for, and public spending on, culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of public libraries • Number of scientific libraries

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of inhabitants per library by state • Volumes in operations in libraries by state • Distribution of cultural houses and centers by state • Number of inhabitants per cultural houses and centers by state • Distribution of museums by state • Number of inhabitants per museum by state • Distribution of theaters by state • Number of inhabitants per theater by state • Distribution of libraries and selling points by state • Number of inhabitants per libraries and 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of book loans and renewals
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	selling points by state		
Social participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population by age and gender that declares going to movies, theater, parties or reunions • Consultations in libraries by state • Average hours used for culture and entertainment by school level • Percentage of the population that goes to cultural venues • Percentage of the population that uses audiovisual media • Average hours per week used for culture and entertainment by age group • Visitors to INAH museums (thousands) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys of cultural habits and practices in Spain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population that goes to movies, theater • Population that goes to museums • Population that goes to public theaters • Population that goes to private theaters • Population by age and gender that declares that they go to movies or theater

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors to archeological zones by state (thousands) • Archeological zones with highest flow • INAH museums with highest flow • INBA museums with highest flow 		
Freedom and cultural rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of time in activities by gender • Average hours per week used for culture and entertainment by gender • Population by age and gender that declares reading books, magazines or newspapers unrelated to school or work 	Not tabulated for the cultural field	Not tabulated for the cultural field

*Elaborated by the authors based on data from: *Secretaría de Cultura*, Mexico (2017), *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte*, Spain (2017) and *DStatis Statistisches Bundesamt*, Germany (2017)

It is noteworthy that personal development and wellbeing is not one of the variables used by UNESCO in its normative instruments, even though most of the authors cited previously consider it an important indicator. The fact that the UNESCO does not contemplate it seems to be reflected in the statistics on culture gathered worldwide, where this concept does not appear.

A strict analysis reveals that the cultural statistics that countries use for the field of culture today are limited to the following:

- a catalog of cultural infrastructure and the tangible and intangible cultural goods subscribed to a territory
- quantitative statistics on the population's access to cultural production in a given territory
- quantitative statistics on the economic impact of culture in a given territory

These are the indicators and statistics that the entities responsible for culture have available for designing and evaluating their work. In the case of Spain:

Proposing and carrying out government policies for educational matters, vocational training and universities corresponds to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, as do promoting, protecting and disseminating Spain's historical heritage, state museums and arts, books, reading and literary creation, cinematographic and audiovisual activities and books and state libraries, promoting and disseminating Spanish culture, promoting and protecting bullfighting, and fomenting actions for cultural cooperation and, in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, [promoting] international relationships related to culture, and proposing and conducting government policies in the area of sports (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2017).

Since in Mexico these attributions are assigned more rigidly to certain sectors, their number is considerably reduced: "The Secretariat of Culture is the institution in charge of preserving integrally the culture heritage of the Nation in its diverse artistic and cultural manifestations, as well as stimulating programs oriented to their creation, development and dissemination. Conaculta's activities aim towards maintaining a professional commitment that benefits all of Mexican society by promoting and disseminating all things in the culture and artistic sector" (Secretaría de Cultura , 2017).

This information indicates that the responsibilities and, therefore, statistical measurements will focus on the concept of coverage; that is, the number of attendees and cultural offers by territory, as well as on the tangible and intangible cultural heritage –public or private– that

those territories possess. Also, the support that culture provides to economic development will be defined, though it is likely that other governmental and economic areas better suited for this exist.

Given that based on empirical argumentation, individual development and wellbeing are the true essence of the activities that cultural entities must take into account in direct relation to all decisions involving the interaction between culture in general and the population that is targeted to benefit from it, it is important to note that the variable personal development and wellbeing is conspicuously absent from all these statistical measures in the countries analyzed. In contrast, the factor of economic development is a constant in all of them.

As the Nobel Prize in Economics Amartya Sen, has observed: “An ordering of preference is assigned to [persons], and when necessary it is assumed that this ordering reflects their interests, represents their wellbeing, summarizes their idea of what should be done, and describes their choices. (...) In reality, the purely economic man is almost a mentally-retarded individual from a social standpoint. Economic theory has devoted much time to this rational fool ensconced in the commodity of his unique ordering of preferences for all purposes” (Sen, 1986).

Hence, a change of paradigm is required, but this change entails a level of complexity –in terms of both analysis and implementation– that surpasses any existing cultural instance due to the infinite multitude of open fronts where they converge. To understand the challenge that cultural instances face, suffice to answer these more immediate questions that arise from the obligation to carry out cultural actions:

- What is the area of action of a public cultural agency, be it a secretariat, council, ministry, department, agency or institution?
- Must it ensure the correct development of everything indicated by the UNESCO, if its definition is accepted as valid?
- Must it focus on the wellbeing and development of people from their own internal perspective?
- Must it establish guidelines to foster the cultural development of a territory, or must it prevent other forces from intervening so that the culture of a given territory develops in the most natural way possible?
- If cultural components foreign to the culture of the territory implement processes of cultural modification, should they be encouraged... ignored... repelled?

- Is it feasible to define and identify negative patterns in the culture of a territory, and is it licit to try to reverse their effects?

Within these parameters, any action –or non-action– could prove to be valid. Thus, cultural institutions are forced to sustain themselves on two basic premises: to perform all the activities that institutions of this kind have done traditionally in both their own territory and similar ones; and, with a little luck, achieve minor modifications hoping to inconvenience people as little as possible during the process, or definitively remain static, overwhelmed by the potentiality of what is possible.

In reality, neither option is acceptable. If we are not sure of the effects that the actions exerted have in the present, why should they continue to be carried out? But if the impact of carrying on the actions that are generally taken for granted is unknown, then it is not admissible to abandon them, for this will create inertia. This obliges us to look for a third option.

3. Personal development and wellbeing: an ignored cultural measure

Culture is a very difficult topic to analyze. No conclusive definition exists because no author has yet been able to present a meaning capable of achieving a consensus. How are we to measure something if no one knows for sure what it is? There are anthropological visions like those of Lévi-Strauss, compiled versions like UNESCO's, historical versions such as Kluckhohn's (1943), super-organic versions like Kroeber's (1952), instrumental versions like Malinowsky's (1931), those that oppose what is known as high culture, like Grimson's (2011), symbolic versions like Thompson's (2017) and, finally, spiritual versions like Schwanits' (2016). On this topic, Yepes and Aranguren state that culture, therefore,

means learning and possessing what is learned, to have been educated, to have knowledge, interior wealth, [an] intimate world. The richer this world is, the more cultured is one, with more things to say. This reveals that the origin of any culture is the affective, discursive and creative nucleus of the person, his deep intimacy, because it is in memory that the knowledge learned and affections lived are saved, a theoretical and practical wisdom that grows towards the interior, where it is cultivated so that, later on, it can emerge into the exterior (2003).

In this definition, one glimpses the multitude of indicators required to define culture: creativity, discourse, affection, intimacy, knowledge and wisdom, to mention just a few. Such indicators can be intimidating due to their sketchy definition and potential extension. And this is only one definition of culture. It is hardly surprising, then, that when the decision is

taken to construct a cultural indicator, personal development and wellbeing are intrinsically accepted in the results of any cultural action. As a result, it becomes clear that cultural policies have been dominated from the first by two main visions: cultural buonismo, and the economic utilitarianism of culture. Cultural buonismo is a posture which simply envisions that all things cultural are good and, therefore, do not need to be evaluated, judged or questioned. The utilitarian vision occupies the other extreme, for it holds that the only purpose of culture is to generate revenue that supports the economic development of a region and, as a result—at least according to this perspective—the personal development of each inhabitant of said region.

A well-meaning (buonista) approach impedes identifying the real effects of each cultural intervention, for this focus makes it impossible to determine whether a particular action worsens or improves an attitude, vision or important value within a culture. Any cultural action foreign to a culture has the potential to modify that culture, but if it does not, then what would a government's objective be in realizing such an action? If all public policies are "governmental courses of action or inaction in response to public problems" (Kraft & Furlong, 2007), then what should be the principle for undertaking a cultural action? Analyses of the cultural policies currently applied in the world assume that culture is good and that all cultural activity is positive. While this may well be the case, it is simply impossible to know because we do not understand the nature of the problem to be resolved; therefore, the result cannot be evaluated because it is an unknown.

In the utilitarian vision the opposite happens; that is, all cultural action responds to an economic problem the analysis, achievement and evaluation of which are all perfectly documented, but only as long as exclusively economic impacts are measured. It is assumed that positive cultural actions take place for the human development of inhabitants, when the reality is that its actions are distracted from resolving cultural problems, since these are not analyzed as such and so lead back to the same situation: economic development is always positive, and the cultural interventions performed cannot be judged outside of these terms.

However, from a standpoint of wellbeing and development, human welfare is directly related to the concept of quality of life. This concept must never be confused with terms like 'level', 'conditions' or 'standard of living', for these emerge from the utilitarian vision, not from a wider perspective comparable to the one presented by Sen (1996), where wellbeing refers to a person's achievements and how well she/he really is. Thus, this approach attains a higher vision than the economic focus, where the utilitarian paradigm loses strength because it is unable to satisfy the non-economic needs of human beings.

Prasanta Pattanaik, meanwhile, examined certain conceptual issues related to the elaboration of cultural indicators of human development based on Sen's work. They are applicable to human wellbeing and refer to the intellectual, aesthetic, social and political activities of individuals. Sen calls these "functions", "acts", or "ways of being". (Pattanaik, 1999). Setting out from this vision it becomes possible to glimpse a more adequate process of analysis than those usually used to evaluate public cultural policies. Pattanaik proposes a relatively limited number of functions that are deemed essential, and which can be analyzed using the following indicators:

1. "Physical functions: life expectancy; proper nutrition; protection from the elements; absence of disease.
2. Political and social functions: personal security (especially with respect to invasive actions by the State and other entities); participation in community and political life; immunity from discrimination by race, gender, age or sexual preference; capacity to live without being ashamed of one's position in society.
3. Intellectual and aesthetic functions; intellectual capacity to address life problems; intellectual realization by contributing to human knowledge; aesthetic realization through the expression of creative faculties or participation in aesthetic events." (Pattanaik, 1999)

Comparing this approach to the cultural indicators used in the countries analyzed allows us to affirm that the point involving physical functions can be resolved through actions that fall in the rubric of economic development proposed by the UNESCO, while the aspect of political and social functions is reinforced through government activities, social participation, freedom and cultural rights. However, nations seek to address the intellectual and aesthetic functions through education and the transmission of the universal and regional cultural heritage. While this is not incorrect, what it actually measures is the action, not the result, so we cannot know whether the action achieved any objectives in relation to those functions.

4. Cultural analysis: from the complex to the simple.

Logic holds that measuring the effects of cultural policies requires before-and-after analyses in the society to determine the real effects of such actions. The problem is that analyses of this kind have an infinite number measurable variables due to the transversal impact of culture on everything that human beings live and handle. Limiting the boundaries of diagnosis in the face of seemingly infinite variables demands setting out from finite variables and achieving

their effective limitation in order to maintain control over the indicators to be applied. Based on Sen's project, Pattanaik deduced the functions that must be delimited, but restricted himself to providing only a few possible suggestions for indicators.

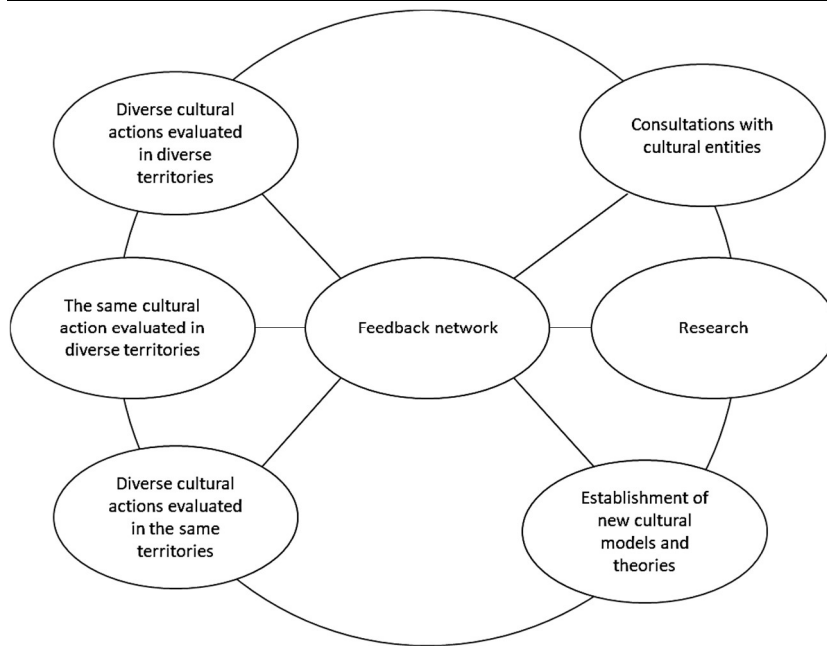
The present essay proposes avoiding general-to-specific cultural analyses, since the extension and depth of the variables in a model with the magnitude and complexity required to analyze culture seem infinite. But inverting this order of analysis makes provides a way to avoid general analyses of culture and so focus exclusively on the effects that actions exert on individuals. In this way, it becomes feasible to construct a process of analysis. This process will examine actions at the conclusion of their application stage and measure the impact using ad hoc indicators. If these indicators are adequate, then it will be possible to measure the level of wellbeing and development attained through a certain cultural action implemented by the entity in charge of doing so in a defined territory. This, in turn, will allow the evaluation and redesign of cultural policies, thus enhancing the utilization of the entity's resources, which are rarely abundant.

5. Constructing a database of experiences by territory

This is the final stage of the process, one that entails a cultural feedback network that a specific entity can initiate with multiple exercises registered in an extensive design. The objective is to compile the experiences and results of the specific activities applied, detect whether patterns exist and if some results can be generalized. This should lead to the development of a more reliable process for applying the resources at a lower global cost.

The process can begin in diverse ways, depending on the capacity of the public policy entrusted with coordinating this effort: it can start from its most simple form, in one entity in charge of the public cultural policy of a given territory, by evaluating a series of cultural actions; for example, all the expositions and concerts organized during a certain year and their effects on people in terms of improving their personal development and wellbeing. Once the information is obtained it is archived in a database, along with the operative data and program costs. This information is made available online to be accessed by other cultural entities and interested researchers. This entity then conducts continuous re-testing in specific periods in order to effectively enlarge that database.

Cultural Feedback Network



Designed and elaborated by the authors.

As more entities participate and their activities and territories become more diverse, it will become possible to collect patterns that allow us to better understand cultural impacts on people's development and wellbeing. We predict that such networks will have the capacity to obtain, at least, the following information:

- the effective benefits of the cultural activities for development and wellbeing
- the real impact of the benefits introduced
- differences or similarities in the level of benefits that accrue to different territories
- a database showing the actions with the highest impact per unit of investment
- a database showing the actions with the lowest impact per unit of investment, and
- changes in the level of benefits of people's development and wellbeing, depending on the territory where said cultural actions are implemented

This information will allow us to obtain statistical data pertinent to the medium or long term in a relatively short period of time, while also managing to avoid the complexity of a global analysis of cultural processes, yet still obtain sufficient indicators to generate statistical analyses of wellbeing and development that maintain the inertia of the entire process of analysis.

Likewise, it will allow public cultural entities –participants or not– to obtain more information on the potential impact of certain actions. These will be few at the beginning of the construction of the database of the information network, but will increase over time as

new and more complex cultural proposals are integrated. They should be available under open access to provide researchers with the opportunity to understand how they should be used, the costs involved, and how they can be made more efficient and economical and generate greater benefits for final users.

Conclusion

Given the magnitude of the analysis and process of creating cultural statistics for evaluating the impact of cultural actions on a targeted population, the entities that measure cultural impact have generally opted to examine more tangible indicators, which are easier to measure; for instance, the number of museums, the number of people who go to concerts, how many movies are made, how many books are published, the number of plays presented, or the proportion of time devoted annually to disseminating domestic fictional television programs. However, the statistic that matters most –since all others are contingent upon it– is the only one that is absent from any measurement; namely, the impact of all this activity and cultural infrastructure on people; more specifically, on their development and wellbeing.

If culture is understood from the viewpoint of public policies as a tool that contributes to the development of interior wealth, of people's creative, discursive and affective abilities, and of the capacity for theoretical and practical wisdom of human beings, then it will be understood that evaluating it using the UNESCO's indicators means assessing only the administrative effects, while setting aside the human ones, unless it is simply assumed that all cultural actions implemented provoke such effects.

But *assuming* is not the same as *knowing*. It is possible that those artistic representations, diploma courses and expositions trigger effects of cultural development, but the effect of each action, its utility, or its value-benefit costs will remain unknown. Cultural entities are subject to the assumption that all culture is good, so spending on it –whether capriciously or more systematically– will have pretty much the same effect, since we do not know the effects of any such actions on the target population.

In another vein, using culture for economic development –not a negative action, but a severely limiting one– condemns cultural actions to renounce their real vocation, which is to serve as satisfiers of the deepest human needs and developers of potentially important skills for human beings that foster their positive participation in the search for a society that is richer in all aspects.

Thus, re-focusing analysis on the real vocation of culture becomes essential, for its usefulness is much too great to be ignored. The paradigm for conducting such analyses was illustrated

in the last century by combining the work of Amartya Sen and Prasanta Pattanaik, thanks to the latter's interpretation of the former's writings, which propelled the creation and development of cultural indicators. The problem lies in the fact that because culture is difficult to define, its general variables tend to elude analysis, precisely due to the complexity of the model. A general-to-specific approach is overwhelming and has ineluctably resisted the efforts of many researchers. Pattanaik himself only outlined some attempts at analysis based on the creation of cultural indicators, but went no further.

It is on this basis that our research proposes an approach contrary to those that have been tested to date. As mentioned above, those efforts have been affected by the complexity of the information that must be gathered, organized and interpreted. Instead of dealing with such an extremely complex model, we propose analyzing actions from the specific-to the-general. Using this strategy, the analysis of each action falls within the capacity of some cultural entity –regardless of the size of the territory or budget– to analyze it. This provides a decision-making and evaluative tool for the cultural activities required.

When employed by a public entity, the capacity of this tool, on its own, would be limited to one territory. It would provide a tool for assessing existing programs in the short or medium term and so determine each one's viability and the level of the investment that should be applied to each action in order to maximize its positive impact on the cultural entity's target population. In addition, if applied simultaneously to various entities in different territories it would generate a multiplier effect on the information that could produce sufficient data for more complex research, and make it possible to obtain valuable cultural information.

Clearly, this is a limited focus whose results will depend on the magnitude, constancy and homologation of the information that is integrated in the network. It could take years for enough data to be obtained to really produce a difference in current cultural research, but even so, this tool is offered as an option to the inertia that paralyzes the study of the effects of cultural actions implemented in the world, whose most important variable has never been adequately evaluated; namely, their effect on the development and wellbeing of target populations.

INDICADORES CULTURAIS DE DESENVOLVIMENTO PESSOAL E BEM-ESTAR NO MÉXICO, ESPANHA E ALEMANHA: UMA PROPOSTA DE CONSTRUÇÃO ATRAVÉS DE REDES DE FEEDBACK

Resumo O presente artigo discute as principais propostas para a construção de indicadores culturais no México, Espanha e Alemanha e as compara aos indicadores utilizados para a coleta de estatísticas culturais. Ficou claro que indicadores individuais de desenvolvimento e bem-estar não foram desenvolvidos, ou pelo menos não em um nível plausível para sua aplicação, embora duas décadas se passaram desde que Pattanaik os propôs para a área da cultura. Este artigo oferece uma proposta de desenvolvimento distinta para abordar esse problema, mais viável para as entidades responsáveis pela cultura em seus territórios, com capacidade de mensurar o impacto das ações culturais implementadas nos indivíduos e com maior probabilidade de obtenção de resultados que permitam a análise e avaliação de tais ações.

Palavras-chave: políticas culturais públicas, indicadores culturais, bem-estar, desenvolvimento humano

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