MULTI-LEVEL PARTNERSHIP IN CULTURAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING: A CASE STUDY FROM BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at analyzing the experience of the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* in Brazil, organized by the Brazilian Ministry of Culture (MinC) in partnership with Itaú Cultural Institute and the Social Service of the Industries (SESI), and implemented by the Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV). Through a theoretical and a field-based approach, the paper examines this multi-level institutional partnership by focusing on the Program's online training modules for cultural management. This case study concludes that the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* provides insights to overcome some of the current challenges to cultural policies and cultural management in Brazil. By bringing together different stakeholders, the Program enabled each institution to use its own expertise to elaborate and implement a cultural policy. Particularly, the Program's online module facilitated a democratic selection of participants and prepared them to search for multifaceted solutions to their daily tasks as cultural managers.

multi-level partnership; cultural policies; cultural management; online training

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims at analyzing the experience of the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* in Brazil, organized by the Brazilian Ministry of Culture (MinC) in partnership with Itaú Cultural Institute[1] and the Social Service of the Industries (SESI)[2], and implemented by Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV)[3]. The Program encompassed face-to-face workshops in all Brazilian regions, as well as online training modules. This paper examines this multi-level institutional partnership by focusing on the Program's online training modules for cultural management.

1 The Itau Cultural Institute aims at researching, mapping, stimulating and disseminating Brazilian artistic and intellectual manifestations inland and abroad. The Institute's mission consists in broadening the access to culture and promoting social participation by understanding cultural practices and producing content about Brazilian arts.

2 The Social Service of Industries (SESI) is an institution affiliated to the enterprises that aims at enhancing the quality and the level of education in Brazilian society. It also supports creating safe and healthy work environments to the Brazilian worker. SESI has 1.218 units that maintain a network of schools, libraries, and cultural centers in Brazil.

3 The Getulio Vargas Foundation is an independent organization aiming at producing and transmitting ideas, data and information in the field of Social Sciences and correlated areas through graduate, undergraduate and specialization courses, research and consulkting. It is also engaged in the conservation and systematization of information, in order to contribute to the Brazilian socioeconomic development and its insertion in the international scenario.

Three research questions guide this paper: Why was the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* in Brazil conceptualized in a multi-level partnership? Which role did an online training module play in the context of this Program? What were the lessons learnt after the implementation of the online training module for cultural management?

Methodologically, this case study presents a theoretical approach about the relationship between cultural policies and development, as well as about the role played by cultural managers in this context. From a field-based approach, it discusses the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* in Brazil.

As for a theoretical approach, this paper underlines the deficiencies of development models that were mainly focused on economic criteria and the need to strengthen other aspects of social life to encourage sustainable development. Among these aspects, culture is supposed to play a crucial role. In addition, this session presents the pertinence of cultural management as an area responsible to promote and protect culture in decision-making arenas. In other words, this paper stresses the importance of cultural managers to guarantee that culture plays its role per se, finding its aim in itself. Curiously, in order to avoid that culture becomes subsumed to market-oriented approaches or captured by biased aims from high-level decision makers, it is the task of cultural managers to speak in the name of culture in bureaucratic environments. In order to achieve this aim, cultural managers must learn the language of bureaucracy. The theoretical approach of this paper deals with these challenges.

From a field-based approach, the authors investigate the experience of the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* under the light of the presented theoretical perspective. This paper uses a case study not only to address the current challenges of cultural management, but also to contextualize these challenges in the new formats of cooperation among different actors. In this case, it explores the particular cooperation between government and civil society organizations, namely the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and Getulio Vargas Foundation, to promote change in the cultural sector[4].

THEORETICAL APPROACH

In the last decades, the deficiencies of development models that were mainly focused on economic criteria were made visible. Particularly in Latin American countries, the effects of the Washington Consensus compromised social achievements, raised inequalities and put minority groups under risk. As a counter effect, other aspects of social life were revalorized, and the belief on their integral and harmonic development was emphasized.

Thus, the idea of culture is important per se and not necessarily a subsumed element of the economic development has evolved in contemporary society. If culture, in its anthropological meaning, is a system of thoughts, values, habits and beliefs of a determined group, it also builds specific conceptions of life and the world; it also uses its symbols to express its own system and the products that derive from it. In doing so, culture is an essential parameter to apply any criteria of governance and governability.

From this perspective, culture is fundamental to foster sustainable development. Nevertheless, the idea of sustainable development must also be contextualized in the transformations of the State's role per se. New approaches for the public sphere have been required to formalize the participation of stakeholders engaged in the development process. The relationship between States, think-tanks, business enterprises, civil society organizations (CSOs) and individuals led to new interaction patterns among these actors, enabling multi-level cooperation, and challenging the means of designing public policies and fostering development; challenging, in fact, the concepts of public policy and development themselves (Peci and Figale, 2009). This has also strongly impacted the way that cultural policies have been elaborated, implemented or evaluated.

Garcia Canclini (1987:51) raises a thought-provoking approach to cultural policy: "It is not confined to limited actions but engages itself in a continuous cultural action (...) and does not reduce culture to the discursive or to the aesthetic, since it tries to stimulate the organized action, self-managed, gathering the most diverse initiatives (from all groups, in the political, social, recreational areas, etc). Beyond transmitting knowledge and developing

4 Although this paper focus is not the analysis of the the partnership of Itaú Cultural Institute and SESI with the Brazilian Ministry of Culture, it is important to stress that both institutions have significantly contributed to the Program's conception. As for the operationalization process, the contribution of Itaú Cultural Institute was mainly focused on the distribution of the didactics material, such as books and journals, to the face-to-face workshops. SESI's participation was, in turn, centered on the provision of infrastructure to implement the face-to-face workshops, such as the space itself and the necessary multimedia equipment.

sensibility, it intents to enhance the social conditions to find the collective creativity. It encourages the subjects themselves to produce the art and culture needed to solve their problems and to affirm and renew their identity". This is a reason why the performance of institutions should be improved with regard to the cultural life.

Yet, this aim cannot be reached without qualified cultural managers. If the articulation of cultural policies in public and private areas as well as in the third sector is continuously growing, it also requires professionals that are able to interpret and to deal with the plurality that characterizes this sector. Consequently, the demand for professionals with such a profile in the cultural sector increased the offer of training courses in the last years.

In Brazil the first measures to build the capacity of cultural managers were taken in the late 1970s (Saravia, 1993). The Inter-American School of Public Administration (EIAP) located at Getulio Vargas Foundation, in Rio de Janeiro, organized the first course designed to cultural managers in Brazil and other Latin American countries. The course was financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). More than 15 Latin American countries sent their cultural managers to participate in this three-month course. After years of successful experiences, the Program was enlarged to cultural managers from African countries, Spain and Portugal. The last course was implemented in 1986. Thereafter, a high number of participants occupied relevant positions in cultural institutions in their respective countries.

This prolonged and successful initiative faced, however, difficulties in the first phases of its implementation. Beyond the expected concerns derived from the eccentricity of such an initiative inside of a management school, there were also doubts and paradoxes that demanded debate, study and analysis. The positive outcomes could only be seen in the medium and long terms. Today, if the importance of building the capacity of cultural managers is not anymore under debate, there is still skepticism to understand the decisive relevance of culture and cultural management in public policies (Saravia, 1981; 2011). The difficulty of guaranteeing an institutional space to culture, as well as the reduced national budgets oriented to cultural management are the main evidences of the marginal position that this theme occupies.

Moreover, the struggle related to the establishment of cultural management in Brazil has been also interlinked with the challenges of building the capacity of cultural managers. The first challenge is related to the average profile of cultural managers in organizations such as archives, libraries, museums, theaters, TV channels or institutions dedicated to preserve the cultural heritage. Should they be well prepared to deal with the labyrinths of bureaucracy, they are less sensitive to the cultural manifestation that they are entitled to manage. Should they be attentive to the cultural phenomena, they lack the administrative skills to enhance their performance as cultural managers. Hence, building the capacity of cultural managers requires elaborating a syllabus focusing both on administrative methods and on the relevance of respecting the creation, the diversity and the rights of culture.

The second challenge is to decide whether the capacity building of cultural managers shall focus on the elaboration of cultural policies or on the cultural administration. It is indeed fundamental to offer cultural managers information on the issues of public and cultural policies. Calabri (2009:9) explains this reason as follows: "The relationship between the State and culture is millennial; however the State's regard to culture as an area that should be treated in the public policy field is contemporary. Cultural policies, in the public sphere, must follow the same logic of elaboration that guides public policies as whole. They can be defined as the result of the political activities – that involve different agents and, therefore, need to allocate different kinds of resources, and have a normative and organizational characteristic".

However, training in cultural administration is also essential for professionals that are in charge of implementing the policies adopted by the government or by a cultural institution. The emphasis on management techniques might enable cultural managers to, among other activities, engage on non-traditional sources of funding in order to maintain their cultural institutions and to develop their programs.

Thirdly, it is uncertain whether a capacity building program for cultural managers should study and discuss the cultural or the organizational phenomenon. If management techniques are to be taught, their rational conceptions might not be welcome in the cultural métier. In fact, administrative instruments are also embedded in a specific culture and necessarily influence the cultural reality where they are applied. To analyze the cultural and the organizational phenomenon in parallel, trying to detect the different modes of interaction between them, is an alternative to acknowledge in which contexts there is a desire to use these rational techniques.

Cunha (2008:142) remembers this challenge by emphasizing the following role of cultural managers: "To guarantee the involvement with artistic matters, creating the conditions to broaden the cultural repertoire and, consequently, generating a better understanding of the inspirational and creation process by attuning two different universes – the artistic and the production – without risking interfering in the artist's creative momentum".

The fourth challenge is related to the fact that there is not a unique direction to cultural administration. Cultural managers engage in a wide range of activities and projects in their career. It is more convenient, therefore, to offer these professionals applicable instruments for their diverse pursuits. The introduction of methods and techniques of *project management* derive from this demand.

The question of whether or not the challenges above mentioned are to be overcome shall, however, be answered on the ground.

FIELD-BASED APPROACH

The conceptualization of the Management Training Program on Cultural Projects

The *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* was an initiative of the Secretariat for Culture Promotion and Incentive (SEFIC) of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture (MinC) in partnership with MinC´s Secretariat of Cultural Policies, the Social Service of the Industries (SESI) and the Itaú Cultural Institute. The Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV) was responsible for its implementation.

The Brazilian Ministry of Culture understands that culture is "not only a fundamental and irreplaceable element to construct the national identity, but also an outstanding sector in the national economy, as a growing source of employment and income" (MinC, 2010). As a result, the Ministry has been working with a broadened conceptualization of culture that considers its symbolic and economic dimensions, as well as citizens´ civil rights.

This broad concept of culture was inaugurated under former president Lula's guidelines to the Ministry. According to him: "It is another one – and it is new – the present understanding of culturethat the Brazilian State has. To us, culture plays a strategic role to build a country that is socially fair and to affirm our sovereignty in the world. We do not see it as something merely decorative, ornamental. But as the basis for the construction and preservation of our identity, as a space for the full achievement of citizenship, as well as an instrument to overcome social exclusion – both by strengthening the self-esteem of our people and due to its capacity of creating jobs and attracting funds to the country. In other words, we face culture in all its dimensions, from the symbolic to the economic" (Brazil, 2006).

The *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* was idealized and implemented under these convictions. The Program started its implementation in 2009 as a pilot project and evolved to different phases until 2012. Free of charge for its participants, its purpose was to build capacity in cultural managers from the public and the private sectors in order to qualify the demand in the cultural sector and to enhance the results of cultural projects.

To allow these principles to be concretized, however, the Program should offer practical and theoretical content about the diverse dimensions that are present in the activities performed by professionals in the cultural sector. In doing so, it would be possible to qualify the participants to manage their cultural projects and products, and to raise funding for them. Moreover, participants should be entitled to receive an academic certification from an institution recognized by the Brazilian Ministry of Education. The partnership with Getulio Vargas Foundation was established to suit these demands.

The Getulio Vargas Foundation is an independent think tank traditionally engaged in education, academic research and consultancy about the socioeconomic realities in Brazil. With regard to its consultancy activities, FGV has been developing projects to both public and private institutions worldwide for decades. In the national context, its schools and institutes have worked in close cooperation with organizations in the local, state and federal levels. As for its research activities, FGV has been producing academic content in numerous fields such as public administration, social sciences, economics, history and law. The Foundation's expertise in these areas of study combined with its managerial structure enabled the creation of undergraduate, graduate and specialization courses.

The evolution of the information and communication technologies (ICT) has been playing, in addition, a fundamental role for FGV to expand the possibilities of building capacity in remote areas of the country. Since 2007, the Foundation has established its own department to implement online training programs, the FGV Online.

For all those reasons, the Brazilian Ministry of Culture set a partnership with Getulio Vargas Foundation. The Foundation, in turn, mobilized its experts on the field of cultural policies and cultural management, as well as its specialists in intellectual property rights and from the online training department. All of them worked together for the design and implementation of the Program's different phases.

The phases of the Management Training Program on Cultural Projects

Four distinct and sequential phases were comprised in the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects*. As a prerequisite to participate at a subsequent phase, participants should have successfully completed the previous phases.

The first phase was designed as a basic online course encompassing 15 hours of didactic material without tutoring support. It touched upon fundamental concepts related to the area of culture. This course was free for all interested people in gaining insights about the cultural field. Having achieved the minimum score required to apply for the following phase, participants received a certificate of completion.

The second phase consisted of face-to-face workshops for building the capacity of cultural agents to draft cultural projects. Each workshop implemented by the Program offered around 80 places in cities located in the North, Northeast and Center-East Brazilian regions, as well as in the states of Santa Catarina (South region) and Espírito Santo (Southeast region). Being the number of applications higher than the offered positions, classification criteria were taken into consideration. Priority was given to applicants living in the cities where the workshops were implemented, as well as in the neighboring areas. Being a professional experienced in the cultural field was also an asset. During three days, participants were tutored in a step-by-step methodology to write a cultural project based on Thiry-Cherques´ handbook on cultural project management (2008). In groups of 6 to 8 people, cultural agents were expected to actively contribute with their knowledge and competence to fulfill the requirements of this phase. Participants attended, in addition, seminars on the issues of intellectual property rights and sources of funding.

The third phase is the main object of study of this paper. Consisting of advanced online training modules of 15 to 30 hours each, this phase was designed for participants who were qualified both in the basic online course and the face-to-face workshop. The five disciplines offered in this phase covered the topics presented in the previous phases with an in-depth approach. Cultural agents were awarded a certificate to each discipline in which the minimum required grade was achieved. Being qualified in this phase meant successfully completing all disciplines and the Program as whole.

The fourth and last phase can be understood as an effort from the Brazilian Ministry of Culture to multiply the benefits of the Program. Entitled "Continuing Education of Facilitators", this phase was designed for outstanding participants that, having completed the previous phases, obtained an additional recommendation of at least one tutor based on a set of academic criteria. The "Continuing Education of Facilitators" consisted of a face-to-face workshop for exceptional cultural agents that were interested in acting as facilitators in their regions. In other words, this last workshop aimed at preparing cultural agents to extend the knowledge gained during the Program to other individuals in their regions. Furthermore, the facilitator's role involved acting as an articulator by orienting groups and institutions in their regions to formulate projects, obtain funding, build capacity, and stimulate entrepreneurship.

During the phases above mentioned, however, it was fundamental to strengthen the tights with cultural institutions in the state and municipal levels. Local representatives were requested, via videoconferences promoted by SESI and official letters sent by SEFIC/MinC, to act as partners of the Program. The cooperation of local institutions was key to launch the Program in each micro-region, by informing potential applicants and orienting the participants. Besides, these institutions have also supported the Brazilian Ministry of Culture in identifying suitable spaces for the implementation of face-to-face workshops.

Hence, the basic online course was distributed in 36 regional centers, 29 face-to-face workshops were implemented, 17 modules of the advanced online phase were offered and one facilitator's meeting took place in the country's capital. 3.552 participants (among 9.500 subscribed candidates) approved the elementary online phase, 1.873 successfully completed the face-to-face workshops, whereas 1.764 participants (among 2.662 subscribed candidates) successfully completed the advanced online phase.

The experience of the advanced online training modules provides hints to clarify how these results could be reached and the lessons learnt with regard to the capacity building of cultural managers.

The Advanced Online Training Modules

In the previous sections, this paper showed how cooperation between different specialized institutions can be an asset to better implement a particular cultural policy. In this section, the focus on the Program's online training modules emphasizes the advantages of combining face-to-face with long-distance activities, so that policy makers can reach their target group. Moreover, the experience of the online training modules provides insights about the field of cultural management in Brazil. Mostly, it contextualizes the main challenges to build the capacity of cultural managers that were presented in the theoretical session.

As stressed above, the advanced online training modules were embedded in the Program's third phase. To participate on this phase candidates must have successfully completed the elementary online course, as well as one of the workshops offered by MinC in 29 different cities. Although this third phase was offered uniquely in an online format, there were tutors responsible for guiding the participants through each of the five disciplines. Participants were invited to enroll for the subjects, which started in different dates, but occurred simultaneously. Through the Program's website, participants were informed about the basic rules to complete the third phase: each discipline had its own certificate attached, but accomplishing the phase and the Program required approving all of them. If once not qualified in a discipline, participants were given one last chance to successfully complete it.

Building capacity online enabled MinC to guarantee the continuity of a cultural policy from 2009 to 2012. Firstly, the Program turned out to be logistically accessible to greater number of participants in various cities. Secondly, it allowed participants flexibility with regard to time and place of study. Last but not least, it remained as a financially affordable Program for the State to implement on the course of three years.

With respect to the challenges in the field of cultural management, it is important to grasp the details of the advanced online training modules. If the purpose of the disciplines was to provide an in-depth analysis of the previous topics covered in phases 1 and 2, these subjects should be also presented in a didactic manner, enabling participants to make use of the course in their daily lives as professionals.

The five disciplines encompassed in this phase and their respective didactics material's authors were:

Cultural Projects (parts I and II) - total of 30 hours - Prof. Hermano Thiry-Cherques;
Cultural Policy and Management (parts I and II) - total of 30 hours - Prof. Enrique Saravia;
Intellectual Property Rights - total of 15 hours - Prof. Sergio Branco;
Marketing, Negotiation and Project Presentation - total of 15 hours - Prof. Eugenio Carvalhal;
Cultural Economics - total of 15 hours - Prof. Enrique Saravia and Prof. Juliana Figale.

As presented in the theoretical session, the first challenge to build the capacity of cultural managers in Brazil is related to the average profile of these professionals. It was argued that cultural managers are normally either sensitive to cultural expressions but lack administrative skills, or they are well-trained managers to run an organization, lacking, however, the ability to recognize the specificities of the cultural field.

In order to attend the demands of these different profiles, participants became acquainted with the managerial qualifications required to work in the cultural field in the discipline of Cultural Politics and Management. Additionally, they learnt how to be attentive to cultural diversities in Brazil, being them regional, ethnical or related to minority groups. The discipline of Intellectual Property Rights focused, in turn, on the rights of cultural agents

that, producing culture, were able to reinterpret the conceptions of private property following the avant-garde approach "Creative Commons".

The second challenge for building cultural management capacity is to decide whether the syllabus should focus on cultural policies or on cultural administration. On one hand, the discipline of Cultural Policy and Management provided a long analysis of the public policy cycle and its contextualization in the cultural sector. The disciplines of Marketing, Negotiation and Project Presentation, and Cultural Economics gave insights to overcome one of the greatest challenges of cultural managers: fund raising.

The third challenge presented in the beginning of this paper is to a great extent the most complex to be tackled. In fact, it refers to the nature of cultural management itself. If culture, on one hand, means the respect to different systems of values, traditions, habits, and language expressions, management, on the other hand, entails a very specific rationale – often characterized as the market rationale. As a result, the term "cultural management" carries undoubtedly a theoretical tension that may only be tackled in practice, case to case.

Although *The Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* did not particularly target this complex issue, such a challenge was faced in the disciplines above mentioned. Most probably, it was during the simultaneous offer of all disciplines that participants could evaluate for themselves in which contexts and to what extent rational techniques should – or should not – play a relevant role in their activities.

The fourth and last challenge mentioned in this paper to build the capacity of cultural managers is related to the diverse directions of cultural administration. Because cultural institutions may completely change, renew or simply alter some of their techniques, it is desirable that professionals working in this field were prepared to those transformations. Aware of this challenge, the discipline of Cultural Projects offered during the advanced online training was designed to systematize a management instrument applicable to different types of projects and cultural activities.

CONCLUSION

This paper presented the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* as an initiative of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture (MinC) in partnership with Itaú Cultural Institute and the Social Service of the Industries (SESI). The Program was implemented by the Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV), an organization devoted to enhance the quality of public policies and to foster development through education, research and consultancy.

Arguing for culture as a fundamental element to apply any criteria of governance and governability, this case study aimed at answering why the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* in Brazil was conceptualized in a multi-level partnership. By aggregating different stakeholders engaged in the development process, the goal was to achieve more accurate results with respect to the Program's goals and to cultural policy as a whole. As a matter of a fact, intents from MinC's side to implement the Program counting only on their own staff and infrastructure proved not to be enough to deal with the complexity of such a demanding initiative.

By bringing other specialized institutions on board, the Program got furnished with expertise and infrastructure to overcome predictable challenges. Of course, all partner institutions played their role in their areas of competence. This paper focused particularly on the partnership between the Ministry of Culture at the federal level and FGV, an independent organization. Nevertheless, the institutional partnership between the federal government and cultural secretariats and foundations at the state and local levels also proved to be essential during the implementation process.

This paper also focused its analysis on the online training modules to build the capacity of cultural managers. Particularly, those designed for engaged participants who managed to successfully complete both the elementary online modules and a face-to-face workshop. As underlined in the previous sessions, the online training modules played a relevant role in the context of this Program. It enabled the democratization of the selection process, by extending it to all regions of the country. Moreover, the existing infrastructure of FGV's online department allowed the program to gain in scale, by accepting around 2500 participants in the third phase. Last but not least, the online training modules reduced the costs of implementing a face-to-face Program in all its phases, allowing this initiative to last for three years.

As for the challenges in the area of cultural management, the Program aimed at enhancing the performance of cultural managers in all Brazilian regions. There was a clear intention to enable participants to develop skills to overcome challenges in their daily professional activity. Last but not least, the Program aimed at building the capacity of participants to use the explicit and tacit language of bureaucracy in their favor, with the advantage of having learnt how to operationalize their own ideas.

It goes without saying that such an innovative initiative was also a learning-by-doing process. Specially among cultural agents excessively tied to their rationale, there has been resistance to be introduced to a new approach or methodology. With respect to the long-distance courses, some participants reported having difficulties in dealing with the online platform, whereas others needed to wait for later opportunities to join a group. Motivation was also an issue for participants engaged in a long distance training program. Nevertheless, the essential combination of online courses with an intensive face-to-face workshop, and the presence of tutors to support participants during the advanced online modules were key for the Program's success. These are the reasons why the authors understand that the *Management Training Program on Cultural Projects* may provide valuable insights to overcome some of the current challenges to cultural policies and cultural management in Brazil and are, hence, eager to share such a valuable experience.

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