

The Paradigm of Governance in Cultural Heritage: Theories and Perspectives

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Abstract

The objective of the paper is to examine the literature within the domain of cultural governance across the globe to understand the contemporary theories and meanings, and trying to understand the various perspectives assigned to the domain of governance. Cultural Governance is still considered to be a new and upcoming concept, but many authors over the years, have categorically written and argued about the need for a proper definition and understanding of the same. Although cultural governance as a research and practice field is a young phenomenon, scholars and researchers have argued that it is still an outstanding research topic that has not been recognised and needs to be defined in order to better understand it.

This aim is achieved by reviewing the existing literature in the field of Cultural Governance in the global context, with the intention of examining and analysing aspects related to the understanding and applications of the system. The research is divided into two sections - first, discussing the concepts of Cultural Governance and connecting it with different theoretical perspectives like public administration, sustainable development, and participatory governance; and the second being the understanding of the current trends of cultural governance in the world, and the implications on the sustainable management of cultural heritage. Through this paper, the researcher has tried to understand the existing cultural governance framework across four major contemporary trends that have been suggested for better understanding of it. The first trend involves incorporating political, economic, and management issues into cultural governance to create or increase cultural heritage and its perceived value. The second trend is to incorporate the characteristics of good governance into the thinking of cultural heritage management. The third stream of concept area is the need of understanding the need of policy making within the realm of cultural basis, which would be a case-to-case basis. The last, but very prominent trend is to bring a semblance of sustainability in the process of cultural governance.

On the whole the paper highlights cultural governance as an emerging but much needed concept. It is quite clear from the review that the cultural governance cannot be a normative concept and as evident has evolved as per the needs of the context and culture. Simultaneously, the need of defining a system for cultural policy making has also been coming up with the help of intellectuals and experts.

Keywords:

Cultural Governance, Cultural Heritage, Governance, Heritage Management, Cultural Policy, Public Administration, Sustainable Development, Local Governments, Cultural Organisations, Decentralisation

1. The Perception of Cultural Governance

Before starting the discussion on Cultural Governance, it is very important to understand the concept of 'Governance' and distinguish it from a government. Rosenau put the difference in a very simple manner, whereby Government is the legal ruling power, while Governance is the concept of how the government works (Schmitt, 2011). Rosenau enlarges "Governance [...] is a more encompassing phenomenon than government. It embraces governmental institutions, but it also subsumes informal, non-governmental mechanisms [...] Governance is thus a system of rule that is as dependent on intersubjective meanings as on formally sanctioned constitutions and charters. Put more emphatically, governance is a system of rule that works only if it is accepted by the majority (or, at least, by the most powerful of those it affects), whereas governments can function even in the face of widespread opposition to their policies" (James N. Rosenau, 1992).

King and Schramme (2019) write about three important components of governance – authority, accountability, and decision-making. They define Authority as the transparent structure of management and creating a top-down approach. Decision-making is about the range and associated complications that come with choice-making. Accountability is demonstrating and maintaining an effective and transparent system of managing public goods. King and Schramme thus define governance as a process involving various steps instead of just a formal system of rules and regulations.

Urban Governance Systems by Paproski (1993) explains governance as a practice of collaboration between the public and a group of actors in 'civil society'. As per Paproski, "the crucial distinction between government and governance is the notion of civil society, which can be defined as the public life of individuals and institutions outside the control of the state."

To start the discussion on cultural governance, let us go through a definition put forward by Jeremy Moon in *The Social Responsibility of Business and New Governance*.

"Cultural governance is defined as government's direct or indirect involvement in the promotion and administration of programs of cultural organizations (including museums) existing in specific geographic boundaries with unique financial and administrative arrangements."

- Moon (2002)

As put by Portolés, Čopič, and Srakar (2014, 184) Cultural governance is still a concept that defies precise definition and is not recognised as a distinguished research topic. If we look at the term in reference to 'governance of culture' then, Čopič and Srakar (2012, 6) have suggested that it is "composed of two sub-areas: (1) the new approaches to the formulation and implementation of sectoral cultural policy that is inspired by the interaction between the state, the civil society, and the market; and (2) the improvements in the steering and supervision of cultural organisations that lead to efficiently-, expertly-, independently- and transparently-operating cultural organisations" (ibid). The publication has tried to capture the essence of the concept of cultural governance through a multidisciplinary approach by correlating it with other theoretical areas like public administration, economics, sustainability, and decentralisation. The term 'governance' has been a matter of consideration for experts and academics since the 1990s. Numerous experts and international organisations have continued their search of developing an alternate system of cultural affairs, albeit with different motives and notions. They have also tried to provide a conceptual understanding of the term cultural governance together with the various definitions and evolution of the term 'culture, along with the ubiquitous term 'governance'.

Thomas Schmitt manages the idea of cultural governance from the viewpoint of cultural studies with a perspective of sociology (Schmitt, 2011). The author starts with exploring the concept of culture which serves as the base for the understanding of the concept of cultural governance. While discussing the concept at hand, Schmitt puts forward an interesting correlation between power and culture, and how power is shaping culture and vice versa. Apart from this, he also gives a brief description of all the existing theories of cultural governance. Thomas Schmitt presents the concept of cultural governance as a research concept for social science and humanities. The literature moves beyond the study of origins and the nature of governance knowledge by redefining its concept through the use of definitions given by scholars like Weber's definition of culture and Adorno & Horkheimer concept of cultural industry.

Schmitt also indulges in the broad understanding of the term 'Governance', reasons for the genesis for a particular form of governance, and how it is different from the term 'Government'. The publication very thoroughly defines governance as an analytical and contextual concept, and not a normative concept. Along with this, based on the commentary by Hyden, "governance has to build on earlier governance" (Hyden et. Al. 2004, 27). This concept is elaborated by Schmitt as he states that cultural governance cannot be an alien input and has to be embedded in a historical, social-cultural, and economic context, where the actors steer the situation through conscious negotiations. Furthering the discussion on the concept of cultural governance, Schmitt puts forth the wide as well as the narrow sense, where the latter is comprehended as the development of cultural policy based on the relationship between the administrative system and cultural institutions. This creates a situation leading cultural governance to be seen as a concept oscillating between cultural policy and cultural management. But sometimes the desired autonomy of cultural institutions is endangered due to direct and indirect political interference through rules and policies, which creates incompatibilities that "lead to conflictive forms of cultural governance" (Schmitt, 2011: 49). The paper puts an emphasis that different concepts of culture co-exist in academia and public discourses.

Raymond Weber in his research 'What governance for Culture and the Cultural Sector?' distinguishes the various levels of governance – from Meta (vision and strategies) to Micro (organised participation and empowerment). In the discussion amongst the various aspects related to the realm of cultural governance, Weber includes international relationships,

creative economy, knowledge generation, and information & communication technology. Unlike Schmitt, Weber puts the notion of cultural governance together with the political context. He importantly puts a very pertinent point of how the civil organisations emerge with a vision of forwarding the democratic view of democracy when the political nexus tends to monopolise the policy decision-making system as an exclusive entity. Weber also touches upon the aspects of reforms in political institutes, democratic structures, and political regulations for better cultural governance. He advocates the shift from government to governance as “our joint and uneven terms of engagement with the complex field of economic, social, political, and cultural power relations in which we are all ‘stakeholders’” (Mercer, 2012). Weber also touches upon the idea of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization) and how it can help withdrawal of the state from the cultural sector.

Cultural governance by Weber has been discussed as a network of actors (state, market, and civil society) working towards a common objective decided in unison. He also stresses the fact that ‘good governance’ needs multi-stakeholder dynamics and the need to specify the responsibilities of the actors, and coherence of functions for better cultural governance. For creating a sustainable development approach, the author writes about the relevance of social capital. He also makes the reader aware of the neglect towards the lesser important aspects of culture when there is an intention of creating profit towards the justification of cultural funding. Also if culture is to be developed for the public good, certain standards like transparency, participatory democracy, democratisation, etc. need to be developed. It should also include features like capacity building, reiving cultural places for citizens, incorporating human rights, and cultural ‘coproduction’ involving private & civil society actors. Overall, Weber’s text serves as a conceptualisation of cultural governance and as a list of standards towards creating a new ‘cultural contract.’

2. A Global Approach to Cultural Governance

The contemporary trends in the field of cultural governance can be segregated into four main sections. These sections are made on the basis of which the researchers have assigned specific characteristics and research directions in the field of cultural governance. The first trend is about the inclusion of subject areas like policy, economics, and management within the governance of culture to create or enhance the value of cultural heritage and how it is perceived. Within this area, John Holden (2006) has developed a triangle model to explain the different values associated with cultural heritage. This triangle method has intrinsic, instrumental, and institutional as its three vertices. The intrinsic values relate to the subjective experiences of culture felt at an individual level – spiritually, emotionally, or intellectually; instrumental values are the ancillary effects of a culture where it is used for socio-economic development; while institutional values primarily talk about the processes, tools, and techniques adopted by cultural organisations towards serving the community. Holden, along with Baltà, have also summarised the debate and literature pertaining to the public value of culture in their paper (Holden & Baltà, 2012).

Another aspect of the value of culture is presented by David Throsby – the economic value. Such a value is created by various factors like use-value and cultural market or market for culture. On the other hand, Srakar and Čopič (2012) put a caution towards associating monetary value with culture and its governance. In such a scenario, only the market-friendly cultural aspects/products would be highlighted and the non-use or intrinsic values will get neglected. Even if there is an economic value associated with these intrinsic values, it will be because of certain external benefits.

Thus, the governance of culture and the associated policies should consider all these different values, and also put focus on the intrinsic values. The current scenario, where the policymakers put a larger emphasis on the instrumental values of culture is a very dangerous precedent being established (Seaman, 1987). As Seaman mentions, it is like “choosing to play one of the weakest cards, while holding back their aces” (Seaman, 1987: 280).

The second trend talks about the idea of incorporating the characteristics of good governance within the governance of cultural heritage. It has become a very relevant area of concern these days, and a lot of researchers are creating good governance models within cultural institutions. Balancing Act: Twentyone Strategic Dilemmas in Cultural Policy discusses 21 key dilemmas related to cultural policymaking (Matarasso & Landry, 1999). The publication is divided into four parts talking about various stages of policymaking and the dilemmas faced in each. It touches upon the dilemmas of cultural democracy or democratisation of culture (framework dilemmas) and centralisation or decentralisation (management dilemmas). In another publication Governance Now: the hidden challenge of leadership (2009), several authors present governance codes that help develop good governance. The publication suggests that there is no need to alter the current model of governance, but only a change in the vision should be good. The publication also talks about the need of providing training for capacity building and establishing a peer networking and support group. There is also literature on

the implications of good governance on culture, and how to create participatory mechanisms to involve all stakeholders (Toksoz, 2008).

Built on an extensive literature review Schramme et al. (2012) offer five general principles of good governance for culture. The first and second principal talk about the 'roles and powers of governance bodies' and careful composition of the bodies, and how these should align with the objectives and mission of cultural governance with clearly defined roles for each body. The third and fourth principles talk about the accountability amongst the governance bodies, and that they should have a transparent operating system as well as keep each other informed in decision-making. The fifth principle talks about the involvement of all the stakeholders and the value created by their involvement.

Taking the last principle mentioned above, another recent trend towards developing good governance for culture is working towards the concept of Participatory Governance in culture. The Open Method of Coordination document looks at participatory governance in culture as an "active involvement of all stakeholders, throughout the whole policy cycle (planning, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation) at multiple levels" (EU, 2018). Brigitte Geissel describes participatory governance as a 'participatory innovation' which is often not invented but reinvented or copied from other contexts/countries (Giessel, 2009). Vidović and Žuvela define participatory governance as sharing authority, rights, and responsibilities amongst stakeholders in conserving culture. (Kutura Nova, 2018).

They go on to say that though there are not many examples of participatory governance implementations, the concept has become a very popular word of discussion in the last two decades. UNESCO, in 1998, adopted the Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development, which recognises the importance of civil society's role in cultural policy framework and these policies have to be made to address current and future needs, also are long-lasting (UNESCO, 1998). The 2005 Faro Convention emphasised democratic participation in cultural approach and putting a special focus towards developing 'legal, financial and professional frameworks which make possible joint action by public authorities, experts, owners, investors, businesses, non-governmental organisations and civil society' (Council of Europe, 2005: 5).

As cultural governance and its various forms are relatively a newer concept, researchers are still trying to develop methods of analysing them and understanding the outcomes. The parallel stream of development is policy making and cultural heritage - the third trend. Within this field, a majority of literature is region-specific and how policymaking has integrated with governance or impacted culture. On the historical context of cultural policy-making, Bernié-Boissard gives an insight into its development and how the concept had different notions in public policy and social sciences during its development (Bernié-Boissard, 2011). Apart from showing the various implementation of cultural governance on the ground, she also shows the good & bad points of various implementation models and the actors involved. Eduardo. Nivón Bolán gives one of the better pieces of literature towards a regional study on cultural policy. He puts forward the system of cultural policies and ways of integrating public policy with cultural governance in the context of Mexico (Bolán, 2006). One of his main contributions is the insights into the evolution of cultural policies and public institutions. On the other hand, Poirier (2010) provides expert views on cultural policy-making and governance from people of various fields of interest and expertise with the French context. Together with Poirier, Ahearne (2010) talks about the involvement and contribution of intellectuals in cultural public policymaking in France. Bonet and Negrier (2011) give a framework for analysing cultural policies – institutional setting, instruments of intervention, distribution of governance, stakeholder capacity and priorities, objectives & values of cultural policies. Pascual (2008) very aptly defines the nature of cultural policymaking, and it is not only an administrative task but also incorporates a wide array of intangibles too.

"Cultural policies create the opportunities that no other public sphere provides. Cultural policies are built on the so-called intrinsic values of culture, which include concepts such as memory, creativity, critical knowledge, rituality, excellence, beauty, diversity"

- Pascual (2008)

The last, but very prominent trend is to bring a semblance of sustainability in the process of cultural governance. Similar to any other area of governance, cultural governance in urban areas has started to pose increased complexities for urban local bodies. This is largely because of increased values attached to the culture, resources, and policies (Baltà, Čopič & Srakar, 2014). This is clearly evident in the inclusion of culture in definitions of sustainable development, where it is shown

as an interconnected pillar along with economic, social, and environmental pillars (Pascual, 2008). J Pascual, while quoting Jon Hawkes, suggests that the currently used triangle of sustainable development can be reframed as a square to include culture as the fourth pillar (ibid). As per the United Cities and Local Government's Agenda 21 for Culture, integrating culture with sustainable development gives an opportunity to create a long-term vision of culture.

Many authors and publications, like Sacco et. al., have talked about the involvement of a wide array of actors. They present the case of how development processes can be successful by involving a "variety of agents – the local government, civil society, universities, the educational system, the private sector, and culture producers – must be involved in the developmental process" (2009: 48). Fleming et al. also suggest the setting up of a 'Creative Commission' at the local and regional level, as "the major public-private partnership for sector development and the core means of ensuring agendas from education to regeneration, economy to arts, are joined up. This should also promote more socially-driven, inclusive, and 'bottom-up' approaches to creative development..." (2011: 11).

3. Conclusion

It is quite clear from the review that the cultural governance cannot be a normative concept and as evident has evolved as per the needs of the context and culture. Similarly, the need of defining a system for cultural policy making has also been coming up with the help of intellectuals and experts. The governance and policy should also look to identify various mechanisms of enhancing the cultural economics and support the cultural industry by creating opportunities for the private sector to get involved in different public private partnerships, government incentives and innovative funding mechanisms.

On the whole this literature review highlights cultural governance as an emerging but much needed concept. A lot of attention is being paid to defining the concepts, the arguments provided by the experts from different regions pertaining the evolution & practice of cultural governance and the implications on the existing practices, coalitions & the culture itself. A few publications show the position of culture in the contemporary society and as a new field of policy making. There are a lot of current trends that have made an impact on cultural governance similar to other concepts like sustainable development. There is also a specific impetus being put on the role and responsibilities of each stakeholder group, especially civil society and academia, towards the better designing and implementation of the cultural governance. Similarly, the need of defining a system for cultural policy making has also been coming up with the help of intellectuals and experts.

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