

Constructing Cultural Indicator System of Kaohsiung City, Taiwan

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Abstract

The development of human history is closely related to culture. Culture shows the living standard of a society, the values of life and the expressions of people's beliefs. With the trend of globalization, investing into cultural industries has become influential factor in the development of a city or a region. Kaohsiung city government has realized the importance of cultural development for the citizens and for the city; therefore, they urged to work on building a system of culture indicators. Kaohsiung is a city shaped by the sunshine, the ocean, the mountains and diverse immigrants. However, it has been lacking of a solid data-based for describing cultural activities and for setting policy. Therefore, indicators will aim to provide a series of statistics to analyze, measure, and assess cultural industries, cultural activities, cultural participation, cultural consumption, and cultural resources of Kaohsiung. It expects to transform Kaohsiung from an industrial city into a service-leading city and cultural center.

Keywords

Cultural indicators, cultural policy, cultural industry, city development and culture, audience participation

Background to the Problem

Culture has been recognized as an important factor in development of countries and cities all over the world. The more concerns on culture/creative industry and cultural tourism, the more concrete interactions among culture, economic, and development occur. Since 1992, UNESCO and the United Nations started to prepare a report on the interactions of culture and development. The purpose of the report is to survey recent trends in culture and development, construct and publish quantitative cultural indicators, and analyze specific themes for policy suggestions.

In Taiwan, the Council of Cultural Affairs (CCA), established in 1981, initiated its first cultural survey in 1992. After 12 years, the category of survey changed from four areas: cultural facilities, cultural activities, cultural participations, and cultural resources to three perspectives: cultural environment, cultural activities, and cultural cultivation. Those statistics are fundamental resources to describe Taiwan's cultural situation (Council of Affairs, 2002). However, the description of culture circumstance focuses only on the development of whole nation. The variation of each city and the local perspective are seldom emphasized. Therefore, constructing a system of cultural indicators from a city perspective can depict the distinct unique situations of each city and empower the competitive capability of the city.

Kaohsiung is located on the southwest cost of Taiwan, a Special Municipality, the second largest city and the largest commercial harbor in Taiwan. It has a population of 1.5 million and comprises an area of 153.6 sq. km, divided into 11 districts. Half of citizens are labors

(Kaohsiung City Government, n. d.). Kaohsiung's history is related to the development of its harbor, immigrants, heavy industry, and sunshine; it has been criticized as a city without culture. Bureau of Cultural Affairs of Kaohsiung City Government was recently established in 2003 and decided to build up a cultural indicator system to describe the scope of cultural in Kaohsiung, to examine the cultural development of Kaohsiung, and to use it as criteria for assessing achievements of cultural policies.

Literature Review

Literature about discussing “cultural” and “indicators” are fairly extensive. The research attempts to use arts activities as the core of culture, including visual arts, performing arts, crafts, media arts (broadcasting, TV, radio), literature, design, etc., and also describes attitudes, customs, religions, and leisure activities of people. Definition of indicators in this research is a series evidences, facts, or data use to describe indirectly observable characteristics and is used as operational definitions of variables (Dunn, 1994; Baeker, 2002). Indicators can be applied to assess the impact or outcome of an organization or agency's work or performance.

Four studies related to cultural indicators have been used as models to build up Kaohsiung's case. They are: UNRISD and UNESCO's Towards a World Report on Culture and Development: Constructing Cultural Statistics and Indicators (1997), Baeker's Measures and Indicators in Local Cultural Development (2002), Hoynes' The Arts, Social Health, and the Development of Cultural Indicators (2003), and Lee's Assessing Cultural Indicators in Taiwan (1992). Basically, the four studies define “culture” differently, from very narrow perspective, arts only, to very broad perspective which includes human rights, political rights, and essential needs etc. The four studies also used various philosophies to construct their indicator systems, such as anthropology, sociology, and economics. Concepts such as diversity, creativity, community, globalization, participation, and cultural industries are essential issues of several studies. Details for those indicators can be seen on figure1 to figure 4.

Figure 1: Cultural Indicator System (UNRISD and UNESCO)

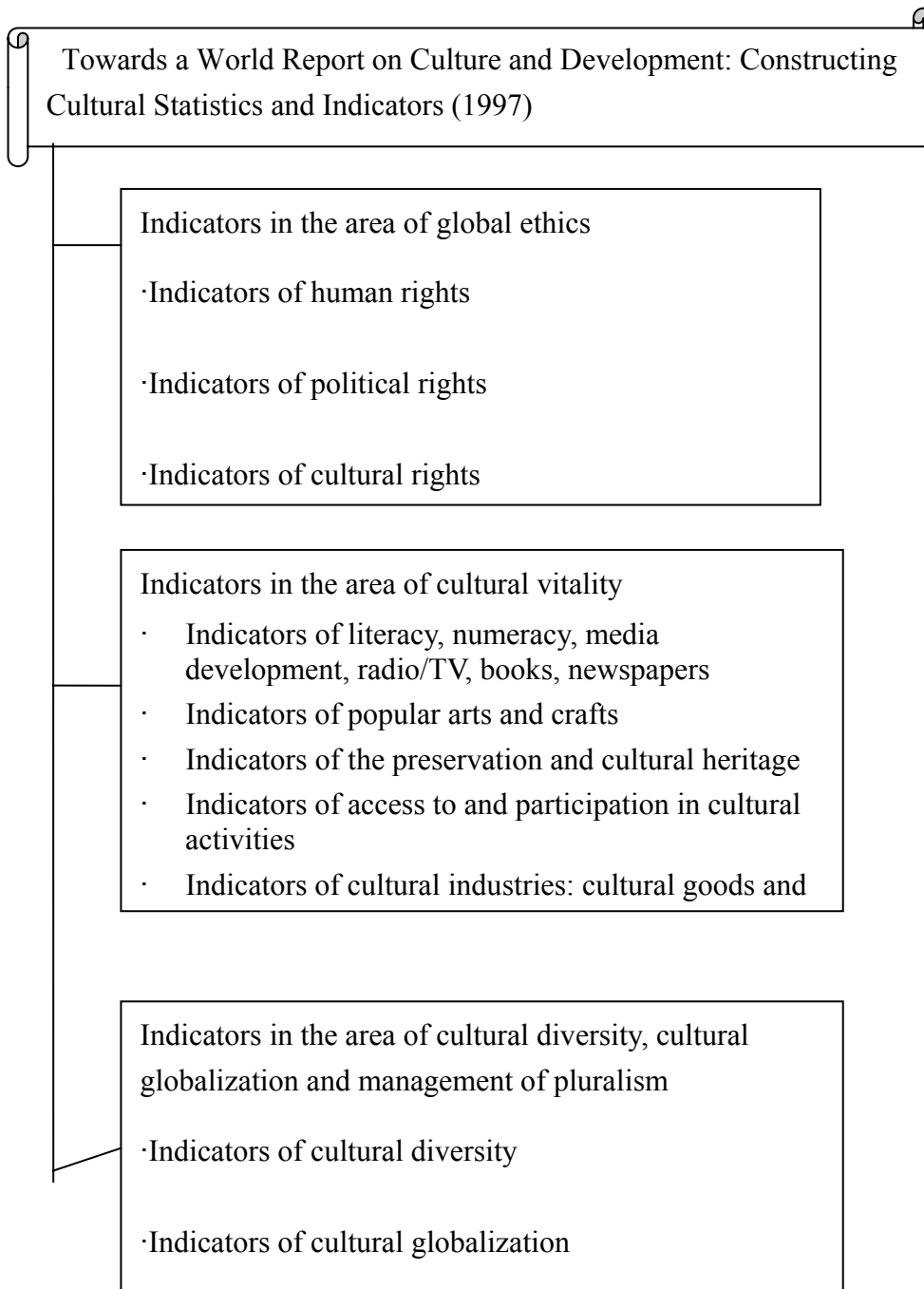


Figure 2: Concept of Cultural indicator (Baeker, Canada)

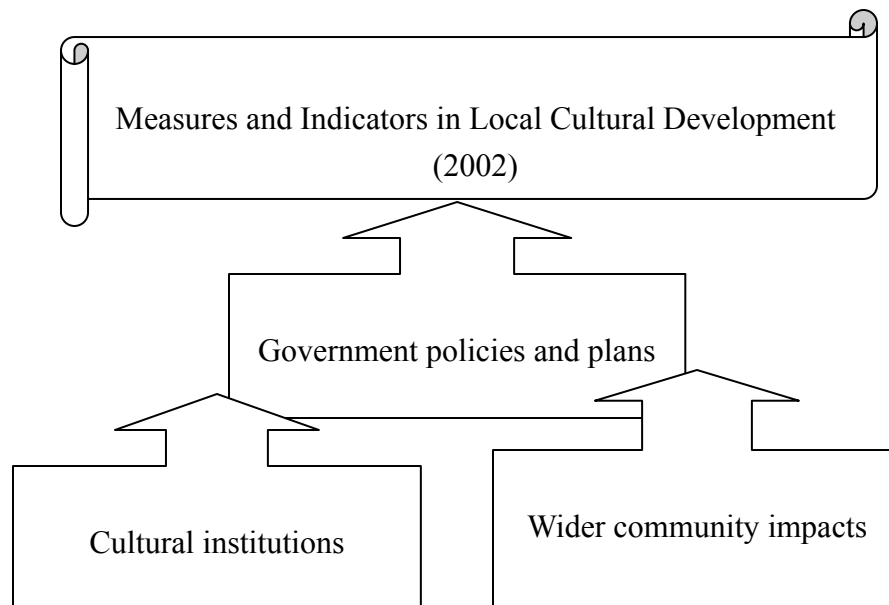


Figure 3: Concept of Cultural Indicator (Hoynes, the United States)

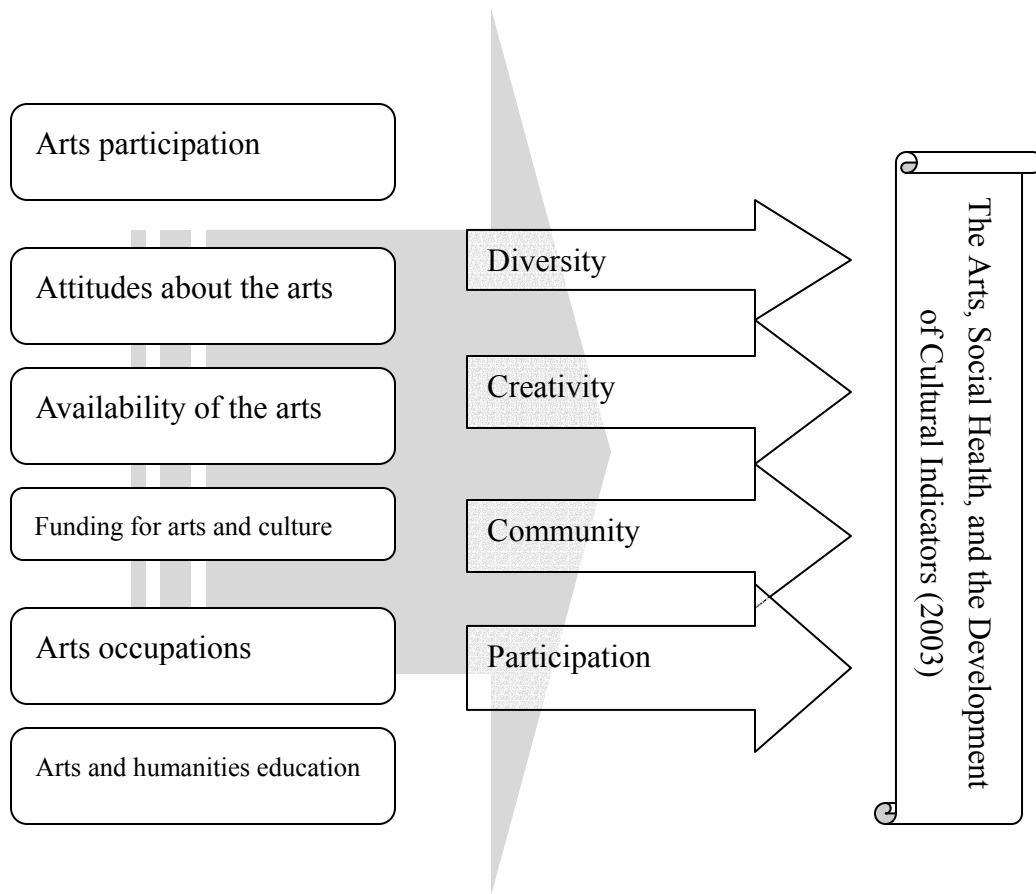
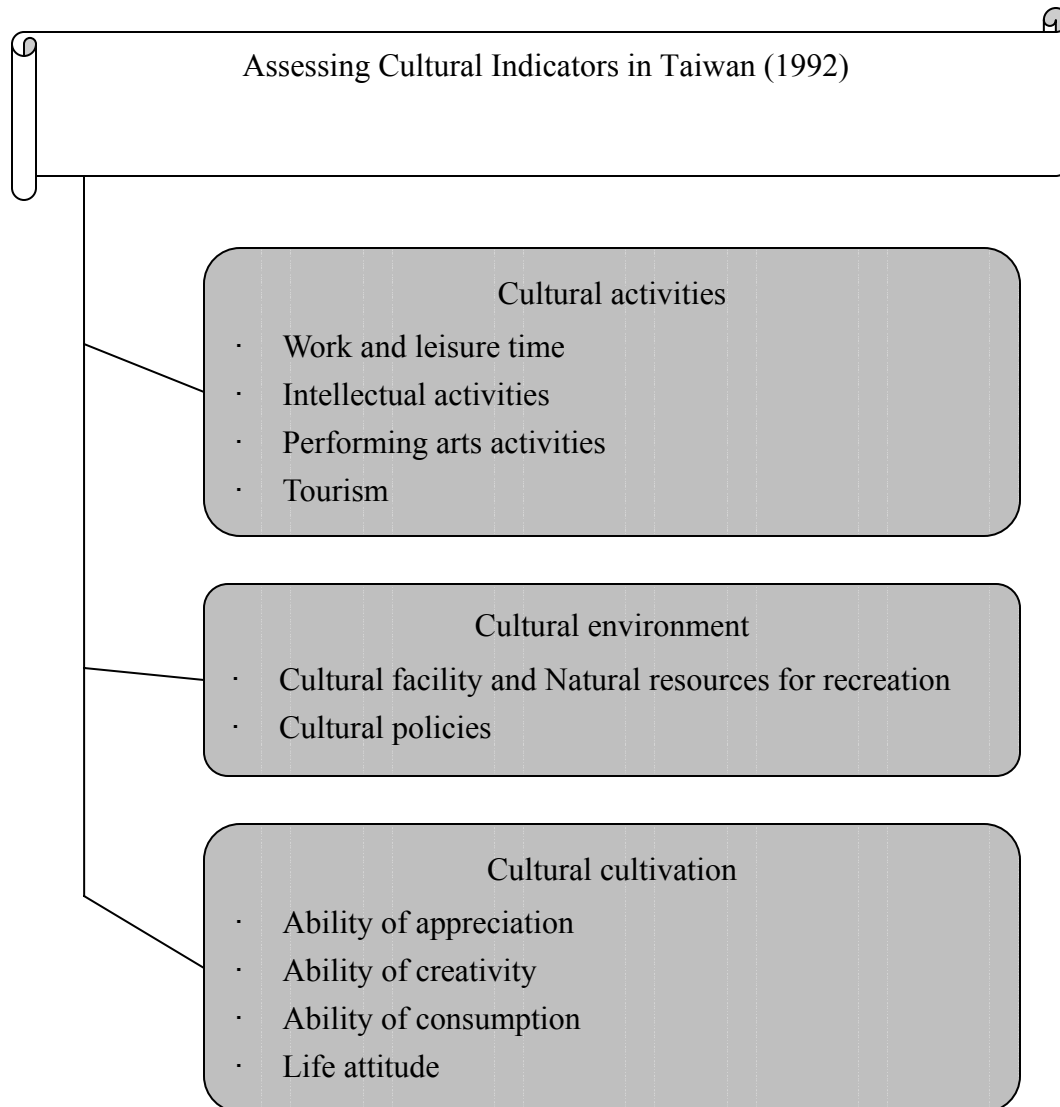


Figure 4: Cultural Indicator System (Lee, Taiwan)



Methodology

Situation-based policy research has been chosen as major methodology. The approach is suitable for dealing with complex problems and multi-layer information. In this research, exploratory and descriptive information is needed. Descriptive information answers the questions of “what’s going on” and provides a baseline for understanding. Exploratory information, on the other hand, deals with questions that lack of knowledge, and views the process of problem identification as problem solving (Hass and Springer, 1998).

Major methods of data collection contain document review, analyzing of existing data, Delphi technique, and focus group. The main purpose of conducting focus group is through Kaohsiung’s artists, community builders and citizens to discover their concerns related to participating cultural activities and attitude toward culture. Therefore, the local perspective of Kaohsiung was added. Delphi technique, consisted of a group of experts, assists the research to define the definition of Kaohsiung’s cultural indicator, categories of indicator, and primary indicators of development.

The development of Kaohsiung is intensively associated with its harbor, bay, and ocean. These geographic features create its own marine culture—stressing trade and economics; therefore applying economic theory as fundamental structure of cultural indicator system is completely suitable. The primary concern of contemporary economists lays emphasis on issues of “demand,” “supply,” and “distribution.” Discussing cultural supply, cultural demand, and distribution of cultural resources is the three essential subjects of the system.

Cultural Indicator System of Kaohsiung City

This research defines “culture indicators of Kaohsiung” as a series of statistics to analyze, measure, and assess cultural industries, cultural activities, cultural participation, cultural consumption, and cultural resources of Kaohsiung. The statistical information can provide us an understanding of Kaohsiung, in terms of the uniqueness, the identity, and the life quality and ideas of how to suggest/adopt into policy setting.

The cultural indicator system has three areas: cultural supply area, cultural demand area, and cultural resource distribution area, seven parts: cultural industry, cultural activities, and cultural exchange, cultural participation, cultural consumption, cultural spaces and cultural resources (Table 1) and forty-nine categories. Details of forty-nine categories are listed in Table 2 to Table 8.

Table 1: Cultural Indicator System of Kaohsiung City

Cultural Indicator System of Kaohsiung City						
Cultural Supply			Cultural Demand		Cultural Distribution	
Cultural industries	Cultural activities	Cultural exchange	Cultural participation	Cultural consumption	Cultural spaces	Cultural resources

Cultural Supply Area: Cultural Industries, Cultural Activities, and Cultural Exchange

The data of cultural industries is based on the newly study of Kaohsiung’s cultural industries. Ten categories are included: core arts industries, publishing industry, design industry, architecture, advertisement, mass communication, film industry, cultural service organizations,

digital industry, and tourism. Core arts industries cover individuals, various kinds of artists, and organizations such as dance, music, theater, traditional arts organizations. In the first part, cultural industries will focus on the number of organizations, employees, amount of capitals, and revenues (Table 2).

Table 2: Cultural Industries

(1) Cultural Industries		
Categories	Items	Units of Measurement
Core arts industries	Artists: visual arts, craft artists, musicians, dancers, actors, authors etc.	Number of artists
	Dance organizations Music organizations Theater organizations Traditional arts organizations	Number of organizations Employees Annual budget
Publishing industry	Newspapers Magazines/Journals Books Sound Software	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Design industry	Product Fashion Landscape	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Architecture	Architects & Associates Community development associations	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Advertising industry	Advertisement	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Mass communication	Broadcasting TV Video	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Film industry	Production Cinemas	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Cultural service organizations	Booking agencies Managing agencies Programming agencies	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Digital industry	Software provider Internet provider	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue
Tourism	Travel agents Hiking consultants Cultural and historical associations	Number of organizations Employees Capital Revenue

Cultural activities have six categories: intellectual activities, performing arts activities, outside art activities, exhibitions, custom and religious activities, and other activities, such as festivals, awards, and movies. In this part, all activities are group activities, and pay attention on their frequencies of holding (Table 3). Cultural exchange, actually, is a category of cultural activities. However, rapid technology development and globalization increase the opportunities of cultural exchange; thus, it is necessary to list cultural exchange as an independent part (Table 4).

Table 3: Cultural Activities

(2) Cultural Activities		
Categories	Items	Units of Measurement
Intellectual activities	Symposium Courses offered by community collages Continuing education of universities Cultural critique	Number of performing/per year
Performing arts activities	Dance Modern theater Traditional theater Music Popular music	Number of performing/per year Number of organizations/per year
Outside art activities	Performing arts Visual arts Others	Number of performing/per year
Exhibitions	Visual arts Others	Number of exhibitions/ per year
Custom and religious activities	Custom activities Religious activities	Number of the activities/per year
Other activities	Festivals Awards Competitions Movies	Number of the activities/per year

Table 4: Cultural Exchange

(3) Cultural Exchange		
Categories	Items	Units of Measurement
International cultural exchange	Academic exchange Cultural activity exchange Foreign affairs Others	Number/per year Number of countries Number of Cities Number of organizations Proportion in different region
Domestic culture exchange	Cities Counties Bureau of Cultural Affairs	Number of cities/per year Number of counties/per year Number of bureaus of cultural affairs/per year

Cultural Demand Area: Cultural Participation and Cultural Consumption

Cultural participation part addresses the number and proportion of citizens attending cultural activities. Seven categories are intellectual activities, performing arts activities, outside art activities, exhibitions, custom and religious activities, and others, same as arts activities, but add one more category--degree of satisfaction for attending activities. Some individual activities are included, such as reading, private arts classes etc (Table 5). In cultural consumption part, discussing how citizens use their leisure time and money, and what attitudes toward culture activities they have. "How much citizens already spent on cultural activities" and "how much they are willing to pay in the future" are the two key questions (Table 6).

Table 5: Cultural Participation

(4) Cultural Participation		
Categories	Items	Units of Measurement
Participation of intellectual activities	Usage of libraries	Number of people enter libraries/per year Number of people borrowing books/per year Number/total population
	Reading	Hours/per day
	Mass communication: Broadcasting, TV, Video, Internet	Hours/per week
	Private arts courses: writing, music, dance, visual arts	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
	Symposium	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
	Courses offered by community collages	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
	Continuing education of universities	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
Participation of performing arts activities	Dance Modern theater Traditional theater Music Popular music	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
Participation of outside art activities	Performing arts Visual arts Others	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
Participation of exhibitions	Visual arts Others	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
Participation of custom and religious activities	Custom activities Religious activities	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
Participation of other activities	Festivals Awards Competitions Movies	Number of attending/per year Number of attending/total survey population
Degree of satisfaction for attending activities	Category of activity Content Facilities and sites Cost Organizing committee	Degree of satisfaction

Table 6: Cultural Consumption

(5) Cultural Consumption		
Categories	Items	Units of Measurement
Consumption of intellectual activities	Books, newspapers, magazines/journals, Internet	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
	Private arts courses: writing, music, dance, visual arts	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
	Symposium	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
	Courses offered by community collages	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
	Continuing education of universities	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
Consumption of performing arts activities	Dance Modern theater Traditional theater Music Popular music	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
Consumption of outside art activities	Performing arts Visual arts Others	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay/per year
Consumption of exhibitions	Visual arts Others	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
Consumption of custom and religious activities	Custom activities Religious activities	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
Consumption of other activities	Festivals Cable TV, CD, DVD, Video renting, Video games Movies Tourism	Amount of consumption per year/total survey population Amount of willing to pay per year/total survey population
Arrangement of leisure time	Non-working days Actually spending on leisure days	Days/per year
	Hours spending on cultural activities Hours plan to spend on cultural activities	Hours/per week
	The most want cultural activities	Number of wants/total survey population
	Ways to obtain information	Channels Degree of satisfaction

Cultural Resource Distribution Area: Cultural Spaces and Cultural Resources

In cultural resource distribution area, the indicator emphasizes what the Kaohsiung government can provide, such as budget for cultural activities, facilities, and policies, and what citizens can obtain. Two parts are covered in this area: cultural spaces (Table 7) and cultural resources (Table 8). Cultural spaces has eleven categories: sea sites, heritages, historical buildings, performing arts facilities, exhibit spaces, libraries, quiz-cultural spaces, parks, city appearance, movie theaters, and gyms. Frequency and degree of satisfaction for using these facilities are main questions. Cultural resources stress cultural budget, sponsor from corporations and individuals, the setting of cultural policies, volunteer cultivation, and training of artists and arts administrators.

Table 7: Cultural Spaces

(6) Cultural Spaces		
Categories	Items	Units of Measurement
Marine Scenery	Marine topography Light houses Marine museums Viewing sites	Number of sites Numbers Numbers Number of sites
Cultural heritages	Designated heritages Ratification of heritages Re-used of heritages	Number of heritages Number of ratification Number of re-used Numbers/total population
Historical buildings	Designated historical buildings Ratification of historical buildings Re-used of historical buildings	Number of heritages Number of ratification Number of re-used Numbers/total population
Performing arts facilities	Concert Halls Theaters & Auditoriums	Numbers Seats Numbers/total population
Exhibit spaces	Museums Galleries	Numbers Capacity Numbers of collection Number/total population
Libraries	Libraries	Numbers Numbers of collection Numbers/total population
Quasi-cultural spaces	Indoor quasi-facilities for cultural activities Outdoor quasi-facilities for cultural activities	Numbers Capacity Numbers/total population
Natural resource for recreation	Tourism spots Parks Playgrounds	Numbers Square Kilometer/total population
City appearance	Public arts Planting Community re-construction	Numbers Numbers/total population
Others	Movie theaters Gymnasiums and Stadiums	Numbers Capacity Numbers/total population
Degree of satisfaction for using cultural facilities	Usage of cultural facilities Space of most usage Space of most satisfaction	Frequency/per year Frequency/per year Degree of satisfaction

Table 8: Cultural Resources

(7) Cultural Resources		
Categories	Items	Units of Measurement
Cultural budget	Central government City government	Total budget Average amount of cultural budge per person
Distribution of budget	Percentage of cultural budgets shared by disadvantaged groups : Females, Ethnic minorities, Foreigners, Low-income citizens, Children, Teenagers, Senior citizens, Metal/Physical disable minorities	Percentage
	Categories: cultural exchange, cultural spaces, cultural heritages, cultural activities, research	Percentage
Sponsorship	Corporations Individuals	Total budget Average amount of cultural budge per person
Cultural policy setting	Policy setting Policy promotion	Numbers of policy accepting/per year Numbers of sponsorship/per year
Volunteer cultivation	Cultural volunteers Contribution hours	Numbers Numbers/total population Hours Hours/total survey hours
Training of artists and arts administrators.	Arts education at elementary schools Arts education at secondary schools Arts education at high schools Arts education at universities Arts education at private arts institutions	Number of schools Number of students Number of teachers Students/teachers Hours/per week
	Courses of community identity and first language: Elementary schools Secondary schools High schools Universities Private arts institutions	Hours/per week

Conclusion

In conclusion, the construction of cultural indicator system for city level should consider local characteristics and combine existing cultural statistics. Through indicators, the researcher expects to explain Kaohsiung's cultural industries, unique cultural activities, citizens' attitudes towards culture, and cultural environment. In accordance to the experts of Delphi technique in the research, four primary parts of cultural development and five critical categories are suggested. Cultural industries, cultural activities, cultural participation, and cultural consumption are the four dimensions of cultural development. Heritages, historical buildings, cultural budget, cultural policies, and the cultivation of artists and administrators are the five categories. Meanwhile, for Kaohsiung, the most pointing indicators are considered as marine cultural activities and city appearance. Above information is strongly recommended to the government of Kaohsiung while establishing related policies.

The investigation of cultural indicators is a work that cross- department/bureau; thus, it requires the cooperation from different sectors, governmental departments, organizations and citizens. Another thing should mention while working on the investigation is the consideration of demographic data, including sex, age, education, occupation, ethnic, and religion. By this way, the indicators can provide us a thorough understanding.

The indicators can be applied for comparison between Kaohsiung's each district, and between Kaohsiung and other cities in Taiwan, and between Kaohsiung and other cities in the world. After several years of investigation, the index can be utilized for continuous observation and future prediction. The qualitative approach is essential method to increase the level of interpretation of the meaning and the usage of cultural indicators. The constructing cultural indicator system of Kaohsiung city is meaningful when the city attempts to transform from an industrial city to a service-leading city. This research is aiming to become the foundation of cultural policy for Kaohsiung city and to increase the life quality of Kaohsiung citizens. It will become the useful guidelines for the preparation of the "2009 World Game" in Kaohsiung.

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