

UNRISD

UNESCO

occasional
paper series
on culture and
development

CULTURAL INDICATORS
OF WELL-BEING

SOME CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

by
Prasanta K. Pattanaik

united nations educational, scientific and cultural organization

**CULTURAL INDICATORS
OF WELL-BEING
SOME CONCEPTUAL ISSUES**

by Prasanta K. Pattanaik



United Nations Research Institute
for Social Development (UNRISD)
Palais des Nations
CH - 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

☎ (41 22) 798 84 00/798 58 50
Fax (41 22) 740 07 91
Telex 41.29.62 UNO CH
E-mail: info@unrisd.org
World Wide Web Site: <http://www.unicc.org/unrisd>



United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
7, place de Fontenoy
F - 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

☎ (33 1) 45 68 10 00
Fax (33 1) 45 67 16 90
E-mail: clt.wcr@unesco.org
World Wide Web Site: <http://www.unesco.org>

ISSN: 1020-5381

Copyright © UNRISD and UNESCO, 1997

Short extracts from this publication may be reproduced unaltered without authorization on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to UNRISD, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland and UNESCO, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France. UNRISD and UNESCO welcome such applications.

The designations employed in this publication, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material herein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNRISD or UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by UNRISD or UNESCO of the opinions expressed in them.

Foreword on Culture and Development

Culture is both the context for development as well as the missing factor in policies for development. Although such interactions have long been recognized as essential, there has been no worldwide analysis in this field on which new policies could be based. The independent World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD) was therefore established jointly by UNESCO and the United Nations in December 1992 to prepare a policy-oriented report on the interactions of culture and development.

The Commission, composed of distinguished specialists from all regions of the world and presided by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, held a series of consultations with scholars, policy makers, artists and NGO activists on specific regional perspectives and concerns. The ideas and data gathered during this process have provided new and powerful insights into the relationship between culture and development worldwide. **Our Creative Diversity**, the report of the Commission presented to the General Conference of UNESCO and the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1995, recommended that an "annual Report on Culture and Development be published as an independent statement addressed to policy makers and other interested parties".

As highlighted in **Our Creative Diversity**, economic, governance and social activities are deeply embedded in the value systems and practices of societies. Their impact on the form and content of development is pervasive and profound. There is an urgent need to analyse and monitor the evolution of interactions such as: economic growth, culture and globalization; ethics, democracy and development objectives; ethnic conflicts, indigenous peoples and the rights of minorities; environment and inter-generational ethics; values, customs and gender; culture and the growth of cities; and culture and the information highway.

The preparation of a World Culture Report will open up a new field in analytical and quantitative thinking on the relationship between culture and development while providing scientific and creative inputs that will inform policy makers. This requires that tasks of an exploratory nature, both conceptually and in terms of creating quantitative indicators on culture and development, be combined with the wide-ranging collection of existing data and statistics on this theme.

For this reason, the close collaboration of multi-disciplinary agencies, such as UNESCO and UNRISD, is crucial. The joint UNRISD-UNESCO series of Occasional Papers on Culture and Development is a first step in facilitating and catalyzing an international debate on culture and development based on high-quality research. In this, the second paper in the series, the author considers some conceptual issues involved in constructing cultural indicators. To do so, he argues that well-being can be understood in terms of what Amartya Sen has called "functionings" - the

“doings” and “beings” that people value. The author is Professor of Economics at the University of California, Riverside.

A World Culture Report that takes an attractive and innovative approach to the quantification of crucial cultural phenomena can have profound implications for global development and international peace, security and well-being. Quantitative indicators in this area deserve greater attention at all levels of development action, for they can contribute to the dissemination throughout the world of a message of respect for creative diversity, equity and peace.

Lourdes Arizpe
Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO
Member of the World Commission on Culture and Development

Dharam Ghai
Director, UNRISD

March 1997

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Culture and Human Development	2
A. Human development	2
B. Well-being and functionings	3
C. The notion of culture: The broad versus the narrow definition	5
3. Cultural Indicators of Individual and Social Well-Being	6
A. Individual well-being and social well-being	6
B. An alternative route	8
C. Freedom	10
4. The Construction of Indicators	11
A. Indicators of intellectual and aesthetic functionings	11
B. Indicators of social and political functionings	12
5. Aggregation of Indicators	13
References	16

1. Introduction¹

The purpose of this paper is to consider some conceptual issues involved in the construction of cultural indicators of human development. Following publication of **Our Creative Diversity**, the important report of the World Commission on Culture and Development (1995), a number of ideas regarding cultural statistics and indicators were discussed in the UNESCO Workshop on Cultural Indicators of Development held in January 1996.² In this paper, I have sought to pursue a little further some of these ideas and to give them a unified structure by putting them in the analytical framework provided by Sen's (1985, 1987) work on the standard of living. It is my hope that some of the issues will become a little clearer when we view the project from this perspective.

The plan of the paper is as follows. In Section 2, I shall try to clarify the notion of cultural indicators of human development. I argue that human development or well-being should be interpreted in terms of what Sen (1987) called "functionings", and that indicators of human development should be viewed as measures of the different functionings that we value. Cultural indicators are then defined as those indicators of human development which seek to measure the intellectual, aesthetic, social and political functionings - but not the physical functionings such as life expectancy, adequate nourishment, etc. In Section 3, I discuss two distinct ways in which we can seek to implement Sen's functionings approach in the assessment of social well-being. One approach, which is in conformity with the standard theory of welfare economics, seeks first to assess the well-being levels of individuals and then to derive social well-being from the individual well-being levels. While analytically appealing, this approach turns out to be impracticable given the limitations of the data that are likely to be available. Also, while the approach allows us to construct an index of social well-being, by itself, it does not help us to construct separate indicators to capture the different dimensions of social well-being. The second approach seeks to assess the social achievement for each functioning separately (which is more in line with our objective of constructing cultural indicators of social well-being), and then proceeds to assess social well-being on the basis of social achievement in terms of the different functionings. Given certain assumptions, this approach avoids the problem relating to data that we face in the first approach, but it suffers from certain intuitive difficulties of its own. Despite these difficulties, I argue that if we want to construct separate indicators for different dimensions of social well-being (with cultural indicators of social well-being capturing one such dimension), we must pursue the second approach. In Section 4, I discuss some details regarding the construction of specific indicators and the issue of aggregating them.

¹ I am grateful to Achin Chakravarty, Indraneel Dasgupta, Keith Griffin and Craig Gundersen for numerous helpful discussions over the years. In particular, without the generous help and encouragement of Keith Griffin, this paper would not have been written.

² The report of this workshop has been published as **Towards a World Report on Culture and Development: Constructing Cultural Statistics and Indicators**, UNRISD-UNESCO Occasional Paper No: 1, UNRISD, Geneva and UNESCO, Paris, 1997.

2. Culture and Human Development

Before cultural indicators of human development can be constructed, certain basic conceptual and terminological issues need to be clarified. First, it is necessary to be clear about what exactly we mean by indicators of human development. Second, we need to decide which of these indicators can meaningfully be put in the category of cultural indicators.

A. Human development

There can be various reasons why one may try to construct an indicator. For example, we may be interested in analysing the link between the economic prosperity of a society and the political system in the country. In that case, we may construct an indicator of the degree of democracy or authoritarianism in the political system and then observe how this indicator behaves as the level of economic prosperity changes. The indicator here is basically descriptive in nature and is used for the positive (i.e., non-normative) purpose of exploring the causal links that may exist between two very different aspects – economic development and political institutions – of a society. On the other hand, an indicator may have an “evaluative” purpose. Thus, one may construct an indicator that will evaluate the artistic and intellectual achievements of two different societies, so that, on the basis of that indicator, one could say that society A has attained a higher level of intellectual and artistic development than society B. Alternatively, the evaluative purpose may be to rank different countries – or the same country at different points in time – in terms of the overall levels of well-being achieved by these societies. Yet another evaluative purpose may be to capture not the overall well-being of societies but only their achievements in terms of specified ends, which may constitute components of overall social well-being.

In the discussion that follows, I shall focus exclusively on the evaluative purpose. Every evaluation, of course, involves some normative criterion. The normative criterion that I shall consider is based on the notion of human well-being. Thus, I shall assume in constructing the indicators that their purpose is to measure the achievements of a society in terms of ends that are believed to be direct components of human well-being. One can, of course, think of other normative bases for judging different aspects of life, especially those aspects which are usually associated with the arts and letters. For example, one may want to say that the tradition of music in some societies is more developed than the musical tradition in

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_21632

