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Original Article (Qualitative)

Explaining the concept of economic development of culture and arts and its influencing factors

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to present a comprehensive model for the development of the culture and art economy. This research is applicable in terms of purpose, and qualitative in nature, with a data-based theory approach, so that the final model is extracted from real data and the experiences of experts. The data collection process was carried out in two stages: first, reviewing documents including books, articles, theses and upstream cultural and economic documents to design the initial research framework; and second, collecting field data through semi-structured interviews with experts in the fields of culture, art and cultural management. The data were analyzed using theoretical and purposive sampling until saturation. Data analysis was carried out with Strauss and Corbin's three-stage coding including open, axial and selective coding to extract the main and sub-categories and the relationships between them. The coding and textual analysis process of the interviews was carried out in the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA 2018. The results showed: causal conditions (including general culture, the impact of new technologies in the production of theatrical works, research and studies, private investment), contextual factors (including physical infrastructure, education and research for training specialized human resources, professional and specialized infrastructure), intervening factors (including cultural policies, competition with other cultural industries, government support, the economic situation of the society), strategies (including infrastructure development, education and empowerment, financial support for productions, marketing and advertising, international, national and local cooperation), and consequences (including economic growth, strengthening cultural components, development of cultural, social, artistic, and political tourism).

Keywords:

Private investment, economic status of society, development of cultural tourism, marketing and advertising

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

In recent decades, culture and art, as one of the main pillars of sustainable development, have found an important place in the economic and social strategies of countries (li et al., 2020). In the present era, economic development is not based solely on physical and industrial capital, but modern economies are formed by relying on knowledge, creativity and cultural values. In the meantime, the culture and art economy, as one of the important branches of the creative economy, plays a key role in creating employment, increasing GDP and promoting social capital. Today, many governments and international institutions such as UNESCO consider cultural development not as an additional cost, but as a long-term investment for the comprehensive growth of society (herizadeh et al., 2022.)

Performing arts, as one of the dynamic and popular branches of art, have a special place in this. These arts, which include theater, street performances, puppetry, musicals, and other forms of performance, have a profound impact on audiences due to their live and interactive nature and play an effective role in shaping social and cultural attitudes. From an economic perspective, performing arts create numerous job opportunities by encompassing a wide range of production, advertising, educational, and service activities and can make a significant contribution to the growth of the creative economy. In addition, performing arts provide a platform for cultural re-creation, social dialogue, and the enhancement of society's symbolic capital (Weinberg et al., 2021). Despite the significant potential of performing arts, this sector in Iran still faces numerous challenges. The lack of a comprehensive cultural policy-making system, weak financing of artistic productions, lack of performing arts infrastructure, instability of government support, and insufficient attention to cultural marketing are among the factors that have prevented the flourishing of the performing arts economy (Nouri et al., 2024). Many artists operate in unfavorable economic conditions and their access to stable financial resources, institutional support, and opportunities to present their works is limited. While in developed countries, performing arts are recognized as a profitable cultural industry and structures have been established to attract private sector investment, develop the audience market, and support artistic innovations, in Iran this field does not yet have such infrastructure (Cacovean et al., 2021).

From a theoretical perspective, the economics of culture and art is based on the assumption that artistic activities can be a source of economic value creation in addition to their cultural function. In this framework, art, as a cultural commodity, has the ability to be exchanged and generate income; however, this process will only be successful if there is an efficient system for managing resources, training and skilling artists, marketing works, and interacting with the private sector. Designing a model for the development of the culture and arts economy with an emphasis on the performing arts can provide a practical solution for dynamizing the arts economy by identifying these factors and the relationships between them (Darmawan et al., 2020). Therefore, the research question is: What is the model for the development of the culture and arts economy?

Theoretical foundations

Economics of culture

The economics of culture is usually defined with an economic approach and considers cultural and artistic activities as an opportunity to earn income and wealth, which is analyzed and explained with economic methods. According to this view, economics and culture are combined in two completely different ways: (Kefayati et al., 2024). 1- In the form of analyzing the economic or material aspects of cultural and artistic activities and finally in the

form of analysis, 2- Applying the methodology of "economic" or preferably "rational choice" to cultural affairs. In this view, most cultural relations and processes are interpreted in accordance with the economic context and conditions, and it is based on the fact that the growth of culture and art requires an economic basis and, in turn, can affect the economy of society to some extent (Donatella et al., 2022).

Shoja Heydari et al. (2024) studied "Identifying and Prioritizing Cultural Policy and Cultural Economy Evaluation Indicators in Iran". Using a descriptive method, mixed data, and a survey of 30 elites in the fields of culture and economics, they extracted and prioritized cultural policy and cultural economy indicators. The results showed that the main indicators affecting cultural policy include formulation, implementation, and evaluation, and in the field of cultural economics, key indicators include cultural attractions, cultural leverage, cultural entrepreneurship, human capital, and cultural participation.

Farzaliyeva et al. (2024) studied "The Economic Power of Culture: How Art and Heritage Drive Employment". This study analyzed global samples from the United Kingdom, South Korea, and France and showed that cultural industries play an important role in creating direct, indirect, and induced employment, and that government support policies, educational entrepreneurship, and comprehensive statistical tracking are prerequisites for the economic success of this field.

Research Method

The present study is applicable in terms of its purpose, and qualitative in terms of nature, conducted with a data-based theory approach, and its goal is to identify and explain the development pattern of the culture and art economy with an emphasis on the performing arts based on real data from experts. Data were collected in two stages: first, relevant theoretical information and background were collected using a documentary method, and then field data were collected through semi-structured interviews with experts in the field of culture and art. Theoretical and purposive sampling and the snowball technique continued until theoretical saturation. Data analysis was conducted using a three-stage coding method (open, axial, and selective) to extract key concepts and relationships between categories and design a final conceptual model. This approach enabled the systematic identification of components and relationships between them, and the research results can be a basis for formulating cultural development policies in the country. The coding and textual analysis of the interviews were conducted in the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA 2018.

Research findings

The research findings showed that the development of the culture and arts economy with an emphasis on the performing arts requires a complex interaction between cultural, economic, and institutional factors. The results indicated that improving the cultural literacy of the community and increasing audience participation in the performing arts increases the public's motivation and enthusiasm for attending the theater, and at the same time, the use of modern and digital technologies in the production of theatrical works improves the efficiency and quality of productions. Also, private sector investment and the use of tax exemption capacities play an important role in the economic sustainability of the performing arts. Strengthening the physical, educational, and professional infrastructure and creating appropriate support policies pave the way for the development of specialized jobs and increasing public access to the performing arts. Ultimately, these factors, along with marketing strategies and national and international interactions, lead to economic growth, strengthening cultural components,

developing cultural tourism, and promoting social capital, and create a solid foundation for dynamizing the culture and arts economy in the country.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results showed that the development of the culture and art economy in Iran, especially in the field of performing arts, is subject to a set of causal, contextual, and intervening factors, the interaction between which determines the path of growth and sustainability of this field. Public culture, as one of the most important causal factors, plays a key role in motivating and attracting audiences to theater. Increasing public enthusiasm and developing cultural literacy provide the basis for strengthening the consumption of theatrical works and promoting social capital. This finding is consistent with the studies of Farzaliyeva et al. (2024) and Khendstani et al. (2021), which show that performing arts can play a connecting and institutionalizing role in cultural values as a social and cultural engine.

Another effective factor in this model is the impact of new technologies on the production of theatrical works. These results are consistent with the findings of Weinberg et al. (2021) who have introduced digital technology as a tool for enhancing the audience experience and improving productivity in the arts industries.

Research and studies have also shown that identifying the needs and interests of audiences and examining the social and cultural impacts of theater not only leads to improving the quality of works, but can also be the basis for targeted policies in developing the arts economy. This is in line with the findings of Shoja Heydari et al. (2024).

Private investment and participation of the semi-governmental and private economic sectors play an important role in financing and expanding theatrical activities. Tax incentives and economic support provide the necessary incentive for investment and can ensure the financial sustainability of theatrical productions. These findings are consistent with the studies of Masoudinia et al. (2021) and Farzaliyeva et al. (2024), who consider investment and economic support to be key factors in the prosperity of the cultural economy.

In the context of contextual factors, physical and educational infrastructure is essential for the development of the performing arts economy. The construction of well-equipped halls, the development of specialized training centers, the establishment of schools and university majors related to theater increase the capacity to cultivate specialized human resources and improve the quality of theatrical productions. These results are in line with the studies of Izadkhah et al. (2024) and Jafari Babadi et al. (2022), who emphasize that professional education and infrastructure are the basis for economic and cultural prosperity.

In the area of intervening factors, cultural policies, competition with other cultural industries, and government support are of great importance. These findings are in line with the studies of Shoja Heydari et al. (2024) and Weinberg et al. (2021).

Finally, the consequences of developing the culture and arts economy include economic growth, strengthening cultural components, developing cultural tourism, improving social skills, artistic innovation, and influencing policymaking. Revenue generation through investment, ticket sales and advertising, creation of sustainable job opportunities and development of cultural and tourism capacities indicate the direct impact of performing arts on the economy and society. These findings are in line with the studies of Farzaliyeva et al. (2024) and Kefayati et al. (2024) who consider arts and culture as both an economic resource and a factor of social development.