Cultural Observatories as Digital Platforms of Public Value in Brazil: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract. For enhancing transparency and compliance with access to information laws, government portals provide information about investments, investing companies, and beneficiary sectors in creative economy. However, the dispersion and poor structuring of data on government investments in culture limit the understanding of the public value generated by these actions, both for public managers themselves and for society. Based on an empirical quantitative study with collected data frow digital portals of two Brazilian different subnational states, this article aims to discuss how government portals can structure their data on cultural investments in a way that translates its public value. As results, we propose directives for the structuring of culture data in government platforms that contemplates dimensions in a way thatsupports the perception of public value.

Keywords. Culture investments, electronic government, public value.

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1. Introduction

In Brazil, cultural support is structured within a complex legal framework that encompasses both federal and municipal levels, with mechanisms for tax incentives and accountability [1]. Through it, companies and individuals can allocate part of their Income Tax due to approved cultural projects in exchange for tax benefits. In accordance with Brazilian legislation, both the federal government and subnational states are required to promote transparency in public administration, which includes disclosing relevant information about cultural investments on their respective websites.

Although Brazilian legislation advocates for transparency and the availability of data regarding cultural investments, in practice, such information is not always integrated and structured appropriately on government websites. Furthermore, there is a notable absence of crucial information regarding the socioeconomic impact of cultural investments, which undermines society's perception of public value.

Seeking to address the theoretical gap—i.e. the compromised effectiveness of public value in government websites—this article presents an analytical study of two government portals from different subnational states in Brazil. The study aims to discuss how the cultural investment data available on these platforms can generate public value.

2. Theoretical background

Public value refers to the tangible and intangible benefits that government policies and services provide to society.

Therefore, creating public value is the primary responsibility of public managers, who must balance the needs and expectations of citizens with the available capacities and resources. E-government, in turn, is the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to transform government processes and services, increasing efficiency, accessibility, and transparency [2].

The perception of value in the creative economy is related to how individuals and companies interact with digital public services. For creative entrepreneurs, easy access to information, registration, and funding services is essential for decision-making. An efficient e-government not only reduces bureaucratic barriers but also improves user experience, increasing trust in public administration [18].

Therefore, e-government plays a crucial role in promoting the creative economy, providing the infrastructure and incentives needed for the development of this dynamic sector. Addressing the challenges of e-government implementation and investing in continuous innovation are essential steps to ensure that governments can create sustainable public value in an increasingly digitalized world [21]

3. Methodology

This study employs quantitative analysis of secondary data and documentary analysis to conduct a comparative study between the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre in the context of digital cultural data platforms. The research uses two main sources of data: Rio de Janeiro's "Carnival Data" reports (2022-2024), and documents from the Itaú Cultural Observatory. The main source of quantitative data is the so called Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNADC), carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

The PNADC was chosen over the RAIS (Annual Social Information Report) due to its greater scope, since Around 55% of Brazilian workers in creative occupations do not have a formal work permit or are self-employed. The PNADC allows us to capture this informality, which is characteristic of the cultural sector. For this study, we used data for the period 2022-2024, focusing on the metropolitan regions of Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre.

Data processing involved multiple steps to ensure a comparative analysis between the two cities. Initially, after extracting the PNADC microdata, filtering was carried out to keep only the data for the capitals Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre for the period 2022-2024.

To operationalize this classification, three main categories of analysis were created:
1. Creative Employees in Creative Sectors - professionals who carry out creative activities in cultural/creative sectors
2. Non-Creative Employees in Creative Sectors - professionals in support roles in cultural/creative sectors
3. Creative Employees in Non-Creative Sectors - creative professionals working in traditional sectors

The creative sectors were identified using the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE 2.0), resulting in 10 sector groups: Fashion; Craft Activities; Publishing; Film, Music, Radio and TV; Information Technology; Architecture; Advertising; Design; Performing Arts and Visual Arts; Museums and Heritage.

4. Creative Labor Market: A Comparative Analysis Between Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre.

A comparative analysis between Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre reveals significant differences in both the structure of the creative labor market and the availability of sector-related data. While Rio de Janeiro has developed a digital platform specifically for monitoring the Carnival ("Carnaval de Dados"), Porto Alegre still lacks similar instruments for cultural data management and transparency [26][27][28].

Data from the Continuous PNAD (National Household Sample Survey) highlight significant structural differences between the two cities. Porto Alegre has a higher percentage of workers in creative occupations (10.72%) compared to Rio de Janeiro (9.94%). However, when analyzing the creative sector as a whole, Rio de Janeiro exhibits greater robustness, with 9.55% of workers, compared to 8.57% in Porto Alegre [22].

In terms of earnings, Rio de Janeiro presents higher values for professionals working simultaneously in creative occupations and sectors (R$ 6,317), whereas in Porto Alegre, this average is R$ 5,384. However, for creative occupations in non-creative sectors, Porto Alegre has a slightly higher average income (R$ 7,216 versus R$ 7,139

in Rio de Janeiro).

The most striking differences appear in the educational and racial profile of workers. In Porto Alegre, 80.94% of creative workers hold a higher education degree, a percentage that drops to 74.56% in Rio de Janeiro. The racial

composition also shows significant contrasts: while in Porto Alegre, 86.42% of workers are white and 13.58% are black/brown, in Rio de Janeiro, these proportions are 65.11% and 34.89%, respectively, indicating greater racial diversity in Rio's creative market.

Regarding Carnival, Rio de Janeiro exemplifies how structured data management can contribute to sectoral development. According to data from "Carnaval de Dados," the event mobilizes approximately 45,000 direct workers, including 20,000 in the Sambadrome, 18,400 municipal employees, and 10,000 licensed street vendors For 41% of these workers, Carnival represents their primary annual source of income, underscoring its economic significance [24][26][27][28].

Analyzing the structure of the cultural labor market in both cities is enriched when considering specific data from Rio de Janeiro's Carnival between 2022 and 2024. While PNAD data provide a general overview of the creative sector, Carnival data reveal how a specific cultural manifestation can significantly impact the local economy.

The profile of Carnival workers presents characteristics that differentiate it from the broader creative market. While the PNAD analysis shows high levels of formal education (74.56% with higher education in Rio) , the Carnival sector exhibits a more diversified and informal structure. The predominance of informal labor (42%) and service providers (29%) indicates a specific work dynamic within this cultural segment [26][27][28].

Carnival presents a significantly different racial profile compared to the broader creative market. While PNAD data indicate a predominance of white workers in the creative sector (65.11% in Rio), in Carnival, 67.6% of workers are black [26][27][28].

While the creative sector shows high levels of formal education (74.56% with higher education in Rio), the Carnival sector exposes significant labor precarity. The high percentage of black (67.6%) and young (51.3% under 36) workers, combined with the predominance of informal links (42%) and low wages (35.2% earning between 1 and 3 minimum wages, 33.3% earning up to 1 minimum wage), suggests patterns of labor precarization.

The employment structure analysis reveals that only 1% of Carnival workers hold formal employment contracts, while the vast majority fall into informal work and service provision. This seasonality, characteristic of the Carnival event, contributes to the economic instability of cultural sector workers. Despite high educational qualifications, these professionals rarely hold employer positions or establish stable employment relationships, perpetuating a cycle of precariousness in the cultural sector.

This scenario is particularly significant considering that 41% of these workers rely on Carnival as their primary annual income source [24] highlighting how the lack of cultural sector structuring can contribute to maintaining precarious labor conditions, even in large-scale economic events. This comparative analysis demonstrates how the availability of detailed data on a specific cultural manifestation (as in Rio de Janeiro) allows for a deeper understanding of its socioeconomic impact, reinforcing the importance of cultural data management and monitoring tools, which are currently absent in the Porto Alegre context.

5. Final Remarks

This study has explored the role of cultural observatories as digital platforms for public value generation in Brazil, particularly through a comparative analysis of the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre. By assessing the availability, structure, and impact of cultural investment data, we have highlighted the critical importance of well-structured digital governance mechanisms in fostering transparency, efficiency, and public engagement in the cultural sector.

One of the key contributions of this study is the identification of significant disparities in the structuring and accessibility of cultural investment data between the two cities. The presence of a structured data observatory in Rio de Janeiro, specifically for Carnival illustrates how digital platforms can enhance transparency, facilitate decision-making, and generate public value. The detailed employment and demographic data collected through the "Carnaval de Dados" initiative exemplify best practices that could be replicated in other cities to improve cultural policy management [26][27][28].

Data/Software Access Statement

The statistical software STATA was used to read and analyze the microdata from the PNADC (Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua - Continuous National Household Sample Survey).

Contributor Statement

Describe properly all author contributions and all types of contributions; see Policies (tudelft.nl).

Use of AI

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used Claude.ai in order to optimize Stata`s code. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed, edited, made the content their own and validated the outcome as needed, and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Conflict Of Interest (COI)

There is no conflict of interest

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