EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Title:
Performance of cultural heritage institutions: a regional perspective

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Subject area: *(please, indicate the subject area which corresponds to the paper)*
Special session S16 –Spatial Perspectives in Cultural Economics

Abstract: *(minimum 1500 words)*
Most studies on performance evaluation in the cultural sector are based on efficiency assessment of a network of institutions, taking them as the main objects to be analysed. There is therefore ample literature on performance evaluation of libraries, museums, symphony orchestras, theatres and many other cultural entities. However, very few works take territorial divisions as the case study in the line of closely related areas of research, such as the efficiency evaluation of tourist destinations. Under this approach, a virtual territorial production function is designed which includes several cultural resources and endowments concerning one particular branch of culture in order to optimize outcomes defined mainly as services to the public, i.e. demand success. This focus proves both challenging and valuable. First, because based on a similar optimization approach for cultural heritage institutions located in a given area, such as regions, we can analyse who perform better or worse in a country and why. Two-stage evaluation models might thus be appropriate to study the effect of environmental variables on regional cultural efficiency, especially those related with the level of training and economic development, among others. Second, results could be useful for policy implications and for extending current knowledge on how institutions perform differently over areas, following not a managerial but a neo-institutional approach.

On the basis of these premises, our main aim is to evaluate the efficiency of cultural heritage institutions from a regional perspective in Spain. We consider the three most emblematic institutions in this area; namely, museums, libraries, and archives, for a large time lapse from 2000 to 2020. We establish a homogenous production function that uses primary resources of capital and labour force (facilities and employees), as well as the main cultural collection of each institution (artistic, bibliographical or document holdings, respectively). The latter is considered a kind of permanent cultural capital, acting as carry-

over throughout time. As regards outcomes, we focus on services to the public and tasks related with this function. As a methodological approach, we adopt a two-stage efficiency evaluation model. First, we assess the regional performance of these cultural heritage institution networks through non-parametric techniques. Specifically, we apply dynamic DEA models (Tone and Tsutui, 2010 and 2016) and build dynamic Malmquist indices to measure productivity and to study the effect of technological progress. Second, we estimate how environmental variables may determine regional efficiency, selecting for that purpose socio-economic indicators which characterize the level of economic development in regions. In this section, and following Simar and Wilson (2017), truncated regression models are applied. We use a sample of 17 regions corresponding to Spain's territorial structure, for ten time slots between 2000 and 2020, given that data on the main cultural heritage institutions are published in even-numbered years. We plan to analyse regional cultural efficiency for each thematic group of heritage institutions and to adopt a homogenous approach for the whole cultural network at a regional level using weighted index numbers to standardise inputs and outputs of each kind of heritage entity.