

Social vulnerability access to culture as a determinant

Abstract

The objective of this article is to analyze access to culture as one of the determining factors in social vulnerability. To achieve the objective, the methodology used was documentary, with a quantitative-qualitative approach and of a descriptive nature; the method used was the inductive one. For its part, the search for information was carried out online in Google Scholar, in the Scielo database, Dialnet. The population was made up of the documents registered under the format of theses/articles/books consulted, with a total of 18 documents, of which were selected through criteria, it is made up of a total of 11 documents from the last two decades.

It is concluded that social vulnerability corresponds to a set of social and cultural factors, including access to culture expressed at the macro level in public policies, cultural, educational and micro systems, including cultural institutions or programs, added to this the educational contexts, the quality of the professionals who socialize cultural knowledge, the climate of cultural access, cultural consumption and the leadership that coherently complements said processes.

These processes are of vital importance because they specify cultural policies in the social, community and family contexts, in such a way that, without them, there will be no national, regional or local cultural policy that allows cultural access for all, as an effective tool to combat and reduce social vulnerability effectively.

Keywords: social vulnerability, access to culture, social transformation, risk management, social justice

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Introduction

The historical course of humanity has configured a scenario in the 21st century where the term social vulnerability increasingly occupies a greater presence in scientific, academic, political, journalistic, health, mass media and daily life; Just to cite a traumatic episode in the sense indicated, it would be worth mentioning the experience recently lived with the Covid-19 pandemic.

In one way or another, social vulnerability is understood as the specific level of exposure and fragility suffered by people in the face of a threat of a diverse nature; determined by multiple socioeconomic, institutional, psychological and cultural factors. Within the set of cultural factors that have an impact on social vulnerability, access to culture becomes one of the most significant because it allows for the appropriation of values, both tangible and intangible, produced by humanity in its development, which defines people's ability to prepare, respond and recover from hazardous events in different contexts.

Social vulnerability constitutes a problem that affects various societies, in one way or another during the last decades, regardless of the level of development they reach, hence it continues to gain importance today. Despite the efforts of governments, civil society and the International Community to combat it, this problem continues to be present in many areas of people's lives in the face of the multiple threats they face. In the Ibero-American context, various authors assume social vulnerability as an object of study.

Among those who stop in their manifestation before natural phenomena: Bohórquez,¹ in the cultural sphere: Kalman,² Bayardo,³ Güell, P. and Peters,⁴ in the application of policies: Busso,⁵ regarding social asymmetries: Camarero,⁶ in the face of health crises: Feito,⁷ the relationship between this vulnerability, health and migration: Salgado de Snyder, González, Bojorquez and Infante.⁸ However,

the visibility of access to culture as one of the determining factors in social vulnerability is insufficient.

This issue cannot be postponed due to the transversality of culture in the lives of people, communities and each nation. Through an approximation, this article analyzes access to culture as one of the determining factors in social vulnerability. To achieve the objective, the documentary methodology is used, with a quantitative-qualitative approach and of a descriptive nature; the method used was the inductive one. For its part, the search for information was carried out online in Google Scholar, in the Scielo database, Dialnet.

The population was made up of the documents registered under the format of theses/articles/books consulted, with a total of 18 documents located, of which they were selected through criteria, being made up of a total of 11 documents from the last two decades. The first section seeks to limit the definition of the concept: social vulnerability, as well as some elements that can be considered distinctive for such vulnerability. Secondly, a general characterization of the relationships established between such vulnerability and access to culture is addressed, until revealing the subsistence of access to culture for social vulnerability.

Social vulnerability is determined by a set of social and cultural factors, including access to culture expressed at the macro level in public policies, cultural, educational and micro systems, including cultural institutions or programs, added to this the educational contexts, the quality of the professionals who socialize the cultural knowledge, the climate of cultural access, the cultural consumption and the leadership that coherently complements these processes. These processes are of vital importance because they specify cultural policies in the social, community and family contexts, in such a way that, without them, there will be no national, regional or local cultural policy that allows cultural access for all, as an effective tool, to combat and reduce social vulnerability effectively.

Conceptual aspects: diversity about social vulnerability

One of the main features of the current context is the synchronous incidence of economic, social, regulatory, legal, ethical, food, health, gender, political and institutional deficiencies that place a large number of people at high exposures and vulnerabilities. The fragility that large human groups suffer more and more, is made visible both in the specialized literature, the mass media, social networks and by the tragic impact of high human and material losses in the reality that occurs.

For Kelly and Adger, the origin of the word, social vulnerability, is found in the Latin *vulnus* or *vulnerare*, which means 'a wound' or 'to hurt'; these authors conclude that: "Specifically, the word is derived from the late Latin *vulnerabilis* [...], a term used by the Romans to describe the state of a wounded soldier on the battlefield, therefore, when wounded, one is at risk of new attacks".

Around social vulnerability there is a multiplicity of approaches and perspectives of analysis constituting the conceptual treatment a disputed terrain where dissent has prevailed over consensus in research. In the treatment of the Busso concept,⁵ he defines social vulnerability, "...as a multidimensional process that converges in the risk or probability of the individual, home or community of being hurt, injured or damaged before changes or permanence of external situations and/or internal".

In this same sense, Salgado de Snyder; Gonzalez; Bojorquez & Infante⁸ understand social vulnerability as "...a condition resulting from the absence or limitation of personal, family, community, social and economic resources, the interaction of such resources, however scarce they may be, and the management that the person makes of them". On the other hand, the International Red Cross defines "vulnerability" "...as the diminished capacity of a person or a group of people to anticipate, cope with and resist the effects of a natural hazard or one caused by human activity, and to recover from them. It is a relative and dynamic concept".⁹

Around social vulnerability, the multiplicity of the variables that define it and the difficulty to measure and integrate them and, to a better extent, demonstrate the complex behavior of the variables involved are recognized. On the other hand, Liedo¹⁰ states that the academic literature on the concept of "vulnerability" is recent and is still in the process of consolidation. He distinguishes, in general terms, two currents of study: the first, which reflects on the "ontological vulnerability", shared by all human beings; and the second, on "social" or "situational" vulnerability, generated in certain specific situations of injustice or oppression.

While García¹¹ maintains that the concept of social vulnerability has already reached enough consistency in the social sciences, governments and development cooperation agencies, although it cannot yet be affirmed that it is fully consolidated. Liedo¹⁰ contributes that when it comes to "social vulnerability" it should focus on the conditions that generate inequalities in the degrees of vulnerability that a person can face, due to an unequal distribution of resources or capabilities. What could be called in different ways: "social vulnerability" Feito,⁷ "situational" Gilson¹² or "particular" Delgado.¹³

Likewise, Salgado de Snyder; Gonzalez; Bojorquez & Infante⁸ formulate that social vulnerability appears as an important variable in the analysis of inequality and its effects on social organization and the health of populations. For these authors, social aspects: class, gender, ethnicity, sexual preferences; biological: sex and age; and the structural conditions of the context: culture, politics, economy determine the degree of this vulnerability in an individual or group.

The perspectives and approaches on social vulnerability presented here and others located in the scientific literature make visible the concept of "social vulnerability" through human fragility in the face of a series of events and/or phenomena of different entities: natural, social, economic, legal and political, among others.

The evolution of the treatment of this problem is carried out from certain fields or approaches in which the state of defenselessness of individuals in specific situations is analyzed. Despite the various disciplines from which the concept, object of study, is analyzed, there is a consensus on common elements that allow progress on new ways of understanding about the different ways in which vulnerability manifests itself and the relevance of its theoretical approach. methodological. Although different dimensions of analysis of the same phenomenon are discussed and proposed: social vulnerability, it is agreed that such vulnerability should be projected as an articulating axis given its epistemic scope and transversal problematic field.

Thus, the analysis of social vulnerability is related to some potential risk that has multiple content associated with security, health, migration, natural disasters and the inability to respond to such threats due to a deficit of cultural values. The scopes reveal the probability that all human beings and societies in general are more or less vulnerable, but what is essential lies in determining the degree of vulnerability in which social groups, communities, families and specific people find themselves, with respect to the rest.

Hence, it is necessary to identify the causes that originate the state of defenselessness, determine and point out the human, physical and social assets or capital available to mitigate adverse and hostile impacts, the necessary measures to transform the contexts where it occurs and reproduces vulnerability; the procedures and actions to implement strategies that allow them to adapt and maintain or achieve their quality of life. In general, it can be concluded that in the treatment of social vulnerability there is a wide plurality both at a conceptual and methodological level.

Consensus is also reached on two central elements that such a concept encompasses: the threat to which one is exposed (be it natural, social, political, legal, that is, of a different nature) and the capacity of different systems and actors (sectors, territories, institutions, communities, people) to face these threats. From the perspective of this study, access to culture is not only associated with qualitative characteristics, but also with the knowledge and use of cultural values, while appropriation and participation become central to accessing cultural assets in all their magnitude, therefore that has a strong political sense: the empowerment of specific people from their daily lives intertwined with the social structure.

Without intending to exhaust the subject that is presented in this article, but with the purpose of revealing how access to culture influences social vulnerability, the following pages are necessary to achieve the objective of this work. In them you will not find definitive reflections but rather they are the result of the dynamics in which the relationship under study takes place.

Access to culture: a determinant of social vulnerability, some reflections

The social vulnerability associated with access to culture contains the limitations of individuals, groups and communities to the specific nature of cultural goods, services and industries, in terms of values, beliefs and identities. In this sense, access to culture is a determining factor of vulnerability, while culture and its diversity become a common heritage of humanity and serve as a motor for sustainable

development, the recognition of the contribution of indigenous peoples' knowledge and traditional, the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms.³

Therefore, when addressing this issue, some authors incorporate the right of access to culture, understanding it as "...that subjective position of the individual linked to the claim to know, acquire culture and thus enrich his person, mind, reason, spirit supposedly existing, etc. A right whose exercise... is perhaps an invitation to become a forced consumer of cultural goods (instrumental or superfluous) that civilization itself produces, but a right, ultimately still linked to what is understood by "free development of the personality".

It is about the right of access to culture as part of the most generic nucleus of what we usually refer to with the expression "right to culture": the citizen's right to access and participate actively or passively in culture".¹⁴ Therefore, the democratization of culture is imposed, in relation to its transforming, liberating and emancipating capacity of the citizen; question that some authors raise has not been satisfied.¹⁴

The gaps between people become visible in access to cultural resources, while culture is a 'good' in the sense that its products and services constitute appropriate objects; desirable, for this reason cultural access remains scarce or regulated and, for this, it is administered according to some rule of inclusion and exclusion: be it money, the right or the conditions of participation in cultural enjoyment. Referred to in this way, access to culture is not only significant because it is symbolic, but also because it is used for the formation of identities by individuals and because a spiritually and morally superior character is attributed to this process, which is usually described with the term 'authenticity'.¹⁵

If culture is understood as: "...the specific way in which the vital activity of men is organized and developed, represented in the fruits of their social production, in the set of relationships created by humanity through socio-historical practice and that the subject establishes in relation to nature, and other men, as well as to himself, in the set of material and spiritual values".¹⁶ It can be understood, taking into account the previous conception of culture, that access to culture becomes the main source for all people to lead a life that is not only active but dignified in the conglomerate of social relations in which they are immersed.

It is not only about knowledge, but also about instrumental procedures, skills and values. Likewise, some authors suggest that when studying the question of access to social practices, to a large extent, the possibility of participating in their use with people who know and use them should be taken into account; Therefore, the examination of the concept of access from the perspective of sociocultural theory is pertinent from the triad: appropriation, participation and access.² It is pertinent to incorporate this contribution when it comes to access to culture, that is, how people and groups appropriate, participate and access the tangible and intangible products that culture in its broad and specific sense generates.

On the other hand, various authors maintain that in Latin American literature it is common to find that economic, educational and age determining factors determine, to a large extent, the modes of cultural appropriation and consumption.¹⁷ In this context, it is significant to highlight that the greater availability of cultural goods and services, with a progressive increase in the individuality of people, condition a greater possibility of appropriation, consumption and access to cultural goods.

Also, currently societies show multiple simultaneous forms of stratification, these define social belongings and lifestyles. Particular forms of stratification of people, among them: race, ethnicity, surnames or gender, may in principle be contradictory to the forms proper to a society. But in real societies, such principles of organization of society can coexist, each with more or less weight, giving rise to hybrid forms. Hence, all people do not have equal access to culture.

Meanwhile, structural positions limit the ability of individuals, groups and communities to choose and to acquire or access cultural assets.⁴ Access to culture is cardinal because it provides the cultural capital of each person, without which men and women find themselves vulnerable to the various threats that emerge from different scenarios. The cultural capital as: "... condition of possibility for a person, a group or a territory to develop and overcome situations of poverty and exclusion. It provides subjects with conscience, orientation, moral judgment, spirits, capacities and resources for reflection, creativity and communication. Cultural capital is progressively crucial to be able to empower and develop in the infomodern society we live in, characterized by reflexivity, networks, globality, diversity, informationalization, risk and participation".¹⁸

Likewise, the access of all people to culture is presented as a matter of citizenship rights; an issue that finds greater obstacles in the case of groups, communities and human beings in vulnerable conditions. Therefore, it is essential to adopt sufficient and effective regulatory, political and institutional instruments to reduce the existing gaps. The diagnosis of the gaps, asymmetries and barriers faced by people in situations of vulnerability makes it possible to promote policies that improve their exercise of the right of access to culture, as a public good.

The importance of access to culture is defined because it contains the direction regarding the forms and intellectual, material and institutional products that have characterized humanity in its evolution. Access to culture produces cultural dynamics, which carry the capacity of individuals, families and communities to underpin or contribute to a necessary social sustainability,⁶ essential in order for living spaces to generate innovative and attractive environments for the public. development of a full life for everyone, an essential condition for the transcendence in time of societies and therefore of humanity.

Access to culture allows, to a large extent, to achieve the diversity of production areas for the sustainability of the territory.¹⁹ Focused in this way, it is important to gain clarity regarding the fact that culture integrates both the most general modes, as well as the peculiarities, that characterize the vital activity of people, since general and specific material and spiritual values are fixed.

In this way, reference can be made to access to national, territorial or local culture; the various spheres in which it is produced and reproduced. Poverty is not only a consequence but also a cause of the lack of access to culture, as a factor of vulnerability, agreeing that: "...poverty exacerbates the inequalities of cultural capital relative to means of reflection and expression (...). The poor and excluded have fewer information and communication resources (...) The poor suffer a barrier to their participation in public conversation (...) The poorer and more excluded the person and the environment in which they live, the less access to the press, fewer access the internet at home and less participate in social networks. If we compare it with someone who lives in an upper-middle-class area, a citizen who lives in a marginal area is 31% less likely to be able to access the press and news, 71% less likely to have access at home to the internet and 58% less to participate in social networks".¹⁸

Thus, access to culture defines the activity that each person can carry out in the society where they live and modulates the definition of the spiritual world, the feelings, the will, the interests, the conscience and the activism of the groups, communities, families and individuals on an individual level. The culture of each person cannot exist without the more general link in which it is formed, developed and reproduced, that is, the culture of the group, people or nation as a whole. In the dialectic of the universal, the general and the particular, the social subject of culture fixes its content.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that social vulnerability is a problem that affects various societies, in one way or another, regardless of the level of development they reach, which is why it has gained importance today. Regarding social vulnerability and access to culture, there are various conceptualizations and both issues have been addressed from various perspectives in order to promote, generate and disseminate knowledge through research. In this same sense, it is significant to emphasize that social vulnerability is determined by a set of social and cultural factors, including access to culture expressed at the macro level in public policies, cultural, educational and micro systems, among them the cultural institutions or programs, added to this the educational contexts, the quality of the professionals who socialize cultural knowledge, the climate of cultural access, cultural consumption and the leadership that complements it.²⁰

The training and formation of cultural leaders is extremely important since they transfer cultural policies to social, community and family contexts. Access to culture makes it possible to combat and effectively reduce social vulnerability. In this way, it is shown that access to culture contains the democratization of culture, in relation to its transforming, liberating and emancipating capacity of the citizen; question that allows access to the forms and intellectual, material and institutional products that have characterized humanity in its evolution.

It also allows achieving the diversity of production areas for national sustainability, territories and at the local level. Access to culture, insofar as it contributes the cultural capital of each person, defines the condition of vulnerability of men and women in the face of the various threats that emerge from different scenarios. Said access determines the activity that each person can display in the society where they live by defining the spiritual world and the activism of groups, communities, families and individuals at the individual level. Access to culture by defining the position, right, consumption and participation of each human being with respect to the tangible and intangible values produced by humanity becomes an essential tool to manage the wealth generated by humanity in order to reduce and eradicate vulnerabilities. of all nations, peoples, communities and individuals.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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