



## Cultural factors and economic development issues : How to include cultural variables in economic models ?

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### ABSTRACT

The economy is inevitably linked to culture and history. Culture extends to traditions, history and social heritage. Taking culture into account as a significant variable in economic development is indeed a debate of particular importance within economics. Broadening the study of development factors is a perspective that aims to integrate cultural factors into economic development models. This work presents culture and heritage both as an economic input and a tool for attractiveness and influence. This makes it possible to put into practice the interactions that exist between cultural aspects and economic factors. The objective of the article is to reflect on the importance and the way of integrating the cultural aspects that promote economic development and which constitute a decisive element in any design of development model. This consists of questioning first the role of cultural factors in social progress, then their coexistence with economic rationality and their place in economic policy as invisible factors of development.

### INTRODUCTION

Culture is an ambiguous and polysemous concept, its meaning and interpretation have varied over time. According to its most widely accepted definition, it is the set of lifestyles and ways of being of a given society. That is to say, a system of values that brings together the practices, representations, traditions and attitudes that mark the way individuals behave and the development of territories (Lacour et al., 2014). This value system, with its beliefs, matrimonial rules and convictions shared by all of these individuals, constitutes the traits that characterize each society (Facchini, 2008). UNESCO (2010) defines culture as the set of spiritual, intellectual and affective traits that mark social orientations and that punctuate social life. These traits reverberate in the form of arts, languages, ways of life and practices that distinguish people. These different elements together constitute the socio-cultural heritage that underlines their ways of thinking and acting. Generally, culture is not present as part of standard

economic analysis (Kahn, 2010). The absence of the cultural dimension makes economic theory a-cultural; it is based exclusively on assumptions of a material and technical nature (Facchini, 2008). Consequently, cultural factors do not find a concrete place in any development policy despite the fact that they are present in economic interactions and social realities where economic factors and cultural factors are intertwined (Kahn, 2010).

Indeed, culture is the product of a set of social, historical and psychological elements which, through permanent interaction, constitute a coherent whole impacting other aspect of life, in particular the economy. The elements of culture materialize in the form of rules and behaviors that mark the behavior of individuals and shape their social and economic interactions. Moreover, they make up the cultural and social capital of society and represent its ability to cope with the various constraints imposed by the physical and economic conditions of the environment (Parra and Moulaert, 2011).

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Culture influences how individuals coordinate in markets and engage in business. This reality imposes the importance of taking into account cultural aspects as development factors, since they make it possible to generate several resources likely to meet development needs. These resources reorganize economic activities in order to promote the development of society, and accompany the improvement of its social well-being (Facchini, 2008). In France, culture represents a direct economic weight of 2.3% in the overall added value of the economy (Lacour et al., 2014).

Moreover, the term development has a broader definition that encompasses several meanings ranging from economic growth to a set of conceptions that emphasize social, cultural and demographic progress. These positively influence the quality of life of society. Development makes it possible to define a process for improving social well-being whose determinants cannot be limited to material and economic elements alone. It is therefore obvious that culture has significant impacts on the well-being and development of society (UNESCO, 2010), and therefore on the development of productive activity.

However, economic activity is part of human and social activities which are indeed marked by aspects with a strong cultural content. In addition, cultural variables represent a framework in which individuals who share the same norms and rules of life interact (Stien, 2012). Thus, they constitute factors of influence whose impact must be recognized on actions and economic choices. This is why culture deserves more importance to prepare the future of societies. It can even become a *sine qua non* for development by contributing to the prosperity of a country.

Thus the neo-classical perspective of economic analysis can be overcome by opting for an economic policy that simultaneously integrates the economic and cultural factors that impact productive activity according to the objectives of global, equitable and

sustainable development. This is why it is a priority to develop a new vision that offers a favorable framework for integrating cultural factors that are really relevant to economic practice (Renou and Charmettant, 2019). This requires realizing the importance of their impact on economic prosperity, quality of life and social well-being.

Essentially, and starting from this vision, this work questions the possibility of integrating this cultural dimension into economic analysis. This may put an end to an era where cultural factors are always excluded from any search for an economic development model. This is a perspective that aims to direct the attention of decision-makers in favor of culture and its potential role in the development research process. This integration of cultural issues is an approach that aims to broaden the study of development factors to extra-economic variables. These are invisible factors of development.

In this context, after a presentation, in the first section, of the importance of culture in the socio-economic context, the second section will be devoted to a reflection on the role of cultural factors in social progress. Then, the third section exposes the interactions that can exist between cultural factors and the postulate of economic rationality, and discusses the issues of their integration into economic policy, with a view to an economic model that guarantees their inclusion. Finally, the fourth section will be an opportunity to propose these cultural issues as invisible factors in any development process by illustrating their significant impact through their role in human development and sustainable development (Lahourich et al., 2022)..

## 1. CULTURE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Culture encompasses a set of aspects common to individuals living in society. It can manifest itself in the form of spiritual and intellectual traits or in the form of concrete practices. These are elements that have been forged over the course of the history of a society and which tend to meet its different

psychological, affective and material needs. In fact, culture can be considered as a set of facts and practices that highlight the way of life of a society, and which generate the multiple constraints imposed by its environment. Consequently, it represents a construct designed to solve the problems that this society may encounter in its interaction with its environment.

Taking into account the cultural elements of development correspond to an evolution of the economic reality (Kahn, 2010). The elements of culture make it possible to respond to the needs of society according to matrimonial norms and rules established collectively, but which can evolve in the form of a process of adaptation to the environment. These norms and rules guide the way in which the actors of a society interact with each other and conduct their exchanges. For society, it is a way of acting that makes it possible to deal with the problems of external adaptation and internal integration (Parra and Moulaert, 2011).

In this context, according to Parra and Moulaert (2011), the socio-cultural heritage of a society includes a set of modes of communication that determine how individuals behave in various situations. These modes can develop in a formal (laws, rules) or informal (routines) way. Thus this heritage involves knowledge that can be apprehended in two distinct forms: codified knowledge, represented by procedures, and tacit knowledge which is knowledge incorporated into the actions of individuals and concretized in their attitudes and activities in the form of know-how. traditional (Renou and Charmettant, 2019).

In fact, it is possible to distinguish in all cultural elements between what is difficult to observe and what is immediately observable. In other words, cultural factors can be differentiated into an implicit part and an explicit part. The implicit part, deeper and not immediately observable, is constituted by beliefs, routines, traditional know-how, etc. The explicit part represents the visible concretization of

this culture, it can be in the form of language, clothing, etc. The two parts complement each other and constitute the two sides of the culture.

These two parts are determined together by major institutions such as family, school and religion. The family makes it possible to transmit values, language, marriage rules and religion from generation to generation. The school in turn transmits knowledge and the rules of life in society. Similarly, the peer group influences the behaviors and cultural identity of the individual (Stien, 2012). Thus, culture enjoys a dynamic aspect insofar as it is at the same time shared, transmissible and evolving. Its transmission takes place through an adaptation of society in order to perpetuate the actions and choices of all the actors involved in collective action (Renou and Charmettant, 2019).

It is a process that evolves according to the importance of the interactions that may exist between culture and the environment of society. This process gives rise to a set of socially produced behaviors that shape the exchanges and the different interactions between members of society. This is why culture is a variable that promotes the development of individuals' capacities and their participation in social life. It can be considered as a source that mobilizes the specific individual contributions made to the different activities of society.

All of these interactions contribute to the enrichment of the company's heritage. The latter constitutes a pillar of social life which contributes to socio-economic development, as a capital of knowledge and immaterial resources. This verifies the articulation between culture, heritage, knowledge and development (Lacour et al., 2014). This is why culture is thus an essential vector present in the socio-economic movement, its dynamic aspect evolves and can impact social exchanges and economic interactions (Vernières, 2015).

Indeed, the cultural heritage of society generates significant resources that should be mobilized to solve the problems related to poverty and

underdevelopment. It is mainly a strategy that is becoming increasingly necessary in order to support the process of globalization and its lot in terms of social distortions, precariousness and misery in almost all countries. This is why it is almost urgent to rely on collective and cultural values such as solidarity in order to improve social conditions (Casson, 1993).

In addition, intangible resources when they are not formalized knowledge, are largely made up of elements drawn from cultural heritage. Moreover, interpersonal influences will also have a role in the various interactions, since the individual evolves and interacts with members of society and elements of the social environment (Stien, 2012). It remains for individuals to appropriate these cultural aspects favorable to development in order to shape their behaviors which remain largely dependent on the social and economic environment.

It is therefore necessary to emphasize the importance of these factors considered as productive resources in any development policy given their influence on economic behavior. To this end, several authors (Williamson, Sen, North, Hayek, Keynes) have noted their impact on economic behavior and have noted the dependencies that exist between cultural dimensions and economic factors (Kahn, 2010). However, the idea that there are cultural prerequisites for economic growth and productive activity remains a marginal idea (Facchini, 2006). This is why the cultural variable cannot be fully integrated into the framework of standard economic analysis (Kahn, 2010).

Moreover, economic performance cannot be explained solely by economic and technical variables such as technology, scientific research, industry characteristics, competition and market conditions (Facchini, 2006). The performances are also explained by the social progress which is obtained by the development of the different skills and individual potentialities. These are qualities that make it possible to better manage the constraints of economic development and ensure social well-being.

Therefore, culture is a social aspect that accompanies any development process and ensures its effectiveness and adaptability to economic and social reality. The latter continues to impose itself with more acuity, especially with the evolution of globalization and the multiplication of crises. This development process depends on exchanges between individuals and is imbued with different social norms and rules, since each economic activity cannot take place outside of social relations and the cultural environment (Parra and Moulaert, 2011).

In short, consideration of the potential of culture is a necessary prerequisite for promoting the different specific contributions it can generate. In other words, the existence of a dialogue between cultural attributes and economic actions allows the mobilization of all resources for the benefit of economic development. Nevertheless, this presupposes an understanding of the articulation between cultural life and economic life according to the economic and social reality of each society (Stien, 2012).

## 2. CULTURAL FACTORS AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

The socio-economic system is characterized by the existence of a large number of collective values with a strong cultural content. These values act favorably on social progress which constitutes a very primordial element in any economic development (Casson, 1993). In this regard, several cultural factors are at the root of this progress and which constitute a fundamental basis for solving problems related to social cohesion (Grefe, 2005; Pecqueur, 2004; Perrin, 2001).

However, creativity, innovation and culture are the pillars of the socioeconomic model (Lacour et al., 2014). Development orientations are therefore related to population status, social capital and cultural heritage (Kahn, 2010). These latter elements characterize the way of life of society and are responsible for social values such as solidarity. The aptitude of individuals for cooperation and solidarity constitutes a resource for the benefit of society. It is

a resource that promotes socio-economic progress, improves quality of life and social well-being, and contributes to social change.

### 2.1 Social change

Social change is defined as a set of lasting modifications that affect the functioning and organization of society. It corresponds to the different transformations that impact the organization of different social relations. This change can take place according to the impact of the environment on social relations, in particular, the impact largely dependent on the elements of cultural life. It concerns the way of thinking and acting which is mainly linked to the cultural traits that mark society and its social capital (Kahn, 2010).

Culture can mobilize the various material and immaterial resources to channel them towards a common objective, namely social progress. In this context, several changes modify the habits of economic life and related activities in order to improve the quality of life of the population. This represents a potential favorable to economic development, insofar as this mobilization is supposed to improve the impact of social and economic activity. In this respect, change causes the different choices that transform the relational configuration to evolve to lead to new social rules (Renou and Charmettant, 2019). It can be done according to the impact of the vectors of cultural life, such as collective values or norms, on the value system of the society. It is a process that is explained by a set of forces creating a dynamism that often aims to achieve better conditions.

Thus, cultural factors are largely at the heart of social change. They are dynamic and linked to any convergence towards a new organizational situation with its new social ties and economic relationships (Greffé, 2005). Their impact catalyzes the evolution towards a new organization of social and economic relations. Therefore, it is necessary to direct their concrete effects which are involved in the evolution of the social and economic reality of a society so that

they effectively participate in the search for appropriate solutions to the various socio-economic problems (Stien, 2012) .

This process can be influenced by family, school, technology and the economy. It constitutes a source of wealth which could be one of the pillars of economic and social development. Indeed, each culture leads to rethinking the relationships of the individual with respect to the values and norms that prevail at the level of society, these relationships necessarily impact the lifestyles of individuals. This makes it possible to better identify the cultural issues that can induce the acquisition of new skills that can enable individuals to break with old ways of thinking and acting.

Finally, it seems that change is a very real process that engages resources and channels them towards an objective of improving the conditions of social life. This dynamic generates progress that involves a set of socio-economic measures to ensure greater integration of populations into social and economic life. It is a commitment to improvement and progress plans that are a boon for all companies seeking development. Consequently, it is useful to appeal to all the dimensions of cultural heritage, especially the cognitive ones.

### 2.2 Social innovation

Culture is a notion that also rhymes with the term creativity and the potential for innovation. It constitutes a particular support which should be given to development programs, because the creative capacities stemming from socio-economic life are not detachable from the cultural substrate which feeds them. In this context, social innovations can give rise to initiatives capable of activating the potentialities of society and improving the lives of the population.

In addition, through its creative force and its potential for innovation, culture plays a catalytic role that promotes the establishment of prosperous economic relations. Among the many elements of cultural life

that participate in this development effort, it is worth highlighting traditional know-how and tacit knowledge that can be used directly in productive activities that create wealth and can catalyze innovation (Huck and Kahn, 2009).

Moreover, culture is favorable to economic development if it is favorable to innovation. In this sense, the links between culture and innovation present a development opportunity that makes it possible to respond to many challenges faced by today's societies (precariousness, underemployment, unemployment, exclusion) (Stien, 2012). This is why sectors related to culture such as tourism are support sectors of the economy.

More specifically, the mobilization of the cognitive dimensions of cultural heritage constitutes a source for finding solutions to the problems of underdevelopment. Similarly, to be a factor of development, heritage must be fully recognized both by its population and by its history (Vernières, 2015). It is certainly a new vision of development given the enthusiasm for culture, heritage and knowledge as factors of development. This new vision associates culture and heritage as dynamic factors of production that generate interactions between production, consumption, well-being, innovation and development (Lacour et al., 2014).

Heritage is a social construction that finds its place in development projects, obviously, this depends on the development objectives sought by society. This makes heritage seen as a potential resource for development. But for this to actually be so, many conditions must be met. Any process of economic and social development of a society must be based on its characteristics which are part of its history and which cannot respond to an imported general model (Vernières, 2015).

Innovations generally impact the socio-economic fabric by correlating the collective values of a society and its cultural practices. The quality of these

innovations depends on the material and immaterial resources of society, which must be properly exploited. According to Kahn (2010), intangible resources when they are not formalized knowledge, are largely made up of elements drawn from the cultural heritage and social capital of society.

The objective is the adoption of approaches that give rise to initiatives to initiate social and economic interactions that play a key role in the development of society. In general, these initiatives are a tool for generating social potential that mainly benefits the fragile layers of society, such as young people and the unemployed. Indeed, creative activities can bring out initiatives that promote a social dynamic and relaunch activities whose benefits are particularly important from a social and economic point of view (Majdouline and Elbaz, 2017).

Thus, creative solutions can simply mean putting in place appropriate innovative practices to solve socio-economic problems such as exclusion. In Morocco, the national initiative for human development is a social innovation that aims to stem several socioeconomic problems. It is an initiative that fights against poverty, precariousness and social exclusion. It promotes income-generating and employment-generating activities. Its main achievements concern assistance in the creation of cooperatives in rural areas and support for associations.

This type of innovation mainly involves public and private actors aiming to put their resources at the service of inclusive development. These innovations are at the same time a provider of values of inclusion that deserve to be valued. This logic demands that cultural factors be fully considered as resources for generating social progress (Huck and Kahn, 2009). Consequently, development policies must strive to mobilize them in order to constitute a capital dimension of any socio-economic dynamic (European Commission, 2009).

Essentially, cultural heritage is an economic good that abounds with several possibilities for socio-economic development. More specifically, it involves several practices and intangible resources that have the ability to catalyze innovations and initiatives that initiate development. It is a tool for outreach and development linked to creativity and innovation (Lacour et al., 2014). It should then be reconsidered to allow a new process of development, which also improves the quality of life and the competitiveness of the economic system.

### 2.3 Social solidarity

In the current context, it is obvious that development that can ensure both economic growth and social cohesion becomes both an objective to be achieved and a challenge to be met (Grefe, 2005; Kosianski, 2004). Consequently, it is therefore necessary to enhance the possibilities of convergence between economy and culture in order to promote the development of solidarity and social cohesion (OECD, 2005).

Indeed, faced with the multiple crises, climatic, energy, financial and economic, which affect most countries, especially underdeveloped ones, the creation of new forms of solidarity is a godsend for promoting the social field. This reading, combining productive objectives and societal issues, connects the production and consumption system with social organization to create new opportunities for progress and development (Lacour et al., 2014).

As a result, in the face of the vagaries of globalization and the scale of socio-economic problems that are constantly increasing, initiatives based on the values of solidarity can thwart unbridled movements of precariousness and exploitation. The effects of these movements are very harmful socially and economically. It is worth mentioning, in this context, social vulnerability, the non-valorization of human capital and the increase in poverty and exclusion.

In this regard, marriage rules that promote the values of solidarity and sharing constitute a source of reconciliation and social cohesion. The aim is to mobilize this social capital, and its multiple resources,

in favor of initiatives that fight against precariousness, poverty and unemployment. These are approaches that mainly aim to protect the population against the deterioration of socio-economic conditions and acute forms of vulnerability and exclusion.

Moreover, the cultural variables make it possible to insert within the framework of a global strategy the elements of social capital which play an essential role in individual motivations. It is therefore a priority to highlight the aptitudes that result from these individual predispositions in order to face the problems that societies are experiencing (Perrin, 2001). It follows that society can prosper by taking advantage of its own traditional values that drive these individuals.

There is therefore a convergence between economy, culture and solidarity activities. These elements form a coherent whole that impacts social and economic life (Pecqueur, 2004). The objective is the use of creative resources from culture in activities that generate development opportunities. This determines the possibilities of sustainable and inclusive economic development according to more equitable social and economic relations (Anouma, 1996).

Nevertheless, economic efficiency requires combining this logic of cohesion and solidarity with the market order. It is a question of seeking a coherence that implies several collective values that are at the center of these initiatives aimed at solidarity between the members of society. Their contribution to social progress is undeniable. This is why these collective values must be sufficiently shared to provide individuals with a collective feeling of societal commitment (Kahn, 2010).

In this context, it will be necessary to take into account the specific needs of society to reduce poverty and ensure its progress. This allows culture to position itself in the fields of socio-economic development. In other words, it is about relying on cultural aspects to foster an appropriate environment

that promotes mechanisms of cooperation and solidarity that benefit the economy. Therefore, this dynamic is likely to activate the capacity of culture to be a central actor of development and transition towards a more inclusive economy.

As a result, development orientations are not only related to the economic situation, but also to the population, its social capital and its cultural and collective values. It is therefore possible to link these different elements through permanent interactions between cultural factors and social and economic realities. These interactions give rise to different cultural practices that can generally lead to an improvement in the ability of populations to take charge of themselves and initiate social progress (OECD, 2005).

It therefore seems obvious that development that can ensure both economic growth and social progress becomes a main priority (Greffé, 2005; Kosianski, 2004). Indeed, by combining collective values and social progress, the cultural dimension constitutes a vector in favor of a virtuous economic dynamic. Nevertheless, the effective participation of the entire population in this process is the absolutely strict condition for cultural heritage to be a significant factor in this development (Vernières, 2015).

It appears that culture can be a guide for local and national action for economic and social development. Nevertheless, this remains dependent on its factors and their ability to activate the resources of innovation and social solidarity, with a view to social change in favor of the progress of society.

### **3. CULTURAL FACTORS AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

The cultural dimension is very largely absent from the analyzes of development produced by economic analysis (Dargent, 2002). However, as confirmed by Facchini (2006), economic performance cannot be explained solely by economic factors, such as competition, technology and the market. This one-dimensional approach can today be overcome in favor of a more global vision reflecting an interaction between the different economic, social and cultural

dimensions (Anouma, 1996). This consists of broadening the factors of development, the object of economic analysis, by considering the cultural factors specific to each society.

The place of culture in the question of development should change. Broadening the study of development factors therefore remains a perspective that aims to integrate several cultural aspects into economic analysis according to a vision that considers them as a plausible driver of economic activity. This particularly amounts to questioning the place of culture in relation to the postulate of rationality.

#### *3.1 Cultural factors and economic rationality*

It is known that standard economic theory is an a-cultural analysis, insofar as it is dominated by the paradigm of maximizing rationality which excludes all non-economic factors. Methodological individualism confirms the dominance of this paradigm, which rules out any consideration of extra-economic factors in economic analysis (Dargent, 2002). Generally, the environment is not an object of interest for standard economics, what matters is the ability of the environment to influence individual and collective well-being (Boidin and Zuideau, 2006). Nevertheless, the weakening of economic optimization theory has challenged this one-dimensional approach.

Indeed, the theory of optimization has been weakened by the results of experimental psychology (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979), and by the hypothesis of bounded rationality (Simon, 1959; 1979). The standard economist is not concerned with the cultural and social vectors that condition perceptions related to the environment. On the other hand, he retains the expression of the latter in terms of well-being (Boidin and Zuideau, 2006). Thus neoclassical economic theory considers the individual as a rational actor whose choices aim to optimize his own well-being. Admittedly, this generally leads to decisions that come from an economic perspective, but apply to situations that

largely depend on the social and cultural context (Granier and Robert, 2002).

Thus the individual, in his decision, is often constrained by the system of perception, communication and interpretation, imposed by his history, his experience, his education and his own progress in society. It is obvious that these last elements are not dissociated from the culture of the company. In other words, the rationality of the individual, which aims to optimize his own interest, exists in relation to a system of values which will be involved in the explanation of his behavior. Its rationality does not only appeal to its cognitive resources, but requires a global and realistic vision of the articulation between cultural vectors and individual cognitive resources.

According to this logic, the choices of individuals often follow motivations that reflect their values and cultures. Thus, in their actions, they also think of logics other than the pursuit of profit and the optimization of their own interest. In other words, to meet their needs, individuals also follow objectives that reflect choices influenced by cultural considerations stemming from their social environment.

Cultural considerations mean that rational choice procedures are pre-determined by the cultural context (Granier and Robert, 2002). Consequently, it is difficult to deny the importance of cultural factors in making economic choices aimed at development. These results imply the need to broaden the development factors by introducing cultural criteria alongside the principle of purely economic rationality. Their inclusion is to propose, at least from a theoretical point of view, a new conception of economic analysis. This may even consist in undertaking a break with the assumptions of standard economics (Kahn, 2010).

Moreover, the study of the economic factors of development materializes in the real and methodical exploitation of technical, financial, natural and human resources. This exploitation of resources that values technology and the saving of time, money, energy

and work, also has a social and cultural projection, since it is obvious that values, traditions and ethics intervene in this exploitation and saving of resources alongside rational calculation.

The analysis of the concept of rationality, and its interaction with the cultural dimension, leads to the importance of introducing cultural criteria considered as factors influencing development processes (Stien, 2012). This is a perspective that aims above all to respect the cultural specificities that characterize society and accompany its process of economic choices. It unquestionably refers to a logic that seeks to reconcile cultural specificities and rational calculation in the exploitation of resources and the accumulation of wealth, the source of all development.

On the other hand, this should not hide the fact that culture can also be an important source of irrational actions. In this regard, it is possible to include cultural factors with concerns similar to those that led Simon to develop the concept of bounded rationality. Nevertheless, these factors entail respect for the cultural specificities of society to ensure its development process and support the design of its economic policy.

### *3.2 Cultural factors and economic policy*

The elements mentioned above highlight the possibilities of the positive impact of cultural factors on economic activity. This interaction between elements with a strong cultural content and economic development calls for a new conception of economic policy. This is why a development project must necessarily relate to all the factors that contribute to its success, including those from the social and cultural environment (Anouma, 1996).

Cultural factors affect productive activity insofar as they particularly affect working time, leisure, consumption behavior, the amount of savings, the number of years of education and even the choice of the number of children. Consequently, it becomes inevitable to include them in any economic policy, because they also make it possible to make

economic choices adapted to cultural life (Stien, 2012).

According to this order of ideas, the development of the economy of a country cannot be done away from its material and immaterial resources and its social and cultural realities. The introduction of a paradigm that gives culture a priority place in development issues has become a necessity. Moreover, the resources coming from the culture govern the relations between the actors and complement the standard economic variables. This is why their potential contribution in terms of economic growth must be fully exploited (Facchini, 2006).

Indeed, culture intervenes at each stage of the realization of a development project. An economic project that does not sufficiently integrate cultural aspects has little chance of succeeding, because these aspects are considered central elements that promote the commitment of individuals in the economic project. However, each society has its style of development that best suits its social structures, its economic data and the values that mark its culture. These values create a sense of belonging among citizens and constitute an essential dimension that accompanies economic projects.

Currently, the whole world relies on culture to give dynamism to the various development strategies. In this sense, the UNDP, in its 2004 World Report on Human Development, promoted a new conception of development that respects cultural factors. It highlights the difficulty of denying the importance of culture as a catalyst for the adoption of policies and strategies intended to promote economic development and respond to the need to improve social conditions.

Even more, it is important to find appropriate solutions to development problems, by making economic policies benefit from cultural practices favorable to development. The cultural dimension will thus be able to play a catalytic role in engaging stakeholders in this development process. It involves personal attitudes and the connection of individual abilities. Consequently, it constitutes a decisive

variable in the development of social potentialities (Stien, 2012).

The determinants of development depend on the resources of the economy, the characteristics of the culture, the specificities of the society, its history and its institutions. Cultural specificities should therefore be valued so that economic projects best correspond to economic and social development policies (Casson, 1993). According to Lacour et al. (2014), culture can become a driver of territorial development strategies by reinforcing the obligation to take into account the interactions between the economic, social and cultural worlds.

In this perspective, it is necessary to integrate all the decisive factors involved in the development effort and in the design of economic policy. The need to reconcile tradition and development emphasizes the need to grant an important place to cultural specificities which affect economic choices and projects. These are particularly cultural factors that directly impact economic activity and that must be mobilized in order to include them in any conception of an economic development model.

### *3.3 Cultural factors and development models*

Through their consideration in the design of economic policies, cultural factors accompany the emergence of economic development models. They therefore impact economic choices and become income generators. However, the effectiveness of development models presupposes at the same time the favorable choice of economic projects and the capacity of society to successfully carry out these projects. The outcome of these models remains closely linked to the different cultural components. This is why it is very difficult to deny the importance of the cultural variable in the adoption of the behaviors required by economic development.

Indeed, several studies highlight the importance of including cultural factors in the design of economic development models (Council of Europe/CLRAE, 2000). Cultural heritage seems to be the origin of several potential development resources (Vernières,

2015). As there are poor countries that are sorely lacking in natural resources or technology, cultural wealth can be a resource to be developed to compensate for this lack of resources and successfully complete development models.

In this sense, cultural factors offer particular support to development programs, since the capacities for innovation and creativity that each development process needs are not detachable from the cultural substrate that feeds them. On the other hand, any process of emergence of a mode of development must be done while ensuring respect for the specificities of society and its cultural heritage. This is why it is necessary to question how to transform these cultural factors into significant variables in order to be able to integrate them into a global and inclusive development model.

The putting into practice of the components of cultural life such as traditional knowledge, and their appropriation by the populations, must be done in close relation with the logic of development. These components of cultural life are resources that play a crucial role in the disposition of individuals to engage in productive activities. Consequently, they constitute resources prior to the elaboration of development models, and must be considered in the same way as economic resources (Huck and Kahn, 2009).

For example, the Asian value system has made it possible to create a development model specific to these countries. In addition, some of these countries, such as Japan, have adopted a model of development through innovation, because their material and immaterial resources and the nature of cultural factors encourage innovation. On the other hand, although the role of cultural life has been much highlighted in the development of these countries, it has been widely considered as an obstacle in other countries such as the case of African countries. These arguments generate the opportunity to introduce cultural vectors into growth models (Facchini, 2008).

In this respect, underdevelopment does not only have economic causes, it also has non-economic origins. Thus traditions can sometimes present

brakes that prevent development. Indeed, certain cultural traditions constitute obstacles to the process of accumulation which is a goal sought by any economic activity. This hinders industrialization, an indisputable prerequisite for development. This is why cultural factors can explain why some countries develop while others suffer from unprecedented underdevelopment.

Moreover, there is not a single development model. Each country must develop its own model according to its resources, its cultural richness and the nature of its institutions. It is mainly a question of allowing the population to appropriate the cultural variables which direct their attitudes in favor of development. This is likely to generate favorable economic spin-offs that provide solutions for progress in line with the specific peculiarities of society. The objective is to consider the effects of these variables qualified as invisible factors of development.

#### **4. CULTURAL VARIABLES AS INVISIBLE FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT**

Cultural factors that affect economic practice are active factors that help explain the relationship between cultural heritage and economic behavior (Dargent, 2002). Nevertheless, this potential of culture unfortunately remains unexplored for a large number of countries. Its integration into development models gives rise to very favorable stakes in terms of their growth. Similarly, the cultural dimension must henceforth be an integral part of any development policy (Kahn, 2010).

In doing so, it is therefore necessary to simplify cultural factors in the form of concrete practices in order to be able to integrate them into these development models. In other words, it is a question of making them visible to facilitate their integration and their consideration by development, as is the case for human development and sustainable development.

#### 4.1 Role of cultural variables in human development

The development of individual capacities remains the favored asset for any economy. It enhances human resources and is a tool that no society can do without for an economic activity favorable to development. It is obviously a question of reinforcing the capacity of the populations to acquire aptitudes which enable them to face the various deprivations. It is clear that these skills are prerequisites for social and economic development.

The objective is the orientation of the populations towards the creation of the best conditions thanks to their capacities favorable to the development. This requires a participatory approach that emphasizes the promotion of cultural practices and their role in motivating populations, which necessarily contributes to the development of their capacities and enhances their skills (Albala-Bertrand, 1992).

According to Kahn (2010), the development of human resources makes it possible to curb several problems of underdevelopment by providing practical and shared knowledge that the population can use according to its particular needs. Consequently, each development model has an interest in considering the role of cultural factors in the promotion of human skills (Vernières, 2015). This makes it possible to deal with the various problems from which today's societies suffer, such as the deterioration of social ties, the decline in social cohesion and the non-valorization of human capital.

This awareness has begun to be reinforced since the beginning of the 2000s. During this period, the cultural dimension took on particular importance. Indeed, in 2004, the UNDP asked countries to put forward a dynamic concept capable of promoting human resources in order to put them at the service of economic development. More specifically, it is a question of highlighting traditional know-how, craft skills and customs that transmit cooperation and the values of solidarity and social cohesion.

In this respect, the collective values that convey tacit knowledge are determining factors of growth. They must be sufficiently shared to permeate actions and

economic interactions. In other words, it is useful that the specific particularities of the culture are taken into account in the management of human capital and the creative use of human potentialities in the various projects and economic policies (Albala-Bertrand, 1992). It is also a means of adapting the productive work of economic activity to the needs of society and its resources.

Finally, the development must also be that of the human resources of the entire population, both physically and intellectually. This reinforces the development of social potential. In this context, education aims to develop human skills and abilities (Anouma, 1996). It is likely to promote inclusive and prosperous societies through the integration of populations into economic life. It also allows an effective use of human potentialities to prepare the conditions for such activities capable of guaranteeing change towards progress (Albala-Bertrand, 1992). The objective is to increase the level of engagement of the entire population in productive activities.

This is the reason why the cultural factors of development should have the function of promoting the creation of conditions that allow people to access knowledge. However, access to education is a necessary step to effect social and economic change prior to economic growth. This seems to be the key to the creative and effective use of human potential in every process of economic development.

#### 4.2 Role of cultural variables in sustainable development

Sustainable development aims to enforce concerns that are economic, social and environmental. It is a question of taking into account, in decisions relating to development choices, a socio-economic and environmental balance so that the satisfaction of the needs of current generations does not hinder that of future generations. It is a process that promotes the orientation of the behavior of society to help reduce

the harmful effects of human activity and safeguard the environment (Albala-Bertrand, 1992).

In an extremely changing environment, sustainable development must be a will of any society. In doing so, you have to adapt to new conditions and anticipate the future in order to be in control. Despite efforts in this area, the strategies used are not easy to implement to achieve equitable and sustainable development (Raynal and Ferguson, 2009). This process plays a role in improving the economic benefits through a consensus in favor of sustainability which aims to establish a new vision of economy.

In this sense, culture offers several perspectives that will lead to environmental sustainability. The variables resulting from cultural life may involve individual and collective commitments in favor of activities centered on the protection of environmental resources. In this regard, cultural factors play a key role in raising public awareness of environmental issues. In addition, there is a lot to learn from local know-how, customs and common rules of morality in the search for practices that are more conservative of environmental resources (Beaurain et al., 2017). The objective is to mobilize the potential for innovation and creativity for a more sustainable use that ensures access to environmental resources. It is a question of revaluing the cultural practices that reorganize productive activities. These practices call on a set of intangible resources that play a key role in motivating individuals and their commitment to sustainable practices (Beaurain et al., 2017).

In 2002, the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development gave priority to culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. He has paved the way for a commitment and awareness that helps safeguard practical knowledge and traditional skills in the field. These are a godsend for putting the economy at the service of environmental protection. At the same time, it is a perspective that aims to guarantee the right of future generations to benefit from the cultural assets forged over the course of history and which protect the environment (Boidin and Zuideau, 2006).

According to this logic, cultural factors favorably influence the ways of interacting with the natural environment. They guide behavior for the sustainable use of environmental resources. By drawing on traditional know-how, common rules of morality and capacities for solidarity, it is possible to find more viable solutions to reduce the environmental footprint of societies. This is necessary in order to develop strategies to fight against waste, overconsumption, pollution and underdevelopment. These strategies reorganize economic activities in order to also face the various constraints imposed by the requirements of sustainable development.

Finally, in order to carry out this fight against climatic hazards in terms of resource depletion and pollution, it is essential to harmonize efforts and create the conditions that allow cultural factors to fully play their role in this effort. It is therefore urgent for any society to rely on its own cultural capital to promote more ecologically rational modes of production and consumption. The objective is to focus on approaches to integrate cultural factors into development models aimed at protecting the environment and reducing the massive exploitation of ecosystem resources.

## CONCLUSION

The criticism of classical economic analysis is that explanations of development are exclusively sought among economic factors. However, culture constitutes a fundamental dimension to be taken into account in any development research process. Certain elements resulting from cultural life are closely linked to economic variables and constitute an asset for the benefit of development. The aim is to highlight those cultural elements that constitute a prerequisite for the process of economic development (Huck and Kahn, 2009).

The integration of cultural factors into economic analysis is an approach that aims to broaden the study of development factors to extra-economic variables. This first requires becoming aware of the importance of these cultural factors given their impact on economic prosperity, quality of life and social well-

being. They must now constitute one of the essential elements with added value in terms of economic policy and planning. This gives citizens a mobilizing impetus to ensure development and thus give the population a satisfactory social life (Raynal and Ferguson, 2009).

The mobilization of material and immaterial, physical and cultural resources, develops a new vision of development that integrates several dimensions: economic, social and environmental. This awareness of the importance of culture in the design of economic policies offers the possibility of integrating cultural factors into development models. To this end, society has every interest in mobilizing cultural vectors and promoting their place with the aim of social progress, environmental protection and economic development.

According to this vision, cultural issues weigh heavily in any development research process. The strengthening of their role is an opportunity to carry out economic choices and projects well, which leads culture to create a link between the economic and social domains. These areas must take care to respect the cultural characteristics of society which serve as a catalyst to stimulate and promote relations and interactions between economic agents. This illustrates why the explanation of economic choices goes beyond economic logic alone.

Moreover, cultural variables have a very real concretization in the ethics of individuals and their perception. This requires tapping into cultural wealth to create the right conditions for making the right economic choices in terms of consumption and production processes. Insofar as man is the architect of cultural evolution, we must be aware of being responsible for this evolution towards greater justice and generosity. It is appropriate to propose standards that reveal the need to integrate the different dimensions of this interaction: ecological, social, cultural, political and economic (Boidin and Zuindeau, 2006).

As a result, culture becomes an area where public and private investments merge (Lacour et al., 2014). The goal is for cultural capital to accompany the

individual and society on the path to prosperity for a continuous improvement of social well-being. Economic success and the strategies adopted to achieve it depend largely on the integration of individuals into social and economic ties that will allow them to adapt to economic and material reality and to benefit from it socially and economically. .

Finally, it is desirable to promote the different logics of development that can lead to social and cultural progress. Thus for each society, the promotion of its culture strengthens its capacity to provide resources, promote activities and catalyze dynamics that solve the problems of underdevelopment: precariousness, unemployment and exclusion. This perspective aims to generate a dialogue between the economy and culture which remains very profitable for the economy and society.

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