

# Soft Powers and their application as potential and conditioning structures in the development and strengthening of education, culture and identity in Chile

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## Abstract

The research will identify the role of soft powers, architecture, heritage, and culture, as building structures of cultural development and identity of Chilean society. A trilogy that contributes to a potential socio-cultural improvement, as integration platforms, applying a management model with new educational and cultural strategies, promoting the recovery of municipal infrastructure for cultural use in the neighborhoods, which favor and facilitate the interrelation of audiences at the communal level, considering in it relevance of the own, generating a greater identity thickness that allows an improvement in the quality of life of the society. Chilean society, neoliberal, considers urban spaces of mass consumption, shopping centers, and galleries, as its entertainment and “cultural” action par excellence, replacing and displacing the socio-cultural action of meeting and developing creative and cultural activities, around squares, parks, and spaces of citizen cultural infrastructure, showing a loss of cultural and identity values. Chile presents today a certain weakening in behaviors referred to as cultural attendance and consumption (low audience in theaters, libraries, museums, and art galleries), which does not mean that no time is devoted to leisure recreation, but shows deterioration and lack of massive interest in the attendance and use of spaces traditionally used as platforms for cultural expression and development, denoting, also, a growing phenomenon of fragmentation and socio-cultural stratification. As a scientific product, a typology of the project is developed, as a model of cultural management, with the recovery of existing infrastructure, which will expose a result that the soft powers are facilitators of building axes to strengthen the culture and identity of the society. As a research methodology, it is a non-experimental, interpretative and exploratory, theoretical structure with a qualitative approach. In conclusion, the constructive role achieved by soft powers, improving spaces for participation and socio-cultural integration, as a contribution to the quality of life of society, will be highlighted.

**Keywords:** Architecture, Culture, Heritage, Education, Soft Power, Management Model, Identity, Society, Platforms, Cultural Integration.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The research will identify the role of soft powers, architecture, heritage, and culture, as building structures of cultural development and identity of Chilean society. A trilogy that contributes to a potential socio-cultural

improvement, as integration platforms, applying a management model with new educational and cultural strategies, promoting the recovery of municipal infrastructure for cultural use in the neighborhoods, which favor and facilitate the interrelation of audiences at the communal level, considering in it relevance

of the own, generating a greater identity thickness that allows an improvement in the quality of life of the society. Chilean society, neoliberal, considers urban spaces of mass consumption, shopping centers, and galleries, as its entertainment and “cultural” action par excellence, replacing and displacing the socio-cultural action of meeting and developing creative and cultural activities, around squares, parks, and spaces of citizen cultural infrastructure, showing a loss of cultural and identity values. Chile presents today a certain weakening in behaviors referred to as cultural attendance and consumption (low audience in theaters, libraries, museums, and art galleries), which does not mean that no time is devoted to leisure recreation, but shows deterioration and lack of massive interest in the attendance and use of spaces traditionally used as platforms for cultural expression and development, denoting, also, a growing phenomenon of fragmentation and socio-cultural stratification. As a scientific product, a typology of the project is developed, as a model of cultural management, with the recovery of existing infrastructure, which will expose a result that the soft powers are facilitators of building axes to strengthen the culture and identity of the society. As a research methodology, it is a non-experimental, interpretative and exploratory, theoretical structure with a qualitative approach. In conclusion, the constructive role achieved by soft powers, improving spaces for participation and socio-cultural integration, as a contribution to the quality of life of society, will be highlighted.

## **2. Objectives**

### **2.1 General Objective**

Contribute to a proposed solution, through the development of a programmatic management model, for community cultural spaces in communal units, promoting and using soft powers, trinominal architecture, heritage, and culture, as platforms for integration and mediation to provide a permanent offer that encourages training, creation, and enjoyment of culture, arts, and interest in local heritage,

generating community participation and revitalizing the existing communal cultural infrastructure.

### **2.2 Specific objectives**

1- To analyze and diagnose the state and behavior of cultural and identity consumption in Chile in the last 20 years.

2- Develop a cultural management model to be applied in community cultural spaces in communal units, which considers the use of soft powers, architecture, culture, and heritage, to rehabilitate the existing municipal cultural infrastructure and create meeting and participation spaces with the development of artistic-cultural, leisure and recreational programs, as platforms for integration and cultural mediation for the community.

3- Establish the lines of action within the management model, applying architecture, culture, and heritage, as facilitating axes in terms of promoting greater linkage, participation, and social inclusion, with spaces for exchange with more culture and strengthening our identity.

## **3. Hypothesis**

### **Hypothesis 1:**

The lack of management models, at the community and municipal levels, to strengthen educational and civic-cultural areas, results in the underutilization of urban culture and heritage infrastructure, which contributes to the decrease and lack of cultural participation and social integration.

### **Hypothesis 2:**

The underutilization of cultural infrastructures and the lack of platforms for socio-cultural use and integration, resulting from the absence of educational and cultural strategies at the community and municipal levels, reduces cultural consumption and prevents the improvement of cultural and social cohesion in Chile.

### Hypothesis 3:

The proliferation throughout the country of shopping malls and mega malls, in their urban renewal areas, which offer and are constituted as alternative spaces for leisure, recreation, and citizen meetings par excellence, has led to a decrease in consumption and attendance of traditional cultural and urban spaces for citizen meetings.

## 4. Methodology

The research addresses the issues of architecture, heritage, culture, education, and society, therefore considering a multidisciplinary approach. Qualitative data and bibliographic material from various disciplines, cultural, artistic, political, sociological, historical, and social, among others, were used also considering legislative, political, and legal bibliography.

About the use of a qualitative research structure, the authors define that:

Qualitative data are detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, observed behaviors, and their manifestations. It acquires an “internal” point of view, although it maintains an analytical perspective or a certain distance as an external observer, using various research techniques and social skills flexibly, according to the requirements of the situation. It does not define the variables to manipulate them experimentally (Hernández Sampieri et al, 2014. pp.36-38).

By using a qualitative structure, data collection and analysis were used to refine the research questions that revealed new questions in the interpretation process. The methodology is based on an extensive bibliographic review and consultation of public and private databases.

As a research methodology, it is non-experimental, interpretative and exploratory, theoretical, with a qualitative approach.

- A qualitative type of research structure was applied, whose frame of reference is existing literature, surveys, interviews, direct observation, field visits, and documentary research, in addition to the use of documentary, historical, ethnic, demographic, and sociocultural sources, and documentary research.

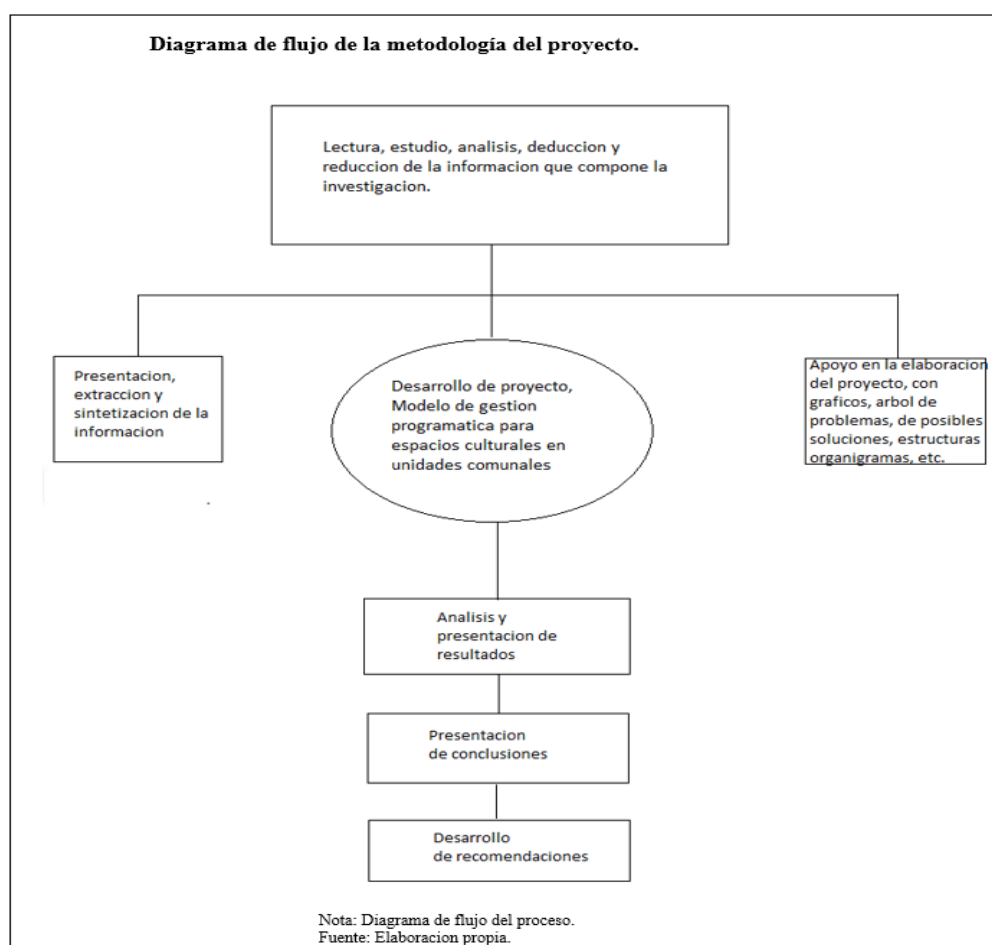
- Data and content analysis, codification of the information collected, typology of identification of observable and categorizable information, which allows establishing a structure of truthful, reliable analysis, which represents hard data support to back up the Thesis Research, was developed.

- The case study was also considered, which serves to analyze, learn about and expose different situations related to the research and problem statement.

The research work is of a social and cultural nature. In this sense, the scope of the research and thesis is descriptive. Regarding the data and qualitative management of the research, Schettini states that “the choice of qualitative strategies implies emphasizing processes that are not rigorously examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Qualitative researchers emphasize the social construction of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what he/she studies, and the constructions of the context that conditions the research” (Schettini, 2015, p.45).

### 4.1 Research design

The research design is non-experimental and descriptive, with documentary research techniques and theoretical analysis.



#### 4.2 Population and sample

The community of urban centers was considered, in communes of Chile, between 15 and 78 years of age approximately.

Because the target population of the research is very large, at the country level, with 12,151 participants and respondents, in the urban territory, a qualitative non-probabilistic sampling was considered, applied to a geographic coverage that considered the entire population residing in localities of urban centers of 10,000 inhabitants or more within the country, excluding rural and difficult access areas, with case study data collection and indirect study sampling, established by the following entities: National Institute of Statistics, INE, Cultural Statistics Yearbook Ministry of Cultures, Heritage and Arts, Ministry of Education, Statistics Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, among others. The existing statistics of sampling were used as tools, which were representative of the universe to investigate in relation to the cultural

consumption, statistics, Ministries, and Universities, which deliver the main results at a national level with reliable statistical data carried out by the organism, referring to cultural consumption, education levels, socio-cultural behaviors, results of the population census referring to the topics that are part of the research, using also, the descriptive statistics as a complementary element of measurement of the study. The qualitative methodology of this research is exploratory, as it seeks to know the object of study from the perception and cultural practices, it is descriptive, as it seeks to collect data regarding a particular phenomenon and analytical, and it seeks to identify and see the cultural participation from its social representations.

#### 4.3 Tools

In order to develop this document, two surveys and interviews are also developed:

-Survey one, at a general level to measure the level of participation and cultural consumption in the community, with 284 respondents.

-Survey two, regarding citizen perception of cultural spaces in their environment, with 165 respondents.

Both surveys were answered online, due to the global contingency that occurred from the beginning of 2020 to the present. For Survey one, people of different age ranges were considered, considering the following groups: Under 18 or 18 years old to 24 years old or 25 years old to 34 years old or 35 years old to 44 years old or 45 years old to 54 years old or Over 54 years old. For Survey Two, the target audience focuses on youth and adults. The results of the surveys and their conclusions.

## 5. Results

The role played by the knowledge of architecture, heritage, and culture and their application as soft powers, potential, and conditioning structures in the development and strengthening of education, culture, and identity, is contributed to the current research and discussion. The formulation and design of a programmatic cultural management model were developed, as a development proposal to be applied in community cultural spaces, in communal units applying the soft powers as axes that make up the project.

It is proposed as a tool to provide access to culture to its inhabitants and encourage their participation in the neighborhoods and communal units, to increase attendance and cultural consumption, generating more and better audiences, with more education, culture, and arts programs. It is presented as a baseline for directing resources and efforts to cultural development in neighborhoods and communal units, understanding the latter as the essential element to prospect a better cultural, social, and identity development in each commune. The development of a programmatic management model for community cultural spaces in communal units was developed in conjunction with the Municipality of Viña del Mar, the

Directorate of Community Development and the Territorial Culture Unit, as well as the neighborhood units of Forestal Alto, Viña del Mar. This model will be applied to start in 2022, on an experimental basis, as a project developed in the design stage.

### 5.1 Survey results

#### Cultural consumption survey

Going into the presentation of the project, before its formulation, it is necessary to know some trends in the population or part of it, to project analysis and its next proposals to change or improve a particular situation.

Between December 2020 and April 2021, a survey on Cultural Consumption and Participation was made available to the community via social networks, which was validly answered by 164 people of different ages (the survey is included in the annexes).

This survey was based on the consultation on cultural consumption habits, development of artistic-cultural activities, cultural needs, and proposals, among others, in a structured questionnaire of closed and open questions, being able to provide an answer or select several alternatives.

Given that the project to be developed is an integral management model for community cultural spaces in communal units, it is feasible to be applied in all the communes of the country, to be developed in spaces and infrastructure for municipal cultural use.

In this context, the city of Viña del Mar was chosen as the communal territorial unit for surveys one and two on cultural consumption and participation, because this city has a high rate of lack of municipal cultural spaces and programs, where the community has been affected for years due to this lack, and yet it is a city that concentrates a large number of commercial spaces, both malls, and urban-commercial centers, and very little cultural infrastructure.

It is the only city in the country, where in less than 6 blocks and surrounding a public square, Plaza O'Higgins, there are 4 megamalls, plus

one, which will be completed in 2022, currently under construction, and not a single cultural center or space for cultural-educational

activities in this commercial urban radius, around Avenida 15 Norte with Avenida Libertad.



Figure 1. Aerial view of the central urban area of the city of Viña del Mar.

Note: Prepared by the authors. Zoning of commercial and cultural areas in the city of Viña del Mar, Avenida Libertad and 15 Norte. Source: Image taken from Google Earth, 2021.

Figure 1 shows the zoning of commercial areas and cultural spaces in the city of Viña del Mar, the urban environment between Libertad Avenue and 15 Norte.

## 6. Results Obtained and Samples.

### 6.1 Corroboration of hypotheses

-To corroborate working hypothesis one, which consists of demonstrating that the lack of management models, at the communal, and municipal level, that strengthen the educational and civic-cultural areas, results in an underutilization of the urban culture and heritage infrastructure, which contributes to the decrease and lack of cultural participation and social integration, the current Pladecos (communal management plans) of the high conurbation cities of Viña del Mar and Valparaíso, Chile, were analyzed.

In turn, on-site observation and field surveys were used, supporting the results obtained in the measurement and registration of cultural consumption, which allowed corroborating that cultural infrastructures, theaters, cultural centers, galleries, and libraries, among others, are underutilized, with low public attendance, as is apparent in the discussion and graphs in section 5.8 Methodology and results of the Survey.

-To corroborate hypothesis two, underutilization of cultural infrastructures and lack of platforms for sociocultural use and integration, as a result of the absence of educational and cultural strategies at the communal and municipal levels, reduces cultural consumption and prevents the improvement of cultural and social cohesion in Chile, the samples were analyzed, The survey and results of cultural consumption in Chile, the hard data of surveys of participation, attendance and use of cultural spaces, the

formal value, symbolic value, and use value, which allows to include and categorize all reasonable possibilities of value attribution that individuals are accustomed to giving to cultural spaces, were analyzed.

-About hypothesis three, the proliferation at the national level of shopping malls and mega malls, in their urban renewal areas, which offer and are constituted as the alternative of being the leisure, recreation, and citizen meeting spaces par excellence, has caused a decrease in consumption and attendance to the traditional cultural and urban spaces for citizen meetings, the information of the population about the frequency and manner of use of commercial spaces is collected and analyzed, cultural consumption and its behavior over the last ten years, attendance statistics, the study and analysis of social stratification statistics, to infer the results that show Chile as a highly polarized and stratified society, to corroborate that the authorities have been unable and overwhelmed to prevent the increase of social and cultural disintegration and, in turn, have been promoters of renovations in urban and commercial spaces.

## **7. Proposals and Development of Future Strategies.**

The application of soft powers through a programmatic management model, for community cultural spaces in communal units, seeks to be an exploratory model for future projects, with a focus on profitability and cultural and social commitment, in the neighborhoods. At the same time, to serve as a guide to value and rehabilitate existing infrastructure, so that a proposal for the generation of new cultural, educational, and recreational spaces for the community can be reached, consigned in the local population, which integrates society with its place of residence and promotes integration and cultural interrelationship in their neighborhoods.

For the development and participation in culture, local identity, and education, this management model, applying soft powers, allows:

Medium-term research on the effect of the intervened cultural space, with the application of the cultural management model in the benefited communities.

- Development of intervention and reconversion projects, with the use of soft powers, architecture-culture, and heritage, for the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure, generating new spaces for cultural and community use, and the promotion of local neighborhood identity.

- Development of new initiatives and projects to address and provide the necessary tools to the municipalities so that they can generate more and better cultural audiences in each benefited community, at the local level, with proposals aimed at accessing more educational programs in art, culture, and heritage, through the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure to create in the neighborhoods, platforms for participation that facilitate access, understanding, appreciation, and preservation.

- The project, as an application of the programmatic cultural management model and infrastructure rehabilitation, will provide new meeting spaces for citizens, which will impact the development and quality of life of each neighborhood or community unit where it is applied. Likewise, each new cultural space allows providing a place of recreation for adults, seniors, youth, and children in their neighborhoods, which is also relevant considering the pandemic factor, Covid-19, with which many people have suffered the effects of confinement on their physical and mental health, so that people of all ages have suffered from anxiety, depression, stress, among others.

For this reason, the activities proposed in the management model program also recognize this need and focus on children and youth. Children because they are the ones who have spent time locked up and without sharing with their peers at a formative age for them, so socialization is necessary for their first years of life, in their childhood and adolescence, therefore, it is essential to carry out recreational activities for these two groups.



This does not mean that the project only focuses on them, since it also focuses on the general public, facilitating cultural access to the community through different socio-cultural activities to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants, enhancing the participation and constant commitment of the community and citizens, creating opportunities for community meetings and gatherings that also ensure the delivery of a permanent cultural offer of creation, training and educational, cultural and heritage valuation.

## 8. Conclusions

Through the development of this article, each of the components that structure this research was studied, concerning the soft powers, architecture, heritage, and culture, their meaning, and values, considering in it the heritage typologies and cultural identity, as a valuation of the cultural trilogy, at the service of the community.

Then the research related to attendance, participation, and cultural consumption in Chile, latest statistics 2018, 2019, and 2020, is addressed, to give way to the research and development of the current situation of urban-commercial spaces versus cultural spaces, considering the participation of citizens, in Chile, analyzing consumption, attendance and recreation in commercial spaces.

The importance and the role played by soft powers to achieve a civic identity development in the neighborhoods is evidenced, considering culture and heritage as identity creators, where the results of the preceding research presented here corroborate the hypotheses put forward, without forgetting that community cultural management in communal territorial units should be a joint role between the community, the private sector, corporations, and municipalities, as communal governments.

As results, the project is a programmatic management model for community cultural spaces in communal units, where the application of soft powers, integrated into the management model, is a proposal that promotes

cultural development and citizen participation at the neighborhood level, in addition to seeking an incentive to a larger audience through culture, thus there is a value added to the community as an important focal point.

The greatest challenge considers that the application and use of soft powers are feasible, at the service of society as potential and conditioning structures in the development and educational, cultural, and identity strengthening, since it allows a contribution to the formulation of the project, which aims to be the base management model for the cultural development of the communes, allowing the formulation and development of programmatic management models with cultural, artistic, heritage and educational activities to be implemented in municipal infrastructures rehabilitated for use as community cultural spaces in communal units.

A programmatic management model, applying the soft powers of architecture-culture and heritage, which acts and develops as a contribution from the residential neighborhoods to contribute to an improvement and increase of consumption, audiences, and cultural identity cohesion in Chile. A proposed solution that promotes and understands the use of soft powers, in the construction of new local platforms, neighborhoods, integration, and linkage, with new educational and cultural strategies, which add up to an increase in sociocultural cohesion more participatory and inclusive, in the communes.

It is also possible to recover existing and underutilized municipal infrastructure for its reconversion as spaces for cultural use, as platforms for participation, integration, and linkage of the beneficiary communities, in new spaces that provide cultural and social dynamics in the communes, in urban neighborhoods, reflecting the importance of cultural management, local identity, and heritage, while contributing to an improvement in the quality of life at the neighborhood level. Therefore, it is essential to provide new spaces for community integration and participation, with an educational, cultural, and social contribution.



Managing this type of project is essential to contribute to reversing the low consumption and attendance to programs, activities, and cultural events, at the national level, providing new tools and mechanisms so that our communities can participate locally in cultural, leisure, recreational, and artistic programs and interventions, also achieving a rooting and appropriation, recognizing and caring for the local heritage, working that sense of neighborhood appropriation.

It is a network at the municipal, community, corporation, and establishment levels.

8.1 The value of soft power, tangible components architecture-culture-heritage at the service of the community.

The analysis of the responses obtained from users shows that the citizens surveyed do not consider participation and do not have a relevant cultural development, this is due to the lack of more spaces and infrastructure for community and neighborhood cultural development, the lack of dissemination of cultural spaces open to the community and the lack of cultural offerings that are attractive and recognize the interests of each community.

In addition, a large part of those surveyed believes that they would like to see the creation of new spaces for leisure, cultural and artistic recreation and that they would like to participate in the activities that are carried out. On the other hand, a large part of the respondents has not participated in cultural activities, events, meetings, and workshops, and the main reason for this is that there is no massive dissemination of cultural training activities in the communities.

The value of the soft powers, tangible architecture-culture-heritage components, lies in the fact that they are tools that can be made available to the municipalities and their urban living spaces, to generate initiatives for the conversion and rehabilitation of existing municipal infrastructure in a state of underutilization for use as new cultural spaces, which house and allow, through the application of the programmatic management model, the development of platforms for cultural, artistic,

educational and leisure activities, as new community meeting spaces in their living environments, thus bringing culture to their neighborhoods, reusing existing municipal infrastructure, either as new community meeting spaces, or as new cultural spaces in their living environments, with cultural, artistic, educational and leisure activities, the development of platforms as new community meeting spaces in their living environments, thus bringing culture to their neighborhoods, reusing existing municipal infrastructure either as in this case, school type, as well as sports facilities, community centers, multiple rooms, warehouses, social headquarters, among others, defined as community infrastructure in the socio-cultural field (Established in chapter VI).

At the same time, it is to generate instances to face new challenges, which allows enhancing the development of opportunities in terms of cultural management, community, territorial and social development of a community. The use of soft powers and their initiatives go hand in hand with the development of the territory, the environment, and the habitat of each community, since the greater the variety of artistic, educational, leisure, and socio-cultural activities offered in the neighborhoods or community units, the greater the development, participation, and integration achieved. It is to effectively reach the inhabitants of each community sector, creating participation and bonding, thus increasing audiences, generating loyal audiences, a community that we seek to strengthen, integrating more and more people, children, youth, adults, and seniors.

The axes of the cultural management model, as the use of soft powers, allowed the development of an integral project, applying the programmatic model in a chained manner, starting with:

- 1- the application of architecture, with the identification of the communal territorial space in which to develop the project, the choice of the existing municipal infrastructure, in this case, of a school nature, and the development of the project to provide the beneficiary population with more access to culture, promoting the use of public spaces and existing

cultural infrastructure, in addition to increasing artistic training and socio-cultural participation, generating an architecture that allows recycling and creating new cultural spaces as platforms for integration, meeting, and exchange of experiences, accessible to the community.

2- the application of heritage and its use as soft power, to recognize and strengthen local, neighborhood, and territorial identity, understanding that it is necessary to strengthen the links that each community has with its environment, to achieve a local, immaterial, and identity-based heritage development, giving value to their places, not the urban centers, but their surroundings and what surrounds each neighborhood, recovering their spaces, their squares, giving new life to existing community infrastructure.

3- culture and its use as soft power, considering the encouragement, development, and programmatic promotion of artistic, cultural, social, and civic activities, promoting inclusion, participation, linkage, and integration of the community, through a program of performances, activities, workshops and various events, in an annual format to be developed in the new venues of the Cultural Space created.

The program of activities of the model includes 3 lines of action based on the axes, which recognize the requirements of the community:

Training and Creation/ Local Production and Dissemination/ Cultural Promotion.

For the above, the project developed, allows the application and use of soft powers, architecture, heritage, and culture, achieving the following contributions:

-In the architecture line, the elaboration of a cadaster of urban spaces, is feasible to be used as cultural scenarios and infrastructure in the communes (communal units) where the management model for community cultural spaces operates, and from the development of joint work with the professional teams of the Culture and Social Development departments of the municipalities, the coordination, identification and selection of the suitable

spaces and infrastructure for the application of the model and development of the project is achieved. At the same time, the rehabilitation of existing municipal infrastructure is achieved, for its reconversion to cultural space, as a platform for integration and participation, allowing the community to have in their neighborhoods, meeting spaces, artistic and recreational cultural development.

-In the culture line, the programmatic development of activities with artistic and cultural workshops and participatory intervention events is achieved. At the same time, through the workshops, the cultural participation of children, youth, adults, and senior citizens in the commune is encouraged and enhanced, thus generating a greater cultural and educational development, reinforcing local identity, and increasing recreational, leisure, and socialization practices in the neighborhoods, thus achieving a real cultural decentralization.

-In the heritage line, a program of workshops was developed, valuing my space, and my identity, with educational and formative talks on heritage and local identity, to promote the identity values that each community has as a wealth of heritage.

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