The BEAM Cultural Indicators–A Pilot Study of an Urban Cultural Indicators System [*]

YU Kwok-Lit [*] 茹國烈

Executive Summary

This is a Pilot Study on building an urban Cultural Indicators System (CIS) for the city of Hong Kong.

In this Study, I propose a conceptual framework–the BEAM-GEST cultural model to build the Cultural Indicators System.

The BEAM-GEST cultural model covers 4 main key attributes of Culture:

- Belief and Value
- Everyday Lifestyle
- Arts and Creation
- Memories and Tradition

These 4 key attributes are further broken down into 12 indicators. Each indicator is formed by 1 to 3 sub-indicators. A total number of 19 sub-indicators are used in this pilot study.

With the BEAM-GEST model as the Conceptual Framework, the BEAM Cultural Indicators system is constructed to analyse the cultural vibrancy of the 18 administrative districts of Hong Kong through a quantitative analysis.

With the result of the pilot study, the following observations are made:

- The BEAM CIS provides evidence of the different cultural characteristics of different districts
- The BEAM CIS provides evidence of the cultural vibrancy gap between the urban and suburban area
- The BEAM CIS provides evidence to show the strong relationship between old city areas and their cultural vibrancy

Keywords

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[*]   Director, Hong Kong Art School

Objectives

The objective of this study is:

- To develop a set of cultural indicators for analysing the cultural vibrancy of a city with a broad definition of Culture.
- To use the 18 administrative districts of Hong Kong as the units of comparison.
- To find out if the 18 administrative districts are different in cultural vibrancy. If yes, how?

What is Culture?

Definition 1 - UNESCO

UNESCO defines culture as "the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs" (Pessoa and Deloumeaux 2009).

Definition 2 - Raymond Williams

In "The Analysis of Culture", part one of chapter two of the book The Long Revolution, Raymond Williams outlines the three general categories in the definition of culture (Williams 2001).

- Ideal: "is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal values."
- Documentary: "is the body of intellectual and imaginative work, in which, in a detailed way, human thought and experience are variously recorded."
- Social: Culture "is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour."

Definition 3 - Terry Eagleton

- At the beginning of his book *Culture*, Terry Eagleton writes about the four major meanings of the word "Culture": "It can mean (1) a body of artistic and intellectual work; (2) a process of spiritual and intellectual development; (3) the values, customs, belief and symbolic practices by which men and women live; or (4) a whole way of life."(Eagleton 2023)

Definition 4 - The Cultural and Heritage Commission of Hong Kong[1]

At the beginning of its Policy Recommendation Report (2003), the Cultural and Heritage Commission of Hong Kong used four paragraphs to define Culture:

- 1.3 "Culture" is a word that is frequently used but difficult to define. UNESCO defines "culture" as the common beliefs, values, customs, language, behaviour, rituals and objects of a social group. This definition is so broad that it is almost all-enveloping.
- 1.4 Some people adopt a narrower definition, considering those cultural and arts activities such as literature, dance, music, drama and visual arts as culture, because

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1   The Cultural and Heritage Commission. 2004. "Policy Recommendation Report." Hong Kong (website). https://www.hab.gov.hk/file_manager/en/documents/policy_responsibilities/CHC-PolicyRecommendationReport_E.pdf.

these activities can best reflect the common values and aesthetic inclinations of a community. Some even restrict culture to "high arts": this represents the narrowest sense of the word "culture".

1.5 In Chinese, "Wen Hua (文化)" means the cultivation of knowledge, character and aesthetic sense, which mirrors the meaning of the Latin word "cultus" from which the English word "culture" is derived.

1.6 On the one hand, the broad definition in paragraph 1.3 will be too wide for the purpose of the Commission's deliberations. On the other hand, the narrow definition in paragraph 1.4 will be too limited, bearing in mind the strategies of "people-oriented", "pluralism", and "holistic approach" that we advocate. Hence in considering the overall cultural development and cultural position of Hong Kong, we adopt a broader perspective, and in matters relating to resource deployment, a narrower definition. We will also take into account the definition in paragraph 1.5 in matters relating to the impact of culture on social development.

From the perspective of this Study, the Cultural and Heritage Commission's definition of culture gave a high-level definition of Culture and could be a good reference to build a Cultural Indicater System.

Definition 5 - Assessing cultural sustainability by Paul James

In his 2014 article "Assessing Cultural Sustainability," Paul James argued that culture should be recognized as the fourth domain of sustainability alongside economics, politics, and ecology, as outlined in the Circles of Social Life framework (James 2014).

In this framework, Culture was defined as "the practices, discourses, and material expressions, which, over time, express continuities and discontinuities of social meaning." There are 7 subdomains of culture in this framework:

1. Identity and Engagement
2. Creativity and Recreation
3. Memory and Projection
4. Beliefs and Ideas
5. Gender and Generations
6. Enquiry and Learning
7. Wellbeing and Health

From the perspective of this Study, the 7 subdomains of Culture covered a very wide range of aspects of culture and was a very good reference.

Definition 6 - 2019 UNESCO Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda[2]

The 2019 UNESCO Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda was a set of indicators that UNESCO has developed to measure the contribution of culture to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The indicators were meant to help countries and organisations to assess their progress towards achieving the SDGs related to culture.

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2   UNESCO, 2019, The UNESCO Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda. UNESCO Website: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371562.

There were 22 indicators, organised into 4 thematic areas:

1. Environment and Resilience
2. Prosperity and Livelihood
3. Knowledge and Skills
4. Inclusion and Participation

The indicators were designed to be adaptable to different contexts and to allow for comparisons between countries. They aimed to provide a comprehensive and standardised way of measuring the contribution of culture to sustainable development, and to help countries to identify areas where they needed to focus their efforts.

From the perspective of this Study, the UNESCO Thematic Indicators focused on the sustainability aspects and are not suitable to measure the vibrancy of culture in a city.

The BEAM-GEST Urban Cultural Model

The Conceptual Framework - the 4 Key Attributes of Culture (BEAM)

As mentioned earlier, one of the objectives of the research is to "develop a set of cultural indicators for analysing the cultural vibrancy of Hong Kong with a broad definition of Culture." After studying the 6 definitions and categorisation of Culture, four Key Attributes: "Belief and Value", "Everyday Lifestyle", "Arts and Creation", and "Memories and Tradition" (BEAM) are suggested as the conceptual framework of the Study. This conceptual framework is designed to cover the multi-faceted, tangible and intangible nature of culture.

In the urban environment, the four Key Attributes cover different aspects of culture.

Belief and Value cover the different concepts, beliefs and philosophies people have towards life and the society. The cultural vibrancy of a city in these areas can be represented by the activities of different religious activities, the diversity of ethnicity and the number of educational institutions.

Everyday Lifestyle covers a wide range of aspects that fulfill people's basic social and physical needs. It covers all kinds of lifestyles including how people communicate and relate to each other, how people live and travel and work, how they dress, eat, exercise and spend their leisure.

Arts and Creation represent the creative nature of culture. It includes every aspect of creative activities. This area covers all intellectual output of human activities including the artistic, scientific, technological and the social aspects and the creation of knowledge and know-how in the society.

Memories and Tradition represent the cumulative nature of culture. It covers the tangible cultural heritage and the intangible cultural heritage in the city. It includes all personal, organisational and community memories and traditions in all recorded and living forms including stories, history, records, monuments, buildings and cityscapes, traditional practices, rituals and ceremonies.

The four Key Attributes in the BEAM are of equal importance.

In fact, depending on who the viewer is, everything (tangible and intangible) in the city carries more than one of the BEAM attributes. Everything can be seen as part of the urban culture.

These 4 Key Attributes are designed to summarise all previous definitions of culture. The 4 Key Attributes of BEAM is easy to understand and they include conceptually the internal (Belief and Value), external (Everyday Lifestyle), creation (Arts and Creation) and the accumulation (Memories and Tradition) aspects of culture.

The four Key Attributes of Culture do not exist in isolation. They interact and affect each other in different ways. One example is to form a Cycle of Culture. The system can be seen to work as follow:

1. Belief and Value <u>shape</u> Everyday Lifestyle
2. Belief and Value and Everyday Lifestyle <u>inspire</u> Arts and Creation
3. Belief and Value, Everyday Lifestyle and Arts and Creation <u>create</u> Memories and Tradition
4. Memories and Tradition <u>form</u> Belief and Value

Figure 1 shows how the BEAM system forms a cycle. It shows conceptually how the four Key Attributes of culture influence each other and help pass culture from generation to next.

Figure 1. *The BEAM Culture Cycle.*
Source: Designed by the author.
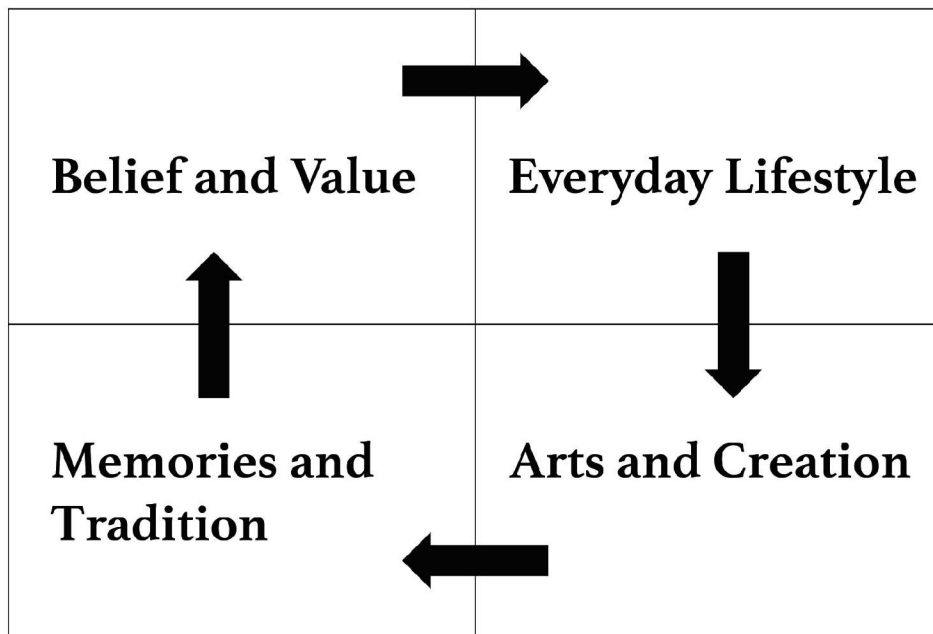
According to the "four pillars of Sustainability" (Environmental, Social, Economic, and Cultural) model (James, Paul, Liam Magee, and Thomas Honeck 2020), culture is one of the four pillars of the sustainable development of cities. Inspired by the Four Pillars model, with highlights on some specific influences, for example the technology, a GEST environment model (Geo-climatic, Economic, Socio-political and Technological) is proposed to show the major influences affecting the BEAM in a city.

The four GEST environments include:

- Geo-climatic Environment

  The geo-climatic environment of a city defines the geographic boundary of the city and the relationship with other cities and regions. This environment also determines the natural environment and the climatic conditions of the city. All these elements affect the BEAM of the city.

- Economic Environment

  The economic environment of a city is about how the city sustains itself economically. What are the main businesses of the city? Some cities focus on trading while some focus on manufacturing. Some are strong in tourism and some focus on research and education. All these activities influence the BEAM of the city.

- Socio-Political Environment

  Socio-political environment refers to the socio-political structure of the city including the relationship between the city and the country, political system, demography, social custom, taboos, laws, rules and regulations. All of these influence the BEAM of the city.

- Technological Environment

  Technological Environment refers to the technology used by the city and the people. Technological change has been one of the biggest driving forces in cultural change in the last century, influencing all aspects of BEAM.

Every city has a unique set of GEST and the GEST changes over time. GEST influences the city's BEAM. By describing different cities' BEAM and GEST, we can describe a city's culture and compare it with other cities.

The BEAM-GEST model of Culture is summarised and shown in Figure 2. The arrows inside the circle represent the multi-directional interaction among the BEAM in a city.

Culture in the city is not a closed system. Cities influence each other through the Import and export of culture. The four arrows connecting the BEAM outside the box represent the interactions between the city and the other cities and regions.

Figure 2. *The BEAM-GEST model of Culture*
*Source*: Designed by the author.
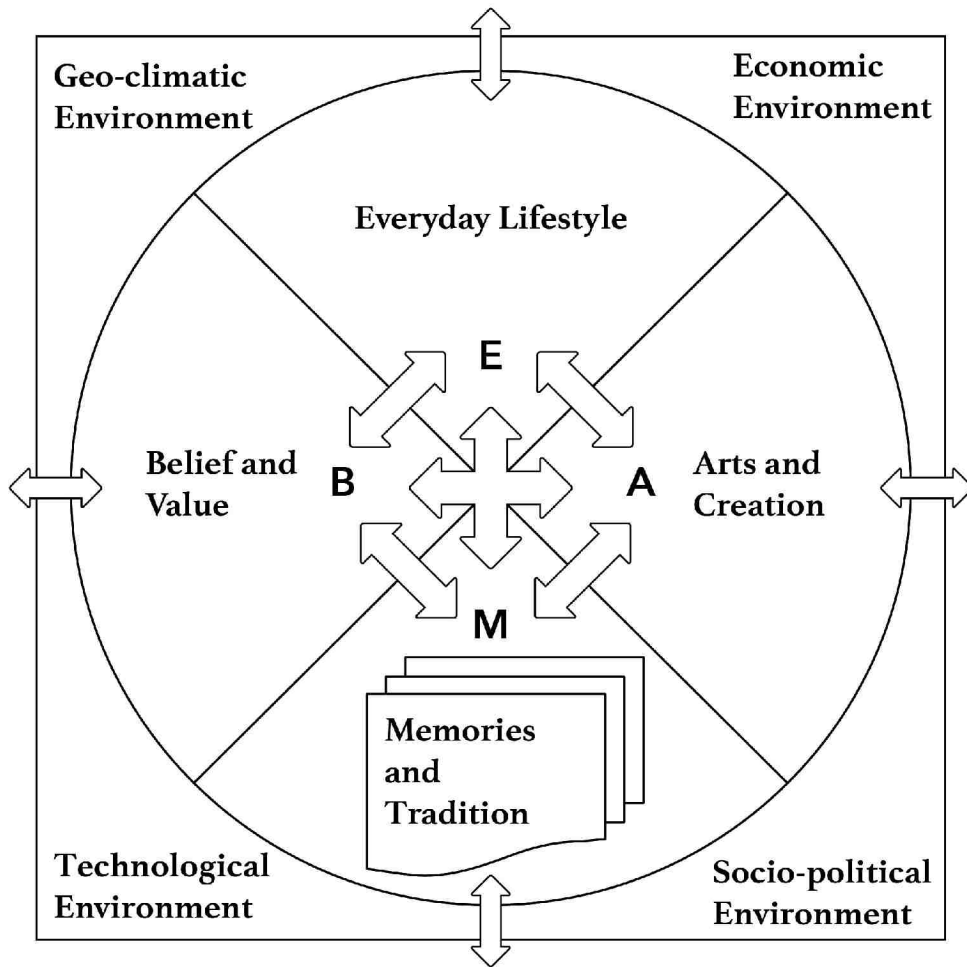
Proposal of a BEAM Cultural Indicators System (CIS) for Hong Kong

The 18 Districts of Hong Kong

Hong Kong has an area of 1,106 square km and is divided into 18 political areas geographically and administratively. The demarcation of the Districts is more due to historical and administrative reasons. Figure 3 shows the map of the 18 districts.

Figure 3. *18 districts of Hong Kong.*

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Districts_of_Hong_Kong
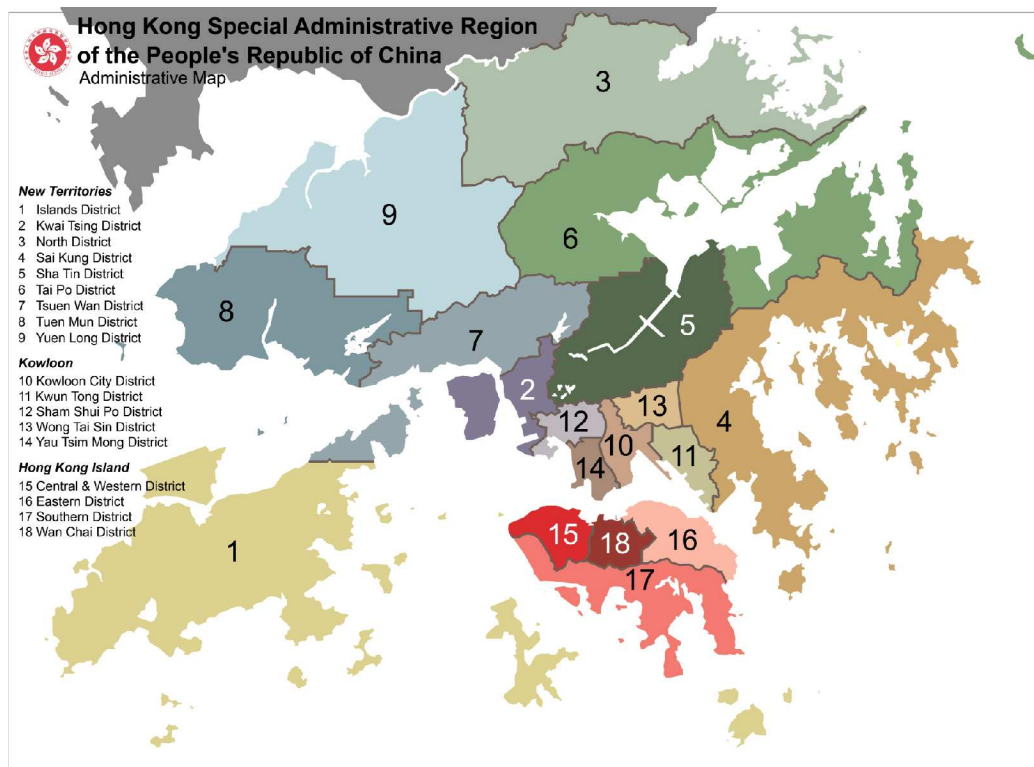
The BEAM Cultural Indicators System

Cultural Indicators Systems is a tool that help to understand the culture of a society through recognising measurable elements and objective descriptions of different aspects of a cultural phenomenon or experience.

Cultural Indicators System can be used to conduct a longitudinal study of a community or to compare the culture of one community with the other.

The BEAM cultural model is used here as the Conceptual Framework to develop a Cultural Indicators System for Hong Kong,

The 12 "Indicators" and "Sub-Indicators"

In order to construct a Cultural Indicators System with the BEAM model for this Study, Indicators and Sub-indicators are designed. In principle, it is not necessary to keep an equal number under the four BEAM attributes. Three Indicators are chosen for each

attribute for this Pilot Study in order to show a balance of emphasis on the 4 Key Attributes of BEAM. All 12 (4 x 3) Indicators are selected because they are commonly known as the major contributors to the cultural vibrancy of a society. Advice from expert advisors are also sought in the process. In order to compose a quantitative study, 1-3 measurable sub-indicator are assigned to each of the 12 indicators. Table 1 shows a summary of the BEAM Cultural Indicators System.

Table 1. *BEAM Cultural Indicators System.*
Source: Designed by the author.

Key Attributes	Indicators	Sub-indicators
Belief and Value	1. Ethnic Diversity 2. Religious Vibrancy 3. Education Vibrancy	1. Non-Chinese % 2. Places of worship / km² 3. University and higher education institutes / km², School and education centre / km²
Everyday Lifestyle	1. Lifestyle Culture 2. Food Culture 3. Outdoor and Sports Culture	1. Shopping centre / km² 2. Restaurant / km², Coffee Shop / km² 3. Country Park area / km², park area / km², sports facilities / km²
Arts and Creation	1. Visual and Performing Arts 2. Entertainment Culture 3. Book Culture	1. Gallery / km², Cultural facilities / km², Music School / km² 2. Movie Screen / km² 3. Bookshop / km2, Library / km²
Memories and Tradition	1. Historic Buildings 2. Cultural Conservation 3. Intangible Cultural Heritage	1. Historic Building / km² 2. Museum / km² 3. Number of traditional rituals and festivals / km²

Under the first Key Attribute - Belief and value, there are 3 Indicators:

1. Ethnic Diversity

   Ethnic diversity in the population contributes positively to the cultural diversity of a city. The ethnicity mix also represents the diversity of beliefs and values of a city. Hong Kong is largely a homogenous society with 92% Chinese Han ethnicity. However, some districts are more ethnically diversified than others. The sub-indicator used here is the "Proportion of ethnic minorities among the whole population in the district"[3] from the 2016 Population By-census.

2. Religious Vibrancy

   The vibrancy in religion is commonly believed to contribute positively to the vibrancy of culture in a city. In trying to find out which district is more religious, the sub-indicator used here is the "number of Places of worship per km2 in the district" in 2016 with data from the Legislative Council[4].

3. Education Vibrancy

   The Education level significantly affects the beliefs and values of a person. In order to find out to what extent the districts' beliefs and values are affected through

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3   Census and Statistics Department. 2016. "Thematic Report Ethnic Minorities 主題性報告少數族裔人士 ." https://www.statistics.gov.hk/pub/B11201002016XXXXB0100.pdf.

4   Legislative Council. "Fact Sheet - Religious facilities in Hong Kong." 2017. Hong Kong (website) . https://www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/english/1718fs01-religious-facilities-in-hong-kong-20171208-e.pdf.

education, 2 sub-indicator used here are: 1) the "Number of universities and higher education institutes per km^2"[5] from the Education Bureau; 2) The "Number of schools and education centres per km^2".

Under the second Key Attribute - Everyday lifestyle, there are 3 Domains / Indicators:

1. Lifestyle Culture

    Hong Kong is widely regarded as a commercial city and the shopping culture is the most visible aspect of it. It is estimated that there are around 800 shopping centres in Hong Kong and it is regarded as a "city of malls" (DeWolf, Christopher, Fiona S. Scott, and Ana Rosado 2020). In order to compare the commercial culture of the 18 districts, the indicator selected here is the "number of shopping centre per km^2"[6].

2. Food Culture

    Food culture is a significant part of everyday life culture. According to a 2012 survey, Hong Kong people dine out 5.1 times on average per week[7]. The vibrancy of the food culture of each district could be reflected in the number of restaurants. The sub-indicator used here is 1) The "number of restaurants per km^2" in the 18 districts with data from the list of licensed restaurants[8] from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and 2) The "number of coffee shops per km^2" with data from Google Map.

3. Outdoor and Sports Culture

    As one of the most high-density metropolises in the world, one uniqueness of Hong Kong is that its countryside consists of about three quarters of its 1108 square kilometres of land. There are in total 24 country parks designated for the purposes of nature conservation, countryside recreation and outdoor education. To reflect the difference in the outdoor and sports culture of the 18 districts, 3 sub-indicators are used here. They are 1) the "country park area per km^2"[9], 2) The urban park area per km^2, and 3) The number of sports facilities per km^2.

Under the third Key Attribute - Arts and Creation, there are 3 Indicators:

1. Visual and Performing Arts

    Hong Kong is hailed as the art capital of Asia (Kinsella and Brown 2020). The Art scene contributes a lot to the city's Arts and Creation. How is it reflected in the different districts? 3 sub-indicators are used here. They are: 1) the "number of art

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5   Education Bureau. 2013. "School Lists by District." https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/student-parents/sch-info/sch-search/schlist-by-district/index.html.

6   Wikiwand. n.d. "Hong Kong Shopping Arcade listing 香港商場列 ." Accessed April 20, 2023. https://www.wikiwand.com/zh-hk/%E9%A6%99%E6%B8%AF%E5%95%86%E5%A0%B4%E5%88%97%E8%A1%A8#/google_vignette.

7   Public Opinion Programme. 2012. "Survey on Hong Kong people's eating habits.", The University of Hong Kong (website).

8   Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. n.d. "List of Licensed Restaurants and Factory Canteens." Accessed April 20, 2023. https://www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/licence-foodPremises-rest.html.

9   Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. n.d. "Country Parks and Special Areas." Accessed April 20, 2023. https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/country/cou_lea/the_facts.html.

10   BBC News. 2012. "Hong Kong emerges as Asia's art capital." https://www.bbc.com/news/business-17201249.

galleries per km^2". As there is no official statistics in this aspect, the data used here is from the Google Map[11], 2) The "number of cultural venues per km^2" with data from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and 3) The "number of music schools per km^2" with data from the Google Map.

2. Entertainment Culture

In contrast with the visual and performing arts, popular culture covers the mass aspect of Arts and creation. As one of the most representative forms of popular entertainment, movies have been playing an important role in Hong Kong as the city has a long history of being one of the most active movie-manufacturing cities of Asia. The sub-indicator selected here is the "number of cinema screens" with data from the Hong Kong Theatre Association and the Hong Kong Movie website[12].

3. Book Culture

The vibrancy of the reading culture is generally accepted as an important part of the cultural vibrancy of a city. Hong. The sub-indicators selected here are 1) the "number of bookstores per km^2" with data from the Google Map and 2) The "number of public, community and university libraries per km^2" with data from LCSD public library and Google Map.

Under the fourth Key Attribute - Memories and Tradition, there are 3 Indicators:

1. Historic Buildings

Under this indicator, historic buildings are regarded as a main keeper of collective memory in a city and they are a major cultural assets of a district. The Antiquities Advisory Board's website shows a comprehensive list of buildings that have been assessed for their historic value. The sub-indicator selected here is the "Number of historic buildings" with a total of 1774 buildings.

2. Culture Conservation

Under this indicator, museums are regarded as a main keeper of cultural assets and collective memories. The majority of museums in Hong Kong are operated by the Government or the universities. The sub-indicator selected here is the "number of museums" with data from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department of the Government[13] and the "List of Museums in Hong Kong"[14] from Wikipedia.

3. Intangible Cultural Heritage / Number of traditional rituals and festivals

While "Historic building" and "Museum" represent the material aspect of Memories in the BEAM model, the "Intangible Cultural Heritage" represents the immaterial aspect of it. The first intangible cultural heritage inventory[15] of Hong Kong was

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11   199 art galleries were found on Google map in all 18 districts in Hong Kong in December 2020. After filtering the irrelevant entries, the data of 176 art galleries were used in the study.

12   Hong Kong Movie. n.d. "Hong Kong Movie Screening List 香港電影戲院上映場次." Accessed April 20, 2023. https://hkmovie6.com/cinema.

13   Leisure and Cultural Services Department. n.d. "Museums." Accessed April 20, 2023. https://www.museums.gov.hk/en_US/web/portal/home.html.

14   Wikipedia. n.d. "List of museums in Hong Kong." Wikipedia. Accessed April 20, 2023. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_museums_in_Hong_Kong.

15   Leisure and Cultural Services Department. n.d. "ICH Inventory of Hong Kong." Accessed April 20, 2023. https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/Museum/ICHO/en_US/web/icho/the_first_intangible_cultural_heritage_inventory_of_hong_kong.html.

established in 2014. The Inventory list consists of 5 domains. The items under the "number of social practices, rituals and festive events" domain[16] are mostly site-specific and they are used to be the sub-indicator here.

Data Collection, Treatment and Presentation

All data in the Study are collected from the public realm.

As the objective of the Study is to compare the cultural vibrancy of the 18 districts using the BEAM cultural model, the data collected is treated in a consistent way to make them comparable.

The 19 sets of sub-indicators data collected contain respective figures under the 18 administrative districts. Each set of data (Scores) is transformed into a scale of 0-100% (Index) with the highest Score as 100%.

Some indicators have more than one sub-indicator and the Average of their respective indexes will be used as the Index of that Indicator.
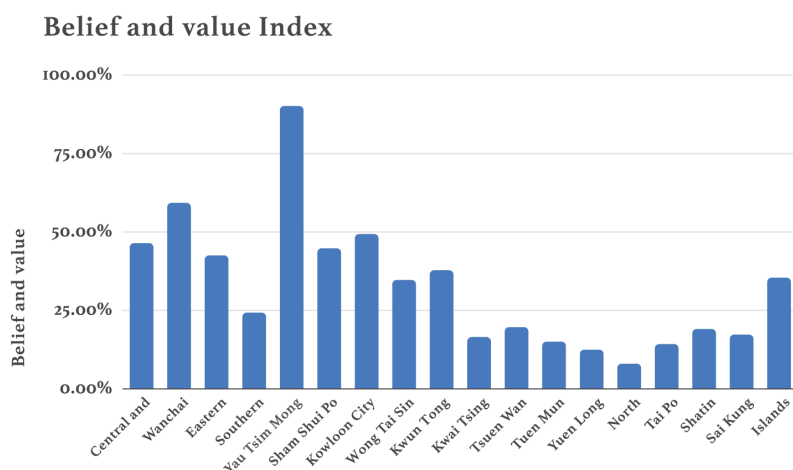
For example, the Visual and Performing Arts Indicator has 3 sub-indicators. They are 1) Number of galleries per km^2, 2) Number of Cultural Venues for Hire and 3. Number of Music Schools. The average of the Indexes of these 3 sub-indicators is used as the overall index of the Visual and Performing Arts Indicator.

With the above treatment of data, the 12 indicators of the 18 districts are compared.

Key Attribute 1 - Belief and Value

Figure 4. *Belief and Value Index.*
Source: Designed by the author.

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16   Leisure and Cultural Services Department. n.d. "Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events, ICH Inventory of Hong Kong." Accessed April 20, 2023. https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/Museum/ICHO/documents/3862785/3863408/First_hkich_inventory_E.pdf.

Figure 4 shows the comparison of the cultural vibrancy of the 18 districts in the key attribute of Belief and Value. The three indicators are as below:

- Ethnic Diversity–the percentage of Non-Chinese in the population
- Religious Vibrancy–the number of places of worship / km²
- Education Vibrancy–the number of universities and higher education institutes / km², and the number of Schools and education centres / km²

Key Attributes 2 - Everyday Lifestyle

Figure 5. *Everyday Lifestyle.*
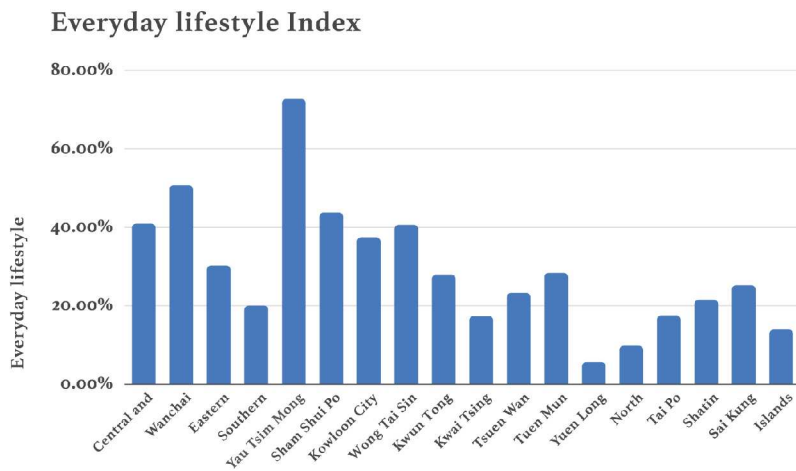*Source*: Designed by the author.

Figure 5 shows the comparison of the cultural vibrancy of the 18 districts in the key attribute of Everyday Lifestyle. The three indicators are as below:

- Lifestyle Culture–the number of shopping centres / km²
- Food Culture–the number of restaurants and the number of coffee shops / km²
- Outdoor and Sports Culture-Country Park area / km², park area / km², number of sports facilities / km²

Key Attribute 3 - Arts and Creation

Figure 6. *Arts and Creation Index.*
Source: Designed by the author.
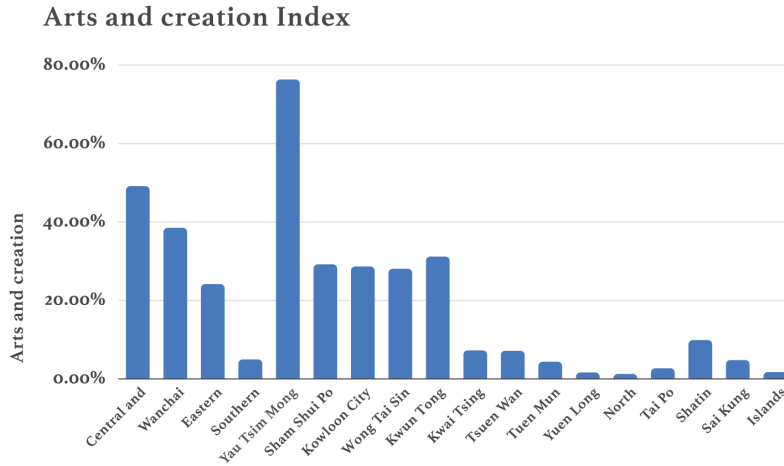
Arts and creation Index

Figure 6 shows the comparison of the cultural vibrancy of the 18 districts in the key attribute of Arts and Creation. The three indicators are as below:

- Visual and Performing Arts–the number of galleries / km², the number of cultural venues / km2 and the number of music schools / km².
- Entertainment Culture–the number of cinema screens / km²
- Book Culture–Number of bookshops / km2 and number of libraries / km²

Key Attribute 4 - Memories and Tradition

Figure 7. *Memories Index.*
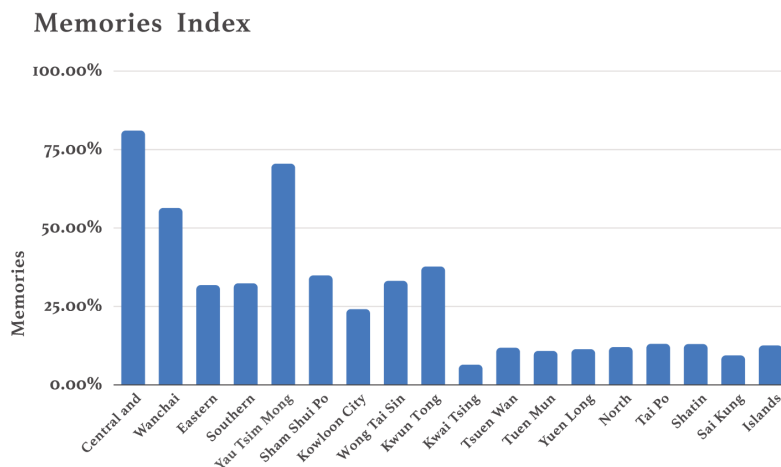*Source*: Designed by the author.

Memories Index

Figure 7 shows the comparison of the cultural vibrancy of the 18 districts in the key attribute of Memories. The three indicators are as below:

- Historic buildings and monuments–Historic buildings and monuments / km²
- Culture conservation–the number of museums / km²
- Intangible Cultural Heritage–Number of traditional rituals and festivals / km²

Overall Comparison

Figure 8. *BEAM Cultural Indicators Overall Comparison.*
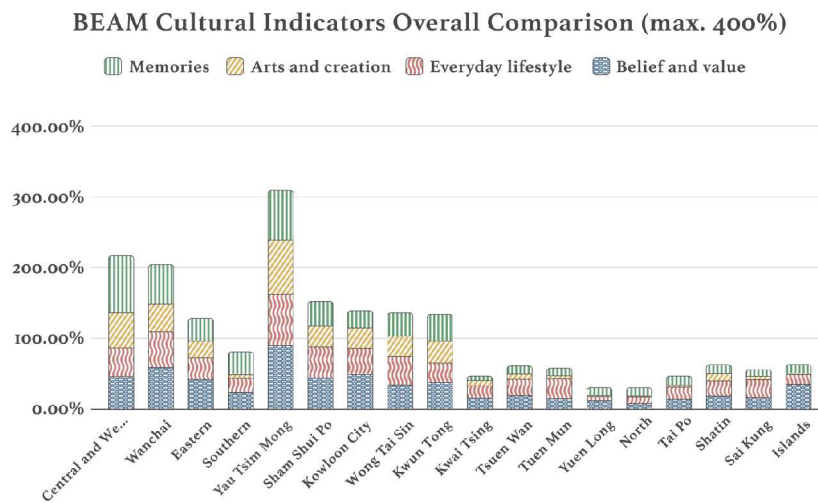*Source*: Designed by the author.

Figure 8 shows the comparison of the cultural vibrancy of the 18 districts with the respective proportion of all the 4 key attributes.

1. Yau Tsim Mong is the most culturally vibrant district in Hong Kong and it stands out clearly from all other districts. It is strong in all 4 key attributes.
2. Yuen Long and North District are the least culturally vibrant districts
3. Generally speaking, the urban areas are more culturally vibrant than the suburban areas.
4. Among the urban areas, the earlier developed areas are culturally more vibrant than the newly developed areas.

Observations

Observations: Analysis of the 18 districts and the Study findings.

Table 2. *BEAM Cultural Indicators Overall Ranking.*
Source: Designed by the author.

|	BEAM Cultural Indicators Overall Ranking
Yau Tsim Mong	1
Central and Western	2
Wanchai	3
Sham Shui Po	4
Kowloon City	5
Wong Tai Sin	6
Kwun Tong	7
Eastern	8
Southern	9
Islands	10
Shatin	11
Tsuen Wan	12
Tuen Mun	13
Sai Kung	14
Tai Po	15
Kwai Tsing	16
North	17
Yuen Long	18

Table 2 lists the Overall Ranking of the 18 Districts, the 3 highest scored districts are:

- Yau Tsim Mong
- Central and Western
- Wanchai

Figure 9 puts the 18 districts overall ranking into a map. The deep red grid shows the 3 districts with the highest BEAM ranking and the deep blue twill shows the 3 districts with the lowest BEAM ranking.

Figure 9. *Overall Ranking Map.*
Source: Designed by the author.
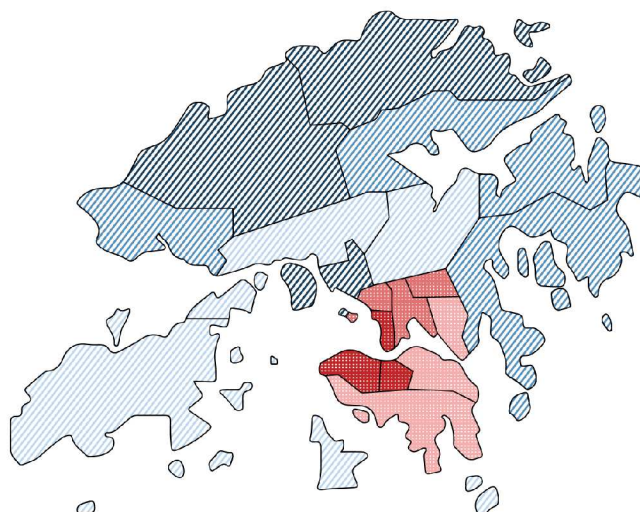
This map shows the different cultural characteristics of different districts. It shows the cultural vibrancy gap between the urban and suburban areas which is aligned with the perception of the general public.

What do the districts with a higher BEAM cultural vibrancy have in common?

From the map, we can see that the highest ranked 9 districts are all the urban areas of the city and they are all adjacent to each other. These 9 districts overlap with the early urbanised area of Hong Kong which was occupied by the British from 1841-1860.

The BEAM vibrancy of these 9 districts is significantly higher than the other districts. Obviously the urbanization came with the colonisation in these areas contributed to the current cultural vibrancy a lot.

It is observed that the BEAM overall indexes of the top 3 districts (Yau Tsim Mong, Central and Wanchai) are higher than the other districts significantly. They are also generally recognised as the most popular tourist districts. These 3 districts cover the "old city" areas of Hong Kong. A strong relationship between the old city areas and the criteria of cultural vibrancy defined in the BEAM cultural model in this Pilot Study is observed.

The Hong Kong Old City areas developed in the 19th century are high-density and highly mixed-used areas with residential, commercial, religious, educational, entertainment and industrial functionalities. They are mostly very well connected and pedestrian-friendly. The historic buildings in the old city areas are usually diverse in styles because they were built and refurbished in different periods. These Old city areas are now prime tourist districts because the streetscapes are historically-rich and culturally-diversified. From the BEAM point of view, the old city areas are rich with all four Key Attributes (Belief and Value, Everyday Lifestyle, Arts and Entertainment, Memories and Tradition). These elements have influenced each other over the last 180 years and have created a unique cultural milieu in the old city areas.

The Pilot Study has given evidence of how the BEAM cultural model can be used to analyse and explain how urban culture is formed and mixed. It also provides a tool to quantify and compare Cultural Vibrancy in a city.

Constraints and Limitations

This is a Pilot Study with very limited resources. If more resources are allowed, stakeholder engagement is needed in the design of the Indicators and Sub-indicators. Stakeholders should include representatives from the cultural sector and the community sector.

The selection of sub-indicators in this Pilot Study is constrained by the availability of data in the public realm and the manpower limitation. If more resources are allowed, more sub-indicators can be included under every attribute, especially Everyday Lifestyle as it is a very encompassing area.

Cultural vibrancy on the internet is not included in this Pilot Study because of the lack of data of online activities relating to the 18 districts level.

This is a quantitative study of the cultural vibrancy of a city and it does not show the qualitative side of cultural vibrancy. If more time and resources are allowed, this study can be supplemented by a description of the culture of the 18 districts of Hong Kong in essay form with input from the stakeholder through questionnaires, focus groups and interviews.

The GEST part of the BEAM-GEST cultural model is not included in the Pilot Study. A qualitative analysis of how the GEST relates to the BEAM of the 18 districts can be added if more time and resources are allowed.

Conclusion

Can the BEAM-GEST cultural model describe and explain Cultural Vibrancy in a city?

In this Pilot Study, the BEAM cultural model was translated into an empirical study with data from the 18 districts of Hong Kong. On one hand, the result of the Study echoes the general public's perception regarding the cultural vibrancy of these 18 districts. On the other hand, it provides a new framework to analyse urban culture. It opens a door to study in detail the interaction between the 4 BEAM elements in urban culture.

Can the BEAM-GEST cultural model and the BEAM Cultural Indicators System be used to study other cities?

The BEAM-GEST cultural model is designed for cities in general. The BEAM Cultural Indicators System is designed for Hong Kong especially in the selection of the Indicators and Sub-indicators. Having said that, the general principle of the BEAM CIS can be applied to any city.

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