

## MULTI ACTOR-BASED APPROACH TO PLANNING DECISIONS FOR CULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN NEW ECONOMY

Onur MENGI<sup>1</sup>, Deniz DENIZ<sup>1</sup>, Ahmet Can OZCAN<sup>1</sup>, Cigdem TARHAN<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Izmir University of Economics, Department of Industrial Design, Izmir, Turkey

<sup>2</sup>Dokuz Eylul University, Department of Management Information Systems, Izmir, Turkey,  
[cigdem.tarhan@deu.edu.tr](mailto:cigdem.tarhan@deu.edu.tr)

***Abstract:** Along with the new economy, the competitive advantage of cities is now derived from management of their cultural productions. However, pottery making as cultural industry including ceramic and other earthenware products, currently suffers from many difficulties as inefficient role of government, environmental problems, and the lack of promotion and marketing strategies and falls behind the recent urban development trends. Menemen-Izmir/Turkey has been selected as case area, where the pottery making inherited for five generations. The aim of this study is to suggest a model to tackle with the current difficulties of and also to develop cultural production. The data have been collected via questionnaire and interviews with the pottery masters and Pottery Makers Association. The research proposes the multi actor-based approach through statistically analyses and maps to manage cultural industries and integrate various actors related to the cultural production into the decision making process of urban planning.*

**Key words:** New Economy, Cultural Industries, Multi-actor Decision Making, Urban Development, Sustainability

**JEL Classification Codes:** O21, R58

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's new economic structure, competitive environment, the shift towards to the production of culture, and the presence of a class driving the knowledge and know-how has become essential to the city development. Urban places all over the world are now planned and designed with cultural assets as their best strength or their cultural objective and they have always been considered as centres of cultural production and economic activities. Especially from the very early settlements, cities have always provided a considerable capacity to produce culture in different forms as art, ideas, and life styles etc. to persuade sustainable economic improvement. Within the recent years, the spheres of cultural and economic development with creativity seem to be more convergent as the features of development for cities. That requires for a new approach to the urban decision making on urban environments.

The purpose of this study is to suggest a model to tackle with the current problems of cultural production from the new economy perspective. Such model is intended to provide the urban decision making process with a proposed operational partnership. In order to do that, Menemen, a district of İzmir/Turkey, has been selected as a case area for this particular study, where the pottery making as a cultural industry inherited for five generations. The data has been collected via questionnaire and interviews with the pottery masters, as well as Pottery Makers Association. The findings have been complemented by the observations of the ateliers and markets in the case area to analyse the main difficulties for cultural production and also to emphasize the importance of collaboration for managing the cultural industries.

The main problem from the urban decision making perspective is to tackle with pottery sector that currently suffers from many difficulties, including; inefficient role of government, environmental problems, the lack of promotion and marketing strategies for sustainable production. In order to fill this vital gap, the multi actor-based approach model for cultural industries is proposed to work towards immediate strategies for cultural development and, for managing and boosting the cultural production potential for similar cases all over the world.

## **2. NEW ECONOMY AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES**

The first decade of the twenty-first century, urban restructuring processes were marked by a rising interest in creativity and culture and enthusiasm for new economy in cities. Examination of the new economy from the cultural perspective reveals that the competitive advantage of cities is now derived from investment in promoting cultural production as cultural industries, creating new decision making methods and collaborations. Alterations in consumption trends after the 1980s have led the appeal of the unique and special come forward and have created a tendency towards niche cultural markets and increased the market share of cultural products. For 30 years urban environment has been witnessing a growing understanding of the mutuality between creativity, culture and economics in urban environments (Gospodini, 2006). New approaches to the decision making tools have become to be the most appreciated quality in our economy, especially to reproduce culture. Cities all over the world are planned with new models as their best strength or their cultural objective. Cities have always been considered as centres of cultural production and economic activities. Especially from the very early settlements, cities have always provided a considerable capacity, not necessarily simultaneously, both to produce culture in different forms as art, ideas, ideologies and life styles, and to persuade economic improvement and growth. Within the recent years, however, the spheres of cultural and economic development as well as scientific and technological developments seem to be more convergent as the features of urban development, and necessitate involvement of various actors.

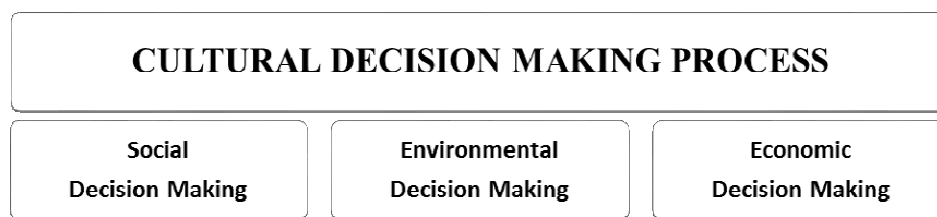
Examination of the new economy from the cultural perspective reveals that the competitive advantage of cities is now derived from investment in promoting cultural production as cultural industries, creating ideas and products. They are increasingly important leverages to take role in the global market. The emergence of the local districts is very much based on how culture is being used. Cultural production within the cultural industries, nurtures the creative and innovative environment associated with the new economy, and enables the physical environment to maintain their role as incubators of creativity (Hall, 2000). With the cultural ingredient added to the production and their creative capacities in design, branding, promotion and marketing, cultural industries also carry the potential of providing to the traditional manufacturing industries with an ability to compete internationally (Fleming, 1999).

Especially from the very early settlements, cities have always provided a considerable capacity, not necessarily simultaneously, both to produce culture in different forms as art, ideas, ideologies and life styles, and to persuade economic improvement and growth. Along with the latest restructuring process, the term new economy started to be used for changing economic, technical and social structures in urban areas. Especially over the past 30 year, many scholars (Landry & Bianchini, 1997; Scott, 1997; Begg, 2000; Hall, 2000; Florida, 2002; Hutton, 2004) have underlined the rise of new economy which is named 'creative' or/and 'knowledge', or/and 'cultural'. Since then, urban environment has been witnessing a growing understanding of the mutuality between creativity, culture and economics in urban environments (Gospodini, 2006). By the early 1980s, cultural industries were becoming increasingly noticeable for cultural policy-makers. The major effort at the international level was to pull the cultural industries into policy circles. The Greater London Council introduced the UK's first cultural industries strategy and

promoted cultural industries as a new way of policy making. This was also as part of a local economic strategy since they are regarded as drivers for the cultural heritage and urban regeneration for solving the post-industrial cities (O'Connor & Wynne, 1993; Hesmondhalgh, 2007; McGuigan, 1996). The cultural industries, then, were perceived as a major source of local employment by many nations (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1994; Garnham, 2001; O'Connor, 1999).

Cultural industries are mainly defined as goods and activities that engage in primary economic value comes from their cultural significance and uniqueness. This definition includes both the conventional cultural industries as well as the traditional arts including visual art, crafts etc. (Throsby, 2008). As stated by Scott (2000) in *The Cultural Economy of Cities*, cultural production necessarily involves high levels of human input, organized as clusters of small companies working on a project basis, where teams, partnerships and alliances dissolve and reform constantly. Such structure heavily relies on flows and exchange of information, goods and services coming from the skills sourcing and know-how. That flow and exchange occurs among various actors involved in the cultural production and cultural development processes. Cultural industries integrate the whole production chain of cultural goods, from creation to consumption and re-use, within the final usage and also range across from the fine arts to popular culture.

In order to enable decision making process specifically for fostering cultural values which are counted as the major aspects of cultural industries; first, there are social aspect that indicates equal opportunities of the craftsmen and local pottery makers. Despite the unique structure that has been attempted to maintain locally, even sometimes within families, should be acknowledged as a social value and kept by certain uniform policies. Second, the environmental aspect where the pottery making process is based on, and its unique soil as an ingredient has been harvested around the area is composed of ecological and environmental balances. The physical environment and the properties of the adjacent landscape here create the content of such cultural heritage. This brings about the environmental dimension of decision making for cultural industries. Third, the economic prosperity of cultural production is also crucial. Within the economic framework, it is not only about producing the cultural content but also its consumption and distribution (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Dimensions of cultural decision making process**

Regarding the new economy of today, financial viability of craftsmen and their work, and their economic values and benefits not only for the locality but also for the region and nation becomes essential. Through this particular study it is aimed to propose multi-actor collaboration based on the findings that contribute to make urban planning decisions for nurturing the cultural industries in cities and development of the cultural production Menemen as a case study.

### 3. STUDY AREA, DATA AND METHODOLOGY

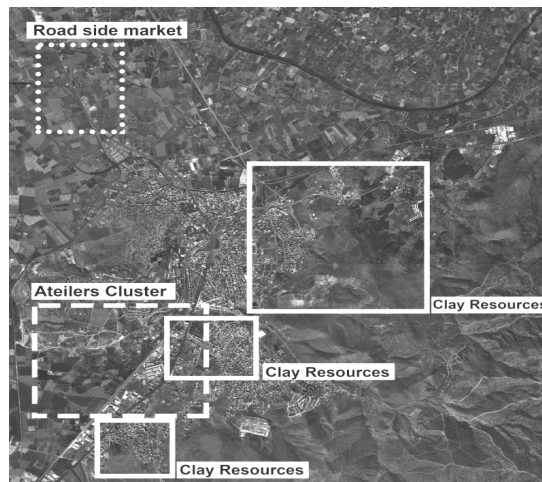
Menemen, a district of Izmir is located in the west coast of Turkey. Its economy depends mainly on the agriculture and stockbreeding in large part, yet the production and export of potteries including ceramic and other earthenware products have always been famous across Turkey since centuries. According to the interviews with the members of the Menemen Pottery

Makers Association, Menemen has been exporting 90% of its products to the international markets until 2008, however now it mainly serve to the domestic market due to the shrinkage of international markets. Pottery makers, who produce 80% of Turkey's pottery needs and send their products to adjacent touristic regions. The pottery sector in Menemen currently suffers from the lack of promotion and marketing strategies. In order to fill this vital gap, The Menemen Pottery Makers Association was founded recently to improve and advertise pottery, continues to work towards immediate strategies for development and sustainability of the cultural heritage and production of Menemen (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Menemen District in Izmir - Turkey**

The location of Menemen is crucial as a pottery making site. One of the most important spatial aspects of the district is being close to the harbor in Izmir. Another spatial importance of the district is its unique soil that can only be found and extracted around the hills located in Menemen. There are a cluster of 22 organized ateliers, 3 main clay resources, 1 large road-side market and 1 newly founded administrative body, the Menemen Pottery Makers Association, are distributed in Menemen (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Spatial organization of pottery making in Menemen**

Through the research period, there have been many chances to observe crucial studies on to the features of cultural industries and also interviewing with many professionals on pottery. Initial data has been obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the local potters and

NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) in Menemen. The following data has been collected via observations of the pottery ateliers, clay-sources and other spatial setting such as pottery exhibits and markets in Menemen. The research process has mainly shown that managing cultural industries is a complex issue and they must be considered in a wider perspective and over varied scales, including; national, regional and local levels to deliver on its promise.

In the data collection process, all the pottery makers in different ateliers have been questioned regarding to their professional and know-how history; second, their product range and product types, third, their manufacturing processes; and last, their needs and expectations. Some of the questions have been left open-ended in purpose.

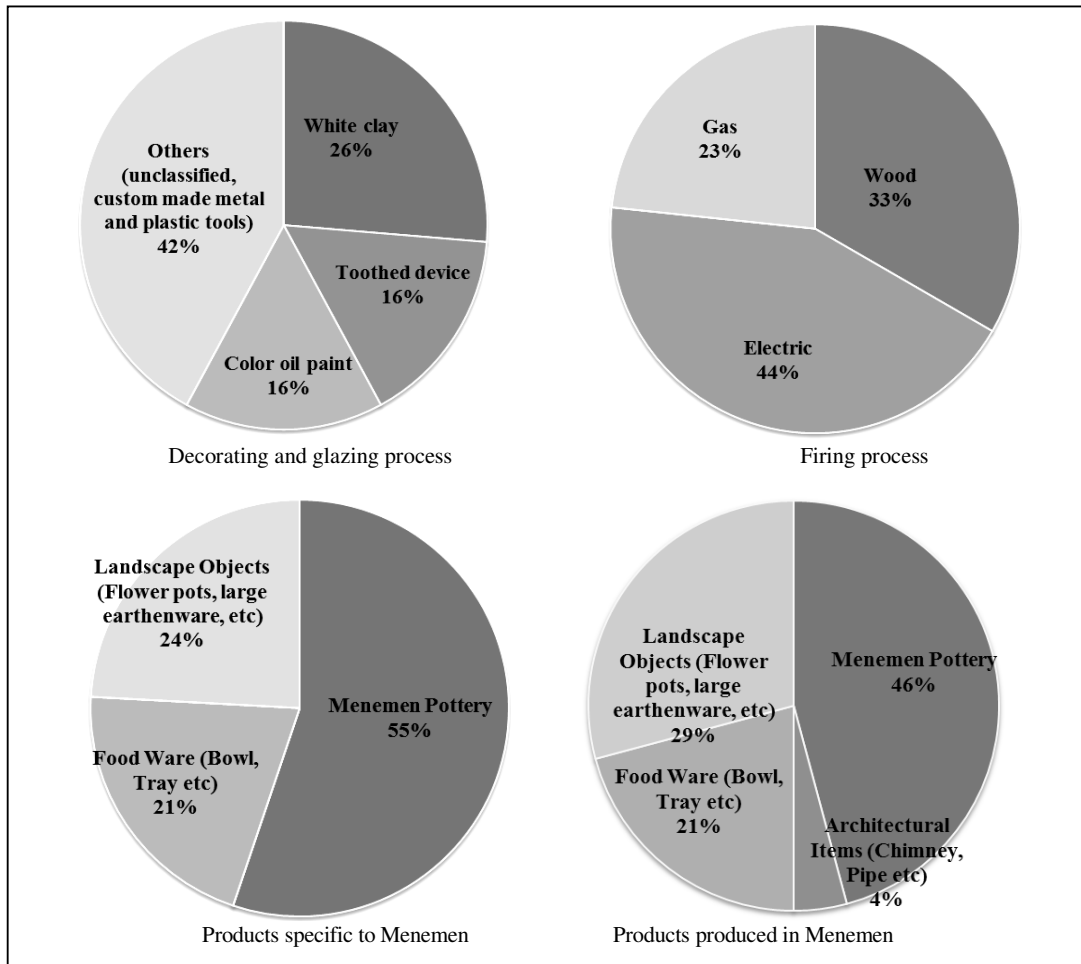
#### **4. PROPOSAL FOR THE MULTI ACTOR-BASED APPROACH**

##### **4.1. Analyses**

Based on the results gained through the investigating the production process; there are 2 main production types in the ateliers of Menemen. First of all, traditional, in other words, hand building is employed by more than half of the ateliers (62%) in the shaping process. Handcraft for this industry has been reported as the earliest forming method where they constructed by hand from coils of clay, blending flat slabs of clay. Second, the percentage of use of pottery wheel where clay is placed in the center of a turntable and rotated with a stick, by foot power or electric motor is 19%. That is equal to the mixed method where the pottery makers combine these two different production techniques (Figure 4). More than one-thirds of the ateliers (88%) apply the molding and casting through the process.

Potteries can be decorated in many different ways utilizing different tools. Some decoration can be done before or after the firing. Also, glazing is required to render porous pottery vessels impermeable to water and other liquids so that glassy coating is applied on pottery with the intention of decoration and protection. Almost the half of the decoration for the potteries produced in Menemen is carried out by unclassified, custom made, metal or plastic tools, 26% of the decoration is done by applying white clay. Color paint is also preferred. Specific to this place, toothed devices are also used in the process. Firing process of pottery is conducted by a variety of methods. Yet, the maximum temperature that they exposed to and the duration of firing together affect qualities of the final product. Almost the half of the ateliers conducts the firing process predominantly by electricity (44%), and wood and gas (Figure 5). According to the results of the third data set investigating the product range and product types, the products known as specific to Menemen and representing the historical background of this village have been mostly stated as unique type of Menemen pottery (55%), and landscape objects and various food wares. Additionally, regarding these sorts of products, the one currently being produced is mainly the unique type of Menemen pottery (46%) (Figure 5). That is followed by the others; the landscape objects, food wares and also the architectural items such as chimneys, pipes, etc.

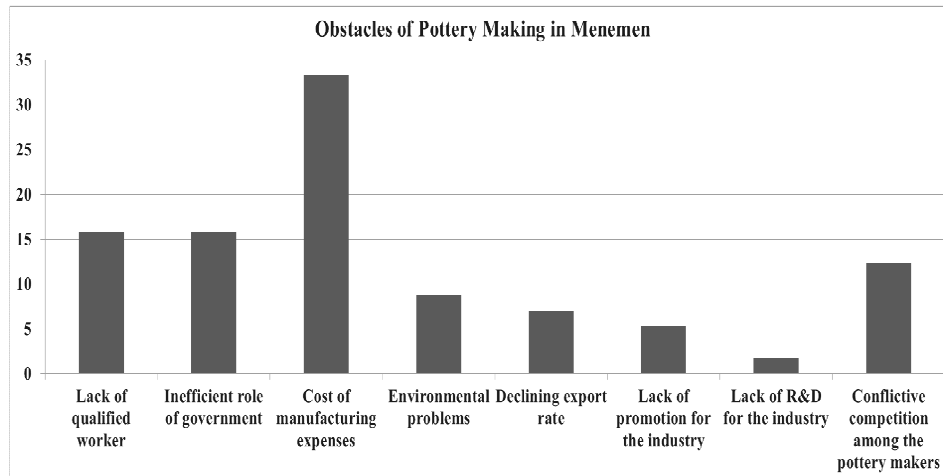
According to the questionnaire conducted with all the pottery makers, it has been claimed that only the landscape objects are exported to the international market. On the other hand, despite the fact that the unique type of pottery is regarded as specific to Menemen; comparatively, landscape elements are more frequently exported, more than third of them are currently being sold in the national market and the other the other 17 percentage is realized by the food wares. The countries where these products are exported generally upon request are Germany, Cyprus and Holland, Hungary, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom.



**Figure 4. Data analysis of Menemen pottery cultural production**

The major difficulty reported by the pottery makers in Menemen is the cost of manufacturing expenses. Two-thirds of these expenses are covered by the cost of clay resource collection (75%), as the other quarters are energy source expenditures due to the lack of incentives supplied by the local government (Figure 5). The other important problems are the lack of qualified workers available at the district since the attractiveness and appeal of the industry to work for has been declined, and the inefficient role of government that directly related to the weak role of current NGOs. The other difficulties are conflictive competition among the ateliers, environmental problems, declining rate of export as well as the lack of promotion and research and development of this cultural industry in and around Menemen.

While the inefficient usage of raw materials covers more than half of the reported environmental problems due to the recent changes at the local policies, environmental pollution and the cause of unhealthy smoke and ash can also be regarded as considerable.



**Figure 5. Major difficulties of pottery making in Menemen**

#### **4.2 Managing the cultural industries through the multi actor-based approach**

In terms of the social aspects of management of cultural industries, the regulations for urban decision making should be introduced to link the society to the cultural industries by maintaining the potential of knowledge and know-how transfer occurred within the families. At the same time, these institutions can hire these experienced masters of pottery making in order to make a contribution on this particular educational process. Since the spatiality of Menemen is crucial in terms of its closeness to the harbor and its unique type of soil can only be found in Menemen, in order to overcome the problem of declining export to the abroad, such proximity and locational preferences can reduce the transportation costs of the products to be exported through the sea-shipment.

Working with collaboration indicating multiple actors is also crucial, because successful collaboration helps for better and sustainable use of existing resources. The cooperation also helps to create a successful strategic action plan by considering the local situation and local needs. In other words, working with collaboration brings a range of perspectives by considering the issue from different point of views. Therefore, this not only increases understanding of the specific problem, but also helps to figure out the targets for decision making tools and implement the planned actions for each local area.

The major difficulties at the site survey indicate the lack of research center for the industry, cost of manufacturing expenses, and environmental problems. Along with the educational institutions, there should also be a research and development agency established in cooperation with the government to make developments to reduce the cost in the manufacturing processes as well as to also help to minimize the environmental problems. At the same time, such cooperation will enhance the role of local government and boost its reputation among the community. The local government, here, should give some incentives to the industry for its future development. The provision of incentives can also be shared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Policies can also be supported by indication of environmentally aware NGOs complementary to the Menemen Pottery Making Association.

In this respect, there must be a powerful monitoring system between the local government and NGOs. These NGOs can also be responsible for controlling and managing environmental issues through certain policies. For examples, the use of wood as an energy source for the firing

process that creates a series of environmental pollutions; smoke and ashes, can be regulated through such policies by the NGOs monitored by the local government.

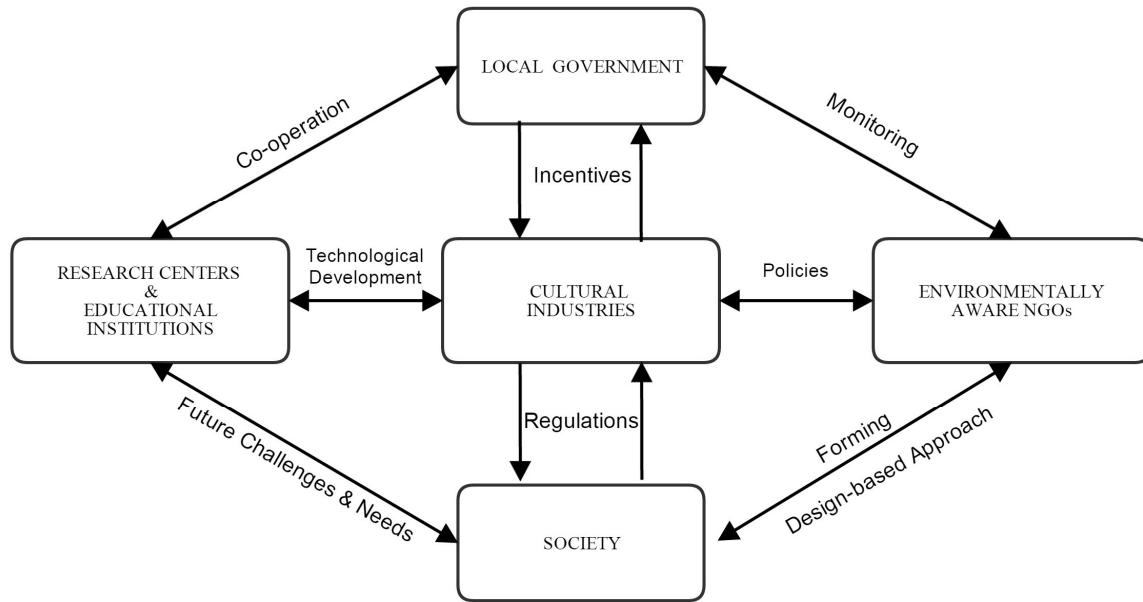
The current state of the lack of promotion for the industry can be solved by the collaboration of NGOs with the local government. The awareness of such cultural industry can also be realized through remarkable design. If the design is involved in every process from the clay collection to promotion, the problem of conflictive competition among the ateliers can be solved. The monitoring system can control and manage the particular aspects and skills of each pottery maker, distinguish originalities of each atelier, and help them to develop and promote their unique products accordingly.

The demand for the export of today is considerably related to the design that meets expectations of customers. The type of the clay and the shaping processes with hand building are very authentic to Menemen, especially producing the unique type of Menemen pottery. However, the exported products are rather landscape objects. The demand from the national and international markets should be directed to the unique type of Menemen pottery. This type of pottery can be created more attractively by utilizing the design in the process. Additionally, it will not only reverse the declining export problem and but also reduce the environmental problems. Future challenges and needs for this industry are associated with planning and promotion of the pottery making and process.

Collaborative studies also create community participation through the whole process, which is crucial for long-term solutions. Besides, sharing responsibilities by collaboration makes easier to evaluate the possible solutions at first stage. Therefore, in order to have fruitful improvement, possible solutions must be considered from the very beginning of these studies. Otherwise, these solutions will only be a short term and unsuccessful. As another point, the cooperation also brings together both practical and theoretical knowledge before deciding on possible solutions to generate cultural industry development. Current understanding of making potteries upon request and daily basis must be changed. In order to start this process, multi actor-based approach must be stimulated by NGOs and implemented by the pottery makers. Such approaches should be encouraged via the research centers as well as educational institutions cooperated by the local government.

In order to develop a successful model, it is crucial to find out what are the national, political and social conditions for existing situation. Besides, what kind of deficiencies and difficulties exist for likely developments. In order to have a great achievement on cultural industry-based development, there is an urgent need to integrate this concept into the planning process into the management of cultural industries at the urban decision making level, successfully. It is obvious that, cultural production is a complex issue and limiting planning and application only in one scale do not completely achieve to success. In this case, NGO and Research & Education type local organizations, cooperated and monitored by the local government should be developed and they must be strictly connected to each other in order to nurture the cultural industry potential in different localities. A simple chart for the operational partnership can be summarized as below (Figure 6).





**Figure 6. The multi actor-based approach**

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

This particular study has emphasized that multi actor-based operational partnership is crucial for management of cultural industries in terms of social, environmental and economic aspects. There are only short-term solutions and precautions so far, particularly in developing countries, which are not unfortunately ill-planned. However, the costs involved in correcting badly designed applications are certainly much greater than getting it right in the first place. Therefore, these concept needs to be considered at the beginning of environmental planning decisions for communities in order to provide fully-embedded solutions.

At that point, all actors need to be aware of the risks of a location and understand the potentials of the area before deciding on possible urban decisions. In this case, in order to minimize the financial expenses, the local governments must consider these stages through planning process of any public developments, as well as applications. Briefly, in the first stage all of the actors should closely work together. Pre-application process must present possible conflicts between the objectives and planning objectives deriving from proposed solutions for every stage. In addition, designers and planners should be consulted with the local community and other actors as much as possible in order to get their recommendations and these knowledge databases must be considered along with wider decision making processes.

The multi actor-based approach has been introduced as a general model for the localities which industries based on the cultural production. In order to develop a successful operational partnership, all the actors of this model needs to be involved and it must be located at the heart of the operational process. Then, all urban decisions must clearly demonstrate how these collaborations will function need to be considered thoroughly. In this case, due to the similar problems lead to different responses in different places, gathering and analyzing information on local situation is crucial. The important thing is to find out how urban decision making tools must be made considering local situations and local needs, and possible actors.

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