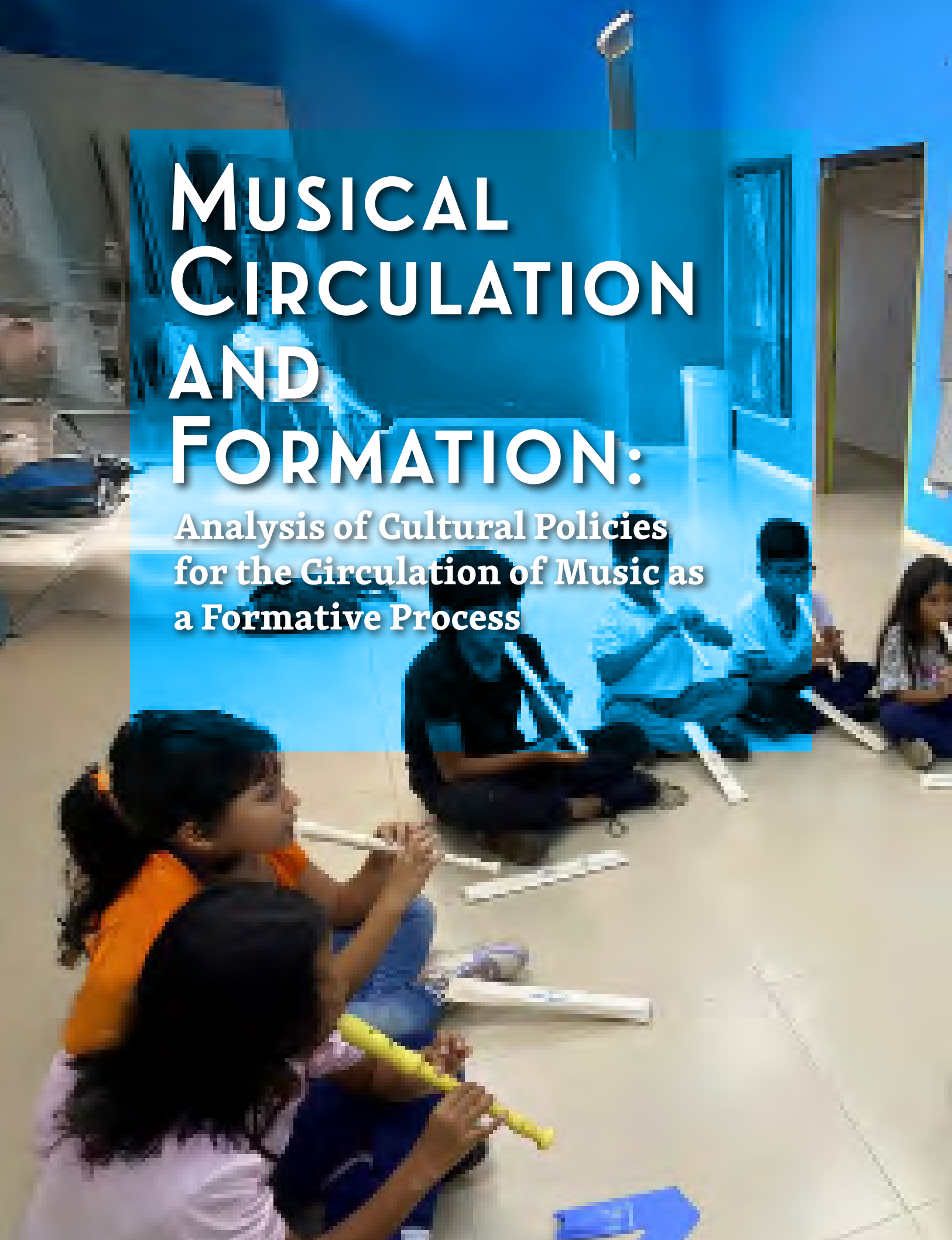


MUSICAL CIRCULATION AND FORMATION:

**Analysis of Cultural Policies
for the Circulation of Music as
a Formative Process**



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Abstract

This article discusses the concept of the circulation of different types of music and the cultural policies that can favor this process, based on a series of cases in Colombia. Conceptually, the study distances itself from the generalized notion of circulation as a linear process product/service/consumer, and instead proposes the idea of circulation as formation. This is done through a combination of the concept of “musicking” proposed by Christopher Small and the ecological perspective (musical cultures as ecosystems) presented by Schippers and Grant. Methodologically, a documentary analysis approach of a set of policies is employed, which is contrasted with two recent empirical cases from southwestern Colombia. Among other points, the study concludes that there is indeed a normative framework that makes musical circulation as formation possible, but its implementation requires a change in the understanding of the concept of circulation.

Keywords: musical circulation; formation; musicking; cultural policies

Circulação musical e formação: análise de políticas culturais para a circulação das músicas como processo formativo

Resumo

O presente artigo propõe uma discussão sobre o conceito de circulação das diferentes músicas e as políticas culturais que podem favorecer esse processo, a partir de uma série de casos na Colômbia. Conceitualmente, o estudo se distancia da noção generalizada de circulação como um processo linear produto/serviço/consumidor, e propõe em vez disso a ideia de circulação como formação. Isso é feito através de uma combinação do conceito de “musicar” proposto por Christopher Small e a perspectiva ecológica (culturas musicais como ecossistemas) apresentada por Schippers e Grant. Metodologicamente, é empregada uma abordagem de análise documental de um conjunto de políticas, que é contrastada com dois casos empíricos recentes para o sudoeste colombiano. Entre outros pontos, o estudo conclui que sim, existe um marco normativo que torna possível a circulação musical como formação, mas que sua implementação requer uma mudança na compreensão do conceito de circulação.

Palabras-chave: circulação musical; formação; musicking; políticas culturais

Políticas culturales y circulación musical como proceso formativo: análisis de un caso en Colombia

Resumen

El presente artículo plantea una discusión sobre el concepto de circulación de las diferentes músicas y las políticas culturales que pueden favorecer ese proceso, a partir de una serie de casos en Colombia. En términos conceptuales, el estudio se distancia de la noción generalizada de circulación como un proceso lineal producto/servicio/consumidor, y propone en su lugar la idea de *circulación como formación*. Esto se hace a través de una combinación del concepto de *musicar* propuesto por Christopher Small y la perspectiva ecológica (culturas musicales como ecosistemas) planteada por Schippers y Grant. En términos metodológicos, se emplea un enfoque de análisis documental de un conjunto de políticas, que se contrasta con dos casos empíricos recientes para el suroccidente colombiano. Entre otros puntos, el estudio concluye que sí existe un marco normativo que hace posible que se dé la circulación musical como formación, pero que su implementación requiere un cambio en la comprensión del concepto de circulación.

Palabras clave: circulación musical; formación; musicar; políticas culturales



Introduction

The book *Aquí hacemos de todo: análisis documental sobre circulación de músicas en el Pacífico colombiano* (Sevilla et al., 2021, p. 11) was published in 2021 as the result of a documentary research project focused on the circulation processes of different musical genres in the Colombian Pacific region¹⁴ Among its findings, this work identifies a series of conceptual assumptions that have gained traction in the literature on the topic but fail to capture the complexity present in that territory. Notable examples include the generalizing notions that the entire population of the region is Afro descendant (which ignores mestizo and indigenous communities).

The study identified a third bias, which relates specifically to the notion of musical circulation and gives rise to the reflection proposed in this article. Specifically, many of the documents and programs consulted for the research circumscribe the notion of musical circulation to “what happens with a cultural product or service from time it is complete until it meets consumers” (Lado, 2017, cited in Sevilla et al., 2021, p. 91). Thus posed, this notion is relevant for understanding circulation processes embedded in the music industry and in urban contexts with very particular technical conditions (for example, extended coverage of internet access and existence of live commercial music). However, it does not fit the context of a large part of the Colombian Pacific and the circulation practices that take place there (in fact, a focus on the provision of musical services and products to a group of consumers overlooks the community-based logics that underlie the circulation of music in the Pacific). The study concludes with a call to broaden this view and to formulate notions of musical circulation that adjust to the realities of diverse territories and communities.

This article seeks to respond to that call and proposes the concept of circulation within the framework of training as an alternative to analyze and propose musical circulation processes in territories that are far from having optimal conditions for circulation under the model of “provision of musical services and products,” but that do have conditions for musical training processes. This applies to a large part of the Colombian Pacific territory and many parts of Colombia, and it is toward this broad spectrum that the proposal is made.

¹ Project carried out by the POIESIS group of the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Cali), within the framework of an agreement between that university and the then Ministry of Culture of Colombia. Two of the co-authors of this text (Bolaños Izquierdo and Sevilla) were part of that project and co-authors of the aforementioned book.

The following pages present an analysis of a set of national, departmental, and municipal regulations in Colombia related to musical circulation which, according to the authors, provide a regulatory support for circulation in the context of training. In addition to the regulatory review, a recent empirical case where this form of circulation has been implemented: the Cultural Monitors Network (Red de Monitores Culturales, RMC) and Cultural Schools of Valle del Cauca (Escuelas Culturales Vallecaucanas, ECV), initiatives of the Departmental Secretariat of Culture of Valle del Cauca (in southwestern Colombia).² The analysis is made considering the concepts of “musicar” and musical ecosystems, and is enriched by the experience of one of the article’s authors in the field of music teaching at the formal, non-formal, and informal school levels.

The first section presents the conceptual aspects that support the study, namely, the concepts of *musicar* and musical ecosystems in relation to music education processes. The second section succinctly outlines the methodological aspects and the categories of analysis. Sections three and four correspond to the results (including a description of the documentary corpus and the empirical case of the RMC) and the discussion. The final section presents the conclusions.

Conceptual Framework

The analysis presented here is based on three conceptual frameworks. The first is that of musical cultures as ecosystems. This notion, proposed in 2016 by Australian researchers Huib Schippers and Catherine Grant, argue that musical practices should be understood as the result of various dynamics occurring across five domains of society: musical learning systems (formal and informal), musicians and their communities, cultural contexts and constructions, infrastructure and regulations, and media and the music industry. This approach broadens the scope of analysis from musical performers (the usual focus of attention) to other actors and social elements that constitute the true “musical cultures,” where musical practices become

possible, transform, and even disappear. Since these actors and elements are connected and thus affect each other, Schippers and Grant use the ecological analogy to describe their complex functioning (i.e., a musical ecosystem). In the case discussed here, given the interest in the normative component as a support for circulation in the training framework, the analysis focuses on the dimensions of infrastructure and regulation (centered on public policies for musical circulation [PPs]) and their relationship with musical teaching systems. Regarding these two dimensions, the authors state:

Musical teaching systems refer to the processes through which certain aspects of musical practices are transmitted from one individual or group to another. In this sense, it is necessary to investigate the balance between “formal and informal, autonomous-based, community-based, or institutionally mediated education” (Schippers and Grant 2016, p. 334, emphasis added).

Regulation and infrastructure refer to the legal and normative frameworks that regulate musical practices. Although Schippers and Grant highlight the component of royalties and copyright (in line with the notion of musical circulation associated with the provision of products and services), they also point out the importance of “rules and policies that can directly or indirectly affect musical activity, sometimes significantly” (Schippers and Grant 2016, p. 338).

This last observation is key to the broad look on regulations that were made in the article.

A second concept used in the analysis of musical action is that of *musicking* or *musicar*, proposed by Christopher Small (1999), who argues that speaking only of music as a noun ignores that the musical phenomenon consists of “taking part, at any level or capacity, in a musical performance, at any level, in a musical performance, whether performing, listening, rehearsing or practicing, providing material for the performance, or dancing” (p. 71). Jordán (2021) adds that this pedagogy invites to the analysis of how musical relationships function in society, to demystify power relations (p. 72). Moreover, the *musicking*,

² The Cultural Monitors Network project was part of the Valle del Cauca Departmental Culture Plan, 2020–2023, and in 2024 it transformed into the Cultural Schools of Valle del Cauca. The content presented in this article is based on publicly available information accessible through web portals, as well as on the firsthand experience of Edgar Fabián Bolaños Izquierdo as part of both programs since 2020.

subject is considered as anyone who engages with sonic experience, based on the premise of music as action (*musicar*) or, above all, experience.

Finally, this article adopts the perspective of Manuel Antonio Garretón (2008), who explains that cultural policies can arise from two conceptions of culture: a) culture as “the ways of being of a society,” and calls this dimension the “cultural dimension of public policy or basic cultural policy”; and b) that referring to “cultural manifestations, apparatuses, and expressions,” which he classifies as “sectoral or specific cultural policies, or simply cultural policies” (pp. 76–77). This is complemented by the ideas of Gilberto Giménez (2005), who states that cultural practices occur around institutions such as the state, schools, churches, mass media, social groups, among others, so that culture is not “only a meaning produced to be deciphered as a text but also an instrument of intervention on the world and a device of power” (pp. 67–73).

Methodological aspects

This article is the result of an analysis carried out from a methodological perspective of qualitative approach, with documentary design and a complementary exercise of ethnographic design, according to empirical referents.

The documentary design was used for the analysis of the first and main empirical referent (a normative corpus described below) and consisted of analyzing current regulations that directly relate or alluding to the administration and management of issues associated with musical circulation and other topics, as well as regulations associated with artistic and/or musical educational processes. The observation window was established starting in 1991, taking as a milestone the promulgation of the Constitution, which laid the foundations for the safeguarding, management, and dissemination of culture, as well as the format of interrelation with outside world, culminating with the National Culture Plan 2024–2038. The documentary corpus focuses on the regulations generated from the central level, insofar as the administrative structure of the Colombian state is generally top-down; that is, regulations are issued from bodies such as Congress, the Presidency, and Ministries (among others), while departments, municipalities, or districts make the necessary adaptations to implement

the regulations locally. In the territorial case, some documents generated by the Department of Valle del Cauca are included, which are relevant to the cases of the Cultural Monitors Network (RMC) and the Cultural Schools of Valle del Cauca (ECV).

The documentary corpus includes, but is not limited to, development plans, CONPES, documents, Ministry of Culture documents,³⁶ Ministry of Education documents, documents from other ministries, the National Program of Incentives and Cultural Concertation, and other relevant guidelines. Document consultation was carried out via institutional web portals and other sources.

The ethnographic design was used complementarily for the analysis of the second empirical reference, which were the RMC and ECV programs. This mainly involved the recounting of participant and non-participant observations, given the role of one of the authors as an educator involved in these programs. This knowledge of both programs also allowed for the documentary corpus to be supplemented with elements such as management reports, publications in institutional websites, and news portals, among others (all publicly accessible).

The research assumes that there are elements of public policy that can remedy some of the shortcomings identified within the musical ecosystem regarding its circulation processes in a training context. Finally, the collected information is contrasted with the theoretical frameworks presented and complementary academic literature to generate the analysis and reflections.

Results

Below, the two empirical references are presented: namely, a normative corpus related to musical circulation processes (from multiple perspectives and at different levels), and a case where the concept of circulation within the framework of training has been implemented.

3 In 2023, Colombia's Ministry of Culture changed its name to the Ministry of Cultures, Arts, and Knowledge. Throughout this article, the former name will be used in consideration of the fact that most of the documents analyzed and testimonies refer to it by that name. The new denomination will only be used in cases where the document or testimony explicitly employs it.

Political Context: Regulatory Framework for Circulation and Formal and Non-Formal Education (ETDH)

In the 1991 Constitution, the teaching systems of the various artistic manifestations,⁴⁷ including music, acquire a relevant role. Examples are Articles 7 and 8 (which establish the State's recognition and protection of the country's ethnic and cultural diversity). Article 27 (freedom of education) and Article 44 (education and culture as fundamental rights). Article 67 states that "Education is a right of the individual and a public service that has a social function; it seeks access to knowledge, science, technology, and other goods and values of culture". It can be seen then that education systems acquire a fundamental value for culture, in accordance with Garretón (2008), already mentioned in the conceptual section.

One of the main normative referents that seeks to develop these guiding principles is Law 115 of 1994 (General Education Law), which differentiates two main instances of musical education. One includes formal teaching processes and non-formal teaching processes (Education for Work and Human Development - ETDH), which take place in educational institutions, universities, academies, art schools and others that provide training in musical technique. The other instance involves traditional or "informal" teaching formats, based on orality, closer to the contexts of specific populations or ethnic groups.

Regarding the school level (the first instance), Law 115 of 1994 expresses in its Title I, Article 5, paragraphs 6 and 7, that within the purposes of the state are the study of national culture and access to cultural values. Complementing this, the Ministry of National Education (MEN) issues guidelines for artistic education. Its last update in 2020, titled "Curricular guidelines for artistic and cultural education in basic and secondary education", includes competencies in music: "I recognize the artistic and musical expressions of my family and local environment" (MEN, 2020. p. 124); "I identify characteristics of some musical rhythms: traditional, urban, among others" (p. 126); "I participate in artistic-musical spaces such as school artistic festivals valuing, analyzing and contributing to the development of these spaces" (p. 128); among others.

On the other hand, there are elements in the legislation that are specific to ethnic groups, for example, in Law 397 of 1997 (General Culture Law), it is established in Title 1, Article 6, that the state must guarantee that these groups can preserve, live and disseminate their cultures, this aligns with the provisions of Law 115 of 1994, in Title 3, which refers to ethno-education defined as "education offered to groups or communities that are part of the nationality and possess their own culture, language, traditions, and autonomous and indigenous legal systems." Articles 58 and 59 of this law open the field to the teaching of traditional music in the school context. Similarly, Decree 804 of 1995 "whereby educational attention for ethnic groups is regulated", and Decree 1122 of 1998, "whereby norms are issued for the development of the Afro-Colombian Studies in all formal education institutions in the country and other provisions".

4 Reference is made to artistic manifestations with the intention of including not only the so-called fine arts within the category but, more broadly, the diverse forms of expression recognized as vital elements within a country that identifies itself as diverse, pluriethnic, and multicultural.





Article 64 of Law 397 of 1997 gives rise to the National System of Artistic Training and Culture but limits the Ministry of Culture to the field of non-formal education, leaving in the hands of the MEN the full responsibility for the processes concerning primary, secondary and technical secondary education. Law 2294 of 2023 modifies this article (64 of Law 397 of 1997) transforming the National System of Artistic Training into the new National System of Artistic and Cultural Training and Education for Coexistence and Peace (SINEFAC), in line with the vision of the Development Plan Colombia World Power of Life, of the government of the day. Now, the modification goes more into the discussion of the vision of culture and the exercise of power, described by authors such as Giménez (2005), Hall (cited in Demart, n.d.), and Gómez (2011), among others, than into a practical change in the ways in which the Ministry of Culture influences or contributes to the format of arts education in schools.

Another opportunity for musical circulation in schools lies in specific legislation such as Decree 4635 of 2011, “which establishes measures for assistance, care, comprehensive reparation, and land restitution for victims belonging to black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal, and Palenquero communities,” or Special Safeguarding Plans (PES), such as those for marimba music or vallenato music, which create formative instances that can be introduced into the classroom.

Recently, the National Culture Plan 2024–2038, “*Culture for the Care of the Diversity of Life, Territory, and Peace*,” in its field 2: “*Memory and Creation*,” line 4: “*Articulation with Educational Processes*,” has the following objective:

Strengthen the intersectoral coordination system to improve the quality of cultural and artistic education, fostering the appreciation of cultural diversity and cultural knowledge, and contributing to the comprehensive education of all citizens. (MinCultura, 2024, pp. 114–115)

Finally, there is the National Development Plan 2022–2026, “*Colombia: Global power for Life*,” which, under Axis 2, Catalyst C, Item 2, section c, proposes:

In coordination between the culture and education sectors, access to the arts, knowledge systems, and culture will be guaranteed through educational and training processes that engage children, adolescents, youth, ethnic communities, and various population groups. (DNP, 2023, p. 124)

As discussed below, and as a foretaste of the conclusions, it can be seen that the implementation of circulation processes within the framework of training largely depends on the approach adopted by Educational Institutions (IEs).

After the formal school stage, there is another instance of possible circulation for music in particular and the arts in general, which is the non-formal level ETDH, which, according to Law 115 of 1994, is “which is offered with the purpose of complementing, updating, supplementing knowledge and training in academic or labor aspects without being subject to the system of established levels and grades” (Art. 36); its purpose is, among others, to promote the improvement of labor and citizenship skills and competencies (Art. 37). This educational format was regulated by Decree 4904 of 2009, which confirms in Article 1.3 that the purpose of this

type of education is to develop skills for integration into the labor market; that training in the arts is permitted; and that ETDH is understood as a bridge between formal education and higher education. The intention to provide tools for the integration of young people into the cultural industry is particularly noteworthy when applied to a sector that is expanding yet characterized by a high degree of informality and underreporting.

Regulatory Framework for Circulation, Informal Education, and the Creative Industries

In the second instance are the informal processes, which Law 115 of 1994 defines as “all freely and spontaneously acquired knowledge, coming from persons, entities, mass media, printed media, traditions, customs, social behaviors and other unstructured ones” (Art. 43, On informal education). Here, the institutional normative parameters come into play in a decisive way, through which the state seeks to provide conditions for the work of musicians and for the strengthening of the communities that support them (all these dimensions of the ecological system proposed by Shippers and Grant). This is concretized in the General Law on Culture (Law 397 of 1997), which, in its Title III, Articles 17 and 18, sets out the bases for the role of the State in the promotion and encouragement of culture, and from which tools (plans, programs and projects) are derived for its implementation in the territories

Returning to the legislative component, as part of the arts-music policy, within the framework of the National Music Plan for Coexistence (PNMC), there are two PPS tools that seek to operationalize the provisions of the law: the National Stimulus Program (PNE) and the National Culture Coordination Program (PNCC). The former is aimed at national or foreign individuals residing in the country, and through a system of scholarships, internships, awards and artistic residencies, provides access to resources for cultural actors. The PNE includes several lines such as training, creation and circulation (understood as the provision of goods and services for a public of consumers).⁵ The PNCC focuses on legal entities (MinCultura, 2010, p. 594) and allocates resources through lines such as the generation of spaces for

artistic events, the strengthening of infrastructure, and the promotion of artistic and cultural training programs⁶.

To date, the PNMC continues to be an active and important public policy; however, since 2024 it competes with the program of the Presidency of the Republic called “Sounds for the construction of peace”, which is executed by the MinCultura, and which would merit a specific study of the benefits or complications that this concomitant existence represents for the state cultural system.

One aspect to highlight is that, as already mentioned, the notion of circulation in the framework of these programs tends to be associated with the provision of goods and services, in close relation to the so-called Cultural and Creative Industry. The concept of cultural industry begins to be mentioned since the National Culture Plan 2001-2010. “Towards a democratic and cultural citizenship” and is maintained in subsequent documents such as Conpes 3659 (2010), “National policy for the promotion of cultural industries in Colombia”, which would lay the groundwork for Law 1834 of 2017, “Whereby the cultural and creative industry is promoted”, which aims to “develop, promote, encourage and protect creative industries. These will be understood as those industries that generate value by reason of their goods and services, which are based on intellectual property” (emphasis added). The above, inserts artistic production in general, and musical production in particular, within the dynamics of the market economy and the vision of culture as an engine of development, opening and consolidating new forms of relationships.

In alignment, CONPES document 4090 of 2022, “National Orange Economy Policy: strategy to boost the economy of creativity”, gives a new lease of life to this industry to the extent that, as stated in the background of the document, it is considered that this sector should be a pillar of the national economy. Along the same lines, there is the Cultural and Creative Tourism Policy, “Colombia as a tourist, cultural, creative and sustainable destination”, issued by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MinCit, 2021), whose objectives are: “To improve the conditions of sustainability and competitiveness of cultural and creative tourism in Colombia, [...]; promoting the effective integration of the value chains in the tourism, cultural, artistic and creative industries” (p. 159).

⁵ See the terms and conditions of the National Incentives Program, Mincultura, 2009 to 2024.

⁶ See the terms and conditions of the call for proposals of the Programa Nacional de Concertación Cultural, Mincultura, 2010 to 2024.

The Policy for strengthening the trades of the cultural sector in Colombia, issued by MinCultura in 2018, is relevant insofar as it sets forth in its principles sustainable social and productive development (p. 71) and intersectoral and territorial coordination and shared responsibility as guiding axes for energizing the sector (p. 73). It also includes a component addressing work and entrepreneurship (p. 87), and a strategy for social, productive, and institutional development (p. 105). Regarding this framework, in 2022, Law 2184 was enacted, which, in Titles III and IV, in addition to the creation of institutions such as councils, the tools for the promotion and commercialization of cultural products, aimed at strengthening the sector as an industry.

The National Culture Plan 2024-2038, in field 1, line 3, topic 4, “Culture and life cycle,” proposes strategies that can drive the sector as a builder of life projects, benefiting the musical cultural industry alongside its circulation processes. Additionally, field 2, “memory and creation,” in its lines 2 and 4, and field 3, “Governance and Cultural Sustainability,” in its line 3, “economic sustainability for cultures,” outline the state’s focus of action regarding the cultural industries.

Another PP tool associated with strengthening musician communities and community-based musical practice is the National Program of Taller Schools, a policy of the current government which, according to the institutional portal, “recognizes the country’s cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and territorial diversity as a source of wealth, an opportunity for human and community development, and as a possibility for this recognition to impact the safeguarding of traditional crafts and knowledge” (MinCultura, n.d.). Similarly, the Co Crea strategy, a public-private partnership, promotes entrepreneurship initiatives by connecting cultural actors, the state, and private enterprise (Co Crea, n.d.).

Empirical Case No. 2: Cultural Monitors Network and Cultural Schools of Valle del Cauca

As an example of state action to guarantee access, enjoyment, and enjoyment of cultural rights of population, specifically in the department of Valle del Cauca from informal education, is the Cultural Monitors Network (RMC) project, a component framed in the Valle del Cauca Artistic and Cultural Development program, a project to strengthen cultural rights in Valle del Cauca. The RMC became one of

the main tools for implementation of cultural policies, from the Departmental Secretariat of Culture during the period 2020–2023, becoming the largest cultural network in the country (Gobernación del Valle, 2023).

The RMC project was implemented in the territory through roles such as the cultural monitor, who ensures effective enjoyment through experimentation; the instructor, who guarantees the informal training process and the artistic bases of each discipline, the ambassadors, artists who help generate cultural activations throughout the department. One way to showcase the activities and processes carried out was through the “Itinerant Art Tent” (Gobernación del Valle, 2022).

According to the management report from the Secretariat of Culture (Gobernación del Valle, 2024, pp. 3-8), the RMC impacted over 40 000 beneficiaries per year across the entire department through its cultural managers, cultural ambassadors, and instructors. Musical processes played a significant role within this impact, as will be seen in the discussion section.

For the year 2024 the project, with the change of government, the project is transformed into the Vallecaucanas Cultural Schools, and becomes

a training program that contains 2 lines. The first focuses on specialized training in cultural processes, including artistic education in dance, music, and theater. The second is aimed at artistic mediation for the recognition and appropriation of cultural rights. (Gobernación del Valle, 2024b)

According to the institutional portal, the ECVs are already inserted within the non-formal education format with the creation of diploma courses. Additionally, they will promote artistic residencies, support cultural entrepreneurship and the creation of the “Cátedra de la vallecaucanidad” (Chair of the vallecaucanidad). Among the roles for working with the population is the Educator, responsible for teaching the Cátedra de la vallecaucanidad from some artistic expertise.

Discussion

This article proposes an alternative to the concept of circulation associated exclusively with the provision of goods and services and suggesting instead that circulation be considered with the framework of education, based

on the importance of musical teaching systems. As Small points out, with the concept of musicking or musicar (Small, 1999; Samper, 2017; Jordán, 2021), and Shippers and Grant, with the idea of musical ecosystems (2016), musical practice is not circumscribed to the object (the song, the piece, the recital), but is an extended action that contributes to the development of the musical subjects and the communities that support them. Thus seen, musical practice integrates education systems, cultural contexts and constructs, and normative systems that allow, to a greater or lesser extent, this constant exchange. It is worth questioning to what extent the current regulations related to musical practice in Colombia support this circulation within the framework of education, or whether, on the contrary, they limit circulation to the narrow notion of the “provision of goods and services.”

A review of the National Music Plan for Coexistence (PNMC), established in 2003 as a strategy to implement the provisions of CONPES Document 3162 of 2001, reveals a concerning exclusive association between circulation, spectacle, and commercialization:

The circulation of musical activity in the municipalities is oriented to the programming of events and the proliferation of stages. However, there is no clear awareness of the importance of making visible the diversity of creation and interpretation processes as a strengthening mechanism for artists, as a starting point for the recognition and construction of collective and identifying projects, and as an international projection of the Colombian musical heritage. This evidence shows a gap in understanding and public policy regarding the scope of music dissemination and circulation (Ministry of Culture, n.d., p. 17, emphasis added).

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international projection of Colombian musical heritage. This reveals a gap in understanding and public policy regarding the scope of dissemination and circulation of music” (Ministry of Culture, n.d., p. 17, emphasis added)

In 2006, with the issuance of CONPES Document 3409, “Guidelines for Strengthening the National Music Plan for Coexistence,” the PNMC receives a boost but maintains the notion of circulation framed as product/service/consumer. An example can be found in the section on training policy, which states one of its objectives as “1. The circulation of the various musical practices present in the country, recognizing regional contexts and the unique characteristics of different music genres” (MinCultura, 2010, p. 159). However, the section related to circulation describes it as a policy that aims to “mobilize and project the diverse forms of musical creation and expression to national and international contexts as a strategy to strengthen and promote Colombian musical production” (p. 168). Up to this point, the outlook is not very promising. However, a look at the regulatory frameworks associated with education (in its different forms) reveals another perspective.

As Sevilla et al. (2021, p. 95) have already pointed out, “one of the keys to musical survival in various localities of the Colombian Pacific is music education,” where actors and agents such as family, social organizations, religious entities, and in this case, schools, play a greater or lesser role in the formative process. Taken together, if *musicking* is assumed as a pedagogical model in which “what matters is the type of aesthetic experience that the musical experience can produce at a certain moment, for a certain group of people within the social ritual of music,” educational spaces, whether formal or non-formal, become key scenarios *for circulation within the framework of training.*

Laws such as 115 of 1994, 397 of 1997, and the provisions of the National Culture Plan 2024-2038, position schools in a place for strengthening representation scenarios, not only for social or ethnic groups, but also for the state as an institution, in a two-way process. The regulations cited in previous sections establish criteria for artistic education in schools that, in one way or another, support the circulation of music, as seen in the subject of Artistic and Cultural Education. Although it is not mandatory that the content be musical, it is very common for this curricular requirement to be fulfilled in many institutions

through a music class. In directing content for this level, the artistic and cultural area differs from others in that the MEN issues “Curricular Orientations” for it (MEN, 2022), which focus more on developing aesthetic appreciation, critical thinking, and sensitivity, serving as references rather than a concrete thematic syllabus.

Working from the dimensions proposed in the Curricular Orientations (MEN, 2020), rather than from Basic Learning Rights, helps nuance a difficulty arising from the country’s multiculturalism and even more so, the international context. It also contributes to transforming music (as an object) into *musicking* (as an action) based on motivation for such circulation or “circulation as education.” This is clearly seen in the case of the *Cátedra de la Vallecaucanidad* within the *Escuelas Culturales Vallecaucanas* (ECV) project, which seeks to foster a sense of belonging in the culture present in the department through the arts in the educational institutions under its jurisdiction.

Of particular note is one modality of impact through Freestyle, in which the educator guides students (music-makers, not musicians) by providing examples on how to build a rhyming line that fits the beat of the backing track, initially allowing freedom in the texts and later introducing the component of regional knowledge. In some cases, so-called “Batalla de gallos” are permitted, where several freestylers compete to determine the best improviser.⁷ The freestyle educator takes the role of musician music-maker, and the students that of non-musician music-makers, generating a social ritual in which circulation as education enables the acquisition of sociocultural knowledge and the development of musical skills.

Finally, regarding informal education processes, the case of the RMC is particularly illustrative. During 2022, one of the objectives of the instructors involved in the program was the formation of a children’s orchestra with a dual purpose: training in singing techniques and instrumental performance, and the circulation of the group as a formative tool for the young music-makers. Several of the sessions focused on circulation as education was to generate awareness of the social ritual (in terms of Small, Samper, and Jordán), centered on stage performance and

audience management, among other aspects. This is a case of informal education within an institutional framework, since the RMC processes are conceived as a strategy to provide the department’s population with effective access to the enjoyment and exercise of their cultural rights, without the need to generate certifications, as that is beyond the project’s scope.

Conclusions

In light of the discussions presented in the previous pages, it is possible to draw several conclusions:

First, there is a normative framework that associates musical circulation almost exclusively with the provision of musical goods and services for an audience, generally under the umbrella of the creative industries. From this perspective, musical circulation is subject to logic over which music-makers and their communities have limited control.

Second, by distancing from this notion, it is possible to conceive the idea of circulation within the framework of training, and current legislation allows for this within formal education processes (primary, secondary, and technical levels). Approaching circulation from this perspective not only fulfills the mandates of various normative instruments (constitutional articles, the General Education Law, provisions for ethnic groups, and even guidelines for reparation to priority groups) but also grants a broader range of action for music-makers and the communities that support them, including educational communities.

Third, circulation as training can be projected as an effective tool to mainstream content through the act of *musicking*, by taking out simple interpretative facts and immersing it in contexts that enhance aesthetic experience within the social ritual. In this sense, *musicking* operates in a dual way: enabling musician music-makers to enhance their knowledge and musical skills through circulation as training, while also turning non-musician music-makers into a potential audience.

Finally, the reflections offered here encourage a forward-looking perspective, where a complementary lens for analyzing circulation processes allows us to consider their relationship with both individual development and territorial development strategies driven by culture.

⁷ The above arises from the observation process carried out during the ECV between April and August 2024, and from a personal communication with educator and freestyler Edwin Darío Ospina.

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