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Luis Ángel Correa García

*Interamerican University for Development, Zacatecas, Zacatecas, Mexico, luisangel\_zac@hotmail.com*

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# The Cultural Aspects and Economic Performance of Small Wixarica Artisan Businesses\*

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Luis Ángel Correa García\*\*

## Keywords

Handicrafts, Culture,  
Wixarika, Mexico

## JEL classification

D01, D21, D24, M14

## Abstract

The Huichol or Wixarika culture is one of the most important in Mexico. They are carriers of traditions transmitted from generation to generation. Their customs have been present since ancient times. They have values that are fundamental for the union of their community. From the theoretical approach of Resources and Capabilities, this empirical study aims to analyze how the cultural aspects influence the economic performance of small wixarika artisan businesses. The methodology used was multiple regression analysis. The construct “cultural aspects” was elaborated based on the literature review. The results show that the customs variable, measured through “making of handcrafted pieces as his parents taught him,” influences the income from the business. The variables tradition inherited from generation to generation and the values that parents instill in the business do not influence their economic performance. It concludes with the need to dignify and value the work of the artisans.

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\*\* Professor and Researcher, Interamerican University for Development, Zacatecas, Zacatecas, Mexico. ✉ [luisangel\\_zac@hotmail.com](mailto:luisangel_zac@hotmail.com)  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3255-7191>



## Los aspectos culturales y el desempeño económico de las pequeñas empresas artesanales Wixarika

### Resumen

La cultura Wixarika o Huichol es una de las más importantes de México. Son portadores de tradiciones transmitidas de generación en generación, sus costumbres están presentes desde tiempos ancestrales y tienen valores que son fundamentales para la unión de su comunidad. El objetivo de este estudio empírico es analizar desde la perspectiva teórica de Recursos y Capacidades, cómo los aspectos culturales influyen en el desempeño económico de los pequeños negocios artesanales Wixarika. La metodología usada fue el análisis de regresión múltiple. El constructo “aspectos culturales” fue elaborado con base en la revisión de literatura. Los resultados muestran que la variable costumbres, medida a través de la “elaboración de piezas como sus padres le enseñaron” influye en el ingreso del negocio. Las variables tradición heredada de generación en generación y los valores que sus padres le inculcaron en el negocio no tienen influencia en el desempeño económico. Se concluye en la necesidad de dignificar y valorar el trabajo de los artesanos.

### Palabras clave

Artesanía, Cultura, Wixarika, México

## Introduction

In the actual context of the globalization, characterized by the cultural, economic and social changes, it is important the study of the cultures that keep the traditions, customs and values intact as is the case with the *Huichol* ethnic group, one of the best-preserved cultures- (Benítez, 1989). The dynamism of the economy displaces popular culture, especially the character of indigenous people, who live in conditions of marginalization and poverty; away from modern production and marketing techniques.

Lumholtz (1904b) documented that the indigenous people do not benefit from civilization because it is destroying their homeland. Their explorations captured that the natives and Mestizos (*teiwaxixi*) differ so much in their way of thinking and living. He points out that natives are more moral, intellectual, and economic than civilized people. Actually in Mexico exist 64 indigenous tribes; each one has its language and its own historical and political knowledge (Corona, 2009).

Mexican indigenous communities are considered national pride and cultural richness (Le Mur, 2015), are important because they represent the identity and are a key element to preserve the cultural heritage of Mexico. This paper is to study the *Wixaritari* or *Huichol* on how an indigenous group lives in the Sierra Madre Occidental of the state of Jalisco, Mexico (Bonfiglioli & Gutierrez, 2012; Crocker et al., 2004; Vargas-Hernández et al., 2012). This ethnic group has lived here for at least 5,000 years (Benítez, 1989), it is a community that has remained relatively isolated and has retained its primitive cultural traits (Barrera, 2000). Lawlor (2013) explains that due to the rugged and remote mountainous region, which is difficult to access is one of the reasons why the *Huichol* have been able to retain their culture and resist neoliberalism. Their settlement in the mountains predates the arrival of the Aztecs in the Valley of Mexico. The *Huichol* race is divided into three tribes that differ culturally and linguistically: *huautuari*, *tuapuritari* and the *tatekitari*. (Negrín, 1979). The typical dress of the *Huichols* is very striking (Neurath, 2003) regarding the pre-Hispanic history of this indigenous group is known very little.

The first studies were anthropological and began at the end of the nineteenth century and were led by researchers Carl Lumholtz (Norway) and Konrat Theodor Preuss of German origin. The first study by the Mexican government called "Operation Huicot" was in 1965 (Negrín, 1979). This document noted that the *Huichol* has not changed concerning its traditions over the years since they have been well preserved.

Lumholtz (1904b) in its anthropological contributions points out that the indigenous people live in the mountains; they have a culture deeply rooted in their customs and traditions. According to Vargas & Briones (2013) the Culture *Wixaritari* is present in the states of Nayarit, Jalisco, Durango and northern parts of Zacatecas. Their language *Wixárika* belongs to the Uto-Aztecan language family (Negrín, 1979; Santos & Verdin, 2011). The *Huichols* has a lot of economic activities: the farming, the livestock, wage labor and the handicrafts sales (Neurath, 2003); the ethnic *Wixarika* conserves the culture of food consumption based on maize as a fundamental element (Lumholtz 1904a; Saumade, 2013; Torres, 2013), with bean aggregates and pumpkin (Crocket et al., 2004). The ritual exchanges express and reproduce solidarity among members of the community (Neurath, 2000); those are examples of ceremonial objects (Neurath, 2015).

Especially in the handicraft sector, the *Huichols* faces a difficult situation; the first is that they have to migrate from the Sierra to the cities as a result of economic pressures and opportunities to sell their handicrafts in the tourist markets (Wiegand

& Fikes, 2004). For Le Mur (2015) the handicrafts are very colorful and its sale is a very important survival strategy for the *Huichols*. The authors Vargas, Briones & Rivera (2014), provide that the crafts contribute to economic growth, generate employment and income for thousands of families (Toledo et al., 2012), culturally it maintains and transmits the roots and identity of the peoples where they are present. Another perspective is from García & Toledo (2019), points out how the product sales are low; the handicrafts have been displaced by modern techniques of production.

In the state of Zacatecas, the handicraft that they produce is a very important activity since the 70's to the present day and is a form of artistic expression that reflects the beliefs and traditions of the Huichol Culture. Correa (2017), provides that artisans in the Zacatecas metropolitan area generally operate with reduced production volumes, the process does not implement technology and their qualifications are limited. Specifically, the *Huichols* that are located in this area have limited schooling, some are illiterately related to businesses, do not have economic resources and have large shortages of working capital and investment. Considered most delicate is the disappearance of artisanal culture due to the low social value of Huichol and their work it does. For its part Bonfil (2003) points out that the Mexican population, through using different social and cultural practices is considered indigenous people as backward in their systems of values and meanings. It is categorized as a lagging culture and generally seen as inferiority.

The discussion presented herein is from an economic perspective that leads to understand what happened with the cultural aspects of the *Wixarika* business. Therefore these study aims to analyze how the traditions, customs, and values are related with the economic performance in small *Huichol businesses*. This document is organized by the study of the theoretical references, followed by the method used, then results presented and finally the discussion and conclusions.

## Theoretical References

### The Wixarika or Huichol Culture

Culture are the habits, beliefs, values shared by members of the tribe and defines the way things are done and guides the behavior of members (Rubio & Aragon, 2008). For Bonfil (2003) culture are the symbols, values, skills and attitudes, knowledge, meanings, forms of communication and social organization that

make the life of society possible that allows it to transform from one generation to the next. Both definitions are considered relevant to understand the culture *wixarika* because it details important intangible aspects of cultural heritage. Lumholtz (1904a) was the first to point out that the *Wixarika* are firmly ingrained in their customs. Recently Moctezuma (2001) defines the term “traditions” as a very complex process that includes preserving old forms, models, and techniques associated with ancestral work. Toledo et al. (2012), point out that the artisanal sector reinforced their social and cultural values.

Although the literature on the economic perspective of the ethnic *Wixarika* is scarce, the anthropological literature is one of the classic studies from Carl Lumholtz (1904b) on how to analyze the *Huichols*. It also found that they are very attached to their traditions (Jurankova, 2007). The Huichol culture could not be understood without the knowledge transmitted by the ancestors and it is based on the community. The territory of the Huichol culture is not confined to the place where indigenous communities are based but transcends frontiers because most of them live out of the mountains (Porrás, 2006). The indigenous people are studied in the traditions (Corona, 2009; León-Portilla, 2018), for Aedo & Faba (2017) the values and emotions that are present in the Huichol culture.

In traditional Huichol culture, the *nierika* a complex key concept that symbolizes, or refers to, the appearance of beings and things. This allows to establish a link with the interior of these elements, denominated “el don de ver”; by example, the appearance of a god, or the portrait of an indigenous ancestor, thus *nierika* includes iconographic objects and figures, elements of the natural and social environment of the *Wixarika* culture, which correspond to mythical places and characters, relates to rituals and aspects of its cosmology (Kindl, 2008).

Some indigenous people paint their faces with yellow designs associated with the sun (Lumholtz, 1904b) just before the peyote ingestion, which is a holy sacrament *hikuli* (*Lophophora williamsii*). It is a little hallucinogenic cactus; it is essential role in Huichol beliefs (Benítez, 1989; Lawlor, 2013). Through the year, small groups make a long journey to *Wirikuta* (Allen, 2008), located in the desert of San Luis Potosi, Mexico (Neurath, 2015; Aedo & Faba, 2017), which is one of the most sacred territories of the cosmogony of the indigenous *Wixarika* to which they have made a pilgrimage for more than two thousand years (Benítez, 1989). For Vargas-Hernández et al., (2012) religiosity and spirituality influence the mode of seeing the world. This indigenous people have maintained their key cultural traits over time (Tetreault & Lucio, 2011).

It is considered a relevant aspect of the *Wixarika* culture that older people pass on their wisdom to the new generations (Negrín, 1977), so resists because it adapts and transforms the elements that were imposed by the crossbreeding, colonization and modernity (Saumade, 2013), the interest of the study in this ethnic group focuses on the transmission of knowledge and traditions (Neurath, 2008); however, development towards communities of *wixarika* origin is minimal or null, because public policies this ethnic group marginalized (Torres, 2013), this situation causes indigenous people to live in situations of poverty.

In Mexico, Indigenous ethnics groups have low levels of education, are socio-economically disadvantaged, and are considered as a marginalized group (Santos & Verdin, 2011; Jurankova, 2007). For Crocker et al. (2004) malnutrition is high and very similar to other indigenous groups. Throughout history, the *Wixarika* people have undergone countless adversities. For Le Mur (2015) they are vulnerable people, unable to represent themselves and to commercialize their handicrafts successfully they have difficulty in covering the basic costs of food and health. The commercialization of its artisan products brings about the loss of originality of the piece, also implies that the quality of the products decreases. dicates

Meanwhile, Tetreault & Lucio (2011) indicates that the *Wixarika* population has a reduced life expectancy, high rates of infant mortality, and submission of women. For Barrera (2000) the obtaining basic food and access to health services are insufficient to eliminate the disease. It is also important to note that the artisan activities are considered subsistence, which does not provide a better standard of living.

The economy of the indigenous community is based on handicrafts which have been increased its boom since the decade of the 50's, thanks to its aesthetic and mythological characteristics. Whit the hippy wave from 1960 to 1970 is known internationally (Guizar, 2007), in this decade, handicrafts began to be marketed, before this; they were exchanged for food or blankets (Torres, 2013). In 1985, it began the current way of writing your language (Jurankova, 2007). Currently, handicrafts that are marketed in urban centers constitute standardized copies of local iconographic patterns (Faba, 2015). For Vizcaino et al., (2017) the production of handicrafts in Mexico is usually done in small family workshops where members transmit the knowledge to the next generation, most artisans are men, and tradition is often transmitted by that line, where there is a marked division of gender work.

All *Wixarika* ethics and philosophy are based on following what they call "El Costumbre" composed of rites and traditional life bequeathed by the elders of the

tribe (Negrín, 1977). Regarding the customs of the daily life of the Huicholes, they are governed by rules that to date are unknown for the most part (Aedo, 2003).

## The Context of Handicraft in Mexico

Craft creations originate from ancient indigenous processes; handicrafts are part of the cultural heritage that creates identity since techniques and knowledge are transmitted from generation to generation (Ramos, 2001) and play an important role in the popular culture because they represent customs and traditions. Generally, *Wixarika* craft workshops are familiar and only work with manual systems and traditional techniques that allow the pieces made by the Huichols to have a high artistic and cultural value (Salcedo et al., 2012). Unfortunately, Lumholtz (1904b) regarded Huichol artisans as poor and points out that the objects they make spend a lot of time and work, a situation that is currently presented.

Cultural aspects are the ways of life, customs, traditions and knowledge that this important social group possesses (Correa, 2017). In the culture *Wixarika*, the traditions are fundamental for community members, because they are attached to their millenary beliefs, by example Lumholtz (1904b) describes that are their festivals and rituals, one of the most relevant it is the dance of rain, where they sacrifice oxen for request that it rain in the farmland.

From the socio-cultural perspective, the importance of handicrafts for the community is fundamental because allows the development of the *Wixarika* culture, since it is a means of transmitting knowledge, which strengthens its values, remember its ancestors and facilitates the expressions of its worldview, reflected in behavior and the conduct as well as in the shapes, styles and colors that they capture in their crafts. Variables not contemplated in this research paper.

From the above, discuss is that the *Wixarika* ethnic group have a balance between their daily activities and the production of handicrafts, which means that the community does not present great problems of violence and crime. On the contrary, their beliefs and spiritual activities as well as their joyful music remain through time deeply rooted; these characteristics make it possible to explain handicrafts in a broader sense.

Therefore, there is a link between culture and the economy, their culture is very strong and is composed of customs, values and traditions. On the other hand, the economy revolves around the making and sale of their crafts, agricultural



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production, livestock and sometimes they migrate to the states of Jalisco, Nayarit and Zacatecas to work seasonally in the fields of cultivation generating little income. Both variables culture and economy are related and are transcendent for the study of this important tribe.

The artisanal sector in Mexico comprises millions of people who depend directly on the production and sale of handicrafts, it is a complex manifestation that involves cultural, social and economic elements, unfortunately, there are no official statistics that reflect the scale of the artisanal sector (Correa, 2017), usually artisanal business is classified in the broad segment of micro-enterprises, which are characterized by being a key factor in the national economy. It is an important economic activity because it creates jobs. It is a sector with little growth because it depends on tourism and public policy programmers. It is very difficult to measure its profitability because there are no records within the organization.

This research focuses on the micro-craft companies of the Huichol art branch that are family production units operating as subsistence businesses (Toledo et al., 2012), *Wixarika* artisanal business continues to use ancestral techniques, which provides identity and intangible heritage. In this sense, it is important to point out that the *Huichol* ethnic group belongs to a social class framed by marginality and serious problems of poverty. Currently, industrialization processes cause a loss of knowledge and a shift in the management of ancestral production techniques, which gradually causes the forgetfulness of their traditions. In Mexico live 7,382,785 inhabitants that are indigenous (INEGI, 2019). The population of the *Wixarika* ethnic group is 23,769 people (CULTURA, 2019). The distribution is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Population by State.

State in México	Population
Nayarit	11,978
Jalisco	10,305
Durango	1,483
Zacatecas	1,003

Source: own work I

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Inside the culture *Wixarika*, *Nierika* is the origin of the artistic expression of Huichol culture. It is the basis for the making of stamen crafts of pre-Hispanic origin, actually, embroidered handicrafts, called tables to the stamen of commercial type, have lost the religious character of traditional *Wixarika* Art (Negrín, 1977), these works have great aesthetic merit. However, they have moved to contemporary craftsmanship with attachment to what the market demands. The Huichol artisanal context is generally characterized by large-scale production focused on the tourist market and the purchases made by the government. On the other hand, Le Mur (2018) points out that the production of handicrafts is the first approach to *Wixarika* culture for tourist.

The handicrafts produced by the *Huichols* include embroidered tables of stamen, figures covered with *chaquiras* and woven crosses of stamen, among other objects, are known for its beauty and symbols (Vargas et al., 2014). In general, craftsmanship is manufactured by both men and women, although men are the ones that produce the most. The level of expression varies according to the mythical understanding and personal vision of the craftsman. Currently, the producer of handcrafted pieces can be considered as an urbanized person who migrates from the mountains to the big cities; therefore he is uprooted from his community.

The workshop is located in its home, although not all families market their products (Guizar, 2007). For Torres (2013) the handicrafts were used from the ancestors as an offering to the gods, the drawings that they impregnate are derived from the animal and vegetable world, of important objects of domestic and religious life. At this point, it is necessary to specify that the craftsman, who produces to the markets, does not do it as a result of divine inspiration, rather by the satisfaction of a need to sell to earn an income. In the face of this, the craftsman is exploited or belittled his work because it is not valued by the consumer (Correa, 2017).

The handicrafts are part of the productive system, it is an important economic activity that allows obtaining income, and however, it leads to the abandonment of the communities to leave toward the big cities to commercialize the pieces. Perhaps, the most representative piece of craftsmanship the pictures of the stamen (*nierikate*), which are Huichol images that describe objects, landscapes and people (Faba, 2015). One of the characteristics of the Huichol handicrafts is the rooting of the traditions (Barrera, 2000). Another perspective is that of Corona (2009) who points out those handicrafts are made of their use, to distinguish themselves from other artisans or to express their generational differences.

## The Resources and Capabilities Theory

The *Wixarika* analyzed companies are micro and small Therefore due to their size and characteristics they have resources and capabilities that are scarce (Correa, 2017), and so the theoretical foundations are based on the ability to coordinate resources and the capacity for development. This theory explains that each company has resources and capabilities and therefore explains the success (Rubio & Aragón, 2008). Resources are the tangible and intangible assets that the company gets to carry out its activities On the other hand, the capabilities are the combination of resources. This translates into increased intangible resources. For Salcedo et al. (2012), resources and capacity theory allows to identify of the company's strengths, weaknesses and explore opportunities and neutralize threats.

Grant (1991) points out that the resources and capabilities in the companies are those durable, difficult to identify and understand, which is not easy to replicate for Barney (1991) exploring internal resources is the only way to gain competitiveness. Analysis of this theory provides a framework for studying the resources available to *Wixarika* companies.

Wernerfelt (1984) classifies the company's resources as tangible and intangible assets that it has. For Paige & Littrel (2002) both traditional criteria and intrinsic factors as the increase of the craft tradition can be studied to know the success of small *Wixarika* businesses. Toledo et al. (2012) highlight the importance that not all businesses can be measured with the same indicators It require an approach of cultural factors. Following this idea, this research paper studies intangible resources and raises the following research hypothesis.

H1: How traditions, customs, and values influence the economic performance of *Wixarika* artisanal business.

## Methods

According to whit Corona (2009), the Indigenous communities are privileged places for the analysis of cultural diversity, especially the costumes, values, and traditions in the production of the handicraft workshops. This research was a court quantitative, exploratory and longitudinal (Hernández et al., 2010). To corroborate the theoretically raised hypothesis, it builds a research model based on the revised literature, then a survey was applied to 72 artisans of the *Wixarika* ethnic group located in the State of Zacatecas, México, on a period of June 2016 to February 2020 All interviews were conducted in Spanish. Data processing was performed in SPSS v.20 statistical software. Table 2 shows the provenance of the artisans interviewed.

Table 2. Municipality of origin.

Name of the community	Frequency
Enrique Estrada	14
Fresnillo	10
Guadalupe	3
Valparaiso	8
Zacatecas	35
Unknown	1

Source: own work.

As shown in table two, the largest presence of artisans corresponds to the area of Zacatecas, which is the capital city of the state. Continuing the analysis, the mathematical model is developed which is specified in equation one.

$$y = f(X_1, X_2, X_3) \quad (1)$$

Where:  $y$  = business economic performance;  $X_1$  = Traditions inherited from parents remain through time;  $X_2$  = Crafting of handcrafted pieces as his parents taught him;  $X_3$  = Values your parents instilled in you. The econometric model is represented in equation two:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \mu \quad (2)$$

Where:  $y$  = is the dependent variable: business sales;  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ , and  $X_3$  are the variables of the construct “cultural aspects”;  $\beta_0$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$  and  $\beta_3$  are the population parameters and  $\mu$  is a random error term. For the hypothesis test, the economic model establishes the null hypothesis that the variables considered in equation two do not influence the economic performance of the craft workshop. The research hypothesis is set out in equation three:

$$H_0: \beta_1=0, \beta_2=0, \beta_3=0 \quad (3)$$

$$H_1: H_0 \text{ it is not true}$$

The variables studied in this research work were customs, traditions, and values that were measured on a two-point dichotomy scale, where 0 = no and 1 = yes. Customs and values were measured on a scale of three items and traditions on a scale of four items. Table 3 shows the operationalization of variables and authors based on which it was built.

Table 3. Matrix of operationalization of variables

Variable	Indicator	Author
Cultural Aspects	Tradition ( $X_1$ ) = Traditions inherited from parents remain through time. Custom ( $X_2$ ) = Crafting of handcrafted pieces as his parents taught him. Values ( $X_3$ ) = Values your parents instilled in you.	Lumholtz (1904a); Benítez (1989); Barrera (2000); Ramos (2001); Moctezuma (2001); Paige & Littrell (2002); Bonfil (2003); Rubio & Aragón (2008); Corona (2009); Toledo et al., (2012); Salcedo et al., (2012); Aedo & Faba (2017) and Correa (2017).
Economic performance	Monthly sales income	(INEGI, 2019)

Source: own work

## Results

The results of this paper are divided into two parts, the first presents descriptive data, the degree of schooling and source of learning in the making of handicrafts and the second presents the analysis of multiple regression. This section starts with the descriptive results of the artisan that appear in table 4:

Table 4. Descriptive data

Description	Data
Age	34 years old
Male gender	32%
Female gender	68%
Business revenue	\$3,280.55 MXP = 158.07 USD*

Source: own work based on \*BANXICO (2021) exchange rate = 20,7527

The table above shows that the average age of the artisans is 34 years, 68% are female and 32% male of the respondents. The average monthly sales of the business are \$3,280 Mexican pesos, which equates to 158 dollars. The following table shows the schooling level of the micro-entrepreneurs interviewed.

Table 5. Schooling Level

Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	High school
28%	44%	17%	8%

Source: own work.

As seen in table five, artisans have limited schooling degrees, most of them have the primary level, and 28% cannot read, or write the Spanish language. Seventeen percent have a secondary level and 8% high school. None of the indigenous people interviewed have a university degree. Table 6 presents a source of artisanal learning.

Table 6. Learning craftsmanship

Learning source	Data
Self-learning.	28%
Family	70%
Previous work	1%
Unspecified	1%

Source: own work

Table 6 shows that learning of artisans is familiar, i.e. it is passed down from generation to generation, followed by self-learning, 1% learned from a previous job and other indigenous work. Another 1% does not specifies where their artisanal knowledge comes from. Continuing the results analysis, table 7 present the Cronbach alpha coefficient, which is the most widely used reliability statistics (Hernández et al., 2010).

Table 7. Reliability calculation

Independent variables	Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Tradition ( $X_1$ ) = Traditions inherited from parents remain through time. Custom ( $X_2$ ) = Crafting of handcrafted pieces as his parents taught him. Values ( $X_3$ ) = Values that parents instilled in you.	0.802

Source: own work.

As shown in table 7, Cronbach's alpha coefficient exceeds 0.75, indicating that the reliability is acceptable. Below are the results of multiple regression analysis, considering the independent and dependent variables. Table 8 provides the result of equation 3, estimating the ratio.

Table 8. Model summary

R	R <sup>2</sup>	Error	Degrees of freedom	F	Sig.
0.235	0.055	2,752.91	70	4.079	0.047

Source: own work.

Table 8 shows the correlation coefficient (R) between the dependent variable and the independent variable, followed by the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ); this value indicates the percentage of variation of the dependent variables explained by the independent variables. The F statistic value proves the validity of the three variables of the model. The results of the regression analysis are shown in table 9.

Table 9. Hypothesis test

Variable	B	Error	$\beta$	T	Sig.
Constant	3,954.28	465.32	-	8.498	0
Custom ( $X_2$ ) - Crafting of handcrafted pieces as his parents taught him	-1311.04	649.11	-0.235	-2.020	0.047

Source: own work.

Table 9, sets out the coefficient (B) with a constant value of 3,954 for the variable indigenous customs “Crafting of handcrafted pieces as his parents taught him ( $X_2$ )”, presents a negative sign (-1311), which predicts the dependent variable. So our regression line is  $y = 3,954.28 - 1,311.04$ . Which indicates that sales estimates of revenue decreased by \$1,311 Mexican pesos, compared to an artisan who does not make their pieces with adherence to customs. This can be explained by the production process since each piece of craftsmanship is unique and has a different value than what is produced in series. Therefore, *Wixarika* craftsmanship requires a greater investment of time in labor since they are produced with adherence to traditional techniques and it causes a modest level of production, which has a negative impact on the decrease in revenues. This phenomenon is coupled to the market demands of new products, away from the symbolic pieces of the *Wixarika* culture.

The standardized value of the *Beta* coefficient allows to determine the influence on the dependent variable. The *t-value* contrast the null hypothesis. Therefore, we can assert that the elaboration of pieces with adherence to *Wixarika* customs detracts from the competitiveness of an artisanal business. Regarding the variable  $X_1$  “traditions inherited from the parents remain through time” and  $X_3$  “the presence of values that their parents instilled in them” is not significant. Therefore, there is no influence on traditions and values on the economic performance of the business. This can be explained because they are family business, and their attachment to indigenous traditions and values, are strongly rooted in



their culture. This can be seen with the attire of his typical costumes, pilgrimages, and ritual described in the theoretical references.

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## Discussion

It is definitely humanity task to preserve indigenous customs, traditions and values. The study of the craftsmanship is relevant because it allows providing continuity over time, despite the harsh economic conditions faced by the craftsman and what is considered in this paper the most important, the loss of the cultural aspects in artisanal business due to the devaluation of craftsmanship, explained by the poor cultural level of the population regarding the artisanal issue and the negative displacement of the handicraft demand by the industrial products. Another factor affecting the development of the craft sector is the institutional constraints of the State, which does not encourage productive activity (North, 2012), because social programs do not decrease inequality and it is the indigenous population the most vulnerable (Correa & González, 2016).

The study of the culture in indigenous business is scarce and usually approached from an anthropological perspective (Lumholtz, 1904a; Negrín, 1979; Neurath, 2015; Le Mur, 2018) In the reviewed literature, no document was found from an administrative-economic perspective. It is, therefore, considered that this paper contributes to the study of this important ethnicity.

Analyzing *Wixarika* culture is a complex endeavor According to Bertalanffy (2012) the primitive human groups are part of the cultural universe. There are no statistics to size the activities of *Wixarika* craft workshops (Correa, 2017). One aspect that complicates their study is the limited levels of education that indigenous artisans possess, which negatively impacts the development of their knowledge and skills and it causes the limited production of handicrafts, a slow manufacturing process, which has result in poor economic performance.

For purposes of this discussion, it is necessary to specify that culture measuring represents a great challenge because it is a differentiating element of each *Wixarika* craft workshop. According to the results, adherence customs negatively influences the income of a small business, so they must implement innovation in the product (Correa & González, 2017). this means that by increasing the quality of the handicraft, combined whit ancestral knowledge, the artisan can make different designs and shapes. It is necessary to enhance quality by creating value for the artisanal

pieces with the incorporation of a brand name and logo to the artisan workshops. It does not involve investment of financial resources but the implementation of intangible resources such as the application of knowledge, skill development and motivations. This will have a direct impact on higher sales for the business, which will allow a decent income for the craftsman to raise their quality of life.

## Conclusions

For the preservation of the *Wixarika* culture, it is necessary to teach courses with preschool and primary children, where the history and cosmogony of the *Huichol* Community are studied, with the purpose of understanding the customs, traditions, and values of this important ethnicity.

It is concluded that it is necessary to educate the Mexican people about the importance of *Wixarika* culture because it is a complex culture that keeps Pre Hispanic indigenous traits. It is essential to dignify craftsmanship as well as raise awareness about the time invest on each handcrafted piece, for example, by drawing necklaces, crafting of figures and symbolic pieces, the content of feelings and visions of the craftsman *Wixarika*. It is necessary to emphasize that the value of *Wixarika* culture is being lost.

Recognition of value this culture implies the development of the *Wixarika* art craft business, in other words, it is necessary to raise occupancy levels by increasing employment through the investment in the production. These considerations will provide a stable income level in long periods (Keynes, 2019).

To achieve the development of *Wixarika* indigenous ethnic group, it is necessary to increase the coverage of health services in rural communities where they live, plan investment in school infrastructure whit the aim of improving the academic levels of the indigenous communities. Also , it is a must to provide financing to the artisan workshops for the purchase of tools (Correa, 2017) and raw materials

“By increasing the quality of the handicraft, combined whit ancestral knowledge, the artisan can make different designs and shapes. [...] It does not involve investment of financial resources but the implementation of intangible resources such as the application of knowledge, skill development and motivations”.

to ensure the ancestral production of handicrafts. It is urgent to train artisans in issues of productive project development, marketing, and operations management.

To improve the economic performance of *Wixarika* craft workshops, they must work on having a defined business image and include a logo to handicraft pieces that adhere to their customs. Increase the quality in the making/manufacturing of handicrafts for a better placement in the tourism sector. It is recommended to diversify and apply the proposed model in other indigenous communities such as Tarahumaras of Chihuahua, the Otomí artisans of the State of Mexico, or Zapotec culture in the State of Oaxaca, all of them ethnicities rich in culture. For future studies, it will be appropriate to include data on other sources of income from the artisanal indigenous business. Limitations can be considered the cultural measurement utilized plus the longitudinal cut of the study and the sample size.

The artisanal workshops are part of the intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, their study is important because the knowledge produced in these economic units allows contributing to their preservation and the dignification of people who, with their hands, produce and detail pieces of enormous cultural value. They are carriers of millenarian traditions and customs: the Indigenous artisans.

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