



PASOS. Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural

ISSN: 1695-7121

info@pasosonline.org

Universidad de La Laguna  
España

García del Junco, Julio; Dutschke, Georg; Petrucci, Marina  
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PASOS. Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural, vol. 6, núm. 1, enero, 2008, pp. 27-36  
Universidad de La Laguna  
El Sauzal (Tenerife), España

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## The Hofstede model in the study of the impact of Sevilla Expo 92

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**Resumen:** Este artículo toma una aproximación múltiple sobre el estudio del impacto de la Expo 92 de Sevilla. Comenzamos identificando los valores sociales y culturales de 50 profesionales de Sevilla, usando el modelo de Hofstede, añadiendo algunas cuestiones exploratorias acerca del evento para llegar a comprender el impacto percibido de la exhibición. Entonces analizamos la realidad de la Expo 92 a través del método de caso, usando información longitudinal. Los resultados demuestran que los valores sociales y culturales de los habitantes de Sevilla influyeron en la Expo 92 durante su realización, pero también después del evento. Las conclusiones identifican las contribuciones relevantes para el estudio futuro de eventos en ciudades.

**Palabras clave:** Método de caso; Modelo de Hostede; Eventos; Ciudades; Eventos mundiales.

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**Abstract:** This paper takes a multiple approach towards the study of the impact of Seville Expo 92. We start by identifying the social and cultural values of 50 professionals from the Sevilla, using the Hofstede model, adding some exploratory questions about the event, allowing understanding the perceived impact of the exhibition. We then have analyzed the Expo 92 reality through the case method by using longitudinal information. Results demonstrate how the socio and cultural values of Sevilla inhabitants have influenced the Expo 92 during its realization, but also after the event. Conclusions identify relevant contributions for future study on city events.

**Keywords:** Case methodology; Hofstede Model; City Events; Worldwide events.

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## Introducción

The main reasons for the knowledge creation is the need to understand the reason why of the things, to achieve a global vision, to understand the relations in a system, among others. We consider that is not the statistic that better allows this process, being the case method, the methodology that should comes in first allowing, after, a statistical approach.

We aim to use the case study methodology since that allows to explain the empirical results through the examination of causal mechanisms, those stable and independent factors that, under certain conditions, tie causes with effects [George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett, 2005]. In our article, complex relations with causal origin are identified and can be studied through the case study methodology.

The diverse methods used for social investigation have advantages and disadvantages depending on the problem being study [Yin 1994]: in our study, when looking for the method to use, three requirements were considered: (1) the question looking for response: to understand the Expo'92 results, as known now, and why; (2) the control that the investigator has on the events being study: handling heavy secondary source data base, but not controlling what have really happened; and (3) the temporality of the question being study: an event that happened 15 years ago, but still very actual, giving a good perspective for its study and analysis.

The cases are valid when questions as "how" and "why" are considered, when the investigator has little control on the events and when the subject is actual. For these reasons we consider that the use of the case method is adequate in our investigation. The questions "how" and "why" are explanatory and easily considered in the cases study, since human history and facts deals with operative chains, developed throughout the time [George et al., 2005].

Within the case we investigate the questions "how" and "why". The use of a qualitative model will allow a better, in depth study, of the answers we are looking for. We have used the Hofstede model to better understand "how" the Expo'92 was

developed and "why" the results were achieved.

The Universal Event<sup>1</sup> happening in Seville (Spain) in 1992 (Expo 92) was developed within the strategy to position the city in the world-wide map. Has referred by Hall and Hodges [1998], in the last years the process of developing important urban marketing events are an important tool to position cities in a global scope. The Universal Exhibitions was an instrument used by the city of Sevilla to revitalize the economy, built new infrastructure and improve its image. The end economic impact was positive, has indicated by Light [1996] and Getz [1991]. By using the Hofstede model we have verified the social and cultural characteristics of the Sevilla citizens. Also, was possible to verify that the hospitality level in the city has grown.

Our study aims to identify (1) if there was a positive contribution of the Expo 92 event on the citizens hospitality, and, why and (2) if the Expo 92 has contributed for a positive impact in the tourism growth.

Using the Hofstede Model to identify the Social and Cultural values, we have received responses from 50 professionals from Seville. We have used this model due to its validity to identify cultural values in a city or country [Sondergaard 1994]. To understand the reality of the Universal Exhibition (Exposición'92) we have used the case study method and considered longitudinal information available. Merriam [1988] consider the case study methodology has the best option for investigators looking to understand and discover, more than to test hypothesis, and when there is a desire for a descriptive and holistic explanation.

Finally, in the Hofstede questionnaire, we have added some exploratory questions using a five point Likert scale, and one open question treated with a content analysis.

Considering that the economy globalization originates the growth of the cities importance [Kotler and Andreasen, 1991], like Expo'92 (Seville), within our investigation we have looked to identify relations among the socio and cultural values, and, the realization of the Expo 92 project [Richards and Wilson 2004], considered by

Wait [2003] as a way to position a city within the market.

As a result of the previous considerations, the following problem was identified: the public companies managing the event need to have criteria, mentality and management capability, since, as referred by Bouinot and Rawding [1996], those companies must have a strategic management vision to be effective. We consider that as true, when the next six impacts are achieved: economic, tourist, political, psychological, physical, and socio and cultural.

| Academics      | Sevilla | Employees | Sevilla |
|----------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Primary School | 5       | 1-5       | 1       |
| High School    | 29      | 6-10      | 17      |
| University     | 11      | 11-20     | 23      |
| Posgraduation  | 5       | 21-30     | 3       |
|                |         | >31       | 6       |

### Methodology and data collection

In order to identify the cultural and social values of the inhabitants of the city of Seville (Spain) we have used the VSM 94 questionnaire (Values Survey Module 1994) provided by IRIC. Hofstede [2003] refers that “the answers to the 20 questions can be influenced by other characteristics of the respondents than the strong influence of the nationality, as the type of work developed by the respondents. Therefore the comparison between countries or regions, will have to be consistent, up to where possible, on the respondents samples, that should be comparable in all the criteria considered, aside from the nationality or region” being in our case, professionals. To identify relations on the cultural and social values of the city with the World-wide Exhibition of Seville 92, we have used the case method. We completed the cases and VSM 94, using a brief questionnaire with three questions: 1. How was the future influence of the Exhibitions in the tourism? ; 2. How was its influence in the citizens’ hospitality and why? ; 3. How was the exhibition business as treated by using the computer program ATLAS/TI from Scientific Software, friendly software allowing using powerful solutions regarding the codification and extraction of conclusions [Miles and Hubertman 1994].

### Data Collection

We have achieved 50 responses from Sevillians professionals. The number of respondents is adapted to Hofstede [2003] recommendation, when considering that 20 answers is the minimum necessary, being 50 answers the ideal. The questionnaire in Spanish was facilitated by IRIC, not supposing any translation.

| Age   | Sevilla |
|-------|---------|
| 18-24 | 2       |
| 25-34 | 18      |
| 35-44 | 18      |
| 45-54 | 7       |
| 55-64 | 4       |
| >65   | 1       |

| Gender | Sevilla |
|--------|---------|
| Men    | 44      |
| Women  | 6       |

### The Hofstede Model

Has referred by Scheler [1921]: “the order and the law of the values may be achieved with as much evidence and precision, than the mathematical ones”, we then may understand how the works of Hofstede facilitate, from a practical point of view, the possibility of developing quantitative comparisons between nations [Hofstede 1980]. More works could have been considered on the study of cultural and social values. In our investigation we will use the model developed by Hofstede since its very representative, facilitating enough valid instruments of measurement [Sondergaard 1994]. Logically, this model is not free of critics, has mentioned by Tayeb [1994] and Schramm-Nielsen [2000]. Summarizing, the model developed by Hofstede, considers the national values survey from 1994 (Value Survey Module VSM 94) using a questionnaire of 26 points, allowing comparing cultural values of two or more, countries or regions. The questionnaire considers five dimensions, each with four questions. The others 6 questions consider demographic data.

### The five dimensions

1. Power Distance Index. PDI.
2. Individualism Distance Index. IDI.
3. Masculinity Index. MAS.
4. Uncertainty Avoidance Index. AVI.
5. Long-Term Orientation Index. LTO.

*Power Distance or Hierarchy Distance.* Is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a society expect and accept that a power is distributed unequally.

*Individualism Distance.* Individualism stands for a society in which the ties between individuals are loose: a person is expected to look after himself and his immediate family only.

*Masculinity.* Is defined as a society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with quality of life. Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with quality of life.

*Uncertainty Avoidance.* Is defined as the extent to which the members of institutions and organizations within a society feel threatened by uncertain, unknown, ambiguous, or unstructured situations.

*Long Term Orientation.* Stands for a society that fosters virtues oriented towards future rewards, in particular perseverance and thrift. Short term orientation stands for a society that fosters virtues related to the past and present, in particular respect for tradition, preservation of "face", and fulfilling social obligations.

### Case study methodology

The reason for using the case study methodology is that, first, there is the need to understand the reality when the variables to study and their relations are not accurately defined [Snow and Thomas 1994], and second, this methodology is adapted to the type of investigation to be developed in our work. Orlikowski et al. [1991] and Marshall [1985], confirms the validity and value of the case method for the investigation of complex questions and processes, innovating systems, and investigations on low structured relations. The case studies allows, in addition, perceiving the reality with more detail than by using a survey, allowing analyzing a higher number of variables. The design of an exploratory cases study for this investigation leans in the idea and recommendations from dif-

ferent investigators: Long, Convey and Chwalek [1985] refers its validity for in depth studies and concrete processes situations. Yins [1994], mention that this method allows investigate a present fact within its real context, especially when the limits between the fact and its context are not clearly evident. For Robson [1993] the method is useful as a strategy to develop an empirical investigation on a present and particular phenomenon in their real context, using multiple sources of evidences. Merrian [1988] consider the case study has the best option for investigators looking to understand and discover, more than to test hypothesis, and, when there is a desire for a descriptive and holistic explanation. For Kerlinger [1992] the exploratory study of cases has three intentions: to find significant variables, to discover the relations between the variables, and to prepare the investigation for a later test of hypothesis in a more rigorous and systematic way. Stake [1981] indicates that the investigation using the study of cases tends to be more concrete and contingent. Is expected that by using the case study, the unknown variables and existing relations could be identified, allowing a new reflection on the variables to study.

In our investigation, the next step was the data codification by analyzing the open question "how do you believe the Exhibition may have improved the level of citizens' hospitality?" To develop the Content Analysis we have codified each word or groups of words, summarizing the set of textual appointments. The following process was developed: citation process, emphasize the most representative parts of each of the cases for each of the questions being study. Then, we have codified the appointments by using a citation-code process interactive revision. This process follows Miles and Hubertman [1994] recommendations. For the codification process, key in the analysis of qualitative data, an initial code list was created based on the scheme referred by Miles and Hubertman [1994], used in the interactive process of analysis. These codes facilitates the identification and appearance of guidelines, the control of gaps, the identification of alternative or opposite directions, a high level of consistency, and other subjects related to the study of explo-

ratory cases. Once identified the codes, we have then proceed studying the relations between the different codes aiming identifying its frequency, as the number of relations existing with other codes, allowing establishing the importance and strength of the code, and this way, creating categories.

## Main results.

### *Seville Expo '92 Case*

The Exhibition of Seville was the great celebration of the end of the millennium, allowing locating the city in the world, and increasing its conditions for competing. Seville was far from being a universal city before 1992. Up to there, the fame of Seville was based on very few elements: an exceptional Easter, surely one of the most famous in Spain, and a Fair considered as model for all the others. These two events took just 15 days of the year, and nothing else. During the rest of the year this city did not exist, and was just famous for the other Spanish by being slow, uncomfortable, and warm with little activity. Therefore the strategy was to locate the city in the world, and for that, nothing better than a celebration. It was a complicated project, and it was not obtained without great problems.

The success was obtained! Seville is today located in the map of the world, achieving the desired objective developed with Expo 92 event, of being a nice city to visit, to enjoy, to submerge in and to live intensely. The main proposed, and obtained objective, was to locate Seville as more tourist destination. It is clear that tourism is the industry, the instrument that opens a city to visitors, but saying that is a tourist destiny is less than to say we have a place in the map of the world.

Expo 92 surpassed the predicted number of visits. Estimations were 36 million, and final visits were 41.814.571: a 16.15% more. Nevertheless, the total visitors - each could repeat the visit several days - were 15.540.628, a 13.7% less than the 18 million predicted. It was a good result, considering some adverse circumstances, mainly two: The fact that Seville has a no central situation in Europe, far from the great concentrations of population, and the economic International crisis that already struck

strongly in the developed countries, although Spain was still resisting, partly due to the investments on the 92 celebrations.

Indeed, the crisis on the world-wide economy contributes to a decrease on the estimated foreign visitors, only 33.5%, when expected to be 50%. The great majority (23.4%) came from our surroundings, those called A countries (Germany, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Portugal, Benelux and Switzerland), 7.2% from B countries (rest of Western Europe and America developed countries), and 2.9% from the rest of the world. These could be considered good figures, since the most interesting visitors are those coming from more closed countries: it's easier to return, and in fact they have returned. From those 66.5% Spanish visitors, 19.9% came from Andalusia. From Seville and its metropolitan area came 5.5%, but with a high index of repetition: those who had free entrance for all the period of the Exhibition - called season ticket, coming from areas surrounding the city, and on average have made 60 visits, representing that 43.5% of the total visits were done by individuals with a season ticket, mainly Sevillians. This means that the inhabitants of the city have completely full the Exhibition. It is relevant the fact that the season ticket was very economic: 180 euros, but that cannot explain all this effect. The end reason is that individuals have enjoyed much the Exhibition!

But not only have the Sevillians been pleased with the experience. The Expo organization has developed several surveys, both in the place and by telephone, demonstrating very favorable results regarding the image of the Exhibition: 88% considers that the visit had been worth the trouble, 77% considered the Expo a great success, 89% considers that Expo had contributed positively (much or enough) to Seville, 82% to Andalusia and 71% to Spain. The global valuation was 8,6 considering a scale from 0 to 10, being much evaluated the cleaning (8,9), followed by the available information (8,7), even more than the pavilions (7,8). In the valuation scale gains the total environment: being more valued the general atmosphere: 45% of the respondents' mentioned that in the first place. But there are some surprises: have a good time been more valued than

the fair thematic: the spectacle on the Lake was the second pleased event (38%) and the architecture was the third (11%). Almost all the most important media from Spain were present in the event: 2,116 Spanish journalists and 1.872 coming from abroad.

The Sevillians, the citizens in general, have considered the Exhibition has their own, they lived it with intensity and they turned it a great public success. The nostalgic of those days and the desire to celebrate its tenth anniversary, clearly demonstrates that the enthusiasm is still present.

“And now what we will do?” This was the most repeated question after the closing of Expo'92 that during six months had fed the joy and the discord on the inhabitants of Seville. What still remains and what was demolished was not decided by the Sevillians. It is understood that some pavilions were of little future utility, but many could have been saved, not only within the enclosure, but in new and better destinies. At the moment, Cartuja-93 considers that solely a 25% of free ground is left. Almost all the extension of the island remains industrial land (I+D). The most recent data written in a national newspaper, dated 18 of June 2007, indicates that only 23 pavilions from the initials 112 were left, not considering services places, infrastructure and others. Today the Sevillians still asking why there was not a long term planning allowing to better profit from the strong investments made in the Expo 92. Very recent data even show that many tourists are coming to the city looking for the pavilions of their countries or cities.

Lack of strategic vision? Lack of a long term vision in the resources management? Not to know how to integrate Expo 92 in the set of the city? Maybe, the Expo 92 was developed by the Sevillians and they did not have obligation of doing more.

### Key figures

*Economy:* Expo'92 total investment is estimated: 8.500 million euros

*Extension:* in total: 215 hectares

*Construction:* Close to 1,500 architects, engineers and technicians from all around the world have participated in the Expo'92 design, being estimated in 4.000 the total of

professionals' involved. Some figures shows that in some days a total of 6,000 workers have been working together

*Spectacles:* Cultural performances: 6.000 million (50,000 live performances during the Expo).

### Cultural and Social values for the citizens of Seville and the Expo 92

Power distance Index: 10; we can observe a very low index for the hierarchical distance, as stated by Hofstede and Bond [1984], which implies a great need for adaptability. The following paragraph gives an idea of the high level of adaptation observed. “Generally speaking, Sevillian citizens, made their own, the Exposition full; they have lived it with intensity and this made it attractive to a large amount of public. The nostalgia felt for those days and the desire to celebrate it during the recent 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary are clear proofs of the continuing excitement regarding the event”. This index highlights the following data: “The design of the Expo 92 has involved approximately 1 500 architects, engineers and technicians from all over the world, among a total of 4. 000 professionals” In addition, there was an effective system of control on those with powering positions; any irregularity was denounced and taken to the courts.

Individualism Index: 85; highly individualistic. Seville was very individualistic as observed in the following statement: “Seville's fame was based on just a few elements, in fact, just two: an exceptional holy week, which was clearly the most important, and a fair being a model for all the others. Two weeks and no more. The rest of the year the city didn't exist.”

Masculinity Index: 5; a strong feminine pole. “In the Seville Expo, the great end-of-millennium fiesta, what was most appreciated was the whole, the overall atmosphere, 45 % of the interviewees refers that in first place.

Control of uncertainty Index: 95; as stated by Hofstede [1991] the control of uncertainty should not be confused with control of risk. Risk can be expressed as the percentage of probability for an event to happen. Uncertainty is not connected with probability. When uncertainty is expressed

as a risk, it ends up being a source of anxiety. More than reducing the risk, the control of uncertainty aims to reduce the ambiguity. In those countries with a high control of uncertainty, people tend to be more fidgety, emotional, aggressive and active. In the case, three statements justifies this level: 1) "Seville is in a non central position in Europe, far from the great population centres", 2) "an international economic crisis was already affecting the more developed countries", 3) Seville was far from being a universal city prior to 1992". However, at the end, they did it! Seville is now firmly on the world map and in a way which Expo 92 wanted it to be: as a city to be visited, enjoyed and lived with intensity.

Long term orientation Index: 35; short term orientation. This short term orientation can observed: "The most recent figures, published in a national daily newspaper on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2007, state that only 23 pavilions remains from the total of 112 built for the Expo92, not counting services and infrastructures. Today, however, Sevillians asked themselves why things weren't planned to last longer avoiding the waste of resources". Even it's true that the Expo 92 strategically put Seville on the world map; the managers of Expo92 were not able to put the Expo92 on the map of the city of Seville.

From the three questions considered to moderate the Hofstede questionnaire, main conclusions from Sevillians respondents are: 60% of the entrepreneurs consider that the tourist growth after the Expo92 was important, being this event the main responsible for that, and 22% considers that the importance has been moderate. 56% refers that the Expo92 has been a success and 8% a complete success, while 36% thinks that has been indifferent. The data referring hospitality allows having some very interesting conclusions: 46% of the respondents considers that the hospitality of the Seville citizens has had an important improvement after the Expo92, while 44% thinks that the growth of importance is moderate; in the low and top boxes, 8% considers that the growth of importance was low and 2% that was very important. By applying the content analysis to this last question in order to evaluate the "reason of the degree of hospitality" we were

able to obtain the following categories: "learn to be a host" (8), "Change of mentality" (7), "Responsibility before the events" (6), "Open mind to treat different people from other places" (6), the remainder categories are not mentioned as they are very diverse and, in our opinion, not significant. From this analysis we may conclude that the citizens of Seville have learned to be better hosts, differing from before, when they were more closed. This added to a more universal change of mentality, being less local. The opening to other countries and the contact with other cultures has allowing a better understanding of the hospitality, as an intangible of high value, both for contact with tourists and for the image of a city. A so significant equality is understood - 46% (4) and 44% (3) - in the question regarding the hospitality, when crossed with the high Individualism index (85) highlighting the social and cultural values of the Sevillians. The categories "learn to be a host", "change of mentality", with the "open mind to treat different people from different places" could be understood in sight of the low Masculinity index (5), same as an absolutely Female Index.

## Conclusions

A major conclusion can be observed: the event was a success allowing the city of Sevilla to have a better positioning in the worldwide tourism mapping. Also is relevant the after event analysis, allowing a better understand why the Expo'92 place was not so well maintained.

The Long Term Index reflects this reality. Seville Expo was not the example of a long term planning (master plan was thought exclusively for the event). This may demonstrate the existence of an important correlation between the capacity for a long term vision and the Hofstede Long Term Orientation Index.

Is also important the analysis regarding the Uncertainty index in Seville. The high level observed may be influenced by the terrorism (ETA), which leads to hard safety measures reducing the ambiguity.

The open questions analysis shows that the level of hospitality in the city of Seville has improved. Crossing this fact with the Feminity high index (5) the results may



reflect a more local, but less, universal vision.

As a summary, we may argue that in the Expo'92 the public entities managing the event did not have the criteria, mentality and management strategic vision to consider this event not just for a short term, but has a really opportunity to develop more in debt urban strategic upgrades.

Finally, we have had the ability to test the complementarities of the case method with the Hofstede qualitative model.

The case is always an instrument of proven quality, as much for teaching as for the investigation, our case, but we have verified that, when complemented with other instruments of investigation, may be even more effective than when used alone. We were able to verify how the Expo'92 case reflects the reality of which has happened and why, and with the application of the Hofstede model we were able to learn the "why" of that "why", allowing trying to formulate theories with a higher level of rigor.

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### NOTA

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<sup>1</sup> One shot action allowing a better potential of a place awareness, perception profitability (Janiskee, 1997)

*Recibido: 03 de septiembre de 2007*

*Aceptado: 20 de diciembre de 2007*

*Sometido a evaluación por pares anónimos*