


## MUSEUMS FOR WHOM? INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PUBLIC PROFILE, LEISURE, AND TOURISM

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**ABSTRACT:** This article reflects on the triad tourism, museums, and leisure from the public study. It consists of quantitative research conducted in two science museums in Brazil. The sample was 342 forms distributed equally between the surveyed institutions, 171 each. Two instruments were used to obtain data: the form for the quantitative approach and field observation, which enabled the observation of qualitative data. For the statistical treatment of the database, the R program, version 3.6.1 was used, through regression and correlation analysis. The results point out that the profile of the public is similar to others both in the national and international context and confirm the elite status of these spaces. In the specific case of Brazil, the cultural factor can be highlighted as a defining feature of distancing the population. A surprise identified in the survey was the low rate found for visitors who can be defined as tourists.

**KEYWORDS:** Museums. Leisure activities. Tourism.

## MUSEUS PARA QUEM? INTERAÇÕES ENTRE PERFIL DE PÚBLICO, LAZER E TURISMO

**RESUMO:** O artigo reflete sobre turismo, museus e lazer a partir do estudo de público. Consiste em pesquisa quantitativa realizada em dois museus de ciências em Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais. A amostra foi 342 formulários, distribuídos entre as instituições pesquisadas, sendo 171 em cada. Para a obtenção dos dados foram utilizados dois instrumentos: formulário para a abordagem quantitativa e a observação de campo, para dados qualitativos. Para o tratamento dos dados, foi utilizado o programa R, versão 3.6.1, com análise de regressão e correlação. Os resultados apontam que o perfil do público se assemelha a outros no contexto nacional e internacional e confirmam o status de elite dos espaços. No caso específico do Brasil, o fator cultural pode ser destacado como uma característica definidora do distanciamento da população.

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Uma surpresa identificada na pesquisa foi o baixo índice de visitantes que podem ser definidos como turistas.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Museus. Atividades de lazer. Turismo.

## **Introduction**

This article is structured from the research entitled "Leisure and Learning: intersections from family visits to university science museums" (MACEDO, 2020), conducted under the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Leisure Studies - PPGIEL - Federal University of Minas Gerais - UFMG, Brazil. The study analysed the relationship between leisure and learning from family visits to two university science museums: *Espaço do Conhecimento* (Space of Knowledge) UFMG and *Museu de Ciências Naturais* (Natural Sciences Museum) PUC Minas, both located in the city of Belo Horizonte, State of Minas Gerais in the Southeast region of Brazil. In the article new analyses are presented from the data collected, aiming to reflect on the triad tourism, museums, and leisure, fields which present several interactions, being the culture a convergent element, and therefore, occupying a core role in this research.

Public studies are considered an important planning and management tool, not only for museum spaces but also for leisure and tourism, showing reflections on progress and setbacks. Besides understanding the profile of the specific public and the visitors' appropriation ways towards the museum, it is also possible to follow the flow and dynamics of the visits. The interest and importance of conducting public studies in museums gradually grow since understanding the visitors' motivations and attitudes is crucial to the relationship between heritage institutions and their visitors. (SHEN et al., 2019). In this direction, this type of study enables systematizing processes of understanding current and potential visitors and about the non-public (KOPTCKE, 2012), in different contexts. They can result in different purposes: from planning

specific activities for different audiences to promoting dialogue between different fields of knowledge that intertwine; or to understand different connections between the processes of planning and museum management (KOPTCKE, 2012), among many others.

In Brazil, the studies of the public in museums are relatively recent. Thus, it is possible to state that there are still gaps to be filled through the study of different areas and possible interactions, gaps that indicate the breadth and power of studies of this nature. In this direction, the scope of this article is to reflect on the interactions between museums, leisure, and tourism observing the contours, limits, and potentialities from a public study carried out in the city of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil, in dialogue with studies from other parts of the country and the world.

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) understands a museum as a non-profit institution at the service of the development of a society that "acquires, preserves, researches, disseminates and exhibits, for study, education, and leisure, testimonies of peoples and their environment" (DESVALÉES; MAIRESSE, 2016, p. 36), which already enables the first reflections between the triad that is the focus of this article. At first, it is highlighted the convergence point - culture - seen from the record of testimonies. Education, as the formation of the subject, pervades the three fields of knowledge, and leisure, as the enjoyment of culture and subject education, also encompasses tourism in one of its cultural contents (CAMARGOS, 1998).

Like public studies in museums, leisure and tourism are also relatively recent fields. Both have received more attention, in Brazil, since the 1970s, when some research groups began to focus on professional training for the sector (SILVA, 2017; ISAYAMA; LACERDA, 2010; GOMES, 2008). Both are fields of multi, inter and transdisciplinary knowledge, while the existence of some gaps in knowledge production

in the field still is latent, as there is much to be researched, many disciplines to relate, and many points to investigate (MAGNANI, 2018; GOMES, 2008; MELO, 2010).

According to Gomes (2008), leisure comprises four basic and interrelated elements: time, space, cultural manifestations, and leisure. Since museums are spaces where it is possible to socially and culturally express and interact through games, play, dialogues, imagination, they can be considered leisure spaces and means of cultural access and production (LOPES, 2014). For Gomes, leisure can be defined as:

A dimension of culture constituted through the ludic experience of cultural manifestations in a time/space conquered by the subject or social group, establishing dialectical relations with the needs, duties, and obligations, particularly with productive work (GOMES, 2008, p. 125).

As the author points out, it is important to think of cultural manifestations and culture in the plural, in a multiple and multifaceted way, dynamic, in constant (re)construction and re-signification by the cultural actors.

The research presented hereto is a quantitative study, which began with bibliographic research to assess the possible interactions found in the literature between the three fields of knowledge, as well as in studies of related areas that enabled a step towards interdisciplinarity. Two instruments were used to obtain the research data: the form for the quantitative approach and field observation, which enabled the qualitative data compliance.

To select the spaces where the study was undertaken some criteria were observed: to have a structured education sector, links with renowned universities, broad dialogue with the academic knowledge productions, research and extension projects, and direct relationship with the university faculty and students to which they are related. Two spaces fit the criteria defined for the research, in Belo Horizonte: the UFMG - *Espaço do Conhecimento* (Space of Knowledge) and the PUC Minas – *Museu de Ciências Naturais* (Natural Sciences Museum). The defined criteria convergence does

not mean that the spaces do not have major diverging points: while the UFMG's Space of Knowledge is located in a central area, with free entrance to exhibitions, without traditional physical collections or technical reserves, and with a bold proposal for scientific dissemination, the PUC Minas' Natural Sciences Museum is located in a region away from the city centre, with paid entrance to the exhibition, assembled basically from its collection and replicas produced inside the very museum, with a traditional expographic proposal. The choice for two museums that are similar in their exhibition proposal, collection, and geographical location in the city could be another criterion, but we opted for diversity, and the possibility to research museums with striking differences. The possibility of identifying visitors with different goals, interests, and motivations guided this choice, which in theory could bring new reflection elements to the study.

**Figure 1: Spatial location of the museum spaces in the city of Belo Horizonte**



Source: Own production

As this is a research conducted with families with children, it was decided to apply the forms only to one adult member of the group, to enable the research and reduce the negative impacts on the respondents. To adjust the form and verify specific issues, a pilot survey was conducted on the 19th of October 2019, with the application of 17 forms, which led to the reformulation of the survey's final instrument.

The term family public encompasses diverse realities (JONCHERY; PRAËT, 2014), therefore it is important to indicate the understanding and definition of the family adopted by the study, to standardize the approaches and ensure rigour in the collection. According to Shen et al (2019) families can have several configurations, with or without children, hindering the conceptualisation and the cut-off. In some cases, it means the set of visitors who are not alone; in others, it targets groups composed of adult(s) and child(ren)" (JONCHERY; PRAËT, 2014, p. 163), the latter being the one chosen for the screening of families suitable to participate in the study. It is worth highlighting that few studies are focusing on understanding family visits to cultural spaces, especially in developing countries such as Brazil, which brought even more challenges to the cut-off proposed in this study, repeated in the surveys already conducted in the selected spaces. This absence is not an issue only for Brazilian museums and it was also identified in the research of Shen et al (2019) in Chinese museums.

Thus, the sample was calculated from the data available in a public survey conducted by the UFMG Knowledge Space in 2017 and published in 2018. According to the survey, of the 62,065 visitors received that year, 51,825 were spontaneous. Of those, 25% were accompanied by children, without being identified as families in the context adopted here, which defines a population of 12,956 people per year (ESPAÇO, 2018). Considering a 5% margin of error and a 90% reliability level, the calculation

obtained the amount of 342 forms that were equally distributed among the surveyed institutions - 171 for each.

One of the research features is interdisciplinarity, and it was present not only in the theoretical dialogue but in the dialogue between research and teaching as well. For data collection, a team was formed comprising undergraduates from the Tourism course at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, assisted by the researcher. The application of the forms was conducted between November 02 and December 15, 2019, only on weekends, when the number of families visiting the museums is greater.

The public counting for approaching the participants was instrumental to ensure the randomness and impartiality of the collected data, providing statistical rigour to the research. Thus, the researchers positioned themselves on a specific floor of the two museums, attempting to always apply it in similar places in both environments. The count started from the first family that entered the premises, always approaching the third family (1 in every 3 would be approached). This meant that all families visiting the museum had the same probability of being chosen to participate in the survey, along the lines conducted by the Observatory of Public in Museums and Cultural Centres in Rio de Janeiro (DAMICO; MANO; KÖPTCKE, 2010).

During the collection period, observations were made, as previously mentioned, and recorded in a field notebook. These observations were used in the qualitative analysis, and it also enabled the observation of secondary results indicated by the research and which could be the subjects of other studies.

For the database statistical analyses, the project was submitted to an internal call for proposals at the Federal University of Minas Gerais' Department of Statistics and approved. At this point, the interdisciplinarity is once again expressed by connecting different courses and levels, i.e. undergraduate courses in Tourism and Statistics, and

graduate courses. For database statistical treatment it was used the R program, version 3.6.1. Regression and correlation analyses were performed, later discussed in the research context.

### **From the Public Profile to Leisure and Tourism**

Due to the breadth of data generated by the research, the emphasis herein was given to a new cut-off of variables, such as the visitors' mobility and origin data participating in the survey.

In general, the participants' socio-economic profile of the research focus of this article is in line with national and international research, where most visitors are women, white, with high education and income, aged between 31 and 50 (ESPAÇO, 2018; KÖPTCKE; CAZELLI; MARINO, 2008; JONCHERY; PRAËT, 2014; DAMICO; MANO; KÖPTCKE, 2010; BOURDIEU; DARBEL, 2007; INSTITUTO, 2014). It is important to emphasize that according to Boukas (2011) in general this is also the profile of people who practice Cultural Tourism. One of the justifications for this age group to be the majority in the visits would be concerning the characteristics identified in this phase of life in the family composition (KÖPTCKE; CAZELLI; MARINO, 2008) which coincides with the stage in which adults, in general, have children in the age group selected for the research (0 to 12 years). Moreover, the higher number of women may be related to women's centrality in family leisure choices as well as family obligations (SCHWAB; DUSTIN, 2015; YERKES; ROETERS; BAXTER, 2020; KÖPTCKE; CAZELLI; MARINO, 2008; BOURDIEU; DARBEL, 2007).

It can be seen, therefore, that the reflections made from the public of museums are restricted to a small stratum of the Brazilian population, since, according to Pedrão and Uvinha (2017, p. 41), the IBGE identified, in the 2010 demographic census, that



36.2% of the Brazilian population earns up to 2 minimum wages and 50.2% has up to primary schools, a population that, according to the analysed studies of museum public is a minority among those who spontaneously visit museums.

According to the IBGE (2019), spending on culture by Brazilian families increases proportionally to income. On average, families earning 6 minimum wages or more spend more on culture than the others, investing around 8% of monthly income on this item. Here it is necessary to briefly reflect on what and which culture this could be.

There are many understandings on culture, and it is not possible to identify all the possibilities in a single study. However, some of its historical development will be indicated, encompassing the multiple ways of defining and understanding its complexity, particularly in the Social Sciences (VELHO; CASTRO, 1978; TEIXEIRA COELHO, 2008).

Culture in the 18th century was understood in different ways (GOMES, 2006; VELHO; CASTRO, 1978; TEIXEIRA COELHO, 2008): it could be seen both as what differentiates one group from another, as what defines man's universal characteristics. Although very different from each other, they have a common point: the notion that culture is something cultivated in man, it is not natural to him and, therefore, would be linked to the idea of training and knowledge, reinforcing the idea that culture is something that one either has or not. This perception is linked to modernity and colonialism where the Europeans considered themselves advanced, culturally evolved, and would have the duty to bring their culture to the colonised people, who, from this point of view, would be culturally backward (MALDONADO-TORRES, 2018). The cultures of non-Western people, represented in the Cabinets of Curiosities, are seen as uncivilised as they did not fit into the capitalist mode of relations.

Edward Taylor (1832-1917) proposed another way of understanding culture: one which embraced differences, diversity, as cultural features common to all humanity: "legends, myths, beliefs, objects, norms, values, knowledge, etc., passed on from generation to generation" (GOMES, 2006, p. 3). Thus, the hypothesis of not having culture would not exist, since it would be the common feature that characterizes all human beings. In this conception, culture is seen as something learned from relations within social groups, throughout life (GOMES, 2006).

From the late 19th century onward, culture began to be thought in the plural, and ethnography emerged as a method to describe and reflect on the particularities of each type, without ranking one to the other (GOMES, 2006; VELHO; CASTRO, 1978).

From the 20th century onward, culture starts to be perceived as a set of codes, rules, and interpretations seized by individuals throughout their lives, which enable to provide meaning to the relations of and in the whole (VELHO; CASTRO, 1978). According to Gomes (2006), at that point, what matters is not to understand how the groups are organised or behave, but how the norms are seized in communities. This idea led to the understanding that all individuals would be subject to unconscious rules and behaviors, which would determine their way of interacting and their bond with society through codes, symbolic devices decoded by the social subjects.

Thus, several types of culture coexist, what Velho and Castro (1978) call subcultures, within complex societies. However, coexistence does not mean that there is not a predominant culture, which tends to be the culture linked to the economic elites, and the consequent need to distinguish between cultures: educated culture (or elite culture), popular culture, mass culture, etc. (VELHO; CASTRO, 1978; TEIXEIRA COELHO, 1993). This distinction carries the idea that one would be superior to the other, with more refined aesthetic values to the others. Popular culture would be cruder,

related to traditions and ethnic groups, and, therefore, less valued as it does not provide development and sophistication to individuals. It is commonly presented as having historical, traditional, and more stable values than other cultures and it is produced by the same players who consume it (TEIXEIRA COELHO, 2008).

In the current context, it is not impossible to deal with cultures in a watertight way, as in the past, especially when it comes to large metropolises, where different groups relate to and cohabit the same geographical space and with organic and dynamic social practices, being redefined by social agents all the time.

It is perceptible, then, that Culture is a dynamic concept, in constant (re)construction, which expresses the richness, the complexity, and the importance of the topic. Despite the different definitions, the several viewpoints do not annul or overlap, being complementary, coexisting, and dialoguing among themselves, in their multiple perspectives. Each researcher resorts to the concepts that he/she identifies as being most appropriate to his/her objectives and pathways which do not mean that this choice denies the others. Thus, for this work we chose to consider culture as "human language", which can manifest itself in many ways (oral, written, gestural, visual, artistic, among others) and occurring at all moments of life - at work, at leisure, at school, in the family, in politics, in science, etc" (GOMES, 2006). This choice is due to the proximity of the concept to the definitions and understandings of a museum as a cultural and dialogical institution, as well as leisure, understood as a social phenomenon and dimension of culture, contextualised and dynamic (GOMES, 2008), and also tourism, understood here as an amalgam of phenomena of socio-spatial and human nature, which comprises a complex and extensive network of relationships and multi- and interdisciplinary interrelationships, characterized by mobility (OLIVEIRA, 2018).

Although museums are recognised as places of formalised, crystallised culture, some movements seek to open them up to multiple cultures, to embrace and access different social subjects, as is the case of Social Museology, which understands that museological institutions should have as a premise to serve the development of society as a place for leisure and education (CHAGAS, 2012).

Analysing the monthly income of families, it was found that most respondents have income range between 07 and 15 minimum wages (frequency of 30% in the Knowledge Space and 31% at the PUC Museum). To calculate the values, it was considered the absolute value of the minimum wage in Brazil for the year 2020, which was R\$ 1,039.00. Thus, the average salary of most respondent families was R\$ 11,429.00. It is important to stress that this is significantly above the average salary of the Brazilian population, which, according to the IBGE, was R\$2,420.00 in 2017 or R\$2,683.44 in 2020.

Despite the Brazilian racial-ethnic diversity, most visitors self-declare as white (50.1%) or brown (33.8%), followed by people who declare themselves as black (11.1%), a result similar to that found in the public surveys conducted by the UFMG Knowledge Space and OMCC (ESPAÇO, 2018; DAMICO; MANO; KÖPTCKE, 2010). However, this division does not reflect the reality of the Brazilian population which, according to the 2018 Continuous PNAD, comprised 45.22% as being white and 53.92% as being brown or black. This is an indication of the elite nature of the museum spaces since, on checking the education of the Brazilian population, we can see that the illiteracy rates among brown and black people (9.1%) are significantly higher than among whites (3.9%) and higher in the regions of the country where there are more self-declared black and brown people, as is the case of the North-east (13.9%)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://educa.ibge.gov.br/jovens/conheca-o-brasil/populacao/18317-educacao.html>. Accessed on: 10th of May 2020 at 1.24pm.

Concerning the respondent's schooling, if we add those who have higher education to those who have graduate degrees, the amount represents more than 70% of the respondents in both surveyed museums, a result aligned with the other consulted researches (DAMICO; MANO; KÖPTCKE; 2010; ESPAÇO, 2018; INSTITUTO, 2014).

According to Bourdieu and Darbel (2007), schooling is one of the factors that most influences access to cultural spaces since formal education and family directly influence the training of the individuals' cultural capital, a preponderant item for access to museums and the development of the habitus (SETTON, 2002; DENSDACK; LOPES, 2016).

Reflecting only on those who have completed higher education, the data indicated that 34.1% of the total respondents have this educational level, which differs from the profile identified by the 2018 Continuous PNAD, which identified that only 16.5% of the Brazilian population had full higher education.

In 2017, researchers from eight Brazilian universities developed a major study on Brazilians' leisure and funded by the Ministry of Sports, in which 2,400 people from across the country were interviewed (ISAYAMA; STOPPA, 2017). Leisure interests were divided into leisure, tourist, physical-sports, artistic, social, manual, and intellectual. The frequency to libraries, painting galleries, and museums was framed as intellectual leisure. According to the survey, the type of leisure most engaged by men is physical-sports (64%) and by women is social (70.9%). As for intellectual leisure, only 1.7% of men and 4.7% of women indicated that they effectively enjoy it (SOUTTO MAYOR; ISAYAMA, 2017). As for those who wish to visit museums but fail to do so, the percentage was 1% for both men and women. The reasons given were: lack of financial resources and time (SOUTTO MAYOR; ISAYAMA, 2017).

To understand the frequency of family visits to museums participating in the research, and considering that this frequency can be an interesting indicator of the importance of museums in family leisure, some associations between the frequency of family visits in 2019 and some socioeconomic variables were made: monthly family income, education and colour/race of the respondents.

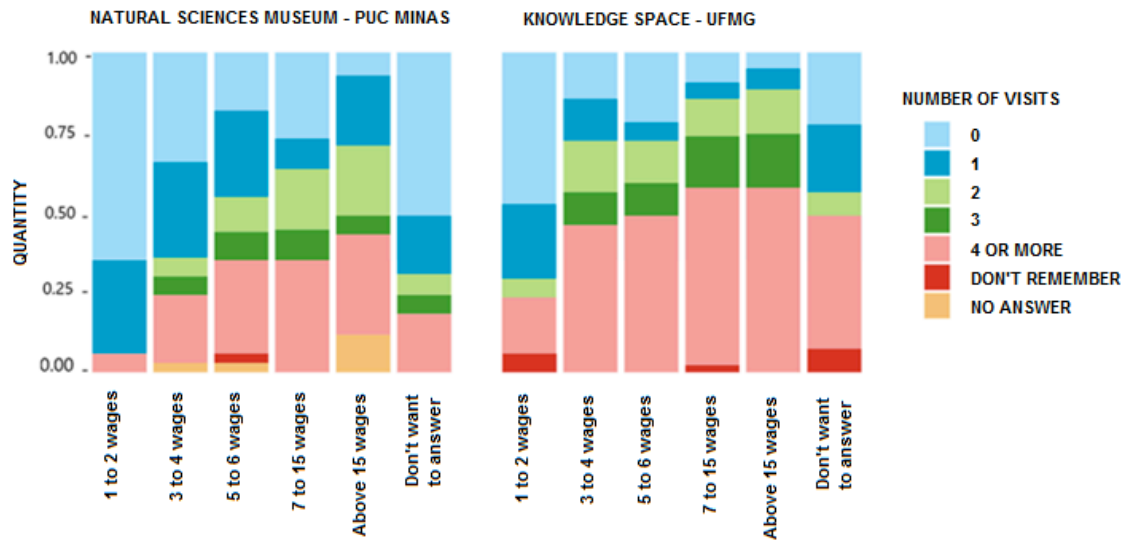
Graph 1 shows the associations between the number of visits in 2019 and family income, from which it can be inferred that the higher the income, the greater the number of visits<sup>4</sup>. This finding shows that even if the visits are free, other costs must be measured, "such as transportation or the costs involved in any family outing" Bourdieu and Darbel (2007, p. 42) such as food, for example. In this sense, economic capital is a factor that can influence the frequency of visits to the spaces surveyed, even if one of them charges admission and the other does not, as indicated by the histogram<sup>5</sup> represented in Graph 1, the visitors' behaviour is similar in both institutions.

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<sup>4</sup> p-value lower than 0.0001 indicates that the association between the variables is significant.

<sup>5</sup> It is worth a brief explanation for reading the histograms that will be used in this work. The x-axis represents the income ranges indicated by the families and the y-axis represents the number of visits. The Histogram was chosen for this representation since, in a single bar, it is possible to see all the variations in the number of visits in each salary range, segmented by museum, offering a good visualisation of the responses and the difference between the income brackets.

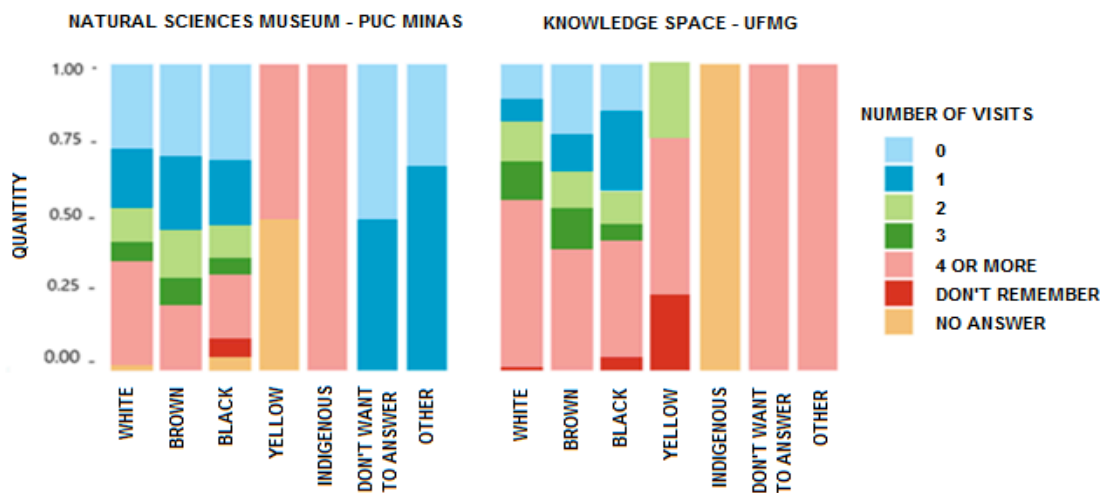
**Graph 1: Number of visits in 2019 in relation to family income of visitors**



Source: Survey data.

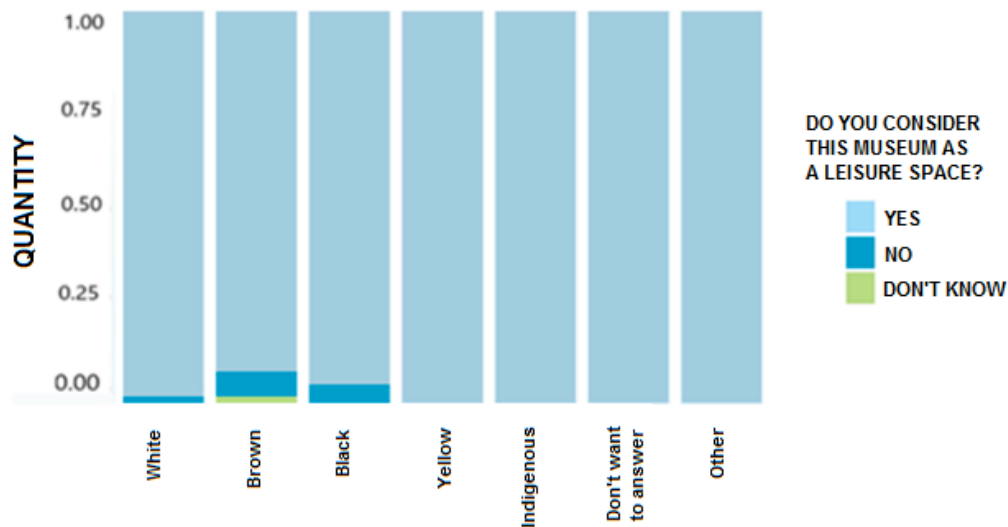
When relating the number of visits with the declared colour/race, it shows a significant correlation: white people are more likely to visit museums than brown and black people, as shown in Graph 2.

**Graph 2: Number of visits in 2019 in relation to skin colour or race of visitors**



Source: Survey data.

**Graph 3: Colour/race and the perceptions of the museum as a leisure space**



Source: Survey data.

As previously indicated, black and brown people have lower income and schooling, which negatively impacts attendance and the perception of museums as leisure spaces. People with lower income and schooling tend to have less complex capitals, not having the necessary codes for interaction with fields that are not familiar to them. Individuals from lower classes, with low income, tend to be exposed to a smaller range of capitals (cultural, school, economic, political, social, etc.), which decreases the chance of developing more complex habitus enabling the transit between fields (BRANDÃO, 2010). Thus, the understanding and choice of museums as leisure spaces by this public is impacted, once the access to codes that allow them to interact with cultural spaces is not reached by this public. Along the same line, Bourdieu (2007) indicates that the advantages and disadvantages in education and culture are cumulative, as well as the obstacles.

Still, according to the survey on Brazilian leisure, Pedrão and Uvinha (2017) indicate that not only education and schooling directly influence choices for leisure time enjoyment, but also income and colour/race, intrinsically related variables. According to



them, the low level of education of Brazilians means that individuals, by and large, do not have a critical view of leisure.

Through education, people become aware of the multiple possible kinds of leisure, and they are more likely to include them in their choices, as is the case of museums and other intellectual leisure spaces. Thus, schooling may be another barrier faced by Brazilians for leisure enjoyment, even if it is a constitutional right since 1988 (GOMES, 2008; ISAYAMA; STOPPA, 2017), which makes the access to this type of activity vary and linked to the individuals' social class.

After the reflection on the profile of museum-goers in Brazil, a brief investigation is proposed on the visitors' origin and the location of these institutions related to possible tourist flows, for example.

Regarding the visitors' origin, the responses were classified as follows: residents in Belo Horizonte (BH), in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte (except BH); in Minas Gerais; in Brazil and, finally, abroad, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Visitors' Origin**

<b>Origin of visitors</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>%</b>
Belo Horizonte	217	63,4
Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte	57	16,7
Minas Gerais	42	12,3
Brazil	26	7,6
Foreign visitors	1	0,03
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Survey data.

As seen, most visitors are from the city where the surveyed museums are located. If we add those who live in the Metropolitan Region, we reach a total of 80.1%

of the participants, which makes it important to reflect on the influence of the state capital on the metropolitan region.

According to the official website of the Belo Horizonte Metropolitan Region (RMBH)<sup>6</sup>, the RMBH was set up in 1973, along with the regions of São Paulo, Porto Alegre, Recife, and Salvador, major Brazilian metropolises. Initially comprising 14 municipalities, others have been added over the years, totalling 32 cities<sup>7</sup>. Currently, RMBH management is intended to be democratic and participatory, with representatives from public authorities and civil society, through the following agencies: Metropolitan Assembly, Metropolitan Development Deliberative Council, Belo Horizonte Metropolitan Region Development Agency, Belo Horizonte Metropolitan Region Integrated Development Master Plan, and the Metropolitan Development Fund.

Living in the Metropolitan Region can directly influence the cultural consumption of museum equipment since in the state there is a large concentration of these in the capital, Belo Horizonte. If we verify and relate the number of respondents who indicated living in one of these cities, we see that they represent 16.7% of all survey participants. Regarding the variety of municipalities, of the 32 cities comprising the metropolitan region, 17 are represented among the respondents, corresponding to 53.1% of the RMBH municipalities.

According to the National Register of Museums, created in 2006, Brazil currently has 3,793 museums and cultural centres<sup>8</sup>, of these 431 are located in Minas Gerais. This number makes the state the third with the largest number of museums in the country, behind São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul, respectively. However, this does

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<sup>6</sup> Available at <http://www.rmbh.org.br/rmbh.php>. Accessed: 14th of November 2020 at 3.01 p.m..

<sup>7</sup> According to the RMBH website, it comprises the following municipalities: Belo Horizonte, Betim, Caeté, Contagem, Ibirité, Lagoa Santa, Nova Lima, Pedro Leopoldo, Raposos, Ribeirão das Neves, Rio Acima, Sabará, Santa Luzia, Vespasiano, Brumadinho, Esmeraldas, Igarapé, Mateus Leme, Florestal, Rio Manso, Confins, Mário Campos, São Joaquim de Bicas, Sarzedo, Baldim, Capim Branco, Jaboticatubas, Taquaraçu de Minas, Itaguara, Matozinhos, Nova União e Itatiaiuçu.

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <https://www.museus.gov.br/sistemas/cadastro-nacional-de-museus/>. Accessed: 14th of May 2020 at 10.41am

not mean that access is broad and unrestricted. According to the former Ministry of Culture, in a survey conducted by the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA, acronym in Portuguese), a public foundation linked to the Ministry of Economy, in 2013 only 14.9% of the Brazilian population visited museums or cultural centres, which, according to the survey, may have some reasons, such as the lack of habit in attending these institutions and also the lack of museums in many Brazilian municipalities<sup>9</sup>. If we look at Belo Horizonte, according to official City Hall data, there are 53 museums and 65 cultural centres located in the city, totalling 118 institutions.

Therefore, it is important to consider this influx of metropolitan visitors, who travel to the metropolis for cultural or other purposes taking advantage of the “trip” to enjoy cultural spaces. This importance has even more weight when we look at the number of visitors from the other categories (Minas Gerais, Brazil, abroad), which together represent only 20% of the survey participants. Here it is worth mentioning that according to Boukas (2011) frequently tourists and visitors who go to a place do not always have cultural tourism as a goal, including visits to museums, and it is possible to associate cultural consumption with other purposes in the city.

The period in which the survey was conducted (November and early December 2019) represents a period when, in Brazil, people generally do not travel much. It is the end of the academic semester in universities and of the school year, and the summer holidays usually starting in the second half of December, when families generally travel more. We add to this the fact that at the end of December workers with formal income and a contract under the Consolidation of Labour Laws (CLT, acronym in Portuguese) receive the so-called 13th salary, an extra income paid by employers once a year, which is often used for tourism trips during the holiday period.

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<sup>9</sup> Data taken from the Ministry of Culture's website: <https://goo.gl/m0FexU>. Enquiry made on 9th of February 2019 at 9.19am

Still, on the visitors' origin, it is important to reflect on the location of one of the surveyed spaces, as well as on the economic and cultural scenario of Belo Horizonte and Minas Gerais.

The UFMG Knowledge Space is part of the Liberty Circuit, implemented in Liberty Square in 2010. The Architectural Complex of Liberty Square is a cultural and architectural heritage listed by the State Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage of Minas Gerais (IEPHA – MG, acronym in Portuguese) in 1977<sup>10</sup>. It was inaugurated in 1897 to be the seat of state government, thus making the square an extension of the Liberty Palace, the governor's residence and workplace, the highest authority of the state. The buildings of the state secretariats surrounding it represent the necessary support for the Government's good work, with easy access to the city's population.

The city and the state's economic vigour became increasingly complex, demanding the expansion and complexity of the state apparatus, which was not confined to the Praça da Liberdade region anymore. Thus, the Administrative City was built in the 2000s, where the entire public administration was transferred. In Liberty Square, the Liberty Square Cultural Circuit (CCPL, acronym in Portuguese) was established and opened to the public in 2010. There, museums and cultural centres were created from public-private partnerships to occupy the old buildings and, along with the cultural facilities already existing in the region, they formed the country's largest cultural circuit, one of them is UFMG's Space of Knowledge<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Available at: <http://www.iepha.mg.gov.br/index.php/programas-e-aco/es/patrimonio-cultural-protegido/bens-tombados/details/1/86/bens-tombados-pra%C3%A7a-da-liberdade> . Accessed: 16th of February 2021 at 1.12 p.m..

<sup>11</sup> Currently, the Circuit comprises 16 institutions: Biblioteca Pública Luís de Bessa, Centro de Informação ao Visitante do Circuito Liberdade, HUB Minas Digital, Espaço do Conhecimento UFMG, MM Gerdau – Museu das Minas e do Metal, Memorial Minas Gerais Vale, Centro de Arte Popular – CEMIG, BDMG Cultural, Academia Mineira de Letras, Museu Mineiro, Arquivo Público Mineiro, Casa do Patrimônio Cultural, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Horizonte Sebrae Casa da Economia Criativa, Cefart Liberdade, Casa Fiat de Cultura e Palácio da Liberdade.

As the State's main cultural equipment, it is managed by the State Secretariat of Culture and Tourism (SECULT, acronym in Portuguese) and the target of actions for its promotion as a tourist attraction of great attractiveness for the city and the State. In this sense, it was expected that the influx of tourists beyond the metropolitan region would be significant in the survey, which did not occur. This expectation builds on the campaigns promoted by the state government, as well as on the fact that traditional heritage areas, such as the Liberty Square, tend to attract a considerable number of tourists, for several reasons (BOUKAS, 2011, p. 434). However, according to the author, few tourists of international origin have the purpose of visiting cultural spaces, which was also verified in the present survey, since only one of the respondents indicated living abroad.

Extending the analysis of the visitors' origin to the Brazilian states, out of 26 states and the Federal District, we verified the occurrence of only 7, representing only 26 visitors. Of these, 18 were from Rio de Janeiro (10) and São Paulo (8), states closer to the capital of Minas Gerais, with easy access by main roads and many daily flights, and also associated with business tourism flows, as indicated in Table 2. It is important to stress that the states of Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Espírito Santo comprise the Southeast region, the country's most populous and richest region.

**Table 2: States of Origin of Visitors**

<b>Home States</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
Federal District	2
São Paulo	8
Ceará	2
Bahia	1
Rio de Janeiro	10
Rio Grande do Sul	1
Piauí	1

Source: Survey Data

### **Final Considerations**

The fields of knowledge museums, leisure, and tourism have some striking and converging features, among them the multi- and inter and transdisciplinary nature. Therefore, different possibilities of studies can be developed. In this article, some interactions, contours, limits, and potentialities were analysed from the public study for which culture is a major link defining the interactions, as well as the limits and potentialities for the triad object of analysis.

The profile of the public found in this research is similar to others conducted both nationally and internationally, confirming the elite status of these spaces. It is known that it is possible to plan actions for specific audiences, but in the case of museum spaces, particularly those linked to educational institutions, and that can contribute greatly to the cultural, intellectual training in times of leisure enjoyment, this elite status should not be so striking, and therefore it is observed as a limit to further investigation. This finding indicates the possibility of future studies in which the issues of access, planning, and management of these spaces for other public profiles can also enjoy these spaces in their leisure time, enabling access to culture and personal development for people from different social classes. In the specific case of Brazil, the cultural factor can be highlighted as a defining feature of distancing the population, as a significant portion of it has low schooling, low wages, and low cultural capital, i.e., totally opposite to the profile of the public perceived by the research.

A surprise identified in the survey was the low rate of people visiting the areas that can be defined as tourists. A greater flow was expected, as in both places, there are

actions of the public authorities at the local and state level to associate the spaces to tourism consumption. Hence, it is necessary to consider two possibilities that may also be the subject of future studies: the low interest in visiting museum spaces, or even the inexpressive influence of actions to motivate tourist visitation to these spaces. In the specific case of the UFMG Space of Knowledge, which is located in an area with significant tourist appeal, this finding becomes even more relevant.

It is important to highlight that studies of this nature are useful for decision-making at different scales, i.e. for the spaces' managers, for the local public managers, for the different actors that are related when other contours of the visitation process are observed, those interested in the cultural development, whether through the offer of products for consumption, or for studies that identify limits to be overcome, or for the development of the very localities where these spaces are located.

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