

A Culture of Urgency, and Municipal Asymmetries in the Territorial Contribution to Development

Cultura de la urgencia y asimetrías municipales en la contribución territorial del desarrollo

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ABSTRACT

Aim: To assess the levels of symmetry observed in decisions related to the utilization of territorial contribution to local development in the province of Villa Clara, Cuba, and the urgent vs strategic dilemma in the practice of a decision-making culture of allocating limited resources for development.

Methods and techniques: The method of case study was used in a Cuban province and municipalities, regarding the utilization of resources captured through territorial contribution for local development. Statistical-mathematical techniques were used in relation to the diagnostic of the current situation. Several indexes were designed to measure the levels of symmetry reached in municipal government management, regarding territorial contribution to local development.

Main results: The efficacy of decision-making in terms of municipal allocation of resources generated through territorial contribution to foster local development. Emphasis was placed on decision-making weaknesses observed throughout this process.

Conclusions: Every Cuban location will become a pivotal scenario in terms of future development and prosperity. The actors that emerged during the transformation of the Cuban Constitution are a reality now, and are already making institutional changes. Decentralization of decision-making to employ resources critical for endogenous development in every location demands an essential cultural transformation, in which impact assessment governs every decision that compromises the future. Significant asymmetries were corroborated in the effects achieved.

Key words: decentralization; decision; local development; decision-making culture.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Valorar los grados de simetría que se manifiestan en las decisiones relacionadas con el empleo de la contribución territorial al desarrollo local en la provincia Villa Clara, Cuba y los dilemas de lo urgente frente a lo estratégico en la práctica de la cultura decisional de asignar recursos limitados, para el desarrollo.

Métodos y técnicas: Se aplicó el método de estudio de caso de una provincia en Cuba y sus respectivos municipios respecto a la utilización de los recursos captados por la contribución territorial del desarrollo local. Se emplearon técnicas estadístico-matemáticas relacionadas con el diagnóstico de la situación actual. Se construyen índices para medir los grados de simetría alcanzada en la gestión de gobierno municipal, relacionada con la contribución territorial del desarrollo local.

Principales resultados: Se evaluó la eficacia del proceso decisional de asignación de recursos a escala municipal de los recursos captados como contribución territorial para el desarrollo local; se destacaron las debilidades observadas en este proceso que guardan relación con la cultura en la toma de decisiones.

Conclusiones: El futuro de Cuba y su prosperidad tendrá en cada localidad un escenario decisivo. Los actores emergidos en la transformación constitucional cubana son ya realidad, junto a ellos operan cambios institucionales. La descentralización de la

toma de decisiones en el empleo de recursos críticos para el desarrollo endógeno de cada localidad, exige un cambio cultural esencial, donde la evaluación de impactos presida cada decisión que comprometa el futuro. Se corroboraron asimetrías significativas en el impacto alcanzado.

Palabras clave: descentralización; decisión; desarrollo local; cultura decisional.

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INTRODUCTION

The future of Cuba and its prosperity will have a different scenario in every location. The real actors that emerge in the constitutional transformation of the Cuban nation take control. Institutional and functional changes take place gradually, as local government structures are transformed. Decentralization of decision-making to employ resources critical to endogenous development in every location demands an essential cultural transformation, in which impact assessment must govern every decision that compromises the future.

This paper analyzes changes of concepts in terms of government, related to the culture of making decisions, the capacity of interpreting the complexities of every alternative, and the assimilation of multiple approximatively criteria of development.

The aim of this research study is to assess the levels of symmetry observed in decisions related to the utilization of territorial contribution for local development in the province of Villa Clara, Cuba, and the urgent vs strategic dilemma in the practice of the culture of decision-making in allocating limited resources for development.

DEVELOPMENT

Bibliographic review

Local governments seek development through a decisional culture that is intended to be made of multiple dimensions, and characterized by diverse analytical horizons. The theoretical-methodological and practical discussion is a glimpse into a moment of deep changes in the current Cuban economy (Fig, 1).

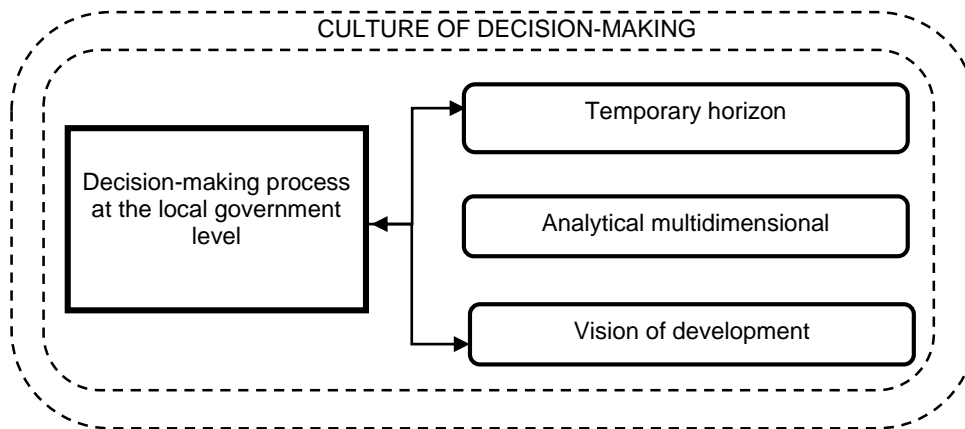


Fig. 1. Categories of the methodological proposal

Source: Made by the authors

The decision-making process of local governments includes, among other aspects, decision-makers, beneficiaries, surrounding factors, knowledge, temporary horizon, and assumptions. The effects of making decisions based on temporary horizon analysis, are different, depending on the decision-making alternatives characterized by immediacy, in relation to others that include a future perspective.

Decision-making in managing processes of public structures is increasingly comprising multi-criteria approaches. Some of the most relevant are economic and sociological components (Guzón, 2008). The analyses of multicriteria decision-making rely on quantitative and qualitative techniques (Vázquez, 2000). The utilization of decision-making in neurosciences, psychology, sociology, political science, economy, and computing sciences simultaneously is gaining momentum (Gold and Shadlen, 2007).

Efficacy in government decisions is generally associated to two aspects: the cost of decisions adopted should be the lowest possible, and the benefit is the highest possible (Harnecker, 2015).

The general consensus established rests on not associating the category of development with only the progress made by a country or territory. There is a recognition of the need to come to a new quality: sustainable development, even in a context of growing competition and globalization of the economy and society (Berumen, 2006; Boisier, 2004; Gil, 2016; Vázquez, 2005). The challenges of human sustainability in the 2030 Agenda warn that when measuring town and location wellbeing, the expansion of their economies should not be the only tool. Sustainable development has generated an innovating vision in the humanity of the new century, since this concept suggests the protection of nature, along with present and future social equity (Íñiguez, 2014; United Nations Organization [UN], 2016).

The global and local sides of development are two positions of thinking which have been illustrated to be asynchronous. To materialize development there must be endogenous components linked to macroeconomic aggregates (Albuquerque, 2004; Vázquez, 2007). Local and endogenous development of communities demand the enhancement of the participatory characters of their actors and beneficiaries, according to which, a toolbox is necessary in the hands of actors and professionals (extensionists, promoters, community leaders, researchers), in the search for improvements and systematization, of community intervention in their projects and actions (Guzón, 2011; Hechavarria, 2017). In Cuba, the role of the municipality is considered relevant as the first instance of management under the necessary conditions to reach local development (Pérez, 2013). Sustainable development increasingly demands an innovating capacity of managers, so it calls for the necessary formation of a culture of enterprising, modernizing, changing, and adapting the system, according to the modifications of the scenario, the climate, and modernity-related issues (Núñez and Fernández, 2016).

The role of culture has expanded unprecedentedly into the political and economic scenarios, globally. There is an increasingly recognition of the idea that between culture and democracy exist greater communication bridges, in which the dialog of the participatory is essential (Harnecker, 2015). Culture is present in most processes of economic decisions. In a globalized world, the economic and cultural imperatives are two of the most important within human conduct. The relation between economy and culture are involved in a great deal of the system of decision-making. Within the context

of a globalized world, the idea that territories had come to an end was proliferating, as a result of the thesis that socio-economic globalization had led to de-territorialization or de-localization, putting local culture in crisis (Giménez, 2011).

Culture includes rules of behavior, which are explicit or implicit, acquired or transmitted through symbols, and constitutes the distinguishing heritage of human groups, including their representation in objects; the essential core of culture is the traditional ideas (that is, historically generated and selected ideas), and especially, the values linked to them; the systems of culture may be considered, on one hand, as products of action, and on the other, as conditioning elements of future actions (Kroeber and Cluckhohlm, 1952).

Existence of a three-sided relation between culture, decisions, and development. A sufficient level of culture is required to make decisions, with high knowledge of the object of analysis in the advancement of development (Fig. 2).

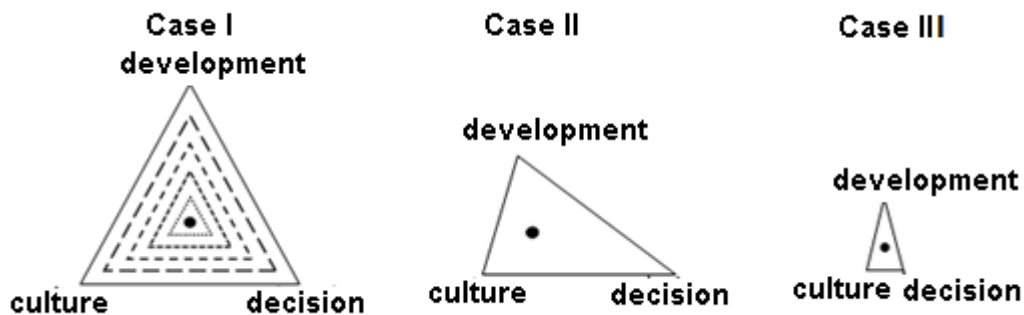


Fig. 2. Relationship between, culture, decision-making, and development

Source: Made by the authors

It is fundamental to achieve a proportionality between decision-making culture, efficacy in the decision-making process, and measurement of development level, since the cultural limitation of decision-makers (Cases II and II, Fig. 2) might slow down decision-making, and therefore, impose sacrifices in desirable development processes.

Levels of sufficient culture absence in a decision-maker, characterized by the tendency of deciding under conditions of temporariness or urgency, in face of difficulties to understand the system on which the holistic form is decided, that compromises the levels of complementary roles, and proportionality, which are needed, and must characterize the path to development.

Decision-making culture, local contribution, and development in the new conditions of Cuba

The present government of Cuba has emphasized on the need to take from the academy, its engagement in development, into a bilateral relationship based on reciprocal benefits, since professional formation processes are enriched through this exchange of knowledge.

Presently, the levels of proportionality, equality, and symmetry of local economies are revisited to review the territories with allocated resources, on the basis of decisions made with certain levels of decision-making culture by decision-makers of local policies.

The territorial contribution to local development (CTDL in Spanish) is a contributing figure, which together with taxes, levees, and other forms of contribution, is part of the possibilities of the budget to input resources for the materialization of developing policies (Romero, 2018).

In Cuba, CTDL emerged as a type of contribution in 2012. A contribution was established for sustainable development of municipalities (National Assembly of the People's Power [ANPP in Spanish], 2012), that levies income from the sales of goods and services by companies, mercantile societies, and cooperatives in their territories.

The income collected through CTDL is used to fund activities linked to sustainable territorial development, managed by the municipal administration councils (CAM in Spanish). CTDL provides a source of income for development to CAM in locations with production factor enclaves that produced little to local prosperity. The percent definition in the annual State budget establishes the possibilities so that contribution, determined on gross income of each productive entity, and their possible exemptions by definition of the law, becomes a pivotal factor in the amount of own available resources in each location.

Apart from the importance of proper quantitative estimation and projection, depending on the predicted income of each location, a more suitable allocation of the sums captured becomes invaluable, as a response to a more development enhancing policy.

Moving toward development requires the adoption of a decisional culture characterized by a multidimensional reflection of the object to be developed (Sarduy, 2016). The type of culture referred to in this paper must be the fruit of accumulated knowledge resulting

from the capacity of understanding the reality to be transformed as a complex component, characterized by various qualities that make every sector, branch, production or service activity, community, and individual, in which any effort related to resource utilization would not have the same reproduction or multiplication impact. The worst that can happen to this decisional process is the assumption that decisions can wait, or, on the contrary, have an immediate effect.

Characterization of territorial contribution for local development in 2019

In 2019, the province of Villa Clara, in Cuba, was able to use a CTDL of 38.8 MMP¹ whose municipal structure is shown in Fig. 3. Uneven municipal implementation was observed, with structures between 1.9 and 7%, except in the capital municipality, which, as a national rule, showed the highest values in this type of contribution.

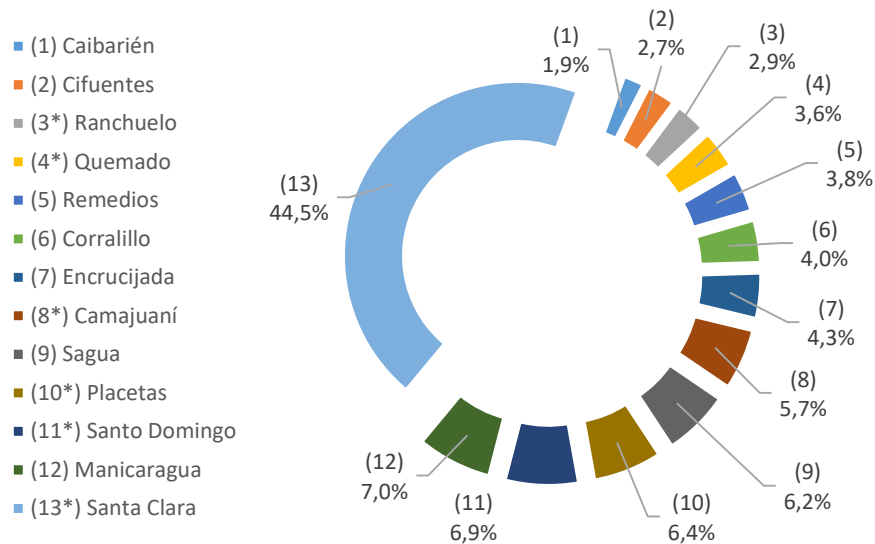


Fig. 3. Percent CTDL burden of VC municipalities (2019)

Source: Calculated according to the Report of the Provincial Office of Economy and Planning, in Villa Clara (DEP-VC, 2019), delivered through CAM agreement.

Every statistical calculation to show the diagnostic made was processed through Microsoft Office 2013 (Excel 2013).

The structure for the implementation of CTDL in terms of investments² and current expenditures, offers a disproportion that reveals the counterbalances between urgent and development problems in every municipality.

The sum earmarked for investment within CTDL was very little by 2019, just 5.6% (Fig. 4. Likewise, in seven of the thirteen municipalities, CTDL is not used to finance construction and assembling actions in investments (Fig. 5).

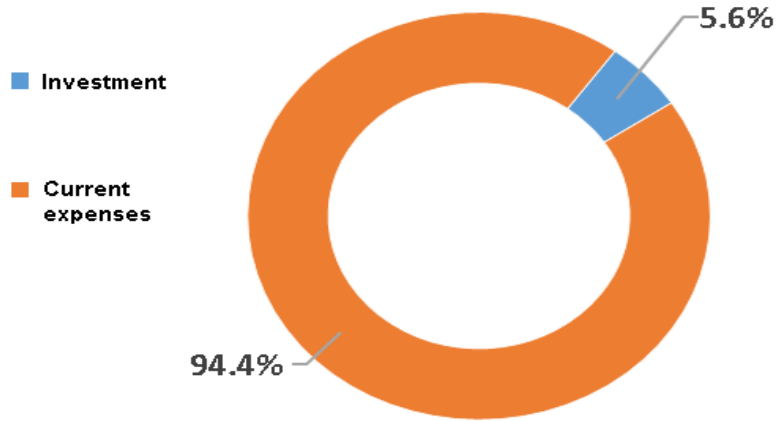


Fig. 4. CTDL Distribution by allocations in VC (2019)

Source: DEP-VC, (2019)

CTDL distribution based on the branches of the economy grants a high importance to the allocation of social activities, trade, and current expenses, which account for an overall 81% of the funds captured in the province (Fig. 6).

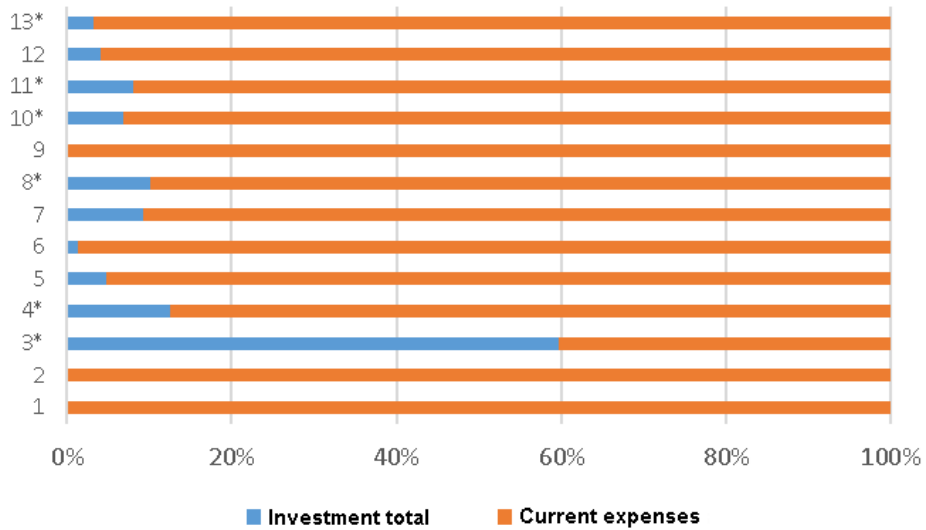


Fig. 5. CTDL breakdown by municipality, in VC (2019)

Source: DEP-VC (2019)

Legend: (3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 13) * Municipalities that include construction and assembling expenditures in investment based on CTDL. Legend of the municipalities, Fig. 3.

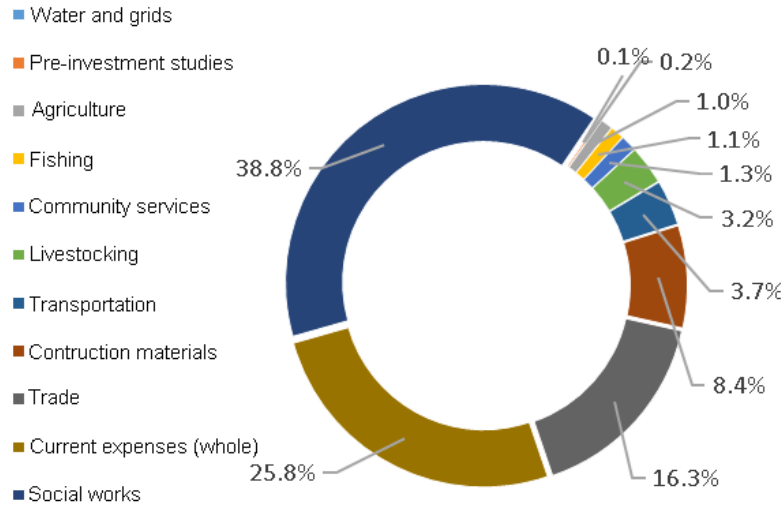


Fig. 6. CTDL activity distribution in VC (2019)

Source: DEP-VC, (2019)

In the immediate future, relying on reinforced efforts with the incorporation of intendants in all the municipalities, more attention should be paid to the economy of resources used in the process of CTDL earmarking, since it demands time on the part of work group commissions in the municipalities, which include approval meetings, and therefore delays, and administrative costs. The monetary values allocated to CTDL, and the agreements adopted in the municipalities for earmarking were correlated. These administrative decisions showed significant disproportions. The municipalities in striped bars (Fig. 7) show low CTDL values mobilized by administrative efforts. Nine of the thirteen municipalities deal average CTDL sums, by every agreement adopted under the provincial reference, reaching \$ 82 300 pesos. Programing managing expenditures in terms to adjusting allocation with higher rationality is more convenient.

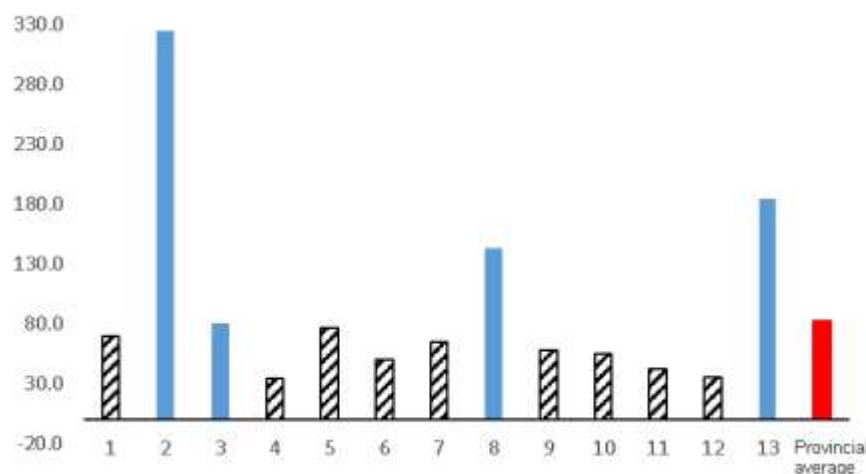


Fig. 7. CTDL sums, as agreed by adopted CAM

Source: DEP-VC, (2019). Calculated on the basis of the results in Table 1. The provincial average is highlighted in red. Legend of municipalities in Fig. 3.

Changing the disproportionate burden (82%) of CTDL allocations to bodies attending social organizations, such as culture, education, health care, community work, and internal dependencies of CAM (Table 1), as well as a reactivation of retail stores and prepared food facilities, was challenging. Although the repercussion of wellbeing is understood to a lesser extent, it does not generate profits in all the locations, and compromises the desired economic production.

Table 1. CTDL by municipality/allocations and administrative costs

Municipality/CTDL allocation	Agriculture	Fishing	Livestocking	Social works	Trade	Transportation	Construction materials	Community services	Water and grids	Whole current expenses	Total*	No. of allocation, as agreed by CAM	CTDL sum based on adopted
1	0	0	0	177	0	0	0	0	0	521	697	10	69.7
2	0	0	798	71	0	0	108	0	0	0	976	3	325.4
3	182	0	0	150	0	70	241	0	0	402	1045	13	80.4
4	0	0	0	554	118	66	0	5	0	537	1278.8	37	34.6
5	0	0	0	958	282	0	66	0	5	0	1310.4	17	77.1
6	0	48	404	492	139	44	143	0	0	171	1441.7	28	50.3
7	0	0	0	368	239	0	74	93	38	728	1539.4	25	64.8
8	0	0	0	713	0	0	100	0	0	1197	2010.1	14	143.6

9	200	0	7	981	0	520	201	128	0	203	2239.6	38	58.2
10	0	88	2	984	604	30	192	0	0	352	2252.9	41	54.9
11	0	0	0	831	675	376	125	0	0	376	2382.8	56	42.6
12	29	0	0	874	242	145	338	25	0	814	2466.6	68	35.5
13	0	296	0	8009	3586	129	517	0	0	3454	15991	83	184.9
Total	382	432	1212	14533	5886	1380	2105	250	42	8726	35631	433	82.3
%	1%	1%	3%	41%	17%	4%	6%	1%	0.1%	24%	100%		

Source: DEP-VC, (2019).

Note: Total* (CTDL sums allocated to the provincial reserve were not included, to not affect municipal decision frames). Legend of municipalities in Fig. 3.

The proportionality observed in the CTDL values, as agreed, demands a review of acceptance ranges, in order to avoid excessive costs from delays, managing, and controls, associated to the activity they are approved for.

Municipal CTDL asymmetries

The following analytical expression is suggested to measure the proportionality or symmetry of CTDL allocation:

$$IS_j = \sum_{i=1}^{13} (Pe_{ji} - Pe_{CTDLi}) \quad (1)$$

Being,

IS_j: Symmetry index calculated for the j variable

Pe_{ji}: Specific weight of variable j for each municipality i

Pe_{CTDLi}: Specific CTDL weight of the municipality i

i: municipality assessed (tour of variable municipality from 1 to 13, referred to the total amount of municipalities in the province of Villa Clara)

Depending on the variables available with physico-economic information of the municipalities, the symmetry index of the municipalities was determined, and the IS_j representing the minimum value will include the best symmetry for a year of CTDL allocation (Table 2).

Fig. 8 shows a graph of observable symmetries/asymmetries with respect to variables: area, population, investment amount, and commercial circulation of the municipalities of Villa Clara.

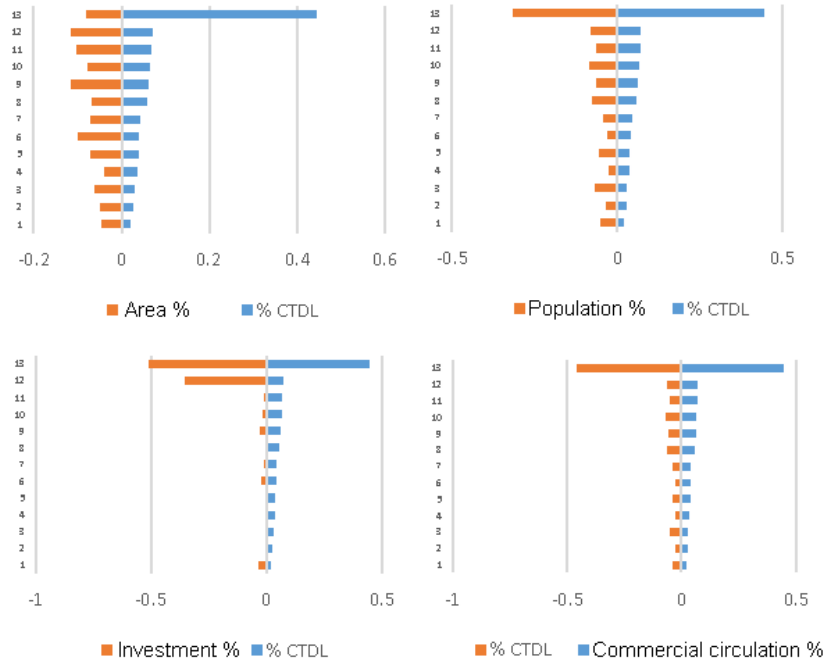


Fig. 8. CTDL symmetry observed in the variables selected

Source: Calculated by the authors. Legend of municipalities in Fig. Legend of municipalities in Fig. 3.

The best calculated symmetry should correspond to the development criteria followed by different municipalities, for which variable investment might represent the highest levels of CTDL approximation in each territory.

As can be seen in the last row of Table 2, the lowest IS_j value corresponds to commercial circulation by municipality, with 0.123 034, followed by population, investments, and surface area.

Table 2. Calculated symmetry coefficients in relation to CTDL

Municipality	Population %	Area %	Investment %	Commercial circulation %
1	0.032 399	0.026 468	0.017 970	0.019 658
2	0.007 545	0.022 285	0.024 440	0.002 436
3	0.038 643	0.032 967	0.027 717	0.019 882
4	0.008 482	0.003 952	0.034 839	0.009 705
5	0.018 260	0.032 017	0.034 004	0.000 147
6	0.007 351	0.059 441	0.016 601	0.012 887
7	0.001 045	0.027 503	0.033 821	0.004 070

8	0.018 553	0.012 422	0.056 626	0.007 191
9	0.003 559	0.052 053	0.030 855	0.007 727
10	0.021 931	0.013 635	0.049 302	0.002 374
11	0.005 903	0.035 784	0.056 981	0.018 758
12	0.011 948	0.047 316	0.282 677	0.008 370
13	0.130 058	0.365 842	0.064 540	0.009 830
IS _j	0.305 677	0.731 683	0.730 375	0.123 034

Source: Calculated by the authors.

Territorial development and CTDL do not contribute sufficiently to the objectives of the country, particularly, production chains, and implications on the trade and payment balances of the nation, which require a more direct relationship between earmarked resources for development and variables that involve modernization, intersectoral ties among production agents, and their institutions. There are still significant reserves.

This assessment of CTDL allocation policy warns about weaknesses in relation to values executed in indicators that should keep a better ratio at the territorial development level.

Challenges are found in the asymmetries that persist in CTDL allocation by municipality, and the levels of this source of funding used in every location (Fig. 9). Important differences observed in the levels of corroborated symmetries are evidenced.

There are several municipalities in which the best symmetries observed do not correspond to the highest amounts of allocated CTDL.

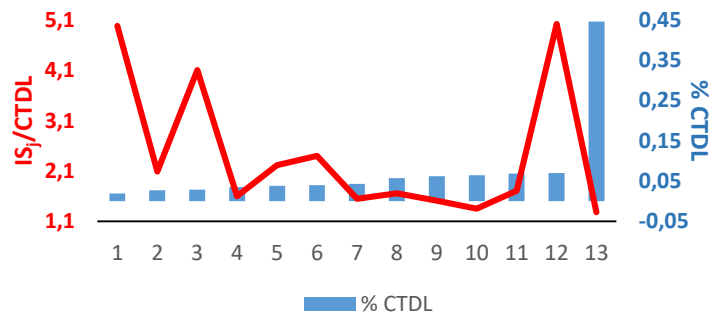


Fig. 9. Relation between CTDL and municipal asymmetries

Source: Ibidem

CONCLUSIONS

Territorial decentralization becomes increasingly important in the reality of the Cuban economy; it demands higher interconnecting levels between the culture of decision-makers, their analytical processes of evaluation to decide how the scarce resources available can be earmarked, and the process to cement development.

The challenges posed to intendants in the municipalities in order to promote a culture of strategic thinking are many, despite the temporary circumstances that demand responses to problems with a weak analytical projection. The utilization of resources captured in the territories promises new potentials, on which further efforts should be made into deciding the way to achieve equity and proportionality as a driver and stimulator of the best possible outcome.

In the municipalities of Villa Clara, a Cuban province, important reserves within the symmetry that should characterize CTDL allocation, are observed, according to the variables that best represent the potentialities of each case. Based on applied diagnostic, in this aspect, the tendency to make decisions out of a culture of urgency was preferable, rather than analytical practice that leads to development.

The complexity of deciding how to allocate funds captured in the locations that best correspond to the variables of enhanced development, multiplication of impacts on final beneficiaries: the inhabitants, and on the entities that reproduce modernity, and the infrastructure that hold collective wellbeing, should never be overlooked.

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Conflicts of interest and conflict of ethics statement

The authors declare that this manuscript is original, and it has not been submitted to another journal. The authors are responsible for the contents of this article, adding that it contains no plagiarism, conflicts of interest or conflicts of ethics.

Author contribution statement

Inocencio Raúl Sánchez Machado. Conceptualization-ideas (leader), formal analysis, redaction-original draft.

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Eusebia Cristina Mendiondo Roig. Conceptualization (support), resources, redaction original draft.

NOTES

¹Figueredo (2019) declares that 41.7 MMP would be for the capture of the expected CTDL in the budget of the province, by 2019.

²Using CTDL for investment means previous forecasting practice in all the locations, to register this source of funding in the investment plan, thus compelling the execution of a greater strategic exercise.