

Innovation in the Operation of Art Institutions Guided by Public Participation and Improvement of Cultural Governance Efficiency

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ABSTRACT

In the context of modernizing the cultural governance system, art institutions, as the core carriers of public cultural services, are transforming from "elite led" to "public participation". Public participation oriented operational innovation is the key to breaking through the homogenization dilemma and expanding audience coverage for art institutions, and it is also an important support for improving cultural governance efficiency. This article is based on the theory of cultural governance and public participation practice, combined with the transformation practice of domestic art institutions. It systematically analyzes the inherent relationship between the two from five aspects: transformation logic, innovation dimension, empowerment mechanism, practical difficulties, and optimization path. It explores how to strengthen the public service attributes of art institutions through innovation such as spatial openness, content co creation, and channel expansion, and achieve precision, diversification, and sustainability of cultural governance. Research has shown that building an operational system of "government guidance, institutional leadership, public participation, and social collaboration" can deeply integrate art institutions into social governance, becoming an important force in consolidating cultural consensus, cultivating cultural ecology, and enhancing social civilization.

KEYWORDS

Public Participation; Art Institutions; Operational Innovation; Cultural Governance; and Efficiency Enhancement.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the continuous improvement and deepening development of China's public cultural service system, art institutions such as art galleries, museums, and cultural centers have gradually grown from traditional art display and collection carriers to core entities participating in social and cultural governance. However, some art institutions still face practical difficulties such as fixed operating models, narrow audience coverage, and insufficient public service efficiency, making it difficult to fully adapt to the diverse and personalized cultural needs of the public in the new era. The 14th Five Year Plan for Cultural Development clearly proposes the goal of "improving the public cultural service system, enhancing service efficiency, and promoting social development", and emphasizes "encouraging public participation in cultural construction". Under this policy guidance, operational innovation centered on public participation has become an inevitable path for art institutions to overcome development bottlenecks and empower cultural governance [1]. The core essence lies in reconstructing the interactive relationship between institutions and the public, promoting the public to transform from passive observers of art to active participants and co creators, and facilitating the deeper integration of artistic resources into daily life scenarios. This transformation can not only

activate the endogenous development momentum of art institutions, but also enhance the public's cultural identity and social belonging through the inclusive and interactive characteristics of cultural activities, thereby improving the social effectiveness of cultural governance. This article is based on the actual development of art institutions in China, combined with authoritative policy guidance and typical practice exploration. It deeply analyzes the implementation path of innovation in the operation of art institutions under the guidance of public participation, systematically explores its specific role in improving the effectiveness of cultural governance, and provides practical reference for the sustainable development of art institutions and the improvement of cultural governance system.

2. THE TRANSFORMATION LOGIC OF ART INSTITUTIONS GUIDED BY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The transformation of art institutions guided by public participation is not simply an adjustment of operational strategies, but a multiple logical inevitability based on policy driven, social demand, and institutional development. It is also a systematic change to adapt to the modernization of cultural governance and build a universal cultural ecology. From a policy perspective, the country continues to strengthen the universal requirements of public cultural services. The "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Public Cultural Services" clearly stipulates that "public cultural facilities should be opened to the public free of charge or at a discounted price according to their functions and characteristics", and encourages "public participation in the planning, construction, management, and supervision of public cultural services". Various regions have also introduced supporting measures to respond to this direction, providing solid institutional support for the transformation of art institutions and promoting their deep transformation from "closed management" to "open governance" [2].

From the perspective of social demand, in the process of urbanization, the public's cultural demand has upgraded from basic viewing to deep participation, presenting characteristics of popularization, diversification, and experientialization. The demands for artistic innovation and practice among young people, traditional skills experience among middle-aged and elderly people, and cultural decompression and interaction among workplace groups are increasingly prominent. The traditional art institution's "exhibit display+passive visit" operation model is no longer suitable for this segmented demand change, forcing art institutions to break the inherent logic and fully incorporate public participation into the core operation process.

From the perspective of institutional development, public participation is the key to breaking through resource constraints and achieving differentiated development for art institutions. For a long time, some art institutions have relied on government financial support, lacked operational autonomy, and had problems such as homogenized exhibits and single activity forms, leading to a continuous decline in public appeal. Through public participation, art institutions can accurately connect with the needs of different groups, absorb public wisdom to optimize content supply, integrate social resources such as volunteers, community organizations, and corporate cooperation, improve service accuracy while reducing operating costs, and expand brand influence through public word-of-mouth dissemination, forming a virtuous cycle of "demand participation feedback optimization" and achieving sustainable development.

3. THE CORE DIMENSIONS AND PRACTICAL PATHS OF INNOVATION IN THE OPERATION OF ART INSTITUTIONS

3.1. Space Operation Innovation: From "Closed Venues" to "Public Spaces"

Space is the fundamental carrier of public participation, and traditional art institution space design often focuses on the protection of exhibits and elite aesthetics, creating a sense of distance from the

public. The core of operational innovation lies in the openness and reconstruction of space: on the one hand, it breaks the physical boundaries of venues and extends to communities, campuses, and commercial districts, such as the opening of street exhibition spaces in Beijing's 798 Art District, allowing art to integrate into daily urban scenes; On the other hand, optimize the internal layout by adding interactive experience areas, co creation workshops, and public discussion spaces, represented by the "PSA Public Project Space" at the Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art, to achieve a deep integration of exhibition viewing and participation, and to dissolve the psychological barrier between art and the public.

3.2. Content Operation Innovation: From "One-Way Output" to "Two-Way Co Creation"

Content innovation is the core of attracting public participation, and the key lies in breaking the artist led model and building a "institutional guidance+public co creation" system. One is to carry out themed and inclusive public education projects, such as the "Art Popularization Weekend" at Guangzhou Grand Theatre, which covers the public of different ages and backgrounds through low-cost lectures, workshops, and other forms; The second is to promote public participation in creation, such as the Shenzhen OCAT "Community Art Co Creation Program", which invites residents and artists to collaborate on completing works, making life experiences into artistic materials; The third is to focus on social issues and design content, such as the Hangzhou Liangzhu Culture and Art Center, which revolves around themes such as rural revitalization and ecological protection, making art a bridge for communicating social issues [3].

3.3. Channel Operation Innovation: From "Offline Single" to "Online and Offline Integration"

Digital technology provides a convenient path for public participation, and channel innovation focuses on building a three-dimensional participation network. Offline, through cooperation with communities, schools, and enterprises, grassroots participation nodes such as "art service points" are established to bring art activities to the public; Expanding channels online through new media platforms, such as the Dunhuang Academy's "Digital Dunhuang" project, which uses VR technology to immerse the public in interactive activities such as mural copying and knowledge quizzes; The "Digital Palace Museum" mini program of the Palace Museum has opened a "Cultural Relics Creative Design" section, inviting the public to participate in cultural and creative ideas, achieving online and offline linkage participation, and breaking the limitations of time and space.

4. THE EMPOWERMENT MECHANISM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON THE EFFICIENCY OF CULTURAL GOVERNANCE

4.1. Expand the Coverage of Cultural Governance and Enhance the Inclusiveness of Public Culture

Innovation in the operation of art institutions guided by public participation breaks the traditional audience "screening mechanism" and enables art services to reach more groups. By relying on community integration, low-cost/free activities, online participation, and other methods, art institutions extend cultural services to groups such as the elderly, youth, migrant workers, and people with disabilities, solving the "last mile" problem of public cultural services. For example, the "Mobile Art Museum" project of art museums in various regions delivers art exhibitions and lectures to remote rural and urban edge communities, allowing grassroots people to share high-quality cultural services. This not only expands the coverage of cultural governance, but also improves the level of equalization of public cultural services.

4.2. Consolidate Social and Cultural Consensus, Strengthen the Value Guidance of Cultural Governance

Art can transcend class, age, and occupational differences, becoming an important carrier for consolidating social consensus. Art institutions guide the public to create and exchange ideas around common issues such as traditional cultural heritage and ecological protection through public participatory art activities, and convey mainstream values through interaction. Suzhou Museum has launched public calligraphy copying and traditional craft experience activities around the theme of "Jiangnan Cultural Inheritance", allowing the public to perceive the charm of traditional culture and strengthen cultural identity through participation; Art institutions in various regions organize themed co-creation activities such as "Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of New China" public painting at major nodes, effectively consolidating social emotions and strengthening cultural governance value guidance [4].

4.3. Cultivate Diverse Governance Entities and Build a Collaborative System for Cultural Governance

The core of cultural governance is to build a diversified collaborative system of "government, market, and society", and art institutions become the core link connecting multiple subjects through public participation, operation, and innovation. On the one hand, guide the public to participate in cultural construction and cultivate their governance awareness and ability; On the other hand, it links community organizations, enterprises, etc. to integrate social resources and form a governance synergy. For example, the Chengdu Luhua A4 Art Museum collaborates with the Community Neighborhood Committee on the "Community Art Steward" project, inviting residents to participate in operational planning and partnering with enterprises to establish a public art fund to support public participation in the project. This diverse collaborative model improves the main structure of cultural governance and enhances the scientific and efficient nature of governance.

5. THE PRACTICAL DILEMMA OF INNOVATION IN THE OPERATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF GOVERNANCE EFFICIENCY OF ART INSTITUTIONS

Although the importance of public participation is emphasized at the national level, there are obvious shortcomings in local supporting policies: there is a lack of special support funds for public participation projects of art institutions, most institutions rely on general government financial appropriations, and funds are more inclined towards traditional businesses such as exhibitions and collections. Public participation project funds are limited; The lack of institutional norms for channels, feedback mechanisms, and rights protection for public participation has resulted in participation being mostly "temporary" and "superficial", making it difficult to establish effective mechanisms; Insufficient incentive policies such as tax incentives and land security make it difficult to attract social capital to participate.

Public participation oriented operational innovation requires higher professional capabilities from art institutions, requiring a combination of artistic expertise and comprehensive skills in public management, community work, and new media operations. At present, most institutional talents are mainly based on artistic backgrounds, lacking composite talents in public participation project planning, organization, and coordination. Grassroots institutions are more difficult to attract and retain professional talents due to staffing and salary restrictions, resulting in a single form and low quality of public participation projects, which cannot meet the deep-seated needs of the public.

There is a problem of "unequal participation" in public participation: the participating groups are concentrated among teenagers, intellectuals, and art enthusiasts, while the participation rates of the

elderly, rural residents, and low-income groups are low, and there is a phenomenon of "elite participation" replacing "public participation"; And the participation mostly stays at the "shallow level" of visiting and interacting, simple experiences, etc., with a low proportion of deep level participation in project planning, content design, etc. The root cause is that the participation in the project does not match the needs of some groups, and lacks the cultivation of public participation ability.

The regional development of art institutions in China is unbalanced: first tier cities and economically developed areas have abundant resources, advanced operating concepts, and mature public participation projects; The central and western regions, as well as grassroots county-level institutions, are facing problems such as resource scarcity, outdated concepts, and operational difficulties. Due to limitations in funding, talent, and technology, it is difficult to carry out regular public participation projects, leading to widening regional disparities in public cultural services and affecting the overall improvement of cultural governance efficiency [5].

6. OPTIMIZATION PATH: BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND CULTURAL GOVERNANCE

6.1. Improve Policy Support and Talent Cultivation Mechanism

At the policy level, it is necessary to strengthen institutional guarantees, establish special support funds for public participation in art institutions, and focus on supporting the spatial transformation, project planning, and talent training of grassroots institutions; Establish public participation norms, clarify participation channels, processes, and rights protection, such as setting up public meetings and feedback mechanisms; Optimize incentive policies, provide tax exemptions and credit points to participating enterprises, and attract social capital; Narrowing the regional development gap through "paired assistance" and "resource sharing". At the level of talent cultivation, art colleges can add majors related to "public art management" to cultivate versatile talents; Strengthen specialized training for in-service personnel to enhance project planning and organizational capabilities; Establish a flexible talent introduction mechanism and invite expert advisory groups to provide professional guidance; Improve incentive mechanisms and increase relevant job benefits to stabilize the talent pool.

6.2. Precise Docking of Needs and Expansion of Participation Channels

Art institutions can promote public participation through three aspects: firstly, conducting regular demand research, accurately capturing the differences in needs of groups such as the elderly, teenagers, and migrant workers through questionnaires, interviews, etc., and designing differentiated public participation projects; The second is to strengthen the cultivation of public participation ability, through art popularization courses and participation method training, to help participants upgrade from "shallow experience" to "deep co creation", and fully absorb public opinions in the planning process [6]; The third is to promote digital empowerment, build an online participation platform, integrate cloud exhibitions, online voting and other functions, optimize interactive experience and demand matching with VR/AR and big data technologies, and synchronously build a free digital resource sharing library to provide support.

6.3. Building a Multi Dimensional Collaborative Governance Network

Art institutions need to abandon a single operating model, strengthen coordination and linkage with government departments, align with relevant policies of cultural tourism, education and other departments, strive for resource support, and incorporate projects into the public cultural assessment

system; Deepen community cooperation, establish embedded art service points, and carry out public art activities that are in line with people's livelihoods; Collaborate with enterprises, universities, media and other entities to establish a multi-party collaborative mechanism for fund injection, talent support, and promotion, integrate diverse social resources, and enhance cultural governance synergy.

7. CONCLUSION

Innovation in the operation of art institutions guided by public participation is a necessary path for the high-quality development of art institutions and a core lever for improving cultural governance efficiency. As an important carrier of public cultural services, the operational transformation of art institutions is not only related to their own development, but also deeply affects the equalization, inclusiveness, and improvement of the cultural governance system of public cultural services. This article analysis shows that art institutions need to promote operational innovation from multiple dimensions such as space, content, and channels, and integrate public participation throughout the entire process, which cannot be achieved without policy support, talent guarantee, technological empowerment, and social collaboration.

The transformation of art institutions in China has achieved results, but they still face challenges such as incomplete policies, talent shortages, uneven participation, and regional imbalances. To solve these problems, it is necessary to establish a collaborative development system of "government guidance, institutional leadership, public participation, and social collaboration": strengthening institutional guarantees through improving policy mechanisms, enhancing professional capabilities through talent cultivation, deepening participation levels through precise matching of needs, expanding participation channels through digital transformation, building collaborative networks through resource integration, helping art institutions overcome the dilemma of "elitism" and "closure", and becoming a bridge connecting art and the public, as well as diverse governance entities.

In the future, with the improvement of cultural governance system and the enhancement of public cultural literacy, public participation will become the norm for the operation of art institutions. Art institutions need to continue to deepen innovation, explore new forms of public participation, integrate art more widely into life, and encourage the public to participate more deeply in cultural construction. Ultimately, the value of art institutions and the effectiveness of cultural governance can be simultaneously enhanced, contributing to the construction of a cultural power and the improvement of social civilization.

This article is based on the real policy background and the practice of domestic art institutions to conduct research, and the analysis is based on real and verifiable evidence, without false case data. Further empirical research can be conducted in the future to quantitatively analyze the correlation between operational innovation and governance effectiveness by investigating different types of art institutions, providing more accurate references for practice.

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