

How Can the Museums in Shanxi Province Make Better Use of the Participatory Model to Improve Public Education?

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Abstract: This research regards the whole practice of museum participatory mode reform in Shanxi Province as a case, and the related practices of Shanxi Museum, Shanxi Museum of Bronze, The Coal Museum of China, Taiyuan Museum and Shanxi Science and Technology Museum, which are the first to carry out museum participatory mode reform, as a case respectively. Collect relevant data through interviews, collate and analyze the problems reflected in these data, and finally form an in-depth understanding, reliable conclusions and constructive suggestions. Answered how can the museums in Shanxi Province make better use of the participatory model to improve public education.

Keywords: Participatory Museum Model, Public Education, Reform, Case Study, Constructivism, NVivo11.

1. Introduction

A fundamental idea of the participatory museum model is to respect the ideas of all participants, which should run through the whole process of the reform of the participatory museum model from design to implementation to evaluation. The audiences who participate in the public education activities of the participatory museum model and the designers and executors who promote the reform of the participatory museum model are all participants in the context of the participatory museum model. Therefore, after the reform has been carried out for a period of time, fully listening to their opinions, understanding their feelings and consulting their suggestions is an indispensable key link in the reform of museum participatory model. This link is different from the evaluation link in the general sense, but should be regarded as a part of "participation" in the context of participatory museum model reform. In this sense, this research is a participatory research in which the researcher is directly involve in the museum participatory model reform in Shanxi Province in order to solve the practical problems in the reform.

2. Literature Review

Yu (2015) believed museum education is an eternal topic that every museologist will never tire of. Since the rise of the New Museology Movement in the 1960s and 1970s, museum education has been fully developed. Basically, every museum now, regardless of the nature of the discipline and the source of funding, has an education department that advertises itself as an educational institution. Office of Policy and Analysis (2014) believed, at present, the dominant educational thought in museum theory is constructivism, but there are still many preaching education phenomena in the actual work of museums. For example, museums in mainland China generally refer to the education department as the Ministry of Publicity and Education, that is, the unity of publicity and education, and the museum commentator are usually under the management of the Ministry of Publicity and Education. Even in many museums, listening to the museum commentator is actually the only education. The museum

commentator is usually recruited separately and does not participate in the curatorial process. They just memorise the manuscript provided by the museum and retells them to the audience who needs the explanation. In this way, the audience is like listening to the teacher in school, completely passively accept the indoctrination of knowledge and information, the method is single and the effect is not good. Some government officials and museum practitioners conservatively believe that the role of the Ministry of Publicity and Education is to do mass work, and the status and treatment of museum educators are far inferior to colleagues in research and exhibition departments. In authoritarian countries such as Nazi Germany and the former Soviet Union, such museums have even been reduced to ideological propaganda tools. Hu (2010) said, however, many modern educational theories are based on the empirical work of Dewey, Piaget and his followers, and Vygotsky's theory that social formation determines learning. They emphasized the awareness of the brains' participation in the process of activities, and believed that learning is not a simple process of passive reception, on the contrary, it is a process in which learners should actively participate in summarizing knowledge and then absorbing, that is to say, learning is human take the initiative to summarize and transform a series of objective phenomena in your brains. Liu (2011) said that Hein, a professor at Lesley University, combined two opposing views of knowledge and learning orthogonally to form a comprehensive constructivism education model. This is highly consistent with the pedagogical issues involved in this research and will serve as the theoretical framework for this research.

Based on this, Hein (2010) enumerated the corresponding museum education methods in each mode, and the constructivism education method was the most important part. He was also the first to introduce constructivism education into the museum. Constructivism education theory assumes that learners must actively participate both mentally and physically in order to gain knowledge. Therefore, constructivism exhibitions should "have many points at the same time, but there is no special way to visit, and there is no starting point and endpoint; the scope will be provided. Broad

active learning mode; a series of viewpoints can appear at the same time; allowing the audience to connect with the object (and thought) through a series of activities and experiences, their life experience is still very important; will provide many experiences and materials for the students of the school worked hard to practice, deduce, and summarize the final conclusion".

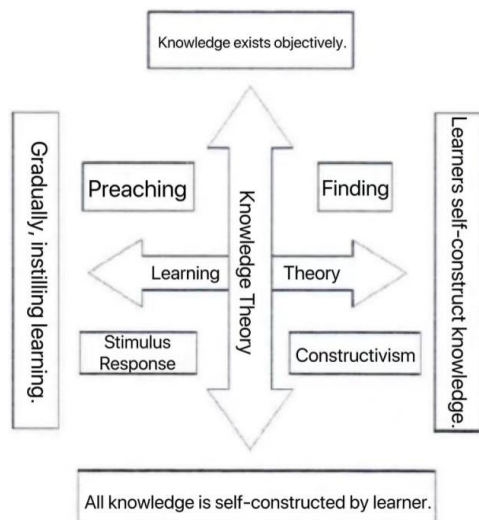


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Simon (2010) believed that, Hein's constructivism educational theoretical model is very important to understand the essence of museum education and explore the theoretical cornerstones of the participatory museum model. In the preface of *The Participatory Museum*, she directly claims that the constructivism theory of Hein and others is the backing of her own thinking. Van et al. (2011) said, perhaps it is because *Learning in the Museum* was written a little earlier, so his theory of how to practice constructivism education in museums is mainly implemented in the exhibition. In fact, as Van et al. have observed, most participatory model projects implemented by museums are almost centered on curatorial and collection collections and other activities in front of the stage, and participation should be broadened to collection registration and archiving, preservation, research and other activities behind the scenes.

3. Methodology

According to the characteristics of the object of this research, combined with the theoretical guidance of previous scholars and the experience of related research, the researcher determined that the approach of this research is a qualitative and research design is a case study. The researcher confirmed that the main instruments of this research are interviews, while identifying the interviewees in this research, and determining the sampling used purposeful sampling, as well as determined use the qualitative analysis software Nvivo11 for data analysis.

4. Research Findings

Continuously deepening the reform of participatory museum model is the only way for museums in Shanxi Province to achieve connotative sustainable development, and the key to deepening the reform of participatory museum model lies in make better use of the participatory model to improve the effect of public education. In-depth understanding of the audience's ideal museum public education activities is the

best starting point for make better use of the participatory model to improve the effect of public education. The promoters of the reform of the participatory museum model continue to summarize the shortcomings exposed in the reform process, and seriously discuss the plan to overcome the shortcomings is an indispensable process of make better use of the participatory model to improve the effect of public education.

The researcher uses the qualitative analysis software Nvivo11 to code (as shown in Table 1) the responses of 20 audiences who participating in public education activities at the 5 museums that have carried out the reform of the participatory museum model to Question: What is your ideal museum public education activity like? Why?

Table 1. The Codebook of The Museum Public Education Activities in the Ideal of the Audience

Name	Sources	References
The Museum Public Education Activities in the Ideal of the Audience	20	31
Combine Education with Pleasure	4	4
Reason	4	4
Have a Sense of Experience	4	4
Reason	4	4
Have a Sense of Happiness	2	2
Reason	1	1
Have a Sense of Participation	4	4
Reason	4	4
Have a Sense of Science and Technology	2	2
Reason	2	2
Plenty Quota	3	3
Reason	2	2
Strong Knowledge	4	4
Reason	4	4
Taking into Account the Needs of Different Ages	2	2
Reason	2	2
Various Forms	4	4
Reason	3	3
Vivid Content	2	2
Reason	2	2

The researcher finds that the ideal museum public education activities of the audience are diverse, generally speaking, they have ten characteristics: combine education with pleasure, have a sense of experience, have a sense of happiness, have a sense of participation, have a sense of science and technology, plenty quota, strong knowledge, taking into account the needs

of different ages, various forms, vivid content.

The researcher believes that the reason why the audience's ideal museum public education activities have the above ten characteristics is mainly based on: on the one hand, they agree with the characteristics of the high-quality public education activities held by museums that have carried out the reform of the participatory museum model, on the other hand, they regret that the public education activities held by these museums lack their due characteristics. At the same time, it is also influenced by their cultural background and cultural values. In the view of the researcher, the ideal museum public education activities of the audience is the goal and direction of make better use of the participatory model to improve the effect of public education.

By using the qualitative analysis software Nvivo11 to code (as shown in Table 2) the responses of 5 promoters of participatory museum model reform in Shanxi Province to Question: What do you think of the main shortcomings in the current museum participatory model reform in Shanxi Province? In order to overcome these shortcomings, how to further deepen the reform?

Table 2. The Codebook of The Promoters of Participatory Museum Model Reform in Shanxi Province's Understanding of Further Deepening the Reform

Name	Sources	References
The Promoters of Participatory Museum Model Reform in Shanxi Province's Understanding of Further Deepening the Reform	5	10
Main Shortcomings	5	5
How to Overcome	5	5

The researcher finds that the promoters of the participatory museum model reform in Shanxi Province have the following understanding of the shortcomings in the current reform: 1) the lack of scale, the participatory museum model reform is in the pilot stage and has not achieved full coverage; the quota of public education activities is insufficient; the frequency of holding is too low. 2) the lack of conditions, there is a shortage of professionals and special funds needed for the reform. 3) the deficiency of digital construction, the construction of online public education resources lags behind. 4) the deficiency in the transformation between new and old models, and the lack of integration between participatory public education activities and thematic education special exhibitions. 5) the lack of efficiency, the pace of reform is somewhat slow.

The researcher believes that the above shortcomings are practical obstacles to the realization of the ten characteristics of the museum public education activities that affect the audience's ideal, and make better use of the participatory model to improve the effect of public education must be based on breaking these obstacles one by one.

The researcher finds that in order to solve the problem that the funds needed to promote the reform of the participatory museum model were still insufficient, the promoters of the participatory museum model reform put forward a plan to share the use of the required equipment and technology throughout the province by centralizing the purchase of the

necessary equipment and technology. In view of the shortage of talent resources in participatory public education activities, the promoters of the reform of the participatory museum model have proposed flexible employment and continuous training of on-the-job staff to enable them to master a variety of skills. a plan that can take on more types of work. In view of the low integration of the participatory model and the thematic education special exhibition, the promoters of the reform of the participatory museum model have issued a call for further emancipation of the mind. In view of the insufficient quota and low frequency of participatory public education activities, the promoters of the reform of the participatory museum model have proposed to achieve weekly public education activities at all levels of museums in the province within three years. National first-class museums provide no less than 100 public education activities per week. In view of the lag of online public education resources in museums, the promoters of the reform of the participatory museum model proposed that the Department of Culture and Tourism, together with the propaganda Department of the Provincial CPC Committee and the Department of Radio, Film and Television, set up a working group and planned to focus on this work in one year.

The researcher believes that the measures to further deepen the reform put forward by the promoters of the museum participatory model reform will be effective to make up for the main shortcomings exposed in the previous reform. however, the implementation of these measures alone cannot create a participatory museum public education activity with the ten characteristics of the audience's ideals, and it will not be able to achieve the ultimate goal of the reform of the participatory museum model.

5. Conclusion and Implication

5.1. The Museum of Participatory Museum Model Should Give Full Exert to the Guiding Role of Constructivism Education Theory

Hein (2010) was the first to introduce constructivism education into the museum. Constructivism education theory assumes that learners must actively participate both mentally and physically in order to gain knowledge. Therefore, constructivism exhibitions should "have many points at the same time, but there is no special way to visit, and there is no starting point and end point; the scope will be provided. Broad active learning mode; a series of viewpoints can appear at the same time; allowing the audience to connect with the object (and thought) through a series of activities and experiences, their life experience is still very important; will provide many experiences and materials for the students of the school worked hard to practice, deduce, and summarize the final conclusion". Simon (2010) believed that, George Hein's constructivism educational theoretical model is very important to understand the essence of museum education and explore the theoretical cornerstones of the participatory museum model. In the preface of *The Participatory Museum*, she directly claims that the constructivism theory of Hein and others is the backing of her own thinking. In the view of the researcher, Hein's constructivist education theory is the ideological starting point for the reform of the participatory museum model. Simon said that Hein's theory is her firm ideological backing, which is no exaggeration. The researcher

believes that the museum of participatory museum model should give full exert to the guiding role of constructivism education theory.

The researcher believes that the problems exposed in the reform of the participatory museum model in Shanxi Province, especially the contradiction between thematic educational exhibitions and participatory public educational activities, and the lack of sense of participation and experience brought to the audience by public educational activities, are directly related to the inadequate guiding role of constructivist educational theory. The researcher believes that to give full play to the guiding role of constructivist educational theory, we should first understand three questions: first, how to understand the saying that "knowledge is constructed in the learner's mind"; second, how to make the learning process lively and better attract the audience; third, how to design the situation so that the audience can easily intervene from the physical, social and intellectual aspects. After careful consideration of the above three issues, the designed constructivist exhibition should: there will be many entry points, no specific route, no starting point and end point; let the audience use their own life experience to interact with objects (including ideas) in a variety of activities and experiences; will provide a variety of active learning models; will present a variety of views. Provide experience and materials in campus projects for students to experiment, reason, and draw conclusions. In addition, the most important things are "starting from the audience's existing experience" and "providing a mode of active learning". In the exhibition, the acquisition of objects familiar to the audience, or in some way to establish a connection with the audience's life experience, will arouse the audience's interest in learning.

5.2. The Museum of Participatory Museum Model Should Make the Audience Participate in the Whole Process of Public Education Activities from Design and Implementation to Evaluation

Regarding how to practice the participatory model, Simon (2010) in the second part of *The Participatory Museum* gives four types of participation models that can be implemented by museums: (1) Contributory, that is, the museum guides the audience to provide limited, designated objects and ideas, and participate in timely, and the whole process is the responsibility of the museum; (2) Collaborative, the museum invites the audience to actively participate in the production of the project, but the museum is also responsible for the project from beginning to end; (3) Co-creative, community members cooperate with museum staff, and the establishment of project goals and the operation of the project must be based on community interests; (4) Hosted, museums and other cultural institutions transfer some of their facilities and resources to public groups or audiences to help them develop and implement their own project activities. In short, the difference between these four models lies in the degree of participation and initiative of the participants, which gradually climbed from Contributory to Hosted.

The researcher believes that there is no distinction between the four models of Contributory, Collaborative, Co-creative and Hosted. They also do not have the so-called layer-by-layer progressive relationship leading to the "highest participation". When museums solicit exhibits from visitors,

they embody the Contributory model, while when museums plan exhibitions with a small number of people outside the museum, they embody the Collaborative model. There is no so-called "best" mode of participation in cultural institutions. The differences between different types of participatory projects are related to the distribution of rights between museum staff and visitors. So not every project applies to the same rights allocation structure. The museum's own culture determines the staff's trust in community members, and sometimes even a stumbling block to the success of the project. Some Contributory projects offer only a little opportunity to participate and do not attract people, while some Co-creative projects go too far and the results far exceed expectations.

In the view of the researcher, the museum of participatory museum model should make the audience participate in the whole process of public education activities from design and implementation to evaluation, which is more important to promote the reform of the participatory museum model. Specifically,

(1) Let the audience participate in the design process of the museum public education activities, not just listen to their opinions on the design of the activities. Audiences should be deeply involved in the design process of public education activities in museums, not only to express their needs, but also to give full play to their creativity and demonstrate their ideas.

(2) Let the audience become the executors of the public education activities, not just participants. Audiences should deeply participate in the implementation process of museum public education activities, provide exhibits, undertake explanation work, and use personal social media accounts for publicity. Serving as a seminar speaker or even a convener is what the museum should encourage the audience to do.

(3) Let the audience play a decisive role in the evaluation of public education activities, not just as advisors. In the process of evaluation, the participation of the audience should be more powerful, and it should play a leading role in increasing or decreasing the frequency of a museum public education activity, increasing or reducing the budget, or even canceling the votes of the audience.

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