



Hong Kong Arts Development Council – Research Report
Public Attitude on Arts (Arts Poll 2000)

80% of Poll Respondents Agree that Arts Enhances City Image and Creativity

Nearly 80% of the people polled agree that arts are conducive to the development of independent thinking and the promotion of our city image. More than 90% of respondents support more cultural and artistic activities in schools. The poll on Public Attitude On Arts, commissioned by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, was conducted by the Hong Kong University Social Science Research Centre at the end of November 2000. In the random telephone poll, 1,150 citizens, aged 14-64, responded to the questions. It was found that their attitude on culture and arts has evolved from the old concept of personal refinement to the recognition of its contribution towards creativity and city image enhancement.

Artistic Creativity is a Contributory Factor in a Knowledge-based Economy

In the ADC survey, it was also found that 30% of the citizens have participated at least once in an artistic activity held in public cultural facilities. Local participation rate in arts may not be high, but local attitude on arts is fast catching up with developed countries (United States, Australia, etc). We have recognised the importance of arts and culture in city image and in a knowledge-based economy. The Council has urged the cultural departments concerned not to overlook this new public attitude, and place more emphasis on arts and culture in the education and curriculum reform. In “Hong Kong ^ Unlimited”, the soon-to-be-released ADC three-year plan, we emphasis the social contribution of arts, and we propose the inclusion of arts and culture in our urban development agenda. We should exploit the social functions of arts to enhance public creativity. In response to the overwhelming public support for arts and cultural education, the Council, besides continuing with the promotion of arts and cultural education in schools, will actively seek better ways, such as appreciation courses or continuing arts courses, to promote public arts education. In this new era of the knowledge-based economy, the public have the right, and the need, for arts education to enhance and nurture their inspiration and creativity.

Public Artistic Participation Greater Than Ever

Few surveys have been conducted on public participation in cultural activities. The latest statistics we can refer to is the Household Survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department in 1993. In a population of 4.45 million, a total of 29,383 randomised citizens, aged 15-64, in 11,109 households were polled. 15.9% of the respondents expressed interest in artistic activities, but actual involvement was just 6%. The participation rate was identical to a similar survey conducted in 1988. (However, in the 1988 survey, 21.1% of the respondents expressed interest in artistic activities.) In the telephone survey, commissioned by the former Broadcasting, Culture and Sports Branch, conducted by SRH Marketing and Research Company in the same year, of the 1000 citizens (aged 16-64) polled, 26% had at least once participated in an artistic activity in the previous year. No more Government surveys were conducted since. Comparing the ADC survey with the similar 1993 BCSB survey, it is obvious that public support for cultural and artistic activities has never been greater.

Global Comparison: New Zealanders Most Supportive of Arts

According to the Studies in Public Participation in Arts (1997) conducted by the United States National Arts Foundation, on average, 50% of the American adults participate in public artistic activities at least once a year. Australia has a public participation rate of more than 50% (1995). In remote Wales, the rate is 40% (1998). New Zealand has the highest rate of all (1999): 93% of the adults went to artistic activities in public venues at least once in the previous year.

Appendix: Poll Summary

1. In the past year, you more than once went to artistic activities held in public venues. Yes or no.

	Percentage
Yes	30.4
No	69.3
Don't remember	0.2
No comment	0.1
Total	100.0

2. Participation in artistic activities enhances creativity and independent thinking. Do you agree?

	Percentage
Partially agree	7.3
Agree	78.6
Do not agree	4.6
No idea	8.0
Hard to say	1.4
No Comment	0.1
Total	100.0

3. More artistic and cultural activities will enhance our city image and overall competitiveness. Do you agree?

	Percentage
Partially agree	8.6
Agree	75.0
Do not agree	7.1
No idea	6.3
Hard to say	2.6
No comment	0.4
Total	100.0

4. Do you support schools to increase arts and cultural education activities, such as visiting art galleries, museums, etc.?

	Percentage
Partially agree	2.1
Agree	90.2
Do not agree	1.2
No idea	4.9
Hard to say	0.5
No comment	1.0
Total	100.0

5. If there are more arts appreciation or arts education activities, would that increase your interest in arts?

	Percentage
Yes	65.9
No	21.9
Don' t know	4.5
Hard to say	6.6
No comment	1.0
Total	100.0