



rezeeti
revitalizing museums

Importance of the *Arts*

An audience survey report

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Introduction

The Arts are an important aspect in many people's lives. However, some people do not find the Arts interesting, or struggle to understand it, and hence tend to stay away from them. They may in some cases consider themselves apathetic towards the arts. The project aims to survey this group of people who may not engage regularly or deeply with the arts about their reasons for apathy or indifference.

These arts and heritage spaces may include but are not limited to museums, art exhibitions, galleries, theatre, visual arts and traditional performing arts events such as music, dance, and drama.

Through this study, we aimed to find out why people may have little to no interest in the Arts.

The study:

- Covers the time between the beginning of Covid-19 lockdown and a year prior.
- Was aimed at urban-dwelling affluent people who have the ability to access, engage and fund the arts, however, who may have little or no interest to do so.
- Had a target sample size of 100.

The objectives of the project were to learn about:

- a. The motivators of this group of people
- b. The expectations and needs of this group of people
- c. The barriers to engagement of this group of people
- d. What could help them engage more with the arts
- e. If they would fund the arts, and if so, in what capacity

Consequently, some key research questions were:

- Do people engage because of their children?
- Would they engage if offered a fun night out with family or friends?
- Would people increase their engagement in order to be perceived as cultured by peers? Do they look for recreational opportunities to relax?
- Do people not engage with the arts due to lack of time, or because they don't see value in them, or because they don't know about these spaces?

Project Team



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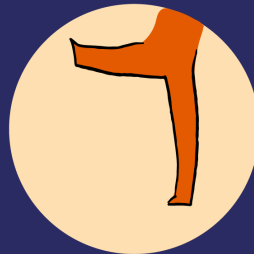
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Methodology

- Quantitative data was collected using a survey questionnaire that was circulated online.
- The study had 89 respondents from across India and abroad.
- The questionnaire was circulated through email, social media and private messaging to people who considered themselves apathetic towards the arts.


Design of Questions

The questionnaire consisted of five sections:

1. Demographics of the respondents, such as age, gender, location and profession.
2. Engagement with arts:
 - a. general interest
 - b. frequency of attending arts events
 - c. motivation to attend arts events
 - d. general experience at an arts space or event
3. Access to the arts:
 - a. How respondents' came across arts events
 - b. Respondents' level of satisfaction with information available on arts events
 - c. Sources of gaining information about arts events
4. Funding the arts, and spending patterns over the last few years towards the arts.
5. The future of arts in their lives:
 - a. Willingness to attend and fund arts events in the future
 - b. Their perception on the role of arts in childrens' lives, in their lives, and in society

Limitations

In the process of designing the questionnaire and collecting data, there have been certain limitations. To begin with, the depth of information to be collected and the corresponding questions were revised multiple times both to keep the survey short but also gain specific information. A few respondents felt that the survey took longer than expected to fill and that some questions were repetitive. In addition to that, finding people specifically apathetic towards the arts was difficult since a known circle of family and friends did not fit the criteria. Hence, snowballing was used to inch closer to the sample size envisioned in the beginning of the study.



MAJOR FINDINGS

More than 90% of respondents were interested in the arts.

MORE THAN

50%

rarely attended an arts event online or offline

12.4%

have never attended an arts event online or offline.



Major factors limiting attendance

at Offline arts events

19.9% COVID-19

LACK OF TIME **18.4%**

at Online arts events

21.7% LACK OF TIME

NON-AVAILABILITY OF SUFFICIENT INFORMATION **17.2%**

Almost 35% of the respondents used social media as a means to know of arts events happening around them.

However, contradictorily,

ONLY **10.1%**

actually obtained information from social media at least once a month, with

40.4%

rarely using the source to know of arts events



Moreover

ONLY

43.8%

of the respondents were somewhat satisfied with the availability of information regarding arts events and

94%

felt that arts events needed to be promoted better to reach a wider audience.

Most respondents strongly agreed that the arts and culture sector needed *the most support from the government.*

MORE THAN **50%**

of respondents donated in some form or the other over the last one year. A majority of donations went towards COVID-19 relief, health, charity and education.



A majority of respondents felt that *information from the organisation explaining how their donation was used and knowing that the money would be spent locally* would strongly motivate them to donate towards the arts and culture sector.



ALMOST **65%**

of the respondents strongly agreed the arts should be an important part of education as it would help foster creativity in children and equip them with the necessary life skills.



MORE THAN

50%

of respondents agreed that the arts played a valuable role in society and made for a richer and more meaningful life

48.3%

of respondents agreed that the arts had a significant effect on the quality of their life.



ANALYSIS



DEMOGRAPHICS

More than 40% of the respondents were under 24 years old, followed by 22.5% of respondents being aged between 45 and 54 years old. The target group envisioned in the beginning of the study comprised only 9% aged between 25 and 34 years old, and 11.2% between 35 and 44 years old.

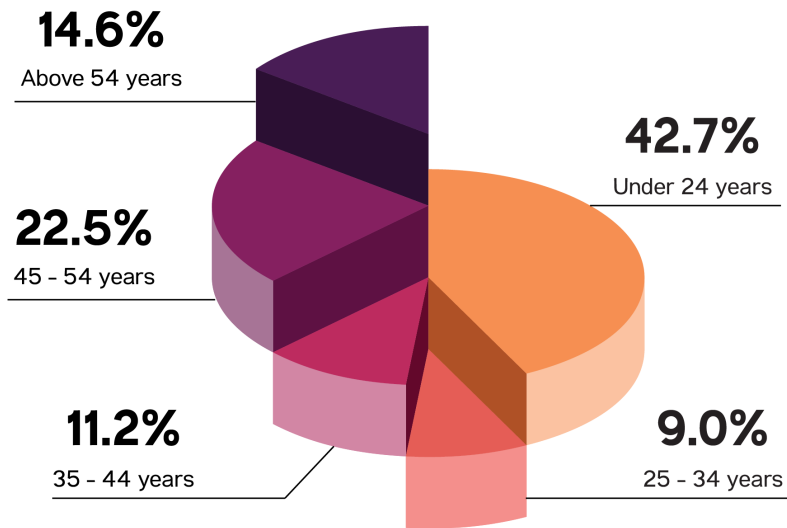


Figure 1
AGE GROUPS THE RESPONDENTS BELONG TO

Respondents comprised



68.5%
FEMALE



31.5%
MALE

A large % (43.8) of the respondents' surveyed were employed full-time, while 32.6% were employed part-time.

In terms of profession, there has been a diversity among respondents, 13.5% in accounting, 11.2% in IT, and 7.9% each in business and engineering.



ENGAGING WITH THE ARTS

In terms of interest in the arts, 47.2% of respondents' were most interested in the arts while 43.8% were somewhat interested in the arts. More than 71% of respondents found their experience at an arts event or space to be pleasant and only 3.4% of respondents found it boring, while 23.6% enjoyed their experience at an arts event or space.

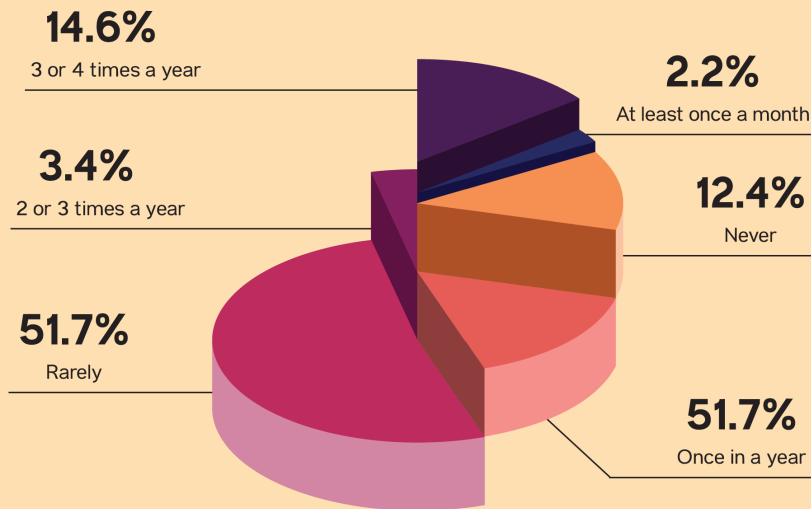


Figure 3
FREQUENCY OF ATTENDING ARTS EVENTS

More than 50% of the respondents rarely attended an arts event online or offline and 12.4% never attended an arts event online or offline. While 15.7% attended arts events once in a year, only 14.6% attended arts events thrice or four times a year.

In the last one year, during the COVID-19 lockdown period, 39.3% of the respondents never attended an online arts event or workshop, while only 6.7% of the respondents attended an online arts event or workshop less than a week prior to filling the survey sheet. It is seen that 30.3% of respondents attended an online arts event or workshop two or more years ago, that is before the advent of COVID-19.

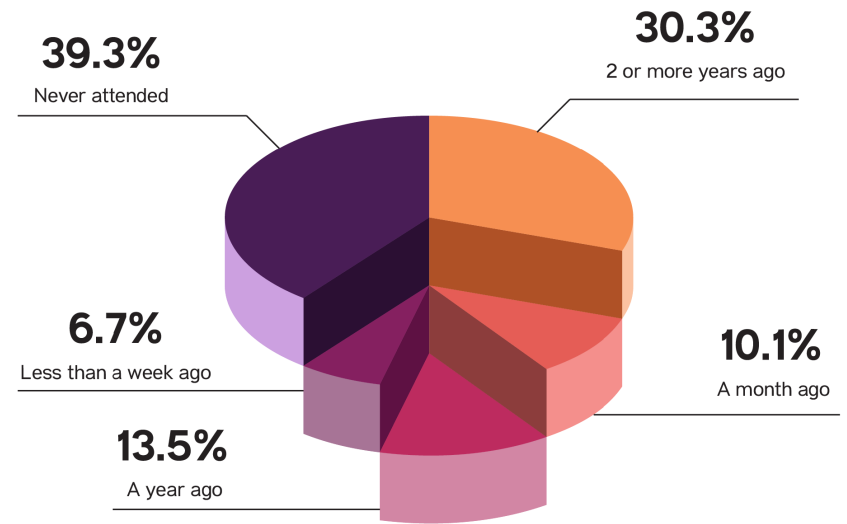


Figure 4
LAST ATTENDANCE OF AN ONLINE ARTS EVENT/WORKSHOP

Major factors limiting attendance at offline arts events included COVID-19 (19.9%) and lack of time (18.4%). 8.3% of respondents were not interested in attending arts events, while 7.8% responded that they had other responsibilities. Other factors for non attendance at offline arts events included lack of information on what is available and lack of company to attend arts events (7.3%), expensive events and inaccessible locations of events (6.8%).

Major factors limiting attendance to online arts events included lack of time (21.7%) and non-availability of sufficient information about these events (17.2%). 14% of respondents were not really interested in attending online events while 14% found that event timings were inconvenient. Other factors for non-attendance included participation in other leisure activities (11.5%), other household responsibilities (7.6%), and limited choice or poor quality of events (7%).

ACCESSING THE ARTS

In terms of accessing arts events, almost 35% of the respondents used social media as a means to know of arts events happening around them, while 19.6% got to know of arts events purely through word of mouth.

However, only 10.1% actually obtained information from social media at least once a month, with 40.4% rarely using the source for getting to know of arts events. Other major sources included newspapers (14.3%), online websites (12.7%) and television (12.2%). Moreover, only 43.8% of the respondents were somewhat satisfied with the availability of information while 38.2% were not satisfied with the availability of information regarding arts events.

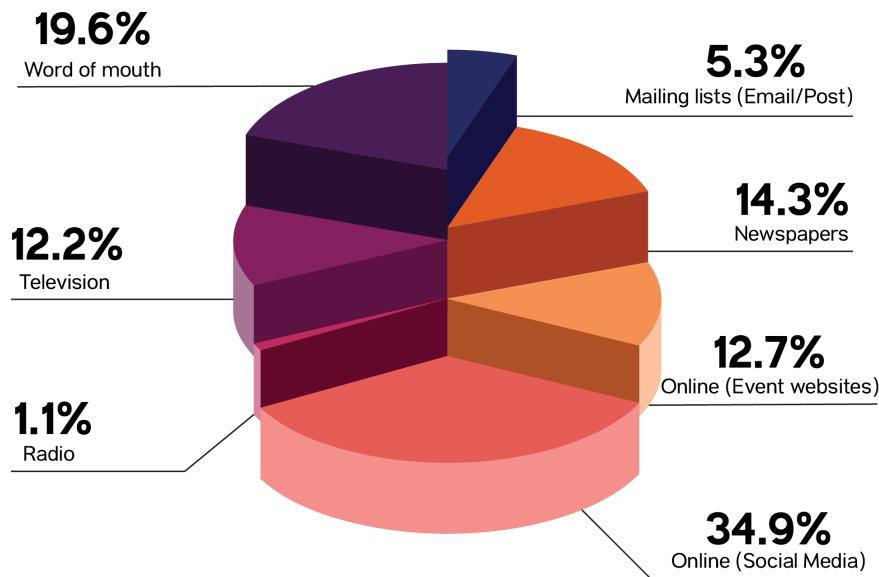
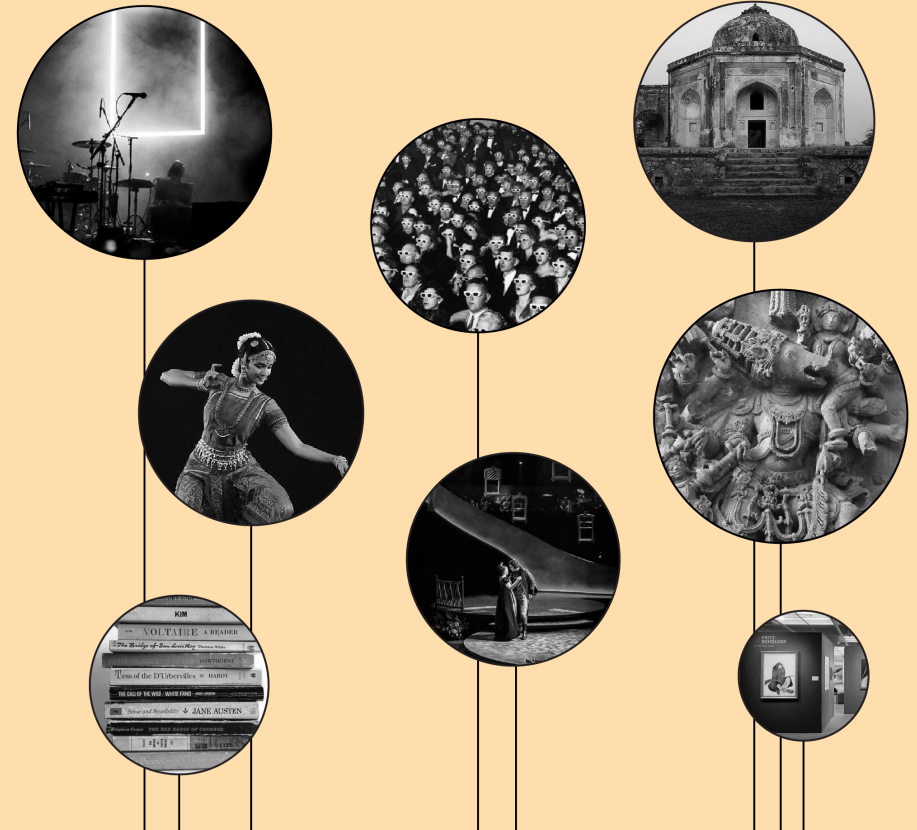


Figure 5
SOURCES USED FOR FINDING ARTS EVENTS



94% of the respondents felt that arts events needed to be promoted better to reach a wider audience

Music festivals and concerts were the most popular among respondents in terms of events that are promoted well followed by dance events and workshops.

FUNDING THE ARTS

More than 50% of respondents donated in some form or the other over the last one year. A majority of the respondents (16.2%) donated towards performing arts, while only 5.7% of respondents donated to museums and heritage each. A majority of donations went towards COVID-19 relief, health, charity and education.



Most respondents believed that the arts and culture sector needed most support from the government and some support from individuals and the wider community. More than half the percentage of respondents agreed that the sector is a worthy cause for donation and that they would donate to local arts and cultural organisations. **More than 60% of the respondents said that they would probably fund arts and cultural events in the future.**

A majority of respondents felt that information from the organisation explaining how their donation was used and knowing that the money would be spent locally would strongly motivate them to donate towards the arts and culture sector, while a significant section of them felt that better tax relief measures and requests from friends or family would encourage them to donate towards the arts and culture sector.

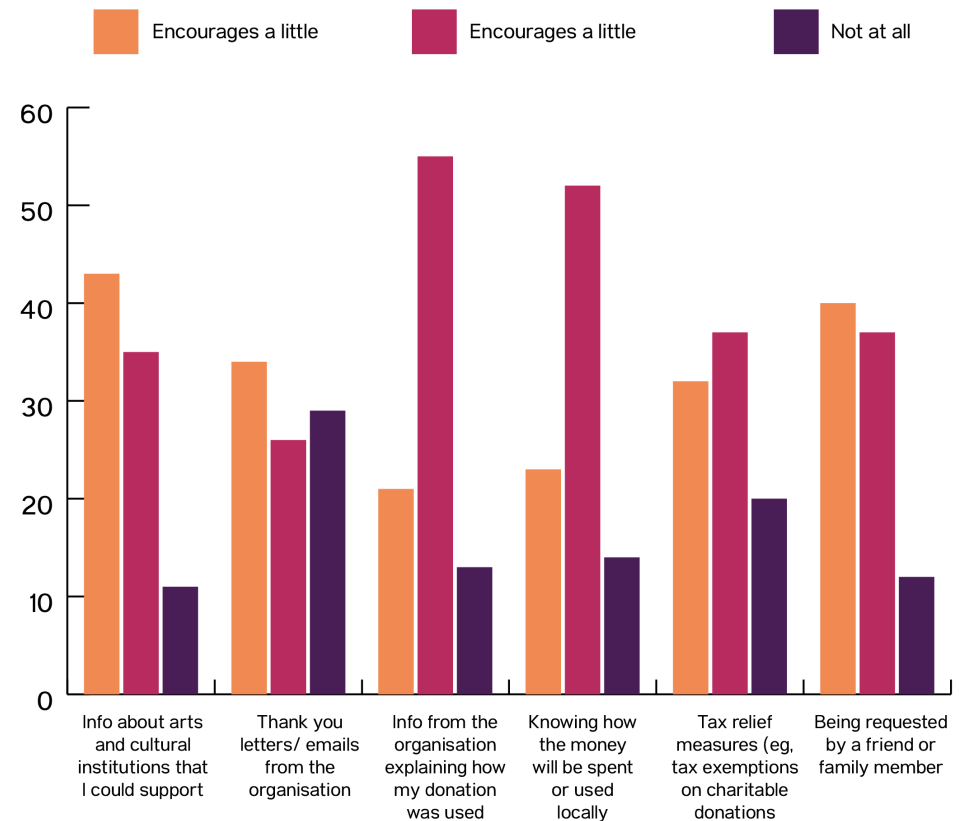


Figure 6
MOTIVATION TO DONATE TO ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR

ENVISIONING THE ARTS

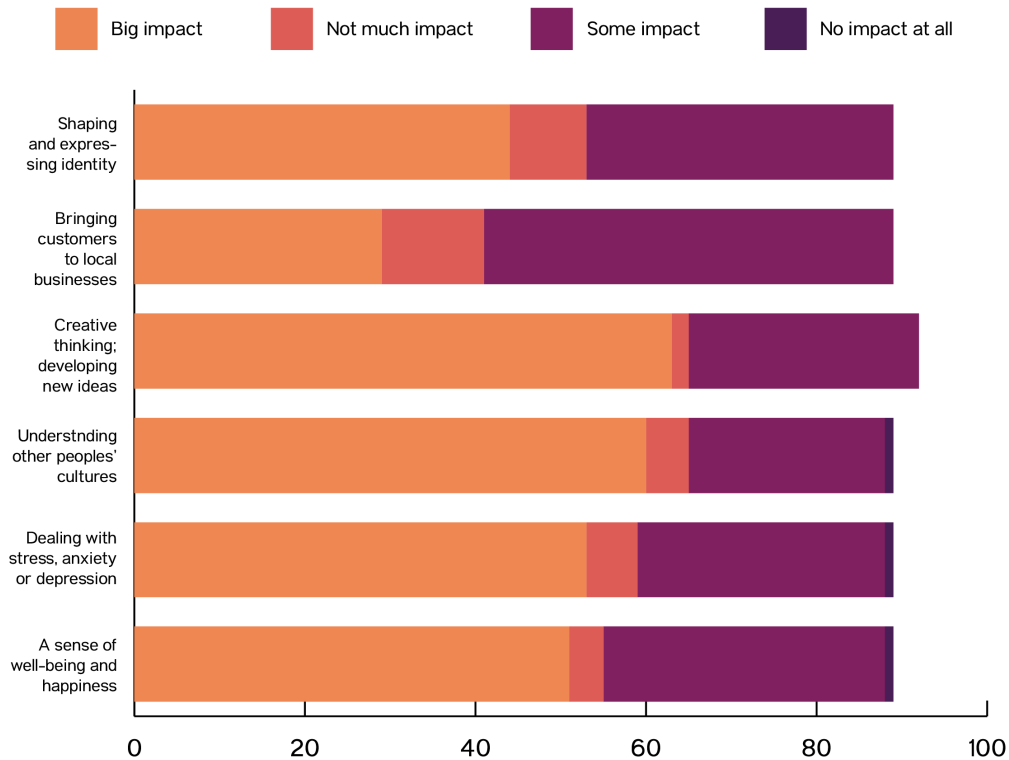


Figure 7
IMPACT OF ARTS

In terms of the impact of arts on people's lives, more than 70% of respondents felt that the arts had a big impact on creative thinking skills and developing new ideas. A majority of respondents also felt that the arts help in understanding other peoples and cultures. More than 50% felt that the arts had a big impact in dealing with stress, anxiety or depression, and towards our sense of wellbeing and happiness.

Almost 65% of the respondents strongly agreed the arts should be an important part of education as it would help foster creativity in children and equip them with the necessary life skills. More than 50% of respondents agreed that the arts played a valuable role in society and made for a richer and more meaningful life. 48.3% of respondents agreed that the arts had a significant effect on the quality of their life.

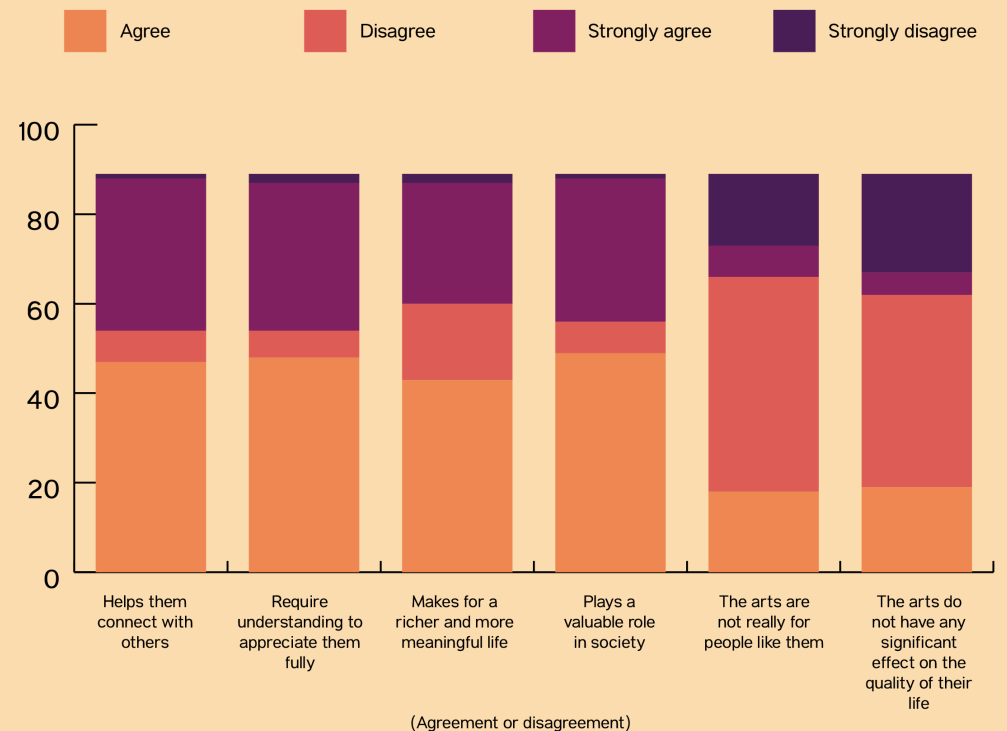


Figure 8
ROLE OF ARTS IN LIFE AND SOCIETY

RESPONDENTS LEAST INTERESTED IN THE ARTS

8.9%
(approx.)

of the respondents said they were least interested in the arts.

Their frequency of attending an arts event/space ranged from rarely to never.

>45%

of respondents had not attended any type of arts event offline or online in the past one year.

However, music concerts or festivals featured in most respondents' frequency of attendance.

More than 50% of those who were least interested in the arts did not attend due to their absolute lack of interest. Other factors of non-attendance included lack of time and interest in activities other than the arts. **75% of this crowd were satisfied with the availability of information on arts and cultural events.** However, the same percentage also believed that arts events needed better promotion. They rarely or never accessed museums, arts events or art organization websites or heard about arts events on social media

80% *of those who were least interested in the arts did not spend any money on activities related to the arts and culture sector.*

However, more than 60% agreed that the sector is a worthy cause to donate to and 50% each agreed and disagreed with the statement that they would donate to local arts and cultural organizations.

would maybe be willing to fund the sector in the future **50%**

37.5% *were not willing to fund the sector*

More than 50% agreed that the arts had a big impact in developing new ideas, creative thinking, understanding new cultures and people, and dealing with stress, anxiety or depression, while all of them agreed that the arts brought customers closer to local businesses. All of those least interested in the arts also agreed to varying degrees that arts education would equip children with important life skills and foster creativity in them. In addition, and contrarily, 87.5% of them agreed that the arts helped them connect with others and played a valuable role in society.

MORE THAN 62% *responded that the arts have a significant effect on the quality of their lives.*

Conclusion

The study has helped understand a specific section of people who considered themselves apathetic towards the arts. However, it is evident from the study that the apathy arises mostly out of lack of access and engagement. It is seldom out of disinterest since more than 90% of respondents are interested in some art form or the other.

Hence, it is imperative for art and cultural institutions to work towards addressing this section of the audience through improved engagement strategies and access options. When engagement and access improves, people would be willing to fund arts and cultural events both as individuals and as a community or society. Hence, it is essential to link people's desire towards understanding the arts and attending events, to people's access to these arts and heritage spaces.