Improving Art Museum Accessibility for Adults With Acquired Hearing Loss.

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Abstract

PURPOSE:

Adults with hearing loss rated the accessibility of guided or docent-led art museum tours with and without hearing assistive technology (HAT).

METHOD:

Nineteen individuals (average age 64 years, range 35-87 years) with acquired hearing loss participated. All participants had a bilateral hearing loss (mild to profound) using hearing aids (n = 12), cochlear implants (n = 5), or no technology (n = 2). Two docents who were previously trained to modify their presentations and use clear speech led the tours. Participants experienced a tour with and without the museum's HAT and rated its effectiveness using a rating scale. The study used a pre-post test design.

RESULTS:

The docent-led tours with HAT were rated significantly higher ($p = .003$) than the tours without HAT. Participants made several suggestions on improving museum accessibility for individuals with hearing loss.

CONCLUSIONS:

The use of HAT during a museum tour was beneficial for individuals with hearing loss. Training docents to modify their presentations, use clear speech, and HAT improved the accessibility of docent-led tours for individuals with hearing loss.