Motivations for Participating in Museums’ Interventions

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ABSTRACT: The article examines what motivates people to participate in a cultural institution’s participatory interventions. In recent decades, the changing roles of cultural institutions and the concepts of defining museum audiences are brought together in the case study of the Estonian National Museum’s participatory interventions. This paper indicates that motivations for participation are emotional and personal, that social goals are often overestimated, but the wish to cooperate and gain recognition from institutions have often been underestimated as motivators. The museum’s roles to support intercultural dialogue and facilitate diverse views were not supported by the participational interventions. Analysis indicated that being a participant does not make people more critical or dialogical in a museum context, as the topics the participants chose to be involved with are appropriate to their own experiences, contexts and assumptions.

KEYWORDS: Participation; Museum; Motivation; Participant; Intervention; Audience.
CHANGING ROLES OF MUSEUMS

The modern cultural and institutional roles of museums are characterized by the complexity of the relations, pressures and goals surrounding them. Museums can be described as: temples of civilization, sites for the creation of citizens, forums of debate, settings for cultural interchange and negotiation of values, engines of economic renewal and revenue generation, imposed colonialist enterprises, havens of elitist distinction and discrimination, or places of empowerment and recognition etc (Kratz & Karp, 2006: 1-4). All of which generate new circumstances and opportunities of development.

In order to examine the multiple roles of a museum, I selected the six most prominent topics in modern museum discourse:

1) Museums are governmental, collective and educative. The view that heritage is a valuable source of meaning making, a collective representation of tradition and ideals, which is closely connected to informal public education and guided by official cultural policy (for example Hall, 2005; Bennett, 2006: 59).

2) Heritage as facilitator. The idea that the museum is in control of ‘facilitating the world to people’, where heritage and tradition are envisaged as a social glue that might be used to stick together disparate bits of society and to attach those sectors that seem to have become detached (Macdonald, 2008; Ciolfi, 2012).

3) Heritage’s importance to cultural tourism and economy. In the contexts of the creative industry and cultural tourism, there are successful sectors amongst which heritage-related activities have considerable economic importance (Menger, 2010; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2006).

4) Global and technological change. Museums are elements of globalized flows of information, people and ideas; they reach beyond their spaces and national boundaries through the Internet. Technology has caused changes in the notions of objects and exhibitions, and placed the concepts of real and original artefacts on the public agenda (Ross, 2010).

5) Issues of expertise. Digitalised collections have made museum collections more open, more visible and more used than ever before. Collecting digitally created content or other participatory practices have changed the boundaries on who is the creator or expert of cultural heritage (Smith, 2006: 44; McMaster, 2007).
6) Diverse and expanding audiences, citizenship and the non-presence of others. Contemporary museum practices are linked to intercultural dialogue, citizen participation, and the practice of repatriating artefacts. Despite the involvement of many groups in negotiations, marginalisation of some groups also occurs (Eliasoph, 1998; Hage, 1998: 160).

MUSEUMS AS PARTICIPATIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Currently most museums and cultural institutions are experimenting with strengthening the participation of the public by engaging audiences in discussions, most often using social media, web environments or spaces for facilitating participatory activities. In the context of this article, I will follow the idea of the museum being transformed through participatory opportunities. I define participation as the manner in which museums are sharing some functions, power and responsibilities with the public who, in turn, contributes to activities or content of the museum.

The notion of participation has been raised in many conceptual debates. Nico Carpentier argues democratic theory still holds a privileged position in the theoretical discussions on participation (Carpentier, 2011: 124). Carpentier integrates democracy theory with the access-interaction-participation (AIP) model so that participation can be conceptualised as either minimalist or maximalist. Minimalist participation relies on the assumption that the political does not necessarily reach beyond the realm of conventional politics, and that professionals should be in control of the structure and processes, allowing them to homogenise audiences whenever necessary. The maximalist approach to participation is based on a belief that the political is an underlying dimension of the social and that participation (ideally) entails power sharing, heterogeneity of audiences and also allows for structural changes (Carpentier, 2011: 17-22, 69).

In a museum context, there are four dimensions of participatory practices worthy of discussion: 1) Participation needs to be personal for participants. Indeed, participatory actions in society can only be successful when people's topic specific viewpoints are intertwined (McAfee, 2000: 159-160). Cultural heritage, memories and the past are not necessarily part of everyday life, therefore, it is a challenge for museums to involve the public in creating heritage and the dialogue related to heritage. 2) Participation is social and brings together...
the people with same interests. Balčytienė et al. (2012) discuss new alternative medias, which have been used to create personalized, dynamic, parallel online spaces that help to consolidate common interests and values among users. 3) The influence of participation on institutions is often minimalistic. Runnel et al. (2014) point out that while museums can be very open and invite participation and participants into some areas of its activities, they may restrict access to other areas. Tatsi and Aljas (2012) have analysed the impact of participatory interventions on Eesti Rahva Muuseum (Estonian National Museum, ERM) collections and concluded that ethnographic museum collections, where the history consists of at least 80 years of inclusive methods of collecting, typically include contributions from the public, and are influenced by the minimalistic participatory mode; 4) Participation is also a method for analysing audiences. Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt et al. (2014) have used different interventions to analyse and understand the changes in relations between audiences and museums.

AUDIENCES AROUND THE MUSEUM

The traditional understanding of museum audiences as exhibition visitors has changed to individual interpreters with their own social contexts. In the context of museum visitor studies1 since the 1990s, Stylianou-Lambert sums up the developments of how assorted approaches have led to a paradigm that presents the museum as an “open work that is completed by the visitor” (Stylianou-Lambert, 2010: 137). Beyond the classical site-visit, museum studies acknowledge that the museum experience starts well before the visitor steps through the door of the museum. Recent studies categorise audiences by their motivations for visiting museums and also by their behaviour in museums (see Falk, 2009), and different museum service users have been categorized similarly to media user types as being in a spectrum from inactive to creators (as Kelly & Russo, 2008; Simon, 2007).

People within and nearby the museum have different assumptions, expectations and understandings of the museum. Runnel et al. (2014) have taken these needs into consideration when they conceptualized people around the museum on the basis of their different relationships with museums, taking into account that the relationships can change in time and depend on context and situations.

1Eilean Hooper-Greenhill has claimed that visitor studies has been used as an umbrella term in museum studies for a range of different forms of research and evaluation involving museums and their actual, potential and virtual visitors, which collectively can be termed the “audience” for museums (Hooper-Greenhill, 2011: 363). In the article context I use the notions from media studies as audiences and audience studies.
The pyramid reflects the quantities of non-museum employed people with either the potential to be involved with a museum (the base) or contributors with serious intent (the peak). The public refers to the large quantity of people not connected to the museum but who do have the potential to do so. The more connected people are to the museum, the higher up the pyramid they appear. Audiences are conceptualised as groups who, while being aware of messages from the museum, do not go to the museum and seldom use its resources. Runnel et al. (2014) cite the argument by Morrone (2006) that any kind of engagement with cultural activities can be considered cultural participation, because audiences consume cultural messages from museums. Visitors are the most traditional group in museum studies; they are the people who enter the museum. Users use the online resources and spaces of the museum, the numbers of which, in the context of ERM, is still smaller than actual visits, although the databases of ERM’s collections are now being accessed more than ever before. Participants are defined as the group of people with whom the museum is willing to share a small amount of decision-making power and who are the most desirable group with whom the museum is seeking to engage. Participants are also the group that needs the most attention from the museum to maintain an ongoing relationship (Runnel et al, 2014: 222-223).
THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN MAPPING THE MOTIVATIONS

Research has long explored the motivations of museum audiences from the traditional context of concrete museum visits to the contemporary abstract of online services (see for example Peacock & Brownbill, 2007; Ellenbogen et al., 2007: 188; Saldago., 2008; Fantoni et al., 2012). The reasons behind the public engaging with museums are often difficult to define because of the confusion about the conceptual nature of motivation and also because, inevitably, any discussion of audience motivation tends to involve psychology.

Psychologists view the source of differences in motivations as being the origin, which consists of extrinsic (external) motivation and intrinsic (internal) motivation (Russo & Peacock, 2009). Examples of intrinsic influences are generally positive feelings of enjoyment and curiosity, as well as personal needs and interests, whereas extrinsic influences are more negative such as penalties and social pressure and also the positive nature of incentives. When the motivation is intrinsic, the task is rewarding to do and thus, Goldman (2004) argues, the extrinsic influences of incentives or social pressures are not necessary. Unfortunately, most activities require both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This argument creates a link to self-determination theory, which presumes that people are by nature active and self-motivated. However, social conditions and processes impact on what people do and how they feel while acting, and as a consequence the social environment supports, directs or thwarts their activities (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

People are usually motivated by a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, depending on which has the priority. Csikszentmihaly and Hermanson (1995) contend that the public’s relations with museums are mostly motivated by intrinsic rewards; therefore, museums should capture the visitors’ curiosity, correlate to people’s own lives and encourage new and alternative perspectives. Should these aspects be fulfilled, the museum experience would be intrinsically rewarding.

Active involvement and the motivation to do so have been parallel topics in the development of participation theories. Jakob Nielsen (2006), an Internet usability expert, proposes five ways to motivate people to participate and overcome participation inequality: (i) ease of participation; (ii) participation should be a side effect of a visit; (iii) participation should involve the concept of editing as opposed to creating; (iv) participation should be rewarded afterwards and (v) participation should promote high quality contributions. Museologist Nina Simon (2010), citing Clay Shirky (2008), sees social conditions as motivating
factors for participation coming from the institution’s clear and open expressions of promise, tools and bargain, and where participants would like to see their contributions are integrated in a timely, attractive, and respectful way. In the context of memory institutions, Krista Lepik (2013) has been mapping the preconditions of participation and argues the importance of capitals (financial, social, educational, political and cultural), information literacy and social identity.

Psychologist Patric Waterson suggests the motivations in online communities are summarised with the following basic desires: 1) Seeking information for personal benefit; 2) Opportunities to exchange ideas and find solutions to problems; 3) Fun; 4) Opportunity for dialogue; 5) Opportunity to help others; 6) Chance to gain respect and visibility within a community; 7) Seeking to build social cohesion within a group; 8) Shared sense of identity and belonging; 9) Raise profile with peers; 10) Commitment to shared values and norms and resembling basic desires (Waterson, 2006: 334 cited in Russo, 2009).

People in the audience groups, with their multi-layered identities and interpretive strategies, are dynamic and motivated to shifting their position to become more motivated. The issue that interests me, is what motivates them to change their positions and relationships with museums? In order to answer this question, I will map the participatory interventions of ERM and analyse the motivations that participants have had to change their positions and relationships with the museum.

**PARTICIPATORY INTERVENTIONS IN THE ERM**

The ERM has organized much of its daily work in recent years by using participatory ideas. Runnel et al. (2010) states the ERM, as both a set of words and an institution, carries several meanings and thus several obligations. On the one hand, ‘Rahva’ (National) means state owned and the ERM is the primary, and the largest and most representative, museum of the Estonian state and nation. On the other hand, the Estonian name for the museum can be translated as meaning a museum of the Estonian people, encompassing the different ethnic groups who live in Estonia and also the ethnographic nature of the museum. All these meanings come together in the complex set of expectations present when reinventing the Estonian nation in the 21st century and the opening of the new museum building in 2016, which ensures public interest in the museum’s activities.
MATERIALS AND METHODS

Since 2007, more than 30 participatory interventions have taken place, which have been analysed on the basis of the influence of participation on the institution, on the museum professionals, exhibitions, collections, visits and participants. The interventions have been planned so that participants’ personal experiences and opinions on everyday life could be related to museum activities and existing heritage, which could result in a rethink of their relationship with the museum. Interventions were planned to incorporate different designs, topics and processes of participation that would reflect the conditions and possibilities of participation in the Estonian cultural heritage context.

For this paper I have chosen 10 of these interventions (see Table 1). Each was targeted towards a select audience group, had different designs, and took place in either online or offline environments. Each intervention had a specific purpose and intended outcome, and involved the participants undertaking a variable amount of work ranging from long commitments to brief participations. Some were successful in their different components and others were not. Most importantly, they offered people different kinds of self-expressions and content creation by participation from tagging, voting, commenting, photo uploading to storytelling and a month of handicraft.

Feedback about the participation process was specifically asked for in interviews with participants of the intervention “My Favourite...” (coded as ML 1-9) and interviews with the curators of “Railway Gardens” (RA 1). Also, the voters (ON 1-201) of ideas for the first open curatorship exhibition (Create Your Own Exhibition1) were asked separately what they thought about being actively involved in voting for an exhibition of the museum. Furthermore, authors of most of the comments, stories, photos and cover letters that the interventions attracted sent in their reasons for doing so and their thoughts on the opportunity being available.

Qualitative analysis of the feedback material consisted of two phases. The first, based on close readings of the data of each intervention (as shown in Table 1, column 3), I collated the major articulations concerning the formation of motivations and categorised them as personal, social, institutional and environmental. In order to analyse the motivations of ERM’s participants, I combined 11 selected intrinsic and extrinsic motivations based on Russo and Pecock’s motivation origins (2009), mapped 6 conditions for an environment that motivates participation, expanded the Nielsen (2006) categories and elaborated Watson’s basic desires into museum centred categories (see Tables 2-5).
Table 1.
Overview of selected participatory interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Year*</th>
<th>Short description</th>
<th>Data used for analysis / code</th>
<th>Number of contributions</th>
<th>Group targeted</th>
<th>Workload**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonian Moments</td>
<td>2007-2013</td>
<td>Uploading photos to web-based environment for collecting museum photographs representing contemporary Estonian everyday life</td>
<td>Comments to photos by authors / EH 1-43</td>
<td>589 photos***</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donate a Day to the Museum</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Description of a “typical day”, 14 April 2009, on text, video, photo, map etc. sent as gift to ERM for its 100th anniversary</td>
<td>Cover letters and comments to stories and photos / KP 1-450</td>
<td>450 descriptions</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition “With a 1000 steps...”</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Commenting on photos with post-it notes and pens in an exhibition of ERM’s photo collection, where every 182th photograph (by order of accession) was chosen</td>
<td>Comments on the photos from the exhibition and feedback from visitors book / TS 1-80</td>
<td>80 comments</td>
<td>Visitor</td>
<td>Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create Your Own Exhibition1: voters</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Voting online and offline in the Exhibition House of ERM on favourite exhibition ideas proposed for Open Curatorship competition</td>
<td>Answers to the question What did you think about participating in voting? / ON 1-201</td>
<td>201 comments</td>
<td>Visitor, public</td>
<td>Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum Night: comments</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Commenting on ERM’s permanent exhibition in Museum Night event</td>
<td>Comments in exhibition / MO 1-17</td>
<td>17 comments</td>
<td>Visitor</td>
<td>Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Favourite from Collections of the ERM</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Co-operation with handicraft web-communities, where people had to choose their favourite object from the museum collections and make an authentic copy or use the original for inspiration</td>
<td>Interviews with 9 participants / ML 1-9</td>
<td>54 objects</td>
<td>Users, visitors</td>
<td>Heavy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 1.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Year*</th>
<th>Short description</th>
<th>Data used for analysis / code</th>
<th>Number of contributions</th>
<th>Group targeted</th>
<th>Workload**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take a Picture of What You Eat</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Uploading food and meal pictures to web-environment</td>
<td>Comments to photos / MS 1-711</td>
<td>711 photos</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regretted Purchase</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Many interventions occurred in parallel with the contemporary consumption exhibition “Shopping Fever”. One of these asked people to share their stories and objects of regretted purchases</td>
<td>Cover letters and comments to stories / KO 1-50</td>
<td>50 stories, 44 objects</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Exhibition3 - Railway Gardens: curators</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Process of the third accomplished exhibition by the open curatorship call Create Your Own Exhibition</td>
<td>Interview with curators / RA 1 exhibition</td>
<td>1 exhibition</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Exhibition3 - Railway Gardens: visitors</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Share the stories in exhibition environment related to the exhibition subject</td>
<td>Comments on the exhibition / RK 1-47</td>
<td>47 stories</td>
<td>Visitor comment</td>
<td>Light</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data indicates Year of Intervention  
** Descriptions – heavy, moderate, light – refer to intensity of workload  
***Altogether approximately 1500 photos were uploaded. But only 589 photos were displayed.

The second phase consisted of a comparison of the influences of motivations on interventions. To achieve this, I used the scale from ‘very important’ to ‘not important at all’, which are illustrated and marked in the relevant Tables as: Very important ↑↑, important ↑, intermediate →, not very important ↓ and not important at all ↓↓.

After the first analysis of motivations against interventions, I could make the first aggregation: there was a clear correlation between the level of motivation and the level of workload. This means the variations in motivation are not in correlation to the interventions, but by the amount of work and time that people were willing to invest in participating in the museum’s activities, (see Tables 2-5). There are three categories: Participation with a heavy workload...
required participants to be involved in time consuming preparations, creative approaches and to display sufficient confidence in their skills at creating exhibition displays, handicrafts and storytelling; Participation with a moderate workload required participants to have the necessary resources to respond to an intervention in which they wished to participate, e.g. to know there is a call for uploading daily meal photographs requires the resources to take and upload a photo and the ability to comment online on the photograph; Participation with a light workload required participants to react spontaneously to a call and spend a short time tagging, commenting on and voting.

**PERSONAL MOTIVATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal motivations arising from generalised motivations to participate.</th>
<th>Participation with heavy workload</th>
<th>Participation with moderate workload</th>
<th>Participation with light workload</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Related to personal interest and curiosity, subjects of own life</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum, heritage, exhibition, personal interest is posing questions, to which people seek answers; getting new knowledge or information, alternative or new perspectives, for personal benefit</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing personal skills and knowledge, sense of challenge</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis confirmed the notion of Csikszentmihaly and Hermanson’s (1995) idea that intrinsic motivations, which come mostly from personal interests and connections with the topic, are the most important. Also the analysis indicated that pleasure in doing an activity and any sense of accomplishment inspires participation. “The competition was the possibility to put myself to test and do something, also inspiration and challenge, that can I do it” (ML 4). Active involvement also means self-expression and self-reflexivity for the participants. Irrespective of whether the feedback comes from the briefest of comments or the longest of heavy workloads, the source is a personal perspective, personal context and a contemporary point of view. The new knowledge people gain from participation is also listed as an important motivator, especially in terms of the time and resources consumed. “Making of exhibition seemed much more interesting then just watching, like new stage of expressing” (RA 1). Fun did
not seem to be very important for ERM’s interventions, although it was still a motivator.

**PERSONAL SOCIAL MOTIVATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities to express ideas, opinions, comments</th>
<th>Participation with heavy workload</th>
<th>Participation with moderate workload</th>
<th>Participation with light workload</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Opportunity to have dialogue, find solutions to problems, help others | ↑ | ↑ | ↓↓ |

| Chance to gain respect and visibility within a community | ↑↑ | → | ↓↓ |

| Shared sense of identity and belonging | ↑ | ↓ | ↓↓ |

A key element of participation requires personal integrity and being able to tackle the pressures of public attention, as well as being unafraid of embarrassing oneself in front of everybody (Nyre & O’Neill, 2012: 205). In the context of ERM interventions, social motivations are the most influential at the level of public self-expression. “I have been member in Isetegija forum for 3-4 years and quite often uploaded something of my handicrafts from there, but I wanted also to do something more and show here what I do” (ML 1). The light workload accompanied by spontaneous reaction mostly correlates when the topic is relevant and people can express their opinions in public. A similar type of motivation is apparent for moderate workloads when personal expression and personal interest in the subject, and interacting with others is influential.

Opportunities to gain feedback from, or have dialogue with, others are not considered to be important museum activities. Becoming involved with a museum is often related to social activities and theoretically participation is often seen to be at least connected to communities of practice (Carpentier, 2011: 223). In the context of ERM interventions, only in those with a heavy workload do social motivations start to play a more important role, as participants find it important to interact with similar persons, to find solutions or help each other. Also community existence and the sense of being part of the activity become more important.
PERSONAL INSTITUTIONAL MOTIVATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Institutional motivations arising from commitments to participate.</th>
<th>Participation with heavy workload</th>
<th>Participation with moderate workload</th>
<th>Participation with light workload</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Documents about yourself in the museum, to the future</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>↓↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting institutional recognition</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>↓↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewarding after participation</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>→</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The greater the time and effort involved in the participation process, the greater the correlational importance between the motivator for the participant and the institution. Institutional importance is phrased as getting recognition from the institution and documenting about themselves to the museum and to the future. As one participant stated “I hope my grandchild will come to read that in the future.” (KP 46).

After analysing the participant interventions in ERM, it appears that the level of heavy workloads and social-centred motivations are overestimated compared to institutional motivations. Many participants also stated that if some other museum or group had asked them to participate, they would not have done so. As some participants explained, “This competition has more prestige then one of the Internet forum competitions, and if my handicraft would do to an exhibition or to collections, it would be much better then just in Internet and really great” (ML 1) or “Museum is known all over the world, and if you can connect yourself with it, it gives you more credibility and ERMs knowledge quality is very high” (ML 6). Participants in the light workload category do not see institutional recognition as important. However, the institutional context is important, as comprehension of museum activities and purposes, as well as the museums position in public space, are all influential in motivating people to take part in the participation activities.

Still, we need to keep in mind motivations for participation at the individual level are also different inside interventions. For example, with the photograph collecting project “Estonian Moments”, there were participants who were interested in sharing and commenting, as one photographer was saying: “In different places all around Estonia you could see this happy robot face (graffiti), who says you to think positively. Have you also seen it?” (EH 10). Others wanted their photographs to be part of the museum collections and share historical moments as “Today is an historical day for Orava station, its opened for the last day as Estonian Republics border station. Still made it to take the photo for
Nevertheless, all participants considered a close relation with the museum was important.

Nielsen (2006) proposes that the notion of a reward is an important feature for motivating participation. In the context of ERM interventions, rewards are always mentioned and provided by the museum. For participants, a reward is mostly connected to institutional recognition or recognition of a donation becoming part of the museum collections, which is illustrated by a teacher who commented of her school class taking part in storytelling that: “Taking part in ERM’s call is important for school children, their writing assignments aren’t going to the trash after reading, but will be, and will remain, in part of the museum collections” (KP 263). The concept of rewards varies amongst the participant communities. In the case of the handicraft makers, they wanted recognition for their handicraft skills and their practical knowledge and they had high hopes their handicraft would become part of the museum’s collections; for the Russian speaking population, recognition was the museum adding their storytelling to its collection and thus becoming part of Estonian history. Co-operation with the museum was also considered as a mark of quality by the participants in recognition of their work and skills.

### PARTICIPATORY ENVIRONMENT AS MOTIVATOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Participation with heavy workload</th>
<th>Participation with moderate workload</th>
<th>Participation with light workload</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation is made easy, or in the case of web-intervention, corresponds to participants information literacy skills</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation as side effect</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>←</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication in intervention is supportive and encouraging</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants needs are noticed and they are responded</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation has influence to museum or its collections, participant is being part of museum activity</td>
<td>↑↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous experiences with museum</td>
<td>←</td>
<td>←</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the people involved, the most important aspect of participation is that the process is easy for them to undertake, in that the tasks correspond to their skills.
and the participatory design is user friendly. Skills could be defined as information literacy, language-oriented, photography-oriented or handicraft-oriented. If the intervention provides a heavy workload from participants then the intervention being a side effect of exhibition visit is unimportant as opposed to the light, quite spontaneous workload required at the time of a visit to the museum, e.g. commenting on photos in the exhibition “1000 steps.”

Nyre and O’Neill (2012: 217) contend, in the context of participating in media debates, the greatest barrier comes from the participants’ consideration of the activity being closed and prejudiced, which is the opposite of the aspects of open dialogue, discernment and respecting the rights of others. The participants of the interventions also deemed that the environment is supportive, encouraging and reliable were important aspects and that their motivations to participate were supported with clearly stated purpose and effect.

Many participants viewed the opportunity to be part of both the museum’s decision-making process and the museum activities and collections as a basic right. The majority considered being involved in the museum’s traditional expertise as an honour, as illustrated by the comment of a voter: “Being part of the voting process of an exhibition is a big honour for a regular citizen, I appreciate this trust very highly.” (ON 12).

Participants from the categories ‘public’ or ‘audience’ (see Figure 1) did not see having any previous relationships with the museum as important. Still, important motivators were the topic and the way the museum approached people. As seen in the context of institutional motivations, the name of ERM added importance, of course, for participants coming from ‘users’ or ‘visitors’ categories (see Figure 1), so previous positive contacts with museum should not be underestimated.

**CLOSING DISCUSSION**

The article analyses the motivation of audience groups to participate in cultural institution activities.

Museums, with their modern varied roles, have understood that the need for engaging the different audiences and calling them to participate in activities has become a frequent practice. Museums are the spaces through which museological practices and statements about heritage, history and identity are constructed and also debated. Audience participation is seen as one of the most important
methods for expanding the interpretation of heritage and legitimisation of different values.

Adaptation to participation is not easy for either organizations or their audiences, particularly as public understanding of cultural institutions is still based on professionalism, expertise and education. Although in the context of participation, a favourable aspect is that the public views museums as trustworthy institutions.

The culture-consuming public is now numerically greater and comes from more socially and geographically diverse backgrounds than ever before. Audience groups have different relationships with the museum (as seen in Figure 1), which depend upon the groups’ perceptions, as either passive consumers of information coming from the museum or as creators and interpreters of cultural heritage. The number of participants in the participation group (at the top in Figure 1) is always less numerous than the other categories due to the museum’s participatory activities being both intensely personal and based on maintaining close contacts.

Participation is always affected by organisational structure, which supports, through its objectives and practices, more minimalist or maximalist participation. My case study of the ERM’s participatory interventions is based on the AIP model, which is categorized as the minimalist participation example. There is some power sharing with participants, they can decide on the level of their participation and the topic, their content creation is personal and formats are unrestricted, and there are some structural changes in organization that participation influences. At the same time, participation does not change the museum’s system, and the museum maintains control on the topics for interaction.

The ERM is representative of both the Estonian state, as well as the everyday lives of Estonia’s ethnic populations. This twin theme makes the museum a constantly contested place, in a state of change and, currently, constantly on the public agenda. Participants’ attitudes about participating in the museum were mostly very positive concerning the importance of the museum as a keeper and interpreter of heritage and the initiative to cooperate was acknowledged.

The museum audiences’ motivations for participating were analysed through the concept of participatory motivations, which presumes audiences to be active if the topic is relevant to their everyday life. The differences in motivations to participate were categorized by the amount of work and time that participants need to invest at the museum. The analysis indicated that it does not
matter what the person’s relation to the museum had been before the intervention – public, audience or visitor – the important aspects are that the topic is relevant, and that the institutional image, communication and participation design are appropriate.

Each participation experience is the synthesis of an individual’s motivations and how the participants perceive the museum is perceived, and also whether or not the participation environment satisfies the needs and interests that are the consequence of that motivation. Also, surprisingly contrary to the social nature of participation, social motivations are not influential in bringing people together to discuss a shared interest. One explanation is that the museum had not promoted the concept of social motivations nor had the designs of the interventions considered social intercourses as significant. Another explanation is that participants find it more important to interact with the museum’s exhibitions rather than with the other participants. So the most important aspect of social motivation could be public self-expression.

The time and effort involved in the participation process and the length of the commitment correlates to the degree of importance any relationship with the museum holds as a motivator. The analysis also found that the museum’s image, previous contacts with the museum, and gaining recognition from the institution for personal skills and knowledge are all important motivators. If the motivations are related to rewards, then a major motivation is the hope that their contribution will become part of the museum’s collections, which is characterized as being both stable and future-oriented. The participants also found co-operation with ERM was a rewarding experience.

Future research could question what people expect of being an active audience; how their relationship with the museum is changing, and what are the opportunities arising from participation? Generalised assumptions could be that: participants discover something new and the institution corresponds to their attitudes and legitimizes it; participants have felt useful; participants’ contributions are part of legitimized cultural heritage; participants look to future collaborations and participants are connected to the museum more than before. From the other side, the participatory interventions did not support the museum’s intended role of facilitating intercultural dialogue and the expression of diverse views. The analysis indicated that being a participant does not make people either more critical or dialogical in the museum context, as the topics the participants chose to be involved with relate to their own experiences, contexts and assumptions.
REFERENCES


Agnes ALJAS

DALYVAVIMO MUZIEJŲ PRIEMONĖSE MOTYVACIJOS

SANTRAUKA

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama, kas motyvuoja žmones dalyvauti kultūros įstaigų dalyvavimo priemonėse. Pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais kintantys kultūros institucijų vaidmenys ir samprata, apibrėžiantys muziejų auditorijas, yra taikomi atvejo studijos tyrime, analizuojančiame Estijos nacionalinio muziejaus dalyvavimo priemones. Straipsnyje pabrėžiama, kad dalyvavimo motyvacijos yra emocinio ir asmeninio pobūdžio, o socialiniai tikslai dažnai yra perdėm sureikšminami, tačiau noras bendradarbiauti ir gauti pripažinimą iš institucijos dažnai buvo nepakankamai vertinami kaip motyvatoriai. Muziejaus vaidmuo remti kultūrų dialogą ir palaikyti įvairias pažiūras nebuvò pagrįstai dalyvavimo intervencijų tyrimo. Analizë parodë, kad buvimas dalyviu nedaro žmonių kritiškesnių ar aktyviau komunikuojančių, nes temos, kuriose dalyviai pasirinko dalyvauti, buvo susijusios su jų patirtimis, kontekstais ir prielaidomis.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: dalyvavimas, muziejus, motyvacija, dalyvis, intervencija, auditorija.