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EDUCATION IN OPEN-AIR MUSEUMS IN RESEARCH STUDIES OF VISITORS TO THE WIELKOPOLSKI ETHNOGRAPHIC PARK IN DZIEKANOWICE

Key words: visitor attraction, education, visitors, open-air museum.

ABSTRACT

The article presents results of a study regarding visitors to the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park in Dziekanowice. 319 people were interviewed in the questionnaire. The questions concerned the reasons for the visit, interests in the exhibition and sources of information. A quiz testing the knowledge acquired through visiting the museum was also carried out. The data analysis included differential tests between groups (on motives, interests and knowledge in relation to social-demographic features) and a cluster analysis of tourists visiting the museum. A number of subjective and objective factors were identified which determine the knowledge acquired during the visit to the museum. They included the exhibition arrangement, ways of interpreting the heritage used to transfer knowledge and the type of visiting group.

INTRODUCTION

The will of acquiring knowledge is one of the most significant reasons for visiting museums, open-air museums and other tourist attractions. Education at the museums takes form of formal (school classes taught on the museum premises), non-formal (organized sightseeing trips) or informal (visiting museums individually or in a group of friends) education [3]. In the last case, the term “life-long education” may apply, where learning continues during the whole life of an individual, but it can also be seen as “general-life education”, where learning is the basic aspect of the entire life and extends far beyond what is normally referred to as education [2]. Formal education is characterized by the mandatory school attendance, by the time devoted to educational activities where external rewards (grades, prizes) are important, by

the need to concentrate (often strictly required) and by the formal (school, or academic) atmosphere in which it is performed. The informal, and especially non-formal education is characterized by the voluntary participation, lack of specified time for educational activities, lack of external rewards (only internal award in the form of satisfaction), lack of necessity for concentration and by informal atmosphere during the learning process [1]. In order to effectively stimulate each of the mentioned processes, museums should implement and integrate knowledge in the field of education as well as ways of knowledge transfer.

There are very few examples of research regarding visitors to open-air museums in Poland. Among them are studies by A. Wrzesińska [6] and by A. Stasiak [5] conducted in the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park in Dziekanowice. These studies concentrated on the quantitative characteristics of

the tourist traffic in the Park. An interesting analysis of perceptions of people visiting the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park based on the entries in the commemorative books was carried out by A. Pelczyk [4]. He used qualitative text analysis, which allowed him to interpret impressions of tourists visiting the open-air museum.

The aim of this study was to analyze educational effects on visitors to the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park and to identify objective and subjective factors determining their learning process.

The Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park lies on the Piastowski Tourist Route in Poland, 35 kilometers from Poznań, by the national Road 5 in the direction of Gniezno. It occupies 21 hectares of land by the Lednickie Lake. The open-air museum exhibits a reconstruction of a typical Wielkopolska village from the second half of the 19th century. It consists mostly of huts, livestock buildings and barns which make up farms of different sizes situated around an oval central place. Together with a court and farm compound, some rural craftsmanship constructions and an 18th century church, it is an almost natural structure. The buildings' interiors are fully equipped with appliances, pottery, tools and clothes reflecting the living conditions and habits of families of various professions.

Diverse forms of interpretation of the heritage are used on the grounds of the museum from direction signs to interpretation panels. The farms are marked with plates informing about the origin and the time when a particular building was put up. It is the only form of interpretation available on the farms, thus the purpose of the appliances and objects placed inside the farms remains unknown to those unfamiliar with the rural culture or visiting the museum without a guide. At the time when this study was conducted, one of the few interpretation panels was placed in front of the Hauländer farm with information in three languages about the details of Hauländer settlements in Wielkopolska. At the time of this study there were also two exhibitions offering quite an extensive interpretation: a temporary exhibition at the lumber room and a permanent exhibition at the mill. The first exhibition was titled "On the catafalque they shall lay him, to the cemetery they shall bear him, in the ground they shall bury him. Death in the old rural communities" and it interpreted the matter of

death in a traditional rural community. The other one titled "Man and nature in the history of Ostrów Lednicki" presented the changes in the natural and cultural environment in the area of the Lednica Landscape Park, from the old times until the present. The exhibition has been set up in a rather modern way; it offers many richly illustrated panels, large-format photographs as well as a diorama with stuffed animals representing the fauna of the Park. The arrangement of the exhibition is close to the didactic-explanatory model. Many of the panels include large portions of text without illustrations. The exhibition is of a purely visual nature and it requires the visitors to concentrate on the narration without stimulating any activity (the only forms of activity are looking and reading).

In the reception building there is a gift shop offering the visitors publications and souvenirs connected with the themes of the museum. When the outdoor events are held, the artisans exhibit various forms of rural craftsmanship and handiwork. They also present their own products, which are everyday-use utensils.

The museum also organizes classes. On the grounds of the open-air museum there are no exhibitions and interpretations for children. Visitor groups are offered to be shown around by a guide.

METHODS

The research was conducted between June and September 2004. Visitors were asked to fill in a questionnaire when they were leaving the museum. The subject selection could be defined as "the first one at hand", which means that having completed an interview with one person, the interviewer asked the next person available to fill in the questionnaire. 319 people took part in the test, 60.5% of whom were women and 39.5% men. Teenagers aged 15-18 constituted only 4.4%, while 11.6% were people aged 19-25, 33.8% of the people interviewed were those aged 26-35, 15.5% were aged 46-66 and only 11.2% were people over 55 years of age. Only 17% of the visitors were tourists (people on trips lasting longer than 1 day), and 44% were those who had already visited the open-air museum in the past. In terms of professional profile, 53% were specialists and managers, 16.4% were blue-collar workers. Less than 1% of visitors were farmers. Only 13% of visitors lived in rural areas.

Reasons for visiting the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park (WEP)

The most common motive was spending time with friends or family. 57% of visitors thought this reason was very important (an average answer was 4.44). At the same time, the lowest of the standard deviations measured for this model – 0.79 – can show the conformity of the subject group in that matter. The second most important reason for visiting the WEP was to relax in nice surroundings. 39% of interviewees declared it as very important

and 50% said it was an important reason, resulting in an average of 4.21, significantly higher than that of the third reason – escape from daily stress. 39% saw it as very important and the same percentage said it was important with the average being 4.02. The least important reason was definitely the intention to learn something new about folk culture. Only 16% of subjects declared it as very important and 40% as important (average 3.59). The obtained results show that the WEP is mostly a place for social interactions, family rest and recreation.

Table 1. Reasons for visiting the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park (source: own study)

Reasons	Not important	Of little importance	Quite important %	Important	Very important	Average	Standard variance
I wanted to learn something new about the folk culture	2.90	7.74	32.90	40.32	16.13	3.59	0.95
I wanted to relax in nice surroundings	1.27	3.17	7.30	49.52	38.73	4.21	0.81
I wanted to show the kids/family/friends something new	6.93	5.94	13.53	35.97	37.62	3.91	1.17
I wanted to escape daily stress	4.89	5.54	11.07	39.74	38.76	4.02	1.08
Because places like this one should be visited	3.90	10.06	14.94	41.88	29.22	3.82	1.08
I wanted to see a new, interesting place	3.85	3.53	15.06	45.83	31.73	3.98	0.98
I wanted to have a nice time with the kids/family/friends	1.62	1.62	4.21	35.92	56.63	4.44	0.79

Note: averages were calculated assigning the answers values as follows: very important – 5, important – 4, rather important – 3, of little importance – 2, not important – 1.

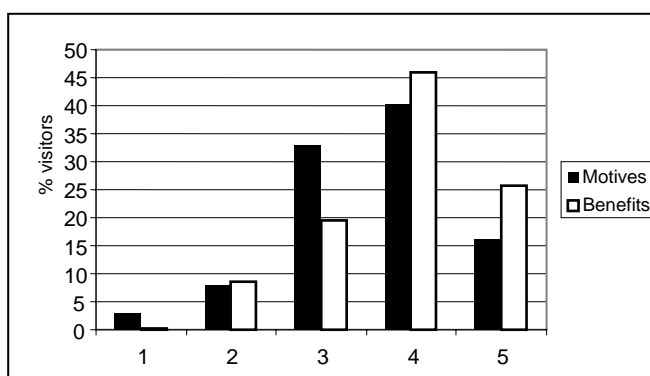


Figure 1. Motives and educational benefits (source: own study). Motive: *I wanted to learn something new*: 1 – not important, 2 – of little importance, 3 – rather important, 4 – important, 5 – very important. Benefit: *I managed to learn something new*: 1 – definitely not, 2 – rather not, 3 – undecided, 4 – rather yes, 5 – definitely yes.

The subjects were also asked if they had learned anything during their visit to the open-air museum. 25% answered *definitely yes*, while 45% said *rather yes*. Figure 1 lists answers to the questions: *Was the reason for your visit the intention to learn something new?* (motive) and *Did you learn something new?* (benefit). The diagram shows that although rather few people came to the open-air museum in order to learn something new (only 16% decided this reason was very important and 40% said it was important), yet after the visit as many as 70% stated that they had indeed learned something new. It gives evidence to the educational possibilities of the museum, which are not known to the visitors before they decide to visit the place.

Perception of the exhibition

Perception of the exhibition was tested by a question in which the degree of interest in chosen elements of the exhibition was to be marked. The exhibitions were graded using a five-point Likert scale where 1 was *little interesting* and 5 *very interesting*. The manor house was found the most interesting by the visitors. It was given an average grade of 4.49 and 57% of visitors marked it as very interesting. It is worth mentioning that it is not an authentic structure but a hypothetical reconstruction of a residential complex in Wielkopolska comprising copies of buildings from different parts of the region [4]. The ground floor of the manor is available to the public where the interior has been designed to show the living conditions of an average aristocratic family in the 1920s and 1930s. Almost equally high grades were given to the village farms ($x = 4.42$ – 60% evaluated them as very interesting) and the temporary exhibition in the lumber-room ($x = 4.38$ – 56%). The windmills received the lowest score ($x = 3.43$ – 43%) probably due to difficult access to the interiors (Fig. 2). The average value of interest in the ten exhibitions was rather high ($x = 4.11$).

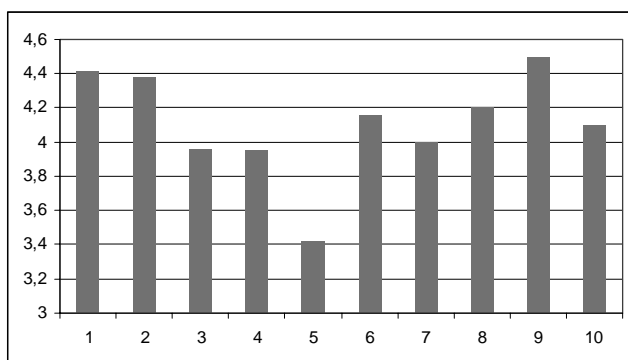


Figure 2. Evaluation of interest in WEP exhibitions (source: own study)

Exhibitions: 1 – village farms, 2 – lumber room, 3 – church, 4 – natural scientific exhibition at the mill, 5 – windmills, 6 – Hauländer farm, 7 – smithy, 8 – cemetery and chapel, 9 – manor, 10 – displays of handicraft. Evaluation scale: from 1 – little interesting to 5 – very interesting.

A guided tour was declared the most interesting of the six evaluated sources of information (the average score being 4.18)¹. Only

21.6% of the visitors decided to join a guided tour². An almost equally high score was awarded to the possibility of obtaining information from the exhibition personnel (4.01). 89% of visitors actually took advantage of this form of interpretation. It shows that the visitors are mostly interested in having direct contact with the personnel of the open-air museum and the information they can be provided with in this manner. Written sources of information such as folders, direction signs, plans and maps were found significantly less interesting (Fig. 3).

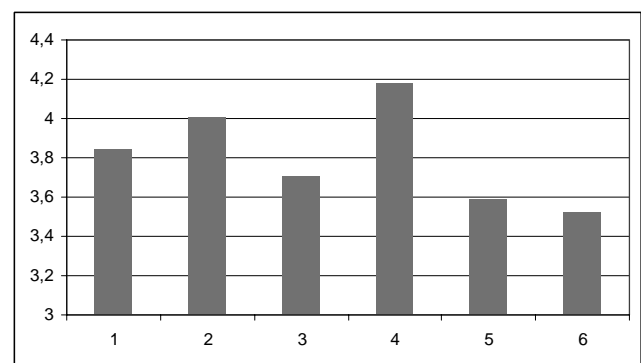


Figure 3. Visitors' interest in sources of information at the WEP (source: own study)

Sources of information: 1 – information plates and panels, 2 – conversation with the personnel, 3 – guide-book/folder, 4 – guided tour, 5 – direction signs, 6 – maps.

Evaluation scale: from 1 – little interesting to 5 – very interesting.

The knowledge acquired by the visitors to the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park was tested using a multiple choice quiz. The quiz consisted of five questions concerning issues interpreted in the museum. Additionally, the subjects were asked to specify whether the answer to the question had been known to them before their arrival at the open-air museum.

Almost 60% of subjects gave correct answers to all the questions. The most correct answers (71%) concerned the area from which the buildings placed in the museum were brought in. Information about the origins of the buildings is placed on each building on a wooden information plate. The least correct answers (41%) concerned the knowledge of Hauländers (Fig. 4). This piece of information could only be found on one panel placed by the

¹ 21.6% of visitors used a guide.

² Only the opinions of visitors on a guided tour were taken into consideration.

entrance to the Hauländer farm. Excluding those who had known the answer already before their visit, less than 40% of people gained the knowledge allowing them to answer all the questions correctly. Most people learned the information on the period from which the presented buildings originated. In fact, the information which permits to answer this question is placed on every building in the museum on wooden plates specifying the date of creation and the origins of each building. The lowest number of visitors gained the knowledge about the provenance of Hauländers (only 25%).

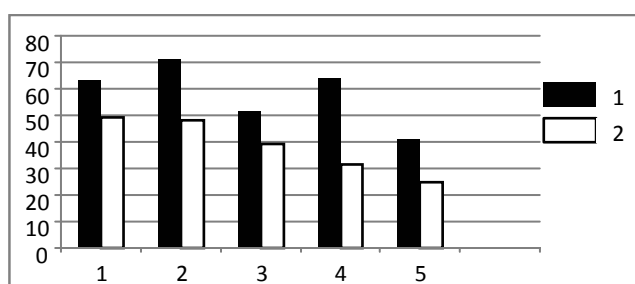


Figure 4. Proportions of visitors' correct answers to each of the questionnaire questions (source: own study). 1 – visitors who knew the correct answer before the visit, 2 – visitors who did not know the answer before the visit.

Question 1: What period do the buildings found in the open-air museum come from? a) the end of the 16th c.; b) the end of the 19th c. and the beginning of the 20th c.; c) from the period between the 17th and the 19th c.; d) I don't know.

Question 2: The rural buildings gathered in the museum come from... a) Wielkopolska; b) different parts of Poland, e.g. the Zulawy; c) different regions of Western Poland, e.g. Lubusz Land; d) I don't know.

Question 3: The village pattern of the museum is a reconstruction of: a) a village that had existed in that area; b) a typical 19th-century Wielkopolska village; c) a Hauländer village from the second half of the 19th c.; d) I don't know.

Question 4: The open-air museum is located on the grounds of the: a) Dziekanowice National Park; b) Lednica Landscape Park; c) Wielkopolski Culture Park d) I don't know.

Question 5: Hauländers is the name of: a) emigrants from the Netherlands from the period of the Spring of Nations; b) settlers who settled here under Dutch law; c) Dutch windmills; d) I don't know.

In the further part of the analysis it was calculated how many questions were answered correctly by each of the visitors. Only 3% of the interviewees were unable to answer even one out of five quiz questions. The questions to which answers were unknown at the beginning, were also answered incorrectly later by as many as 15% of people. Three test questions were answered

correctly by 20% of people, whereas 11% gave correct answers to 4 questions, and only 2% of those who did not know the answers before the visit, answered all the five questions correctly (Fig. 5).

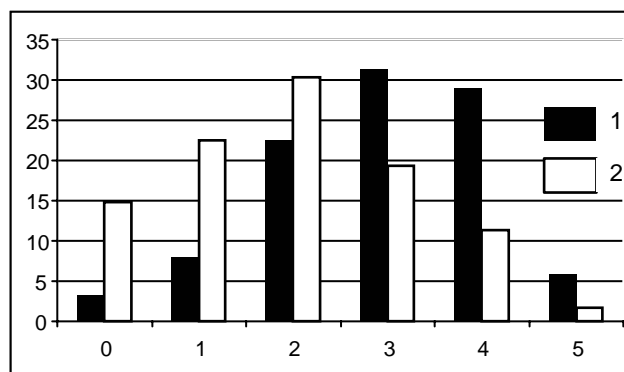


Figure 5. Proportion of visitors who gave correct answers to a certain number of questions (source: own study): 1 – visitors who knew the answer before the visit, 2 – visitors who did not know the answer before the visit.

Quiz questions: see Figure 4.

No significant differences in knowledge were noticed in relation to sex, age, education level and the size of the interviewee's locality of residence. No differences were found between the knowledge of the tourists and one-day visitors. It was discovered that more questions were answered correctly by those visiting the Park for the first time than by those who had been there before ($F = 8.34$, $p < 0.004$)³. Remarkably, the level of interest in the museum did not generally affect the level of knowledge learnt during the visit.

In order to distinguish groups of people who perceived and visited the museum in a similar way, a cluster analysis was conducted⁴. The variables of interest in the exhibitions, use of information sources, time spent on visiting the museum, and the knowledge acquired were used as criteria of segmentation. The resulting clusters were characterized by the socio-demographic and

³ The differences between groups were calculated using one-way ANOVA.

⁴ The k-means method and the case grouping and distance sorting algorithm was used with observations made at a fixed interval. The goal of the procedure was to obtain a particular number of concentrations which differ in the ways of visiting the place to the highest possible degree.

motivational variables. The four-cluster variant turned out to be the clearest and easiest to interpret. The choice was based on the variables analysis (comparison of average measurements of chosen variables between the clusters) and the Euclidian spaces between them.

The groups were: *residents* constituting 30% of the subject group, *students* (26%), *recreational visitors* (15%) and *sprinters* (30%) (Table 2). Two of the segments – students and sprinters – are in contradiction and thus easy to interpret.

Students display an above-the-average level of interest in all the exhibitions. They also use all the available sources of information and therefore the time they spend at the attraction is the longest (2.7 hours on an average). This group includes an above-the-average number of people with vocational education, almost half of the people in the group live in towns up to 100 thousand inhabitants; also, a significant percentage of those who visit the museum in organized groups belong to this group (Table 3). The motive of showing the family and friends a new place is characteristic of this group as well (Table 4).

The second segment, which is in contradiction to the first one, was called **sprinters** due to the short time of visit and little interest in the

exhibitions and sources of information. Among this group, only the manor exhibition attracted some attention. Interestingly, the average value for using the information sources is high as opposed to that of the group of ‘experts’. A relatively large number of primary school students, people from large cities and tourists can be found in this group. There was not even one person among them visiting the museum individually. This group cannot be distinguished from the other groups in terms of the motives.

The **residents** accounted for 30% of the subjects. These people were mostly interested in the rural farms (including the Hauländer farm), they read the information plates and asked the staff members for information during their visit. The group is characterized by an above-the-average number of people with a secondary school education, they also come mostly from villages or large cities. A distinguishing feature of this group is their cognitive motivation – to learn, to see or to show something new to their children or friend(s). There is also a strong social motive present – to spend time with the family or friends. People in this group also have a strong internal need to see this kind of places.

Table 2. The results of cluster analysis of visitors to the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park in Dziekanowice (source: own study)

Variables	Clusters			
	Residents	Students	Recreational	Sprinters
Rural farms	4.570	4.734	4.222	(4.044)
Church	3.978	4.734	4.178	4.067
Exhibition in the lumber room	2.000	4.051	2.667	(0.711)
Natural science exhibition at the Mill	(0.366)	3.975	3.600	(0.156)
Windmills	3.054	4.608	4.400	(2.333)
Hauländer farm	4.247	4.532	3.844	(1.744)
Smithy	3.237	4.430	3.267	(2.456)
Cemetery and the chapel	(2.710)	4.405	3.778	3.811
Manor	(3.054)	4.633	3.889	4.267
Presentations of handicraft	(0.194)	3.203	3.133	2.211
Information plates and panels	3.903	4.266	(1.667)	3.667
Conversation with the personnel	3.946	4.481	(1.667)	3.456
Guide book/folder	(0.548)	2.734	(0.244)	1.267
Direction signs	3.290	4.127	(1.200)	(2.678)
Plans, maps	2.108	3.924	(0.956)	1.822
Time of visit	2.100	2.684	2.300	2.069
Knowledge	2.000	1.747	1.844	2.122
N (%)	93 (30.3%)	79 (25.7%)	45 (14.7%)	90 (29.3%)

Note: the bold font was used to mark variables with values above the average, whereas the parentheses were used to mark values below the average.

Table 3. The characteristics of clusters by visitors' personal traits (source: own study)

Trait	Clusters				
	Residents	Students	Recreational	Sprinters	Average
Education					
Elementary	(2.15%)	5.06%	4.65%	10.00%	5.57%
Vocational	7.53%	13.92%	(4.65%)	5.56%	8.20%
Secondary and post-graduate	32.26%	29.11%	23.26%	(17.78%)	25.90%
Higher	58.06%	(51.90%)	67.44%	66.67%	60.33%
Chi ² Pearson's test	$\chi^2 = 19.00$; df=9. p<0.05				
Size of the place of residence					
Village	17.20%	11.39%	13.64%	11.11%	13.40%
Town up to 100 thousand citizens	(25.81%)	48.10%	36.36%	(25.56%)	33.01%
101-500 thousand	(3.23%)	13.92%	15.91%	10.00%	9.80%
More than 500 thousand	53.76%	(26.58%)	(34.09%)	53.33%	43.79%
Chi ² Pearson's test	$\chi^2 = 27.59$; df=9. p=0.001				
Are you on a trip for more than one day?					
Yes	7.53%	16.67%	17.78%	25.56%	16.67%
No	92.47%	83.33%	82.22%	74.44%	83.33%
Chi ² Pearson's test	$\chi^2 = 10.75$; df=3. p<0.01				
Group of visitors					
Individual	2.17%	1.27%	4.44%	(0.00%)	1.64%
With a friend/husband/wife	51.09%	(36.71%)	44.44%	46.07%	44.92%
On a trip	(4.35%)	20.25%	(6.67%)	13.48%	11.48%
With family and children	42.39%	41.77%	44.44%	40.45%	41.97%
Chi ² Pearson's test	$\chi^2 = 17.55$; df=9. p<0.05				

Note: see Table 1.

Table 4. Clusters and visitors' motives (source: own study)

Motives	Clusters				ANOVA Test
	Residents	Students	Recreational	Sprinters	
I wanted to learn something new about folk culture	3.956	3.409	3.406	3.473	F(3,295) = 7.13; p = 0.0001
I wanted to relax in nice surroundings	4.308	4.272	4.127	4.202	F(3,299) = 0.82; p = 0.4
I wanted to show the kids/family/friends something new	4.266	4.130	(3.611)	(3.662)	F(3,291) = 6.55; p = 0.0002
I wanted to escape daily stress	4.247	3.840	3.890	4.038	F(3,293) = 2.23; p = 0.08
Because places like this one should be visited	4.054	(3.522)	3.734	3.794	F(3,293) = 2.79; p = 0.04
I wanted to see a new, interesting place	4.236	(3.777)	(3.767)	4.000	F(3,297) = 4.16; p = 0.006
I wanted to have a nice time with the kids/family/friends	4.565	(4.244)	4.546	4.327	F(3,295) = 2.67; p = 0.04

Note: see Table 2.

Finally, the fourth group, which is the least numerous, were the **recreational visitors**. They only accounted for 15% of all the visitors. Their interest in all the exhibitions was mediocre, especially the interest in the natural science exhibition at the mill, the windmills and the handicraft displays. A rather weak interest in the information sources was found in that group, yet the time of visit and the acquired knowledge remain on an average level. This group consists mostly of people with a higher education who come from large cities (100-500 thousand citizens); many of them visited the museum individually, although a social motivation to spend time with family and friends was also dominant in this group.

DISCUSSION

The effects and determining factors of learning in the course of a visit to the museum is not a frequent subject of studies. The attempt made by this article to specify the determinants influencing the effects of learning took two groups of factors into consideration – objective (those of the place) and subjective (regarding the visitors). The factors of the place include most of all the exhibition arrangement and the form of interpretation of the heritage used to transfer knowledge to the visitors. The analysis of the exhibitions and the activity forms of the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park showed that it is mostly groups that benefit from visiting the museum in terms of educational advantage. It is a tour guide showing the group round and interpreting the objects, or a museum employee teaching a class, who can significantly influence the level of knowledge acquired during a stay. Individual visitors who see unknown appliances or objects remain uninformed of their function. They also have no possibility to become familiar with non-material aspects of rural culture. What has to be underlined is that the museum grounds magnificently resemble the homeliness, character, climate or atmosphere of a village. It creates a feeling of nostalgia, fondness and reflection [4, p. 90]. It is particularly important for older people. To young people, especially those visiting without a tour guide, many of the artifacts and contexts remain unclear. There will be more such visitors in the years to come, so perhaps it is worth considering how to facilitate access to knowledge

of both the exhibited objects and other non-material aspects of rural culture.

As the above study has shown, the Wielkopolski Ethnographic Park is mostly visited for recreational reasons such as spending time with the family or friends. Acquiring new information and seeing a new place were the motives which ranked the lowest. It is in contradiction to the results obtained by Stasiak [5], where reasons such as curiosity, contact with rural culture and interest in the subject were most often indicated. Perhaps the differences are due to different methodologies applied. In the present study, seven motives were evaluated, which gave an opportunity to every visitor to assess exactly the same motives. In Stasiak's study, it seems, each visitor was to name a motive which made him visit the open-air museum⁵. This way unconscious or hidden motives of recreation and rest with the family could fall back in the hierarchy. It is also confirmed by the entries in the commemorative books cited by Pelczyk [4, p. 90], "...the stay here is (...) a nice rest and gives an opportunity to think", "...it is a place where you can rest", "I was enchanted by the mallows (...) a wonderful atmosphere" or "the taste of real Poland". The open-air museum is a place of reflection and a sentimental place to relax. It is perfect for spending melancholic time among friends. Apart from the general atmosphere of the museum, visitors are also interested in the exposition which was evaluated very highly.

The most interesting information sources were the tour guides and the museum personnel working at the exposition. However, what is worth considering is why the guidebooks, folders, direction signs and plans were all evaluated so lowly. In their leisure time, people are not willing to use written materials which require much more effort and competence⁶ than a casual conversation with another person or asking questions. That is why designing clear, interesting materials which attract attention is so important. It begins with a guidebook available at the reception desk, through direction signs and interpretation panels. Multimedia guides available at the reception and multimedia points placed in several spots on the museum grounds are also worth considering. They would allow visitors to understand better both the

⁵ The procedure is not clearly explained in the article.

⁶ for example, reading comprehension skills.

material objects and elements of non-material rural culture such as singing, dance, music, customs, etc.

The results presented above point to the fact that the visitors to the museum are not inclined to acquire knowledge about the place. According to Pelczyk [4, p. 90] "...the public in the open-air museums does not pay too much attention to the substantial details", they are more about "...the aura of authenticity evoked by the special place". Stasiak also writes [5, p. 232] that "the public does not usually expect to be provided with specific, detailed information about the objects (age, construction, history)". The author of this paper agrees completely with the above statements. However, he believes that it is relevant to inform the visitors about the general context of the Polish countryside (especially that of Wielkopolska), specificity of its culture, characteristics, and things worth saving for the future generations of which we are so proud. It is known to those for whom the open-air museum creates the aura of homeliness, nostalgia, sentiment and reflection. It is not known to young urban people or from abroad. For them the museum is incomprehensible and may seem like a boring collection of old buildings. It is for them that the rural culture should be 'tamed'. What is interesting in it should be shown in order to inspire the interest in the rural culture, as Andrzej Stasiak put it, they should be provided with sensations and emotions.

At least more than a half of the visitors ('students' and 'sprinters') showed high interest in all the information sources. They are the potential target for the extended interpretation. Visiting the open-air museum with a tour guide ('students') significantly extends the time of visit, so people expect information. 'Sprinters' are to a large extent school pupils, people from large cities and tourists. They are unfamiliar with the rural culture. For them a special strategy should be worked out to provide the basic knowledge in the most clear and attractive way. A special program taking their specific needs into consideration should be created for children. 'Residents' come mostly from rural areas. As the study has shown, they are strongly motivated; they are interested in the facility and the information plates. They are the potential target for specialized and extended information and anecdotes. Since they live in the countryside, the context of the open-air museum is known to them, so they expect details. Finally, the fourth group, the 'recreational visitors', are people who come to have a nice time and are

only slightly interested in acquiring knowledge. Even though this group makes up only 15% of all the visitors, it is important to provide them with conditions to rest and interact with their family and friends. They would certainly be interested in solving puzzles connected with the rural culture, theme games, possibilities to see artistic craftsmanship, etc.

One of the important conclusions resulting from this study is that visitors to open-air museums do not constitute a homogeneous group that perceives and reacts to the museum space in a uniform manner. They are individuals with different needs, preferences and cultural competences. Since creating an individual offer for each and every one of them is not possible, groups of visitors with similar preferences should be set apart, and offered programs to satisfy their needs in the best way possible. One of the most important target groups are obviously children. It is their satisfaction that determines the satisfaction of an entire family visiting a tourist attraction.

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