

ENONTEKIÖ ART PATH - ENONTEKIÖN TAIDEPOLKU
A practical framework for sustainable community art projects
in Finnish Lapland using service design tools

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Abstract

The following study presents a practical framework for sustainable community art projects based on the Enontekiön taidepolku or Enontekiö Art Path project (will be called the latter throughout the thesis). Enontekiö Art Path is a collaborative project between University of Lapland and Municipality of Enontekiö in Finnish Lapland. The art path is formed by six different art workshops that moved from the village of Hetta all the way to the village of Kilpisjärvi during the years 2017–18. The aim of the project is to create environmental artworks based on local stories, traditions and materials that the people in each village shared with the team of students and staff from the University of Lapland.

This study has various objectives: first, to demonstrate the potential of art and artistic practices in the empowerment of the ageing members of the communities; second, to depict the significance of service design thinking and co-creation in community art projects; third, to present a practical framework for sustainable community art projects using service design thinking particularly in Finnish Lapland.

The research strategy is arts-based action research. The main working methods were place-specific research, observations, note taking and documentation.

A major outcome of this study is a practical framework for community art projects utilizing participatory service design tools, which can be used by the future Arctic Art and Design (AAD) students at the University of Lapland if they plan to continue the art path to other villages of Enontekiö municipality. Another outcome which is part of an artistic practice, is a publication designed for the community members and municipality website. Hence the results of this study are substantial and useful at both general and personal levels. At a personal level, the results are useful in terms of gained knowledge, experience, skills and empathy together with an increased sense of responsibility towards older populations of the society. On a general level, the results aim to demonstrate the potential of multicultural and multidisciplinary collaborations which are useful for the empowerment of communities.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Community art projects have received much attention in recent years because of their power to address identity crises especially within marginalized communities and also because of their social and economic benefits. Such projects provide communities a platform to restore their losing identities especially in areas such the northern part of Finland or what is popularly known as Finnish Lapland, where communities face numerous challenges such as migration of young adults to the southern cities resulting in a declining population of the area. As accurately summed up by Satu Miettinen, Laura Laivamaa & Mira Alhonsuo (2014), the living condition in the Arctic is challenging as, “Distances between towns are long, land area is sparsely populated, natural living conditions are harsh and, in some places, population is rapidly aging” (p. 105).

The community art project utilized in this study commenced with the collaboration of University of Lapland and Enontekiö municipality of Finnish Lapland in 2016. The concept for the project involved community art workshops based on local stories and materials in different villages of Enontekiö municipality forming an art path across the region giving meaning to the name of the project, Enontekiön Taidepolku (in Finnish) or Enontekiö Art Path. The project successfully completed six artistic workshops in five different villages of the municipality, with accomplished environmental artworks as end products (five temporary and one permanent). The first workshop took place in the municipality capital, Hetta, followed by a series of workshops in Vuontisjärvi, Hetta (again), Palojärvi, Karesuvanto and Kilpisjärvi. The project was completed gloriously with an exhibition in the nature center of Hetta from November 2018 to February 2019.

The workshops that took place in different villages were based on either local stories or a combination of a local folktale and an innovative idea from the international team of students from the university, using local natural materials. The team involved in the project were mostly students and two teachers from the department of art and design at the University of Lapland along with few local art enthusiasts who helped materialize the happening.

I was part of four of the six workshops and worked as an organizer, planner, artist and researcher. Due to the language barrier and because of my professional and educational

background as a graphic designer, I was responsible for documentation and designing the graphical material for the project. Additionally, I designed the logo for this project, handled social media marketing and designed a small coffee table book depicting the process of making artworks which was launched and distributed at the exhibition opening in October 2018. Designing the logo along with the coffee table book was part of my artistic journey in this project.

The idea for this study originated during one of the workshops when the team faced the challenge of extremely limited participation from the community members in spite of planning the workshop to accurately suit the interest of the village members. Although surprised and disappointed by the disinterest of the community members, I was curious to find out the reasons behind this mishap and solutions to avoid this problem in future. Hence one of the aims of this study is to increase the participation of the local community members in community art projects keeping in mind the unique natural living environment of the arctic, especially Finnish Lapland.

Another problem addressed by this study is the increasing ageing population of Finland especially in the Finnish Lapland. According to a recent report, the world's population is ageing rapidly as a result of decline in human fertility and increase in human life expectancy. Finland stands third in position as the country with world's most aged population: 28%, along with Germany, Portugal, and Bulgaria. Additionally the percentage of older persons (60 years or above) living independently in Finland is 33% (World Population Ageing, 2017). Although the entire population of the country is ageing rapidly, this problem is accompanied with other issues in Finnish Lapland as emphasized by Timo Jokela and Glen Coutts (2016) as "...the disintegration of cultural activities as well as psycho-social problems often related to the loss of cultural identity and weak communication" (p. 8). Hence, University of Lapland that positions itself as the center of "Arctic and northern research" (Jokela, Hiltunen & Härkönen, 2015, p. 434) contributes towards cultural sustainability and regional development through various community based projects involving students from the department of art and design and collaborate with local communities and businesses throughout Lapland (Härkönen & Vuontisjärvi, 2018).

During the Enontekiö Art Path project, the rising issue of ageing population along with other challenges of living in the arctic became even clearer. Additionally, the project provided an opportunity to explore the problems even further during workshops as well as during interaction with the community members and offered a platform to find possible solutions to it.

1.2 Objectives of the research

The main objective of this study is to demonstrate the importance of art and artistic collaborations for ensuring the wellbeing of the communities living in Finnish Lapland. As discussed in the literature review chapter of the study, that although art is an enigmatic concept, its power, significance and influence on the lives of the people is unimaginable. However, its use for solving wicked problems of the society is still an emerging and underexplored field for researchers, designers, artists, and art enthusiasts (Matarasso, 1997). Therefore, using the feedback of few participants as well as my personal experience and observations, I have tried to depict the potential of art and artistic collaboration for the welfare and prosperity of communities living in the Finnish Lapland. Additionally, participatory service design which is another emerging field, offers excellent tools for collaboration and utilizes empathy as a tool to gain deeper community insight and facilitate co-creation with various stakeholders.

Altogether there are three research questions posed by this study: One, how to develop a practical framework for sustainable community art projects using service design tools? Second, how to plan sustainable community art projects with a focus on increasing the participation of locals especially the ageing population in Finnish Lapland? Third, how Finnish Lapland offers unique challenges and opportunities for both, multidisciplinary collaborations and for the inhabitants of the area?

Through this study I also wish to reflect upon the knowledge gained during the project and how it has affected me. At a personal level, this study has been a difficult yet exhilarating journey for me, both as an artists and a researcher. As an artist, the challenges faced were in terms of new cultural environment, unfamiliar materials such as snow, and the collaborative aspect of making artworks were focus was on the process rather than the outcome. As a researcher, language barrier was the biggest challenges however by the end of the study I was able to figure out ways to overcome it using alternative methods of communication. Nonetheless, as quoted by François Matarasso (2019), “In community art, the journey always matters as much as the destination” (p. 15), my journey in this study has been a transformative one and has inspired me to somehow continue to be a part of the team that solves wicked problems of the society by using art and artistic practices in all its’ glory.

1.3 Methodology

The two overarching methodologies for this study are arts based action research and reflexive research. Arts based action research, as described by Timo Jokela, Mirja Hiltunen and Elina Härkönen (2015), is a method for artistic and creative collaboration in the areas related to the Arctic. Additionally, it involves art as a medium for the action research, justifying the name of the methodology (Jokela, 2017). It aligns perfectly with my research project and has provided me with methods relevant for successful completion of this study. On the other hand, reflexive research, which involves the researcher's self as an integral part of the research, has helped me shape my personal artistic journey in the research project as well as this study. Additionally, as emphasized by Etherington (2004), reflexivity along with its inclusion in the representation of the research, has helped me produce better results for the framework which is presented as the final outcome of this study.

The practical framework for community art projects using participatory service design tools proposed at the end of this study is based on the synthesis of arguments drawn from the analysis of written as well as visual data collected during the workshops. The framework consists of five major arguments that can be utilized by future AAD students at the University of Lapland who wish to expand the scope of project further. It can also be employed by other artists and researchers, working in the field of community arts in Finnish Lapland and places with similar settings.

The study seeks to find answers to the research questions by using methods of qualitative analysis of data, that is collected during the workshop mostly in the form of field notes, observations, sketches and photographs. The data is divided into two groups: written and visual, and is analysed independently using open coding and compositional interpretation respectively. This analysis is then used to draw arguments for the practical framework proposed by this study.

1.4 Ethical considerations

The research project utilized in this study took over a period of two years and I have been part of roughly half of it. The study was limited to the members of Enontekiö municipality and students and teachers of the University of Lapland. The students that participated in the project

came from various ethnicities and disciplines and the overall age of all the members (including Enontekiö community members) ranges between 4 to 80 years. Due to multiculturalism and a wide range of age groups involved in the study, it was important to follow a strict mode of ethical conduct. The following ethical guidelines were put into order at all times (before, during and after the research):

- The research data collected during the project was kept confidential throughout the study.
- A verbal permission was taken from the adults involved in the project, concerning photo and videographic documentation and the ways of using the data was explicitly explained.
- In case of minors, a written permission related to collection of photographs and videographs, and its consequent use in print and web media was asked from the parents beforehand in the form of a consent form. In case of denial of permission for documentation from any person, minor or adult, a special care was given to respect their decision and the photographers were asked to figure out a way around such cases.
- The dignity and wellbeing of all those involved in the study was secured at all times.

1.5 Limitations of the study

Since the research project utilized in this study, is a unique community art project based in one of the several municipalities of Finnish Lapland, there are several limitations of this study. First, Finnish Lapland is of the most unique, challenging and exotic locations in the Global North, making the scope of this study very limited, geographically. Second, the final outcome of this study can be utilized in community art projects with settings only similar to Finnish Lapland. Third, the focus of this study is increasing the participation of local ageing community members in art projects, hence it inevitably excludes the focus on other age groups of the community. Fourth, the study focuses on creating environmental artworks and use of natural materials hence limiting the scope of this study as compared to other contemporary art forms that might have an altogether different impact on the community members.

Nonetheless, I believe that such limitations are an indication that there is a huge unexplored aspect to community art projects and can be viewed as the undiscovered milestones in future scope of this study.

Chapter 2: Context: Enontekiö Municipality

Finnish Lapland, in general, makes up for one third of Finland in area. It's population is three percent of the total population making it severely less populated (Tilastokeskus, 2014). Specifically, Enontekiö municipality with its administrative centre in the village of Hetta, is the outermost northwest tip of Finland. Geographically, Enontekiö share borders with Norway and Sweden (Figure 1). The largest villages in the area are Peltovuoma, Kilpisjärvi, Karesuvanto, Vuontisjärvi, Leppäjärvi and Palojoensuu in addition to Hetta. It is the third largest municipality in size and second most sparsely populated municipality in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2018; Tilastotietoa Enontekiön kunnasta, n.d.). The major population in Enontekiö municipality is between 45 to 67 years of age, i.e., an ageing population (Figure 2).



Figure 1

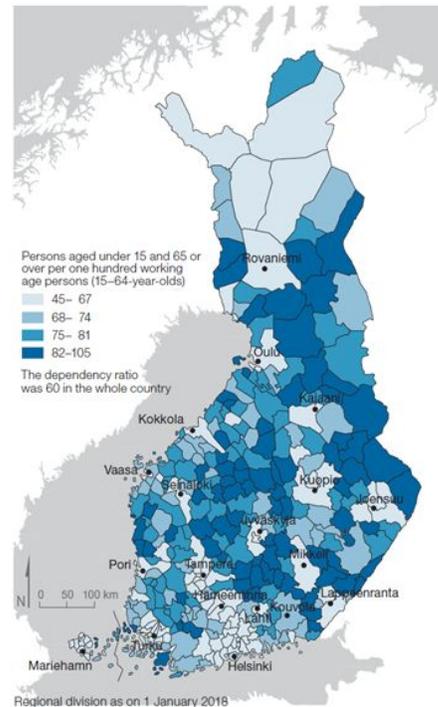


Figure 2

Figure 1: Enontekiö Municipality (Source: Google Maps, 2019)

Figure 2: Population division in Finland based on age (Source: Statistics Finland, 2018)

As described by Lähteenmäki (2017), Finnish Lapland is a storehouse of exciting activities ranging from skiing in winter to peaceful cottage life in summer together with a tranquil atmosphere all year long. In addition to the popular ski centers in Levi, Kittilä and Luosto-Pyhätunturi fell close to Sodankylä, Enontekiö has some of the “earliest holiday centres to exist in Lapland” (Lähteenmäki, 2017, p. 177) in Muonio, Hetta and Kilpisjärvi. Enontekiö is also known for the fells throughout the area along with two of the highest mountains in Finland, Halti and Saana close to Norway border. In general, Hetta, which is the administrative centre, is also referred as Enontekiö (usually on signboards along the roads). The name Enontekiö means the place where the river originates, referring to the the river Ounasjoki that originates from the lake Oynasjärvi in Hetta (Tietoa Enontekiöstä, n.d.). All traditional and cultural activities in Enontekiö are inspired by nature in some way or the other. Reindeer bone and antlers are used as a popular material for a variety of handicraft objects like, jewelry, utensils, handle for *kuksa*. Additionally, socks, shoes, bags, and garments are available in reindeer leather. Berry picking and fishing are the most cherished activities for the people in summer (Enontekiöläistä kulttuuria, n.d.).

Reindeer herding is one of the most imperative occupations for the inhabitants in the area. In earlier days, the reindeer herders lived as nomads, moving from one village to another whereas now most of them have farms and lead a more settled life. People these days also use GPS tracking devices on reindeers and detect their movement using various mobile phone applications. One of the herders referred it as the “the best invention since the snowmobile” (Lähteenmäki, 2017, p. 135).

Overall, Enontekiö is a flourishing municipality, both because of the development of the area in terms of infrastructure as well as focus on the wellbeing of its inhabitants by the policy makers. The municipality is not just a storehouse of variety of landscapes (see below, Figure 3) and activities for the tourists but it also focuses on preserving the traditional stories and development of the area through art. The best example of this is its collaboration with international institutions such as the University of Lapland, which gives an opportunity to both its inhabitants and students from different parts of the world, to interact, share ideas, make collaborative artworks and understand each other's cultures.



Figure 3: Enontekiö Municipality: Pictures demonstrating the varying natural environment of Enontekiö. From left to right: Fells enroute Enontekiö; Berries in Kilpisjärvi; Sand dunes in Karesuvanto; Sweden-Finland border in Karesuando, Sweden; Chilly sunset in Palojärvi; and Saana mountain in Kilpisjärvi, October 2017 to September 2018.

These images (Figure 3) are a clear representation of the range of sceneries offered by the Enontekiö municipality. The long winter season offers various activities for the both inhabitants and the tourists including skiing, snowboarding, ice fishing, winter swimming, northern lights hunting and so on. On the other hand, berry picking, hiking, canoeing in lakes, are some of the major activities done during the summer season which is comparatively short, but extremely colorful and lively.

During the project (Enontekiön Arth Path), the students of the Arctic Art and Design (AAD) Master's degree programme (including myself) along with one exchange student, got a chance to experience life in the villages of Enontekiö and interact with local people.



Figure 4: Tunturi-Lapin Luontokeskus (Nature Center), Hetta, October 2017 and November 2018.

Opportunely, over the two year long project, with six workshops in five different villages, students got a chance to experience every season of the area namely, winter, spring, summer, autumn and the dark month of November. The two pictures (Figure 4) of Tunturi-Lapin Luontokeskus (Nature Center) in Hetta were taken on the first and the last trip to Enontekiö during the project.

Chapter 3: Literature review

The dominant research themes explored in this chapter are *art and communities, community art, environmental art, Finnish Lapland, ageing population and participatory service design*. Starting from the common impression about art, followed by relevant theories related to inclination of traditional notions of art towards community and environmental art, leading to impact of artistic practices on the ageing communities, this chapter concludes with the methods and tools of service design and its significance in social research.

3.1 Art and communities

Arts and artistic practices have always been an integral part of our society. However, for a long time, examining the impact of art as a tool to build empathy, empowerment and feeling of belongingness within individuals and communities by researchers, practitioners and art enthusiasts have been “terra incognita, a continent whose existence is known, but which remains unexplored” (Matarasso, 1997, p. IV; Kay, 2000). Ellen Dissanayake (1990) has described art (usually referred to visual arts) or the arts (includes all other art forms such as dancing, sculpting, drama, singing and so on), as an evolutionary trait of human beings, hence directly related to science, psychology and human biology. She has justified this idea with three interesting arguments. First, art is omnipresent; which according to the evolutionary theory depicts its importance in the “evolutionary fitness” (p. 6) of the species; second, art is and has been an integral part of the society, meaning it has its roots in the survival instincts of the species; third, art is pleasurable, which is a complex emotion, consequently referring to an attribute of the human species. Hence, art or the arts is not only a joyous activity or an aesthetic supplement, it is indeed an integral part of human behavior, henceforth an important tool in ensuring the well being of the human kind. Similarly, Matarasso (1997) has pointed out an interesting argument about the ubiquitous nature of art as, “Despite or because of its apparent uselessness, art is produced by all human societies” (p. 12).

Furthermore, Dissanayake (1990) has elaborated the meaning of art based on how it is practiced, perceived, evaluated, positioned and regarded differently, in different parts of the world. For example, some cultures accentuate visual art and ornamentation, whereas some cultures have less regard for the pictorial art as compared to other art forms. Similarly, some cultures consider art to be practiced only by skilled artists while others believe art is for everyone; some cultures places artists on the highest pedestal while others contempt them and so on. Also, "Art may be an unexceptional part of life and "just happen"; frequently, however, it is considered to come from a special or divine realm, perhaps being revealed in dreams or in a magical sort of inspiration" (Dissanayake, 1990, p. 48). A similar argument is presented by Alain Botton and John Armstrong (2013). They have emphasised the idea of art being sanative and a powerful tool in establishing humanity and that it has the ability to amplify our capabilities as humans beyond the natural limits.

Additionally, Botton and Armstrong (2013) have labeled art as a helpful medium in surmounting various psychological challenges. They have identified seven such frailties, and presented seven functions of art to overcome them. These seven functions of art are: remembering, hope, sorrow, rebalancing, self-understanding, growth and appreciation. Art critic Nicolas Bourriaud in his book, *Relational Aesthetics* (2002), describes relational art in a comparable way to what Ellen Dissanayake describes the evolutionary trait of art. According to Bourriaud, art and its interaction with humans has evolved drastically over the years. At first, art served as a means to connect with the almighty, then it served as a junction between man and nature and eventually it focused its attention on inter-human relations. Art and artists are now gradually moving towards a more sociable and public form of art which aims at dealing with social and cultural issues (Bourriaud, 2002).

Although it is established that art is indeed an enigmatic concept, there are numerous theories focusing on the purpose of art and what it has to offer to the humanity and today's society. Kate Crehan (2011) narrates the journey of a British arts organization called Free Form Arts Trust, commenced in the 1969, which single mindedly promoted art to reach everyone and not just the typical elite art world admirers. Since they aimed at reaching the common man through this new form of arts, they called it "community arts" (Crehan, 2011, p. 12). Additionally, other aspirations of these 'community artists' (this is what they called themselves) included: exercising the artistic activities in places and people with hardships, be it environmental, cultural, financial or educational; bringing about social and environmental changes through art; and, making an impact on the policy makers. The three founders of Free Form Arts Trust, namely Martin

Goodrich, Jim Ives and Barbara Wheeler-Early, believed in the revolutionary power of art and the fact that it should not be confined to galleries and exhibitions (Crehan, 2011). Although, in the earlier years of their effort to connect art to the local public, they had to overcome two unavoidable obstacles: first, ignorance and disinterest of gallery artists to reach beyond the entitled art world audience; and second, ignorance and disinterest of common people who regarded contemporary art extraneous to them and their lives (Crehan, 2011). Furthermore, Kate describes the initial days of Free Form, when they used to travel throughout the country, talking to people, making mobile projects and figuring out ways to stay connected to people for future collaboration. They adopted a simple procedure to establish a reliable relationship with the community: first, a small icebreaker performance for the people of the community; and second, a simple artistic workshop to initiate dialogue which eventually led to ways in which their collaboration could function all year long. As emphasised by Kate (2011), the second step is particularly important because of the ephemeral nature of the collaborative activities between artists and the community.

Scotland based artist and researcher, Mark Dawes (2008) presents a similar argument related to the temporary characteristic of artistic collaborations with communities. He says, “A process-based model can be a highly successful approach to working with people in the arts, but the short-term nature of most projects of this kind limits more profound possibilities for growth within communities” (p. 65). He has also questioned the suitability of the use of word ‘project’ while working with communities because “a ‘project’ has an endpoint” (p. 65) and how can there be a limit or a final destination for the extent of empowerment or growth in case of communities and people in general. As quoted by Dawes (2008),

“If empowerment is an important function of the arts, then the direction of travel should be towards complete and permanent integration of the arts within public construction partnerships, and away from the ‘visitations’ of short-term projects which appear to value the creativity, ideas and energy of communities for only a finite period” (p. 82).

On the contrary, Roxanne Permar (2013) has reported that few participants of a community art project called ‘Mirrie dancers’ project in Shetland Island, Scotland regard the transitory nature of such projects as a way of making “them more special” (p. 91) irrespective of the fact that they don't last long. The project consisted of community art workshops and events in eight different regions of Shetland Island using light as medium for artworks. The temporary illuminations

created by the team of artists and local community members lasted for two to six weeks depending majorly on community ownership and interest. However, some communities wanted to keep the illuminations as permanent installations.

3.2 Community art

François Matarasso (2019), describes community art that started in around 1960s as the backbone of the contemporary participatory art. According to him, “Community art is the creation of art as a human right, by professional and non-professional artists, co-operating as equals, for purposes and to standards they set together, and whose processes, products and outcomes cannot be known in advance” (p. 51). He has further explained the importance of cooperation and equality between professional and non-professional artists as well as the unexpected outcomes or product of their collaboration. This uncertainty is an important aspect of community art projects as importance is given to the process of making artworks which is based on an agreed set of boundaries between the two parties and, “...art emerges as they pay attention and respond to one another” (p. 52).

Distinctively, Timo Jokela, Glen Coutts, Elina Härkönen and Maria Huhmarniemi (2013) have discussed the concept of community art by using examples from various successful projects in the field and the applied visual art (AVA) program at the University of Lapland. According to them, the AVA program is a, “seamless extension of community art education and participatory environmental art developed within the department of art education at the University of Lapland” (p. 8).

There are several accomplished as well as ongoing projects specifically in the global North, which are devoted to establishing artistic practices as a method for sustainable development of the communities. Below I have elaborated the concept of community art using various examples from similar community art projects especially in the Global North.

The ‘Mosaic Bollard Project, Woodlands, Glasgow’ reported by Dawes (2008) is a classic example of how community art can be an exemplary tool in inculcating a feeling of belongingness in people towards their built environment. According to Dawes, Karina Young, a local artist, collaborated with a local primary school and turned the dull, slightly horrid looking bollards into beautiful mosaics using colorful tiles. The visual for the mosaics were made by children which were further rescaled and applied to bollards. “The sense of ownership fostered

by this project amongst the local children is a key factor in its success...[and] The bright, vibrant designs speak eloquently of the diversity of the local population” (p. 84).

On a similar note, Satu Miettinen, Melanie Sarantou and Daria Akimenko (2016) after accomplishing two art and storytelling workshops with Anangu Aboriginal communities of South and Western Australia and the Fibre Space Incorporated textile artist group of South Australia by adopting empathic design approach, emphasise the significance of sharing personal experiences and stories by engaging in artistic practices. For the South Australian women artists, art and craft making is a means to improve self actualization and bear with the difficult living conditions in outback Australia. This is similar to the case of the Gaelic speaking area in the Western Isles of Scotland where the local community participates in a week long traditional music and dance summer school every year, as one of the means to cope with the adversity of the economic and social depression in the area, as described by Alan Kay (2000). Both the examples mentioned above represents the far-reaching positive impact of artistic practices especially in marginalized communities and the way it serves as an escape for the community members from the complications of everyday lives.

Furthermore, Kay (2000) also discusses about the use of artistic practices as a tool to build empathy, empowerment and feelings of belongingness within individuals and communities. He has laid down techniques to evaluate the outcomes of community art projects by critically examining four distinctive art projects in Scotland. The foundation of this evaluative framework is built on the outcomes of four participatory art projects in Australia, Ireland, North America, and the United Kingdom. Kay (2000) emphasises on the importance of precise and systematic evaluation of art projects to make it more valuable for the policy makers and for them to realise the significance of art in community revitalization.

Community art projects are not just limited to a place-specific group of people working with art against certain communal issues. Instead, it also includes building a family of like minded, art enthusiasts, who believe in the potential of artistic practices, regardless of their age, race or cultural differences. One such inspirational project, reported by Dawes (2008) is the Room 13 network. It is an art studio established and run entirely by students, originated in 1994 in the Caol Primary School, Scotland. This democratic organization runs by electing a management team which appoints “an artist in residence to work with them” (p. 72) and arranges the necessary projects, raises funds and looks over the overall maintenance. The main goal of Room 13 network is to provide the raw materials and a place to work for booming young artists, entrepreneurs and creative thinkers. Works include but are not limited to “collage, drawings,

sculpture, photography, digital prints, film, performance art, sound art, text, installations” (p. 72) and so on. A simple initiative by a group of passionate young students has turned into a worldwide network of similar studios and proudly operates as a great example of community empowerment.

Seana S. Lowe (2000) has described the impact of community art projects in two Denver neighborhoods by analysing two projects in the area. The two community art projects included building a permanent mural (3'4" x10') in Showtime Public Library and putting up a “multigenerational play” (p. 361) emphasising the Latino culture. I will be focusing on mural built by the Showtime residents and its profound impact as reported by Lowe. “The mural was produced by Showtime residents in honor of their neighborhood’s history of housing circus animals during the winter. They created tiles of clowns, trapeze artists, circus animals, and other circus images” (Lowe, 2000, p. 361). During and after the successful completion of the mural, the participants felt more connected, united and socially rejuvenated. Since the idea for the mural originated from the community members, it was close to their hearts, and as a result, all the participants were both, emotionally and creatively involved in the artistic process. As described by Lowe (2000), “...when interpreting the theme of the circus, an older woman drew a clown, a young boy drew a wagon wheel, and a teenager drew an elephant, as illustrations of what the circus meant to them” (p. 365). The analysis of the projects also yielded results such as: development of relationships within families and with other participants; discussions about shared concerns; inculcation of collective and individual identity; increased personal consciousness and strengthened artistic skills and intensified sense of belonging with the place. ‘Mirrie dancers’ project reported by Roxanne Permar (2013), is another example of a cross-generational community art project using light as a medium for the artwork in Shetland Island, Scotland in 2012. As described by Permar, the project was, “able to investigate the potential for light to play an active role in generating creative community engagement, innovation in traditional craft practices and collective memory through shared meaning of place” (p. 90). Permar claims that the project was a major success in terms of community involvement and community revitalization. Since the subject of the artwork (lace knitting) was both closely related to the lives of the Shetlanders as well as innovative in the use of technology (light projection), the participation, excitement and commitment of the community members was optimum. This project is an excellent example of a successful community art project in all possible aspects and was a major source of inspiration for my interest in the field.

Lastly, Matarasso (1997) describes the social and personal impact of art projects primarily in Britain. The findings from his research are divided into six categories, namely: personal development; social cohesion; community empowerment and self-determination; local image and identity; imagination and vision; and health and wellbeing (p. 7-9). The two categories that I found most interesting and relevant to my study are 'local image and identity' and 'health and wellbeing'. According to Matarasso, participatory art projects offer a great opportunity for people to celebrate the uniqueness of their living environment and helps in increasing a sense of belonging within individuals. Similarly, participation in artistic activities personally or in groups help people cope with certain mental health issues as well as provokes a general feeling of betterment and enhanced quality of life (Matarasso, 1997).

3.3 Environmental art

John Thornes (2008) has presented a straightforward definition of the term environmental art. In his words,

“Environmental art is[...]a very useful overarching term that encompasses works of art that have been composed or displayed, in or out of doors, and concerned with the environment. Environmental art can be brought into the gallery in the form of canvases, photographs, sculptures, videos, films, and natural samples (e.g., driftwood, soil, leaves, mud, rocks) or viewed outdoors in situ” (p. 393).

He has explained the need for such a forthright explanation of the term since it has been usually confused with the ideas of landscape art, land art, ecological art, environmental sculptures and so on. Additionally, in the last few decades, environmental art has seen a drastic shift in the ways it is practiced, regarded and viewed and hence there is a need to recognize this contemporary form of environmental art which is majorly “non representational” and “performative” (p. 393) in nature. Thornes (2008) has described the origin of environmental art in the early 20th century when artists and painters started “open-air painting” (p. 398) outside their closed studio into the natural environment. However, the non representational and performative aspect to environmental art began to materialize around 1960s when artists focused on the physical and sculptural approach to art making, which were made both away and outside the galleries.

Distinctly, Jokela (2013) has elaborated the significance of environmental art in Applied Visual Art (AVA) program at the University of Lapland. He describes applied visual art as, “an art that is useful” (p. 15) and how the AVA program integrates environmental art as a tool for understanding and collaborating with the communities. Since University of Lapland proclaims itself as an institute of Arctic and Northern research, the specializations offered by the university such as the AVA program provide opportunities of sustainable development of the cultural heritage in the North through multidisciplinary approaches. Additionally, since environmental art is an extremely broad concept, “place-specific applied art” (p.16) is a more accurate term for the process incorporated in the AVA program. As reported by Jokela, “Place-specific applied art has been designed for a specific location based on the identified need and terms” (p. 16).

‘The Pello Snowpark’ project reported by Esther Dorsman (2013) is a good example of environmental art, that took place in 2012 in Pello, Finnish Lapland. As described by Dorsman (2013), the project was collaborative in nature, and included participants from a local company (who initiated the project), students from University of Lapland and a local junior high school (p. 102). The project created a snow playground with snow sculptures related to the area which then served a pleasurable park for tourists and locals. Additionally, it helped the local company involved in the project gain valuable knowledge about the techniques of working with snow and ice as well as ways to incorporate other local schools and companies in similar collaborative projects in future.

Another similar and interesting environmental art project, the ‘Village of the Water Bird’ project is described by Elina Härkönen (2013). This project took place in 2012 in Meltosjärvi, Finland where Härkönen along with four students from the University of Lapland arranged a willow sculpting workshop together with the inhabitants of the village. Since the village was undergoing a landscape-mending program to eliminate the growth of willow in the area and the locals were uninterested in taking part in the process, an amusing artistic workshop came to rescue and changed the course of the way in which locals reacted to the willow problem. Through the project, the community members successfully built a huge willow sculpture in the form of a northern pike fish, which has historical importance in the area and as described by Härkönen, “Everyone seemed to be proud of the effort made to improve the village scenery with the former troublemaker, the willow” (p. 108).

Ann T. Rosenthal (2003) in her article focuses on “promoting systems thinking” (p. 153) and “integration-building skills” (p. 156) in students, artists and art enthusiasts by teaching environmental art at educational institutes. She has referred to environmental art as ‘eco-art’

and discusses unique ways of delivering an all rounded course to the students which consequently enables them to collaborate well with the nature and take sound decisions to tackle wicked environmental problems. Some aspects of her teaching method include: forming an interdisciplinary group of students working on a common environmental issue; detailed study and analysis of the environmental issue; creative and interactive sessions for innovative solution generation and so on. As quoted by Rosenthal, "...environmentalist academics can lead the way in developing interdisciplinary, theme-based courses that offer a systems approach to education" (p. 166).

I believe the use of term *environmentalist academics* by Rosenthal (2003) is a great way to summarize the expectations and aspirations of researchers working in the field of environmental art since dealing with environment and nature is a critical job and requires dedication, precision, empathy and passion of an environmentalist.

3.4 Finnish Lapland

The specifications of a place such as its natural environment, climate and occupational opportunities, are important factors to keep in mind when learning about the life of people and factors which affect its quality. In case of Finnish Lapland, as Maria Lähteenmäki (2017) describes, it is its "northernness" (p. 9) that influences the living conditions of its people in a unique way. From the daunting months of winter darkness, followed by a long winter season, to beautiful starry nights with Northern Lights and midnight sun in summer season, Northern Finland or Finnish Lapland, is indeed "the largest and most authentic adventure park in Europe and its only true wilderness area." (Lähteenmäki, 2017, p. 12). In a similar manner, Timo Jokela (2013) explains the span of landscapes offered by Finnish Lapland like, "It ranges from the forests and rivers of Lapland to its fells and the shores of the Arctic Ocean" (p. 132).

Geographically, the current area of Finnish Lapland became part of Finland in 1809 with a major population of indigenous Sámi people. After the devastation of Finnish Lapland in the Lapland war (1944 to 1945), the beginning of its restoration started with an event in Helsinki under the name of "Lapland on the rise" (Lähteenmäki, 2017, p. 117). Later, the word *lappilainen* (Laplander) was introduced and used to describe the people of Lapland (both Finnish and Sámi cultures). Currently, there are about 3500 Sámi people living in the municipalities of "Enontekiö, Utsjoki, Inari and the northern parts of Sodankylä, and a further 6400 living outside this area" (Samediggi, n.d., as cited in Lähteenmäki, 2017, p. 127)

Reindeer husbandry, hunting, fishing and craft making are some of the oldest means of livelihood for the Sámi community. However, reindeer herding, which is also one of the primeval occupations in the Finnish Lapland, has significantly changed its course over the years in terms of the price of reindeer meat, limitation on land availability and accessibility of grazing grounds and advancements in medical sciences impacting the population of reindeers over the years. The development of tourism industry in Finnish Lapland, has also affected the lives of reindeers and their herders to a great extent, for example, the potential grazing grounds are being converted to activity centres for the tourists. Additionally, reindeer herding is usually considered as a job for the older members of the communities as young adults are keen to move to the southern part of the country and take up city jobs (Lähteenmäki, 2017).

The unique natural environment of Finnish Lapland and a majority of Sámi community residing in the area, offers various opportunities and challenges for artists working in the region. Inkeri Ruokonen and Laurie Eldridge (2017) in their article discuss the history, aspirations and factors affecting artistic practices within Sámi community in Finland. They have reported the influence of tradition and culture in Sámi art for example, the use of “traditional yoik” (p. 14) by Sámi musicians. Distinctively, Satu Miettinen, Laura Laivamaa & Mira Alhonsuo (2014) have discussed the emerging concept of ‘arctic design’ as a brand that takes into account the distinctive natural environment and living conditions of the Arctic and acts as a tool for developing services, products and crafts in the circumpolar north. Arctic design incorporates methods of service design, co-creation and user centered approach to deliver products and services that are suitable for the challenges in the Arctic such innovative materials for harsh climatic conditions, consideration towards the cultural heritage of the indigenous population in the area and so on.

3.5 Ageing communities

As a result of advancement in the health science research over the past few years, there is a notable escalation in the human life expectancy, throughout the globe (Fillit, Rockwood & Woodhouse, 2011 as cited in Söderbacka, Nyström, & Fagerström, 2017). Consequently, there is a rise in the ageing population in the world. In Europe, this increase is also accounted for the decline in fertility of humans, in addition to the increasing human life expectancy. Statistically, there is a sudden growth in percentage of people aged 60 and more to 12.3% in 2015 from 9.2% in 1990. Moreover, this number is estimated to reach around 21% by 2050 worldwide.

Additionally, in Finland, the estimated increase in the population aged 60 years or over between 2017 and 2050 is 21%. Finland stands third in position as the country with world's most aged population: 28%, along with Germany, Portugal, and Bulgaria. Also, the percentage of older persons (60 years or older) living independently in Finland is 33%. (World Population Ageing, 2017). Similarly, in Finland there is a drastic change the population structure from 1917 to 2017, with an enormous increase in aged people in the country (Figure 5).

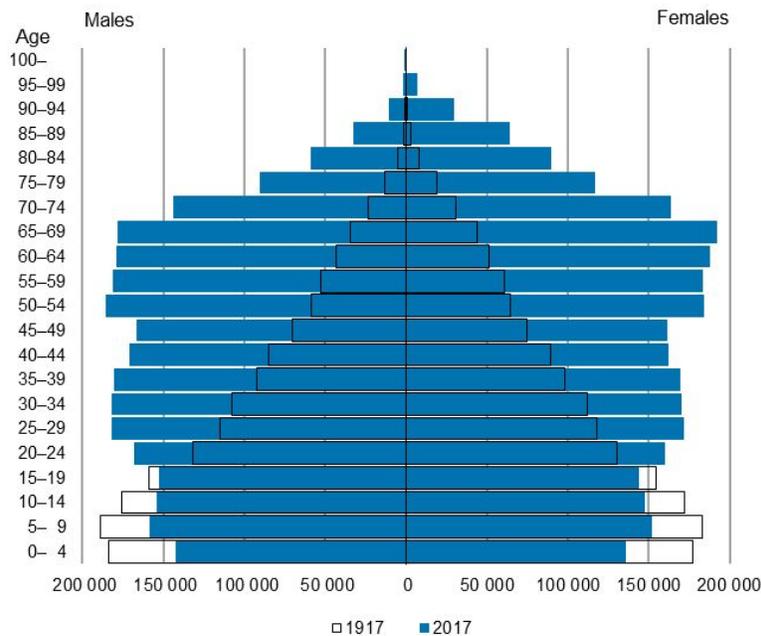


Figure 5: Population Structure (Source: Statistics Finland, 2018)

Consequently, there is an increased need for healthcare amenities and wellbeing initiatives for the ageing population (Söderbacka, Nyström, & Fagerström, 2017).

A study about the factors determining the vitality of older people, published by Tina Söderbacka, Lisbet Nyström, and Lisbeth Fagerström (2017), revealed that the 'feeling of being needed', is the biggest source of vitality for most of the participants (aged 65 and 75 years from Ostrobothnia, Finland and Västerbotten, Sweden). This feeling is majorly accomplished by either being available as a spouse, parent, grandparent, child (in some cases), or by being an active member in communal activities. Additionally, involvement in hobbies and friends are also important attributes that positively influence vitality. Contrarily, factors which suppress vitality in older adults include sickness, difficult living conditions, occurrences around the globe as well as

intimate surroundings, family issues and loneliness (Söderbacka, Nyström & Fagerström, 2017). Clearly, projects such as Enontekiö Art Path, are not only beneficial but at some level essential for the well being of people, especially in the faintly populated areas with a majority of older residents.

Söderbacka, Nyström, and Fagerström's study of vitality in older population also revealed an interesting point regarding work or employment, "Work at this age is often voluntary or takes the form of unpaid volunteer (charity) work, and a sense of being needed, being useful and/or having a role were more important than remuneration" (p. 381). For a majority of participants in the study, taking part in cultural events, enjoying music, making art and learning new skills were also valuable sources of inspiration. "Human beings need a clear task or mission; they need to serve others and thereby preserve their feeling of being useful and valuable, even if they no longer have a professional role. The experience of not being involved or needed can be experienced as unpleasant, and this influences older persons' vitality" (p. 385).

Anastasia Emelyanova and Päivi Rautio (2016) have discussed the multifold benefits of volunteering which include healthy ageing, satisfaction by feeling needed, socialising and networking and also how it is perceived and practiced by the ageing communities in the Arctic region. In Finland, the most popular areas of volunteering include but are not restricted to, "sport, health, religious and community activities" (Emelyanova & Rautio, 2016, p. 63). Undoubtedly, community art projects such as Enontekiö Art Path which provide a platform for the members of the community to be a part of a productive artistic experience, are hence advantageous.

Päivi Naskali, Marjaana Seppänen and Shahnaj Begum (2016), emphasise the idea that, "The Arctic creates a unique context in which to grow old" (p. 3). The factors affecting the aging process in Arctic include, unique and harsh natural environment, local beliefs and traditions, long distances between places, limited resources (both natural and manmade) and changing climate. Additionally, it is of utmost importance to understand the relationship of older people with nature and their immediate living environment, especially in rural villages because of their closeness with one another (Naskali, Seppänen & Begum, 2016).

Another interesting argument presented by Naskali, Seppänen and Begum (2016) is related to the contrasting nature of how the 'aged people' are projected by the local media in Finnish Lapland versus the official statisticians' view of them. On the one hand, aged people are considered self sufficient, prosperous and potential consumers and on the other hand, they are regarded as an economic burden and a threat to the Finnish society.

According to a survey of “almost 1000 people aged 65 and over living at home in Britain: the *ESRC-MRC HSRC QoL Survey*” (Bowling, 2005, p. 4), 81% of the participants acknowledged “good social relationships” (p. 77) and social activities as the most important quality for a good life. When the participants were asked about the ways of improving their quality of life, the most common response was, “having better health and physical mobility” (p. 71), followed by “having better social relationships with family members or friends/neighbours” (p. 81).

The following is the gist of the social activities that are majorly reported by the older communities (Bowling, 2005, p. 85):

- Social relationships: healthy relationship with partner, family, pets; regular contact to grandchildren/ children; closeness with friends and neighbours
- Social roles and social activities: helping friends, family, and neighbours; volunteer work; active participation in communal activities; participation in art making, music/choir, drama; presence in cultural and religious events; shopping, travelling and outings
- Solo activities: craft making like woodwork, painting, embroidery, sewing, knitting; collecting coins, books, stamps; pursuing hobbies like photography, cooking, gardening, playing instruments, reading books, exercising and so on

Additionally, the social activities that the participant enjoy the most, with walking (68%), gardening (59%) and attending clubs or organized groups (42%) as the top three activities whereas voluntary work (17%), other activities, including hobbies (10%) as well as attending evening or educational classes (7%) as the less important ones (Box 4.3 Examples of social activities mentioned, Bowling, 2005, p. 109). Interestingly, the participants who reported themselves as active members in varied social activities also rated their “QoL positively” (Bowling, 2005, p.110). Similarly, social activities and maintaining an eventful life as key sources for eradicating loneliness in old age (David J. Ekerdt, 1986 as cited in Bowling, 2005).

3.6 Participatory service design

Service design is an emerging field however services have been an integral part our society since the beginning of history. With the changing needs of users and advancements in technology and research sector over the decades, terms such as service marketing, service innovation, service engineering and service science research have gained enormous importance (Mager, 2009). As defined by Stefan Moritz (2005), “Service Design helps to innovate (create new) or improve (existing) services to make them more useful, usable,

desirable for clients and efficient as well as effective for organisations. It is a new holistic, multi-disciplinary, integrative field” (p. 23). Similarly, Marc Stickdorn (2012) describes service design as, “an interdisciplinary approach that combines different methods and tools from various disciplines. It is a new way of thinking as opposed to a new stand-alone academic discipline” (p. 22). However, Stickdorn also emphasises the fact that service design is a young and developing field and hence it is challenging to settle with one single definition. In his words, “If you would ask ten people what service design is, you would end up with eleven different answers – at least” (p. 22). Furthermore, Stickdorn & Schneider (2012) point out the five underlying principles of service design: user centered approach, co-creation, sequence of actions, evidencing and holistic approach (p. 26).

Differently, Stefan Moritz (2005), emphasises the importance and need of a holistic, combinative and multidisciplinary field that can improve and innovate services in today’s world where the largest sector of economy is service, making up upto 70% of GDP. Additionally, since service design aims at creating valuable and usable experiences for both its’ users and stakeholders, it incorporates unique methods, tools and techniques (Moritz, 2005). Satu Miettinen (2009) has emphasised the importance of design thinking tools in service design. Similar to the principles discussed by Stickdorn & Schneider (2012), Miettinen describes “Iteration and co-creation” as the two overarching approaches of service design.

However, Elizabeth B.-N. Sanders (2008) argue about the shifting perspective of designers and researchers from user centered design towards participatory design. Simply put, products and services are now designed ‘with’ users instead of ‘for’ them. It is also clear that the role of designers, researchers and users are changing drastically and has affected the ways products and services are developed in today’s world. Furthermore, participatory design broadly includes co-creation and co-design and are usually used as synonyms for co-design. The figure below (Figure 6), clearly demonstrate the different stages of co-designing (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Similarly, Cristiele A. Scariota, Adriano Heemanna and Stephania Padovania (2012) describe participatory design as the process that, “involves designing with the user, at the participatory design involvement level, and it points to the user as an inside and active contributor throughout each step of design development” (p. 2703).

Rachael Luck (2003) clearly explains the role of the so called ‘users’ in participatory design projects as,

“When engaged in a participatory design workshop the people who attend are part of the social process of design and play an active part in the issue/problem raising, discussion and decision making processes that are part of the early design stage of a project” (p. 524).

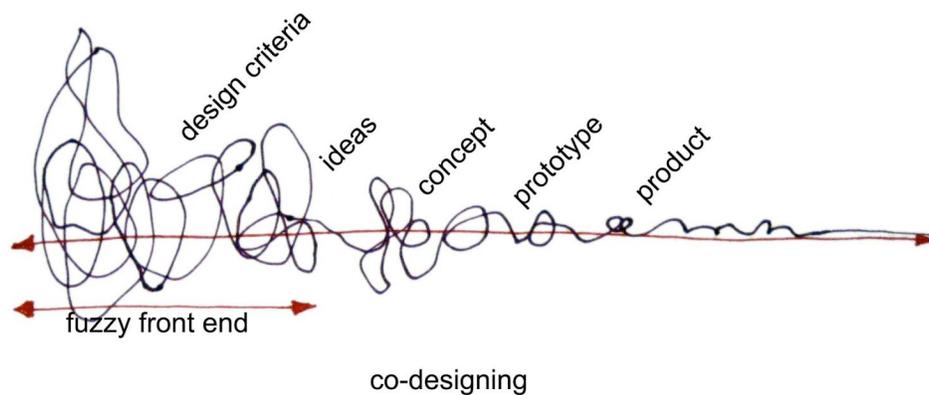


Figure 6: The front end of the design process has been growing as designers move closer to the future users of what they design (Source: Sanders & Stappers, 2008)

Hence, through participatory design approach the role of designer and the user blurs, opening endless possibilities and an illimitable space for efficient flow of ideas (Luck, 2003). In the field of social research and community art projects, participatory service design tools can be particularly effective because of the inclusivity of the immediate users or community members. In places such as Finnish Lapland, which offer unique set of opportunities and challenges, the best and most reliable of source of data are the local people themselves. Another compelling tool utilized in participatory service design as emphasised by Miettinen, Sarantou and Akimenko (2016) is empathy building. By sharing intimate life stories, and discussing the problems of everyday livelihood, participants can easily build empathy towards one another and also between researcher and participants.

Additionally, Andrea Alessandro Gasparini (2015) discusses the two aspects of empathy, emotional and cognitive (p. 49). Emotional aspect of empathy is facilitating one to feel what other people are feeling or experiencing whereas cognitive empathy enables understanding what other people are feeling or experiencing from their personal point of view. Although, the latter is highly subjective and can create misinterpretations, it can also be transformed into a

empathic insight by carefully examining the situation. Additionally, there are numerous ways in which empathy can be used as a tool to design services, products and to solve wicked problems of the society.

To conclude, there are numerous factors that affect the ways in which human beings interact with one another, and their natural environment and by utilizing suitable aspects of art and artistic practices, social researchers, designers, art enthusiasts and artists themselves can contribute to bring about changes in the society. Through this chapter, I have tried to highlight the potential of art in ensuring the wellbeing of human race by reporting various community art projects specifically in the Global North. Additionally, emphasis is given to environmental art and the issue of ageing population in Finnish Lapland as these are two of the major factors that contribute to the unique living conditions prevalent in the area. Furthermore, the major aspects of participatory service design are discussed as they play a key role in this study. As an emerging field, participatory service design has gained enormous popularity in today's world as it offers tools for engaging the immediate users in the design process and since it has been an inevitable part of the research project utilized in this study.

Chapter 4: Methods

As described by Christopher Crouch and Jane Pearce (2012), research methodology is the map for the research journey (p. 58). It defines the course of the research right from collection of data to its analysis to the final results. The three major components of methodology, namely, researcher's position; the analytical lens through which the study is viewed; and the methods, are intervened and greatly interdependent (Crouch & Pearce, 2012). Additionally, a researcher's position, which is influenced by a number of underpinning factors such as social, economical, cultural, educational, ecological, and so on, defines the "methodological decisions" (p. 62) the researcher takes. Conversely, the choice of methodology and methods should suit the personality, ideologies and beliefs of the researcher while accomplishing any kind of research (Kim Etherington, 2004). She further emphasises this idea as, "Choosing how to do research is therefore a personal decision about what I need to do to discover what I want to know" (p. 72).

Although, the terms methodology and methods are used interchangeably, in reality, methodology is the theoretical framework of particular methods, and methods are strategies or tools for conducting research (Crouch & Pearce, 2012, p. 67; Leavy, 2017). A similar argument about the difference between methods and methodology is presented by C. R. Kothari (2004). He argues that research methods are an integral part of the multidimensional research methodology. Therefore, discussions related to research methodologies constitutes answers to questions about the the purpose and values underlying the research problem, ways of data collections as well as its analysis and justification of the methods applied for the same and so on (p. 8).

This chapter aims at presenting the purpose of my research and to rationalize the chosen methodology, right from collection of data, to analysis of the collected data.

4.1 Research aims and questions

As mentioned earlier, this study aims at demonstrating the potential of art and artistic practices in the empowerment of the ageing members of the communities living in Finnish Lapland as well to present a practical guideline for sustainable community art projects using service design

thinking. The study has both general and personal goals. At general level, the results aim to demonstrate the potential of multicultural and multidisciplinary collaborations which are useful for ensuring the wellbeing of communities in places offering living conditions similar to those in Finnish Lapland. On a personal level, the results are useful in terms of gained knowledge, experience, skills and empathy together with an increased sense of responsibility towards older population of the society. Although I was an 'outsider' for the community members during the project, struggling with challenges related to language and unfamiliarity with local knowledge, I believe I possessed few benefits over the 'insiders' which are explained in detail in section 4.3, page 39.

Nevertheless, research questions for this study are:

1. How to develop a practical framework for sustainable community art projects?
2. How to plan sustainable community art projects with a focus on increasing the participation of locals especially the ageing population in Finnish Lapland?
3. How Finnish Lapland offers unique challenges and opportunities for both, multidisciplinary collaborations and for the inhabitants of the area?

4.2 Methodology

I have used art-based action research approach along with reflexive research, to conduct my study. I believe these are the appropriate approaches since they can fulfil my intention to gain knowledge through art and artistic collaborations as well as provide me a platform to express my artistic journey in this project. In order to understand the body of this approach it is important to consider the following: art-based research, action research and reflexive approaches, which I have describe further.

4.2.1 Art based research

The term "art-based research" was invented by Elliot W. Eisner in 1990s (Leavy, 2018, p. 6). Together, Tom Barone and Elliot W. Eisner (2012) boldly describe the research traditionalists' idea of a genuine research which follows a standard process; defining the problem, describing the theory, identifying the population to be examined, applying some treatment, measuring the effects, and determining the plausible use of the treatment based on the experiment with the

sample. With such a robotic approach to research, the 'human factor' of the study is generally ignored and a great deal of attention is diverted to figures and statistics generated. Infact, "...the very idea of an approach to research in the social sciences that is based upon a conception of art was an oxymoronic idea" (Barone and Eisner, 2012, p. 12). However with the emergence of a heuristic such as arts based research, the division between science and art has started to blur as it provides a deeper understanding of the complex aspects of the world, unlike the the traditional 'scientific research' that claims propositions for these complex aspects (Barone and Eisner, 2012). Similarly, according to Patricia Leavy (2015) arts-based research or ABR is the meeting point of art and science and she analyses the rise of arts-based research as a new "alternative paradigm" (p. 6), accentuating its historical context, advancements, strengths and impact.

"Art-based research practices are a set of methodological tools used by researchers across the disciplines during all phases of social research, including data generation, analysis, interpretation, and representation. These emerging tools adapt the tenets of the creative arts in order to address social research questions in holistic and engaged ways in which theory and practice are intertwined" (Leavy, 2015, p. 4).

Leavy (2015) also argues about the ways in which arts-based research is different from other traditional social forms of research. One of them, particularly suitable to my study is, the fact that unlike other forms of research, where researchers are restricted to reveal their relationship with the work, ABR practices allows this relationship to be addressed forthrightly with the readers. This gives space for the artistic expression of the work to play an important role in the research process as well as the final outcome (Leavy, 2015). Arts based research is hence the relevant and suitable form of research for my study and the following statement by Leavy (2015) sums up its appropriateness even furthur:

"Art based research offers ways to tap into what would be otherwise inaccessible, make connections and interconnections that are otherwise out of reach, ask and answer new research questions, explore old research questions in new ways, and represent research differently, often more effectively, with respect to reaching broad audiences and nonacademic stakeholders" (p. 21)

Shaun McNiff (1998) has pointed out an interesting (slightly infamous) aspect of arts based research in terms of its end result. He argues that although the outcomes of arts based research are usually uncertain and ambiguous in nature, they offer more creativity, artistry and are open to discussions for further inquiry. Also, the results of arts based research are highly individualized and are thus diverse and unique in their own different ways (p. 38).

Lastly, one of the most compelling features of arts based research as described by Tom Barone and Elliot W. Eisner (2012), is its nature to provide “a starting point for further inquiry” (p. 3), which is similar to the above mentioned argument by Shaun McNiff and I believe, is an important aspect of my study as well.

4.2.2 Action Research

All kinds of research intends to contribute to the existing knowledge with a clear purpose and claims to justify the results. McNiff, Lomax and Whitehead (2003) claim that action research, in addition to all basic characteristics of a scientific research, integrates action as a fundamental part of the research process, takes into account the professional development of the researcher and tends to focus on enhancing the practice of action rather than generating knowledge (p. 14). One of the most relevant aspect of action research, that relates to my study, is that, “Action research is a form of practitioner research that can be used to help you improve your professional practices in many different types of workplaces (McNiff, Lomax and Whitehead, 2003, p. 7).

Additionally, as the name suggest, action research accentuate the significance of action. McNiff, Lomax and Whitehead (2003), suggest that this action is indeed the driving force for the research and is a result of “ deep seated values” (p. 9-10) of the researcher. I completely agree with the authors’ suggestion since it is because of my regard for the ageing communities that I choose to make them an integral part of my study. This interventionist characteristic of action research is one of the features that differentiates it form other forms of social research. Also, “The aim of action research is personal improvement for social transformation, so it is essentially collaborative” (McNiff, Lomax and Whitehead, 2003, p. 30).

Similarly, action research goes beyond the mere act of describing and explaining social practices to engaging the participants affected by the practice and modifying them in their best interest (Somekh, 2005). Bridget Somekh (2005) has beautifully described action research as a cyclic process in the following statement,

“Action research integrates research and action in a series of flexible cycles involving, holistically rather than as separate steps: the collection of data about the topic of investigation; analysis and interpretation of those data; the planning and introduction of action strategies to bring about positive changes; and evaluation of those changes through further data collection, analysis and interpretation ... and so forth to other flexible cycles until a decision is taken to intervene in this process in order to publish its outcomes to date” (p. 6)

This rather long statement by Somekh, reflects my research process for this study. I (along with the other team members) have applied continuous cycles of iterative processes to ensure better functioning of the workshops, and although I intend to present a ‘guideline’ at the end of this study, based on my research project, it will always be a work in progress. In Somekh’s words, “...the cyclic process is unlikely to stop when the research is ‘written up” (p. 6-7), demonstrating the endless potential of action research for both participants and the researcher.

Another important aspect of action research as reported by Hilary Bradbury (2015) is its ability to tackle wicked problems of today’s world. Globally prevalent problems which are usually complicated, uncontrollable and twisted, need “an action-oriented, participative, experimental approach to knowledge creation” (p. 4) offered by action research. Additionally, action research is democratic and pragmatic, focusing on “co-creation knowing *with*, and not *about* people” (Bradbury, 2015, p. 2).

4.2.3 Art based action research

Timo Jokela, Mirja Hiltunen and Elina Härkönen (2015) in their article explain the background and development of art-based action research (ABAR) as a method for artistic and creative collaboration especially in the areas related to Arctic and the north. ABAR emerged as a strategy for regional development particularly in the Arctic, as a response to numerous challenges prevailing the area such as sparsely populated villages, increasing ageing population, migration of young adults to south for education and career, and so on at the University of Lapland. Jokela (2017) describes the origin of name arts based action research as, “ To emphasize the meaning of art, the method was named ‘art-based action research’. The method of the research is an action research and the method of action is art” (p. 59).

Furthermore, Timo Jokela and Maria Huhmarniemi (2018) define art-based action research as, “a research strategy which guides the progress of research in the cycles of action research and uses art as a catalyst for development work — for example, empowerment or the better design of environments” (p. 9). As the name suggests, art-based action research integrates elements of action research, artistic and arts-based research. Developed by a group of like minded artists, researchers and educators, the method aims to “develop operational methods that allow stakeholders and local communities, or the society in general, to become increasingly more sustainable.” (Jokela & Huhmarniemi, 2018, p. 9). For this, participation of stakeholder and community members in the research process is of utmost importance and it is generally the first step of any art-based action research project. The following statement by Jokela and Huhmarniemi (2018), sums up the relevance of this strategy in my study:

“Art-based refers to the utilisation of art in research in such a way that stakeholders and members of the organisation or community can be included in the research, and tacit knowledge and experiences can be obtained from them, which are not conveyed through traditional qualitative research methods based on verbal or written language.” (p. 9)

Interactive and cooperative methods used by designers and artists in the processes of service design to solve complex problems, also share resemblance to methods used in art-based action research. Since arts based action research emphasises community involvement in the research process, various methods and tools of service designs, are extremely valuable for arts based action researchers.

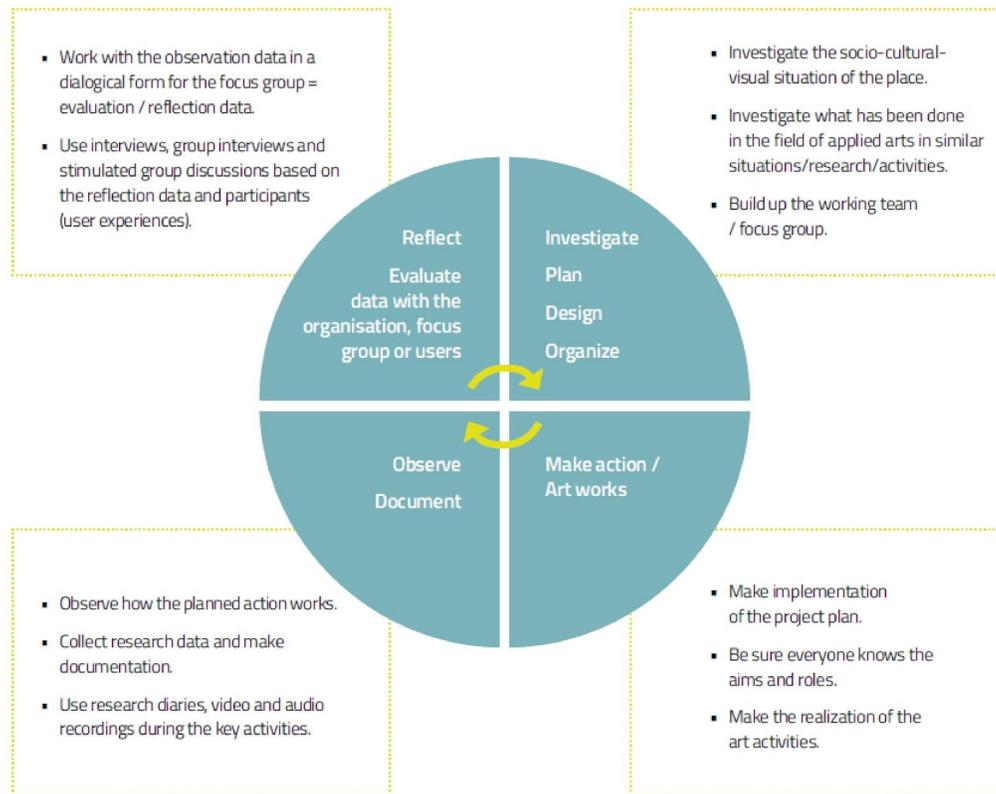


Figure 7: Art-Based Action Research cycles described by Timo Jokela (Jokela & Huhmarniemi, 2018, p. 15)

Jokela (2017) discusses the proximity of ABAR to a/r/tography method, methods of environmental and community art, service design, project based action, design research and community based art education (p. 59). These methods when combined together possess the power to bring about desired social change, community empowerment and solve wicked problems. Additionally, ABAR aims majorly at developing interaction between researchers, participants and communities rather than the personal aims of the artist or researcher.

Lastly, according to Jokela and Huhmarniemi (2018), “Art-based action research is a cyclical process of research and development” (p. 14). It starts with a clear set of objectives, tasks and a detailed inspection of the place or community, followed by a planned action or intervention. After the first cycle, the documented research process and outcomes are analysed and used for defining the course of the next cycle (Figure 7). All aspects of art-based action research, artistic, action and art based approaches are reflected in my study both in theory and practice.

4.2.4 Reflexive research

The traditionalist view of research demanded researchers to maintain a safe distance from their research as a way of keeping the research impersonal and free of subjectivity. However, it is nearly impossible to do so specifically in the field of social research (Attiaa & Edge, 2017; Etherington, 2004; Mantzoukas, 2005; Palaganas et al., 2017).

Kim Etherington (2004) describes this “‘God’s eye view’ of the world” (p. 25) mentioned above, hard to relate with, inarguable and apathetic. Additionally, biased studies are also regarded as unscientific and contaminated with personal judgements (Mantzoukas, 2005).

Nevertheless, contrary to the popular belief, Etherington (2004) discusses the concept of reflexivity along with its inclusion in the representation of the research and ways in which it can help researchers to produce better results specifically in the field of social research. First, it enables researchers to acknowledge their experiences and make an informed decision of its’ use in the research outcome; second, it blurs the gap between the researcher and the researched, enabling a more free flow of information; third, it enhances the trustworthiness and authenticity of the research outcomes; and forth, it challenges the researchers to be fully conscious and observant about all the decisions taken during the research process. She further describes an important difference between reflexivity and subjectivity as, “Reflexivity is not the same as subjectivity but rather it opens up a space between subjectivity and objectivity that allows for an exploration and representation of the more blurred genres of our experiences” (Etherington, 2004, p. 37).

Similarly, Mariam Attiaa and Julian Edge (2017) in their article, explain reflexivity as a continuous process of “mutual shaping between researcher and research” (p. 33) and as the ‘key tool’ of reflexive research which puts the development of the researcher in the centre of the research process. Likewise, reflexivity is a means of addressing the changes brought about in researchers because of the research process and vice versa. The acknowledgment of these mutual effects between the researcher and the research “enriches the research process and its outcomes” (Palaganas et al., 2017, p. 427). Furthermore, Palaganas, Sanchez, Molintas and Caricativo (2017) have described this enrichment of results through the following statement,

“...our positionality (i.e., position based on class, sex, ethnicity, race, etc.) and who we are as persons (shaped by the socio-economic and political environment) play a fundamental role in the research process, in the field as well as in the final text. Reflexivity must then be a part of

our commitment. It must become a duty of every researcher to reveal and share these reflexivities, not only for learning purposes but towards enhancing theory building” (Palaganas et al., 2017, p. 428).

Daria Akimenko (2018) in her doctoral dissertation acknowledged the inevitable bias of her study as an “empathic reflection” (p. 71) and how this empathy with the research participants affected her process at different levels. She has beautifully described the process of empathy building in the following statement,

“In my study, even prior to getting to know them, I could empathise with or relate to most of the participating communities and groups I interacted with, being a woman, an artist, a researcher, a Russian, a migrant. And so could they” (p. 70)

I believe, I have encountered similar stages in my research journey, where I was able to empathise with the participating communities at multiple levels and it helped me to take better methodological decisions. I have acknowledged the details of factors that affected the research process and vice versa, in the following section.

4.3 My position as a researcher, artist and myself as a person

The role of a researcher was new, exciting and challenging for me. However, with the support and help from my mentors, supervisors and colleagues, it turned into an incredible learning journey. Coming from an artistic background (graphic designer), making artworks with community members was comparatively easy and came naturally to me. However, the unique landscape and varying natural environment of the Arctic, provided numerous opportunities that tested my strengths and weaknesses not just as a researcher or an artist by also as a person. Experiencing the chills of minus 33 degree celsius, travelling long distances, working continuously for hours, dealing with children when you don't speak a common language and many more such adventures, contributed in inculcating patience, tolerance and quick problem solving in me. The research project challenged me mentally, physically, emotionally and psychologically. Nonetheless, determination, passion and constant encouragement from my team, were the factors that helped me throughout the process.

Language barrier and environmental harshness, were probably two of the most challenging as well as empowering aspects of my study. Since I did not understand the conversations

(although they were translated most of the times), I came up with creative ways to interpret the situation in the form of quick sketches and scribbles. It also gave me the opportunity to focus on the expressions of the speaker and I reported them at various incidents in my diary. The only disappointing aspect of not understanding the language of participants is that I was unable to access the exact words of the speaker because I believe translation at times cannot do justice to the exact emotions the speaker has conveyed. These were the times I regret being an outsider, but however during discussions, we as a team tried to cover all aspects of conversations.

Use of methods from different research forms, contributed to making my study multidisciplinary as well as more compelling as an artistic expression. As mentioned in the start of this chapter, me being an 'outsider' for the community members during the project, had majority of merits and a few demerits. I was able to experience the place of study as a clean canvas because for me everything was unfamiliar and unadulterated: routes, landscapes and people. Being an outsider also gave me the opportunity to look at the usually mundane aspects of the place (such as snow) with a fresh perspective. There are two incidents that I recall, which explicitly reflect my perspective as an outsider in the research process. First, I remember being startled by the enormous amount of snow everywhere, on our first visit to Hetta and all the Finnish members of the team were surprised to see my excitement. Second, during the opening ceremony for the our project exhibition on the last visit to Hetta, I was stunned to see the promptness and punctuality of the attendees. I immediately compared a similar event in my home country and could clearly point out the differences between the people of the two cultures. However, Marlice Rabe (2003) has emphasises the ever changing status of social researchers. She argues that, "As a social researcher you may initially be an outsider to a particular group, but as you spend more time with them, you become more of an insider" (p. 150). I have experienced the same shift in myself, over the entire research project. Furthermore, I got the opportunity to work with people from different backgrounds both, within the team and during the workshops, and it also affected the way I documented the happenings. For example, photographic documentation done within our team members was more impetuous, liberal and creative whereas the one with the research participants was more formal, thoughtful and ethical.

4.4 Data collecting methods

According to Johnny Saldaña and Patricia Leavy (2011), researchers use several types of data collection tools, but “it is the researcher him or herself who is generally regarded as the primary data collection instrument in qualitative research” (p. 32). Methods of data collection in qualitative research are not limited to observing, transcribing, writing, and sketching but also involve researcher’s cognitive skills such as “inferring, intuiting, empathizing, and evaluating” (p. 32). I too believe in utilising various humanly instincts, especially when working with different communities to allow maximum flow of information.

However, methods for data collection greatly depend on the purpose of the research, research questions and preferred style of representation (Saldaña & Leavy, 2011). According to Jokela and Huhmarniemi (2018), there are several methods of collecting data in different formats. Particularly in arts based action research, some of these (but not restricted to) methods are: interviews, questionnaires, note taking, observations, meeting memos, photographic and video documentation, feedback discussions. I have maintained an observation diary throughout the project which has helped me record my feelings, ideas and important notes from discussions, systematically in a chronological order. The research material collected during the workshops in different villages as well as during the planning phase at the University of Lapland, can be divided into two parts, written and visual. The written material includes notes made by me during each phase of the process (team meetings, village visits, art making and feedback sessions) interviews and ethnographic observations. The visual materials gathered during the project include: photographic and videographic documentation material; sketches and prototypes of the artworks.

The argument about the researcher being the foremost tool of data collection, by Saldaña and Leavy (2011), is reflected in my notes (partially), and in the changes I see in myself as a person which is hard to describe in any tangible form. Along with everything else, I have to tried to somehow explain this powerful yet abstract information that I assembled during the project in the following section.

Several qualitative methods were used to analyse the gathered data. First, the observation diary helped in reporting the chronological order of the events and organizing the data accordingly as illustrated in the journey map (Figure 12). Second, the visual data was subdivided into different themes and categories to look for recurring patterns. Third, the written data mostly notes from the feedback sessions and few interview have been used as supporting material for the practical

guideline. Visual materials collected during the research especially the photographs, served various purposes: first, as an essential tool in the analysing the project and redefining the aims at each step of the project; second, as a visual library for both the handbook and the exhibition; and third, as promotional and graphical material for various web pages. It was undoubtedly the most valuable material for the overall development of the project both theoretically and practically. Below I have explained the data collection methods for both written and visual materials.

4.4.1 Note Taking

Taking notes during both formal and informal interviews, focus group discussions as well as general discussions has been an integral part of collecting data throughout the research project and it also served as the framework for the guideline presented in chapter 7.

As described by Ann Blair (20014), “Notes recorded from reading or experience typically contribute to one’s conversation and compositions, from which others can draw in turn in their own thinking and writing, thus perpetuating a cycle of transmission and transformation of knowledge, ideas, and experiences” (p. 85). For the purpose of taking notes, I maintained a small diary throughout the project and carried it everywhere. Through note taking, I have tried to record experiences, epiphanies and observations: basically anything I found interesting, informative or worth remembering. Places, purpose and intention of taking notes varied throughout the research project. For me, the most valuable notes were recorded during the discussion within our research team usually before and after any important event because these discussion were in English since notes recorded during participant interviews or general discussions with community members were usually extracts from the translations.

4.4.2 Documentation

As emphasized by Alan Kay (2000), documentation not only helps in evaluation and improvisation of the project in later stages, but it’s use in promotion of the project also opens new discussions about the significance of art as a tool for empowerment and development. Additionally, photographs and videos, are immensely handy to preserve for a long time and can be used on various platforms easily. Also, the artworks made during the research project were majorly temporary in nature, such as snow sculpting or wind art, so documenting was the only

way to preserve and represent them. Hence, documentation has been an integral part of the research project. Numerous methods and equipments based on the type of the workshop, weather, time and the expected participants were used. We (the members of the research project including myself) also kept in mind the ethical aspect while documenting the process and events. Documentation of the workshops was done through following methods:

Photographs and videos: Documentation of the workshops was done majoring by capturing photographs and videos. After the four workshops that we were part of, we managed to gather around 20 Gb of material in the form of photographs and videos. These photographs not only helped us to analyse and improve the workshops but has also been an important material for promoting our project on social media channels. Prior to the workshop, we used to either have a verbal permission to click pictures or hand out consent forms especially in the workshops involving children. This was a good way to legalise the process and also helped us create a trustworthy relationship with the community.

The tools used for this data collection method were: camera, drone, mobile phones and tripod.

Sketching Diary: Since the medium of instruction for all the workshops was Finnish, the non Finnish Speaking members of the research team (including me) tried to document the process in the form of notes and sketches. I believe photographs capture the moment as it is but sketching gives you the liberty to add our own perspective of the happening. This is what inspired a lot of us to maintain a sketching diary throughout the project. It also came handy to write down the exact words, phrases used by participants and community members during personal interviews and one on one interactions. It also helped us to write or sketch about the emotions of the people and our own reflection of the event in words and visual forms.

The tools I used for this data collection method were: sketching pads, pen and pencil.

Since the major method of documentation involved capturing photographs and videos, the whole research team was extremely considerate, patient and sensitive towards the community members in order to avoid any mishap. A verbal permission from the participants was sought beforehand and it was clearly mentioned about how we will use the pictures and where. In the two workshops involving children (in Karesuvanto and Kilpsjärvi), consent forms to the respective teachers were sent out few days prior to the happening and written permission from the parents was acquired. We as a team, were also mindful and considerate with the use of the photographs on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, during the workshops, we had to carefully go about in few situations where participants did not consent

to their photographs taken, so we had to be mindful of how to position ourselves and the camera not to include these participants. Some challenges related to documentation faced during the workshops included bad climatic conditions such as freezing temperatures and rain. As a result, special attention was paid to the needs of equipments such as cameras and drone as well to the handlers (including myself) to document the happenings along with surviving the harsh weather conditions. In spite of these challenges we managed to get high quality, well composed pictures and videos after each workshop. Since I was predominantly responsible for documentation throughout the project, I learned and developed various technical as well behavioral skills related to the role such persistence, patience, adaptability and quick problem solving approaches.

4.5 Data analysis

As mentioned earlier, various qualitative methods are used to capture the data. The research project that produced this data and my interpretation herein are grounded in my view: my understanding and unique relationship with the data and my inevitable place in research. As emphasised by Erik Blair (2015), such acknowledgement of bias and subjectivity of analysis from the start is important and thus it clarifies that the results are not purely objective but researcher's reflections. Additionally, I have used open coding to categories and interpret both written and visual data. Having clarified that, the analysis can be divided into two parts: analysis of written material and visual analysis of photographs.

4.5.1 Analysis of written material

The written material collected during the research project constitutes of field notes, notes from observations, formal and informal interviews, interaction with participants, focus group discussions and general discussions. During the initial stages of the research project, the main aim of collecting notes was to gather information related to the Finnish Lapland, the location, people and their cultural background. After every visit to the research location, we as a team discussed about the shortcoming and ways in which the next encounter with the community can be improved.

Over the one year long project, I have gathered around eight A4 size pages of written material which includes notes from interaction with community members, focus group discussions and

my personal observations. This material was initially collected in small bits and pieces and later on I elaborated them with my memory usually within one week after each workshop. I have classified the written data into eight different themes with consequent sub themes using open coding:

1. *Landscape of the place*: size, climate, natural environment, houses, population, village center
2. *Environmental factors*: season, temperature, clothing
3. *Researcher's interaction with participants*: promotion, communication, reactions, skills
4. *Sample size*: number, age groups, interest, body language
5. *Workshop briefs*: materials, making, concept
6. *Outcome (final artwork)*: state (temporary or permanent), location, process, placement, attachment
7. *Strategies*: introduction, presentation, warm up exercises
8. *Opportunities and challenges*: participation, interaction, interest, brief, publicity

As I re-read through the notes, I could see that these themes were both interrelated and interdependent. For instance, in some cases, the workshop brief invoked interest in participants and turned into the strength of the event, whereas in some cases, the workshop brief was not appropriate which resulted in lack of participation and so on.

Focusing on one of my research questions, I examined these themes and their relation to the participation of community members. As a matter of fact, five of the seven themes mentioned above, namely, landscape of the place (1), environmental factors (2), workshop brief (5) and the outcome (final artwork) (6), affected the participation of community members in different but significant proportions.

Unquestionably, landscape of the place (1) and environmental factors (2) were independent of any themes mentioned above but ironically, affected all of them explicitly.

Another interesting result was that, the sample size (4), outcome (6) and strategies (7) were dependent on all the themes but it affected all the themes except landscape of the place (1) and environmental factors (2). Similarly, workshop brief (5) was dependent on all the themes except sample size (4) as well as it affected all the themes except landscape of the place (1) and environmental factors (2).

Lastly, discussions related to the opportunities and challenges (8) after every workshop, were dependent on all other seven themes as well as they determined the workshop brief (5), outcome (6), and strategies (7) of the next workshop. Additionally, landscape of the place (1) and environmental factors (2) were the key determinants of the workshop brief (5) as well as the decisions regarding the outcome (6) of the workshop.

Figure 7 illustrates these relationships in a more direct and simpler way.

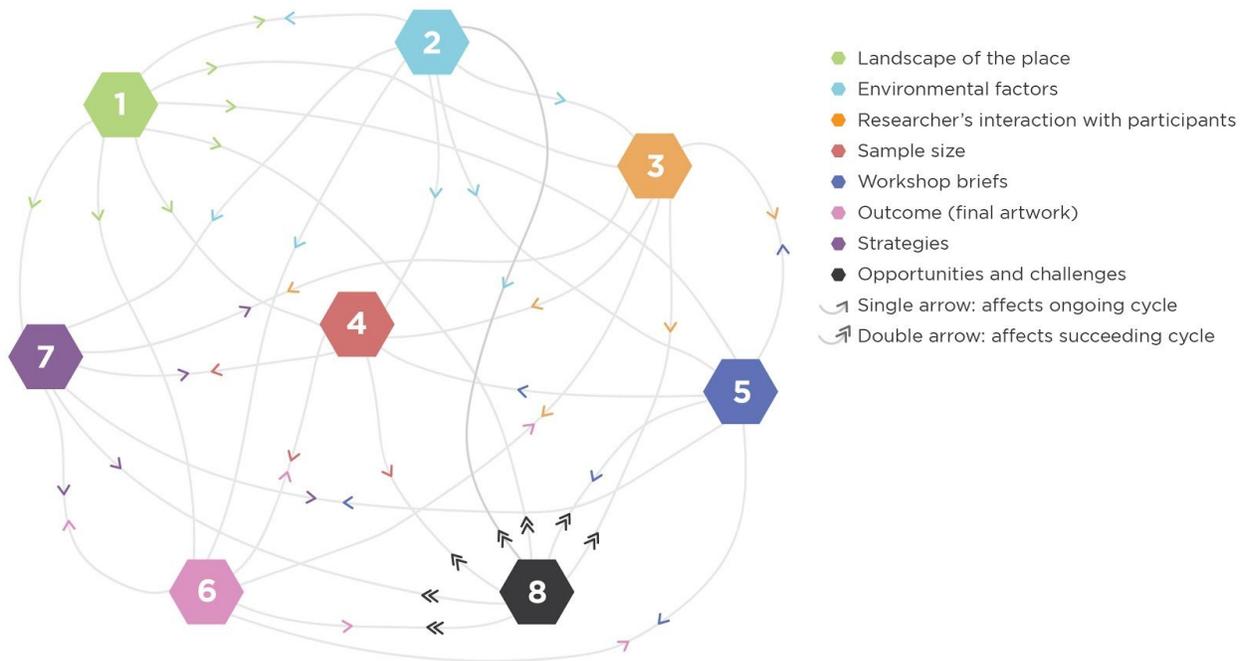


Figure 8: Relationship within various themes that emerged from the analysis of the written data

The practical framework for sustainable community art projects presented at the end of this study, is based on the combined results of the overall analysis of both written and visual materials.

4.5.2 Analysis of visual material

Categorising the photographs collected during the research project based on recurring patterns and their interpretation constitutes another important part of analysis in my study. Gillian Rose (2001) has boldly described the process of analysing visual material as, “Successful interpretation depends on a passionate engagement with what you see. Use your methodology to discipline your passion, not to deaden it” (p. 4). I would like to point out the use of term ‘interpretation’ in the analysis of photographs as it is a highly subjective field as compared to analysis of written material which is more objective. For the visual analysis and interpretation of photographs collected during the research project I have used “compositional interpretation” (p. 33) described by Gillian Rose in her book *Visual Methodologies* (2001).

According to Rose, “...there are three sites at which the meanings of images are made: the site of production, the site of the image itself, and the site of its audiencing” (p. 188) which are also the three ways in which images become culturally meaningful. Additionally, “...each of those three sites could be understood in terms of three modalities, [...] technological, the compositional and the social” (p. 188). Using random sampling, I have categorized the twenty photographs from each workshop in the following sub groups (five photographs per group):

1. Workshop location: making, placement (of final artwork)
2. Participants: portraits, groups
3. Process: planning, making artwork
4. Final artwork: portraits, group pictures (research team and participants)

Now, using methods of compositional interpretation, the group of images under each category were analysed by their “expressive content” (Rose, 2001, p. 46). This means that the feelings evoked by the cluster of images were written and then arguments were drawn based on those feelings. One example is illustrated in Figure 8.

Every individual workshop, evoked both ordinary and unique feelings under each category. Based on the analysis, the general feelings evoked by the photographs were related to these factors:

1. Workshop location: open/ closed; central/ isolated; season/weather; colorful/ monotonous (based on season)
2. Participants: number; age group; expressions (if determinable)

3. Proces: individualised/ group work, skill level required (easy/ difficult); materials; tools
4. Final artwork: accessibility (based on location); temporary/ permanent; general feelings evoked by the artwork; attachment of participants



Figure 9: Visual analysis of photographs from Karesuvanto workshop

Analysis of photographs was an exciting process since it yielded information that supports the analysis of written material. Illustrated above (Figure 9) is an example of the visual analysis of photographs collected from the workshop in Karesuvanto. Similarly all the four workshop that I was part of during this research project, were analysed in the similar manner (Figure 9).

For Karesuvanto workshop, the conclusions that I drew based on the photographs and their analysis area are as follows:

- a) Karesuvanto school offered a great location of making artworks since it had a big campus with plenty of open space. The atmosphere of the school was calm, playful and spacious. Arrangements for the actual making of the artworks was outside the classrooms, which offered an excellent opportunity for children to get inspired by the natural environment of the village (since theme of coloring task was 'our village') as well as to enjoy the activity. Summer season provided a great opportunity for everyone to relish the process of art making in abundance of sunshine and warm air.

- b) Karesuvanto school was an appropriate choice for the workshop since it assured a considerable number of participants, unlike the case in Palojärvi workshop. The two active members of the project, Unto and Kalevi along with the whole research team participated in the workshop. Overall the children looked happy, excited and enthusiastic about the event. Some children exhibited exceptional coloring skills, some were extremely thoughtful, some children were slightly carefree and uninterested, and some children looked shy and hesitant. Overall it was an interesting and pleasant experience.
- c) The process of making the final artworks was exciting, as we were unaware of what the children might paint. Everything worked according to our plan, especially the warm up sessions were a big hit. There was a considerable increase in the energy level of children after the warm up exercises and it turned out into a successful experiment. Materials and tools used in the workshop were extremely common for everyone. The coloring part of the workshop brief was easy as compared to the assembling part which was tiresome and time consuming.
- d) Location for placing the artwork was also felicitous unlike our experience in Palojärvi. The final artwork was placed alongside the main road, on a high sand dune with fells in the background. It was easily visible to the passersby and looked mysterious in the middle of nature. The opening ceremony was attended by the local members of the community, children and staff from the school and a local press reporter. The artwork looked colorful, joyous, attractive and had a immensely positive feel to it.

Some arguments that were drawn from the analysis mentioned above are as follows:

1. Choosing a closed community such as a school is advantageous over an open invitation to entire the village for collaboration or research because the former assures a substantial number of participants. I believe, such a strategy is beneficial especially in the initial stages of any project for the project to gain popularity.
2. Apparently, including children as the main actors of the project, builds a sense of attachment towards the event, even in the older members of the community. Some elders who may not be interested at first, may accompany their children in the event and consequently become participants.
3. Warm up exercises works as an excellent ice breaking tool between researcher or project organisers and participants. It instantly boosts the energy of all the participating

members, and helps in making the environment comfortable, light and cheerful. Especially in multicultural collaborations, where everyone doesn't share a common language for interaction, a quick warm up session helps in building a feeling of trust and an instant connection.

In a similar manner, photographs from all the workshops were analysed and the arguments were drawn from their analysis.

Once again, as defined by Kothari (2004), "Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem" (p. 8). However, amidst all the methodological restrictions, procedural rigidity and the pressure of doing a 'scientific enquiry', my journey as a researcher, an artist and as a person, has been exhilarating. As described in the start of this chapter, my research methodology was arts based action research and reflexive research. Several data collection methods were used the study such as note taking, observations and documentation. Additionally the methods used for analysis were open coding for written material and compositional interpretation for visual material. Arguments drawn from the analysis of data, are extensively used in laying down a practical framework for similar community art projects. To summarise, this chapter has presented the backbone of my study and the following chapters introduce the research project and discussion related to the findings.

Chapter 5: Enontekiön Taidepolku or Enontekiö Art Path

As briefly mentioned in previous chapters, Enontekiö Art Path is a collaborative community art project between Municipality of Enontekiö and University of Lapland. The project was conceptualized when a local activist living in Enontekiö, came up with an idea for a full fledged art park, to exhibit artworks from the municipality. The idea was conceived with a belief that the art park would add to the attractiveness of the municipality in terms of tourism development and would also contribute to raising awareness about the uniqueness of the area. However, over the time, the concept of art park got transformed into an art path, making it more innovative and dynamic and raised the chances of people from far off villages to participate in a fun, artistic event related to their own region.

The idea got materialized when the mayor of the municipality Jari Rantapelkonen contacted University of Lapland in 2016 for a possible collaboration. Since the project was a collaboration between an educational institution and a community, it showed thriving potential and opened doors to endless possibilities. The first team from the University of Lapland to commence the project consisted of students Juho Hiilivirta from Finland and Huang Liu from China, both Master's degree student in Arctic Art and Design along with Timo Jokela, professor of art education and Elina Härkönen, university lecturer of art education and a PhD candidate.

After two successful workshops of making artworks in the villages of Hetta in March 2017 and in Vuontisjärvi in August 2017, the project was handed over to new Master's degree student in Arctic Art and Design programme. The new team of students included, Tanja Koistinen from Finland, Eutheum Lee from South Korea and myself from India along with an exchange student Juliana Semenovah from Russia.

For this study, the insights of the first two workshops were collected from interview with Juho Hiilivirta and a written report by both the students (Juho and Liu) about the project. Figure 10 illustrates the art path formed after successful completion of the six workshops.

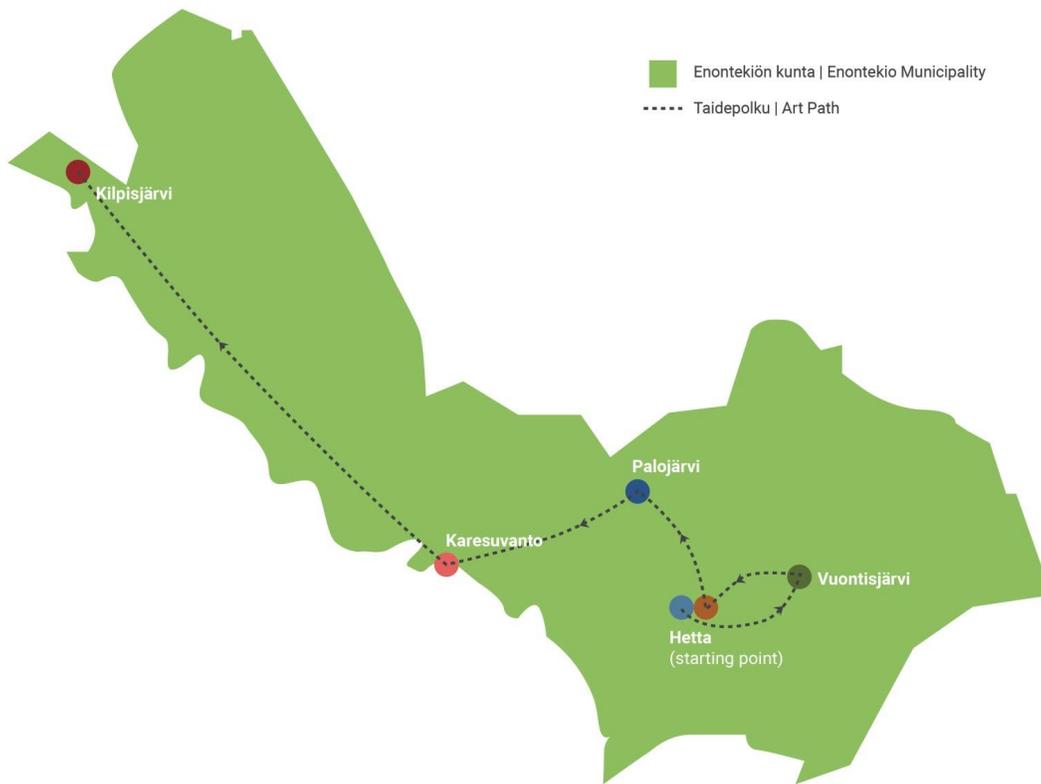


Figure 10: Art Path formed across Enontekiö municipality

5.1 Project responsibilities and participants

The project consisted of six rigorous art based workshops in five different villages of Enontekiö municipality with accomplished artworks (five temporary and one permanent) as end results.

The whole process of the project can be divided into five main phases.

First, communicating with a local inhabitant of the village. Second, planning the artwork to be made based on the local stories, materials or simply an idea. Third, designing promotional graphics inviting community members to take part in the workshop. Forth, the actual workshop along with documenting the process of making the artwork and general interaction with the community members. Fifth, reflecting upon the strengths and weaknesses of the event and methods of improvisations for the next round. The team of students involved in the project had varying professional and educational backgrounds: graphic design, painting, visual design, environmental art and art education. Half of the team (Juho, Tanja and Eutheum) was fluent in speaking and understanding Finnish and had a deeper knowledge about the cultures living in

Finnish Lapland whereas, the other half (Juliana, Liu and me) were new to the region, and did not speak or understand Finnish. However, after adequate amount of research, numerous team meetings and long discussions about the municipality, everyone in the team (especially the international students including myself) acquired enough awareness and sensitivity required for the project. Since we were a multicultural and a multidisciplinary team, we faced various challenges, but it also made working within the project more informative, interesting and dynamic. The following stakeholder map illustrates the participants involved in the project along with their respective roles (Figure 11).

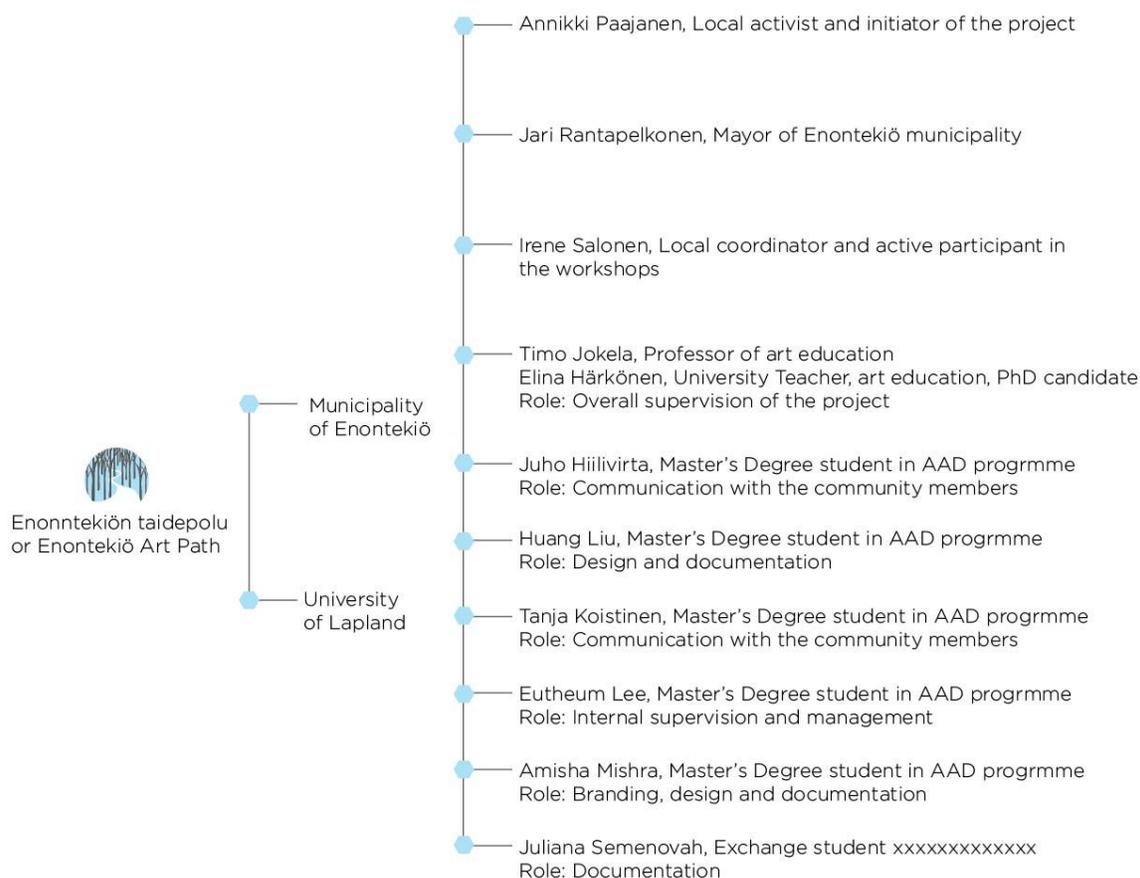


Figure 11: Stakeholders map of Enontekiön Taidepolku project.

Based on our skills, capabilities as well as shortcomings such as language issues, we divided the tasks among ourselves. This division proved extremely helpful and avoided unnecessary misunderstandings. Everyone undertook their responsibility seriously and with full dedication, and as a result, we successfully completed the project within the proposed timeline. As mentioned in the stakeholder's map (Figure 11):

- Tanja Koistinen was responsible for communicating with the community members, understanding their needs and aspirations and arranging accommodation for our stay during visits since she is fluent in Finnish and has close contacts in the area.
- Eutheum Lee was responsible for internal supervision and management because of her leadership and organisational skills. She speaks Finnish too and sometimes helped Tanja in coordination.
- I was responsible for documentation and designing the graphical material for the workshop because of my professional and educational background as a graphic designer. Later on, I designed the visual identity as well a handbook for the project, and handled social media marketing of the project for the entire duration.

Other than the individual roles mentioned above, we all shared the common tasks of place research, brainstorming, ideation and discussions for and after each workshop.

5.2 Working Process

The project journey map (Figure 12) clearly outlines the steps involved in the development of the project. It also indicates that the project was lengthy, strenuous and highly eventful. The cyclic nature of arts based action research, as pointed out by Timo Jokela and Maria Huhmarniemi (2018), is also visible in the journey map. Each workshop started with discussions, brainstorming and place based research of the village, followed by ideation and prototyping and ended with analysis about the ways of improvisation of the next workshop.

Looking back on the process, I can clearly highlight my general as well as personal artistic contributions in the journey of this project, mostly in the form of overlapping roles as an organiser, communicator, designer, participant, facilitator, photographer and an observationist.

Furthermore, I have provided a detailed description of the major steps involved in the process. Several methods were exercised both separately and simultaneously during the project. First, each step of the process was systematically documented in both written and visual form. All team members (including me) maintained a diary to collect the relevant data mostly in the form of notes, photographs, videos and sketches.

The second method that we used was the iterative process of service design thinking. As described by Marc Stickdorn (2012), an iterative process is cyclic in nature and consists of four recurring steps: exploration, creation, reflection and implementation (Figure 13). In our project,

we successfully completed three cycles of the method starting from the workshop in Palojärvi and continued it until the exhibition in Hetta.

After each workshop (starting from Palojärvi), we discussed the challenges and shortcomings and ideated ways to overcome in them in the next cycle. This is also evident from the project journey map (Figure 12). The third method that we repeatedly applied in the working process was the double diamond approach. It also consists of four steps: discover, define, develop and deliver (Figure 14). This method was exceedingly effective for brainstorming ideas for the workshop.

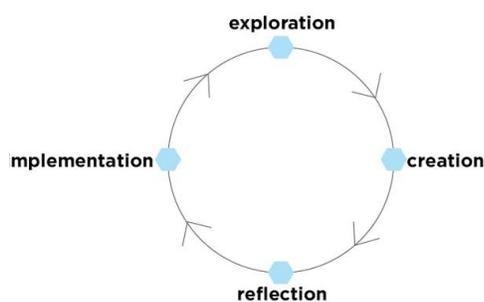


Figure 13: Iteration process

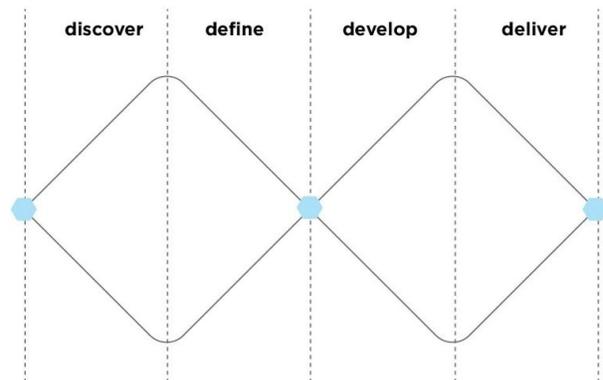
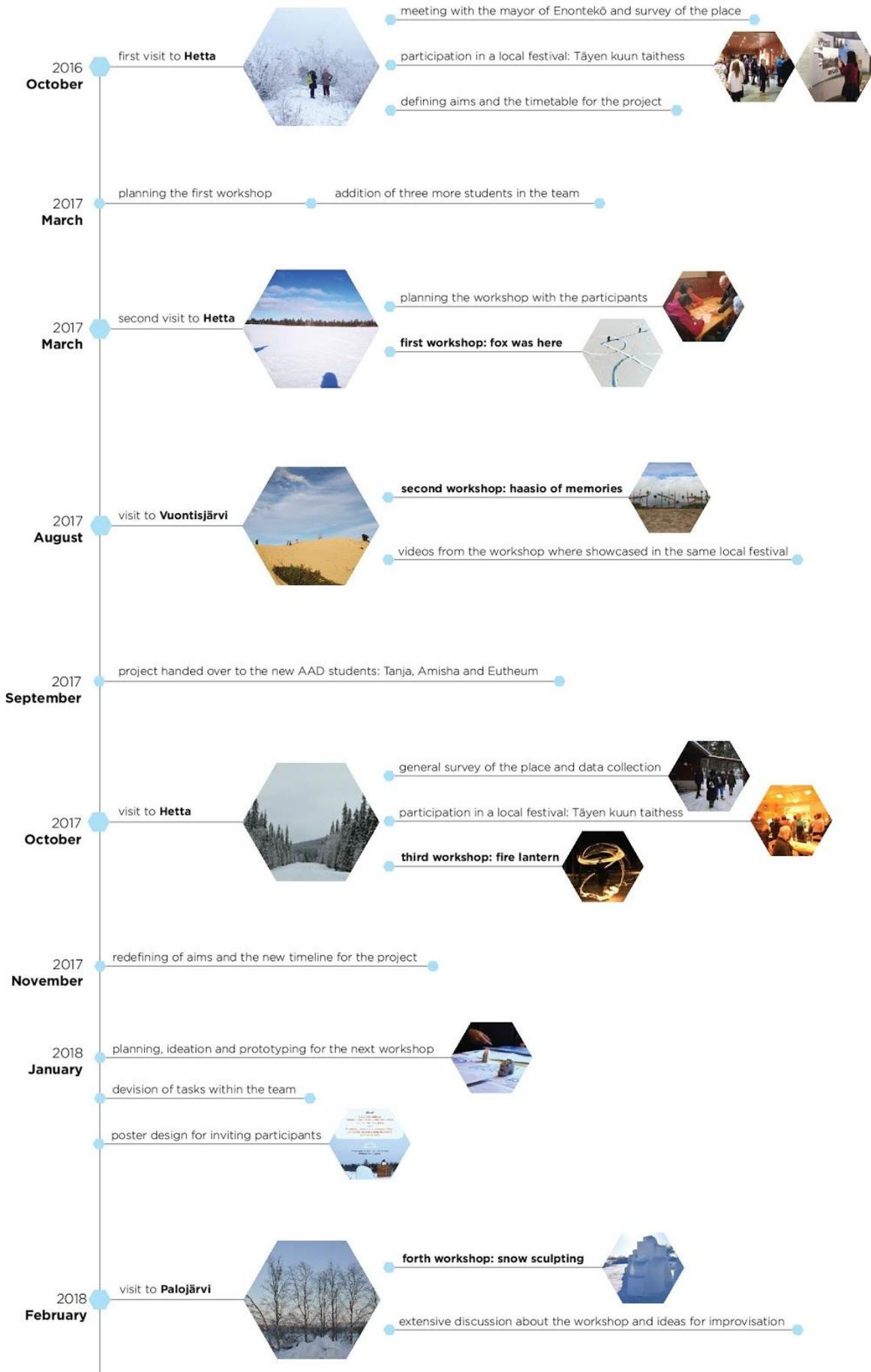


Figure 14: Double diamond process

As visible in Figure 13, first, we started by defining the requirements of the workshop based on the instructions and information given by the village members. Second, we tried to brainstorm various options for the workshop based on the requirements as well as other factors such as a theoretical study of the place, materials available in the area, weather conditions, and the workforce required. Third, we used to present the ideas to both, the contact person from the community and our supervisors, Elina and Timo. Forth, the ideas were polished further and aims redefined based on the feedback from both the stakeholders. Fifth, a thoughtful concept for the workshop was finalized followed by an iteration process to materialize the plan using prototypes and sketches.

As mentioned earlier, the main task of the project was to conduct environmental art workshops in different villages of Enontekiö based on the local stories, materials or simply an exciting idea. This task is closely linked to the ‘place-specific applied art’ discussed by Jokela (2013).



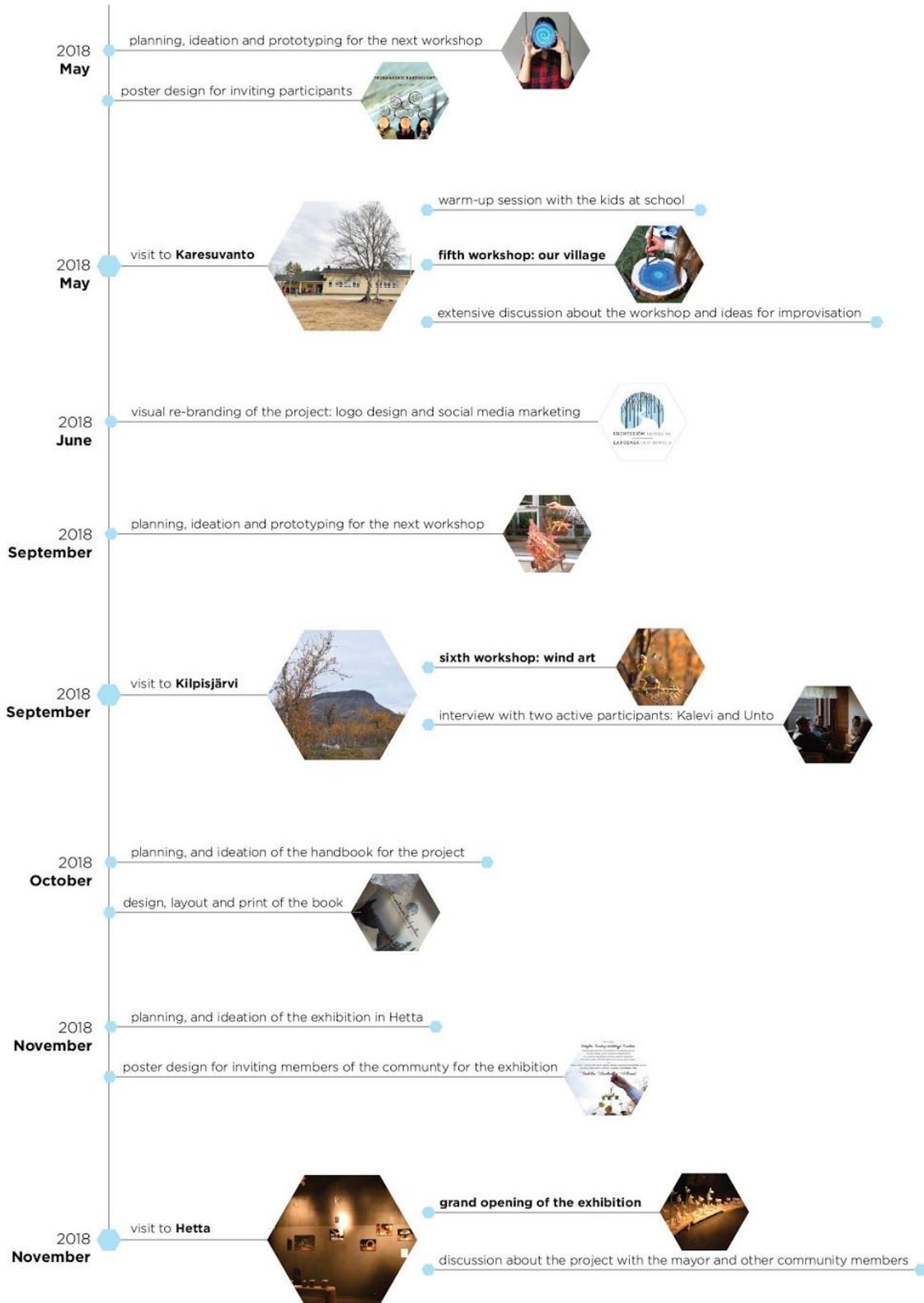


Figure 12: Project journey map.

According to him, “Place-specific applied art has been designed for a specific location based on the identified need and terms. It communicates with place related experiences and memories rather than with the terms of the physical space” (p. 16). Keeping this in mind, it was of utmost importance for us to carry out a place based research for each village in order to understand its historical, cultural and connotative aspects and then to somehow incorporate the findings in the art making. Since it was practically unmanageable for us to visit the place and conduct the research, we had to rely on written and visual materials available at our disposal. As a result, we faced numerous challenges during the workshops which I have discussed in the next chapter. Nevertheless, it made us realize the significance of an extensive place based research and its ability to avoid complications especially when working with communities.

Following is the description of the each workshop, challenges faced and our learning outcomes. An extensive discussion at the end of each workshop helped us to pinpoint the exact pros and cons of the event, ways to improve the process and discuss our personal experiences as artists. I have also included few personal notes from my diary.

Workshop One: Fox was here, Hetta



Figure 15: Fox was here workshop, March 2017 (Source: Juho Hiilivirta and Liu Huang)

As reported by students Liu and Yuho (Huang & Hiilivirta, 2018), the first workshop of the project took place in March 2017 during their second visit to the village of Hetta. The team of students included three other exchange students in addition to Liu and Yuho. The idea of the first workshop came from an old Finnish folktale, in which northern lights are described to be caused by a fox, who is running in the forest and its tail causes the tiny snow particles to rise and spread in the sky. “This constantly shapeshifting mythical fox has left abstract tracks in Hetta” (Huang & Hiilivirta, 2018). The idea took shape by walking on the snow in the form of ten connected zig-zag circles representing the footprints of the fox. Circles were formed using ropes and its each circle was filled with a different pattern by stomping the snow in order to make the pattern prominent.

Workshop Two: Muistelohaasio or Haasio of memories, Vuontisjärvi



Figure 16: Haasio of memories workshop, August 2017 (Source: Juho Hiilivirta and Liu Huang)

The second workshop took place in the small yet lively village of Vuontisjärvi, which is approximately 19 kms north-east from Hetta (Figure 10). The idea for this workshop initiated from an old local story. According to the story, hundreds of years ago, a farmer called Rován

Niku tried to increase his harvest by artificially flooding his meadow. He started digging a ditch towards the Vuontisjärvi lake which accidentally led to a new river causing the surface of Vuontisjärvi to fall by a few meters and consequently blessing the area with a sandy beach. The final idea for the workshop included three peculiar features of the village: first, place for implementing the artwork was atop the sandy beach in remembrance of the Rovaniemi Niku story; second, the materials for the artwork included hay and willow, which were inspired by the local traditions of hay making; and third, the structure for the artwork was derived from the 'haasio', an old structure that was used for collecting and drying hay in earlier days. Various objects made of willow and hay were attached to main structure, giving participants a chance to express their creativity and skills. The name of the workshop, 'haasio of memories' is dedicated to the memorable experience of working collectively in the workshop.

Workshop Three: Tulilyhtypaja Hetassa or Fire lantern, Hetta



Figure 17: Fire lantern workshop, August 2017 (Source: Juho Hiilivirta and Liu Huang)

In August 2017, the third workshop that took place in Hetta, marked the beginning of a new team taking over the project that consisted of three new AAD master's degree programme

students (including me) and an exchange student from Russia. As illustrated in the project journey map (Figure 12), it was the first visit for the new team to Enontekiö and third visit for Liu and Juho. The journey to Hetta was a four hours drive from Rovaniemi and it was in fact an incredible journey because it had been snowing heavily the region. We, as a team, got the opportunity to present the project in the local art festival 'täyen kuun taithessa' which is celebrated each year on the full moon, at Tunturi-Lapin Luontokeskus (Lapland nature center) in Hetta. We were excited to see that our project has been gaining popularity and through a pictorial survey we also identified the kind of artistic workshop, people would be interested in, in future.

The third workshop, took place in the forest near the nature center. The idea for the workshop came from one of our team members Eutheum, who is from South Korea. She introduced us with a Korean play called Jwibulnori, in which cans containing burning wooden blocks are twirled in circles using long strings. After a while, the motion of cans form beautiful round images and the play is fun and exciting. We started by preparing the cans for the play, when a big family of Syrian refugees who came to attend the art festival, got very interested in the workshop. All of them, including their kids, helped us in preparing cans, and also actively participated in the workshop afterwards. The workshop and art festival started at the same time, and we took turns to attend both.

It was an unique and exciting experience for me since for the first time I travelled above the arctic circle and also because this workshop marked the start of my journey in this project. I tried to soak in the experience using all my senses and tried to collect as much data as possible in the form of notes, photographs and observations. This is what I wrote about my first experience in Enontekiö:

"Everything I have read and heard about this magical land is indeed true. After all the discussion about the sensitivity of cultures in the north, especially between Sámi and Finnish people, I was really scared to interact with anyone in the start, but the Sámi lady selling earrings was so supportive of the fact the anyone can wear those earrings irrespective of their cultural background, made me feel very comfortable. I get a very positive vibe from everything around here. The landscape here is surely different, trees have got shorter, colors more vibrant and wind more chilling. The abundance of snow makes everything look so pure and innocent"

On our way back to Rovaniemi, we discussed about the achievements and shortcomings of the workshop. We also tried to analyse the data we all collected and planned the a meeting to discuss the next workshop.

Workshop Four: Lumiveistopaja or Snow sculpture, Palojärvi



Figure 18: Snow sculpture, February 2018

The fourth workshop was anticipated to be an extremely challenging one (at least by me) and as it turns out, it really was. The idea for the workshop was although simple: to make snow sculptures in the form of Sun, in a small village called Palojärvi which is around 28 kms north of Hetta (Figure 10). The idea for making snow sculptures was based on the fact that Palojärvi has an extremely cold winter from January to May and hence abundance of snow. Since Sun is the ultimate source of light and energy, we decided to make snow sculpture inspired the symbol of Sun in different cultures. It was easy to decide the cultures, since we as a team researched about the symbols of Sun in our own cultures, namely Indian, Russian, Korean and Sámi (we choose a Sámi symbol over Finnish to respect the majority of Sámi population in the area).

After finalizing the concept, we made miniature clay models of the the symbols and tried out different placement options (see below, Figure 19). We used the prototyping method to get a clear idea of the dimensions as well the tools required for sculpting the details.



Figure 19: Arranging the prototypes, Palojärvi, February 2018 (Source: Tanja Koistinen)

After reaching Palojärvi we did a quick survey of the place, and were not satisfied with the location of the workshop. It was a small area far away from the village center parallel to a busy road that had big chunks of snow piled alongside. The location of the workshop was not at all what we imagined and it had very less visibility from the road. It made us realise the significance of place based research. Another disappointment was the lack of participants in the workshop. We analysed it was partially because of the chilling weather of -34 degree celsius and partially because of the ongoing 2018 Winter Olympics, in PyeongChang, South Korea. The popularity of livo Niskanen, a Finnish cross country skier, who was speculated to win a gold, narrowed the chances of people leaving their homes and participating in the workshop.

However, we decided to make the best of what was offered started by building the cuboidal blocks of snow, using wooden planks and ropes that were left to solidify through the night. After the tough 4 hours of work in freezing temperature with hardly any members from the community, and sat down to decide the placement of individual sculpture. After going through all possible options, we made a plan and began carving the cuboidal blocks the next morning. Although it was a beautiful sunny day, the temperature outside was around -36 degree celsius (with a real

feel of -42 degree celsius). It was unbearable especially for someone like me who comes from a country of +45 degree celsius weather conditions. This is what I wrote in my diary about the experience,

“I have never imagined how it feels to not feel your toes, nose, ears, cheeks and fingers because of the cold. Well, now I do! At one point during the block building, I felt as if my fingers are rock solid and will break like chalk. It was so kind of Irene to offer me her daughter’s shoes: they were lifesavers. I can’t believe the love and care older people have to offer, even to a foreigner like me. I am touched and extremely thankful to be a part of this project. It is giving me the best stories of my life that I will always recall whenever I feel weak. I am so proud of myself. I have survived this, I can survive anything now.”

In spite of all the hardships and disappointments, we were successful in carving out the sculptures. We finished the workshop with a small poem recited by Eutheum and wished that the Sun shaped snow sculptures would bring warmth in the village. As a team, we also bonded well with the two participants who drove all the way from Vuontisjärvi to attend the workshop, Unto and Kalevi. They have been part of the hay workshop, and really enjoyed it. Similar to the last workshop, on our way back to Rovaniemi, we discussed about the achievements and shortcomings with possible solutions to solve the problems in the next workshop.

Workshop Five: Meän kylä or Min Gilli or Our Village, Karesuvanto

The fifth workshop took place in the beautiful summer of 2018 in a village near Finland-Sweden border called Karesuvanto. It is located around 65 kms east of Hetta and is a small yet lively place. Learning from the problems faced in Palojärvi, we decided to work with a rather closed community such as a school which at least assured a good number the participants. Additionally, the idea of working with kids was interesting and filled with opportunities.



Figure 20: Meän kylä or Min Gilli or Our Village, Karesuvanto, May 2018

For setting the plan into action, we contacted a local primary school for possible collaboration and fortunately they agreed to host the workshop in their school campus. The idea for the workshop came from the fact that a majority of trucks carrying wood stopped at Karesuvanto. Hence we decided to use wood as a material and researched about all possible options of wood art. Finally, we decided to cut small wooden slices, so that children could paint their individual ideas on them and later on, all slices could be combined to form a big mural (Figure 20). After arranging an adequate amount of wooden slices, we started by making prototypes of the painted wooden slices and brainstormed ways in which they could be arranged.

For the paint to stay longer, we applied primer to the slices and let them dry before the workshop (see below, Figure 21). Working with colors was a refreshing as well fun filled experience for the whole team, especially because we were trying to figure out ways to make it more and more interesting for the kids.



Figure 21: Left: preparing prototypes, University of Lapland and right: wooden slices with primer, Karesuvanto, May 2018

As a result we decided to conduct a small coloring session with children at school and tell them about the color theory. To make it interesting, I decided to combine a warm up session with a simple game of colors that could help the children become comfortable with us, as well as feel enthusiast to paint their ideas on the slices. We divided the participants into two age- groups: six to ten and ten to twelve. The idea of warm up sessions as a technique for easy flow of ideas was introduced to me in the advanced service design and participatory design courses. I was astonished to see its impact especially in opening discussions during team works or in general energising ourselves before an exhaustive creative process. Hence I decided to implement the exercise during the workshop. We were surprised to see the excitement and rise in energy level of kids after the session.

We planned the workshop meticulously, for optimum utilization of time and to avoid mishaps. We started the workshop by introducing ourselves to the class. It was surprising to see that the students at the school learn three languages simultaneously: Sámi, Finnish and English. After the general introduction, I conducted a small warm up session (Figure 22) to make children excited for the happening followed by a coloring session (on paper first, because they were very young in age and might mess up coloring directly onto the slices). As expected, the warm up session was very helpful in building a bond of comfort and ease. We then introduced the theme for coloring 'our village' and left children free to paint their ideas about the village in any way they wanted. I, along with Julianna documented the whole process through photographs.



Figure 22: Warm up sessions, Karesuvanto, May 2018

Later that afternoon, we repeated the process with children of age group ten to twelve. I changed the warm session to suit their age and again, it filled them energy and laughter. This group of children were original, extremely confident in painting their ideas and some of them actually painted well as compared to the age group of six to ten year olds, who either replicated the prototypes we showed them, or painted what their friends were painting or painted whatever they felt like painting irrespective of the theme. This gave us some valuable data regarding the psychology of children of different age groups. After an eventful first day, we began arranging the colored slices on a wooden frame using nails and drill. It was rather long process and required arranging the slices in a well composed manner. Tanja worked extensively on attaching the slices to the wooden frame and after hours of hard work, we were ready to place the finished artwork on the allotted location. The location was decided by one of the school teachers and it was a beautiful place on top of a sand dune with fells in the background.

Unto and Kalevi, the two old men who had been part of all the workshops helped us place the artwork on site. We also attached a small banner on top of the artwork that said its name, 'our village' in all three languages: Sámi, Finnish and English. Our workshop was taped by a local Sámi reporter who later published a small segment in the newspaper and online at Sápmi, Yle Uutiset (yle.fi).



Figure 23: Workshop reported in a local newspaper, Karesuvanto, May 2018

This workshop was undoubtedly a very successful event and helped the project gain great popularity in municipality. As a matter of fact, while we were in Karesuvanto, we got a call from a visual artist in Kilpisjärvi who wanted to arrange a workshop with us. This was the first invitation from a village asking for a possible collaboration and it proved the rising recognition of our project in the area. On our way back to Rovaniemi, we discussed about the achievements and shortcomings of the workshop and ideas for workshop in Kilpisjärvi.

Workshop Six: Tuulen työpaja or experimental wind art, Kilpisjärvi

After the successful completion of the workshop in Karesuvanto, the final workshop of our project took place in Kilpisjärvi in September 2018. Kilpisjärvi is a beautiful village situated around 173 kms north east of Hetta, in the foothills of the Saana mountain. As mentioned earlier, a visual artist in Kilpisjärvi contacted us to arrange the workshop in the nature centre. The idea for the workshop was proposed by the artist, and she wanted to make experimental wind art using local natural materials. Once again, children from a local school were invited to take part in the workshop. We also invited local inhabitants of the area to take part as well as the tourists who visit nature centre be a part of the event. We started by brainstorming concepts for wind art and finalized two simple ideas that were easy to implement and fun to make. Since it was a two days event, we divided the ideas evenly.



Figure 24: Tuulen työpaja or experimental wind art, Kilpisjärvi, September 2018

According to our plan, on day one, children from the local school would make experimental wind art using natural materials available near the nature centre such as leaves, berries, stones, hay and so on. On the second day, we as a group along with other participants would make a huge mandala using similar natural materials. We made some prototypes of the artworks and thought of ways to hang them for wind to do its job.

The nature centre where the workshop took place was situated at small hill top surrounded by beautiful autumn trees and the majestic Saana mountain in the background (Figure 25). As planned the workshop started with a general introduction and a quick warm up session. The children from the school were extremely excited to see our prototypes and in no time dispersed into the area and started collecting materials.



Figure 25: Natural environment near Kilpisjärvi nature center, Kilpisjärvi, September 2018

It was surprising to see the variety of materials collected by children (Figure 26). Most of them tried to make beautiful hanging artworks made of berries, pebbles, and leaves but a group of young boys made an artwork from all the man made waste lying around the place such as cans, plastic containers and bottles. They pointed out they wanted to control pollution of the natural environment and this is a good way to highlight the issue.



Figure 26: Children working with different materials, Kilpisjärvi, September 2018

Two children out of the whole bunch, worked very meticulously and made astonishingly thoughtful artworks (Figure 27). I was surprised to see the dedication with which they made the artworks and also the confidence with which they presented it. I was particularly impressed by these two kids because of their thoughtfulness and I sincerely hope that they pursue art as a career in future. After a full day of making art with children and hanging them at different places, we started working the next day with the intention to create a big mandala with natural materials.



Figure 27: Children with exceptionally thoughtful artworks, Kilpisjärvi, September 2018

We made a basic structure on the ground using ropes and paper (Figure 28). Meanwhile, Elina started picking berries for birds and arranged them in beautiful patterns to make a pathway which starts from berries and leads to children's artworks with the mandala in the middle. Unto and Kalevi were once again present to help us in collecting materials for the mandala. Additionally, during the mandala making, children from the school revisited us and wanted to help. This was an achievement for the project and a proud moment for our team. Some parents of the children also came to see the workshop and some even took part. This workshop also gave us our youngest participant, Tume, who came with her elder sister and mother and took part in the madala making (Figure 28). Mandala was made using berries, leaves, wooden sticks, hay, stones, mushrooms and dried grass.



Figure 28: Berries for birds; structuring the madala; Tume helping in arranging stones and an aerial view of the finished mandala, Kilpisjärvi, September 2018

We ended the workshop by gathering everyone in the backyard of nature centre for some snacks and juice. Then we asked everyone present to move around and appreciate the artworks. Few children explained their thoughts behind the artworks and it was inspiring to see their excitement. All actions during the workshop were documented with due permissions in the form of photographs and videos.

The last task of the workshop included an extensive interview of Unto and Kalevi, the two men who had been active participants and our strongest pillars of support throughout the project (Figure 29). We discussed the achievements and shortcomings of the project and ways to improve the participation of community members. The medium of conversation was Finnish but below is translation of some of their words:

“We have been part of all workshops and love to work with your team...we will follow you wherever you go”

I believe Unto and Kalevi have played a very important role in making the project a success. It is because of their active involvement that has strengthened my faith in the impact of artist practices in isolated communities. Irrespective of the fact that I do not speak or understand their

language, they treated me with nothing but love, affection and care. I have developed a strong bond with the two men and I always want to be in touch with them. They have become an integral part of my journey in this project and are also a true reflection of what the project stands and aims for.



Figure 29: Unto and Kalevi, Enontekiö Art Path project

5.3 Book design- Layout, print and distribution

The idea of designing a small coffee table book (will be referred simply as a book) came to our team towards to end of the project. Since we were able to collect some really interesting photographs during the workshops, a book that illustrated the pictures along with a brief description of each workshop, appeared to be a good economical option to assemble the project in one place. We also intended to send printed copies of the book to the almost all places we conducted the workshops, personal copies to all stakeholders and the active participants of the workshop as well an online version for Enonkekiö municipality official website. We decided to launch the book at the exhibition we planned have in November 2018 in Hetta.

The process of designing the book started with designing the logo of the project first. As a matter of fact, I have been thinking about the logo right from the time the project commenced since I was not satisfied with logo made earlier by Juho.



Figure 30: Logo of the project, August 2018

After days of brainstorming, ideating and refining, the logo was ready (Figure 30). It is inspired by the natural environment of Finnish Lapland. The pathway between the long birch trees stand for: one, the trail made by reindeers as they move from from one place to another and two, the art path that this project aims to create by making artworks in different villages. Name beneath the icons is in both Finnish and Sámi language. As defined by Michael Hodgson (2010), “A logo expresses a visual personality”, whereas a good logo, “transcends design by creating an emotional connection between the symbol and your personal story”. Inspired by this definition I tried to create a story in the logo. I wanted the people of the area to recognize its atmosphere and relate to it at naturally.

The next task was to define the specifications of the book such as size, number of pages, layout, content and printing. Elina helped me in the process and we finalized the layout in no time. Then I sat down for selection of images from the library that we created throughout the project. After carefully picking the best images, I started the designing process using adobe creative suite. It was a long, meticulous process but finally I was able to deliver the finished book on time and we were able to get it printed before the exhibition. Design and layout of the book was done keeping in mind the immediate audience: older members of the community as well as children. Hence, it was designed to be picture oriented with very brief descriptions. Additionally, the text was present in two languages both Finnish and English to make it understandable for international students like myself as well.

5.4 Exhibition in Hetta

We got the opportunity to exhibit the work done during the project in the nature center of Hetta, in November 2018. We opened the exhibition on 27th November 2018 and it stayed in the nature centre until 28th February 2019. It was perfect way to conclude the project for now (until another team takes over) and we did our best put up a grand show. We displayed images, videos, paintings (by Eutheum), gif animations, original artworks and tools used in making artworks such as cans of fire lantern workshop, wooden slices, experimental wind art artwork as well as one original wooden art piece made by Tanja especially for the exhibition. In addition to these, we also displayed art pieces from Willow Grouse (Figure 31), which was a collaborative workshop organised by Irene Salonen (local coordinator of our project and an art enthusiast) and Timo Jokela (Professor of art education, University of Lapland). The workshop offered a clay workshop along with a platform to share experiences and stories about the extinguishing birds of the North. We also exhibited an art piece made by Tanja Koistinen, “Grow back” which is a wooden artwork inspired by the Karesuvanto workshop and is a way of reminding people to not just keep consuming but every once in a while try to give something back to the nature.



Figure 31: Left: Grow back by Tanja Koistinen; right: Willow Grouse workshop, November 2018

The opening ceremony for the exhibition begun with a speech by Jari Rantapelkonen, mayor of Enontekiö municipality (Figure 32). He expressed his happiness about meeting the aims of the project and congratulated us on delivering what was expected of the collaboration.

After Jari, all other stakeholders such as Irene, Annikki and many more expressed their thoughts about the project and their individual experiences. Then Elina and Tanja briefly summarized the whole journey and how the project has been advantageous for both students as well as the municipality. I tried to express my views as an outsider and how I viewed the place with an outsider's perspective and Tanja translated my words in Finnish for everyone to understand. I also wanted to share my thoughts about the people and their living condition in the Finnish Lapland but I started crying before I could complete my speech. I was so touched by seeing all the old men and women who came to celebrate the opening of the exhibition from different villages. I was filled with so many emotions that I couldn't stop myself from bursting into tears. So although I couldn't complete my speech I believe my tears summed up how I really felt about the project. This is what I wrote in my diary that night:

“This project was so powerful in nature, that it has changed me as a person. My journey in this project has made me stronger, more confident and more empathetic. I still can't believe the love and care I received from Unto and Kalevi. I feel like I have become a part of their community and they are a part of mine. Every visit to Enontekiö feels like finding home away from home. Undoubtedly the best part of my master's degree program is this project. I hope I could do something to repay the love and affection I have received from the people. I will miss this place, these people and this positivity.”



Figure 32: Exhibition opening, Hetta, November 2018

The medium of interaction in the ceremony was Finnish so I couldn't understand everything that was said but Tanja and Elina translated the important points on our way back to Rovaniemi. To conclude it was a very successful project but definitely has a scope of improvement in terms of organization and communication with the community members. This also sums up my motivation for the research: to develop a practical framework for sustainable community art projects using methods of service design thinking. After learning about what people said about our project, and based on my personal experiences I am convinced that projects such as Enontekiö Art Path have enormous potential to bring change in the lives of people and I want to contribute to expanding the capabilities of such projects using the best of my abilities.

Chapter 6: A practical framework for community art workshops in Finnish Lapland

As a result of all the challenges and opportunities offered by this project, this study proposes a practical framework that can be used for better functioning of the project in future. It can be used by students at the University of Lapland who wish to take over the project or even independent artists interested in making community artworks in similar settings like the ones offered in Finnish Lapland. One important thing to note here is that the framework consists of some of the most important takeaways based on my experience in the project and does not include the practices that are apparent. I have tried to focus my attention on the aspects of projects that are usually considered less important but in reality have a great impact on the overall functioning of the project. Most of the points in this framework are generic in nature and can be applied to any place specific community art project with settings similar to Finnish Lapland. I have discussed each point in detail along with examples from the research project- Enontekiön Art Path (details in previous chapter).

The framework is based on the analysis of both written and visual data which was collected during the workshops and during general discussions within the team; interviews with Unto and Kalevi (two active participants throughout the project), Maria Huhmarniemi (University teacher, art education) and my personal experience as an organiser, facilitator, researcher, participant, artist and an observationist in the project.

One: Communication and exchange of ideas

It is of utmost importance to understand the expectations of community members from the project, which is conveyed both directly and indirectly, by communication and interaction before the actual event takes place.

It is extremely important to visit the place and arrange an interactive session with the community members before planning the details of any artistic intervention. Timo Jokela emphasises this point in the form of extensive place based research (Jokela, 2013). Understanding about the place as a location, the living condition of its inhabitants and their cultural and historical background, gives us an idea about the general expectation of people from the project. It also creates empathy and an instant connection with the location by transforming it into a 'place'.

Lucy R. Lippard (1997) beautifully describes the difference between place and landscape simply as what we feel inside and what we see outside. Place has the power to evoke memories, it is temporal and spatial and personal and political (p. 7) whereas landscape is what we see from a single, static point of view and it simply implies the experience of viewing (p. 8).

Visiting the place and interacting with the people before the workshop is hence of great significance. Doing a quick survey of the place in terms of location, climate and surroundings can also help in avoiding unnecessary problems. For example during the workshop in Palojärvi (discussed in last chapter) the location where the workshop took place was far away from the village center, had very less visibility from the main road and was close to snowmobile tracks. However, if we would have seen the location of the workshop earlier, by visiting the place a few days prior to the actual event, we would have tried to arrange it somewhere else. Since we anticipated the location using google maps and by relying on various sources without examining the situation ourselves, we were left disappointed and helpless in the end. Such circumstances can be avoided by visiting the place and analysing everything with bare eyes.

Another advantage of a pre-visit is the opportunity to meet the people of the place by arranging a small interactive session. Since we faced the problem of lack of participants in almost all the workshops, I believe by involving people in a discussion about their locality and by co-creating the workshop plan together, we can evoke a sense of attachment in the community members towards the event that is about to happen. Such collective session can also be a platform to share stories and folktales about the village and can yield some highly valuable information about the place that is difficult to find through books and internet. Geke van Dijk, Bas Raijmakers and Luke Kelly (2012) have reported several service design tools to strengthen the communication between people involved in creative projects. Some of these methods and tools that can relate well to this study are: first, contextual interviews, in which the interviews take place in the contextual settings to amplify the impact of the surroundings and a greater attention to specific details is attainable; second, The 5 Whys?, in which discussions are scrutinized in a very detailed manner by asking consequent why questions; third, expectation, stakeholder and customer journey maps that can be utilized to plan and run the interactive sessions with the community members in a more systematic and detailed manner.

Hence, visiting the village before the workshop is eminently valuable as well as advantageous for both the organisers and the community members. To summarise:

- Visiting the place of community art project for an extensive place research is extremely important.

- Arranging a quick interactive session with the community members can help the facilitators avoid unnecessary mishaps.
- Utilizing various service design tools and methods in the interactive sessions with the community members can amplify both the quality and quantity of the interaction yielding more useful data for later enquiry.

Two: Promotion and publicity

A clear announcement with explicit details about the workshop such as theme, time, place and so on, through relevant channels such as newspapers, should be an integral part of the workshop, should be done with expertise, care and creativity and in no condition, taken casually.

Since participation of local community members is one of the main aims of the project, it should be made sure that each and every person in the chosen area knows about the workshop and can choose to participate, if interested. Reaching anyone and everyone living in the area by using various mediums, such as newspapers, radio, facebook, posters and so on, should be the priority. After being part of four workshops in this project, I have realized that no matter how extensive the place based research is, how precisely the workshop is planned and how creatively brilliant the idea of artwork to be made is, if a clear public announcement about the happening is not made well in advance, with regular reminders, everything else is a waste.

Additionally when it comes to reaching the people with a specific purpose and expecting them to participate in an event, I like to think of this project as a 'brand' offering collaborative services with ethical and humanitarian aims in the name of Enontekiön Art Path. Furthermore, with a brand comes the responsibility of the brand image, brand attitude and brand equity. As described by Flemming Hansen and Lars Bech Christensen (2003), "A brand name is meant to trigger in memory positive associations with that brand" (p. 13) and "It is advertising (when successful) that positions a brand in the consumer's mind, nurtures salience, and builds positive brand attitude that leads to a strong brand equity" (p. 15).

Therefore, in order to have a connection with the people it is of great importance to promote the project effectively. During the interview with Unto and Kalevi, they agreed on the growing popularity of the project in some places, but pointed out that it is still unknown to a major population in the municipality. When asked for a solution to this issue, they suggested using

traditional channels such as newspapers and radio for promoting the project. I was surprised to hear the suggestion, because in spite of being such a simple solution, it never crossed our minds. A majority of population in Enontekiö is ageing, hence they have a better, easy and regular access to newspapers and radio rather than Facebook and Instagram.

Hence, it is not only important to promote and publicize the project details extensively but also through careful selection of media to ensure optimum participation of the community members.

To summarise:

- Effective promotion of the project to make sure it reaches everyone living in the area is one of the most practical ways to increase the local participation.
- The role of integrated and multi-channel market strategies for promotion. The most relevant channels for promotion and publicity of the project should be identified based on age, qualifications and interests of the community members to optimise the reach of adverts.
- Co-design with the community, right from the planning, promotion and execution of the project.

Three: Regular re-evaluation of strategies

To keep up with the diversity of people, environments and landscapes along with their changing requirements and expectations from the project, especially in the Finnish Lapland, it is extremely important to learn from experiences, make thoughtful changes in plans and keep on re-evaluating strategies.

Usually when working in a dynamic environment like the one offered by Finnish Lapland, artists and researchers, need to have an open mind to accommodate the changing habitats, landscapes, experiences and even people. It is extremely important to learn from experiences and tweak the ways of working that works best for the project.

For example, to make the community members feel more comfortable with the research team, we included interactive warm up sessions as a part of the general introduction and it did wonders in terms of community involvement and enthusiasm (discussed in detail in the next section).

Additionally, learning from experiences both good and bad, and using the conclusions drawn from those experiences constructively, is another important aspect of community art workshops.

I have two examples to illustrate this argument. First, after experiencing lack of local participation in Palojärvi workshop, the next workshop was organised in a school to ensure a considerable number of participants which consequently lead to the project gaining popularity. Also, I believe it is important to build a strong foundation for any project to grow by making safe decisions in the beginning, so that the scope of experimentation and expansion can be multifold in the later stages. Second, after two consecutive workshops with children in Karesuvanto and Kilpisjärvi, it was apparent that the involvement of children was indeed a better way to involve adults of the community as the kids were usually accompanied by their parents or grandparents. Additionally, to suit the changing circumstances of community art projects that require working with different communities, artists and researchers should acquire quick problem solving skills that can come handy at critical situations. To summarise:

- Working in dynamic environments call for certain skills that help in the success of any community art project such quick problem solving, open mindedness and learning from experiences.
- Along with these skills, artists and researchers should also make relevant changes in plans and strategies that work best for the project.
- Role of service design values or approaches such as reflexivity, iteration to continuously revisit and adapt strategies since successful strategies are usually flexible and changing. (Etherington, 2004; Jokela & Huhmarniemi, 2018; Stickdorn, 2012).

Four: Warm up sessions

Including quick, easy, exciting and interactive warm up exercises before or during the creative process can enhance the energy levels of participants as well as break the ice between participants and facilitators allowing an easy flow of information.

Usually when working with communities with language barriers or within a multicultural team, it is highly possible for both the community members and the facilitators or researchers to feel insecure, hesitant and nervous to communicate effectively with one another. Participatory service design methods offer an excellent solution to this situation in the form of warm up exercises. Arthur B. VanGundy (2005) has described warm up exercises as tools to “help individuals and groups stretch their thinking muscles” (p. 30). Although VanGundy has focused the use of such exercises and activities for idea generation and innovative thinking within

organizations and companies, I believe that similar exercises can be tweaked according to the requirements can be used effectively in community art projects. Simply put, it can be used to build empathy for one another, which is an important attribute of any participatory art project (Miettinen, Sarantou, & Akimenko, 2016).

Additionally, Samuel Tschepe (2018) has emphasised the importance of well chosen exercises as they help the participants to feel comfortable and excited in contrast to a poorly chosen warm up that can spoil the mood of participants and leave everyone unenthusiastic and confused.

During the workshop with school children in Karesuvanto, since some of us didn't share a common language with the participants, it was important to identify methods to break the ice and make the participants comfortable with our team. Hence, we used interactive warm up exercises facilitated by the international members of the team (including myself). I came up with a simple exercise in which children had to clap, jump or dance when I show them a card with a color linked to it. The aim of the exercise was to energise children before the actual workshop as well as to help them practice name of colors in English language since we were told that the children were taught three languages at school: Finnish, Sami and English. As anticipated, the warm up session made everyone laugh, feel comfortable with another and to a great extent, broke the ice between the participants (children) and us.

Lastly, warm up exercises are also an effective way to reduce the pressure of performance, especially in community art projects where people are usually nervous to participate since the artistic activity might be something they have never done before, like paint or sculpt. When chosen considerately, warm up exercises also create an atmosphere of laughter and positivity which help running the artistic endeavor in every possible way. To summarise:

- Including warm up exercises before or during community art projects enhances the quality as well as enthusiasm of both participants and facilitators.
- Exercises should be selected carefully based on factors such aim of the project, succeeding activities, age group of participant and so on since wrong choice of warm up exercise can have negative repercussions.
- It is highly advisable to tweak any existing warm up exercise to suite the requirements of a particular project, place and its people.
- Interactive processes or activities at the front end of any action in the research field can enable empathy between those who actively partake in a project. Empathy is recognized as the front end (prestage) of a service design process (Miettinen, Sarantou, & Akimenko, 2016)

Five: Respect and reward

Respecting the sensitivities and peculiarities of communities as well as fellow team members, when working in multicultural teams is not only essential but a fundamental expectation. Along with this mutual respect for one another's differences, any tangible or intangible reward, amplifies the impact of community art projects.

Multicultural groups offer numerous opportunities to all its members to learn about one another and share insightful facts about their cultural heritage. However it also poses challenges due to difference in style of working, cultural dissimilarities and varied perceptions about issues. Hence it is very important to have mutual respect for one another within the team as well as a sensitive attitude towards the communities for the collaboration between the two entities to function smoothly. It is because of this mutual respect and understanding towards the differences that defines the success of any community art project. This feeling of mutual respect and understanding towards one another can be inculcated by using tools of participatory service design such as empathy building. Empathy building not only helps in strengthening the relationship between researcher and participants, but also results in a long term connection that leaves marks in the hearts and minds of people. As pointed out by Miettinen, Sarantou, and Akimenko (2016), "Through equal participation in art-making and shared storytelling, connectedness is enabled. (p. 174) and it is through this connectedness that long lasting impressions are left on the people involved in the project.

Additionally, for artist-researchers (like myself) being a part of community art projects is a great opportunity to learn about place specific art, human behavior, factors affecting the project and so on. On the other hand, for participants, community art projects offers a platform to display their artistic skills, build artworks related to their environment, have a good time working with their family and friends and so on. However, in spite of all the above mentioned takeaways for both researchers and participants, when their hard work and dedication is honoured with any kind of tangible or intangible reward, the effect of project on both the groups intensifies. Furthermore, since community art projects are usually ephemeral in nature, a simple token of appreciation to the participating members of the community can have a long lasting impact.

For example, the exhibition for the research project in Hetta in November 2018, along with a small personal handbook of the project to the all stakeholders, active participants and an online

version for the municipality official website, was one of our ways to reciprocate the love and support our project received from the community members.

To summarise:

- In addition to respecting the cultural and behavioral differences within multicultural teams and also while working with different communities, it is important to think of ways to return the input of various stakeholders. Empathy as discussed in the literature review chapter of this study, is one of the most important aspects of participatory service design that helps in building a trustworthy relationship between the researcher and the participants.
- Even a small token of appreciation (tangible or intangible) goes a long way in leaving a positive memory of the project on the minds of people associated with it. Building a feeling of 'connectedness' (Miettinen, Sarantou, and Akimenko, 2016) by engaging empathically with the participants, is another a way of reciprocating the input of participants in any research project.

All the five topics covered in this framework are aspects of community art projects that are often overlooked and taken casually. However, simple factors like these when considered seriously, can increase the desired outcome of the project multifold. Each of these aspects have a method linked to improvise it in the form of a specific participatory service design tool. As discussed earlier in the literature review chapter, service design offers methods and techniques that can be utilized to improve services and experiences by incorporating human centered approach (Morits, 2005; Stickdorn, 2012). Furthermore, participatory service design focuses on the active involvement of the users (in this case community members) to participate in making critical decisions related to the service or experience, playing a key role in designing the service or experience (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Such constructive, systematic and well planned involvement of the ultimate users or community members in shaping the overall design of the service or project, has numerous benefits and advantages. First, engaging directly with the actual people (the end users) affected by any service or project, helps in getting useful insights related to the problem; second, facilitates easy publicity of the service or project along with an increased sense of attachment with that service or project prior to its beginning; third, provides a platform for multiple cycles of iteration, prototyping and improvements before finalizing an idea or outcome; fourth, collection of rich quality of data that can be utilized for future inquiry and research as well as a chance to experiment with a wide range of service design tools and fifth,

builds empathy between various stakeholders and long lasting connections that have a positive effects on the lives of people.

Lastly, the topics covered in this framework can help the project reach more communities in Finnish Lapland and beyond, gain further popularity and have deeper impact on the lives of ones involved in it.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

By analysis the data gathered from the community art project in Finnish Lapland, this study has proposed a practical framework for better functioning of the project in future as well as the significance of participatory service design tools in social research. I believe that the practical framework (presented in the previous chapter) has successfully answered the research questions posed by this study. Firstly, the framework has been deduced keeping in mind the unique natural environment and living conditions offered by Finnish Lapland, although it can be utilized by artists and researchers in other places as well, working in similar settings. Secondly, in the proposed framework, a special emphasis is given to increasing the participation of local community members in art projects to overcome the challenges faced by the research team during the project in terms of community involvement. Thirdly, the framework is well suited taking into account the ageing population in the area and ways to increase their participation in such projects.

As a result of increasing ageing population throughout Finland and migration of young adults to bigger cities for studies and jobs, the small villages, especially in the north, are losing their identities. These villages are usually at long distances from one another, have limited resources (supermarkets, entertainment centres and so on), experience extreme climatic conditions especially during winters and have majority of population that is ageing rapidly. Therefore, community art projects such as Enontekiö art path, offer excellent opportunities for the inhabitants of such villages to restore their losing identities by participating in exciting artistic activities, and offers them a platform to rejuvenate the feeling of belongingness within themselves. Hence, the outcome of this study which is in the form of a practical framework, can be utilized for better functioning of such projects in Finnish Lapland.

The overall journey of this project has been highly eventful and enlightening. There were numerous challenges both within the team and with the community members, due to various factors such as multiculturalism, language barrier, multidisciplinary and so on. However, with mutual support, empathy and understanding towards one another and also towards the community members, all the issues got resolved easily and the project was completed gloriously. The outcomes of this study can be considered meaningful and advantageous on various levels that are discussed below.

1. At a general level, the practical framework proposed by this study is helpful for art education students, designers, artists, researchers or anyone interested in conducting community art workshops in Finnish Lapland as well as places with similar settings.
2. For the members of Enontekiö municipality, firstly, this project has provided them a platform to experience their artistic and creative self especially for the ones who have never been involved with art before. Additionally, it has opened new opportunities for the people to initiate their own artistic adventures as well as plan bigger community art projects in future. This project has also helped community members to look at the everyday objects in their natural environment with a fresh perspective which consequently increases the feeling of belongingness and appreciation for the place. Additionally, I believe that if the outcomes of this study, are implemented successfully in the development of the project in future, it might have more positive and profound impact on the community members.
3. For the students at the University of Lapland, the outcomes of this study are beneficial to both, plan and organise community art workshops in other parts of Finnish Lapland or advance with the same project and expand it to other villages of Enontekiö municipality. It also sets an example of multicultural teamwork, mutual respect and understanding for one another, and courage to work in demanding environmental condition of Finnish Lapland. I also believe that community art projects like Enontekiö Art Path are an inspiration for the students to come out of their comfort zones and work in challenging environments which is helpful for their professional lives afterwards.
4. At a personal level, being an integral part of this project as well as my research journey associated with it, has been an exciting, challenging and an extremely educative experience for me. The results of this study are clearly reflected in terms of the gained knowledge, experience, skills and empathy together with an increased sense of responsibility towards older population of the society. Ability to work with multicultural and multidisciplinary teams is one of my greatest takeaways from this study and I feel that it will be extremely helpful for my future plan of working in different international workspaces. As a response to challenges such as language barrier and new cultural environment, I have developed skills like adaptability, creativity and new ways of communication. This study has also been an eye opener for me in terms of the potential of art and artistic practices to solve the wicked problems prevalent in the society. It has inspired me work for the betterment of people as well as environment, both in my

professional and personal life. As a student at the University of Lapland, I believe that this project and the research journey associated with it, were the best possible ways for me to understand the Finnish culture with such closeness that wouldn't have been possible just by attending lectures.

Lastly, I have developed a strong emotional connection with Finnish Lapland and its people and I wish to continue be in touch with this place throughout my life.

Recommendations for further research

This study aspires to encourage the new AAD students at the University of Lapland to expand this project to other villages of Enontekiö municipality, implement the framework proposed by this study and polish the framework further with their experience. This study also aims at inspiring other artists and researcher to escalate the discussions related to the use of community art in ensuring the social wellbeing of the people, particularly in the North and revealing new opportunities in this field. Further broader and wider aims posed by this study include research related to: community art projects aimed at the ageing population in the North; and multicultural and multidisciplinary collaborations seeking creative problem solving approaches and social, cultural and environmental sustainability using art. I sincerely believe that a research including artistic practices at its foundation can uncover new perspectives in the field of social research and can be helpful in solving wicked problems of the society.

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