



Evaluation of Faculty of Health Sciences Students, Perspectives on Art

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ABSTRACT

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This research aimed to determine the perspectives of health sciences faculty students regarding art. In this context, data was collected through a survey from 393 students in different departments studying at Necmettin Erbakan University Nezahat Keleşoğlu Faculty of Health Sciences in the 2023-2024 academic year. Participants: It was observed that 86.8% were women, 34.6% were sophomores, 28.8% were students of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, and 46.8% were not interested in any branch of art. The two statements with which the participants agreed at the highest level were "I like going to the movies" (4.32±.74) and "I believe that works of art evoke good feelings in people" (4.24±.73), respectively. The two statements with the lowest arithmetic mean in the scale were determined as "I would love to see myself as a famous artist in the future" and "I dream of my artistic works being exhibited in a museum or gallery one day," respectively. It is seen that the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the scale total score are 3.80±.55. No significant relationship was found between students' attitudes towards art and gender, age, department, and class. The overall average of the scale with the sub-dimensions "valuing art education," "necessity of art," and "personal artistic tendency" is higher for participants who are interested in art than those who are not interested. In line with the research results, it can be recommended to support students' participation in artistic activities and increase such activities in schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Artistic activities are important works that enable individuals to express their emotions in aesthetic ways. Expressing oneself in creative ways and engaging in artistic production by engaging in any field of art also has positive effects in terms of psychological well-being. As Maslow includes in his hierarchy of basic needs, making an aesthetic and original production in a field is an important need that supports one's development. Engaging in creativity and artistic activities can help improve adaptive flexibility, support psychological well-being, and protect mental and spiritual health while increasing the individual's ability to respond to the increasing complexities of society (Lawrence et. al., 2015). The American Art Therapy Association also argues that through art, the individual's level of awareness can increase and the ability to cope with stress and traumatic experiences can improve (Quoted in Dempsey, 2023). In this respect, providing educational content that supports individuals' perspectives on art in their educational lives can motivate individuals to participate in art-related activities. As a matter of fact, providing opportunities for students to reveal their creativity and supporting them to develop positive attitudes towards art during the higher education process, which is one of the educational periods that support the development of individuals, is important in terms of both their ability to spend their education process more efficiently and their personal development (Jackson, 2004). In this context, students' having a positive perspective on art and being interested in a branch of art that suits their interests and abilities and the advancements in their artistic perspectives can contribute to their academic studies throughout their educational process in higher education, as science and art are disciplines that support each other. Additionally, advances in their artistic perspectives may enable them to develop a more innovative understanding (Yılmaz-Gündüz & Gürten, 2023) Research results showing that the implementation of art-based programs in businesses can improve the creative abilities of employees and encourage innovation also support this inference (An & Youn, 2018). In addition to all these, students' having a positive perspective towards art during higher education can enable them to use their free time productively and have the opportunity to develop themselves in an artistic field.

Higher education institutions offering programs in health sciences train professionals in a range of disciplines, including child development, nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and rehabilitation, and audiometry. Students graduating from these faculties undertake important professional roles in protecting and improving the health of individuals. He constantly carries out vital work whose subject is human, both during his professional practices at the university and throughout his professional life. The health sector is a work area where employees may experience emotional exhaustion due to both intense working hours and the special disease-related condition of the group they serve. There are also study results in the literature showing that engaging in an artistic activity for individuals working in the field of health can positively affect their work performance and mental health (nurse: Karpavičiūtė & Macijauskienė, 2016; nurses and mental health professionals: Gilliam, 2018; health professionals: Depret et al., 2019; medical school students: Karagöz et al., 2020). Considering these findings, it was chosen as the subject of this study, considering that it is important to examine the perspectives of health sciences faculty students towards art, starting from the period of their higher education. In the literature, different professional groups (preschool teachers, lecturers, teacher physicians, and student groups) have examined the perspectives on art, but no study has been found that evaluates the perspectives of health sciences faculty students on art (Shapiro & Stein, 2005; Ayaydın et al., 2018; Ülger, 2018; Chen et al., 2022; Polat et al., 2022; Fahy, 2023; van Woezik et al., 2023). It is thought that this study will contribute to filling this gap in the literature. In the light of this information, answers to the following questions will be sought within the scope of the study.

1. How are the students of the Faculty of Health Sciences interested in art?
2. What is the perspective of Faculty of Health Sciences students towards art?
3. Do the attitudes of Faculty of Health Sciences students towards art differ significantly according to the variables of age, gender, class, department, and interest in art?

METHOD

Research design

The research is a descriptive type of quantitative cross-sectional study.

Research Sample

The research population consists of all 1547 students studying at Necmettin Erbakan University Nezahat Keleşoğlu Faculty of Health Sciences. The sample size to represent the universe was obtained by calculating with the formula $n = \frac{Nt^2pq}{d^2(N-1) + t^2pq}$. The values in the formula were taken as $t = 1.96$, $p = 0.5$, $q = 0.5$, $d = 0.05$ (Erkuş, 2021) and the sample size was calculated as 308. 393 students were reached by easy sampling method.

Research Instruments and Processes

In the study, a personal information form prepared by the researchers was used to collect personal information about the participating students. The personal information form includes four questions regarding the participants' age, gender, interest in art, class they attend, and department information.

Attitude Scale to Reveal Students' Perspectives on Art

In order to reveal the students' perspectives on art at the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Attitude Scale for Revealing Students' Perspectives on Art, developed by Dede (2016) and whose validity and reliability were determined on high school students, was used. After deciding to use the measurement tool in the study, permission was obtained from the scientist who developed it (Dede, 2016). The original version of the scale consists of 4 factors and 21 items. The first factor is called 'Necessity of Art', the second factor is 'Valuing Art Education', the third factor is 'Personal Artistic Tendency' and the fourth factor is 'Participating in Artistic Activities'. The scale includes a five-point Likert-type evaluation as "strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, completely agree." Items 3, 8, and 9 on the scale are negative items. High scores from the scale indicate that the student's perspective towards art is positive. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the measurement tool is stated as 0.894 (Dede, 2016). Since the validity and reliability study of the scale in the original study was conducted on a high school student sample, it was first evaluated whether the items in the measurement tool were suitable for the university student sample before use, and it was evaluated that the items in the scale were also suitable for university students. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined as 0.897.

Data Analysis

Data was collected between February 10-20, 2024. Necessary institutional permission was obtained from Nezahat Keleşoğlu Faculty of Health Sciences, where the data will be collected. The scales were applied to students who volunteered to participate in the research until the numbers determined in stratified sampling were reached. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation values were used to evaluate the data obtained. In determining the level of Health Sciences Faculty Students' Perspectives on Art, a criterion of low, medium and high was developed by dividing the four-point range into three, taking into account the fact that each item in the scale can be scored between 1 and 5 based on the scores they obtained from the Attitude Scale for Revealing Students' Perspectives on Art. Accordingly, items with mean scores between 1-2.33 were evaluated as low, items with mean scores between 2.34-3.67 were evaluated as medium, and items with mean scores between 3.68-5.00 were evaluated as high.

Ethic

This study received an Ethics Committee Approval Certificate from Necmettin Erbakan University Health Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee, dated 07/02/2024 and numbered 2024/678.

FINDINGS

The findings regarding the distribution of the students participating in the research according to age, gender, department and class variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information of participants (n=393)

Variable		f	%
Gender	Female	341	86.8
	Male	52	13.2
Age	18	30	7.6
	19	81	20.6
	20	93	23.7
	21	89	22.6
	22	56	14.2
	23+	44	11.2
Department	Healthcare management	85	21.6
	Social work	99	25.2
	Nutrition and dietetics	113	28.8
	Physical therapy and rehabilitation	96	24.4
Class	1.class	79	20.1
	2. class	136	34.6
	3. class	106	27.0
	4. class	72	18.3

Examining Table 1, it is seen that the average age of the students participating in the research is 20.48 ± 1.44 . Participants: 86.8% (f = 341) are women, 34.6% are sophomores (f = 136), and 28.8% (f = 113) are students of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics.

The first sub-problem of the research is “How are the students of the Faculty of Health Sciences interested in art?” Findings regarding revealing students’ interest in art in answer to the question are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants’ interest in art(n=393)

Interests	f	%
I am not interested	184	46.8
Literature	45	11.5
Statue	1	0.3
Architectural	4	1.0
Music	79	20.1
Picture	54	13.7
Cinema	16	4.1
Theatre	10	2.5
Total	393	100

Examining Table 2, it is seen that 46.8% of the students participating in the research are not interested in any branch of art. The branches of art that students are most interested in are music (20.1%), painting (13.7%), and literature (11.5%), while the branch of art that they are least interested in is sculpture (0.3%).

The second sub-problem of the research is “What is the perspective of the students of the Faculty of Health Sciences towards art?” The findings obtained from the scale applied to reveal students’ perspectives on art in answer to the question are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation values for the participants’ responses to the scale items

Expression	Mean	Ss	Score rank	Level
1. I attend art education classes with great enthusiasm.	3.38	1.0	17	Middle
2. I would like the duration of art courses to be extended.	3.26	.92	19	Middle

3. I lose interest quickly in art classes.	3.63	.84	15	Middle
4. I enjoy being in environments where works of art are exhibited, such as galleries and museums.	3.98	.96	9	High
5. I like going to the cinema.	4.32	.74	1	High
6. I enjoy chatting about artistic topics.	3.71	.90	14	High
7. Art is something necessary for everyone.	3.88	.96	12	High
8. I prefer not to do artistic work because I feel incompetent.	3.30	1.15	19	Middle
9. Concerts are boring to me.	4.18	1.03	4	High
10. I think intelligent people have an artistic side.	3.61	1.02	16	Middle
11. I think that our creativity will develop through art.	4.17	.84	5	High
12. I believe that works of art evoke good emotions in people.	4.24	.73	2	High
13. I see art as an area where I can express myself freely.	3.94	.81	11	High
14. I think that art has a great contribution to the development of humanity.	4.11	.74	6	High
15. I think that an individual who is interested in art will gain sensitivity towards his environment.	4.02	.78	7	High
16. I think I can express myself better through artistic works.	3.71	.88	13	High
17. I think that art is not given the necessary importance in our society.	4.00	.88	8	High
18. Art is a part of our cultural values.	4.23	.65	3	High
19. I dream of one day exhibiting my artistic works in a museum or gallery.	3.09	1.06	20	Middle
20. I believe that the development levels of societies will increase in direct proportion to the value they attach to art.	3.96	.84	10	High
21. I would love to see myself as a famous artist in the future.	3.02	1.1	21	Middle
Total	3.80	.55		

Examining Table 3, it is seen that the arithmetic means of the items in the scale regarding students' attitudes towards art vary between 3.02 and 4.32. The two statements with which the participants agreed at the highest level were "I like going to the movies" (4.32±.74) and "I believe that works of art evoke good feelings in people" (4.24±.73), respectively. The two statements with the lowest arithmetic mean in the scale were determined as "I would love to see myself as a famous artist in the future" and "I dream of my artistic works being exhibited in a museum or gallery one day," respectively. It is seen that the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the total score are 3.80±.55. The arithmetic mean values of seven items in the scale revealed that the perspective on art regarding the relevant items was at a medium level, and the arithmetic average values of 14 items revealed that the perspective on art regarding the relevant items was at a high level.

The third sub-problem of the research is "Do the attitudes of Faculty of Health Sciences students towards art differ significantly according to the variables of gender, age, class, department, and interest in art?" The findings obtained from the analysis results in answer to the question are presented in Table 4. (Findings for variables for which no significant difference was observed are presented as text).

Table 4. *T test results regarding art interest status*

Variable		Necessity of art	Valuing arts education	Personal artistic inclination	Participating in artistic events	Overall scale average
		$\bar{x}\pm sd$	$\bar{x}\pm sd$	$\bar{x}\pm sd$	$\bar{x}\pm sd$	$\bar{x}\pm sd$
Interest in Art	Yes	3.58±.76	3.68±.62	4.13±.45	4.27±.70	4.01±.42
	No	3.18±.74	3.14±.58	3.87±.53	4.26±.70	3.71±.44
	TS	t=4.924 p=.000	t=8.764 p=.000	t= 5.177 p=.000	t= .070 p=.944	t=6.852 p=.000
Gender	Male	3.48±.79	3.47±.68	3.96±.47	4.10±.77	3.84±.43
	Female	3.39±.77	3.43±.66	4.01±.50	4.28±.68	3.88±.46
	TS	t=.703 p=.483	t=.399 p=.690	t=-.647 p=.518	t=-1.646 p=.101	t=-.510 p=.610
Department	Healthcare management	3.41±.78	3.44±.60	4.02±.58	4.20±.76	3.88±.48
	Social work	3.39±.80	3.48±.71	4.04±.52	4.24±.76	3.90±.49
	Nutrition and dietetics	3.34±.88	3.32±.74	3.86±.66	4.26±.61	3.75±.58

	Physical therapy and rehabilitation	3.31±.75	3.38±.64	3.95±.54	4.26±.72	3.82±.49
	TS	F=.343 p=.794	F=1.015 p=.386	F=1.956 p=.120	F=.131 p=.941	F=1.756 p=.155
Class	1.class	3.35±.77	3.46±.59	3.99±.45	4.22±.75	3.85±.40
	2.class	3.32±.81	3.41±.60	3.96±.55	4.28±.72	3.83±.48
	3.class	3.39±.82	3.40±.77	3.93±.57	4.26±.64	3.81±.54
	4.class	3.43±.84	3.35±.80	3.99±.78	4.18±.72	3.84±.66
	TS	F=.366 p=.778	F=.332 p=.802	F=.222 p=.881	F=.381 p=.767	F=.086 p=.968
Age	18	3.45±.80	3.53±.55	3.86±.43	4.11±.88	3.79±.41
	19	3.27±.77	3.37±.60	3.95±.51	4.36±.69	3.82±.45
	20	3.31±.84	3.31±.66	3.93±.60	4.25±.65	3.79±.53
	21	3.52±.80	3.41±.82	4.02±.56	4.23±.71	3.89±.52
	22	3.28±.81	3.42±.58	4.10±.53	4.16±.74	3.90±.45
	23+	3.37±.86	3.54±.77	3.82±.83	4.24±.67	3.78±.72
	TS	F=1.139 p=.315	F=.681 p=.822	F=1.104 p=.348	F=.948 p=.517	F=.890 p=.587

TS=test statistic

No significant difference was detected between students' attitudes towards art and gender, age, department, and class ($p > .05$ for all four variables). The attitudes of students who are interested in art and those who are not interested in art differ significantly towards art. Accordingly, the overall average of the scale with the sub-dimensions of "necessity of art," "valuing art education," and "personal artistic tendency" of the participants who are interested in art is higher than the participants who are not interested.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, which was conducted to determine the perspectives of health sciences faculty students on art, the findings regarding their interest in art revealed that approximately half of the students (46.8%) were not interested in any branch of art. There are different numerical rates in the literature regarding university students' interest in art. In a study conducted with students in the classroom teaching department, it was found that only 16.59% of the students were not interested in art (Baysal & Dıvrak, 2020). In another study conducted with tourism faculty students, it was determined that 68.3% of the students were not interested in art (Unur & Şeker, 2016). According to the results we obtained in our study, the rate of interest in art among health sciences faculty students is higher than that of tourism faculty students and lower than that of classroom teaching students. It may be suggested that students in health sciences faculties should be directed to art, taking into account the existing literature information on the contributions of art engagement in their professional lives.

Research findings have shown that the two branches of art that students interested in art are most interested in are music and painting, respectively. The least interested branches of art are sculpture and architecture. Similar to our study, in the 10 Art Branches Most Preferred by Young People in Turkey Research conducted by the Turkish Youth Foundation in 2018, music (42.6%) and painting (16.4%) were in the first two places among the most preferred branches of art. Sculpture and architecture are not included in the ranking (URL 1). When it comes to art, the first branches of art that come to mind in society are painting and music, but artistic production should not be restricted to only the visual and auditory fields (Törün Oruç, 2023), and students should be directed to fields such as literature, theater, architecture, and sculpture, and students should be provided with the opportunity to express themselves in these fields. It is thought to be useful.

The research results revealed that the positive attitudes of health sciences faculty students towards art as a whole were at a high level (3.80±.55). In the literature, there are conflicting results in the results of previous studies conducted with students from different departments of universities. Similar to this study, in addition to the study results in which students' attitudes towards art are high (preschool teaching department students: Güngör and Dalgıç, 2023; art and music teaching department students: Kayabaş, 2021), the attitude towards art is at a medium level (classroom teaching students; Baysal & Dıvrak, 2020), and study results showing that the attitude towards art is low (university students from different departments: Denac, Çagran, Denac, & Kafol, 2013). When evaluated in this respect, considering that the

study participants have an intense workload and are students who will do their profession in the field of human health, the high attitude of health sciences faculty students towards art is considered a positive situation. Art is the behavior of creating a form that meets the spiritual needs of the individual (Tansuğ, 1988). Having high attitudes towards art for students who will study in the field of health sciences may also be beneficial in meeting their psychological needs. It is also thought that students will contribute to themselves professionally when they start their professional careers. As a matter of fact, Bentwich & Gilbey (2017) revealed in their studies that a positive attitude towards art contributes to the development of empathy skills and tolerance for uncertainty in students who will work in the field of health.

The two statements with which the participants agreed at the highest level were “I like going to the movies” (4.32±.74) and “I believe that works of art evoke good feelings in people” (4.24±.73), respectively. Going to the movies is a type of activity that all university students can access. As a matter of fact, in the Turkey’s Youth 2020 research conducted by the Turkish Youth NGOs Platform, it was revealed that the art activity in which young people participate most intensively is cinema (URL 2). Going to the cinema is a type of activity in which the participant participates as a spectator, that is, is passive. The item “I believe that works of art evoke good feelings in people” is similarly a passive statement that shows that the person has beliefs that support a positive perspective towards art. It may be recommended that students be directed to artistic activities in which they can actively participate, engage in artistic production, and thus express themselves.

The two statements with which the participants agreed at the lowest level were determined as “I would love to see myself as a famous artist in the future” and “I dream of my artistic works being exhibited in a museum or gallery one day,” respectively. Whether students want to be artists in the future or want their artistic works to be exhibited in a museum or gallery one day are situations that require them to engage in active artistic production. Approximately half of the participating students stated that they were not interested in art anyway. Considering the two low items, it was also suggested that the research participants who expressed an interest in art thought that their artistic works were hobby-level pursuits, that their perspective on their own artistic production was not at the level of producing works of art, and that they did not feel competent in this respect.

The last finding of the research is that the attitudes towards art of students who are interested in any branch of art are significantly higher than those who are not interested. People who are not actively interested in art by producing products and who only have theoretical knowledge about the artistic works are viewers. The person who deals with art directly, that is, by producing products for it, is the person who is aware of the aesthetic pleasure that this action gives (Chapman, 1994). It is thought that this pleasure created by being interested in art may have positively affected the person’s attitude towards art.

Limitations

This research also has some limitations. These are: the individuals participating in the research are students of Nezahat Keleşoğlu Faculty of Health Sciences and the research is limited to the participants’ answers to the questions in the measurement tools.

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