



## **EVALUATION OF STUDENT OPINIONS ON PRACTICE OF VISUAL ARTS LESSON IN MUSEUM AND CLASS SETTING**

### **GÖRSEL SANATLAR DERSİNİN MÜZE VE SINIF ORTAMINDA İŞLENİŞİNE İLİŞKİN ÖĞRENCİ GÖRÜŞLERİNİN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ**

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#### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to evaluate student opinions on practice of visual arts lesson in museum and class setting. On this research performed qualitatively, the collected data is analysed and interpreted through “descriptive analysis” approach. At the end of the research, the students who underwent education in museum setting (class 9-C), were in the opinion that they realized the value of art, they liked the course and the same teaching method is to be practiced for further courses also. The students who underwent education in class setting (class 9-E) are however in the opinion that the course was boring, they didnot make any different activity, and they donot want the same teaching to be practiced for other lessons. Moreover, while students of 9-C class were in the opinion that observational learning in museum is effective in formation of lesson oriented feeling and idea; students of 9-E class were in the opinion that there is no change in their thoughts. According to the results achieved on this research, it is suggested that, visual arts education lesson is also to be supported by museum settings other than classes.

**Key Words:** Museum Education, Art Education, Museum and Art, Visual Arts

#### **Öz**

Bu araştırmanın amacı, görsel sanatlar dersinin müze ortamında ve sınıf ortamında işlenişine ilişkin öğrenci görüşlerini değerlendirmektir. Nitel olarak gerçekleştirilen bu çalışmada elde edilen veriler “betimsel analiz” yaklaşımı ile analiz edilmiş ve yorumlanmıştır. Araştırmanın sonucunda müze ortamında öğretime tabi tutulan öğrenciler (9-C sınıfı), sanatın değerini fark ettikleri, dersten hoşlandıkları ve benzer öğretimin bundan sonraki derslerinde de uygulanması görüşündedirler. Sınıf ortamında öğretime tabi tutulan öğrenciler (9-E sınıfı) ise, dersin sıkıcı geçtiği, farklı etkinlik yapmadıkları ve benzer öğretimin başka derslerde de olmasını istemedikleri görüşündedirler. Ayrıca 9-C sınıfı öğrencileri derse yönelik duygu ve düşüncelerinin oluşmasında, müzede görerek öğrenmenin etkili olduğu görüşünde iken, 9-E sınıfı öğrencileri duygu ve düşüncelerinde herhangi bir değişiklik olmadığı görüşündedirler. Bu çalışmada elde edilen sonuçlara göre, görsel sanatlar eğitimi dersinin sınıf dışında müze ortamlarıyla da desteklenmesi gerektiği önerilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Müze Eğitimi, Sanat Eğitimi, Müze ve Sanat, Görsel Sanatlar

#### **Introduction**

Art is one of the indispensable fields for each individual but especially for individuals at school age. As Gibson (2003:112) says, making art has very positive effects on children. Children’s engagement in art provides them development, representing and conceiving the ideas, sentimentality and respecting to cultural assets.

Art education may be considered as coincidental detection of interests and faculties. However the purpose of such an education is rendering the life worthwhile and providing enjoy of living other than determining these. “Bringing up generations in accordance with contemporary human being apprehension, generating the human being within its own values, is the purpose of art education. This is a case corresponding to “being intellectual person” principle which each individual seeks to achieve” (Erinç, 2004:32).

One of the fields within the extent of art education is visual arts education. Giving education of visual arts is of paramount importance for formation of well-balanced societies with positive, critical, creative and inquiring individuals. And well-qualified practice of visual arts education is a requirement for materialization of attainments expected to come into being on individuals through visual arts. It is possible to say that, benefitting from sources other than class is important on materialization of these requirements.

On visual arts education at the present day, alternative educational settings and sources are seen to be benefitted, especially in developed countries such as EU Countries, England, Japan, etc. Museums loom large among these sources on ground of their “educational” functions. On visual arts education training programs, usage of real objects stand out for benefitting from the museums as a source.

Gardner (1993:141) says that there is necessity for taking any art form to the centre in young individuals’ introduce of product. According to him, children learn best when they actively participate into the studies; they seek to get opportunity to be able to directly obtain the objects and settings about their studies; and this is the same in art; this efficiency and inclination can be provided by doing something almost always. Young children should consider how a vital role skill plays on an artistic sculpture or picture and they should have an opportunity to make such a thing. Museums head among the places where objects and things can be directly presented to individuals.

Museums’ function for being a teaching aid or education setting, for visual arts education, takes a meaning especially for presenting unique work of arts. Because, as Giray (2002:52) states too; museums are “the most rational areas composing the real conscious of artistic thoughts and strengthening its development. Museums provide the existence of experiences and relations the individual builds with the world and individual environment, by facing up to artistic and aesthetic practices.” Besides all these characteristics of museums, as a matter of meeting requirement for obtaining knowledge both for children and adults in the world becoming complicated gradually, learning in museum helps to search the history, present state and future of

mankind and the natural world people are living in, to communicate and conceive (Davis, 2004:31).

By setting out the justifications implied above, to determine the opinions of students for visual arts education lesson practiced in museum setting and visual arts education lesson practiced in class setting and developing hypotheses according to the results of this research, has been considered as a need.

### **Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this research is to determine the opinions of students on visual arts education lesson practiced in museum setting and visual arts education lesson practiced in class setting.

### **Method of the Research**

Qualitative research techniques have been benefitted for this research. Qualitative method provides being able to see the subject under research through the perspective of related individuals and introduces the social structure and processes forming these perspectives (Özsoy, 2001:42). So, to determine the opinions of students on practice of lesson in museum setting, an interview form has been prepared by the researcher. The interview form consisting of three(3) open-ended questions resembling structured interview, is standardized at open-ended questionnaire interview type. Standardized open-ended interview mainly increases the possibility of repetition of a research by the others. Namely, the same means of measure can be similarly used also within the context of another interview (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2000:93-96).

The cosmos of research is the high schools in Diyarbakır city centre; the cosmos of study is Diyarbakır Ziya Gökalp High School, and the sampling is the students of 9-C ( the group underwent teaching in museum setting) and students of 9-E (the group underwent teaching in class setting) of the school in 2006-2007 education-teaching year autumn semester.

### **Development of Data Collection Instrument**

The interview form has been developed by the researcher. Opinions of 4 experts have been applied to ensure the reliability of the interview form. Required amendments have been made in accordance with expert opinions to ensure the reliability of the form. For the form prepared at the end of this process, it is re-applied to expert opinion for legality study, and the interview form has been finalized by making the required amendments.

### **Analysis of the Data**

The data obtained; has been materialized through fettering, analysing the students' answers for the questions in interview form, their organization and interpretation according to the themes which research questions betray.

### **Findings and Interpretation**

The findings obtained from the research have been gained from the opinions of students they delivered against the open-ended questions in interview form. The findings obtained and interpretations regarding these findings are given according to the sequence of question clauses. Question clauses and students' opinions regarding the questions are stated below:

1. The first question seeked for answer in the research was "do you think that the activities done on visual arts education lesson become effective on your realisation the value of works of art, can you explain?" The findings obtained intended for this purpose, and their interpretations are as below:

Some considerable opinions of the students underwent education in museum (class 9-C) for the first question are as below:

*"It was very effective up to me. Because I got various learnings I hadnot known in general information and art. While I had different opinions for art beforehand, now they greatly changed. Meaningly, they changed in positive direction". "Yes. Because when I look and analyze a work of art now, I can consider on whether it is a sculpture, ceramic, picture or a graphic work and I suppose that I conceive it. Besides increasing my culturel intelligence, this case has also increased my interest in art." "I didnt pay attention to works of art beforehand. To speak honestly I realized that I didnt have well knowledge on what is art. I was even unable to estimate which components they are made from. Moreover, I didnt have any knowledge about which period they belong to. However now, I can find answers for the questions in my mind when I look over the works of art." "Yes. I experienced improvement in myself on culturel and artistic works thanks to museum visits in painting lesson. Thanks to these activities, I began to pay more attention to works of art in my surroundings and to enjoy them more. Besides, I can say that there is improvement in my awareness of protecting them".*

Some considerable opinions of the students who underwent education in class setting (class 9-E) for the first question are as below:

*"No. Because there is no tend to such an activity". "I didnt make a comparison regarding art". "No. I wish the painting lesson were studied in another place". "No. Because as*

*we practice painting lesson only through the facilities memorization-based system brings, I think that it is not possible to notice the value of works of art". "No. Because there was not a study to this effect. "No. The activities we make in painting lecture is not of use to notice the value of works of art. Because no activity was done regarding works of art". "No. Nothing was done to be effective on our realization of the value of works of art". "One can be successful as long as recognizing the paintings".*

When answers of the students for the first question are examined, while students of 9-C are in the opinion that the fact that benefitting from museum setting in visual arts education lesson is effective on learning the art, and on increasing their honoring towards and interest in the works of art; for students of 9-E it is seen that there is no activity in visual arts education lesson to provide them notice the value of art and for this reason they are in the opinion that they cannot make a comparison. According to the findings obtained; it is seen that students of class 9-C who underwent practice of visual arts lecture in museum setting, look more positively on conceiving and approving art value. Supported by this result, it is possible to say that benefitting from the museums as a source or education environment is important for visual arts education. As Çetinkaya and others stated too (1999:91), activities out of lesson, that learning activities to perform by benefitting from museum setting may constitute a part of this extent, can assist for the students' gaining desired skills by supporting education-teaching activities.

This result obtained in the research runs parallel with the result of the research Hein (1995) made. As the result of Hein's research, it is determined that, museums are the most noteworthy places for learning. It is understood that the power and effect of museums place learning amazingly for people by becoming integrated with them. Because it is accepted that, learning becomes "more significant" when the students participate in objective decisions, evaluation, planning (Michael, 1983:86). Such a learning includes the possibility of implementation of whole activities, even more, museum setting and its teaching functions (museum education activities), learning of visitors by self or in interaction with each other. So, the students taking part in museum programs differentiate from the ones at school in the literal sense as a matter of desire for learning (Vallance, 2004:345).

Geleş (2002:166), who explicates the contribution of museums to education in the context of toy museums, expresses the fact that school-age children' practice their lessons in museums with real objects, portray of history by adding visuality to objects, exhibition form of some events are very considerable from the aspect of comprehension of the subject.

Consequently, it can be said that visual arts education lesson practiced by benefitting

from museum setting, is more effective comparing to visual arts education lesson practiced traditionally in class setting, regarding students' realization the value of works of art and showing interest in them.

2. The second question was "Were there any times you thought that you liked the visual arts education lesson, can you explain? The findings and their interpretations attributed to this purpose are as below:

Some considerable opininons of the studentS underwent education in museum (class 9-C) stated are as below:

*"I had very enjoyable teaching periods. It was nice to see the ancient objects belonging neolithic ages in Diyarbakır Archeology Museum and know what they mean. I also enjoyed very much in Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı Cultur Museum. The fact that my friends' playing drama and reflecting us the subject through a different perspective was interesting and nice". "Yes. Our friends' giving us information about the museum in Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı Museum, their reading poems took my fancy, I was affected. I can say that especially the fact that these happened in the house where the poet was born (museum) made me having different feelings". "According to me our studying a lesson in museums was nice. Museum setting affected me much. Once, it was a more free setting than class. I didnot feel the course as if I study a lesson. I felt as if I lived the historical past events there". "Yes. I liked the time we spent in Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı Museum. I got very happy there". "The times I liked best in painting lesson were museum visits. It was very enjoyable. I wish we could visit there at all times."*

Some considerable opinions of the students who underwent teaching in class (class 9-E) are as below:

*"No unfortunately there weren't". "I didnot have a nice remembrance in painting lesson". "Once, we went to art room and worked with music. That moment was very enjoyable and nice. But it didnot repeat". "No, there weren't". "No. Because I hated painting lesson last year. Last year, our teacher was carrying out a difficult and pressurized painting course. However, painting lesson mustnot be a lesson of pressure". "No. I didnot have such a time. Class you know, what can happen". "In painting course, I enjoy best by drawing nature painting. I like nature paintings much". "No. There weren't such moments". "No. Class setting bothers me".*

When the opinions of students for the second question are examined, there are significiant differences in favor of lesson practiced by benefitting from museum setting, between the students attending the course practiced benefitting from museum setting (9-C) and the

students attending the course in class setting (9-E). It is possible to say by supported with the findings obtained that, visual arts education lesson practiced by benefitting from museum setting is effective in regard of enjoying and liking the lesson.

The findings obtained at the end of the research and the result of research Gürkan (2004:79) made run paralel with each other. At the end of his research, when the opinions of primary school-age students about visual arts education lesson practiced in museum are analyzed, Gürkan (2004:79) determined that; almost all of the students “enjoyed” the course, they considered that this practice is “educational and creative”, and “provides permanent knowledge”.On a research Buyurgan (2004:114) made in this context, it is seen that, a student disinterested and unsuccessful, who donot attend the lesson in class setting much, acted very interested in museum, asked questions to museum guide and took notes, made paintings, and tried to fill in the study sheets.

On a similar research (Baillie, 2005), it was seen that social groups and families had emotional experiences of a high percentage on attending the exhibitions during museum visit. It is also understood with this research that, the activities students do together, increase their motivation. Museums do significant activities to educate sense of art and provide the public’s enjoy the works of art. For this reason, learning and enjoying the lesson can be achieved much easier and lasting in museum rather than a class setting. Because the children see, touch, smell and hold the objects. While school books provide mental comprehension of history in the first stage, a museum provides to connect the students more emotionally to their past cultures and people(Seidel and Hudson, 1999:21-26).

According to the findings obtained on the research, the students who underwent education in class setting stated that there was not a moment they liked in the lesson studied in class setting. Besides, they expressed that they were bored of the lesson studied in class setting. Only one student stated the hours when they had the lesson in atelier setting accompanied by music, as the time he liked. According to this finding, it cannot be said that, continuous practice of visual arts education lesson in class setting is effective.

As a result, it is possible to say that, visual arts education lesson practiced in museum is more effective in students’ liking the lesson comparing to lesson practiced in class setting.

**3.** The third question was expressed as; “Would you want the activities carried out in visual arts education lesson to be carried out also for further visual arts education lessons, why?” The findings and their interpretations attributed to this purpose are as below:

Some considerable opinions of the students who underwent teaching in museum (class 9-

C) for the second question are as below:

*“I’d certainly want. Just being given a subject in class setting and made painting comes me boring. Being made speech on that subject, given information by test and others is better. Besides, practice of lesson in a different setting, meaningly in museum setting, aroused different feelings within myself”. “Why not. Because I think to have gained much in lesson thanks to the activities we made”. “I’d certainly want. Because my eagerness, interest towards lesson has increased. I think that, if the lesson is ever studied in this way, efficiency increases. We made so many activities in course that I couldnot realize how quickly the time passed”. “Yes I’d want. Because I found that it is very nice to see works of art onsite. It was the firs ttime I visited a museum for purpose of lesson”. “Yes. Because I am awfully bored in course where only painting is made. Already it doesnot attract my attention. And also, should this lesson improve skill only? I can never understand it. Provided that various activities are existing, meaningly as it is in this lesson we studied, it can be. Even being aware of the old civillizations in our inhabited city, changed my opinions towards this lesson”. “According to me, the lesson shouldnot only consist of painting, because my drawing is not very good. However for instance, museum visits, activities in museum were nice. Hence, it may be if the lesson is carried out in this way”.*

Some significiant opinions of the students who underwent teaching in class setting (class 9-E) for the third question are as below:

*“No I do not want”. “I do not want”. “No I do not want”. “Yes but it is like to be nicer if practiced in a more comfortable, more open place”. “I want the best is performed. Not such this form”. “No. It would be better if different activities were done”. “No. Painting by seeing real works of art more, would be better. Therefore, I donot want painting activities based on memorization from now on”. “I do not want. The existing painting lesson system is very boring. We would be more active”. “We donot like existing activities. But I donot know further ones”. “We are only making study in painting lessons now. There is not a different activity, but we wish there were”. “No”. “No. I wish painting lesson is practiced in places such as museum or art galleria. It would be more interesting”. “I’d not want. I donot want the existing subjects practiced now continue”. “I donot want. Because I donot like”. “No. It is as if people always study the same subjects in this painting lesson”. “No. Because these activities are not adequate for me”.*

When the opinions of students for the third question are analyzed, their opinions about the lesson practiced in museum and practiced in class setting differentiate. It can be expressed according to the findings obtained that, the activities carried out in course in museum are more

effective comparing to the activities carried out in course in class. According to this result, while the students of 9-C donot want the activities carried out in course in class setting to continue for further courses; it can be said that the other students (9-C) are in the opinion that the activities carried out in course in museum setting is to continue for further courses. By presenting real works of art to the students, visual arts education carried out by benefitting from the museums will provide students more than the efficiency (creativeness, motivation, etc.) to be obtained from the copied works shown to them in a closed class setting; that also other researches made recently (Özsoy, 2002; Buyurgan, 2004; Hooper-Greenhill, 1999; Akmehmet, 2003; Hein, 2004; Gürkan, 2004a; Mercin 2006) supports this result (opinions of 9-C students).

As a conclusion, it is possible to say that visual arts education lesson practiced in museum is more effective comparing to visual arts education lesson, on their desire of continuation of activities also in further visual arts education lessons.

### **Discussion and Evaluation**

Museums are institutions presenting the real proofs of what human being have produced both in past and in today. By its this characteristic, museums are institutions reminding us what they did, by directly presenting the past of our district, the surroundings where people with whom we have material and moral connections existed, the goods they used etc, products and providing to establish emotional relations with them. Accordingly, it can be said that museums are teaching settings to be benefitted for the purpose of education by schools and so by students.

It is possible to say upon the findings obtained on the research that, adhibition of museum supported visual arts education lesson provided different experiences to the students. Howeveron account of the students were in the opinion against the first question in interview form that practice of visual arts education lesson in museum is effective in appreciating and conceiving art, increasing of interest in works of art; can be said to take root from the fact that the museums, which were accepted as “the place where lost important parts of culture exist” formerly, turned to be accepted as as a basic, authentic object in education anymore. Because museums are accepted as: “primary extansive educational institutions to be able to contribute formation and improvement of observation, logic, creativity, imagination and sense of appreciation”.

At the end of the research; for the question “do you want your other lessons also to be practiced in museum like visual arts education lesson, why?”; while almost all the students in 9-C delivered positive opinion, students in 9-E delivered negative opinions. The fact that students

in course in museum setting stated that they liked the course much; runs in paralel with the results of a project study of Atagök and Akmehmet (2003) under “Use of Museums as Laboratory in History” headline. Forasmuch as according to this research, “it is observed that the students who are passive within the class, actively participated into lesson during museum visit”, most of the students stated that “when they repeat in museum the history lessons they learnt in class, the knowledge obtained is more lasting and provided that the further lessons are also studied in museums, they would like history lessons much more” (Oruçoğlu, 2003).

Against “do you want the activities carried out in painting course to be carried out also for your further painting courses, why?” question taking place on the research, it has been determined that, while all of the students in 9-C replied as “yes”, almost all of the students in 9-E replied as “no”. As a reason for the students of 9-E refusing the same visual arts education lesson as practiced in class setting for further visual arts education lessons, they show the fact that the lessons were boring and it is carried out just to reveal skill. They also stated that they are in the opinion that the lessons should be performed in different settings. It is possible to say that, the reasons why the students of 9-C were in the opinion that the following visual arts education lesson also should be practiced in museum setting are; the fact that museum setting was effective on teaching, they liked the activities carried out, the works of art in museum attracted their attention and the teaching was flexible. This result obtained on the research runs in paralel with results of research made in the field (Mercin, 2006:222; Hicks, 2005:70-74; Gürkan, 2004:79; Oruçoğlu, 2003:45; Buyurgan, 2002). Upon the researches made, it is determined that the students are in the opinion about museum visits that “they enjoyed much”, this practice is “educational and creative”, “lasting knowledge is obtained”, “it improved social relations” and “the museum area and its learning environment is very impressive and interesting”.

It is understood according to the findings obtained at the end of research that, students of 9-C are in the same opinion, on museum setting in visual arts education lesson contributed to their success. Because by use of different sense organs simultaneously, museum setting provides the perception of knowledge easier and more lasting in getting knowledge, in learning. In such a learning, one of the senses students differently use is learning by touching. Besides the fact that learning by touching in museum in visual arts teaching can be beneficial not only for students but also for everybody, as aslo Alvarez (2005) stated; it provides many advantages on aiding to perceive art, improving visual judging skills especially in art museums and encouraging oral interpretation. Moreover, it can be said that, such a learning method improves attention ability and observational skills as facilitating to conceive art (appreciate art).

## Conclusion

At the end of the research, the students who underwent education in museum setting (9-C) are in the opinion that they noticed the value of art, they liked the course and they want the similar teaching also to be practiced for further courses. However, the students who underwent teaching in class setting (9-E) are in the opinion that the course was boring, they did not make any different activity and they do not want the same teaching to exist in other lessons. Moreover, while it is determined that observational learning was effective in formation of feelings and ideas of students of 9-C, it is come to the conclusion that there was not any change in the feelings and ideas of students in class 9-E.

## Suggestions

1. Teaching programs for visual arts lesson in secondary education level should be re-arranged for being able to benefit from the museums as a source.
2. Visual Art Lesson Teachers should organize scheduled tours to art educational museums in courses.
3. Methods to arouse students' interest (drama, work criticizing, touching, plays, etc.) should be applied in visual arts lesson to be practiced in museum.
4. In visual arts lesson to be practiced in museum, activities to provide students' active participation should certainly be given place. In this extent, students' taking responsibility in lessons should be provided.

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