A Qualitative Study on the Opinions of 7th Grade Students on Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the opinions of 7th grade students at middle schools on the elements of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and to reveal their levels of awareness on such elements. The study based on qualitative research method was carried out through qualitative research design. The study group consists of 13 students studying at a school at the city center of Bartın. Data of the study were obtained from focus group interviews held with students. The data were analyzed through content analysis method by using MAXQDA 2018 qualitative data analysis software. According to findings, it has been concluded that the students are able to correctly interpret the notion of intangible cultural heritage and distinguish it from the notion of tangible cultural heritage, that students' awareness on local cultural values is higher than national cultural values, that students have a high interest in traditional children's games, which is a significant part of the intangible cultural heritage, however those games are not adequately experienced, that the survival of national values is dependent upon their discovery by the young generation, that settlement area, sex and age are major variables on the interest in cultural values, that society in general and family and educational institutions in particular have a quite significant function in development of young individuals' awareness on the conservation of national cultural values such as cultural and religious rituals, folk songs and tales etc., that technological developments cause young individuals to be alienated from national cultural values, that the conservation of such values is highly important for the existence of nations.

Keywords

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As stated in article 2 of the Basic Law of National Education, one of the fundamental objectives of education is to raise individuals "...*who adopt, maintain and develop national, moral, humane, intangible and cultural values of Turkish Nation...*" and to ensure transfer of the culture to new generations (Basic Law of National Education, 1973). Cultural heritage may gradually lose its nature as a "culture" unless it is passed to the next generations and to the future. Therefore, the literature lays an emphasis on the importance of conservation of cultural assets and their transfer to the future generations (Şahin, 2011; Kolaç, 2009; Özdoğan, 2007; Artun, 2005). Education, on the other hand, has an indisputable role on this subject as education is observed to function as a bridge to culture regardless of in which sense the notion of culture is addressed (Pehlivan and Kolaç, 2016; Çengelci, 2012). For this purpose, a large number of topics related to national cultural elements are provided in the course books prepared. Particularly, it is stated that education on cultural heritage in early childhood is of high importance (Kaplan, 2001). The social studies course given at the level of elementary education in Turkey is considered one of the most essential courses to ensure the transfer of national values such as traditional weddings, professions, dishes, cultural and religious rituals, folk songs and tales etc. to the young generation (Safran, 2015; Çençen and Akça-Berk, 2014).

Every society has the aim to sustain its social values while improving its culture and introducing it to the members living in it (Safran, 2015). It is observed that when the elements of intangible cultural heritage are inadequately addressed at educational institutions or they cannot be passed on to the young generation, this consequently leads to a cultural alienation. Alienation refers to a state of estrangement in which the basic characteristics are lost and an isolation from the identity, and an individual's loss of harmony with the society. In cultural sense, alienation is a manifestation of the process in which one feels estranged from one's own culture (Köseoğlu, 2013). It is believed that an education on the transfer of national culture will also prevent alienation (Süleymanov, 2004).

Generally, education refers to the process of raising people for particular purposes and also constitutes a part of the process of social acculturation (Fidan, 2012). There is such a strong bond between culture and education that culture is believed to be at the heart of all activities conducted for purpose of education (Gay, 2014). All cognitive and affective aspects of a society are transferred to the young generations of that society by means of educational institutions, from elementary school to university (Ültanır, 2003). John Dewey (2010) states that traditions of societies create common beliefs and functions as a mental glue to stick the society together. Similarly, Emile Durkheim also points out to the fact that education is the most important factor holding the society together, stating that education helps forming an integrated society out of a group of individuals (Giddens, 2012). Therefore, cultural characteristics of a society is taken into consideration while determining curricula (Küçüktepe, 2013). It is of high significance to act in a holistic way of thinking when identifying the elements of cultural heritage to be transferred through education, and to benefit from elements of tangible (pieces of art, etc.) and intangible (values, beliefs, etc.) cultural heritage of a society (Banks and Banks, 2010). With this aim, UNESCO addresses the relationship between intangible

cultural heritage and education in 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Article 14, as follows (UNESCO, 2003):

a. *Ensure recognition of, respect for, and enhancement of the intangible cultural heritage in society, in particular through:*
  1. *Educational, awareness-raising and information programmes, aimed at the general public, in particular young people;*
  2. *Specific educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned;*
  3. *Capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular management and scientific research;*
  4. *Non-formal means of transmitting knowledge;*
b. *Keep the public informed of the dangers threatening such heritage, and of the activities carried out in pursuance of this Convention;*
c. *Promote education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage.*

In addition, it is stated in the introduction of the convention that more awareness needs to be raised, especially among youth, on the importance of intangible cultural heritage and safeguarding it (UNESCO, 2003).

It is an undeniable fact that scientific developments led by modern technology have brought along changes in many areas of life, from world views to interpersonal relations (Gürel, 2016; Güngör, 2011). Radio, TV, cinema and the Internet introduce people to the values of other cultures as they have never experienced before (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton, 2010). The biggest effect of this situation is on the young generation, as it has been impairing their sensitivity towards their own cultural values and making the transmission of cultural values difficult (Gigli and Aneta, 2001; Gigli, 2004). Regarding the subject, it is stated in the literature that global culture has been replacing national culture as the elements of intangible cultural heritage are not adequately addressed at educational institutions and on the media. It is indicated that the new generation is more familiar with tales that do not belong to Turkish national culture, such as Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Robin Hood, etc. than our national tales such as *Nardaniye Hanim, Koroglu* and *Zumrudu Anka*, all of which are among our national values (Oğuz, 2010; Oğuz, 2008). To avoid such consequences, the society should pay due care for the transfer of intangible cultural heritage, and an effective cultural education should be provided especially at educational institutions, which are the most important means of cultural transmission.

Intangible culture is the traditional culture of a nation, reflecting its identity and considered worthy of preservation (Pietrobruno, 2009). The intangible cultural heritage is expressed in 2003 Convention, Article 2 as:

"*means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills–as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith–that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated*

by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity."

Education is a means of acculturation; when the curricula are reviewed, social studies course can be seen among the courses used to transmit culture effectively at elementary level education (Gürel and Çetin, 2017; Safran, 2015; Kaya, 2009; Çengelci, 2012). 7th grade social studies course is one of the courses which most frequently includes cultural elements among all social studies courses (Gürel and Çetin, 2018; Çetin and Gürel, 2016; Gürkan, 2015; Çengelci, 2012). This course, which is given in the formal operational stage of the students, has an important role in increasing awareness of the values that constitute the national culture. The clause "Students will understand the basic elements and processes that constitute the Turkish culture and history, and acknowledge the need for the preservation and development of cultural heritage that develops national consciousness.", which is listed among the general objectives of social studies course for 7th grade students by the Ministry of National Education [MoNE], expressly emphasizes the role of social studies course at the 7th grade in cultural transmission (Öztürk, 2012). Students' opinions on intangible cultural heritage at the 7th grade, which is the final year in which intangible cultural heritage is lectured, will reveal their cultural awareness. Moreover, it was observed in previous studies that the awareness of the students regarding the intangible cultural heritage was not at the desired level (Gürel and Çetin, 2017; Çelepi, 2016; Karaca-Yılmaz et al., 2017; Keçe, 2015; Kılcan and Akbaba, 2013; Oğuz, 2008). For that reason, under this study, a training based on intangible cultural heritage was provided with a view to raise consciousness and conservation awareness on intangible cultural heritage in scope of social studies course (Gürel and Çetin, 2019). At the end of the training, whether or not the students gained the necessary awareness and preserving consciousness about the intangible cultural heritage were examined. This study also aimed to contribute to the literature by examining the effectiveness of the activities implemented during the training based on the views of the students.

Methodology

Model

This study was performed as a qualitative case study. Case studies require collection of data through multiple methods to describe an existing situation in the best manner (Creswell, 2013). The most commonly used methods are observation, interview (including focus group interviews) and document review (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). The basic purpose is to understand the process by looking for answers to the questions of 'what', 'how' and 'why' (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2014). This method was employed to discover awareness of students in the study group on intangible cultural heritage, define or observe the factors related to such awareness, explain and assess the situation.

Study Group

The study group consists of 13 students studying at the 7th grade at an elementary school at the city center of Bartın with an average socio-economic status. Criterion sampling, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used in selection of the students to be interviewed. In this method, the researcher creates pre-determined criteria and examines all situations on basis of such criteria (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). For selection of the study group of this study, four criteria were developed, as stated below:

a) Proportional distribution of gender in the study group in line with the general gender distribution in the classroom

b) Whether the students reside in villages, in the city or in the district center

c) Educational levels and professions of students' parents

d) Income levels of the households

Thus, it is assumed that richer data can be reached regarding the awareness of students towards intangible cultural heritage and these variables enable make more comprehensive inferences.

Teaching Process and Material

Students were given a ten-week training in scope of the study; in-class and out-of-class activities were used in the training. In-class activities are titled "*A cup of coffee*", "*Journey of Wheat*", "*Sweating Blood*", "*Brotherhood of Ahi Community*", "*My Dear Fellow Karagöz*", "*Elderly Telling Tales*", "*I Do Marbling*", "*I Know and I Match*", and out-of-class activities are titled "*I Watch the Sky*" and "*Young Archers*".

Data Collection and Analysis

This study benefitted from content analysis for the analysis of the data. As a qualitative method, content analysis refers to scaling down the qualitative data with the aim of identifying the essential consistencies and meanings by taking a volume of qualitative material (Patton, 2014). In consideration of the information on content analysis under this study, a focus group interview was initially held with students selected from the study group.

The focus group interviews were conducted under the guidance of the interview form which included the previously developed questions of the interview. The questions in the form were presented to the opinions of three experts in terms of quality and quantity of the questions and some adjustments were made to the questions with the feedback from experts; then, additional questions were supplied to the form. Generally, these questions are related to knowledge, awareness, interest, emotion and value on the intangible cultural heritage. The legibility of the questions in the interview form was tested with two students and the shape of the interview form was finalized. The questions asked during the focus group interview are as follows:

1. What does the concept of intangible cultural heritage mean to you? Please explain.

2. Do you attend cultural events organized in your area? If you do, which events do you most often attend, and why?

3. Are you interested in any traditional handicrafts? What are they?
   a) Is there a famous handicraft in your area? What are they?
   b) Have you ever done any handicraft such as *ebru* (marbling), *tel kirma* (metallic embroidery), etc.? Which one and why?
   c) Do you have any family member doing any traditional handicrafts? Which one and why?

4. Are you interested in any oral tradition (Turkish folk songs, tales, jokes, etc.)? If yes, please indicate which ones you are interested in and why?

5. Would you attend a *Nawroz* celebration event in your area? Why?

6. Which elements of intangible cultural heritage are you most interested in? Why?

7. What actions can be taken by individuals, the society or state to maintain elements of intangible cultural heritage?

In order to acquire reliable data and gain trust, the participants were provided with necessary information about the study and due care was paid to ensure that the interview is scheduled on a convenient date and time, the interview area is quiet, and interviews are not interrupted. The said requirements were discussed with the school administration and it was finally decided that the focus group interviews would be held at the library. Interviews were held in two sessions in round table style at the library. In order to ensure a smooth course of interview and an uninterrupted dialogue, various assumption questions were directed to the interviewees (Glesne, 2013). Necessary care was paid to ensure each student to express themselves in a relaxed environment; the interviews with the students were carried out in a conversational setting. The main questions and additional questions asked on intangible cultural heritage were aimed at obtaining further information as much as possible. The interviews were led by the researcher and they lasted for about two and a half hours. The interviews were recorded by a digital camera and later transcribed on computer environment. In order to analyze the transcribed data, this study made use of MAXQDA 2018 software. Digital data on the focus group interviews are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Data from the Focus Group Interview

Sessions	Duration (minute)	Number of Participants
1. Session	67	6
2. Session	71	7
Total	138	13

According to Table 1, focus group interview was held in two sessions. The interview took 138 minutes in total; the first session lasted for 67 minutes and the second session lasted for 71 minutes. 6 students attended the first session and 7 students attended the second session. Saturation of the data was effective in limitation of the number of groups interviewed (Creswell, 2013).

The data obtained from the interviews were subject to a series of validity checks from the analysis stage to the conclusion stage. First of all, a different researcher was referred to in order to ensure the coding accessed by the researcher to be more valid. By this way, consistency of the coding was checked in terms of agreement between coders (Silverman, 2005; Miles and Huberman, 2015). The codes and themes reached as a result of the analysis of data were interpreted along with the statements made by the participants. In order to ensure consistency of the themes created, different sources were also referred to in the literature. The whole study was checked through assistance by an external auditor, and the results obtained from an exchange of views with the external auditor were collectively assessed in levels (Creswell, 2013). In addition, direct quotations from the participants, which carry importance for qualitative research, were presented in order to enhance the credibility and reliability of the findings of the study (Creswell, 2018).

The findings obtained upon the analysis of data are presented with interpretations of the figures and frequencies in the findings section. When interpreting these findings, each participant was given codes to maintain confidentiality of their identity details. When providing the participants with the codes, the participants were firstly classified by gender; so, codes such as F1, F2, ... were assigned to female students, ..., and codes such as M1, M2, ... were assigned to male students.

Findings

This part of the study contains the findings obtained from focus group interviews held with the 7th grade students, comments on the findings and directly quoted statements of interviewed students.

Findings and Comments on the First Question

Figure 1 shows the findings obtained from the answers given to the first question in the interview form: "What does the concept of intangible cultural heritage mean to you? Please explain.".
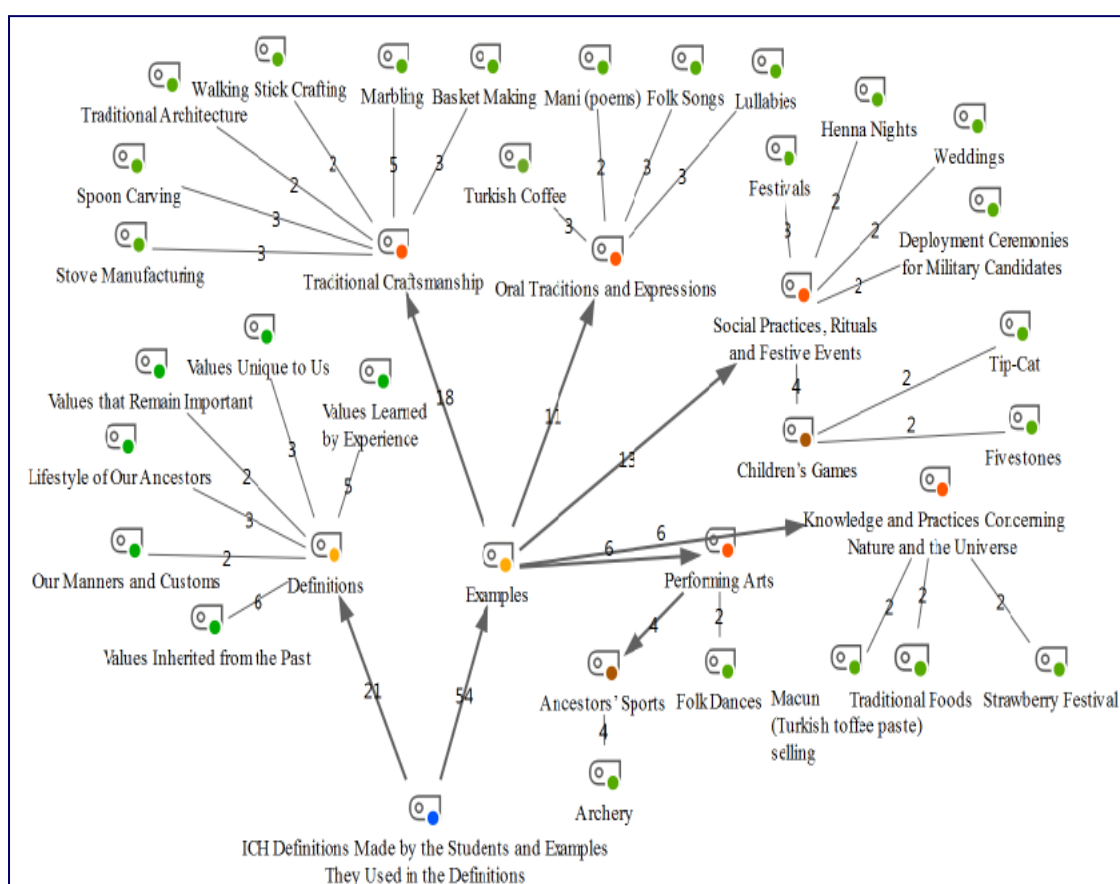
Figure 1. ICH Definitions Made by the Students and Examples They Used in the Definitions

According to Figure 1, it is seen that the definitions made by the students are grouped under six codes in total and the students are seen to define intangible cultural heritage by most commonly using the codes *Values Inherited from the Past (f = 6)* and *Values Learned by Experience (f = 5)*. Other definitions made by the students are as follows: *Values Unique to Us (f=3)*, *Lifestyle of our Ancestors (f=3)*, *Values that Remain Important (f=2) and Our Manners and Customs (f=2)*.

The majority of the interviewed students made their definitions by giving examples. The examples used by the students in the definitions and relevant fields of the examples are shown in Figure 1. As shown in Figure 1, the examples by the students are related to the five domains regarding intangible cultural heritage. The domains that are most commonly given as examples are *Traditional Craftsmanship (f=18)*, *Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events (f=13)* and *Oral Traditions and Expressions (f=11)*, and the domains least commonly given as examples are *Performing Arts (f=6)*, *Knowledge and Practices concerning Nature and the Universe (f=6)*. It is seen that the codes most commonly used by the students is *Marbling (f=5)* in the domain of traditional craftsmanship, *Archery (f=4)* in the domain of Performing Arts, *Festivals (f=3)* in the domain of social practices, rituals and festive events, *Turkish Coffee (f=3)*, *Folk Songs (f=3) and Lullabies (f=3)* in the domain of oral traditions and expressions. All of the codes used in the domain of Knowledge and Practices concerning Nature and the

Universe have the same frequency. Below are several opinions stated by the interviewed students:

M1: *"Our ancestors' occupations such as stove manufacturing, walking stick crafting, or other things, for example, our cuisine. I don't know how to say, these are tangible but also a tradition, which is neither concrete nor abstract.*

F2: *"Our cultural heritage from the past till today, which is of continuing significance, specific to Turks, which we think that we will never lose. Like archery, or Turkish Coffee, for example."*

F7: *"The values that have survived from ancient ages till today."*

F5: *"In other words, the values that have not disappeared but have survived to this day."*

M5: *"Our cultural heritage from the past till today. For example, strawberry festivals in Bartın."*

Considering the definitions made by the students and the examples they used when making those definitions, it is understood that the elements particularly preferred include those that are subject to events such as *Marbling* (*f*=5), *Archery* (*f*=4) and *Turkish Coffee* (*f*=3) and *Folk Songs* (*f*=3), or cultural elements that are subjects of interest depending on features of the related development stage of children, such as *Children's Games* (*f*=4), *Festivals* (*f*=3) and *Lullabies* (*f*=3). Also, it can be deducted that the students reach to a definition from the elements related to the values which they experienced, or which exists in their environment. It can be stated that the events organized in scope of the study have a positive impact on the conceptual development of the students and their awareness on intangible cultural heritage.

Findings and Comments on the Second Question

Figure 2 shows the results of the content analysis on the answers given by the interviewed students to the second question in the interview form "Do you attend cultural events organized in your area? If you do, which events do you most often attend, and why?".
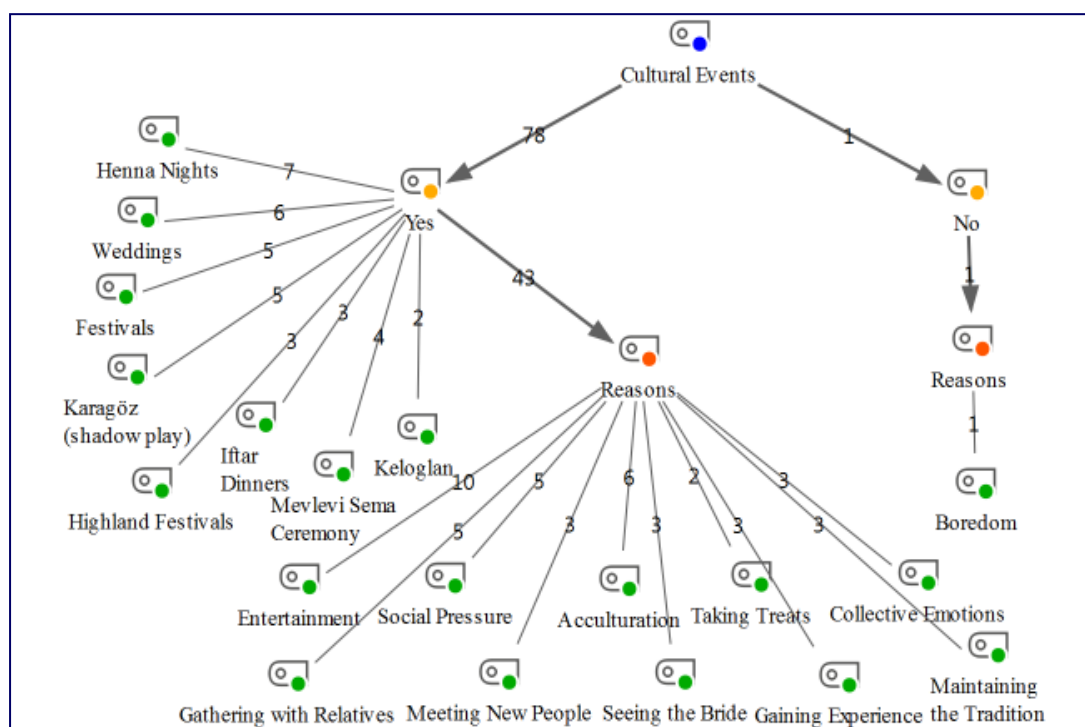
Figure 2. Opinions of Students on Attendance to Cultural Events Organized in their Areas and Reasons for their Opinions

As given in Figure 2, the majority of the students who took part in the focus group interview attend the cultural events organized around their areas while only one student reported that he does not want to attend such kind of events. He stated the reason for this fact with the code *Boredom* (*f*=1). The student who does not want to attend a cultural event organized in his area has the following opinion about the topic:

M2: *When I was a little child, I used to live in a village with my family. We used to go to henna nights in the village and my friends also used to attend those events. I used to attend mostly to be with my friends there. We used to clown around and have fun together. Teacher, I find this kind of events very boring, so I avoid them. For example, my parents shoot videos all the time, so it gets more boring."*

Students who answered yes to the question asked to them most commonly stated that they attended or wanted to attend *Henna Nights* (*f*=7), *Weddings* (*f*=6) and *Festivals* (*f*=5). When the reasons for attendance of students to events in their environment are examined, the most commonly stated reasons are *Entertainment* (*f*=10), *Social Pressure* (*f*=5), *Gathering with Relatives* (*f*=5) and *Acculturation* (*f*=6). Several students stated their opinions about the events organized in their areas and the reasons for their attendance to such events, which are as follows:

F4: *"We attend school events if they are open to public, but we do not often attend out-of-school events. We attend rural weddings and henna nights when such events are organized. I usually attend henna nights because I like applying henna. And we get together with our relatives there, so I attend those events.*

M1: *"It's fun for me and I like this kind of events. I find them as an opportunity to get together with family members. So, it's fun for me and I like such events. It's an opportunity to have close time with relatives, so that's why I attend those events, that is, to gather with them. And I like it. You can spend time with relatives, so I attend such events for them, in order to get together with them. That's what I like."*

F5: *"My parents once took me to a Karagoz & Hacivat shadow play in the month of Ramadan. I asked my mother to take me to the event and they did. My parents love those events as well, so we went together because it was so fun. We learn a lot of things from those events about our culture; for example, Sufi whirling has this philosophy: "Receive grace from the beloved and give that grace to the world." We learn all these from those events."*

When the opinions of students who took part in the focus group interview were assessed in general, types of cultural activities and reasons for participation at such events appear to be different between female and male students. For example, it is often observed that female students who want to attend wedding events usually intend to see the bride or meet new people, while male students usually attend the same events in order to get together with their friends or due to social pressure. On the other hand, a major part of the students attends cultural events to have fun and learn about and maintain the tradition.

As seen in Figure 2, the events students most commonly attend are weddings and henna nights. It can be thought that this is mainly owing to the fact that those events strengthen family relationships, there may be some social pressure on people to attend, and those events are easily accessible. Additionally, it is observed that certain behaviors displayed by families during the events alienate the students from those events.

Findings and Comments on the Third Question

Figure 3 presents the results regarding the content analysis on the students' answers to the third question included the interview form, which is: "Are you interested in any traditional handicrafts? What are they?" and the following sub-questions related to that main question, which are as follows:

a) Is there a famous handicraft in your area? What are they?
b) Have you ever done any handicraft such as *ebru* (marbling), *tel kirma* (metallic embroidery), etc.? Which one and why?
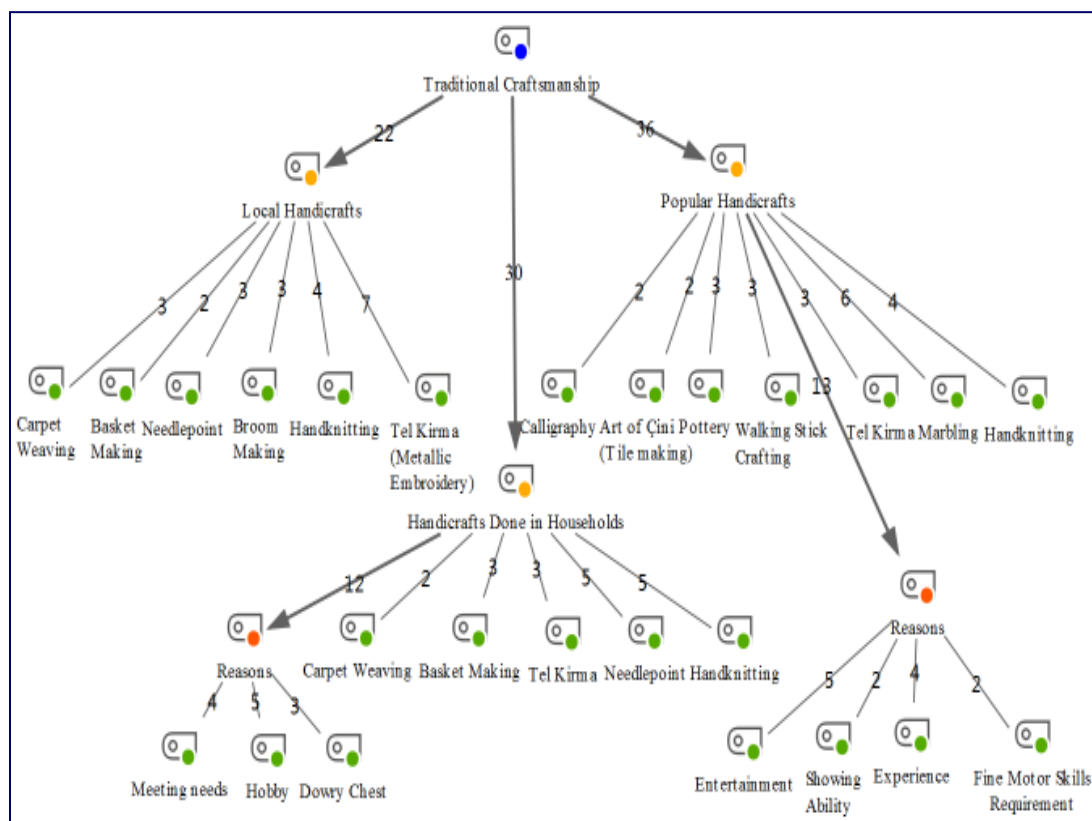c) Do you have any family member doing any traditional handicrafts? Which one and why?

Figure 3. Opinions of Students on Traditional Handicrafts and Reasons for their Opinions

According to Figure 3, the art of *Tel Kirma (Metallic Embroidery)* (*f*=7) which is a handicraft specific to the city of Bartın, has the highest frequency in category of *Local Handicrafts,* which is followed by the code *Knitting* (*f*=4). It is seen that the arts of *Knitting* (*f*=5), *Needlepoint* (*f*=5) and *Tel Kirma (Metallic Embroidery)* (*f*=3) are the most common under the theme *Handicrafts Done in Households and their Reasons.* The reasons for preference of the said arts are listed with the codes *Need* (*f*=4), *Hobby* (*f*=5) and *Dowry* (*f*=3). Below are some of the opinions stated by the students on the topic:

F6: *"My aunt and mother do knitting very often. My aunt has mastered the technique. They often knit patterns for toys, you know. My aunt started knitting as a leisure activity. This has gradually become her hobby, and now she does knitting all the time. My mother does knitting mainly for her daughters, she knits items for their dowry chests.*

F2: *"My mother was doing Tel Kirma until four years ago. She doesn't do it anymore. My grandmother does point lace work as embroidery for edges of headscarves. She also knits stoles and does lacework. I say: "Grandma, why do you spend your time doing this? They are already out of fashion." And she answers: "No, they are never out of fashion, they are our tradition and I will put them into your dowry chest." She has already filled my dowry chest with embroidery.*

M5: *"My grandma does tel kirma. My mother does, too. My mother once took a tel kirma course. Her embroidery works are not for sale but are future gifts for us. She says she will give them as gifts to our future wives. She still does embroidery in her spare time."*

When the category titled *Popular Handicrafts and Reasons for the Interest in Them*, *Marbling* ($f=6$) and *Knitting* ($f=4$) has the highest frequency. The students stated that they are interested in handicrafts for reasons of *Entertainment* ($f=5$) and *Experience* ($f=4$). Below are several opinions on the handicrafts that are popular among the students and the reasons for interest in them:

F4: *"I'm interested in paper marbling. I even watch tutorial videos at home. Floral embroidery, or rose embroidery, for example, I think they are amazing. My mother used to do needlepoint. I once tried doing it, as well; I even practiced for a month but my work later got sloppy. Frankly speaking, I find marbling and needlepoint interesting."*

F7: *"I once tried practicing tel kirma. But I failed, it turned out that the technique is extremely hard. I never tried the art of marbling before my first try in the classroom environment, I think that it's real fun."*

M5: *"I am a little interested in walking stick crafting. I find the motifs carved on walking sticks beautiful. This is already a local craft in our villages."*

When the opinions of the students and Figure 3 are considered, it is found out that handicrafts done in households are also widespread in the settlement; and when the popular handicrafts and reasons for the interest in them are considered, it is understood that the popular handicrafts mainly include those that are done in the households and with which the students are familiar and those that attract the attention and interest of the students during the events organized in scope of the study. Figure 3 reveals that the majority of the students have yet to experience a widely popular art such as marbling, or a local art such as *tel kirma*, which can be considered as a negative situation in terms of maintaining traditions. Moreover, considering opinions of female and male students, it is revealed that male students are more interested in handicrafts that require gross motor skills while female students rather prefer handicrafts that require fine motor skills. This finding reinforces the view that gender may have an effect on the type of handicrafts which individuals are interested in. Nevertheless, the finding may as well be interpreted to conclude that the activities organized in scope of the study raised students' awareness on handicrafts, which can be transformed into the sensitivity needed for keeping traditional handicrafts alive in the long term.

Findings and Comments on the Fourth Question

Figure 4 presents the results regarding the content analysis on the students' answers to the fourth question in the interview form, which is: "Are you interested in any oral tradition (folk songs, tales, jokes, etc.)? If yes, please indicate which ones you are interested in and why?".
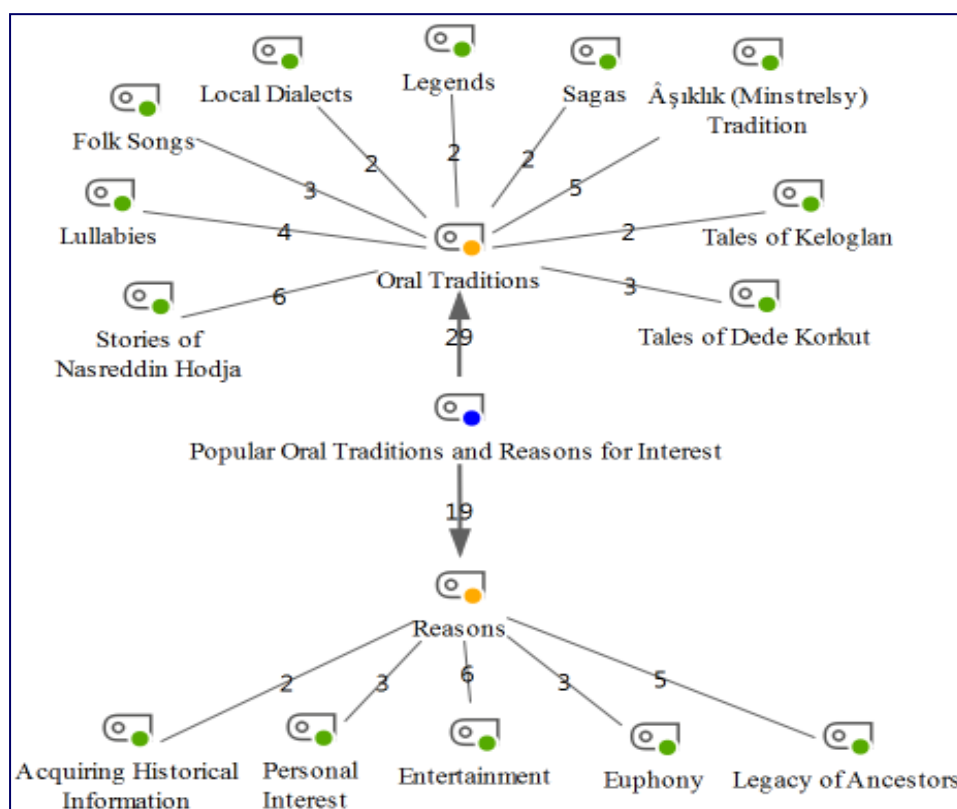
Figure 4. Popular Oral Traditions among the Students and Reasons for the Interest

Figure 4 shows the results related to the oral traditions which are popular among the students and reasons for their interest. According to Figure 4, the students mentioned nine traditions in the category of *Oral Traditions* (*f*=29). It is observed that *Stories of Nasreddin Hodja* (*f*=6), *Ashik-style Poetry Tradition* (*f*=5) and *Lullabies* (*f*=4) have the highest frequency among the said traditions. To state the reasons for their interest in certain oral traditions, the students most commonly used the codes *Entertainment* (*f*=6) and *Legacy of Ancestors* (*f*=5). Below are several opinions of the students on the topic:

M2: *"If we can count accents (talking about dialects) in the category of oral traditions, I can say I like accents. Especially the Thracian accent. I don't know why but I like it very much. And there are lullabies sung in our region. For example, Kayikci (Boatman) is one of the lullabies that I still remember."*

F4: *"I am mostly interested in jokes and sagas. Because they have reached us from ancient times. I find the events told in sagas and legends exciting. Like my friend, I love lullabies, too. The lullabies sung to us by our mothers reminds me of my childhood and I like them very much. If my mother sang a lullaby to me, I would eagerly listen. I can even sing a lullaby by heart... It is called 'Benim Annem Guzel Annem' (My Beautiful Mom)*

M4: *"Teacher, I remember a class when you let us watch a video. There was a man with a needle between his lips. The video was about ashik-style poetry*

tradition, and their technique was called Leb-degmez. I remember that I found it very interesting then, that technique is too hard to practice."

When Figure 4 and the opinions of the students are considered, it can be said that the traditions which the students are interested in are influenced by their age group characteristics and by the area they live. It can be thought that the characteristics of oral traditions such as tales, lullabies, jokes, legends and sagas are consistent with the age group characteristics of the students, and the local dialect of the settlement in which the students live may influence their tendency to adopt that dialect. Furthermore, a former classroom activity on Ashik-style poetry tradition appears to have aroused interest and curiosity about that tradition amongst the students who previously had no knowledge of the tradition. Moreover, the code *Entertainment* (*f*=6) under the theme *Reasons* has the highest frequency, which can be interpreted to conclude that the students show much more interest in oral traditions that entertain them.

Findings and Comments on the Fifth Question

Figure 5 presents the results regarding the content analysis on the students' answers to the fifth question included the interview form, which is: "Would you attend a Nawroz celebration event in your area? Why?".
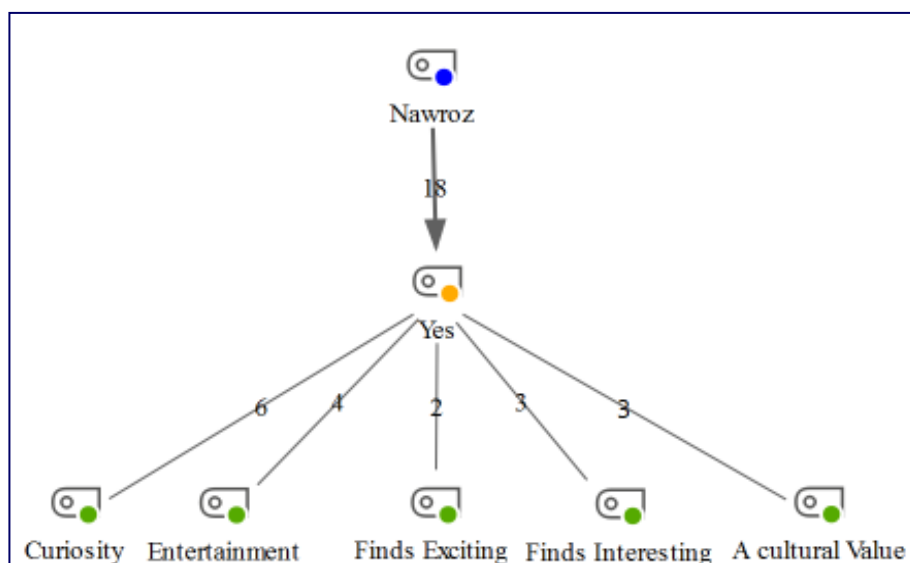

Figure 5. Opinions of Students on Attendance to Nawroz Events and Reasons for their Opinions

As seen in Figure 5, all of the students interviewed want to attend a Nawroz event to be organized in their area. When the reason for this situation is examined, it is observed that the students most commonly reported the reasons *Curiosity* (*f*=6) and *Entertainment* (*f*=4) for their interest in attending a Nawroz event. Below are several opinions stated by the students about the reasons for their interest in attending a Nawroz event:

M3: *"I would attend such an event if there was one in my vicinity. I would not jump over the fire but watch others jump. It's very exciting but may be a little bit dangerous. I have never attended a Nawroz event, but I would like to.*

M1: *"I am curious about jumping over the flames, it attracts my attention, but I haven't had the chance until now. I really want to jump over the bonfire. So I would very probably attend such an event if there was one organized in my vicinity. And it would be entertaining, I suppose."*

F2: *"Actually, anything that is related to our culture attracts my interest. I would like to learn them, I mean, it would be so nice and fun to tell other about them. I couldn't fully express my opinion but I can say that it's a cultural value and it attracts my interest."*

According to the opinions of students and Figure 5, all of the students are eager to attend a Nawroz event but very few of them have previously attended such event. As given in the figure, the code "Curiosity" has the highest frequency compared to the other codes, and it can be considered that the majority of the students are curious about this event and they want to experience it. Moreover, some of the students think that this tradition is a cultural value. Therefore, the students can be provided with the opportunity to experience a Nawroz tradition and their awareness can be raised so that they can keep the tradition alive.

Findings and Comments on the Sixth Question

Figure 6 presents the results regarding the content analysis on the students' answers to the sixth question included the interview form, which is: "Which elements of intangible cultural heritage are you most interested in? Why?".
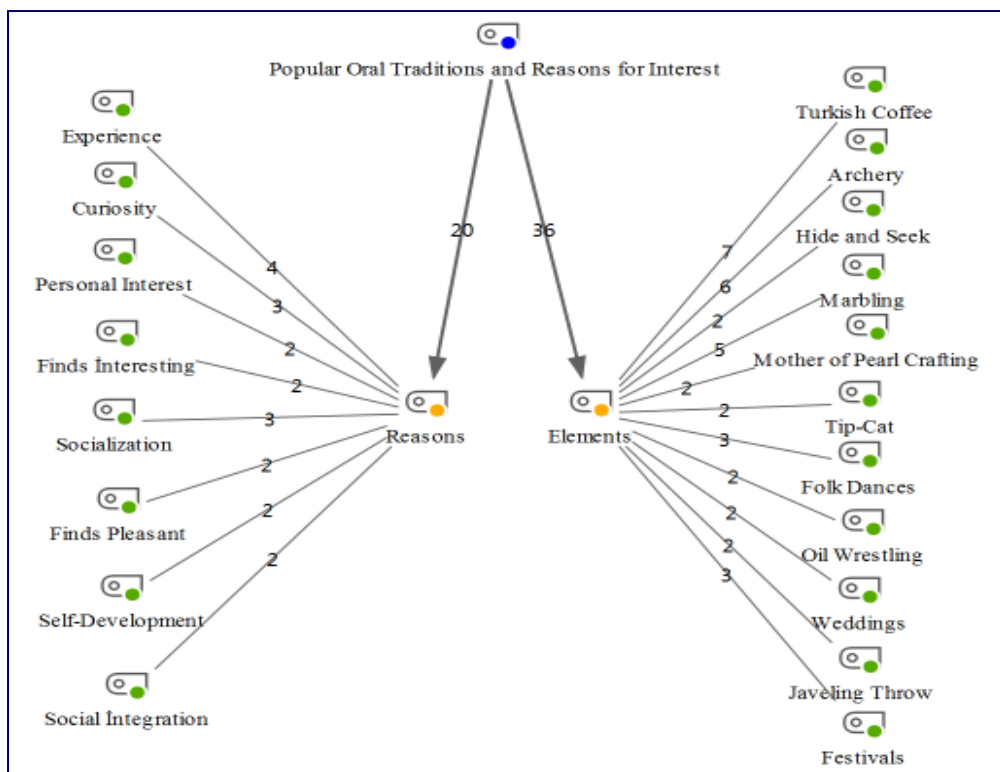

Figure 6. ICH Elements that Attract the Highest Interest and Reasons for the Interest

As shown in Figure 6, it can be seen that the most popular element of intangible cultural heritage among the interviewed students is *Turkish Coffee* (*f*=7), which is followed by *Archery* (*f*=6) and *Marbling* (*f*=5) codes, respectively. When the reasons for the interest in the said popular elements are examined, it is observed that the most common reasons are *Experience* (*f*=4), *Curiosity* (*f*=3) and *Socialization* (*f*=3). Below are several opinions stated by the students about the tenth question:

M3: *"Mister, I remember a class in which we practiced marbling, I'm interested in that art. Because we can create very beautiful patterns with that technique. We use paint and transform the patterns to A4 paper. I tried marbling and loved it, I would like to keep practicing and learn the technique in the future."*

F2: *"I am mostly interested in archery. I think that it is a quite unique branch of sports. I heard that it improves hand - eye - arm coordination. It is not like any other sports, I find it a little bit interesting. I also like Turkish coffee. But there's this thing adults say, "You are too young to drink Turkish coffee, you shouldn't, otherwise you won't have children when you grow up", this will make kids reluctant to drink coffee."*

F5: *"You remember the class when we had a Turkish coffee event? I had never drunk Turkish coffee until that event. I even disliked its taste and refused to drink that coffee when mom made it. But the event in which we tried it with you sparked my interest. I also learned how to make Turkish coffee at home. I even made Turkish coffee for my parents, I also started drinking it."*

When the opinions stated by the students and given in Figure 6 are assessed in general, it is found out that traditional elements which have never been experienced or are not much known by the majority of the students, such as Turkish coffee, archery and marbling are the most popular elements among the students; and the reasons for the interest in the said elements can be interpreted as the facts that they have previously experienced those elements, and the activities performed in scope of the study aroused their interest in elements of intangible cultural heritage and their curiosity for these elements. Nevertheless, as seen in the previous findings, gender appears as an effective factor on the interest in certain traditions such as Turkish folk dances, wrestling and javelin throw.

Findings on the Seventh Question

Figure 7 presents the results regarding the content analysis on the students' answers to the seventh question included the interview form, which is: "What actions can be taken by individuals, the society or state to maintain elements of intangible cultural heritage?".
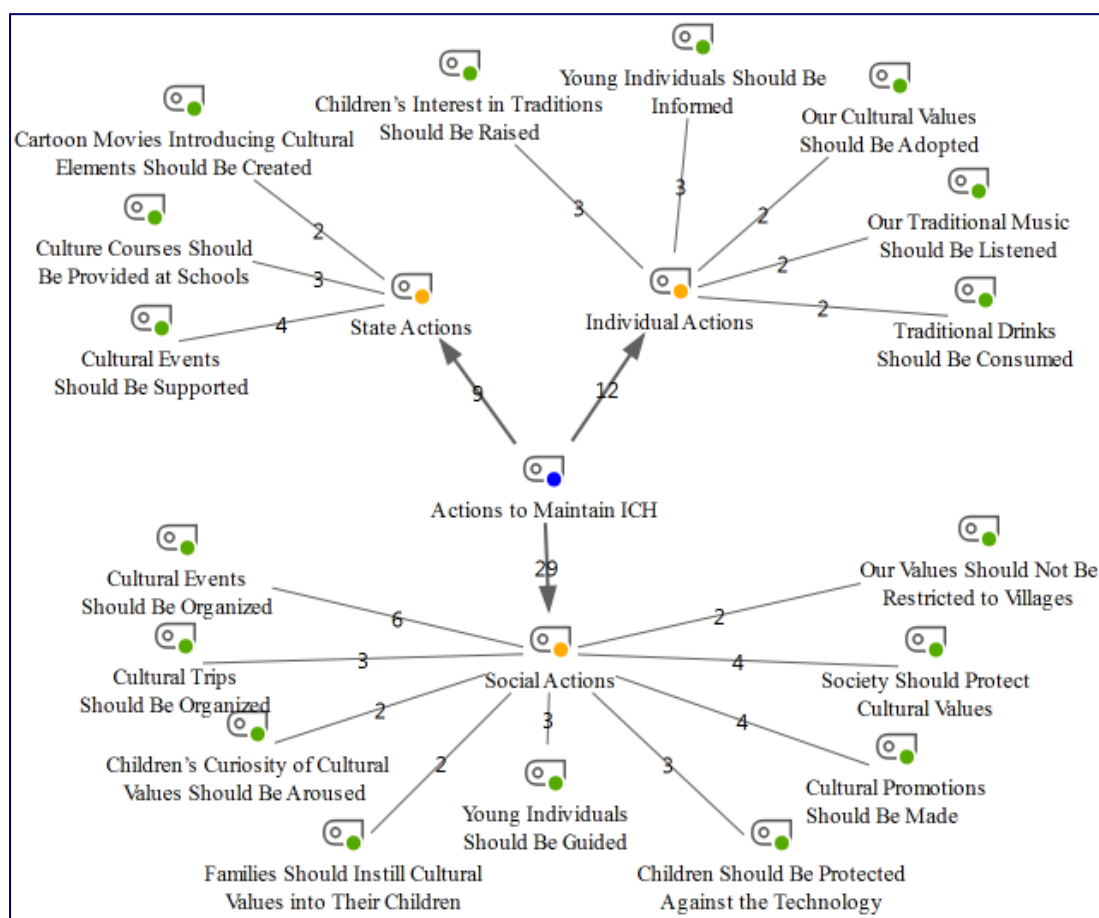
Figure 7. Actions to Maintain ICH

According to Figure 7, the answers given to the interview question are grouped under three categories. It is seen that the category *Society Should Maintain the ICH* (*f*=29) has the highest frequency among actions that can be taken to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage. Under this category, the students most commonly used the codes *Cultural Events Should be Organized* (*f*=6), *Cultural Advertisements Should be Made* (*f*=4) and *Society Should Maintain the ICH* (*f*=4), and they stated that the intangible cultural heritage can be maintained by the society.

Another category determined from the opinions of the students on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is *Individual Actions to Maintain the ICH* (*f*=12). Under this category, the students most commonly used the codes *Children's Interest in Traditions Should be Increased* (*f*=3) and *Youth Should be Informed* (*f*=3) when stating their opinions.

The final category in relation to the seventh question is *State Actions to Maintain the ICH* (*f*=9). Under this category, the students most commonly stated that the intangible cultural heritage can be maintained by the state, by *Supporting Cultural Events* (*f*=4) and *Providing Culture Courses* (*f*=3). Below are several opinions stated by the interviewed students about the ninth question:

M1: *"The society should show interest... We should show interest in this kind of traditions and occupations. If we don't show enough interest, they will disappear, they are already about to extinct. We should keep our traditions alive, this is what I think."*

F1: *"I think it would be better if children and teenagers listened to Turkish folk songs on their smartphones and learned Turkish folk music instead of listening to pop music. They should be encouraged to learn our traditions."*

M4: *"Cultural advertisements should be made. We should preserve our cultural heritage. They can craft wooden toy cars instead of technological games. Or they can craft traditional peg tops and sell them anywhere. We should see our cultural heritage wherever we look at. That is how we can protect our cultural heritage."*

F5: *"Our parents should guide us. The state should also organize more events and activities for this purpose. We should tell our friends about the things we learn from our families so that we can influence each other. This can help everyone pay more attention to this subject."*

An overall examination on the opinions stated by the students in relation to the seventh question reveals that the opinions are quite extensive. Although the students did not answer the questions by considering the themes given in Figure 7, they still answered in consistence with the said themes, which can be interpreted to conclude that they have suitable levels of awareness on the topic. When the codes used by the students to explain their opinions are taken into consideration, it can be concluded that in-class and out-of-class activities performed in scope of the study have a positive effect on the students (Akkuş, Karaca & Polat, 2015; Işık, 2013; Yeşilbursa, 2011). As it can be inferred from the observations on the process and statements of the students, the focal point of student opinions is to raise interest and curiosity of young individuals on cultural heritage, to guide them appropriately, and to protect children and young individuals against negative effects of technology. It can also be inferred from their opinions that the students themselves are the object of this situation and they express their expectations for themselves by referring to other persons or groups.

Conclusions

An examination of the results concluded on basis of the findings obtained in scope of the study mainly reveals that the students who are asked what they understand from the concept of intangible cultural heritage reported that intangible cultural heritage are values that we have inherited from the past and noticed through human experience, and that are still significant for us and specific to us. In addition, the students reported that such values manifest the lifestyle of our ancestors and constitute a basis for our customs and traditions. This result achieved under this study appears to be supportive of the results achieved in former studies (Ünlü, 2012; Yeşilbursa, 2011). It can be said that the aforementioned opinions of the students point out to the need for a link between the past and the future and the faith in cultural transmission from the past to the future. Moreover, the interviewed students are observed to have failed to make a direct definition of intangible cultural heritage but instead used examples to express the

concept. The students made use of instances related to the five basic domains of intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003). Some of these examples were seen to contain region-specific elements of intangible cultural heritage. The students used cultural elements of their close vicinity as examples, which is similar to the conclusions reached by Gürel and Çetin (2017) in their study. In this study conducted with 7th grade elementary students, the interviewees used the cultural elements in their vicinity while giving examples of intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, this result obtained is considered to be important in the aspect that it shows the effect of the training given on basis of the near-to-far principle on awareness of the students (Kayalı, 2008). Some part of the examples used by the students are similar to the cultural elements which are topics of in-class and out-of-class activities, which can be considered as an evidence that the activities performed during the process are influential on the students' levels of cultural knowledge and awareness; and it can be said that this result is supportive of the results of the study conducted by Yeşilbursa (2011).

Another result of the study indicates that the students' experience in elements of intangible cultural heritage raise their awareness on and interest in such elements, developing conservation awareness. This result of the study supports the conclusion reached by Akkuş, Karaca and Polat (2015) in their study, suggesting that there is a significant difference between students' awareness on cultural heritage and their experience. This result is also supportive of the conclusion reached in scope of the study conducted by Ar (2015), which suggests that the tourist guides are important in raising knowledge and conservation awareness on intangible cultural heritage. In this regard, it can be stated that any kind of educational or promotional activity on intangible cultural heritage, such as visits to historical areas or museums, will contribute to individuals' levels of cultural awareness and to the development of their conservation awareness (Yeşilbursa, 2011; Işık, 2013; Çelepi, 2016; Öztürk, Kılıçarslan, Demir and Caber, 2015).

Another result achieved under the study indicates that the majority of the students attended cultural events organized in their areas. It is found out that the cultural events attended by the students are usually free, easily accessible and widely popular in the public, such as weddings, henna nights, iftar (the meal eaten by Muslims after sunset during Ramadan), festivals, and also suitable for their ages, such as *Karagoz* and *Keloglan*. Moreover, it is observed that most of the students attend such events for a number of reasons including social pressure, gathering with relatives, experience, while others avoid attending such events due to various behaviors of their families during the events. On basis of the said findings, it can be suggested that the students' decisions on attendance to such events cannot be considered independently of their family, and the society (Karaca-Yılmaz et al., 2017; Öztürk et al., 2015). On the other hand, reasons such as maintaining the tradition, acculturation, entertainment, etc. are influential on the students' decisions on attendance to such events.

The study has revealed that the students have adequate awareness on the traditional craftsmanship activities in their area. Whereas, former studies carried out in collaboration with different study groups had revealed that the individuals have low or medium levels of awareness on popular handicrafts in their area (Çelepi, 2016; Karaca

Yılmaz et al., 2017). According to the opinions of the students, such awareness is due to the fact that such handicrafts were formerly practiced in the classroom environment or are done in the household and previously experienced by the students. Additionally, considering the reasons for the students' interest in handicrafts, it is quite essential to increase the number of exemplary persons doing local and popular handicrafts in the related settlement areas and to provide opportunities for the students to experience the handicrafts in an entertaining environment. It can be suggested that such kind of actions can considerably help students reveal their skills on these arts and maintain the handicrafts (Çelepi, 2016).

Another result of the study suggests that the interest of individuals in cultural values may be influenced by cultural characteristics of the area in which they live. A majority of the students think that the dialect spoken in Bartın area is of importance in the culture of Bartın. This result can be said to be supportive of the conclusion reached in scope of the study conducted by Çetin and Gürgil (2013), suggesting that a time period spent in a local area is influential on individuals' awareness on the cultural values of that area. The students stated that their interest in oral traditions such as tales, stories, jokes, lullabies and the reasons for their interest are mainly based on the entertaining quality of such traditions, which can be interpreted to conclude that age is a determinant of the popularity of a cultural value. However, it is observed that the students do not have the desired level of awareness on and interest in Turkish folk songs. Nevertheless, the introduction of the keystones of Turkish culture such as Turkish folk songs and ashik-style poetry tradition is considered to be of high importance for raising their interest in such values. It must be noted that this finding is related to the Nawroz tradition examined in the study. It is found out that this tradition receives much interest from the students, they are eager to experience this tradition but have no previous experience in the tradition. In the light of the foregoing, it can be said that it is possible to raise students' interest in cultural values by creating entertaining environments (Meydan and Akkuş, 2014).

In the scope of this study, it can be observed that the greatest problem with the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is the obstacles created by technological developments, as a result of which the society and individuals have gradually been losing interest in cultural values. Furthermore, the students are observed to have the opinion that their early exposure to the Internet and technology at very early ages alienate them from numerous national and cultural values primarily including traditional children's games. This result reached in scope of the study is supportive of the conclusion revealed in the study by Kurtdede - Fidan (2013), suggesting that mass media have negative effects on the efforts to instill cultural values into students. This result of the study indicates that the students have the same perceptions as that of the society that mass media have negative effects on the conservation of cultural characteristics (Oğuz, 2013; Güngör, 2011) On the other hand, a literature review can lead us to the conclusion that it is possible to use technology for suitable purposes so that young individuals of the society can satisfy their curiosity and interest in learning and experiencing traditional values and transmit those values to future generations

despite their current unfamiliarity with traditional values (Kasapoğlu - Akyol, 2016; Pietrobruno, 2013; Brown, 2005).

It is stated in the literature that numerous studies can be performed for the safeguarding of cultural heritage (Lowenthal, 2005). In parallel to this fact noted in the literature, the students think that intangible cultural heritage builds a link between the past and the future (Petronela, 2016) and it is a great responsibility of the state, society and individual to maintain this heritage. While the state is expected to develop eligible policies and support education for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (Çelepi, 2016; Ott, Dagnino and Pozzi, 2015; Gürçayır - Teke, 2013; Brown, 2005) the society is expected to organize cultural festivals and families are expected to have required sensitivity for transmitting cultural values to young individuals (Abdelazim Ahmed, 2017; Mfa et al., 2013; del Barrio, Devesa and Herrero, 2012). Additionally, the students lay emphasis on the fact that young individuals of the society have the tendency to maintain and increase their commitment to traditional values. It can be suggested that the opinions stated by the students on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage are also usually supported by the literature. (Gürel and Çetin, 2017; Çelepi, 2016; Arıoğlu and Aydoğdu-Atasoy, 2015; Kılcan and Akbaba, 2013; Yeşilbursa, 2011; Kutlu, 2009).

When the findings on the most popular elements of intangible cultural heritage among the students are evaluated, it can be determined that the most popular elements are those that have been introduced through in-class activities such as Turkish coffee, archery and marbling. Moreover, it is considered that gender is as effective as the activities performed on the interest in elements of intangible cultural heritage. It is found out in scope of the study that male students are more interested in ancestors' sports that require power, such as oil wrestling, archery and javelin throw, while female students are mainly interested in widely common traditional events that are related to social life, such as weddings and festivals, and traditional elements that particularly require fine skills such as folk dances and the art of marbling. The result of this study, which manifests that gender is a distinctive factor of the interest in cultural values, is not supportive of the study conducted on university students by Dinç, Erdil and Keçe (2011). The said study revealed that gender is not an effective factor on the interest of university students in cultural values. In the light of these results, it can be suggested that the age characteristics of the study group have an effect on the group's interest in cultural values.

Another result achieved in the study is the fact that the students have high interest and attitude in terms of the importance of cultural heritage but cannot adequately transform such interest and attitude into action. It is possible to conclude that this result is similar to the results of the study performed by Keçe (2015) in collaboration with pre-service teachers, and of the study performed by Gümüş and Adanalı (2011) in collaboration with middle school students. Under the mentioned studies, the researchers revealed that pre-service teachers and middle school students have high attitude in terms of cultural values, but such attitude cannot be adequately transformed into practice. This manifests the similarity of results despite the difference in study groups. When assessed in general, it can be suggested that students' opinions on intangible cultural heritage are

positive as also evidenced by other studies on cultural heritage (Yeşilbursa, 2011; Arıkan and Doğan, 2013). It is possible to make an inference from this result that positive opinions on intangible cultural heritage will create a positive effect on cultural competence, cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural understanding, cultural sensitivity and cultural skills (Burchum, 2002).

Suggestions

The following suggestions are made in scope of this study:

- Researchers can perform studies on elements of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, primarily at the level of elementary education and also at higher levels of education.
- Workshops can be organized to examine the effect of family and other social factors on individuals' interest in and awareness on cultural characteristics.
- This study reveals that the Internet environment and technological products constitute a serious obstacle to intangible cultural heritage. The effect of the Internet and technological means on transmission of intangible cultural heritage and on creating awareness on that heritage can be examined under subsequent studies.
- It is noted that elective or compulsory courses on intangible cultural heritage are of significance to integrate intangible cultural heritage, which constitutes the most important part of national values, into all educational levels.
- It is suggested that environments may be created to enable young individuals to transform their cultural awareness into practice in every sphere of life, primarily including educational institutions.

Acknowledgements

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