



Discussion on the Concept of Visual Culture at Museum within Postmodern Art Education*

Zekiye Çıldır**

Abstract

In this study, it is aimed to reveal the practicability of using museums for educational purposes within the concept of postmodern art education. The study analyses visual culture which come to prominence in the newest researches on postmodern art and education studies. In this study, present a theoretical analysis of the conception of the most topical discourses. This study is necessary in order to propound the functionality of visual culture approach at museums instead of traditional art education; and it creates the problem of the study. The main goal of this study is to determine how the concept of visual culture is handled at museums within the context of postmodernism and to discuss museums within visual culture and art education. It is in a survey model structured by using qualitative research method and techniques. In this respect, both postmodern art education approach and museum education are studied within the limitations of such a study. The shift of art education researches in the recent decade is evident, varying and dynamic, starting with interest social aspects, multicultural education, manifestation of the media arts, new technologies and finally passing on to the development of visual culture, which expands the limits of the traditional understanding of art education. In the study, there are views on the fact that visual culture approach which is considered within postmodern art education should be handled at museums. In this regard, there are determinations about activating museums in art education and how to include visual culture in educational studies of museums.

Keywords: art, art education, postmodernism, visual culture, museum

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** Dr., Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Cultural Foundations of Education, Fine Arts Education, Ankara, Turkey. E-mail: zcildir@gmail.com

Görsel Kültür Kavramının Postmodern Sanat Eğitimi Kapsamında Müzedede Ele Alınması

Öz

Bu araştırmada, postmodern sanat eğitimi bağlamında müzenin eğitim amacıyla kullanımının uygulanabilirliği ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır. Araştırma, çağdaş sanat kültürü, sanat çalışmaları ve eğitim çalışmaları hakkındaki en yeni çalışmalarda göze çarpan görsel kültürünün güncel söylemlerini incelemektedir. Bu araştırma, en güncel söylemlerin algılanışıyla ilgili teorik bir analiz ortaya koymaktadır. Geleneksel sanat eğitimi yerine, müzedeki görsel kültür yaklaşımının işlevliliğinin ortaya çıkarılması araştırmanın yapılmasını gerekli kılmakta ve araştırmanın problemini oluşturmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, postmodernizm bağlamında görsel kültür kavramının müzedeki nasıl ele alındığını belirleyerek müzeleri görsel kültür ve sanat eğitimi bağlamında ele almaktır. Nitel araştırma yöntem ve teknikleri kullanılarak yapılandırılmış tarama modelinde bir çalışmadır. Bu bakımdan gerek postmodern sanat eğitimi yaklaşımı gerekse de müze eğitimi bu kapsamda bir çalışmanın sınırlılıklarının elverdiği ölçüde irdelenmiştir. Sosyal konular, kültürlerarası eğitim, medya sanatları ve yeni teknolojilerin ortaya çıkışına karşı ilgiyle başlayan ve nihayetinde geleneksel sanat eğitimi anlayışının sınırlarını aşan görsel kültürün gelişimine doğru yönelen, son on yılda görülen sanat eğitimindeki yön değişimi apaçık, değişken ve dinamiktir. Çalışmada postmodern sanat eğitimi bağlamında değerlendirilen görsel kültür yaklaşımının müzedeki ele alınmasına yönelik görüşler ortaya koyulmuştur. Bu bağlamda, sanat eğitiminde müzeyi etkin kılmak için müze eğitimi çalışmalarında görsel kültüre nasıl yer vereceğine ilişkin saptamalara yer verilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: sanat, sanat eğitimi, postmodernizm, görsel kültür, müze

Introduction

Art is one of the main keystones of education. The approach of “education through art” lies in the centre of art education field. In this approach, art becomes a tool used for educational purposes in order for individuals to develop a consistent and balanced personality. According to San (2006), art education is a sum of “educational programs which allow perceiving art and artistry, dynamic instability in them, define their vital values and aim to develop creativity in the fields of art and thought. Among the goals of art education, one of them is to help children and the young acquire a sense of art and develop aesthetic sensitivity. Arts education is one of the most significant tools which help to acquire aesthetic sensitivity at primary and secondary school level. Through art education, an individual learns how to see instead of just looking. By this way, they develop a personality that can think through looking from different aspects, criticize, question and, most of all, create solutions. Art education is human centred inherently; it empowers, motivates people and develops a sense of trust. Art education is a process which helps to produce unique, audacious and modern ideas because it foresees creativity as a feeling and a kind of sensitivity education; it also impels curiosity and frees people. It is necessary for training an individual’s creative power and potency, and for organizing aesthetic thought and conscious. The goal of art education is to provide thinking education based on observation and to educate a child within nature-life-art integrity. Art education should be seen as a meaningful contribution and advantage for the education of individuals, societies and the humanity. Within this respect, art education directs individuals to see, question and perform experimental studies.

A qualified art education is only possible with a curriculum program which carries certain values and can renew itself according to the developing and changing conditions of the era. Art education has an understanding that handles theoretical and practical studies together by entreating all fields of fine arts in general. One of the most prominent places of research and practice at this field is a museum. In a museum, the starting point is the question that “How do educational practises which are performed through visual culture education instead of traditional art education become active and meaningful learning experiences within the context of postmodern art education?” In a museum, revealing the functionality of visual culture approach makes it necessary to study and it becomes the problem of the study.

Postmodernism and Art Education

Postmodernism is a remarkable stream of thought especially at modern culture discussions. Experiencing its effect nearly all fields of social life, postmodernism has become so widespread that it is highly difficult to find a field that is not affected by postmodernism. Postmodern discourse has been felt firstly in the field of art, then, it has become an accepted thought after affecting other fields, too. Postmodernism is also a matter of art which is a dynamic of culture and it directs practices in the fields of art and education, too. Art education is affected by science, technology, philosophy, psychology and politics, at the same time, it also affects these fields. This situation makes it necessary to keep up with the modern era for art education,

70 DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

curriculum methods and techniques. In this respect, in order for a better comprehend of the changes in art education, it is essential to evaluate the concept of postmodernism and its effects on art.

Each century reflects new thinking ways within the context of its own political, economical and social structure. Being created in the 21st century, the concept of postmodernism includes ideas of many writers with different interest fields who don't achieve a consensus among themselves. Rooted in many fields such as art, philosophy, feminism, criticism, linguistics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, psychology, sociology and theology; the main argument of postmodernism focuses on the idea of rejecting objective and absolute truth. In order to fully understand the appearance of the concept of postmodernism, it would be appropriate to comprehend the concepts of modernization and modernism. The concept of modernization is defined with scientific, technological advancements, industrialization, and population movements, social and technological changes. Huyssen (1994, p. 108) sees postmodernism as a phase or a specific era in modernism instead of treating it as a new historical phase. Postmodernism is considered as a questioning or discussion of modernism which has continued in a way that includes objections and critics against it. Many theoreticians have considered postmodernism as an expression of radical disengagements from the fields of culture and art. In postmodern culture, "culture" is a product in itself. Tolerance, criticism on culture, religious revivals are treated within the theory of cultural postmodernism. Jameson (2008, p. 31) states that he defines postmodernism as the culture of the late capitalist era society. He expresses that a new type of society appears, culture is integrated with commodity production, it gains a structural function that focuses on empiricism more, and representation and expression can express itself freely at all the institutions of the state in postmodern era.

It has a pluralist structure unlike the single dominance structure of modernism (Kellner and Best, 1998, p. 24; Şaylan, 2002, p. 47). Leaving modernist ideals means moving to postmodernism. Jameson describes postmodernism as "cultural nationale of late capitalism" and defines it as "the collapse of formats ideology". Jameson talks about a culture which is created by capitalism at the level it reached. According to him, changes in socio-cultural, political, economical, philosophical, etc. parameters produce new cultural values. Cultural new features about format and the postmodern concept which appears as a yield of the era and continues to be uncertain as a result of the discussions are discourses against modernism. Unlike modernism, postmodernism can be defined as a perception of building a modern life. On the other hand, cultural researchers entitle the present social period as "late modernity". Giddens (2000) sees the present era as a radical phase of modernity, Lyotard (1994) sees postmodernism as a "situation of knowledge" on reality, Jameson (2002) as a "postmodern environment", and Welsh (2004) as a period of "postmodern modernity". Some other writers entitle the 21st century as a post-modernism by emphasizing the concept of postmodernism which has already been changed and digital, interactive structure of culture (Musneckine, 2009).

DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM 71 WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

One of the problem areas of art education is the effect of art on postmodern society, and the other one is the effect of postmodern structure on art. By opening the aspects of modern times, postmodernism helps us see what modern is. Not many "-ism" has created confusion and suspicion as postmodernism. By examining the studies made by Efland, Freedman and Stuhl recently in America; when postmodernism is applied to art and design education, the question "What should one understand from this?" appears. The consensus on this topic is that "modernism is put into words arbitrarily" with Adair's words, according to Gablic "it has failed", or according to Harvey's ideas "it has destroyed itself". In other words, "superior discourses and superior narrations" which have shaped the growing progress of resistance and adaptation develop among locality, nationality and globosity. According to Musneckine (2009), aesthetic confusion by dominating on postmodern paradigm, popular culture by eliminating the borders between "elite art" and "popular art" and spreading fast, multimedia and the spread of globalism processes have in fact changed the concept of art culture. Aesthetic criteria in postmodern art is various. It is defined and determined by the artist rather than the society. Montage is preferred instead of mission and vision. Uncertainty and instability substitutes the reflection of the reality. The number of the humanist people are increased and the personalities to whom are fled from structurality are very common too. Rather than mass art, it is favoured to be produced imitation and reflection. (Şaylan, 2002). Another problem is about the ideas on the reconstruction of art education as visual culture education instead of traditional art education.

The Place of Visual Culture in Postmodern Art Education

The main feature that distinguishes people from other living creatures is the capacity to conceptualize the world and the ability to communicate through these concepts symbolically. Today especially the cultural anthropologists emphasize that they consider culture as a system of signs and symbols regarding a society (Delaney and Kaspin, 2011, p. 13). Postmodern art education handles visual world with its positive and negative aspects. Hickman (2004) argues that postmodern art education should include multicultural approach and all cultural symbol, sign and image of postmodern world. In this respect, visual arts subject should provide students with a wide range of art culture.

There has been a rapid change in the traditional education approach where the main focus is on the result rather than the process. Today's education approach emphasizes not the result but the decisive abilities, activities, experience and creative potential (Onur, 2003). A similar change can be seen in the art education field. Art education programs have oriented to interdisciplinary art education by leaving discipline-based art education programs.

20th century is a period when uniformitarianism of the modernism is destroyed, art approach that is ideal for everyone is accepted, science and technology affect social life, and social circumstances and visual technologies challenge traditional art education. Art education plays the role of a savior in circumstances where people struggle with the problems created by postmodernism.

Visual Culture

As a part of culture, visual culture is the unity of research in the fields of philosophy, sociology, anthropology and art studies. Everything we see in the past and nowadays and everything we envision in our minds is included within the content of visual culture. With its most general definition, visual culture focuses on various culture elements connecting through images which discuss each side opening to the vision of culture area. Visual culture is defined as “image pedagogy” teaching us what we see and how we see and think (Garoian and Gaudelius, 2004). Considering in general, it is the meaning that we attach to the things we see as related to our perceptions. It is a culture’s struggle to make its values and beliefs visible through various ways. The concept of visual culture reflects a period when culture and mass communication tools gain importance. Visual culture is rooted in postmodernism and it is based on hearing and seeing at social communication. It is also interested in the copy and spontaneous publish of digital images in an era where originality doesn’t exist and even it is irrational. Postmodernism, in a sense, represents a period where non-visual things are visualized.

Widespread of visual culture has eliminated the borders among the products of elite art, popular art and sub-cultural art by weakening the impulse of elite art on life. There have been significant alterations also in art education as a reflection to the global culture and changes in art. However, it is obvious that established forms and practices of modernist art education can't reflect today's dynamic culture with multi meanings well enough.

Also development of technologies and new communication methods has facilitated the improvement and spread of art culture. İpşiroğlu (1994, p. 13-20) entitles art education in general as a seeing education, an education teaching “how to see”. Here “seeing” gains a broader meaning and integrates with thinking. Considering the fact that art is a message filtered from the unity of seeing, hearing, sensing, thinking, and perceiving abilities, art is considered as a “form of seeing”; if art education, above all, is considered as an education of seeing, it is stated that art education would become an inseparable part of education after finding its place naturally in the unity of education. What is important in visual culture is not the visual itself but the meanings it creates regarding individuals, society and the world. Analysis and explication of visual codes has become a necessity for an individual’s developing his cultural identity and, by this was, for the transformation of the society.

There are various studies also in the field of art education that handles visual culture within different contexts. Based on the increase in the effect of visual culture in society, these studies emphasize interdisciplinary explications (Duncum, 2001; Freedman, 2000; Mirzeoff, 1999; 2002; 2006; Mitchell, 2002 and Tavin 2003; 2004; 2005), changing roles of art educators (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001) and the importance of technological experience in art education (Tillander, 2011). While some researchers are interested in visual culture and man-made visual effects on our lives (Freedman, 2001, 41), some researchers use popular and other images (Tavin, 2001, p. 153) for referring to formed visual memories (Irwin, 1999; 2000, p. 82-86,

Smith-Shank, 1999; 2000, p. 93-96), and paintings, drawings, sculptures, architecture, movies, etc. (Dobbs, 1998). Resulting in fiery debates in many fields, postmodern art has been reflected also on the art education debates. Visual culture which forms an important perspective of today's art education is an upper concept containing both fine arts and popular culture (Duncum, 2009, p. 65). Today's art education has turned into postmodern art perception, and it caused to visual culture studies. These studies envisage that they should reduce their bounds partially with traditional art education which is based on drawing and painting more. As it is seen, visual culture is firstly based on cultural studies and image systems. According to Duncum (2006, p. 99), unlike traditional art education practices, visual culture studies are interested in the images of modern global press, under what circumstances we watch these images and also social and critical analysis of these two.

Postmodernism in art culture which has accelerated the changes in visual arts and visual culture studies have revived scientific research on art education topics. Art education becomes more complicated by having a postmodernist character gradually and going beyond traditional perception of objects, and it contains a broad social context. The main theme of 32nd World Congress held in 2008 in Osaka, Japan was "Mind, Media and Heritage". At the congress, the subjects of culture, art and education were included and general tendencies in art education were presented. Narrow perception about fine arts and fine arts education within the new art forms can't reflect visual expression and visual culture in an integrated perception form.

Museum and Visual Culture

Within the multicultural approach of postmodern art education, in order for an individual to live harmoniously with the multicultural environment, he should have a comprehensive education. One of the approaches which meet the needs in accordance with the necessities of the century, provide new methods in teaching and provide active participation of students especially at teaching environments is learning at museum approach. Morin (2013) describes the education of mental processes whose emotional sides are more dominant such as eye, sense, sensation, perception being ignored, imagery, imagination and designing in addition to mind and logic education as art education. According to him, meeting the museum object with the viewers, evaluating the object both in its context and linking it with subject, content and concepts would display the possibilities that is provided by this multi-sided learning environment.

A museum is the provider of nonstop communication and interaction between objects and people. In recent years, we see that museums being more and more important in our country and the topic of museum education have become an area which provides different and effective art education possibilities. The faith in the power of art to civilize and humanize has been one of the most vital factors for museums to become art institutions. Museums are modern institutions asking questions that create curiosity in the minds of viewers about the subjects they handle and providing a comfortable field service. In a museum, individuals feel the pleasure of being out of school and experience the togetherness of knowledge and game.

74 DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

Providing art education in various places and practically out of educational institutions may ensure a more qualified education.

Within this context, museums hold an important role in diversifying educational environments. Museums have two important roles in art education; first one is creating an audience who can understand, grasp, comment, criticize and develop an aesthetic pleasure about the objects being exhibited in a museum; and the second one is developing creativity which is another goal of art education. "Learning through doing-living" approach which is used as the most effective method for developing creativity can be applicable in museums. Various elements of visual culture provide a metaphorical richness to the museum viewers which enable them to make reference to the subjects affecting their present time experiences. This experience includes what the audience know about life and their ideas and what they live through in their everyday lives emotionally (Çıldır & Karadeniz, 2014).

As an active learning environment, a museum is an address contributing to richer sense-making experiences and dialogue. A museum is a kind of forum contributing to understand who we were in the past and we are today and what we are going to be in the future (Djakovic and Rakovic, 2009, p. 34). Museums have become dynamic and social places where collectors, curators, designers and educators engage in a dialogue sometimes implicitly and sometimes openly. Museums have put the visual culture theory into practice which is connected with the logic of late capitalist era. So they have important opportunities about providing new ways for looking at a museum object by supporting the audience to evaluate both themselves and their environment. It is witnessed that social roles of the museums which renewed their philosophy and practices have increased. When societies become more sensitive about the power of a sign, it has caused them to increase their awareness on culture and its relation with identity. As Onur (2012) stated, museums produce visual cultural narrations on the past and today by taking active role in shaping knowledge and using their collections.

The idea of preventing the disappearance of cultural values, collecting, exhibiting, educating the public and transferring to next generations was the main reason for the birth of the modern museums. Since the 21st century educational mission of modern museums has been one step ahead and by this way museums can contribute to society a lot more. Nuzzaci (2006, p. 66) expresses that museum education is applied with its both theoretical and practical dimensions in many countries. Besides, museums are modern institutions where they ask questions to create curiosity in the minds of the audience about the subjects they handle and they provide a comfortable field of service. When the audience meet physical environment of a museum, it is necessary to leave them alone with the exhibition, to provide a learning environment with free choices and to enable them have an interactive spatial experience by making the act of watching a museum object more attractive. Nowadays, these phrases are added to the missions and responsibilities of a museum: "reflecting himself, freedom of speech, disagreement, multi meaning, critical thinking, analytical thinking, sensitivity, responsibility, social responsibility" (Pearce, 1992; Weil, 1990). It is seen that the visitors participating in a museum

education enter into a culturally and socially effective learning process and it is understood that museum education is a dynamic process in which open and implicit messages of the museum are transferred to the visitors through activities.

Being considered as the main philosophy of the new century, postmodernism gave birth to visual culture. Visual culture put popular things into the borders of museums and it has become an underlined subject in order to provide sustainability of modern museums. When they are considered as living environments, modern museums produce knowledge, aim to spread knowledge to all levels of a society through educational activities and use visual culture for achieving these goals. By means of new exhibition techniques and narration methods, modern museums have become environments where interactive spatial experience is had by using today's technologies and creating a different space and time perception. According to Bowe (2009, p. 14), modern museums are dialogue centers which develop a learning-centered close relationship with visitors in order for the promotion of the museum exhibitions. According to Greenhill (2002, p. 27), the role of modern museums has changed, and he also states that museums which were object-based in the past are accepted as visitor-oriented institutions nowadays. It is accepted that modern museum studies improve towards a postmodern path. Greenhill (2007) describes the new concept of "post-museum" as grasping the complex relationships among culture, communication learning and identity so that they can provide a new approach for visitors. Although highlighting educational mission of museums is accepted, there are also views against it. Foley and McPherson (2000) argue that postmodern museums stress free time activities rather than focusing on education completely. The underlying reason of this argument is the idea that education and free time are opposite and inconsistent concepts.

Visual Culture Education in Museums

Museum education is both a sensational and intellectual education (Adams, 1984, p. 5). Traditionally, the purpose of visiting a museum is either to research museum collection or, if the visit is to a historical building, to observe that building in detail and to study any expertise subject there. A general museum visit in terms of the visitor focuses on either "seeing" and "understanding" an object or providing only visual experience free from thoughts. However, the experience of seeing and comprehending at a museum can be expanded with the senses of touching, hearing and even smelling. As a result of these experiences, the primary education in museums has evolved to a sensual and effective education.

Also visual culture education makes it necessary to approach objects (visual images) contextually. According to Kırıçoğlu (2009, p. 48), visual culture education aims to acquire critical analysis and visual awareness by means of art. In critical analysis, the object is neither the pure art nor the object of culture by itself. Each object should be evaluated within the environment it is created and with the reason why it is created. Freedman (2003) expresses that by means of contextual learning, people develop social perspective, interactive learning with art from each other and from objects, the importance of cultural identity, visual culture with a broad perspective, evaluation of objects or art works within a certain context and the ability

76 DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

to make constructive criticism. In addition to developing creativity, visual culture education also contributes to teaching the ability to react to existing things. By this way, students have a better understanding that the most effective way to evaluate existing things constructively is to criticize their selves. Museum visitors become active in a museum environment and they reinterpret their previous experiences.

These experiences and identities are understood through television, web sites, movies, etc. which are related with visual culture. For this reason, in order to comprehend the relation of popular visual culture, museums and museum studies should be considered as visual culture. When an individual enters a museum obtains museum life which is only a small part of popular culture that is huge because of the previous experiences regarding visual culture.

Many writers study museum collections as visual culture within museum context. According to Greenhill (2000) who is one of the writers who study museum collections within the context of visual culture, there is a complex consensus environment between museum visitors and museum staff about what is important and what isn't important regarding both collections and personal exhibitions. The suggestion of the experts is to interpret silent meaning of objects. Greenhill emphasize the comprehensive world of visual culture and the importance of visitor experience at a museum. Valance (2008) discusses visual culture at museums with a different approach. According to him, the works at a museum and the visual culture outside seem related with each other. Informative texts of museum collections and mutual debates of writers provide opportunities for a new understanding. Garoian (2001) points out that a museum is an actual area performing a critical dialogue between museum narration at the entrance and dominant narration of the museum. Gorian stresses that these are active meaning creators. He finds an interesting name and entitles all these strategies as "autobiographic performance (stage)". As the writer describes, in order to produce creative narration representing their art experiences, autobiographic performance at a museum is based on personal anecdotes, memories and cultural history which is provided to the audience by museum culture.

Greenhill express that museum education provides visual learning environment to visitors through exhibitions. Greenhill (2000, p.1);

"Considering the educational mission of museums, it is seen that they are structured by means of firstly the narrations of exhibitions and secondly the methods used for communicating with these narrations. Museum education provides its visitors a visual learning environment that activates their own interpretation strategies and memories."

Museum education has a non-normative structure bringing various disciplines together and benefiting from different materials and opportunities. Various disciplines like educational sciences, archeology, anthropology, art history, even physical sciences, etc. come together and make interdisciplinary research within the process of museum education. Museum education brings social resources, human beings, educational and other institutions and people from each age group together. In this respect, it is understood that museum education is a dynamic process in which

open and implicit messages by the museum are transferred to visitors through activities and visitors enter into a culturally and socially effective learning process.

Visiting a museum does not only give information about the piece of art, the artist and the art movement to the individual but also it provides a high level of life experience environment. France (1999, p. 8-9) states that it is extremely important to provide art education by benefiting from real or copy art works at a museum. It is expressed that museums facilitate critical approach by making people to focus on art works and to analyze them for obtaining the information on art. On the basis of post-museum or new museum understanding lays the goal to comprehend the complex relations among culture, communication, learning and identity with a more modern approach. How visual culture is taught at museum education brings a different perspective to visual culture. Visual culture, at the same time, means going below the visual world. Kırıçoğlu (2009, p. 44) defines every object which is created by the visual images around children and the young and which has an aesthetical, communicational and functional goal as visual culture. He argues that people are under the influence of these cultural images during their visits to museums and galleries. Visual culture objects undertake new meanings and functions towards increasing aesthetic consume by emphasizing contextual relations of an object in visual culture.

At the World Congress of InSEA which is a NGO concerning art education, the topics of visual culture education, multiculturalism, approaches to art education, creativity, imagination and development of aesthetic experience were discussed in order to produce general discourses on art education within globalization. Among the topics discussed in the World Congress, there are museum education and educational activities at museums, visual culture (popular culture, media environments, television, cinema, etc.), cross-cultural art education (multiculturalism, conflicts between genders, sub-culture art), social art and education (social topics, violence, development of public soul through art) (Musneckiene, 2009). Focusing on the studies made through visual culture at art education, Tavin (2013) states that it is necessary to teach what can be created from the things that we are conditioned to see or be by means of visual culture and how students represent their selves through visual culture based on their experiences, things they see and think.

The goal of this study is to determine how visual culture is handled at museums within the context of postmodernism. In respect to this general goal, the role of the museums is discussed within the context of visual culture and postmodern art education approach in the literature.

Method

This study is in descriptive model structured by using qualitative research methods and techniques. Descriptive studies try to describe “what” events, objects, entities, institutions, groups and various fields are. Descriptive research try to reveal existing circumstances, conditions and features as they already are. Descriptive model serves for the purposes of collecting, classifying and summarizing necessary

78 DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

information for studies such as identifying present conditions and solving problems, etc. (Yıldırım, 1966, p. 67).

According to Yıldırım & Şimşek (2006), descriptive model means searching the present condition of a subject and reveal the relations between variables without changing anything. Descriptive models are research approaches aiming to describe a condition as it was in the past or as it is today (Karasar, 2003). In descriptive models, goals are usually expressed through interrogative sentences. These are questions such as "What was it?", "What is it?", "What is it related to?" and "What are the contents of it?" The information obtained by using this research is summarized and interpreted based on the themes that were defined beforehand. Literature review (analysis of documents) is a method used by the researcher for analysis on the related resources and publications. Literature review is a process containing the phases of collecting data and discussing the importance of this data, making connection between the data and the problem and classifying information. It will try to reach concepts and relations that would explain the data obtained by content analysis method. The obtained data will be conceptualized and then, some results will appear according to these concepts and their interpretations (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006).

Data Collection Tool

The data of the study is obtained by using literature review and document analysis that are qualitative data collection methods.

Analysis of the Data

Within the study; by connecting the concepts of visual culture and postmodern art education, the findings obtained from the related literature review are used in document analysis. The concepts which are related to the effect of using visual culture and museums for education purposes on art education are determined and content analysis is done.

Museums and galleries are places enhancing seeing and perception. Educational activities based on the objects in museums tend towards to senses, aesthetic sensitivity, imagination, creativity and critical approach rather than transferring phenomena-information. Whether it is dependant on an object or not each kind of sense perception can be transferred into a visual form or image. Museums provide significant opportunities for art education by bringing important visual environment and opportunities that are important for directing perceptions together.

It is obvious that established forms and practices of modern art education can not use the opportunities of visual experiences and reflect today's dynamic and multi-meaningful culture well enough. Art education is a field that opens art, creation, design and aesthetic up for discussion. Within this, benefiting from primary resources at learning can bring an individual's real life values into the learning environment. Museums and museum collections are a part of visual culture. Visual culture at a museum plays the role in the process of re-identifying an object in a collection. Although museums seem to have an inconsistent role with principles of visual culture at art education, museum education undertakes a more critical role. Nowadays art education contains a broad social context by moving beyond

DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM 79 WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

traditional perception of objects and having a postmodern character. Visual culture includes everything we see in the past and today and everything we imagine on our minds; it also enables us to analyze and make sense of visual stimuli. Postmodernism and visual culture studies undertake an important role in speeding up the changes in visual arts.

Visual culture is expanded with the meanings attached to visual objects and general rules of visual culture rather than the visual objects. The forms of visual culture are represented through the thoughts of people. Education is necessary for reaching deeper meanings of a visual, understanding an art work and appreciating it and also producing a visual (Freedman: 2003, Greenhill: 2000). Using visual culture theory at museums provides visitors with environments in which they can understand the surrounding around them and the society well by themselves. While trying to connect nontraditional and traditional museum practices, the audience can be attracted more easily through visual culture discourses (by talking, discussing) at the re-transformation of the act of “seeing”. The studies made by using visual culture

theory in a museum support individuals to evaluate their environments and themselves, and provide a new path about looking. In a museum environment, at educational process, using visual culture discourses especially as an objective (lens) at evolving looking practice, free areas can be created where audiences can discuss both art objects and their social relations.

The only way to reach deeper and original meanings of the visual culture world around us is to be educated. Life experienced program in the visual arts education program emphasizes that activities such as a museum or an art gallery visit out of school environment would be more permanent. Postmodern art program should contain not only western art perspective but also other cultures. Similarly, art history doesn't have a story. It can be told by different ways and with different perspectives (Freedman, 2003). A general museum visit is based on seeing and understanding the object in terms of the audience. Apart from this, it should focus on providing visual experience free from thoughts. Museums serve as an important visual environment for orienting every kind of sensual perception which is transferred into a visual form or image; they also provide significant opportunities for art education. In this respect, we see museums as alternative learning environments for postmodern art education.

At a museum visit, the visitors enter into a culturally and socially effective learning process; open and implicit messages by the museum are transferred through activities and it is understood that this is a dynamic process. Individualistic, social and physical dimensions of museum education include topics such as interaction through objects, senses and interests, observation, expression of ideas and feelings, using of imagination, connecting them to our own lives, information, seeing and understanding the perspective of a museum, reading objects, sharing cultural values and life, searching for truth, practicing and making evaluations.

Results and Recommendations

At the end of this study, it is determined that the focus of the visual culture studies in museums is generally on how to look at objects. Analyzing the resources on the subject, it is ascertained that museum visits are constructed mostly on seeing and understanding an object. However, there are hardly any studies towards the use of museum object as a questioning tool in art education. Another determination is that studies about visual culture discourses contribute to the learning and education experiences at museums. When postmodern art education program is provided with cultural richness by covering also other cultures, activities such as museum or gallery visits out of school environment will contribute to more permanent learning. In this study, it is stated that museums are used as alternative learning environments in postmodern art education; and museums perform this function by providing a visual environment in orienting sensual perceptions on museum objects. In recent years, critical understanding of visitors has been encouraged and they can create their own meanings via visual culture studies that would be performed through visual culture elements such as digital material at museums. Museum educators can design educational activities focusing on looking context by analyzing how individuals see the objects in a museum, how they experience them and in which context they connect to the object after considering the concepts in visual culture discourses. By this way, culture, museum and museum object can serve for art education as a questioning tool.

As a result, it is recommended that art education teaching programs should be restructured in a way that would allow critical analysis of visual culture, and there should be studies towards the use of museum environments for the purpose of education.

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82 DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION

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**DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF VISUAL CULTURE AT MUSEUM 83
WITHIN POSTMODERN ART EDUCATION**

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