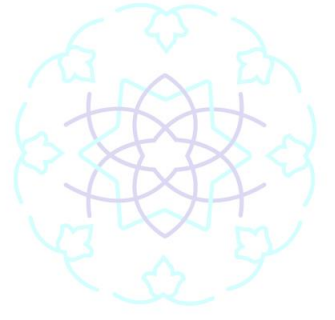




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EDUCATION IN MUSEUMS IN TERMS OF VISUAL CULTURE: LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION¹

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Abstract

In the twenty-first century, the advancement of technology has brought with it an increase in visual images and this has increased interest in visual culture and education, which is shaped by seeing and looking. Visual culture education is an interdisciplinary phenomenon that impacts human experiences in various ways and is associated with different fields and institutions. Museums are effective institutions for utilising visual culture elements within this interaction dynamic. Nowadays, museums often incorporate visual technologies to focus on education and cultural missions. This research aims to examine museums from various perspectives on the axis of visual culture education and make predictions about their future based on current practices. In the research conducted with students of art education, it was found that visual materials were preferred over audio materials for qualified education in terms of visual culture. The combined use of technological materials, both visual and auditory, was preferred for a qualified educational environment. The study emphasized that the use of virtual museums contributes to learning effectiveness and provides an alternative to real museum experiences. The museum education course has been found to contribute to the critical evaluation of visual culture elements. According to interviews with museum officials, museums conduct studies on the educational function and use various practices to exhibit and teach visual culture elements. These museums aim to integrate new technologies into

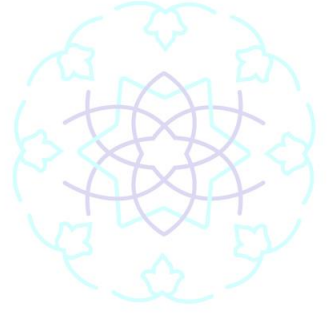
¹ Bu makale, Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsünde sunulan “Görsel Kültür Eğitimi Bağlamında Müzelerin Geleceği” başlıklı doktora tezinden türetilmiştir.

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educational areas and activities, adapting to modern conditions. When considering museums from a future-oriented perspective, it is anticipated that infrastructure will be developed to integrate modern technologies and support hands-on learning. This may include the expansion of virtual and augmented reality applications, as well as the combination of on-site and online learning.

Keywords: Visual Culture Education, Visual Culture, Art Education, Museum, Digital Learning

GÖRSEL KÜLTÜR AÇISINDAN MÜZELERDE EĞİTİM: ÖĞRENME VE TEKNOLOJİ ENTEGRASYONU

Özet

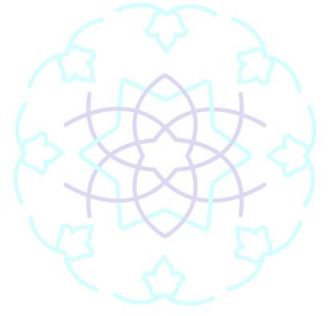
Yirmi birinci yüzyılda teknolojinin ilerlemesi, özellikle görsel imgelerdeki artışı beraberinde getirmiş ve bu durum, görmek ve bakmak odaklı şekillenen görsel kültür ve eğitimi konularına yönelik ilgiyi artırmıştır. Görsel kültür eğitimi, farklı yönleriyle insan deneyimlerini etkileyen bir olgu olarak ortaya çıkmış ve disiplinlerarası yapısı nedeniyle çeşitli alanlar ya da kurumlarla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Bu etkileşim dinamiği içinde, görsel kültür unsurlarının etkin bir şekilde kullanıldığı kurumlardan biri de müzelerdir. Günümüzde müzeler, kültürel misyonlarının yanı sıra eğitim alanına odaklanarak, sıkça görsel teknolojilere yer vermektedirler. Bu bağlamda yapılan araştırmada, görsel kültür eğitimi ekseninde müzelerin farklı perspektiflerden incelenmesi ve güncel uygulamalardan hareketle geleceğine yönelik öngörülerde bulunulması amaçlanmıştır. Sanat eğitimi öğrencileriyle yapılan araştırmada, görsel kültür eğitimi açısından nitelikli bir eğitim için görsel materyallerin kullanımının işitsel materyallere oranla daha çok tercih edildiği görülmüştür. Teknolojik materyallerin görsel ve işitsel olarak bir arada kullanımı, nitelikli bir eğitim ortamı için daha fazla tercih edilmiştir. Sanal müze kullanımının, öğrenim etkinliğine katkı sağladığı ve gerçek müze deneyimlerine alternatif olduğu vurgulanmıştır. Ayrıca, müze eğitimi dersinin, görsel kültür unsurlarını eleştirel bir perspektifle değerlendirmeye katkıda bulunduğu belirlenmiştir. Müze yetkilileri ile gerçekleştirilen görüşmelerde, müzelerin eğitim işlevine odaklanarak çeşitli çalışmalar yürüttüğü ve bu kapsamda görsel kültür unsurlarının sergilenmesi ve öğreticiliği açısından çeşitli uygulamaların kullanıldığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu müzelerde, eğitim alanları ve eğitici faaliyetlerin, günümüz koşullarına entegre olabilmesi için yeni teknolojilerle geliştirilmesi planlanmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, müzeler geleceğe dönük bir yaklaşımla ele alındığında; altyapılarının çağın insanının entegre olabileceği teknolojilerle geliştirilmesinin yanı sıra dokunarak ve hissederek öğrenmeyi destekleyen yöntemlerin gelişeceği, sanal gerçeklik ve artırılmış gerçeklik uygulamalarına daha fazla yer verileceği, yerinde öğrenim ile çevrimiçi öğrenimin (sanal-online) birleştirilerek geliştirileceği öngörülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Görsel Kültür Eğitimi, Görsel Kültür, Sanat Eğitimi, Müze, Dijital Öğrenme



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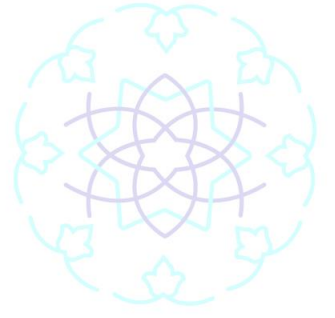
Introduction

Visual culture has become a phenomenon that provides communication beyond the physical presence, transcending the boundaries of space and time, as a result of the widespread use of visuals today. Barnard (2010) emphasised that the use of culture as a form of communication is as important as language. With the effect of technology and information age, the effect of this phenomenon is felt in every aspect of our lives. For this reason, visual culture appears in different forms; in museums and galleries, on telephones and televisions, and on the streets, shaping our visual experiences to a great extent. In this sense, visual culture is in a relationship with our visual life experiences based on seeing and looking. Marshall (1999) stated that visual culture includes everything that is communicated through human-made tools. Mirzoeff (1999), on the other hand, sees visual culture not as a part of life but as the whole of life. In this context, within the scope of visual culture as a field related to the perception and analysis of the visual, firstly, the actions of seeing and looking should be performed consciously (Saybaşı, 2007: 27). In order to ensure this state of consciousness in a systematic way, it has been associated with various fields of education. Visual culture, which focuses on the communication power of the visual, has started to take place in art education researches in this context. With the association of visual culture with education, art education has focused on the communication role of the visual in leaving a socio-cultural impact, apart from an education based on modern art. For this purpose, art education shows a development based on visual culture theory. In the axis of constructivist approaches of postmodern art education, critical pedagogy is given more space by focusing on the development of questioning perspective and abilities. Taylor (2000) sees critical pedagogy as a questioning approach that activates the individual's imagination and intellectual perspective. In this context, postmodern pedagogy is based on the critical theory of art education and visual culture theory. This approach, which emphasises the cultural and social evaluation of art education, affects all areas of life, including the field of art, and tries to reach the meanings of all forms considered within the scope of visual culture.



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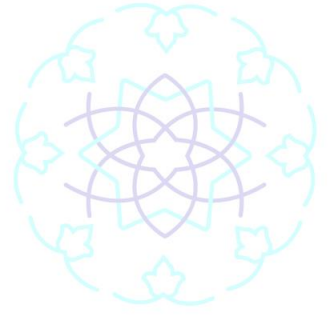
In the 21st century, with the increasingly intensive use of visuals, the technologies that are the source of visual culture that increase the dialectic of seeing and looking have diversified. Images and images provided by new technologies appear in various forms. The visual culture emerging in this context refers to a situation where images and visuals, significantly influencing human experiences, are developed by being supported with various tools and technological advancements (Tavin, 2004: 4). As a result of the increase in this interaction, it has started to be used more by various disciplines and institutions. One of these institutions is museums where visual elements are used intensively.

Museums have existed for the purpose of visually exhibiting and preserving the cultural and artistic elements that are the source of human history. In addition, they are seen as social and cultural institutions that represent communities culturally, lead them to come together, and are responsible for the protection of artistic and scientific resources (Leinhardt, et al., 20002: 136). However, since the mid-twentieth century, education has gained importance and has been adopted as one of the functions of museums. Thus, museums have become a tool used as a learning environment. The use of museums as a learning environment and as a source of visual culture elements contributes to the multidimensional development of the individual and feeds the society. This situation has led museums to new technologies in presentation and display methods. Interaction tools such as mobile phones, projection, mobile applications, LCD screens and sensors, which are among the tools used in presentation and exhibition systems in museums, improve access to cultural and artistic products and increase presentation possibilities. These interaction tools contribute to the educational function by creating a physical, spiritual and emotional impact on the audience. Today, modern museums emphasise alternative exhibition methods by using these interaction tools. Upon analyzing international cases, it becomes apparent that numerous museums have adopted these methodologies. In Turkey, various projects aimed at enhancing the technological infrastructure of museums have been undertaken since 2000 (Çıldır & Karadeniz, 2014: 548). In addition, physical distances have been eliminated to reach museums



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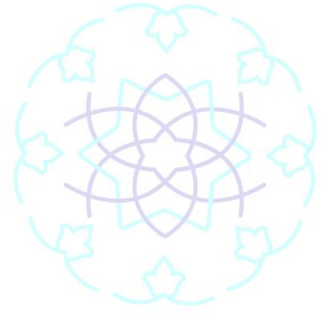
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through museum websites, not only for presentation purposes but also for access. Virtual reality and animation technologies have increased interaction by supporting these applications.

Due to the increasing educational function of museums, many museums organise museum tours, seminars and educational activities (such as London Museum, British Museum, Guggenheim Museum, MoMa). These museums have various experience areas. When we look at the museums in Turkey, it is seen that technologically supported and developed examples are concentrated in certain provinces compared to others. This creates a disadvantage in conditions where physical access to museums is limited. While there are more types of museums in certain regions or provinces, there is only one kind of museum in regions with physically limited conditions. Therefore, individuals with a single type of museum experience in these regions may have their ability to compare and interpret visual elements affected.

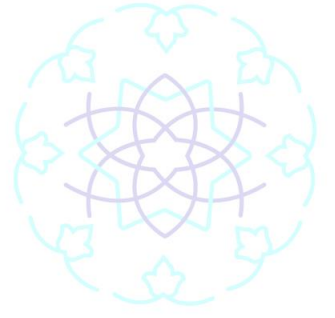
In recent years, visual culture studies, which include different approaches to visuals, have become a source of research. Considering that visual culture focuses intensely on social and cultural situations, museums are considered to be one of the institutions that represent these characteristics. Especially within the framework of positivist approaches, the increase in the educational functions of museums necessitates the critical evaluation of the visual culture elements exhibited. Museums, where visual culture elements are used intensively, have started to be handled together with educational approaches in order to strengthen their educational functions as well as their preservation and storage functions. They have been supported with effective presentation and exhibition methods by using technological tools that support and support the educational function. In addition, applications such as providing access to museums in the virtual environment and increasing reality with various add-ons have increased their visual impact. It is seen that museums that lag behind this situation and do not focus on the educational function are limiting in terms of visual education by focusing only on the conservation function in the traditional sense. The question of whether museums that prioritize visual appeal over educational function, despite being the source of valuable artistic and cultural products, should be preferred is a matter that requires examination.



Statement of the Problem

The relationship between visual culture and education is not a new topic. However, its place in the curriculum is still the subject of research (Duncum, 2002: 2). In Turkey, there is no compulsory course content focusing on visual culture education at different educational levels. However, in the context of art education and critical pedagogy, it is similar to the museum education course in terms of its content and outcomes. In 2013, since the outcomes of the field of "cultural heritage" were included in this course content, it has common denominators with visual culture content. Both areas focus on critical thinking and multidimensional thinking. Within the scope of this lesson; evaluations regarding visual culture education and the contributions of the course to critical pedagogy need to be examined from various perspectives. In addition, considering that the sample group taking the museum education course plays an important role in visual culture education as future art educators, their competence in gaining the ability to read and interpret visual culture elements should be evaluated from different angles. Due to this necessity, in order to determine the disadvantages of museum education in terms of visual culture education and to make predictions for the future by evaluating the current practices of museums; questioning museums from different angles within the scope of critical pedagogy in terms of visual culture education has been determined as the subject of the research. In this context, considering the current situation of museums, their contributions to visual culture education were investigated. In accordance with this general purpose, it was aimed to answer the following questions:

- What are the effects of the materials exhibited and presented in museums on visual culture education? Which materials are preferred among auditory, visual and tactile supported materials?
- Are virtual museums preferable in terms of their current qualities (content and accessibility) in terms of visual culture education?
- How do the comparison and interpretation skills of individuals with one type of museum experience and those with different types of museum experience differ?



- Which of the museum types are more preferred in terms of visual culture education?
- How do the individuals who take the course within the scope of museum education develop their ability to evaluate visual culture elements with a critical pedagogy perspective? Can the outcomes of this course be applied as a tutorial in the future?

Depending on the problem situations identified in the research, emphasising the contribution of visual materials used in museums to visual culture education in line with the past, present and future of museums was accepted as a reference point. In this context, when the literature focusing on visual culture education and methodology was reviewed, it was found that both theoretical and practical research has been developed by visual culture educators and theorists (Tavin, 2002; Greenhill, 2001; Duncum, 2008). According to national research, there has been a rise in the quantity of research conducted on visual culture and education in recent years (Mamur, 2012; Balkır, 2011; Dilli, 2013; Uysal, 2011; Soğancı, 2011). These studies are generally aimed at developing application and teaching methods based on visual culture theory. There is no research with a theoretical approach in which museums are evaluated on the axis of visual culture in terms of their current position and functions. For this reason, it is thought that this study can be a reference to studies in the field of art and art education based on visual culture and critical pedagogy and will contribute to studies in the field of visual culture education. This research, in which the use of museums in education is evaluated from the perspective of visual culture education, is important in terms of the results obtained.

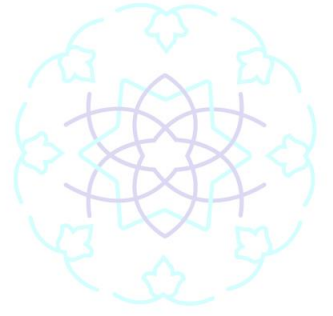
Methodology

The relevant literature was extensively reviewed, as the study aimed to evaluate museums in the context of visual culture education and investigate their impact within the educational sphere. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods simultaneously, guided by the identified problem context. Qualitative research method is based on the use of data collection methods such as document analysis, observation and interview together, in which the events and phenomena to be investigated are revealed and investigated in their natural environment (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005: 39). In addition, the research is descriptive as it aims to



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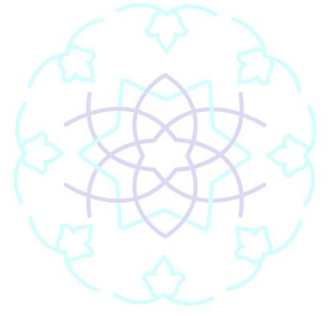
reveal the current situation. Descriptive researches are researches that are based on answering "what" and "how" questions and deal with the description of events and situations (Başol, 2000: 12). For this purpose, universities from different regions were reached within the scope of the survey methodology. Given the size and accessibility of the population, a sample group that represents the population was utilized. In this context, the research sample was formed using randomization principles. Depending on non-randomised typical case sampling, a certain part of the comprehensive situation covering the research problem was studied. For this reason, for the purpose of the research, 180 undergraduate students studying in the Fine Arts Education department of four different universities constitute the sample of the research. With the descriptive survey method, inferences were made about the population (Çepni, 2010: 12). For the purpose of the research, the survey model was used as one of the data collection tools in the data collection process. In the descriptive survey method used, the necessary permissions and ethics committee approval were obtained for the sample of 180 pre-service teachers. The questionnaire, which was determined as the data collection method utilized a questionnaire comprising questions pertaining to demographic characteristics, 3-point Likert-type rating scale from positive to negative and open-ended questions. In studies where Likert-type questions are used, the questions are handled independently of each other (Turan, et al., 2015: 190). Percentage and frequency values were obtained for the responses, and data on the percentage of participants' agreement or disagreement with the propositions with options were obtained. All answers given in open-ended questions were analysed and classified within the framework of the categories created. The more concise data were analysed and explained. All qualitative and quantitative findings obtained were blended in a way to form an answer to research problem and a report was prepared.

In the research, for the purpose of evaluating the current status of museums in the context of visual culture education from various perspectives and to make predictions for the future based on these evaluations, the research was expanded with a sample group consisting of museum officials. The research sample group was chosen through the criterion sampling method, which



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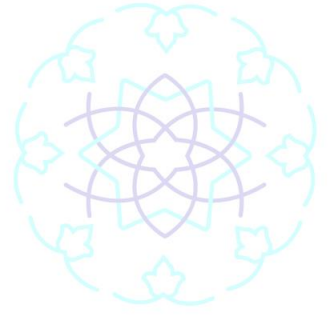
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is one of the purposeful sampling techniques. Criterion sampling is based on the principle of creating a sample with people, events, objects and situations that have determined characteristics related to the problem (Büyüköztürk, et al., 2009: 250). For this purpose, the authorities and experts of the museums suitable for the subject of the study constituted the sample of the research. However, the transition of museum institutions examined in the national and international context to flexible working and remote working system due to 2019 pandemic constituted the limitation in terms of sample size in the research. In order to evaluate the current situation of museums from the perspective of visual culture education and technology use and to making predictions about the future in this context, an interview method was used with a sample of museum experts and officials. The primary objective of the interview is to comprehend the viewpoints of the participants regarding the subject matter (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005: 120). In order to support this situation and to increase reliability, direct quotations from the answers given to open-ended questions were included. Direct quotations of the participants' responses were considered important to accurately reflect the participants' perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). A semi-structured interview form was used to help obtain in-depth information about the subject. In this context, experts or authorities have been contacted in order to evaluate the current situation regarding technological support of visual culture elements in museums and their transformation into a learning environment. The questions determined through the interview form related to the problem were forwarded to the relevant people after obtaining expert opinion. The responses were pooled and the data analyzed using the content analysis technique. Content analysis is accepted as a versatile method in processing textual, visual or audio data (Stemler, 2015: 1).

Findings

It was analyzed in accordance with the research purpose and discussed in two stages. In the first stage, it is based on the opinions of the students of the Department of Painting and Art Education who take the museum education course, similar to the critical pedagogy outcomes within the scope of visual culture education in the national context. In the second stage, the



interview form created for museum experts and officials is taken as basis in order to examine the current situation of museums. To this end, during the initial phase of the study, a questionnaire consisting of 24 inquiries was administered to the sample group. Questions 1-7 of the questionnaire consist of questions containing information about personal characteristics. In the second part, questions 8-22 are composed of 3-point Likert type questions. Questions 23 and 24 were composed of open-ended questions.

Table 1. Information on the Research Group

Variable (n:180)		Frequency	Percentage
University	Ondokuzmayıs University	50	27.8
	Gazi University	45	25
	Dokuz Eylul University	40	22.2
	Marmara University	45	25
Gender	Woman	138	76.7
	Male	42	23.3
Age Range	18-21	29	16.1
	21-31	143	79.4
	31-40	5	2.8
	41-50	3	1.7

In addition to the demographic information mentioned above, it was thought that the frequency of the participants' physical or virtual visits to museums would support the validity and reliability of their views on this issue. For this purpose, this content is also included in the information section of the participants.

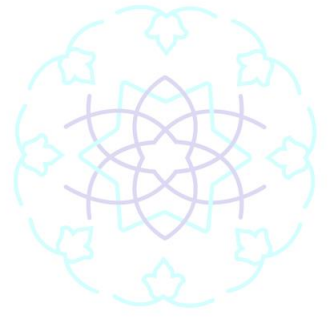


Table 2. Background information about the research group

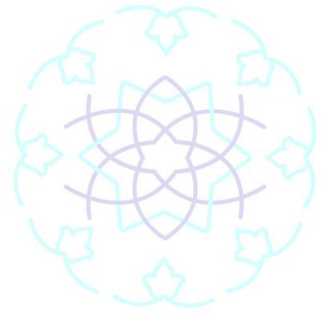
Museum Type	Physical Museum		Virtual Museum	
	f	%	f	%
Frequency of visit				
Once a week	9	5	33	18.3
Once a month	60	33.3	74	41.1
Once a year	100	55.5	52	28.9
None	11	6.1	26	14.4
Total	180	100	180	100

As seen in Table 2, the frequency of visiting physical and virtual museums is discussed in the information section of the participants. While 5% of the participants visited physical museums once a week, 33.3% once a month, 55.5% once a year, 6.1% stated that they never visited. Considering the frequency of virtual museum visits; 18.3% of the participants stated once a week, 41.1% once a month, 28.9% once a year, 14.4% never.

Table 3. Effectiveness of learning areas in museums

Learning areas	I agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Visual	42	23.3	36	20	102	56.7
Auditory	28	15.6	49	27.2	103	57.2
Audio and Visual	157	87.2	14	7.8	9	5
Total	180	100	180	100	180	100

As seen in Table 3, when the participants' answers regarding the use of only visual materials within the scope of visual culture education in museums are examined, it is observed that 23.3% (f=42) of the participants perceived the use of visual materials as adequate, while 20% (f=36) remained undecided. Additionally, 56.7% (f=102) of the participants expressed dissatisfaction with the adequacy of visual materials. Regarding auditory materials, 15.6% (f=28) of the participants found them adequate, 57.2% (f=103) deemed them inadequate, and 27.2%

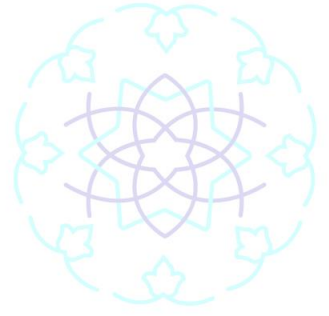


(f=49) were undecided. Moreover, 87.2% (f=157) of the participants indicated that employing both learning domains constitutes an appropriate educational approach, whereas 7.8% (f=14) were undecided, and 5% (f=9) disagreed.

Regarding the evaluation of virtual museums in terms of content and accessibility in terms of visual culture education, 62.2% (f=112) of the participants stated that virtual museums are preferable, 75.5% (f=136) stated that the use of virtual museums improves the level of visual culture, 73.9% (f=133) stated that virtual museum visits are an alternative to real museum visits, 37.7% (f=68) stated that virtual museums are sufficient in terms of content and accessibility, and 81.7% (f=147) stated that virtual museums contribute to visual culture learning.

The fact that museums in Turkey are concentrated in certain provinces is expected to limit different types of museum experience. This situation may have various reasons such as physical distance, time and cost. Regarding the comparison and interpretation of individuals with more than one type of museum experience (archaeology, ethnography, art museum, etc.) on visual culture education, 80% of the participants (f=144) did not find the comparison and interpretation power of individuals with a single type of museum experience sufficient. 92.8% (f=167) of the participants stated that having different museum experiences increased the power of comparison and interpretation in terms of visual culture education; 84.4% (f=152) of the participants stated that museum types differ in terms of visual culture education. In the research questions regarding the evaluation of the visual culture elements in museums in terms of critical pedagogy, 90.6% (f=163) of the participants stated that this course contributed to the achievements of the museum education course.

When the qualitative data for the open-ended questions were analysed, the answers (f=100) given by the participants about how the outcomes of the museum education course would be used in the future were evaluated. As a result of the descriptive analysis of the participants' responses, they were divided into the following themes.

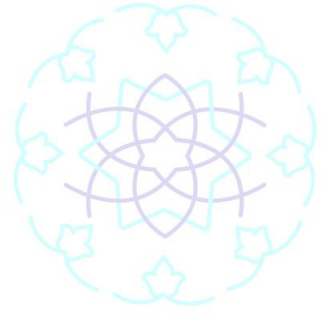


Museum Education and Transferring it to Students: The participants' introduction of museum culture to their students reflects the skills they acquired for the purpose of organising museum trips. These skills include giving information to students about museums, transferring cultural awareness and guiding museum trips effectively. A sample statement given for this theme is as follows: *"I think that museums have an important place in terms of lifelong education. Therefore, I aim to make museum visits more in line with the achievements of my courses in order for students to spend active time in museums in order to intensify cultural transfers."*(S7)

Planning Museum Trips: This theme focuses on how participants, as teachers, can organise museum trips and provide experiences for their students. It offers ideas on how to teach students effectively when they visit museums. The sample statement given for this theme is as follows: *"When I go on a museum trip with my students in the future, I have learnt many ideas and rules about how to behave when I go on a museum trip with my students, what can and cannot be done in the necessary activities, and how to spend more quality time. I can make applications accordingly."* (S97)

The Importance of Museum Visits: Within the scope of this theme, it is emphasized that it will help the participants to understand their role in education as a pre-service teacher and how students can learn visual arts. It also emphasises why it is important to transfer cultural awareness. A sample response related to this theme is as follows: *"When we visit museums with our students, I think that students will have the opportunity to experience the visual arts course by doing and experiencing. Designing by being inspired by an artefact in the museum will enable students to expand their visual perception."* (S85)

Acquisition of Knowledge and Consciousness: This theme emphasises the acquisition of knowledge and consciousness that participants learnt in the museum education course. Recognition and acquisition of museums and cultural awareness is an important focal point. The sample response given for this theme is as follows: *"I would use museums not only for sightseeing but also as an educational environment."* (S36). This response emphasises the importance of



museums and how to transfer the knowledge and awareness learned in the museum education course to students.

Future Use: In the context of this thematic framework, it is underscored that reflects the participants' aim to introduce museum culture to students as a prospective teacher and to see themselves as more conscious and knowledgeable. In the future, it focuses on their aim to transfer the knowledge they gained in the museum education course to students. The sample response given for this theme is as follows: *"We can express in a descriptive language with the information we have learnt from the museum education course that we can instil the importance of museums in future generations and that visiting museums will be a good direction for our past and future"* (S42). This response includes a thought and plan about how the participant will transfer the knowledge gained from the museum education course to his/her students in the future.

Teaching Approaches: Within this theme, the focus is on the teaching approaches that participants will use on how to convey their knowledge about museums. It includes topics such as the use of museums in education and methods of transferring museums to students. The sample response given for this theme is as follows: *"In order to improve the visual, auditory, etc. perceptions of my students, I can use my knowledge in the museum education course by transferring my knowledge as I have learnt and allowing students to experience it"* (Ö60). This response focuses on the participant's learning approaches as a learning method.

In the study, 87 participants answered the open-ended question in which the participants' ideas and expectations about museums within the scope of visual culture education were answered. In line with the answers given, they were categorised by descriptive method and analysed as follows:

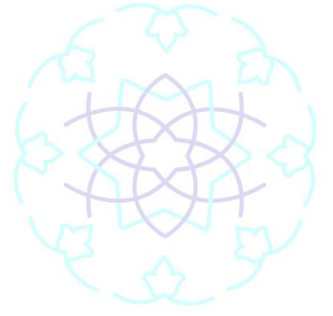


Table 4. Themes obtained for the participants' ideas and expectations in terms of visual culture education

No	Themes	f
1	Promotion of Museum Visiting and Accessibility	24
2	Museum Education and Activities	16
3	Virtual Museums and Technology	15
4	Museum Education and Cultural Consciousness	14
5	Educational Approaches	10
6	Museum Diversity and Quality	11
7	Protection of Cultural Heritage	6
8	Training Programmes and Cooperation	7
9	Use of Digital Technology	8

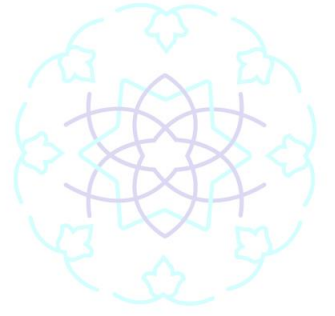
Promotion of Museum Visiting and Accessibility: In general, it was stated that museums should be more accessible. It was suggested that entrance fees should be reduced, especially for students. In some responses, the importance of regular visits to museums by everyone was emphasised.

- **Museum Education and Activities:** It was suggested that museums should include more educational activities and lessons. In particular, it was requested to offer more learning opportunities to students by co-operating with schools.
- **Virtual Museums and Technology:** It was suggested that virtual museums should be further developed, online visits should be increased and technological developments should be used. It was also stated that virtual museum visits should be made more realistic and interactive.
- **Museum Education and Cultural Consciousness:** The importance of museum education was emphasised and it was stated that it plays an important role in cultural awareness and learning history.



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- **Teaching Approaches:** Suggestions focused on how to integrate teaching approaches into museum visits. It was stated that students should be provided with audio-visual learning experiences and detailed information about artefacts in museums.
- **Museum Diversity and Quality:** It was suggested to open more museums, to offer different types of museums and artefacts, and to increase the quality of museums.
- **Protection of Cultural Heritage:** It was emphasized that museums play an important role in preserving cultural heritage.
- **Education Programmes and Cooperation:** It was suggested that museums should focus more on educational programmes, collaborate with schools and offer students the opportunity to use museums frequently in certain subjects.
- **Use of Digital Technology:** Augmented reality, virtual reality and online education in museums have been focussed on. It has been proposed that the utilization of these technologies may enhance participation.

In the second stage of the research, a semi-structured interview form was sent to the sample group via the internet in order to evaluate the current situation of museums in terms of visual culture education, using qualitative methods based on the opinions of museum experts and authorities.

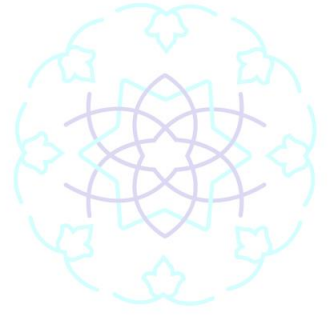


Table 5. Information on Museums and Museum Authorities participating in the research

Museum Name/Country	Mission
Sakıp Sabancı Museum/ Turkey	Marketing Communication Specialist
Samsun City Museum/ Turkey	Art Historian
Ankara Ethnography Museum/ Turkey	Archaeologist, Museum Educator
Çorum Museum/ Turkey	Museum Director
Gaziantep Museum Directorate/ Turkey	Museum Director
Antalya Museum/ Turkey	Museum Director
Schokoladen Museum/ Germany	Museum Curator
Dubai Frame Museum/ United Arab Emirates	Operation Manager
Irish Museum of Modern Art/ Ireland	Curator, Museum Educator

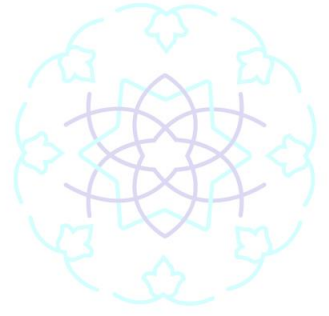
As depicted in Table 5, individuals with various responsibilities and authorities from diverse cities and countries participated in the study. Consistent with the research's scope, efforts were made to include museums where visual culture elements are enhanced by technology in the sample. The research entailed evaluating the responses provided by participants to an interview form comprising 6 questions. Within this methodology, it was deemed crucial for the questions to be non-restrictive and non-directive. Following expert consultation, the designated questions were disseminated to the relevant individuals. The responses to these inquiries were thematically analyzed to condense and refine the data.

In the theme of space allocated for education, museum experts and officials evaluated the spaces, departments and areas allocated for education in the museum institution they are affiliated with. The majority of the participants (f=8) stated that they have spaces allocated for education, that the sections used for educational purposes are mostly used as practice-oriented workshops (f=5), that there are workshops for both adults and children (f=4) or that there are more areas in the form of children's workshops (f=4). An example of a museum official's response to these views is shared below.



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"It is both in our zeugma mosaic museum and our archaeological museum. We also have a project that made it to the finals of the 2020 Anatolian Awards of the Baksı Culture and Art Foundation. There is an "Art Workshop" in our Archaeological Museum and a "Children's Playground" in our Zeugma Mosaic Museum." (M5)

In the theme of educational activities, information was obtained from museum experts and officials about educational activities (conferences, symposiums, panels, guided tours, workshops, etc.) in the museum they are affiliated with. All of the participants (f=9) stated workshops and conferences were organised for educational purposes. In addition, it was reported that documentary screenings, periodical trainings for teachers, separate trips for children and adults, seminars and conferences for the purpose, and artist-led trainings were given. A sample response from a museum official regarding these views is shared below.

"Documentary screenings are organised by Anatolian Art Historians. In September 2019, we participated in seminars for teachers at the Ethnography Museum. We conducted a seminar on how the museum should be used by teachers with museum narration. We also make guided trips to schools."(M3)

In the theme of contemporary exhibition methods, museum experts and officials stated that visual or audio kiosks, various digital screens and media stations were mainly used (f=6) regarding the contemporary exhibition methods and technologies used in the museum they are affiliated with. In addition, tablet augmented reality, interactive screens for virtual museum application, simulation, laser projectors and hologram technology are used. A sample response from a museum official regarding these views is shared below.

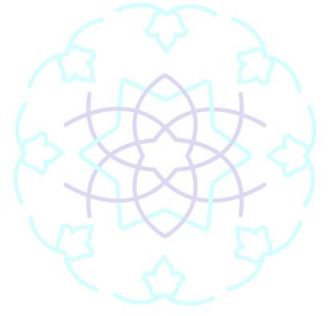
"Augmented reality application with tablet during physical museum visits, virtual tours of past exhibitions are also available on our online website and Youtube channel." (M1)

In the theme of different exhibition and activity practices, it was observed that museum experts and officials emphasised the general concept of the museum in their answers about why the museum they are affiliated with should be preferred. The majority of participants (f=6) stated



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they have developed with digitally developed exhibition methods, educational activities and interactive museum identity. A sample museum official's response regarding these views is shared below.

"The primary reason is that it is a pioneering museum in bringing the movements and artists who have shaped the history of art to our country in both national and international exhibitions. The advantage of being a museum affiliated to Sabancı University is that it offers chronological exhibition details, information and all periods of the artists' lives in detail to all age groups with videos, films, documentaries, conferences, publications issued within the scope of the exhibition and children's workshops. Another important difference from other museums is "www.digitalssm.org", the archive and research area that presents SSM's own collection and exhibitions in digital environment."(M1)

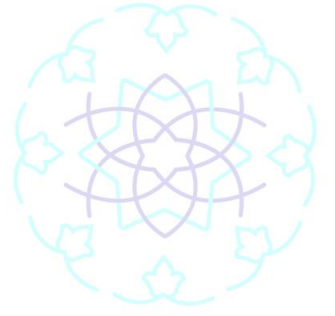
In the theme of future planning of museums, it was observed during the interviews with museum experts and officials that each museum's future plans and activities are different. However, digitalisation, technological advances, education and diversification of the visitor experience stand out as prominent themes in these responses. While some of the participants (f=3) emphasised technological equipment such as digital archives, implementing new technologies, working with materials such as 3D museum visits with VR glasses, focusing on the internet and virtual presentations, and more interactive screens; some (f=3) mentioned projects that support the development and diversification of educational workshops and touch learning. While some museums are making concrete efforts in this direction (f=8), others (f=1) stated that there is no such planning yet. In general, the participants focused on interactive media and digital learning in relation to future projects and practices. An example of a museum official's response to these views is shared below.

"Expansion of the museum's digital archive, integration of the website with different displays and applications brought by new technologies, some applications offered by new technology (VR glasses, 3D museum visit experience, etc.) are currently being worked on."(M1)



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In the theme of the future of museums, in the interviews with experts and officials of museums of various types and regions, it is seen that the participants suggest that digital learning and on-site learning be considered together. In addition to the methods developed using the tools developed by modern technology, it is predicted that applications that provide visual, auditory and tactile learning will be developed. An example of a museum official's response to these views is shared below.

"People are more enthusiastic about using technology, but they also want to feel and touch. Many new technologies are available or about to be realised that allow visitors to have virtual reality and augmented reality experiences." (M8)

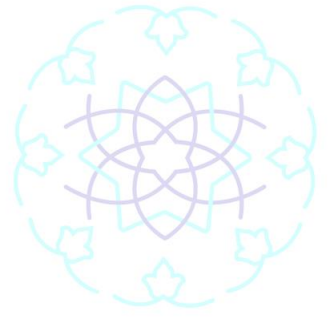
Results, Discussion and Recommendations

The study, in which museums are examined from the perspective of visual culture education and their contributions to visual culture education are investigated depending on their current situation, is handled from an interdisciplinary perspective. As a result of a detailed literature review, visual culture, art education and critical pedagogy were associated and evaluated with the museum education course in the curriculum. The findings of the research carried out with the students receiving museum education in different universities, which constitute the sample of the research, were explained and the approaches to the contribution of museums to visual culture education and the effect of the museum education course on visual culture education were tried to be evaluated. In addition, interviews were conducted with museum officials to reveal the current status of museums in visual culture education, learning methods that serve the educational function and learning with technology. Thus, the research was extended by taking opinions about the current situation of museums and the projects and applications that are expected to be developed in the context of visual culture education in the future.



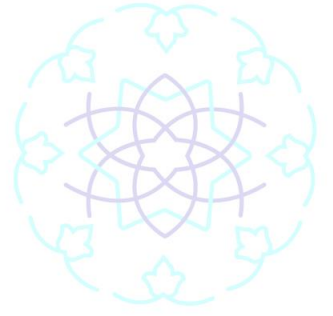
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In visual culture, it is important to gain a critical perspective in order to correctly understand the values, judgements or belief systems created with images as an approach. For this reason, visual culture education has been associated with concepts such as art education and critical pedagogy. Many researchers have supported the idea that art education should provide a critical perspective on how visual images reflect visual culture. For this purpose, visual culture educators and theorists have developed new methods focusing on both theoretical and practical methods and techniques (Greenhill, 2001; Duncum, 2008; Tavin, 2002). At the national level, visual culture research in art education has increased recently. When the literature is examined, studies focusing on the meaning and formal construction of visual images, including critical thinking, emphasise the development of visual culture by taking place in art education (Soğancı, 2011; Mamur, 2015; Uysal, 2011). The interdisciplinary structure of visual culture requires it to be in relationship with different disciplines. Especially on the basis of visual culture, the relationship of seeing with learning and its evaluation in the context of art education brings different expansions.

The field of visual culture, supported by visual technology, is associated with many institutions and disciplines as it supports human experiences in different aspects. One of these institutions is museums where visual culture elements are mainly exhibited. Museums have hosted scientific, social and artistic resources reflecting the cultural characteristics of the society throughout history. Although the purpose of establishment was to preserve valuable objects, it has acquired new purposes with its educational function. For this reason, museums are looking for educational ways to present visual culture elements effectively by closely following visual technologies. Observations and analyses show that museums at the national level use alternative exhibition methods by using technology and presentation possibilities. For this purpose, museums affiliated to the Ministry of Culture are carrying out technological infrastructure improvement projects. Private museums, on the other hand, are developing new approaches brought by the age. When analysed internationally, it is observed that are museums that apply postmodern presentation possibilities and focus on digital platforms.

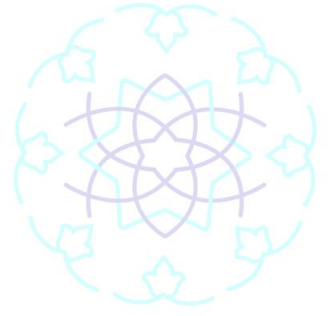


It is seen that the use of technology in museums is increasing not only as an exhibition and presentation tool, but also for their use in interactive environments. Especially during the March-2019 COVID pandemic, many museums have developed technologies that focus on access through their websites. These virtual museums focus on virtual reality and animation technologies.

In the light of the findings obtained from the research, it was seen that the use of visual materials in museums was preferred more than auditory technologies as a result of the responses of the participants who took museum education courses in the relevant departments of universities with different social, economic and cultural environments. It was reported that the use of both visual and auditory materials together is more important for the educational function of museums in terms of visual culture.

In the study, 87.7% of the participants expressed that the utilization of virtual museums contributes to visual culture education. When assessing the preference rate of virtual museums based on quality, 62.2% of the participants indicated a preference. However, it was stated that the use of virtual museums would contribute to the level of visual culture. It is thought that the use of virtual museums is an alternative approach to real museum visits. However, it was observed that the participants could not make clear statements in terms of content and accessibility. Considering that this is a subject that is still being developed in terms of content and quality, it is thought that it may be in a structure affected by many variables (economic, resource, scarcity of practitioners, etc.). For this reason, it should be investigated separately as a different research topic.

Museums are divided into different types (ethnography museum, art museum, history museum, etc.) in terms of their cultural assets. In this respect, the comparison and interpretation power of individuals with a single type of museum experience is not considered to be sufficient compared to those who have experienced different types of museums. Considering that the universities to which the individuals participating in the research are affiliated are located in different regions, it was observed that there was a difference in the percentage values of these



responses. While the reasons for this situation may vary, firstly, reasons related to physical access can be taken into consideration. In addition, when the universities to which the participants are affiliated are taken into consideration, there is no significant difference in the rate of preferring different types of museums.

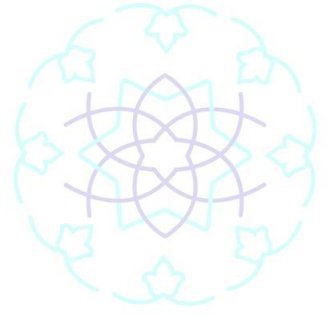
In the open-ended questions in which the participants evaluated the elements of visual culture in museums in terms of critical pedagogy, the findings were analysed descriptively in order to reach implicit meanings, considering that there may be variability in the characteristics of the participants in terms of the universities to which they are affiliated. The thematic analysis of the responses of the museum education course participants to the open-ended questions reveals important findings under five main headings. The participants primarily emphasised the skills of transferring museum culture to students and planning museum visits. In this context, the focus was on guiding students effectively when they visit museums and transferring cultural awareness. In addition, the importance of museum visits in education and the visual art experiences they can bring to students were also emphasised. The goal of transferring the knowledge and awareness gained in the museum education course to students was an important focal point for future teaching practice. As a result, the participants expressed their intention to use various teaching approaches in the future in order to transfer the gains from the museum education course to students and to assume a conscious role in this regard.

In the other open-ended question of the research, 87 participants' ideas and expectations about museums in the context of visual culture education were analysed. Participant responses generally focussed on the need for museums to be more accessible, in particular, it was suggested that student entrance fees should be reduced. Museums should focus more on educational activities and courses, and provide more learning opportunities for students in co-operation with schools. In addition to requests for the development of virtual museums and increased online visits, the need to make these virtual museum experiences more realistic and interactive was emphasised. Participants emphasised that museum education has an important role in cultural awareness and history learning. In the context of educational approaches, suggestions were made



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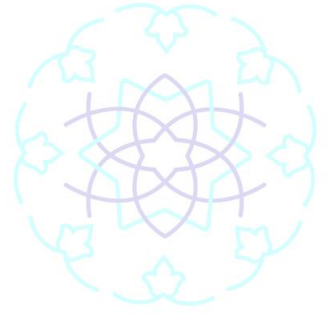
for integrating museum visits and providing students with audio-visual learning experiences. Regarding the diversity and quality of museums, demands for opening more museums, presenting different types of museums and artefacts, and increasing the quality of museums came to the fore. In addition, the importance of museums in the protection of cultural heritage was emphasised and it was suggested to increase the cooperation between educational programmes and schools. Finally, suggestions for the use of digital technology included augmented reality, virtual reality, and online education, and emphasised that these technologies can provide more participation. These results provide insights into various strategies to increase the potential of museums in visual culture education and provide a more effective learning experience.

In the second stage of the research, the current situation of museums within the scope of visual culture education was evaluated based on the opinions of museum experts and authorities. The fact that the participants have different duties and authorities from various cities and countries reflects the broad perspectives of museums in terms of education, activities, exhibition methods, differences and future planning. In terms of spaces allocated for education, museum experts stated that they usually organise educational workshops and conferences. Workshops and conferences are the most prominent educational activities. In the theme of contemporary exhibition methods, museums tend to use contemporary technologies such as visual and audio kiosks, digital displays and media stations. In different exhibition and activity practices, museums are often characterised by digital enhancements, interactive museum identities and educational activities. Expanding digital archives, integrating new technologies and developing interactive learning environments stand out in future planning. In the future of museums, the tendency to combine digital learning and on-site learning, to adopt methods developed using technological tools, and to offer augmented reality and experiences to visitors are becoming more prominent. These findings suggest that there is a need to increase research and practice on the integration of technology and various activities in order to strengthen the role of museums in education and to offer more impressive experiences to visitors.



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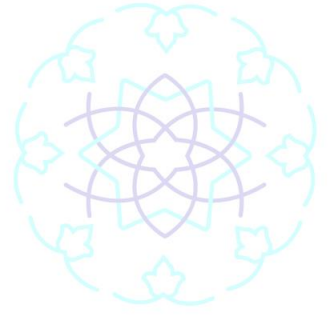
The views of museum authorities on the future of museums are shaped by the fact that people are interested in technology but prefer to learn by touch. In this context, virtual reality and augmented reality applications are expected to increase in a way to offer both virtual and real experiences together. It is predicted that the technology used by museums in the future will develop in a framework that offers visitors a wide range of experiences.

Based on the results of the literature review and the findings obtained, the research process reveals that museums contribute positively to visual culture education and have the potential for further development in this field. It is seen that the practices planned in this framework are included in museum strategy development plans and it is also concluded that the museum education course contributes to critical pedagogy by positively affecting the perception of visual culture.

This study, which supports the association of the field of visual culture education with museums as an important institution in art education, is intended to guide and contribute to future visual culture education studies. With the increasing interest in vision and visual culture, it is predicted that the studies in this field will expand in the future and the need in this field will increase in developed societies. For this reason, it is thought that this research can make an important contribution to future visual culture education studies.

In the context of visual culture education, suggestions for the future based on the current practices of museums can be listed as follows:

- Improving technology and presentation possibilities: Strategic plans should be developed for museums in Turkey to expand their technology and presentation opportunities and to adopt alternative exhibition methods. An interdisciplinary board should be established to support the dissemination of innovative practices led by technologists.
- Expanding educational spaces: By focusing more on educational functions, museums can diversify their educational spaces such as workshops and classrooms. Programmes



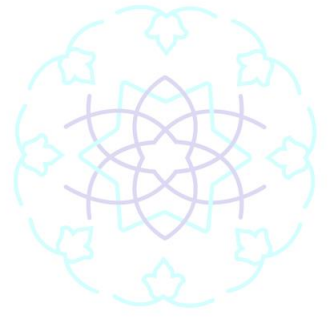
such as educational activities, conferences, panels, symposiums and symposiums for all age groups can increase the educational potential of museums.

- To evaluate artefacts with interactive applications: Interactive applications that appeal to different sensory organs should be developed by considering the exhibited artefacts as elements of visual culture. In particular, projects that enable individuals with special needs to use the museum as a learning environment should be implemented.
- Increase the use of virtual reality and augmented reality: Applications such as virtual museums and museum websites should be encouraged to offer more interactive and realistic experiences with technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), beyond just presenting visual cultural elements.
- Making virtual tours more widespread: Given the cost and accessibility of museum visits, it is important for museums to make virtual tours more widely available. In cases where physical access is limited, virtual museum tours should increase accessibility.
- Focus on training programmes: In collaboration with the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Culture, training programmes for teachers should be organised and their ability to read and interpret elements of visual culture should be strengthened.
- Integration of visual culture education into curricula: Visual culture education should be expanded with new course contents that include learning outcomes within the framework of visual culture theory and critical pedagogy. These contents should be disseminated in undergraduate and graduate programmes with an interdisciplinary perspective.
- Focusing on teaching methods that develop visual thinking and perception: Teaching methods that develop visual thinking and visual perception should be included in art education programmes at all levels of education to strengthen students' ability to understand and interpret visual culture.



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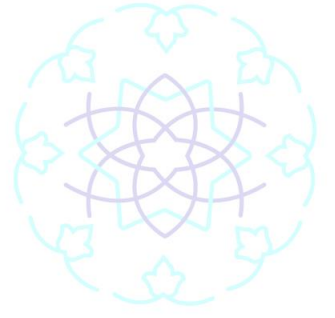
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- Encouraging visual research: In order to provide today's young people with the ability to read and perceive visual elements consciously, elective or compulsory course content that encourages visual research should be included in their curricula.

With the realisation of these suggestions, it is thought that museums will contribute more effectively to visual culture education.

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the potential contributions of museums in visual culture education, and reveals the need for various strategies for development in this field. The findings suggest that museums should follow innovations in technology, educational programmes and exhibition methods. Museum education courses have been found to play an important role in transferring cultural awareness and providing visual culture experiences to students. In this context, recommended strategies include improving technology and presentation facilities, diversifying educational areas, increasing interactive applications, and expanding virtual tours. In addition, museums should give priority to educational training and the integration of visual culture education into curricula. Focusing on teaching methods that develop visual thinking and perception, encouraging visual research, and placing more emphasis on technology in museums' future planning are also recommended. By implementing these recommendations, museums will be able to contribute more effectively to visual culture education and provide richer experiences for visitors. In addition to protecting cultural heritage, museums can be more effective as an important learning environment to develop the skills of understanding and interpreting visual culture.



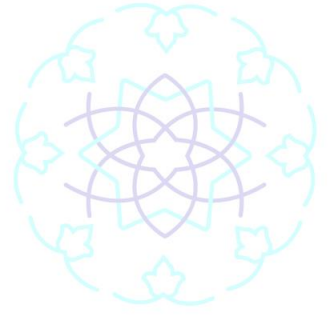
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