

Postmodernism in Visual Arts Lesson and Its Reflections on Students

Ismail Tetikci¹, Gonca Erim¹ & Kevser Baykan²

¹ Department of Visual Arts Education, Bursa Uludag University, Bursa, Turkey

² Uludag University, Turkey

Correspondence: Ismail Tetikci, Bursa Uludag University, Faculty of Education, Gorukle Campus, Bursa, Turkey.

Received: April 7, 2023

Accepted: May 23, 2023

Online Published: May 30, 2023

doi:10.5539/jel.v12n4p70

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v12n4p70>

Abstract

Postmodernism emerged as a movement that opposed the dominant views of modernism in the field of art. Postmodernism, which originated in architecture and gradually influenced many areas of art, is discussed in this study with a focus on painting and visual arts education. In high school programs in Turkey, it is important for students to be able to examine the past, embrace the present, the era, and the postmodern way of thinking. When the relevant literature was reviewed, it was determined that there is no research on how postmodernism is used in art education in terms of student learning outcomes. The aim of this research is to determine how high school visual arts teachers incorporate the postmodernism movement into their teaching and to identify any changes in students' interest levels in the course. In this study, a qualitative research method was used, specifically the case study design. The sample of the study consisted of four visual arts teachers who work in one central and three district schools in Yalova province. Two semi-structured interview forms and document analysis were used as data collection tools. The findings were analyzed using thematic analysis. According to the research findings, it was determined that the participating teachers conveyed the artistic and intellectual structure of postmodernism to students through various teaching methods during the lesson process. However, they were unable to achieve all the learning outcomes related to postmodernism. The study also revealed that students demonstrated changes in the methods they preferred to employ in their artwork after learning about postmodernism and being exposed to examples of postmodern art. Moreover, students provided both positive and negative critiques, reflecting their aesthetic perspectives on postmodern artworks. This research is considered important in terms of serving as an example for teachers and contributing to the literature.

Keywords: art education, qualitative research, postmodernism

1. Introduction

Societies undergo development and change in tandem with advancements in fields like science, industry, technology, and communication. Similarly, art and art education are not immune to the impact of these significant societal developments. Postmodernism, a subject of numerous debates throughout history, has permeated and spread across various domains such as architecture, painting, philosophy, politics, and literature since the 1950s (Kumar, 2013). Postmodernism challenges the established dominance of modernist art and philosophical theories, taking a contrasting stance against modernism (Bozkurt, 2014). Postmodernism, which emerged in the field of architecture and eventually influenced many areas of art, is addressed in this study specifically in terms of painting and visual arts education.

When examining the historical progression, it becomes evident that numerous scientific studies have significantly contributed to the advancement of art education. In the 1950s, Viktor Lowenfeld put forth the Theory of Children's Artistic Development (Ozsoy, 2015), while in the 1960s, June King McFee focused on the effects of societal and environmental factors in art education. Concurrently, Barkan challenged the notion that children should solely view art as a hobby and advocated for their engagement as art historians, art critics, or even artists themselves (Artut, 2013). Vincent Lanier emphasized the importance of aesthetic experience in art studies (Lanier, 1972), and Edmund Feldman developed the method of subjective art criticism to be able to look at works of art properly (Stokrocki & Kirisoglu, 1997). Eisner, who made significant contributions to art education, conducted studies on the development of aesthetic intelligence and art criticism and argued that art is a cognitive development process (Artut, 2013). Howard Gardner revealed with the Theory of Multiple Intelligences that there are eight different

types of intelligence and that intelligence can vary due to environmental reasons as well as genetic reasons (Gardner & Hatch, 1989). In the 1980s, Discipline-Based Art Education was implemented and developed in the United States with the contributions of the Getty Art Education Center, by combining aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and practical disciplines (Young & Adams, 1991). According to Efland (2005), discipline-based art education adopts an independent discipline understanding. Therefore, this theory, which separates disciplines and has a modernist structure, criticizes the focus on the form of the work in the art criticism method, leaving the social context in the background.

Art and science move in parallel with social life. Sometimes art and science influence social structure, while at other times society influences science and art. Therefore, the developments that occur also have implications for educational systems. Since the 1980s, theories and approaches influenced by postmodern thought and discourse have been observed in art education, along with social and cultural changes. According to Kirisoglu (2015), these approaches, called multiculturalism, visual culture, and interdisciplinary studies, carry traces of postmodern thought and partly reflect on the curriculum.

Since the 2005-2006 academic year in Turkey, a constructivist approach has been adopted in education (Saylan, 2012). It is seen as an important development that, instead of a behaviorist approach compatible with modern views, a constructivist approach compatible with postmodern views has been adopted (Kesici, 2019). Along with the constructivist approach, discipline-based art education is also included in the renewed education programs. The learning areas of “art criticism and aesthetics,” “cultural heritage,” and “shaping in the visual arts” in the high school visual arts curriculum overlap with the disciplines of aesthetics, art history, art criticism, and practical applications in the discipline-based art education theory. The visual arts curriculum includes outcomes related to postmodern art under the “contemporary art” topic in the “art criticism and aesthetics” learning area. These outcomes include:

Explaining the general characteristics of postmodern art.

Examining the differences between postmodern and modern art.

Acquiring knowledge about artistic works and artists of the modern and postmodern periods, such as Marcel Duchamp, Anish Kapoor (postmodern), Paul Cezanne, Richard Serra (modern), Burhan Dogancay (postmodern), Nurullah Berk (modern) and their characteristics (understanding) of the periods they belong to, as well as introducing artworks from Turkish and Western art, including the Istanbul Biennial.

Evaluating contemporary art in the context of technological developments (Ministry of National Education [MEB], 2018, p. 24).

Based on the aforementioned gains, students should be equipped with the knowledge of the general characteristics of postmodern art, differences from modern art, and a comparison of modern/postmodern artists and artworks in Western and Turkish art.

The aim of the visual arts course is to educate individuals who learn art through universal values, respect the values of different cultures as well as their own culture, understand, interpret, produce and follow art (MEB, 2018). Considering these goals, it is important for students to be able to examine the past, embrace the present, the era and the postmodern way of thinking. Postmodernism aims to combine art with life by turning towards everyday life in contrast to the selective and high-art approach that developed alongside modernism, and it rejects selectivity. Postmodernism, which accepts the contemporary world, also includes production based on technology in addition to artistic production, and prefers to use different artworks together (Yamaner, 2007). According to postmodernism, which accepts all times, modernism is not more valuable than postmodernism today. It emphasizes interdisciplinarity, eclecticism, locality and pluralism (Cevizci, 2005) and adopts methods such as pastiche, irony, collage, assemblage (Sahin, 2015). Considering the developing technology, increasing communication network and understanding of art in today’s world, it is thought that introducing and using postmodern art in the visual arts course would be useful for students to interpret and compare art from the past to the present and to recognize artistic forms of expression.

When studies on postmodernism and art education in Turkey are examined, it is seen that interdisciplinary art education, multiculturalism, visual culture, and similar topics are addressed within the scope of postmodernism. Although postmodernism is included in the visual arts curriculum, no study has been found on how teachers acquire these achievements and how students approach the subject. Based on this, the aim of this study is to determine how postmodernism is incorporated into the lesson process according to the visual arts curriculum achievements and its reflections on students.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study contains a detailed analysis of the research questions “How do art educators use postmodernism and postmodern art examples in the Visual Arts Curriculum’s learning outcomes?” and “What are the changes in students’ interest in the art classes where postmodernism examples are used?” in the master’s thesis titled “Investigating the Reflections of Postmodernism on Art Education”. In this regard, a qualitative research method, the case study design, was used to determine how art educators use postmodernism in the course process and what changes occur in students’ interests during or after the course. Case study design is used by researchers to deeply reveal a single or a small number of situations (Yin, 2017). Creswell (2021) defines case study design as a qualitative approach where detailed information is collected using various data collection tools such as observation, interview, visual-audio material, etc., about one or more cases. Based on Yin and Creswell’s definitions, the case study design was used in this study to examine and analyze a small number of situations in depth.

2.2 Sample and Participants

The sample of the study was created using purposive sampling technique in qualitative research, which involves the selection of individuals and locations by the researcher (Creswell, 2021). In this study, the aim was to use criterion sampling for the first interview form and homogeneous sampling for the second interview form. According to Patton (2018), criterion sampling allows for the examination of situations that meet predetermined criteria. Therefore, the following criteria were determined by the researcher to select the sample for the first interview form:

- Visual arts teachers who teach the 11th and 12th grade visual arts course in high school.
- Visual arts teachers with a minimum of four years of professional experience.

Due to the suspension of face-to-face education during the Covid-19 pandemic and the negative responses from many teachers who were approached to participate, the homogenous sampling strategy targeted for the implementation of interview form 2 could not be applied. Therefore, after conducting interview form 1 with the participating teachers who accepted the invitation to participate in the study, interview form 2 was applied using an appropriate sampling strategy. An appropriate sampling strategy is “one that is contingent upon the prevailing conditions” (Merriam, 2018, p.78) and prioritizes utility (Patton, 2018).

The sample of the study was formed by four visual arts teachers who work in one central and two district schools (Ciftlikkoy, Altinova) in Yalova province in the spring semester of the 2020–2021 academic year, as the necessary criteria were met. Due to ethical considerations, the real names of the participants were not used in the study, instead, designated code names were used. Detailed information about the participants can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants of semi-structured interview

Participants who participated in the 1st and 2nd Interview Forms	Gender	Type of school	Years of professional experience
Participant 1	Female	Public school	20 years
Participant 2	Male	Public school	6 years
Participant 3	Male	Public school	8 years
Participant 4	Female	Public school	4 years

2.3 Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative research, researchers utilize various sources such as interviews, observation, documents, and audiovisual materials for data collection (Creswell, 2014). Punch (2011) suggests that the interview method used in research should be compatible with the purpose and questions of the study. The semi-structured interview questions of this study were prepared primarily based on a detailed literature review and the aim and questions of the research. The research questions were developed by obtaining the opinions of two expert faculty members in the field of fine arts education and qualitative research methods at Bursa Uludağ University Faculty of Education, and necessary adjustments were made as deemed appropriate.

The first semi-structured interview form included 3 open-ended questions to inquire whether visual arts teachers addressed postmodernism topics in their 11th and 12th grade classes. The second semi-structured interview form included 9 open-ended questions to determine how visual arts teachers used postmodernism-related topics in their classes and their observations on the changes in students’ interest in the class.

2.4 Data Collection Process

Before the semi-structured interview forms were applied, the participating teachers were reminded that participation in the research was based on voluntary basis and that audio recording would be taken during the interview. The four participant teachers accepted the participation conditions and signed the Participant Teacher Consent Form. After the application of the first interview form, the participants who were determined to include postmodernism topics in their lesson contents were re-interviewed with the second interview form on predetermined dates. Table 2 shows the information related to the semi-structured interview process.

Table 2. Semi-structured interview information

Interviewer code name		Interview date	Meeting time	Interview Duration
Interview Form 1	Participant 1	05.06.2021	12:00	10 min
	Participant 2	01.06.2021	13:00	10 min
	Participant 3	09.06.2021	14:00	15 min
	Participant 4	11.06.2021	15:00	12 min
Interview Form 2	Participant 1	05.06.2021	17:00	15 min
	Participant 2	08.06.2021	14:00	15 min
	Participant 3	23.06.2021	13:30	31 min
	Participant 4	25.06.2021	18:00	32 min

In order to diversify the data and increase the validity of the research in this study, the Visual Arts Curriculum obtained from the official website of the Ministry of National Education, student works obtained from participant teachers, and all written and visual sources related to the research topic were included in the document analysis. Document analysis includes the examination of all written and visual materials that contain information about the phenomena to be investigated. The purpose of document analysis is to support and/or refute the data obtained through observation or interviews. Document analysis, used in conjunction with other data collection methods, diversifies the data and thus increases the validity of the research (Yildirim & Simsek, 1999).

2.5 Analysis

The data obtained from the semi-structured interviews, which constitute the main data source of the research, were analyzed using thematic analysis method. According to Boyatzis, thematic analysis is used to identify patterns in research data, analyze them, and finally report them (cited in Braun & Clarke, 2019). During the analysis process, answers to research questions were sought and the smallest pieces in the data set that could answer these questions were identified (Merriam, 2018). This process ends with the meaningful integration of the identified pieces (Creswell, 2014). Based on this information, codes that could answer research questions were first created. Then, interconnected codes were brought together to form categories. Themes were then created by bringing together categories that formed a meaningful whole. All stages of code-category-theme creation were reviewed by experts from the Faculty of Education at Uludag University. Changes deemed necessary by experts in the field were made and approved in the conducted interviews.

3. Findings and Interpretation

The data analyzed with thematic analysis method were categorized under the themes of ‘Teaching Process’ and ‘Reflection on Students’. The Teaching Process theme includes categories of ‘Lesson Process’, ‘Technological Materials’, and ‘Limitations’, which reveal how visual arts teachers utilize postmodernism in the teaching process and the factors that affect this process. The categories and codes related to the ‘Teaching Process’ theme can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Categories and codes of the ‘teaching process’ theme

‘Lesson Process’ category	‘Technological Materials’ category	‘Limitations’ category
Accessing Examples	Smartboard	Insufficient class time
Introducing with Images	Distance Learning	Financial inadequacy
Theoretical Explanation	Digital design	
Transferring Thought Process	Mobile phone	
Focusing on the Student’s Interest		

The category of the 'Lesson Process' consists of codes such as 'Accessing Examples', 'Introducing with Images', 'Theoretical Explanation', 'Transferring Thought Process', and 'Focusing on the Student's Interest'. When the code 'Accessing Examples' is examined in detail, it is determined that the participating teachers have achieved results that involve accessing postmodern art examples in line with the learning outcomes. Accordingly, Participant 1 stated that she can access postmodern art examples with the help of the internet, saying "I can reach visual and video materials with the help of the internet" (Participant 1, 1st Interview, p. 1). However, the statements from other participants demonstrate a negative perspective for various reasons. For example, Participant 4's statement "Of course, we cannot reach them. There is a bias that students have towards art lessons. First, we try to overcome that bias. First, we try to make them love drawing." (Participant 4, 1st Interview, p. 1) indicates that she spends time addressing students' biases towards visual arts lessons, which prevents them from achieving the desired outcomes. The statements of Participant 3 and Participant 2 show similarities in that they were unable to attain the achievements due to the inadequacy of the lesson time.

The 'Introducing with Images' code includes findings that participant teachers incorporated postmodern art examples by showing images during the lesson process. According to these findings, Participant 4 provides a detailed explanation as follows: 'For instance, I show children how Duchamp declared a urinal as a work of art... I also show Picasso's work made of a bicycle saddle and handlebars...' (Participant 4, 2nd Interview, p. 4). In addition, Participant 1 tried to explain that she introduced postmodern works by using visuals with the following statement "I use visuals to present postmodern works of art about the present time." (Participant 1, 2nd Interview, p. 1).

The 'Theoretical Explanation' code includes findings that participant teachers provided information about postmodernism through theoretical explanations during the lesson process. According to these findings, Participant 2 states that he makes theoretical explanations, comparing art movements such as expressionism after impressionism, saying, '...let's say after impressionism comes expressionism, in this for instance what are we comparing, look here he has made a landscape but in post-impressionism it feels like emotions have entered into it. I explain that the next period was achieved with the developments in society and technology compared to the previous one...' (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, p. 2). However, he does not mention postmodern art movements in his explanation. While Participant 1 explains that she uses examples from art movements when providing theoretical explanations, Participant 4 states that she briefly touches upon this topic during the lesson.

The 'Transferring Thought Process' code consists of findings indicating that participant teachers used two different methods, discussion and application, when providing information about the intellectual structure of postmodernism and postmodern art pieces. Participant 3 expressed that he used the application method to enable students to make deductions about postmodern thought with the following statement:

Postmodernism, instead of imitating and presenting something that is true in modernism, has developed as a counter-idea outside of it. But it is the same thing, like Duchamp using a urinal, actually when you look at it, he has created something by loading meaning only by the artist and society on a mass-produced item. We are doing similar works. Although we do not present the definitions and theories to the students directly, we do this indirectly. (Participant, 3, 1st Interview, p. 2)

Participant 4 explains the postmodern way of thinking by discussing it through artworks and provides an example from her classroom experience:

American artist Cattelan hung three different bananas on a wall and named it "Comedy." He told people that this is an artwork and I opened it up in the classroom and said, "This banana is now an artwork because the painter, the artist, stuck it on the wall and said 'this is an artwork.' What do you think about it?" Some responded with thoughts like, "Is he joking? What kind of art is this? There's no effort put into it." Some said, "I could do that too." Different thoughts came up. Some said, "Just thinking about it is an artwork itself. Not everyone can think to hang a banana on the wall." I agreed with them. Some approached it this way. I can see it as an artwork. The meaning I attribute to it is important, not what the artist intended. The artist didn't provide the subject matter, but I call it a dancer, I see the banana as a dancer, and the meaning I attribute to it is important." (Participant 4, 1st Interview, p. 3)

The code 'Focusing on the Student's Interest' was formed from the findings obtained from the question "Which art movements and artists do you think students are mostly interested in? What are your observations on this?" included in semi-structured interview form 2. According to these findings, Participant 2 emphasizes that students tend to modern movements when it comes to art movements, and to postmodern techniques in the methods they will use in art studies in his words, "Students are more interested in modern movements. Like pop art, post-impressionism, abstract art, expressionism. They adopt the assemblage, collage and generally hybrid

techniques of these and similar movements” (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, p. 4). It was observed in the document review that the students of Participant 2 addressed social issues using the collage technique. While Participant 1 states that her students’ interests are concentrated in classical and modern periods, Participant 3 notes a clear distinction in his students’ interests, saying, “I can say this with certainty. We can divide it into two: half are interested in modern art, and half in pop art. When I say modern art, I’m not talking about surrealism or cubism. It’s more about expressionism, impressionism, and nature” (Participant 3, 2nd Interview, p. 8). Participant 4, on the other hand, emphasizes that he focuses primarily on artists and works such as Frida Kahlo, Van Gogh, Salvador Dali, Picasso, and Osman Hamdi Bey.

The ‘Technological Material’ category included in the ‘teaching process’ theme is composed of codes ‘Smart Board’, ‘Distance Education’, ‘Digital Design’, and ‘Mobile Phone’. The code ‘Smart Board’ was formed from the findings obtained with the question “How do you evaluate and apply the learning outcome of contemporary art in line with technological advancements during the teaching process?” in the semi-structured interview form 2. Participant 2 conveys that he benefits from technology to achieve postmodernism gains with the following statement: “This gain has a great benefit for us in the lesson process. First of all, we have a beautiful technological product like a smart board” (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, p. 2). Participant 3 explains that he cannot use the smart board application to convey postmodern art examples and the subject due to infrastructure deficiencies in their school with the following statement: “As you know, in schools, we can use it to convey the lesson or examples to students because of the arrival of smart boards, but not now. We have not been able to use it for three years because the infrastructure is not suitable since our school is newly built” (Participant 3, 2nd Interview, p. 6).

The code of ‘Distance Education’ is based on the findings obtained from the question “Do you benefit from virtual museum applications in terms of getting to know our culture and different cultures within the lesson as participant teachers?” directed to participant teachers. According to these findings, virtual museum applications have gained importance in distance education process. Participant 2 answered the question as follows:

Especially many museums have opened their own virtual tours. For example, we watched Frida Kahlo’s house and it was very interesting. I really find virtual museums very successful. They do it beautifully and the content is also very good. It’s very realistic. You are walking around in three dimensions, so we used a virtual museum a lot. Along with this, of course, they saw different cultures, of course, I include historical museums and archaeological museums in this way. (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, p. 4)

Participant 4, on the other hand, stated that they visited many museums during the distance education period and it was very good.

In fact, I gave them a performance project assignment about it. “You will tell about the museum, you will take them on a tour, you will make the presentation,” I said. We went to Gobeklitepe, Corum Hattusas, Painting and Sculpture Museum. We went to Frida’s house in Mexico. We visited various locations We went to Nemrut. It was beautiful and they enjoyed it. It was as if they were there. Because these children are technology-savvy, they felt like they were wandering inside it. I think it is very useful, of course, it cannot be like the real thing but they still saw, entered, looked, and examined the artifacts. (Participant 4, 2nd Interview, p. 8)

Similar to the opinions of the other two participants, Participant 1 emphasized the importance of virtual museum applications in terms of getting to know artworks and artists. The cultural diversity highlighted by postmodernism is effective in students learning, understanding, and respecting different cultures and interacting with different cultures in art education. From the teachers’ opinions, it is observed that they agree that the virtual museum application is beneficial for students to recognize different cultures and their own culture.

The ‘Digital Design’ code contains findings related to how participating teachers benefit from technology in their postmodern art studies and students’ enthusiasm for this topic. Participant 2 stated, “we process some topics digitally. Especially in design topics, they benefit a lot from technology” (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, p. 3), indicating that he uses technology according to the topics covered in the lesson. The same participant stated that students utilised technology and covered topics such as emblem and logo creation. Participant 4, on the other hand, indicated that he was unable to have students produce digitally, and was limited to providing theoretical information about digital programs.

The code ‘Mobile Phone’ is composed of findings related to the use of mobile phones, which are the most common communication tool today. Participant 2 states,

All students have phones now. They don’t waste time getting printouts. They can instantly bring up an image and draw on it. When we tell them to open a certain picture, they can search and find it immediately. That’s

why we use it positively and in a good way (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, p. 2).

indicating that mobile phones contribute to the learning process and students' success. However, it can be seen that the participant does not mention postmodernism in his words. On the other hand, Participant 4 encourages students to use their phones for art projects without explicitly mentioning postmodern works. She says,

We conducted two photographic exhibitions. I made them love taking photos with their phones. I always tell them to not just use their phones for taking Instagram stories, but to take pictures everywhere they go. I teach them the subtleties and necessities of photography as an art form. There were two such displays. (Participant 4, 2nd Interview, p. 7).

With this statement, it could be understood that the participant attempted to give technical materials significance by encouraging students to create artwork with mobile phones.

The 'Limitations' category, located in the teaching process theme, was created with findings that visual arts teachers believe have negative effects on achieving postmodernism achievements. This category consists of the codes 'Insufficient Class Time' and 'Financial Inadequacy'. The code 'Insufficient Class Time' is formed by the opinions of the participating teachers stating that the lesson time is insufficient to realize the gains of postmodernism. The views of Participant 2 and Participant 3 overlap on the issue that the lesson time is insufficient to achieve the visual arts course gains.

Participant 4 expressed her opinion that the class hours are insufficient to achieve the objectives, and also stated that providing students with education from different disciplines would be beneficial for visual arts classes and students, with the following statements:

I believe the History of Art should be a required course at schools. There is a philosophy course; Art History also should be offered. The students have no knowledge of the history of that art; they merely see images. They should be familiar with its history. The students are unaware of the history of Turkish art and architecture or Western art; therefore, which art should I teach the child? Should I teach painting or this way of thinking? I attempt to offer them as much of this perspective as I can, given that our class hours are limited. (Participant 4, 2nd Interview, p. 5)

The content of the code named 'Financial Inadequacy' consists of findings indicating that participant teachers face some limitations in carrying out activities they believe would contribute to the course process. Participant 3 explains how the negative environmental conditions of the school they work in restrict the formation and implementation of the teaching plan with the statement:

...the situation of the students who come to our school is not the same as the situation of the students who go to Yalova High School. Both financially and socially, in every sense. If we apply the same plan there here, it would be a problem. Because you wouldn't have any problem with materials there, but we have a problem here. For example, it says in the annual plan that a trip to Anıtkabir (Atatürk's Mausoleum) and museums can be organized. We don't have such an opportunity." (Participant 3, 2nd Interview, p. 12)

Participant 4 expresses that she could not carry out the necessary social activities with her students and says, "I wish we had the opportunity to go to biennials with them, I really want to take them to museums, to the painting and sculpture museum, to Ayasofya (Hagia Sophia). I really want to show them our own history, but the support of the administration and the perspective of the students are very important in these matters" (Participant 4, 2nd Interview, p. 7).

Another theme that emerged through the thematic analysis method is named 'Reflection on Students'. This theme consists of categories of 'Student Tendencies' and 'Perceptual Development'. The categories and codes belonging to this theme are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Categories and codes of 'reflections on students' theme

'Students' Tendencies' category	'Perceptual Development' category
Motivational factor	Awareness
Interest in various materials	Aesthetic understanding

The 'Students' Tendencies' category consists of two codes, namely 'Motivational Factor' and 'Interest in Various Materials.' According to the views of the participating teachers, motivation is one of the significant aspects in the teaching process using examples of postmodernism and postmodern art. Therefore, the 'Motivational Factor' code contains the thoughts of the participating teachers on the issue. Considering the results, Participant 2 stated that:

When we bring it to the level of the individual, it is vital to demonstrate that they all have tendencies for specific subjects in the lesson; thus, you may make the students happy by connecting with an artist in the class; for example, the students find painting in the manner of Jackson Pollock simple and only progresses with it. When he realises that he can do something, he experiences the joy of it. (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, p. 3)

In parallel with the explanations of Participant 2, Participant 3 added that popular culture influences students' motivation. In this regard, the participant expressed the following:

If we approach it from this point of view, we can say that today's children are affected by pop art. Because pop is currently widespread, in other words, we see it everywhere in advertisements—in movies, on consumer goods, and everywhere else. Children also adore it, so when we choose it as a subject, the students also prefer it since they are more interested in it. I can say that they find it more enjoyable and are interested in it. Additionally, students are drawn to it since they can complete it more quickly than others, i.e., without needing advanced abilities. (Participant 3, 2nd Interview, pp. 4–5)

According to the document analysis, the student works retrieved from Participant 3 were mainly about the pop art trend and incorporated the teacher's comments.

The code 'Interest in Various Materials' consists of the explanations from participant teachers that students wanted to move beyond traditional painting methods and worked in this direction. Regarding this issue, participant 2 stated that students favoured three-dimensional studies employing ready-made items. The document analysis identified three-dimensional student works that coincided with the statements of Participant 2. Participant 3 expressed that

We assess everything that can be evaluated... These are in some way recyclable. Recycling is one of the most significant aspects of modern society. As a result, we are compelled to adopt a kind of postmodern mentality, which is one of the things they do regularly. (Participant 3, Interview 2, p. 4).

With these statements, the participant declared that the students were engaged in postmodern thought since they were recycling various resources.

In the visual arts course that deals with postmodernism, the interests and preferences of the students in their art works, as well as the reflections on their perceptual development, are evident. Findings related to these reflections were analyzed under the 'Awareness' and 'Aesthetic Understanding' codes in the 'Perceptual Development' category. When the 'Awareness' code was examined in detail, it was revealed that students were inclined towards the contemporary and that popular culture was a determining factor in their interests. Participant 2 expressed their views in this regard as follows:

They are definitely interested in what is current. They find it closer to themselves and at first they don't find it boring, so they prefer postmodernist movements. They encounter them a lot in daily life, in advertisements everywhere, so they feel closer to them. We should also look at it from this perspective, not only as a fine art but also as a graphic design, because we already have an advertising industry, a big advertising industry. Children see things all around them. For example, they see Van Gogh's painting in an advertisement. They visit a gallery and come across an abstract picture. Since they can easily access these, it increases their interest even more. That is why we may say so." (Participant 2, 2nd Interview, pp. 4–5)

Regarding the same aspect, participant 3 states that:

Such situations, in the style of video art and pop art, of course, attract their attention. As he stands closer to popular culture, the child knows that trend without realising it; he is familiar with it. The child has actually seen it somewhere, but when they see it in class, they say, "Oh, I know this." They find it close because, in the end, they are implanted with it somehow in popular culture, through fashion or consumer products, phones, so they see it closer. (Participant 3, 2nd Interview, p. 7)

From the findings obtained from the participant teachers, it is understood that after the visual arts class where postmodernism is studied, awareness has been formed towards contemporary art works and postmodern art works with the influence of popular culture.

The content of the "Aesthetic Understanding" code comprises positive or negative aesthetic remarks made by students regarding the works studied in the postmodern art examples-based visual arts course. Participant 3 noted that the students exhibited a cynical attitude towards the works by stating, "The students do not comprehend anything when I show them the work of Duchamp. They find it ridiculous..." (Participant 3, 2nd Interview, p. 6). Similar poor evaluations of the students may be seen in Participant 4's explanations. Participant 4 discussed this

problem as follows: “For instance, Duchamp claims that his urinal is a piece of art. I show it to the students, who respond, “- teacher, this is a toilet.” I illustrate Picasso’s work using the bicycle seat and handlebars. In that case, they remark, “Teacher, we would have done the same thing” (Participant 4, 2nd Interview, p. 4). In another response on Interview Form 1, Participant 4 inquired, ‘What do you think about this?’ He posed the query primarily, “-Is he joking? What type of artwork is this? I could do the same.” “I believe that simply thinking in this manner demonstrates that it is an artistic creation. Because not everybody can come up with it, the fact that they convey their thoughts by such means as “hanging that banana on that wall is a different idea there” indicates how they express themselves (Participant 4, 1st Interview, p. 3). According to the findings, it can be argued that students have a superficial approach in understanding the works of art that have undergone transformation in terms of both the materials used and the expression style in the process of art history.

4. Discussion

In this study, aimed at determining how postmodernism is used in the visual arts class process and how it reflects on the students, two main themes have emerged. These are the ‘Teaching Process’ and ‘Reflection on Students’ themes.

4.1 ‘Teaching Process’ Theme

This theme contains the findings that will answer the research question “How do art educators use postmodernism and postmodern art examples in the Visual Arts Curriculum’s learning outcomes?” Under ‘Teaching Process’ theme, the categories are ‘Lesson Process’, ‘Technological Materials’, and ‘Limitations’. In the ‘Lesson Process’ category, there are explanations from participating teachers that they could not reach all the achievements related to postmodernism. Participants explained this situation for different reasons such as spending time on topics that attract students’ interests more, motivating students who have negative views on painting lessons or do not consider themselves sufficient for this lesson, and insufficient lesson time to achieve the gains. During the lesson process, it is observed that teachers transfer postmodern art examples and postmodern way of thinking by showing visuals and providing theoretical information. Teaching methods, including narration, demonstration, and visual and audio presentations of art studies, direct the entire class to learn (Ozsoy & Alakus, 2017). Another result that emerged in the lesson process category is that although students also recognize postmodern art movements, they mainly show interest in Baroque, Renaissance, and Modern art movements, and teachers continue in line with these interests.

Upon examining the findings of the ‘Technological Materials’ category, it is determined that gains have been achieved in virtual museum applications. It can be seen that participating teachers emphasize museum applications for students to recognize their own culture and different cultures regarding the culture issue that postmodernism focuses on. However, it is not clear whether they touch upon postmodernism and the culture issue of postmodernism during this application. Culture, which has always been an important element of art, has experienced a distinction between popular and elite cultures in the social process. Postmodernism argues that this cultural distinction should be eliminated at this point (Sarup, 2010). In art education, culture appears again within the scope of multiculturalism approach of postmodernism (Kirisoglu, 2015). In the work that teachers assign using technological materials (emblem, logo, and photograph) during the lesson process, it is understood that they do not aim to make a postmodern art study.

In the ‘Limitations’ category, it is observed that the lesson time is considered insufficient to reach the gains related to postmodernism issues. In order to reach all the gains of visual arts lessons, which are currently applied once a week for 45 minutes, it should be rearranged to have continuity during the week (Ozsoy & Alakus, 2017). In addition, one of the participating teachers has pointed out that the parallel progression of visual arts lessons with fields such as art history and philosophy would make significant contributions to the lesson and students. Among the other issues that limit the teaching process are the financial limitations of the region where schools are located, negative attitudes of school administration and students towards activities to reach the gains. According to the participants, the limited opportunities provided by the school and environment negatively affect the realization of art activities. The primary approach of the art educator should be to prioritize the student, taking into account the learning-teaching objectives, all environmental opportunities, and the students’ developmental levels (Artut, 2013). According to the research data, it was found that participating teachers try to provide gains to students with different opportunities and methods from each other.

4.2 ‘Reflection on Students’ Theme

The “Reflection on Students” theme of the study contains findings that could answer the question “What are the changes in students’ interest in the art classes where postmodernism examples are used?” Under this theme, the categories of ‘Students’ Tendencies’ and ‘Perceptual Development’ are included. In the ‘Students’ Tendencies’

category, it is understood that students are motivated by leaning towards easy tasks and being influenced by popular culture. There are no expressions in the obtained results suggesting that their interest in postmodern arts is effective in the motivation of the students. Document reviews show that practices such as pop art, three-dimensional works, and recycling are among the topics that students tend to prefer.

The findings in the category of ‘Perceptual Development’ reveal that students’ knowledge obtained from their daily experiences and the course process interact with each other. It is understood that students gain awareness of contemporary and postmodern art after learning about postmodern art and its works in visual arts classes. At the same time, it is revealed that they feel a sense of closeness when they see postmodern art examples that they frequently encounter in their daily lives during the course process.

It can be observed that both positive and negative aesthetic judgments are formed in students through the use of postmodernism and postmodern art examples in visual arts classes. Aesthetics are subjective reactions that vary from person to person and are described as beautiful or ugly responses to the external world (Bozkurt, 2014). Aesthetic appreciation, which originates from the level of liking, is associated with aesthetic education and cultural accumulation (Gokay & Demir, 2006). In the context of visual arts classes, it can be said that addressing postmodernism topics is important not only for students to recognize art movements, but also for the enrichment and strengthening of their aesthetic perceptions.

5. Conclusion

This study investigates how postmodernism is addressed in the visual arts curriculum and its effects on students. The conceptual framework of the research includes the reflections of postmodernism on art and art education. From the responses of the participating teachers, it has been revealed that they incorporate postmodernism topics into the lesson with different teaching methods in accordance with the program outcomes.

The participants stated that students’ preferences were not directed towards postmodern art movements in classes where postmodernism topics were covered. Additionally, it was found that students had predominantly negative views towards postmodern art works. Participating teachers expressed that inadequate school and environmental facilities negatively affected the students’ ability to carry out their art projects.

In light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be taken into consideration:

When explaining postmodern art movements in visual arts classes, it is suggested to detail how the intellectual foundations of the art movements and how they are influenced by social developments. It is believed to be beneficial to enrich students’ understanding of art pieces and enrich their aesthetic perspectives with different teaching methods such as museum and gallery visits, in-class enactments, brainstorming, and games.

When examining postmodern art movements, it is seen that they have a structure that allows the artist to break out of traditional molds and provides diversity and limitlessness in terms of space and materials. In the context of visual arts classes, teachers are expected to utilize this flexibility provided by postmodernism in their art activities with students, by using different materials and spaces outside of the classroom.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Yalova Provincial Directorate of National Education, school principals, and visual arts teachers for their support of this research.

References

- Artut, K. (2013). *Art education theories and methods*. Ani.
- Bozkurt, N. (2014). *Art and aesthetic theories*. Sentez.
- Braun, V. V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Use of thematic analysis in psychology. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, 7(2).
- Cevizci, A. (2005). *Philosophy dictionary*. Paradigma.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches* (4th ed.). Egiten.
- Creswell, J. W. (2021). *Qualitative research methods* (3rd ed.). Siyasal.
- Efland, A. D. (2005). Problems confronting visual culture. *Art Education*, 58(6), 35–40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043125.2005.11651567>
- Gardner, H., & Hatch, T. (1989). Multiple intelligences go to school: educational implications of the theory of multiple intelligences. *Educational Researcher*, 18(8), 4–10. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1176460>
- Gokay, M., & Demir, A. (2006). Aesthetic appreciation at different educational levels. *Selcuk University Journal*

- of Social Sciences Institute*, 16, 329–342. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/susbed/issue/61792/924104>
- Kirisoglu, T. O. (2015). *Art, culture, creativity, visual arts and cultural education-teaching*. Pegem.
- Kumar, K. (2013). *New theories of the contemporary world from post-industrial society to postmodern society*. Dost.
- Lanier, V. (1972). Objectives of teaching art. *Art Education*, 25(3), 15–19. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3191679>
- MEB. (2018). *Visual arts education curriculum*. Turkish National Ministry of Education, Ankara.
- Merriam, S. B. (2018). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation* (3rd ed.). Nobel.
- Ozsoy, A., & Alakus, A. O. (2017). *Special teaching methods in visual arts education*. Pegem.
- Ozsoy, V. (2015). *Visual arts education: historical and intellectual foundations of painting education*. Pegem.
- Patton, M. Q. (2018). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Pegem.
- Punch, K. F. (2011). *Introduction to social research: quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Siyasal.
- Sahin, H. (2015). Stylistic confusion and pastiche in contemporary art. *Süleyman Demirel University Journal of the Faculty of Fine Arts*, 15(15), 110–126. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/193490>
- Sarup, M. (2010). *Post-structuralism and postmodernism*. Kirk Gece.
- Stokrocki, M., & Kirisoglu, O. T. (1997). *Secondary arts education*. YOK/World Bank National Education Development Project Pre-Service Teacher Training.
- Yamaner, G. (2007). *Postmodernism and Art: Architecture, Cinema, Literature, Theatre, Design*. Algi.
- Yildirim, A., & Simsek, H. (1999). *Qualitative research methods in the social sciences*. Seckin.
- Yin, R. K. (2017). *Applications of Case Study Research* (3rd ed.). Nobel.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author, with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).