

The Views of Prospective Classroom Teachers on Cultural Heritage-themed Museum Education Course

Ceren Karadeniz¹ and Zekiye Çildir²

¹ Ankara University Faculty of Fine Arts, Ankara, Turkey

² Artvin Çoruh University Faculty of Art and Design, Artvin, Turkey

E-mail: ¹<ckaradeniz@ankara.edu.tr>, ²<zildir@artvin.edu.tr>

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ABSTRACT Culture as a complex unity comprised of knowledge, beliefs, art, ethics and customs collectively relates to the acquired skills by individuals as the members of one larger community. By virtue of this feature, museums have been specialized as informal educational settings aiding the teaching of tangible and intangible heritage. Museum education serves a long list of purposes ranging from familiarizing with one's own culture and recognizing other cultures through a multidimensional and tolerant perspective and better internalizing intercultural similarities and differences in addition to effectively bolstering the awareness on preserving cultural assets. This research was carried out to demonstrate the views of prospective classroom teachers, having studied "cultural heritage" -themed Museum Education Course, in Ankara University Department of Classroom Teaching, on the implementation of museums in cultural heritage education; and to monitor skills of concerned participants in utilizing museums for educational purposes during their in-service teaching experiences.

INTRODUCTION

In its broadest and widely acknowledged definition, the term 'culture' refers to the complex unity comprised of knowledge, beliefs, art, ethics, law, customs and traditions that collectively relate to the acquired skills by individuals as the members of a community. Equally comprehensive as the concept culture itself, "cultural heritage" notion was preliminarily investigated under two distinctive categories as: tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Tangible cultural heritage covers edifices, historic sites, monuments and relevant structures demanding to be safely preserved for transferring to future generations (ICOMOS 2002). Feather (2006) argued that structured settings (buildings, city centers, archeological relics), natural habitat (countryside, beaches, sea sites, agricultural heritage zones) and any type of man-made works (books, printed texts, objects, figures) are also to be evaluated within the context of cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage concept on the other hand involves untouchable, invisible elements, such as traditions, language, beliefs, music, folk songs, dances, shows, rhymes, tales and poems that collectively identify a particular community. In the aftermath of 2000 one of the most salient developments that need to be un-

derscored about culture and globe-wide museum policies relates to Act on Intangible Cultural Heritage issued in year 2006. This particular Act declared in the 32nd UNESCO General Conference in Paris between 29 September 2003 to 17 October 2003 holds two primary resources for substructure: 1989-dated *UNESCO Recommendation on Preserving Traditional Culture and Folklore* and 2001-dated *UNESCO Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity*. In this Act particular emphasis was laid on the role of intangible heritage as the guardian of cultural diversity and sustainable development. It was specifically accentuated that local communities and individuals play vital roles in the production, preservation, protection and reproduction of Intangible Cultural Heritage works and that engagement would, in effect, contribute to broadening cultural diversity and human creativity (Act on the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003: 4; Oguz 2009: 8).

In parallel with the emphasized educational functions, museums of the 21st century embraced citizens and emerged as a leisure-time setting that could meet, based on the necessities of modern age, much-diversified needs and interests of humans. To serve the aim of "making sense", museums attached importance to the active involvement of visitors. Hence, in order

to manifest social responsibility, the function of museums, foremost of which is education, developed in a way to focus on visitors' active participation and education. Greenhill (1992:7) illustrated museum education as a lifelong, active, participatory and innovative process that establishes connection between museum collections and participants' interests. International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM) defined museum education as the process originating from a list of values, concepts and insights to ensure the development of viewers through implementing pedagogical methods (ICOFOM 2010). The changes witnessed in museums as of the onset of 2000s promoted interest toward museum education and also added variety to treated subjects and augmented the methods and techniques employed in museums. In response to the enlargement in the scope of museum education, educational institutes took further steps in forming curriculums that can, for the aim of meeting the needs and demands of information age, appeal to a larger segment of viewers, and these institutes closely monitored the society and social movements during the transition from industrial age to information age (Gorman 2008). As the laboratories and playgrounds in which intercultural interaction occurred was achieved, modern museums activated museum education for the preliminary purposes viz. gaining the participants skills of synthesizing, inspiring, identifying and providing information on novel ideas, views and technologies. Museum education in the modern age is widely acknowledged as one of the spaces that museums could most effectively present their attempts to attract viewers (Ambrose and Paine 2006: 5). Education approach of modern museums and galleries emphasizes prioritizing the ability of visitors to interpret museum objects, and to enable their deeper involvement with the process as active members of the exhibition and activities. Museums can, in the words of Hein (1998: 150) provide the below-listed experiences to the visitors during their visits:

1. Establishing intellectual connection; museums enable access to the exhibited object by reconnecting facts, opinions and emotions.
2. Leaving an impact on value judgments and behaviors, aiding in recognizing different cultures.

3. Assisting in accepting concepts, such as culture, community and family.
4. Enhancing interest and curiosity. Empowering self-confidence, augmenting future-related life and education opportunities.
5. By paying more attention to the way visitors think rather than what they think, skillfully reaching their inner world.
6. By forming the expected and demanded communication with the individuals, fueling social exchange.

Education via museums is not only regarded as the tool to inoculate the vitality of cultural heritage but also as a means to familiarize with other cultures besides one's own culture through a multidimensional and tolerant approach; by the same token education via museums is expectedly valued as the process aiding in better internalizing intercultural diversities and analogies. In addition to that function, its originating point can be linked with the purposes of effectively improving the awareness on preserving cultural and natural assets (Ilhan and Okvuran 2000). Transferring cultural heritage concept is one domain in which it has most widely been harnessed. During this process, museums bearing dissimilar types and contexts play the role of a laboratory for cultural-heritage-themed museum education.

Turkey is endowed with a rich and varied cultural heritage. Treating this heritage for educational purposes and analyzing within the framework of integrating to curriculums holds significance in introducing cultural heritage to younger generations. Asides from that mission, it is imperative to unite museums with education and utilize educational settings as outside-school settings for the aim of assisting Turkey in drawing a parallel between the progress and innovative approach attained in the domain of museology and boosting the ability of museums to accomplish their social functions. Museums are the kind of settings in which objects from a range of civilizations are collected, repaired, restored, exhibited and presented to the viewers for educational purposes. Archeology museums and sites are particularly effective as laboratories in teaching History of Civilizations Course. Turkish History and Culture Course analyzes developmental stages in the History of Turkish Culture, political and social past of Turkish States and societies from the past till present date; belief systems, culture and civilizations,

and their links with philosophy, science, literature, fine arts and construction activities. In Turkey Ethnography Museums, Turkish-Islamic Arts Museums, Archeology Museums with separate ethnography halls, museums affiliated to the General Directorate of Foundations and a number of private museums bear cultural assets helpful to support the contents of Turkish History and Culture Course. Art Education and Teaching of Visual Arts courses on the other hand aim to enable students to grasp theoretical and practical aspects of artistic knowledge and experiences on the theories of philosophy and art in particular, and to further hone their critical thinking and evaluation skills on the history and philosophy of art. Within that scope, the objective was to customize students' audio-visual and sensory perceptions through illustrations, graphic designs, textile designs, architectural designs and conventional designs and through painting and drawing. Another objective was to enable learning through art, and hone students' creative skills. Art museums and art galleries are crucial informal educational settings for art education and teaching of visual arts. On the other hand, methods and techniques acquired in teaching visual arts could likewise be skillfully practiced in educational activities implemented in any different type of museum.

To the end of developing prospective teachers' skills of using museums in the above-listed domains, a learning setting was forged in favor of constructivist learning approach in which target mass would be actively engaged in cultural-heritage themed activities offered in elective Museum Education Course. In learning activities, student-centered individual works and group works, drama (games), artistic activities, observations and museum education methods and techniques were developed. The most viable informal (outside-school) settings to implement constructivist approach are museums in particular. As of 2005-2006 Academic Year, constructivist approach-based curriculums were operational in elementary and secondary grade education programs in Turkey. This approach advocates students' constructing of their pre-knowledge and re-discovery of novel information through interrogation and analysis. The aim was to enable active participation of students via a learner-centered approach. Schools and instructors are no longer the mere sources of knowledge in this method. Through the guid-

ance of instructors it became possible to access knowledge from outside-school resources as well. Accordingly, to better implement this approach within the framework of the course, museums and archeological sites in and in the vicinity of Ankara were employed as learning settings.

Constructivist educational approach attempts to regulate museums as viable learning settings to foster students' creative thinking and creative solution skills. As also underpinned by Gartenhaus (2000:34), museums aid in the free movement between ideas, opinions and objects and can be utilized as the impeccable stimulant for creativity; that benefit is- by virtue of the fact that- museums could exhibit objects which are to be approached through a multitude of mental and physical aspects imbued with accentuated meanings.

Museums can activate minds even before spotting the routes to choose. Hence, museums have turned into the kind of spaces exhibiting fun and memorable specimens of learning that can back up in-school experiences by augmenting learning experiences in classroom. In elective Museum Education Course lasting 13 weeks, educational activities were based on the above-mentioned principles of constructivist approach and the objective was to gain certain level of knowledge and experience on cultural heritage to prospective classroom teachers through learning-by-experimenting, practicing and workshop activities under the guidance of teachers.

In the *first* class, prospective teachers were informed about the course, acquisitions, methods and techniques to implement in the entire course and practices to follow in museums. In the *second* and *third* classes, cultural heritage was defined; detailed presentations on Turkey's position in UNESCO General Natural and Cultural Heritage list were shared; intangible heritage, museums, modern museums, functions of museums, education in museum, museum education methods and museum types were communicated. In these presentations, multiple disciplines that are linked to UNESCO Act on Natural and Cultural Heritage Preservation and science of heritage were also discussed. In this class, latest newspaper articles on cultural heritage were distributed to hold discussions about near-extinct cultural heritage specimens due to destruction, ravage or relevant negative causes.

In the *fourth* class, presentations were shared on creative drama which was one of the teach-

ing methods to be employed; cultural-heritage-themed introduction-preparation-warm up-communication activities were conducted. Within that context, games such as *name activity* and *heritage basket games* were integrated. Tangible objects representing cultural heritage were introduced in class and students were asked to select one object by visualizing artifacts exhibited in cultural heritage and museums and requested to dramatize them through frozen image technique. In the closure part of this class, trailer of Ankara Ethnography Museum, which would subsequently be implemented as a learning setting, was displayed. The *fifth* class took place in Ethnography Museum. In museum garden, warm-up games such as “my name is” and “I look like” were played. After the games, field specialists shared information about the museum. In the wooden artifact gallery of museum, students were asked to dramatize a traditional ceremony by employing frozen image technique.

The sixth class that took place in Ethnography Museum focused on the components of cultural heritage and Intangible heritage. By utilizing silent motion technique, students were asked to narrate the motifs on carpets and rugs. Next, the carpet hall in this museum was visited and brochures providing information and photos on carpet motifs were distributed among students. Students correctly matched scripts with photographs, searched identical motifs on the carpets exhibited in museum and upon spotting the motifs accurately, they held discussions on the motif after reading the brochure with extensive information on motifs. The class was concluded with a large group discussion involving the uses of such motifs in distinctive domains. In the *seventh* class after playing “where is the ring?” game in the Ethnography Museum garden, students took part in a warm-up activity which involved proverbs on Turkish coffee. Next, the gallery that exhibited Turkish coffee culture and wedding traditions were visited in the museum and stories that narrated both concepts were communicated. Students were allotted into separate groups to create a character, then they dramatized a story in which this character was the protagonist and got involved in Turkish coffee culture and wedding traditions. *The eighth* class took place as a guided tour in the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. *The eighth* and *ninth* classes focused on the theme of time and space-based distribution of cultural

heritage components. In the *ninth* class, ‘*artifact network*’ and ‘*draw on my back*’ games were played in the museum garden, Hittite and Frig legends were dramatized, seek-find and frame-shot game activities were conducted. The main theme of the *tenth* class was Roman Empire. Role cards were dramatized, matching games were played and subsequently, the lesson was concluded with a museum-sketch activity. In the *eleventh* class, presentations on different museums in the world and Turkey were shared in the classroom to familiarize students with different forms of museums and modern museology approaches. In the *twelfth* class, *Corum Archeology Museum*, *Bogazkoy Museum* and *Hattusa Ancient City* were visited to further investigate the relics. In the *thirteenth* class, the overall course was evaluated and students shared their feedbacks.

Objectives

This research was carried out to demonstrate the views of prospective classroom teachers having studied “cultural heritage” themed Museum Education Course offered during 2014-2015 Academic Year Spring Term in Ankara University, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Classroom Teaching on the implementation of museums in cultural heritage education. In parallel with this general objective, the following were the research questions:

1. What are the contributions of employed teaching methods and techniques in elective Museum Education Course in learning the context better?
2. What are the views of participatory students on the implementation of museums in education?
3. What are the plans of prospective teachers to apply their theoretical knowledge during professional teaching experiences?
4. How did prospective teachers implement their acquired knowledge after graduating from college?

METHODOLOGY

This case paper demonstrates the views of prospective classroom teachers having studied “cultural heritage” -themed Museum Education Course offered during 2014-2015 Academic Year Spring Term in Ankara University, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Classroom

Teaching on the implementation of museums in cultural heritage education and to monitor concerned participants' levels of awareness on cultural heritage concept.

Data Collection Tools

Employed data collection tools in this research were student diaries about the course, activity evaluation forms and pre- and post-evaluation forms for cultural-heritage-themed Museum Education Course. Throughout the course researchers recorded a total of 26 hours of video shooting and after watching the complete set of video shot, an analysis was conducted. One year after the completion of the course, prospective teachers were re-contacted and monitored to check whether or not their awareness on concepts of cultural heritage and museum education developed. Within the scope of monitoring activity, a monitoring form consisting of six questions was harnessed and interviews were conducted on a social networking website.

Data Analysis

Collected data were analyzed via descriptive analysis method, which is one of the qualitative analysis methods. Descriptive analysis was used in the processing of data that do not necessitate detailed analysis. Descriptive analysis is the illustrative presentation of the data via adhering to the original form of data in qualitative analyses and directly quoting from scholars' remarks, notes and contents of documents. Descriptive studies aim to identify, classify and record researched phenomena and interrelations between such phenomena. First, collected data were conceptualized; next, themes were designated in parallel with emerging concepts. Later, concluding remarks were formed by interpreting the themes. In the descriptive analysis of data; framework forming for data analysis, data coding, theme formation, consistency check, ordering the data under theme and subtheme categories and definition and interpretation of findings were the ensuing stages (Creswell 2013: 179).

Student diaries, activity evaluation forms, pre- and post-evaluation forms of the course were examined personally and independently by researchers and obtained findings were contrasted. Extensive reporting was provided on the analysis criteria of data and findings were test-

ed. Yildirim and Simsek (2006: 257-259) attested that lengthy reporting of compiled data and providing explanations on the pursued methods of researchers in reaching findings were the salient criteria for validity check. Responses provided by participants were divided into common themes and sub-codes were identified upon coding particular themes. Upon data matching, direct quotations to obtain from the participants were determined and the research was thus presented as one single report.

Study Group

The population of this research was composed of 11 4th grade (senior) prospective teachers in Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Classroom Teaching during 2014-2015 Academic Year Spring Term and having attended Museum Education Course offered within the curriculum. In selecting the population, purposeful sampling method was employed. Purposeful sampling is a viable sampling technique used to select individuals bearing definitive, restrictive and hardly-accessible personality traits. The objective of this method is to select individuals demonstrating relevant features (Erkus 2009: 98). Depending on the research objective, purposeful sampling allows the conduction of in-depth researches by selecting data-abundant cases. It is opted for in situations when one or multiple cases meeting certain criteria or bearing specific features are aimed to be analyzed (Büyüköztürk et al. 2010).

RESULTS

Findings Concerning the Research Questions

In this paper, the views of prospective teachers on cultural heritage and museum concepts and teaching of cultural heritage phenomenon in the museum setting by harnessing museum education methods and techniques were analyzed. In the museum education pre-evaluation form distributed to prospective teachers prior to commencing 13-week course, a list of questions were asked on the definition and functions of museum, objective in museum education, purpose of museum visits and course expectations. Received responses were analyzed under the heading of museum "education pre-evaluation form". Of all the participatory prospective teach-

ers, 6 participants were females and 5 participants were males.

Findings on Museum Education Pre-evaluation Form

Definition of Museum

In pre-evaluation form of the course students were initially asked to define museum using their own statements. Responses of students included the following: Museums are the places that preserve and exhibit past relics, or any given form of tangible and intangible values and cultural heritage. Students were then questioned about the functions of museums. They answered that its functions referred to preservation, promotion, exhibition, collection and documentation of historically and culturally valued objects. Students also signaled that museums achieved socio-economic functions such as financial development. Students claimed that museums also shed light on understanding the past; forged history awareness and prepared the society for cultural life and also exhibited relevant cultural functions. They also stated that starting from elementary school, museums offered viable means of educational and cultural development for individuals from all age groups seeking to bolster their general knowledge level.

Use of Museum for Educational Purposes

As the third item, students were questioned about their views on the use of museum for educational purposes. Based on their undergraduate course, students associated museums with the courses they would teach during their professional life. Social Sciences and Life Science Courses were the courses most frequently associated with museums. Students reported that;

- In a museum, national and global values can be taught to students by setting a link between the past and the future.
- Course subjects can be materialized through tangible objects.
- Anatolian Civilizations topics can be taught in the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations.
- Within the scope of Museum Education Course, it can be feasible to focus on few selected objects that relate to one specific theme rather than the entire range of objects.

- Since it is an outside-school learning setting, students could be highly motivated to learn, which might in effect offer advantage to the instructor.

Museum Visits

As the fourth item, students were asked about the museums they visited last and the visitation purposes. Within the scope of relevant courses (in Ankara) during undergraduate education, students paid technical visits to *Konya Science Center*, *Ethnography Museums*, *Sabancı Museum*, *Estergon Castle Ethnography Museum* (Ankara) and *Middle East Technical University Science and Technology Museum*. Except the visit to *Estergon Castle* the objective in all these visits was to set a relevant link with their teaching skills. Students expressed that they were particularly impressed by Joan Miro Exhibition viewed in *Sabancı Museum* within the scope of visual arts course.

Course Expectations

Expectations of students from this course can be divided into two categories as academic and social expectations.

Social Expectations:

- In the final and hardest period of their undergraduate education, having the opportunity to enjoy and travel, though partially.
- Having a less formal learning experience in outside-school learning settings.
- Acquiring the habit of frequent museum visits.
- Meeting museum staff.

"This is our last year at school and we have a busy schedule. We have a lot of assignments. At the same time we are preparing for exam and almost every day we are at school or at a private course. I know that we will visit museums in this course. I reckon this will mitigate our stress level to a certain degree" (S11, age20)

"Actually I have an interest toward the antique age and fondness for history, but since I lack the habit of museum visits I cannot claim that I am a frequent visitor. I want to visit museums to acquire this habit..." (S9, age 20).

Academic Expectations:

- Viewing education specimens that can be utilized in their own teaching career,

- Fostering their general culture awareness,
- Learning cultural heritage,
- Acknowledging use of creative drama method in museum education,
- Familiarization with museum artifacts.

"I hope to encounter more examples on the activities to use museum for educational purposes..." (S1, age 22).

"I would like to explore how to make students like museums in museum education..." (S3, age 21).

Findings on Museum Education Post-evaluation Form

Definition of Museum

In the post-evaluation form of the course, students were initially asked to define museum using their own statements. Student responses included: Museums are the places that preserve and exhibit past relics, any given form of tangible and intangible values and cultural heritage. Taking into account the identical phrases used in pre-evaluation forms completed by students, it surfaces that the word "museum" was still largely associated with the words "*past and relics*". Also, all participants emphasized that museums are educational settings.

Functions of the Museums

In the post-evaluation form students were once again questioned about the functions of museum. They answered that its functions referred to preservation, public exhibition, collection, promotion and education. Students also reported that museums exhibited artifacts that reflected common values of society belonging to the past and present and museums hosted cultural activities connected with past, present and future concepts. Students claimed that one of the functions of museums is: by harnessing its physical means, offering its indoor or outdoor spaces to public use. Students reported that museums' functions can be grouped as; *basic, social and cultural functions*. Preservation and education are the basic functions of museums. Social functions relate to contributing to economic advancement, socializing and empathy acquisition. Cultural functions refer to history knowledge and cultural transfer.

Contribution of Museums to the Educational Process

As the third item students were asked about the contribution of museum to their educational process. Students expressed that once used for educational purposes, museums materialized the courses; enabled better understanding of the topics; museums offered advantage outside settings for Social Sciences and Life Science courses, students gained a chance to socialize and partake in group work activities and to freely express themselves. Students argued that once coordinately used with drama activities, museums could turn into further effective learning settings.

Museum Visits

Among the museums students paid a visit within the scope of this course, students shared that they liked *Corum Museum* and Museum of Anatolian Civilizations most. Preliminary objectives in visiting *Corum Museum* were acquiring knowledge on Hittite Civilization, viewing the capital city and engaging in activities in *Corum Museum*. Students also emphasized that the most salient factor to like museums was studying the course contents in such settings.

General Views on Museum Education Course

Students stated that they employed creative drama method in the course, actively participated in the process, learnt different types of activities, familiarized with the museum artifacts through several activities which were all instrumental in achieving permanent learning. Students linked the course with different courses they would teach. Students emphasized that this course would contribute to curriculum preparation in their teaching experiences and that this course improved their general culture level.

Students were pleased to engage in game activities developed within the context. They also stated that they were pleased after visiting and viewing the museums, to have spent fun and joyful time in the museums and that the course created sympathy toward museums. All students enjoyed the Museum Education Course. They accentuated the necessity to integrate this course to the freshman curriculum and continuing grades in the department of teaching.

"Museum education was the most enjoyable undergraduate course" (S7, age 22)

"I cannot believe I was so unaware of cultural heritage for so many years". (S2, age 20)

"I think this course should continue for four years and be mandatory. It is such an instructive and fun course" (S4, age 22)

"Evaluation methods and teaching of this course is original and exactly suitable for teachers. If only I can put into practice what I learnt in this course, I assume my students would develop a fondness for history topics." (S8, age 21)

"Museum Education Course transformed my views on museums. It altered my prejudices. I learnt the necessity to view museum artifacts more attentively and knowingly" (S5, age 22).

"Museum Education Course is not a theoretical course to be taught using books and notebooks only. Just like we did during this term, it should be a practical course that can be augmented through different teaching methods and techniques by individually visiting the museums. In summary, it should be turned into a real life experience..."(S1, age 22).

Students' Views on the Objectives and Acquisitions of Course

Lastly, students were questioned about the potential course objective and acquisitions and whether the course met their expectations. Students evaluated course objective and acquisitions under four separate categories as "social, cultural heritage, learning and museum awareness".

Social objective and acquisitions:

1. Ensuring active participation
2. Socializing

Objective and acquisitions on museum awareness:

1. Gaining awareness on museum visits
2. Gaining the skill of distinguishing museum types

Objective and acquisitions on cultural heritage:

1. Recognizing cultural heritage
2. Gaining the skill of narrating cultural heritage
3. Witnessing development of civilizations

4. Witnessing artifacts of different civilizations
5. Setting a link between past-present-future

Learning relevant objective and acquisitions:

1. Enabling permanent learning,

2. Linking with other courses and creative drama,
3. Course materialization,
4. Recognizing the artifacts in museum.

Students' Views on Meeting their Expectations by Course Context

Students reported that course context (activities, topic, theme) consisted of activities linked with social sciences course and they learnt through dramatizing different methods and techniques which correspondingly enabled active and permanent learning and they also had lots of fun during the course. Since they learnt by witnessing everything in its original place, they could thus grasp the place of creative drama in museum education. Students developed social fondness for museums by virtue of course context, spent fun and joyful time, conducted activities in great museums within the course context, and lastly, they focused on developing their students' fondness toward museums during their professional teaching experiences. Students declared that this course far exceeded their initial expectations.

Findings Related to Activity Evaluation Forms

During the 13-week activities, creative drama method and museum education methods and techniques were employed. Students were asked to state the most memorable activities and provide reasons. During the courses they liked to be in the draw on my back, pattern seeking activity, seek and find in the museum activity, sketch drawings, story narrating and dramatizing activities.

DISCUSSION

Despite the fact that museum education departments have been actively operational in Turkey since 2000; workshop activities have been practiced, virtual museum applications have gained impetus, digital applications have emerged and several developments have risen it is yet argued that teachers still lack the expected level of experience on museums and museum education (Mercin 2003; Güler 2011; Güleç and Alkis 2003) asserted that the use of museums as outside-school learning settings in teacher training programs and in Teacher Training Faculties within the context of Museum Education Course should be prepared accordingly. On the other

hand, from the literature reviews realized within the scope of the current paper, research results revealed that in Turkey museum and art gallery visits have positive effects on students (Akyürek 2011; Atalay 2011; Demir 2005; Karakus and Çoruh 2014; Sar and Sagkol 2013; Tosun 2009; Utku 2008; Dilmaç 2016). In these studies, it was observed that students expanded their knowledge on museums and historical artifacts as a result of their experiences during museum visits, which in turn led to students' attitudes toward the courses to improve (Dilmaç 2016). Museum visits also contributed to students gaining a greater amount of interest in their courses. The importance of museums and art galleries comes into greater prominence when learning by doing and through experimenting is taken into consideration.

This research dealt with the process of Museum Education Course designed within the framework of constructivist approach geared toward honing museum-use skills of prospective teachers via Museum Education Course focused on "cultural heritage" theme. Hughes (1998) noted that by means of methods and techniques utilized in Museum Education Course exhibited objects could be put into practice; history and individuals could be dramatized; different perspectives toward objects, subjects and concepts holding a particular story could be developed. In treating the concept of "cultural heritage" dealt within the context of this course, teaching methods and techniques such as creative drama and Museum Education were adopted. Creative drama is one of the learning processes in which the learner is active and can learn through fun. Implementing creative drama in Museum Education curricula renders assistance to cognitive and affective learning of participants (Egitmen 1995; Earl 1995). By virtue of being a learner-centered technique and a complementary factor for cognitive, affective, kinesthetic and social learning processes, drama has gained prominence as a further effective method in museum teaching (Hughes et al. 2007). Karadeniz and Okvuran (2014) who examined preschool teacher candidates' opinions after participating in museum visits also proved the importance and the positive effects of creative drama during museum education process. As several researches supported that using educational materials and contemporary museum education technics also benefits the process. Edu-

cational materials in museum should be arranged in an informative and engaging manner, suggesting possible ways to arrange materials. Thus, the objects in museums and galleries in which active learning techniques are to be applied should be presented to visitors in suitable ways (Guisasola et al. 2005).

Greenhill (1992) pointed out that Museum Education is a process in which a common share is linked between museum collections and visitors' interests. Cultural heritage-themed Museum Education Course was studied in Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ethnography Museum, *Corum Archeology Museum* and *Bogazkoy Museum*; on the basis of objects exhibited in museum collection a range of activities that would put prospective teachers into center and offer them to experiment actual experiences could be developed. Hein (1998) claimed that by placing viewers into the center, Museum Education studies offer real experiences, and allow the viewers to grasp the originating society and culture of the exhibited objects; to set linkage with a particular era; to contrast with the present era; and lastly, to form augmented settings with the objects. Accordingly, museums are acknowledged to be the kind of settings in which prospective teachers can discover knowledge through structuring their previous insights and reach knowledge through questioning and analyzing their understanding.

It was attested in this paper that prospective teachers defined museums as institutions preserving past relics, tangible-intangible values and cultural heritage while at the end of the course they also reached a certain level of awareness allowing them to accentuate educational function of the museums too. Nuzzaci (2006) reported that the education process aided by museums and galleries provides long-term and permanent knowledge and triggers a change of behavior and attitude toward the subject. Based on their personal museum education experiences, prospective teachers agreed that starting from elementary school, museums could offer a positive setting for the cultural and educational development of learners from all age groups and could offer means to better analyze the subject matter.

Prospective teachers remarked that application of different learning methods and techniques in museum education added variety to the course and bolstered their teaching skills. On

the other hand, they added that Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, *Corum Museum* and *Bogazkoy Museum* that were utilized as classroom setting helped them to gain detailed information on antique cultures and released them from prejudices toward different cultures. As also emphasized by Ambrose and Paine (2006), museums are some forms of laboratories and playgrounds in which intercultural interaction is achieved. During intercultural interaction, museum education provides the participants skills such as, synthesizing, inspiring and identifying; providing information on novel ideas, views and technologies. Therefore, prospective teachers reported that by setting a link between antique cultures and present life they had an easier and more effective learning process and relinquished their prejudices.

Another heavily-accentuated topic within the scope of evaluation is the museum atmosphere. Greenhill (2007) asserted that in tandem with the rise in constructivist and socio-cultural learning theories post-modern way of thinking has reshaped museum perception, and authenticity of learning and diversity of learning methods gained further attraction. In this process, museums should be utilized as effective outside-school learning settings which offer an opportunity to meet the object with viewers and present live and real experience opportunities. The authentic atmosphere of museums used within course context deeply impressed prospective teachers and enhanced their learning motivations.

At the end of this course awareness on the need to spread museum education increased. Participants stated that they were slightly worried about the likelihood of not being able to actively teach museum education if no museum existed in the city/town they worked in; nonetheless, they were still highly motivated to form museums in classroom or school or to conduct suitcase museum practices. Suitcase museum practices that have been widely popularized as of 1950s for the sake of rendering assistance to socio-economically disadvantaged students' education aids to simplify the subject matter and through directly connecting with the object, it urges motivation to visit museums (Seattle Art Museum 2014). Suitcase museum practice signaled by prospective teachers is a potential solution for new teachers assigned to towns where there are no museums. In addition, one of the prospective teachers accentuated that upon his/

her official assignment as a professional teacher, s/he displayed virtual museum samples to students on the Internet and they studied museum types exhibiting folkloric clothes within course context.

Participants accentuated social functions of a museum rather than its traditional functions and defined its role as a modern institute contributing to economic growth, which clearly indicates their awareness on the transformation in museology approach. Museums that were utilized for educational purposes within course context the information provided by museum specialists, inside-museum experiences, museum-focused researches and obtained feedbacks enabled prospective teachers to have a right of word about these museums and established familiarization with museums. Hence, as also emphasized by Sandell (2001), this experience relates to participation in museum processes by initiating social involvement for triggering changes in museum philosophy. One of the easiest ways to eradicate traditional museum practices and elitist museum approaches is to open the gates of museum to education. Any museum engaged in education can turn into a democratic, community-based and advanced institute.

Research findings also revealed that museums, by materializing course subjects, facilitated better comprehension for prospective teachers and particularly for Social Sciences and Life Science courses, they provided unique settings for the ideal social interaction with students. The research demonstrated that museums allowed the students to socialize and participate in group work discussions and to freely express their views. Digital applications and technological tools utilized in the museums examined within course context during the process of museum education were fun, supportive of learning and motivational to use; integration of technology that has a major place in students' lives into museum education was deemed to be a crucial factor to develop fondness for museums.

Researchers re-contacted prospective teachers in the subsequent year and conducted interviews to monitor whether an improvement emerged in their awareness on cultural heritage and museum education concepts. During the monitoring process, a total of ten participants were reached. Six participants were females, four were males. Four prospective teachers passed

Public Personnel Selection Examination and worked in official institutions.

The rest were still getting prepared to pass Public Personnel Selection Examination. All the interviewed prospective teachers continued visiting museums in their leisure time. Among the visited places were antique cities and museum houses in addition to museum buildings. A good quantity of participants still resided in Ankara as their education was in progress. Hence, the most frequently visited museums were Ankara-stationed Museum of Anatolian Civilizations and *Rahmi Koc Museum*. These museums were followed by *Gordion Museum* (Ankara), *Harun Resit Castle* (Osmaniye), *Erzurum Museum*, *Cifte Minareli Madrasah* (Erzurum) and *Tarsus Archeology Museum* and various archeological sites. Prospective teachers were aware of the news that Iraq Damascus Islamic State rampaged cultural heritage, and they anxiously monitored the news that Surp Giragos and Armenian Catholic Churches in the city of Diyarbakir were partially destructed. Furthermore, recent news on faulty restorations also worried them. Some participants shared their excitement about the lately-discovered underground city Ürgüp and their pride to hear the news about the inclusion of Gaziantep to UNESCO Creative Cities Network in the category of gastronomy. Prospective teachers stated that they did not enroll in any establishment or institution to conduct any promotion program for museum education, but they shared insights with their friends and colleagues about education in museums and projected future plans for museum visits.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research and monitoring process indicated that during teacher training programs, museums should be more frequently utilized in order to activate operational course plans relevant of skillfully using outside-school learning settings. Via museum education, prospective teachers could directly access cultural heritage objects, meet museum specialists, and by coordinating with the relevant staff they could conduct interdisciplinary studies and by conducting education activities in museums they could develop fondness for museum settings. Besides, it was observed that prospective teachers gained applicable and refined skills of using outside-school learning settings to better em-

ploy constructivist approach. Prospective teachers held the belief that during their professional career they would feel comfortable in using education in museum for Social Sciences, Life Science, Visual Arts and other interdisciplinary curriculums. Prospective teachers also accentuated that interaction with museum specialists boosted their success in museum education processes. Talboys (2005) reported that in museum education, museum staff played vital roles to effectively utilize museums for educational purposes. Within that context, to effectively use museums in education, it is of vital significance to inform museum staff about their responsibilities as museum instructors and encourage being responsive to interaction.

Findings obtained from the present research can be outlined as below:

- Within the scope of course acquisitions museum education achieved its preset objective.
- Participants gained better insight on how to hone their teaching skills via museums.
- Participants gained an opportunity to meet museum specialists and established effective communication.
- Via utilizing museums and archeological sites they better comprehended “outside-school learning setting” concept.
- Participants gained an opportunity to visit museums that remarkably exceeded prior expectations with respect to contents and equipment.
- Participants made use of technological components in museums as learning materials.
- Participants’ awareness on museums continued after graduation as well.
- Participants, cooperatively with their students, sought after authentic and alternative paths to achieve museum education.
- Participants were highly motivated to inform their colleagues about museum education.
- Participants accentuated the necessity to integrate this course to the freshman curricula and continuing grades in the department of teaching.

Based on the findings of the present research, it is suggested that further studies be conducted on the frequency of graduate teachers to apply education in museums; selected materials to apply museum education and mis-

cellaneous outside-school learning settings that teachers utilized to raise students' awareness on cultural heritage. Additionally, this paper once again unearthed the foremost necessity to rearrange museums as educational settings in addition to accomplishing its functions listed as ensuring democratization, socializing and sustainability and accomplishing the function of safeguarding the currency of "education" and transformation.

Museums are dynamic places that provide contemporary, effective and interesting teaching facilities to both learners and teachers. It can be said that using active museum education techniques are effective in moving teacher candidates toward different and creative ways of thinking about using museums and galleries as centers for education. Thus, Museum Education Course should be added to the school teaching undergraduate program in a wide variety of departments, such as school teaching, preschool teaching, history, science, and social sciences programmes. It is also recommended to provide in-service education to teachers at museums through the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of National Education, and the Council of Higher Education.

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