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Views of painting teaching programme candidates toward virtual exhibitions

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Abstract

There are lessons including the use of basic information technologies in the Teacher Education Programmes as well as how these technologies can be used in educational activities and Internet supported Distance Education practices. Painting Teaching Programme candidates must acquire competencies regarding both personal and occupational development. This research performed for evaluating the contribution of virtual museums in personal and occupational development by the views of Painting Teaching Programme candidates.

Research is an action research and data analyzed according to qualitative data analysis. Data gathered from Pamukkale University Painting Teaching Programme second graduate candidates in 2007-2008 academic years. Views were towards personal and occupational development, virtual artworks and general to virtual museums.

Teacher candidates expressed that virtual museums may contribute to occupational and personal development. They also stated that they must see and look in artworks in the way of producing original artworks and developing self style as many as they can. According to candidates virtual artworks can not create the same impressions as real artworks and virtual museums can be a useful information resource.

This research can provide information to educators lecturing computer or basic information technologies and also to the practitioners and researchers in the virtual museum design processes.

1. Introduction

In the information age, information is about change in terms of amount and quantity. So individuals need to find direction, master, analyze, share and present information, collaborate by appropriate technologies and be long life

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learners. Also societies need people qualifying those attributes. In the process of shifting from teacher oriented education to learner oriented education, people must acquire 21st knowledge and capabilities (UNESCO, 2002).

Teachers have great responsibilities in point of individuals to obtain those qualifications and to be a model to other people. So it is important teacher candidates to obtain the skills of use of information technologies and cultures. Teacher candidates should be able to realize teaching applications using information technologies with appropriate pedagogical approaches in their own fields. Teacher Education Programmes are being designed and implemented according to changing teacher and learner roles (UNESCO, 2002). There are lessons including usage basic information technologies and how to use those technologies in educational activities, computer supported distance education applications such as virtual museums. Virtual museums are significance in personal and occupational development for art teacher candidates.

1.1. Educational functions of museums and virtual museums

Museums are the public institutions researching, collecting, saving the objects witnessed to human and human life. They share the information; give exploring, education and joy opportunities concerning nonprofit activities in the services of social development in contemporary meaning (Şahan, 2005). Also museums have educational dimensions including pedagogical, sociological and psychological components (Lepouras ve Vassilakis, 2005).

As the computer and communication technologies are being used in all fields of life, education, research and culture institutes has begun to use those technologies. Initially museums used computers for keeping art objects records. According as the development in the information and communication technologies, museums exhibited art works in virtual environments. In 1990's with the use of Internet, Virtual Museum concept emerged (Çolak, 2006).

Schweibenz (2004) has been defined virtual museums as '…a logically related collection of digital objects composed in a variety of media which, because of its capacity to provide connectedness and various points of access, lends itself to transcending traditional methods of communicating and interacting with visitors…; it has no real place or space, its objects and the related information can be disseminated all over the world' (p. 1).

1.2. Types of virtual museums

Schweibenz (2004) has categorized virtual museums on the Internet as follows,

1. The brochure museum,
2. The content museum,
3. The learning museum,
4. The virtual museum.

Brochure museums are the web sites containing basic information like types of collection, contact details for informing potential visitors (Schweibenz, 2004).

Content museums are the web sites presenting collections online. Art objects are presented with identical database information. That kind of museums designed for experts to provide a detailed portrayal of the collections and has no didactical mission (Schweibenz, 2004).

Learning museums are the web sites designed for virtual visitors to interact in a context based way. Information is presented according to visitors' age, background and knowledge. The site is didactically enhanced and the goal of the learning museum is to make the virtual visitor revisit and come to the museum to see the real objects (Schweibenz, 2004). In the learning museums visitors can play games, see the virtual object and places in 2D or 3D (Çolak, 2006). Virtual reality applications can create objects and situations those are not real and make the visitors feel in real environment. In this way there is no danger of art works to break, loose or damage. Visitors have no opportunity to touch the objects but they can look in different angles, situations (Lepouras ve Vassilakis, 2005).

The virtual museum is the next step on from the learning museum is to provide not only information about the institution's collection but to link to digital collections of others. In this way, digital collections are created which have no counterparts in the real world (Schweibenz, 2004).

Although there are some discussions about the virtual museums in point of definition, visitor experience and exhibiting objects, but it can be said that, initially a web museum application must present virtual objects and give virtual tour opportunities to visitors then it can be called a virtual museum.

1.3. Virtual museums and education

Experince is important in learning precess. Extraordinary experiences can provide greater effects in leraning (Hein, 2002). Museums can provide appropriate environments toward education process by experiences. Virtual museum activities make visitors live more different experiences but the same goals.

Meaningful learning is dependent to some principals. Some of them are
1. learning requires a cognitive process,
2. individual sees in a social environment,
3. individual communicates in a social environment,
4. individual is active,
5. individual manages knowledge and time according to own character,
6. motivation is important (Şahan, 2005).

Virtual museums can provide not only learning environments according to principals above but also discovering, interaction, and participation opportunities.

Museums have an important potential on enhancing learning. Virtual museums can contribute in classroom learning activities utilizing that potential. Virtual museums can break the source and time constraints. They can provide accessing to rich and more different learning materials beyond the classroom walls to learners and teachers.

Virtual museums are useful in child and adult education, social development, recognizing historical heritage and other societies.

Lepouras and Vassilakis (2005) have emphasized that participants reported their pleasure regarding 3D game based virtual museum. They also expressed virtual museums are prominence conceptions in edutainment.

Okolo, Englert, Bouck, and Heutsche (2007) expressed virtual museums beneficial in history learning. Teacher and students can direct access to art works, historical objects, photos, texts, videos. Handicapped students can have the same opportunities. They also reported that there is an increase on achieving learning goals in education curriculums.

1.4. Purpose

The main purpose of this research is to determine and evaluate how painting teaching programme candidates, who took the Basic Computer 2 lesson, gave meaning to virtual museums and the views toward contributions of the virtual exhibitions to personal and occupational development in education process.

1.5. Definitions

Blog : A blog (a contraction of the term "Web log") is a Web site, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video (en.wikipedia.org, 2008).

Occupational Development : development of teacher candidates' regarding teaching profession.
Personal Development : development of teacher candidates' regarding art knowledge and applications.

1.6. Importance

This research is important in the point of
• giving hints to instructors lecturing Basic Computer Education,

- contributing personal developments of teacher candidates,
- contributing occupational developments of teacher candidates,
- contributing cultural developments of teacher candidates,
- giving hints to individuals and institutions developing and designing virtual museums.
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1.7. Research questions

1. What are the natural perceptions of teacher candidates towards virtual museums,
2. How does teacher candidates estimates virtual museums and virtual paintings,
3. What are the views of teacher candidates about contributions of virtual museums to their occupational and personal development?

2. Method

2.1. Research design

Research was designed as action research and qualitative method was used to analyze the data. Action research can be used when there is a need to improve a process or try to a new approach (Yıldırım s.299). In this context, researcher considered virtual museums as a new approach and with Painting Teaching Programme candidates in Computer 2 lesson visited a virtual painting museum. Teacher candidates reflected their views towards virtual museums in their blogs opened previous lessons.

2.2. Participants

Data gathered from Pamukkale University Painting Teaching Programme second graduate candidates in 2007-2008 academic years.

2.3. Data collection process

Computer 1 and 2 lessons take place in the programme of education faculties 4 hours a week. The goal of these lessons are make the teacher candidates to recognize basic computer technologies, to gain knowledge and experience about computer literature, computer supported education. There are also Distance Education applications in the curriculum of these lessons. So a virtual museum visiting activity was realized according to Painting Teaching Programme as a distance education application. Visiting activity realized in 2 weeks means 8 lesson hours. Teacher candidates visited exhibitions, used tools designed to look into paintings and create their own collections.

2.4. Data collection

Data was gathered from the blogs of participants. Willing candidates participated to research. 20 of the 32 teacher candidates created own blog page and 17 of them expressed own views. Teacher candidates expressed their views according to research questions.

2.5. Data Analyses

Content analyses used to analyze the data gathered from the blogs.

3. Findings

3.1. Natural perceptions of teacher candidates towards virtual museums

Teacher candidates considered virtual museums like an access tool to art objects and paintings. Virtual museums and the virtual exhibitions in virtual museums provide easy access opportunities in terms of time and source to individuals. Virtual museums also can provide visitors to see various and multiple paintings and look in them. These opportunities can open a door to new visitors, individuals interested in paintings, and artists.

Teacher candidates also give a point to the interaction capability of virtual museums. This interaction may occur between individual, society and the artists and virtual museums can be ideal environments for interaction. This interaction can make the societies and cultures to be conscious, develop, give chance to catch developed countries. Also artist and art can get more valuable and change the views of people regarding art and artist in society.

According to teacher candidates virtual museums can provide cultural values to present wide mass of people. In this context, virtual museums have an important role in recognizing and meeting other cultures and societies. Real or virtual museums have a potential on creating individual and social awareness about cultural richness. Cultural knowledge can be transferred between cultures and generations with virtual museums too.

Virtual museums can contribute on introducing and presenting cultural richness and extend the activities and the effectiveness of real museums. Convenience on individual or institutional presenting art works is important for society, individual and artist.

3.2. Views of teacher candidates towards virtual art works in virtual museums

According to teacher candidates, virtual paintings can not create the same impression like real ones. This is because of indirect interaction between human and virtual object. Seeing and looking in an art work on a brochure or display causes a dimension constraint. Brush strokes, patterns, volume and dimension details are the important parameters when exploring a painting. Virtual paintings can not provide those parameters and reflect the same effect.

3.3. The views of teacher candidates about contributions of virtual museums to their occupational and personal development

In the process of occupational development, teacher candidates must look into paintings and recognize painters as many as they can. It is possible to criticize, comment and compare the paintings in virtual museums so teacher candidates are able to be cherished. Thus teacher candidates improve their imagination, creativity, extend viewpoint and reflect to their paintings and drawings. Recognizing different painters, styles, drawing and painting techniques are the requisites in the process of developing self style.

Creating original paintings need visual experience and visual richness. Virtual museums can provide visual experience and visual richness on account of quality and quantity.

Another point that teacher candidates impressed is getting general and detailed culture and knowledge regarding their field. Having efficient knowledge about, painters, art works, art philosophies and art trends is important both their and their students' development. It is a necessity in the way of being a teacher and an artist.

Virtual museums can provide up to date information source to teacher candidates and students. With this attribute virtual museums present more comprehensive information in comparison with printed materials such books and magazines. Virtual museums can be considered as a useful lecture material in the lessons.

4. Conclusion

This research performed for seeing contribution of virtual museums and determining views of teacher candidates towards virtual museums in process of teacher education. As a result lecturer and the teacher candidates had confident attitudes towards virtual museums and virtual museums had a positive effect on the education process. In this context, teacher candidates had positive approaches in terms of acquiring culture and constructing knowledge regarding painting art, recognizing painters and paintings, producing original art works, interacting between individual, society and artist, providing information sources to their students in teacher proficiency and career. They also stated that virtual museums have a positive impact on social development.

Teacher candidates had no confident attitudes towards virtual art works and paintings. According to their views virtual paintings can not create the same effect and impression in terms of sensation, emotion and perception like real ones.

Since curriculums are including field specific applications, this research can give hints to educators lecturing computer lessons in teacher education programmes like virtual museums for Painting Teaching Programme. Positive or negative attitudes are one of the factors affecting the success of the applications. So according to the results, applications can be rejected or included.

Also this research can contribute design process of virtual museums. Virtual museums are not only presenting places the artworks, but also providing interaction, information about artworks, including tools for looking in them.

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