International Journal of Assessment Tools in Education
2018, Vol. 5, No. 4, 740–753

DOI: 10.21449/ijate.478277

Published at http://www.ijate.net http://dergipark.gov.tr/ijate *Research Article*

Facebook as a Peer-Assessment Platform: A Case Study in Art Teacher Education Context

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 04 May 2018
Revised: 12 October 2018
Accepted: 26 October 2018

KEYWORDS

Facebook,
Peer assessment,
Interactive learning environments

Abstract: This research intended to answer the question "Is Peer-Assessment on Facebook useful in visual art education?" in an intrinsic case study. Participants were a group of prospective visual-art teachers, who regularly share and comment on the photographs of their paintings in a special group they created on Facebook. Ten volunteering prospective visual-art teachers were involved in the study during 2013-2014 academic year. Focus group interviews were conducted with the participants to collect data in addition to online digital documents, including photographs of students' paintings and comments on them. In general, participants stated that Facebook-based peer assessment is beneficial, since it helps them notice their deficiencies, look at their works from a different perspective and improve their artistic skills. Thanks to the productive feedback, their motivation and self-confidence are boosted. It was also found that peer-assessment on Facebook has the advantage of ubiquity, allowing more peer involvement, easy and objective criticism, and sustainable learning opportunities in the long-run. The participants also emphasized some disadvantages of the practice of peer assessment on Facebook such as subjective feedback and poor quality of digitalized visuals.

1. INTRODUCTION

"*Art educators will need assistance to develop a vision for planning and interpretation of ICT in their curricula*" (Wilks, Cutcher & Wilks, 2012, p. 64).

The transition from teacher-centered instructional approaches to a learner-centered approach implies a change in the conventional measurement and assessment procedures (Uysal, 2008). Unlike teacher-centered conventional assessment approaches, contemporary constructivist approaches advocate that both learning process and outcomes should be evaluated through more learner-based methods. Changing perspectives about assessment has brought about a shift from assessment of learning approach to an assessment for learning approach (Ploegh, Tillema, & Segers, 2009). This shift also suggests that self- and peer- assessment is an integral component of assessment process (Sluijsmans, Dochy, & Moerkerke, 1998). Self- and peer-assessment

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ISSN-e: 2148-7456 /© IJATE 2018

help students understand their own learning better (Wen & Tsai, 2006), become active, autonomous, responsible, and reflective (Sambell & McDowell, 1998). Primarily used for formative purposes (Sluijsman et al., 1998), peer-assessment is a pedagogical and practical evaluation method especially in higher education (Wheater, Langan & Dunleavy, 2005). It provides opportunities for authentic assessment, student autonomy, and collaboration (Loureiro, Pombo & Moreira, 2012).

As one of the most successful Web 2.0 applications (Ozmen, Akuzum, Sunkur & Baysal, 2011) Facebook has become an effective learning or, more specifically, a peer assessment tool in various subjects (Keles & Demirel, 2011; Shih 2011; Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi, 2012). Art education is one of the disciplines that theorists encourage art educators to embrace ICT to create new pedagogies for learning and teaching (Wilks et al., 2012). Thus, there is a need to discover and investigate the pedagogical ways of using popular technologies like Web 2.0 for pedagogical purposes. In this regard, present research intended to introduce a case study on a group of visual-art students studying at an education college, who regularly share and comment on the photographs of their paintings in a special group created on Facebook. More specifically, it was aimed to investigate the effect of using Facebook as a platform for peer assessment in visual-art teacher education.

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. Peer Assessment

One effective strategy used as a part of learning from peers is peer-assessment [PA]. PA has been implemented in schools both as a learning and assessment tool (Lu & Zhang 2012; Ploegh et al. 2009). However, the assessment nature of PA is not summative (determining success), but rather formative (supporting learning) (Patton, 2012; Sluijsman et al., 1998; Topping, 1998). Moreover, even though much assessment in higher education is summative (Topping Smith, Swanson & Elliot, 2000), pedagogical and practical arguments acknowledge that PA, as a learner-centered approach, supports learning and is adopted extensively in higher education context (Bay 2011; Liang & Tsai 2010; Tillema, Leenknecht & Segers, 2011; Weaver & Esposto, 2012; Wen & Tsai, 2006; Wheater et al., 2005).

Topping (1998 p.250) defines PA as "an arrangement in which individuals consider the amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes of peers of similar status." PA refers to "those activities of learners in which they judge and evaluate...[products or work]…of their peers with similar learning backgrounds (Sung, Chang, Chiou & Hou 2005, p. 188). PA involves good amount of cognitive investment thanks to increased time on task, thinking, comparing, contrasting, and communicating (Topping, 1998). Thus, teachers are recommended to encourage their students to give especially cognitive feedback to their peers (Lu & Zhang 2012).

1.1.2. Web 2.0 echnologies and Learning

Today it is evident that young people embrace the digital world as intuitive learners of ICT, and "many have developed their skills unprompted and independent of what they are doing at school" (Wilks et al., 2012, p. 64). Thanks to Web 2.0 technologies, blended learning, and peer assessment, students are able to contact with each other, question each other, comment on each other's works, and exchange opinions, which actually refer to the principles of social constructivist theory (Shih, 2011). Web 2.0 is increasingly used for distributed and collaborative learning (Poldoja et al., 2012). Integrating social media with blended learning in higher education seems to be a usable way of supporting student learning (Shih, 2011). Online peer collaborative teaching methods have gradually been expanded, applied, and explored by teachers and researchers (Wu, Hou & Hwang, 2012). Web-based portfolios and assessments have gained popularity due to the accessibility of network and the limitations of their paper-

based counterparts (Chang et al., 2011). Web-technology can provide students with opportunities to interact with their peers without time and space, more diversity and flexibility in designing peer-assessment procedures based on students' demands and needs (Sung et al., 2005).

PA is a mainstay in most online student question-generation systems (Yu, 2011). Popularity of web-based PA increases gradually due to the increasing interest in web-based learning because of the rapid development of internet technologies (Topping, 1998). Liu and Lee (2013) suggest that students can make constructive modifications to their work with the help of feedback from their online peers. Lin, Liu and Yuan (2001, p. 422) list the advantages of online PA procedure: the anonymity, which facilitates willingness to critique; teachers' ability to monitor students' progress at any time; and a decrease in the time and expense of photocopying. Similarly, Wen and Tsai (2006) argue that using the Internet as a tool for implementing PA can provide learners with anonymous environments to express their thoughts and ideas about other students' work freely.

1.1.3. Facebook as a Peer Assessment tool

Today social networks such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter are among the most popular especially for Generation Y (Shih, 2011). Facebook is nominated as technically most successful Web 2.0 technology by the authorities and reported to be the most popular one among the educators in US (Ozmen et al., 2011). Facebook enables the users to communicate or interact with each other, create and/or join groups, and share a variety of contents (e.g. text, photo, video, links) both private and public. In particular, thanks to its sharing and commenting function, Facebook allows people to almost instantly discuss and share a large spectrum of information and knowledge, turning it into an online discussion board (Shih, 2011). As an alternative learning tool, Facebook can provide students convenient and attractive means to engage in discussions with the teacher and other users (Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi, 2012).

Considering the availability of facilitated communication and interaction features, online systems have been designed by the researchers to implement peer-assessment like the NetPeas designed by Lin et al. (2001); the Web-SPA by Sung et al. (2005), the iLAP by Lu and Zhang (2012) and the DigiMina by Poldoja et al. (2012). Moreover, thanks to providing some diversity and flexibility in designing peer-assessment procedures (Sung et al., 2005), some well-established popular online platforms are also used for similar purposes. For example, Wu et al. (2012) utilized a synchronous communication tool -MSN Messenger- to conduct peer assessment discussion activities. Shih (2011) used Facebook to incorporate peer assessment in college-level English writing classes, which motivated the students to participate in the study and help them enjoyed the learning process thanks to the convenience and popularity of the Facebook platform. Keles and Demirel (2011) used Facebook as a platform for the "Computer-assisted physics" course, where students shared and commented on their assignments for six weeks.

Though digital technologies have a potential, educators need to use them in meaningful, relevant, and worthy ways while creating and criticizing the visual arts (Wilks et al., 2012). We need fresh thinking and new approaches to find out new pedagogical ways to integrate ICT into art classrooms (Wilks et al., 2012). For example, in a rare study on visual art education Lin, Yang, Hung and Wang (2006) found use of a web-based portfolio system and peer-assessment helped students' learning in visual-art education at elementary school. Since there are few studies investigating students' perceptions of online PA specifically, there seems to be a need to examine students' views about online PA (Wen & Tsai, 2006) and PA in visual art teacher education more specifically.

The goal of this study was to investigate the use of Facebook as a platform for peer assessment in visual-art education context. To this end, we analyzed a specific group of visual-art education students studying at an education college, who regularly shared and commented on the photographs of their paintings in a special group created on Facebook. Thus, this research intended to explore how a small group of visual art education students used Facebook as a peer-assessment platform, as well as to better understand the advantages and disadvantages of this particular practice in terms of visual art teacher education.

2. METHOD

2.1. Design

The present study employed a qualitative intrinsic case study design. Case study designs allow researchers "to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin, 2003, p.2). A case may involve "one individual, several individuals, a group, an entire program, or an activity" (Creswell, 2007, p. 74). Furthermore, an intrinsic case study focuses "the case itself (e.g., evaluating a program, or studying a student having difficulty…) because the case presents an unusual or unique situation" (as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 74). In the present study, the intrinsic case under investigation was the practice of using Facebook as a peer assessment tool by a small group of visual art education students during 2013-2014 academic year. It was considered unusual or unique because this rather informal yet pedagogical and innovative practice was completely initiated and sustained by the learners.

2.2. Context and Participants

The investigated case of using Facebook as a peer assessment tool was first noticed by the first researcher during her fieldwork as an instructor. She works at the educational faculty of a medium-scale university located at the eastern part of Turkey. During the 2013-2014 academic year, she was assigned to teach second-year Visual Art Education students a course entitled Instructional Technologies and Material Design. When she introduced the subject digital learning, some of the students mentioned about their specific Facebook group, where they regularly share and comment on the photographs of their paintings. This specific Facebook group was administered by a senior art teaching student the same department. Altough most of the participants in the group came from the same department, any peers interested in the group were welcome.

Table 1. Profiles of participating prospective art teachers

Participants (nicknames)	Profiles
Kamil	male, senior art teaching student, the founder and the administer of Facebook group
Fatih	male, senior art teaching student
Ali	male, senior art teaching student
Musa	male, senior art teaching student
Erdem	male, senior art teaching student
Yasin	male, senior art teaching student
Tugce	female, senior art teaching student
Hakan	male, second year art teaching student
Baris	male, second year art teaching student
Suna	female, second year art teaching student

Being informed about such a specific practice, both researchers decided to study this intrinsic case because it was "unusual and [had] merit in and of itself" (Creswell, 2012, p. 465). Next, researchers asked the group members to volunteer in an academic research. The procedure

rather followed a chain sampling method, where "information-rich key informants or critical cases" (Patton, 2002, p.237) were accumulated by asking each student for the next participant. Eventually, a total of ten voluntary visual-art education students, mostly seniors, who actively involved in the peer assessment process on Facebook accepted to get involved into the study. Detailed information about the participants can be traced in Table 1.

2.3. Data collection and analysis

The case study design is characterized with use of multiple sources of data collected through observations, interviews, documents, audiovisual materials, pictures, scrapbooks, e-mails, archival records or physical artifacts (Creswell, 2007, 2012; Yin, 2003). Thus, in order to collect multiple data about whether and how this specific practice of peer-assessment via Facebook worked for visual-art students, face-to-face focus group interviews were conducted with the members of Facebook group in two sessions, in addition to collecting online digital documents, including photographs of students' art and comments on them. During the focus group interviews, voluntary students were asked to explain and comment on their Facebook group and the practice of peer-assessment. The interviews, which lasted about three hours in total, were recorded by a voice-recorder. Obtained data through interviews and documents were analyzed using content analysis method through NVivo10 software program. Throughout the analysis the coding process was compared and contrasted by both researchers. When there was a disagreement between both analysts, briefs were arranged to reach complete consensus. Also, both the process and products of the analysis were exposed to the audit of the external consultants to examine whether the findings, interpretations, and conclusions are credible. Finally, as part of member checking, the participants' views were asked to confirm the findings and interpretations (Creswell, 2007)

3. RESULTS

The analysis of the multiple data revealed that the use of Facebook as a Web 2.0 technology for peer assessment purposes is an informal but pedagogical and innovative practice with several advantages and disadvantages to be handled for better results. As it is apparent in Figure 1, the peer assessment at Facebook in art education context has both positive and negative aspects.

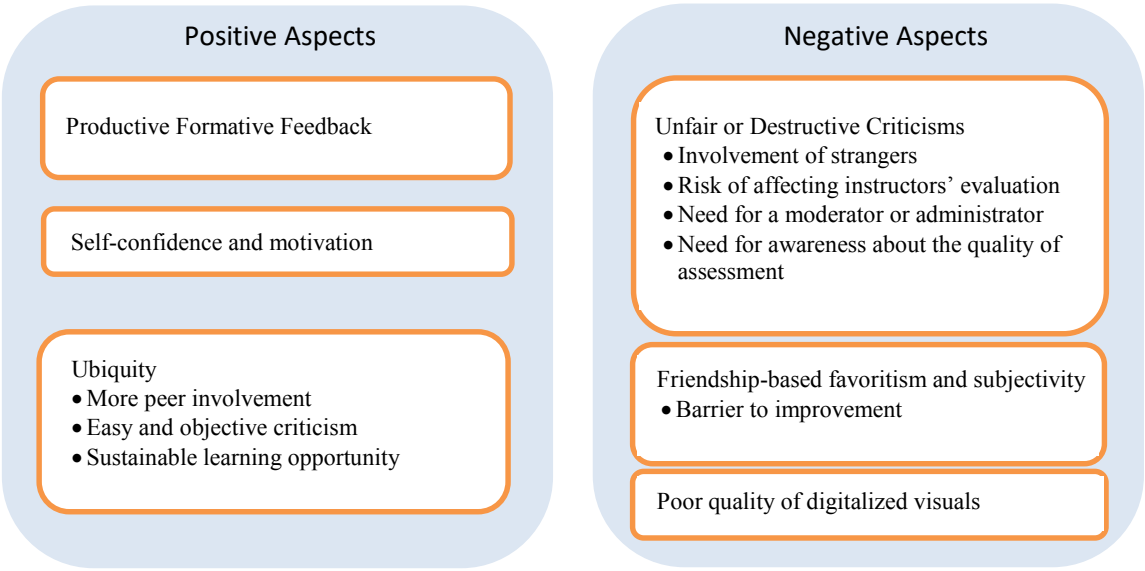

Figure 1. Views of participants concerning peer-assessment at Facebook

3.1. Productive Formative Feedback

Participants emphasized that publishing a piece of painting on Facebook means exposing it to the artistic appreciation and/or criticism of many potential artists. Receiving practical and formative feedback from others on Facebook helps them get aware of some problematic, defectful, or immature aspects of their work. Below is an example of how a senior, Musa, commented on the proportional deficiencies of the drawing, with two *likes* indicating others also agreed with the feedback.

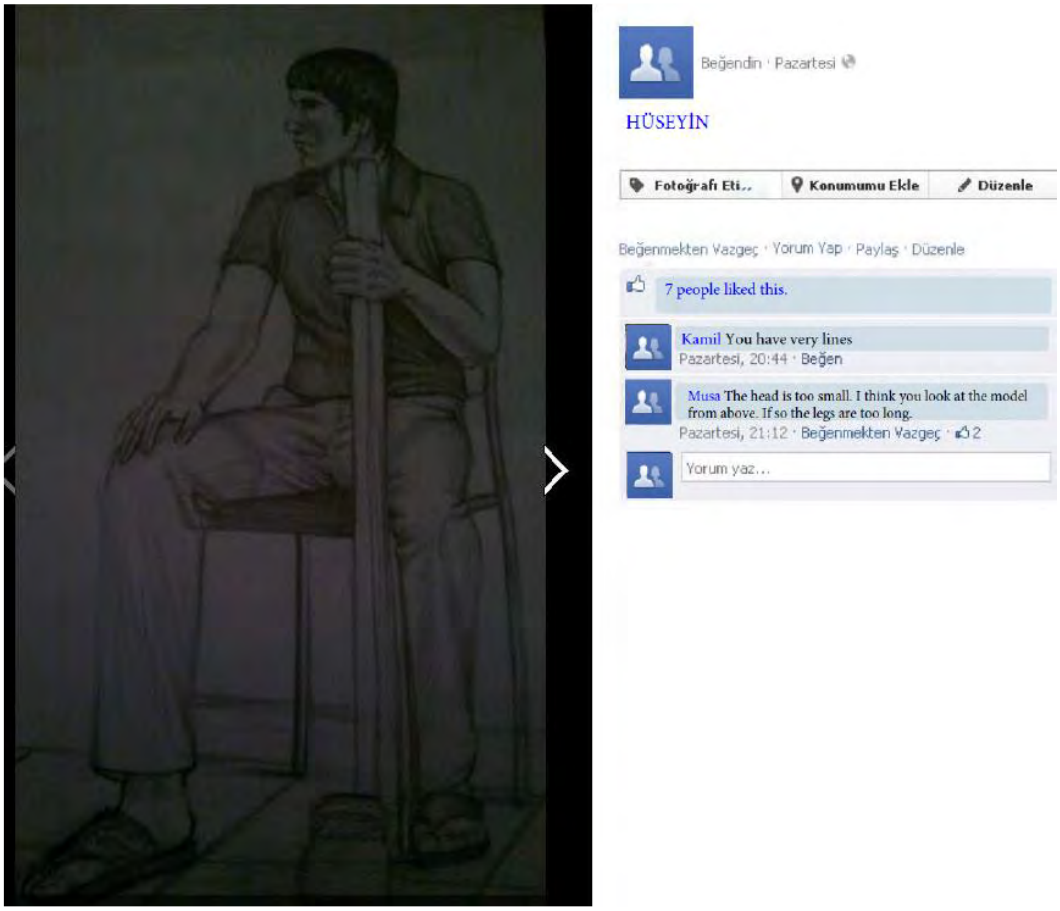

Figure 2. A screenshot of example peer assessment of the painting on Facebook

Participants believed such productive feedback is beneficial for the improvement of their artistic skills. Senior art students Fatih, Ali, Musa and Tugce expressed how they formatively benefited from the Facebook sharings as below:

> *Fatih: "Eventually, a painting expresses what it is supposed to express to the extent that the target audience feel, not that you want to express. Therefore, receiving feedback on Facebook tell me to what extend I was able to express what I wanted to."*
>
> *Ali: "Comments on my painting help me notice my defects on the work and contribute to me one hundred percent."*
>
> *Musa: "Criticisms from my friends on my works on Facebook give me idea about how to continue with my work. These criticisms perhaps make the most contribution to my self-assessment.*
>
> *Tugce: "I have benefited a lot from the comments of those people who can look at my work from a different perspective. In case of negative criticisms on my painting, I check over it again, contemplate on whatever impairs the integrity of the painting, and try to concentrate to fix those points."*

3.2. Self-confidence and Motivation

In addition to its positive formative function, Facebook-based peer assessment also boosted students' self-confidence and motivation. Participants thought, as expressed by Musa and Baris below, positive peer assessment increased their self-confidence in their artistic skills. Besides, it motivated them to improve their current work or produce new ones. Surprisingly, while some participants (e.g. Kamil and Ali) stated they were motivated especially from positive feedback, some others (e.g. Fatih, and Hakan) asserted that negative feedback was also a source of motivation for them.

> *Musa: "Especially when my friends appreciate my pencil drawings on the net, this gives me confidence."*
> *Baris: "Though it may seem insignificant, actually when our paintings are appreciated by people, we feel happy and confident.*
> *Kamil: "Especially when the comments are positive, we put more importance on our work and we enjoy the work much more."*
> *Ali: "When my peers' feedbacks are positive, this gives me positive reinforcement for my next works."*

As it can be seen in Figure 3, the painting received many *likes* and simple positive comments were made, not necessarily including complex technical evaluations. The peers' dialog seems to be encouraging and motivating others to share their paintings as well.

The source of motivation in case of negative feedback is characterized with some ambition or determination to do better for some students:

> *Fatih: "Actually I like the negative comments more. When negative comments are received, I can say 'Ok, these are my deficiencies".*
> *Hakan: "However, I think negative comments are more advantageous. They help us do better job."*

3.3. Ubiquity

Compared to the other advantages, i.e. formative feedback, self-confidence and motivation, which can be alternatively achieved through face-to-face encounters, *ubiquity* seems to be a unique advantage of the Facebook-based peer assessment. Referring to the ability to *happen whenever and wherever needed* (Peng et al., 2009), ubiquitous nature of Facebook-based peer assessment enables the students to share easily their works with more peers or see works of others including those from upper classes in the same department (see Hakan and Baris below) or peers from departments of different faculties at different universities (see Kamil below). Students especially highlight the role of mobile communication tools like smartphones and internet in facilitating the ubiguious nature of Facebook-based peer assessment. Since ubiqutious way of peer-assessment through Facebook has the potential to involve more peers to the process, previously mentioned advantages including formative feedback and self-confidence and motivation are enjoyed more compared to face-to-face peer assessment. Also the distant nature of assessment encourages peers to *criticize more easily and objectively* compared to face-to-face assessment (see Ali below):

> *Hakan: "We are in second year. We feel happy when we have feedback from fellows in upper classes. This helps improve us. Facebook is necessary. We are not always together with our friends. We can communicate more easily via Facebook."*

Figure 3. A screenshot of example peer assessment of the painting on Facebook

> *Baris: "It takes longer time if ask some of our friends in person to comment on our works. However, Facebook is fine… for a fact everybody can see and comment on your work. "*
>
> *Kamil: "People from different universities join our group. We can see each other's works. With their participation, we gain different point of views. Internet and smartphones have become an inevitable part of lives and thanks to them I can communicate with peers studying at different universities. We can have access to everybody via the Facebook pages we have developed."*
>
> *Ali: "When asked in face, we cannot always tell each other the negative aspects of a work, thinking that it would be unkind. We can give negative more easily on Facebook. When it is not face-to-face, comments are more realistic."*

Still an advantage of ubiquitous nature of Facebook-based feedback, *sustainable learning opportunity* stands out to be a strong advantage as highlighted by the some students (e.g. Hakan). Sustainability of learning refers to the ability to follow the lesson asynchronously even after the lesson or the term has finished. Participants generally believed that this practice should be a formal or informal part of the lesson, because the time constraints of the lesson is removed as they can reciprocally share their works on Facebook and have comments from the instructor and other peers anytime. Even after the students successfully complete the course, they have the chance to follow the course content and sustainably learn new things.

> *Hakan: "I think it is fine. For example, we can share and have comments on our ongoing works from the instructor and peers at any time on the Facebook group created. Otherwise, we would have to go to the instructor's room, which would be a waste of time both for the instructor and us."*

Although less in number compared to positive ones, some negative aspects were also attributed to Facebook-based peer assessment practice by the students. These negative aspects were categorized under the main themes of *unfair or destructive criticisms, friendship-based favoritism and subjectivity,* and *poor quality of digitalized visuals*.

3.4. Unfair or Destructive Criticisms

As reported earlier, some participants asserted negative feedback was a source of motivation for them. Nevertheless, some other students (see Suna's comments below) complained about unfair or destructive criticisms about their works exhibited on Facebook. It was clear that these negative criticisms either unfair or destructive offended and discouraged the students:

> *Suna: "If comments are negative, they should be like a remark helping the painter notice mistakes without offending… However, there are unfair and ungrounded criticisms beside the justified ones. There are comments not made to criticize the work but to insult the artist as if the commentator had some personal issues against the artist. And this demoralizes that person. No matter how much you enjoyed painting the assigned homework or appreciated the final work, you suddenly lose your affection for it."*

Unfair or destructive criticism may sound to be a common potential problem in case of face-to-face peer assessment. However, what seems unique to Facebook-based peer assessment is the involvement of strangers. Suna justifies this by saying "*we can change the privacy settings in our personal Facebook accounts, but in group's Facebook account people we don't know may also see our works and some of them just write comments to demoralize on purpose.*"

Fatih and Suna also voiced their concerns about the possibility that these negative criticisms may affect the formal evaluation of the instructor about the assigned work. Thus, most participants were in favor of having a moderator or administrator in charge of monitoring and pre-checking the sharings and comments on the group's Facebook account for appropriacy (e.g. Tugce and Yasin):

> Tugce: "*I believe there should be someone administrating the account. Otherwise everything can get out of hand and very rude comments can appear."*
>
> Yasin: "*Definitely there must be a moderator. He/she can intervene in case things go wrong. Nothing undesired happened so far in my personal account, but we have witnessed many harsh arguments."*

Participants also believed personally that they should be aware whether the criticism comes from a knowledgeable person and should be taken into consideration or not. Some indicators mentioned regarding the quality of assessment were the richness and justification of criticisms, and the quality of the paintings of the person himself.

3.5. Friendship-based Favoritism and Subjectivity

Among the negative aspects, the most frequently cited one was the favoritism in peer judgments while assessing someone's work due to friendship. Participants emphasized that generally friends hesitate to criticize and tend to comment more positively their friends' works. Participants also assert that these friendship-based subjective comments pose a major barrier preventing the opportunity for improvement.

Figure 4. A screenshot of example peer assessment of the painting on Facebook

> *Kamil: "It happens that peers make positive comments to their close friends. I uploaded the painting of a friend of mine* (see Figure 4). *The work, a pencil drawing, was not very good actually. Yet the comments were all positive. There were only suggestions about minor corrections. Later, the owner of the painting commented on his own painting saying 'awful work'. Despite all the positive comments he made a self-criticism".*

3.6. Poor Quality of Digitalized Visuals

Finally some participants admitted that unless the photos of the paintings are taken with high resolution, there is a loss of quality in visuals, as it is exemplified in Figure 2 where the dim light makes it difficult to clearly see the picture. That prevents the peers to clearly see the details and objectively assess the quality of the painting:

> Tugce: "*I think it is better to assess the painting in the workshop, because on Facebook the details cannot be seen. Sometimes, the quality of the photograph may be very poor."*

4. DISCUSSION

This intrinsic case study investigated the merit of Facebook-based peer assessment in terms of art teacher education in higher education context. The results suggested that participants were generally positive about the online peer assessment practices they informally and reciprocally performed in their art education classes. Considering that young people have embraced the digital world as intuitive learners of ICT (Wilks et al., 2012), it is inevitable that they explore innovative ways of integrating learning and ICT, including social media tools. Likewise, integrating education with online platforms is a current trend at all levels (Cooke, 2017; Hocevar, 2013; Lau, 2017; Wen & Tsai, 2006). More specifically, using online peer assessment is becoming a popular practice for different subjects at various levels (see Loureiro et al., 2012; Thomas, Martin & Pleasants, 2011). For example, in an initial attempt Liang and Tsai (2010) utilized online peer assessment to facilitate students' learning by science writing. Liu and Lee (2013) investigated the influence of peer observation and feedback on learning Statistics in Education and Psychology, which resulted in improved learning and positive impressions on the part of students. Shih (2011) investigated the effect of incorporating Facebook and peer assessment with English writing class, which proved to be interesting, motivating, cooperative and effective.

The main reason for the positive views towards using Facebook as a peer assessment tool was the formative feedback students received which worked productively in improving their paintings. The formative and productive nature of peer assessment is the most frequently cited pedagogical strength of it. Previous research revealed that students find peer-assessment or feedback valuable because it helps them see their mistakes and shortcomings from different perspectives (Bay 2011), make valuable modifications to their work (Liu & Lee 2013), improve their assignments (Rubin & Turner 2012), prevent some errors and provide hints for making progress (Lin et al., 2001), and increase their awareness of their strengths and weaknesses (Koc 2011). More specifically, recent studies on online peer assessment practices proved that it is favorable and beneficial on the part of students (Liang & Tsai 2010; Liu & Lee 2013; Loureiro et al., 2012).

This productive feedback, no matter negative or positive, motivated or increased students' self-confidence to produce better works. This kind of increase in motivation and self-confidence is known to characterize peer-assessment, which in turn brings better academic achievement (Topping, 1998).

Among others, ubiquity was found to be the unique advantage of the Facebook-based peer assessment as it refers to the ability to happen whenever and wherever needed (Peng, Su, Chou & Tsai 2009). Ubiquitous learning environments enable "access (to) learning content from anywhere at any time, and to communicate with colleagues or lecturers synchronously and asynchronously much more frequently" (Hummel & Hlavacs, 2003, p.1). Thanks to the ubiquitous nature of Facebook-based peer assessment practice, more peers can involve assessment process reciprocally, make criticism more easily and objectively, and enjoy the opportunity to earn sustainably. This is actually the most important reason that web-based portfolios and assessments have gained popularity: due to the accessibility of network and the limitations of their paper-based counterparts (Chang et al., 2011). In similar studies, Facebook or similar web-technologies were also reported to facilitate peer interaction during peer assessment (Shih 2011), provide students with more opportunities of peer interaction beyond the constraints from time and locations (Sung et al., 2005); peers other than the class community take part in peer assessment process (Keles & Demirel, 2011). In lifelong learning perspective, the use of Facebook in art education for peer assessment can be said to be a contemporary ubiqutious practice as against its classroom-base face-to-face alternative, since both knowledge and skills cannot be confined to the school-based training only (Uysal, 2008).

Contrary to the pros about the Facebook-based peer assessment practice in art education, there were also cons mentioned. One major disturbing aspect was the perceived unfair or destructive criticisms especially coming from the strangers, which makes the assessed students feel offended or discouraged. Similarly, Koc (2011) found that students can feel under pressure and anxious about not being assessed objectively online. Participants were further stressed that these negative criticisms might affect the instructors' evaluation. Although peer-assessment is more pedagogically used for formative purposes (Sluijsman et al., 1998) and its use for scoring purposes is not welcome especially by students (Lin et al., 2001; Patton, 2012; Wen & Tsai, 2006), this still may be the case. However, peer assessment should not only be used for scoring (Bay, 2011). If used for scoring purposes, PA cannot be reliable or valid because some students may tend to give extremely low or high scores (Lin et al., 2001). Moreover, using peer-assessment for summative purposes may spoil the rapport in class. Thus, it should be made clear in such online platforms that formative peer responses or criticisms are not done to measure academic achievement but to improve the work. Also a recommendation to prevent this unfair or destructive critics was to assign a moderator or administrator. In Shih's (2011) work on online peer assessment, for example, instructor himself served as a facilitator and monitor evaluating and commenting on students' work and responses (Shih, 2011). For better

results, it is also suggested to set-up, monitor or manage the peer assessment processes (Topping, 1998; Wheater et al., 2005). Finally, a last recommendation against unfair and destructive criticisms was to raise awareness among the peers about distinguishing between high quality and low quality criticisms. As a matter of fact, assessing peers may not have adequate knowledge to evaluate others' works (Lin et al., 2001). Thus, before assessing peers should be trained about the rules, principles and criteria (Bay, 2011; Cihanoğlu, 2008).

On the other end of the continuum, there were ungrounded positive assessments by close friends. Students complained about being complimented, because it is a barrier to improvement. Friendship-based subjectivity of peer assessment process has been widely criticized in previous research (Lin et al., 2001; Uysal, 2008). To prevent this it can be suggested that extensive training should be given (Sluijsmans et al., 1998), and teachers or whoever is in charge should ask students to be specific in their feedback, particularly with regard to the problems in assessees' work, and to provide suggestions (Lu & Law, 2012).

Last but not the least, most critical criticism about using peer-assessment in art education on Facebook was about the poor quality of digitalized visuals. While the merit of producing art with digital technologies is disputable (Wilks et al., 2012), reproducing it, even in poor quality, for assessment purposes cannot be acceptable. Then it becomes a matter of validity and reliability against usability. That is, despite the availability of a highly usable (ubiqutious) online platform, assessors cannot assess the real merit of the painting because they cannot see the details. Thus, it is highly recommended that peers photograph their works using high resolution settings.

5. CONCLUSIONS

We attempted to answer whether peer-assessment on Facebook work in visual art education through an intrinsic case study. For the investigated group, Facebook-integrated peer-assessment practice yielded productive and innovative results in terms of visual-art education. Most of the students had positive opinions regarding peer observation and comments via Facebook. In general, participants stated that such peer assessment is beneficial, since it helps them notice their deficiencies, look at their work from a different perspective and improve their artistic skills; thanks to this productive feedback their motivation and self-confidence is boosted. It was also concluded that peer-assessment on Facebook has the advantage of ubiquity, allowing more peer involvement, easy and objective criticism, and sustainable learning opportunities. Yet, there are some drawbacks regarding this practice. The participants also emphasized the disadvantages of the practice of peer assessment on Facebook, which included the subjective comments (either favorable or unfavorable) biased according to the degree of friendship, and destructive comments demotivating and discouraging the students from sharing their paintings. A rather technical drawback of Facebook assessment via photographed painting was the deterioration in the visual quality of the painting, which allegedly affected the accuracy of assessment.

Acknowledgement

The findings of the research were presented as a paper at International Congress on Education for the Future: Issues and Challenges (ICEFIC 2015) held on 13-15 May 2015, in Ankara University, Turkey

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