Study of Cognitive Structures of Professional Music Education Students Regarding the Concept of Aesthetics

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Abstract

Music is related to aesthetics like any field of fine arts. Just as an understanding of art that lacks aesthetics and philosophy cannot be conceived, there is no general music education devoid of these. In this study, it was aimed to examine the cognitive structures of the aesthetics concept of the students studying professional music education. The participants were 88 students in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade at the Department of Music, Musicology and Turkish Music at a public university in Turkey in 2022-2023 academic year. It was followed the qualitative research method and used descriptive research design. A word association test (WAT) was used as data collection tool. In word association tests, the words that are associated with a series of keywords given to the research group are expected to be listed within the given time. In this context, participants were given the concept "aesthetics" and asked to write their associations and to make a related sentence about that concept. The content analysis was used in the analysis process. The results of the study showed that the majority of music students had misconceptions about the concept of aesthetics.

Keywords: Aesthetics, music students, cognitive structure, word association test.

Introduction

Although the approach of aesthetics as a science, its naming and examination through certain definitions date as recently as the 18th century, it can be said that aesthetic relations with objects, arguments that investigate and question beauty, date back as far as the history of reasoning. Since Baumgarten's definition of aesthetics as "the science of sensory knowledge" (Tunalı, 1998, p. 14) and naming it as a *science,* many contradictory and parallel ideas have been grounded: Contrary to the idea that aesthetics is a branch of science, there is the view that treats it as a philosophical area; on the other hand, some views keep aesthetics apart from the ideas dealing with the philosophy of art in the same frame. They offer proposals defining aesthetics over each of the elements they cover, and when all these contemplations are taken into consideration, it is realized that it is impossible to make a single definition of aesthetics. However, Ziss's (2016, p. 130) definition proposes the opportunity to understand aesthetics not only as the science of beauty but also in a broader framework: Aesthetics is *"the science of the artistic assimilation of reality, and above all the science of the laws of art and the theory of artistic creation"*. Considering the emotive nature of art, it is understood that the knowledge gained from artistic experiences differs from that acquired through reason, and therefore, aesthetics is acknowledged as a means of perception through the senses (Aykut, 2018). Art does not only appeal to the mind through knowledge but also to the soul and self of the person (Soykan, 2020).

To fully understand aesthetics, first, it is useful to recognize the concepts in which it is integrated into existence. When we look at the concept of aesthetic value, which is one of them, or the concept of beauty with its more widespread use, aesthetic definitions that focus on beauty such as "science of beauty" and "philosophy of beauty" are frequently encountered in many sources written on aesthetics. It can be said that aesthetics is a body of thought that seeks beauty and aims to determine the criteria of beauty, to understand and perceive it. Nevertheless, as Tunalı (1998) stated, considering aesthetics only as a science that examines the value of beauty or as a pure philosophy of beauty narrows the realm of his research. Every artwork that has aesthetic value cannot be characterized by the term 'beautiful' used in everyday language; disturbing, tragic, frightening, funny, irritating, and even ugly value applies within aesthetic limits. The main reason for this is that the concept of aesthetic beauty has a different meaning from the beautiful used in daily language, and this difference lies in its power to convey the situations

and feelings that cannot be described as beauty to the receivers through the artwork and to evoke aesthetic pleasure.

Aesthetic experience, in which the subject's attention is completely focused on the aesthetic object, goes beyond time and space and is different from everyday experiences, arises from encounters with works of art (Fubini, 2014). The fundamental elements covered by aesthetic experience stand out as aesthetic object, aesthetic subject, the subject's aesthetic attitude towards the object, aesthetic pleasure in the subject, aesthetic taste, aesthetic feeling, and aesthetic judgment. Although the progress of music aesthetics, a specific area of aesthetics with well-founded propositions, dates to the post-19th century, reflections on music date back to Ancient Greece. Music aesthetics, as an effort to create and find beauty in the context of musical works, investigate the criteria of beauty and the perception of taste in music (Yıldırım & Koç, 2006). The aesthetic analysis process of music also requires blending different styles and period information. In this sense, it is important to develop musical manners (Torun, 2021).

Musical beauty, in its historical development from antiquity to the present, was first evaluated on a mathematical basis and then discussed with its pleasing and soulful aspects. It took on a religious identity for a while, then it was placed on a humanist basis, and the idea that it was spiritual and universal came to the fore. Later, it focused on social problems, and by getting rid of them, a new understanding of music, which was independent of emotion and time, developed in the last century. It is essential to have knowledge and sensitivity about the historical development of the understanding of beauty in music and the meanings attributed to music, and different ways of thinking about music, to approach a musical work in a holistic rather than a singular way while analyzing a musical work aesthetically. In addition to the development of the world we live in and the technique, the phenomenon of art and aesthetic evaluation become an inseparable part of human activities due to the development of human consciousness, emotion, and intuition (Doğan, 1975). To perceive and interpret art and to have a critical view, it is necessary to know aesthetic concepts and to comprehend their relations with each other. Considering the intertwining of art and aesthetics, individuals who choose to create, produce, interpret, and think about art as a profession are expected to have knowledge about aesthetics and the basic concepts of aesthetics and to adopt an aesthetic perspective. Like every field of fine arts, music is also related to aesthetics; music aesthetics explores the relations between composer, performer, and listener and the criteria of these relations regarding beauty. It is impossible to think of an understanding of art independent of aesthetics and philosophy, and there is no general music education without them. Soykan (2020), the influence of music on the individual and society has been known since ancient Chinese teachings and that aesthetics and music education form a basis for social-moral education, and adds: "A person who has the soul-body integrity created with mental education and by becoming able to perceive real musical works becomes free with the competence he has acquired in using his judgment on the one hand and in revealing his behavior style on the other hand". Besides, the aesthetic point of view goes beyond just an attitude towards art and works of art and becomes a way of life; its effect is observed in every aspect of our lives. In line with these reasons, it is essential to reveal the knowledge levels, approaches, and misconceptions of the aesthetic concepts of the artists, educators, and art scientist candidates who receive vocational art education.

Word association tests are a method that has been used widely and for a long time among the various methods used to evaluate the connections between the related concepts that have taken place in the long-term memories of people regarding a certain concept, and to reveal whether there are

sufficient and meaningful relationships between these concepts (Bahar & Özatlı, 2003, p. 75). It is based on the assumption that giving a stimulus word on the relevant topic and asking the respondent to freely associate the ideas that come to his mind with this word/concept provides access to the mental representations of the stimulus concept (Hovardas & Korfiatis, 2006).

In recent years, research has been carried out with participant groups in different fields and with different characteristics, that word association tests are used as the main data collection tool. Some of these can be listed as follows: Aykaç, Bilgin, and Bacakoğlu (2016), regarding the concepts related to drama; Ünal and Er (2017), regarding abstract concepts within the scope of social studies course; Gerekten (2018), on the concept of authority; Balbağ and Kaya (2019) and Çetin and Ünsal (2019) regarding the values; Atabek Yiğit and Balkan Kıyıcı (2019), regarding the concept of teacher; Alaca, Yaman, and Nas (2020), regarding concepts that represent certain life skills; Nacaroğlu and Kızkapan (2021), conducted studies on the concepts of knowledge and learning and Özaydın (2022), studies on the concept of a chorus. In terms of art and aesthetics, Karip (2019) and Özalp (2020) studied visual arts teacher candidates' perceptions of the concept of aesthetics. In the fields related to music, there is no study in this direction. In this principle, in this study, it was aimed to determine how the concept of aesthetics is perceived by the students who receive professional music education through the word association test, which is used to analyze the cognitive structures of important concepts in many different disciplines, and the answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What are the cognitive structures of the students receiving professional music education regarding the concept of aesthetics?

2. What are the misconceptions of the students who receive professional music education regarding the concept of aesthetics?

Method

This research, in which the qualitative method is followed, has a descriptive identity. In the description of qualitative research by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2021), there is an emphasis on trying to present perceptions and events in their natural conditions and realistically in line with research problems. In the qualitative tradition, which is based on an interpretive understanding, there is a concern not to establish cause and effect relationships, but to analyze facts and events with an in-depth and descriptive approach. It can be said that most of the social studies aim to describe situations and events (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Descriptive research, which is frequently done in the field of education, aims to describe a phenomenon or situation in detail and tries to explain what entities, events, objects, institutions, and groups are (Büyüköztürk et al., 2009; Karasar, 2006). In this study, it is tried to reveal the "what" of the cognitive perceptions of the study group regarding the concept of aesthetics.

Study Group

The study group of the research consists of 88 students who continue their education in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades of the Music, Musicology, and Turkish Music departments of a public university in Turkey in the 2022-2023 academic year and participate voluntarily in the study. In the selection of the sample, the purposive sampling method was followed. Purposive sampling is a nonrandom sampling technique and the researcher determines some criteria in line with the research purpose and selects the people or institutions that meet these criteria (Johnson & Christensen, 2019, p. 714). The specified criteria are that the sample group has not taken an aesthetic course and that professional music education departments with different programs and mission are located under the same roof.

Table 1. *The profile of the participants*

		N	%
Gender	F	39	44,31
	M	49	55,68
Grade	1	35	39,77
	2	15	17,04
	3	10	11,36
	4	28	31,81
Department	Music	9	10,22
	Musicology	39	44,31
	Turkish Music	40	45,45
Total		88	100

Data Collection Tool and Data Collection Process

Research data were collected with the Word Association Test (WAT). Word association, one of the strategies developed to provide and measure conceptual understanding, is used as an alternative assessment and evaluation technique. In addition, it is frequently used in the literature to detect misconceptions and reveal the cognitive structure of a certain concept. In this technique, the participants express other concepts that are associated with a given key concept related to the determined topic, mostly within 30 seconds. It is assumed that the sequential answers "reveal the connections between the concepts in the cognitive structure and show the semantic closeness. In line with semantic closeness, the closeness of two concepts to each other in semantic memory is an indication of the close relationship between them, and the answers to the concepts in this close relationship will be faster (Bahar et al., 2003).

The word association test used as a data collection tool consists of two stages. First, after the participants were provided with information about their department, class, and gender. In the first stage, they were then asked to write down an aesthetic key concept five times in a row, leaving the answer blank each time. After that, participants were given 30 seconds to write down five words that the key concept reminded them of. In the second stage, they were expected to write a sentence about what the key concept meant to them. This "relevant sentence" was considered necessary in terms of providing more detailed information about the participants' view of the concept of aesthetics. Because a 'related sentence' is typically more complex and higher-level than a single-word answer, various factors such as the scientific validity and potential misconceptions of the sentence can affect the evaluation process (Ercan, Taşdere, & Ercan, 2010).

What are the concepts you associate with "aesthetics"? Write down the first 5 concepts that come to your mind within a period of 30 seconds.
Aesthetics:
Aesthetics:
Aesthetics:
Aesthetics:
Aesthetics:
What does the concept of "aesthetics" mean to you?
A sample sentence related with aesthetics

Figure 1. A sample page of WAT

Data Analysis

The data obtained with the word association test were analyzed by the content analysis method. Content analysis is a research method that provides an objective tool to make inferences from written, oral, or visual data sources to define and measure certain situations. It is based on conceptualizing the

data in line with the meaning they contain and explaining the meaningful connections between these concepts through themes. It is more than a counting process and aims to interpret the results in terms of the context or the environment in which they are produced (Downe & Wamblot, 1992; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). A concept is an abstract representation of an event, object, or action that the researcher deems significant in the data; it serves as a nomenclature. The purpose of this naming is to group events and phenomena according to their common or similar characteristics (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). These concepts lead the researcher to the themes, and through the themes, the phenomena can become more organized and understandable (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Microsoft Excel program was used to organize the data in the analysis process. First, the responses of 88 participants were listed and analyzed. Responses with missing concepts or no clear connection between the concepts and the sentence were considered invalid and excluded from the analysis. The valid responses were numbered and subsequently analyzed in detail. Prominent and repetitive concepts or words were identified and coded, and all words were listed alphabetically. Finally, a frequency table was created. In line with the number of repetitions of concepts/words, those that are used only once are not included in the next steps. The expressions that were repeated twice or more and that were valid were gathered under the categories/themes created in line with their similarities to each other. Finally, frequency tables related to the themes were created, and the findings were interpreted with sample sentences.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the research, two researchers independently matched concepts and categories. After the agreement and disagreement between the two encoders were determined numerically by comparing the category lists, the reliability calculation was made using Miles and Huberman's (1994) reliability formula [reliability = consensus / (consensus + disagreement) x 100]. The agreement rate between the two encoders was calculated as 89% [= 41/ (41+5) x 100] out of a total of 46 valid words.

Ethical Permits of Research

In this study, all the rules specified to be followed within the scope of "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" were complied with. None of the actions specified under the heading "Actions Contrary to Scientific Research and Publication Ethics", which is the second part of the directive, have been taken.

Ethics Committee Permission Information:

Name of the committee that made the ethical evaluation = Ordu University Socai and Human Sciences Ethics Committee

Date of ethical review decision=27/10/2022

Ethics assessment document issue number=2022-206

Findings

In this part of the research, the analysis of the data obtained with the WAT is included. The frequency and percentage distributions of the concepts and categories that emerged because of the data analyzed using the content analysis method were evaluated.

A total of 24 answers, in which the same word was repeated more than once by the same person, were excluded from the research. When examining the answers of the 64 participants included in the

study, it was determined that 111 different concepts related to aesthetics were derived from their responses. Within the scope of the study, 66 words that were used only once out of the 111 words derived by the students were excluded. According to the content analysis, 45 words were collected under 4 different categories. These categories are the source of aesthetics has emerged as aesthetic qualifications and terms, aesthetic values, and misconceptions. The concepts in Table 2 are listed alphabetically with their frequency distributions.

Table 2. *Words derived concerning the concept of eesthetics*

Concepts	f	%	Concepts	f	%	Concepts	f	%
Abstract	1	0,4	Fragrance	1	0,4	Seda Sayan	2	0,8
Ajda Pekkan	2	0,8	Hairdresser	1	0,4	Self-confidence	1	0,4
Appearance	9	3,6	Harmony/			Sensation	1	0,4
Art	12	4,8	Harmonious	4	1,6	Size	1	0,4
Artificial	5	2	Human	2	0,8	Sky	1	0,4
Artistic	1	0,4	Intake	3	1,2	Smile	1	0,4
Attenuation	1	0,4	Landscape	2	0,8	Socrates	1	0,4
Attractive	1	0,4	Life	1	0,4	Song	1	0,4
Beautiful/			Light	1	0,4	Spirit	4	1,6
Beauty	51	20,4	Lip	5	2	Status	1	0,4
Binding	1	0,4	Literature	1	0,4	Stylish	1	0,4
Body	5	2	Love	3	1,2	Subjective	1	0,4
Botox	4	1,6	Luminous	1	0,4	Surgery	3	1,2
Bulent Ersoy	1	0,4	Makeup	1	0,4	Symmetric	2	0,8
Car	1	0,4	Masculinity	1	0,4	Symmetry	3	1,2
Care	4	1,6	Melody	1	0,4	Taste	3	1,2
Change	1	0,4	Music	2	0,8	Theory	1	0,4
Charm	2	0,8	Natural	3	1,2	Therapy	1	0,4
Chorus	1	0,4	Nature	3	1,2	Thought	2	0,8
Concrete	1	0,4	Neat	5	2	Tone	1	0,4
Constructivism	1	0,4	Nose	14	5,6	Turku	1	0,4
Cosmetics	2	0,8	Nuance	1	0,4	Unnatural	1	0,4
Creativity	2	0,8	Operation	6	2,4	Variation	1	0,4
Culture	1	0,4	Orchestra	1	0,4	Visual Arts	1	0,4
Dance	1	0,4	Order	4	1,6			
Demo	1	0,4	Ornament	1	0,4			
Design	1	0,4	Passion	1	0,4			
Desired	2	0,8	Patient	1	0,4			
Difference	1	0,4	Pattern	1	0,4			
Doctor	4	1,6	Perception	2	0,8			
Drawing	1	0,4	Perfect	2	0,8			
Dream	1	0,4	Philosophy	2	0,8			
Elegance	4	1,6	Physical appearance	1	0,4			
Embellishment	1	0,4	Physics	2	0,8			
Emotion	1	0,4	Piano	1	0,4			
Eye	2	0,8	Plastic	1	0,4			
Eyebrow	2	0,8	Pleasant	9	3,6			
Eye Pleasure	1	0,4	Point of view	3	1,2			
Face	2	0,8	Positive	1	0,4			
Fashion	1	0,4	Proportion	4	1,6			
Figure	1	0,4	Regulation	1	0,4			
Fineness	3	1,3	Relativity	1	0,4			
Flexibility	1	0,4	Required	1	0,4			
Formalism	1	0,4	Scene	1	0,4			
Format	1	0,4	Sculpture	3	1,2			
Total							250	100

According to Table 2, 111 different words in total, 250 words related to the concept of aesthetics, were derived by the participants. The expressions most frequently repeated by individuals receiving professional music education are beauty (f=51), nose (f=14), stage (f=12), appearance (f=9), pleasant (f=9), surgery (f=6), lip (f=5), neat (f=5), body (f=5), botox (f=4), harmony/harmonious (f=4), doctor (f=4), grace (f=4), order (f=4), care (f=4), proportion (f=4), spirit (f=4).

Table 3. *Categories created in line with the concepts related to the concept of aesthetics*

Categories	N	f	%
Aesthetic Qualifications and Terms	19	8	9,35
The source of aesthetics	31	9	15,27
Aesthetic Values	57	7	28,07
Misconceptions	96	22	47,29
Total	203	46	100

As can be seen in the Table 3 large part of the cognitive structures of the participants regarding the concept of aesthetics consists of the category of misconceptions (n=96) derived from 22 different words. These words constitute 47.29% of the total words derived and have the highest rate revealing the quality of the cognitive structures of the participants regarding the concept of aesthetics. The distribution of other cognitive structures into categories according to the frequency of use; it is the category of aesthetic values derived from 7 different words (n=57), the source of aesthetics from 9 different words (n=31) category, and the category of aesthetic qualifications and terms derived from 8 different words (n=19). The total number of frequencies was calculated as 46, as the concept of beauty was used in two different senses in the categories of aesthetic values and misconceptions.

Table 4. Distribution of words derived concerning the concept of aesthetics

Categories	Concepts	N	f	%
Aesthetic Terms and Qualifications	Elegance (3), Neat (3), Point of View (3), Charm (2), Taste (2), Creativity (2), Delicacy (2), Perception (2)	19	8	9,35
The Source of Aesthetics	Art (12), Nature (3), Sculpture (3), Love (3), Music (2), Philosophy (2), Human (2), Thought (2), Landscape (2)	31	9	15,27
Aesthetic Values	Beauty (36), Pleasant (7), Order (3), Symmetry (3), Harmony/Harmonious (3), Proportion (3), Perfect (2)	57	7	28,07
Misconceptions	Beatuful/Beauty (15), Nose (14,) Appearance (9), Operation (6), Body (5), Artificial (5), Lip (5), Botox (4), Doctor (4), Care (4), Surgery (3), Symmetric (2), Smooth (2), Physics (2), Eye (2), Eyebrow (2), Face (2), Unnatural (2), Ajda Pekkan (2), Seda Sayan (2), Cosmetics (2), Desired (2)	96	22	47,29
Total		250	46	100

As a result of the analysis of the data obtained in Table 4 the category with the least word derived was the category of aesthetic qualifications and terms (f=8). 8 words were repeated 19 times in total. The words in this category have a share of 9.35% in other categories. The most repeated words were elegance (f=3), neat (f=3), and point of view (f=3). In addition, the words "charm, taste, creativity, delicacy, and perception" were also included as words produced under this category.

The source of aesthetics category (f=9) has a share of 15.27% among other categories. 9 words were repeated 31 times in total. The most repeated words in this category were art (f=12), nature (f=3),

sculpture (f=3), and love (f=3). In addition, the words "philosophy, human, thought, and landscape" are also included as words produced under this category.

The category of aesthetic values (f=7) represents 28.07% of the total categories. Seven words have been repeated a total of 57 times, with "beautiful/beauty" being the most frequently used (f=36) followed by "pleasant" (f=7). Additionally, this category includes words such as "order," "symmetry," "harmony/harmonious," "proportion," and "perfect".

If the category with the most words is derived, the category of misconceptions (22) has a share of 47.29% among other categories. Among the most repetitive words in this category, the word beauty/beautiful (f=15) was included in this category because it was also included in the category of aesthetic values, but because it was determined to represent a human-specific appearance. The words most frequently repeated by the participants were nose (f=14), appearance (f=9), operation (f=6), body (f=5), artificial (5), lip (f=5), botox (f=4), doctor (f=4), care (f=4). Again, in this category, the words "surgery, symmetrical, smooth, unnatural, physique, eye, eyebrow, face, Ajda Pekkan, Seda Sayan, cosmetics, and desired" were included.

Table 5. Sample sentences derived by participants ın the concept of aesthetics

Categories	Sample Sentences
Aesthetic Qualification and Terms	*It is the sublime." (P89, 4th degree)* *"It is the personal development of perspective on the world." (P65, 4th degree)* *"To be naiver and more elegant. It is the reflection of that elegance people in the works one does." (P86, 4th degree)*
Source of Aesthetics	*"It is the beauty of nature." (P34, 2nd degree)* *"Appealing to the eye, ear, and mind; evoking art; these are the structures and concepts that are good for the soul." (P46, 1st degree)* *"It is the concept and science of artistic creativity, which is beautiful in art and life." (P55, 1st degree)* *"It is the beauty of art that is performed not only in the musical sense, but also, in every field." (P57, 1st degree)* *"Aesthetics for me is human thought." (P71, 3rd degree)*
Aesthetic Values	*"It is the harmony of all beauties in each other."(P3, 4th degree)* *"It is a beautiful concept that is pleasant when we look at it and listen to it." (P36, 2nd degree)* *"It is a regular and systematic beauty." (P58, 1st degree)* *"Aesthetics is a perspective that evaluates the concept of beauty without intellectual consciousness or intellectual consciousness." (P69, 4th degree)* *"It is perfection; the perfection of something." (P84, 4th degree)* *"Aesthetics is something that looks beautiful when understated." (P2, 3rd degree)*
Misconceptions	*"They are unnatural processes." (P20, 1st degree)* *"What a person does to feel good and beautiful." (P24, 2nd degree)* *"They are procedures applied with plastic surgery." (P30, 1st degree)* *"It is the correction of the limbs that are not liked or cause health problems." (P31, 1st degree)*

In Table 5 the related sentences formed by the individuals who receive vocational music education by associating them with the concept of aesthetics are given. Related sentences were classified in 4 different categories within the scope of the study. In the "Aesthetic Qualifications and Terms", "Source of Aesthetics" and "Aesthetic Values" categories, it is seen that the sentences formed by the participants regarding the concept of aesthetics are related to the philosophical existence of aesthetics, and in the "Misconceptions" category, aesthetics is associated with the surgical/medical aesthetic field.

Discussion and Conclusion

In line with the findings for the question, it was concluded that the cognitive structures of students who receive vocational music education regarding the concept of aesthetics are most strongly associated with the classification of 'aesthetic values,' specifically the concept of beautiful/beauty (f=36). When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that the same findings have been reached in similar studies on the concept of aesthetics (Karip, 2019; Özalp, 2020; Istók et al., 2009). The concept of beauty has been at the center of aesthetic debates from the ancient age to the present. Aesthetic thinking, which started with the question "What is beautiful?", has evolved into different approaches and views, and aesthetics has become a multidimensional body of thoughts beyond questioning only what is beautiful. As Tunalı (1998) emphasizes, to consider aesthetics as a science or thought that examines only the beautiful is to limit the discussion area of aesthetics; because values such as ugly, tragic, elegant, and sublime, as well as beautiful, fall into the research field of aesthetics.

The concept of art (f=12), which is the second most frequently associated and classified under 'sources of aesthetics', is the main research area in which aesthetics is directly related and nourished. Artistic creation is the most obvious of the sources with which aesthetics is related, and aesthetic beauty, unlike the concept of beauty used in daily life, exists in the value of the artwork created by the artist and the emotion it conveys to the receivers (Doğan, 1975).

In addition, pleasant (f=9), another concept most associated with aesthetics, is one of the prominent concepts in the discussions focusing on the concept of beauty in aesthetics. According to Hartman (1996), pleasant is a feeling value that belongs to subjects, not objects, as a value related to beauty (as cited in Türker, 2011). Yet, aesthetic beauty differs from an everyday notion of beauty that is perceived only as "pleasant" or "pleasant to the eye"; in this sense, it also describes "not beautiful", frightening and disturbing things in daily language (Doğan, 1975).

When the expressions of *harmony/harmonious* (f=3), *symmetry* (f=3), *proportion* (f=3), and *order* (f=3), which are classified under 'aesthetic values', are considered holistically as interrelated concepts, other important expressions come to the fore. Since ancient times philosophers, it has been known that there are philosophers who consider art based on the material world, defend the objectivity of beauty, and therefore observe the features that reinforce harmony in the artwork such as symmetry and proportion. Looking at the history of aesthetics, it can be said that the materialist aesthetic theories, which raised beauty over concepts such as harmony, size, and proportion, from the Aristotelian understanding to the present, put forward an understanding of beauty through the external properties of objects and reduced beauty to a mathematical base (Ziss, 2016).

The most repeated expressions in the category of 'aesthetic terms and qualities' were the concepts of elegance (f=3) and sublime (f=3). Kagan (1982), he says, "There are some appearances that turn into beautiful in terms of their essence and for this, they become the subject of research for aesthetics." According to him, the elegant, as well as the sublime, attractive, dramatic concepts, are among these 'transforming' values. On the other hand, he states that the opposites of these concepts, such as the ugly, vulgar, and funny concepts, are among aesthetic values. In this direction, he argues that aesthetics is a science that investigates all the aesthetic values that exist in art, rather than just being a science of beauty. Kant, one of the most important philosophers in aesthetics, defines the sublime as that which evokes awe or reverence in size and degree. He resembles the sublime and the beauty in

some angles, but separates it from daily, usual emotions. The sublime covers the beauty, but transcends it (Tunalı, 1998).

The second question of the research is, "What are the misconceptions of the students who receive vocational music education about the concept of aesthetics?" Findings for the question show that there are misconceptions about the concept of aesthetics among the participants in a significant amount (47.29%). Among these concepts, it is seen that the concepts of beautiful/beauty (f=15), nose (f=14), and appearance (f=9), which are determined to be used only in the same context with the external appearance of the person and the surgical operation, come to the fore. It may be expected that the concept of aesthetics is perceived in this way by people who do not have a professional interest or relationship with art or who are in younger age groups: Demirel (2018), in his study with children aged 9-12, concluded that although the participants associated the concept of aesthetics with beauty, this association generally included surgical intervention and physical appearance, and he commented that they could not "assimilate" aesthetics artistically. Similarly, Kılcan and Akbaba (2014) in their research with eighth-grade students, one of the findings they reached in line with the analysis of the metaphors developed regarding aesthetics and the analysis of the drawings, is that the students perceive aesthetics as a surgical intervention. Based on the answers given by the students in the interviews, the researchers interpreted that the negative effects of the media might have caused this result. Karip (2019), in his research conducted with visual arts teacher candidates, found that only 1.1% of the participants had some misconceptions in which they associate aesthetics with the medical aspect. An important criterion for the participants is that they have taken an aesthetics course in their undergraduate program. In his study, Seyhan (2020), in which he investigated the metaphorical perceptions of social studies teacher candidates regarding the concept of aesthetics and emphasized that aesthetic value is important in social studies learning, found that very few of the participants had misconceptions about aesthetics (operation and artificiality) and stated that the false perception was at a very low level. Based on this information, it is quite thought-provoking that in the present study, the majority of people who received professional music education at the undergraduate level have an aesthetic perception in this direction.

Although it is a common way of thinking to associate aesthetics with visual arts in the field of art, it is undeniable that music aesthetics is also a deep and multidimensional field of thinking. Awareness about aesthetic experience, aesthetic appreciation, aesthetic judgment, and attitude in music are important supporters for understanding music. In the research, it is seen that there is no relationship between the concepts such as experience, value, pleasure, judgment, subject, work/object, which constitute the field of existence of aesthetics, and the concept of aesthetics, therefore, these concepts are not included in the cognitive schemes of students regarding aesthetics. It is demanding to have knowledge and perception about aesthetics without being aware of the basic concepts of aesthetics. Aesthetic perception is a state of awareness, and without this awareness, it becomes difficult for people who pursue art as a profession to make positive contributions to their own aesthetic experience and understanding, as well as to the aesthetic life of their environment and ultimately, society.

In a study investigating music teacher candidates' perceptions of music aesthetics, it was found that participants focused on concepts such as aesthetic judgment, universality in music, aesthetic pleasure, aesthetic taste, harmony, beauty, and interpretation, and they had a certain perception of music aesthetics. In addition, pre-service teachers stated that there is a need for education to have an aesthetic understanding and to make comments. The researcher interpreted these results as a positive

contribution of the 'philosophy' course included in the curriculum during the study years and suggested that courses such as aesthetics and philosophy of art should also be included in an art education program in addition to philosophy courses (Şen, 2014). It should be noted that as of 2018, the compulsory philosophy course in the music teaching undergraduate program was abolished, and the philosophy of education course was added instead, with the 'art and aesthetics' course being included in the general culture elective course pool (Türkiye Higher Education Council, 2018).

Ralph A. Smith, one of the important figures in aesthetic education, suggests that to develop an advanced artistic perception, it is necessary not only to create and apply skills but also to have a mastery of aesthetic concepts and to approach them critically (Aykut, 2012). It can be argued that aesthetic education is a prerequisite for the formation and development of a refined artistic sense. Art and music education that emphasizes aesthetics is expected to have a positive impact on the level of appreciation, artistic perception, and sensitivity.

Recommendations

In line with the results of the research, the following suggestions can be made:

- Institutions offering vocational music education should include, as a compulsory or elective course according to current conditions, a philosophy or aesthetics course that focuses on basic aesthetic concepts, the development of aesthetic experience and taste, music aesthetics, and the aesthetic analysis of works of art, to increase aesthetic awareness in their undergraduate programs.
- Planning extracurricular studies and workshops that will provide students with aesthetic experience and critical approach opportunities, in addition to the inclusion of aesthetics in teaching within the scope of a course.
- Reviewing the possibilities of aesthetic analysis and experience in different fields of art, starting from the idea of having an aesthetic understanding not only in one field of art but also in all fields of life.
- Conducting similar studies with different participants in terms of age, class level, institution of education, and department of music education.
- It may be recommended to carry out similar studies by following different research designs and using different data collection tools.

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Contribution Rate of Researchers

Author 1: 60%

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There is no material or individual organic link with the person or institution involved and no conflict of interest in the research.

Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Mesleki Müzik Eğitimi Alan Öğrencilerin Estetik Kavramına İlişkin Bilişsel Yapılarının İncelenmesi

Giriş

Estetiğin bir bilim olarak ele alınışı, isimlendirilmesi ve belirli tanımlar üzerinden irdelenmesi 18. yüzyıl gibi yakın bir zamana tarihlense de nesnelerle kurulan estetik ilişkilerin, güzeli araştıran ve sorgulayan düşünülerin, düşünce tarihi kadar eskiye uzandığı söylenebilir. Estetiğin bir bilim dalı olduğuna ilişkin görüşün karşısında onu felsefi bir alan olarak ele alan görüş, estetiği sanat felsefesi ile aynı çerçevede ele alan düşünce karşısında birbirinden ayrı tutan düşünce ve kapsadığı her bir unsur üzerinden estetiği tanımlayan önermeler düşünüldüğünde, tek bir estetik tanımı yapmanın olanaksızlığı fark edilir. Ancak Ziss'in (2016, s. 130) tanımı, estetiği yalnızca güzelin bilimi olarak değil, daha geniş bir çerçevede anlama olanağı sunar: Estetik, "*gerçekliğin sanatsal özümsenmesinin bilimidir ve her şeyden önce de sanatın yasalarının bilimi ve sanatsal yaratı kuramıdır*".

Yaşadığımız dünyanın ve tekniğin gelişiminin yanında, insan bilincindeki, duygu ve sezgisindeki gelişim nedeniyle, sanat olgusu ve estetik değerlendirme, insan etkinliklerinin ayrılmaz bir parçası haline gelir (Doğan, 1975). Sanatı tam anlamıyla algılayabilmek, yorumlayabilmek ve eleştirel bir bakış edinebilmek için estetik kavramları bilmek ve birbirleriyle ilişkilerini kavrayabilmek gerekir. Sanat ile estetiğin iç içeliği düşünüldüğünde, özellikle de sanatı yaratmayı, üretmeyi, yorumlamayı ve sanat üzerine düşünmeyi meslek olarak seçen bireylerin estetik ve estetiğe ilişkin temel kavramlar hakkında bilgi sahibi olması ve estetik bakışı benimsemeleri beklentisi söz konusu olur. Güzel sanatların her alanı gibi, müzik de estetikle ilintilidir; müzik estetiğinin, besteci, yorumcu ve dinleyici arasındaki bağıntıları ve bu bağıntıların güzele ilişkin ölçütlerini araştırdığı söylenebilir. Estetikten ve felsefeden bağımsız bir sanat anlayışı düşünülemeyeceği gibi, bunlardan yoksun bir genel müzik eğitimi de düşünülemez. Estetik bakış açısı, yalnızca sanat ve sanat eserlerine karşı edinilen bir tutum olmanın ötesine geçerek bir yaşam biçimi haline gelir; yaşantılarımızın her alanında etkisi gözlemlenir. Bu nedenlerle, mesleki

sanat eğitimi alan sanatçı, eğitimci ve sanat bilimci adaylarının estetik kavramına ilişkin bilgi düzeylerini, yaklaşımlarını ve varsa kavram yanılgılarını ortaya koymak önem kazanır.

Kelime ilişkilendirme testleri, kişilerin belli bir kavrama ilişkin uzun dönemli hafızalarında yer edinmiş ilgili kavramların arasındaki bağları değerlendirmek, bu kavramlar arasında yeterli ve anlamlı ilişkiler olup olmadığını ortaya koymak için kullanılan çeşitli metotların içinde yaygınca ve uzun süredir kullanılan bir yöntemdir (Bahar & Özatlı, 2003, s. 75). Bu araştırmada da, pek çok farklı disiplinde önemli kavramlara ilişkin bilişsel yapıları çözümlemek için başvurulan kelime ilişkilendirme testi aracılığıyla mesleki müzik eğitimi alan öğrenciler tarafından estetik kavramının nasıl algılandığını belirlemek amaçlanmış ve şu sorulara yanıt aranmıştır:

1.Mesleki müzik eğitimi alan öğrencilerin estetik kavramına ilişkin bilişsel yapıları nasıldır?

2.Mesleki müzik eğitimi alan öğrencilerin estetik kavramına ilişkin kavram yanılgıları nelerdir?

Yöntem

Nitel yöntemin izlendiği bu araştırma, betimleyici bir kimlik taşımaktadır. Eğitim alanında sıklıkla yapılan betimsel, bir diğer adıyla betimleyici araştırmalar, bir olgu ya da durumu detaylıca tanımlamayı hedefler ve varlıkların, olayların, nesnelerin, kurumların, grupların "ne" olduğunu açıklamaya çalışır (Büyüköztürk vd., 2009; Karasar, 2006). Bu araştırmada da çalışma grubunun estetik kavramına ilişkin bilişsel algı durumlarının "ne" olduğu ortaya konmaya çalışılmaktadır.

Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 2022- 2023 öğretim yılında Türkiye'de bir devlet üniversitesine bağlı Müzik, Müzikoloji ve Türk Müziği bölümlerinin 1., 2., 3. ve 4. sınıflarında öğrenimine devam eden ve çalışmaya gönüllü katılım sağlayan öğrenciler oluşturmaktadır. Araştırma verileri, belli bir kavrama ilişkin bilişsel yapıyı ortaya koymak ve kavram yanıgılarını tespit etmek için alanyazında kullanılan alternatif bir ölçme-değerlendirme tekniği olan kelime ilişkilendirme testi (KİT) ile toplanmıştır. Kelime ilişkilendirme testlerinde, araştırma grubuna verilen bir dizi anahtar kelime ile ilişki kurulan kelimelerin, verilen süre içinde sıralanması beklenir.

Kelime ilişkilendirme testi ile elde edilen veriler, içerik analizi yöntemiyle çözümlenmiştir. Verilerin içerdikleri anlam doğrultusunda kavramsal hale getirilmesi ve temalar aracılığıyla bu kavramların arasındaki anlamlı bağlantıların açıklanması temeline dayanan içerik analizi sürecinde, tekrarlayan ve öne çıkan kelimelerin belirlenmesiyle kodlama yapılmış ve bir frekans tablosu oluşturulmuştur. Tekrarlanan ve geçerli olan ifadeler, birbirlerine olan benzerlikleri doğrultusunda oluşturulan kategoriler/temalar altında toplanmıştır. Son olarak temalara ilişkin frekans tabloları oluşturulmuş ve elde edilen bulgular örnek cümlelerle birlikte yorumlanmıştır.

Bulgular

Geçersiz yanıtlar kapsam dışı bırakıldıktan sonra araştırmaya dahil edilen 64 katılımcı yanıtı incelendiğinde, estetik kavramı ile ilgili birbirinden farklı 111 kavram türetildiği tespit edilmiştir. Bu sözcükler içinde yalnızca bir kez kullanılmış olan 66 sözcük araştırmaya dahil edilmemiştir. İçerik analizi doğrultusunda 45 sözcük 4 farklı kategori altında toplanmıştır. Bu kategoriler; estetiğin kaynağı, estetik nitelemeler ve terimler, estetik değerler ve kavram yanılgıları olarak ortaya çıkmıştır.

Katılımcıların estetik kavramına ilişkin bilişsel yapılarının büyük bir kısmını, 22 farklı sözcük türetilen *kavram yanılgıları* (n=96) kategorisi oluşturmaktadır. Bu sözcükler türetilen toplam

sözcüklerin %47,29'nu oluşturarak katılımcıların estetik kavramına ilişkin bilişsel yapılarının niteliğini ortaya çıkaran en yüksek orana sahiptir. Diğer bilişsel yapıların kategorilere dağılımı kullanım sıklığına göre; 7 farklı sözcük türetilen *estetik değerler* (n=57) kategorisi, 9 farklı sözcük türetilen *estetiğin kaynağı* (n=31) kategorisi, 8 farklı sözcük türetilen *estetik nitelemeler ve terimler* (n=19) kategorisidir. Güzel/güzellik kavramının *estetik değerler* ve *kavram yanılgıları* kategorilerinde iki farklı anlamda kullanılması üzerine toplam frekans sayısı 46 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

Elde edilen verilen analizi sonucunda en az sözcük türetilen kategori estetik nitelemeler ve terimler (f=8) kategorisi olmuştur. Bu kategoride yer alan sözcükler diğer kategoriler içerisinde %9,35'lik bir paya sahiptir. En çok tekrar edilen sözcükler zarafet (f=3), düzgün (f=3) ve bakış açısı (f=3) olmuştur. Estetiğin kaynağı kategorisi (f=9) diğer kategoriler içerisinde %15,27'lik bir paya sahiptir. Bu kategoride en çok tekrar eden sözcükleri sanat (f=12), doğa (f=3), heykel (f=3) ve aşk (f=3) olmuştur. Bir diğer kategori olan estetik değerler kategorisi (f=7) diğer kategoriler içerisinde %28,07'lik bir paya sahiptir. En çok tekrar edilen güzel/güzellik (f=36) ve hoş (7) sözcükleri olmuştur. En çok sözcük türetilen kategori ise kavram yanılgıları (22) kategorisi diğer kategoriler içerisinde %47,29'luk bir paya sahiptir. Bu kategori içerisinde en çok tekrar eden sözcükler arasında estetik değerler kategorisinde de yer alan, ancak insana özgü dış görünüşü temsil ettiği saptandığı için bu kategoride yer verilen güzel/güzellik (f=15) sözcüğü olmuştur. Katılımcılar tarafından en çok tekrar edilen sözcükler burun (f=14), görünüm/görünüş (f=9), ameliyat (f=6), vücut (f=5), yapay/yapaylık (5), dudak (f=5), botoks (f=4), doktor (f=4), bakım (f=4) olmuştur.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Araştırmanın "Mesleki müzik eğitimi alan öğrencilerin estetik kavramına ilişkin bilişsel yapıları nasıldır?" sorusuna yönelik ulaşılan bulgular doğrultusunda, mesleki müzik eğitimi alan öğrencilerin estetik ile en çok ilişkilendirdikleri ifadelerin 'estetik değerler' altında sınıflandırılan *güzellik/güzel* (f=36) kavramı olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. İlgili alanyazın incelendiğinde estetik kavramına ilişkin yapılmış benzer araştırmalarda da aynı yönde bulguya ulaşıldığı görülmektedir (Karip, 2019; Özalp, 2020; Istók et al., 2009). İlişkilendirilme sıklığı ikinci sırada yer alan ve 'estetiğin kaynakları' altında sınıflandırılan *sanat* (f=12) kavramı, estetiğin doğrudan ilintili olduğu ve beslendiği temel araştırma alanıdır. Bunun yanında, çalışmada estetik ile en çok ilişkilendirilen bir diğer kavram olan *hoş* (f=7), estetikte güzel kavramına odaklanan tartışmalarda da öne çıkan kavramlardandır. 'Estetik değerler' altında sınıflandırılan *uyum* (f=3), *simetri* (f=3) *oran* (f=3) ve *düzen* (f=3) ifadeleri birbiriyle ilintili kavramlar olarak bütüncül şekilde ele alındığında, öne çıkan diğer önemli ifadelerdir. 'Estetik terim ve nitelikler' kategorisinde en çok tekrar eden ifadeler ise *zarafet* (f=3) ve *yüce* kavramları (f=3) olmuştur.

Araştırmanın ikinci sorusu olan "Mesleki müzik eğitimi alan öğrencilerin estetik kavramına ilişkin kavram yanılgıları nelerdir?" sorusuna yönelik ulaşılan bulgular, katılımcılar arasında oldukça önemli bir yoğunlukta (%47,2) estetik kavramına ilişkin kavram yanılgılarının bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Bu kavramlar arasında yalnızca kişilerin dış görüntüleriyle ve cerrahi operasyonla aynı bağlam içerisinde kullanıldığı belirlenen *güzel/güzellik* (f=15), burun (f=14) ve görünüm/görünüş (f=9) kavramlarının öne çıktığı görülmektedir. Sanatla mesleki bir ilgi ve ilişkisi bulunmayan ya da küçük yaş gruplarındaki kişilerce estetik kavramının bu yönde algılanması beklendik olabilir ve bu yönde bulgulara ulaşan ilgili çalışmalar da (Demirel, 2018; Kılcan & Akbaba, 2014) bulunmaktadır. Ancak lisans düzeyinde mesleki müzik eğitimi alan kişilerin, azımsanamayacak bir çoğunlukta bu yönde bir estetik algıya sahip olmaları oldukça düşündürücüdür. Estetiğe ilişkin temel kavramların farkında

olmadan, estetik hakkında bilgi ve algı sahibi olmak güçtür. Estetik algı, bir farkındalık halidir ve bu farkındalık olmadan sanatı meslek edinen kişilerin gerek kendi estetik yaşantı ve anlayışlarına, gerekse çevrelerinin ve nihayetinde toplumun estetik yaşantısına olumlu katkılarda bulunabilmeleri güçleşir.

Öneriler

Araştırmada ulaşılan sonuçlar doğrultusunda şu öneriler getirilebilir:

- Özellikle temel estetik kavramları, estetik deneyimi, estetik beğeni gelişimini, müzik estetiğini ve sanat yapıtlarının estetik çözümlenmesini odağına alan, estetik farkındalığı artırma amacındaki bir felsefe ya da estetik dersinin mevcut koşullara göre zorunlu ya da seçmeli ders olarak mesleki müzik eğitimi veren kurumların lisans programlarında yer alması,
- Estetiğin bir ders kapsamında öğretime katılmasının yanında, öğrencilere estetik deneyim ve eleştirel yaklaşım olanakları sunulacak ders dışı çalışmalar ve atölyelerin planlanması,
- Sanatın yalnızca bir alanında değil, tüm alanlarında ve hatta tüm yaşamda estetik anlayışa sahip olma ülküsünden yola çıkarak farklı sanat alanlarında estetik çözümleme ve deneyim olanaklarının gözden geçirilmesi,
- Yaş, sınıf düzeyi, eğitim alınan kurum ve müzik alanında eğitim alınan bölüm değişkenleri açısından farklı katılımcılarla benzer çalışmaların yürütülmesi,
- Farklı araştırma desenleri izlenerek ve farklı veri toplama araçları kullanılarak benzer çalışmaların yapılması önerilebilir.