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Impact of Digitalization on Visual Arts Consumers' Behavior during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Generational Perspective of Art Management

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The virtualization of the aesthetic experience influences the scope of artistry and creativity of visual artwork and the quality of participation in visual arts. Due to variances in perception qualities between individuals belonging to particular generations, this article aims to assess the impact of the participation form (physical/traditional or digital) on the aesthetic situation of recipients from certain generations. The quality of participation in visual arts was assessed using ten criteria.

Methodology: Quantitative data exploration from a survey undertaken using a digital instrument provided by SURVIO based on a worldwide sample from 22 countries (n = 87). Due to the relatively ephemeric character of the research problem, an additional qualitative analysis of the statistical results was performed.

Findings: The participation form (online or in-real) in visual arts determines participation quality level of the aesthetic situation of particular generations. Significant differences exist among generations in online and in-real participation in visual arts and between particular forms of participation. This article did not look for the reasons for these differences; only additional comparative qualitative research can try to reveal them.

Value Added: It is the first analysis of the impact of digitalization of visual arts from the perspective of visual arts consumers' behavior based on the components of aesthetic situation theory.

Implications: The research results should be of interest to: 1) Visual arts creators looking for the optimal way of distributing artworks among recipients from different generations; 2) Visual arts managers and marketers for a multi-layered understanding of generation-diversified visual arts recipients' perspectives and their preferences about participation in visual arts in-real or digitally; 3) Visual arts customers (recipients) who wish to compare their own views about participating in visual arts with those of other recipients belonging to certain generations.

Key words: humanistic management, management aesthetics, generation differences, consumer behavior, creativity, visual arts, participation in arts, aesthetic situation, receiving process, art perception

JEL codes: J16, P52, Z10, Z11

Introduction

Throughout the centuries, artistic pursuits have exhibited a relatively stable content (materials, techniques, artistic means) with visual arts, in particular, standing out as one of the most prevalent means of enriching our perception of reality, alongside musical arts, owing to its lasting impact. Distinct epochs of cultural progress in humanity have also been characterized by evolving art forms, while the fundamental essence of each artistic discipline has remained unchanged. However, the late 20th century ushered in a transformative era, as the proliferation of digitalization and virtualization commenced a dualistic phase in the creative and reception processes of arts. This paradigm shift has significantly influenced how we engage with artistic expression. Naturally, numerous factors influence the pace of digitalization and virtualization in specific artistic domains (Enhuber, 2015; Kröner et al., 2021), but the fact is undeniable and can be compared with milestones like Gutenberg's invention of the printing press. The transformation of real-life activities into digital and virtual formats alters them, as the manner of engagement influences the nature of involvement, leading to shifts in contributions and resultant outcomes (Karayilanoğlu & Arabacıoğlu, 2020). Cultural determinants additionally diversify this process (Hofstede, 2011; Vollero et al., 2020). Considering the aesthetic situation (Gołaszewska, 1984b) as a field of management theory (Szostak, 2022b, 2023; Szostak & Sułkowski, 2020a), these constantly-evolving circumstances require new approaches and tools.

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the speed of digital participation in numerous cultural areas, including the visual arts (Lei & Tan, 2021; Szostak,

2022d, 2022a, 2022c). Considering visual arts from the perspective of the aesthetic situation, an examination of the involvement should be undertaken from two sides: the creators and the recipients (Gołaszewska, 1984b; Szostak, 2020, 2021a; Szostak & Sułkowski, 2020a). Hence, the core of this investigation revolves around the synergy between the “aesthetic situation” and “digital technologies”, aimed at uncovering insights into shifts in creative and artistic potential. The central research challenge involves dissecting the effects of “digital technologies” on specific components of the “aesthetic situation” within the context of potential loss or gain in creativity and artistry while considering different generations. Consequently, the focal examination of this matter necessitates a twofold approach: 1) the creator-artwork relationship (creative process) and 2) the artwork-recipient dynamic (receiving process). This paper underscores the phase involving the reception of artwork, with its objectives encompassing: 1) an assessment of how digital technologies influence the perception of visual arts within distinct generations; 2) the gauging of the extent of this influence across these generational cohorts; 3) an appraisal of the degree of creativity and artistry that may be forfeited or enhanced due to the integration of digital technologies in visual arts, as observed through specific generations. Therefore, the following research hypothesis was created, based on analyzing such differences, to achieve these goals: The form of participation (1. physical/traditional which will be called in this article ‘in-real’ or 2. digital) in visual arts shapes the quality of the aesthetic situation in the eyes of arts recipients who belong to particular generations differently. Therefore, the following research questions were devised to verify this hypothesis:

- RQ1) How do arts recipients from particular generations perceive the quality of their participation in visual arts with regard to the form of that participation (in-real or digitally)?
- RQ2) What are the differences among arts recipients from different generations with regard to particular forms of participation in visual arts?
- RQ3) What are the differences among arts recipients from particular generations between participation in visual arts regarding the form of participation?

This study aims not to elucidate the variations in appraising the quality of the aesthetic situation, as such distinctions can only be articulated subsequent to an extensive qualitative analysis. Nevertheless, the outcomes of this inquiry have the potential to serve as a foundational framework for establishing indicators that underpin the development of a model tailored to this genre of research.

Literature Review

The fusion of nature and culture molds humanity; thus, the presence of arts in human existence dates back to ancient times. However, over the course of centuries, the functions of arts and creativity have evolved, intermingled, and advanced (Szostak, 2023, pp. 11–12). Aesthetics, as a separate discipline dealing with arts and beauty, split from philosophy somewhat late, i.e. in the 19th century, but it was present from the beginning of abstract thought within philosophical discourses (Gołaszewska, 1984b; Szostak & Sułkowski, 2020a; Tatarkiewicz, 2015). As a way of transferring the artist's will into the artwork to affect the recipients, art allows the artist to communicate inner conditions. Artists express their states of mind, permitting recipients to achieve these particular states (Szostak & Sułkowski, 2020a). Considering the perspective of the aesthetic situation, the artist produces their artwork by drawing from both the biological world and universal values. This resulting work is then offered to the recipient as a completed piece. The recipient has the autonomy to choose their mode of engagement in the reception process, adapting it to specific circumstances. Conversely, opting for a perception format (in-real or digital) that doesn't align with the situation shapes the essence of the reception process. Those more seasoned in receiving may adeptly employ a less optimal participation approach without compromising the content's quality. On the other hand, even the most effective mode of engagement might fall short in conveying the entirety of the content to recipients with less experience (Gołaszewska, 1984b; Szostak, 2020). Looking through an aesthetic lens, the artwork itself

stands out as the most prominent manifestation of artistry and creativity. Within the creator's character, the foundational processes that constitute the essence of creativity unfold. The artwork serves as a vessel for conveying both creativity and artistry (Szostak, 2020); at the same time, the level of creativity and artistry (including universal values) positioned in the artwork varies depending on the art recipient's attitude and their form of participation in arts (Szostak, 2021a). Specified factors like personality and social conditions or a wealth of experience shape the activity of artistic creation. However, a straightforward creative attitude is insufficient to start the creative process: creativity itself is compulsory (Gołaszewska, 1984b, 1984a; Szostak, 2020, 2021a).

The senses, one of the most important factors allowing a human to perceive nature and culture, are crucial for participating in arts (Ekmekçi et al., 2014; Sosnowska, 2015). The senses allow for physical, emotional (Buravenkova et al., 2018), intellectual, and spiritual (Rivas-Carmona, 2020; Wu, 2020) participation in art. Centuries of natural ways of participation in arts have developed specific standards and techniques for creating and perceiving arts. These methods have not changed dramatically; just a few steps can be mentioned in the history of visual arts that could be considered milestones shifts: the application of perspective by Leonardo da Vinci, impressionism by Claude Monet or cubism by Pablo Picasso and the contemporary art from Marcel Duchamp in the early 20th century to Andy Warhol in the middle, and Maurizio Cattelan nowadays. These artists have left a lasting impact on the art scene, shaping its evolution and cultural significance. The end of the 20th century brought fast technological progress, and a new digital reality dimension started attracting art creators and recipients. Firstly, digitalization, and next, virtualization started to function parallelly to the in-real arts participation methods. Participating in visual arts through digital means can assume the function of "digital mediation", even as the process of digitizing the arts is governed by the technical capacity to translate the sensory encounters of the analogue world into virtual realms (Mao & Jiang, 2021). This perspective situates digital technology in a role that lies 'between' the artwork and its recipient (Jarrier & Bourgeon-Renault, 2019).

Exploring the reception process of the arts across various cultural contexts reveals the intricate nature of the issue under scrutiny. Advanced information

technology tools, digitalization, the pervasive influence of social media, and the ever-evolving landscape of business skills have prompted a significant shift in the trajectory of the arts (Handa, 2020). Even though the integration of digitalization in visual arts has surged in speed, scope, and intensity over successive years, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic introduced novel dynamics to this practice (Lei & Tan, 2021; Raimo et al., 2022; Szostak & Sułkowski, 2021a). Concurrently, beyond the digital transformation of participation in visual arts, artists are manifesting complementary trends, such as altering their entrepreneurial inclinations (Szostak & Sułkowski, 2021a) or grappling with fresh challenges tied to self-identification (Szostak & Sułkowski, 2021b, 2021c). It renders digitalization as potentially revolutionary or evolutionary. By enabling the reshaping of environments and addressing historical quandaries, digital technologies are shaping the fabric of contemporary culture (Roberge & Chan-*tepie*, 2017). Given that the impact of digital transformation varies across specific cultures, it also magnifies spirituality as it shifts from its original context in the socio-cultural interpretation of the natural world to the present digitally mediated settings (Sosnowska, 2015).

The mediatization of cultural practices fundamentally alters the processes of forming cultural memory, while proficiency in online interfaces has become a cornerstone of education, harmonizing tradition and modernity (Arkhangelsky & Novikova, 2021). The goal of utilizing the Internet as a platform for participation to engage the public in art creation highlights the interplay between collective imagination and the distinct artistic sensibilities of participants (Litterat, 2012). The digitization (i.e., changing from analog to digital) of aesthetics has revolutionized the art world, particularly with the remarkable expansion of the online art market. The value of the online art market surged from 6 billion USD in 2019 to 12.4 billion USD in 2020 and further escalated to 13.3 billion USD in 2021, catalyzed mainly by the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. This digital transformation has ushered in new avenues for artists and audiences, enabling global engagement with art. However, concerns have emerged regarding potential shifts in artistic quality and the risk of digital exclusion influencing the diverse ways cultures perceive art in this digital era (McAndrew, 2023, p. 30).

Digitalization, while expanding the horizons for visual arts recipients, brings forth concurrent concerns. Firstly, the attitude of the mass of recipients can lead to a decrease in the artistic quality of visual artwork. Secondly, the digitalization of visual arts is reshaping these arts' role to enhance their accessibility and user-friendliness (Pöppel et al., 2018; Szostak, 2021a). Thirdly, digital exclusion limits participation in the reception process (Hracs, 2015; Rikou & Chaviara, 2016). Still, a pivotal question pertains to the interplay between value and quality employed to assess and compare diverse encountered objects (Fortuna & Modliński, 2021). For instance, in the context of visual arts, during the experience of an in-person concert, the recipient encounters the artwork in the form intended by the artist: with no alterations in volume or interruptions. Conversely, the digital mode of participation in visual arts permits these adjustments, which, if implemented arbitrarily, can lead the artwork to impact the recipient in a manner contrary to the creator's intent. In the realm of performing arts experienced in-person, the recipient is akin to a captive audience of the artwork, compelled to adhere to its parameters (such as duration, volume, and visibility). Among all artistic domains, digitalization arguably influences performing arts most (Dube & Ince, 2019).

Lastly, the fusion of the concept of self-historicization with the contemporary artistic language of performance bolsters artists' recognition within the international art sphere. The enduring legacy of communism, which significantly influenced the art participation culture, plays a significant role in this phenomenon (Proksch-Weilguni, 2019). Grounded in this, digital collaboration in art, digital marketing, and digital performance have the potential to differentiate and engage audiences as authentic co-producers of art (Fortuna & Modliński, 2021). It is intriguing to explore how art recipients from diverse cultural backgrounds (such as post-communist and non-communist) perceive artworks created within this framework, as the effectiveness of digitizing the aesthetic situation is not readily evident (Nawa & Sirayi, 2014; Rusinko, 2020; Szostak, 2022e).

Applying management theory to the abstract concept of the aesthetic situation theory allows for selecting and regulating the optimal type of participation in each type of art, considering the acceptable grade of creativity and artistry loss or gain for art creators and recipients (Szostak, 2021a; Szostak &

Sułkowski, 2020a, 2020b). Digitalization and virtualization provide new dimensions for managing the aesthetic situation and its particular components and relations. Considering the managerial perspective, it can be said that visual art creators manage the creative process differently with regard to the traditional in-real and the digital form of the aesthetic situation.

Generations can be delineated as cohorts of individuals within the same age range who undergo comparable life events and grow up in analogous socio-historical contexts, primarily contributing to their shared maturation. The existing literature has assigned labels to subsequent generations based on their distinct traits, which remain evident in contemporary realities. Generation Z (1997–2012) is the most recent generation, followed by Generation Y, also known as Millennials (1981–1996). Next in line is Generation X (1965–1980), followed by Boomers (1946–1964) – occasionally divided into Boomers I (1946–1954) and Boomers II (1955–1964). The Silent or Post War Generation (1928–1945) is represented by the last surviving members of the World War II Generation (born in the 1920s). The configuration of characteristic features within each generation is substantially influenced by varying factors such as experiences of adversity, traumas, favorable socioeconomic conditions, globalization, technological advancements, digitalization, and virtualization. All these elements collectively shape humanity’s lifestyle, behavior, and beliefs, significantly impacting each generation’s personal and professional development (Beresford Research, 2022; Gayle et al., 2021; Shen, 2019).

The Silent Generation, having grown up during the tumultuous era of World War II, is renowned for its remarkably subdued demeanor. Throughout their lives, this generation has clung steadfastly to enduring values guiding their actions. Hard work, loyalty, and thrift form the bedrock of their belief system, and they are also well-regarded for fostering meaningful interpersonal connections (Lissitsa et al., 2022). A life motto, “I work to survive”, succinctly characterizes Boomers. Independence, optimism, and commitment are central to their ethos, and they exhibit a notable inclination towards cooperation, consensus-seeking, and robust communication (Olsson et al., 2020; Rusak, 2014). Members of Generation X have also internalized a strong work ethic. Personal growth, independence, diversity, initiative, and diligence are the cornerstones

of their values. This mature generation of working professionals often seeks job security and stability, sometimes subordinating their personal lives to their careers. Ownership, wealth, and social status hold significant importance for representatives of Generation X (Berkup, 2014; Hardey, 2011). Generation Y, or Millennials, and their successors, Generation Z, often referred to as 'Generation C' – 'C' represents connected which means plugged in – share the perception that all activities are transient and work serves merely as a means to achieve their goals. Their values encompass optimism, idealization, diversity, ambition, creativity, initiative, innovation, education, and training. Emphasizing the importance of work-life balance, they prioritize personal achievements over professional success. A strong sense of self-worth characterizes Generation Y, leading them to seek jobs that align with their individual needs rather than sacrificing their lives for their work (Baran & Kłos, 2014; Mcneill, 2014; Meister & Willyers, 2010). Moreover, they highly esteem experiences, freedom, fun, and social standing (Hardey, 2011). Adaptability and openness to change are defining features of Generation Y and Z, enabling them to acclimate quickly to new environments. Additionally, they are avid social media users and avid consumers of online information, spending substantial time on the Internet for valuable knowledge and entertainment (Bencsik et al., 2016; Hardey, 2011; Mude & Undale, 2023).

In summary, the unique traits ascribed to each generation offer a captivating insight into the varied dynamics of human development. While these generations progress through the ages, their principles, convictions, and conduct consistently adjust and metamorphose under the influence of an ever-changing society. The ramifications of historical occurrences, technological advancements, and socioeconomic circumstances leave a lasting impact on every generation, molding their perspectives on life and the global milieu. As we advance into an ambiguous future, it becomes imperative to recognize and comprehend these generational attributes, cultivating compassion and cooperation amidst the rich diversity of humanity (Deal et al., 2010; Lissitsa & Laor, 2021). By acknowledging and valuing these generational subtleties, we can more adeptly steer through the intricacies of contemporary civilization and establish a harmonious cohabitation for everyone.

Methods and Materials

In the first stage of the analysis, research in the form of a literature review – concentrating on a qualitative selection of the content from databases such as EBSCO, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Mendeley and Scopus from the last five years (2018–2022) – was undertaken with the use of NVivo Pro. The methodological approach to the literature review was grounded on an interdisciplinary approach combining aesthetic theory, information visualization, human-computer interaction, cultural and reception studies, arts and management. For the objective of this study, only visual arts (architecture, ceramics, comics, design, drawing, fashion, painting, photography, and sculpture) were investigated. After the literature review, ten critical aspects were set out for assessment of the quality of participation in visual arts: 1) satisfaction of the recipient when participating (Guo et al., 2020; Quattrini et al., 2020; Zollo et al., 2021), 2) participation pleasure by the recipient (Dunne-Howrie, 2020), 3) participation engagement by the recipient (Dube & Ince, 2019; Quattrini et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2017), 4) possibility of experiencing a state of catharsis by the recipient (Craig et al., 2020; Lee, 2011), 5) contact of the recipient with the artwork itself (Habelsberger & Bhansing, 2021), 6) contact of the recipient with the performer (Wu et al., 2017), 7) participation comfort of the recipient (Guidry, 2014), 8) shaping-the-aesthetical-experience possibilities of the recipient (Jackson, 2017; Park & Lim, 2015), 9) own motivation to participate of the recipient (Hobbs & Tuzel, 2017; Pianzola et al., 2021), 10) participation ease for the recipient (Dunne-Howrie, 2020; Fancourt et al., 2020).

During the second phase of the study, a quantitative analysis was conducted to assess the quality of participation by recipients from different generations in the realm of visual arts. This assessment was based on the ten criteria delineated earlier. Moreover, the objective of this phase was to deduce findings concerning the potential divergence in the comprehensibility of varied artistic endeavors concurrently. Data analysis from the surveys was performed using IBM SPSS and MS Excel; however, multiplex statistics were not conducted due to the minor sample volume ($n = 87$). The quantitative examination was performed in 2021 using a digital instrument provided by SURVIO. The survey

was arranged in English and disseminated by social media, direct requests, and official announcements. It contained 71 questions. All questions were the closed type; respondents could select prepared answers only. While assessing the level of quality of a factor, the respondents used a 5-step Likert scale: *very low* (-2), *rather low* (-1), *neutral* (0), *rather high* (+1), and *very high* (+2). The survey permitted categorizing the respondents regarding age (it allowed categorizing participants of certain generations), gender, nationality and education level. The oldest participant was born in 1931 (90 y.o.), and the youngest in 2005 (16 y.o.). Most study participants (n = 51, 58.6%) had graduated with bachelor's, master's, or engineer studies; 32.2% (n = 28) had a doctorate, habilitation, or professorship; 5.8% (n = 5) had graduated from a technical college or high school, and only 2.3% (n = 2) from primary school or junior high school. Respondents (51.7% men and 48.3% women) came from 22 countries: 25.3% from Poland, 12.6% from the USA, 8.1% from Finland, 6.9% from Ukraine, 4.6% from Germany; the rest of the participants came from Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, China, Congo, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Lithuania, Nigeria, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, the UK, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. This article presents just a part of the research outcomes.

Findings

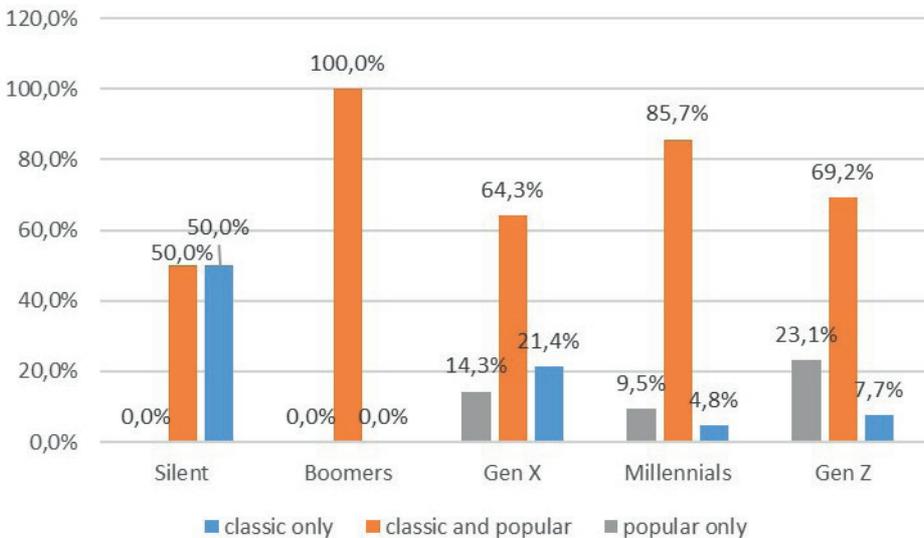
The findings are divided into two parts: 1) findings about the aesthetic situation as a whole and 2) findings about the ten particular qualities of the aesthetic situation.

Regarding the Whole Aesthetic Situation

Particular generations participate in types of visual art differently. The Silent Generation is not interested in popular visual art only; 50.0% of this generation participates in classical and popular forms of visual art, and 50.0% indicates classical forms of visual art only. Boomers are not interested in classical visual art only

or popular visual art only; 100.0% of this generation participates in classical and popular forms of visual art. 14.3% of Generation X participates in popular visual art only; 64.3% of this generation participates in classical and popular music, and 21.4% indicates classical forms of visual art only. 9.5% of Millennials participates in popular visual art only; 85.7% of this generation participates in classical and popular music, and 4.8% indicates classical music only. Finally, 21.3% of Generation Z participates in popular visual art only; 69.2% of this generation participates in classical and popular music, and 7.7% indicates classical music only. See: Figure 1.

Figure 1. Participation in type of visual art (classical only, both classical and popular, popular only) by generation

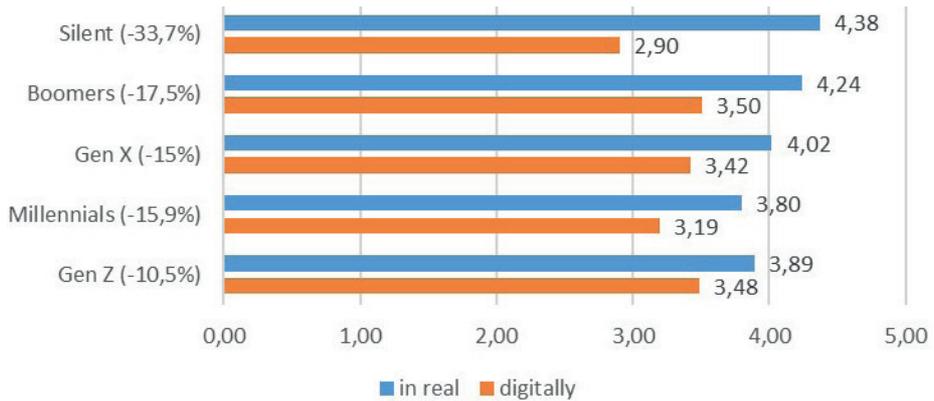


Source: own elaboration.

The research reveals the following variances between generations with regard to the form of their participation in visual arts. Visual arts recipients from the Silent Generation assess the quality of the whole aesthetic situation undertaken in-real as 4.38 and digitally as 2.90 (a difference of 33.7%). Visual arts recipients belonging to the Baby Boomers generation assess the quality of the whole aesthetic situation undertaken in-real as 4.24 and digitally as 3.50

(a difference of 17.5%). Visual arts recipients belonging to Generation X assess the quality of the whole aesthetic situation undertaken in-real as 4.02 and digitally as 3.42 (a difference of 15.0%). Visual arts recipients from the Millennial generation assess the quality of the aesthetic situation undertaken in-real as 3.80 and digitally as 3.19 (a difference of 15.9%). Finally, visual arts recipients belonging to Generation Z assess the quality of the whole aesthetic situation undertaken in-real as 3.89 and digitally as 3.48 (a difference of 10.5%). See: Figure 2. All generations assess the quality of the whole aesthetic situation undertaken in-real at a higher level. It can be seen that the oldest generation assesses the quality of the whole aesthetic situation undertaken in-real at the highest level, and then the assessment score declines with every generation. On the other hand, differences in assessing the quality of the whole aesthetic situation undertaken digitally are flatter, and there is no linear correlation.

Figure 2. Assessment of the quality of the whole aesthetic situation regarding the form of participation in the receiving process of visual arts between generations



Source: own elaboration.

Regarding Qualities of the Aesthetic Situation

Following an examination of overall differences in participation forms within visual arts across generations, it becomes pertinent to investigate how generations

perceive specific components of the aesthetic situation in relation to their mode of engagement. These components are:

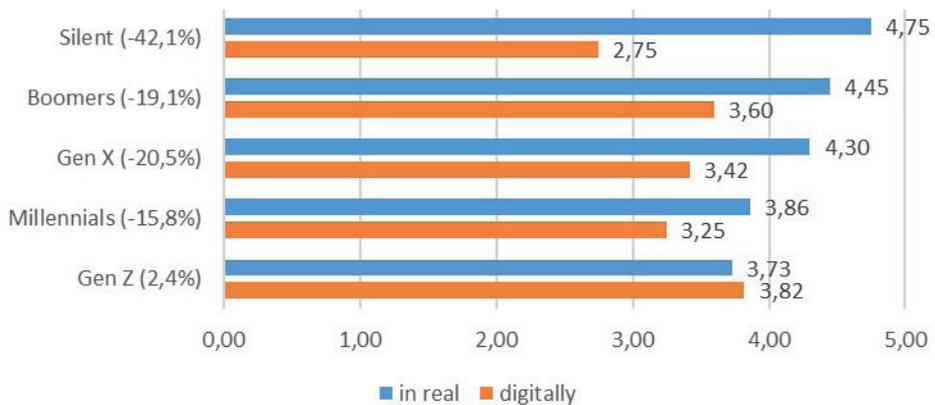
1. satisfaction – a state of contentment and fulfilment from meeting personal desires or expectations;
2. pleasure – a positive and enjoyable sensation or feeling experienced in response to stimuli activating happiness;
3. engagement – a state of active involvement, interest, and participation in a particular activity or situation;
4. the possibility of experiencing catharsis – a potential for emotional release, purification, or cleansing through the expression or processing of intense feelings or emotions;
5. contact with the artwork itself – direct interaction with the physical aspects of a piece of art, enabling a personal and sensory connection to its creative components;
6. contact with the performer him/herself – direct interaction with the individual presenting a work of art, allowing for an immediate personal connection to their expressive and artistic presentation;
7. the comfort of participation – a feeling of ease, satisfaction, and emotional well-being experienced when actively interacting with a work of art;
8. possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience – availability of various opportunities and methods to influence or mold the perception of and emotional response to artistic or sensory stimuli;
9. own motivation to participate – individual's drive or internal reasons that prompt them to engage and take part in a work of art;
10. ease of participation – level of simplicity, convenience, and lack of obstacles encountered when engaging in a work of art.

Satisfaction

The Silent Generation assesses its satisfaction from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.75 and digitally as 2.75 (a difference of 42.1%). Baby Boomers assess their satisfaction from participation in the receiving

process in the in-real form as 4.45 and digitally as 3.60 (a difference of 19.1%). Generation X assesses its satisfaction from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.30 and digitally as 3.42 (a difference of 20.5%). Millennials assess their satisfaction from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.86 and digitally as 3.25 (a difference of 15.8%). Generation Z assesses its satisfaction from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.73 and digitally as 3.82 (a difference of 2.4%). It can be stated that the oldest generation reports the highest satisfaction from the aesthetic situation experienced in-real, and then the assessment score declines with every generation. Generation Z, the youngest generation considered in this research, assesses satisfaction from the aesthetic situation as slightly higher while participating digitally. See: Figure 3.

Figure 3. Assessment of satisfaction flowing from visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations



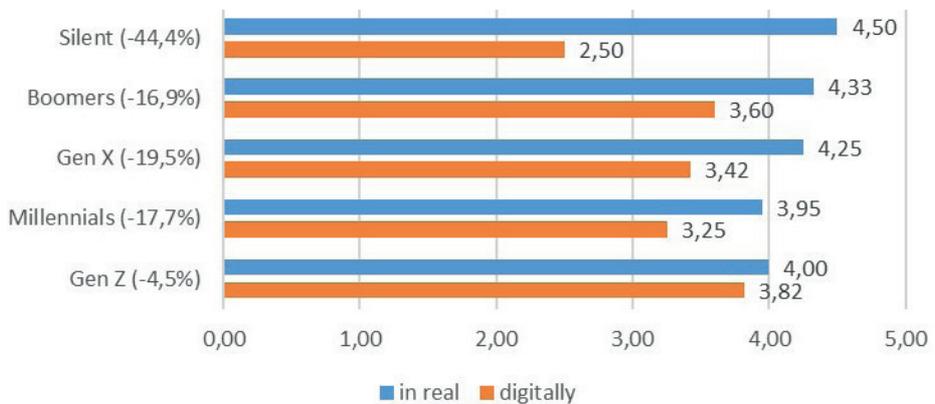
Source: own elaboration.

Pleasure

The Silent Generation assesses its pleasure from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.50 and digitally as 2.50 (a difference of 44.4%). Baby Boomers assess their pleasure from participation in the receiving process

in the in-real form as 4.33 and digitally as 3.60 (a difference of 16.9%). Generation X assesses its pleasure from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.25 and digitally as 3.42 (a difference of 19.5%). Millennials assess their pleasure from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.95 and digitally as 3.25 (a difference of 17.7%). Finally, Generation Z assesses its pleasure from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.00 and digitally as 3.82 (a difference of 4.5%). The in-real form of participation slightly declines pleasure with every younger generation and inclines in the digital form. See: Figure 4.

Figure 4. Assessment of pleasure flowing from visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations



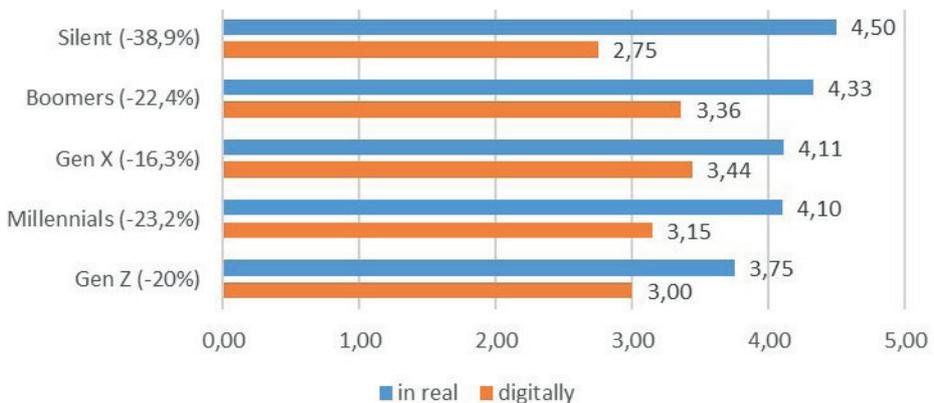
Source: own elaboration.

Engagement

The Silent Generation assesses its engagement from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.50 and digitally as 2.75 (a difference of 38.9%). Baby Boomers assess their engagement from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.33 and digitally as 3.36 (a difference of 22.4%). Generation X assesses its engagement from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.11 and digitally as 3.44 (a difference of 16.3%).

Millennials assess their engagement from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.10 and digitally as 3.15 (a difference of 23.2%). Finally, Generation Z assesses its engagement from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.75 and digitally as 3.00 (a difference of 20.0%). Every younger generation assesses its engagement as slightly lower with regard to participating in visual arts in-real. On the other hand, the digital form of participation does not engage every younger generation more and more; starting from Generation X, engagement via the digital form of participation declines. See: Figure 5.

Figure 5. Assessment of engagement flowing from visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations



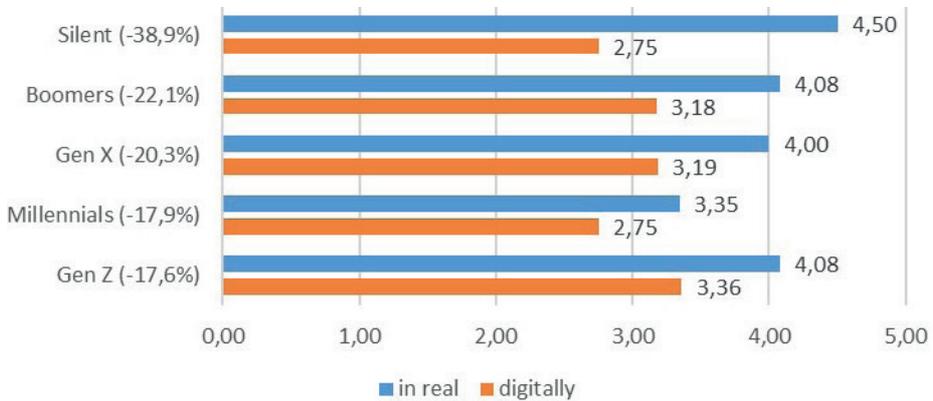
Source: own elaboration.

The Possibility of Experiencing Catharsis

The Silent Generation assesses the possibility of experiencing catharsis from participation in the receiving process of visual arts in the in-real form as 4.50 and digitally as 2.75 (a difference of 38.9%). Baby Boomers assess the possibility of experiencing catharsis from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.08 and digitally as 3.18 (a difference of 22.1%). Generation X assesses the possibility of experiencing catharsis from participation in

the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.00 and digitally as 3.19 (a difference of 20.3%). Millennials assess the possibility of experiencing catharsis from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.35 and digitally as 2.75 (a difference of 17.9%). Finally, Generation Z assesses the possibility of experiencing catharsis from participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.09 and digitally as 3.36 (a difference of 17.6%). See: Figure 6.

Figure 6. Assessment of the possibility of experiencing catharsis in visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations



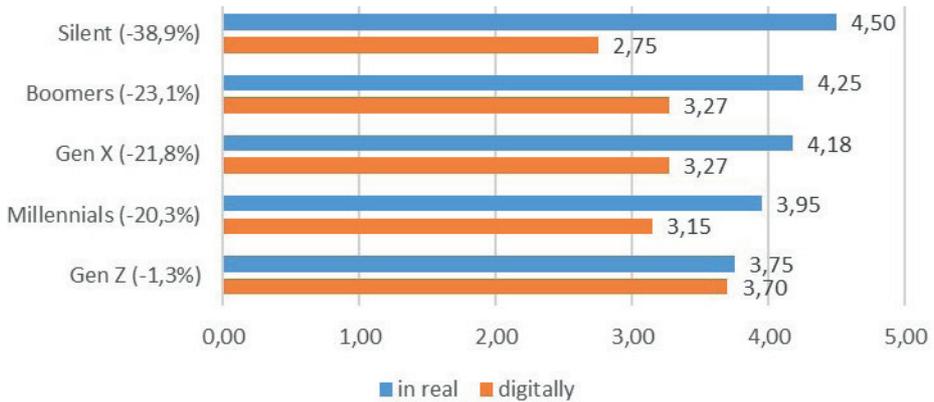
Source: own elaboration

Contact with the Artwork Itself

The Silent Generation assesses contact with the artwork itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.50 and digitally as 2.75 (a difference of 38.9%). Baby Boomers assess contact with the artwork itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.25 and digitally as 3.27 (a difference of 23.1%). Generation X assesses contact with the artwork itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.18 and digitally as 3.27 (a difference of 21.8%). Millennials assess contact with the artwork itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.95 and digitally as 3.15 (a difference of 20.3%). Finally,

Generation Z assesses contact with the artwork itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.75 and digitally as 3.70 (a difference of 1.3%). See: Figure 7.

Figure 7. Assessment of contact with the artwork itself in visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations



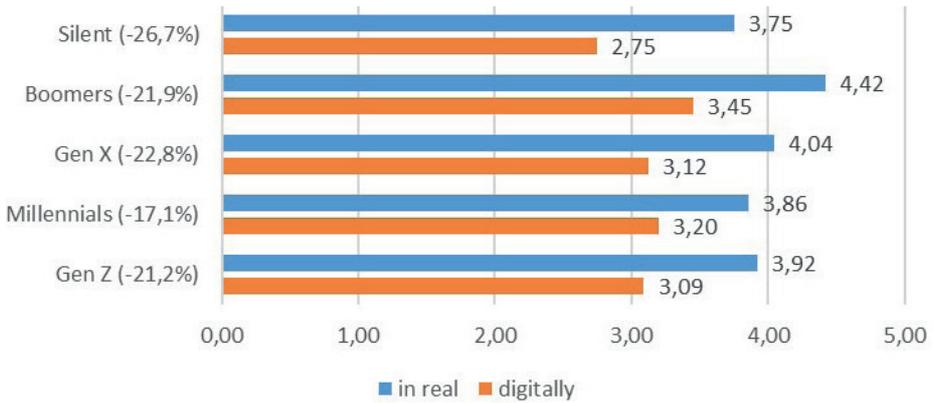
Source: own elaboration.

Contact with the Performer Him/Herself

The Silent Generation assesses contact with the performer itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.75 and digitally as 2.75 (a difference of 26.7%). Baby Boomers assess contact with the performer itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.42 and digitally as 3.45 (a difference of 21.9%). Generation X assesses contact with the performer itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.04. and digitally as 3.12 (a difference of 22.8%). Millennials assess contact with the performer itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.86 and digitally as 3.20 (a difference of 17.1%). Finally, Generation Z assesses contact with the performer itself based on participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.92 and digitally as 3.09 (a difference of 21.2%). The results clearly show that all generations assess contact

with the performer itself of visual arts as significantly higher when the aesthetic situation takes place in-real. See: Figure 8.

Figure 8. Assessment of contact with the performer him/herself in visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations

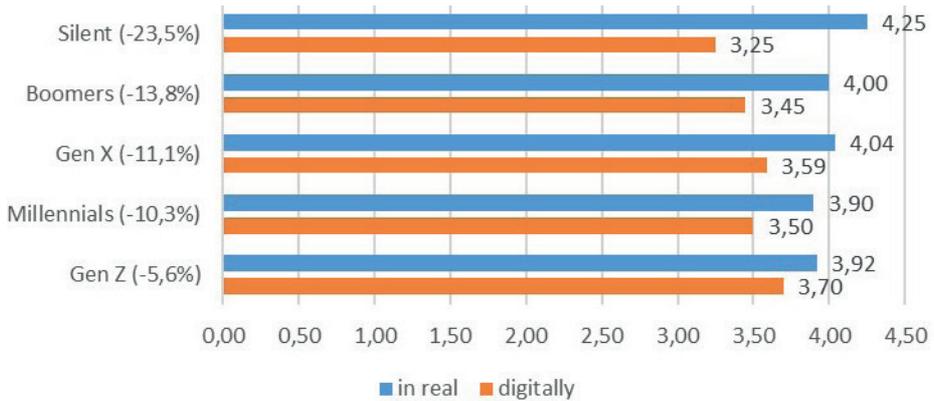


Source: own elaboration.

Comfort of Participation

The Silent Generation assesses the comfort of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.25 and digitally as 3.25 (a difference of 23.5%). Baby Boomers assess the comfort of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.00 and digitally as 3.45 (a difference of 13.8%). Generation X assesses the comfort of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.04 and digitally as 3.59 (a difference of 11.1%). Millennials assess the comfort of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.90 and digitally as 3.50 (a difference of 10.3%). Finally, Generation Z assesses the comfort of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.92 and digitally as 3.70 (a difference of 5.6%). See: Figure 9.

Figure 9. Assessment of comfort of participation flowing from visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations

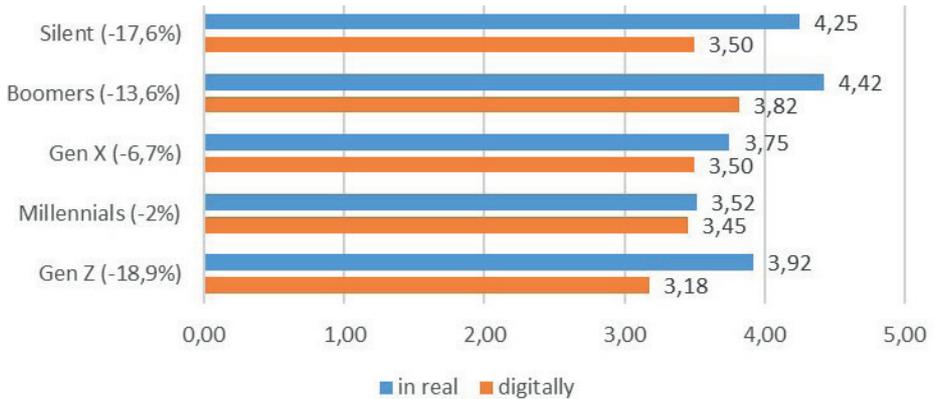


Source: own elaboration.

Possibilities of Shaping the Aesthetic Experience

The Silent Generation assesses possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience by participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.25 and digitally as 3.50 (a difference of 17.6%). Baby Boomers assess possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience by participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.42 and digitally as 3.82 (a difference of 13.6%). Generation X assesses possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience by participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.75 and digitally as 3.50 (a difference of 6.7%). Millennials assess possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience by participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.52 and digitally as 3.45 (a difference of 2.0%). Finally, Generation Z assesses possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience by participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.92 and digitally as 3.18 (a difference of 18.9%). See: Figure 10.

Figure 10. Assessment of possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience in visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations

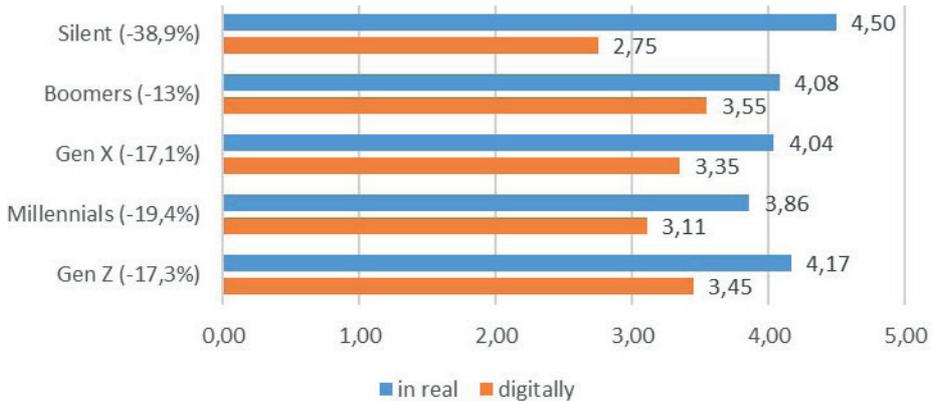


Source: own elaboration.

Own Motivation to Participate

The Silent Generation assesses its motivation to participate in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.50 and digitally as 2.75 (a difference of 38.9%). Baby Boomers assess their motivation to participate in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.08 and digitally as 3.55 (a difference of 13.0%). Generation X assesses its motivation to participate in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.04 and digitally as 3.35 (a difference of 17.1%). Millennials assess their motivation to participate in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.86 and digitally as 3.11 (a difference of 19.4%). Finally, Generation Z assesses its motivation to participate in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.17 and digitally as 3.45 (a difference of 17.3%). See: Figure 11.

Figure 11. Assessment of own motivation to participate in visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations

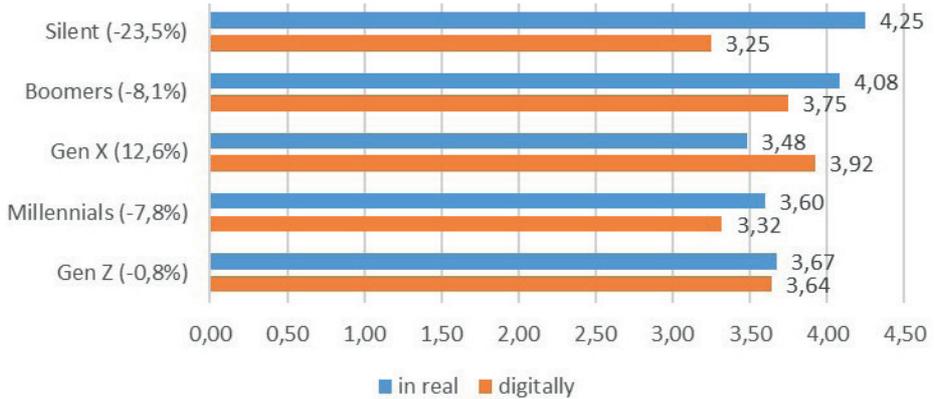


Source: own elaboration.

Ease of Participation

The Silent Generation assesses the ease of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.25 and digitally as 3.25 (a difference of 23.5%). Baby Boomers assess the ease of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 4.08 and digitally as 3.75 (a difference of 8.1%). Generation X assesses the ease of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.48 and digitally as 3.92 (a difference of 12.6). Millennials assess the ease of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.60 and digitally as 3.32 (a difference of 7.8%). Finally, Generation Z assesses the ease of participation in the receiving process in the in-real form as 3.67 and digitally as 3.64 (a difference of 0.8%). It could be expected that the ease of participation in visual arts in digital forms should be assessed much higher than in in-real modes, but the results show the opposite. Only members of Generation X hold that the virtual mode of participation in visual arts is more accessible. See: Figure 12.

Figure 12. Assessment of ease of participation in visual arts concerning the form of participation in the receiving process between generations



Source: own elaboration.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that the form of participation (in-real or digital) in visual arts culturally influences in different ways how recipients from particular generations perceive the quality of an aesthetic situation. Answering the first research question, it can be stated that art recipients from particular generations perceive the quality of their participation in visual arts, with regard to the form of that participation (in-real or digitally), differently: the older the generation, the more significant discrepancies between both forms of participation in visual arts. The differences between the forms of participation in visual arts decrease with every younger generation. Answering the second research question, it can be stated that the differences among arts recipients from different generations with regard to particular forms of participation in visual arts are visible in all ten criteria selected for this research, i.e., 1) satisfaction from meeting personal desires or expectations; 2) pleasure experienced in response to stimuli activating by the aesthetic situation; 3) engagement in a particular aesthetic situation;

4) the possibility of experiencing catharsis; 5) contact with the artwork itself; 6) contact with the performer him/herself; 7) the comfort of participation in the interaction with a work of art; 8) possibilities of shaping the aesthetical experience as an emotional response to artistic or sensory stimuli; 9) own motivation to participate in visual arts; 10) ease of participation, level of simplicity, convenience, and lack of obstacles encountered when engaging in a work of visual art. Answering the third research question, it can be stated that the differences among arts recipients from particular generations regarding the form of their participation in visual arts vary according to the particular generation and specific criterion of analysis; it is impossible to summarize these differences in short due to the complexity and variety of the analyzed components.

The results of this investigation should be of interest to: 1) Visual arts creators looking for the optimal way of distributing artworks among recipients from different generations; 2) Visual arts managers and marketers who wish for a deeper understanding of generation-diversified visual arts recipients' perspectives and their preferences about participation in visual arts in-real or digitally; 3) Visual arts recipients who wish to balance their opinion about the ways of participation in visual arts by understanding the preferences of recipients belonging to particular generations.

The following limitations of the research may be seen: 1) The vast majority of the sample was represented by persons with higher education experiences confirmed by Bachelor's, Engineer's, Master's, Doctoral and Professorship diplomas, who are more conscious of their behavior and better equipped to describe their perception of insubstantial assets and features in comparison to the rest of society; 2) The sample set was relatively small for broad conclusions (n = 115).

Possible areas of enquiry for further research include the following: 1) How do creators of visual arts from specific generations perceive shifts in artistry and creativity – whether gained or diminished – in relation to various modes of distributing visual artworks? 2) What disparities emerge across generations in terms of artistry and creativity shifts – whether gained or diminished – in the context of diverse receiving processes, particularly across different cultural contexts? 3) How do artistry and creativity shifts – whether gained or

diminished – within diverse receiving processes differ among individuals belonging to distinct generations? 4) In what ways can specific generations leverage disparities in participation within visual arts to contribute to the sustainable development of society, the economy, and the environment? 5) What factors underlie the distinctions in assessments of different forms of participation within visual arts, as perceived by particular generations?

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