

Vitality of Strategic Museum Management: An Application from Turkish Museums

(Research Article)

Stratejik Müze Yönetiminin Hayatiliği: Türk Müzelerinden Bir Uygulama

Doi: 10.29023/alanyaakademik.1035175

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How to cite this article: Ada, N., Pinar, İ. & Altın, H. O. (2022). "Vitality of Strategic Museum Management: An Application from Turkish Museums", *Alanya Akademik Bakış*, 6(1), Sayfa No. 1891-1905.

ABSTRACT

Keywords:
Museum management,
Strategic museum
management; Turkish
museums

Received: 10.12.2021

Accepted: 10.01.2022

Collecting, protecting and presenting a diverse range of objects can be considered as one of the main purposes of the museums. Similar to many other non-profit organizations, management aspect of museums is often ignored or overlooked up until the beginning of 21st century. However, with the innovative managerial practices, impact of globalization and inter-connected entertainment sector forced the museums to integrate strategic management practices into their operations. Within this context, study aims to discover the managerial perspective of the visited-oriented museums in Turkey and explore whether they are embracing or employing strategic management principles or not. To achieve this aim, 12 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the museum managers. Results highlights the contemporary administrative structures of Turkish museums which yields valuable information. Numerous managerial implications and future recommendations are provided for the effective management of museums.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental roles of the museums is to collect, protect and present a diverse range of objects that have an intrinsic meaning for people (Gilmore et al., 2002; Pinar et al., 2017). Museums often reflect the culture of the community they are constructed in, yet, protecting intangible cultural heritage (Ferrer-Yulfo, 2020). Thus, museums help visitors by helping them

develop a better understanding of the society they visit by providing community involvement (Cho, 2020). In addition to these aspects, yet another crucial point of the museums is that they protect, maintain and safeguard invaluable items such as famous sculptures, paintings, places, letters, and thousands of prominent icons that interested visitors might want to see (Plačėke et al., 2017; Vasylenko et al., 2020). Thus, museums should organize their businesses in order to exhibit their collections, develop bridges between present and past, educate people, trigger research, inform and protect heritage of societies for future (Kovach, 1989; Kawashima, 1998; Kotler et al., 2000; Kotler, 2001; Reussner, 2003).

Nowadays, with the ever-growing impact of the globalization, technological advancements, alterations in the living conditions of everyday, expectations and needs of individuals are changing on a daily basis. Thus, as of year 2016, like Kotler mentioned (2000), visitors of our century are looking for a marvelous experience in museums which is surrounded by memorable, participatory and sociable events. In addition to this, aforementioned experience should be supported by situations that triggers strong responses and emotions in visitors. Furthermore, participatory and sociable experiences, interactive programs and improved educational offerings should be integrated into the event to further position the event in the mind of the visitor as a remarkable experience (Pica, 2014). Within this context, it should be stated that museums are not only competing with each other; rather, they are competing with other entertainment options in different fields such as various shows, concerts and theaters, restaurants, shopping malls, sports, summer tourism and science centers (Kotler et al., 2000). Under these circumstances, managing a museum is further than merely exhibiting the objects appropriately yet some lack good management practice and procedures (Holmes et al., 2008). Nowadays, museum managers should establish teams that will carefully plan and forecast the future, keep up with changes, meet the accountability demands, track opportunities to exploit effectively and develop creative and innovative solutions for visitors (Overman, 2021). This study argues that this can only be done by the help of strategic management which is the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives and gain a competitive advantage for a sustainable superior performance over other organizations (Kong, 2008; David et al., 2015).

2. AIM OF THE STUDY

Based on this information, present study will focus on the importance and current implementation practices of the strategic management for museums in the light of the existing literature. Within this context, the main motivation of this study was two folded, first it aims to discover the managerial perspective of the visited oriented museums and explore whether they are embracing or employing strategic management principles or not. As for the secondary aim, study discusses the managerial perspective of visitor-oriented museums and suggests managerial implication in the light of the present results. Secondly, it will highlight the managerial perspective of Turkish Museum Managers' by revealing to what extent they depend on the principles of strategic management. Additionally, implications are presented and recommendations are provided for museum managers to keep up with the rapid changes that we experienced all around the world in both needs and wants of visitors. In order to achieve aforementioned aims, the study adapted a qualitative research method.

3. THEORETIC FRAMEWORK & CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

3.1. Managing Museums: Strategic Management for Non-Profit Museums

It was thought of as unnecessary and irrelevant to talk about managerial practices for museums at the very beginning of '90s. (Sandell et al., 2007). However, as mentioned previously, new challenges, technological advancements and continuous managerial developments for all types of organizations paved the way for numerous principles of management such as performance management, staff training and strategy formulation to become an integral part of museums for sustainable and effective administration (Kotler et al., 2000; Peacock, 2008). Similar to its neglect of variety of subsectors of tourism (Altın et al., 2021), museum's impact on the tourism industry as well as their fundamental managerial practices were also undermined significantly. The importance of management for museums supported by sophisticated studies, and growing interest against subject in the literature stake the importance of strategic management for museums (Moore, 1999; Griffin et al., 1999; Griffin et al., 2000; Kotler et al., 2000; Reussner, 2003; Sandell et al., 2007).

Like any other organization, museums must also find an efficient way to serve, create value and phase a constructive change for the communities they are settled in (Weil, 1999; Griffin et al., 2000). In the study of Griffin and Abraham (2000) narrative responses given during the semi structured interviews showed that points mentioned below are the crucial aspects of a successful museum management:

- the importance given to human resources,
- long ranged strategic thinking,
- developing a clear vision,
- shared goals,
- flexibility and participation in decision making process,
- an effective communication among managerial levels,
- training,
- financial support and ability to serve for diversified needs.

In addition to this, Bennis and O'Toole (2000) argued that people who hold the managerial positions are very critical for museums and they must be selected carefully. Comprehensive examination of the studies yields the principles and the desired outcomes of an efficient strategic management aspects.

Today, museums should create a sense of festival that individuals from any religion, ethnicity, political and economic standpoint, sex, gender, age and et. al. will be willing to participate in. As a possible approach to cope with this crucial predicament, museums have embraced the concept of strategic management from for-profit organizations in order to cope with the changing demands of the societies and complex nature of competition (Reussner, 2003; Papoulias et al., 2020). For non-profit organizations like museums; strategies that focuses on business, external marketing, long term planning and a more comprehensive view that follows the "Goal Development-Strategic Planning-Strategy Selection-Implementation and Program Development" path are recommended by the literature (Hatten, 1982; Kovach, 1989; Ambrose et al., 1991; Oster, 1995; Kotler et al., 1996; Kotler et al., 2000; Kawashima, 1998; Kotler, 2001; Reussner, 2003; Kong,2008).

The thorough literature review reveals that implementation of strategic management aspects in museums should include more than just a marketing or public relation-oriented approach. Rather, it should hold a more comprehensive purpose that matches with the responsibilities of museums (Reussner, 2003) and when compared with other organizations it is rather complex (Covach, 1989). Thus, the fundamental functions of museum management will cover all the necessary activities of museums in order to reach their primary goal. The very basic activities of museums (presented in Figure 1) consist of finding a collection to exhibit in an effective manner, contribute to the welfare of public and culture, and market the pieces displayed. Therefore, the primary goal of museums should be meeting both the external needs such as cultural participation and competition and internal needs such as creating an exciting visiting experience and generating emotions for stakeholders (Reussner, 2003; Camarero-Izquierdo et al., 2009; Izquierdo et al., 2011; Vasylenko et al., 2020) through the main three functions as communication, marketing, and education (Ayala et al., 2020).

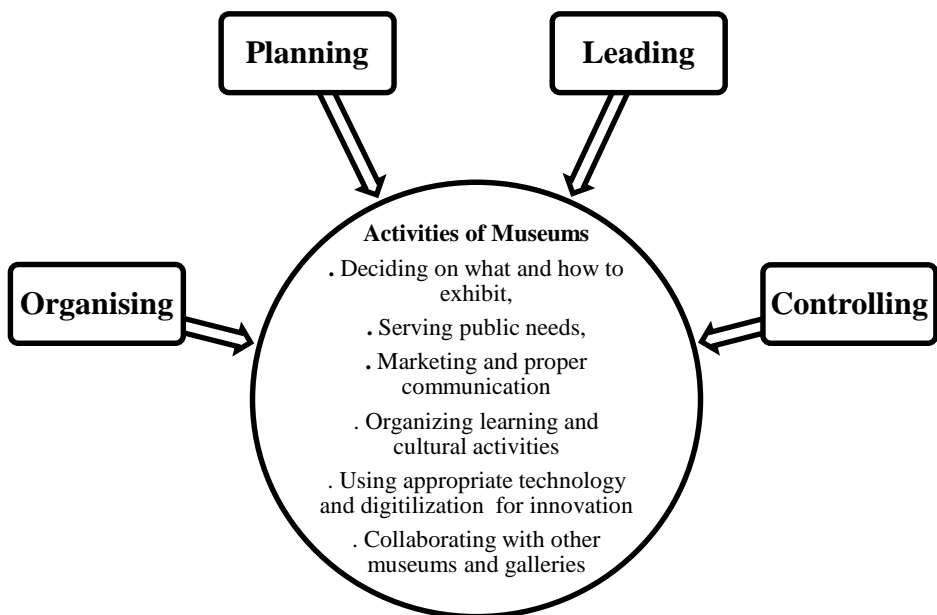


Figure 1: Managing Museum Activities

Museum managers should find the best management practice to reach their goals that fit with rapidly changing demands of 21st century. At that point, it is highly believed that, the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions which help managers of museums to reach their goals will support their activities (David, 2015). In fact, the process mentioned as- formulating, implementing and evaluating- are the three stages of strategic management in general. In most studies, managing strategically is used interchangeably with “having strategic plans”. Regardless of its reference, it is a kind of game that executives involved in. During this game, managers of any organization, whether it is a profit or not for profit one, strive to select the best alternative for their organization’s sustainability and success. Furthermore, they should act in accordance with the needs of the market and show commitment to the laws, rules, regulations, policies and psychological

agreements that are present in the markets. Thus, managing strategically requires a “360 degree” thinking ability without by-passing any stakeholder in this particular business game. Strategic management for any kind of organization consists of three basic steps which in fact holds different processes in each. Figure 2 shows these basic 3 stages and demonstrate the strategic management processes for organizations, which is also applicable to museums.

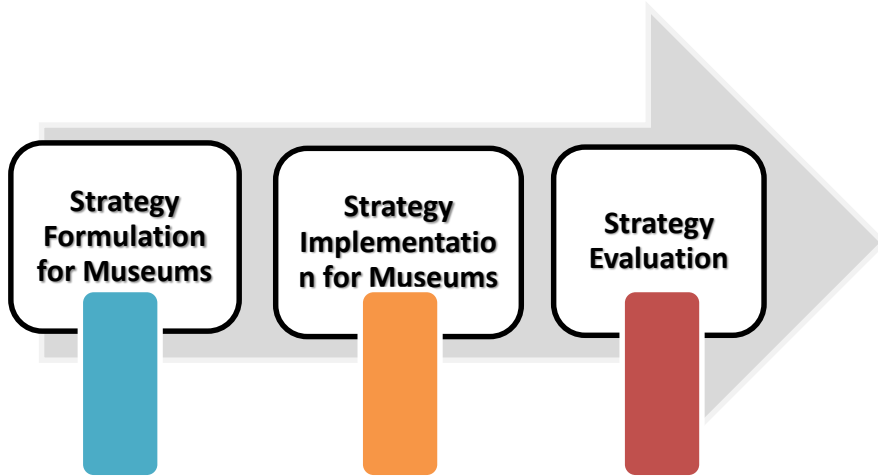


Figure 2: Stages of Strategic Management for Museums

Source: David, F.R. and David, F.R. (2015) Strategic Management: Concept and Cases, 15th Edition, Page 15 Pearson: Global Edition

During the *strategy formulation* stage, which is the first stage among three, museums should decide on their vision, mission and goals. Thus; at this stage they should decide on what they are going to exhibit, how they are going to exhibit and for whom they are displaying their artifacts and items, hence, choose form alternatives which are most appropriate (Zorloni, 2010). Subsequently, yet another decision that should be made by museums is the positioning and their target market. Visitor-oriented museums may focus on various alternatives at this stage (Ioanna et al., 2019). They might prefer to address to a wide group of audience or choose a specific group of visitors for their exhibitions. They might prefer to spent the whole year for wide group of visitors but access to special groups such as minorities during the weeks which are inherently significant for those people. Should they choose the latter, specialized marketing practices can be quite effective. They may prefer to develop the life-long learning ability of their visitors and public or they might prefer to enlighten a special period or/and event to help visitors get a detailed understanding of what they are presenting. Hence, configuring value creation capabilities consistent with museum’s strategic objectives is also important (Coblence et al., 2014). There is no doubt that these decisions should be given according to the activities of other museums in the region, needs of visitors and internal strengths of the museums such as the originality and popularity of the pieces they are presenting. Therefore, in this stage, museum managers should concentrate on numerous things such as the internal and external abilities and disabilities of their museums; the way competitors act in the market; the innovation and value creation capability, the business model to choose, the expectations and habits of visitors and lastly, policies and procedures relevant to culture (Scott, 2015).

During the *strategy implementation* stage, is about “deciding how the organization is going to get there internally” (Horovitz, 1984:27) and what is expected from a museum manager is to take the necessary actions to increase the number of visitors by putting the aforementioned strategic plans into practice. At strategy implementation stage the museum administration may sign contract with tourist offices, organize interactive shows for children, arrange seminars about collection presented within the museums, support art students with courses and/or manufacture souvenirs to be sold in museum shops. Implementation stage must be effectuated by the supervision of museum managers (Ioanna et al., 2019). In order to attain the museum goals, implementation stage is crucial for museum administration (Ayala et al., 2020). At this stage museum managers may periodically check the number of visitors, oversee the feedbacks by checking museum guest book, evaluate the criticism of visitors and public, and/or develop survey to understand the visitors in both national and international market. Furthermore, control and monitor activities which are rather complex for museum management and creative arts (Sassi et al., 2017), can be achieved via the help of an appropriate web page which will also help the museum manager to develop their reputation in the market.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Design

In order to explore the relationship between two variables stated previously, proposed research has adapted methods from qualitative research. Considering the limited literature on the field (Najda-Janoszka et al., 2018) and the lack of a comprehensive framework with uniform methodologies and concrete findings, it has been revealed that implementation of strategic management on museums is a nascent research area, which further justifies the use of qualitative research methods. Thus, it was proposed 12 semi-structured in-depth interviews with various museum managers is sufficient to reach data saturation to discover how the manage their museums and the findings are interpreted with the support of thorough literature review and thoroughgoing examination of secondary data.

4.2. Data Collection & Data Analysis

In-depth interview technique has been chosen as the main data collected method. Semi-structured interviews were used while collecting data since it allows researchers to follow-up any interesting stream of questions without losing the main focus point. Interviews were conducted with public relation managers’ and senior managers of both community and private museums located primarily in Turkey. Thus, population of this study comprises of senior managers and PR managers of museums that are located in Turkey.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with open-ended questions. Additionally, a protocol is employed and applied to assist interviewer to recall the main themes. With the permission of the informants, interviews were recorded. Participants were informed that no personal information will be disseminated or declared. Interview records were transcribed and coded to observe if it is required to revise the interview protocol. The findings will be supported by the secondary data about the museums and public relation activities in national and international settings for reinforcing the results and provide additional managerial implications. The semi-structured in-depth interviews were held with 12 professionals that are managers or/and directors who work for the public and private museums in Turkey. While sampling the population, purposive sampling method is utilized. Participants were chosen based on their

knowledgeability and their ability to provide unique, valuable insights about the topic that is being researched. The sample is targeted to be composed of 30 in-depth interviews. After 10th interview however, it was revealed that data saturation is reached since additional interviews provided no unique insights and mostly existing codes were mentioned by new participants. Thus, it was revealed that data saturation is reached and authors decided that 12 interviews are sufficient. Each interview took between 45 to 110 minutes and all are recorded with the permission of participants. In order to keep the anonymity and maintain the privacy of the participants'; names of respondents and museums are not declared. Rather, participants of the study are named as "Respondent 1,2,3...etc."

All records are transcribed and analyzed after the final confirmation of the participants. All transcripts were scanned in the light of questions and the answers written in each document is grouped according to the scope of the study by the researchers. Transcriptions of interviews were made by hand. Transcription process was iterative and exhaustive as to not miss any important aspects. Common, frequent answers were grouped which paved the way for the conception of themes among the answers of participants. The results of the study are presented in the light of the related literature, and with the support of the quotes from the interviews.

5. RESULTS: REALITIES OF MUSEUMS IN TURKEY FROM STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

The documentation about İzmir and its neighborhood showed that there are about 36 museums around that can be visited excluding the archeological museums¹. These museums are started to be established by the beginning of 1980s and they mainly exhibit paintings, sculptures and archeological pieces. With the beginning of 2000s, museum portfolio in İzmir Province diversified by specific themes such as music, toys, joy and cartoon, radio and television, city archive, paper, and car museums by the help of the private museums. Among these museums, Arkas Art Museum, Key Car Museum, İzmir Women Museum, Paper and Book Museum, Ahmet Piriştina City Archive Museum are the most popular representatives of the boutique museums located within İzmir.

As stated above, throughout this study researchers have interviewed the managers of both public museums that are governed by the Turkish Ministry of Culture, and private-museums that are held by private investments in and around İzmir district. During these interviews, the questions about the managerial perspectives, mode of operations, vision, mission and goals of the museums, and fundamental marketing philosophy were asked to the participants. During the ice-breaking questions, managers' opinion and expectations from a museum had been clearly revealed:

"...the aims of the museums are to protect the pieces of valuable artist and discover new talents that will create value for future ..."

Respondent 12

"Museums are places where the communication between generations are done by the help of objects. Especially the city museums let people to develop a commitment to their cities and help

¹<http://www.smyrnalegacy.com>: last checked in 30.03.2016

them to learn their history. Apart from this, visitors of city museums place their environment on a reasonable platform in the world history..."

Respondent 2

"...Museums are bridges between past and future. They help us to learn the history while living in today's world and let visitors to shape their expectations from future..."

Respondent 3

The thorough literature review about museums showed that the museum managers in our study had a parallel notion and similar viewpoints just like their colleagues around the world. All the participants provided thorough definitions for museums. These definitions indicated their extent of knowledge about museums. Furthermore, this factual standpoint can be further supported by the educational backgrounds of our participants. Majority of the participants within this study graduated from art faculties or/and still working as professors in science and art faculties of leading universities of the region.

The interviews reveal stunning results about the functioning aspects of museums. The respondents declared that the infrastructure of museum buildings prevent them to use modern technology and re-construction of places according to different exhibitions are usually impossible in most of the cases. Historical buildings and establishments prevent the restoration activities or re-building endeavors. Participants also added that their museums aim to provide service every single visitor regardless of their age and disabilities. However, due to the aforementioned infrastructural problems, in some cases building lifts and sound systems are not an option. As a result of this, the goal of "museum for every single individual" sometimes become unfeasible to reach.

The uniform standpoint among the participants of the study is that, there is a lack of managerial knowledge about the museum administration aspects especially among the top management levels. This phenomenon is especially present in the public foundations. This disadvantageous incapability often hinders the efficient and effective functioning of museums. During the interviews, four of the participants said that the storerooms of the museums are full of incredible pieces that can be exhibited, but due to the bureaucratic obstacles and incapable managerial perspective they are left to rot in warehouses. Although the majority of the participants' associate this phenomenon with the lack of knowledge about museum management, in the other side of the medallion, "lack of financial support" has also been mentioned by many participants. All the respondents said that superiors do not attach necessary importance to art and recording (archiving) and therefore required financial support is not issued to museums.

For every organization in existence whether they are for profit or non-profit, strategic management is a necessity to develop and implement various plans be it short-term or long-term. There are various areas that organizations should focus their strategic management on. One example of that would be the business level activities and practices. Within this level, executives that embrace strategic management ideas may direct their efforts to various functional areas of business such as sales, marketing, operations, finance, human resources, research and development, and customer services (David et al., 2015). While applying strategic management to museums, the key point should not only be developing an overall marketing strategy to attract visitors. Instead, strategies should focus on donators, companies, occupational groups, trovers, and investors that might relieve the financial gap. Kotler (1975)

remarks that museums that are strategically managed should enhance their national and international recognition for the fundamental financial support.

In order to determine whether Turkish museums managers' have any strategy for better recognition in both domestic and international markets; which consequently transforms into better fundraising, the respondents were asked several questions such as "Can you please talk about the national and international recognition about your museum? What kind of future plans do you have for a better recognition and visitors' satisfaction?". Responses showed that all the museums primarily focused their activities for national reputation. The following quotation had been repeated by nearly all the respondents:

".....Our target is all people living in our country regardless of their age, gender, religious, ethnicity, race and etc. We pay great attention to children because we believe that they will help us to protect our wealth in future. For us it is difficult to increase our recognition in international market rather we focus on domestic market. For international recognition we attend to conferences and special fairs..."

Respondent 10

The common point in all answers was "children". Thus, all the participants fervently believed that children must be given special importance by the museum management for sustainability reasons as they are the future parents and visitors of the museums. This statement also confirms the previously mentioned inference: majority of the museums focus on national marketing activities rather than international. Within this context, interviews also revealed that most museums in Turkey develop a yearly visit plan for students in an academic year. During these planned visits, students are allowed to touch the pieces, play drama about the exhibitions and learn the details about the pieces from experts. For example, the students who visit the "Music and Instruments Museum", have the chance to play the replica of the instruments and trace concerts. One of the respondents told that any visual activity that enable visitors to experience the details of the exhibition increase the attention against that exposition. 10 of the respondents believe that history of art and museums has to be subject in the curriculum of schools in all levels. They insist on that only with the help of education museums can sustain in Turkey. Additionally, respondents declared that when they invite students to museums, their parents or elders who never had a museum experience, got a chance of visiting a museum for the first time in their lives. In a uniform manner, all the participants remarked that they were competing with cinemas, theaters and concerts once but nowadays they are competing with big shopping malls to attract visitors. In addition to this, to increase the number of visitors and strengthen their position in Turkey, museums arrange courses about different subjects such as sculpture, painting, music and some other art related headings.

"...if you want to publicize your museum you must get into the fields of interest of visitors...thus any kind of hobby such as toys, cars, music, food, books...etc. You should discover the areas of interest for people and refer to that area.... only by doing this you can catch up with the needs and wants of visitors and also keep phase with today. On the other hand, you will be old fashioned..."

Respondent 6

This argument was also supported by other participants. To overcome the dull and boring image of the museums, majority of the managers arrange different activities. Besides the art pieces

that are representing the fundamental aim of the museums, managers prefer to arrange different exhibitions throughout the year to entice new visitors. Transportation history of cities, galleries of local artist, costumes worn during various periods such as 1900s, and 1890s and lots of other demonstrations that highlight the characteristics of the past and future of cities, republic or the former landlords of the today's metropolises are only some of the exhibitions and demonstrations conducted by museums. It has been revealed that summer is a rest and renovation time for the museums in Turkey due to the fact that people prefer to be off the cities and live by sea-sides in summer conditions. However, Turkish museum managers seemed to find a solution for this season by arranging mobile exhibitions for summer villages in order keep the awareness of the visitors alive.

The results indicated that the awareness of an everyday citizen is not high due to the lack of effective advertisement in domestic media. Nevertheless, numerous Turkish museums are receiving important awards in international conferences and contests. For example, the initial Fun and Cartoon Museum of Turkey, which is located in İzmir, got to the finals in the contest arranged by European Museum Academy. It has been revealed throughout the interviews that these kinds of international attractions help them to keep phase with, discuss and learn different commitments done in the field of museum management abroad.

Analysis of the interviews revealed that majority of the managers fail to develop an effective vision & mission statement and do not set clear goals for their museums. Considering the fact that these steps are the starting point of any strategic management process, huge shortcoming exists in the initial implementation steps for museums. Rather, museum managers try plethora of other activities for the survival of their institution without any strategic plans, financial support or necessary education. Moreover, dubious managerial competencies and ignorance of art and museums in Turkey further hinders the efforts of museums managers. However, despite all these aforementioned obstacles, annually recorded visitor numbers seem to be satisfactory by the museum managers.

Finally, majority of the participants complain about the lack of networking among the managers of museums in Turkey which is actually a key point in strategic management. Considering that networking allows museums managers to be aware of their competitors, share knowledge and support each other for a better rivalry which benefits all the institutions for a successful future and strengthen presence (Plaza et al., 2015; Bira et al., 2019), absence of it hinders the effective and successful administration of museums.

In this part, the answers given to questions are analyzed per the frequency of recurrence and it is avoided to make any interpretation about the responses. In the final part the results will be discussed and conclusions will be made in line with the literature and researchers own opinions that is accumulated during the analysis of the interviews.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As it is surrounded by seas on three sides, Turkey is a popular tourist destination especially during summer seasons. Just like summer tourism, museums hold equally significant importance for tourism in Turkey. As they reflect the history, habits, ethics, norms, values, culture and routine of the people and highlight the potential future, museums carry a significant tourism potential. Nowadays, as it is stated previously, museums are competing with technology, shopping malls, cinemas, concerts, theaters, social media, and various indoor and

outdoor activities that become popular in recent years. With this intense competition lurking on every corner of entertainment field, determining the vision and mission, putting the goals forward, implementing various strategies to reach the stated goals and controlling the market for a better competition became very important for museums. In other words, what was mentioned here is in fact “Managing Strategically”. This study believes that visitor-oriented museums should apply the rules of strategic management for maximum visitor satisfaction. With this thought in mind, the present study is designed to explore the administrative structure of the museums in Turkey.

The major aim of the study is to provide insights into the administrative structure of the museum in Turkey and find out whether they use the advantages of strategic management. In order to achieve this aim, qualitative research methods are employed throughout the study to explore and gain an understanding of how the museums are managed in Turkey. Within this context, 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted to uncover the trends in museum management, understand opinions and dive deeper into the problem if any exists.

Results of the study revealed that despite all the challenges and obstacles, museums in Turkey are trying their best nevertheless. The managers or/and directors are aware of the realities of the country they are living in and understand the dynamic of the visitors. With this input in their hand, they try to improve reputation of their museum and employ various new practices to increase the number of visitors. In the light of these information, it is revealed that museum managers in Turkey are aware of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats even though they do not call it a SWOT analysis per se. Managers revealed information about the financial problems, inefficient and ineffective support of the state, incompetent managers, constraints of media, shopping malls, technology and social media. However, on the other side, they are aware of the fact that they are settled in a geographically advantageous state with a magnificent history and enormous stories to exhibit in every respect. During the interviews the vision and mission statements were never mentioned by the respondents but they told that mission and the vision were reflected during their practices. Participants are running their museums in a visitor-oriented standpoint and targeting the new generation especially the children of all age groups. Their mission is to teach history to citizens and they are trying achieve this with diversified exhibitions and expositions.

From this perspective, arguing that they are implementing the steps of strategic management in an unorganized and unplanned way will not be a very wrong inference. This is most probably because the majority of the museums are not managed by professional managers. Rather, they are supervised mostly by graduates of art and science faculties. Thus, they have a profound knowledge of art, science, history, collections, and museums however some of them might have difficulties in managing a non-profit institution like museums which requires a specific background of management.

The results of the study highlight the actual administrative structure of the museums which reveals some invaluable information. This information allows researchers to provide some relevant managerial implementations about the present situation for future use. Firstly, as majority of the participants remarked, education is the key point for increasing awareness to museums. Therefore, it is recommended that schools in different levels should include courses that educates the children to understand the importance of history, museums, art and science. Management schools and faculties might include specific subjects for the graduates whom are planning to work in museums. These courses may include various subjects such as “Museum

Management”, “Museum Marketing” or/and “Accounting for Museums”. Universities that are specialized in management might even develop programs for “Museum Management”. Additionally, these universities can develop certification program for existing museum managers or/and people who are planning to work for museums.

Secondly, tourism sector holds a significant importance for Turkey. Therefore, museums might engage in collaborations with tourism agencies, hotels, and guides. As a result of this association and collaboration, museums can be included in the tour destination of tourism agencies, handouts of museums can be left to the receptions of hotels, and tourist guides might direct their groups to museums in cities beside sea-sides and open-air archeological areas. In addition to these aforementioned practices, various media branches can be utilized effectively for both international and domestic promotion of the exhibitions and valuable pieces that are displayed by the museums. Physical promotional options such as banners, billboards and virtual channels such as social media, local and national TV channels, magazines and newspapers may include news about the museums and their respective exhibitions.

Thirdly, Turkish museums may host famous exhibitions and art pieces that are popular throughout the world such as the “Lilies of Van Gogh”. This may help them to increase their popularity among visitors and art lovers and indirectly increase the awareness of domestic visitors. Moreover, museum buildings and all the relevant superstructures can be reconstructed with better infrastructure that ultimately fit the needs of all visitors, technology, and exhibitions.

Finally, it is highly recommended that museums in Turkey should find a “sister-museum” from other parts of the world. This museum should be selected from the ones who have advanced understanding in museum management in order to get valuable insights. This might help sister-museums to learn new things from each other, share knowledge and outreach themselves for future. This partnership might also benefit the visitors. New collections and the opportunity to learn new cultures at their homes without the obligation of going abroad will directly benefit the domestic visitors and consequently increase the awareness towards museums.

The proposed study aims to explore the managerial practices of museums in Turkey. To our recent knowledge this is among the first researches conducted with various Turkish museum managers to explore their managerial practices from strategic perspective. As in other studies, it has some limitations such as limited number of participants. Besides this factor, due to time constraint, it was not easy to reach different museums from all around Turkey. However, it is planned to widen this study with other museums from all around Turkey and develop a strategic management model for all the Turkish museums. Yet further, in the future studies, researchers may try to develop a managerial framework which can be utilized globally. Moreover, studies which incorporate additional museums with different specializations will surely greatly contribute to the literature.

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