



Visual Data Browsing in the Design Process: Interior Architecture Students' Approaches to the Use of Social Networking Platforms

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Abstract

This study examines the visual data browsing approaches of interior architecture students through social networking platforms (SNP) in the design process. Based on the characteristics of the research group, the study aims to reveal the contributions of SNP to interior architecture education and the emerging trends in this context. Within this aim, a total of 298 students from the Interior Architecture and Environmental Design Departments of Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University and Hacettepe University participated in the study. A questionnaire including 28 questions was used to assess the use of SNP during the design process, usage habits, preferred platforms, and data collection methods. The findings indicate that interior architecture students actively use SNP in the design process for purposes such as design innovations, seeing different design approaches, getting inspiration or learning new techniques. It has been determined that as the level of education differs, differences may occur in the students' approaches to bringing together visuals and analysing existing designs better to create original designs. It was determined that students generally use SNP for professional projects and design content, and that weekly and daily use is common. It has been observed that 3rd grade students benefit from SNP more than students in other educational levels. No significant differences were found between universities; Pinterest was found to be the most preferred platform. Despite the limited negative effects of SNP, such as distractions and reliability issues, it was concluded that their conscious and balanced use, contributes academically and professionally to the design education process.

Keywords: Design process, Interior architecture, Interior architecture education, Social networking platforms, Visual data

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To cite this article: Kara, Ş., & Özkan, A. (2026) Visual Data Browsing in the Design Process: Interior Architecture Students' Approaches to the Use of Social Networking Platforms. *ICONARP International Journal of Architecture and Planning*, 14 (1), 230-255. DOI: 10.15320/ICONARP.2026.360



INTRODUCTION

The rapid proliferation of online platforms, driven by advancements in digital technologies, empowers design students to integrate these platforms into their educational processes, thereby transforming information access and production methods (Güler, 2015; Cho and Cho, 2020; İltir, 2020; Scolere, 2023). While this change reveals new approaches in design education, SNP become a part of visual data browsing and inspiration-seeking processes for students. Specifically, SNP are defined as digital environments where users generate, disseminate, and engage with visual, textual, and auditory content (Weaver and Morrison, 2008; Castells, 2023). Students frequently use these platforms to search, collect, and interpret visual data. Visual data are spatial representations that influence design decisions, such as images, drawings, and photographs that students access through information search methods.

Interior architecture education encompasses the instruction of knowledge and skills pertinent to space design, developing individuals with creative and analytical abilities, and strives to furnish students with the essential knowledge, skills, and values required for career success (Kurt Cavuş and Kaptan, 2022). A key requirement of interior architecture education is that students understand diverse social, cultural, and spatial contexts and stay up to date with contemporary lifestyles. In this context, design students are increasingly utilizing SNP to better understand users' lifestyles and spatial requirements in the modern era. SNP are defined as online spaces where users can share their emotions, thoughts, experiences, knowledge, and areas of interest either vocally or visually with known or unknown individuals (Ince and Koçak, 2017). The rapid development of these platforms and their ease of access to visual and informational data have encouraged students to integrate SNP into their educational processes, thereby enhancing the efficiency (Akçay et al., 2021; Atar, 2022).

Studies on the interaction between SNP and educational systems suggest that out-of-school education will increasingly occur through these platforms (Akgün, 2016; Eryılmaz, 2017; İzadpanah, 2021; Atar, 2022). This interaction not only extends learning beyond the classroom, making the process more flexible and accessible for students but also broadens the learning experience, thereby creating a more inclusive structure. Furthermore, it enables students to personalize their learning processes and engage with a wider array of resources. SNP foster students' creativity while also encouraging the growth of digital literacy, self-directed learning, teamwork and communication abilities, and critical thinking skills (Allen et al., 2012; Eryılmaz, 2017; Pérez Nanclores and Del Blanco García, 2024). The use of SNP not only engages individuals cognitively, but also supports their cognitive development, enhances their level of awareness, enriches their knowledge base, and contributes to behavioral transformation (Gillet et al., 2008).

Through the content they share on SNP, students not only enhance their learning but also contribute the skills they acquire back to society (Ham and Schnabel, 2011). In design education, knowledge and experience gained from previous projects assist students with similar design challenges. This accumulation of knowledge and experience guides new designs while continuously evolving through professional practice (Özgür, 2019). Pourahmad Ghalejough et al. (2022) stated that the more designers enrich their visual resources and archives, the more creatively they can manage design challenges and processes. Moreover, students use images at the beginning of the design process to seek inspiration, guide their work and establish a general atmosphere for their designs (Gilman and Vincent, 2013; Erçevik Sönmez, 2020). SNP make learning processes more innovative and engaging, facilitate the comprehension of information and enable students to save both time and money (Agusintadewi et al., 2021). However, these platforms can also lead to the loss of critical resources, create pressure and result in disruptions, fatigue, exhaustion, and information overload that inhibit self-dependence and personal control (Zhang and Mao, 2023). Additionally, when students struggle with time management, they may opt for a superficial approach over in-depth learning, face difficulties critically evaluating the possibilities offered by representational media, and experience indecision about which information to pursue due to excessive information access—leading to the neglect of other relevant stimuli while focusing on specific cues (Ham, 2013; Gonçalves et al., 2016; Özsavaş Uluçay, 2017). This situation can result in negative outcomes in design culture, such as distortion, repetition and even replication or imitation (Özsavaş Uluçay, 2017). The study is structured around the following research questions:

RQ1: How does the practice of visual data exploration on social networking platforms (SNP) during the design process affect the creativity and technical development of interior architecture students?

RQ2: What are the potential positive and negative impacts of visual data exploration on social networking platforms (SNP) during the design process for interior architecture students?

RQ3: What are the social networking platforms (SNP) usage habits, preferred content types, and data collection methods of interior architecture students during the design process?

While existing studies in the literature offer helpful information regarding students' visual data exploration through SNP (e.g., in medical education: Cheston et al, 2013; in secondary education: Greenhow and Lewin, 2016; in engineering education: Junco et al, 2011; in language learning: Zhou, 2021), there is still a lack of sufficient research on how interior architecture students engage with these platforms and how they are affected by them. The contribution of this study to the literature aims to fill gaps in the existing literature, specifically the limited number of studies on interior architecture education, which are generally confined to one or a few SNP (Ham, 2013; Gilman and Vincent, 2013; Ilter and

Karacar, 2017; Gürdağ et al., 2018; Taşdelen, 2018; Chai and Fan., 2018; Al Hashimi et al., 2019; Scolere, 2019; Dwijendra and Yogantari, 2019; Ilter, 2020; Izadpanah, 2021; Pourahmad Ghalejough et al., 2022; Gök Tokgöz and Altın, 2022; Atar, 2022; Özteke Aysal et al, 2024). In this sense, it aims to examine the role of SNP in design processes from a broader perspective and to provide a resource to fill the gaps in this field. This study examines the relationship between interior architecture students' visual data exploration on SNP at different stages of the design process and their creativity and overall design development. It seeks to identify the similarities and differences in the approaches of interior architecture students, as well as to explore the reasons behind these approaches, providing a detailed evaluation of interior architecture education and students' engagement with SNP. Moreover, the study aims to identify the preferred SNP among interior architecture students

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, a questionnaire was developed to assess the opinions of students in the Departments of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design at Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University (BŞEU) and Hacettepe University (HU) about the relationship between their creativity and overall design development through visual data discovery on SNP at various stages of the design process.

Participants

Participants consisted of a total of 298 students from the Departments of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design BŞEU (194 individuals) and HU (194 individuals) during the fall semester of 2024-2025, all of whom willingly consented to participate in the study (Table 1).

Table 1. General Information About the Participants

Characteristics of Participants		F	%
Gender	Female	248	83,2
	Male	50	16,8
Age	17-22	218	73,2
	23-30	79	26,5
	31 and above	1	0,3
University	Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University	149	50
	Hacettepe University	149	50
Level of Education	1st Grade	47	15,8
	2nd Grade	91	30,5
	3rd Grade	59	19,8
	4th Grade	101	33,9

Notes: F: Number of participants %: Percentage value

According to Table 1, 16,8% of the respondents male, and 83.2% were female; 73,2% were between the ages of 17-22, 26,5% were between the ages of 23-30, and 0,3% were between the ages of 31 and above; 15,8% were in 1st grade, 30,5% were in 2nd grade, 19,8% were in 3rd grade, and 33,9% were in 4th grade. Consequently, gender and age variables

were excluded from the analysis because most of the participants were female, and between the ages of 17-22.

Questionnaire Design and Procedure

A single questionnaire was prepared consisting of four parts: the first part consists of questions about demographic information, the second part consists of nine questions to evaluate the use of SNP in the design process using a Five-point Likert-type scale (1: Never, 5: Always), the third part consists of ten questions to evaluate the approach of using SNP using a Five-point Likert-type scale (1: Strongly Disagree, 5: Strongly Agree) and the fourth section consists of five multiple choice questions to evaluate the habits of using SNP. The questionnaire form was prepared by using the literature in the interior architecture discipline and different design disciplines. (Toğay et al, 2013; Chai and Fan, 2018; Ilter and Karacar, 2017; Alacacı Torun, 2019; Gürdağ et al, 2018; Abdul Kadir, 2020; Izadpanah, 2021; Tümer, 2022; Pourahmad Ghalejough et al., 2022; Gök and Altın, 2022; Scolere, 2023; Özteke Aysal et al., 2024).

The questionnaire, which received the necessary ethical permissions from the relevant institutions, was shared with the participants online via Google Forms in the fall semester of 2024-2025 and was structured in a way that their voluntary consent for participation could be obtained.

Statistical Methods

Statistical analyses were carried out with IBM SPSS Statistics (v. 22.0). Data collected from the questionnaire, designed in accordance with the research questions, were analysed using appropriate statistical methods. First, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients, mean, and standard deviation values were computed for each dependent variable. Then, relationships between universities and education levels were analysed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Data were also presented graphically to better illustrate the differences between the obtained percentages and means.

FINDINGS

The data obtained were evaluated and interpreted within the framework of the main questions of the research (RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3) and detailed under the relevant headings. The findings are divided into three different sections as 'Analysis of Evaluations on the Use of SNP in the Design Process', 'Analysis of the Potential Positive and Negative Impacts on the Use of SNP' and 'Analysis of SNP Usage Habits, Preferred Platforms, and Data Collection Methods' following the sections of the questionnaire form and the research questions.

Analysis of Evaluations on the Use of SNP in the Design Process

To examine how visual data exploration on SNP influences creativity and technical development in the design process of interior architecture education. (RQ-1), nine statements were directed to the participants and

the attitudes and behaviours of interior architecture students regarding the use of SNP in the design process were examined.

Initially, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the dependent variables were computed, and the reliability levels of the scales are displayed in Table 2. Subsequently, the mean and standard deviation scores reflecting participants' responses to the statements were determined.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations and Results of Reliability Analysis Regarding the Use of SNP

Dependent Variables		M ^a	SD	N	Item Reliability	Scale Reliability
U1	During the design process, I find an image by browsing visual data on SNP, then I try to improve it.	3,53	0,92	298	0,72	0,759
U2	During the design process, I find visuals by searching visual data on SNP, then I create my design by bringing them all together.	3,42	0,97	298	0,72	
U3	Browsing visual data through SNP enables me to observe various design approaches.	4,24	0,85	298	0,72	
U4	Browsing visual data on SNP allows me to better analyse existing designs.	4,10	0,85	298	0,71	
U5	Browsing visual data through SNP allows me to learn new techniques.	4,08	0,88	298	0,72	
U6	Browsing visual data through SNP puts me into repetitive design patterns during the design process.	2,57	1,10	298	0,75	
U7	Browsing visual data through SNP sometimes makes it difficult for me to find inspiration.	2,40	1,15	298	0,77	
U8	Browsing visual data through SNP inspires me and helps me develop my ideas.	3,91	0,87	298	0,74	
U9	Searching visual data through SNP causes me to create similar designs with my friends with whom I share the same project.	2,72	1,03	298	0,74	
Notes: M: Mean, SD: Standard Deviation, N: Number of Participants, ^a : Scale. Variable means ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (always)						

According to the results in Table 2, the scale reliability of the nine statements is 0.759. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient above 0.70 is considered reliable (George et al., 2010; Büyüköztürk, 2011; Akyüz, 2018; Yıldız and Uzunsakal, 2018). On this basis, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is above 0.70 for all statements that constitute the dependent variables of the study, indicates that the research data are reliable.

According to Table 2, when the participants' use of SNP in the design process is evaluated; indicating that the statements with the highest mean values are U3 (M: 4,24), U4 (M: 4,10) and U5 (M: 4,08), respectively. The statements with the lowest mean scores are U7 (M: 2,40), U6 (M: 2,57) and U9 (M: 2,72), respectively. The graphical expression of the scale averages of the nine statements was presented in Figure 1.

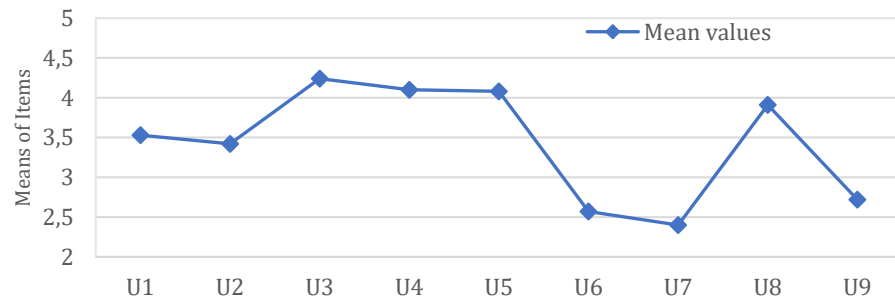


Figure 1. Participants' Use of SNP in the Design Process

Note: Variable means ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (always)

In this direction, it is understood that interior architecture students' visual data browsing on SNP to improve their creativity and technical development in the design process is basically to see different design approaches; then to better analyse existing designs and learn new techniques. It can be said that the students partially benefit from browsing data in order to inspire and contribute to the development of ideas; they are undecided about whether they find one or more images and then try to improve them or whether they try to create their design by combining them all together. It is understood that design students do not have difficulty in finding inspiration in the process of visual data browsing through SNP, and that they think that visual data browsing does not lead them to repetitive design patterns or cause them to create similar designs.

Table 3. The Effect of Universities of Study on Dependent Variables

Dependent Variables	BŞEU		HU		ANOVA		
	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	F	df	Sig.
U1	3,46	0,86	3,61	0,97	1,91	1	0,16
U2	3,47	0,99	3,37	0,96	0,78	1	0,37
U3	4,20	0,84	4,28	0,86	0,66	1	0,41
U4	4,08	0,87	4,12	0,83	0,22	1	0,63
U5	4,04	0,93	4,13	0,83	0,83	1	0,36
U6	2,65	1,20	2,48	0,99	1,58	1	0,20
U7	2,52	1,28	2,28	1	3,09	1	0,08
U8	3,91	0,88	3,91	0,86	0,00	1	1,00
U9	2,85	1,05	2,59	0,99	5,12	1	0,24

Notes: BŞEU: Bilecik Şeyh Edebalı University, HU: Hacettepe University, M: Mean, SD: Standard Deviation, F: F-statistic, df: Degrees of freedom, Sig: Significance Value, significant at p<0.05 level, ^a: Scale, variable means ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (always)

Whether the attitudes and evaluations of interior architecture students towards the effect of visual data searches on design processes through SNP in line with the statements directed to them differ according

to the universities where they are educated is examined with ANOVA in Table 3.

According to the analysed results, since the significance value of all nine statements is greater than $p < 0.05$, there is no significant difference between the groups. This shows that the university variable does not reveal a difference between the students, and that students studying at different universities have similar views. The findings obtained in line with Table 4 are shown graphically in Figure 2.

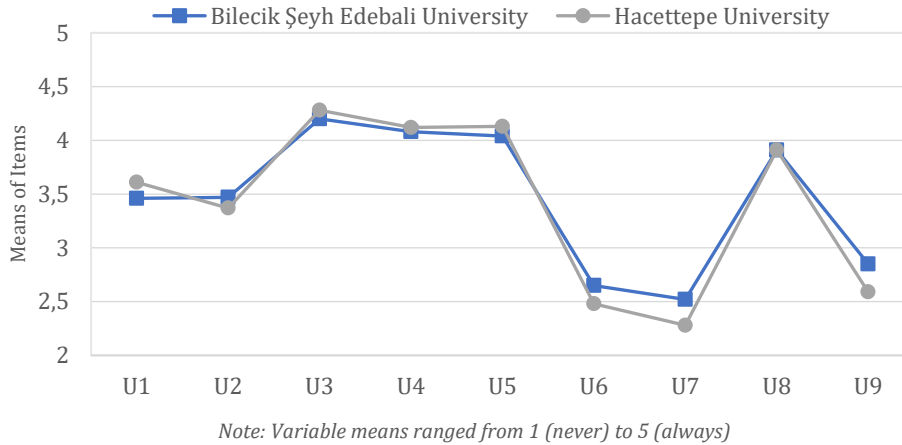


Figure 2. The Effect of Universities of Study on Dependent Variables

Whether the students' attitudes and evaluations towards the impact of visual data browsing on design processes through SNP in line with the statements directed to them differ according to their bachelor's degree education levels is analysed by ANOVA in Table 4. Based on the analysis, significant group differences were found only for the statements U1, U2 and U4 at the level of $p < 0.05$ among the nine statements (Table 4).

Table 4. The Effect of Education Levels on Dependent Variables

Dep. Vari.	1st Grade		2nd Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade		ANOVA		
	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	F	df	Sig.
U1	3,40	0,92	3,56	0,87	3,94	0,83	3,33	0,94	6,18	3	<,001*
U2	3,21	1,14	3,41	0,89	3,77	0,98	3,32	0,92	3,75	3	0,01*
U3	4,40	0,85	4,13	0,88	4,35	0,76	4,19	0,87	1,51	3	0,21
U4	4,23	0,83	3,98	0,90	4,38	0,78	3,98	0,81	3,95	3	0,009*
U5	4,25	0,89	3,98	0,86	4,22	0,87	4,01	0,90	1,58	3	0,19
U6	2,48	1,24	2,71	1,05	2,64	1,20	2,43	1,01	1,18	3	0,31
U7	2,53	1,29	2,48	1,11	2,27	1,11	2,35	1,15	0,64	3	0,58
U8	4,06	0,86	3,81	0,86	3,98	0,81	3,91	0,87	0,98	3	0,39
U9	2,87	1,11	2,82	0,97	2,74	0,99	2,55	1,05	1,53	3	0,20

Notes: M: Mean, SD: Std. Deviation, F: F-statistic, df: Degrees of freedom, Sig: Significance Value,

*:Significant at $p < 0.05$, ^a: Scale, Variable means ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (always)

The findings revealed that interior architecture students' approaches to visual data search and its development may differ according to their education levels and are shown graphically in Figure 3.

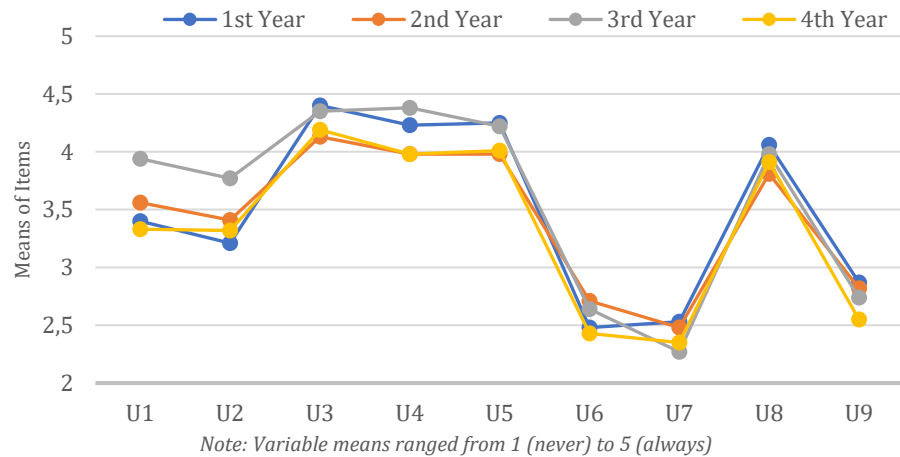


Figure 3. The Effect of Bachelor's Degree Education Levels on Dependent Variables

1st grade students frequently use SNP, especially to see different design approaches (U3: 4,40) and to analyse existing designs (U4: 4,23). The low U6 and U7 scores indicate that these platforms do not lead to repetition or inspiration problems. Grade 2 students similarly have high averages in statements U3, U4 and U5. This shows that they see SNP as a complementary tool for exploring new ideas and techniques. 3rd grade students use SNP more intensively to develop different approaches (U3: 4,35) and to create their own designs (U1, U2 high). 4th grade students also prefer SNP mostly to see different designs (U3: 4,21) and to obtain technical information. However, U1 and U2 values decreased slightly, indicating that advanced students rely on their own knowledge rather than SNP. Considering of these data, it is understood that 3rd graders are the students who make the most use of SNP to create and develop their designs and analyse existing examples in the design process.

The findings reveal that as the level of bachelor's degree education among students differs, differences may occur in their approaches to creating original designs by combining visuals. In addition, it also reveals that as the level of bachelor's degree education among students differs, differences may occur in their approaches to better analyse existing designs.

Analysis of the Potential Positive and Negative Impacts on the Use of SNP

To examine the potential positive and negative impacts of visual data exploration on SNP during the design process (RQ2), ten statements were presented to the students using a Five-point Likert-type scale, and their evaluations of these statements regarding the use of SNP were analysed.

Initially, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were computed, together with the mean and standard deviation statistics for the dependent variables, and the corresponding results are displayed in Table 5. Then, analyses were made according to the characteristics of the universities and education levels. ANOVA was applied to determine the differences between students' evaluations.

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations and Results of Reliability Analysis Regarding the Impacts of SNP

Dependent Variables		M ^a	SD	N	Item Reliability	Scale Reliability
I1	SNP should be used in the design process.	3,96	0,94	298	0,82	0,807
I2	Using SNP in the design process causes difficulties in finding reliable sources due to information pollution.	3,00	1,03	298	0,78	
I3	Using SNP in the design process causes time management problems.	2,54	1,06	298	0,77	
I4	Using SNP in the design process causes distraction and concentration problems.	2,51	1,09	298	0,77	
I5	Using SNP in the design process causes excessive competition and pressure.	2,56	1,10	298	0,77	
I6	Using SNP in the design process limits creativity and originality.	2,67	1,09	298	0,78	
I7	Using SNP in the design process supports their development through sharing projects and educational materials.	3,78	0,98	298	0,80	
I8	Using SNP in the design process provides an understanding of international and local design influences.	3,92	0,97	298	0,79	
I9	Using SNP in the design process can weaken critical thinking skills because it can lead to superficial evaluations.	2,73	1,07	298	0,78	
I10	Using SNP in the design process can make it difficult to find one's design language.	2,85	1,12	298	0,79	
Notes: M: Mean, SD: Standard Deviation, N: Number of Participants, ^a : Variable means ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)						

According to the Table 5, the reliability coefficient value of the ten statements is 0.807. Therefore, Cronbach's alpha coefficient is above 0.70 for all statements that constitute the dependent variables of the study, indicating that the research data are reliable.

According to the results of the participants' opinions to using SNP (Table 5), it is seen that the statements with the highest mean score with the participation of the students are I1 (M: 3,96), I8 (M: 3,92), and I7 (M: 3,78), respectively. According to interior architecture students' evaluations, SNP should be used in the design process; local and international designs are better understood for evaluation, and students' development is supported by sharing projects and materials through SNP. Based on the students' ratings (I2, M^a: 3.00), it is understood that the students participating in the study are uncertain as to whether the use of SNP in the design process will cause difficulties in finding reliable sources due to information overload. The statements with the lowest mean

scores were I4 (M: 2.51), I3 (M: 2.54) and I5 (M: 2.56), respectively. The graphical expression of the results is given in Figure 4.

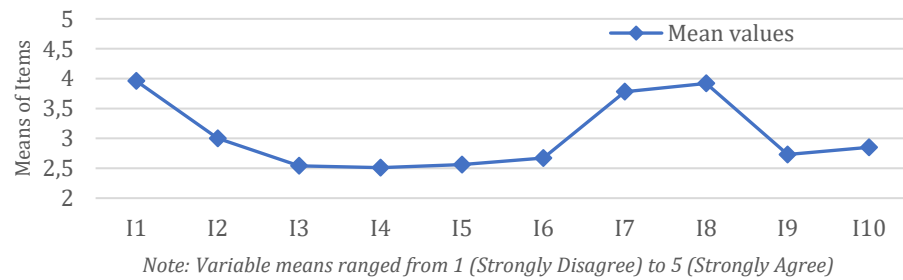


Figure 4. Distribution of Participants' Approaches to the Use of SNP

Whether the attitudes and evaluations towards the impact of visual data searches on design processes through SNP differ according to the universities of education is examined with ANOVA in Table 6.

Table 6. The Effect of Universities of Study on Dependent Variables

Dep. Vari.	BŞEU		HU		ANOVA		
	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	F	df	Sig.
I1	3,89	1,03	4,03	0,83	1,51	1	0,21
I2	2,95	1,05	3,04	1,02	0,52	1	0,47
I3	2,57	1,03	2,51	1,08	0,29	1	0,58
I4	2,46	1,07	2,57	1,11	0,71	1	0,39
I5	2,59	1,13	2,54	1,07	0,13	1	0,71
I6	2,61	1,14	2,73	1,03	1,01	1	0,31
I7	3,63	1,06	3,93	0,89	6,77	1	0,01*
I8	3,83	1,00	4,02	0,92	2,80	1	0,09**
I9	2,67	1,12	2,80	1,01	1,16	1	0,28
I10	2,86	1,17	2,84	1,07	0,02	1	0,87

Notes: BŞEU: Bilecik Şeyh Edebalı University, HU: Hacettepe University. M: Mean, SD: Std. Deviation, F: F-statistic df: Degrees of freedom, a: Scale, Sig: Significance Value, significant at $p < 0.05$ level. Variable means ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

The analysis revealed significant differences between the groups only in the I7 statement at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance among the ten statements. In this direction, mostly HU students evaluated more positively than BŞEU students that sharing projects and educational materials by using SNP in the design process supports development.

As seen in Figure 5 both BŞEU and HU students evaluated in the same direction.

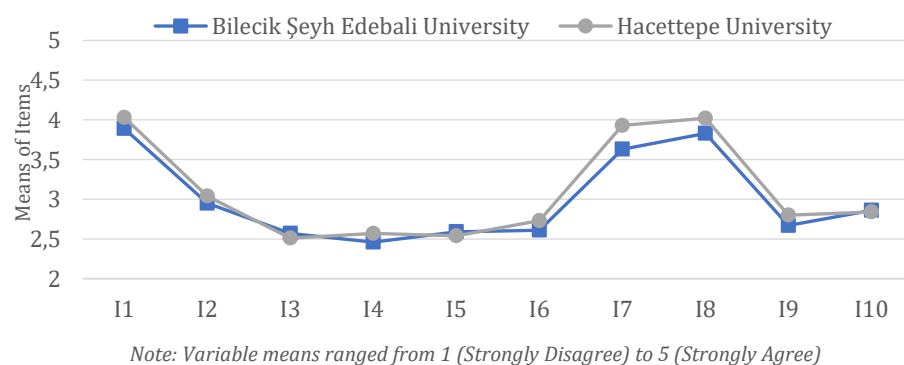


Figure 5. The Effect of Education Level on Dependent Variables

This finding shows that SNP have similar impacts on interior architecture students even their university differs. In other words, it can be said that the university has no effect on SNP usage.

Table 7 shows whether attitudes and evaluations of the effect of visual data browsing on design processes through SNP differ based on bachelor's degree education levels, as analysed using ANOVA.

Table 7. The Effect of Education Levels on Dependent Variables

Dep. Vari.	1st Grade		2nd Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade		ANOVA		
	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	M ^a	SD	F	df	Sig.
I1	3,80	1,15	4,01	1,00	4,22	0,67	3,85	0,88	2,47	3	0,06
I2	2,78	1,17	3,04	0,96	2,94	1,04	3,09	1,03	1,06	3	0,36
I3	2,44	0,99	2,65	1,11	2,45	1,03	2,53	1,05	0,62	3	0,60
I4	2,23	1,04	2,61	1,13	2,49	0,97	2,57	1,13	1,40	3	0,24
I5	2,46	1,08	2,59	1,13	2,52	1,08	2,61	1,10	0,23	3	0,87
I6	2,68	1,10	2,68	1,14	2,66	0,99	2,67	1,10	0,00	3	1
I7	3,87	1,13	3,65	1,02	4	0,80	3,73	0,96	1,64	3	0,17
I8	4,12	1,09	3,80	1,06	3,96	0,76	3,92	0,92	1,20	3	0,30
I9	2,63	1,11	2,71	1,00	2,71	1,09	2,82	1,10	0,36	3	0,77
I10	2,93	1,14	2,91	1,07	2,74	1,10	2,83	1,18	0,35	3	0,78

Notes: M: Mean, SD: Std. Deviation, F: F-statistic df: Degrees of freedom, a: Scale, Sig: Significance Value, *significant at $p < 0.05$. Variable means ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

According to the analysed results, among the ten statements, no statement with a significance value of $p < 0.05$ was found and no significant between-group differences were identified. The findings were presented in Figure 6.

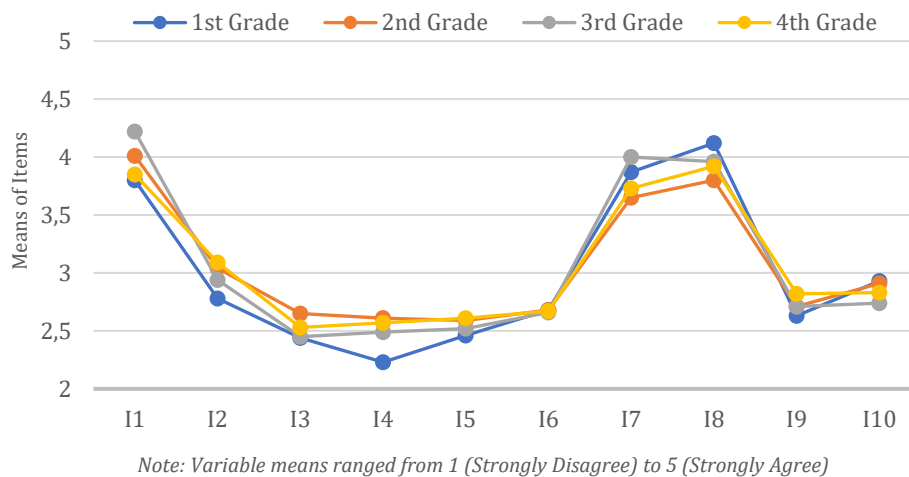


Figure 6. The Effect of Education Levels on Dependent Variables

Analysis of SNP Usage Habits, Preferred Platforms and Data Collection Methods

Within the scope of RQ-3, the attitudes and behaviours of the statements regarding the habits of interior architecture students' use of SNP, preferred contents and data collection methods were examined. In this direction, descriptive statistics on students' approaches are shown in Table 8 and explained in detail in other tables.

Table 8. Distribution of Approaches to the Use of SNP

Which SNP do you use in the design process?	f	%	T %
Instagram	167	19,3	56
Pinterest	278	32,1	93,3
Behance	67	7,7	22,5
Facebook	2	0,2	0,7
LinkedIn	14	1,6	4,7
YouTube	44	5,1	14,8
TikTok	13	1,5	4,4
Dribbble	0	0	0
Houzz	2	0,2	0,7
Google Image Search	40	4,6	13,4
Tumblr	5	0,6	1,7
Int. Arc./Arc. Comp. Web	153	17,6	51,3
AI (Artificial Intelligence) Plat.	82	9,5	27,5
Other	0	0	0
None of them	0	0	0
Total	867	100	290,9

Notes: f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value, T %: Total Percentage Value

When the participants' approaches to using SNP are evaluated in line with the data shown in Table 8, it is seen that the most preferred platforms of the students are 'Pinterest' > 'Instagram' > 'Interior Architecture/Architectural Firm Websites' > 'AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms' > 'Behance' > 'YouTube', while the least preferred platforms below 5% are 'Facebook', 'Houzz', 'Tumblr', 'TikTok' and 'LinkedIn', respectively. None of the participants selected 'Dribbble', 'Other' and 'None'. In this sense, it is also shown that students do not use a platform different from the SNP presented to them. The findings were presented in Figure 7.

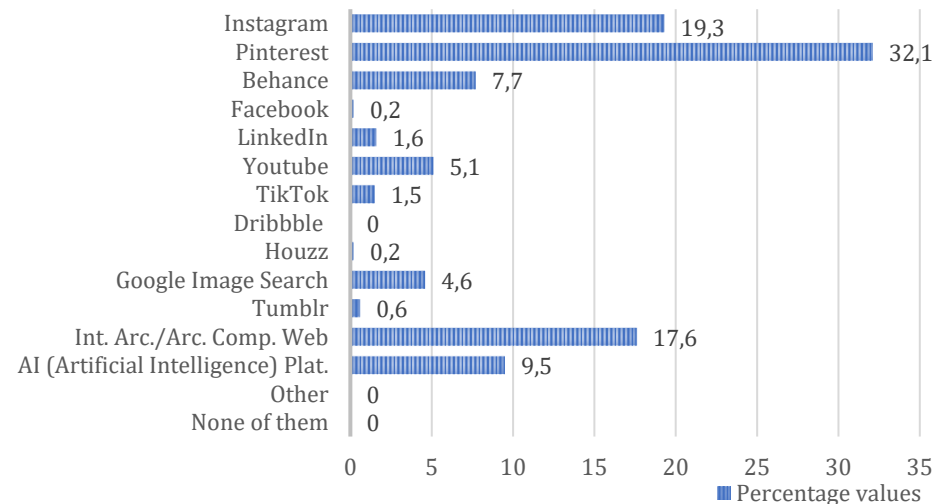


Figure 7. Distribution of Approaches to the Use of SNP

The fact that 278 of the 298 students who participated in the survey preferred 'Pinterest' shows that it is the most effective and widely preferred platform in terms of students' visual data browsing approaches. 167 students preferred 'Instagram' and this shows that they can use SNP to access design examples and follow approaches related to the discipline of interior architecture as well as features such as photo and video sharing and communication. In addition, 153 students

preferred 'Interior Architecture/Architectural Firm Websites', which shows that students also turn to professional resources in the design process. The fact that 'Behance' (67 students), which was established to create a portfolio for designers (67 students), and 'AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms' (82 students), which focus on production and aim to increase productivity (82 students), are preferred by less than half of the students suggests that students are still less inclined to turn to creative and project-oriented content production.

In line with the data shown in Table 9 and Figure 8, when the use of SNP is evaluated according to the universities where the participants receive education; the preference rates of SNP in both universities show a small difference.

Table 9. Distribution of SNP by University of Education

SNP	BŞEU		HU		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Instagram	94	31,5	73	24,5	167	56
Pinterest	134	45	144	48,3	278	93,3
Behance	21	7	46	15,4	67	22,5
Facebook	2	0,7	0	0	2	0,7
LinkedIn	10	3,4	4	1,3	14	4,7
YouTube	28	9,4	16	5,4	44	14,8
TikTok	9	3	4	1,3	13	4,4
Dribbble	0	0	0	0	0	0
Houzz	1	0,3	1	0,3	2	0,7
Google Image Search	21	7	19	6,4	40	13,4
Tumblr	3	1	2	0,7	5	1,7
Int. Arc./Arc. Comp. Web	69	23,2	84	28,2	153	51,3
AI (Artificial Intelligence) Plat.	42	14,1	40	13,4	82	27,5
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
None of them	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	434	145,6	433	145,2	867	291

Notes: BŞEU: Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University, HU: Hacettepe University. f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value

Among the most preferred platforms, 'Pinterest' is preferred by 134 students at BŞEU and 144 students at HU. 'Instagram' was preferred by 94 students at BŞEU and 73 students at HU. 'Behance', which was established to create a portfolio for designers, was preferred by 46 students at HU and 21 students at BŞEU.

It is seen that the most preferred platforms by the students of BŞEU are 'Pinterest' > 'Instagram' > 'Interior Design/Architectural Company Websites' > 'AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms' > 'YouTube' > 'Behance' = 'Google Image Search', while the least preferred platforms below 5% are 'LinkedIn', 'TikTok', 'Tumblr', 'Facebook' and 'Houzz'. 'Dribbble', 'Other' and 'None' options were not selected by the participants.

The most preferred platforms by HU students are 'Pinterest' > 'Instagram' > 'Interior Design/Architectural Firm Websites' > 'Behance' > 'AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms' > 'Google Image Search' > 'YouTube', while the least preferred platforms below 5% are 'LinkedIn', 'TikTok', 'Tumblr' and 'Houzz', respectively. 'Facebook', 'Dribbble', 'Other' and 'None' options were not selected by the participants.

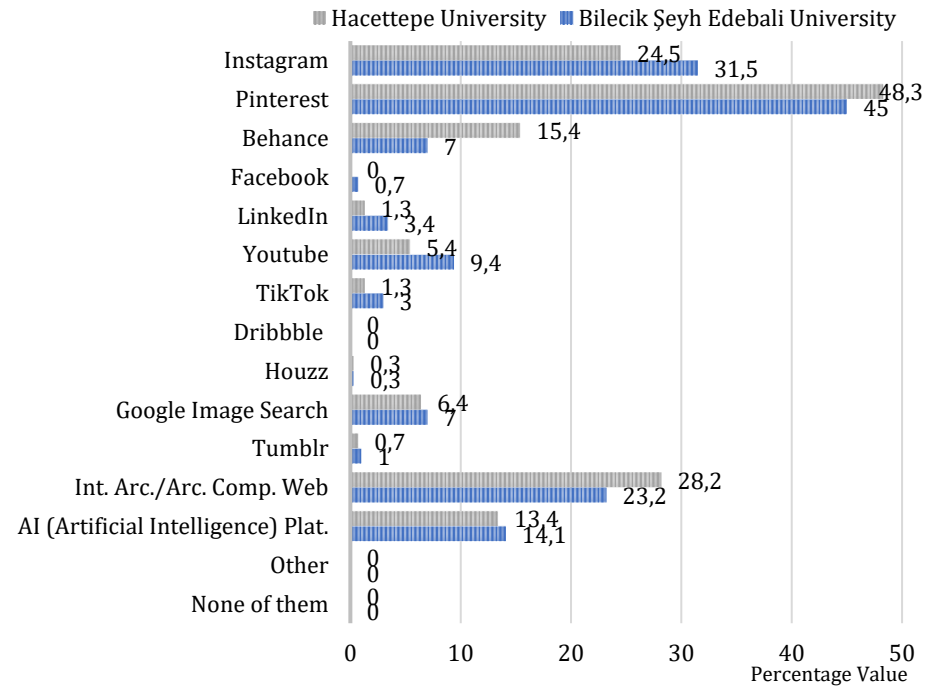


Figure 8. Distribution of SNP by University

In general, the fact that HU students prefer platforms such as 'Pinterest', 'Behance' and 'Interior Architecture/Architectural Websites' relatively more than BŞEU students shows that they prefer more technical, professional and production-oriented platforms in the design process, while the fact that BŞEU students prefer platforms such as 'Youtube', 'Instagram', 'Linkedin' and 'Tiktok' relatively more than HU students can be evaluated as giving priority to more popular and user-oriented SNP applications in the design process.

Table 10. Distribution of SNP by Education

	1 st Grade (47 People)		2 nd Grade (91 People)		3 rd Grade (59 People)		4 th Grade (101 People)		Total
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f
Instagram	22	46,8	55	60,4	30	50,8	60	59,4	167
Pinterest	43	91,5	82	90,1	57	96,6	96	95	278
Behance	3	6,4	15	16,5	18	30,5	31	30,7	67
Facebook	0	0	1	1,1	0	0	1	1	2
LinkedIn	3	3	1	1,1	5	8,5	5	5	14
YouTube	11	23,4	11	12,1	5	8,5	17	16,8	44
TikTok	4	8,5	5	5,5	2	3,4	2	2	13
Dribbble	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Houzz	0	0	1	1,1	0	0	1	1	2
Google Image Search	14	29,8	10	11	9	15,3	7	6,9	40
Tumblr	1	2,1	1	1,1	1	1,7	2	2	5
Int. Arc./Arc. Comp. Web	25	53,2	51	56	30	50,8	47	46,5	153
AI Platforms	11	23,4	32	35,2	13	22	26	25,7	82
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
None of them	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	47	-	91	-	59	-	101	-	298

Notes: f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value (Within All Classes)

When the SNP preferred by the participants are evaluated according to their bachelor's degree education levels in line with the data shown graphically in Table 10 and Figure 9, it is understood that the three most used platforms in all classes are 'Pinterest', 'Instagram' and 'Interior Architecture/Architectural Firm Websites'.

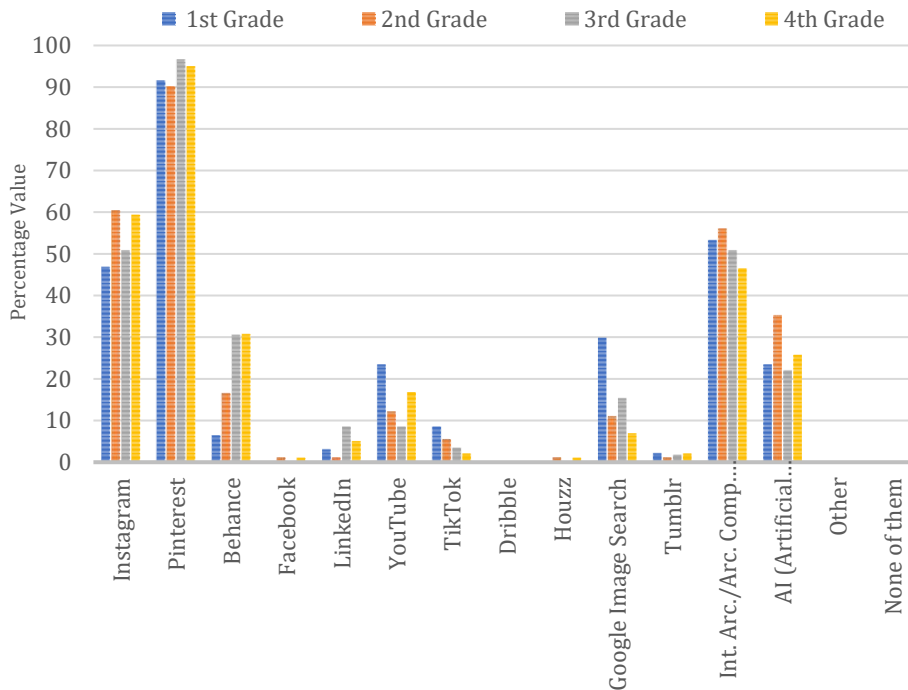


Figure 9. Distribution of SNP by Education

It is understood that the least used platforms among all grades are 'TikTok', 'LinkedIn', 'Tumblr', 'Facebook' and 'Houzz'. While 'Houzz' and 'Facebook' were not preferred by Grade 1 and Grade 3 students, they were preferred by 1 student each in Grades 2 and 4. It was observed that 'Dribbble' platform was not used in any class.

1st grade most used platforms are Pinterest> Interior Design/Architectural Company Websites> Instagram> Google Image Search> AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms> Youtube;

2nd grade preferred to use Pinterest> Instagram> Interior Design/Architectural Company Websites> AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms;

3rd grade preferred to use Pinterest > Instagram = Interior Design/Architectural Company Websites > Behance > AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms;

4th grade, similar to 3rd grade, preferred to use Pinterest > Instagram > Interior Design/Architecture Company Websites > Behance > AI (Artificial Intelligence) Platforms.

It is also understood that 1st grade use 'Youtube' and 'Google Image Search' platforms more frequently than other grades. It is thought that 1st grade students, who have just started their education process, prioritize the use of these platforms because they can search using keywords and the desired result can be reached more concisely.

It is understood that 3rd and 4th grade students prefer to use the 'Behance' platform. In this case, it can be said that as the level of education increases, the use of more technical, professional and production-oriented platforms begins to increase.

When the frequency of participants' use of SNP is evaluated in line with the data shown in Table 11 and Figure 10, it is seen that students prefer SNP quite frequently.

Table 11. Frequency of Participants' Use of SNP

How often do you use SNP in the design process?		
	f	%
Every Day	120	40,3
Several Times a Week	148	49,7
Several Times a Month	30	10,1
Never Use	0	0
Other	0	0
Total	298	100

Notes: f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value

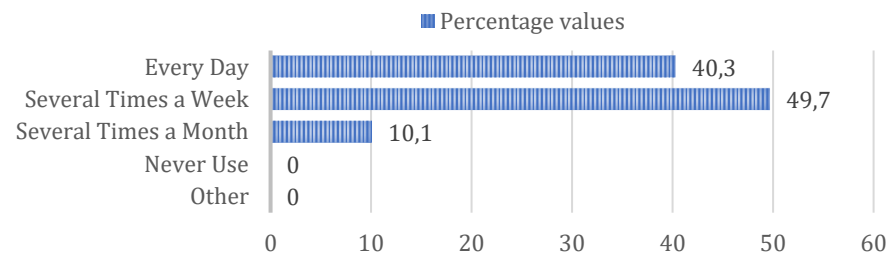


Figure 10. Frequency of Participants' Use of SNP

In addition to the fact that 148 students with a rate of 49.7% stated that they use SNP 'several times a week', 120 students with a rate of 40.3% stated that they use them 'every day'. This shows that students frequently use SNP on a daily or weekly basis during the design process, while the fact that 30 students with a rate of 10.1% indicated the option 'A Few Times a Month' shows that the number of students who use SNP infrequently is quite low. None of the participants selected the 'Never Use' and 'Other' options.

In this context, the data in this study makes it possible to say that students use SNP as a tool in the design process.

When the frequency of use of SNP is evaluated according to the university of study in line with the data shown in Table 12 and Figure 11, it is seen that the most preferred option is 'Several Times a Week' with a rate of 24.8% in both universities.

Table 12. Distribution of Frequency of Use of SNP According to the University of Education

Dependent Variables	BŞEU		HU		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Every Day	55	18,5	65	21,8	120	40,3
Several Times a Week	74	24,8	74	24,8	148	49,7
Several Times a Month	20	6,7	10	3,4	30	10,1
Never Use	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	149	50	149	50	298	100

Notes: BŞEU: Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University, HU: Hacettepe University. f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value

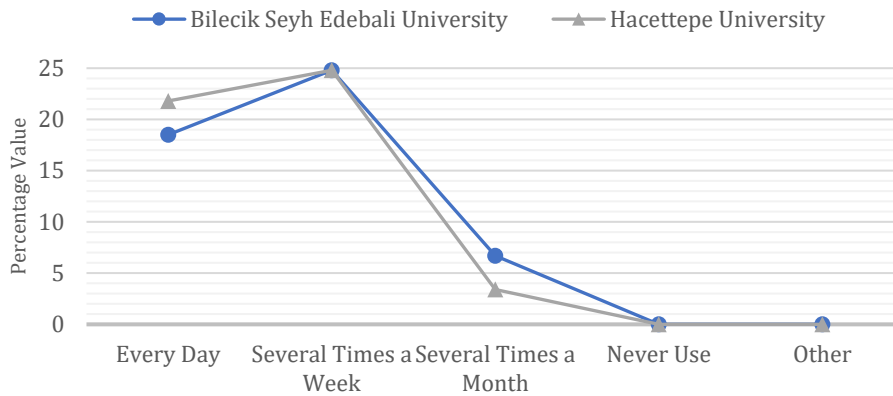


Figure 11. Distribution of Frequency of Use of SNP According to the University of Education

While HU students chose the 'Every Day' option more frequently, BŞEU students chose the 'Several Times a Month' option more frequently. This shows that HU students use SNP relatively more frequently in the design process.

Table 13. Distribution of Frequency of Use of SNP According to Education Level

	1 st Grade		2 nd Grade		3 rd Grade		4 th Grade		Total
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Every Day	10	21,3	42	46,2	29	49,2	39	38,6	120
Several Times a Week	27	57,4	43	47,3	26	44,1	52	51,5	148
Several Times a Month	10	21,3	6	6,6	4	6,8	10	9,9	30
Never Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	47	15,8	91	30,5	59	19,8	101	33,9	298

Notes: f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value (Within All Classes)

When the frequency of use of SNP is evaluated according to undergraduate education levels in line with the data shown in Table 13 and Figure 12, it is seen that the most preferred option of 1st, 2nd and 4th grade students is 'Several Times a Week', while 3rd grade students mostly choose 'Every Day'.

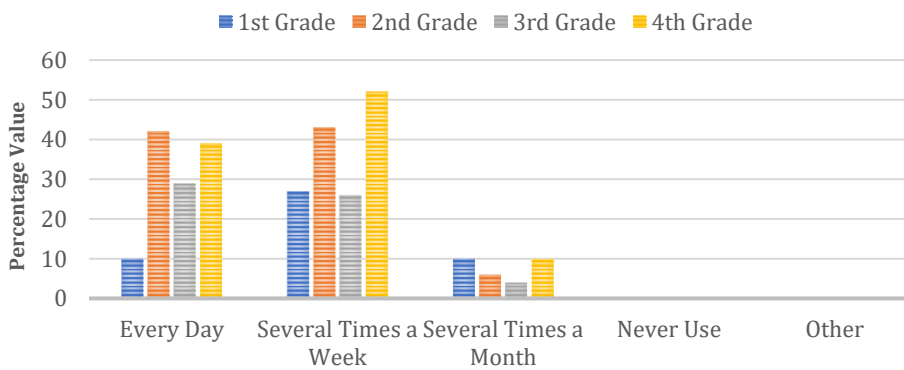


Figure 12. Distribution of Frequency of Use of SNP According to Education Level

When the participants' approaches to the use of SNP are evaluated in line with the data shown in Table 14 and Figure 13, a total of 847 markings were made as each student marked more than one option. The most preferred ones were 'Design and Architectural Projects' > 'Art and Aesthetics' > 'Culture and Entertainment' > 'Fashion and Trends' > 'Education and Information'.

Table 14. Distribution of Content of SNP Usage

What kind of content do you analyse SNP for the most?	f	%	T %
Design and Architectural Projects	259	30,6	86,9
Art and Aesthetics	194	22,9	65,1
Fashion and Trends	92	10,9	30,9
Education and Information	73	8,6	24,5
Sports and Health	20	2,4	6,7
Food and Recipes	27	3,2	9,1
Travel and Attractions	39	4,6	13,1
Technology and Innovations	26	3,1	8,7
Culture and Entertainment	94	11,1	31,5
Nature and Environment	23	2,7	7,7
Other	0	0	0
Total	847	100	284

Notes: f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value, T %: Total Percentage Value

These findings show that students use SNP not only for daily use but also for finding inspiration and examining design examples. The least preferred platforms under 5% were 'Travel and Travel', 'Food and Recipes', 'Technology and Innovations', 'Nature and Environment' and 'Sports and Health'. No respondent selected the 'Other' option.

This shows that students prefer less daily content that is not related to the design process on SNP. In addition, although the rate of content related to 'Technology and Innovations' is low, it can be predicted that the use of current artificial intelligence technologies, digital software and tools may increase among students in the following periods.

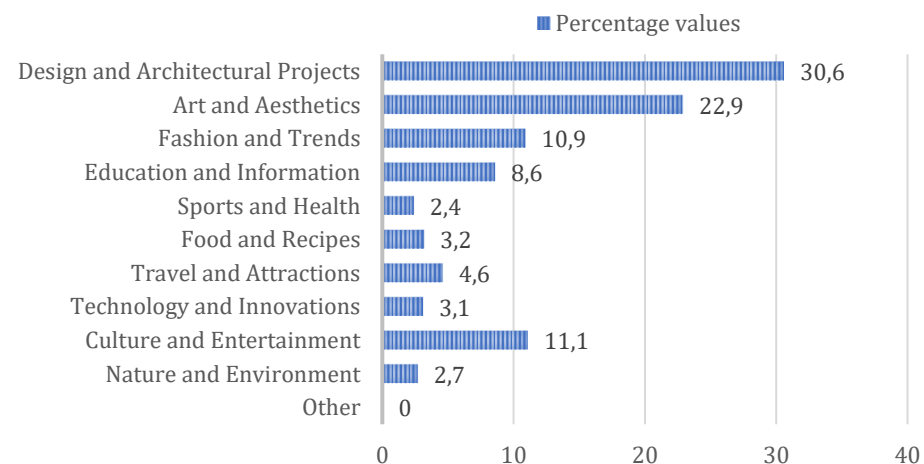


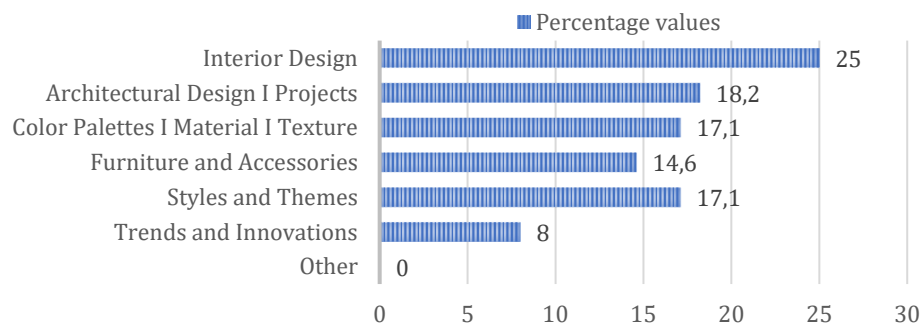
Figure 13. Distribution of Content of Social Network Platforms Usage

When the keywords used by the participants while searching on SNP are evaluated in line with the data shown graphically in Table 15 and Figure 14, it is seen that the total number of options marked reached 917 since each student marked more than one option.

Table 15. Distributions of Keywords Used in Search

What keywords do you use when searching for your designs on SNP?	f	%	T %
Interior Design	229	25	76,8
Architectural Design I Projects	167	18,2	56
Colour Palettes I Materials I Texture	157	17,1	52,7
Furniture and Accessories	134	14,6	45
Styles and Themes	157	17,1	52,7
Trends and Innovations	73	8	24,5
Other	0	0	0
Total	917	100	307,7

Notes: f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value, T %: Total Percentage Value


Figure 14. Distributions of Keywords Used in Search

The most preferred keywords used by students while searching on SNP are 'Interior Design' > 'Architectural Design I Projects' > 'Colour Palettes I Material I Texture', while the least preferred options are 'Style and Themes' > 'Furniture and Accessories' > 'Trends and Innovations'. 'Other' option was not preferred by any student.

These findings show that students' keyword choices during searches are generally directed towards professional and practical examples of existing design, material and style information. Trends and innovations, on the other hand, are of relatively less interest to students.

When the visual data collection and organization approaches of the participants are evaluated in line with the data shown in Table 16 and Figure 15, it is seen that the total number of options reached 899 students since each student checked more than one option.

Table 16. Distributions of Visual Data Collection and Organization

How do you collect and organize visual data?	f	%	T %
Categorizing	154	17,1	51,7
Creating My Own Design Library	159	17,7	53,4
Following Some Hashtags	42	4,7	14,1
Following Interior Design I Architectural Pages	199	22,1	66,8
Online Courses and Webinars	22	2,4	7,4
Design Blogs and Forums	55	6,1	18,5
Design Events and Fairs	29	3,2	9,7
Taking My Own Photos	51	5,7	17,1
Keeping My Own Sketches and Notes	110	12,2	36,9
Using Design Apps	78	8,7	26,2
Other	0	0	0
Total	899	100	301,7

Notes: f: Frequency number, %: Percentage value, T %: Total Percentage Value

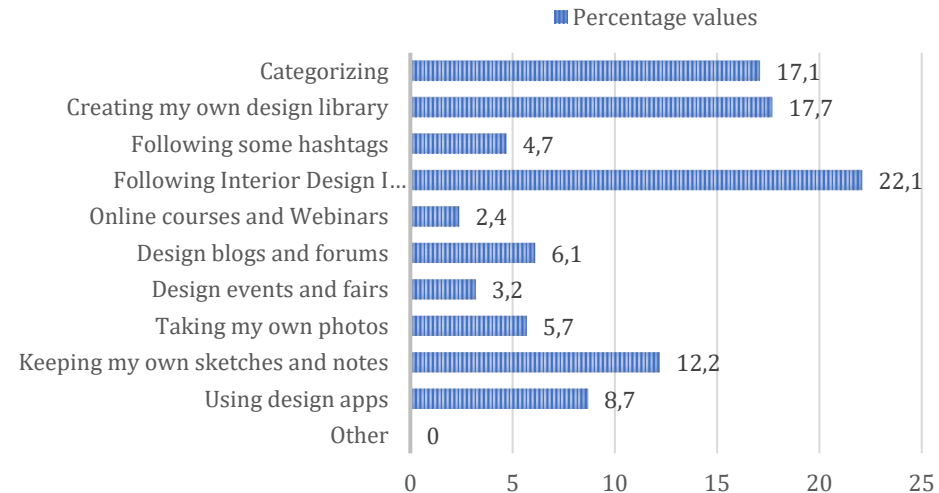


Figure 15. Visual Data Collection and Organization Breakdowns

The most preferred options for how students collect and organize visual data are 'Following Interior Architecture I Architectural Pages' (199)> 'Creating My Own Design Library' (159)> 'Categorizing' (154)> 'Keeping My Own Sketch Notes' (110). The least preferred options under 10% are 'Using Design Apps', 'Design Blogs and Forums', 'Taking My Own Photos', 'Following Some Hashtags', 'Design Events and Fairs', 'Online Courses and Websites'. None of the participants selected the 'Other' option.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between creativity and the design processes of interior architecture students as they browsed visual data through SNP at various stages of the design process. Similarities and differences in students' approaches to using these platforms are evaluated, the reasons for these approaches are investigated and their effects on interior architecture education are analysed. In addition, it was tried to determine which platforms students prefer at which stages of the design process.

The findings obtained within the scope of RQ-1 showed that SNP provide positive contributions in terms of inspiration, seeing alternative approaches, developing analysis skills, technical learning and generating ideas. In this context, it was concluded that SNP support students' creativity and technical development through visual data browsing. Furthermore, it is understood that these tools are a complementary element in the design process.

ANOVA results showed that although there was no significant difference between universities ($p>0.05$), there were significant differences ($p<0.05$) in some variables according to bachelors. It was observed that especially 3rd grade students were more active in SNP usage. This shows that their access to digital tools and their tendency to use these tools for academic purposes are higher. This finding is in line with the results of studies such as Akçay et al. (2021) and Korzynski et al.

(2020). However, the negative effects of social networks such as causing repetition in designs, difficulty in finding inspiration and loss of originality were supported at a limited level. No significant difference was found in the opinions on these negativities according to university and education level variables.

Within the scope of RQ-2, students stated that SNP contributed to their development by allowing them to see national and international design effects and sharing project materials. According to the ANOVA results, these contributions show a significant difference according to the university variable ($p<0.05$), but there is no significant difference according to the education level ($p>0.05$). On the other hand, the negative statements that SNP can cause distraction, time management problems and superficial evaluations found limited support. These findings differ from studies such as Zhang and Mao (2023), Ham (2013) and Özsavaş Uluçay (2017). The difficulty of finding reliable sources due to information pollution was met with ambivalence by the students; this shows that the benefits and limitations of SNP are perceived equally by the students.

In line with RQ-3, it was determined that students generally use SNP for professional projects and design content, and weekly and daily use is common. It was seen that the most preferred platform was Pinterest, and this coincided with the results of studies such as Cho and Cho (2020), Scolere (2023), and Izadpanah (2021). It was determined that Pinterest functions as visual data browsing, digital archiving and inspiration source. In their searches with vocational keywords, students mostly preferred traditional content and less preferred keywords related to new technologies. This situation shows that current technologies have not yet been sufficiently integrated into design, but the use of artificial intelligence and digital tools may increase in the future. In addition, students tended to collect and organise visual data through interior architecture themed pages and interacted less with online courses, professional events and professional contacts. This finding reveals that students' methods of accessing information should be diversified and their professional interactions should be increased.

In conclusion, the contribution of social networking platforms (SNP) to the design process is valuable in terms of both creative development and professional knowledge. However, the risks such as distraction, time management and information reliability should also be taken into consideration, and these tools should be used in a conscious and balanced manner.

The study's limited generalizability stems from its specific sample (two universities) and imbalances in demographic variables (age, gender). Future research should aim for a more balanced participant distribution and employ a mixed-method approach (questionnaire and face-to-face interviews) to enhance the depth and completeness of findings. It is anticipated that this will lead to more robust conclusions.

NOTES

This study was prepared within the scope of Şule Koç's master's thesis titled "*Tasarım Sürecinde İçmimarlık Öğrencilerinin Sosyal Ağ Platformları Üzerinden Görsel Veri Tarama Yaklaşımları*", under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Ayşen Özkan at the Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design, Hacettepe University, Institute of Fine Arts. Ethics Committee permission was obtained with the decision of the Hacettepe University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee dated 24/12/2024 and numbered 00003963881.

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Resume

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