**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