



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## OPEN ACCESS

# Hidden curriculum in visual arts education\*

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## Highlights:

- In visual arts education, the hidden curriculum encompasses a range of school and extracurricular activities.
- The hidden curriculum affects students cognitively, affectively, and aesthetically, either positively or negatively
- School administrators play an important role in sustaining hidden curriculum activities.
- Hidden curriculum practices in visual arts education enhance students' artistic awareness.

## Abstract

The unspoken type of curriculum through which values, attitudes, and skills are learned in schools beyond the formal curriculum is called the hidden curriculum. Through the hidden curriculum, students develop certain positive and negative traits in many classes. One example is the visual arts classes in schools. Through activities in visual arts classes and the projects shared in the school setting, students acquire many values and attitudes that extend beyond the official curriculum. This study primarily aims to identify the elements that comprise the hidden curriculum and to examine how these elements influence students. A qualitative research method was used in this study. The participants consisted of 8 schools located in the central district of Edirne, including both visual arts teachers and administrators working in these schools. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers and administrators, along with field observations. The data was analyzed qualitatively, revealing the hidden elements within the visual arts field, how these elements reflect on learners, and the responsibilities, roles, and suggestions for teachers and administrators regarding these aspects. The study found that schools implement various hidden curriculum activities such as exercises, classes, club workshops, out-of-school trips, exhibitions, competitions, and physical space arrangements. These activities have educational, sensory, and aesthetic impacts on learners. Administrators ensure the organization of these activities and sometimes collaborate with teachers. They play a vital role in establishing the hidden curriculum program. The results were discussed in light of the literature and relevant studies, resulting in various suggestions.

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## 1. Introduction

The hidden curriculum is an explicit yet effective educational process that imparts values, attitudes, and social skills beyond the official school curricula. Operating based on unwritten rules and values, the hidden curriculum can significantly influence the social and emotional development of learners. The term 'hidden curriculum' was introduced by Jackson (1968) in his book "Life in Classrooms" as a response to mass education, which was shown to be ineffective in eliminating class, race, and gender inequalities (Rossouw & Frick, 2023). According to Jackson, education is a socially structured socialization process. In this process, learners are not only taught accepted knowledge but also social norms and values. Learners acquire much of this from interactions in the classroom and school, beyond what is specified in official programs (Veznedaroğlu, 2007). The hidden curriculum can be as influential as academic curricula in preparing students for social life. Demirel (2017) describes the hidden curriculum as a broad concept that includes extracurricular activities. In this context, it can be argued that both in-school and out-of-school factors influence the hidden curriculum. In-school influences encompass teachers' attitudes and behaviors during lessons, school management style, classroom climate, school culture, physical environment, formal curriculum, teaching materials, assessment systems, extracurricular activities, and socio-cultural events. Out-of-school factors include family, society, environment, media, social media, and the broader educational system. All these elements guide learners by shaping their values and beliefs. It is also important to note that sometimes the hidden curriculum diverges from the formal curriculum. For example, school climate and teachers' behaviors may clash with official teachings. Schimmel (2003) argues that although qualities like creativity, independence, and critical thinking are emphasized in the formal curriculum, through the hidden curriculum, students learn societal norms, rules, and beliefs—such as waiting in line, competing, conforming, obeying authority, showing respect, and sacrificing personal desires (as cited in Veznedaroğlu, 2007). While such discrepancies are plausible, generally, the hidden and formal curricula produce similar outcomes. Rossouw and Frick (2023) state that the hidden curriculum involves lessons learners are exposed to outside the formal classroom, which can influence the development of skills, values, and competencies. Furthermore, Ressa, Daniels, and Wells-Jensen (2021) suggest that even time can be considered a component of the hidden curriculum. With the rise of social media, recent studies have examined learner-learner and learner-teacher interactions on these platforms as parts of the hidden curriculum (Duek & Tourn, 2016; Şad & Demir, 2019). Additionally, physical elements like the school's structure, corridors, educational and artistic corners, posters, wall pictures, and photographs carry messages that contribute to the hidden curriculum. These elements can vary by subject area or remain as permanent features of the school's physical environment, influencing students over time. In this context, activity corners within classrooms can be important for shaping students' values and attitudes. Unfortunately, many educators are unaware of the concept of the 'hidden curriculum' and its implicit role in teaching (Rossouw & Frick, 2023).

It is common to cite many classes that align with the hidden curriculum in school environments, which may also be considered part of this scope. Visual arts is one of the subjects with strong potential to influence students beyond the curriculum through the products created during the course. The visual arts class is scheduled for 1 hour per week in all grades of primary and secondary schools in Turkey. For high schools, the schedule varies by the type of high school; for example, it is scheduled for 2 hours per week in each grade at Anatolian high schools. Visual arts class is defined as "a requirement for individuals of all ages at all levels as it provides favorable gains to the personal life of the individual, such as ability to express oneself, gaining aesthetic awareness, and advantages for societies" (MoNE, 2018) in the primary and secondary school curricula for 2018.

The class's learning domains were identified as visual communication and design, cultural heritage, art criticism, and aesthetics in primary and secondary schools. In this scope, 15 achievements are set for 1st grades, 17 for 2nd and 3rd grades, 16 for 4th grades, 19 for 5th grades, 21 for 6th grades, and 20 for 7th and 8th grades in each of the three learning domains. Additionally, the curriculum emphasizes that "it is necessary to provide the opportunity of exhibiting the works of learners and assign active roles to learners in organizing the exhibitions." In this context, artistic activities in schools create opportunities

for hidden curriculum elements to emerge for other learners. Through these activities, learners can receive a wide variety of messages within the framework of the hidden curriculum. It has been observed that there is no research in the literature examining the effects of the elements of the hidden curriculum that arise from these opportunities, or their impact on student development and school environments. For this reason, the study aims to scrutinize the effects of the hidden curriculum elements generated by artistic activities on learners' development and their manifestations within various educational settings. As such, it intends to determine the elements that are included in hidden curriculum, which has an important role in shaping the cognitive, affective, and motor skills of learners within the field (discipline) of visual arts beyond the official curricula, and the effects of such elements on learners in secondary schools. Within this framework, answers to some questions will be sought through the data to be collected. These questions; (i) What are the elements of hidden curriculum which may influence learners in the field of visual arts beyond the official curriculum in schools?, (ii) What are the opinions of teachers and administrators on the reflections of hidden curriculum elements on learners?, (iii) What are the opinions of administrators and teachers on the responsibilities and roles expected of, and the suggestions made to, them?

This study is considered significant in terms of the findings it is expected to yield regarding the identification of hidden curriculum elements within the field of visual arts. The review of international and Turkish literature also revealed that no study has been carried out in this context, and this study will be the first in the literature. Moreover, the study is expected to provide valuable guidance for school administrators and teachers by introducing visual art-based practices that may contribute to shaping the perception of visual arts in schools.

## 2. Method

This section of the study covers the model and participants of the study, the data collection tool, and the analysis of the data collected.

### 2.1. Research Design

This study was conducted within a qualitative research framework. In this context, the research method can be described as basic qualitative research. Basic qualitative research design is a flexible and broad approach that does not adhere strictly to a specific methodological framework or philosophical stance. Its goal is to gain a deep understanding of participants' perspectives and the meanings they assign to particular phenomena or experiences (Merriam, 2015). Using this design, interviews and observations were conducted, and specific findings were identified through the content analysis of the collected data. Qualitative research refers to "the research where a qualitative process intended to demonstrate the phenomena and facts realistically and holistically within their natural environment is followed and data collection techniques such as observation, interview, and document analysis, etc, are employed" (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2015). In this study, in accordance with the specified sub-objectives, participants' views were gathered, and efforts were made to observe activities related to the visual arts course within the natural school environment.

### 2.2. Participants of the Study

The participants of the study are visual arts teachers and administrators working in secondary schools. In this context, an application was submitted to the provincial directorate of national education to obtain the necessary permissions to conduct interviews with visual arts teachers in the central district of Edirne province. During the permission process, researchers emphasized that visual art classes should be taught by the relevant subject teachers. Consequently, it can be said that a purposive sampling method was used because the course was taught by the designated field teachers. The provincial directorate of national education approved interviews with eight secondary schools, whose names are detailed in the permission letter. Following this approval, the researchers contacted visual arts teachers and school administrators, informed them about the study's scope, and scheduled interviews. Ultimately, interviews were conducted with 8 administrators and 8 visual arts teachers. The administrators' tenure in their

schools ranges from 1.5 to 8 years, while most teachers have over 20 years of experience. Specifically, one teacher has 8 years, another 10 years, and another 11 years of professional experience. Separate appointment dates were arranged for each school, and interviews were conducted with all teachers and administrators for whom permission was granted, with no sampling beyond this scope.

### 2.3. Data Collection Tool of the Study

In the study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observations. The researchers primarily developed a semi-structured interview form to gather opinions from visual arts teachers on the hidden curriculum. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has a set of predetermined questions or themes but may also ask additional questions or explore topics further based on the responses or emerging topics during the interview (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2015). Before creating the interview questions, the researchers reviewed the relevant literature and drafted questions based on the findings of relevant studies. They then consulted a domain expert for feedback on the draft questions. Based on the expert's review, some modifications were made to align the questions with the study's goals. Additionally, an "interview consent form" was developed to obtain prior consent and document voluntary participation from the participants. A test interview was conducted using the draft questions. After adjustments, it was decided to ask the participants seven questions. The test interview indicated that the interview would take approximately 15 to 20 minutes and that the questions were clear and understandable. Accordingly, the researchers and field experts shaped the final seven questions in line with their opinions. Some of the questions include: "What are the applications you have carried out in the visual arts lesson outside the official curriculum?" and "What kind of contributions do you think these applications might have on students?" Recording equipment was used during the interviews, and the analyses were based on the recordings. Additionally, observation data were collected by taking photographs and voice recordings of relevant spaces, with tours accompanied by the teacher or administrator. These observations were not aimed at assessing student work or lesson processes but rather aimed to support the school interview data by observing the school environment and documenting work related to the field of visual arts.

### 2.4. Ethical Approvals of the Study

Within the scope of the study, ethical approval was first obtained through decision number 2024.07.08 dated 03.07.2014 from the "Trakya University's Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee," which stated that there were no ethical or scientific objections to conducting the research. Alongside this, an application was submitted to the Edirne Provincial Directorate of National Education to conduct interviews with visual arts teachers and school administrators, and approval was received for eight schools in the central district of the province. When the relevant institutions arrived for interviews, participants were shown the necessary permissions and informed that the study had been conducted in accordance with these approvals. Additionally, participants were informed beforehand through a voluntary participation form, and informed consent was obtained. To ensure the anonymity of the schools, teachers, and administrators in the research report, participants were identified using abbreviations such as "A.S.S. teacher" and "M.R.E.S.S. administrator."

### 2.5. Data Analysis

Based on the interview findings, it was initially decided that descriptive analysis alone would not be enough, so content analysis was chosen instead. To prepare the data for content analysis, the first step was to convert the audio recordings into written form. The interviews, which were in audio format, were listened to and transcribed into text. The transcriptions were then checked against the recordings to ensure accuracy. Afterward, the transcripts were shared with the participants for confirmation, and they were asked to note any corrections or additions. Once the participants confirmed the transcripts, the content analysis was carried out on the interview data. Content analysis is a unique approach to data interpretation, mainly because of how the content is structured (Krippendorff, 2004). The main process

involves grouping similar data into specific concepts and themes, organizing this information clearly, and then interpreting it (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). During the analysis, the researchers independently examined about 30% of the data to identify codes and themes. The codes and themes identified by each researcher were then compared, and a 90% agreement was achieved using the Miles-Huberman (1994) method. Differences were discussed to reach a consensus on any conflicting units. After this, a single researcher completed the content analysis of the remaining data. NVivo 15 software was used to facilitate the analysis process.

## 2.6. Validity and Reliability of Data

The researchers conducted the interviews in a neutral and impartial manner, avoiding personal opinions when asking questions. Before the interviews, the purpose and sub-objectives of the research were shared with the field expert, and their opinion on how these relate to the interview questions was sought. Some adjustments were then made within this scope. During the interviews, practices were used to uncover the participants' views aligned with the sub-objectives, through follow-up questions. The interview transcripts were electronically sent to the participants for approval of their opinions. Additionally, in the findings section, direct quotations were included to present the participants' views, and a validation approach was followed regarding the identified codes and themes. A certain percentage of the findings were re-coded by the researchers to minimize bias. To gather participants' views with maximum validity and clarity, permissions from the ethics committee and the provincial directorate of national education were shared, and efforts were made to create a comfortable environment. Moreover, participants were informed that the research data would be accessible only to the researchers, and it was explained that their views would be presented using pseudonyms. Both researchers involved in the study have experience in qualitative research. To ensure data credibility, multiple sources were used, including teachers, administrators, and observations from one school. To prevent data loss, technological devices were employed; interviews were recorded with an audio device, and the analysis was conducted using NVivo 15 software.

## 3. Results

As a result of the data obtained in the study, several findings were revealed. These findings have been categorized in terms of research questions as *findings related to the hidden curriculum elements in the field of visual arts*, *findings related to the reflections of hidden elements on students*, *findings regarding the responsibilities, roles, and suggestions for administrators and teachers*, and under each of these categories, relevant themes and sub-themes have been created. These findings are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Themes and sub-themes

Research Questions	Themes	Sub-Themes
Elements of the hidden curriculum in the field of visual arts	Exercises, courses, club activities	
	Extracurricular trips	
	Exhibitions and competitions	
	Organization of physical space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painting workshops-classrooms</li> <li>• Exhibition Areas</li> <li>• Wall paintings and painting works</li> <li>• Providing work motivation</li> <li>• Taking responsibility in tasks</li> <li>• Collaborative work between teacher and student</li> </ul>
Reflections of Hidden Curriculum on Students	Instructional reflections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling valued</li> <li>• Increased self-confidence</li> <li>• Positive behavioral changes in students</li> <li>• Adaptation to social environments</li> <li>• Modeling the teacher and successful students</li> </ul>
	Affective contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating art awareness</li> <li>• Technical development</li> <li>• Discovering artistic talent</li> </ul>
	Artistic development	
	Administrator and Teacher Responsibilities and Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators ensuring organization</li> <li>• Administrator-Teacher collaboration</li> <li>• Administrators providing resources</li> </ul>
Responsibilities, Roles, and		

### 3.1. Results Related to Hidden Curriculum Elements in the Field of Visual Arts

In the research, some findings related to the activities within the hidden curriculum in the field of visual arts in secondary schools have emerged. In this context, it was found that exercises, courses, and club activities are conducted in schools, extracurricular trips are organized, exhibitions and competitions are held, and arrangements are made in physical spaces. These findings were thematized as *exercises, courses, club activities, extracurricular trips, exhibitions and competitions, and the organization of physical spaces*, which are presented below.

#### 3.1.1. Exercises, Courses, Club Activities

It was found that schools generally conduct at least one activity such as exercises, courses, or art club activities outside the formal curriculum. Visual arts teachers stated that within these activities, they develop students' drawing skills, apply different techniques that capture students' interest, organize activities related to special days and weeks, and prepare students for competitions. In this context, K.S.S. teacher mentioned that they focus on techniques that interest students, saying, "I make them do things they like and that will catch their attention. Like cutting and pasting rather than drawing and painting. They enjoy sticking something they found in nature and creating something from it." E.Y.S.S. administrator stated that they prepare for special days and weeks, saying, "if there is a topic for the week or if it coincides with a special day or week, they work on that subject when they gather," and the I.S.S. teacher said they prepare for competitions, explaining, "When competitions come, we make students in the club draw pictures, and we hang them on the bulletin board."

E.Y.S.S. teacher stated that they created a comprehensive activity in their exercise artwork. The teacher mentioned that, in this activity, they worked on reproductions of Turkish painters' paintings and exhibited these works at the city's shopping mall and expressed it with the following words: "*We made reproductions of Turkish painters' paintings, and at Erasta, we exhibited the works, which consist of about 90 pieces.*"

Some schools have reported that they were able to carry out exercise, course, and club activities in previous years. However, they are currently unable to conduct these activities due to certain adverse circumstances. This was attributed to the high cost of materials, a low number of students applying for the courses, and time constraints. In this context, the I.S.S. administrator explained that the high cost of materials negatively affected the opening of the course, saying, "The students stopped attending the course I opened earlier because they couldn't afford it financially. This is because the materials are very expensive." Similarly, the I.S.S. administrator mentioned that the low number of applicants also prevented the opening of courses, stating, "The children who are interested want to attend the courses. When we want to open the course, only a few people show up. Since the number isn't enough, we can't, even though we want to open the course." The A.S.S. administrator, on the other hand, pointed out that students do not dedicate time to the art club, which affects its activities, saying, "We had opened an art club a long time ago, but cannot work very actively. Because club activities are generally held outside of class hours. It's very hard to find students after school. So, the club activities are not very productive because of this."

#### 3.1.2. Extracurricular Trips

The research revealed that schools organize extracurricular trips. Administrators and teachers mentioned that they organize visits to museums and, specifically for the visual arts, exhibition events, exhibition tours, and fine arts school trips. However, administrators and teachers stated that these trips are very few nowadays and usually involve a limited number of participating students. In this context, K.S.S. teacher mentioned that they don't organize many trips, but they did take some students to an art museum and expressed this situation by saying, "We don't do it very often. But last year, I took some students to the Osman İnci Museum. It was nice, they were interested." F.S.S. teacher and I.S.S. teacher



indicated that they only go to extracurricular art events with the participating students. The F.S.S. teacher expressed this as, "I took three of my students who displayed works in the exhibition and participated in the event," and the I.S.S. teacher said, "There was an exhibition with a peace theme at the Fine Arts High School, we sent paintings there but could not attend because it clashed with graduation. The municipality organized a wall painting event, and we participated in that." The A.S.S. teacher mentioned that as part of school trips, they visit the fine arts high school and said, "We also have school trips every year. We always go to the Fine Arts High School. The children are amazed. They tour the art gallery and workshops." The F.S.M.S.S. teacher and T.B.S.S. administrator stated that in previous years, due to close proximity, they visited faculty exhibitions at the university and that currently they plan to attend an exhibition at the youth center. The F.S.M.S.S. teacher expressed this by saying, "Because it was close, we occasionally went to the exhibitions at the Faculty of Education at the end of terms when they were opened," and the T.B.S.S. teacher expressed it, saying, "We used to take exhibition tours at my previous school in Karaağaç, taking students to the Fine Arts Faculty exhibitions frequently. However, since we didn't hear about any exhibitions here, we did not go," and added, "The painting teacher at the Youth Center will be opening an exhibition at the Balkan Congress Center. We have talked with the travel club, and we will take our students there." The E.Y.S.S. teacher mentioned that they organized an exhibition with nearly 90 pieces of artwork at a shopping mall in the city and expressed this by saying, "We made reproductions of Turkish painters' artworks, in acrylic on canvas. We exhibited them at Erasta. There were about 90 pieces of artwork."

Schools have stated that they face certain limitations in organizing extracurricular trips. These limitations include financial constraints and time restrictions. Regarding financial constraints, schools mentioned that the cost of transportation for extracurricular trips puts pressure on them. The M.R.S.S. administrator expressed this by saying, *"The cost of school bus service is a minimum of 900 TRY for transportation within the city. The prices are very high. It is difficult for us, as a school, to bear such a cost. Suppose a teacher wants to organize such a trip for a class that aligns with the curriculum. In that case, they can, of course, do it by charging the students financially."* Similarly, the K.S.S. administrator said, *"We sometimes have problems with transportation. Financially, it can be an issue because our school does not generate revenue."* Time constraints were also mentioned as negatively affecting trips. The F.S.M.S.S. teacher said, *"We cannot visit museums because, for example, if I take the 7th grade class A to the museum, just traveling there and back would take hours and it would interfere with my other lessons."*

### 3.1.3. Exhibitions and Competitions

The research revealed that schools organize exhibitions and participate in competitions. First and foremost, teachers mentioned that they organize various exhibitions throughout the year. These exhibitions include end-of-year exhibitions, term exhibitions, special day and week exhibitions, and post-event exhibitions. In this context, the A.S.S. teacher stated that they organize exhibitions at the end of events, saying, "At the end of every topic, we organize exhibitions within the school. We hang the works on our boards and the walls of the workshop," and the F.S.S. teacher mentioned that they organize exhibitions for special days and weeks, saying, "We create exhibitions for special days and weeks. I have the students create special works for these. For example, we made an extra exhibition for April 23rd," and the E.Y.S.S. teacher shared that they hold an end-of-year exhibition, saying, "Our end-of-year exhibitions always involve works from all the students," and the F.S.M.S.S. teacher mentioned that they organize both end-of-year and end-of-term exhibitions, saying, "We hold a normal end-of-year exhibition. Sometimes we also have term exhibitions at the end of the first term."

The research also showed that schools participate in painting competitions. These competitions are organized both within the school and outside. External competitions are usually held nationwide or at the provincial level by the national Ministry of Education and other public and private organizations, and are announced to schools. Teachers noted that students are hesitant to participate in national competitions, but are more interested in participating in provincial ones. The A.S.S. teacher said, "Participation in nationwide competitions is less or none. Students don't want to participate, thinking

they can't win." The E.Y.S.S. teacher added, "There are competitions which we learn about from the Ministry of National Education through official letters. There are also competitions sent by municipalities or government agencies, such as the State Waterworks. We try to enter as many of these as possible," and the A.S.S. administrator mentioned, "Participation in competitions is good. Our visual arts teacher submits works to all these competitions. She informs the students who are interested, and the talented children create their paintings." Some teachers also hold school-level painting contests for special days and weeks. The I.S.S. teacher explained, "We sometimes organize them for special days and weeks. For example, we do it on Republic Day or April 23rd, both to highlight those feelings and to help students understand them better."

The research showed that the prize, theme, and frequency of competitions are key factors that affect participation. It was observed that good prizes motivate students and boost participation. The F.S.S. teacher said, "Participating in competitions with prizes motivates the students more. They try to produce works more frequently." Conversely, unappealing prizes and challenging themes were found to reduce participation. The F.S.M.S.S. teacher stated, "When announcing a competition, the first thing the students ask is, 'What's the prize?' If they feel it's not worth the effort, they decide not to participate," and the I.S.S. administrator noted that certain themes and the frequency of events can be discouraging, saying, "Some themes can be too difficult for our students. Or, when competitions are held constantly, there can be a loss of motivation. The students might not want to participate all the time."

#### 3.1.4. Organization of Physical Space

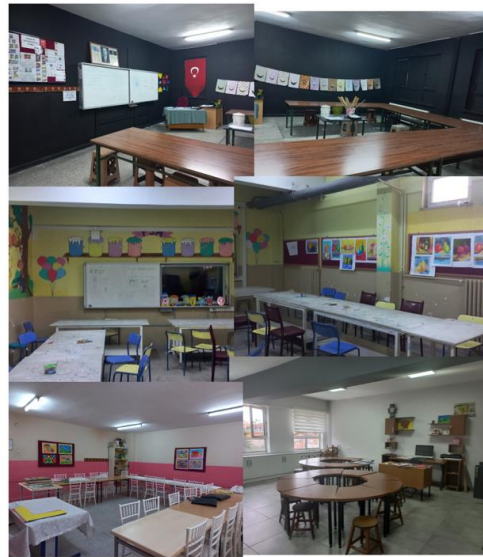
It was found that there are physical arrangements in schools related to the visual arts. In this context, it was observed that schools have painting workshops, designated exhibition areas, and wall paintings and artworks displayed on school corridors and garden walls. These findings have been thematized through painting workshops, classrooms, *exhibition areas*, and *wall paintings and artworks*. The subthemes are presented below.

##### 3.1.4.1. Painting workshops-classrooms

In most of the schools included in the research, it was found that a painting workshop is available (Figure 1), but many teachers conduct lessons in classrooms instead. In the painting workshops, it was observed that the seating arrangement was organized in a U or circular shape to allow students to move freely, and some of these workshops featured works created by students and informative visuals on the walls. Additionally, the workshops contained pieces of work, materials, and cabinets for storing them. In this context, the A.S.S. teacher described the workshop arrangement as follows: "*We have a smart board. We also have all kinds of materials available for students. For students preparing for the fine arts, we have a still life corner. We also have a recycling corner where we collect colored lids,*" and the E.Y.S.S. teacher described the workshop arrangement, saying "*The arrangement in the workshop is U-shaped. We have large tables where students can see each other. They created works where they could express themselves very comfortably.*"

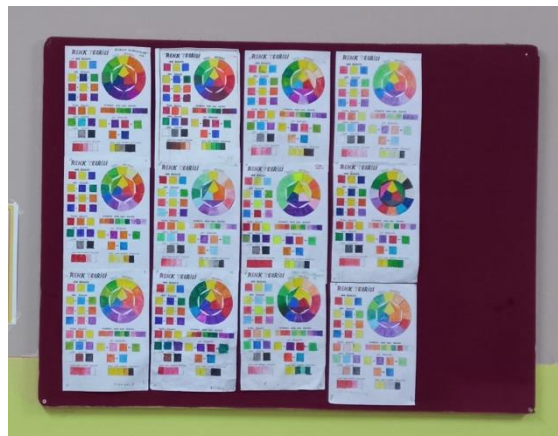
Teachers noted that the workshop provides a comfortable working environment, helping students feel part of the art space and motivating them to work. The F.S.S. teacher described the comfort of the workshop, saying, "It creates an environment where students can easily use their materials independently of the classroom setting and feel freer," while the A.S.S. teacher added, "The kids are more comfortable here. Our tables are big, everyone sits wherever they want, and they work comfortably. Even if they spill water, it's not a problem." The F.S.S. teacher also mentioned that the workshop gives the feeling of being in an art environment, stating, "In artistic terms, the workshop is essential to connecting with art and is one of the must-haves of art," and the A.S.S. teacher emphasized, "Students should come into the workshop and be immersed in art. They should feel the art environment." Additionally, teachers said the workshop motivates students to work, with the F.S.M.S.S. teacher explaining, "When students come to the workshop, they come specifically for the art lesson, and they are motivated by that," and the F.S.S. teacher adding, "Bringing their art materials into the workshop and breathing the air in the workshop environment motivates the students even more and becomes a source that pushes them to work."





**Figure 1.** Painting workshops

They stated that some schools lack workshops due to inadequate physical conditions, which presents a challenge. The I.S.S. teacher explained this situation by saying, "Every space in our school is occupied. If possible, I would like there to be a workshop. Students forget and lose their materials," and the M.R.S.S. teacher added, "We don't have a workshop. Not only do we lack a workshop, but we also don't have a place to store our materials. At the very least, there should be a sink. When we do watercolor work, it's very difficult in the classroom to change water or wash hands." Most schools were observed to lack artworks or informative visuals related to visual arts in their classrooms. However, in the Secondary School K., it was noted that there are informative visuals related to visual arts displayed in the classrooms (Figure 2)



**Figure 2.** Informative visuals in K. Secondary School classes

#### 3.1.4.2. Exhibition Areas

The research found that most schools use painting workshops, corridors, and bulletin boards as exhibition spaces (Figure 3). Schools display smaller exhibitions in workshops and school bulletin boards, while for larger exhibitions, such as year-end displays, they use bulletin boards, corridors, and easels. The A.S.S teacher explained this by saying, "We display works created in class in the workshop. We exhibit works related to special days and weeks on various bulletin boards throughout the school.". The M.R.S.S. teacher stated, "Every week, we have an art bulletin board where we hang the works we've done every week, as much as it fits. We prepare the bulletin boards for special days and weeks. For the end-of-year exhibition, we used

easels. We also have 4 to 5 bulletin boards, and we used it both-sided. We also stuck some works on the walls." The T.B.S.S. administrator mentioned that they use an empty classroom for exhibitions, saying, "We have an empty classroom for exhibition space. We have freestanding bulletin boards. We arrange the desks and hang the students' works on the freestanding boards to display them." (T.B.S.S.Y.).



**Figure 3.** Exhibition Areas

It was observed that, in Secondary School A., there are two permanent exhibitions. One of these exhibitions features works by the school's alumni, while the other, called the Çınar Art Gallery, was created as part of a project and displays works by artists. Additionally, in the same school, reproductions of famous artworks are exhibited on canvas on the staircase walls (Figure 4). Some schools also have exhibition boards dedicated to visual arts, which continuously display paintings related to activities and significant days and weeks (Figure 3).



**Figure 4.** A. Secondary school exhibition areas

#### 3.1.4.3. Wall paintings and painting works

It was observed that, in schools, paintings have been made on school corridors, classroom doors, and garden walls to beautify the space, (Figure 5) and various prints and reproductions have been hung on school corridors (Figure 6). The paintings on the school corridors and doors were found to be informative visuals related to various disciplines, created by the visual arts teacher and students together. The M.R.S.S. administrator explained this by saying, "For the wall paintings, we took advantage of the teacher's talent to beautify the school. The visual arts teacher worked with the students. The paintings also

add visual appeal to the school and give the idea that there are artistic activities in this school," and the E.Y.S.S. administrator described, "Together with a group of 12 students, two of my teachers are painting the school corridors according to the subjects. Currently, they are working simultaneously on both the math and English corridors. The kids are learning both English and math formulas on the walls."



Figure 5. Wall and door painting

It was seen in three schools, that replicas and reproductions of notable artworks were displayed in the corridors (Figure 6). Particularly in the secondary school A., small-sized reproduction works were displayed on the staircase corridors. In the same school, a resting area called "Pinhani" was created in the basement for students, the walls of which were painted with murals, decorated with bulletin boards with student works, and reproduction works to ensure that the space was filled with art (Figure 6). The school's administrator explained this by saying, "The place where my students gather during lunch breaks is called 'Pinhani.' Here, the visual arts teacher's boards are displayed. This space has been filled with artistic works. The idea is for the children not to look at empty walls but to look at the artworks."

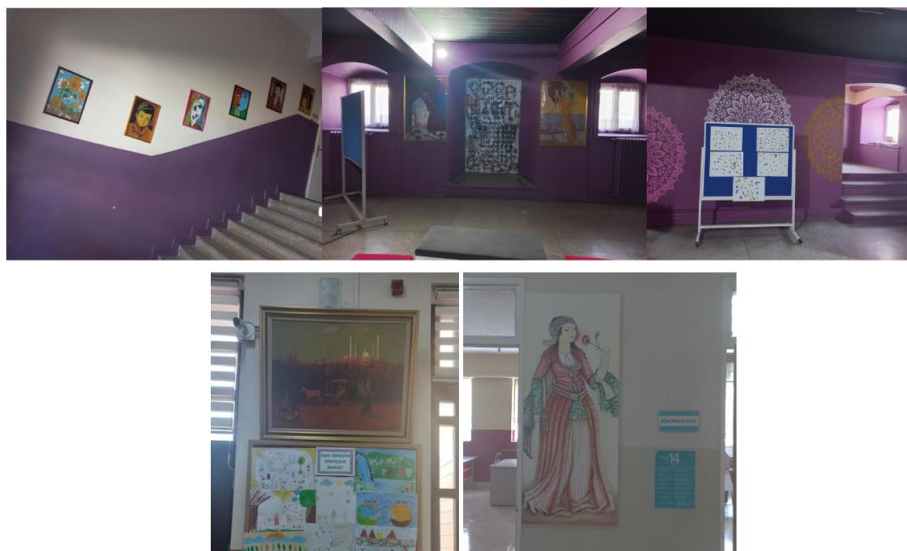


Figure 6. Reproductions and wall painting

### 3.2. The Findings Regarding the Reflections of Hidden Curriculum on Students

Based on the data obtained from the interviews with teachers and administrators in the research, some findings regarding the reflections of hidden curriculum on students have been identified. These

findings have been thematized as instructional reflections, affective reflections, and artistic development, which are presented below.

### 3.2.1. Instructional Reflections

The research has revealed that the hidden curriculum elements have instructional reflections on students. In this context, it was found that these elements provide students with work motivation, students take responsibility in the tasks carried out, and a task is carried out collaboratively by the student and teacher. These findings are presented under the sub-themes of *providing work motivation, taking responsibility in tasks and collaborative work between teacher and student*.

#### 3.2.1.1. Providing work motivation

Teachers have stated that students who participate in exhibitions and competitions tend to feel happier, which motivates them to work harder. The F.S.M.S.S. teacher expressed that students work better when they know their works will be exhibited, saying, *"When students know their paintings will be displayed or that they will be exhibited, they work much better. It serves as a motivation for them."* The teacher also noted that even a simple exhibition can motivate reluctant students, saying, *"To motivate reluctant students, even a simple exhibition or putting up a board can motivate them."* Likewise, other teachers also mentioned that exhibitions motivate students to work. The F.S.S. teacher stated, *"Knowing that their work will be exhibited in the end motivates the student more,"* and the K.S.S. teacher said, *"It encourages them for their next work,"* and the T.B.S.S. administrator mentioned, *"When the products they create are appreciated, it motivates the children more. They will produce better things in the exhibition next year. We have also seen that a student who worked on the previous exhibition produced better works in the next year's exhibition."* (T.B.S.S.A).

Teachers have stated that exhibitions also encourage students whose works are not displayed and motivate them to work. The A.S.S. teacher expressed this by saying, *"I think more than the competitions, the exhibition is where they see their work. My work was displayed too. This makes them happy. Sometimes they even ask, 'Teacher, will you hang mine up?' I tell them, 'If you do it well, I'll hang it,' and they say, 'I'll make it nice so the teacher will hang it.'"*

Teachers also mentioned that conducting the art lessons in the art workshop helps provide work motivation for students. The A.S.S. teacher shared this idea, saying, *"The workshop setup directly focuses the child on the lesson."* (See also the theme of "art workshop-classrooms").

However, some teachers pointed out that while such activities motivate students who are already interested, they have little impact on students who are not engaged. The M.R.S.S. teacher expressed this by saying, *"The child whose artwork is displayed is the one who is always interested in the lesson. We do these exhibitions so that they can serve as examples for others. We want them to enjoy it and see their work. It does affect some, of course, but it does not interest some disinterested children at all."* The F.S.M.S.S. teacher also mentioned, *"No matter what you do, nothing motivates the reluctant children. The child even struggles with bringing materials. Usually, most of the class participates in these activities. They enjoy them, but it is not a source of motivation for everyone."*

#### 3.2.1.2. Taking responsibility in tasks

Teachers stated that they assign tasks to students in activities such as preparing bulletin boards, organizing exhibitions, and creating wall paintings, and that students take responsibility in these tasks. In this context, the A.S.S. teacher mentioned that during important days and weeks, students are given the responsibility of preparing the bulletin board and that they take on these responsibilities by saying, *"I'm down with the November 24th celebration. We have already prepared our bulletin board. Tasks are distributed to the students. We celebrate together and set up our exhibitions... Students take responsibility. They work under a certain discipline."*

The E.Y.S.S. teacher shared that student took on roles in the out-of-school exhibition they organized and enjoyed doing so, saying, *"Last year, we had a linocut exhibition. We even placed examples of the works on the table. The visitors were shown how to do it in practice by the students. They really enjoyed it,*



and they love taking on responsibilities. Additionally, students have assumed responsibility in creating wall paintings in corridors and have worked alongside their teachers. The M.R.S.S. administrator described this by saying, *"While the wall paintings were being made, there were a lot of paints and brushes around the teacher. Even if the child didn't have the talent, a responsibility was given to that child. They worked with the children as well."*

### 3.2.1.3. Collaborative work between teacher and student

Teachers and administrators have stated that teachers and students work together on bulletin boards and wall paintings in schools, and students enjoy this collaboration. The A.S.S teacher and M.R.S.S. administrator mentioned that they prepare the bulletin boards together with students, saying, *"We have main bulletin boards at the entrances. We prepare them. Tasks are distributed to the students. We celebrate together and set up our exhibitions,"* (A.S.S.T.) and the M.R.S.S. administrator also shared, *"They prepare for special days and weeks. School bulletin boards are arranged together with students."* The T.B.S.S. administrator emphasized that they prepare activities with students, saying, *"Students really enjoy participating in activities. They love not only doing the work but also preparing the activity together. They enjoy being part of it."* Similarly, administrators mentioned that teachers also work alongside students on wall paintings in schools. This was explained by the F.S.S. administrator by saying, *"Beautification efforts are carried out in those parts of school areas according to the program. These are done through teacher-student collaboration."* The M.R.S.S. administrator also stated that students enjoy working in collaboration with teacher, saying *"The wall is done to beautify the school. Teachers work together with students, and it becomes a large-scale activity."* The M.R.S.S. administrator also noted that students enjoy working with teachers, saying, *"Students enjoy it. They enjoy being with the teacher, helping them, and chatting while working."*

### 3.2.2. Affective Contribution

The research has revealed that hidden curriculum elements provide affective contributions to students. In this context, it was found that when students participate in activities such as exhibitions, competitions, and wall paintings, they feel valued, their self-confidence increases, they exhibit positive behavioral changes, develop skills to adapt to social environments, and model their teacher and successful students. These findings are presented under the sub-themes of *feeling valued, increased self-confidence, positive behavioral changes in students, adaptation to social environments, and modeling the teacher and successful students*.

#### 3.2.2.1. Feeling valued

Visual arts teachers stated that students feel valued and take pride in themselves when they participate in competitions and exhibitions. The I.S.S. teacher explained that students feel proud of themselves when they win first place and receive an award, saying, *"The student goes up to the ceremony area, and after their name is called in front of the whole school, announcing that they are first, they feel proud of themselves."* The F.S.S. teacher also mentioned that when students' artworks are selected for competitions, it makes them feel valued, saying, *"When their paintings are selected and sent to the Ministry of Education, they feel valued."* The E.Y.S.S. teacher expressed that through exhibitions and competitions, he/she wants students to experience the feeling of being recognized in front of the community, saying, *"I love participating in exhibitions and competitions with my students. While participating in these, I want them to understand what it feels like to be recognized."*

#### 3.2.2.2. Increased self-confidence

Teachers have stated that students whose works are displayed in exhibitions experience an increase in their confidence regarding the lesson. The E.Y.S.S. teacher mentioned that when they organized an exhibition outside of school, the students who both participated in the event and had their work exhibited gained more confidence, saying, *"We had an exhibition at Erasta where students whose artworks were displayed were assigned specific tasks. The students learned to explain their work according to each age group, and they wanted to repeat this because the children's self-confidence increased."* (E.Y.S.S.T.).

And the F.S.S. teacher explained that students whose works are displayed in exhibitions gain more confidence towards the lesson, stating, *"When a student's work is exhibited alongside their peers, especially at school, it increases their sense of achievement and self-confidence. At least, it boosts their self-confidence regarding my subject."* (F.S.S.T)

### 3.2.2.3. Positive behavioral changes in students

Teachers have reported observing positive behavioral changes in students who participated in exhibitions and competitions or assumed responsibilities within these events. The E.Y.S.S. teacher mentioned that students who were involved in exhibitions and extracurricular activities showed positive behavioral changes in class, saying, *"Students who take part in exhibitions and especially extracurricular activities return to school more calm, more attentive, and with higher adaptability, even if they were mischievous or aggressive before,"* while the T.B.S.S. administrator also observed similar changes in students participating in an internal competition, expressing, *"Competitions provide us with an opportunity to get to know the children better. A student who had some behavioral problems became more motivated and started following the rules after creating that piece of art."* (T.B.S.S.A.).

### 3.2.2.4. Adaptation to social environments

Teachers have stated that exhibitions and competitions help students develop the ability to adapt to social environments. The T.B.S.S. administrator expressed this by saying, *"First and foremost, students develop the ability to adapt to social environments."* The E.Y.S.S. teacher also mentioned, saying *"Especially the exhibitions outside of school help children adapt to society along with the social environment."* Also, *"They realized how beautiful and important the art class is as a social activity."*

### 3.2.2.5. Modeling the teacher and successful students

The research revealed that students model their teacher and successful students. Teachers, in particular, noted that seeing them working motivates students to engage in their own work. The A.S.S teacher explained this by saying, *"Sometimes they see me working. When I'm preparing for the bulletin board, the students say, 'We're just sitting, but the teacher is working, so we should work too.' They might perceive that the works displayed on the walls are created by me, similarly to how they believe the teacher also produces them,"* and the E.Y.S.S. teacher also stated, *"By following current trends, we try to incorporate new, up-to-date activities for our students. My teacher does it, and I do it too."*

Teachers have stated that students whose artworks are exhibited in exhibitions and who place in competitions serve as role models by increasing the motivation of other students. The A.S.S teacher explained this by saying, *"The student is happy because he/she ranked first in the competition at school. It also becomes attractive to other children. My friend won an award, I can participate too. They think, 'I can do it too,' and they get excited,"* while the F.S.S. teacher stated, saying *"Some students create works themselves with the desire to achieve the same success their friend did,"* and the M.R.S.S. teacher mentioned, *"They bring out the students who won awards at school and give them their prizes. They talk about how it happened. The children like it, honestly. They think to themselves, 'Next time, I can participate too.'"* Some teachers also pointed out that one reason they organize exhibitions is to set an example for other students. The E.Y.S.S. teacher expressed this by saying, *"Our students really enjoy seeing their works exhibited, and I believe these kinds of activities motivate students who don't engage in them,"* while the M.R.S.S. teacher also said, *"The child whose artwork is displayed is already a child who is constantly interested in the lesson. We, in fact, organize these exhibitions so that they can serve as an example to others."* On the negative side, the F.S.S. teacher noted that some students do not consider themselves as talented as the successful ones and feel discouraged, and explained this, saying *"Sometimes, the opposite can happen. The student may think, 'We're not that talented,' and shy away even more."*

### 3.2.3. Artistic Development

The research revealed that elements of the hidden curriculum contribute to students' artistic development. In this context, activities conducted outside the formal curriculum was to help create an



awareness of art in students, support their technical development, and enable them to discover their artistic abilities. These findings are presented under the subthemes of *creating art awareness*, *technical development*, and *discovering artistic talent*.

### 3.2.3.1. Creating art awareness

Teachers have stated that activities outside the formal curriculum contribute to the development of students' artistic awareness. The M.R.S.S. teacher emphasized the necessity of extracurricular activities, such as museum, exhibition, and workshop visits, noting that these activities increase interest in art, saying, *"When children see such environments, I believe they develop more, and their interest grows. At least their perspective on art changes, I think. Without these, interest in art tends to lag behind."* Similarly, the T.B.S.S. administrator explained that the exhibition visit activity changed students' views on art, saying, *"You know children, when they see a different photo or a naked woman, they immediately get embarrassed, but we aim to broaden their horizons by explaining that this is art, and such things can be part of art. It seems to have worked. Children have started to look at art more beautifully,"* and the E.Y.S.S. teacher also highlighted that extracurricular exhibition activities help students adapt to art, stating, *"I believe that exhibitions outside the school are important for students to adapt to art alongside their social environment."* The A.S.S. teacher expressed that such activities help students approach art more consciously, saying, *"At least in the future, when they look at art or paintings, they will not just stare blankly."*

The research also revealed that most schools organize various exhibitions and create exhibition spaces, wall paintings, bulletin boards, and informative visuals as part of their physical arrangements. This increases students' familiarity with visuals. In this context, the A.S.S. administrator explained that they created a rest area for students at their school, where they placed reproductions of artworks to familiarize students with artistic creations. The administrator described this by saying, *"They have filled this space with artistic works. We do not want the children to look at blank walls. The idea is that it would cheer them up, and they could look at the artworks."*

### 3.2.3.2. Technical development

Teachers have stated that artistic activities outside the formal curriculum contribute to the development of students' technical skills. The A.S.S. teacher explained that students use different technical skills in various artistic activities, saying, *"They see different techniques in an artistic sense. Preparing bulletin boards, cutting paper and cardboard neatly, using scissors, and applying paint in a technique-appropriate and smooth manner."* Similarly, the F.S.S. teacher emphasized that extra activities allow students to experience different techniques and applications, stating, *"Through extra activities, we have the opportunity to use materials that are not included in the curriculum. For example, we can practice marbling through an additional activity."*

### 3.2.3.3. Discovering artistic talent

Teachers have stated that some students are unaware of their talents, but through activities such as exhibitions, competitions, wall paintings, and courses, they become aware of their abilities, which directs them towards the field of art. The F.S.S. teacher mentioned that competitions raise awareness of talent, saying, *"Some of our students have talent but are not aware of it. Through these competitions, awareness is created,"* while the I.S.S. teacher explained that the art course helped a students recognize their abilities and consider art as a profession, stating, *"I had opened an art course. They became aware of themselves and started thinking about fine arts."* The T.B.S.S. administrator added that they discovered talented students through competitions, saying, *"We did a poster project related to Yunus Emre. We discovered two talented students. We didn't know they were skilled in this area. These competitions provide us with an opportunity to get to know the children better."*

## 3.3. Findings Regarding the Responsibilities, Roles, and Suggestions for Administrators and Teachers

As a result of the data obtained from the interviews with teachers and administrators in the research, some findings have been made regarding the responsibilities, roles, and suggestions for

administrators and teachers. These findings have been thematized as *administrator and teacher responsibilities and roles*, and the *suggestions of teachers and administrators*. These themes are presented below.

### 3.3.1. Administrator and Teacher Responsibilities and Roles

In the research, some findings were obtained regarding the responsibilities and roles of administrators and teachers in the activities that form the hidden curriculum. According to these findings, administrators organize activities outside the formal curriculum, some activities are carried out through teacher-administrator collaboration, administrators need to provide resources for the activities to take place, and teachers engage in activities with specific objectives in mind. These findings are presented under the subthemes of *administrators ensuring organization*, *administrator-teacher collaboration*, *administrators providing resources*, and *teachers' purposes for engaging in activities*.

#### 3.3.1.1. Administrators ensuring organization

It has been revealed that administrators ensure the organization of activities in schools. In this context, administrators stated that they plan and manage various activities such as the end-of-year exhibitions, announcing external competitions, organizing award ceremonies, opening courses, conducting exercise sessions, and creating wall paintings. The F.S.M.S.S. administrator explained that they organize the end-of-year exhibitions, saying, "*When the exercise sessions are completed at the end of the year, the works created throughout the year are exhibited. We handle the organization of this.*" and the M.R.S.S. administrator stated that they request the end-of-year exhibition from the teachers, saying, "*We ask the teacher for the end-of-year exhibitions.*". Administrators generally mentioned that they announce and manage the connections for external competitions. This process was explained by the F.S.S. administrator and the F.S.M.S.S. administrator in the following statements:

As a routine, there are announcements for painting competitions from the local education authority for special days and weeks. We print out these announcements from the system, along with the participation conditions, and present them to our teacher. Our teacher handles the rest of the process, and then provides feedback to us. We then send the artworks to the local education authority. (F.S.S.A.)

On national and official holidays, we organize various painting and poetry competitions within the school. The winners of such competitions are sent to the provincial competition. During ceremonies, we also display the artworks of the students who placed in the competition and have them applauded along with their names. (F.S.M.S.S.A.)

Administrators have stated that they also plan the wall paintings. The F.S.S. administrator explained this by saying, "*Within the available resources, we identify potential areas both inside and outside the school where the paintings can be done. We discuss with our teacher and carry out beautification works in the school's areas according to the program.*"

Administrators have also mentioned that there are challenges they face in carrying out these activities. In this context, the F.S.M.S.S. administrator stated that due to time constraints, teachers hesitate to give exercise sessions, avoid museum visits due to class hours, and organizing additional competitions creates extra workload. These situations negatively impact the realization of the activities. The administrator explained this view with the following words:

Sometimes, teachers may not be willing to conduct extracurricular exercises because they are outside of class hours... If you plan a museum visit, it has to be done during class time. The teacher might say, 'I need to teach math, I'm already struggling to finish the topic.' No one is very keen on it... Organizing an additional competition also creates extra workload. Schools may be unwilling to get too involved so as to avoid imposing additional burdens.

The I.S.S. administrator mentioned that sometimes the heavy topics in competitions and the frequent organization of competitions reduce students' motivation and decrease participation. They also expressed that they were unable to open courses due to insufficient number of applicants. They explained such cases with the following statements: "*Some themes can be too difficult for our students.*"

*When competitions are organized constantly, the children may not want to participate all the time."* and *"When we want to open a course, only a few students show interest. Because the number is not sufficient, we cannot open those courses."* Administrators also stated that financial constraints negatively impact museum visits. The M.R.S.S. administrator explained this situation by saying, *"Financial issues are very challenging. The school bus fare to the city center is not less than 900. The prices are very high. It's difficult for us as a school to cover this."*

### 3.3.1.2. Administrator-Teacher collaboration

Administrators have stated that they plan art-related activities in schools, especially for special days, weeks, and end-of-year exhibitions, together with teachers. The F.S.S. administrator explained this by saying, *"Especially on national holidays, we plan the art exhibition together with our school's art teacher,"* and the K.S.S. administrator mentioned that they organize the exhibition for the school's spring festival in collaboration with the teacher, saying, *"Last year, we discussed together how to organize it. We decided to do it together so that more people could see it."* The T.B.S.S. administrator also stated, *"We always make sure to hold our exhibition annually. We communicate this with the teacher colleagues, and they don't say no; we prepare the exhibition together."*

### 3.3.1.3. Administrators providing resources

Teachers and administrators have stated that the attitude of administrators is crucial for the implementation of visual arts activities in schools, and that administrators need to provide opportunities and support teachers within those possibilities. In this context, the A.S.S. teacher mentioned that her administrator supports her, and this makes her feel good and expressed this opinion by saying, *"The administrators are where it all ends. I feel very good. Thanks to my principal. He is always with me, supporting me. He gets me whatever I want, he makes it happen. Otherwise, I might not have been able to do it. That would have made me unhappy."* The A.S.S. administrator, on the other hand, stated that a teacher cannot act alone and that the role of the administrator is essential. He expressed this by saying, *"If the school administration does not support, the teacher cannot do anything on their own. We support our teacher here."* Similarly, the I.S.S. administrator stated that it is the administrator's duty to provide opportunities for the teacher, saying, *"It is to be a source of motivation for both the teacher and the students, to provide opportunities. If our teacher wants to open a course, we provide the greatest opportunities,"* and the M.R.S.S. administrator also mentioned that they always try to provide opportunities for the teacher, saying, *"We do whatever the teacher needs. We facilitate her requests. As long as the teacher asks for it.. she asked for an easel, we get an easel. For example, if she says it's needed for an exhibition, we try to meet every need, everything the teacher requires, financially."*

It has been stated that the perspective of the principal and vice principals on art is also important in providing opportunities for the teacher. The A.S.S. teacher expressed this by saying, *"It all ends with the administration. If your administration has a modern perspective and is someone who loves art, they won't hinder you. They'll just ask, 'What else are you going to do?'"* and the T.B.S.S. administrator explained it by saying, *"The perspective of the administrators on art also affects the situation. If the administrator has the mindset of 'it's fine if the student goes to the exhibition, it's fine if they don't,' then there's nothing left to do."*

### 3.3.1.4. Teachers' purposes for engaging in activities

Teachers stated that they carry out activities outside of the official curriculum for certain purposes. These purposes include ensuring students' art literacy, encouraging the students to be willing, fulfilling certain mandatory activities, and motivating their own professional growth. Firstly, some teachers mentioned that they carried out these activities to ensure the students gain art literacy. The A.S.S. teacher explained this idea by saying, *"Look, this is a warm color, this is a cool color. I've heard of this artist. It's like we had practiced this technique. They should know about it. After all, none of them will be artists... At least when they look at art in the future, they won't look at it blankly,"* and the M.R.S.S. teacher added, *"I do it for the students, so they can see visual things. So they can see the works of their other friends. I want them to grasp beauty and aesthetics."* Some teachers, however, stated that students' willingness and happiness

motivated them, and the I.S.S. teacher explained this by saying, *"The biggest factor is their willingness. Because painting is something that will be done more voluntarily. It is something they will do more willingly. When they are willing, I also try to do my best,"* and the E.Y.S.S. teacher expressed it saying *"The children enjoy it, and receiving feedback from it, is an additional factor for us. We love working with children, exhibiting their works, and seeing the happiness on their faces."* The F.S.M.S.S. teacher, mentioned that some of these activities are mandatory, and they are also done to maintain the teacher's motivation. She explained this by saying, *"Some of these are mandatory anyway; you have to do them. For example, the end-of-year exhibition,"* and *"Participating in a competition, organizing an exhibition, or doing any work outside of lessons is purely for motivation. If you are appreciated, your motivation increases. If you are not appreciated, your motivation is lost."*

### 3.3.2. Suggestions of Teachers and Administrators

Teachers and administrators have made suggestions regarding activities and the teaching staff. Firstly, teachers have proposed that inter-institutional collaborative projects could be carried out for activities, and that courses aimed at developing students' talents could be opened. In this context, the A.S.S. administrator suggested that an exhibition project could be organized jointly by schools under the provincial directorate of national education and expressed this suggestion by saying, *"Different things can be organized at the provincial level by the Ministry of National Education. A collective exhibition could be created at a certain location where all the schools come together. The Ministry of National Education should organize these types of events."* Similarly, the A.S.S. teacher suggested increasing inter-school collaboration and stated, *"There could be more cooperation between schools. There could be joint projects with students, like material collaboration. It would be nice for the children; a student from another school would come and they would work together. We also expect support from the university; we could do something together."* The A.S.S. administrator and the I.S.S. teacher both suggested opening talent-development courses. The A.S.S. administrator expressed this idea by saying, *"There should be free courses, suitable for children's talents, provided by the state. The children should go there and develop their abilities in that course,"* and the I.S.S. teacher said, *"If they have the means, students stand out in the courses. They do it with a lot of passion. I would recommend they open courses in workshops."* As another suggestion, the A.S.S. administrator pointed out that the Ministry of National Education should increase the rewards in competitions and expressed this suggestion by saying, *"The Ministry of Education could increase the rewards for children. It could be encouraging."*

Suggestions for teachers emphasize the need for them to be enthusiastic, active, and courageous in organizing activities, to encourage students to participate in events such as exhibitions and competitions, and to support students' development. First, the suggestion was made that teachers should be courageous, active, and willing. This was expressed by the E.Y.S.S. teacher, who said, *"They should not be afraid of working with the students or increasing responsibilities. They should not be afraid of organizing activities. The feedback is very positive."* The M.R.E.O. teacher stated, *"Definitely, art teachers should be active, discover talented children, work with them individually, and help them develop... They need to be willing."* The T.B.S.S. administrator said, *"The planning and preparation of this, when I do exhibitions, is quite challenging at first, but you need to keep the energy high, you need to be willing."* The I.S.S. teacher, on the other hand, suggested that teachers should encourage students to participate in activities and expressed this opinion by saying, *"If they encourage students to participate in competitions and such activities, participation is guaranteed."*

## 4. Discussion Conclusions, and Suggestions

The research aimed to identify the elements of the hidden curriculum and their effects on students. Accordingly, the study collected data on these elements within the field of visual arts, examining how they influence students, as well as the responsibilities, roles, and suggestions of administrators and teachers in this process. The findings, discussions, and recommendations related to these points are presented below.

As a result of the study, several elements of the hidden curriculum in middle school visual arts programs were identified. These include exercises, courses, club activities, extracurricular trips, exhibitions, competitions, and arrangements of physical space. Hatipoğlu and Semerci (2019) found through their interviews with teachers that social and cultural activities, along with the physical environment, significantly influence the development of aesthetic values, allowing students to gain aesthetic experiences through these channels. The research determined that schools usually conduct one of these activities, such as exercises, courses, or club activities. During these activities, it was noted that painting projects were developed, various techniques that engaged students' interest were applied, activities for special days and weeks were organized, students prepared for competitions, and large-scale events were held. Similarly, related studies have highlighted that these kinds of activities, which support implicit learning, are practical tools in student development (Hatipoğlu, 2018; Ishiguro et al., 2021). However, it was also found that some unfavorable circumstances created barriers to implementing these activities. For example, the high cost of materials limited participation in courses; some courses could not be offered because they did not attract enough students; and students could not find time for club activities outside of class hours. From these findings, it can be concluded that students' interest in these activities is relatively low, and efforts are needed to improve student participation.

It was found that schools organize extracurricular trips as part of the hidden curriculum. These trips include visits to museums, art museums, out-of-school exhibitions, exhibition tours, and visits to art schools. According to Şen (2019), extracurricular trips promote interactive learning and support the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. Additionally, similar studies have shown that students who participate in such activities develop a greater interest in art and become more engaged in school (Arts Education Partnership, 2019). However, the research revealed that these activities are currently limited and are attended by only a small number of students. This creates the perception that students undervalue visual arts and that top students are prioritized. In his research, Gülüm (2016) emphasized the importance of exhibition tours, stating that students can observe new artistic techniques, enhance their aesthetic judgments, and develop a habit of attending exhibitions. Therefore, increasing the frequency of these activities and student participation is vital for gaining aesthetic knowledge and perspectives. The study also identified some barriers to organizing these activities, including the distance to exhibition venues, financial constraints, and the discouraging effect of disrupting class schedules on teachers.

It was found that schools organize various exhibitions and competitions and participate in external events. In this context, it was determined that schools hold year-end exhibitions, term exhibitions, celebrations for special days and weeks, end-of-event exhibitions, and competitions for special occasions, as well as participate in external contests. It was mentioned that students take part in internal competitions and provincial contests, but are hesitant to join national competitions due to reduced chances of winning. Additionally, it was noted that a lack of attractive prizes, challenging topics, and the frequency of events contributed to decreased participation.

It was found that the physical arrangements related to visual arts are established in schools. In this context, schools were observed to have art classrooms, exhibition areas, wall paintings, and displayed artworks in hallways. Specifically, most schools have art classrooms where student artworks, art materials, storage cabinets, and informative visuals are present. It was noted that workshops provide a comfortable working environment, help students feel immersed in an artistic atmosphere, and motivate them to engage in their work. Similar studies indicate that educational environments with quality physical conditions increase student success and motivation (Broome, 2013; Şengöz & Sağgöz, 2015), help students feel special, and boost their interest in art (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, 2007). Therefore, it can be argued that adequate physical facilities lead to positive student outcomes. However, it was observed that very few schools actually utilize the art classrooms. Some schools mentioned that due to inadequate physical conditions, art classrooms were missing, causing difficulties during lessons. Tekin Kırıçoğlu (2005) stated that the marginalization of art classes in schools also results in a lack of suitable spaces, with classrooms being used as workshops that are not suitable for art lessons. In this



context, the absence of dedicated art classrooms and proper facilities implicitly suggests that art lessons are considered of secondary importance for schools.

It was observed that in schools, display areas such as art classrooms, bulletin boards in corridors, and corridor walls are used. Some schools had a small bulletin board dedicated to visual arts. However, having only one bulletin board for visual arts is likely insufficient. In one of the research schools, a permanent gallery showcasing artists' works was found. It was also noted that various wall paintings and artworks are present in schools. Many schools featured wall paintings related to interdisciplinary topics on garden walls and corridors. Yet, many classrooms lack visuals related to visual arts. Some schools displayed posters of prints and reproductions along the hallways. One research school had a large number of reproductions hung up. In this regard, Hatipoğlu and Semerci (2019) emphasized the importance of the school climate in transmitting aesthetic values. Therefore, an increase or decrease in spaces and visuals related to visual arts in schools can influence the school climate and, consequently, the transmission of aesthetics.

In his research, Yüksel (2007) stated that the hidden curriculum in schools plays an important role in helping students acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Similar studies have observed that students who engage actively with art show increased academic success (Arts Education Partnership, 2019). This study also revealed that the hidden curriculum activities in schools have instructional, affective, and artistic effects on students. Instructionally, the study found that students who participated in activities such as exhibitions and competitions were more motivated to work, and even students who did not participate were encouraged to work with enthusiasm. Similarly, Tiryaki (2024) concluded that students who receive awards in society boost the motivation of other students. Ayaydın (2009) noted that exhibitions motivate students and emphasized that care should be taken to ensure that every student's work is displayed to maintain motivation. Similar studies have also found that student participation in exhibitions improves the quality of their work (Hardly, 2022). The research revealed that students took on responsibilities by participating in activities such as preparing exhibitions and bulletin boards, and that teachers and students collaborated on creating bulletin boards and wall paintings. It was also noted that students enjoyed this collaborative process.

The study revealed that hidden curriculum activities have affective implications for students. According to Yüksel (2002), one of the most important features of the hidden curriculum is its ability to impart affective qualities. The study found that students who participated in exhibitions and competitions, and those who received awards by presenting their work in front of the public, felt valued and experienced an increase in their confidence related to the field. It also showed that students felt happy when taking part in activities such as exhibitions, painting competitions, and wall painting projects, and that behavioral problems of troubled students decreased. Additionally, students who engaged with social environments through exhibitions and competitions developed better social adaptation skills. Teachers and students involved in these activities acted as role models, encouraging others to engage in their work. Tekin Kırıçoğlu (2009) similarly stated that successful students create a driving force for their peers. Other studies have generally indicated that the hidden curriculum helps students develop positive affective traits (Abroampa, 2020; Uysal, 2023; Beydoğan, 2012; Saracaloğlu & Küçükoğlu, 2022). However, it was also noted that some students, by comparing themselves to successful peers, felt inadequate and withdrew. This situation could unintentionally lead to negative outcomes.

It was determined that the hidden curriculum activities related to visual arts contribute to students' artistic development. In this context, it was found that extracurricular art activities and physical arrangements help develop students' art awareness, leading to increased awareness, interest, and familiarity with art. Through art activities, students encounter different techniques, which enhance their technical skills, and as a result of all these activities, students discover their talents, influencing their professional futures. In his research, Tuncel (2008) also indicated that hidden curriculum activities help reveal students' areas of interest.

It was found that both administrators and teachers have specific responsibilities and roles in activities related to the hidden curriculum. In this context, it was noted that administrators are



responsible for organizing activities such as year-end exhibitions, announcing competitions, creating wall paintings, offering courses, and overseeing exercises. However, factors like financial limitations, lack of student participation, avoidance of excessive workload, and teachers' difficulties in allocating time for these activities were identified as elements that negatively affect organization. It was also found that administrators and teachers collaborate, especially in organizing processes for certain activities like exhibitions. Similarly, Hatipoğlu (2018) and Başar, Akan, and Çankaya (2014) stated that teachers and administrators play a key decision-making role in shaping the school's hidden curriculum by organizing such activities. The study strongly emphasized that administrators must provide resources for these activities and mentioned that some administrators make efforts to support teachers. In similar studies, it has been noted that the skills and attitudes of school administrators are crucial for achieving the goals of the hidden curriculum and enhancing school quality (Mulyani & Tanuatmodjo, 2021; Brücknerova & Novotny, 2019). The research also identified several factors that motivate teachers to organize such initiatives, including promoting students' artistic literacy, the motivation derived from students' willingness, teachers' own professional motivation, and the necessity of some activities being mandatory.

Administrators and teachers have offered several suggestions regarding these activities. In this context, it was noted that collaborative projects with various institutions could be developed, and courses aimed at students' artistic growth could be introduced. In this regard, Demirel (2017) recommended that hidden curriculum activities should be tailored to meet the diverse needs of individuals and designed to reveal their creative potential. Additionally, the research strongly highlighted that teachers should be proactive, confident, and enthusiastic during the implementation of these activities, and they should motivate students to participate.

Below, some suggestions are offered based on the research results. These suggestions include: (i) increasing social-cultural activities such as exercises, courses, club activities, extracurricular trips, exhibitions, and competitions within the hidden curriculum in schools, along with encouraging student participation; (ii) providing physical resources for art classes to motivate students to engage in artistic creation; (iii) recognizing that activities within the hidden curriculum have multifaceted contributions to students, but also can have negative implicit consequences, so strategies should be developed to prevent these negative impacts and motivate students; and (iv) it is important for school administrators and teachers to organize activities that support students' aesthetic development and creativity to achieve positive hidden outcomes.

#### Statement of Researchers

##### Researchers' contribution rate statement:

**Suzan Arslan:** Conceptualization, data collection, software, data curation, formal analysis, Writing-original draft preparation, validation, writing- review & editing.

**Levent Vural:** Conceptualization, methodology, data collection, Writing-original draft preparation, validation, writing- review & editing.

##### Conflict statement:

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Ethical clearance was first obtained for the study by the decision number. 2024.07.08 of 03.07.2024 of the "Trakya University's Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee".

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