

Social Studies and Love of Art: Students and Teachers Enlighten the Connections

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Abstract

Art and artistic activities that play a significant role in the lives of both children and adults are an important requirement for all individuals. Cultures develop, expand, and enrich through artistic activities, which are important for the development of visual literacy, especially in social studies. The present study aims to determine the reflection of various artistic branches in the social studies course and the student interest and love that art is considered to evoke in the context of the social studies course. In the study, qualitative research methods and techniques were used to review relevant documents and determine participant views about the role of art in social studies. First, the current Turkish social studies curricula and textbooks were analyzed. Then, an interview form developed by the authors was applied to 80 students attending all grades in a public middle school and 3 teachers employed in these schools in one of the major cities in Turkey. The attributes employed by the teachers and students in the interview form were analyzed with thematic and content analysis. The study findings demonstrated that the curricula and textbook achievements that allow activities in several art branches are limited. However, despite the limitations, the study findings demonstrated that the students were interested in different art branches and evidenced the support of social studies in the development of interest and love for certain learning areas.

Keywords: Social studies, Education, Art, Secondary school

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Introduction

Art is a concept between human ideas and habitat, nature, and society (Uçan, 1997). This concept invents problems to be solved and improves creative thinking, adequate and immediate decision-making, analysis, and resolution skills in individuals. Furthermore, art offers various possibilities for enthusiasts to explore and emphasize cultural diversity. Thus, it encourages research on the methods that would establish a common and mutual bond of love and underlines sensibility (Özsoy, 2003; Zhang, Shankar, & Antonidoss, 2022). Therefore, art, which is a vital part of life, contributes to social life; students acquire healthy knowledge about life through art (Freedman, 2000). Because art provides a constant flow of knowledge about history, nature, and people and establishes communication with them, In this context, emotions that are interpreted in the mind are shaped by sounds and words, transforming a stone into a meaningful object, notes into music, and paints into a beautiful painting, achieving an artistic interpretation (Yılmaz, 2005).

Since art is a personal act, the development of aesthetic emotions in the education and instruction process is an important precondition for an active society. Because glorification of the human spirit, satisfaction of the spiritual needs of individuals based on psychological differences, and the creation of psychologically balanced individuals are the essence of the efforts, goals, methods, and principles of human education and instruction activities (Türkdoğan, 1984), it is known that each individual has unique interests and skills. Educational environments should provide all opportunities to develop and guide these interests and skills. Only then would education support and develop creativity. In this period, educational activities should ensure that students can think based on artistic images and conduct artistic activities in different disciplines to improve their creativity (Bousalis, 2022; Uysal, 2005). It was observed that artistic activities in education increase concentration skills and support the development of social identity. The educational environment should engage the children, develop identity, challenge the students, and be safe. Such an environment could be provided by allowing the children to have artistic and cultural experiences. Skills to think, develop a perspective, and criticize could only develop in artistic environments. Furthermore, artistic activities encourage metaphorical, rational, and scientific thinking in children (Chemi & Du, 2017). Thus, art is not an instrumental area that serves the general education of the child and provides a foundation for mental life but a discipline whose purpose is directly based on art and the functions of art (Eisner, 1987; Hansen & Puustinen, 2021). Especially the multi-faceted, cultural, communicative, informative, enlightening, and behavior-enhancing functions of art make it versatile and significant. Individuals without artistic awareness and love could neither recognize or enjoy artworks, cultural values, or natural beauties, nor could they protect them or contribute to the cultural development of society. In 1998, important steps were taken in the curriculum based on the "Art Enlightenment Grows in New York Schools" project in the United States of America, since arts courses were considered instruments that both motivate the students for innovations and novel courses and develop student skills and discipline.

Art is affected by all social developments in life and has taken on a completely different fragmented structure with the removal of the modernist classification and unification influences in the postmodern era. Contemporary art, which has been changing due to the conditions of the current age, could be comprehended when associated with various disciplines in life (Coşkun Onan, 2016). One of the most important ways to have an interest in and love art and to reflect this love in every field of life is through integration with various disciplines other than creating art or an education in art. Because art could supplement various fields such as history and social studies and guide and support an interdisciplinary-thematic program (Garcia, 2021; Fowler & McMullan, 1991; Rosfiani, Akbar, & Neolaka, 2019).

Social studies is a field of study that combines literature, art, and social sciences with an interdisciplinary approach in order to gain basic citizenship competencies (NCSS, 2002). Based on the current social studies curriculum in Turkey, social studies is an inter-disciplinary field. To train creative individuals who can observe, think visually, be aware of their emotions and ideas, be sensitive to their environment, and love nature, people, and art based on the requirements of their age, different branches of art should be integrated into the social studies curriculum. Because most historical and cultural knowledge is based on art produced by different cultures in various eras (Akhan, Demirezen, & Çiçek, 2023; Christensen, 2006; Clark & Hooser, 2018; Herberholz, 2010; Manifold, 1995), by integrating different branches of art with social studies courses,

- Students could make sense of the knowledge framework of social studies through art,
- Students could improve their creativity in their imaginations by establishing novel and different connections with social studies content,
- Students could reconstruct their knowledge to develop transfer skills associated with learning experiences.

Social studies instruction and learning are more effective when they are integrative, meaningful, value-based, active, and challenging. Thus, the National Council for Social Studies emphasized that the program should integrate current social studies concepts, principles, and theories in the fields of anthropology, economics, archeology, geography, history, art, law, psychology, sociology, philosophy, religion, and political science (NCSS, 2002). Integration of the arts into the social studies curriculum is an excellent method to allow students with different learning styles to become active learners. Art reflects the unique cultural perspectives of various cultures and illuminates cultural interactions and migration patterns. Also, learning about different cultures through art could help reveal stereotypes. Thus, art is both an effective learning and instruction process and a critical component of the social studies course. When students have the opportunity to study historical artworks, they begin to understand how art reflects social values and how art is influenced by social, political, and economic beliefs in a society. However, several social studies teachers know that the students would benefit from an integrated approach; however, they are also aware that adopting this approach is harder than ever. Because the teachers, who are overwhelmed by the intensity of the material they need to instruct in a semester, hesitate to add something new to an already dense curriculum (Koçoğlu & Egüz, 2019; Milam, 2020; Sizemore, 2011). Thus, educational, entertaining, and easily accessible curriculum material is required to support teachers and promote their creativity.

Literature Review

There are studies in the literature on art in the social studies course. The review of the studies conducted in Turkey demonstrated that the sufficiency of art topics in the social studies discipline (Ercan, 2007; Erkan, 2010) and the views of pre-service social studies teachers on art (Akhan, 2013; Çıldır Gökaslan, 2020) were studied. Furthermore, theoretical and practical applications were conducted in social studies courses that employed movies (Aktekin & Çoban, 2012; Birkök, 2008; Demircioğlu, 2007; Efe, 2010; Gezici & Demir, 2018; İçen & Tuncel, 2020; Muratalan, 2010; Öztaş, 2009; Savaş & Arslan, 2014; Wagner, 2021), literary works (Akkuş, 2006; Aktın, & Karaçalı Taze, 2021; Akyol, 2011; Arslan, 2014; Leg, 2008; Beldağ & Aktaş, 2016; Çiftçi, 2011; Demir, 2011; Erdoğan, 2007; Öztürk, 2007; Öztürk & Otluoğlu, 2002; Sömen, 2021; Tekgöz, 2005), musical arts (Bölücek, 2008; Egüz, 2022; Göksu, 2020; Gülüm & Ulusoy, 2007; Sidekli & Coşkun, 2014), and painting (Güngör Akıncı, 2016; Moore, 2022). There are also studies on the employment of art in social studies courses around the world (Arnspiger, 1933; Briley, 2002; Burstein & Knotts, 2010; Champoux, 1999; Colley, 2012; Costa, 2005; Desai, Hamlin & Mattson, 2010; Dorminey, 2015; Hailat, et al., 2008; Kosky & Curtis, 2008; Liles, 2007; Manifold, 1995; Marcus, 2005; Morris & Obenchain, 2001; Palmer & Burroughs, 2002; Romero, 1996; Rosenstone, 2001; Schmidt, 2007; Smith, 1999; Stoddard, 2009; Vitulli & Santoli, 2013; Taylor, 2008; Taylor, Monck & Ayoub, 2014; Walker, 2006; Watts, 2007; Woelders, 2007; Zwirn & Libresco, 2010). Russell (2012) discussed five classroom-tested methods for instruction with movies in social studies class. Each method included various movie scenes that could be employed with recommended focus questions and interview topics. Freedman (2000), who suggested a general overview of social perspectives in art education, emphasized that visual arts were vital for all societies and focused on the common ground between various perspectives in revealing the complexity, diversity, and cultural position of representations in education. On the other hand, Zwirn and Libresco (2010) argued that art, which is a relatively new trend in the evaluation process in American history education, offered interesting opportunities for integration into education as a catalyst for student participation in social equality issues. Colley (2012) presented a pilot scheme for pre-service social studies teachers where they could utilize performance arts for active instruction of social studies courses. The project included three components: (1) studying a script; (2) attending a real performance of a professional play; and (3) attending four workshops. The views of the participants revealed that the employment of performing arts in social studies not only encouraged student participation and learning but also gave the students, whose voices were rarely heard in the class, an opportunity to rise to the occasion. The above-mentioned studies contributed to the research problems and methods in the literature. The literature review revealed that despite the availability of several studies on art and the presence of a direct relationship between social studies and art, the number of studies that investigated the correlation between social studies and arts in secondary education is limited, and most studies concentrated on the employment of art as a material in the course. Although the employment of art in social studies education is generally supported, there is no multidimensional study of the views of secondary education students and social studies teachers on the issue and the inclusion of art in the current curriculum. Furthermore, there are no international or national studies on the role of social studies courses in improving the love of art among the students in Turkey. The above-mentioned studies generally conducted surveys to determine participant views on the use of art in social studies. Although the employment of surveys and similar instruments has several advantages, these tools do not make it easy for the students to reflect on their daily experiences and individual differences. The findings presented in these studies, on the other hand, were limited to a theoretical framework rather than developing individual meanings and reflecting differences. However, in studies where qualitative research methods and techniques are employed,

interviews are preferred for data collection. Since in-depth and versatile data are the primary objective in qualitative research, it is necessary to employ various qualitative research techniques to determine the approaches of the participants to art. Because, although the artistic elements are frequently encountered in daily life, it is necessary to make sense of these works, integrate them into the course, perhaps raise awareness about self-interests and skills in social studies, experience the artworks, and determine their role in the sustenance of this interest. Although the current studies discuss several promises of arts integration, they lack a complete map of the current reasons for arts integration into social studies education. Further studies are required to fulfill these promises and realize art integration into social studies courses. Due to the power of art topics in social sciences instruction, especially in primary education, the views, perceptions, and competencies of middle school students on art topics and instruction are important. Furthermore, it could be suggested that the determination of reflections of art and various branches of art in the social studies course and its role in raising the interest and love of art among the students would be important to support the design of applicable arts integration in social studies courses.

The Questions of Study:

Q1: What is the prevalence of art topics in the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade social studies curricula introduced in 2018 in Turkey?

Q2: How do middle school students describe art?

Q3: According to middle school students, which art branch is prevalent in the social studies course?

Q4: Does the social studies course have a positive or negative impact on students' love of art?

Q5: How do social studies teachers describe the significance of social studies courses in the acquisition of a love of art by the students?

Method

Research Design

The study was conducted using the qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research includes the production of knowledge to understand individuals' lifestyles, behaviors, stories, social change, and organizational structures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The study was planned with a "phenomenology" design, a qualitative research model. Phenomenology contributes to a deeper understanding of experiences by revealing accepted assumptions about the methods individuals employ to make sense (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Thus, the present study aimed to reveal the personal experiences of the participants through an in-depth and multidimensional analysis of their experiences in the social studies course.

Participants

In qualitative research, purposive sampling is often used in the assignment of participants. Although purposive sampling allows several strategies, the researcher generally employs self-judgment to determine the sample based on suitability for the aim of the study (Balci, 2004; Yin, 2011). In the present study, maximum diversity sampling (a purposive sampling technique) was employed to determine the views of the participants on the role of social studies in the development of the love of art. Twenty 5th grade, 20 6th grade, 20 7th grade, and 20 8th grade students—a total of 80 students—were assigned the maximum diversity sampling method, where the grade was accepted as the source of maximum diversity. The main purpose of maximum diversity in the present study was to determine whether similar phenomena were shared among various cases and to reveal the different dimensions of the problem based on diversity. Assuming that different study designs illuminate different aspects of a phenomenon, maximum diversity sampling could be used to develop a holistic approach to the studied phenomenon (Suri, 2011). The social studies curriculum is implemented between the 5th and 7th grades in middle school. Eighth grade is also instructed in middle school, but the social studies content is provided in different courses (history, geography, and citizenship). The 8th grade students who took the social studies course in previous years were also included in the study.

The sample size was determined based on the aim and problems of the research, and it was concluded that the sample should include middle school students and social studies teachers in the same school. The study included 80 middle school students in all grade levels and three social studies teachers in a public school in a moderate socioeconomic neighborhood in a major Turkish city. In the study, the names of the participants are not mentioned due to ethical reasons. Thus, the participating middle school students are coded as 5th grade A1... A20, 6th grade B1... B20, 7th grade C1... C20, and 8th grade D1... D20. Social studies teachers were coded as Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and Teacher 3.

Data Collection and Analysis

Qualitative research data collection tools and analysis methods were employed in the study. The study data was collected with an interview form that included structured and semi-structured questions and was developed by the author for students and teachers based on the new 2018 social studies curricula and textbooks for 5th, 6th, and 7th

grades. Document reviews were conducted on the course syllabus and textbooks. Document review is a systematic review of existing documents or records, which could include the analysis of written materials that include information sources on the research topic (Karasar, 2007). Although semi-structured interviews are generally perceived as an easy data collection method (Wengraf, 2001), individual interviews have certain benefits. It is easier for the author to guide the interview to maximize the benefits of the study through one-on-one interviews (Brinkmann, 2014). However, the author should consider various issues when developing the interview form and focus on the depth of the data that would be collected (Kallio et al., 2016). Although the author could develop a list of predetermined questions, semi-structured interviews offer participants a chance to discover topics that could be important (Longhurst, 2016). During the development of the structured and semi-structured interview questions, a literature review was conducted for content validity. All interviews were conducted by the author, and the interviews were recorded. Student interviews lasted approximately 8–12 minutes, and social studies teacher interviews lasted about 15–18 minutes. Later, audio records were transcribed by the author. In a structured question, students were asked to write a paragraph about art to determine the semantics of art for them. Thus, the students were allowed to think in detail about the concept. This approach aimed to avoid “interviewer bias or subjectivity,” which could lead to the collection of more data from certain participants and less superficial data from others.

Content analysis, a qualitative data analysis technique, was employed to analyze the student data in the study. Content analysis could be used on qualitative or quantitative data both with an inductive or deductive approach. The approach is determined by the aim of the study. If there is not sufficient data on the phenomenon before or if the data is fragmented, the inductive approach is recommended (Lauri & Kynga Laur 2005). In the present research, the inductive approach was adopted. Both inductive and deductive analysis processes entail three main stages: preparation, organization, and reporting stages (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). As recommended by Elo and Kyngäs (2008), the content analysis phase of the study was designed as presented in Figure 1.

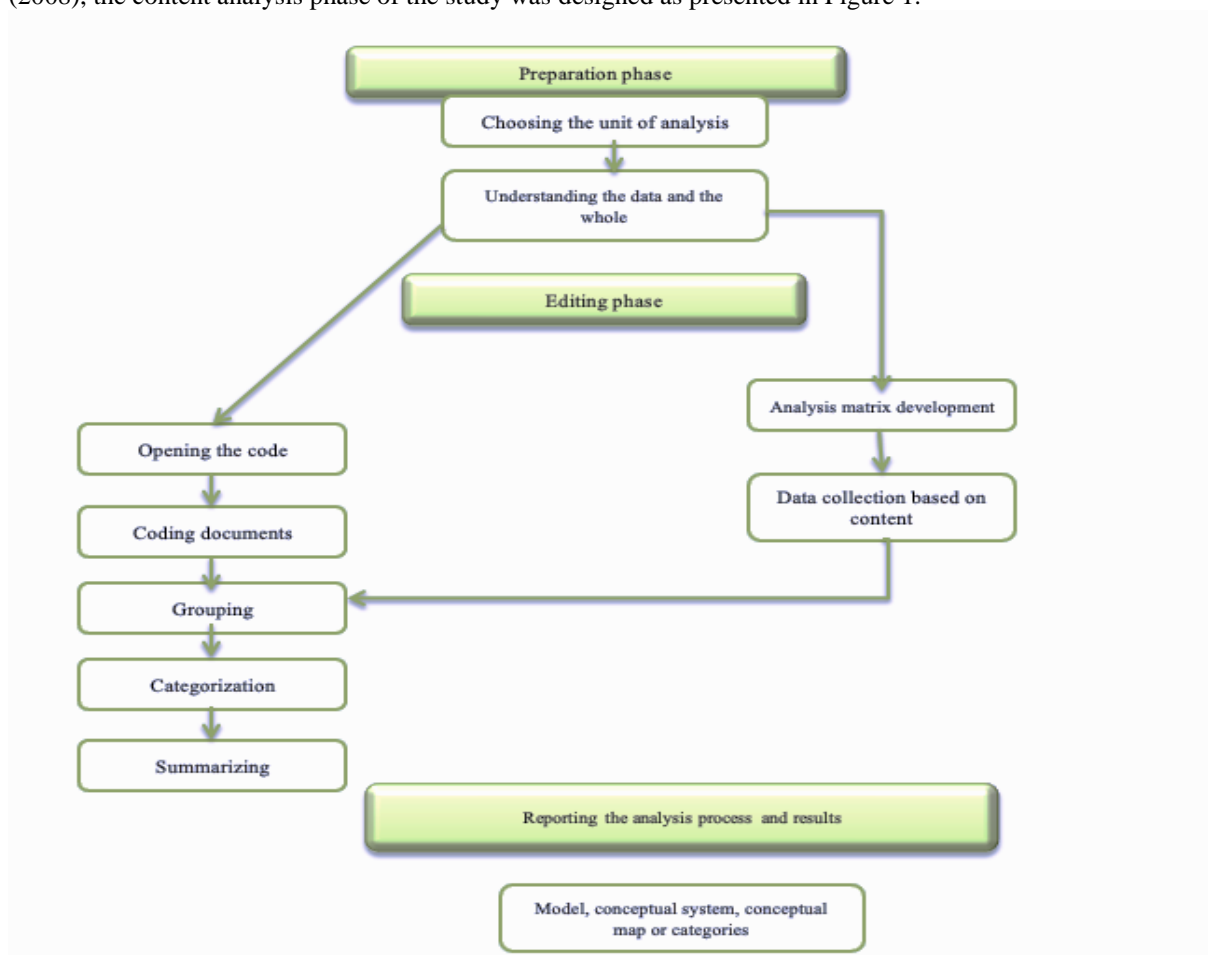


Figure 1. Content analysis preparation, organization, and result stages

The analyses were conducted by the author, and a faculty member assisted the author during the coding process. Each research problem was accepted as a theme. Sub-themes were developed based on the codes determined based on research problems. The “agreements” and “disagreements about the themes and sub-themes were discussed and edited. The reliability of the study was determined with the Miles and Huberman (1994) formula (Reliability = Agreement / Agreement + Disagreement X 100). Thus, the intercoder agreement was calculated at .91. Since the agreement rate was above 70%, it was concluded that the study was reliable (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Descriptive analysis was employed to analyze the teacher data in the study. The descriptive analysis method was preferred since the basic theme in the conceptual framework and analysis was predetermined in the study section conducted with the teachers (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

Necessary ethical permissions were obtained during the implementation process of the study. Ethical permission (19/01/2023 date, No. E.273374) was obtained from Inönü University Social Sciences And Humanities Scientific Research And Publication Ethics Committee Institution For This Research.

Results

Based on the aim of the study, the first focus of the study findings was the determination of the prevalence of art topics in 2018 5th, 6th, and 7th grades social studies curricula, achievements, and textbooks in Turkey. Then, the student descriptions of art, the prevalent art branches in the social studies course, and the impact of the social studies course on the students' love of art were investigated. Finally, the significance of the social studies course in the acquisition of the love of art by the students was reported based on the views of the social studies teachers.

Art in 2018: 5th, 6th, and 7th Grade Social Studies Curricula, Achievements, and Textbooks

The literary and artistic activities conducted by the students, including music, literature, performing arts, and visual arts, positively affect the creative expression of ideas, experiences, and emotions, cultural awareness, and articulation of the students. Thus, in the 2018 social studies curriculum (Table 1), it was recommended to supplement the social studies course with literary works such as epics, legends, fairy tales, folk tales, proverbs, poems, and folk songs; encourage students to read literary works such as historical novels, novels, stories, travel writings, anecdotes, and memoirs that would allow them to enjoy the course topics; and support the predetermined achievements with modern and traditional artworks such as music, painting, miniatures, calligraphy, engraving, sculpture, architecture, ceramics, movies, and theater (MoNE, 2018).

Table 1. Learning areas and achievements associated with art in 2018 5th, 6th, and 7th grade Social Studies Curricula (MoNE, 2018)

	Grade	Learning Area	Achievement	Detail
CURRICULUM 2018	5	CULTURE AND HERITAGE	5.2.1. Recognizes the significant contributions of Anatolian and Mesopotamian civilizations to the human history based on concrete ruins.	
			5.2.2. Promotes natural beings, historical spaces, objects and works in the surroundings.	
			5.2.3. Compares the cultural characteristics of various places in our country and these in the vicinity and determines similarities and differences between these.	
			5.2.5. Evaluates the historical development of cultural elements in daily life.	The continuity and variations of cultural elements in daily life are stressed.
	6		6.2.1. Deducts the geographical, economic, and cultural characteristics of the first Turkish states in Central Asia.	Epics, inscriptions and other sources are utilized.
	7		7.2.5. Gives examples of Ottoman cultural, and artistic, and aesthetic styles.	Examples from travel records of local and foreign travelers are included.

The review of Table 1 would demonstrate that there are a limited number of achievements in the “Culture and Heritage” learning area, one of the 7 learning areas in the current social studies curriculum (MoNE, 2018), that allow activities in various branches of art. Among the achievements, the highest number of artistic elements are included in the 5th grade, and the least number of artistic elements are included in the 6th and 7th grade curricula. There are a total of 98 achievements in the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade social studies curricula. Thus, it was determined that art was included in six achievements. The review of the social studies textbooks revealed that the 5th grade textbook included arts such as theater, architecture, ceramics, sculpture, and traditional handicrafts (carpet weaving, copper ornamentation, marbling art, tile art, and tin smithing) (Şahin, 2018); the 6th grade textbook included sculpture, painting, handicrafts such as belt buckles inlaid with coral, jade, agate, and turquoise, and bronze ornaments (Yılmaz et al., 2018); and the 7th grade textbook included arts such as Ottoman architecture, Ottoman tile art, marbling, calligraphy (fine writing and decoration), glassmaking, weaving, lapidary, and pottery (Gültekin et al., 2018).

The Prevalent Art Branches in Arts and Social Studies Courses Based on Student Views

To determine the views of the students on art, they were asked to write a short paragraph about art and start the paragraph with the definition of art. The descriptions of art according to the students are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Student descriptions about art

Theme	Sub-Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Expression of emotions	Area of freedom	12	28,75
	Expression of intense emotions	9	
	Heartfelt	2	
	Total	23	
An expression of life	Mirror of life	9	25
	Beautifying	7	
	Assigning meaning	3	
	Evaluating	1	
	Total	20	
A reflection of skill	Visualization skill	13	23,75
	Competence	4	
	Achievement	2	
	Total	19	
A means of entertainment	Entertaining	6	12,5
	Source of joy	4	
	Total	10	
Art as a need	Resting	4	10
	Relaxation	2	
	Education	2	
	Total	8	

As seen in Table 2, 28.75% ($f = 23$) of secondary school students who were asked to describe art stated that it was an “expression of emotions.” The most common sub-category in this theme was “area of freedom.” This theme was followed by ‘mirror of life’, ‘reflection of skill’, ‘means of entertainment’, and ‘art as a need’ themes. The students produced five themes and 15 categories. Certain student descriptions are presented below.

“Art is work conducted as one wishes in a place where nobody is involved.” (D12, An Expression of Emotions: An Area of Freedom)

“I turn some bad things into beautiful ones and draw them on paper. This is called art.” (A3, An expression of life—beautifying)

“Not everyone can draw what the teacher assigns. I can do it because I study at home. Art is something that not everyone has.” (C7, A Reflection of Skill: Competence)

“The paintings drawn by people who can paint beautiful lines without overflow are art.” (A10, A Reflection of Skill and Achievement)

“Art is the songs, pictures, and music that relax one when played or drawn.” (D1, Art as a Need: Relaxation)

Social studies is an indispensable course, especially for primary and middle school students, to evaluate their immediate environment and local society and then to understand global problems and events. Thus, data on the employment of art elements in social studies and the awareness of the students about these elements are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Inclusion of art by the teachers in social studies classes based on student views

	5 th grade (f and %)	6 th grade (f and %)	7 th grade (f and %)	8 th grade (f and %)
It is featured in social studies courses	11 (55%)	6 (30%)	4 (20%)	7 (35%)
It is not included in social studies courses	9 (45%)	14 (70%)	16 (80%)	13 (65%)

As seen in Table 3, the students stated that the teachers included art in the 5th grade the most. It was determined that the highest number of participants who stated that the teachers did not include art in social studies classes were in the 7th grade. Certain student views are presented below:

“There are several things about art not in social studies but in other courses.” (A8: Art is not included in the social studies course)

“Once in a historical subject, our teacher made us memorize a poem about history with music. I still remember it.” (B11: Art is included in the social studies course)

“We are only instructed on the topic. We do not draw pictures in that course. We also play music in the music course. Social courses are a little more about past events.” (C9: Art is not included in the social studies course)

“The teacher showed us miniatures or something about the Ottomans. It was a bit complex.” (C20: Art is included in the social studies course)

Based on the views of the students on the inclusion of art by the teachers in the social studies course, it was determined that 35% ($f = 28$) of the participants stated that the teachers included art in the course, while 65% stated that they did not. The 28 students who stated that art was included in social studies were asked which branches of art were included in the course as far as they could remember (Table 4).

Table 4. The distribution of the art branches included in the social studies course based on the student grade


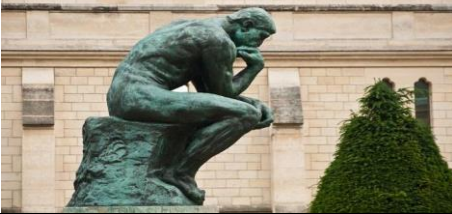




Branches of Art	5 th grade (f and %)	6 th grade (f and %)	7 th grade (f and %)	8 th grade (f and %)
Surface Arts				
Picture				
Photo	3 (28%)	3 (50%)	3 (75%)	1 (14%)
Calligraphy Miniature				
Volumetric Arts				
Sculpture	2 (18%)			1 (14%)
Spatial Arts	4 (36%)		1 (25%)	
Architectural				
Language Arts	2 (18%)	2 (33%)		4 (58%)
Novel				
Poetry				
Sound Arts		1 (17%)		1 (14%)
Music				

The review of Table 4 would demonstrate that 5th grade participants stated that "spatial arts," "surface arts," "volumetric arts," and "language arts" were included in the course. Sixth grade students stated that "surface arts," "language arts," and "music" were included in the course; 7th grade students stated that "surface arts" and "spatial arts" were included; and 8th grade students stated that "language arts," "surface arts," "volumetric arts," and "music" were included. The analysis of the overall data revealed that the prevalence of surface and language arts was the highest, and that of music was the lowest.

The Impact of the Social Studies Course on the Love of Art Among Students

To determine the impact of the social studies course on students' love of art, initially, cards that included the names of artists in different branches and information about and examples of their art branch were developed, and they were asked the question, "Which of these artists would you like to be your social studies teacher?" The art branches included on the cards and the distribution of the related visuals by grade level are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. The distribution of the artists preferred by the students as social studies teachers based on the grade

Artists	Works	Grade			
		5 th (f and %)	6 th (f and %)	7 th (f and %)	8 th (f and %)
Claude Monet (Painter)		3 (15%)	2 (10%)	8 (40%)	6 (30%)
Rodin (Sculptor)		1 (5%)	---	---	2 (10%)
Mimar Sinan (Architect)		5 (25%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	---
Jules Verne (Author)		1 (5%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	---
Fazıl Say (Pianist)		6 (30%)	8 (40%)	6 (30%)	10 (50%)
Nuri Bilge Ceylan (Film Director)		4 (%20)	4 (%20)	3 (%15)	2 (%10)

It was determined that 5th grade students mostly preferred pianists and preferred authors and sculptors the least, 6th grade students preferred pianists the most and painters the least, 7th grade students preferred pianists the most

and architects the least, and 8th grade students preferred pianists the most and sculptors and movie directors the least as their social studies teacher. The review of all grade levels demonstrated that thirty (37.5%) students preferred musicians as their social studies teachers, and three (3.75%) students preferred sculptors. The views of certain students were as follows:

“I love my social studies teacher, but if (s)he were a painter, he would teach us everything with paintings. We would be more curious about the topics.” (C2, Claude Monet-Painter)

“I think it would be nice if the teacher carved historical personalities out of a piece of stone. We would learn. Our exhibition would be like a museum.” (D9, Rodin-Sculptor)

“I think an architect would instruct things in the social textbook better. We can understand how the work came out better.” (A4, Mimar Sinan, Architect)

“The author of every book should be the teacher, as we always follow the book.” (B6, Jules Verne, Author)

“There would be a piano in the classroom. When we were bored, the teacher would play the piano right away. We would not be too bored in the class.” (A20, Fazıl Say-Pianist)

“Since I like watching movies, it would have been better if the social studies teacher was a director. If he instructs the course while watching a movie, maybe we will remember better.” (B8, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Film Director)

The views of the students on the organization of artistic course content and activities in the social studies course are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Student views on the organization of artistic course content and conducting art activities in social studies

Student views	Grade			
	5th (f and %)	6th (f and %)	7th (f and %)	8th (f and %)
Loving approach to the course	10 (%50)	4 (%20)	6 (%30)	11 (%55)
Non-boring	3 (%15)	7 (%35)	8 (%40)	5 (%25)
Entertaining	4 (%20)	4 (%20)	2 (%10)	4 (%20)
Better and meaningful course	3 (%15)	3 (%15)	1 (%5)	---
Imagination	---	2 (%10)	3 (%15)	---

The review of the student approaches presented in Table 6 demonstrated that 5th and 8th grade students approached the social studies course with love. The 6th and 7th grade student approaches concentrated on the removal of boring attributes from the course.

The views of 28 students who stated that the teachers included art in the social studies course and their thoughts about this practice are presented in Table 7. The 5th grade students mostly concentrated on “learning about various branches of art,” the 6th grade students mostly mentioned “raising interest and love of art,” the 7th grade students mostly focused on “promotion of observation,” and the 8th grade students mostly mentioned “to make the course fun” categories. Analysis of the entire data revealed that the contribution of the social studies course to learning about various branches of art was mentioned the most (39%), followed by raising interest and love of art (36%), making the course fun (14%), and promoting observation (11%).

Table 7. The impact of inclusion of art in certain topics by the social studies teacher on the students

Situations Affecting Students	5 th grade	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade
	(f and %)	(f and %)	(f and %)	(f and %)
Learning about various branches of art	6 (55%)	2 (33%)	1 (25%)	2 (29%)
Raising interest and love of art	4 (36%)	3 (50%)	1 (25%)	2 (29%)
To make the course fun	1 (9%)	---	---	3 (43%)
Promotion of observation	---	1 (17%)	2 (50%)	---

The Significance of Social Studies Course in the Acquisition of the Love of Art by the Students Based on the Views of Social Studies Teachers

The participating teachers considered art as a supplementary area in social studies to supplement the instruction of universal values, national awareness, contribution to culture and heritage, observation, analysis, verbal or non-

verbal expression of emotions, to instill love of art, interpretation of topics, different perspectives, discovery of skills, and focus on the professions that would lead to self-improvement. The teacher's views were as follows:

“Art is included in the social studies curriculum. There are related images in our textbooks. I find it positive. I think that it especially contributes to the development of students' observation skills. Sometimes, students can show their emotions and analyze them through art and visuals without reading the topics in the textbook. These are effective in the development of their love of art.” (Teacher1)

“I think social studies courses are very important in instilling a love of art among children. It is already a supplementary area in social studies. Although not all topics have art-related content, from time to time we adapt them ourselves and enrich them with examples. As much as possible, because we also have to instruct the curriculum. The use of artistic elements in the class supports the students in their interpretation of the topics. Over time, they are interested and love [the course].” (Teacher2)

“It helps with the recognition of some things in the world. I can see their various perspectives more clearly, especially when I instruct history topics with art. The discussion of certain national attributes through art actually makes things easier. If you ask how often I do it, I cannot answer that. Frankly, I cannot go beyond the art elements included in the textbook. Unfortunately, there is not a period for art that I can discuss in detail. Children love it; in fact, when I instruct visual arts, I hear about it. I hear that they say, ‘I will be a painter, an architect’.” (Teacher3)

Conclusion and Discussion

Integration of the social studies course and theater, drama, music, and visual art activities could motivate students and promote self-esteem (Romero, 1996). In the study, initially, the 2018 middle school social studies curriculum and textbooks in Turkey were reviewed. The study findings revealed that certain limited achievements about various art branches were included in the "Culture and Heritage" learning area in the 2018 curriculum. It was determined that artistic elements were included in the 5th grade curriculum the most and in the 6th and 7th grade curricula the least. The review of the social studies textbooks revealed that the 5th grade textbook included theater, architecture, ceramics, sculpture, and traditional handicraft (carpet weaving, copper ornaments, marbling art, tile, and tin smithing) elements (Şahin, 2018); the 6th grade textbook included sculpture, painting, and handicrafts such as coral, agate, jade, and turquoise ornamented belt buckles and flame-shaped bronze ornament elements (Yılmaz et al., 2018); the 7th grade textbook included Ottoman architecture, Ottoman tile art, marbling, calligraphy (fine writing and decoration art), glassmaking, weaving, lapidary, and pottery elements (Gültekin et al., 2018); These arts, which are a part of Turkish national culture, play a key role in training individuals with national awareness, knowledge of customs and traditions, cultural awareness, and a love of art. In most cultures and eras, these arts have served both functional and aesthetic purposes, adding beauty and spiritual significance to daily activities. Deveci (2009) emphasized that the inclusion of cultural elements in the social studies course could promote the acquisition of social knowledge, facilitate the adaptation of the individual through socialization, and promote cooperation, empathy, thinking skills, and values such as respect, love, and tolerance. Thus, although the study findings demonstrated that limited artistic elements were included in the curricula and textbooks, the current content includes effective elements to raise the curiosity and interest of the students and allow the students to partially recognize the rich and cultural experiences that humanity has accumulated for centuries.

Art is one of the key fields that connect each generation, ensuring the sustenance of humanity (Özsoy, 2003). Most middle school students who were asked to describe art stated that art was an "expression of emotions." The review of the sub-categories of the theme revealed that most students considered art an "area of freedom." As emphasized by Çetin (2002), art is one of the most effective tools in the development of an original, free, and faithful human society. Student freedom should not be limited to promoting creativity. The more freedom they have, the more prominent the creativity will be (Uysal, 2005). The review of the main themes and categories obtained based on the student descriptions of art revealed 5 themes and 15 categories: an expression of emotions, an expression of life, a reflection of skill, a means of entertainment, and art as a need. Thus, it was determined that art meant different things for the students. The views of Freedman (2000) also support the students who considered art a means of entertainment. According to Freedman, students are not only interested in art due to formal, technical, and even special values, but also due to the fact that it allows social communication on social issues.

One of the challenges encountered by social studies teachers in middle school is helping students comprehend the associations between the various fields of instruction. 55% of the 5th grade students stated that art elements were included in the social studies course, and 45% stated that they were not. In 6th grade, 30% of the students stated

that these were included in the course, 70% stated these were not, 20% of 7th grade students stated that these were included in the course, 80% stated these were not, and 35% of the students in 8th grade stated that these were included in the course, while 65% stated these were not. The review of all responses revealed that the teachers utilized art elements mostly in the 5th grade based on student views. The highest number of participants who claimed that art elements were not included in the social studies course were in the 7th grade. Thus, it could be suggested that the achievements associated with art were mostly included in the 5th grade, which were reflected in the course content and instruction, allowing the 5th grade students to establish the required associations.

The distribution of the art branches of student interest based on the views of the 28 students who stated that art was included in the social studies course revealed that the 5th grade participants stated that "spatial arts, surface arts, volumetric and language arts" were included, 6th grade participants stated that "surface arts, language arts, and music" were included, 7th grade participants stated that "surface arts and spatial arts" were included, and 8th grade participants stated that "language arts, surface arts, volumetric arts, and music" were included. The overall analysis revealed that the participants concentrated on surface and language arts the most and music the least. However, it is necessary to focus on music. Because music has the deepest impact on the human soul among all branches of art (Biber Öz, 2001), it should be clear that the changes in human behavior through music would affect society, which in turn would affect the individual (Say, 2002). Previous findings in social studies were consistent with this finding (Gülüm & Ulusoy, 2008; Hailat et al., 2008; Palmer & Burroughs, 2002).

The overall analysis of the preferred artists that the students wanted to see as their social studies teacher revealed that most wanted to see musicians as their social studies teacher, and sculptors were the least preferred social studies teachers. The preference of musicians could be considered a positive impact of the course. Cooper (1998) reported that the employment of music in education has extreme benefits. For the social studies course, it was argued that music should not only be utilized as an instruction tool but also that playing music during instruction increases the academic achievements of the students (Sidekli & Coskun, 2014). It was interesting that the participants preferred sculptors the least. Sculptures function as objects that bring people together and provide cultural exchange and integration (Öztürk Kurtaslan, 2005).

The social studies course content and classroom activities play a key role in the acquisition of critical thinking skills and the development of various thinking strategies. Thus, it could be suggested that meaningful and permanent learning would be possible through the employment of well-designed activities in the social studies curriculum. In the study, the review of student views on the organization of the social studies course content and activities about art demonstrated that 5th grade and 8th grade students mostly concentrated on an approach to the social studies course with love. Students who were interested in and loved art would focus more on social studies courses when they knew that they would have the chance to express their knowledge creatively and would participate in the class more actively. The findings demonstrated that 5th and 8th grade students were more engaged in the course, especially when the art content was instructed. It was determined that most 6th and 7th graders concentrated on the removal of the boring elements. The 5th and 6th graders concentrated on "imagination," the 7th graders concentrated on "making the course better and more meaningful," and the 8th graders concentrated on the "imagination" categories the least. Contrary to the views of the students in the present study about making the course meaningful, Laney, Moseley, and Pak (1996) employed certain art works in the instruction of economic concepts in social studies courses in middle school. Their analysis revealed that works of art had a positive impact on comprehension. Desai, Hamlin, and Mattson (2010) argued that visual arts, especially in historical topics, allow students to understand people, concepts, and events and express ideas better. Kirsten Cook, a high school teacher who integrated art into the history course, wrote, "Art often develops meaning and provides a visual context for a deeper understanding." Taylor, Monck, & Ayoub (2014).

Since its inception, art has been supposed to possess a quality of entertainment; however, it also has an educational function (Atmaca, 2008). In the present study, the views of 28 students who stated that teachers included art elements in the social studies course were obtained to determine the impact of these classes on them and their emotions. Most 5th grade students concentrated on "learning about various branches of art," most 6th graders concentrated on "raising interest and love of art," most 7th graders concentrated on "promotion of observation," and most 8th graders concentrated on "making the course fun" categories. The review of the overall responses demonstrated that mostly social studies "contributed to learning various branches of art," followed by raising interest in and love of art, making the course fun, and promoting observation. Especially in the dimension of interest and love, Taylor, Monck, and Sheikh (2014) concluded that the integration of art into social studies raised student interest and love, promoted meaningful discussions, and positively affected historical-cultural approaches.

With the integration of art into social studies courses, it would be possible to train individuals who could express themselves with artistic methods, develop visual perception, recognize, preserve, learn, and transfer their culture to future generations, and be constructive, creative, and respectful of the global cultural heritage, thus underscoring the key role that should be played by the teachers. Teachers employed in the research school, on the other hand, considered art as a supplementary field in history and social studies, stated that it promoted the instruction of universal values, the development of national awareness among the students, contributed to culture and heritage, observation, analysis, and verbal or non-verbal self-expression skills of the students, promoted the instillation of love of art, interpretation of the topics, and different perspectives, and allowed the students to focus on the fields where they could develop themselves. Thus, it was observed that the existing social studies course supported the integration of the arts and the development of a love of art among the students. Similarly, previous studies reported that active employment of art in courses had the potential to prevent rote-based learning and promoted analysis, inquiry, answering, comparison, rational thinking, and even production skills (Desai, Hamlin, & Mattson, 2010; Schmidt, 2007; Zwirn & Libresco, 2010). For the active participation of the social studies teachers in the classroom, it is necessary for them to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to infuse multicultural artistic material and instruction strategies into the learning process and curriculum. In particular, an applied, art-integrated curriculum would facilitate the student's ability to comprehend the associations between various concepts and basic ideas with a holistic approach by building knowledge and raising their interest in and love of art.

Recommendations

The following could be recommended based on the study findings:

- The students could be allowed to examine historical, geographical, and cultural images and miniatures and recreate them based on a theme with a series of artistic skills.
- Discovery work could be assigned using music, literary works, paintings, etc. from various cultures.
- Students could be provided artistic visuals, and discussion groups could be formed to determine the corresponding social studies texts for these visuals.

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