REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

MASTER'S THESIS

PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON DECENTRALIZED EDUCATION PRACTICES IN PROJECT SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

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ADVISOR
ASSOC. PROF. EMRE ER

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JANUARY 2025

The study titled **"Perspectives of Teachers and Students on Decentralized Education Practices in Project Schools: A Case Study"**, prepared by **İlknur KAVAK ERGİN**, was unanimously deemed successful as a result of the defense examination conducted on **January 9, 2025,** and was approved by our committee as a master's thesis in the **Educational Administration Program of the Department of Educational Sciences**.

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ABSTRACT

PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON DECENTRALIZED EDUCATION PRACTICES IN PROJECT SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the perspectives of teachers and students regarding decentralized education practices in a project school operating within a centralized education system. The study aims to evaluate decentralized education from the perspectives of teachers and students and provide comprehensive data on the implementation processes within this framework. Decentralized education is an approach that aims to distribute decision-making processes among a broader range of stakeholders, prioritizing local needs. Globally, decentralized education practices have yielded positive outcomes in areas such as student achievement, teacher satisfaction, and system flexibility. In Türkiye, however, the education system largely operates under a centralized structure, which often disregards local needs and limits teachers' involvement in decision-making processes. Therefore, studies exploring the applicability and implications of decentralized education in Türkiye are of great significance. This study was designed as a case study and conducted using qualitative research methods. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. The research included interviews with three teachers and 30 students from a project school. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results of the study indicate that decentralized education practices can be implemented even within a centralized education system. Moreover, teachers and students can take active roles in these processes. Accordingly, it is recommended to strengthen teacher agency, implement distributed leadership models, and encourage the use of innovative digital tools that support individualized learning pathways.

Keywords: Decentralized education, teacher agency, decentralized education practices, project school, student-centered learning.

ÖZET

PROJE OKULLARINDA MERKEZİYETSİZ EĞİTİM UYGULAMALARINA İLİŞKİN ÖĞRETMEN VE ÖĞRENCİ GÖRÜŞLERİ: BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

Bu araştırmanın amacı, merkezi bir eğitim sistemine bağlı bir proje okulunda merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarına ilişkin öğretmen ve öğrenci görüşlerini incelemektir. Araştırma, merkeziyetsiz eğitim anlayışını öğretmen ve öğrenci perspektifinden değerlendirmek ve bu bağlamda uygulama süreçlerine dair kapsamlı veriler sunmak hedefiyle tasarlanmıştır. Merkeziyetsiz eğitim, eğitimde karar alma süreçlerini daha fazla paydaşı kapsayacak şekilde dağıtarak yerel ihtiyaçlara öncelik verilmesini amaçlayan bir yaklaşımdır. Dünyada, merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamaları öğrenci başarısını artırmanın yanı sıra öğretmen memnuniyeti ve sistem esnekliği gibi alanlarda olumlu sonuçlar doğurmuştur. Türkiye'de ise eğitim sistemi büyük ölçüde merkezi bir yapı sergilemekte; bu durum, yerel ihtiyaçların göz ardı edilmesine ve öğretmenlerin karar alma süreçlerine yeterince dahil olamamasına yol açabilmektedir. Bu bağlamda, merkeziyetsiz eğitim anlayışının Türkiye'deki uygulanabilirliğini ve etkilerini anlamaya yönelik çalışmalar büyük önem taşımaktadır. Çalışma, bir durum çalışması olarak tasarlanmış ve nitel araştırma yöntemiyle yürütülmüştür. Veri toplama sürecinde yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme, gözlem ve doküman analizi yöntemlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında bir proje okulunda görev yapan 3 öğretmen ve 30 öğrenciyle görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler, tematik analiz yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın sonuçları, merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarının merkezi bir eğitim sistemi içinde dahi uygulanabilir olduğunu ve öğretmenler ile öğrencilerin bu süreçte aktif roller üstlenebildiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, öğretmen failliğinin güçlendirilmesi, dağıtılmış liderlik modellerinin hayata geçirilmesi ve öğrencilerin bireyselleştirilmiş öğrenme yollarını destekleyecek yenilikçi dijital araçların kullanılması önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Merkeziyetsiz eğitim, öğretmen failliği, merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamaları, proje okulu, öğrenci merkezli öğrenme.

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I owe profound gratitude to my beloved mother, Pempe KAVAK, whose resilient spirit has always been an inspiration to me, and to my dear father, İlhami KAVAK, who has encouraged me to strive for a better version of myself every day. To my invaluable siblings, İlkay KAVAK KILIÇASLAN and Pembe Nur KAVAK OĞUZ, who are my emotional support system, and to my life partner and warrior spirit, Lawyer İbrahim ERGİN, who brings meaning to this journey—I extend my deepest thanks from the bottom of my heart.

Teaching is, for me, a journey that nurtures both my mind and soul. My students, who beautify my heart and keep me energized, are my greatest sources of inspiration—they are my flowers. Every morning, I wake up not for a job but for the excitement of stepping into a magical world of learning and discovery—a school. Teaching is one of the most meaningful professions in the world. The effort I put into earning this title is one of the most valuable journeys of my life.

This thesis aims to shed light on the impact of teachers, contribute to the recognition of teaching as a highly valuable profession, and raise awareness about the vital role of teachers in education. It is my hope that this awareness will benefit the beautiful children of my homeland and pave the way for new discussions on educational systems.

İlknur KAVAK ERGİN
January 2025; İSTANBUL

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis
to Atatürk, the Great Leader who gifted the Republic to Turkish women,
and to my greatest teacher, my daughter Yaz.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACARA	: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
BBC	: British Broadcasting Corporation
BMBF	: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany)
COVID-19	: Coronavirus Disease 2019
DAO	: Decentralized Autonomous Organizations
DeEd	: Decentralized Education
EdCamp	: Education Camp Movement
EduDAO	: Education Decentralized Autonomous Organization
ESSA	: Every Student Succeeds Act
KMK	: Kultusministerkonferenz (Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, Germany)
KPSS	: Kamu Personeli Seçme Sınavı (Public Personnel Selection Examination, Türkiye)
LabDAO	: Laboratory Decentralized Autonomous Organization
LaykaDAO	: A decentralized autonomous organization focusing on Web3 awareness and community building
LGS	: Liseye Geçiş Sınavı (High School Entrance Exam, Türkiye)
MONE	: Ministry of National Education (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, MEB)
NCCERT	: The National Council of Educational Research and Training
NEP	: National Education Policy
OECD	: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBL	: Project-Based Learning
PISA	: Program for International Student Assessment
PLC	: Professional Learning Community
SBM	: School-Based Management
SSA	: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for All Program, India)
STEM	: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
TALIS	: Teaching and Learning International Survey
TeachMeet	: Informal Meeting for Teachers to Share Ideas and Practices
TEDMEM	: Türk Eğitim Derneği'nin Düşünce ve Araştırma Merkezi (Turkish Education Association's Thought and Research Center)
TurkeyDAO	: A blockchain-based DAO created for fundraising and managing aid transparently after the 2023 earthquake in Türkiye
UK	: United Kingdom
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	: United States
USA	: United States of America
Web	: World Wide Web
WEF	: World Economic Forum
xEdu	: Finland-Based Accelerator Program for Educational Technology Startups
YKS	: Yükseköğretim Kurumları Sınavı (Higher Education Institutions Exam, Türkiye)

1. INTRODUCTION

This section includes statement of the problem, purpose of the study, limitations, assumptions, significance, and definitions of the key words.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In the context of evolving educational paradigms, organizational and administrative reforms have emerged as central strategies for addressing the critical challenges confronting modern education systems. Particularly prominent in the fields of economics and business, decentralization has become a pivotal topic in the restructuring of educational institutions and the redefinition of educational goals (Gunter, Hall & Apple, 2017; Leithwood, 2018; Spillane, 2006). Decentralized Education (DeEd) refers to a philosophical and practical shift that influences the structure of school organizations, the delivery of education, and its overall content.

Decentralization represents a significant transformation in the way education systems are structured and managed. The philosophical foundations of this shift include individualism and a student-centered perspective (Biesta, 2010; Dewey, 1938), responsiveness to local needs (Barratt & Barratt, 2011; Karlsen, 2000), and democratic participation (Apple & Beane, 1999; Hargreaves, 2023). In the context of individualism and a student-centered perspective, it is acknowledged that students have diverse learning styles and needs. This perspective encourages students to actively participate in their own learning processes, positioning them not merely as passive recipients but as individuals who play a role in shaping the design of these processes (Harris & Spillane, 2008). In terms of responsiveness to local needs, decentralization supports the development of education policies that consider the needs and cultural characteristics of local communities. This allows education systems to become more flexible and responsive to community demands. The participation of local authorities and schools in decision-making processes ensures that educational content and teaching methods are aligned with the local context (Caldwell, 2005). Democratic participation, as another significant component of decentralized education, enables school communities, families, and local authorities to have a greater

voice in educational policymaking. Consequently, decision-making processes in education become more democratic and participatory (Fielding, 2006).

The idea of decentralization in education, beyond its theoretical foundations, brings about significant changes in practice. This approach provides autonomy to school administrations, allowing curricula and teaching methods to be more flexible and adaptable. Furthermore, it grants schools financial and administrative autonomy, enabling them to manage their own budgets, determine teaching methods, and design curricula. As a result, schools gain the freedom to develop their own strategies based on the needs of local communities (Caldwell, 2005). Decentralization fosters a structure that allows curricula to become more flexible and adaptable. This approach enables schools to shape educational content and teaching methods by considering local cultures, community needs, and student demands (OECD, 2020b). Consequently, learning processes become both more engaging and more effective. In addition, decentralization enhances the accountability of local authorities and schools, enabling local communities to evaluate school performance and intervene when necessary. This structure supports the goal of improving the quality of education (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008).

DeEd represents a significant paradigm shift in the education system. By enabling the direct participation of local communities, schools, and teachers in the development of educational policies, it aligns education more closely with community needs (Leithwood et al., 2008). Moreover, decentralization enhances accountability by assigning greater responsibility to local actors, thereby enabling improvements in the quality of education (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2011). In particular, the ability of local authorities to adapt education to societal and cultural requirements in rural and marginalized areas is considered a significant step toward achieving equity in education (UNESCO, 2019).

DeMatthews and Mawhinney (2014) define decentralized education as a model that encourages educational leaders to make flexible and context-sensitive decisions. They emphasize that it provides an opportunity to develop appropriate strategies to address issues of equity in education. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) consider decentralized education as an opportunity to scale up new pedagogies and enable teachers and leaders to adopt innovative teaching methods. They emphasize that it enhances student engagement, localizes education, and allows for quicker responses to societal transformations. Caldwell (2005) defines decentralization as the transfer of

management and decision-making processes in education systems from central authorities to local governments, schools, teachers, and communities. In this context, moving away from centralization involves shifting control over educational organizations and administration from the central to the local level. This has been particularly significant as a reform area aimed at making education systems more efficient and effective, especially in developing countries (Fiske, 1996).

Decentralization has the potential to fundamentally transform the governance structure and roles within education. Decentralized education grants greater autonomy to schools and provides a foundation for the development of diverse educational models. Alternative schools and the new school theory are innovative approaches that emerge in situations where traditional education systems fall short. Alternative schools go beyond the standard educational model by providing student-centered, flexible, and community-based learning environments. The new school theory, developed in response to modern reforms, aims to introduce a new paradigm in light of ongoing social, cultural, and economic changes. This theory emphasizes student-centered learning, democratic participation, and the impact of education on individuals and society (Lees & Noddings, 2016).

Projections about the future of educational institutions indicate that decentralization trends will deepen. Particularly with the advancement of technology and digitalization, educational institutions are expected to become more flexible, developing models that respond to the individual needs of students and are integrated with local communities. It is anticipated that, in the future, schools will function not only as institutions for knowledge transmission but also as social and cultural hubs for their communities. Within this framework, educational institutions are expected to achieve greater autonomy and, through partnerships with local governments, offer a more diverse range of services tailored to community needs (Sahlberg, 2011).

Education is essential for acquiring individual knowledge, skills, and values, while also transmitting societal and cultural values. Smith et al. (2022) describe education as a process that facilitates personal, social, and professional development through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values. Similarly, Kolko (2012) highlights education as not only a means of transmitting knowledge but also a tool for preserving and advancing social and cultural values. From this perspective, education contributes significantly to the formation of cultural identity and the development of social consciousness. According to Fullan and Langworthy (2014), education fosters

lifelong learning by integrating innovative pedagogies and digital technologies. Thus, education shapes individual learning while driving broader societal transformations. An examination of current trends in education reveals that it is undergoing continuous change and transformation to meet the evolving needs of society. This transformation is particularly evident in the concept of the new generation school, where traditional functions of schools are redefined through innovative approaches. New generation schools are characterized by their flexible and dynamic structures, which aim to support both the social and personal development of students. In this context, these schools are distinguished by dynamic learning partnerships, facilitated by the integration of new pedagogies, digital tools, and resources. (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). New pedagogical approaches prepare students to become leaders of their learning, enabling them to generate new knowledge and develop skills for the future (Fullan, 2001; OECD, 2018). Additionally, it is noted that these pedagogies contribute to the development of skills such as character education, citizenship, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

The implementation of methods within education systems and the roles assumed by school leadership in these processes are crucial for the development of innovative models that enhance teachers' professional development (Leithwood, 2018). Historically, education systems worldwide have been predominantly designed around centralized structures. As a result, modern education systems are often characterized by a significant degree of centralization. Centralization refers to a governance model in which the management and decision-making processes of an education system are controlled by a central authority. Within this framework, centralized education systems delegate critical decisions—such as curriculum development, budget allocation, employment policies, and the construction of educational facilities—to the central authority (Cornito, 2021).

Centralized education systems have structures designed to ensure standardization and consistency in education. One of the key advantages of these systems is their capacity to maintain education quality at a certain level by ensuring the implementation of the same curriculum across all schools (Riese, Hilt, & Søreide, 2022). Additionally, these structures enable the efficient management of educational resources and make it easier to control the budget (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). However, centralized structures are also criticized for overlooking local needs and responding slowly to changes (Cornito, 2021). The slow and bureaucratic structures of centralized

systems limit their ability to respond quickly to changes and reduce the flexibility of schools (Skipper, 2018). As a result, while centralized education systems offer advantages such as standardization and resource management, they also have various limitations in meeting local needs and adapting to innovations. The effectiveness of these systems may vary depending on the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the country or region in which they are implemented.

Türkiye represents an example of a centralized education system in which the Ministry of National Education (MONE; Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, MEB) plays a dominant role. MONE sets curriculum standards, policies, and regulations at all educational levels, ensuring unity in terms of content and learning objectives in both public and private schools (Düşkün, 2021; MEB, 2023c). In Türkiye, centralized exams such as the High School Entrance Exam (LGS) and the Higher Education Institutions Examination (YKS) are used to assess students' academic achievements (Baş & Kıvılcım, 2019). Additionally, MONE oversees teacher certification processes and professional development programs. This ensures that teachers receive education in line with the established standards (World Bank, 2021a). In addition, processes such as centralized fund allocation are planned based on factors such as student enrollment numbers, infrastructure needs, and socio-economic conditions (MEB, 2023a). However, centralized education systems are criticized for limiting local autonomy, flexibility, and the capacity to respond to individual needs (Gür & Çelik, 2009; Kaya & Gündüz, 2015). The uniformity imposed by central policies makes it difficult to adapt to local contexts and may hinder innovative educational approaches (Sahlberg, 2011).

Peter Senge (1990) emphasizes the inevitability of change and the continuous need for societies to adapt, stating, "The solutions of yesterday become the problems of today." In the 21st century, uncertainty and change pervade all areas, including education. This dynamic necessitates the transformation of education systems into more flexible, responsive, and adaptive structures. Centralized approaches once perceived as solutions in the past may now present challenges in decentralized educational contexts. Consequently, these challenges have fueled increased advocacy for reforms aimed at reducing centralization in education.

Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio, and Fasih (2009) emphasize the importance of decentralized decision-making in school management, highlighting the inability of centralized systems to effectively address local needs. Decentralization, by providing

greater autonomy to schools and local governments, is presented as a model that improves the efficiency of educational processes at the local level. Decisions made in a timely and localized manner not only offer quicker solutions to student needs but also enhance the motivation of teachers and students, positively impacting academic achievement. Similarly, Bray (1997) discusses global decentralization trends, emphasizing their alignment with local contexts. This process typically involves transferring authority from central governments to local administrations and schools. It is particularly common in developing countries, where it aims to improve educational quality by addressing local needs more effectively.

McGinn and Welsh (1999*)* state that decentralized education enables schools to respond better to societal needs and, in this way, contributes to the creation of a more democratic education system. Decentralized structures, particularly by strengthening school leadership and teacher agency, create opportunities to improve quality in education (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). It is stated that one of the fundamental elements of ensuring quality in education is the teacher, and that a solid education system can be established with the presence of freedoms that strengthen the professional attributes of teachers (Day & Qing, 2009).

Decentralized practices provide teachers with more autonomy, allowing them to develop creative teaching strategies and experiment with innovative methods (Patrinos et al., 2009). This, in turn, supports teachers in providing higher-quality education by contributing to their professional development processes. Through the quality education they deliver, teachers offer numerous opportunities to students. By diversifying methods and techniques, students take active roles in group work and projects, which contributes to the development of communication, collaboration, and leadership skills (Sahlberg, 2011). These skills enable students to succeed in both their academic and professional lives.

Decentralized practices in education also offer schools the opportunity to continuously assess and improve their educational methods (Bray, 2007). As education practices evolve based on student feedback and teacher experiences, continuous improvement is evident. The decentralized education model creates a more inclusive learning environment by considering the needs of students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. The role of the teacher in educational processes is particularly emphasized in decentralized education. In traditional educational models, teachers are seen as implementers of policies determined by authority, while in the decentralized

education model, they take on a guiding and mentoring role (Priestley et al., 2015). In this model, teachers are expected to develop an approach that places students' learning processes at the center.

In this context, the teacher functions like a conductor, coordinating the students' learning processes. A teacher's effectiveness both inside and outside the classroom is closely related to the concept of teacher agency (Spillane, 2006). Teacher agency refers to the teacher's ability to develop strategies that enable active participation in students' learning processes (Day & Qing, 2009). In centralized education systems, teachers are often required to adhere to externally determined curricula and policies. In contrast, decentralized models provide teachers with the autonomy to make classroom decisions, implement innovative pedagogical approaches, and adapt the curriculum to meet students' individual needs (Leithwood, 2018). Within such flexible systems, teacher agency is regarded as a critical factor for success. When teachers take greater initiative, the functionality of decentralized systems is strengthened, and the overall quality of education is enhanced.

It is crucial to support teachers' individual and holistic well-being for them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Individual well-being refers to teachers' mental and physical health, while holistic well-being encompasses professional satisfaction, social interactions, and continuous personal development processes. These elements enhance teachers' effectiveness and contribute positively to the quality of the educational process.

Seligman (2011) underlines the importance of individual well-being and its impact on teachers' psychological health. It is noted that individual well-being is not only linked to happiness but also to a broader concept of psychological well-being. The study shows that individual well-being enhances teachers' professional effectiveness and contributes positively to education through elements such as emotional intelligence, social relationships, and a meaningful life.

Day and Qing (2009) emphasize that teachers' emotional well-being has a direct impact on their job satisfaction. Positive emotions enhance teachers' motivation, thereby positively affecting overall job satisfaction. It is also stated that strong social support systems help teachers cope with stress, thereby improving their emotional well-being. Furthermore, the development of teachers' emotional intelligence is said to increase their effectiveness in the educational process and contribute positively to student success. In this regard, decentralized education enables teachers to be more

effective and autonomous in their professional roles; in this process, teacher agency, individual well-being, and holistic well-being play a critical role in both teachers' job satisfaction and students' development (Biesta et al., 2015; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). This system promotes the creation of environments where these three concepts are strong, enabling both teachers and students to experience a more successful and harmonious educational experience (Leithwood, 2018).

Studies on the benefits of decentralized education practices for teachers reveal that such education systems enable teachers to be more effective and autonomous in their professional roles (Frost, 2012; Spillane, 2006). Decentralized education allows teachers to participate in decision-making processes at the local level, increasing their job satisfaction and giving them more influence in educational policies (Datnow & Park, 2018; Ingersoll, 2006).

According to Khilji et al. (2022), decentralized education increases teachers' job satisfaction by allowing them to participate in decision-making processes. Moreover, such education systems enable teachers to take on more responsibility and create environments where they can act more independently in their professional roles. As a result, these systems provide an environment that supports teachers' professional development and enhances their individual well-being. Additionally, the decentralization process in education fosters flexibility that allows for a quicker response to local needs and enables teachers to develop solutions that address the needs of their communities. This, in turn, increases the likelihood of teachers improving their skills and having a more effective teaching experience (World Bank, 2022).

In decentralized education, teachers take on leadership roles in educational processes (Spillane, 2006), gaining more freedom and flexibility in the decision-making and implementation stages, which contributes to their professional development (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In this context, the support provided by school administrators enhances teachers' effectiveness and makes them more active participants (Lin, Lee & Riordan, 2018). The role of teachers is not limited to the teaching process but also ensures that they adopt a more proactive stance in their own professional learning processes (Patrinos et al., 2009). Teachers take on various roles, including that of an implementer, guiding mentor, and leader. These roles involve leading, identifying issues, organizing, and managing (Priestley et al., 2015). Teacher leadership is not limited to classroom guidance but encompasses broader responsibilities, including monitoring student development processes, leading in

professional development areas, and contributing to educational policies (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Spillane (2006) emphasizes that distributed leadership is an approach in which leadership roles are not limited to school administrators but are shared among teachers, enabling them to actively participate in both teaching activities and school management processes. Additionally, teachers play a critical role in implementing innovative practices and working collaboratively with the school community. In this context, parallel to decentralized education, distributed leadership expands teachers' leadership roles, allowing them to influence decision-making processes and contribute to school development by sharing leadership responsibilities and participating directly in governance.

Heck and Hallinger (2009) examine the effects of distributed leadership on school success and teachers' job satisfaction, revealing that this leadership model plays a critical role in enhancing schools' academic achievements. They also highlight that distributed leadership practices promote collaboration among teachers and allow them to participate more actively in decision-making processes. This, in turn, increases teachers' job satisfaction and positively contributes to student success. In decentralized education systems, teachers are seen not only as individuals implementing decisions made by central authorities, but also as active participants directly involved in educational processes. This model grants teachers the authority to make classroom decisions, while also enabling the implementation of flexible and innovative practices that support student success.

A review of the literature reveals that the concepts of distributed leadership and teacher agency are closely interconnected. Priestley et al. (2015) suggest that teacher agency is supported by distributed leadership models, particularly strengthened through virtual and professional learning communities. Distributed leadership promotes teacher agency because, in this model, leadership is distributed across the entire teaching staff, allowing teachers to act more independently in their respective areas. This, in turn, facilitates the generation of innovative solutions through the activation of collective intelligence. In this process, teachers contribute not only to their own professional development but also to the overall success of the school.

In addition to teacher agency and distributed leadership, which are recognized for enhancing teachers' professional performance in decentralized education, professional learning communities that support teachers' professional development are

also of significant importance (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are defined as platforms where teachers engage in knowledge sharing and collaboration to continue their professional development, generate innovative ideas, and jointly develop solutions to the challenges they encounter (Brown, Horn & King, 2018). These communities empower teachers' agency and encourage greater participation and leadership responsibilities through collective decision-making processes (Priestley et al., 2015). Furthermore, learning communities provide support to teachers in decentralized education systems, enabling them to contribute not only to classroom practices but also to the development of decisions and policies made at the school level (Lin et al., 2018).

Brown et al. (2018) define PLCs as structures where teachers can collaborate to sustain their professional development and emphasize that these communities provide opportunities for teachers to share information about their teaching practices and combine their experiences. One of the key functions of PLCs is to promote collaboration among teachers. This collaboration helps teachers develop innovative teaching strategies and implement these strategies in their practices. Teachers are able to make their educational processes more effective by discussing the challenges they face and jointly developing solutions.

Additionally, it is emphasized that effective PLCs have a positive impact on student success, with teachers' better response to student needs being linked to an increase in overall academic achievement. In this context, the critical role of school leaders in creating successful PLCs is highlighted, with the need for leaders to foster an environment that encourages teacher participation. Furthermore, the necessity of establishing continuous support and evaluation mechanisms for PLCs to function effectively is advocated. It is also stated that educational policies should be structured in a way that enhances the functionality of PLCs.

Lin et al. (2018) highlight the critical role of teacher leadership in the development of PLCs. In this context, teacher leadership is emphasized as a crucial factor in the success and effectiveness of PLCs, and the importance of implementing effective strategies in this process is discussed. Teachers, by taking on leadership roles, support their colleagues, encourage knowledge sharing, and contribute to the adoption of innovative teaching practices. Thus, teacher leadership not only enhances collaboration among teachers but also ensures the more effective functioning of PLCs. It is also noted that effective leadership strategies increase teacher participation and

facilitate the functioning of communities. At this point, valuable insights are provided on how teacher leadership can be strengthened and its impact on PLCs.

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) emphasize the impact of PLCs in increasing teachers' job satisfaction and school success. PLCs provide learning and development opportunities for teachers, and it is stated that these processes enhance teachers' job satisfaction, thereby improving the quality of education. These communities, where teachers collaborate, offer support in developing and implementing innovative teaching strategies. As a result, teachers' professional competencies increase, which indirectly positively impacts student success. Furthermore, Hargreaves and Fullan stress leadership approaches that encourage teacher participation to increase the effectiveness of professional learning communities and note that the integration of PLCs into educational environments enhances teachers' participation in decision-making processes and supports decentralized education practices.

As a reflection of decentralized education, project schools emerged in Türkiye in 2014 as special-status educational institutions established by MONE to support students' individual interests and talents. The main goal of these schools is to provide students with a deep education in fields such as science, arts, and sports, ensuring that individuals with specific academic achievement levels can compete nationally and internationally in these areas (Çolak, 2024). In this regard, science high schools, social sciences high schools, and certain Anatolian high schools have been structured as project schools (Kaya, 2019).

Various projects are implemented in project schools to enhance the quality of education, introduce innovative teaching methods, and address educational challenges. In this context, innovative methods such as project-based learning, technology integration, interdisciplinary approaches, and student-centered pedagogies are widely adopted. These methods aim to ensure students' active participation in the learning process and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The primary rationale for establishing project schools is to create environments that enable gifted students to realize their potential and receive differentiated education tailored to their individual abilities. These schools go beyond the standard curriculum by offering specialized projects and programs designed to foster students' development based on their unique talents (Çolak, 2024). By adopting a student-centered approach, project schools embody certain principles of decentralized education. However, as the management of these schools and the appointment of teachers are regulated by a centralized authority,

full autonomy cannot be granted to them.

In Türkiye's centralized education system, project schools aim to offer an autonomous and flexible structure. However, due to the direct supervision by MONE, these schools do not fully align with the principles of decentralized education (Çolak, 2024). Although this model, created to enhance the quality of education and support students' talents, incorporates some elements of decentralized education, it operates within a centralized framework (Kaya, 2019).

In project schools, teacher and administrator appointments are made by MONE, which emphasizes the necessity of merit-based selection but also exposes the system to criticism due to its centralized structure. Particularly, the limited job security and decision-making authority of teachers weaken the connection between these schools and decentralized education (Çolak, 2024; Kaya, 2019). The teacher selection process in project schools is carried out through the evaluation of applications for positions announced by the Ministry or local authorities by authorized committees (MEB, 2024). The committees assess candidates' qualifications and experience to select suitable individuals. Teachers take advantage of professional development opportunities such as workshops, seminars, training sessions, and mentoring programs to enhance their pedagogical skills (Çolak, 2024).

Project schools are also supported in terms of improving educational infrastructure, increasing access to technology, and providing educational materials. This support includes the provision of classroom equipment and educational software. Monitoring and evaluation processes are conducted to assess the effectiveness of implemented projects, with data collected on student performance, teacher practices, and school climate, which helps identify areas for improvement (Kaya, 2019). Project schools aim to support educational initiatives by collaborating with parents and other stakeholders. Community involvement is critically important for enhancing school effectiveness, promoting social cohesion, and contributing to sustainable development (MEB, 2024).

Students attending project schools are able to prepare more effectively for university entrance exams and demonstrate higher success in these exams due to the broad opportunities and the experienced teachers they receive education from. Additionally, project schools increase the influence of local communities and educators in decision-making processes by providing them with greater autonomy and flexibility. By participating in innovative practices and adapting educational

approaches to local needs, project schools contribute to the development of decentralized education in Türkiye (Çolak, 2024). The integration of project schools into decentralized education reflects a broader change process aimed at enhancing the adaptability of the education system by empowering local stakeholders (Kaya, 2019).

This study aims to examine teachers' and students' perspectives on decentralized education practices in a project school. The limited number of studies in this area in the literature increases the significance of this research. The study aims to provide valuable insights into the feasibility of decentralized education in Türkiye, and based on the findings, it offers various recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and future research.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the perspectives of teachers and students regarding decentralized education practices in a project school operating within a centralized education system. The research aims to assess the concept of decentralized education from the perspectives of both teachers and students and to present data regarding the implementation processes in this context. In this regard, the study explores how teachers define decentralized education, how they implement decentralized education practices in their teaching practices, and how they structure their professional roles and responsibilities in the process. Additionally, the study aims to assess students' views and experiences regarding their learning processes within the context of decentralized education.

1.3. Limitations

This study is conducted as a case study to examine the perspectives of teachers and students regarding decentralized education practices and is carried out in a school during the 2024-2025 academic year. The research is limited to 30 students from 9th and 10th grades and three subject teachers. Data collection methods are limited to interviews, observations, and documentation.

1.4. Assumptions

It is assumed that decentralized education practices have observable effects on students and teachers within a specific period, and these effects can be reflected through the perspectives of the participants. Another key assumption of this study is that the researcher maintained an impartial stance throughout the process. These

assumptions are of critical importance for the reliability and validity of the research.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study examines the perspectives of students and teachers regarding decentralized education practices in a project school operating within a centralized education system. The study aims to provide a better understanding of the contributions decentralized practices make to centralized structures and to demonstrate how reducing centralization in educational processes could enhance the quality of education. The research findings are expected not only to provide a reference for understanding the effects of decentralized practices but also to offer recommendations for the improvement and development of educational processes in Türkiye. In this context, the study aims to contribute to the development of innovative and practical approaches in educational policy.

1.6. Definitions of the Key Words

Decentralized Education: Decentralized education refers to the transfer of decision-making processes from central authorities to local governments and communities (Caldwell, 2005).

Teacher Agency: Teacher agency refers to teachers' freedom and ability to shape classroom practices and make decisions (Biesta et al., 2015).

Decentralized Education Practices: Decentralized education practices aim to reduce centralization and create a more flexible and participatory structure in education (Karlsen, 2000).

Project School: Project schools are schools that adopt innovative educational practices and have specialized curricula (MEB, 2014). In this study, the project school, despite its emphasis on science-focused education, prioritizes cultural subjects, reflecting a balanced approach to academic and social development.

Student-Centered Learning: Student-centered learning is an approach that supports active student participation and encourages students to take greater responsibility in the learning process (Oakley et al., 2004).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section includes a comprehensive overview of decentralized education, addressing its foundational principles, primary objectives, and a comparative analysis of centralized and decentralized systems. Additionally, it explores global and national implementations, delves into key theoretical constructs, and highlights innovative practices within the framework of decentralized education.

2.1. Decentralized Education

As new educational models emerge after the pandemic, centralized education systems are being questioned more than ever (Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). Additionally, while this process did not begin with the pandemic, it gained momentum during it and provides a global perspective on how the transition to decentralized education could unfold (UNESCO, 2021). It emphasizes more flexible and localized solutions over central control in educational systems, and effective examples of decentralized education practices are being demonstrated in many countries (OECD, 2021). These examples offer significant data for the development of locally responsive, independent, and student-centered approaches in education (Sahlberg, 2020). Particularly, the widespread use of digital learning platforms during the pandemic and hybrid learning models adaptable to local needs highlight the practical benefits of decentralized education practices (Garrison, 2011).

The pandemic has led societies to reconsider what resources they need and in what quantities, while demonstrating that physical conditions may lose their significance, and that perceptions of time and space can become more flexible (UNESCO, 2021). The rise of remote education platforms and the effective use of digital tools provide significant clues about how education will shape in the future (Garrison, 2011). During this period, it has been observed that countries, particularly in the field of education, have felt the need for more flexibility and autonomy in order to adapt to rapidly changing conditions.

The traditional understanding of schools, teachers, and students, which represents the current system, reveals the necessity of transitioning to a more dynamic and localized approach. With the closure of schools, the functioning of the education system was disrupted; globally, educational approaches, influenced by digitalization

and a student-centered structure, have had to evolve towards a decentralized system (Coşkun, 2021; Küçükali & Coşkun, 2021).

In decentralized education, it becomes a necessary requirement for teachers to take on more responsibility in areas such as preparing and managing digital materials (European Commission, 2019). According to this trend, teachers shape the educational processes not based on directives from school administration or central authorities, but by considering the needs of their students (TEDMEM, 2021). In this regard, many countries are strengthening the digital infrastructure of schools and teachers to enable them to quickly adapt to remote education, while also allowing parents and communities to be more involved in the educational process (Köde & Çoklar, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has paved the way for many countries to adopt decentralized education practices, with the strengthening of digital infrastructure and granting autonomy to schools playing a critical role in this transformation. In this regard, Estonia serves as an important example in the transition to decentralized education, with the steps it has taken in the process of digitalization. During the pandemic, the nationwide use of online education infrastructure effectively reduced central control in education, ensuring that schools could independently use digital tools. This approach not only strengthened the digital literacy of students and teachers but also provided a model that responded to local educational needs (European Commission: Joint Research Centre & Mägi, 2021).

During the pandemic, Finland granted schools the flexibility to adapt their curricula to local needs. In this process, the competency of teachers' "teacher agency" was emphasized, and school-based solutions were developed instead of central control. Finland's flexible curriculum implementation is considered to provide an effective example of decentralized education by developing solutions tailored to students' individual needs (OECD, 2020a).

In the British Columbia region of Canada, education policies during the pandemic were shaped according to the needs of the community. Local authorities and school administrators, with the participation of students and teachers, guided the educational processes, and a community-based learning approach was supported. This practice in Canada is seen as a strong example of localization in education systems (Smythe, Wilbur & Hunter, 2021). The practices in these countries provide strong examples of how the transition to decentralized education models has unfolded after the pandemic.

An examination of the historical development of decentralization in education reveals that this process began to take shape in the late 19th century, as industrial advancements gained momentum and demands for democratization grew in Europe and the United States (Bray, 2007). During this period, centralized structures proved inadequate in addressing the local needs of societies, and communities entering the process of democratization called for greater participation in educational systems (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). The desire of local governments to allocate resources according to their specific needs stimulated the quest for a more equitable education system (Faguet, Khan & Khant, 2019).

Following World War II, changing societal needs and their corresponding diversifications led many countries to adopt policies of decentralization in education (Carnoy, 1999). During this process, international organizations such as UNESCO advocated for granting more authority to local governments, thereby supporting the concept of decentralization (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). As a result, the idea that societies should have a greater voice in their educational processes gained increasing significance in subsequent years (Bray, 2007).

The United States stands out as one of the countries where the first examples of decentralization in education can be observed. The fact that each state has the authority to set its own educational policies has increased the impact of local governments on education, enabling each state and region to develop an education system that can be adapted to different local needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

In the United Kingdom, significant steps towards decentralization were taken with the Education Act of 1944. This act, by granting more authority to local education authorities, supported the active role of local governments as part of efforts to ensure equality in education (UK Department for Education, 1944).

Germany, historically, has adopted a federal system with a decentralized structure. In this system, each federal state determines its own educational policies, which are shaped according to local conditions, and the federal government's direct intervention remains limited (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung [BMBF], 2021; Kultusministerkonferenz [KMK], 2021). The state-based structure in Germany presents a strong example of a governance model in education that is distant from centralization.

2.1.1. Principles and Goals of Decentralized Education

Decentralization in education refers to the transfer of decision-making authority from central authorities to local governments, schools, or communities (McGinn& Welsh, 1999). The aim of this approach is to make education systems more responsive to local needs, flexible, and innovative (Bray, 1997). In centralized structures, decisions are typically made at the national level and implemented without considering local needs, whereas decentralization reverses this situation by enabling local entities to take a more active role in educational policies (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

Autonomy, recognized as one of the three core principles of decentralization, empowers local entities to make decisions that align with their unique circumstances. This delegation of authority enables local communities to tailor curricula, instructional strategies, and resource allocation to meet their specific needs (Faguet et al., 2019). Such practices aim to enhance the efficiency and overall quality of educational governance.

Accountability constitutes another fundamental element of decentralized systems. In centralized frameworks, accountability is typically directed toward hierarchical authorities, whereas decentralized systems shift this responsibility to schools and educators, making them answerable to local communities (Carnoy, 1999). This paradigm facilitates the continuous monitoring and assessment of institutional and individual performance, driving improvements in educational quality and fostering innovation (Bray, 2007).

Participation underscores the democratic dimension of decentralization, emphasizing the active engagement of local communities, parents, and educators in decision-making processes (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). Such participatory practices contribute to the formulation of more democratic and contextually responsive educational policies, thereby increasing their relevance to local needs. Consequently, communities assume a more significant role in the educational process, fostering a heightened sense of ownership and responsibility (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

The goals of decentralization include localized approaches, flexibility and innovation, efficiency, and responsiveness. Localized approaches facilitate the customization of educational services by addressing the unique needs of each community (Faguet et al., 2019). Flexibility and innovation are achieved by granting local units decision-making authority, which paves the way for innovations such as

new pedagogical methods and technological integration (Carnoy, 1999). This flexibility encourages the experimentation of alternative educational models and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. Efficiency and responsiveness, on the other hand, enable educational systems to adapt more rapidly to changing conditions and ensure the more effective utilization of resources (Bray, 2007). Within this framework, local actors manage resources more efficiently and respond promptly to local needs, thereby enhancing the overall quality of education (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

However, decentralization also brings certain challenges. These challenges include establishing accountability mechanisms, addressing inequalities in resource allocation, and enhancing local capacity. Particularly, building capacity within local administrations is a critical need for effectively managing decision-making processes. On the other hand, decentralization offers opportunities such as adopting innovative practices, increasing community participation, and empowering teachers. These opportunities are deemed essential for improving educational quality and making the system more flexible. Nonetheless, the decentralization process requires meticulous planning and implementation. Otherwise, it may lead to inefficiencies in resource utilization and increased disparities in quality (Fiske, 1996; McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

An analysis of definitions in the literature reveals that decentralized education refers to an administrative approach in which the management and decision-making powers in education systems are transferred from central authorities to local governments, school administrators, and teachers. This process aims to align educational policies and practices more closely with local needs and the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of communities (Fiske, 1996). The primary goal of this administrative approach is to enhance the influence and participation of local communities in education, democratize educational processes, and improve schools' management capacities (Bray, 1997). Decentralization grants schools' greater authority in managing their resources, determining instructional methods, and developing programs tailored to the specific needs of their students. This enables faster decision-making in education and more effective practices at the local level (Caldwell, 2005).

Additionally, the decentralized education model facilitates the strengthening of accountability mechanisms at the local level. This enables parents, students, and other local stakeholders to participate more actively in educational processes and exercise

greater control over these processes (World Bank, 2021b). Decentralization ensures that such participation and locally made decisions play a role in improving the quality of education (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

Another significant aspect of this model is its potential to reduce educational inequalities. Decentralized education allows schools in less developed regions to utilize their local resources more effectively, thereby promoting greater equity in education (Egalite, Fusarelli & Fusarelli, 2017). However, this process is not merely about transferring authority; it also involves elements such as capacity building at the local level, efficient resource utilization, and the strengthening of leadership skills (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). Ultimately, decentralized education is a comprehensive reform process aimed at enhancing the quality of educational services and creating a more responsive education system by promoting greater flexibility, participation, and accountability in educational governance (Bray, 2007; Caldwell, 2005). Achieving these goals requires careful planning and implementation of the decentralization process.

DeEd offers an approach that shifts decision-making processes from a single central authority to local governments, schools, and individuals. This model aims to create a more flexible, participatory, and responsive structure in education (Sahlberg, 2011). By adapting education to local conditions, it becomes possible to better address the needs of students, teachers, and communities, thereby enhancing students' learning experiences while promoting equity, autonomy, and democratic participation in education (Biesta, 2010). This system allows educational policies to be tailored to the socioeconomic, cultural, and geographical contexts of communities.

In decentralized education, teachers and students have greater influence over the educational process. Teachers are no longer required to strictly adhere to a rigid curriculum imposed by a central authority; instead, they can adapt their content and instructional methods to meet the specific needs of their students. Providing students with more control over their learning processes increases their motivation and academic achievement. Additionally, involving teachers in decision-making processes supports their professional satisfaction and overall well-being (Priestley et al., 2015).

Decentralized education contributes to the democratization of education by including more individuals in decision-making processes. Parents, teachers, and students can play more active roles in school management and the formulation of educational policies. This approach strengthens principles of accountability in

education and ensures that educational policies are more responsive to the needs of society (Spillane, 2006).

Decentralization enables the education system to become more flexible. This flexibility facilitates the faster adoption of innovative teaching methods, such as digital materials, project-based learning, and adaptive curricula. Local governments and schools can more easily experiment with new teaching strategies and technologies, contributing to the continuous development of education (Redecker, 2017).

Additionally, decentralization plays a significant role in the efficient use of resources and the enhancement of educational quality. Local governments, school administrators, and teachers can allocate resources more effectively based on student needs, thereby improving efficiency in education. This approach not only facilitates improvements in educational processes but also enhances student achievement (Patrinos et al., 2009).

2.1.2. Comparison of Centralized and Decentralized Education Systems

The need for decentralization in education arises primarily from the limitations inherent in centralized education systems. Understanding decentralized systems requires a comparison with centralized systems, as these two models differ significantly in terms of who governs and how decision-making processes are structured in education (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). Both systems possess distinct advantages and disadvantages, resulting in varied applications across different countries and regions.

In centralized education systems, decision-making processes are typically conducted at the national level by a ministry of education or a central authority. In this model, curricula, teaching materials, teacher appointments, and assessment methods are determined and implemented centrally (Fiske, 1996). Centralized structures ensure the rapid implementation of decisions and create broad uniformity; however, they also have limitations, such as insufficient consideration of local needs. In contrast, decentralized education systems grant greater authority in decision-making processes to local governments, schools, or communities. Curricula and teaching methods can be adapted to local needs, and responsibilities such as teacher appointments and evaluation processes can be delegated to local units (Bray, 1997). This structure enables a more flexible decision-making process, offering education that is more responsive to the specific needs of communities.

A standardized curriculum implemented at the national level ensures that all students receive identical content and are assessed through uniform examinations in centralized education systems. This approach offers an advantage by promoting equity in education, as all students are measured against the same standards (Caldwell, 2005). On the other hand, in decentralized systems, the curriculum is determined at the local level or adapted with local contributions to a centralized framework. This flexibility allows students to learn content that aligns with their cultural and social environments; however, it can lead to regional variations in standards (Riese et al., 2022).

From the perspective of teachers, there are significant differences between the two models. In centralized systems, teachers are required to adhere to the curriculum and assessment criteria determined by the central authority. This limits teachers' autonomy in classroom practices (OECD, 2020a). In contrast, decentralized education systems provide teachers with greater flexibility, enabling them to develop their own teaching strategies and adapt the curriculum and assessment methods to meet students' needs. Such flexibility fosters creativity and supports the development of student-centered teaching practices (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

Assessment processes also differ significantly between the two models. In centralized systems, assessments are typically conducted through national examinations, with all students evaluated based on the same criteria. While this approach facilitates the comparison of student performance, it may overlook individual development (Fiske, 1996). In decentralized systems, however, assessment criteria can be determined at the local level, and methods that prioritize students' individual development may be employed. While this approach aligns with students' unique learning needs, it can pose challenges to comparability at the national level (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

Both models present certain challenges alongside their advantages in terms of equity and standardization in education. In centralized systems, education is standardized across the country, ensuring that students in different regions have access to the same curriculum and resources. While this approach enhances equity in education, it may overlook local needs (Egalite et al., 2017). On the other hand, decentralized systems improve the capacity to address local needs in education but may create challenges such as unequal resource distribution. This can lead to disparities in educational quality, particularly in economically disadvantaged regions (Caldwell, 2005).

Centralized education systems can also serve as tools to promote cultural and social cohesion nationwide. A standardized curriculum contributes to the transmission of national identity and values to students. In contrast, decentralized systems make education more responsive to the cultural values and needs of local communities. Students can experience more meaningful learning within their own cultural contexts; however, this approach may pose challenges in achieving national cohesion (Bray, 2007; McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

From the perspective of innovation, centralized systems may be slower to adopt innovative methods due to their rigid structures; the requirement for centralized approval can limit flexibility. In contrast, decentralized education systems allow local authorities to implement innovative methods more quickly and experiment with different approaches (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). However, ensuring consistency across these varied practices can be challenging. In terms of administrative costs, centralized education systems are more sustainable with lower costs due to their single-point management structure. On the other hand, decentralized systems may involve higher costs due to local governance participation, but they enable more effective resource allocation based on local needs (World Bank, 2021a).

As a result, centralized systems offer advantages such as standardization, equity, and centralized control, whereas decentralized systems provide greater flexibility, local adaptability, and opportunities for innovation. In large countries or regions with limited resources, a centralized structure can ensure uniformity in education, while a decentralized system can better address local needs. For this reason, many countries adopt a hybrid approach, combining the advantages of both models (Fiske, 1996; McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

2.1.3. Decentralized Education Models

Decentralized education models refer to approaches in which decision-making and administrative processes in education are conducted not by a central authority but at more local or individual levels (Bray, 1997). These models aim to promote localization within education systems, enhancing flexibility, participation, and innovation. Various forms of decentralized education models are implemented across different countries and educational contexts.

In this context, the school-based Management (SBM) model is one of the decentralized approaches highlighted in the literature. This model grants schools

greater autonomy by shifting decision-making processes to the school level. School administrators, teachers, parents, and sometimes students are given a more significant role in decisions related to school budgets, curricula, and resource allocation. SBM enhances flexibility in education and allows schools to adapt to local needs (Leithwood & Menzies, 1998).

Another model, Community-Based Education, involves local communities playing an active role in the management of education. Community members participate in school operations and ensure that the curriculum aligns with local values. An example of this model is the *Escuela Nueva* program implemented in rural areas of Colombia. In this model, students progress at their own learning pace and engage more extensively with the community (Colbert & Arboleda, 2016).

Teacher Agency and Distributed Leadership are also considered examples of decentralized education models, emphasizing the role of teachers not only as knowledge transmitters but also as decision-makers and leaders. Teacher agency grants teachers' greater responsibility and initiative in the educational process. Distributed leadership, on the other hand, shares leadership within the school, not solely among administrators but also among teachers, thereby fostering a more democratic structure in education (Spillane, 2006).

In the Democratic School model, students, teachers, and other school staff have equal decision-making rights. All members collectively make decisions on matters such as school administration and curriculum. Democratic schools aim to enhance student participation in the educational process, fostering individual responsibility and social awareness. Examples of this model include Sudbury schools in the United States and Summerhill School in England (Greenberg, 1992).

In the Project-Based Learning (PBL) model, students are encouraged to learn by solving real-world problems. Project-based learning allows students to engage in projects that capture their interests. Schools like "High Tech High" in the United States prioritize project-based learning, reducing centralized structures and making the learning process more student-centered (Kallick & Zmuda, 2017).

Digital and online education platforms also offer new ways to decentralize educational processes. This model allows students to progress at their own pace and allows curricula to be adapted. Platforms like Khan Academy support independent learning for students and provide opportunities for teachers to offer personalized guidance (Thompson, 2013).

Decentralized Autonomous Organization (DAO)-based education models utilize blockchain technology to decentralize educational processes, promoting transparency, trust, and equity in education. DAO structures allow teachers and students to have a voice in educational processes and encourage democratic decision-making (Ma, Li, Wu, & Wang, 2023).

These models represent various aspects and applications of decentralized education. Each model offers different strategies to make education more democratic, participatory, and student-centered, with implementation varying based on local education policies and school needs.

2.2. Decentralized Education Around the World

Decentralized education practices around the world allow for the adoption of diverse approaches in the management and decision-making processes of education systems while contributing to their alignment with the cultural, economic, and political structures of countries.

The United States is one of the countries where decentralization in education is most prevalent; here, education policies are largely determined by states and local governments. Each state's ability to establish its own standards for education policies, such as curriculum, budgets, and teacher certification, allows states and local communities to design education systems that meet their specific needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

The U.S. education system is governed through state education boards, which have the authority to set education policies, curricula, and budgets. For instance, while California's state education board prioritizes STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields, New York's board offers different programs focused on social sciences. This diversity enables each state to develop a model tailored to its unique educational needs. State education boards are also independent in matters such as instructional materials, student assessment methods, and teacher licensing processes, contributing to diversity at the state level (Fowler, 2013).

Local school districts are one of the foundational units of the decentralized education structure in the United States. Each state consists of various local school districts, which are responsible for managing schools, distributing resources, and overseeing daily operations. For instance, a school district in Chicago can create its own budget, hire teachers, and develop in-school programs. This structure provides

schools with the flexibility to deliver education tailored to the needs of their students. Local school districts are typically governed by school boards, which are often elected by the community. These boards enable communities to have a direct influence on education policies (Sykes, Schneider, & Plank, 2009).

In the United States, curricula are generally determined by state education boards; however, school districts and teachers have the freedom to elaborate on and adapt the curriculum to meet local needs. For instance, the state of Texas places greater emphasis on subjects such as social studies and American history, while Washington state prioritizes topics like environmental science. This flexibility allows for differentiation in education systems across states and provides students with a focused education tailored to their interests (Ingersoll, 2006).

Teacher certification and professional development programs are also regulated at the state level. Each state has unique requirements for teachers to obtain certification, which may include additional training or examinations in some cases. For example, a teacher must hold a specific certification to work in California but may need to meet distinct requirements if they move to another state. States also offer various programs to support teachers' professional development and encourage participation in these initiatives (Odden & Picus, 2014).

Education funding in the United States is primarily derived from local taxes. Local school districts are financed through local revenues, such as property taxes within their jurisdictions. In wealthier areas with higher property values, schools have access to greater financial resources, while less affluent regions often face resource shortages. This system allows school districts to independently manage their financial resources but also leads to imbalances in resource distribution (Dee & Jacob, 2011). Each state establishes its own examination systems and standards for assessing student performance. While the federal government provides a framework through legislation such as *No Child Left Behind Act* and *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, states have the autonomy to develop their own assessment systems within this framework. Some states emphasize standardized testing, while others implement project-based evaluation methods. This flexibility enables each state to define its criteria for educational success according to its own standards (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

The decentralized education model in the United States ensures the direct involvement of communities in educational processes. Since local school districts are governed by school boards elected by the public, local communities have a direct

influence on education policies. This structure allows education policies to be shaped according to the needs of the community. For example, a local school board can develop specialized language programs to address the educational needs of an immigrant population in the area. Such participation fosters a democratic structure in education, enabling communities to create policies that reflect their specific needs (Wirt & Kirst, 2009). The federal government has not assumed a centralized role in education but provides a general framework through certain federal laws. *Every Student Succeeds Act*, for instance, establishes minimum standards, particularly for disadvantaged groups, and offers financial support. However, states maintain autonomy in implementing these standards, creating a balanced model where both federal and state governments influence education in the United States (Fowler, 2013).

Similar to the decentralized education model in the United States, Germany's education system offers a decentralized model enabled by its federal structure, allowing states (Länder) to establish and implement their own education policies. Each state makes decisions based on its local needs, enabling the development of education models tailored to their unique cultural and socio-economic contexts (BMBF, 2021). In Germany, each state has the authority to design its own curriculum. For instance, Bavaria adopts a more traditional curriculum and academic standards, while Berlin implements innovative pedagogical approaches and more flexible curricula. This diversity leads to variations in students' educational experiences across states (Dobbins & Kwiek, 2017).

Although there is no centralized curriculum in Germany, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (KMK) plays a crucial role in maintaining basic educational standards across the states. KMK facilitates collaboration among the education ministers of different states to establish shared educational standards. These meetings ensure the preservation of certain fundamental standards across Germany while supporting each state's autonomy to develop its own curriculum (KMK, 2021).

Teacher training and certification processes also vary across states. In North Rhine-Westphalia, teachers complete a two-year internship after finishing their degree programs, while in Baden-Württemberg, teachers undergo different modules to complete their training. This diversity allows each state to train teachers according to its specific educational needs (BMBF, 2021).

Germany's decentralized structure is also evident in vocational education. The Duale Ausbildung (dual vocational training system) allows each state to design vocational education programs tailored to its local labor market needs. In this system, students receive theoretical education in vocational schools while gaining practical experience through training in companies. This model is an effective solution for developing a workforce that aligns with local industrial needs (Deissinger, 2015).

Germany's decentralized structure also enables the implementation of different language education policies in states with a high immigrant population. In states like Hamburg and Berlin, German support programs and opportunities for education in students' native languages are more prevalent. These programs are designed to facilitate the integration of immigrant children into the education system (Gogolin, 2008). STEM focused education programs also vary across the states in Germany. In industrially strong states such as Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, special budgets are allocated for schools that offer education in STEM fields, and the curriculum in these areas is intensified. This approach allows states to develop education programs that align with local economic needs (PISA Deutschland, 2018).

The ability of states to shape their education programs according to their cultural differences is another example of decentralized education in Germany. While Catholic values are more integrated into education in Bavaria, a more secular educational model is applied in Eastern states like Brandenburg. This diversity enables states to develop education programs that are tailored to their own socio-cultural structures (Dobbins & Kwiek, 2017). These examples demonstrate that, thanks to Germany's decentralized education system, each state can develop education models that meet local needs, and this structure contributes to maintaining overall educational standards in Germany while fostering diversity across states.

Finland, another country with a decentralized education system, stands out as a successful example of decentralization in education, attracting international attention. In Finland's education system, schools, teachers, and local governments operate with significant autonomy, which facilitates the consideration of individual differences in educational processes (Sahlberg, 2011).

Finland's decentralized education model allows teachers to independently determine their classroom practices and adjust based on students' individual needs. While the curriculum is set within general standards, teachers are given considerable flexibility in how to implement it. In this model, teachers can shape lessons according

to students' interests and learning speeds. For instance, while a science topic is being covered in a class, students may choose to explore topics they are curious about in greater depth. This flexibility helps teachers utilize their pedagogical skills more effectively and encourages greater student participation in the learning process (Simola, 2005).

In Finland, teachers are viewed as the most trusted actors in the education system. Teachers receive graduate-level training and are continuously encouraged to develop their pedagogical skills throughout their careers. The trust placed in teachers by the education system, combined with the decentralized structure, provides them with considerable autonomy in the classroom. Instead of following detailed directives from central authorities, teachers are able to manage the educational process based on their own experiences and knowledge (Sahlberg, 2011). This trust fosters the adoption of creative and flexible approaches by teachers.

In Finland's decentralized structure, local governments are entrusted with responsibilities such as managing school budgets, organizing resource allocation, and providing student support services. These local powers allow schools to tailor their resources and programs to meet regional needs. For instance, a school in a rural area may offer more programs focused on developing students' social skills, while an urban school may concentrate on STEM subjects. This diversity ensures that while the principle of equity in education is upheld, schools can be shaped according to the specific needs of local communities (Simola, 2005). In the student assessment process, classroom observations by teachers and individual development reports take precedence over national exams. Teachers have the freedom to assess students' progress using their own methods, providing personalized feedback to support students' learning processes. This assessment method takes individual differences into account and aligns with students' personal learning journeys (Sahlberg, 2011).

In Finland's education system, which strongly embraces a student-centered approach, teachers are able to tailor their teaching strategies by focusing on students' interests and needs. This not only supports students' academic success but also fosters their social and emotional development. In this context, if a student has an interest in the arts, a teacher can offer art-related projects or adapt lessons to align with the student's interests. This flexibility enhances students' motivation to learn and supports their personal development (Simola, 2005).

The system is based on trust in the professionalism of teachers and school administrators, rather than on centralized management and control. Teachers are at the heart of education policies and play an active role in contributing to educational reforms. This participatory and trust-based structure helps mitigate the disadvantages of centralization, making the education system more responsive to community needs (Sahlberg, 2011). Additionally, this structure has contributed to Finland's success in education on the international stage, serving as a model for other countries. The international recognition of this success is supported by prestigious assessments, such as the *Global Competitiveness Report* published by the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2013).

The report ranks Finland's higher education system as number one globally, highlighting that the country's education system is not only focused on academic achievement but also on social and economic contributions. In its assessment, WEF identifies trust in teachers' professionalism, a student-centered approach, and local government support as the key components of Finland's educational success (WEF, 2013). With the extensive autonomy granted to teachers, the student-centered approach, and local government support, Finland is presented as a successful model of decentralized education.

Canada stands out as a country with a decentralized education system. The education system is based on the ability of provinces to determine and implement their own educational policies. While the federal government does not have direct authority over education, this decentralized structure allows provinces to develop education systems that cater to their socio-cultural, economic, and linguistic needs. Each province has the authority to establish its own curriculum and assessment system. In Ontario, the province imposes mandatory credit requirements for students, while in Quebec, French-language education is prioritized. These differences demonstrate that provinces can shape their education policies according to local priorities.

Canada's decentralized education structure is particularly evident in its language policies. In Quebec, French is mandated as the language of instruction, while in bilingual provinces like New Brunswick, education programs give equal importance to both English and French. These language policies demonstrate how Canada's decentralized structure supports cultural diversity and language rights (Waddington, 2018).

Additionally, education programs for Indigenous communities are a significant component of this system. Each province develops specialized programs for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, promoting the preservation of Indigenous cultures and languages. In the province of British Columbia, there are specific educational programs focused on the cultures and languages of local First Nations (Battiste, 2002). Provinces also have the authority to create vocational education programs based on their economic structures and workforce needs. While the province of Alberta offers vocational programs focused on the oil and gas sector, Nova Scotia implements programs centered on the maritime industry. This model enables provinces to develop education policies that align with economic requirements (Gaskell & Rubenson, 2004). Student assessment systems also differ across provinces. In Alberta, the *Provincial Achievement Tests* are administered, while in Ontario, the *Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test* is preferred. The decentralized structure grants provinces the authority to establish their own assessment standards; however, this also presents the risk of lacking a standardized national assessment system (Lessard, 2005).

Education funding is largely provided by the provinces. In British Columbia, education funding is sourced from local taxes, while other provinces rely on central resources. This model allows for the distribution of resources according to local needs but may also lead to resource shortages in some regions (Wotherspoon, 2014).

Australia stands out as a country with a decentralized education model, where states and territories have the authority to determine their education policies. While the federal government provides a general framework, states have the ability to regulate their curricula, teacher appointments, and funding processes according to local needs. The Australian Curriculum, introduced in 2010, has provided a common foundational framework across all states, while allowing them the freedom to adapt it to their local needs. For example, the state of Victoria adopts an approach focused on developing critical thinking skills, while Queensland emphasizes content related to social responsibility (Savage & O'Connor, 2014). These differentiated curriculum implementations enable states to shape their education systems in accordance with their goals and societal requirements.

The decentralized education structure in Australia encourages active participation from local communities in the education process. In each state, schools are managed by school boards or governing committees that are elected by the public. These boards are authorized to make decisions on matters such as school

administration, budget allocation, and setting educational goals. This structure ensures that local communities play a significant role in shaping education (Lingard, 2010).

States organize vocational education programs based on economic and workforce needs. Western Australia develops vocational training programs for the mining sector, while the state of Victoria focuses on programs in the healthcare field. These localized programs contribute to meeting the economic requirements of the states (Keating, 2009). Furthermore, teacher licensing and certification processes are determined by the states. In New South Wales, teachers are required to participate in a certain number of professional development courses to renew their licenses. Professional development programs allow teachers to continuously refresh their skills and adopt innovative approaches that are suited to local educational needs (Dinham, 2013).

Australia's decentralized structure provides the opportunity to organize education financing according to local needs. States take into account the socio-economic conditions of regions in the distribution of education resources, providing more funding to schools in low-income areas. This model aims to ensure equity in access to education and facilitates the effective use of resources (McKenzie et al., 2014). This decentralization in the education system also enables states to develop their own language programs to support a multicultural structure and linguistic diversity. The Northern Territory and Queensland implement special education programs that support local Aboriginal languages and cultural knowledge. These programs play a crucial role in preserving cultural diversity and maintaining the cultural heritage of local communities (Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009).

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) collaborates with state and regional authorities in developing the national curriculum, considering local needs and cultural differences (ACARA, n.d.). Additionally, the broad range of educational options offered to international students reflects Australia's commitment to diversity and inclusivity in education (Study Australia, n.d.).

Another country with a decentralized education structure is Spain. The country's education system was decentralized through the 1978 Constitution, and administrative powers are shared among autonomous regions. Spain has 17 autonomous regions, and these regions have the authority to determine their education policies, curricula, and assessment systems according to their needs. While the central government sets the basic educational standards to be applied across the country, it grants each autonomous

region the right to adapt its own curriculum. Culturally distinct regions such as Catalonia and the Basque Country localize their education process by incorporating their own languages and cultural elements into the curriculum. This flexibility allows regions to preserve their identities while adapting the education system to local needs (Garreta, 2006).

In Spain, the decentralized education structure allows each autonomous region to develop its own language programs, supporting linguistic diversity. In Catalonia, Catalan is used as the language of instruction, while in the Basque Country, Basque is the language of instruction. These language policies enable each region to integrate its own language into the education system in accordance with Spain's cultural diversity, making it possible for students to receive education in regional languages (Lecours, 2010). School administrations and local educational authorities are granted significant autonomy. Education ministries in each autonomous region have decision-making authority on matters such as budget allocation, teacher appointments, and the selection of educational materials. This autonomy allows schools to allocate resources according to local needs and enables the adaptation of educational processes to regional requirements (Eurydice, 2020).

In Spain, while the central government sets general assessment standards, each autonomous region is able to develop its own practices for student evaluation. Some regions organize regional exams in addition to national ones or apply different criteria in their assessment processes. These regional assessment systems allow each region to measure students' achievements according to its own educational standards (Bonal et al., 2023). The Galician region develops specific content and programs that emphasize Galician culture in education. This cultural diversity allows students in different regions of Spain to learn about their own cultures, ensuring that education serves as a tool to strengthen social identities (Hargreaves, 2001).

Argentina has a decentralized education system, adopting a model in which the provinces hold significant autonomy in education management. While the general framework of education policies is set by the national government, provinces have the authority to make independent decisions in areas such as curriculum, funding, and teacher appointments based on their local needs. The federal government establishes the overall framework for education policies, but provinces can adapt their curricula to meet local needs. Buenos Aires offers a curriculum focused on enhancing students' knowledge and skills in social sciences, while more rural areas place greater emphasis

on agricultural and environmental education. This flexibility allows provinces to make adjustments in education that align with their socio-economic and cultural needs (Ruiz, 2009).

In Argentina, the decentralized structure encourages local communities' participation in the education process. Each province has its own education boards and school management committees, which are responsible for the daily administration of schools. This participatory structure enhances the influence of parents and communities on schools, ensuring that education policies are shaped according to the needs of local communities. Education funding is primarily provided by the provinces; however, the national government also offers additional support for schools in low-income areas. In the northern regions of the country, where socioeconomically disadvantaged areas are prevalent, the national government provides funds to improve school infrastructure and educational materials. This structure aims to ensure a more equitable distribution of resources and promote educational equality (Ruiz, 2009).

Argentina, a country with linguistic diversity, implements various language programs in its provinces to preserve and promote local languages. In regions with a high concentration of Indigenous languages, provincial governments develop educational programs in these languages and design curricula based on Indigenous cultures. In provinces such as Formosa and Salta, where Indigenous populations are prominent, education is provided in Indigenous languages (Hamel, 2008).

In Argentina, each province is independent in terms of teacher certification and appointments. Provinces determine the standards for teacher certification based on their own educational policies. This structure allows each province to train qualified teachers according to the priorities of its education system. In rural areas, priority is given to certifying teachers who specialize in rural education. Vocational education in Argentina is shaped according to the economic needs of each province. While the province of Mendoza offers vocational training programs in wine production, the province of Córdoba develops technical education programs for the automotive sector. This localized vocational education model allows provinces to create education policies aligned with their economic development goals (Gorostiaga & Ferreira, 2012).

Argentina's decentralized education model enables each province to adapt its education system to local needs, facilitating the diversification of education services across different regions of the country. This structure supports cultural and regional

diversity in education while also enabling the allocation of resources according to local needs.

India, unlike the other countries mentioned, has a centralized government structure, yet it has practices that support decentralization in education. The education system in India is organized based on a federal structure; while the central government determines general education policies, states and local governments are authorized to adapt and manage education services according to their regions. The decentralization process in India gained momentum particularly with the 1986 National Education Policy (NEP), continuing with the 1992 revision. Most recently, the 2020 NEP aimed to strike a balance between centralized and decentralized processes in education. Although the central government sets the overall educational standards and framework, states have the flexibility to adapt the curriculum and content.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) develops a general curriculum at the national level, but states can modify this curriculum according to local languages, cultures, and needs. Tamil Nadu has developed its own state curriculum, while states such as Kerala and Maharashtra adapt their educational programs according to regional needs (Little, 2010). India's education system has a decentralized structure that supports its multilingual framework. Since different languages are spoken across the country's various states, provinces have the right to provide education in their own languages. In the state of Maharashtra, education is conducted in Marathi, in Tamil Nadu in Tamil, and in Karnataka in Kannada. These language policies support students receiving education in their native languages and preserve cultural diversity (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007).

As part of the decentralized structure in education, the participation of local governments and communities in education is encouraged. Under the local governance system known as Panchayati Raj, management units at the village and neighborhood levels play an active role in the administration and development of schools. This system ensures that schools are managed according to the needs of local communities and enhances accountability in education. Local governments are also responsible for addressing issues such as reducing student absenteeism, promoting school enrollment, and improving the physical infrastructure of schools (Mehrotra, 2006). India's vast geography and demographic structure have led to the development of different educational practices in rural and urban areas. In urban areas, there is a greater emphasis on STEM fields, while in rural areas, education programs focused on

agriculture and local skills take precedence. States have the right to organize vocational education programs according to local economic and workforce needs. For instance, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, agriculture-based education programs are developed, while technology and engineering-focused programs are offered in technology hubs such as Bengaluru (Batra, 2005).

Education financing in India is shared between the central and state governments. The central government allocates resources to support socio-economically disadvantaged states and rural areas. One such initiative is the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)* program (Education for All Movement), a large-scale effort funded by the central government to ensure universal primary education for all children. States distribute these central funds based on local educational needs, ensuring the effective use of resources (Tilak, 2003).

India also runs various local-level educational programs to promote gender equality and inclusivity. States offer programs aimed at increasing school enrollment rates for girls, such as scholarships, transportation support, and specialized accommodation for female students. In Rajasthan, projects like *Apni Beti, Apna Dhan* (Our Daughter, Our Wealth) have been implemented to facilitate girls' access to education. These initiatives aim to increase access for disadvantaged groups in society through locally developed education policies (Kingdon, 2007). India's decentralized education structure allows each state to adapt its education policies according to its linguistic, cultural, and economic needs. However, while maintaining centralized aspects to preserve a common educational standard across the country, this structure also supports local communities in addressing their specific educational needs.

Within Mexico's decentralization policy framework, the management of schools is delegated to local governments; however, the insufficient expertise of these administrations in educational matters leads to a decline in the quality of education. Additionally, issues of corruption within local administrations hinder the efficient use of resources allocated for education, becoming a significant factor in the failure of these reforms. The experience in Mexico demonstrates that reducing centralization without establishing the necessary infrastructure to empower local governments makes achieving desired outcomes more challenging (Santibañez, Vernez & Razquin, 2005).

In Ghana, decentralization reforms have transferred the management of education to local governments; however, inadequate resources and management skills in rural local governments hinder these reforms from improving educational quality.

The limited capacity of local administrations exacerbates educational inequalities in rural areas. Furthermore, the lack of sufficient oversight and support from the central government limits the effectiveness of these reforms (Akyeampong, 2009).

In the Philippines, the decentralization process in education began with the transfer of educational services to local governments; however, the lack of resources and capacity among these administrations has exacerbated issues of educational quality. Schools in rural areas, in particular, struggle with insufficient financial resources and inadequate educational infrastructure. The absence of proper oversight from the central government further hinders local governments from fulfilling their responsibilities, leading to increased regional disparities in education (Andriesse, 2017).

In Indonesia, a series of reforms were introduced in 1999 to decentralize the education system. However, the limited capacity and resources of local governments have constrained the impact of these reforms. Local administrations often lack sufficient expertise to manage educational policies, and the central government fails to provide adequate support. These factors have contributed to declines in educational quality in certain regions. Regional inequalities in education are exacerbated by insufficient central oversight and inequities in resource allocation (Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006).

In Kenya, attempts at decentralizing education have not resulted in substantial improvements in the quality of educational services. The limited resources available to local governments in rural areas, coupled with insufficient oversight from the central government, have led to persistent challenges in maintaining educational standards. Inefficient resource utilization and the inadequate administrative capacity of local governments exacerbate regional disparities, with rural areas consistently experiencing lower levels of educational quality (Amenya, 2024)

In Uganda, the decentralization process has transferred educational services to local governments; however, the limited financial and administrative capacities of these governments have hindered the anticipated outcomes. Local administrations lack the necessary resources to enhance educational quality, and the absence of effective central oversight has contributed to declining educational standards. The lack of experience and resources among local governments negatively impacts the efficiency and equity of educational services (Saito, 2003). To ensure the success of educational decentralization, it is imperative to enhance support for local governments, ensure the

equitable distribution of resources, and establish effective mechanisms for oversight and coordination between central and local administrations.

When comparing the success of decentralization reforms in education systems, it is evident that developed countries have implemented these reforms more effectively. This success is often attributed to the strong administrative capacities of local governments, adequate financial resources, effective oversight mechanisms, and culturally embedded support for local participation.

In countries such as Germany, Canada, and Finland, the allocation of substantial budgets to local governments and the presence of robust monitoring systems play a crucial role in maintaining educational quality and ensuring equity (Fowler, 2013; Gaskell & Rubenson, 2004; Sahlberg, 2011). Conversely, in developing countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Mexico, limited administrative capacity, insufficient resources, and the lack of oversight mechanisms hinder the expected success of decentralization efforts (Gorostiaga & Ferreira, 2012; Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006).

2.3. Decentralized Education in Türkiye

Türkiye's education system is characterized by a centralized structure directly managed by MONE. While this system aims to ensure unity in education across the country and increase equality of opportunity, it has limitations in being responsive to local differences. MONE controls processes such as curriculum development, teacher appointments, school management, and student assessment (Akyüz, 2016). The centralized structure aims to maintain educational standards, but it lacks sufficient flexibility in addressing local needs.

The national curriculum in Türkiye is determined by MONE in a standardized manner across the country. This aims to create equality of opportunity in education by ensuring that students in every region of the country have access to the same content (Gezer & İlhan, 2018). However, this centralized system makes it difficult to be responsive to the cultural, economic, and social characteristics of the regions where students live. Especially when considering the differences between rural and urban areas, offering the same content to both regions can lead to the insufficient addressing of local needs. In this context, the necessity of a flexible and locally sensitive curriculum arrangement in education is emphasized.

Teacher appointments, likewise, are managed through a centralized system and are conducted by MONE based on the results of the Public Personnel Selection Exam

(KPSS) (Aydın et al., 2014). This system leads to teachers having limited influence over the schools and regions where they will serve. Appointments based on a centralized points system aim to ensure equality in teacher distribution across the country; however, challenges arise in recruiting teachers for rural and disadvantaged areas. It is believed that assigning teachers according to local needs would contribute to improving the quality of education; however, such flexibility is limited in the current centralized appointment system.

School administrations primarily operate within the framework of rules set by MONE. Principals and other administrators are appointed by MONE in accordance with the centralized structure, and the administrative operations of schools are supervised by the central authority (Turan et al., 2014). This situation makes it difficult for school administrations to exhibit flexibility based on local needs. In particular, the limited decision-making authority of school administrators based on regional conditions leads to inadequacies in solving local problems. Examining trends in the literature, models such as school-based management are promoted as steps to relax the centralized structure. However, the application of this model remains limited, and it is particularly more effectively implemented in urban areas (Taşar, 2018).

In Türkiye, student assessment processes are centralized, with the High School Entrance Exam (LGS) and the Higher Education Institutions Examination (YKS) used for the transitions from middle school to high school and high school to university, respectively (Baş & Kıvılcım, 2019). This centralized exam system aims to evaluate students' academic achievements based on a common standard. However, this exam-focused structure is considered to overlook students' individual talents and interests. Centralized exams also increase competition in education and push students toward a standardized notion of success.

Education funding and resource allocation are provided and distributed by the central government (Soydan, 2018). This system ensures that schools in densely populated cities receive more resources, while rural areas often face issues of resource scarcity. Although the centralized financing model aims to create equality of opportunity in education, imbalances in resource distribution among different regions are evident. Schools in rural areas often remain disadvantaged due to insufficient resources. Consequently, it is suggested that educational resources should be allocated based on regional needs.

In this context, certain practices have been implemented in Türkiye to relax centralization. One such practice, school-based management, aims to provide schools with greater authority over their administrative processes and introduce local flexibility in decision-making (Gürel & Gül, 2024). Additionally, schools with specific educational missions, such as project schools, have been granted greater flexibility in curriculum adaptations and teacher appointments. Project schools are allowed to recruit highly qualified teachers through special permissions and exhibit more flexibility in implementing their curricula (Kaya, 2019). These schools stand out as prominent examples of efforts to reduce centralization and promote localization in education.

Local education councils constitute another aspect of efforts to relax centralization. Comprising school administrators, teachers, and local community representatives, these councils assist in shaping educational policies to meet local needs. However, their advisory nature within the centralized structure limits their participation in local decision-making processes (Gürel & Gül, 2024). While local education councils are significant in terms of decentralization efforts, effective localization has not been achieved in practice. Steps are also being taken to adapt the centralized curriculum to local characteristics in certain areas. Elective courses such as *local culture* and *traditional arts* allow students to learn about the cultural values of the regions they live in (Gürel & Gül, 2024). These courses particularly enhance cultural awareness among students in rural areas and support localization in education. Additionally, vocational education programs are being developed to meet regional needs. In industrial regions, partnerships with vocational high schools aim to train a workforce tailored to the economic requirements of the area (Özer, 2019).

Certain schools have been granted the authority to utilize local resources in addition to central funding and to manage their budgets more independently. Parent-teacher associations provide additional funding to schools, contributing to schools' ability to make spending decisions based on their specific needs (Aydoğan, 2023). This practice aims to enable schools to gain independence by leveraging local resources and is considered a step toward providing financial flexibility within the centralized system. While Türkiye's centralized education system aims to ensure unity in education across the country and enhance equality of opportunity, it is often regarded as insufficient in addressing local needs (Çelik, Çelik & Usta, 2008).

Although the centralized structure offers the advantage of standardized education, its lack of flexibility for local requirements keeps the necessity of localization in education policies on the agenda (Turan et al., 2014). In this context, the need to balance localization and centralization remains a critical issue in reforms aimed at improving Türkiye's education system (Görgülü, 2019).

Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli (Türkiye's Century Education Model) is considered an educational reform aimed at balancing centralization with local and individual needs. While the model adopts a values-based approach focused on cultivating virtuous individuals, it presents both strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of decentralized education. Among its strengths is its emphasis on addressing students' individual needs and socio-economic conditions, which supports a decentralized approach aimed at achieving equity in education. Additionally, by considering local differences, the model has the potential to mitigate the disadvantages of uniform practices in centralized education (MEB, 2023a). Another strength of the model lies in its *Virtue-Value-Action* framework, which integrates educational processes with social and cultural values. This framework allows for the support of local and cultural differences, enabling each region to incorporate its own values into education (MEB, 2023a). Finally, the model's provisions for measures to support disadvantaged groups are considered an indication of its sensitivity to local needs. This aspect may provide an alternative to the uniform structure of centralized education policies.

However, the model maintains a centralized approach to control. Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli does not fully relinquish centralized control but rather establishes a structure aligned with central policy objectives. The autonomy of local administrations or school-level actors in decision-making processes and curriculum development remains limited (MEB, 2023a). While decentralized education expects teachers to actively participate in decision-making processes, this participation is not explicitly emphasized in the model. Without increasing teachers' leadership and influence in decision-making mechanisms, the model is likely to remain limited in its alignment with decentralized education principles. Additionally, the model's provision of a standardized framework on a national scale may restrict variations in practices at the local level. This could hinder the development of solutions tailored to regional needs and contradict the goals of decentralization.

Studies analyzing Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli from various perspectives within the educational community highlight similar strengths and weaknesses. Akpınar and Köksalan (2024) evaluate the model within a theoretical framework, interpreting its effort to align with 21st-century skills as a positive development. However, the study emphasizes that the model's influence by U.S.-based approaches highlights the need for a more localized and national touch. In particular, it is suggested that the model should further develop the individual's social-emotional elements in the context of identity and social belonging. Moreover, the study underlines that the model should focus on strengthening societal belonging alongside individual development (Akpınar & Köksalan, 2024).

The 2024 report by *Maarif Platformu (Education Platform)* emphasizes that Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli offers a framework aligned with the nation's values and is appreciated for this characteristic. However, the report also highlights the need for teachers and local administrations to play a more active role in the implementation process. Additionally, it notes that centralized control should be more balanced with local needs, suggesting that this approach could strengthen the model's inclusivity goals (Maarif Platformu, 2024).

Another evaluation by *Eğitim Reformu Girişimi (Education Reform Initiative)* (2024) highlights that Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli adopts a holistic approach aimed at fostering both intellectual and moral development. However, the report emphasizes the need for the model to move away from centralization by involving local administrations and teachers more actively in decision-making processes. The absence of these elements, which are critical to decentralization in education, is noted as a factor that could limit the model's potential for effective implementation (Eğitim Reformu Girişimi, 2024). These shortcomings are identified as key issues preventing the model from fully aligning with the principles of decentralized education.

In conclusion, while Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli has taken some positive steps toward decentralization in education, it cannot be fully considered a decentralized model due to the continued presence of centralized control. Although the model aims to enhance sensitivity to individual and societal needs, its shortcomings in strengthening teacher leadership, the influence of local administrations, and the autonomy of schools in decision-making processes emerge as significant limitations.

2.3.1. The Nexus Between Project Schools and Decentralized Education

Project schools, developed as a model to ease the centralized structure of Türkiye's education system and grant schools' greater autonomy, offer enriched educational opportunities tailored to students' talents and interests, particularly in line with specific educational missions (Kaya, 2019).

These schools operate under the supervision of MONE but benefit from certain special statuses that provide them with greater flexibility. The primary goal of project schools is to promote practices that support students' individual development and to diversify education through unique teaching methods and projects (Gürel & Gül, 2024).

Project schools have greater flexibility compared to other schools in areas such as teacher appointments, curriculum adaptation, and the development of social projects. Teachers in these schools are selected based on specific criteria rather than through the centralized appointment system, allowing project schools to recruit educators who are highly qualified and capable of contributing to their initiatives. Kaya (2019) highlight in their study that prioritizing teacher competence in such schools is a factor that directly enhances the quality of education provided to students. Furthermore, Sarıkaya and Keskinkılıç Kara (2020) emphasize the significance of organizational trust and support in creating environments where teachers can thrive professionally and contribute effectively to innovative educational practices. Project schools aim to create such environments by providing autonomy to educators, fostering trust, and ensuring institutional support.

Project schools create learning environments that prioritize students' individual talents and interests by enabling teachers to implement flexible curricula and develop diverse projects. In science high schools, for instance, teachers and administrators have greater autonomy in decision-making. They play an active role in advancing students' scientific skills through scientific research, laboratory work, and special projects (Taşar, 2018). Similarly, in social sciences high schools, which have a specific academic focus, students are encouraged to engage in comprehensive projects in the field of social sciences. These practices aim to provide students with knowledge and skills that go beyond the standard curriculum.

The project schools' model is regarded as a positive step toward easing centralization in education and supporting tendencies toward localization. Gürel and

Gül (2024) emphasize that localization in education provides students with learning opportunities aligned with their talents and interests, thereby increasing their motivation to learn. These schools offer a unique environment for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, which enhances students' engagement in the educational process.

In this context, interdisciplinary projects such as STEM initiatives equip students with diverse competencies and prepare them for the global workforce (Gezer & İlhan, 2018). However, project schools also face certain limitations. The autonomy granted to project schools often remains restricted within the centralized framework. Gürel and Gül (2024) note that bureaucratic constraints prevent project schools from operating entirely independently, leaving them under the control of central authorities in some cases. While flexible curriculum implementations are possible in project schools, these institutions generally achieve autonomy only in specific areas and remain subject to centralized regulations in others. Moreover, challenges related to the recruitment of teachers for project schools and the provision of financial resources can limit their performance (Soydan, 2018).

Another advantage of project schools is their ability to develop education programs that are responsive to local needs. Some vocational project schools aim to train qualified individuals for the labor market by offering programs tailored to the economic needs of their region. Özer (2019) emphasizes that project schools located in industrial zones collaborate with industrial organizations to deliver education aligned with local needs, thereby contributing to regional economic development. These collaborations not only help students adapt to the local workforce but also enhance the flexibility of project schools to address regional demands. However, the implementation of the project school model across all regions presents challenges. Schools in rural areas benefit from this model to a more limited extent, while those in urban areas have access to broader resources and are able to develop more comprehensive projects. This disparity partially limits the role of project schools in easing centralization (Çelik, Çelik & Usta, 2008).

Project schools are also regarded as a model that pioneers the implementation of innovative approaches in education. Kaya (2019) state that offering innovative projects tailored to students' diverse learning needs promotes individualization in education and increases student engagement. Teachers in these schools have more freedom to design creative projects that capture students' interest, aiming to develop problem-

solving, creative thinking, and analytical skills. Supporting innovative practices not only makes project schools more appealing to students but also contributes to extending the boundaries of centralization in education.

2.4. Studies on Decentralized Education

Decentralized education practices aim to enhance sensitivity to local needs, improve educational processes, and promote broader participation in education by granting schools greater autonomy and reducing the influence of central authorities in various countries (Bray, 2007; Carnoy, 1999; McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

In this context, various academic studies examine the impact of reducing centralization on education and highlight the strengths and weaknesses of its implementation in different countries. Fiske and Ladd (2000) examine the decentralization reform introduced in New Zealand in 1989. This reform aims to reduce centralization by granting schools greater control over budgets and management. The research demonstrates that this approach provides administrative flexibility for schools but also results in inequalities among schools when resources are insufficient. By highlighting the complex effects of decentralization on equity, the study emphasizes the importance of careful planning in such reforms.

Fullan and Watson (2000) evaluate the impact of the school-based management model on learning outcomes in Canada and the United States. The study highlights that reducing centralization enables teachers to play a more active role in decision-making processes and contributes to the development of strategies tailored to local needs. Notably, granting teachers greater autonomy over the curriculum enhances student performance and strengthens teacher-student relationships. The study suggests that the school-based management model is an effective approach to improving the quality of education.

Bush and Heystek (2003) analyze the decentralization efforts in South Africa following the democratization process. The study highlights that granting greater decision-making authority to school administrators and teachers facilitates the adaptation of schools to societal needs. Decentralization is observed to enhance community participation and support inclusivity in education. The South African case illustrates how reducing centralization can strengthen societal engagement in the education process.

Ouchi's (2006) study examines efforts to reduce centralization in education across major U.S. cities such as Los Angeles, Houston, and Seattle. The study demonstrates that moving away from centralization grants schools' greater autonomy and accelerates decision-making processes for administrators, thereby improving educational outcomes. Notably, the empowerment of school principals enables teachers to participate more effectively in educational processes, positively influencing student achievement. The study highlights the significant role that decentralization plays in fostering teachers' professional development.

Kingdon and Muzammil (2009) examine decentralization reforms in India's education system and note that these reforms have provided schools with a certain degree of autonomy. Nevertheless, the study emphasizes that this autonomy is constrained by the limited capacity of local governments to utilize it effectively. Factors such as insufficient resources available to local authorities and the lack of qualified educational staff in rural areas have contributed to a decline in education quality. Furthermore, the lack of oversight from the central government has exacerbated disparities in education quality between states, leading to regional inequalities. The study underlines that decentralization alone is insufficient and must be complemented by efforts to build local capacity. Without enhancing the competencies of local governments, decentralization reforms are unlikely to achieve their intended outcomes.

Machin and Vernoit (2011) explore *The Academies Reform* implemented in England to reduce centralization in education. Academies are schools that operate independently of central government control, with the authority to manage their own curricula and budgets. The study observes the positive effects of academies on student achievement, highlighting that academies in low-income areas create greater opportunities for students. However, the research also emphasizes that competition among academies generates complex implications for educational equity.

The OECD report prepared by Hooge, Burns, and Wilkoszewski (2012) examines the effects of decentralization efforts in various countries. The report highlights that granting autonomy to schools positively influences student achievement, with decentralization practices yielding favorable outcomes in countries such as the Netherlands, Finland, and Germany. However, the report emphasizes that the success of decentralization depends on continuous support and monitoring. These

findings underscore the critical role of central governments in providing guidance and support during the decentralization process.

Caldwell and Spinks (2013) explore the school-based management model implemented in Australia to reduce the centralized structure of the education system. This model aims to enhance local administrative flexibility by granting schools greater autonomy in areas such as budget management, staff recruitment, and curriculum adjustments. The findings of the study reveal that this model improves student achievement, boosts teacher motivation, and fosters a stronger institutional culture within schools. These results demonstrate that reducing centralization is a significant step toward improving the quality of education.

Qi (2017) examines the school-based management model in Shanghai, China, highlighting how educational reforms in the region have aimed to reduce central government control and grant greater flexibility to schools. Their findings indicate that involving school administrators and teachers in decision-making processes has positively influenced student outcomes. Furthermore, increased autonomy in managing school resources has led to improved quality in educational services. However, the study also underscores the limiting effects of cultural and social factors on the implementation of decentralization reforms in China.

Jeong, Lee, and Cho (2017) explore efforts to ease centralization and promote decentralization in South Korea's education system. Their study emphasizes the significance of granting more autonomy to rural schools to develop programs tailored to regional needs. The findings suggest that decentralization facilitates better alignment of school management with societal needs and enhances student achievement. Nevertheless, the study observes that such reforms tend to have limited impact in highly centralized contexts like South Korea.

Okano (2020) analyze decentralization reforms in Japan's education system and their impact on student engagement in learning processes. These reforms have granted schools greater authority over budgeting and program development as part of efforts to reduce centralization. The study highlights that decentralization has enhanced students' commitment to school and encouraged greater community involvement in education processes. However, despite the observed positive effects of decentralization in Japan, the study notes that traditional societal values often limit reforms aimed at curbing the authority of the central government.

Wermke and Salokangas (2021) examine decentralization and teacher autonomy in Finland and Sweden, emphasizing how the increasing authority of teachers to organize lesson content and determine assessment methods has positively influenced the ability to address students' individual needs. Their findings suggest that reducing centralization fosters innovation in education, which supports the development of students' critical thinking skills. Moreover, they highlight that the high level of professional independence granted to teachers is a crucial factor contributing to educational success.

These studies examine the effects of reducing centralization across different education systems and highlight the challenges encountered during implementation processes. Decentralization is observed to improve the quality of education, address local needs more effectively, and enhance community participation. However, for such reforms to succeed, it is essential to build local capacities and strengthen community support mechanisms.

2.5. Key Concepts in Decentralized Education

In decentralized education, the concepts of teacher and school are viewed through a highly progressive lens, far removed from traditional perspectives. Teachers are envisioned as pioneers who create exploratory environments, spark curiosity, and guide students through their learning journeys (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Similarly, schools are perceived as foundational structures that serve as spaces for exploration, equipped with local decision-making mechanisms and the autonomy to tailor education to the needs of their communities (Bray, 1997).

In this system, school, teacher, and student are considered integral components of a cohesive structure aimed at envisioning a better future for the world (Priestley et al., 2015). This holistic perspective views the teacher not merely as a transmitter of knowledge but as a guide who facilitates creative thinking, problem-solving, and the learning processes of students (Spillane, 2006). Likewise, the role of school is redefined, not solely as a space for delivering education but as an organization capable of responding to both local and global societal needs (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

2.5.1. The Teacher's New Roles within the Framework of Decentralized Education

Decentralized education, in contrast to the traditional centralized educational structure, requires teachers to assume a crucial role not only as knowledge transmitters but also as guides who facilitate and support the learning process. In this educational model, teachers take the lead in creating an environment where students actively engage in the learning process and are able to access knowledge through their own efforts. The role of teachers in decentralized education is less about directly delivering knowledge and more about guiding students to manage their own learning processes (Biesta et al., 2015).

Teachers no longer serve as mere providers of information; rather, they assume the role of guides who encourage students to explore and deepen their learning. Decentralized education models require a structure that is based on leadership behaviors supporting teachers' professional development. In this context, leadership serves as a powerful tool to enhance teachers' practices (Er, 2021).

Building on this transformation, leadership behaviors play a critical role in supporting teachers' evolving roles in decentralized education. In decentralized education, this transformation of teachers' roles from being information providers to becoming guides aligns with the demands of the digital age and shifts in educational paradigms (Bozkurt et al., 2021; McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

Biesta (2010) argues that a centralized structure renders students passive in the learning process, whereas decentralized structures enable students to take a more active role in their own learning journey. In this context, teachers function not as mere transmitters of knowledge but as facilitators who guide the learning process and equip students with independent thinking skills. This guiding role allows teachers to establish closer relationships with students and gain a deeper understanding of their needs in the learning process (Hargreaves, 2000b).

In traditional education, the process of preparing classroom materials by teachers takes place within a limited framework, whereas in decentralized education, the preparation of digital materials has become one of the teacher's core responsibilities. The creation of digital materials facilitates the provision of content tailored to students' individual learning paces, making the learning process more effective. The digital transformation accelerated during the pandemic has necessitated an enhancement of

teachers' competencies in developing digital resources and content. Additionally, digital materials actively engage students in the learning process and cater to their individual interests, making learning more appealing (Trust & Whalen, 2020).

Under decentralized education systems, teachers' proficiency in creating digital materials is integral to improving the overall quality of education. Teachers are expected to transcend traditional instructional resources by developing interactive applications, online platforms, and audiovisual materials, thereby offering students a diverse range of learning experiences. This paradigm shift requires educators to refine their material design competencies and utilize digital tools with greater efficacy. Moreover, teachers are entrusted with the responsibility of leveraging digital resources to facilitate students' seamless access to knowledge in the digital age (Redecker, 2017).

In DeEd, the role of the teacher transcends mere material preparation, encompassing the adaptation of instructional methodologies to address the unique needs of individual students. Teachers play a critical role in optimizing the learning process by identifying and implementing the most effective strategies for students with diverse learning styles and paces. This represents a paradigm shift from delivering standardized instruction to assuming the responsibility of designing personalized learning trajectories tailored to each student's requirements (Tomlinson, 2001). For instance, visually oriented resources may be employed to support students facing learning difficulties, while more advanced and challenging materials can be provided to those exhibiting accelerated progress.

Within this framework, decentralized education necessitates that teachers adopt flexible and adaptive pedagogical strategies to nurture students' individual competencies and fully realize their potential. Such an approach fosters greater self-efficacy among learners, promoting their active engagement and participation in the educational process (Spillane, 2006).

2.5.2. Teacher Well-being within the Framework of Decentralized Education

The concepts of teacher and school have been more comprehensively defined in the present context of innovative educational approaches. The transition from centralization has also introduced new concepts that support making education more flexible, participatory, and responsive to local needs (Bray, 1997; McGinn & Welsh, 1999). These concepts encourage educational systems to adapt to local needs, foster

more active roles for teachers, and promote the proliferation of student-centered education models (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Priestley et al., 2015).

The increased responsibilities of teachers in DeEd have a positive impact on their job satisfaction and well-being (Day & Qing, 2009). Taking on responsibilities such as addressing students' individual learning needs and contributing directly to their educational processes enhances teachers' professional satisfaction and strengthens their commitment to their work (Leithwood & Menzies, 1998; Lin et al., 2018). This process fosters the development of stronger learning communities and encourages teachers to further cultivate their professional identities (Hargreaves, 2000a).

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that teachers' roles as guides in creating educational processes tailored to individual student needs significantly enhance their job satisfaction and motivation. The increased autonomy and responsibility gained through these roles make teachers' contributions to the educational process more visible, thereby strengthening their professional identities.

Teachers are no longer merely implementers of curricula; they are increasingly taking on greater responsibility and initiative as active participants in the educational process. Empowering teachers in this way expands their control and influence over their professional roles, enabling them to learn from their experiences and contribute to the advancement of education (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2015). This empowerment positively impacts teachers' professional motivation and overall well-being, thereby enhancing job satisfaction. The transfer of responsibility and initiative strengthens teachers' sense of professional fulfillment, allowing them to assume more meaningful roles in their work (Day & Kington, 2008).

Having a greater voice in decision-making enables teachers to find deeper meaning in their work. In line with the principles of teacher agency and distributed leadership, teachers actively participate in areas such as decision-making, curriculum development, and improving student learning outcomes (Spillane, 2006). These participatory roles strengthen teachers' professional identities, making them feel more valued in their profession. This increased sense of professional satisfaction helps reduce stress levels, enables better work-life balance, and supports their overall well-being (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Well-being refers to teachers' ability to maintain balance in both their personal and professional lives. Within a decentralized education structure, teachers work in an environment that enables them to develop their individual capabilities, fostering a

greater sense of empowerment. Teachers' direct involvement in curriculum development processes provides them with increased autonomy, enhancing their professional self-efficacy and job satisfaction. This increased control in both classroom and non-classroom settings positively influences their motivation and overall quality of life (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Furthermore, teachers' ability to build closer relationships with students and contribute directly to their learning processes strengthens the sense of meaning in their work, which positively impacts their well-being (Klassen, Perry & Frenzel, 2012).

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) emphasize that decentralized educational environments, where teachers take on greater professional responsibilities, foster the development of a positive perspective toward their roles. Their research demonstrates that finding meaning in their work and maintaining commitment to their profession positively influence teachers' well-being. Similarly, Day and Kington (2008) highlight that when teachers engage in meaningful tasks, their job satisfaction increases, which in turn enhances their overall motivation and levels of professional fulfillment. Another study examining the impact of increased workloads on teachers' well-being highlights that professional satisfaction is directly linked to their psychological well-being (Klassen et al., 2012). This research indicates that teachers' participation in decision-making processes, both within and outside the classroom, enhances their levels of job satisfaction while reducing occupational stress.

Studies in the literature indicate that in decentralized education systems, teachers who assume greater responsibility and initiative experience an enhanced sense of meaning in their professional roles, which in turn supports their motivation and overall well-being. This process not only increases teachers' professional satisfaction but also helps them feel more valued within the educational environment.

2.5.3. Teacher Agency within the Framework of Decentralized Education

In decentralized education systems, the concept of *teacher agency* refers to teachers taking on more independent, participatory, and decision-making roles in educational processes (Priestley et al., 2015). This concept ensures that teachers are not merely seen as implementers of curricula but are valued as active contributors to and participants in the educational process (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Teacher agency facilitates a move away from centralized structures by involving teachers in

decision-making processes related to pedagogical practices and encouraging them to play a more impactful role in student development (Lin et al., 2018).

Literature highlights that underscore the pivotal role of teacher agency in enhancing the quality of education and the benefits it brings to educational systems. Teacher agency refers to the capacity of teachers to actively shape the educational process by playing an influential role in both classroom and non-classroom decisions, guided by their professional knowledge and skills. Biesta and Tedder (2007) associate teacher agency with the social, cultural, and personal factors that influence pedagogical choices, defining it as the capacity to create a student-centered learning environment. Teacher agency supports innovation in education and empowers teachers to feel more confident and capable in their professional roles.

Teacher agency provides significant advantages in fostering pedagogical flexibility and innovation. A study conducted in the United Kingdom observed that teacher agency enhances classroom innovations and improves student achievement by allowing teachers to make pedagogical decisions with greater autonomy (Priestley et al., 2015). Furthermore, teacher agency strengthens teachers' motivation by increasing their professional satisfaction, contributes to their professional development, and enables them to be recognized as professionals who actively shape the content and direction of education, thereby positively reflecting on the quality of education (Day & Lee, 2011).

Research conducted in the United States demonstrates that teacher agency allows for more flexible responses to students' individual learning needs, resulting in improved student achievement (Lasky, 2005). Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2004) argue that teacher agency promotes teachers' involvement in school management and fosters the development of a democratic school culture. In Finland's education system, teacher agency enhances pedagogical freedom, enabling teachers to guide students according to their individual needs.

Sahlberg (2011) emphasizes that this model has been successful in improving the quality of education. A study conducted in Scotland reveals that teacher agency increases innovative practices in education and contributes to teachers feeling more empowered (Priestley et al., 2012). In Canada, teacher agency provides greater freedom in pedagogical choices, which enhances teachers' professional commitment and improves students' academic performance (Lasky, 2005). The decentralized

education model in Canada encourages teachers to take initiative in classroom practices, thereby fostering innovation in education.

The limited number of studies on teacher agency in Türkiye indicates that this concept has not yet been fully operationalized. Erdem and Eğmir's (2018) research reveals that when teacher agency is integrated into the implementation of educational policies, teachers' professional satisfaction and efficiency in education improve significantly. However, the centralized structure of the Turkish education system restricts teachers' capacity to exercise agency. The study emphasizes that in contexts where teachers have greater freedom in making pedagogical decisions, both their motivation and professional development are enhanced.

These findings suggest that for teacher agency to become more effective in Türkiye, teachers need to be more involved in decision-making processes. Additionally, relaxing centralized structures could strengthen teachers' professional roles and contributions.

2.5.4. Distributed Leadership within the Framework of Decentralized Education

Decentralized education systems support various leadership models that strengthen school governance by promoting greater participation and flexibility in decision-making processes. In this context, *distributed leadership* emerges as a key concept, referring to a leadership approach in which school governance is not limited to principals or administrators but is shared among other stakeholders, such as teachers, students, and parents (Spillane et al., 2004). This model, which aims to enhance democracy, participation, and collective responsibility in education, is recognized as an effective leadership approach within decentralized structures.

Distributed leadership shifts the focus of leadership from being centered on individuals to a collective structure by encouraging the participation of all members of the school community in leadership processes (Harris, 2004). In this model, leadership authority and responsibilities are distributed among individuals at various levels within the school, enabling all members to actively contribute to the leadership process (Spillane et al., 2004). This approach fosters teachers' pedagogical flexibility, supports their professional development, and encourages more creative classroom practices (Harris, 2014; Gronn, 2002).

Distributed leadership offers numerous advantages in educational processes. This leadership model fosters a more democratic and inclusive management structure

by encouraging the participation of various stakeholders in decision-making processes (Bush & Glover, 2012). Furthermore, it enhances teachers' leadership abilities, transforming them from mere instructors into active leaders who contribute to school management (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). This model strengthens collaboration and communication among teachers and other stakeholders. Bringing the entire school community together around shared goals creates an environment of effective cooperation (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Research also indicates that distributed leadership practices improve student achievement. Lambert (2002) highlights that this leadership model promotes a student-centered learning environment, which directly impacts students' academic success.

This approach highlights its impact on collaboration in education, student achievement, and teacher development. Harris (2004) emphasizes that distributed leadership models implemented in schools in the United Kingdom strengthen school culture and increase teachers' involvement in leadership processes. Similarly, Leithwood and Mascall (2008) note in their research conducted in Canada that distributed leadership enhances teachers' contributions to educational processes, yielding positive effects on overall school success.

Although research on distributed leadership in Türkiye is limited, it presents promising outcomes. Göktaş and Kaya (2023) demonstrate that distributed leadership in Turkish schools enhances collaboration among teachers and promotes their active participation in school management processes. They further underline the pivotal role of distributed leadership in fostering effective and locally adaptive school environments, particularly in contexts transitioning away from centralized structures. Similarly, Özkan and Akman (2024) emphasize that distributed leadership not only supports teachers' professional development but also cultivates a more collaborative school culture. Their findings reveal that teacher involvement in leadership processes positively influences both teacher satisfaction and student achievement.

Distributed leadership is an effective leadership model that enhances democratic participation and collective responsibility within decentralized education systems. By enabling all members of the school community to participate in governance processes, this model improves the quality of educational practices. Teachers, under this model, take on active roles not only in classroom practices but also in school management. Research conducted both globally and in Türkiye demonstrates that distributed

leadership practices make significant contributions to areas such as collaboration, student achievement, and teacher development (Göktaş & Kaya, 2023).

2.6. Innovative Practices in Decentralized Education

2.6.1. School-Based Management and the Concept of New-Generation Schools

In decentralized education systems, school-based management (SBM) refers to the transfer of decision-making authority from central authorities to individual schools. This model provides schools with greater autonomy in managing their budgets, hiring teachers, and adapting curricula to local needs. As a result, flexibility in education and local participation are increased, enabling schools to develop solutions tailored to their unique communities (Caldwell & Spinks, 1998; Leithwood & Menzies, 1998).

New-generation schools have emerged as an extension of this structure, emphasizing digitalization, student-centered approaches, and innovative teaching methods. These schools design curricula tailored to students' individual learning needs and aim to develop 21st-century skills through modern educational technologies (Fullan & Watson, 2000; OECD, 2020a).

School-based management allows schools to tailor educational programs to the cultural and socio-economic characteristics of their respective regions. This enables the development of solutions that are more aligned with students' needs (Murphy & Beck, 1995). With the reduction of central bureaucracy, schools are able to make quick decisions and implement them effectively (Leithwood & Menzies, 1998). Additionally, by involving teachers, parents, and students in decision-making processes, school commitment and contributions are enhanced (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). The autonomy in managing their budgets allows schools to utilize resources more efficiently and make plans based on their specific needs (Gunnarsson et al., 2004).

New-generation schools, leveraging the flexibility offered by SBM, provide a student-centered and technology-driven education model. In this structure, students actively participate in their individual learning processes, while teachers are given the freedom to develop innovative teaching methods (Fullan & Watson, 2000). This digitalization-focused model not only enhances students' digital literacy skills but also encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and creative problem-solving abilities (Caldwell & Spinks, 1998; Wößmann, 2003). Through the effective use of educational technologies, these schools offer a modern learning environment that aligns with the evolving needs of the 21st century (OECD, 2020a).

Around the world, there are several notable new-generation school practices within the flexible framework of decentralized education models. The xEdu schools in Espoo, Finland, offer teachers the flexibility to tailor the curriculum to students' interests and adopt a project-based learning model (OECD, 2020a). High Tech High schools in California, USA, embrace a student-centered approach through a project-based learning model focused on social issues (Ingersoll et al., 2017). Wooranna Park Primary School in Victoria, Australia, creates an exploration-based learning environment by providing students the opportunity to choose their own learning paths (Leithwood & Menzies, 1998).

Additionally, the Calgary Board of Education in Alberta, Canada, promotes a decentralized learning model by allowing teachers the freedom to develop content tailored to students' interests (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Pelgulinna Gymnasium in Tallinn, Estonia, fosters active participation from both teachers and students through its digitalization-focused education model (Gunnarsson et al., 2004).

Examples of school-based management and new-generation school approaches in Türkiye are limited. Project schools can be considered as a limited example of the school-based management model. These schools allow for flexibility in making decisions at the school level, enabling them to act according to a specific educational vision (MEB, 2022). The school-based management approach supports the identification of local needs, and the development of solutions tailored to these needs, while project schools partially align with this approach. However, for the school-based management model to be fully implemented, centralization needs to be further reduced in project schools, and teachers, parents, and students must take a more active role in the decision-making processes (Taşar, 2018). In this context, project schools can be seen as a starting point for the transition to the school-based management model.

On the other hand, one example of new-generation school approaches in Türkiye, *42 Yazılım Okulları (42 Software Schools),* stands out with its innovative educational model. These schools go beyond traditional educational approaches by completely removing the classroom, teacher, and exam systems, and instead adopting project-based and collaborative methods. At 42 Yazılım Okulları, students learn from one another and continue their education at their own pace, developing digital skills through real-world problem-based projects (42 İstanbul, 2023). Offering a free and accessible model, these schools encourage individual creativity and help students prepare for the software-driven job market of the 21st century. In this regard, 42

Yazılım Okulları serve as an important example of the application of the new-generation school concept in the digital age.

An important project in Türkiye related to new-generation school approaches is the FATİH Project, which focuses on digitalization and technology integration. The project aims to equip classrooms with smart boards, provide students with tablet computers, and increase the number of schools with internet access. This project presents a development in alignment with the digital aspect of the new-generation school model, offering students a more technologically advanced learning environment (Demirer & Dikmen, 2018). Among the positive outcomes of FATİH Project are the widespread expansion of technological infrastructure and increased access to digital resources for students. Particularly, the digital content provided through *Eğitim Bilişim Ağı (The Educational Information Network, EBA)* supports student-centered learning processes. Moreover, by enhancing access to technology in rural areas, the project contributes to educational equity (Ekici & Yılmaz, 2013). In this regard, the project serves as an example that strengthens the technology-based infrastructure of new-generation schools.

However, the project also draws attention to some negative aspects. The inadequacies in teachers' ability to integrate digital tools into classroom pedagogical processes have resulted in the FATİH Project not fully achieving its intended impact. The inadequacy of in-service training programs and the lack of guidance on how teachers should use technology limit the effective use of digital tools (İslamoğlu, Ursavaş, & Reisoğlu, 2015). Furthermore, the centrally planned FATİH Project falls short of being responsive to local needs, which is inconsistent with the principles of decentralized education (Göktaş & Kaya, 2023).

School-based management and new-generation school models hold significant potential in Türkiye for reducing centralization and granting schools and teachers greater autonomy. Both global and Turkish examples show that these approaches foster innovation in education, provide more responsive solutions to local needs, and create a student-centered learning environment. The broader adoption of these models could make education systems more aligned with the needs of the 21st century (OECD, 2017a).

2.6.2. The Role of DAOs within the Framework of Decentralized Education

In decentralized education, Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAOs) shift decision-making and governance processes away from centralization, offering participants greater autonomy and transparency. Using blockchain technology, DAOs enable collective decision-making and collaboration within educational institutions or communities without the need for a central authority (Ocheja et al., 2022). This system supports distributed leadership, teacher agency, and student participation in education, creating an environment where all stakeholders have an equal voice.

DAOs encourage the participation of all members in decision-making processes within the community and enable teachers and students to play an active role in educational policies or curriculum-related matters. The transparent recording and open accessibility of decisions strengthen trust and accountability (Swan, 2015). These structures provide teachers and students with greater authority in the educational process, allowing them to carry out their own projects and develop innovative educational strategies.

Decentralized structures support teacher agency, enabling teachers to control their professional development processes. DAO systems, which grant equal voting rights to members, promote justice and equality in decision-making processes, creating a democratic educational environment (Buterin, 2013). Furthermore, they facilitate the rapid testing and implementation of innovative educational models or projects, eliminating the slow pace of bureaucratic processes (Wright & De Filippi, 2015).

DAOs create a participatory culture that allows teachers and students to collaborate in a free, innovative, and fair educational environment. These structures, which support the democratization of educational processes, align with the core values of decentralized education, such as equality, autonomy, and transparency. Enhanced by blockchain technology, DAOs enable community members to contribute directly without being dependent on a central authority. At the university level, students, teachers, and researchers can actively participate in decision-making processes by developing projects and securing funding. However, such structures have not yet become widespread at the middle and high school levels due to the fact that younger students do not have full legal authority, and the complexity of decentralized systems is not suitable for these age groups.

There are various examples of decentralized autonomous organizations (DAOs) that cater to different audiences worldwide. For instance, BitDegree, a blockchain-based educational platform, aims to increase learning motivation and provide broad access to education by allowing students to earn tokens for completing courses (BitDegree, 2021). DAO Education Guilds facilitate the gathering of individuals to share knowledge and develop educational projects in fields such as technology, software development, and the arts (Sutikno & Aisyahrani, 2023). Similarly, LabDAO, a DAO designed for scientists and researchers, offers a decentralized resource-sharing network for laboratory work and research on a global scale, enhancing collaboration among researchers and supporting the efficient use of resources (LabDAO, 2022). KERNEL, a blockchain-based educational community, provides programs in new technologies and blockchain education while encouraging participants to collaborate on projects (KERNEL, 2021). Finally, EduDAO is a global structure supporting university students and communities by offering opportunities such as project funding, idea development, and collaboration between universities (EduDAO, 2022).

In Türkiye, DAOs have not yet developed into directly applicable structures in the field of education. However, there are initiatives and awareness campaigns based on the fundamental principles of DAOs. One of the most notable examples is TurkeyDAO, established after the 2023 Kahramanmaraş earthquake. This organization, created for humanitarian aid, developed a blockchain-based fundraising system to support the reconstruction of schools in the affected areas. TurkeyDAO has prioritized community participation and transparency through decentralized structures, aiming to ensure the fair distribution of funds (TurkeyDAO, 2023). Additionally, LaykaDAO, founded to discuss and raise awareness of DAO principles, focuses on the potential of Web3 ecosystems and decentralized governance models in education in Türkiye. LaykaDAO provides participants with information about decentralized structures and explores the applicability of these models in various fields (LaykaDAO, 2022).

The use of DAOs in educational processes enables teachers and students to control their own processes, lead projects, and have a greater say in education. These structures support a libertarian and innovative approach by moving away from centralization in education (Swan, 2015). At the same time, by offering a democratic educational environment, they contribute to making educational systems align with the principles of flexibility and transparency (Wright & De Filippi, 2015).

2.6.3. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for Teachers

In DeEd, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are structures where teachers collaborate continuously to enhance their professional development, pedagogical skills, and student achievement. PLCs support teachers' autonomy and effectiveness in decision-making processes, while also providing opportunities to develop strategies tailored to local needs (Stoll et al., 2006). These communities aim to improve teaching methods and student learning through knowledge sharing and collaborative work (DuFour, 2004).

Additionally, PLCs offer a framework that strengthens teachers' professional identities, increases job satisfaction, and encourages participation in school-based decision-making processes (Hord, 1997). Typically, PLCs are organized around regular meetings and collaborative activities. Teachers come together to analyze student data, discuss effective teaching strategies, and make improvements (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). Key elements of these communities include knowledge sharing, solidarity, and collaboration toward common goals.

PLCs contribute to the development of teachers' professional skills and the creation of a more democratic school structure (DuFour & Eaker, 1998), while supporting teacher agency, enhancing teachers' professional growth and pedagogical effectiveness, and directly impacting student achievement (Stoll et al., 2006). Furthermore, PLCs stand out globally as effective structures where teachers develop their pedagogical practices and share their experiences.

According to the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), while most teachers participate in professional development activities, they specifically request more support in areas such as digital technologies, special education needs, and student behavior management (OECD, 2019a). School climate and administrative support, key factors in job satisfaction, are directly linked to teachers feeling valued. TALIS suggests that teachers should play a more active role in PLCs to strengthen teacher agency.

Globally, there are active PLCs that support teachers' professional development and foster innovation in education. The Edcamp movement, which originated in the United States, enables teachers to engage in discussions on topics they need, develop solutions, and share their experiences. These events offer customized professional development opportunities (Carpenter & Linton, 2016). The Global Teacher Prize

Community, created by the Varkey Foundation, brings together teachers from around the world to facilitate global knowledge sharing and collaboration (Varkey Foundation, 2022). Additionally, the PLC model developed by DuFour and Eaker (1998) has been adopted in many schools. The communities within Chicago Public Schools allow teachers to regularly meet, analyze student achievement data, discuss teaching strategies, and set common goals. This model encourages teachers to collaborate to enhance student learning.

The Collaborative Professional Learning model used in the United Kingdom encourages the exchange of information between schools to support teachers' professional development (Coldwell, 2017). Additionally, Networked Learning Communities is a collaborative model that facilitates the sharing of knowledge and experiences among teachers from different schools. Supported by the National College for School Leadership, these networks contribute to the dissemination of innovative teaching methods and increase inter-school collaboration. Projects developed by teachers in London, focused on STEM education, are shared with other schools, helping to spread innovative approaches in education (Stoll et al., 2006).

The Microsoft Education Community, a digital PLC example, fosters knowledge sharing and encourages new learning methods by offering online courses, seminars, and resources to teachers worldwide (Microsoft, 2021). TeachMeet events, originating in the United Kingdom, allow teachers to share their classroom practices through short presentations, contributing to the development of their pedagogical strategies (TeachMeet, n.d.). Similarly, the Lesson Study model, originating from Japan, brings together teachers in the processes of lesson planning, implementation, and observation. Teachers use feedback from observations to enhance their pedagogical strategies and improve student achievement (Lewis, 2009). The Toyota City Education Commission actively implements this model with the goal of enhancing teachers' professional development (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004).

The Collaborative Teacher Inquiry model implemented in Ontario, Canada, allows teachers to research a teaching issue and develop solutions. Research-based approaches developed by teachers in the Toronto District School Board to address classroom management problems enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and positively contribute to student learning (Kutsyuruba et al., 2015). In Singapore, the Teacher Learning Communities, supported by the Ministry of Education, provide a structure that continually supports teachers' professional development. Teachers at Raffles

Institution improve their pedagogical practices by sharing classroom experiences and experimenting with new approaches, and they sustain their development through feedback processes (Ng, 2008).

In Türkiye, PLCs for teachers are implemented through various practices to support teachers' professional development, enhance collaboration, and promote innovative teaching methods. These communities enable teachers to exchange information with their colleagues, share experiences, and learn about innovations in their fields.

Eğitimde İnovasyon Derneği *(Association for Innovation in Education)* is a community aimed at enhancing teachers' professional skills and promoting STEM-focused innovative teaching methods. The association regularly organizes workshops and seminars, providing a platform where teachers can learn collaboratively. This initiative serves as an effective example of a learning community designed to enhance both digital and pedagogical skills of teachers (Eğitimde İnovasyon Derneği, 2023).

Öğretmen Akademisi Vakfı *(ÖRAV; Teachers' Academy Foundation)* is an organization offering various programs across Türkiye to foster the growth and development of teachers professionally. The foundation's *Professional Learning Communities* project enables teachers to collaborate with their colleagues and share knowledge and experiences. The programs organized by ÖRAV support teachers' development in areas such as classroom management, communication skills, and digital transformation (ÖRAV, 2023).

Eğitim Reformu Girişimi *(The Education Reform Initiative)* is a non-governmental organization that supports the creation of professional learning communities among teachers. Through its annual *Good Practices in Education Conference*, it provides a platform for teachers to learn about innovative practices and share their experiences. This initiative contributes to the formation of professional learning communities among teachers (Eğitim Reformu Girişimi, 2023).

The subject teacher communities under MONE aim to enhance professional collaboration by bringing teachers together within their subject areas. In particular, the *Subject Teacher Meetings* program of the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education stands out as an initiative that develops teachers' professional sharing and joint problem-solving skills. These communities are considered a form of professional learning communities (MEB, 2023b).

The *Learning Teachers Communities* project, supported by Sabancı Vakfı (Sabancı Foundation), encourages teachers to come together and engage in collaborative learning with their colleagues. The project is an initiative that supports teachers from different regions in learning innovative teaching methods and adapting these methods to their classrooms (Sabancı Vakfı, 2023).

2.6.4. Adaptable Curriculum and Decentralized Education

The adaptable curriculum in decentralized education is considered a model where students, teachers, and other stakeholders have greater influence on the educational process. It is a flexible curriculum that can be shaped according to individual needs and local conditions. Instead of fixed curricula determined by central authorities, this model offers a structure that can be continuously updated based on local requirements and student profiles. Aiming to personalize the learning process, the curriculum is customized according to the students' abilities, interests, and learning pace (Tomlinson, 2001).

The adaptable curriculum, tailored to students' individual learning needs, provides an experience that aligns with their learning pace, while being based on a student-centered structure that allows students to control their learning processes and actively participate. Additionally, this flexible structure, which can be adapted to local cultural, social, and economic needs, ensures that educational programs are not limited to general knowledge and skills but are also organized to respond to societal needs (Darling-Hammond, Ancess & Wichterle Ort. (2002).

Continuously updated through technological advancements and modern teaching methods, the adaptable curriculum enables students and teachers to shape the content according to their needs (Van der Vleuten et al., 2010). This framework supports teachers in having greater control over the curriculum, allowing them to modify content according to students' needs, introduce new materials, and provide flexibility in lesson delivery. This promotes teacher agency, enabling teachers to take a more active role in decentralized education (Biesta et al., 2015). By offering content and methods tailored to students' individual needs, this structure enhances learning motivation and supports academic achievement. Furthermore, a curriculum aligned with local needs and student differences strengthens social ties and prepares students for real-life situations they may encounter.

International examples of the adaptable curriculum model demonstrate that this system offers a flexible structure that is aligned with local needs. Finland operates an education system largely controlled by local authorities rather than a central body. The curriculum is implemented with specific flexibilities at each school, with teachers creating content based on students' individual learning needs. As a result, topics and projects specific to the local community are included in the curriculum (Sahlberg, 2011). Montessori schools also provide an adaptable curriculum that supports students' learning based on their individual interests. This model allows students to control their own learning processes and receive education in a structure that is distant from centralization (Lillard, 2017).

High Tech High schools in the United States offer a student-centered, project-based curriculum that encourages the development of projects focused on real-world issues, while also supporting both teachers and students in having greater control over the curriculum (Kallick & Zmuda, 2017). The Escuela Nueva model in Colombia is known for its flexible and adaptable curriculum practices in rural areas. This model provides students the opportunity to learn at their own pace, while offering a learning environment tailored to local needs, guided by teachers (Colbert & Arboleda, 2016). Online platforms such as Khan Academy also implement adaptable curriculum by allowing students to progress at their own pace, while teachers personalize the educational experience by adjusting content based on students' progress (Thompson, 2013).

Adaptable curriculum practices in Türkiye are becoming increasingly widespread, particularly through MONE and some private schools. Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli (Türkiye's Century Education Model) adopts a student-centered approach, aiming to provide a flexible curriculum tailored to students' individual abilities, interests, and learning paces (MEB, 2023a). This model encourages the effective use of technology in education, supporting the development of 21st-century skills such as analytical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. The new assessment tools published by MONE further strengthen this approach. These tools, which include assignments, projects, performance tasks, student portfolios, and presentations, provide a structure that is aligned with students' individual learning processes (MEB, 2023c).

Adaptable curriculum practices are not limited to public schools but are also widely implemented in private schools. The International Baccalaureate (IB) Program

is a model that stands out with its adaptable curriculum structure. This program offers students the opportunity to choose courses based on their individual interests and abilities, providing a student-centered and flexible educational model (International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO], 2023).

In Türkiye, the IB program is implemented in both private and public schools. Among private schools, institutions such as Koç Özel Lisesi (Koç Private High School) and TED Ankara Koleji (TED Ankara College) are examples. These schools are notable for offering a curriculum that supports students' individual learning processes and aligns with international standards. Among public schools, Istanbul Prof. Dr. Mümtaz Turhan Social Sciences High School, which began implementing the IB Diploma Program in 2007, stands out. In addition, various science high schools, Anatolian high schools, and Imam Hatip high schools across Türkiye also implement this program (IBTIBSA, 2023). These schools support students in achieving their individual learning goals.

These practices demonstrate that adaptable curriculum is increasingly embraced in Türkiye, personalizing educational processes by supporting students' individual differences.

3. METHOD

This section includes the research design, context of the study, participants, data collection tools, data collection process, data analysis, reliability and transferability, and the role of the researcher.

3.1. Research Design

This study was conducted using a case study design, which is one of the qualitative research approaches. Qualitative research focuses on in-depth data collection processes aimed at understanding how individuals and groups perceive and experience the world. This method offers the opportunity to collect information in participants' natural environments and provides a descriptive and interpretive analysis process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Flick (2014) defines qualitative research as an interpretive framework used to make sense of phenomena in the social sciences and emphasizes the importance of this approach for analyzing individuals' behaviors in social contexts. Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2018) highlight that qualitative research is a multi-layered process that enables the collection of rich and meaningful data through direct engagement with real-life situations. In this context, data collection methods such as observation, interview, and document analysis are used with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences. The study aims to examine teachers' and students' views on decentralized education practices implemented in a project school.

In a country like Türkiye, with a centralized education system, understanding how decentralized education practices are evaluated by teachers and students is possible through a contextual qualitative analysis. In this regard, interviews with teachers and students, observations during a sample implementation, and document analysis were used as the primary data collection methods.

Since decentralized education practices are based on individual perceptions and experiences, it is crucial to reflect participants' unique perspectives. The qualitative research method allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' thoughts and feelings, enabling an examination of the effects of educational practices on the process (Patton, 2014). Due to its flexibility in data collection and analysis processes, this method was adopted as an appropriate approach for the aims of the study.

In this study, a case study design was applied within a single-case holistic design framework. In this context, the science high school was treated as a single unit of analysis to understand the feasibility of implementing decentralized education approaches within the centralized education system. Yin (2009) states that case studies are an effective method for understanding events in their natural environment. In this regard, the effects of decentralized education practices in the educational setting were examined in detail, and a contextual analysis was conducted. This strategy provides a strong framework for evaluating the effects of decentralized education practices on participants, along with their contexts, during the research process.

3.2. Context of the Study

This study was conducted at one of the leading science high schools in Istanbul. The school where the research was conducted has a vision of equipping students with exceptional abilities in science and mathematics with skills in scientific thinking, innovation, and the ability to compete globally. As of the 2024-2025 academic year, the school has approximately 600 students and 40 teachers. This school, which accepts students from the top 1.56% of the nationwide central exams, stands out with its high academic performance and prestigious position.

The school emphasizes not only the academic success of students but also their social and cultural development. In this context, the promotion of decentralized education practices, particularly in culture-related subjects such as Art, Literature, and English, is a priority. The school principal's emphasis on these types of practices supports teachers in implementing decentralized education more effectively. The sample implementation included in the study focuses on activities conducted in these three subjects. Decentralized education practices are primarily carried out in the 9th and 10th grades, as they are less preferred in higher grades due to university entrance exam preparation. Therefore, the implementations are planned in such a way that they do not overlap with university entrance exam programs.

The study involved a total of 30 students from the 9th and 10th grades, along with 3 teachers from the subjects of Art, Literature, and English. The participating teachers were selected from an experienced and expert staff. In selecting students, the 9th and 10th grades, where decentralized education practices are most intensively implemented, were preferred.

There is a positive relationship between the school administration and teachers' motivation. The administration supports teachers in independently engaging in extracurricular activities and projects, facilitating the more effective implementation of decentralized education practices. This support fosters a positive climate within the school, enhances teacher motivation, and contributes to the diversification of activities that reach students.

The school's physical facilities have been organized in alignment with this vision. In addition to classrooms, the school is equipped with meeting and conference rooms, physics, chemistry, and biology laboratories, a library with an extensive collection of books, sports facilities, and music, art, and maker workshops. Furthermore, a dormitory with a capacity for 160 students and a location close to public transportation provide ease of access and accommodation for students. These facilities offer a supportive learning environment for both teachers and students.

3.3. Participants

In this study, three teachers from the subjects of Art, Literature, and English, working at a project school in Istanbul, along with a total of 30 students from the 9th and 10th grades, participated as the study sample. The participants were selected from individuals capable of providing in-depth responses to the research questions. The teachers work in subjects where decentralized education practices are most intensively implemented and have extensive professional experience. Additionally, the 9th and 10th-grade students were chosen because these grades are where decentralized education practices are more frequently observed. The focus of upper-grade students on intensive preparation for the university entrance exam led to the exclusion of these grades from the study.

In the study, the teachers are represented by the codes Spring, Summer, and Autumn. Spring, who works in the field of Literature, has 20 years of professional experience and has been employed at this school for 7 years. A graduate of a master's program, Spring has participated in various training programs related to decentralized education practices. Summer, who works in the field of English, has 36 years of professional experience and has been employed at this school for 8 years. A graduate of a master's program, Summer has received training in decentralized education. Autumn, who works in the field of Art, has 16 years of teaching experience and has been employed at this school for 6 years. A graduate of a bachelor's program, Autumn

has participated in decentralized education courses. These teachers have received training on decentralized education practices and possess a profile that supports student-centered approaches in their respective fields.

The students are represented by the codes Daisy, Lily, Rose, Sunflower, Tulip, Orchid, Lavender, Peony, Marigold, Iris, Daffodil, Poppy, Bluebell, Hyacinth, Violet, Jasmine, Magnolia, Camellia, Azalea, Chrysanthemum, Hibiscus, Geranium, Snapdragon, Zinnia, Anemone, Freesia, Gardenia, Lilac, Amaryllis, and Petunia. Among the total of 300 students in the 9th and 10th grades, 30 students, representing 10% of the sample, were included in the study. In qualitative research, it is essential to determine the sample size in a way that is appropriate for the research purpose and capable of providing in-depth data (Patton, 2014).

In this context, it is believed that the selected 30 students can provide sufficient depth of data regarding decentralized education practices and enable the study to be answered comprehensively. In qualitative research, when data saturation is reached, the sample size is considered sufficient (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the 10% representation rate expanded the scope of the research and ensured the representation of different perspectives. As a result, the validity of the findings was strengthened, and the reflection of different student experiences in the study was ensured (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

Among the students participating in the study, 15 are from the 9th grade and the other 15 are from the 10th grade. Of the 15 students in the 9th grade, 8 are female and 7 are male. Nine students in this grade stated that they chose the science high school because of its prestigious reputation and high academic performance, while six students expressed that they chose the school to develop themselves in the fields of science and mathematics and to pursue a career as a scientist. Among the 15 students in the 10th grade, 5 are female and 10 are male. In this group, ten students mentioned that they chose the science high school because of its prestige and academic success, while three students made this choice to improve themselves in the fields of science and mathematics. Of the other two students, one indicated that their score on the high school entrance exam was sufficient to be accepted to this school, and the other chose the school because it is close to their home.

These data show that the majority of students in both grade levels chose the science high school primarily due to its prestige and academic performance. Additionally, factors such as self-development in scientific fields, exam scores, and

proximity to home also played a role in the decision-making process. This supports the importance of the study conducted in the grade levels where decentralized education practices are most intensively observed.

3.4. Data Collection

In this study, semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation techniques were used together as data collection methods. The semi-structured interview form was designed to include open-ended questions to deeply understand the participants' experiences and ensure they could express themselves comfortably (Patton, 2014). The interview form was prepared to understand the participants' views on decentralized education practices and provided them with the flexibility to express their unique perspectives. The interviews were recorded with the participants' consent and then carefully transcribed to prepare the data for analysis. This process was carried out meticulously to maintain the accuracy of the data and enhance reliability (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Another data collection method, observation, was conducted to understand the practical aspects of decentralized education practices and to support the data obtained from the interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2014). Field notes taken during the interviews were expanded to include details supporting the participants' statements, as well as the general atmosphere of the school, teacher-student relationships, and the support provided by the school leadership for decentralized practices. Classroom observations were used to examine students' participation in the learning process, teachers' guidance approaches, and the impact of interdisciplinary work.

Finally, the documentation method was used as a complementary data source to concretely understand decentralized education practices. In this context, lesson plans, assessment rubrics, student work, and exhibition photographs related to decentralized education practices carried out through interdisciplinary collaboration in English, Art, and Literature classes were examined. The documents reflected the individualized and student-centered structure of decentralized education, while the exhibition photographs visually supported students' active participation and the tangible outcomes produced.

These three methods were used together to provide a holistic response to the research questions and to evaluate decentralized education practices from multiple perspectives (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

3.4.1. Interview Form

In this study, data were collected using semi-structured interview questions. The semi-structured interview form is a commonly preferred data collection tool in qualitative research because it allows participants to express their opinions, experiences, and feelings in detail (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). This form provides the researcher with the flexibility to add new questions during the interview and adjust questions based on the participants' responses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

In line with the purpose of the study, a series of questions were prepared by reviewing the relevant literature. From these questions, open, focused, unidimensional, and non-directive questions were selected to create the student and teacher interview forms. The Teacher Interview Form is presented in **Appendix 1**, and the Student Interview Form is presented in **Appendix 2**. During the preparation process of the forms, four experts were consulted to enhance the reliability and transferability of the study (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009). Additionally, a language expert specialized in qualitative research was asked to review the interview questions. Based on the feedback from the experts, the questions in the interview forms were re-examined, their clarity was checked, and necessary corrections were made. This process supported the transferability of the study (Creswell, 2013).

In accordance with ethical principles, an interview protocol was prepared for the teacher participants and sent to them via email. The interview protocol for teacher participants is presented in **Appendix 3**. The protocol included information that participants could terminate the interview at any time and that their responses would remain confidential. For student participants, first, the students were informed, and then, since they were minors, their parents were contacted. The content and purpose of the study were explained to the parents over the phone, and the interview protocol was sent to them in writing. The interview protocol for student participants is presented in **Appendix 4**.

The interviews were conducted in a specially arranged space within the school where the participants felt comfortable. With the participants' consent, the interviews

were recorded using a voice recorder, and notes were taken during the interview. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes.

During the interviews, field notes were also taken by observing the participants' attitudes and behaviors. Field notes consist of the researcher's personal observations, thoughts, and impressions recorded during observation, interviews, and other data collection methods. These notes help to gain a deeper understanding of the research context and allow for a detailed follow-up of the research process (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). These notes include elements that are difficult to record, such as the participants' gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, gaze, or implied meanings, but which strengthen the coherence of the research. Thus, the data obtained from the interviews contributed to a better understanding of the context and enriched the analysis process.

3.4.2. Documentation

In this study, the documentation method was used as an additional data collection tool. Document analysis is an important data collection method used in qualitative research that helps to understand the context of the study. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) note that documents carry traces of past events and provide the researcher with a rich data source. This method supports other data collection tools, such as interviews and observations, thereby enhancing the reliability of the research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018)

In the context of the study, lesson plans, student-created products, and exhibition photographs were examined to observe the concrete outcomes of decentralized education practices. Documents serve as an important source for understanding how decentralized education practices are planned, implemented, and evaluated. The examination of these documents facilitated an understanding of the effects of decentralized education on students' creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration skills.

Particularly, data were collected from a decentralized practice example. In this context, the relevant lesson plans were examined, and the products created by students during the lesson were documented. The display of these products in an exhibition helped to better understand the contributions of the decentralized education process to students' creativity and self-confidence development. Photographs taken during the

exhibition and event documents were included in the study as tangible outcomes of decentralized education.

In the documentation process, the collected materials were analyzed in line with the research context, and written consent was obtained from the participants to enhance data reliability. Yin (2009) emphasizes that document analysis, when combined with other data collection methods, can strengthen the research findings. The data obtained from the documents complemented the interview and observation results, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the study's findings.

The data obtained during the documentation process were stored and kept in compliance with research ethical principles before being analyzed. This process supported the study's adherence to ethical standards and enhanced its reliability (Creswell, 2013). In the study, a lesson plan from a decentralized education example implemented at the school and visuals of the products created by students during the implementation process were documented. The lesson plan and assessment rubric used are presented in Appendix 5 to support the context and findings of the research. These documents provided an important data source for understanding the effects of decentralized education practices on students' creativity and collaboration skills.

3.4.3. Observation

Observation is one of the fundamental data collection tools used in case studies to examine and interpret events and phenomena in their natural settings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In this study, the observation method was used to understand the effects and dynamics of decentralized education practices in the classroom environment. The observation was conducted in an unstructured manner to record the behaviors, attitudes, and expressions of students and teachers at every step, from lesson planning to implementation and assessment.

During the observations, the students' level of participation in the practice, the collaboration they exhibited in group work, their ability to take individual responsibility, and their attitudes toward decentralized practices were noted. Additionally, the teachers' roles in guiding the process and their alignment with decentralized education principles were observed. This process aimed to understand the impact of decentralized education practices on the teaching process. Conducting the observation in its natural flow allowed for the realistic examination of participants' behaviors, which enhanced the reliability of the study. Moreover, the data obtained

during the observation were supported and verified with other data collection methods, such as interviews and document analysis. This method provided an opportunity to comprehensively assess the findings of the research.

3.5. Data Collection Process

The data for the study were collected through face-to-face interviews. Prior to the data collection process, the necessary official permissions were obtained from the Ethics Committee of Yıldız Technical University, and the relevant documents are presented in **Appendix 6**. In line with the purpose of the study, a series of questions were prepared separately for teachers and students by reviewing the relevant literature. From these questions, open, focused, unidimensional, and non-directive questions were selected to create the interview forms. The interview forms are presented in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2.**

During the preparation process of the forms, four experts were consulted to enhance the reliability and transferability of the study (Yin, 2009). Additionally, a language expert specialized in qualitative research was asked to review the interview form. Based on the feedback from the experts, the questions in the interview form were re-examined, their clarity was checked, and necessary corrections were made. This process significantly contributed to the transferability of the study (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009).

Prior to conducting the interviews, interview protocols providing information about the content of the interview were prepared and sent to the teacher participants via email. For student participants, first, the students were informed, and then, because they were minors, their parents were contacted by phone to explain the content and purpose of the study, and subsequently, the written interview protocol was provided. This protocol included information about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of personal information and data, and the participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time. The preparation process of the protocol aimed to protect the participants' rights and ensure that the research process was conducted in accordance with ethical principles. The teacher and the student interview protocols related to the study are presented in **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 4.**

Before the interviews, appointments were made with the participants, and the interviews were conducted in a specially arranged space within the school where the participants could feel comfortable. Prior to starting the interviews, a printed version

of the interview protocol was shared with the participants, and their consent was obtained. With the participants' consent, the interviews were recorded using a voice recorder. In addition, important statements, tone of voice, and facial expressions of the participants were noted during the interview. To contribute to the reliability of the research, it is important to conduct the interviews in a sincere and comfortable environment (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, the first 5-10 minutes of the interviews were spent engaging in casual conversations about everyday life to establish communication with the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes.

During the interviews, field notes were taken by observing the participants' attitudes. Field notes allow the researcher to focus on a more complex and richer context during the qualitative data collection process and enrich the collected data (Creswell, 2013). These notes include elements that are difficult to record, such as the participants' gestures, facial expressions, and other cues, but which are important for understanding the context of the research. Thus, the analysis of the interview data was made more comprehensive and meaningful.

Case studies aim to address events and phenomena in their natural flow, and therefore observation is considered one of the most important tools serving this purpose. In this study, observation was used as a crucial data collection method to help understand how decentralized education practices were implemented. To support the data set, unstructured observation was preferred, and every step, from lesson planning to implementation practice and evaluation, was included in the observation. During this process, the attitudes, behaviors, and expressions of students and teachers were carefully examined.

During the observation, not only the relationships between teachers and students but also the attitudes of the school administration toward decentralized education practices and how they responded to teachers' requests were analyzed. This provided an important perspective for understanding the impact of decentralized practices on enhancing the overall operation of the school. The behaviors and expressions of students and teachers during the process were recorded through field notes, which were used as a source to enrich and deepen the data of the study. In addition to the field notes, the findings obtained from the observation were supported by other data collection methods, providing the opportunity to comprehensively evaluate the various dimensions of decentralized education practices.

3.6. Data Analysis

In this study, content analysis was used to systematically and in-depth examine the qualitative data. Content analysis is an analytical technique that allows data to be organized under meaningful themes and interpreted (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In this method, the collected data were analyzed and interpreted by going through specific stages.

The interview audio recordings were transcribed verbatim to obtain raw data. The written data were carefully reviewed for each interview individually, with all transcripts meticulously analyzed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dataset. To ensure in-depth familiarity with the data, all recordings were revisited multiple times before proceeding to the coding phase. During the coding process, recurring expressions, concepts, and themes in participants' responses were identified. This step facilitated the creation of themes aligned with the research questions and the study's objectives (Creswell, 2013). Significant statements and noteworthy points emerging from participants' responses were thoroughly analyzed throughout the coding process.

During the coding process, key words and critical expressions in the data were initially identified and classified under relevant themes. Subsequently, themes were developed, and the codes under each theme were reviewed again. In this process, related expressions were grouped together to ensure greater consistency within the themes. Simultaneously, contrasting opinions and opposing statements were also considered, enabling a balanced analysis across the data. Relationships between themes and sub-themes were detailed to create a meaningful structure for each theme.

After completing the coding process, the identified themes were focused upon to generate findings that addressed the research questions. These findings facilitated the broader interpretation of the data and were elaborated in alignment with the study's objectives. Additionally, the relationships between themes and sub-themes were carefully analyzed, ensuring that the study reached conclusions from a more holistic perspective.

This process enabled an in-depth analysis of the research data and ensured reliable results. The findings obtained through the content analysis method were elaborated with a systematic approach, enhancing the study's reliability and validity (Creswell, 2013; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

3.7. Trustworthiness and Transferability

In qualitative research, the concepts of validity and reliability are often replaced by trustworthiness and transferability. In this study, various measures were implemented to enhance the trustworthiness and transferability of the research.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the research, the interview questions were developed in consultation with four experts specializing in qualitative research methodology. This process was undertaken to improve the clarity and appropriateness of the questions employed in the study. Feedback from the experts informed subsequent revisions to the interview form, ensuring alignment with the research objectives. This procedure, referred to as peer debriefing, represents a critical measure in strengthening the credibility and dependability of the study (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, the interview questions were subjected to a thorough review by a linguist with expertise in qualitative research, ensuring their clarity and coherence. These methodological adjustments also contributed significantly to the transferability of the research findings (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009).

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the research, field notes were meticulously maintained throughout the interviews. These notes encompassed the researcher's personal observations, reflections, and impressions recorded during interviews, observations, and other data collection processes (Emerson et al., 2011). Field notes captured non-verbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, and implied meanings—elements that are challenging to document but crucial for reinforcing the contextual integrity of the study. By increasing the depth of the data, these notes facilitated a more comprehensive and nuanced analysis. After the interviews, the recordings were reviewed for accuracy, and member checks were conducted by seeking participants' confirmation of the transcriptions. This process significantly contributed to the transferability of the findings.

To further ensure trustworthiness, interviews were conducted in a comfortable and relaxed setting (Creswell, 2013). Particular attention was given to selecting locations and times that allowed participants to feel at ease. Before the interviews, a detailed interview protocol was prepared, including information about the study's purpose, data confidentiality, and participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time. This protocol was shared with participants, and their informed consent was obtained. These measures were rigorously implemented to support the trustworthiness

and transferability of the research. All precautions taken throughout this process contributed to the provision of in-depth data while ensuring the study adhered to qualitative research standards.

3.8. The Role of the Researcher

In quantitative research, the role of the researcher is minimized, and data is collected through standardized instruments to achieve objective results (Babbie, 2013). Consequently, the researcher adopts a more passive role and avoids exerting personal influence on the process. In contrast, qualitative research relies on the researcher's active involvement and interpretations to make sense of the data, making the researcher's role more prominent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

In qualitative research, the researcher's active engagement in data collection, analysis, and interpretation is critical. The trust-based relationship established between the researcher and participants facilitates the collection of more in-depth data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Furthermore, the researcher's ability to recognize and manage their biases enhances the reliability and validity of qualitative research (Creswell, 2013).

The role of the researcher is categorized into two main types: insider and outsider (Akarsu, 2019). An insider researcher refers to an individual who belongs to the environment or group being studied, while an outsider researcher denotes someone who is not part of the environment or group (Breen, 2007).

Working as an insider researcher offers the natural advantage of contributing to a deeper flow of information; however, it also carries the risk of bias. Dywer and Buckle (2009) argue that insider researchers, due to their pre-existing relationships with participants, can foster more open and trust-based communication. This dynamic often encourages participants to provide more sincere and honest feedback. On the other hand, DeLyser (2001) emphasizes that the insider researcher's obligation to conduct objective analysis may pose challenges in maintaining impartiality. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the advantages and disadvantages of working as an insider researcher to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the study.

In this study, I am considered an insider researcher as I work as a teacher at the institution where the research was conducted. I hold a bachelor's degree in English Language Teaching and have 10 years of professional teaching experience, with one year spent working at this project school. Sharing similar professional criteria with the teacher participants and being closely familiar with the students facilitated my deep

understanding of the research context and enabled me to establish a natural rapport with the participants. This dynamic contributed to creating an environment where participants felt more comfortable expressing their views. However, this insider position also required me to exercise heightened caution to minimize the influence of biases. In this context, I sought expert opinions while designing the interview questions and analyzing the data. Additionally, I reviewed the data multiple times to ensure its accuracy. These measures were meticulously implemented to enhance the objectivity and trustworthiness of the study (Creswell, 2013).

During the data collection process, I assumed dual roles as both a data collector and an analyst. To ensure participants could freely express their views during the interviews, I refrained from being directive and instead asked in-depth questions. Additionally, I maintained field notes by recording subtle details such as participants' gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice (Emerson et al., 2011). In the data analysis phase, I carefully coded and categorized the data into themes, striving to interpret it objectively. I made a conscious effort to separate my own views from the data. To ensure the accuracy of the coding and analysis processes, I sought feedback from an expert and conducted peer debriefing (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

Throughout the research process, I fully adhered to ethical principles. I provided participants with detailed information about the study's purpose, obtained their written consent, and ensured the process was entirely voluntary. Additionally, I committed to maintaining participant confidentiality and using the collected data solely for research purposes.

As an insider researcher, my trust-based relationships enabled me to identify participants who could provide the most accurate data and to create an environment where they felt free to express themselves openly. During the analysis and interpretation phases, I regularly sought support from my advisor to enhance the reliability and validity of the study. This approach contributed to ensuring the trustworthiness of the research and achieving objective results.

4. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings and interpretations derived from the research conducted to examine teachers' and students' perspectives on decentralized education practices in project schools. The findings are structured according to the research questions and are categorized based on the views of different participant groups. Two main categories have emerged: teachers' perspectives and students' perspectives. The section first provides the findings from teachers, followed by the findings from students. Finally, an example of a decentralized education practice implemented in the studied school is presented.

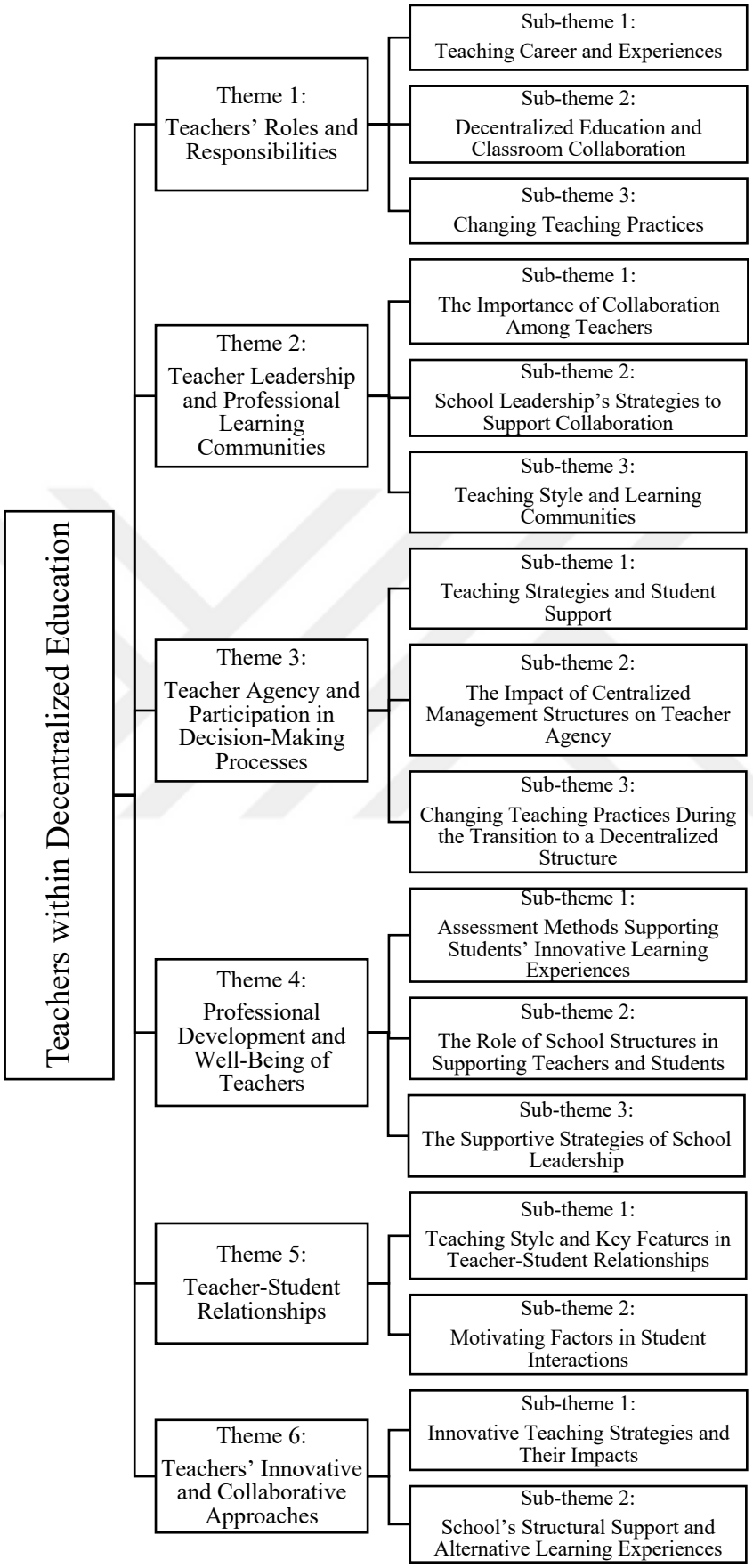
In this study, a metaphorical framework was adopted to code teachers and students. Decentralized education symbolizes respect for individual differences and developmental cycles within the learning environment. Within this context, teachers were coded as seasons, and students were coded as flowers that bloom according to the conditions of those seasons. Just as seasons enable the blooming of different flowers within the cycle of nature, teachers guide each student by respecting their unique developmental path and helping them realize their individual potential. This framework allows each student to complete their learning journey at their own pace and capacity.

Teachers were coded as Spring, Summer, and Autumn, while students were represented using the following codes: Daisy, Lily, Rose, Sunflower, Tulip, Orchid, Lavender, Peony, Marigold, Iris, Daffodil, Poppy, Bluebell, Hyacinth, Violet, Jasmine, Magnolia, Camellia, Azalea, Chrysanthemum, Hibiscus, Geranium, Snapdragon, Zinnia, Anemone, Freesia, Gardenia, Lilac, Amaryllis, and Petunia.

4.1. Teachers within Decentralized Education

As a result of the content analysis conducted in parallel with the research questions, six themes emerged under the heading "Teachers within Decentralized Education": "Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities," "Teacher Leadership and Professional Learning Communities," "Teacher Agency and Participation in Decision-Making Processes," "Professional Development and Well-Being of Teachers," "Teacher-Student Relationships," and "Teachers' Innovative and Collaborative Approaches." These themes are presented in alignment with the research questions.

Figure 4.1.1. Thematic Framework: Teachers within Decentralized Education



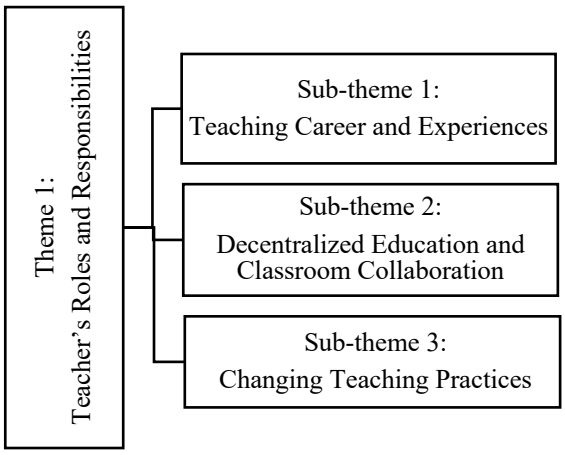
4.1.2. Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities

The theme of "Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities" reflects how teachers assume various roles and responsibilities within the context of decentralized education. Participant teachers described transitioning from being mere transmitters of knowledge to becoming guides, collaborators, and supporters of students' individual development processes.

In the study, teachers were asked the following questions: *What are your experiences with centralized and decentralized education practices throughout your teaching career?, What is your perspective on decentralized education practices? How do you think these practices enhance classroom interaction and collaboration?, During the transition to decentralized education practices, what changes or adaptations did you make in your teaching approach?* The responses to these questions formed the foundation for identifying this theme and its sub-themes.

In this context, three sub-themes emerged: "Teaching Career and Experiences," "Decentralized Education and Classroom Collaboration," and "Changing Teaching Practices." These sub-themes highlight the multifaceted roles teachers adopt in decentralized education settings, emphasizing their dynamic adaptation to new educational approaches.

Figure 4.1.2.1. Theme of Teacher's Roles and Responsibilities and Sub-themes



The sub-theme of "Teaching Career and Experiences" encompasses teachers' journeys through decentralized education and their reflections on this transformative process. Teachers shared their insights as follows:

Spring: *During the centralized education process, as teachers, we were expected to closely follow the curriculum and focus heavily on preparing students for centralized*

exams to measure their success. However, when we expanded the system with decentralized education practices, my role as a teacher shifted to focusing more on students' individual needs, discovering their interests, and guiding them. In this process, I started interacting more with my students and developing projects tailored to their areas of interest. This needs-based approach placed the student at the center and positioned me as a guide. Initially, this felt like I wasn't doing enough, but over time, seeing my students become more inquisitive, determined, and eager to learn brought me great satisfaction in teaching. Literature is life itself. The goal of us teachers is to prepare students for life, so why should the education we provide be limited to textbook knowledge? There's always more—while nurturing their minds, we must also touch their hearts.

Spring highlights the transition in a teacher's focus from curriculum-driven responsibilities in centralized education to a more student-centered approach in decentralized education. Spring emphasizes that the primary role of the teacher in a decentralized system is to guide students by addressing their individual needs. By developing projects based on the interests of students, Spring observed how these learners became more curious, determined, and eager to learn. Furthermore, Spring reimagines literature not simply as a subject for transferring knowledge but as a reflection of life itself, stressing the importance of nurturing both students' minds and their hearts. This approach reflects the broader objective of preparing students for life, a core principle of decentralized education.

Spring's account illustrates how decentralized education redefines the teacher's role, expanding beyond traditional instruction to include responsibilities as a mentor, guide, and source of inspiration. The initial feeling of "not doing enough" reveals both the autonomy decentralized education offers teachers and the challenges of adapting to this freedom. This experience exemplifies the transformation in mindset and practice that decentralized education demands of teachers.

Summer: *In a centralized system, we were all walking the same path. Students' success was evaluated based on exam results. However, in a decentralized structure, I realized that I needed to act as a guide and help each student find their own path. This gave me the chance to see the teaching profession from a different perspective. I realized that another kind of teaching was possible. During this 34-year period, I worked in highly structured schools. I worked in many schools where the curriculum focused solely on preparing students for exams, but preparing for exams wasn't enough for life.*

Some of my students graduated from prestigious universities and pursued well-regarded careers, yet they lacked communication skills, personal development, and self-confidence. The system played a significant role in raising them this way, but I could have made a great difference with my own interventions. When this awareness developed, the change came naturally.

Summer describes working in a centralized system as akin to walking the same path, where students' success was measured by exam results, highlighting a critical stance toward the homogeneous and exam-focused nature of centralized structures. Summer's awareness gained through decentralized education emphasizes that teaching goes beyond simply transmitting knowledge; it involves helping each student find their own path. This teacher's expression of having the opportunity to view the teaching profession from a different perspective thanks to the decentralized system demonstrates how decentralized education enables teachers to reassess their pedagogical approaches.

Summer's experience shows that a student-centered approach focuses not only on academic success but also on the personal development of students. Reflecting on their previous work in schools where students were solely prepared for exams, Summer notes that this approach led to individuals with weak communication skills and low self-confidence. They emphasize that decentralized education makes it possible to overcome these shortcomings. This perspective demonstrates the teacher's responsibility to evaluate students not only academically but also from a holistic standpoint, enriching the teaching profession in the process.

Autumn: *In a decentralized system, I can provide my students with more freedom. This freedom allows them to discover their own creativity, and as a teacher, I act solely as a guide, not trying to fit them into certain molds. In science high schools, the general expectation is for students to achieve admission to a high-scoring program at a prestigious university. However, at this school, as teachers, we aim to prepare them for life. Our students graduate not only with academic success but also with significant social skills. The expectation of university success for science high school students crushes them under the pressure of solving tests. Six years ago, when the principal called me to this school, I told them, "If you want me to only have students solve tests, I won't work like that." When I explained that I am a teacher who wants to instill a love for art and painting in children, the principal clearly expressed that they would support any work beneficial to students. This is a huge gain for a school like this. These*

children become doctors and engineers. Art broadens their horizons. I will share something very personal. My cesarean scar is crooked. My doctor made a wrong cut and stitch. This is a reality that negatively affected me. Why would a surgeon make a crooked cut? When our children become doctors, they will graduate from this school having learned basic drawing techniques, and they won't make such mistakes. This is a very simple but very important example. In the workshop, I teach them drawing techniques. Normally, if I followed the curriculum, I would have to teach modern art topics, but I adjust my program according to the needs of the students. The principal allows me this flexibility.

Autumn emphasizes that decentralized education allows them to provide students with greater freedom, enabling them to explore their creativity while the teacher remains solely in a guiding role. Highlighting the importance of students developing social and artistic skills, even in an academically focused school like a science high school, Autumn points out that decentralized education makes it possible to foster these competencies. They stress that their goal is not only to ensure students' academic success but also to prepare them as well-rounded individuals ready for life.

Autumn's statements illustrate how decentralized education offers teachers greater flexibility and freedom to integrate art and creativity into the learning process. Believing that teaching students drawing techniques can benefit their future careers (for example, as surgeons), Autumn underscores that education is not merely about transferring knowledge but about equipping students with essential life skills. Their experience demonstrates how decentralized education enables teachers to adapt curricula to students' individual needs and to take on the mission of preparing them more comprehensively for life.

These responses highlight the transformative power of decentralized education on teachers and how it fosters a profound reevaluation of the teaching profession. In such a system, teachers take on the responsibility of supporting not only students' academic achievements but also their individual potential and interests, promoting holistic development. It is evident that teachers move beyond the constraints of centralized structures to develop a student-centered, liberating teaching model. Teachers experience the satisfaction of preparing students for life rather than merely focusing on exam-oriented systems. Throughout this process, they rediscover their profession and strengthen their sense of purpose in education. Each teacher expresses the joy of not only imparting knowledge but also acting as a guide, supporter, and

source of inspiration for their students in a decentralized education framework. This analysis underscores how decentralized education deepens teachers' pedagogical understanding and enables them to leave a more meaningful impact on their students. It highlights the potential of such a system to empower teachers to nurture both the intellectual and personal growth of their students, creating a richer educational experience for all.

In the sub-theme of "Decentralized Education and Classroom Collaboration," teachers' perspectives on the increased collaboration within the classroom under a decentralized structure were analyzed. In this system, teachers adopt a guiding role that supports students' learning through group work and mutual interaction. Teachers shared their thoughts as follows:

Spring: *I observe that the decentralized structure allows students to collaborate more in the classroom. Previously, students were focused on exam-oriented studying, but now they are learning by collaborating on their own projects. This change requires me not only to impart knowledge but also to guide them in working as a team. Teamwork is not a common practice for many students during middle school, as they are placed in high schools based on a nationwide exam. Adapting to a group, taking on a role, and expressing oneself effectively are among the most fundamental skills my students need to learn. In this school, I aim to ensure they develop these skills in my class.*

Spring emphasizes the shift from exam-focused learning to project-based and collaborative processes brought about by decentralized education. According to Spring, collaboration is not merely about sharing knowledge but serves as a critical tool for students to learn how to participate in a team, express themselves effectively, and take on responsibilities. Highlighting that students transitioning from middle school are often unfamiliar with group work, Spring asserts that the decentralized structure significantly contributes to the development of these fundamental skills. This perspective demonstrates how collaboration in decentralized education aids students in improving their social adaptation, sense of responsibility, and communication skills.

Summer: *In decentralized education, students interact with each other more frequently. As a teacher, my role is to support this interaction. Encouraging students to think together and solve problems collaboratively is incredibly important. It strengthens the bond within the classroom and enhances the learning process through peer-to-peer interaction. In English classes, I implement a variety of activities for the*

students. The most significant is gamification. When I gamify the lesson, participation is remarkably high, and students become open to collaboration. It's so crucial.

Summer emphasizes that collaboration enhances student interaction. According to Summer's observations, students engage more frequently with one another within a decentralized structure, developing skills such as collective thinking and problem-solving. Summer particularly highlights the use of gamification strategies in lessons to strengthen the collaborative process. Through gamification, students demonstrate higher participation, fostering an environment of open communication and solidarity within the classroom.

Summer's perspective illustrates how collaboration cultivates a sense of belonging among students and contributes to peer-to-peer learning. Additionally, it underscores the teacher's role in strengthening the bond between students and promoting collaboration, thereby making the learning process more dynamic and engaging.

Autumn: *In art classes especially, thanks to the freedom provided by the decentralized structure, students collaborate with each other more. They support each other's projects and realize their creativity by sharing it. This also allows me, as a teacher, to guide them more and observe their processes, intervening only when necessary. If it's not needed, if they don't require it, I don't take any steps that would hinder their creativity. The process unfolds on its own.*

Autumn highlights that students support one another's projects, share their creativity, and learn from each other during this process. In this context, Autumn positions themselves as more of a guide, choosing not to intervene unless students have a specific need. By giving students the freedom to express their creativity, discover themselves through collaboration, and develop their individual skills, Autumn provides a space that encourages growth. This perspective reveals how collaboration supports students in building self-confidence, fostering original thinking, and developing independent working skills.

These insights demonstrate that collaboration plays a significant role not only in academic learning but also in social and personal development. Collaboration enables students to develop diverse perspectives, strengthen their communication skills, and adapt to group dynamics, while also providing a platform for them to showcase their individual creativity. This finding highlights how the decentralized structure fosters collaboration, enhancing students' social interaction skills and helping them become more confident and independent individuals.

Spring's emphasis on the importance of teamwork and taking individual responsibility in group projects underscores the social framework that collaboration builds within education. Summer's use of gamification to increase student interaction and maintain high levels of motivation illustrates how collaboration adds an engaging element to the learning process. Autumn's approach of guiding students while providing them with creative space demonstrates that collaboration fosters individual creativity and original thinking.

This analysis reveals that collaboration within decentralized education provides a structure that enhances students' academic and social skills while positioning teachers as guides. In a decentralized learning environment, students collaborate to access knowledge in a more meaningful way, while also improving their social skills and creative thinking abilities. Teachers, on the other hand, guide students according to their needs, fostering collaboration and recognizing and supporting them as individuals. Thus, collaboration in decentralized education represents a holistic approach that not only facilitates knowledge acquisition but also equips students with essential life skills.

In the sub-theme of "Changing Teaching Practices," the transformation in teaching styles experienced by teachers during the transition to decentralized education practices was examined. Teachers shared their thoughts as follows:

Spring: *Incorporating decentralized education practices into my lessons required me to adopt a more flexible teaching approach. Previously, I worked within the framework of a set curriculum, but now I take students' individual differences into greater consideration and shape my lessons according to their areas of interest. While I cover the curriculum thoroughly for exam preparation, I also enrich my lessons with many extracurricular activities.*

Spring emphasizes that decentralized education necessitates a more flexible teaching approach. By considering students' individual differences and shaping lesson content accordingly, Spring notes that, while adhering to the curriculum for exam preparation, they also organize extracurricular activities to enhance their lessons. This demonstrates the teacher's effort to go beyond academic success and foster students' broader development. Spring's flexibility in their teaching approach aligns with the freedom offered by decentralized education, creating opportunities to provide students with a broader perspective and cater to their diverse interests. This approach reflects

an educational philosophy focused not merely on transmitting knowledge but on supporting students' personal interests and abilities.

Summer: *In this process, I adopted a more student-centered approach. By recognizing that every student has a different learning pace and style, I try to allow them to learn at their own speed. This shift completely transformed my teaching style. In the classroom, it's necessary to create different activities for children with diverse learning styles simultaneously. Some love drawing, others writing, and some are drawn to sound—why not combine them all?*

Summer highlights that decentralized education encourages teachers to adopt a more student-centered approach. By acknowledging the differences in students' learning paces and styles, Summer emphasizes the importance of enabling students to learn at their own speed. This shift demonstrates how decentralized education has completely transformed Summer's teaching style, leading them to create various activities tailored to the diverse learning styles of students within the classroom. Summer's integration of diverse learning modalities, such as drawing, writing, and sound, reflects a creative and inclusive approach designed to help every student access knowledge through their preferred learning method. This diversified teaching approach not only allows students to explore their individual learning paths but also enhances classroom interaction and provides enriched learning experiences in a decentralized education framework.

Autumn: *In art education, I guide my students through their creative processes without intervening too much. In decentralized education, it is crucial for me as a teacher to inspire them and support them in finding their own paths. My teaching approach has evolved into one that is more observational, offering guidance only when necessary.*

Autumn emphasizes that the decentralized structure encourages teachers to adopt a more observational role, stepping in as guides only when needed. This approach allows students to freely explore their individual creativity while enabling the teacher to act as a supportive figure, assisting only at critical moments. Autumn's shift to an observational role highlights the principle of decentralized education, which grants students the freedom to determine their own learning journeys. The teacher's role becomes less interventionist and more that of a guiding mentor. This perspective fosters a creative learning environment where students are empowered to realize their individual potential without constraints, promoting both independence and innovation in their educational experience.

The perspectives shared by the teachers illustrate how decentralized education practices have transformed their teaching approaches. Decentralized education enables teachers to provide greater flexibility in the classroom, adapt to students' individual needs, and bring more meaningful engagement to the learning process. Spring incorporates flexibility into the teaching process by shaping lesson content according to students' interests; Summer supports each student's unique learning journey by employing methods suited to various learning styles in the classroom; and Autumn fosters creative participation by adopting an observation- and guidance-based pedagogical approach, allowing students to freely engage in creative processes.

This analysis reveals that decentralized education enriches teachers' pedagogical approaches, steering them towards a more student-centered, individualized, and guidance-oriented framework. In a decentralized structure, teachers adapt lesson content to meet students' individual needs, create classroom environments that accommodate diverse learning styles, and guide students in creative processes to help them fully realize their potential. Accordingly, the adoption of flexible, inclusive, and guidance-focused teaching methods within decentralized education creates a meaningful and personalized learning journey for students.

4.1.3. Teacher Leadership and Professional Learning Communities

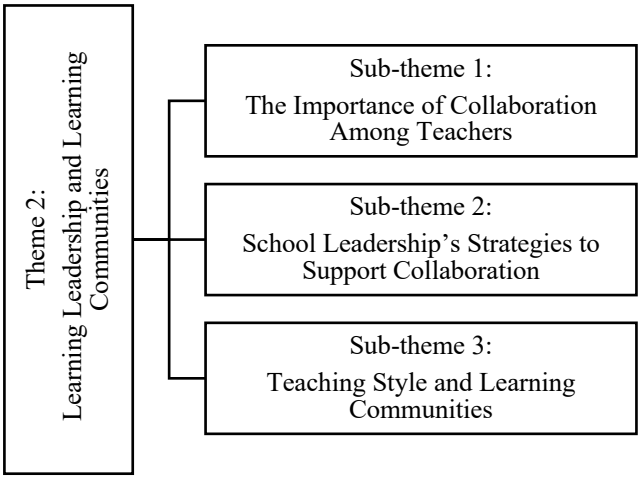
This theme explores how teachers assume leadership roles and participate in learning communities within the context of decentralized education. Decentralized education structures provide teachers with opportunities to go beyond being mere transmitters of knowledge, allowing them to act as leaders and take active roles in learning communities. Through these structures, teachers engage more closely with students, supporting their learning processes while collaborating with colleagues to contribute to their own professional development. Collaboration within a decentralized framework enriches teachers' pedagogical approaches, fostering a multifaceted learning experience for both teachers and students.

Within the scope of this theme, the perspectives of teachers on how they evaluate the contribution of collaboration and sharing to effectiveness, the prominent features of their own teaching styles and relationships with students, and the strategies implemented by the school administration to promote collaboration were examined. In this context, teachers were asked the following questions: *What role do you think collaboration and sharing among teachers play in enhancing the effectiveness of such*

practices? What are the ways to increase or support this collaboration and sharing?, How would you define your own teaching style and character? Which of your characteristics do you think stand out in your relationships with your students? and *What do you think about the strategies implemented by the school administration to promote collaboration and sharing among teachers? How do these strategies affect communication among teachers?*

These questions reflect how teachers perceive collaboration and leadership roles and the methods they adopt to create an effective learning community with their colleagues. The responses detail how teachers define their roles both inside and outside the classroom, the importance they attach to collaboration, and the approaches they adopt to strengthen these processes. Additionally, the teachers' responses highlight how the strategies implemented by the school administration cultivate a communicative environment that encourages collaboration and knowledge sharing among teachers. The theme of learning leadership and learning communities consists of the following subthemes: ‘’The Importance of Collaboration Among Teachers’’, ‘’School Leadership’s Strategies to Support Collaboration’’, and ‘’Teaching Style and Learning Communities.’’

Figure 4.1.3.1. Theme of Learning Leadership and Learning Communities and Sub-themes



The importance of collaboration and sharing among teachers subtheme evaluates the processes through which teachers collaborate with and share knowledge among their colleagues. The responses highlight the positive impacts of interdisciplinary collaboration on both teachers and students.

Spring*: It is very difficult to progress in this process without collaboration. In the projects I conduct with students, I receive support from colleagues in different disciplines, and this support enables students to view the work from different perspectives. Just like life, many things converge at one point. Moreover, this kind of support contributes to our development as teachers as well.*

Spring's statement, *"It is very difficult to progress in this process without collaboration…"*, clearly demonstrates her belief in the value of collaboration within decentralized education. By emphasizing the support, she receives from colleagues in different disciplines, she highlights how this collaboration contributes both to her professional growth and to her students' ability to gain diverse perspectives. This underscores the importance of integrating interdisciplinary collaboration into learning processes.

Summer: *Such practices increase sharing among teachers. For students to gain knowledge in different areas, we teachers also learn from one another. For example, as an English teacher, I collaborated with a history teacher on a project, and this added new perspectives both for me and for the students. I am also a member of online communities where I interact with colleagues in my field. Sharing examples from around the world increases the benefits I bring to my students.*

Summer's statement reflects the active role teachers play in the process of forming a learning community. Her collaboration with a history teacher demonstrates her ability to integrate her own field with another discipline and highlights the positive impact of this collaboration on students. Moreover, her membership in online communities and her engagement with global practices underscore her awareness of professional development and the strength of learning communities.

Autumn: *In our art projects, working particularly with teachers from cultural disciplines is incredibly productive. Collaboration with teachers from different disciplines not only provides me with a new perspective as a teacher but also offers students a multidimensional learning experience.*

Autumn highlights that collaborating with teachers from cultural disciplines within the scope of art projects has enabled her to foster both her professional development and the creation of multidimensional learning opportunities for students. Interdisciplinary collaboration supports mutual learning among teachers and enhances pedagogical richness.

The teachers' responses indicate that collaboration and sharing play a critical role in teachers' professional development and in providing students with multidimensional learning processes. Decentralized education structures strengthen these collaborative environments, enhancing teachers' pedagogical diversity and supporting the effectiveness of learning communities. The variety offered by decentralized education allows teachers to learn from one another, improving their pedagogical skills and adding a new dimension to teaching processes.

School Leadership's Strategies to Support Collaboration subtheme focuses on teachers' views regarding the strategies implemented by school leadership to support their leadership roles within decentralized education. The responses reflect how the supportive practices implemented by the administration influence communication among teachers.

Spring: *Our school administration frequently organizes meetings to encourage us to collaborate more, and these meetings allow us to freely express our ideas. Thanks to this support, we build stronger connections among teachers.*

Spring emphasizes that the school administration fosters stronger bonds among teachers through regular meetings. These meetings allow teachers to freely share their ideas and enhance collaboration.

Summer: *The administration particularly adopts encouraging approaches to motivate us to work on joint projects. For instance, they prioritize planning collaborative activities with teachers from different disciplines, which allows students to benefit in a multidimensional way from their teachers.*

According to Summer, the school administration's encouragement of teachers to collaborate and work on joint projects, as well as its provision of suitable conditions for these practices, not only supports students' multidimensional development but also increases collaboration opportunities for teachers.

Autumn: *The school administration enables us to collaborate with teachers from other disciplines in our art activities. These collaborations are inspiring not only for students but also for us as teachers.*

Autumn's statement indicates that the school administration fosters interdisciplinary collaboration in art activities, supporting teachers' creativity. The administration's supportive strategies contribute to the professional development of teachers.

The strategies implemented by school leadership to promote collaboration create a collaborative working environment for teachers and enhance the effectiveness of decentralized education structures. Administrative support emerges as a factor that strengthens teachers' leadership roles and supports learning communities.

Teaching Style and Learning Communities subtheme reflects teachers' expressions about their own teaching styles, the qualities that enable them to take an active role within learning communities, and how they emphasize leadership and guidance roles in their relationships with students.

Spring: *I perceive my role primarily as that of a guide. I support my students in finding their own paths by guiding them. In this process, I learn together with my students; through learning communities, I contribute both to my own development and to theirs.*

Spring's statement highlights that teaching is a guiding process and demonstrates that this process offers reciprocal learning opportunities for both students and teachers. Spring's approach to the guidance role aligns with the decentralized education model's characteristic of supporting individual learning processes and represents a teaching style consistent with the goal of uncovering each individual's potential by placing the student at the center. Integrating learning communities into this process enhances the teacher's pedagogical capacity while enabling students to develop more independent learning pathways.

Summer: *For me, teaching means supporting students at every step. I try to set an example for them to encourage their interactions with one another. Learning communities are very beneficial in this regard; they strengthen the bonds among students. As a teacher, being part of such professional communities also supports my professional development and helps me stay up to date. Knowing what my international colleagues are doing in the field of foreign languages gives me confidence. In my teaching journey, while planning my steps, I also provide my students with the opportunity to keep up with the times.*

Summer emphasizes that teaching involves supporting students at every stage and highlights how learning communities reinforce this support. Her engagement with international colleagues to enhance her professional development demonstrates the positive impact of learning communities on individual and professional growth. Summer's approach reveals that teachers are not merely knowledge transmitters but also role models and leaders. For Summer, learning communities have become a tool for maintaining pedagogical relevance and professional development. This example

illustrates how decentralized education strengthens teachers' continuous efforts to learn and grow.

Autumn: *I give my students the space to find their own paths. Through learning communities, we, as teachers, explore what can or cannot be done. To me, this is what professionalism means. After all, teaching cannot accommodate amateur practices. Our focus is on people; we are social engineers. Therefore, we must actively participate in communities and follow what is being done professionally both in our country and around the world.*

Autumn's perspective on the necessity of teachers keeping track of global professional practices reflects the importance of global awareness within the context of decentralized education. Her approach to giving students the space to explore their own paths demonstrates her ability to balance leadership and guidance. Autumn's serious approach to the teaching profession and her emphasis on professionalism underscore the role of learning communities as platforms for teacher development. She sets a strong example of teacher leadership in decentralized education.

Evaluations under this subtheme reveal that teachers demonstrate a strong approach to guidance, leadership, and professional development within the context of decentralized education. Each teacher's approach reflects their active role in learning communities, benefiting from the freedom and flexibility provided by decentralized education structures. Spring emphasizes a guidance-focused approach, highlighting the reciprocal developmental contributions of learning communities. Summer views learning communities as a tool for fostering both professional development and interactions among students. Autumn regards learning communities as a platform that strengthens professionalism among teachers and underscores the importance of cultivating global awareness.

Decentralized education practices offer a structure that strengthens teachers' roles in guidance and leadership, while learning communities support both teachers' professional growth and students' individual learning experiences. In this context, the guidance- and collaboration-based approaches of the participating teachers align closely with the student-centered structure of decentralized education.

4.1.4. Teacher Agency and Participation in Decision-Making Processes

The theme of teacher agency and participation in decision-making processes examines how teachers engage in decision-making and exercise their agency within

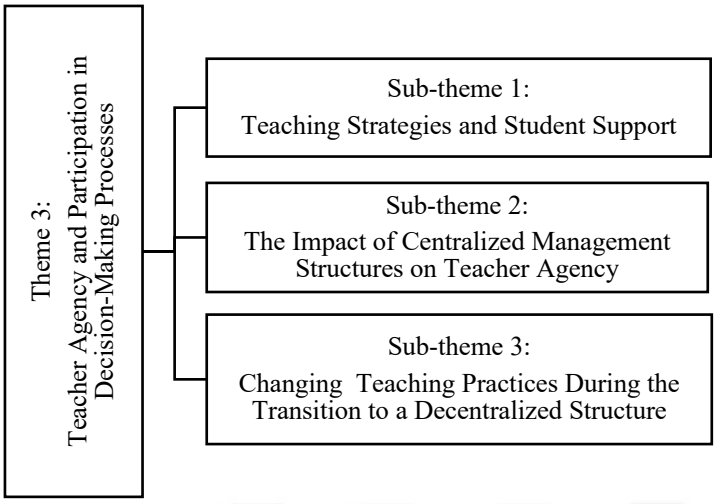
the context of decentralized education. In decentralized education structures, teachers go beyond classroom practices and have the opportunity to participate more extensively in educational processes. Within this framework, teachers take an active role in areas such as lesson planning, content development, and assessment, allowing them the freedom to tailor the educational environment to better meet the needs of their students.

The responses evaluating teachers' agency and participation in decision-making processes were analyzed based on the following questions: *What teaching strategies do you use in an environment where students learn from each other or external resources? How effective are these strategies in supporting students' learning experiences?, What factors have guided or encouraged you to adopt decentralized education practices? What are the barriers to making these practices more systematic?*, and *How do you evaluate the impact of a centralized administrative structure on teachers? Within this structure, how do you perceive teachers' instructional freedom and creativity?*

These questions reflect how teachers shape the educational environment by exercising their agency, how they perceive the differences between centralized and decentralized administrative structures, and the impact of their participation in decision-making processes on instructional strategies. The responses illustrate how teachers support students' individual learning experiences within the context of decentralized education and the strategies they employ to enhance this process effectively.

The theme of Teacher Agency and Participation in Decision-Making Processes consists of the following subthemes: "Teaching Strategies and Student Support," "The Impact of Centralized Management Structures on Teacher Agency," and "Changing Teaching Practices During the Transition to a Decentralized Structure."

Figure 4.1.4.1. Theme of Teacher Agency and Participation in Decision-Making Processes and Sub-themes



The subtheme of Teaching Strategies and Student Support elaborates on how teachers support students and the instructional strategies they employ within the context of decentralized education. The responses reflect teachers' efforts to foster learning processes, provide students with individualized pathways, and create a free learning environment.

Spring: *In a decentralized structure, students develop habits of self-directed learning. As a teacher, I provide them with the freedom to explore and enable them to work on their own projects. In this process, I take on the role of a mentor, intervening only when necessary.*

Spring's statement demonstrates that decentralized education allows students to individualize their learning processes. By offering students *"freedom,"* Spring enables them to create their own projects independently. In this process, she assumes the role of a mentor, guiding students and intervening only when needed. This approach positions the teacher not as an intervenor but as a supporter in the learning process. Spring's strategy provides a strong model for fostering students' independent learning habits. This approach, which balances freedom and guidance in the teacher-student relationship, exemplifies the student-centered nature of decentralized education.

Summer: *Students are very active in learning from one another. My role is to enable them to delve deeper into a topic and provide the necessary resources. In a decentralized structure, I believe that every student has a unique learning path, and I aim to support these pathways.*

Summer emphasizes the importance of student-to-student interaction in decentralized education, stating that she develops strategies to allow students to focus deeply on a subject and believes in the uniqueness of each student's learning path. By supporting students' processes of learning from one another, Summer highlights the collaborative nature of decentralized education. Her approach of providing resources and guidance reflects a student-centered learning philosophy.

Autumn: *In my classes, I give students more freedom to explore their own creative processes. They evaluate each other's work, and in doing so, they learn a great deal from one another. My role is to guide them in navigating this process. There is a well-known fact about education in our country. Families want their children to pursue careers that they believe will bring money and prestige in the future, such as becoming a doctor, rather than encouraging them to work in line with their talents. This puts students in a difficult position. I have students who want to focus on art, but they are in a science high school where they are expected to become doctors or engineers. Family pressure exhausts these students, and they reluctantly prepare for medical school. As a teacher, I show them that there are alternative paths. They begin to see the possibility of studying medicine while also pursuing art. After finishing medical school, they might specialize in a field like plastic surgery, working on the human body while advancing in sculpture or painting. This is what we teachers do, and decentralized education practices enable us to create such new pathways within this system.*

Autumn adopts an approach in art classes that allows students to freely explore their creative processes. The practice of students evaluating each other's work reflects the collaborative learning environment fostered by decentralized education. Autumn also highlights the stress created by parental pressure on students' career choices and aims to offer alternative paths as a teacher. By showing students ways to combine fields like medicine and art, she helps them evaluate their potential from a broader perspective.

Autumn's strategy not only focuses on creative processes but also supports students in pursuing their individual preferences despite societal and familial pressures. This approach illustrates that teachers assume a guidance- and solution-oriented role within the context of decentralized education. Providing students with guidance in both individual freedom and career planning aligns with the flexible and student-responsive structure of decentralized education.

The responses of teachers under this subtheme reveal how teaching strategies and student support are shaped within decentralized education structures. In decentralized education, teachers adopt a guidance-based approach that allows students to explore their individual paths. Strategies that encourage collaboration among students and support learning processes tailored to individual differences strengthen the flexible and student-centered nature of decentralized education. These strategies contribute to the multidimensional development of both students and teachers.

The subtheme of The Impact of Centralized Management Structures on Teacher Agency evaluates how centralized management structures affect teacher agency, particularly in the context of instructional freedom and creativity. Teachers' responses emphasize the restrictive aspects of centralized structures while highlighting how decentralized systems empower teacher agency.

Spring: *In centralized structures, teachers' individual freedoms are limited. There is a strict curriculum and evaluation system. This hinders teachers from expressing their creativity. In a decentralized structure, however, I feel freer and more creative as a teacher.*

Spring notes that working under a rigid curriculum and evaluation system makes it challenging for teachers to engage in pedagogical innovation. Conversely, she expresses that she feels freer and more creative in a decentralized structure. Spring's emphasis illustrates that teacher agency is constrained in centralized systems and that a decentralized framework can eliminate these limitations. Her experience demonstrates a direct connection between the development of teacher agency and the presence of freedom. The rigidity of centralized structures limits teachers' opportunities to showcase their individual competencies, whereas decentralized structures provide a flexible foundation that supports the emergence of these competencies.

Summer: *A centralized structure makes it difficult for me to use my own methods as a teacher. I want to work on projects with my students and adapt to their individual learning paths, but a centralized structure restricts this. In a decentralized system, however, I am more independent and can work in a more student-centered way.*

Summer emphasizes that centralized structures significantly limit teaching methods. While expressing her desire to work on projects with her students and adapt to their individual learning paths, she notes that centralized systems restrict such

innovative and student-centered approaches. In contrast, she states that decentralized systems provide greater independence and opportunities for student-centered work. Summer's perspective clearly demonstrates that centralized structures restrict teacher agency by leaving little room for student-centered pedagogical innovations. Decentralized systems, on the other hand, create an environment that strengthens teacher agency by offering teachers the opportunity to develop their own methods.

Autumn: *Centralized structures limit a teacher's ability to make their own decisions. Even if I want to develop more innovative and student-centered approaches, I am bound to adhere strictly to the curriculum. In a decentralized structure, however, I can work with greater freedom.*

Autumn highlights how centralized structures restrict teachers' decision-making abilities. She expresses her desire to develop more innovative and student-centered approaches but notes that strict adherence to the curriculum hinders these efforts. In contrast, she states that decentralized structures provide greater teaching freedom, which in turn supports teacher agency. Autumn's statements underscore the essential role of decision-making freedom in the development of teacher agency. While centralized structures stifle innovative approaches, decentralized systems offer a broader space for teachers to demonstrate pedagogical creativity.

The subtheme of Changes in Teaching Practices During the Transition to a Decentralized Structure focuses on teachers' perspectives regarding the changes in their teaching approaches following the adoption of decentralized education practices.

Spring: *We cannot claim full decentralization, of course, but since all of our work outside of exams is based on it, I can still guide lessons according to students' interests within this type of decentralized structure. My teaching approach has become more student-centered. While I used to adhere strictly to a specific curriculum, now we can conduct lessons based on students' own areas of interest.*

Summer: *With the transition to decentralized education practices, I have started to adopt a more flexible approach according to my students' learning styles. Recognizing that each student has a different pace and method, I tailor my lessons to meet their needs.*

Autumn: *In art classes, the flexibility of decentralized practices allows students to discover their own creativity. In the past, I used to assign specific projects, but now students choose their own projects and feel more freedom in the process.*

This subtheme evaluates how teachers have altered their teaching approaches during the transition to a decentralized education structure and the effects of these changes on student-centered learning processes. The responses illustrate that teachers have adopted more flexible and individualized teaching methods, aligning with the needs and interests of their students.

Spring highlights that the decentralized structure has enabled her to develop a teaching approach based on students' interests. While she previously worked within a rigid curriculum framework, she now shapes lessons according to students' areas of interest. This reflects a shift towards a more student-centered and flexible teaching approach. Spring's emphasis demonstrates that decentralized structures provide teachers with greater flexibility and creativity. The ability to create a learning environment tailored to students' individual needs underscores the pedagogical richness of decentralized education.

Summer states that with the transition to a decentralized structure, she has started to pay closer attention to each student's learning pace and style. She tailors her lessons to meet students' individual needs, associating this approach with flexibility. Her adoption of a student-centered approach reflects the freedoms afforded to teachers by decentralized structures. Summer's statements illustrate that decentralized education enhances sensitivity to individual differences and enables teachers to develop flexible pedagogical strategies. The effort to design teaching strategies aligned with students' individual learning paths represents one of the strongest aspects of decentralized education.

Autumn notes that the decentralized structure allows students to explore their creativity in art classes. While she previously worked by assigning specific projects, she now permits students to choose their own projects. This change reflects a shift toward a teaching approach centered on freedom and individuality. Autumn's decision to let students select their own projects demonstrates that decentralized education is grounded in the principles of individual creativity and freedom. This approach highlights how teachers, by adopting a less interventionist role, foster students' independence and support the development of their creativity.

The transition to a decentralized structure has transformed teaching approaches from a rigid curriculum-based framework to a more student-centered and individualized model. This shift provides a flexible and liberating learning environment aimed at addressing students' individual needs and enhancing their

creativity. Decentralized education strengthens teacher agency, enabling them to develop more innovative and effective teaching strategies.

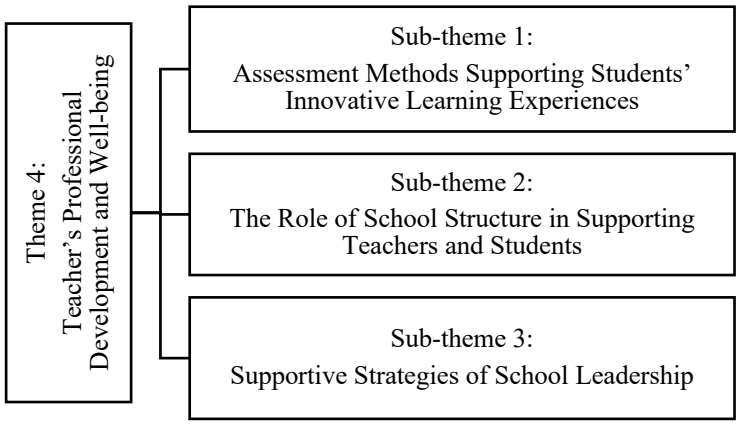
4.1.5. Professional Development and Well-Being of Teachers

This theme explores how teachers support their professional development and occupational well-being within the context of decentralized education. Teachers' perspectives on professional development and well-being were analyzed through the following questions: *What methods do you use to evaluate the knowledge and skills students acquire outside traditional learning tools? How does this evaluation process shape students' learning experiences? , How effective do you find the school's role in supporting students' non-traditional learning experiences? How do you think the structural characteristics of the school influence students' access to and benefits from alternative learning experiences?,* and *What do you think the school administration could do to support and encourage decentralized education practices? What resources should the school administration provide to make decentralized education practices more effective?*

These questions reflect how teachers develop themselves, maintain their professional well-being, and contribute to students' learning processes. The teachers' responses provide insights into how they support students in acquiring knowledge beyond traditional learning tools, the role of school structures in this process, and the impact of the school administration's encouraging strategies on teachers.

Under the theme of Teacher's Professional Development and Well-Being, there are three subthemes: ''Assessment Methods Supporting Students' Innovative Learning Experiences'', ''The Role of School Structures in Supporting Teachers and Students'', and ''The Supportive Strategies of School Leadership.''

Figure 4.1.5.1. Theme of Teacher's Professional Development and Well-being and Sub-themes



Under the subtheme Assessment Methods Supporting Students' Innovative Learning Experiences, teachers' approaches to evaluating students' non-traditional learning processes are examined. The responses reveal that teachers have shifted away from traditional exam methods toward process-oriented, creative, and collaborative assessment strategies.

Spring: *I use methods such as projects and presentations to evaluate the knowledge students acquire from different sources. This process helps them better understand and internalize what they have learned. I pay attention not only to their exam performance but also to how they present their research and the sources they use.*

Spring states that she evaluates students' knowledge gained from various sources through projects and presentations. This method allows students to internalize knowledge rather than merely memorize it and helps them develop their research skills. Additionally, the originality of students' presentations and the sources they use are also among the evaluation criteria. Spring's process- and product-oriented assessment method enriches students' learning processes. Unlike traditional exams, the emphasis on research, analysis, and presentation skills provides a model that supports individual learning within decentralized education.

Summer: *Moving beyond traditional exam methods, I try to observe the roles students take on in group work. For example, when they participate in a problem-solving process together, it's important for me to evaluate how each student contributes to the process. Recently, I organized an activity that integrated different subjects. I collaborated with the Literature and Art teachers and included all 9th-grade students in the project. The activity focused on using a foreign language and engaging in*

Literature and Art-related tasks. The outcome was a product we co-assessed with the other teachers, emphasizing process evaluation since the tasks were subjective. Each week, students had individual and group responsibilities. By the end of six weeks, every student had contributed to a final product, which we displayed in the school corridors. It was highly productive and enjoyable.

Summer employs an assessment method based on group work and interdisciplinary activities. Observing students' roles and contributions in a problem-solving process forms the foundation of her evaluation approach. The activity she organized in collaboration with Literature, Art, and Foreign Language teachers serves as a strong example of emphasizing student participation and process evaluation. Additionally, showcasing the final products in the school corridors made students' efforts visible and boosted their motivation. Summer's approach represents a non-traditional evaluation model that integrates collaboration, process monitoring, and interdisciplinary learning elements. This method allows students to develop individual and group responsibilities while highlighting the flexibility of decentralized education structures.

Autumn: *In my classes, I evaluate students based on their own projects. I provide opportunities for them to develop their creativity and original thinking. This not only enhances their artistic skills but also strengthens their ability to express themselves individually.*

Autumn's project-based assessment method focuses on fostering individual creativity and original thinking. This approach aligns with the goal of decentralized education to uncover students' individual potential and enables students to take an active role in their own learning processes. These assessment approaches highlight the features of decentralized education structures that support individual differences and creative processes. Replacing traditional exam methods with strategies that evaluate students' individual contributions, group roles, and creativity enriches both teachers' pedagogical approaches and students' learning experiences. In decentralized education, assessment becomes a meaningful part of the learning process rather than merely a tool for measuring knowledge.

Under the subtheme The Role of School Structures in Supporting Teachers and Students, teachers' views on the impact of the school's physical and structural features in supporting students' non-traditional learning experiences are explored.

Spring: *The flexible structures in our school allow us to provide more space for students. For example, facilities such as laboratories, workshops, a mini cinema, a conference hall, and meeting rooms contribute to students' development through various projects. In this way, both under my guidance and through their individual efforts, their learning processes are supported.*

Spring's statement highlights how the flexible physical spaces offered by the school create a learning environment that supports both teacher guidance and students' individual efforts. She notes that the school's physical resources are utilized to help students develop themselves in various projects, and her role in guiding them enriches their learning processes. The use of these spaces is a factor that enhances the diversity of learning processes in decentralized education and fosters students' creativity.

Under the subtheme The Role of School Structures in Supporting Teachers and Students, teachers' views on the impact of the school's physical features in supporting students' non-traditional learning experiences are examined.

Summer*: The physical features of the school enable students to learn not only inside the classroom but also outside of it. For example, we can conduct workshops. This makes my role as a teacher more flexible and allows me to provide students with different perspectives.*

Summer's approach demonstrates that the school's physical infrastructure plays a crucial role in decentralized education by diversifying students' learning experiences and enhancing teachers' pedagogical flexibility. Activities such as workshops offer an environment that strengthens both individual and collaborative learning processes for students.

Autumn: *Workshops in the arts, where students can showcase their creativity, allow them to express themselves freely. These physical features of the school also make it easier for me as a teacher to support my students.*

Autumn's statement emphasizes that the physical features in the arts contribute to students' creativity and self-expression. These spaces provide structural support aligned with the individual and original learning goals of decentralized education.

The physical features of schools play a critical role in decentralized education environments, offering essential support for both teachers and students. Facilities such as laboratories, workshops, and exhibition spaces create a flexible learning environment that supports non-traditional learning experiences for students while

enhancing teachers' guidance roles. These structures serve the goals of decentralized education by fostering individual differences and encouraging creativity.

Under the subtheme The Supportive Strategies of School Leadership, teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the strategies provided by school leadership to support decentralized education practices are evaluated. The responses address the role and scope of leadership support in fostering teachers' professional development from various perspectives.

Spring: *Our school administration supports us in participating in professional development programs. Through these programs, we learn different teaching methods and implement them in our classrooms. This support from the administration contributes to my growth as a teacher and enhances my well-being.*

Spring highlights that the support provided by the school leadership represents a holistic approach that fosters teachers' professional development and psychological well-being. Such encouragement boosts teachers' confidence, enabling them to develop innovative methods within decentralized education practices.

Summer: *The administration values teachers' professional development and directs us to participate in professional seminars. These seminars contribute to my growth as a teacher and enable me to be more innovative in classroom practices. Additionally, our school leads many professional initiatives both at the national and provincial levels. The new curriculum also seems to support such initiatives. Over time, I believe the system will evolve to become more decentralized.*

Summer's statement demonstrates that the school administration not only provides individual support to strengthen teacher agency but also contributes to a systemic transformation process. This approach reflects a vision that supports the sustainability and scalability of decentralized education.

Autumn: *I follow the current developments in my field individually. The school administration does not have a strategy for this, and as this is a science high school, I do not have high expectations. If I worked in a fine arts high school, my perspective would be very different, but not here. However, it is sufficient for me that they do not interfere with my practices.*

Autumn's statement indicates that the school administration does not provide equal support to all subject areas. Nevertheless, teachers can sustain decentralized education practices through their individual agency. Increasing administrative support

in the arts could contribute to broader professional development for teachers and strengthen decentralized education processes.

Based on these responses, school leadership supports decentralized education practices by offering strategies that encourage teachers' professional development. However, this support varies depending on teachers' subject areas and individual needs. Developing a more inclusive and subject-focused support system could enhance the impact of decentralized education practices. Strategies such as professional development programs, seminars, and granting individual autonomy play a crucial role in improving teachers' pedagogical skills and supporting their well-being.

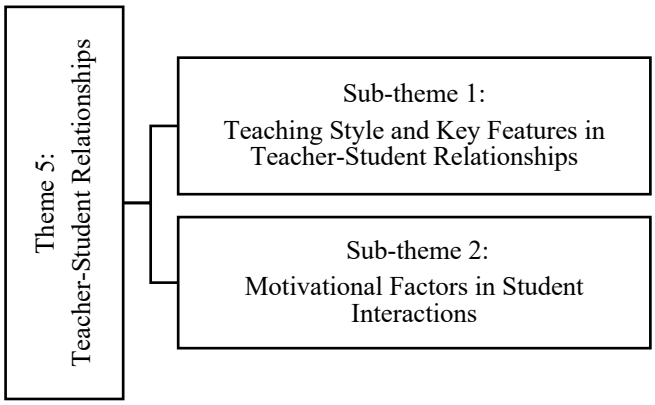
4.1.6. Teacher-Student Relationships

This theme focuses on the relationships teachers establish with students within the context of decentralized education. In a decentralized educational environment, teachers are expected to go beyond merely forming an academic connection with students by guiding them, contributing to their developmental processes, and showing individual attention. Strong and student-centered teacher-student relationships provide a structure that supports the individual learning journeys of students in decentralized education.

In this context, the following questions were asked to understand how teachers define their relationships with students and what motivates them in these interactions: *How would you define your teaching style and character?, Which of your characteristics do you think stand out in your relationships with your students? ,* and *What are the elements that most motivate you in your interactions with students? Factors such as classroom dynamics or students' success—how do they provide motivation for you?* These questions reveal the key characteristics of teachers in their interactions with students and the factors that motivate them.

Under the theme of Teacher-Student Relationships, the following subthemes were examined: ''Teaching Style and Key Features in Teacher-Student Relationships'' and ''Motivating Factors in Student Interactions.''

Figure 4.1.6.1. Theme of Teacher-Student Relationships and Sub-themes



Under the subtheme Teaching Style and Key Features in Teacher-Student Relationships, the characteristics that teachers emphasize in their relationships with students reflect their roles and pedagogical approaches within decentralized education. By considering individual differences and guiding students accordingly, teachers demonstrate that they value students as individuals, thereby building stronger foundations for their relationships.

Spring identifies herself as a guide. She views helping students not only acquire knowledge but also discover their own paths as a priority. Spring expresses that paying attention to students' individual characteristics and guiding them accordingly is an integral part of her teaching style: *In my relationships with my students, I try to pay close attention to their individual characteristics. Truly listening to and understanding them is part of my teaching style. Making them feel valued increases their interest in learning.* This statement highlights that the value Spring places on her students positively influences their learning processes.

Summer, in her teaching style, emphasizes being patient and understanding. She highlights the importance of providing individual attention to each student, building trust, and helping them realize their potential: *As a teacher, I prioritize being patient and understanding. It's important for me to give individual attention to each of my students. I try to encourage them by building their confidence.* Summer's statement demonstrates that by offering individual support, she strengthens students' self-confidence.

Autumn, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of creating a free environment where students can express their creativity, noting that this approach

strengthens teacher-student relationships: *In art classes, creating space for my students to freely express their creativity is fundamental to my teaching style. This also helps me establish a more trust-based relationship with them.* Autumn's statement reflects that the trust she places in her students enables them to showcase their creativity freely, thereby strengthening their relationships.

These findings reveal that in decentralized education, teachers prioritize characteristics such as guiding students while considering their individual needs, fostering self-confidence, and providing individual support. By building relationships based on trust and guidance, teachers adopt a more student-centered pedagogical approach in decentralized education environments.

Under the subtheme Motivating Factors in Student Interactions, the elements that motivate teachers in their interactions with students make their teaching approaches and the bonds they establish with students more meaningful. Witnessing students' successes, observing their individual development, and finding satisfaction in classroom dynamics are among the key motivational factors for teachers.

For Spring, the greatest source of motivation is her students' achievements. Seeing even small successes enhances her love for her profession and contributes to the students' developmental processes: *Seeing my students' small successes motivates me greatly. Being alongside them during their developmental journey and witnessing their achievements increases my passion for teaching.* Spring's statement highlights that she views her students' small steps and achievements as a significant motivational factor.

Summer expresses the satisfaction she derives from her interactions with students in the classroom: *The interactions I have with my students in the classroom motivate me. Contributing to each of them, seeing their achievements, and being part of their developmental processes give me great satisfaction.* Summer's statement demonstrates that building strong bonds with her students enhances her motivation as a teacher.

For Autumn, the greatest source of satisfaction comes from supporting her students in their creative projects: *Helping my students reveal their talents in projects, encouraging them, and witnessing their excitement during this process is my biggest source of motivation.* Autumn's statement illustrates that being present during her students' creative processes provides her with significant fulfillment as a teacher.

These responses reveal that teachers derive great satisfaction from contributing to their students' developmental journeys and that student achievements are one of the most important motivational factors for them. In decentralized education, teachers focus on the developmental processes of their students, and the satisfaction they gain from these processes strengthens their dedication to their profession. These findings demonstrate that teacher-student relationships in decentralized education are based on individual attention and guidance.

4.1.7. Teacher's Innovative and Collaborative Approaches

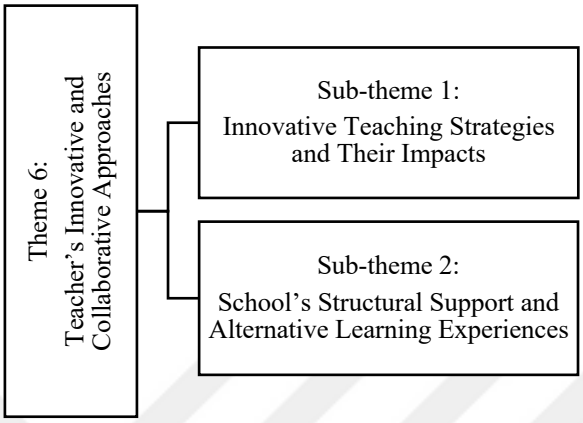
This theme explores teachers' innovative and collaborative approaches within the context of decentralized education. In decentralized educational environments, teachers are expected to develop innovative teaching strategies to enrich students' learning experiences and collaborate with other teachers to implement diverse approaches. In this context, teachers' efforts to bring innovative approaches to students' learning processes allow them to both consider individual differences and create a collaborative learning environment. These approaches reflect the dual focus of decentralized education on fostering creativity and teamwork among both students and teachers.

Considering this, the following questions were asked to understand which innovative and collaborative strategies teachers adopt and how these approaches support students' learning experiences: *What teaching strategies do you use in an environment where students learn from each other or external resources? How effective are these strategies in supporting students' learning experiences?* and *How effective do you find the school's role in supporting students' non-traditional learning experiences? How do you think the structural features of the school influence students' access to and benefit from alternative learning experiences?* Through these questions, the innovative teaching methods teachers apply in their classrooms, their tendencies to collaborate with other teachers, and the role of the structural support provided by schools in these processes were analyzed.

The responses highlight teachers' tendencies to develop and implement innovative strategies, create student-centered learning environments in the classroom, and enrich students' learning experiences. Under the theme of Teacher's Innovative and Collaborative Approaches, the following subthemes are examined: "Innovative

Teaching Strategies and Their Impacts" and "School's Structural Support and Alternative Learning Experiences."

Figure 4.1.7.1. Theme of Teacher's Innovative and Collaborative Approaches and Sub-themes



Under the subtheme Innovative Teaching Strategies and Their Impacts, the innovative strategies adopted by teachers to enhance students' learning experiences are shaped by the flexibility offered by decentralized education structures. These strategies enable students to take a more active role in managing their learning processes and foster a student-centered environment in the classroom.

For Spring, developing strategies that support students' self-directed learning processes is essential. By using group work and projects that allow students to learn from each other, Spring increases classroom interaction and encourages students to take greater responsibility for their learning: *I use group work and projects to enable students to learn from one another. These strategies not only help students acquire knowledge but also encourage them to take responsibility and manage their own learning processes.* Spring's statement demonstrates that the teacher uses innovative strategies to promote students' individual responsibility and active engagement in their learning journeys.

Summer supports students' learning by integrating information obtained from external resources into classroom discussions, creating an innovative learning environment: *I provide my students with opportunities to gather information from various sources and encourage them to learn by discussing this information in class. This allows them to explore different perspectives and offers an innovative learning experience.* Summer's statement shows that she enables students to critically analyze

the knowledge they acquire from external sources and adopts an innovative approach to enhance their learning experiences.

Autumn, by planning projects and activities aimed at developing students' creativity, adopts an innovative teaching approach. She emphasizes that these creative projects enable students to take an active role in their learning processes: *I prepare projects that allow students to showcase their creativity. These projects help them develop their creativity and take an active role in the learning process.*

These findings demonstrate that teachers in decentralized education use innovative strategies to create a student-centered environment and support students' active participation in their learning processes. By adopting innovative approaches, teachers encourage students to take responsibility and enrich their own learning experiences.

Under the subtheme School's Structural Support and Alternative Learning Experiences, the structural support provided by schools emerges as a crucial element in decentralized education, enabling and encouraging teachers' innovative and collaborative approaches. Teachers leverage the opportunities and incentives provided by schools to facilitate students' engagement in non-traditional learning experiences.

Spring highlights that the flexibility provided by the school enables students to gain various experiences: *The flexibility offered by the school allows our students to gain experiences in different areas. This support enables them to benefit from alternative learning experiences.*

Summer emphasizes that the supportive structure of the school allows students to engage in experiences outside the classroom: *The supportive structure of the school allows students to have different experiences outside the classroom. These experiences enrich their learning process and enable them to gain knowledge in various fields.* Summer's statement illustrates that the structural support provided by the school facilitates students' access to non-traditional learning experiences and positively impacts their learning processes.

Autumn notes that the support provided by the school for art projects helps her students discover their creativity: *The support the school provides for art projects helps my students discover their creativity. Thanks to this support, students can find their own paths and take on more responsibility in the learning process.* Autumn's statement shows that the school's structural support fosters students' creative processes and allows them to participate more actively in their learning journeys.

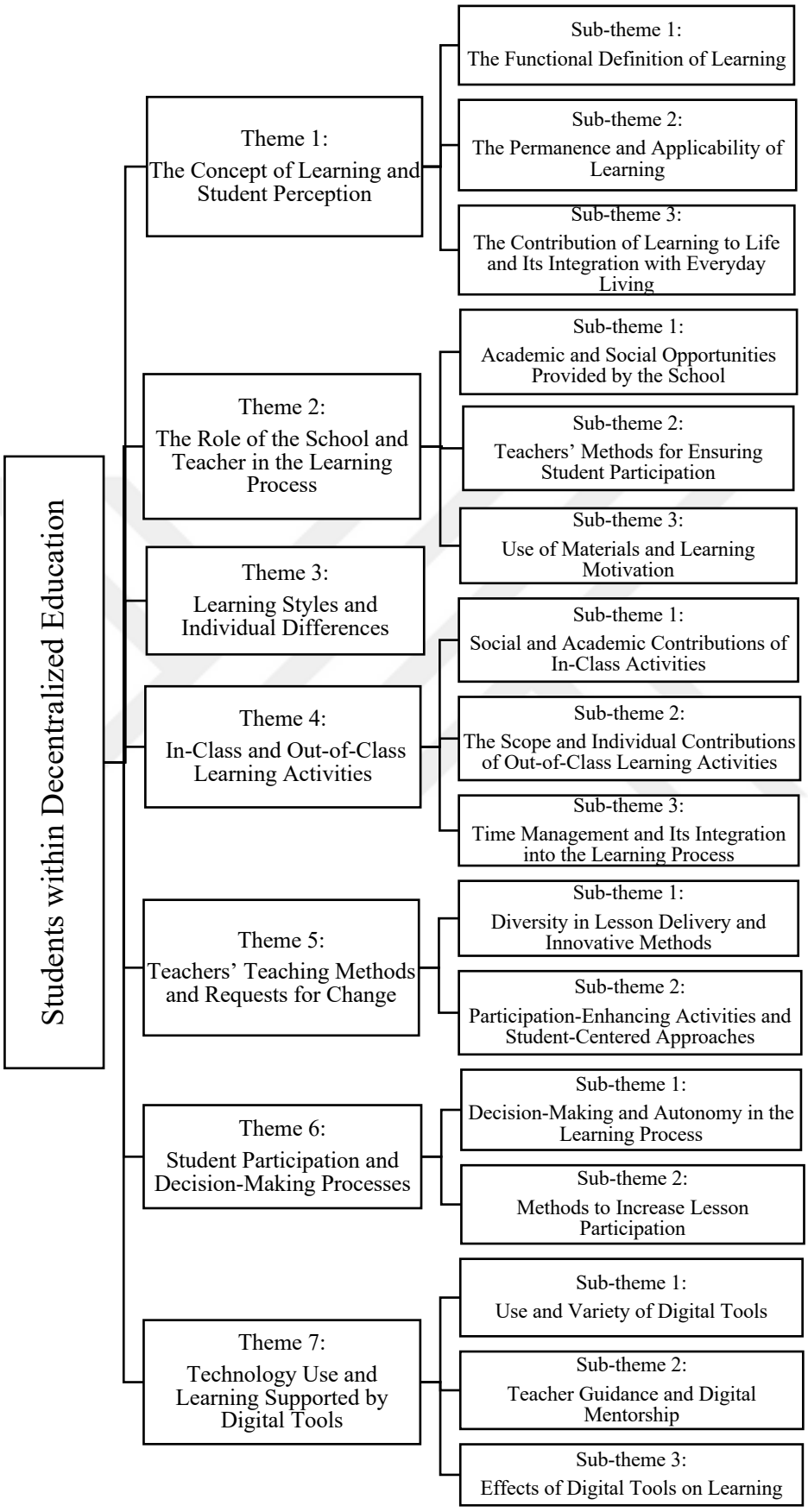
The findings of the study reveal that teachers adopt innovative and collaborative approaches within decentralized education to contribute to students' individual learning processes. Teachers create a student-centered learning environment by employing innovative teaching strategies and leverage the structural support provided by schools to ensure students benefit from alternative learning experiences. This approach demonstrates that the innovative and collaborative role of teachers in decentralized education offers students richer and more diverse learning opportunities.

The analysis of the themes and subthemes examined under the section "Teachers Within Decentralized Education," based on the responses of teacher participants to the research questions, indicates that teachers undertake multidimensional roles such as guidance, leadership, innovation, and collaboration. Teachers develop student-centered pedagogical approaches by considering individual differences, enrich learning processes with innovative strategies, and support their professional development through learning communities. Building trust- and guidance-based bonds in teacher-student relationships strengthens both teachers' pedagogical agency and their commitment to their profession. The decentralized education structure provides a framework that enhances teachers' individual freedoms, fostering their creativity and flexible pedagogical approaches. In this context, decentralized education emerges as a holistic educational model that enables not only students but also teachers to discover their individual potential and find meaning in their profession.

4.2. Students Within Decentralized Education

Under this section, students' perspectives and expectations regarding their learning processes within the context of decentralized education were examined. Content analysis conducted in parallel with the research questions revealed seven themes under the title Students Within Decentralized Education: "The Concept of Learning and Student Perception," , "The Role of the School and Teacher in the Learning Process," , "Learning Styles and Individual Differences," , "In-Class and Out-of-Class Learning Activities," , "Teachers' Teaching Methods and Requests for Change," , "Student Participation and Decision-Making Processes," , "Technology Use and Learning Supported by Digital Tools." These themes are presented alongside the questions directed to students.

Figure 4.2.1. Thematic Framework: Students within Decentralized Education

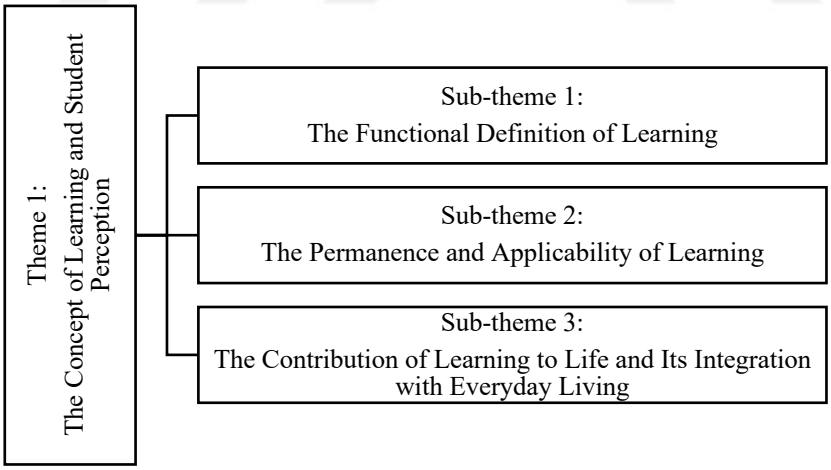


4.2.2. The Concept of Learning and Student Perception

This theme explores how students define learning, what learning means to them, and how they experience this process. In students' responses, the concept of learning was associated with individual, academic, and lifelong development perspectives, emphasizing the functionality, permanence, and integration of learning with life. Within the context of decentralized education, learning can be defined as gaining autonomy and attributing meaning to knowledge. This understanding reveals that students view learning not merely as acquiring information but as personalizing and adapting it to life.

As part of the research, students were asked the following questions: *How do you define the concept of learning? What does learning mean to you?* and *What does it mean for you to learn during a lesson? Is it also possible to learn outside of class? If yes, how?* Under this theme, three subthemes were examined: "The Functional Definition of Learning" , "The Permanence and Applicability of Learning" , and "The Contribution of Learning to Life and Its Integration with Everyday Living."

Figure 4.2.2.1. Theme of The Concept of Learning and Student Perception and Sub-themes



Under the subtheme The Functional Definition of Learning, students defined learning not merely as acquiring knowledge but also as transforming it and using it in different contexts. These responses support the principle of autonomy in the learning process, a fundamental aspect of decentralized education. The students emphasized that acquiring knowledge is not enough; it must be contextualized, given meaning, and integrated into life. Some student responses are as follows:

Orchid: *Learning means ensuring the permanence of the knowledge I acquire and using it in daily life.*
Tulip: *I define the concept of learning as acquiring knowledge. If the new knowledge has become permanent, then I have truly learned it.*
Rose: *It's not enough to acquire knowledge; I need to know where and how to use it. Learning only makes sense when it's put into practice.*
Daisy: *Learning is having knowledge that can be easily applied in life. Knowing isn't enough; you need to integrate that knowledge into your life.*
Violet: *Learning isn't just knowing something; it's about seeing how you use that knowledge.*
Sunflower: *For me, learning is acquiring and transforming knowledge. If I can explain it to someone else, then I consider myself to have learned it.*
Hyacinth: *Learning is turning theory into practice. If you can transfer what you know to others, then you've learned it.*
Lily: *Learning is discovering knowledge that serves a purpose in life*.
Jasmine: *The most important part of learning is knowing where the knowledge will be useful.*
Daffodil: *Learning gains meaning through practice rather than theory. If you don't apply what you know, you can't say you've learned it.*

Orchid and Tulip described learning as a process of making knowledge permanent and adapting it to life, while Rose and Daisy emphasized that knowledge gains meaning only when put into practice. Sunflower and Hyacinth stated that learning is completed when knowledge can be transferred to others and its functionality is demonstrated. These statements suggest that, within the context of decentralized education, learning is a process of assigning personal meaning and that the ability to use knowledge uniquely is a fundamental aspect of learning. Jasmine and Daffodil highlighted that theory gains meaning only when transformed into practice, expressing that learning is not merely the transmission of content but a process that evolves into action within the individual.

Under the subtheme The Permanence and Applicability of Learning, students defined learning as the process of making knowledge memorable for the long term and transforming it into a skill applicable in various contexts. Within the framework of decentralized education, the permanence of knowledge is associated with students'

active participation and their ability to direct their own learning processes. Some student responses are as follows:

Daisy: *Learning means being able to easily use knowledge in life and transfer it to other areas.*

Violet: *For me, learning is storing knowledge in memory and using it when needed.*

Lily: *Learning is acquiring new knowledge and being able to use it.*

Peony: *Learning means reshaping what you know and using it in different areas.*

Camellia: *Knowledge should always be portable. If I can use what I've learned in any setting, then I've learned it.*

Azalea: *The learning process is not just about knowing but also about remembering what you know and using it when necessary.*

Lavender: *Learning means having knowledge that won't be forgotten over time.*

Marigold: *Learning is being able to reuse the knowledge I've gained whenever needed.*

Hibiscus: *Knowledge must be applicable in different situations, not just memorized. Only then can it be considered learning.*

Iris: *Learning is acquiring a skill that can be used throughout life.*

The students' responses define learning as a process that goes beyond mere acquisition of knowledge, transforming it into something meaningful and applicable in personal and social life. Daisy and Violet identified usability as the core criterion for learning, while Peony and Camellia highlighted the portability of knowledge across various contexts as a marker of success in the learning process. Azalea and Lavender emphasized the permanence of knowledge as the most critical element of learning, and Hibiscus and Iris described learning as a lifelong skill-building process rather than merely an academic one. Marigold and Iris particularly emphasized the pivotal role of reusing and transforming knowledge in determining the success of learning processes.

These findings demonstrate that the decentralized education model provides a structure that enables students to make sense of their learning processes and adapt knowledge to their lives, ensuring its permanence. The students' perspectives support the idea that decentralized learning enhances individual awareness and autonomy in the learning process.

Under the subtheme The Contribution of Learning to Life and Its Integration with Everyday Living, students described learning as a process that shapes, develops, and gives meaning to an individual's life. The decentralized education model does not limit learning to academic success but considers it as a tool to enrich one's life. Student

responses clearly demonstrate the alignment of decentralized education with the principles of individual meaning-making and autonomy.

Snowdrop: *Life is a learning process. The more knowledge we acquire, the more fulfilling our lives become.*

Hyacinth: *Learning is about understanding life and adding value to oneself.*

Narcissus: *It's about establishing cause-and-effect relationships between the knowledge we acquire through all our senses.*

These responses highlight the enriching and meaningful aspects of learning in life. While Snowdrop defined learning as the key to leading a fulfilling life, Hyacinth and Narcissus emphasized its role in understanding both the world and oneself.

Rose: *Learning shapes my life as a life practice.*

Jasmine: *Learning helps me understand who I am in life.*

Lily: *Learning helps me discover myself.*

These statements illustrate the impact of learning on identity construction. Rose viewed learning as a life practice, while Jasmine and Lily emphasized its role in helping individuals explore their identity and the meaning of life.

Daisy: *Lifelong learning enhances my quality of life.*

Violet: *It's not enough to acquire knowledge; what I learn defines who I am.*

Orchid: *Learning is a step toward self-actualization.*

Lavender: *The learning process is a bridge that connects me to life.*

These responses express the profound impact of learning on quality of life, identity construction, and self-actualization. Daisy viewed learning as a means to improve life quality, while Orchid and Lavender described it as a process that connects individuals to life and supports their journey of self-fulfillment. The students' responses indicate that they perceive learning as a process of personal meaning-making and lifelong development. Within the context of decentralized education, these findings underscore the importance of customizing learning for individuals and fostering personal awareness. The students' perspectives align with the learner-centered nature of decentralized education.

4.2.3. The Role of the School and Teacher in the Learning Process

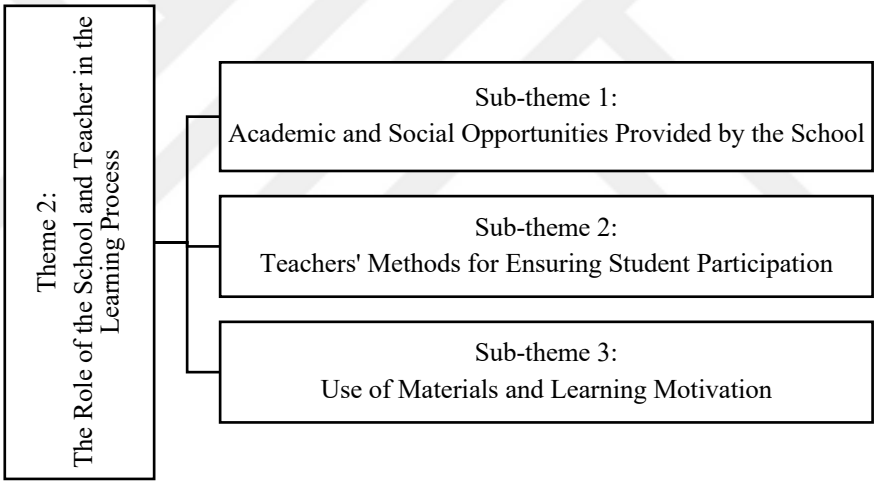
This theme examines how students perceive the contributions of the school and teachers to their learning processes, as well as the impact of the methods used on their learning outcomes. In the context of decentralized education, increasing learners'

autonomy, encouraging active participation in learning, and addressing individual differences are of critical importance. Students evaluated the impact of the school's physical resources, teachers' methods, and materials used on their learning experiences based on their personal observations.

As part of the research, students were asked the following questions: *How does the school contribute to your learning of the topics you are interested in?* and *What do your teachers do to encourage your participation in lessons? How do your teachers' teaching styles and the materials they use affect your learning motivation?*

The analysis of their responses resulted in the identification of three subthemes: "Academic and Social Opportunities Provided by the School", "Teachers' Methods for Ensuring Student Participation" and "Use of Materials and Learning Motivation."

Figure 4.2.3.1. Theme of The Role of the School and Teacher in the Learning Process and Sub-themes



Under the subtheme Academic and Social Opportunities Provided by the School, the impact of the school's physical and academic resources, as well as its social learning environments, on students' learning processes is evaluated. In the context of decentralized education, it is essential to individualize learning processes and adopt a student-centered approach. Facilities such as laboratories, extracurricular activities, and club work have enriched students' learning experiences. Students responded to the questions as follows:

Orchid: *We do practical work in the laboratories. As a student who learns by doing, being at a science high school greatly contributes to my learning.*

Violet: *Since this is a science high school, the focus is on quantitative subjects, and the laboratories are effective, but I wish we had more opportunities for developing social skills.*

Daisy: *The activities in English class are great. I've learned how to give presentations, and my self-confidence has improved. The school contributes a lot to our social lives beyond the lessons.*

Jasmine: *We do workshops for art education. These activities raise awareness in our lives, just as much as quantitative subjects do.*

Lavender: *The school offers versatile opportunities in both academic and social fields. Sports activities and club work significantly contribute to my learning.*

When students evaluated the school's contributions to their learning processes, they particularly emphasized the importance of physical facilities like laboratories and extracurricular social activities. Students such as Orchid and Violet highlighted the impact of hands-on learning on their academic success, while Daisy and Jasmine pointed out how social activities increased their self-confidence and offered integrative learning experiences. In the context of decentralized education, such individualized learning experiences strengthen the meaning of learning and enhance students' self-confidence.

Under the subtheme Teachers' Methods for Ensuring Student Participation, the strategies employed by teachers to enhance students' involvement in lessons were examined. In decentralized education, it is crucial for teachers to adopt a facilitating role rather than a directive one and to use innovative methods that encourage student participation. Student responses included the following:

Sunflower: *Our teachers assign us projects and give us freedom. This way, we both learn and feel more motivated.*

Rose: *In German class, gamification creates a sense of competition. This increases my motivation and makes learning more enjoyable.*

Peony: *Research topics and group work help us learn better. Our teachers guide us through these activities.*

Hyacinth: *Some of our teachers use gestures and facial expressions to explain topics. This captures my interest and increases my participation.*

Iris: *Our teachers adjust their teaching styles to suit us. This boosts my motivation.*

Students expressed that their teachers use various methods to enhance their participation in lessons. Sunflower and Rose highlighted how gamification and

freedom in project work increased their motivation to learn. Peony and Hyacinth emphasized the guiding and engaging teaching styles of their teachers, while Iris appreciated individualized teaching approaches as a positive influence. Within the context of decentralized education, such methods promote more active participation in the learning process and foster individual awareness among students.

Under the subtheme Use of Materials and Learning Motivation, the impact of teachers' use of materials and various learning tools on the learning process is assessed. In decentralized education, the use of materials supports learning through individualized and innovative methods. Student responses included the following:

Camellia: *Materials increase my motivation to learn. Smartboards and visual tools, in particular, make lessons more engaging.*

Daffodil: *Experiments conducted in the laboratory make learning both permanent and enjoyable.*

Marigold: *In quantitative subjects, the visuals and videos used while solving problems significantly boost my motivation.*

Iris: *The materials we use in club activities enhance both our learning and our social skills.*

Jasmine: *In English class, we research the origins of words. Our teacher uses digital materials to show us how to access information. These materials deepen the learning experience.*

Students noted that the use of materials increases their motivation and makes learning more effective. Camellia and Marigold highlighted the positive impact of smartboards and visual materials on the learning process, while Daffodil emphasized the contribution of laboratory experiments. Iris and Jasmine pointed out how innovative materials used in lessons deepen their learning experience.

This theme demonstrates that as students evaluate the resources provided by the school and the methods used by teachers, there is a strong alignment with the core principles of decentralized education. The school's physical resources and social activities diversify individual learning experiences and provide a personalized learning environment. The guiding role of teachers encourages active student participation, while the use of materials makes the learning process both meaningful and effective.

4.2.4. Learning Styles and Individual Differences

This theme examines the methods students prefer in their learning processes and how individual differences impact their learning experiences. In the context of decentralized education, creating a learning environment that adapts to and supports various learning styles is essential. Students described the effects of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles on their learning processes and emphasized the aspects of these styles that facilitate learning. As part of the research, students were asked: *Which type of learning style relates to your best learning experiences: kinesthetic, visual, or auditory?*

The responses of 30 students were categorized into four groups: visual, kinesthetic, auditory, and combination (a mix of multiple learning styles). The data revealed that 40% of the students preferred visual learning, with kinesthetic learning being the second most common choice. Auditory learning was the least preferred method. Twelve students who favored the visual learning style highlighted that working with visual elements such as diagrams, charts, notes, images, and videos made it easier for them to acquire and recall information.

Jasmine: *Tables and visuals make learning easier for me.*

Iris: *I remember things I see; learning becomes difficult without visual materials.*

Thirty-three percent of students (10 students) preferred kinesthetic learning. Practical activities, laboratory experiments, group projects, and tasks requiring physical involvement were effective for these students.

Orchid: *What I learn while conducting experiments in the laboratory is more permanent.*

Hyacinth: *I learn more easily when I'm active, so hands-on lessons are very effective.*

17% of students (5 students) identified auditory learning as the most effective method. Listening to explanations, participating in discussions, and the teacher's delivery style were significant for students with an auditory learning preference.

Rose: *I remember more when I learn by listening.*

Daffodil: *The teacher's tone of voice and presentation style make learning easier for me.*

10% of students (3 students) stated that combining multiple learning styles strengthened their learning processes. A mix of visual and kinesthetic or auditory and

visual learning styles enriched different learning experiences. Some student responses are as follows:

Sunflower: *I learn more through hands-on activities supported by visuals. In chemistry class, when we played games with molecule-shaped materials while learning about molecules, it made the topic unforgettable for me.*

Marigold: *Taking notes while listening and then reviewing what I've written helps me learn.*

The analysis highlights that students' learning styles vary significantly, with individual differences directly impacting their learning processes. The high preference for visual (40%) and kinesthetic (33%) learning styles underscores the need to incorporate more visual and hands-on activities into lesson content. Auditory learning (17%) emerges as a method that could be emphasized more in certain lessons. Discussions, verbal explanations, and oral feedback could effectively address the learning needs of this group.

This research demonstrates that the diversity in learning styles is crucial for understanding students' individual characteristics and making learning processes more effective. In the context of decentralized education, considering these differences can enhance active participation in learning processes and support student autonomy. Teachers should use these findings to enrich lesson content and teaching methods to accommodate diverse learning styles.

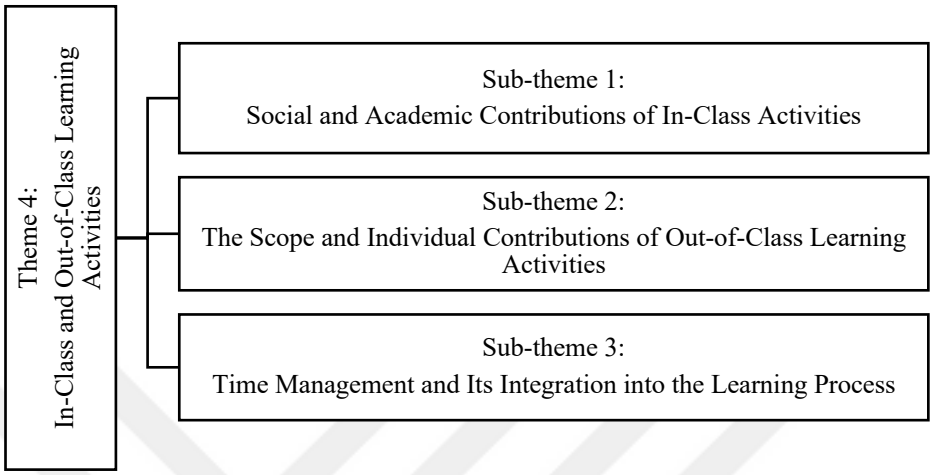
4.2.5. In-Class and Out-of-Class Learning Activities

This theme explores how students perceive the contribution of in-class and out-of-class activities to their learning processes. The impact of activities such as group work, discussions, and project-based learning on in-class learning experiences was analyzed, alongside the role of out-of-class activities conducted during free time in supporting individual growth and learning processes.

As part of the research, students were asked: *How do you evaluate the contribution of classroom activities (e.g., group work, discussions, project-based learning) to your learning process?* and *How much time do you dedicate to out-of-class learning activities on a monthly, weekly*, *and daily basis?* Based on the student responses, the following subthemes were identified: ‘’Social and Academic Contributions of In-Class Activities’’, ‘’The Scope and Individual Contributions of

Out-of-Class Learning Activities'', and ''Time Management and Its Integration into the Learning Process''.

Figure 4.2.5.1. Theme of In-Class and Out-of-Class Learning Activities and Sub-themes



The subtheme Social and Academic Contributions of In-Class Activities examines how activities such as group work, discussions, and project-based learning contribute to students' social skills, motivation, and learning retention. These activities influence not only academic learning but also social development. Within the context of decentralized education, such activities support active participation in the learning process, accommodate individual differences, and provide opportunities for social interaction.

Orchid: *Group work improves my organizational skills. Discussions teach me how to speak more effectively.*

Sunflower: *In project-based learning, we create a product. This process not only helps retain information but also enhances my creativity.*

Violet: *Discussion activities lead to deeper learning. Listening to opposing views and developing arguments influences me.*

Daisy: *Group work helps me socialize. Peer learning allows us to learn a lot from each other.*

Rose: *These activities help me express myself in a group and boost my self-confidence.*

Hyacinth: *I noticed that presentations improve my speaking skills. This will help me a lot in the future.*

Camellia: *In group work, I learn how to be part of a team. It is more instructive than individual work.*

Jasmine: *Project work in class enhances my research skills.*

Daffodil: *Thanks to discussion activities, I feel more comfortable expressing my ideas. This process deepens my learning.*

The students' responses show that in-class activities contribute to learning by enhancing both academic and social skills. The decentralized education model aligns with these activities as it aims to transform students into active participants rather than passive recipients of information. Group work and discussions, in particular, foster communication skills and help students understand diverse perspectives. However, individual preferences among students are also highlighted. For instance, Spring and Iris prefer working individually, emphasizing the importance of flexibility in designing classroom activities to cater to varying learning preferences.

The subtheme The Scope and Individual Contributions of Out-of-Class Learning Activities examines the range of learning activities students engage in during their free time and how these activities contribute to their individual learning processes. Students reported that these activities often provide opportunities to explore interests outside of academic subjects and enhance their sense of personal learning responsibility.

Daffodil: *I take piano and theater courses. These enrich my social life and contribute to my learning.*

Iris: *I have a daily schedule of 3-4 hours outside of class. I also dedicate time to research projects.*

Marigold: *I study for 2 hours a day and participate in arts and sports activities. These activities keep me motivated.*

Lavender: *I spend 10-12 hours weekly on sports and artistic activities. This supports my learning and reduces my stress.*

Jasmine: *In my free time, I paint and play in a music band. This increases my motivation for my classes.*

Violet: *I set aside time to research various topics and develop myself in different fields.*

Spring: *I prefer doing individual research rather than social activities. This helps me learn at my own pace.*

Hyacinth: *Engaging in art helps me balance the intensity of my classes.*

Sunflower: *Outside of class, I regularly participate in a sports club. This has helped me gain discipline.*

Out-of-class learning activities enable students to focus not only on academic knowledge but also to explore their personal interests and curiosities. The

decentralized education model encourages students to take greater responsibility for their learning, allowing them to structure their own learning experiences. Participation in activities such as arts and sports is particularly significant for integrating learning with social life. Additionally, some students noted that they avoid rigid schedules and prefer to manage their learning activities based on immediate needs. This diversity in approaches highlights the importance of flexibility in supporting individual learning pathways within the decentralized education framework.

The subtheme Time Management and Its Integration into the Learning Process focuses on how students allocate and organize their time for learning activities. While time management varies according to individual needs, students who adopt a regular study schedule tend to manage their learning processes more effectively.

Snowdrop: *I study two hours daily on weekdays and increase this time during weekends.*

Sunflower: *I learn more effectively when I plan. I dedicate 3-4 hours daily to classes and projects.*

Petunia: *I study regularly for 1-2 hours every day, adjusting this time based on my needs.*

Orchid: *I don't follow a regular schedule during my free time. I study when necessary.*

Rose: *In my extracurricular studies, I prioritize social activities. Time management for me should be more flexible.*

Time management is a key element in the decentralized education model, supporting students in taking responsibility for their learning processes. Students with regular study schedules, like Sunflower and Snowdrop, demonstrate better management of their learning processes. However, students who adopt a needs-based approach, like Rose, express feeling freer in decentralized learning environments, directing their learning according to their individual needs.

This theme highlights the significant impact of in-class and out-of-class learning activities on students. In-class activities not only support students' academic progress but also contribute to their social skills and self-confidence. Student responses underscore the value of activities such as discussions, group work, and project-based learning in fostering socialization and peer learning. In the context of decentralized education, these activities promote individual awareness and active participation in learning processes. Out-of-class activities help students explore their personal interests and develop social and artistic skills. Participation in sports, arts, and research

activities enables students to approach learning from a broader perspective. Students who effectively utilize their extracurricular time show increased motivation and academic success.

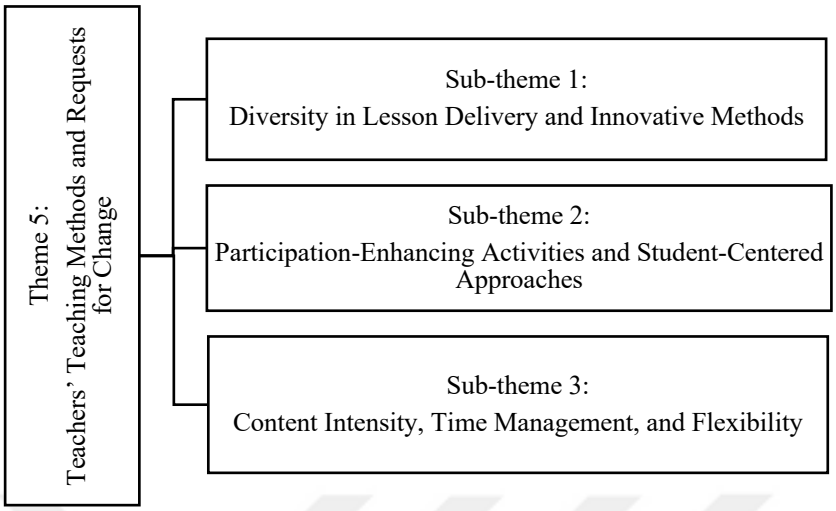
The decentralized education model supports such individualized learning experiences, enriching students' learning processes. Time management plays a critical role in organizing learning processes efficiently. Students who follow structured schedules achieve their learning goals more easily and use their time more effectively. Meanwhile, students who work based on immediate needs leverage the flexibility offered by the decentralized education model to their advantage. Both approaches emphasize the importance of adaptable learning environments that cater to individual differences.

4.2.6. Teachers' Teaching Methods and Requests for Change

This theme encompasses students' evaluations of their teachers' instructional methods and their suggestions for a more effective learning process. The responses highlight the need to consider individual differences, implement participation-enhancing activities, and make lessons more flexible. These demands align with the core principles of the decentralized education model, including flexibility, individualization, and active student participation.

As part of the research, students were asked the following questions: *What changes would you like your teachers to make during lessons to ensure a more effective learning process?*, and *What kind of support do you expect from your teachers to make your learning process more effective?* Based on the students' responses, three subthemes were identified: ''Diversity in Lesson Delivery and Innovative Methods'', ''Participation-Enhancing Activities and Student-Centered Approaches'' and ''Content Intensity, Time Management, and Flexibility.''

Figure 4.2.6.1. Theme of Teachers' Teaching Methods and Requests for Change and Sub-themes



The subtheme of Diversity in Lesson Delivery and Innovative Methods encompasses students' evaluations of teaching methods used in lessons and their requests for more innovative approaches. Suggestions include increasing the use of visual materials, hands-on activities, and experiments. Some student responses are as follows:

Orchid: *I'd like to learn through more experiments in chemistry classes. Laboratory work makes learning more permanent.*

Sunflower: *Project-based activities are very effective. In some classes, our teacher divides us into groups, and we create a product. I'd like to see more of these activities in other classes as well.*

Jasmine: *We use games to learn in English classes. It would be more enjoyable if similar methods were applied in other subjects too.*

Daisy: *Even in social studies, more visual materials could be used. Maps, tables, and videos make learning easier.*

Hyacinth: *In math, we focus only on formulas instead of practical applications. These topics should be explained with more examples.*

Lavender: *In music lessons, we work with different instruments. I'd like to work with varied equipment in subjects like chemistry and physics as well.*

Tulip: *In literature classes, gamification methods are used. I think this could also be applied in science-related subjects.*

Violet: *Some teachers teach in a monotonous way. I'm more active in the lessons of teachers who diversify their teaching methods.*

Rose: *When I learn through presentations, I both research and apply what I've learned in class. This type of activity could be increased.*

Daffodil: *The use of technology in lessons should be increased. Smart boards and videos make learning more effective.*

Students emphasize the need for diversified teaching methods. Innovative approaches such as project-based learning, laboratory work, and gamification significantly enhance students' learning motivation. Within the context of decentralized education, these requests underline the importance of addressing individual learning needs and making teaching methods more flexible.

The sub-theme of Activities to Enhance Participation and Student-Centered Approaches includes students' suggestions for fostering active participation in lessons and their evaluations of current practices. Methods such as group work, discussions, and storytelling are highlighted as engaging strategies. Some student responses are as follows:

Peony: *Group work and discussions make learning more enjoyable. These activities should be increased to encourage greater participation.*

Bluebell: *The questions our teacher asks help me stay more engaged in the lesson. Some teachers don't use this method, which is a big shortcoming.*

Marigold: *Storytelling makes our teachers' lessons more interesting. This method could especially be used more in social studies.*

Anemone: *Presentations give us an active role in lessons. Teachers could use this method more frequently.*

Violet: *We do group projects in English classes. This accelerates my language learning and helps me socialize.*

Orchid: *If our teachers organize more activities, our participation will increase. Just lecturing isn't enough.*

Hyacinth: *In science-related subjects, problem-solving is often one-sided. There should be more opportunities for discussions.*

Rose: *Discussions and group work provide an environment where we can freely express our ideas. This method should be applied in other subjects as well.*

Jasmine: *Project work reinforces learning. It could be supported with more research assignments.*

Freesia: *Gamification methods are very effective in lessons. These should be used in more subjects.*

Students express a strong demand for the expansion of methods that promote active participation in lessons. Strategies such as group work, discussions, and gamification help students directly engage in the learning process. The decentralized education model offers significant flexibility for implementing such methods, which align with its principles of fostering active involvement and student-centered learning.

The subtheme of Topic Density, Time Management, and Flexibility addresses students' requests for reducing topic density, increasing breaks, and restructuring lesson durations. Students express a desire for lessons to be structured in a more flexible and student-centered manner.

Students frequently highlight the need for better time management and reduced topic intensity in lessons. For instance, Daffodil stated that the long duration of lessons affects her concentration, suggesting that breaking lessons into shorter segments with brief breaks would make learning easier. Sunflower noted that the content density is overwhelming and suggested simplifying and covering topics less intensely for better learning outcomes. Jasmine enjoyed the storytelling approach in literature classes and expressed a wish for such diversity to be applied in science subjects as well. Lavender emphasized that some lessons move too quickly and that teachers should manage the time more effectively. Peony suggested shortening lesson durations and increasing breaks to help maintain focus. Iris mentioned that the heavy content in science subjects should be supplemented with more examples to enhance understanding.

Camellia shared that breaks improve focus and that continuous lessons are exhausting. Tulip suggested reducing content density and incorporating more activities to make lessons more enjoyable. Orchid proposed that lesson structures should be more flexible and even suggested prioritizing certain topics based on student preferences. Rose argued that shorter lesson durations could be beneficial given the intense topics being covered. These requests align directly with the flexibility and student-centered structure emphasized in the decentralized education model. The students' feedback highlights the value of a flexible curriculum and learning environment in providing an effective educational experience.

The analysis under this subtheme reveals that students' expectations regarding teaching methods align closely with the principles of decentralized education. Flexibility in lesson structures, the implementation of innovative methods, and the increase of student-centered activities collectively create a learning environment that respects individual differences. Students' expectations extend beyond content delivery

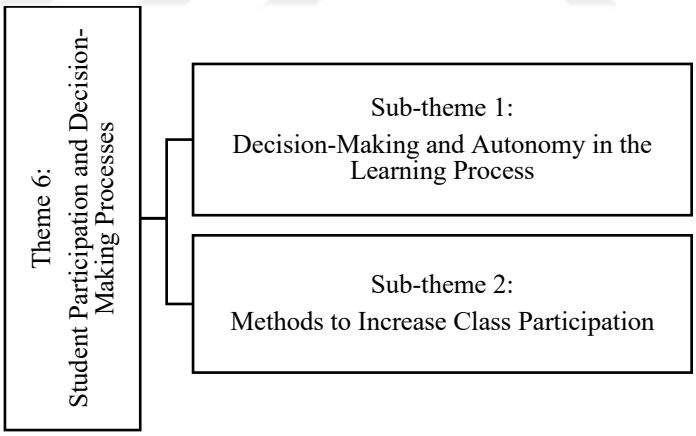
to include the structure of the learning process and modes of interaction. These insights underscore the importance of adapting teaching methods to students' needs and preferences to foster more engaging and effective learning experiences.

4.2.7. Student Participation and Decision-Making Processes

This theme explores students' perspectives on the conditions necessary for increased participation in lessons and their desire to be involved in decision-making processes. Students expressed their preferences for greater control and involvement in decisions, aligning with their need for freedom and independence in the classroom.

As part of the research, students were asked the following questions: *In which aspects of lessons would you prefer to have more control and participation in decision-making processes? In what areas of your learning process would you like to have more freedom and independence?* and *What can be done to encourage greater student participation in lessons?* The analysis of their responses resulted in the identification of two subthemes: *''*Decision-Making and Autonomy in the Learning Process'' and ''Methods to Increase Lesson Participation.''

Figure 4.2.7.1. Theme of Student Participation and Decision-Making Processes and Sub-themes



Under the subtheme of Decision-Making and Autonomy in the Learning Process, students expressed that having more control and decision-making rights in lesson content, assignment choices, and learning methods would positively impact their learning processes. These demands suggest that tailoring lessons to individual learning styles could make them more effective.

Amaryllis stated a desire for flexibility in how topics are covered, saying, "*Some topics really interest me, and I want to learn them in depth, but for topics that don't interest me, I'd prefer to stay more on the surface."* This reflects students' wish to

control their own learning pace. Jasmine emphasized that having a choice in assignments would increase motivation: "*If I could choose which assignment to complete, I'd be more motivated."* She thus highlighted a desire for freedom beyond classroom activities. Lavender mentioned that involving students in decision-making about specific lesson content would make learning more meaningful: "*If we could decide the intensity of topics in math lessons, the learning process would be much more efficient."* Similarly, Sunflower stressed the importance of student input in curriculum planning: *"Allowing students to share their views on which topics are more important would make learning more meaningful."*

Rose pointed out the potential benefits of involving students in choosing physical learning spaces: "*Students' preferences could be considered when selecting learning spaces. Specific classrooms or environments could be arranged for each subject."* Hyacinth expressed a desire for freedom in choosing assignments and projects: *"If we could select assignments and projects based on themes that suit us, it would boost our confidence."* Violet emphasized the need for greater autonomy in the use of technology: *"We should be able to decide how and when to use digital tools."* Peony suggested offering choice in research topics: *"If we were given the right to choose research topics, we would both learn more and become more enthusiastic."* Marigold highlighted the importance of student involvement in curriculum planning*: "If we could decide the sequence of topics, we could plan according to our priorities."* Iris proposed a more flexible assignment and exam system: *"A system where we could choose the types of exams would improve both learning and motivation."*

These responses demonstrate that students desire to take a more active role in their learning processes. Students like Daisy and Jasmine emphasize the importance of addressing individual learning needs, while Rose and Violet advocate for greater freedom in the use of physical spaces and technology. The student-centered approach inherent in the decentralized education model enables the fulfillment of such demands, enhancing individual awareness and making learning more meaningful.

The subtheme "Methods to Increase Classroom Participation" highlights students' suggestions for enhancing their engagement in lessons through interactive methods and diverse learning tools.

Gamification, technology integration, and hands-on teaching methods emerge as significant factors. For instance, Orchid emphasized the effectiveness of gamification and group work by stating, "*Gamification and group activities in lessons are both fun*

and educational. These activities should be increased." Daisy pointed out the impact of visual materials on participation, saying, *"When we work with more visual content, my interest in the lesson significantly increases."* Lavender highlighted the importance of teacher-student interaction: *"If teachers make their teaching methods more interactive, the participation rate in lessons will increase."* Sunflower linked extracurricular activities to better classroom focus, stating, *"If we have activities outside the classroom to expend our energy, we can be more attentive in class."* Hyacinth underlined the motivational role of competition, noting, *"Reward-based games and competitions definitely increase student participation."* Tulip discussed the influence of physical environment changes, saying, *"Having science lessons in the laboratory is both more educational and much more enjoyable."*

Jasmine stressed the need for lessons tailored to individual interests, stating, "*If lessons are aligned with our individual interests, participation will automatically increase."* Marigold emphasized the importance of hands-on lessons, noting, *"Lessons conducted in the laboratory are more effective and educational. Such practices should be increased."* Camellia highlighted the role of technology in making learning engaging: *"Lessons conducted with smart boards and digital tools are much more memorable."* Violet suggested creating lessons based on students' interests, saying, "*Everyone has different interests. Lessons tailored to these interests would significantly boost participation.*" Peony discussed the value of interactive activities: *"Group work and discussions not only enhance idea exchange but also make learning more enjoyable."*

Daffodil underscored the importance of preparation time, saying, *"If we're given time to prepare before lessons, we can participate more effectively."* Lily emphasized the impact of teacher-student relationships on engagement, stating, *"If we establish closer relationships with our teachers, we would be more active in lessons."* Rose highlighted the role of extracurricular activities in enhancing classroom participation, saying, *"Activities that develop students' social skills create a better atmosphere in lessons."*

Student responses emphasize the significance of innovative methods that consider individual differences in enhancing classroom participation. For instance, students like Orchid and Hyacinth highlighted the motivational effects of gamification and competitive environments, while Marigold and Tulip noted the ease of learning through hands-on activities. The decentralized education model provides a flexible

framework for implementing such innovative approaches, offering an effective roadmap for increasing student engagement.

This theme underscores students' desire for greater freedom in lesson content and the necessity of innovative methods to boost participation. Students expressed that addressing individual learning needs and strengthening teacher-student relationships would make learning processes more effective. Responses indicate that tailoring lessons to individual needs, diversifying teaching methods, and adopting a more facilitative teacher role could significantly enhance student participation. Student demands highlight the critical importance of acknowledging individual differences in learning processes.

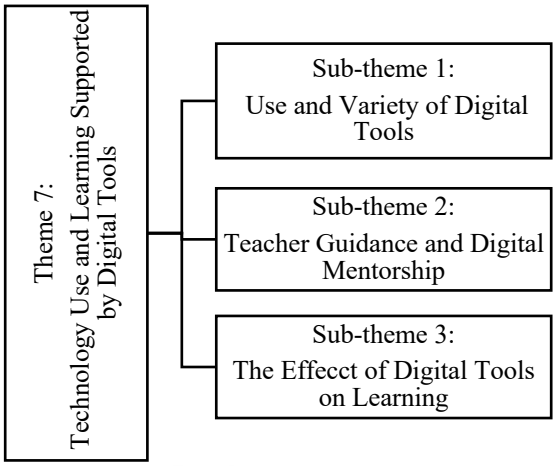
These findings not only underline the impact of decentralized education practices on students but also advocate for redefining the teacher's role from a traditional instructor to a facilitator. Personalized approaches in education not only increase student participation but also make learning experiences more meaningful and memorable. In this regard, the needs and suggestions expressed by students serve as a valuable guide for improving teaching methods and creating more dynamic and effective lessons. Decentralized education practices offer a model flexible enough to meet these demands, fostering an environment where students participate more actively and perceive learning as an enjoyable experience.

4.2.8. Technology Use and Learning Supported by Digital Tools

This theme examines how students utilize digital tools in their learning processes and the impact of these tools on education. One of the defining characteristics of the decentralized education model, digitalization, facilitates personalized and innovative learning experiences. The integration of technology in education caters more effectively to students' individual learning needs and interests, aligning with the principles of decentralized education by combining teacher guidance with modern tools.

As part of the research, students were asked: *What technological tools do you use to improve your in-class and out-of-class learning experiences? How do your teachers guide you in this regard?* Student responses were analyzed under the following three subthemes: "Use and Variety of Digital Tools" , "Teacher Guidance and Digital Mentorship" and "Effects of Digital Tools on Learning."

Figure 4.2.8.1. Theme of Technology Use and Learning Supported by Digital Tools and Sub-themes



Under the subtheme of Use and Variety of Digital Tools, the digital tools used by students and their contributions to the learning process are analyzed. Interactive tools such as smartboards provide a visual and engaging learning experience in the classroom, while devices like phones, tablets, and computers enhance individual learning outside the classroom. Platforms such as YouTube, Canva, Prezi, and language learning applications like Duolingo and Quizlet are among the most frequently used tools by students.

Orchid stated that the Prezi presentation tool she used in English lessons and international experiment videos she watched for biology made her learning process more meaningful. She emphasized that digital tools make lessons more engaging. Sunflower noted that the smartboard provides visual support in lessons, and watching educational videos on her phone outside the classroom reinforces her learning. Rose highlighted that Duolingo and Quizlet were instrumental in developing her language skills. Daisy shared that the interactive features of the smartboard help her focus better in class, while YouTube aids in reinforcing her lessons at home. Hyacinth mentioned that she uses Python and Scratch for learning coding, which has significantly improved her technological skills. Jasmine pointed out that biology experiment videos contribute to her better understanding of concepts.

Lavender stated that the digital platforms recommended in foreign language lessons actively support her vocabulary development. Peony explained that she follows lessons using the interactive sections of the smartboard in class and deepens her learning by conducting research on her tablet outside the classroom. Camellia

remarked that platforms like Google Classroom and Edmodo streamline access to course materials, accelerating her learning process. Tulip noted that YouTube is an invaluable resource for watching instructional videos. Iris emphasized that she can easily access scientific research through her phone and tablet, while Violet shared that she organizes her class notes using digital tools like OneNote. Daffodil mentioned that she greatly benefits from the Memrise app for practicing English vocabulary. Marigold indicated that she uses the Khan Academy platform for audiovisual materials in history lessons. Lilac expressed that platforms such as YouTube and Google Scholar play a significant role in supporting her study sessions and learning process.

The Teacher Guidance and Digital Mentorship subtheme examines the influence of teachers' guidance on students' digital learning experiences. An essential aspect of effective technology use is the mentorship role of teachers. Students reported that they could use digital tools more consciously and efficiently thanks to the applications and resources suggested by their teachers.

Violet shared that her German teacher recommended the Padlet application, which she uses daily to support her language learning. Peony explained that her language skills improved by watching content on platforms like Netflix and Disney+, suggested by her teacher. Lilac highlighted that her English teacher's recommendations, such as Duolingo and Quizlet, made language learning more enjoyable. Jasmine mentioned that her biology teacher's recommendation to watch international experiment videos helped her understand biological concepts better. Daisy emphasized how her literature teacher's suggestion to use Canva developed her creativity and added a visual dimension to her learning. Hyacinth noted that her computing teacher's advice introduced her to different coding platforms, enhancing her skills. Orchid stated that BBC Learning English, suggested by her language teacher, was particularly effective for her language studies.

Camellia explained that she participated in online courses on platforms like Coursera following her teacher's guidance, which significantly increased her interest in learning. Sunflower shared that her history teacher recommended various article sources that greatly contributed to her learning process. Lavender expressed that the experiment videos recommended by her science teachers simplified the understanding of complex topics. Marigold mentioned that documentaries recommended by her social science teachers helped her better understand historical contexts. Lilac shared that the online resources suggested by her teachers for written assignments enriched

her research. Tulip added that digital word games and audio practice applications recommended by her language teachers were highly beneficial for her learning.

The subtheme of The Effects of Digital Tools on Learning explores how digital tools, through audiovisual support and interactive platforms, make learning more meaningful. The integration of technology into learning processes allows for a more effective response to students' individual learning needs.

Iris stated that the visual materials on smartboards made it easier for her to understand lessons, especially in numerical subjects. Jasmine expressed that digital experiment videos in biology classes helped her grasp concepts more effectively. Camellia shared that digital tools for language learning increased her motivation and accelerated her learning process. Lavender noted that her work with digital applications enhanced her learning speed and made it easier to retain information. Zinnia emphasized that digital tools were used not only for acquiring knowledge but also for developing critical thinking and analytical skills.

Sunflower explained that applied simulations in numerical subjects simplified understanding of concepts. Peony mentioned that the integration of digital games into language learning significantly boosted her motivation. Marigold found that audiovisual content made complex historical events more meaningful. Lilac shared that watching educational videos on platforms like YouTube reinforced her understanding. Snapdragon highlighted that digital platforms used in language learning enhanced her motivation and improved her language skills through visual support. Rose stated that the visualization capabilities of digital tools helped her better understand complex mathematical concepts.

Geranium expressed that digital learning tools supported individual study environments and facilitated collaboration in group projects. Daisy noted that digital applications made the knowledge she acquired more permanent and improved the effectiveness of her learning processes. Bluebell shared that digital documentaries and interactive maps in history classes were very helpful in visualizing information. Daffodil mentioned that digital simulations in biology classes made experimental processes more meaningful. Sunflower emphasized that visual tools used in language classes accelerated learning and increased her motivation. Camellia added that the digital platforms recommended by her teachers, particularly discussion forums and interactive assignment systems, made learning processes more flexible.

The analysis of this theme clearly demonstrates that digital tools personalize learning processes and align with the decentralized education model. Students experience more unique and effective learning opportunities through various digital tools, while teacher guidance plays a crucial supportive role in this process. Audiovisual materials, interactive platforms, and creative applications transform learning into both a process and an experience.

The diversity of digital tools, the guiding roles of teachers, and the effects of these tools on learning highlight the critical role of technology in education. By integrating technology into learning processes, the decentralized education model offers students more personalized and flexible learning opportunities. In this context, developing strategies that provide broader guidance and resources for the use of technology will contribute to the creation of more effective learning environments in the future.

The analysis of the themes under the section "Students Within Decentralized Education", based on the responses of student participants, indicates that students play active roles in their individual learning processes and that the decentralized education approach supports these processes. Students have expressed their desire for greater agency in their learning, their effective use of digital tools tailored to individual learning needs, and their increased motivation through creative activities.

4.3. An Example of Decentralized Education Practices: An Interdisciplinary Study

This practice emerged from the transformation of a creative idea discussed in an English class unit into a teaching implementation by integrating other disciplines. The English teacher aimed to create a context in which 9th-grade students could explore their cultural values within the themes of art and painting covered in their lesson plan. This idea evolved into a proposal for an interdisciplinary study involving Art and Literature classes.

At the school where the research was conducted, the interdisciplinary collaboration among English, Art, and Literature classes concretely demonstrates the personalized and student-centered nature of decentralized education. Moreover, this study represents a practice where students actively participate in the learning process, their individual differences are acknowledged, and they express their creative thoughts within an interdisciplinary framework.

The practice aimed to enhance not only the language skills of 9th-grade students but also their cultural and artistic awareness. Teachers viewed this initiative as an opportunity for students in English classes to learn art-related terminology, develop communication skills, and reinforce their learning through the creation of a tangible product. In collaboration with Art and Literature teachers, a project was designed where students would analyze an artist's work and the characteristics of the era, then create an original piece of art and a story inspired by that work. The practice included a structured process to develop students' research, creative thinking, and teamwork skills.

In the first phase, students conducted individual research and presentations to gather information about the selected period's artists and their works. Following this, they collaborated in groups to create a new piece of art inspired by their findings. The newly created work was further enriched with a fictional artist and a supporting story, combining literary and artistic creativity to provide students with a comprehensive learning experience. This process strengthened classroom dynamics by fostering teacher-student interactions while engaging students in a productive interdisciplinary project. The collaborative efforts between English, Art, and Literature teachers extended beyond traditional classroom activities, offering students a creative and multifaceted learning experience.

During the first week, the project was introduced to the students, and they were tasked with conducting individual research. The English teacher introduced the project to the class, explaining the objectives and scope. Students were asked to select one painter from the Ottoman era between 1800 and 1900 and to study one of their works. The purpose of choosing this period was to understand the significance of painting in Turkish culture by examining the impact of Westernization on Ottoman art and how local cultural elements were reflected in these works. The art teacher encouraged students to make their own choices freely by presenting examples from well-known artists such as Osman Hamdi Bey, Şeker Ahmet Paşa, and Halil Paşa, as well as lesser-known painters of the period.

Students were instructed to conduct detailed research about their chosen painter's biography and selected artwork and bring their findings to the class. Materials required included color copies of the selected paintings and notes taken from their online research using technology. As a result, students took responsibility for their own learning by making independent choices and conducting individual research.

During the second week, students presented their research on their chosen painter and artwork in English. The presentations were expected to cover the painter's life, turning points in their artistic career, the technical features and theme of the selected artwork, the cultural context of the period, and the reasoning behind their choices. For example, one student chose Osman Hamdi Bey's The Tortoise Trainer, while another analyzed Şeker Ahmet Paşa's still-life painting or Halil Paşa's portrait works. The art and literature teachers contributed to the presentations by guiding the students in understanding the artistic and historical contexts. Consequently, students gained experience in using art terminology, performed in-depth analyses of the artworks, and improved their English presentation skills.

In the third week, group activities were organized. Students were divided into groups of 4-6 in the classroom. Each group aimed to create a unique piece of art by cutting and reorganizing copies of the artworks introduced during the individual research phase. They planned which parts of the artworks to use and decided to create a fictional painter profile and a story associated with the new artwork. The art and literature teachers provided guidance during this phase, offering support on technical details and story-writing processes. Materials used included scissors, glue, colored pencils, black cardboard, and high-quality copies of the selected artworks.

In the fourth week, the design of new artworks and the storytelling process began. Each group cut and rearranged parts of the selected artworks to create an entirely new and unique piece of art. The concept of the "Snob Effect" in art was explained to the students, with examples provided to inspire their creative process. To add meaning to the newly created artworks, each group wrote a story and connected it to the biography of a fictional painter. One group created an imaginary "cityscape" from the Ottoman era by combining elements from The Tortoise Trainer and Still Life paintings. They contextualized this artwork with the narrative of "an artist depicting social changes in Ottoman society during its final period." As a result, the students produced an interdisciplinary creation by integrating visual and written storytelling.

In the fifth week, group presentations and feedback sessions were held. The groups presented their artworks and fictional stories in English to the class and received feedback from other groups and teachers. The presentations highlighted the creative process, the significance of the chosen elements, the biography of the fictional artist, and its connection to the artwork. The art teacher evaluated the aesthetic details of the work, the literature teacher assessed the structure of the story, and the English

teacher reviewed the language use. Subsequently, students refined their creations based on the feedback they received.

In the sixth week, an exhibition and final evaluations took place. After completing the project, all the artworks were displayed in an exhibition organized within the school. During the exhibition, each group introduced their artwork and story, explaining how the concepts were applied. Ultimately, the students emphasized the uniqueness of their creations and gained valuable experience in showcasing their creativity to a broader audience. The project enhanced students' confidence and enabled them to better understand the connections between art, language, and literature.

The lesson plan was collaboratively designed by English, art, and literature teachers within an interdisciplinary framework. In the first week, guiding students toward individual research was considered essential by the teachers to help them establish foundational knowledge. Summer emphasized that individual research provided a significant opportunity for students to learn English terminology, as accessing resources about Ottoman-era painters and their works in English enhanced their language skills. She also highlighted that allowing students to freely select their research topics increased their individual motivation.

Autumn noted that analyzing chosen painters through individual presentations helped students develop their artistic understanding and stressed the importance of supporting these presentations with visual materials. Spring stated that this phase laid a foundation for literary skills such as story writing and creating fictional artist profiles, adding that students' individual efforts during this stage were remarkable. The concept of the "Snob Effect," included in the plan at the suggestion of the art teacher, Autumn, aided students in designing their works more consciously and highlighting their originality. Autumn emphasized that this concept added depth to artistic thinking and enabled students to make more deliberate aesthetic decisions.

The teachers unanimously agreed on the value of this concept in enhancing students' artistic awareness. The integration of story writing and visual design in group work was included in the plan based on suggestions from the literature and art teachers. Spring remarked that developing stories in harmony with visuals allowed students to think about literary and artistic contexts simultaneously. Autumn observed that students improved their technical skills and aesthetic perception during group work. Summer noted that collaboration in English during this process created an

interdisciplinary connection and reinforced students' language skills. This strategy enabled students to merge skills from different disciplines, resulting in the creation of innovative and original works.

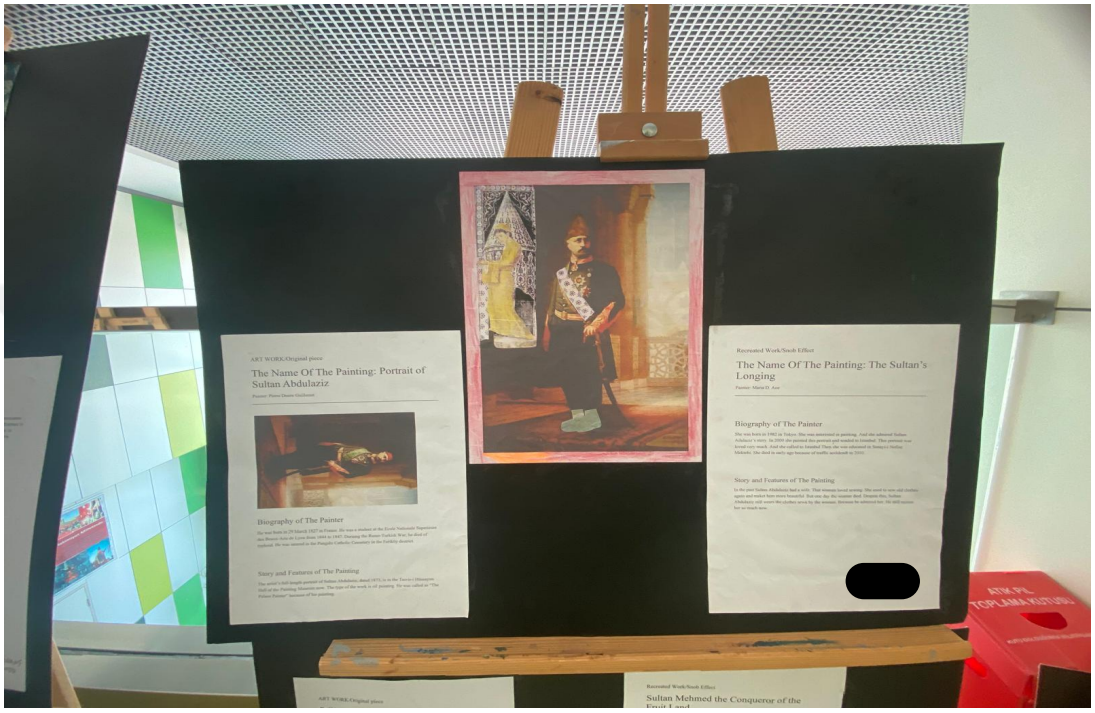
The inclusion of the exhibition at the conclusion of the plan was deemed by the teachers to be an effective method for helping students build self-confidence by presenting their work publicly and reinforcing what they had learned throughout the process. Spring highlighted that the exhibition integrated written narratives with visual artworks, and this experience boosted the students' self-confidence. Autumn emphasized that presenting the artworks with visual details during the exhibition allowed students to convey their artistic perspectives to a broader audience. Summer noted that the exhibition provided students the opportunity to present their works in English and share their creative stories. Summer further stated that the plan's weekly focus on different aspects helped students develop multiple skills simultaneously. The active use of English during the research, presentation, and writing phases facilitated the development of language skills within an interdisciplinary context. Autumn underscored that each stage of the plan enhanced the students' visual perception and strengthened their creativity. Spring remarked that the integration of written narratives with artistic contexts from a literary perspective fostered students' multidimensional thinking skills.

This practice effectively reflects the student-centered approach of decentralized education. The findings can be evaluated in terms of individual responsibility and participation, interdisciplinary connections, and creativity. In this context, students directed their work based on their interests and actively participated in the process. Through the integration of art, language, and literature, students gained multidimensional thinking skills. Additionally, by emphasizing the uniqueness and rarity of the artworks, the students developed a novel perspective on artistic creations.

The detailed lesson plan and assessment rubric are presented in **Appendix 5.** The practice was structured over six weeks, with two class hours allocated weekly for the English lesson. To support the interdisciplinary nature of the practice, students sought guidance from the art and literature teachers as needed, with one additional lesson per week provided in these subjects. The art teacher offered feedback on visual composition, the English teacher focused on language usage, and the literature teacher provided insights on story content. The completed works were showcased in an exhibition held within the school. Each phase of the practice and the final products

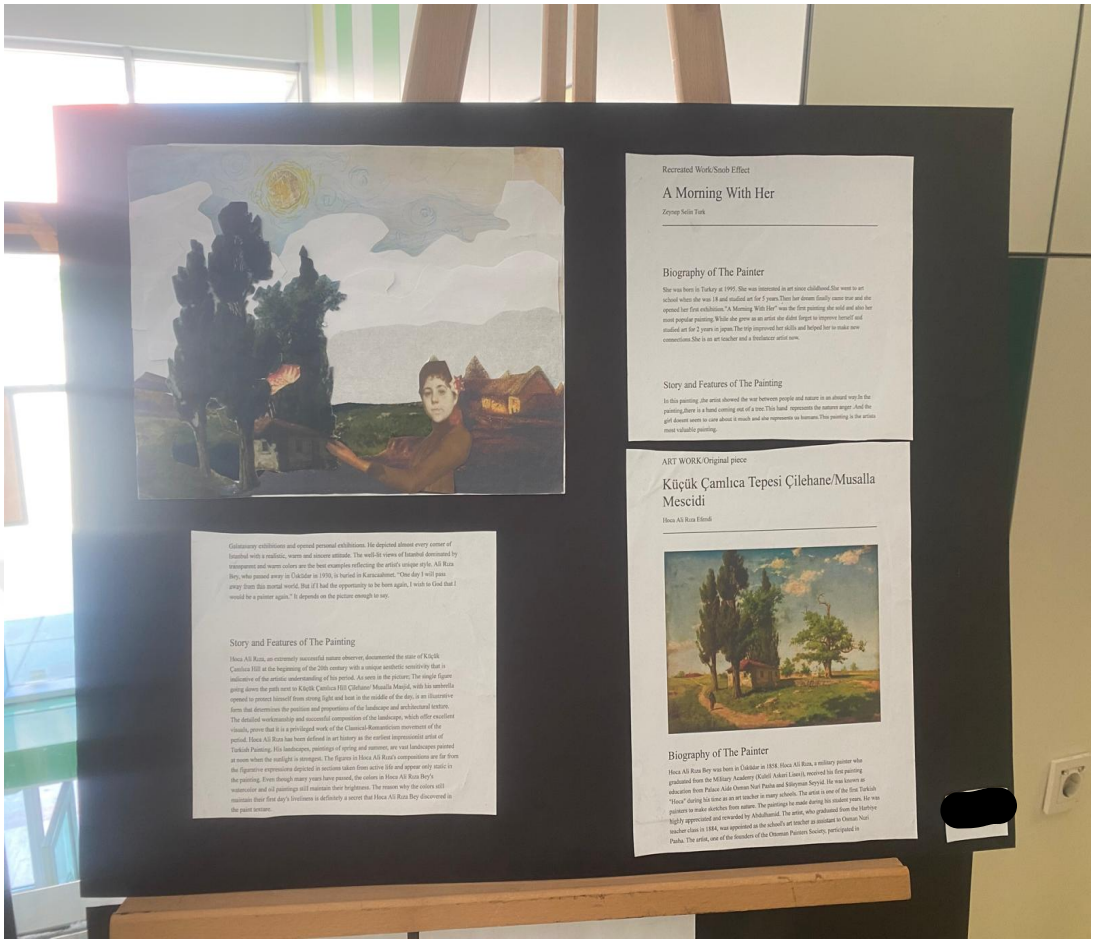
concretely reflect the student-centered approach of the decentralized education philosophy. Below are details of the exhibition layout and analyses of student works, accompanied by photos showcasing some of the outcomes of the decentralized education practices. Additional visuals illustrating various dimensions of the practice are presented in **Appendix 7.**

Figure 4.3.1. Sultan's Longing. Student artwork.



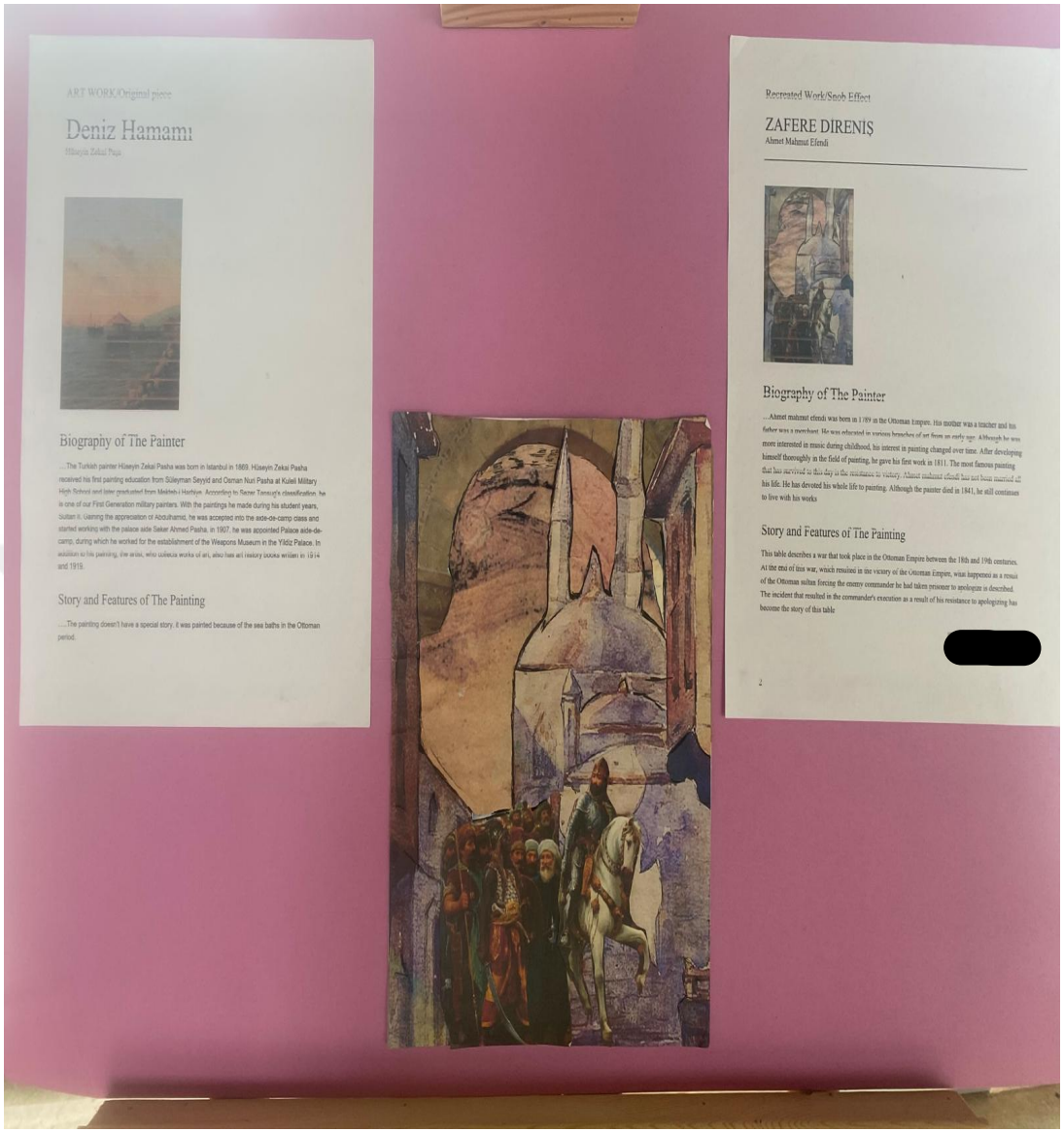
The work presented in Figure 4.3.1 was reinterpreted by the students as "The Sultan's Longing," inspired by Sultan Abdülaziz's portrait. The piece features a background adorned with traditional Ottoman motifs and decorative details rearranged using a collage technique, creating an aesthetic unity with the figure reflecting the Sultan's longing and melancholy. By establishing an interdisciplinary connection between history and art, the students offered an emotional portrayal of the late Ottoman Empire. The combination of modern techniques with Ottoman elements emphasized the Sultan's emotional solitude and his yearning for his responsibilities, enhanced through both visual and narrative details. This creative approach highlighted the Snob Effect, increasing the impact of the artwork and contributing to the students' development of an original artistic perspective.

Figure 4.3.2. Morning with Her. Student artwork.



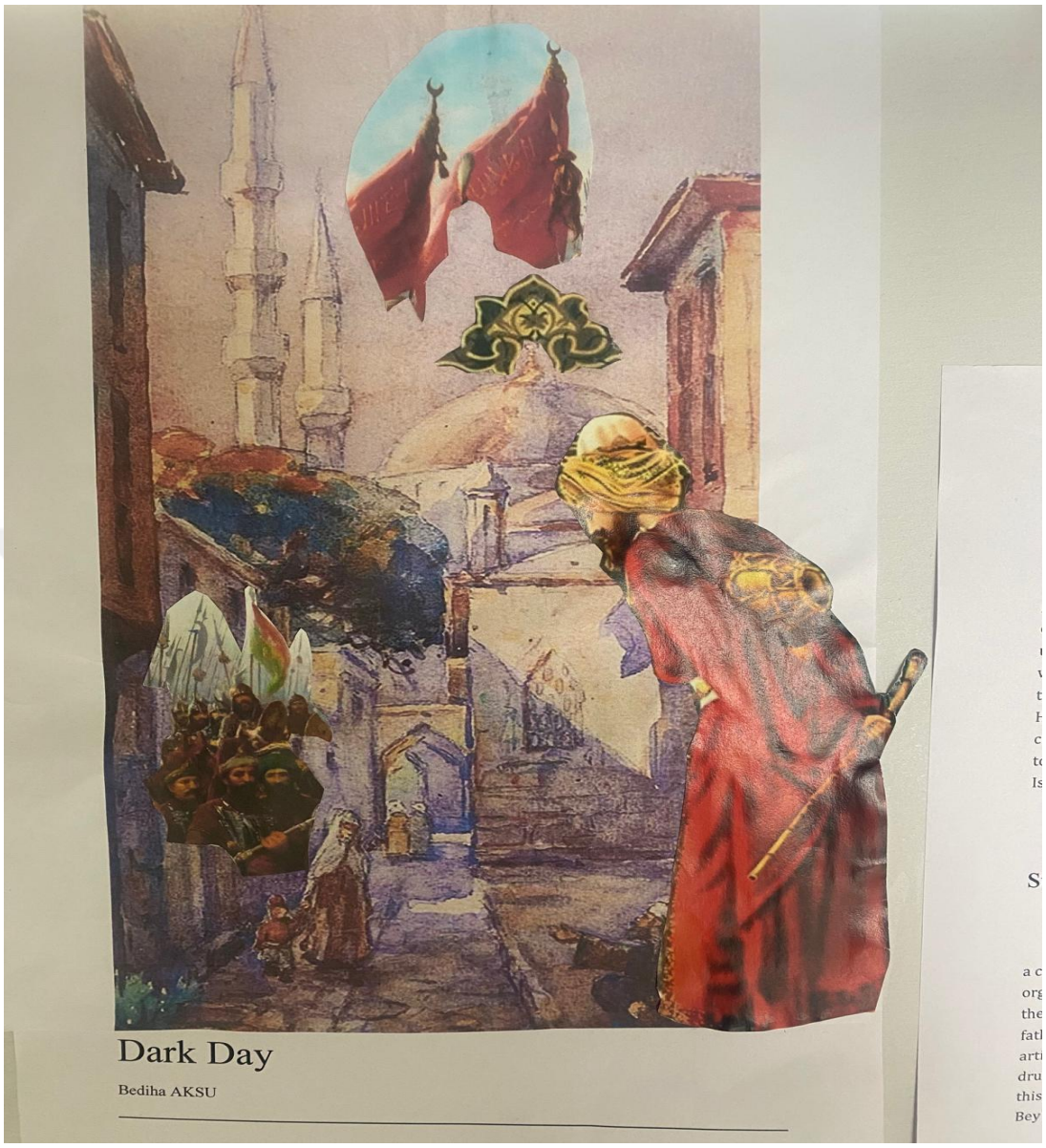
The work presented in Figure 4.3.2 was inspired by Hoca Ali Rıza's piece titled "Küçük Çamlıca Hill Çilehane/Musalla Mosque" and reinterpreted with enriched figurative and collage elements while preserving the original piece's natural and pastoral theme. The central focus of the artwork is a female figure, which complements the pastoral atmosphere by artistically expressing the tranquility of a rural morning and the relationship between humans and their surroundings. The use of modern and colorful touches in the sky adds a dynamic energy to the composition, creating a bridge between traditional and contemporary art. The Snob Effect concept was effectively utilized in this piece to emphasize the harmony between classical and modern art. This creative approach demonstrates the students' ability to establish an interdisciplinary connection in their artistic process and showcases their skill in transforming a classical work into a modern narrative.

Figure 4.3.3. Resistance to Victory. Student artwork.



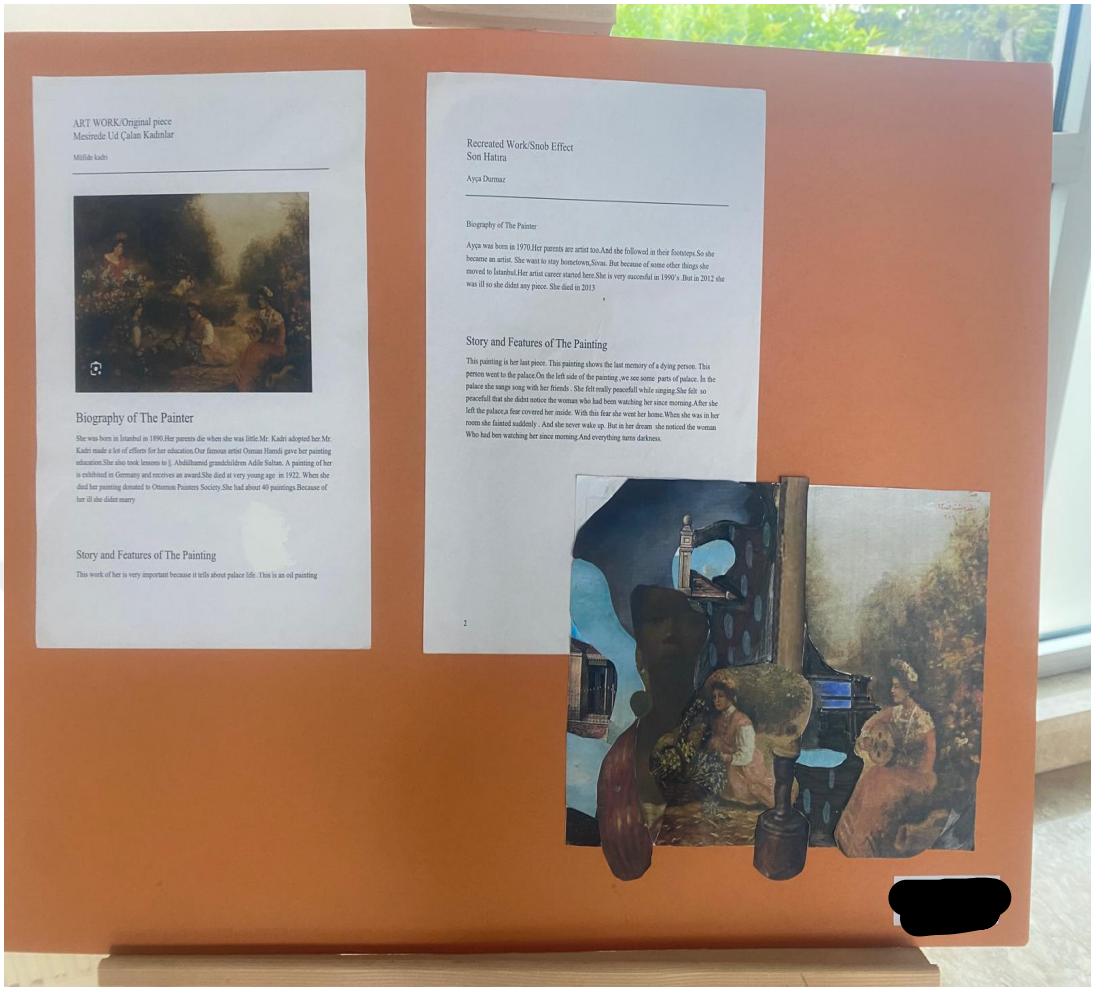
The artwork presented in Figure 4.3.3 reinterprets Ottoman themes of victory and resistance through a modern approach. Inspired by Hoca Ali Rıza's "Sea Bath" and Ahmet Malaz Efendi's works, this piece was created using collage techniques to emphasize the historical context of scenes depicting war and triumph. The elements, brought together through the student's unique perspective, establish a meaningful connection between the past and the modern era, enabling historical events to be expressed with a contemporary narrative. This interpretation showcases the students' ability to merge traditional themes with innovative artistic methods.

Figure 4.3.4. Dark Day. Student artwork.



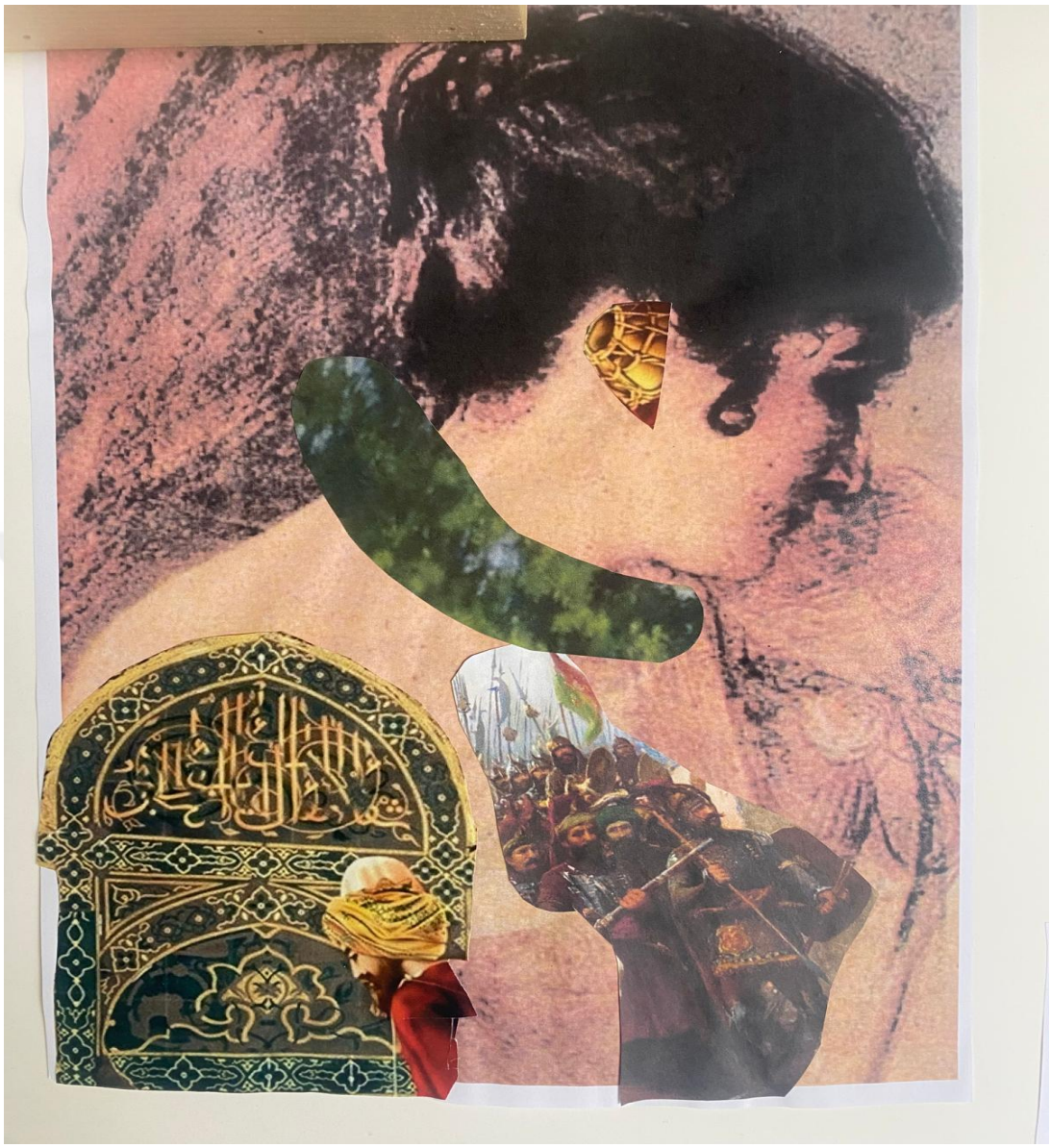
The artwork presented in Figure 4.3.4 depicts the turbulent times of the Ottoman era within a wartime atmosphere. The student crafted a fictional tragic scene by incorporating classic Ottoman architectural details and figures of historical characters. The mosque and flags in the background highlight the religious and national symbols of the period, while the dramatic postures of the characters in the foreground amplify the emotional impact of the piece. This work approaches historical events from an emotionally charged perspective, offering a unique interpretation of the Snob Effect concept, thus creating a meaningful connection between the past and art.

Figure 4.3.5. The Last Memory. Student artwork.



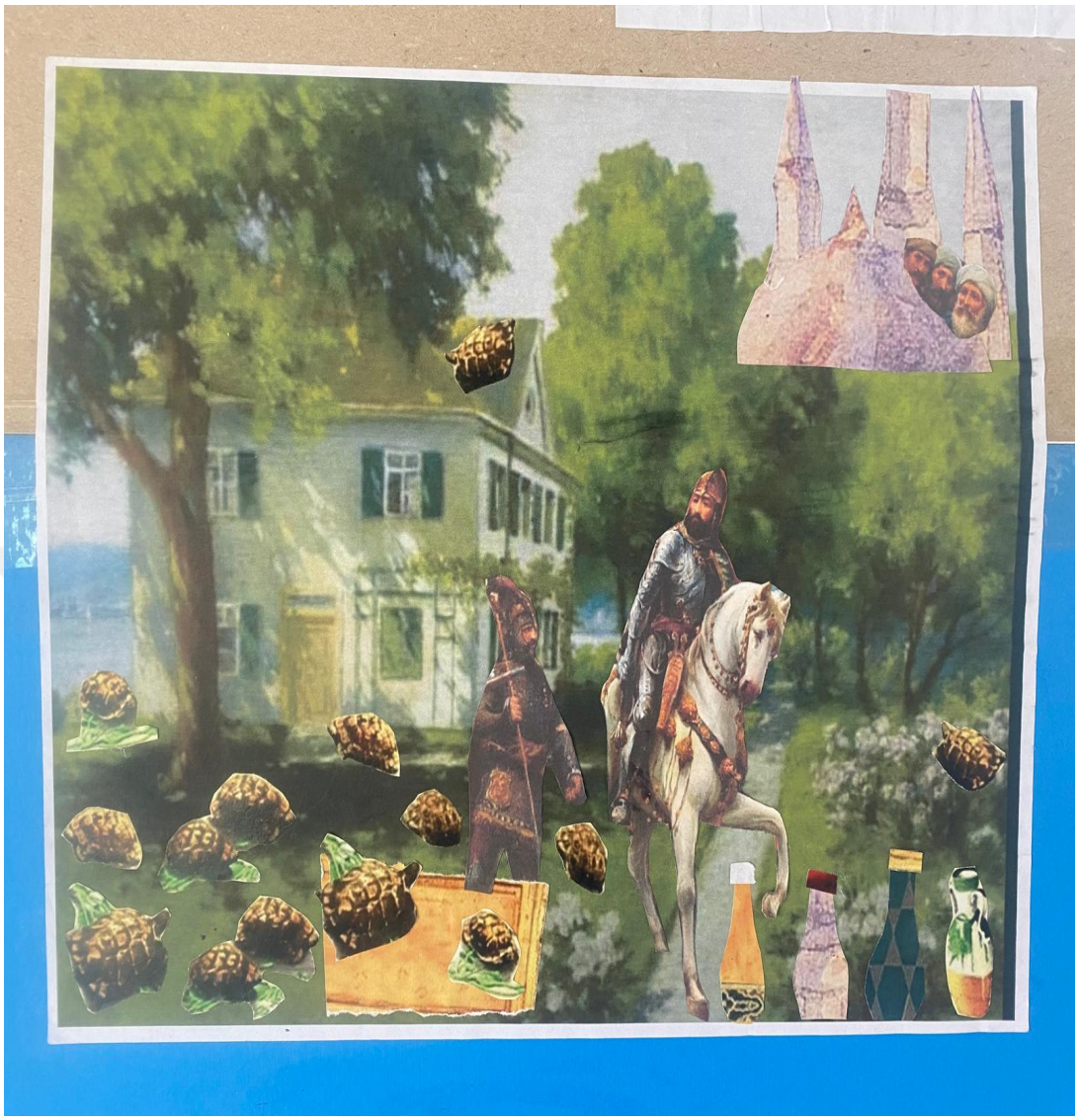
The artwork presented in Figure 4.3.5 is inspired by Mihri Müşfik Hanım's painting "Women Playing Oud in the Countryside." It stands out for its effort to reinterpret Ottoman palace life in a modern context. The architectural details and traditional elements in the background reflect traces of cultural heritage, while the authentic postures of the women in the foreground and their interaction with musical instruments successfully evoke the nostalgic atmosphere of the past. The color tones and intricate details used in the artwork merge the aesthetic sensibilities of the past with modern visual expression techniques, achieving a harmonious composition.

Figure 4.3.6. A Woman's Shadow. Student artwork.



The artwork displayed in Figure 4.3.6 is a student creation that reinterprets historical Ottoman figures and decorative motifs using modern collage techniques. The architectural details and battle scenes in the background reflect the grandeur and dramatic history of the Ottoman era, while the posture of the central figure and the incorporation of calligraphy elegantly visualize the spirit of the period. This piece successfully establishes an interdisciplinary connection between history and art, emphasizing the Snob Effect by blending historical elements with a modern approach. As a result, the artwork effectively combines the legacy of the past with contemporary artistic sensibilities, creating a compelling fusion.

Figure 4.3.7. Captivity. Student artwork.



The artwork depicted in Figure 4.3.7 employs the turtle motif to highlight themes of life's slowness and patience, while visually expressing the grandeur and expansion of the Ottoman Empire through warfare. The turtles, representing slow but steady progress as a metaphor in Ottoman art, are juxtaposed with war figures that powerfully reflect the empire's historical expansion strategies. By blending modern and historical elements, this piece aims to establish a connection between the past and the present, offering viewers a sense of historical depth through a modern aesthetic lens. The work effectively bridges eras, presenting Ottoman history with a creative and contemporary perspective.

Figure 4.3.8. Exhibition image 1.



Figure 4.3.9. Exhibition image 2.



Figures 4.3.8 and 4.3.9 showcase photographs from the exhibition of student works produced through the collaborative efforts of English, Art, and Literature classes. This practice allowed students to reinterpret historical art pieces by integrating creative storytelling and modern artistic techniques.

The images represent an impactful example of decentralized education practices. Students demonstrated leadership in their own learning processes, engaging in interdisciplinary collaboration while showcasing creativity and critical thinking skills. The exhibition also highlights individual innovative expressions and unique creations, emphasizing the students' ability to combine historical and contemporary perspectives effectively.

The evaluation process was conducted using a process-oriented approach. The grades students received for this project were incorporated as performance grades in their English, Art, and Literature classes. The assessment rubric was designed to comprehensively evaluate students' individual and group work processes, product creation, and overall participation. The total score was determined out of 100, with the evaluation based on four main criteria: individual participation (20 points), group work (25 points), the artwork (30 points), and process and participation (25 points).

The individual participation criterion aimed to measure students' research and presentation skills, with a total weight of 20 points. Under the sub-criterion of research depth (8–10 points), students were assessed on their ability to collect detailed information about the chosen artist and artwork and analyze this information accurately. Partial points (4–7) indicated sufficient but incomplete analysis, while lower scores (0–3) reflected superficial research lacking in-depth analysis. The use of English (4–5 points) was evaluated based on the accurate and fluent use of English during presentations, including the appropriate use of art-related terminology. Partial scores (2–3) indicated some errors in language use or terminology, while minimal points (0–1) were awarded for inadequate language use. Presentation skills (4–5 points) included the clear and organized delivery of information and the effective use of visual materials, with lower scores reflecting disorganization or lack of supporting materials.

The group work criterion carried a total weight of 25 points and evaluated collaboration, planning, and creativity. Collaboration and participation (8–10 points) measured the ability of group members to work cohesively, adhere to task distribution, and demonstrate active involvement. Lower scores (4–7) indicated partial collaboration, while minimal points (0–3) reflected weak teamwork or unequal participation. Planning and organization (4–5 points) assessed the group's ability to develop and implement an effective strategy for designing the new artwork, with lower scores indicating some organizational gaps. Creativity and innovation (8–10 points)

were evaluated based on the incorporation of original ideas and the creation of a unique composition, while lower scores reflected limited originality or lack of innovation.

The evaluation of the artwork accounted for 30 points, focusing on visual quality, originality, and coherence with the accompanying story. Visual quality and technical execution (8–10 points) assessed the visual organization of the piece and the effective use of materials, with lower scores indicating technical flaws or lack of aesthetic appeal. Originality and uniqueness (8–10 points) reflected the extent to which the work conveyed a sense of rarity and distinctiveness, while lower scores indicated less innovative work. Coherence with the story (8–10 points) evaluated the alignment of the artwork with the fictional artist's biography and narrative, with partial or minimal points given for incomplete or weak connections.

The process and participation criteria were worth 25 points and included responsiveness to feedback, process management, and consistent contributions. Responsiveness to feedback (8–10 points) involved students' ability to consider and incorporate feedback from teachers and other groups to refine their work. Process management and time planning (8–10 points) evaluated how effectively the group utilized the allocated time to complete their tasks on schedule. Participation and process tracking (4–5 points) measured the consistent involvement and active contributions of group members, with lower scores reflecting partial engagement.

This comprehensive evaluation framework allowed for an objective analysis of students' performance in both individual and group tasks. Teachers provided their discipline-specific observations under the four main headings of the rubric and contributed to a collaborative decision-making process. This approach highlighted how interdisciplinary collaboration enriched the learning experience.

When evaluating individual contributions, Summer stated that the students' English language skills were generally impressive, noting their accurate and fluent use of terminology as an indication of their linguistic proficiency. However, she also observed some grammatical errors and vocabulary gaps in a few students. Autumn highlighted the success of material preparation and individual contributions, emphasizing the students' artistic originality and effective use of materials. Nonetheless, she pointed out technical shortcomings in certain cases. Spring remarked on the originality of the stories and the depth of the characters, indicating that individual efforts stood out in these aspects. However, she also noted some weaknesses in storytelling among certain students, despite the overall high level of success.

In terms of group work, Summer noted strong communication and collaboration within groups, with balanced task distribution and active contributions from all members during presentations. Autumn praised the cooperation among groups, pointing out the successful distribution of technical skills and the balanced compositions they achieved. Spring observed that the alignment between stories and visuals was generally strong but highlighted discrepancies in individual contributions within some groups.

Regarding the quality of the works, Summer emphasized the correct use of terminology in the pieces and their alignment with the stories, adding that the support of visuals with language usage was impressive. Autumn commended the aesthetic coherence, and the techniques used in the pieces, particularly praising the integration of the "Snob Effect" concept. Spring noted that the integration of stories and visuals was generally good, although a few stories lacked detailed elements. However, she concluded that the overall quality was high.

In terms of process and participation, Summer found the students' ability to incorporate feedback throughout the process to be impressive, though she identified weaknesses in time management within some groups. Autumn noted that the groups were generally successful in time management and material use, showing openness to feedback throughout the process. Spring emphasized the success of the story-writing process and the incorporation of feedback, highlighting that the active participation of groups significantly contributed to the overall success.

In general evaluations regarding the practice, Summer highlighted the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary approach in enhancing students' language skills, emphasizing that the collaboration with art and literature classes supported creative thinking skills. She also stated that this process presented a successful example of a multidimensional language learning experience. Autumn noted significant progress in students' artistic creativity and technical skills, asserting that contributions from literature and English classes enriched the aesthetic and conceptual depth of the works. She added that the decentralized approach provided students with opportunities to explore different dimensions of art.

Spring emphasized that the alignment between the works and their stories demonstrated students' creative writing skills, while the collaboration with art and English classes made literary content more enriched and meaningful. She concluded that this process reinforced the student-centered approach of decentralized education.

In this context, this practice is considered an example of decentralized education because the educational process is shaped through the active participation of teachers and students, independent of centralized authority.

Teachers gain flexibility and autonomy in their respective fields, allowing them to adapt lesson content and teaching methods to meet the individual needs of students. Students, on the other hand, select projects based on their individual preferences and interests, producing creative solutions. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration and contributions from teachers of various subjects surpass the constraints of a centralized structure, enabling the creation of a localized, tailored, and student-centered learning environment. These features exemplify an education model that is decentralized, responsive to local needs, flexible, and personalized.

5. DISCUSSION, RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents discussions based on the findings of the study, results drawn from the analysis, and recommendations for future practices.

5.1. Discussion and Results

This subsection provides an interpretation of the findings in relation to relevant literature and outlines the results derived from the study. In line with the study's objectives, the perspectives of teachers and students regarding decentralized education practices are discussed separately, and the findings are analyzed.

5.1.1. Teachers' Perspectives on Decentralized Education Practices

This section focuses on how teachers define decentralized education, implement decentralized education practices in their teaching, and structure their professional roles and responsibilities during this process. Specifically, teachers' behaviors related to teacher agency, leadership, and decision-making processes are examined in alignment with the research objectives and supported by relevant literature. Data obtained from teacher interviews indicate that decentralized education enhances teachers' pedagogical autonomy, enabling them to adopt a leadership- and collaboration-oriented approach. This dynamic fosters significant transformations in both classroom practices and professional roles.

The research findings reveal that the primary focus of teachers is to adapt lesson content to the individual needs of students and enhance classroom interaction. This approach incorporates the fundamental elements of differentiated instruction and effective classroom management strategies. According to Tomlinson (2001), differentiated instruction involves tailoring teaching strategies to students' individual readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles, which increases classroom interaction and fosters more active participation in learning processes.

Similarly, Hamre and Pianta (2003) emphasize that teacher-student interaction significantly impacts students' academic success and social skills. Supporting this, a study conducted using the Classroom Effective Communication Skills Perception Scale developed by Gülbahar and Aksungur (2018) demonstrates that teachers' classroom communication skills positively affect students' participation and academic achievements. Additionally, Avcı and Yüksel (2018) highlight that teachers' adaptation of instructional plans to actively involve students with diverse needs enhances their

academic performance. These findings collectively indicate that adapting lesson content to students' individual needs and fostering classroom interaction have a significant impact on students' academic and social development (Tomlinson, 2014).

The participant teachers expressed that they utilize flexible pedagogical methods to foster students' inquiry, project development, and creative thinking skills, emphasizing the importance of innovative approaches in education. Inquiry-based learning enhances creative problem-solving and critical thinking abilities (Glazewski, 2019), while project-based learning enables students to take an active role in both individual and collaborative learning processes, facilitating the development of original ideas (Barron & Darling-Hammond, 2018). Flexible approaches supporting creative thinking skills further empower students to generate innovative ideas, fostering their transformation into more independent learners (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2020). The findings highlight that flexible pedagogical methods play a critical role in creating student-centered environments that support both individual and collaborative learning processes while enhancing students' creative potential.

The research findings reveal that teachers collaborate with colleagues to develop interdisciplinary projects and actively engage in learning communities. Teachers state that these communities enhance their pedagogical skills, thereby increasing the efficiency of decentralized education practices. Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasize that learning communities support learning processes by developing individuals' professional knowledge and skills. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Vescio et al. (2008) indicates that these communities strengthen teachers' pedagogical competencies and significantly contribute to their professional development.

These communities not only provide teachers with opportunities to develop new methods and approaches but also enable them to assume more effective roles in decentralized education environments. Hord (1997) highlights the critical role of learning communities in fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing among teachers, thereby facilitating the transfer of pedagogical innovations into classrooms. Moreover, these communities support teachers' individual professional growth by enabling them to receive feedback from their peers.

In the context of interdisciplinary projects, Vangrieken et al. (2017) assert that such collaborations help teachers develop diverse perspectives and enhance pedagogical richness. Interdisciplinary projects not only increase teachers' professional satisfaction but also support students' access to diverse learning

pathways. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) find that learning communities strengthen teachers' leadership skills and enhance the effectiveness of decentralized education practices. These communities not only improve classroom practices but also allow teachers to participate more actively in decision-making processes within their schools.

The participant teachers indicate that school administration strengthens the collaborative environment by implementing strategies that promote teacher leadership. Supportive strategies employed by school management enable teachers to adopt leadership roles and establish effective collaboration with their colleagues. These strategies not only encourage teachers to be more open to pedagogical innovations but also allow them to contribute more significantly to students' learning processes. Darling-Hammond et al. (2019) emphasize that providing professional development opportunities to strengthen teacher leadership improves classroom practices and enhances collaboration. Furthermore, these strategies are noted to increase efficiency in both individual and community-based efforts by teachers.

Harris and Muijs (2004) state that participatory management strategies adopted by school leaders to encourage teachers to assume leadership roles create a stronger collaborative environment among teachers. Supporting teacher leadership in this way facilitates the effective implementation of interdisciplinary projects and fosters mutual learning processes among teachers. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) underline distributed leadership as a significant model that promotes collaboration among teachers. This approach ensures that leadership responsibilities are equitably distributed within the school community, enabling teachers to enhance their pedagogical skills. Adopting such strategies by the management increases trust among teachers, strengthens collaboration, and positively impacts student achievement.

Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008) highlight that school leaders who develop policies and practices supporting collaboration enable teachers to work more effectively within professional communities. This support contributes to the development of teachers' leadership skills and facilitates the creation of a student-centered learning environment. These studies demonstrate that promoting teacher leadership not only enhances teachers' professional satisfaction but also contributes to the overall quality of education in schools.

The findings also demonstrate that decentralized education practices in this school strengthen teachers' pedagogical autonomy by increasing their participation in

lesson planning, content development, and assessment processes. The Academy Schools model in the United Kingdom provides teachers with the autonomy to independently implement curricula and develop content. West and Wolfe (2018) state that this model enhances teachers' pedagogical autonomy, enabling them to prioritize student needs during lesson planning. Furthermore, the leadership roles assumed by teachers in assessment processes contribute to the widespread adoption of student-centered pedagogical approaches.

In the United States, the widely implemented Project-Based Learning (PBL) model encourages teachers to participate in lesson planning and assessment processes. Glazewski (2019) highlight that PBL provides teachers with greater freedom to design learning materials and content, allowing them to more effectively address the individual needs of students. PBL also strengthens teachers' guiding roles, enhancing their pedagogical flexibility.

In Australia, the Differentiated Instruction approach allows teachers to adapt lesson content to meet the individual needs of students. Sharp, Jarvis and McMillan (2020) emphasize that this model enables teachers to develop content that supports diverse learning styles and differentiate assessment processes to improve students' academic success. This approach supports teachers in adopting more flexible and creative pedagogical strategies in the classroom. Such practices demonstrate their contribution to helping teachers create innovative, flexible, and student-responsive learning environments that address individual needs.

According to the research findings, teachers indicate that a centralized system restricts their creativity and freedom, whereas working in a school environment where decentralized practices are implemented promotes freedom and encourages diversity in teaching strategies. Teachers report finding greater meaning in their profession through decentralized education practices, stating that these approaches contribute to their professional development and enhance their motivation compared to the rigid rules of a centralized system (Timperley, 2009). This suggests that decentralized structures support teachers' pedagogical autonomy, thereby increasing their professional satisfaction and interest in innovative practices.

The OECD (2019a) report highlights that in European countries where decentralized education practices are in place, teachers' pedagogical freedom has been enhanced, which fosters innovative educational approaches. Countries like Finland and Estonia are noted for enabling teachers to gain greater autonomy, allowing them

to develop creative teaching strategies. Such practices not only enhance teachers' professional satisfaction but also positively impact student achievement (OECD, 2019a).

Simons, Lundahl, and Serpieri (2013) compare centralized and decentralized education practices in Europe and find that decentralized systems grant teachers greater freedom. Their study emphasizes that in countries such as Italy and Sweden, decentralized practices strengthen teachers' leadership roles and increase diversity in classroom practices. Teachers, empowered by this autonomy, develop interdisciplinary projects and implement student-centered approaches more effectively. These studies clearly demonstrate that decentralized structures support teachers' creativity and freedom, fostering diversity in teaching strategies. This, in turn, has a positive impact on teacher motivation and professional satisfaction.

According to the participant teachers, professional seminars and other incentive strategies provided by school administration enhance their pedagogical capacities. Additionally, structural (physical) supports offered by the school facilitate the development of innovative approaches by teachers (Fullan, 2001). These supports provided by the administration enable teachers to adopt more flexible and creative strategies in classroom practices.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) emphasize that the supportive strategies of school administrations are effective in developing teachers' professional capacities and encouraging them to engage more in innovative practices. Particularly, professional seminars are noted to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and diversify their classroom practices.

The OECD (2019a) report reveals that physical and structural supports increase teachers' pedagogical freedom and allow them to focus more on innovative projects. The report highlights the impact of physical environments on teaching strategies, emphasizing that school administrations' support for teachers' efforts to create more innovative educational settings positively influences students' learning processes.

Sahlberg (2011) specifically highlights the Finnish education system, where school administrations provide opportunities for professional development, enabling teachers to adopt more pedagogical innovations. This system not only offers structural and physical support but also promotes teachers' individual creativity. These findings underscore the importance of school administration in supporting teachers' pedagogical capacities and innovative approaches through both professional

development-focused strategies and structural resources. Such efforts are crucial for fostering creativity and flexibility in teaching while enhancing overall educational outcomes.

The participant teachers report establishing guidance-based and trust-driven relationships with their students while considering their individual differences. They also emphasize that observing their students' achievements and developmental progress enhances their commitment to the profession and serves as one of their primary sources of motivation. These findings indicate that teacher-student relationships are shaped by a student-centered approach and that students' progress plays a critical role in increasing teachers' professional satisfaction.

Hamre and Pianta (2003) highlight that teacher-student relationships built on warmth, trust, and sensitivity positively impact both students' academic success and teachers' professional satisfaction. They assert that relationships formed with an awareness of individual differences among students enhance student motivation and positively influence learning processes. Similarly, Hattie (2009), in a comprehensive meta-analysis on the impact of teacher-student relationships on learning, emphasizes that trust-based relationships are a significant factor in improving students' academic performance. The study notes that teachers' student-centered and guidance-oriented approaches help establish strong bonds with students, thereby fostering a supportive learning environment.

Day and Gu (2010) state that the relationships teachers build with their students have a decisive impact on their professional satisfaction and motivation. They reveal that the satisfaction teachers derive from monitoring their students' developmental progress plays a critical role in strengthening their professional commitment. These findings underscore the importance of trust-driven, individual-focused teacher-student relationships in promoting both academic success for students and professional fulfillment for teachers.

In addition to these findings, I would like to incorporate my own observations to contribute to the research. As an internal observer, I had the opportunity to closely examine the strategies implemented by the school administration to encourage teachers within the framework of decentralized education practices. The school administration adopts a student-centered approach, positively responding to teachers' requests aimed at benefiting students. This approach not only supports teachers'

pedagogical freedom but also facilitates the implementation of student-centered projects, activities, and innovative teaching methods.

It was observed that the school administration organizes regular meetings, professional seminars, and collaborative projects to promote cooperation among teachers. Moreover, various incentives are provided to support teachers' professional development. These supports enhance teachers' motivation and strengthen their commitment to educational processes.

The school's advanced physical infrastructure directly influences the quality and diversity of the educational process. Modern classrooms, laboratories, art workshops, sports facilities, conference halls, and outdoor activity areas allow teachers to present lesson content more flexibly and richly. This infrastructure not only facilitates lesson delivery but also provides opportunities for applying diverse pedagogical methods (Dewey, 1938; Tanhan & Özok, 2020). Additionally, it enables the realization of various multidimensional activities such as projects, performances, field trips, concerts, and theater events that support students' social, cultural, and academic development (O'Donnell Wicklund Pigozzi & Peterson et al., 2010). Activities such as domestic and international trips are noted to enhance students' cultural awareness and contribute to a multidimensional learning process (Kolb, 1984). The diversity provided by such physical facilities enriches students' learning experiences and gives teachers the opportunity to expand their pedagogical approaches and experiment with innovative methods (Hargreaves, 2001).

The school's consistent development in academic and social achievements is directly related to the professional competencies and pedagogical practices of its teachers. This success is achieved through teachers assuming roles that extend beyond knowledge transmission, guiding students and leading their individual development processes (Day, Sammons & Gorgen, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020). By embracing guidance and leadership roles, teachers contribute to students' academic and social skills development while highlighting the importance of individualized learning processes (Hattie, 2009).

Furthermore, the school administration's strong leadership and supportive approaches enable teachers to derive a deeper sense of purpose and professional fulfillment, encouraging them to contribute to educational processes with an innovative perspective. Research indicates that supportive school climates enhance teachers' motivation and positively impact their professional satisfaction (Fullan,

2001; Spillane, 2006). Such a supportive approach strengthens not only individual teachers but also the collective success of the entire educational community.

These observations suggest that a decentralized educational environment can be successfully implemented on the basis of strong collaboration and trust between school administration and teachers. This alignment among stakeholders facilitates the creation of a creative, student-centered learning environment that respects students' individual differences.

5.1.2. Students' Perspectives on Decentralized Education Practices

This section examines students' perspectives and experiences regarding learning processes within the context of decentralized education. Based on the content analysis conducted in alignment with the research questions, the views of students on learning, the roles of the school and teacher in the learning process, individual learning styles and differences, in-class and extracurricular activities, teaching methods and requests for changes, student participation in decision-making processes, and the use of digital tools are addressed. These findings indicate that decentralized education supports a personalized, student-centered, and participatory structure.

The research findings reveal that students perceive learning as a process of individual meaning-making and adaptation to life, emphasizing the contribution of teachers and the opportunities provided by the school to these processes. Students underline the significant impact of supporting individual differences in learning styles on their learning experiences. Based on Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences, adopting methods that cater to individuals' diverse learning needs and preferences makes learning experiences more effective and meaningful. Students particularly highlight the enriching effect of technology and digital tools on their learning processes, stating that these tools facilitate personalized learning experiences (Mayer, 2020). Research indicates that technology-supported learning not only increases students' engagement but also enhances their access to information, collaboration, and creative thinking skills (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Prensky, 2010).

The interactive features of digital tools allow learning materials to be tailored to students' needs, which helps them achieve their individual learning goals more effectively (Kozma, 2003). Thus, the use of technology not only supports instructional processes but also makes learning environments more flexible and dynamic.

The decentralized education model responds to these expectations by offering an approach that uncovers students' individual potentials and liberates learning processes. Students define learning not merely as a process of acquiring information but as making knowledge permanent, applicable, personally meaningful, and integrated into various dimensions of life. This reflects that learning is perceived as a process that fosters individual autonomy and authenticity. Specifically, the transformation of theoretical knowledge into practice is regarded as one of the most critical dimensions of learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019). Learning, in this context, is characterized as an individual-focused, experience-based, and life-related process, forming the foundation of modern educational approaches (Säljö, 2010).

In the context of decentralized education, learning is designed as a process that fosters skills such as individual autonomy, flexibility, and creative problem-solving. Meeting students' individual learning needs and ensuring their active participation in learning experiences are among the primary goals of decentralized education models (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012). Additionally, this approach goes beyond mere knowledge transmission, enabling individuals to develop 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity (Fullan, 2019).

The literature associates decentralized education models with individual autonomy, self-regulation, and personalized learning processes. Leithwood and Menzies (1998) state that decentralized education models facilitate access to knowledge, allowing individuals to act more independently in their learning processes. This encourages students to take greater responsibility in transforming theoretical knowledge into practice and to develop original learning pathways.

The OECD (2019b) report reveals that decentralized education practices enhance students' ability to control their own learning processes and make learning more meaningful. Barron and Darling-Hammond (2018) emphasize that project-based learning methods in the context of decentralized education increase the retention and applicability of knowledge, thereby individualizing students' learning processes. These findings clearly demonstrate that decentralized education practices view learning as a process that promotes individual autonomy and authenticity.

Students also report that the physical facilities provided by the school, such as laboratories, social activity areas, and art workshops, enhance their learning processes. The critical role of well-designed physical environments in increasing students' motivation and supporting academic success is supported by academic studies.

Earthman (2004) highlights that the physical quality of learning environments has a direct impact on students' academic performance, emphasizing that flexible and modern learning spaces foster active student participation and enrich the learning process. In this context, hands-on learning areas, such as laboratories and art workshops, enhance students' ability to construct meaning from knowledge.

The findings reveal that teachers' use of innovative methods tailored to individual needs with a guidance-based approach increases student participation in lessons. This is strongly supported by the literature. Barron and Darling-Hammond (2018) highlight that project-based and guidance-focused learning methods ensure active student participation and make learning more meaningful. Tomlinson (2001) notes that differentiated instruction strategies create a student-centered environment, accounting for individual differences and strengthening engagement.

Guidance-based approaches allow students to actively participate in their learning processes and explore their own learning pathways. These approaches support students in becoming active agents in their learning processes rather than mere recipients of information (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Notably, guidance-based learning fosters the development of students' problem-solving, creative thinking, and self-management skills (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

These approaches, aligned with decentralized education models, enable learning to be addressed as an individual-focused, flexible, and student-centered process. Through guidance processes, students gain access not only to academic knowledge but also to lifelong learning skills (Blaschke, 2012). Moreover, positioning the teacher as a guide plays a critical role in helping students explore their individual learning paths and develop a sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, student responses indicate that the use of materials makes learning more effective and lasting.

Academic literature frequently highlights the supportive role of technological tools and visual materials in learning processes. Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) emphasize that integrating digital tools into pedagogical processes enhances students' learning motivation and ensures knowledge retention. Similarly, Hattie (2009) states that visual and hands-on materials increase students' interest in lessons and transform learning into a long-term process. Accordingly, the active use of materials facilitates students' ability to connect abstract knowledge with concrete experiences.

According to the research findings, students exhibit varying levels of visual, kinesthetic, and auditory learning styles in their learning processes. This highlights once again the importance of individual differences in learning. While visual learning styles are observed to be more common among students, each individual's learning preferences may vary, and educational environments that consider these differences yield more effective results. Babayiğit (2016) states that students possess diverse learning styles and that organizing educational environments according to these differences enhances learning efficiency. The study notes that, although visual learning is prevalent, flexible and personalized learning environments benefit all students.

Gün, Zorluoğlu and Kaşıkçı (2023) demonstrates that individualized educational programs support students' learning processes by addressing their individual differences and that decentralized education models encourage such approaches. The study emphasizes that individualized learning offers solutions tailored to students' diverse needs, making it effective in educational processes. Yıldırım and Şahin (2015) finds that flexible and personalized learning environments adapt to students' various learning styles, thereby improving their academic performance. The study highlights the effectiveness of virtual world-based learning environments, particularly for students with visual and kinesthetic learning styles, stating that these environments enhance active student participation and positively impact learning processes.

Görgülü (2019) emphasizes that learning-style-based education positively affects students' academic achievements and underscores the importance of personalized learning environments. The study notes that decentralized education models promote such flexible learning experiences and create more effective learning environments by supporting students' individual differences. These studies underline the importance of considering individual differences in learning processes and creating flexible, personalized learning environments. Decentralized education models aim to maximize students' potential by fostering such learning experiences.

Participant students state that in-class activities such as group work, discussions, and project-based learning not only enhance their social skills but also increase the retention of learning. These activities contribute to the development of students' communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills, making learning processes more meaningful (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Another finding of the research reveals that extracurricular activities such as art and sports events and individual research allow students to discover their interests,

thereby boosting their motivation. These activities also strengthen students' self-discipline and individual responsibility. Additionally, it is observed that improving students' time management skills significantly contributes to the more effective organization of learning processes (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). With these skills, students appear better equipped to manage both their academic and personal goals.

These findings align with the results of PISA 2015, which highlight the relationship between students' collaborative problem-solving skills and well-being. PISA's assessment of collaboration-based problem-solving underscores the importance of in-class group work and discussions in enhancing students' social skills and their ability to generate creative solutions to complex problems (OECD, 2017a). Furthermore, PISA 2015's report on student well-being emphasizes that extracurricular activities such as art and sports play a critical role in increasing students' motivation and supporting their emotional well-being (OECD, 2017b). These reports demonstrate that time management and individual responsibility skills not only improve academic performance but also have positive effects on personal development.

In their responses to the research questions, students expressed the need for more frequent use of innovative and diverse methods (such as laboratory activities and gamification) in lesson delivery. They also highlighted requests for increasing activities that enhance student participation and for making lesson durations more flexible. Laboratory practices deepen students' conceptual understanding by transforming theoretical knowledge into practice, while innovative approaches like gamification make learning an enjoyable and motivating experience (Deterding et al., 2011; Hofstein & Lunetta, 2003). Particularly, individualized teaching methods are found to increase participation by providing solutions tailored to students' individual learning needs.

Barron and Darling-Hammond (2018) emphasize that project-based learning and laboratory activities develop students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Similarly, Alsadoon (2023) note that gamification methods effectively enhance student motivation and interest in learning. Additionally, the OECD (2019b) report shows that flexible learning durations and student-centered practices make learning experiences more meaningful and sustainable. These studies, aligned with the core principles of decentralized education, underscore the importance of diversity, innovation, and flexibility in teaching methods.

Students express the necessity of having greater control and decision-making authority over lesson content, homework selection, and learning methods to actively participate in the learning process (Zimmerman, 2002). This indicates that a learning environment designed around individual preferences enhances students' motivation and makes learning more meaningful. Specifically, the use of technology and interactive activities like gamification has been observed to increase students' interest in lessons and encourage their participation. These findings reaffirm the importance of personalized learning experiences, which form the foundation of decentralized education.

Ryan and Deci (2017) state that intrinsic motivation is higher in learning processes where individuals have control, which enhances the retention of learning. Alsadoon (2023) demonstrate that technology and gamification methods increase student engagement by adding fun and interaction to the learning process. Similarly, Cabaleiro-Cerviño and Vera (2020) emphasize that digital tools in personalized learning environments boost students' learning motivation and performance.

The OECD (2021) report highlights that student-centered teaching approaches, which respond to individual learning preferences, positively impact students' academic and social development. These findings show that students' demand to shape their own learning processes is a significant factor in enhancing the effectiveness of learning, and decentralized education models provide a strong framework to meet these demands.

Students state that digital tools and applications such as smart boards, YouTube, Duolingo, and Prezi personalize their learning processes and make them more meaningful. The integration of visual and auditory content into digital tools is shown to deepen learning and better address students' individual learning needs. Teacher guidance enhances the effective use of these tools, thereby increasing students' motivation (Aloraini, 2012; Fan et al., 2023).

In decentralized education, the use of digital tools plays a key role in strengthening student-centered learning approaches and personalizing learning processes. In this context, Otto et al. (2024) emphasize that the customization of digital tools according to individual learning paces boosts students' confidence and motivation in decentralized education practices. Digital tools not only facilitate the transmission of knowledge but also develop students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Livingstone and Sefton-Green (2016) highlight that digital tools strengthen the connection between in-class and out-of-class learning, fostering greater student involvement in their learning processes. Similarly, Mao et al. (2023) note that teacher guidance plays a critical role in helping students make the most of digital tools, directly impacting student achievement.

The use of digital tools in education has become particularly prominent during the COVID-19 pandemic (Aşan, 2022). The OECD's 2018 PISA report highlights that the effective use of digital tools enhances students' independent learning skills and forms a foundation for student-centered education models (OECD, 2018). Similarly, UNESCO's 2020 report emphasizes that digital tools provide personalized learning experiences, making the learning process more flexible and meaningful. The same report notes that with the widespread adoption of distance learning during the pandemic, digital tools have been increasingly used as a necessity for decentralized education models (UNESCO, 2020).

Dhawan's (2020) study examines how remote education and digital tools transformed decentralized structures within education systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study reveals that digital platforms support the transition of centralized authorities toward student-centered methods and offer opportunities to personalize students' individual learning processes. Furthermore, Akpen et al., (2024) underline that the effective use of digital tools during the pandemic redefined the roles of teachers and students, serving as a catalyst for the transition to decentralized education. The role of digital tools in education is thus viewed not merely as a technological innovation but as a crucial element supporting the individual-focused approach of decentralized education. The pandemic has made this role more visible, promoting flexibility and personalized approaches in education. In this context, the use of digital tools enables learning processes to be structured in a more authentic, participatory, and effective manner.

As an internal observer in this study, I observed that the school provides a strong infrastructure supporting both academic and social development of its students, facilitated by its extensive physical resources and offerings. The school's modern educational environment and comprehensive facilities make meaningful contributions to students' learning processes and personal growth. These facilities include a large library, meeting rooms frequently used for club activities, a cafeteria, a dormitory accommodating 160 students, and dedicated study rooms. Additionally, indoor sports

facilities, outdoor football and basketball courts support students' physical development and encourage an active lifestyle. The school's garden hosts sustainable farming activities, where students participate and develop environmental awareness.

It is noteworthy that students can easily access their teachers not only during class hours but also during breaks and other times. This accessibility strengthens student-teacher relationships and fosters a more supportive and informal learning environment. Personal lockers in the hallways provide students with secure storage for their belongings, while the prohibition of phone use during lessons helps students focus more effectively on their studies. Classrooms are designed as technology-supported learning environments and are equipped with smart boards. This technological infrastructure enables more interactive lessons and supports them with visual and auditory materials (Kirkwood & Price, 2013). Exhibitions in school hallways display students' artistic and academic work, offering them opportunities to express their creativity and share their achievements.

These positive features are among the key elements supporting the decentralized education practices observed in the study. This environment, which considers students' individual differences and enriches their learning processes, also boosts their confidence and motivation. The school's physical and social facilities provide a framework that supports the successful implementation of the decentralized education model identified in the research.

5.1.3. Perspectives on the Example of a Decentralized Education Practice

This practice highlights the fundamental elements of decentralized education, such as interdisciplinary collaboration, student leadership, and creativity. The findings reveal how students become more active in their learning processes through individual and group work in a decentralized practice, with the guidance role of teachers becoming prominent in this process (Spillane, 2006).

During the practice, students combined perspectives from English, Art, and Literature classes to create original outputs. The interdisciplinary approach highlights how collaboration enhances problem-solving and innovative thinking skills (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The evaluation rubric measures performance in both individual and group work, supporting the development of skills such as leadership and creativity (Andrade, 2000; Oakley et al., 2004).

Fullan (2001) states that process-based assessment increases motivation and broadens learning outcomes. During the practice, teachers assumed a guiding role to foster students' creativity and collaboration. Their feedback contributed to improving students' work and managing the process more effectively. Teachers were observed to emphasize individual contributions and support group communication. Leithwood (2018) highlight the critical role of teacher guidance in structuring students' learning processes within decentralized education environments. In this context, teachers' interdisciplinary approach and guidance played a significant role in the success of this practice.

The research shows that students' individual contributions were generally high, but some groups experienced imbalances between individual and group performances. Summer noted strong English language skills among students, though a few had grammar deficiencies; Autumn highlighted overall success in material use but pointed out some technical issues, while Spring emphasized the originality of stories but mentioned narrative weaknesses in a few cases. These observations suggest the need to better integrate students' individual strengths with group dynamics. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that balancing individual and group performances within decentralized structures is critical for teaching efficiency.

This decentralized education practice demonstrated positive outcomes in areas such as interdisciplinary collaboration, creative thinking, and process-based assessment. Students' leadership and creative contributions reflect the core philosophy of decentralized education. However, improvements are needed in balancing individual and group performances and in areas such as time management. These practices, supported by teachers' guidance roles, enhance students' academic and social skills and foster their more active participation in individual learning processes (Durlak et al., 2011).

5.2. Recommendations

This section offers recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and future researchers.

5.2.1. Recommendations for Policymakers and Practitioners

The findings of this study reveal that decentralized education practices provide meaningful contributions to the experiences of both students and teachers. These

practices, with their individual-focused and flexible structure, have the potential to transform student and teacher roles while establishing a strong foundation for creating an educational community in collaboration with school administration.

The centralized education system in Türkiye, with its rigid structure in decision-making processes and curriculum planning, risks overlooking individual differences and local needs. However, recent educational reforms highlight the necessity of supporting the centralized system with flexible and individualized approaches. 2023 Eğitim Vizyonu Belgesi (The 2023 Education Vision Document) emphasizes the promotion of student-centered teaching practices and the development of innovative models such as project schools (MEB, 2018). In this context, the school studied provides a strong example of the effective implementation of decentralized education practices, supported by its extensive physical facilities, strong administrative backing, and innovative teaching approaches.

To enhance teacher agency, it is recommended that continuous professional development programs be established. These programs should focus on training educators in technology integration, differentiated instruction, and innovative pedagogical strategies. Additionally, school administrations are encouraged to adopt distributed leadership models that foster teacher leadership and actively involve teachers in decision-making processes.

Integrated programs providing academic, social, and career guidance should be developed to enhance students' access to personalized guidance services. Digital tools and platforms should be utilized to support individualized learning pathways, and feedback mechanisms should be strengthened to increase students' active participation in learning processes. Moreover, transparent decision-making mechanisms should be created, with councils comprising both teachers and students established to promote democratic participation in school governance.

Policies should be developed to promote the involvement of parents and other local stakeholders in education, ensuring that schools design flexible educational programs based on analyses of the needs of their local communities. As Balyer (2021) emphasizes, educational policies have the potential not only to guide management processes but also to transform societal structures. While developing curricula tailored to local needs, innovative practices should be supported by providing schools with laboratories, art workshops, digital platforms, and other physical resources. Policymakers should implement education models that are responsive to local needs,

personalized, and democratic. In this context, collaboration with municipalities and local administrations should be established to develop flexible curricula based on local needs analysis. Such collaboration can facilitate the efficient management of resources and effectively address school needs.

Schools from various regions should be selected as pilot institutions for decentralized education practices, and the results should be evaluated according to local needs. This approach can provide concrete data to inform the creation of more effective policies before implementing large-scale applications. Certification programs should be organized to develop leadership skills for school administrators and teachers in line with the principles of decentralized education, and greater teacher participation in decision-making processes should be encouraged. To share and expand decentralized education practices, digital networks among schools should be established. These networks can support the sharing of best practices and foster the formation of professional learning communities among teachers.

Additionally, blended (hybrid) teaching models should be developed and disseminated alongside traditional teaching methods, with supportive solutions provided for students in disadvantaged areas with limited access to technology. Collaborative project designs should be encouraged to promote student leadership, with teachers taking on guiding roles to support students throughout the process.

These recommendations can contribute to the current education system by laying the foundation for a more inclusive and flexible structure. The research highlights the importance of implementing flexible practices that address local needs and consider individual differences within Türkiye's centralized education system. The widespread adoption of decentralized education models can enhance the quality of education, paving the way for more democratic and inclusive systems.

5.2.2. Recommendations for Future Researchers

Since this study was conducted in a single school, its findings may be limited to this specific context. Future research should encompass diverse contexts and various school types to evaluate the impacts of decentralized education practices more comprehensively. Including schools from different regions and demographic backgrounds would allow for analyzing the applicability of decentralized education models under varying conditions. This would enhance the generalizability of the findings and provide stronger recommendations for decentralized education policies.

Although this study highlights the experiences of students and teachers in decentralized education practices, it does not sufficiently address the effects on school administration, parents, and local communities. Future research should explore the impacts of decentralized education not only on students and teachers but also on other stakeholders such as school administrators, parents, and local communities.

Studies employing both qualitative and quantitative methods are needed to understand the societal dimensions of decentralized education models. Research analyzing the roles of parents and local communities in decentralized education practices and their experiences can contribute to developing a more holistic approach to the education system. Furthermore, strategies to enhance the participation of these stakeholders in decentralized education processes should be explored, providing recommendations to support the societal acceptance and sustainability of these practices.

The effects of decentralized education practices on teacher-student relationships, professional satisfaction, and motivation should be examined in greater detail. Future research should investigate the challenges faced by teachers in these processes and the sustainability of these practices to understand the long-term impacts of decentralized education models. Specifically, qualitative studies focusing on teachers' experiences are needed, and the findings should be used to improve practices. Strategies involving active teacher participation should also be designed to address sustainability issues. These approaches can enhance the contributions of decentralized education practices to the education system.

More detailed research on decentralized education practices in different types of schools should be conducted. These studies could help better identify the advantages and limitations of decentralized education models. Additionally, comparisons across various contexts should provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of these models, offering policymakers and practitioners data to guide more effective decision-making.

The research has demonstrated that personalized learning methods increase students' motivation and retention of learning. However, the direct relationship between personalized learning and student achievement should be examined using larger samples and quantitative methods. The role of digital tools in personalized learning processes should also be analyzed, particularly by comparing their effects on students in schools lacking technological infrastructure. Such comparisons could

contribute to understanding the impact of digital inequalities on learning processes and developing effective strategies to address these disparities.

In conclusion, this research has presented teachers' and students' perspectives on decentralized education practices. However, the implementation and long-term effects of these practices in different contexts should be explored in greater depth. Such studies would enable a more thorough evaluation of the impacts of decentralized education practices across Türkiye. Researchers should adopt a holistic approach when examining decentralized education, including all stakeholders, various contexts, and sustainability. This would facilitate for a detailed analysis of the effects of decentralized education practices and the formulation of concrete and actionable recommendations for transforming the education system.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Teacher Interview Form

Öğretmen Bireysel Görüşme Formu

Yer:
Tarih:
Görüşmeci:
Görüşülen kişi:

Merhaba,
Ben, İlknur KAVAK ERGİN, Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi'nde bir araştırma yürütüyorum. Bu araştırma, *"Proje Okullarında Merkeziyetsiz Eğitim Uygulamaları İlişkin Öğretmen ve Öğrenci Görüşleri: Bir Durum Çalışması"* başlığını taşıyor. Amacım, merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarının merkezi eğitim sistemi içindeki uygulanabilirlik düzeyini belirlemek ve etkililiğini değerlendirmektir. Bu araştırmanın sonuçları eğitim sistemimiz için önemli olabilir. Bu bireysel görüşmenin amacı, söz konusu okulların öğretmenlerinin, uygulamaların farklı boyutlarına yönelik görüşlerini almak ve etkililiği hakkında ne düşündüklerini ortaya çıkarmaktır.
Görüşme süresince verdiğiniz tüm yanıtlar sadece bu araştırma kapsamında kullanılacaktır. Bilgilerinizin gizliliği önemlidir ve görüşme yapılan kişilerin isimleri herhangi bir raporda belirtilmeyecektir.

Başlamadan önce sormak istediğiniz bir soru var mı?
Eğer bir sorunuz yoksa, bilgilendirme onam formunu doldurmanızı rica edeceğim.
Görüşmenin yaklaşık olarak 1 saat sürmesini planlıyorum.
İzninizle sorulara başlamak istiyorum.

Görüşme Soruları:

Adınız ve soyadınız:
Branşınız:
Mesleki deneyiminiz (yıl olarak):
Eğitim seviyeniz (lisans, yüksek lisans, doktora vb.):

1. Öğretmenlik kariyeriniz boyunca merkezi eğitim ve merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarıyla ilgili deneyimleriniz nelerdir?
2. Merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarına dair bakış açınız nedir? Bu uygulamaların sınıf içi etkileşimi ve iş birliğini nasıl artırdığını düşünüyorsunuz?
3. Öğrencilerin birbirlerinden veya dış kaynaklardan öğrendikleri bir ortamda hangi öğretim stratejilerini kullanıyorsunuz? Bu stratejiler (grup çalışmaları,e-öğrenme platformları, interaktif uygulamalar, çevrimiçi ders materyalleri) öğrencilerin öğrenme deneyimlerini desteklemekte ne kadar etkili oluyor?
4. Öğrencilerin geleneksel öğrenme araçları dışında edindikleri bilgi ve becerileri değerlendirmek için hangi yöntemleri kullanıyorsunuz? Bu değerlendirme süreci, öğrencilerin öğrenme deneyimlerini nasıl şekillendiriyor?
5. Merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalara geçiş sürecinde kendi öğretim yaklaşımınızda nasıl bir değişiklik yaptınız veya adaptasyon sağladınız?

6. Öğretmenler arası iş birliği ve paylaşımın, bu tür uygulamaların etkinliğini artırmada nasıl bir rol oynadığını düşünüyorsunuz? Bu iş birliği ve paylaşımı artırmanın veya desteklemenin yolları nelerdir?
7. Merkezi olmayan eğitim uygulamalarına sizi yönlendiren veya teşvik eden etkenler nelerdir? Bu uygulamaları daha sistematik hale getirmenin önündeki engeller nelerdir?
8. Kendi öğretmenlik tarzınızı ve karakterinizi nasıl tanımlarsınız? Öğrencilerinizle olan ilişkinizde hangi özelliklerinizin ön planda olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?
9. Öğrencilerinizle etkileşimde bulunurken sizi en çok motive eden unsurlar nelerdir? Sınıf içindeki dinamikler veya öğrencilerinizin başarısı gibi faktörler size ne tür bir motivasyon sağlıyor?
10. Okulun rolünü, öğrencilerin geleneksel olmayan öğrenme deneyimlerini desteklemede ne kadar etkili buluyorsunuz? Okulun yapısal özelliklerinin, öğrencilerin alternatif öğrenme deneyimlerine erişimini ve bu deneyimlerden faydalanmalarını nasıl etkilediğini düşünüyorsunuz?
11. Merkeziyetçi bir yönetim yapısının öğretmenler üzerindeki etkilerini nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? Bu yapı içinde öğretmenlerin öğretim özgürlüklerini ve yaratıcılıklarını nasıl hissediyorsunuz?
12. Okul yönetiminin, öğretmenler arasındaki iş birliği ve paylaşımı teşvik etmek için uyguladığı stratejiler hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Bu stratejiler, öğretmenler arasındaki iletişimi nasıl etkiliyor?
13. Okul yönetiminin, merkezi olmayan eğitim uygulamalarını desteklemek ve teşvik etmek için neler yapabileceğini düşünüyorsunuz? Merkezi olmayan eğitim uygulamalarını daha etkin hale getirmek için okul idaresinin sunması gereken kaynaklar nelerdir?
14. Eklemek istediğiniz herhangi bir şey var mı?

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederim.

Appendix 2: Student Interview Form

Öğrenci Bireysel Görüşme Formu

Yer:
Tarih:
Görüşmeci:
Görüşülen kişi:

Merhaba,
Ben, İlknur KAVAK ERGİN, Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi'nde yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında bir araştırma yürütüyorum. Bu araştırma, *"Proje Okullarında Merkeziyetsiz Eğitim Uygulamaları İlişkin Öğretmen ve Öğrenci Görüşleri: Bir Durum Çalışması"* başlığını taşıyor. Amacım, merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarının merkezi olan bir eğitim sistemi içindeki uygulanabilirlik düzeyini belirlemek ve etkinliğini değerlendirmektir. Bu bireysel görüşmenin amacı, söz konusu okulların öğrencilerinin, uygulamaların farklı boyutlarına yönelik görüşlerini almak ve etkinliği hakkında ne düşündüklerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Görüşme süresince verdiğiniz tüm yanıtlar sadece bu araştırma kapsamında kullanılacaktır. Bilgilerinizin gizliliği önemlidir ve görüşme yapılan kişilerin isimleri herhangi bir raporda belirtilmeyecektir. Başlamadan önce sormak istediğiniz bir soru var mı?
Görüşmenin yaklaşık olarak yarım saat sürmesini planlıyorum. İzninizle sorulara başlamak istiyorum.

Görüşme Soruları

Adınız ve Soyadınız:
Cinsiyetiniz:
Fen lisesi seçme nedeniniz:

1. Öğrenme kavramını nasıl tanımlıyorsunuz? Öğrenmek sizin için ne anlama geliyor?
2. Herhangi bir dersi ders esnasında öğrenmek sizin için ne anlama geliyor? Ders dışında da öğrenmek mümkün mü? Cevabınız evetse,nasıl?
3. Okul, öğrenmek istediğiniz konuları öğrenmenize nasıl katkı sağlıyor?
4. En iyi öğrenme deneyimleriniz hangi tür öğrenme tarzıyla ilişkilendirilebilir: bedensel (kinestetik), görsel veya işitsel?
5. Öğretmenlerinizin derslere katılmanız için neler yapıyor? Öğretmenlerin ders anlatım tarzları ve kullanılan materyallerin öğrenme motivasyonunuza etkisi nedir?
6. Derslerdeki etkinliklerin (grup çalışması, tartışma, proje tabanlı öğrenme vb.) öğrenme sürecinize katkısını nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?
7. Boş zamanlarınızda aylık, haftalık ve günlük olarak sınıf dışı öğrenme faaliyetlerine ne kadar zaman ayırıyorsunuz?
8. Daha etkili bir öğrenme süreci için, öğretmenlerinizin ders esnasında ne tür değişiklikler yapmasını isterdiniz?
9. Öğretmenlerden öğrenme sürecinizi daha etkili hale getirmek için ne tür destek bekliyorsunuz?
10. Sınıf içi ve sınıf dışı öğrenme deneyiminizi daha iyi hale getirebilecek hangi teknoloji araçlarını kullanıyorsunuz? Bu konuda öğretmenleriniz sizi nasıl yönlendiriyor?
11. Derslerde hangi konularda daha fazla kontrol ve karar alma süreçlerine katılmayı tercih edersiniz? Öğrenme sürecinizde hangi alanlarda daha fazla özgürlük ve bağımsızlık istersiniz?
12. Derslerde daha fazla öğrenci katılımını teşvik etmek için neler yapılabilir?
13. Eklemek istediğiniz herhangi bir şey var mı?

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederim.

Appendix 3: Teacher Interview Protocol

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DENEKLERİN GÖNÜLLÜLÜĞÜ
VE
AYDINLATILMIŞ ONAM FORMU

Sizi Doç. Dr. Emre ER ve İlknur KAVAK ERGİN tarafından yürütülen *"Proje Okullarında Merkeziyetsiz Eğitim Uygulamaları İlişkin Öğretmen ve Öğrenci Görüşleri: Bir Durum Çalışması"* başlıklı araştırmaya davet ediyoruz. Mevcut çalışmada, merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarının fen lisesinde eğitim görmekte olan öğrencilerin eğitim süreçleri üzerinde anlamlı bir ilişkisi olup olmadığının ortaya çıkarılması amaçlanmaktadır. Bu çalışma sonuçlarının Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı fen lisesinde görev yapan öğretmenlerin merkeziyetsiz eğitim uygulamalarını kullanırken, bu uygulamaların ne kadar etkili olduğunun ortaya çıkarılması planlanmaktadır.

Çalışmaya aşağıdaki koşulları kabul ederek katılım sağlamaktasınız.

1- Çalışma tamamen **gönüllülük** esasına dayanmaktadır.

2- Çalışma sürecinde sizden beklenen davranış soruları yansız, eksiksiz ve içtenlikle cevaplamanızdır. Çalışma, tek seferlik bireysel görüşmede elde edilen verilerin analiziyle tamamlanacaktır.

3- Çalışmanın herhangi bir anında çalışmadan çekilme, çalışmayı terk etme hakkına sahipsiniz. Çalışmada sizden istenecek bilgiler araştırma konusu üzerine olacaktır.

4- Bu çalışmadan elde edilecek bilgiler tamamen araştırma amacı ile kullanılacak olup kişisel bilgileriniz gizli **tutulacaktır**; ancak verileriniz yayın amacı ile kullanılabilir. Toplanan bilgiler araştırmaya katılan bireylerin özel hayatını etkilemeyecektir.

5- Araştırmanın herhangi bir noktasında araştırmacıya araştırma hakkında aklınıza takılan soruları sorabilirsiniz.

6- Araştırma ile ilgili soru, sorun veya görüşlerinizi [redacted]mail adresini kullanarak araştırmacı İlknur KAVAK ERGİN' e iletebilirsiniz.

Yukarıda yazılı olan metni okudum. Araştırmanın amaçları hakkında yeterli bilgiyi edindim. Araştırmacı tarafıma, araştırmaya katılımın gönüllülük esasına dayalı olduğunu, araştırmanın herhangi bir anında araştırmaya katılmaktan vazgeçebileceğimi, kimlik bilgilerimi içeren kişisel verilerimin araştırmanın hiçbir aşamasında istenmeyeceğini hem sözel hem de yazı ile iletti. Bu koşullar altında araştırmacılar Doç. Dr. Emre ER ve İlknur KAVAK ERGİN tarafından yürütülen *"Proje Okullarında Merkeziyetsiz Eğitim Uygulamaları İlişkin Öğretmen ve Öğrenci Görüşleri: Bir Durum Çalışması"* isimli araştırmaya **gönüllü** olarak katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Adı Soyadı;
Mail Adresi;
İmza;
Tarih;

Appendix 4: Student Interview Protocol

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BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ OLUR FORMU

1. Aşağıda imzası olan ben *"Proje Okullarında Merkeziyetsiz Eğitim Uygulamaları İlişkin Öğretmen ve Öğrenci Görüşleri: Bir Durum Çalışması"* başlıklı çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.
2. Bu çalışmayı yürüten İlknur KAVAK ERGİN'e çalışmanın yapısı, amacı ve muhtemel süresi, hakkında ayrıntılı sözlü ve yazılı bilgi verdi.
3. Araştırmayı yürüten İlknur KAVAK ERGİN'e çalışmasıyla ilgili her soruyu sorma fırsatını buldum. Cevapları ve bana verilen bilgiyi anladım.
4. Araştırmacı İlknur KAVAK ERGİN'e bilgilerin ayrıntılarını açıklamama ve benimle ilgili sırları koruması şartıyla benimle bu çalışmayı yapmasına izin veriyorum.
5. Çalışma boyunca tüm kurallara uyacağıma, araştırmayı yürüten İlknur KAVAK ERGİN ile tam bir uyum içinde çalışacağıma ve konuyla ilgili herhangi bir sorun çıktığında hemen onu arayacağımı kabul ediyorum.
6. Bu çalışma sonuçlarının kullanılmasını kısıtlamayacağımı ve yayın, rapor ve benzeri bilimsel dokümanlarda kullanabileceğini kabul ediyorum.
7. Bu çalışmadan istediğim zaman çıkabileceğimi anladım.

OKUDUM VE ONAYLADIM.

Katılımcının Adı ve Soyadı, Adresi:
Tarih, İmza:

Araştırmacının Adı ve Soyadı, Adresi:
Tarih, İmza:

Sayın Veli,

Ekte çocuğunuza(öğrencinize) uygulayacağımız görüşme mevcuttur. Bu bilgiler araştırma amaçlı olup eğitim yönetimi alanında kullanılacaktır ve herhangi bir özel bilgi içermemektedir. Bu bilgiler etik ilkelere paralel olarak kullanılacaktır.

Sayın Öğrenci,

Araştırma eğitim yönetimi alanında olup, söz konusu okullarda eğitim görmekte olan size yöneltilecek sorular, araştırma konusu uygulamaların farklı boyutlarına yönelik görüşlerinizi almak ve bu uygulamaların etkinliği hakkında ne düşündüğünüzü ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla sorulacaktır. Görüşme süresince sorulara verdiğiniz yanıtlar gizlidir ve yalnızca araştırma kapsamında kullanılacaktır.

Çocuğun adı, soyadı:

Çocuğun imzası: Tarih:

Velisinin adı, soyadı:

Velisinin imzası: Tarih:

Araştırıcının adı, soyadı, unvanı:
Adres :
Telefon no:
İmza: Tarih:

Appendix 5: Lesson Plan and Assessment Rubric

İngilizce, Sanat ve Edebiyat Derslerinde Disiplinler Arası Bir Çalışma

Ders Planı: ''Fikirden Projeye Yolculuk"

Çalışmanın Genel Amaçları

Öğrencilerin sanat, dil ve edebiyat arasındaki bağlantıları anlamalarını sağlamak, Osmanlı döneminin sanatsal ve kültürel özelliklerini analiz ederek tarihsel farkındalık geliştirmek, İngilizce terminoloji kullanarak sanatsal ve kültürel sunum becerilerini geliştirmek, öğrencilerin yaratıcı düşünme, iş birliği ve problem çözme becerilerini geliştirmek ve sanatsal nadirlik ve benzersizlik algısını anlamalarını sağlamak.

1. Hafta: Projenin Tanıtımı ve Bireysel Araştırma

Hedefler: Öğrencilere proje kapsamını tanıtmak ve Osmanlı dönemi ressamlarından birini seçerek bireysel araştırma yapmalarını sağlamak.

Etkinlikler:

1. İngilizce öğretmeni projeyi tanıtarak disiplinler arası bir çalışma yapılacağını açıklar.
2. Sanat öğretmeni Osmanlı döneminin sanat anlayışını, batılılaşma etkilerini ve dönemin önemli ressamlarını tanıtır (Osman Hamdi Bey, Şeker Ahmet Paşa, Halil Paşa vb.).
3. Her öğrenci bir ressam ve eser seçer, ardından ressamın biyografisi ve eseri hakkında araştırmaya başlar.
4. Araştırma sırasında öğrencilere sanatsal analiz (renk, kompozisyon, teknik) ve kültürel bağlam üzerinde odaklanmaları önerilir.

Malzemeler: Ressamların eserlerinin kopyaları, araştırma defterleri ve internet kaynakları.

Değerlendirme: Öğrencilerin araştırma notları ve ressam seçimleri kontrol edilerek sürece katılımları değerlendirilir.

2. Hafta: Bireysel Sunumlar

Hedefler: Öğrencilerin seçtikleri ressam ve eseri İngilizce olarak sunmalarını sağlamak ve sanat ve tarih bağlamlarını anlamalarını desteklemek.

Etkinlikler:

1. Her öğrenci, seçtiği ressam ve eserle ilgili hazırladığı bilgileri İngilizce olarak sınıfa sunar.
2. Sunumlarda ressamın hayatı, eserinin teknik ve sanatsal özellikleri, dönemin kültürel bağlamı ve öğrencinin kendi yorumları ele alınır.
3. Sanat ve edebiyat öğretmenleri, sunumlara içerik açısından katkı sağlar ve tartışmaları destekler.

Malzemeler: Sunum notları, eser kopyaları ve akıllı tahta.

Değerlendirme: Sunumlar, İngilizce dil kullanımı, sanat terminolojisi ve içerik derinliği açısından değerlendirilir.

3. Hafta: Grup Çalışmasının Planlanması

Hedefler: Grupların yeni eser tasarımı ve hayali ressam profili için bir plan oluşturmasını sağlamak.

Etkinlikler:

1. Öğrenciler, 4-6 kişilik gruplar halinde bir araya gelir.
2. Gruplar, bireysel sunumlarda tanıtılan eserlerin kopyalarını bir araya getirir ve yeni bir sanat eseri oluşturma fikri geliştirir.

3. Yeni eser için bir kompozisyon planı yapılır (hangi eserlerden hangi parçaların kullanılacağı belirlenir).
4. Hayali ressamın biyografisi oluşturulur (isim, dönem, tarz ve sanatsal etkiler belirlenir).
5. Gruplar, planlarını sanat ve edebiyat öğretmenlerine sunar ve geri bildirim alır.

Malzemeler: Eser kopyaları, makas, yapıştırıcı, renkli kalemler ve 50x70 boyutunda tercihen siyah mukavva.
Değerlendirme: Grupların planlama belgeleri, yaratıcı fikirleri ve iş birliği süreçleri değerlendirilir.

4. Hafta: Yeni Eserlerin Tasarımı ve Hikayeleştirme

Hedefler: Grupların, özgün bir sanat eseri oluşturmasını ve hayali ressamın hikayesini yazmasını sağlamak.

Etkinlikler:

1. Sanat öğretmeni, eserlerin benzersiz bir şekilde yeniden düzenlenmesi için rehberlik eder.
2. Snob Effect kavramı tanıtılarak, yeni eserlerin nadirlik ve benzersizlik unsurlarına vurgu yapılır.
3. Gruplar, seçtikleri parçaları keserek ve yeniden düzenleyerek birleştirir ve yeni bir sanat eseri oluşturur.
4. Gruplar, eser için bir hikâye yazar ve bunu hayali ressamın biyografisiyle ilişkilendirir.

Malzemeler: Sanat malzemeleri makas, yapıştırıcı, kalemler vb.
Değerlendirme: Hikayelerin ve eserlerin özgünlüğü, estetiği ve sanatsal anlamı değerlendirilir.

5. Hafta: Grup Sunumları ve Geri Bildirimler

Hedefler: Grupların eserlerini ve hikayelerini İngilizce olarak sunmasını sağlamak ve öğrencilerin geri bildirimler doğrultusunda eserlerini geliştirmelerine olanak tanımak.

Etkinlikler:

1. Gruplar, eserlerini ve hikayelerini İngilizce olarak sınıfta sunar.
2. Sunumlarda eserlerin yaratım süreci, hayali ressamın biyografisi ve hikayesi ele alınır.
3. Sanat ve edebiyat öğretmenleri, estetik ve içerik açısından geri bildirim sunar.

Malzemeler: Sunum materyalleri, eser kopyaları.
Değerlendirme: Sunumlar ve geri bildirimler doğrultusunda yapılan geliştirmeler değerlendirilir.

6. Hafta: Sergi ve Değerlendirme

Hedefler: Öğrencilerin eserlerini topluma sunmasını sağlamak ve süreç boyunca öğrenilenleri değerlendirmek.

Etkinlikler:

1. Öğrenciler, eserlerini okul içinde düzenlenen bir sergide sergiler.
2. Her grup, eserlerini ziyaretçilere tanıtarak hayali ressamın hikayesini İngilizce olarak paylaşır.
3. Serginin ardından öğretmenler, öğrencilerle genel bir değerlendirme yapar.

Malzemeler: Sergi panoları, Öğrencilerin çalışmaları.
Değerlendirme:Tüm süreç, yaratıcı katkılar, grup çalışması ve bireysel katılım temelinde değerlendirilir.

Çalışma toplamda 6 hafta sürecek şekilde planlanmıştır. Sürecin sonunda öğrencilerin oluşturduğu çalışmalar okulda düzenlenecek bir sergide sunulacaktır. Değerlendirme, İngilizce, Sanat ve Edebiyat öğretmenlerinin ortak çalışmasıyla, hazırlanan detaylı rubrik kullanılarak 100 puan üzerinden yapılacaktır. Öğrencilerin aldığı toplam puan, bu üç dersin performans notu olarak değerlendirilecektir.

Öğrenci
Ad/Soyad:……..

Sınıf/Numara:……

Değerlendirme Rubriği

1.Bireysel Katılım (Toplam: 20 Puan)

Kriter	Puan Aralığı	Açıklama
Araştırma Derinliği	8-10	Araştırma kapsamlı, sanatsal ve tarihsel bağlam doğru analiz edilmiş.
	4-7	Araştırma yeterli ancak bazı eksiklikler mevcut.
	0-3	Araştırma yüzeysel, bağlam ve detaylardan yoksun.
İngilizce Dil Kullanımı	4-5	İngilizce akıcı, doğru terminoloji kullanılmış.
	2-3	Dil kullanımında bazı hatalar mevcut, terminoloji kısmen doğru.
	0-1	İngilizce yetersiz, terminoloji hatalı veya hiç kullanılmamış.
Sunum Becerileri	4-5	Bilgiler düzenli, açık ve görsel materyaller etkili kullanılmış.
	2-3	Sunum anlaşılır ancak yapı ve materyal kullanımı eksik.
	0-1	Sunum düzensiz, materyal eksik veya etkisiz.

2.Grup Çalışması (Toplam: 25 Puan)

Kriter	Puan Aralığı	Açıklama
İş Birliği ve Katılım	8-10	Grup üyeleri görev paylaşımına uyum sağlamış, etkin katılım göstermiş.
	4-7	İş birliği kısmen yeterli, bazı üyeler yeterince katılım göstermemiş.
	0-3	Grup içinde iş birliği zayıf, katılım eksik veya adaletsiz.
Planlama ve Organizasyon	4-5	Planlama etkili, grup stratejik bir yaklaşım geliştirmiş.
	2-3	Planlama yapılmış ancak bazı eksiklikler mevcut.
	0-1	Planlama zayıf veya hiç yapılmamış.
Yaratıcılık ve Yenilikçilik	8-10	Yeni eserin tasarımında yaratıcı fikirler etkili şekilde kullanılmış.
	4-7	Yaratıcılık yeterli ancak özgünlük sınırlı.
	0-3	Eser tasarımında yaratıcılık ve özgünlük eksik.

3.Eser (Toplam: 30 Puan)

Kriter	Puan Aralığı	Açıklama
Görsel Kalite ve Teknik Uygulama	8-10	Eserin görsel düzeni başarılı, malzemeler etkili kullanılmış.
	4-7	Görsellik yeterli ancak teknik uygulamalarda bazı eksiklikler mevcut.
	0-3	Görsellik zayıf, malzeme kullanımı hatalı veya eksik.
Özgünlük ve Benzersizlik	8-10	Eser, Snob Effect'e uygun şekilde nadirlik ve benzersizlik algısını yansıtmış.
	4-7	Eser kısmen özgün ve benzersiz.
	0-3	Eser özgünlük ve benzersizlikten yoksun.
Hikâye ile Uyumluluk	8-10	Eser, hayali ressamın biyografisi ve hikayesiyle tamamen uyumlu.
	4-7	Eser ile hikaye arasındaki uyum yeterli ancak eksiklikler mevcut.
	0-3	Hikaye ve eser bağlantısı zayıf veya eksik.

4.Süreç ve Katılım (Toplam: 25 Puan)

Kriter	Puan Aralığı	Açıklama
Geri Bildirime Açıklık	8-10	Öğrenciler geri bildirimleri etkin şekilde değerlendirmiş, eserde geliştirme yapmış.
	4-7	Geri bildirimler kısmen dikkate alınmış, sınırlı geliştirme yapılmış.
	0-3	Geri bildirimler dikkate alınmamış, eser değişiklik yapılmadan sunulmuş.
Süreç Yönetimi ve Zaman Planlaması	8-10	Süreç etkili yönetilmiş, görevler zamanında tamamlanmış.
	4-7	Süreç yönetimi yeterli ancak zamanlamada aksaklıklar mevcut.
	0-3	Süreç yönetimi başarısız, görevler zamanında tamamlanmamış.
Katılım ve Süreç Takibi	4-5	Tüm grup üyeleri projeye düzenli katkı sağlamış, süreç boyunca aktif katılım göstermiş.
	2-3	Katılım kısmen yeterli, bazı grup üyeleri süreçte pasif kalmış.
	0-1	Grup üyelerinin çoğu sürece katkıda bulunmamış veya katılım göstermemiş.

ÖĞRENCİNİN ALDIĞI TOTAL NOT:……..

Appendix 6: Ethics Committee Approval Letter

YILDIZ TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

Toplantı Tarihi: 06.06.2024 **Toplantı No: 2024.06**

SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER ARAŞTIRMALARI ETİK KURULU TOPLANTI KARARI

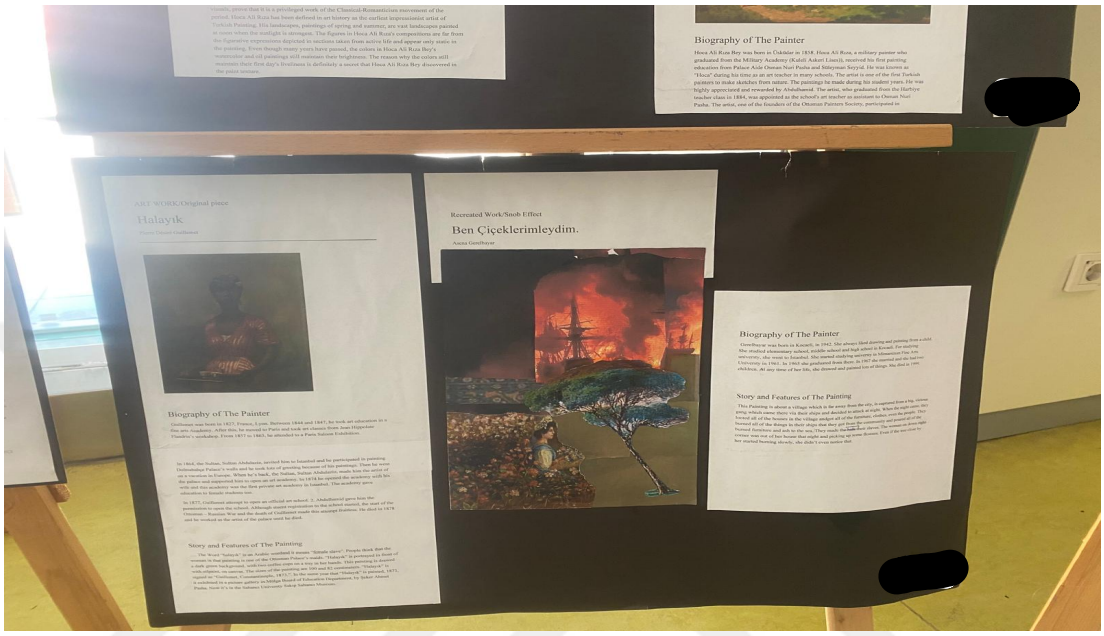
Yürütücülüğünü Üniversitemiz Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü öğretim üyelerinden Doç. Dr. Emre ER danışmanlığında lisansüstü öğrencisi İLKNUR KAVAK ERGİN tarafından yapılacak olan "Proje Okullarında Merkeziyetsiz Eğitim Uygulamaları Bir Durum Çalışması" adlı çalışma ve bu çalışmada kullanılacak veri toplama araçları ve yöntemlerine ilişkin bilgilerde etiğe aykırı herhangi bir bulguya rastlanmamıştır.

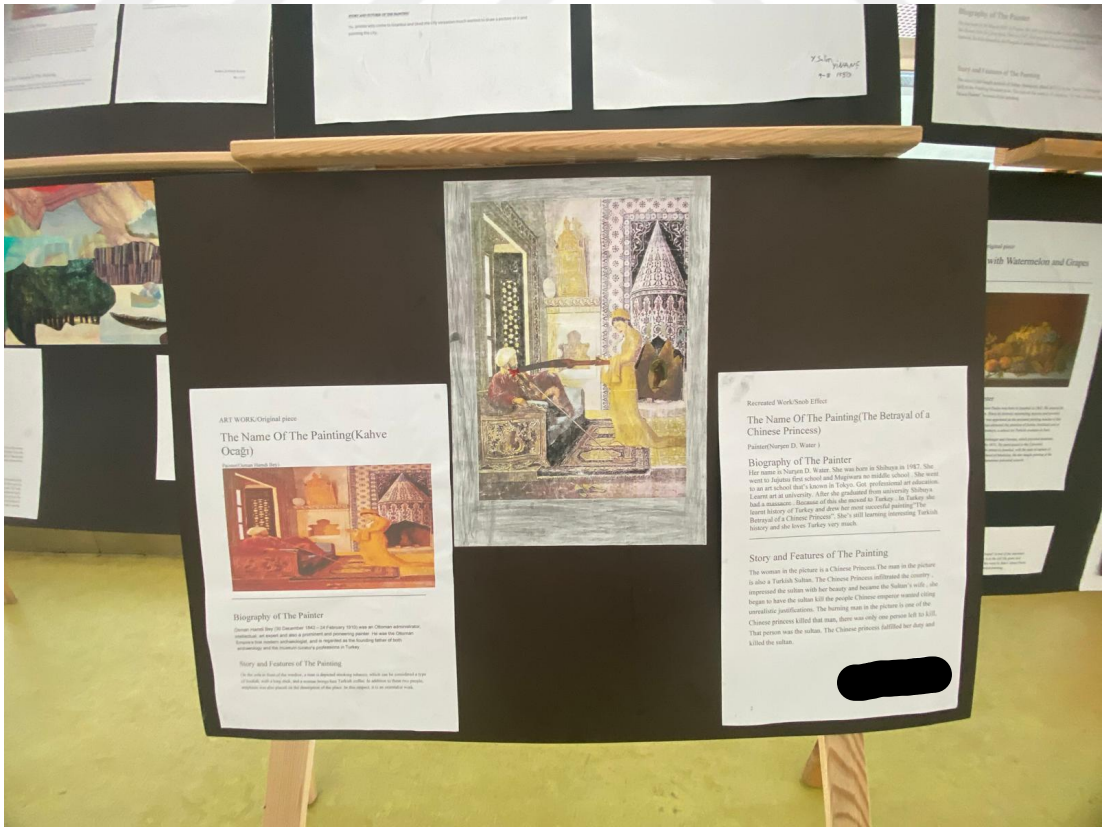
Etik Kurul Üyeleri

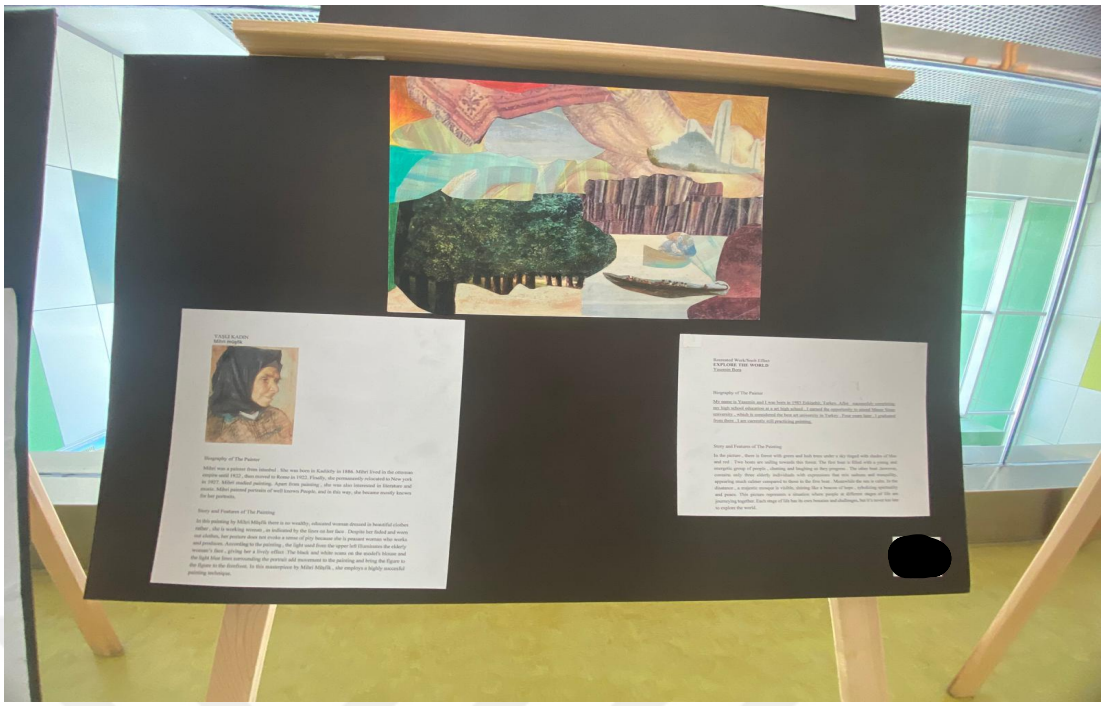
Prof. Dr. Murat DONDURAN
Başkan

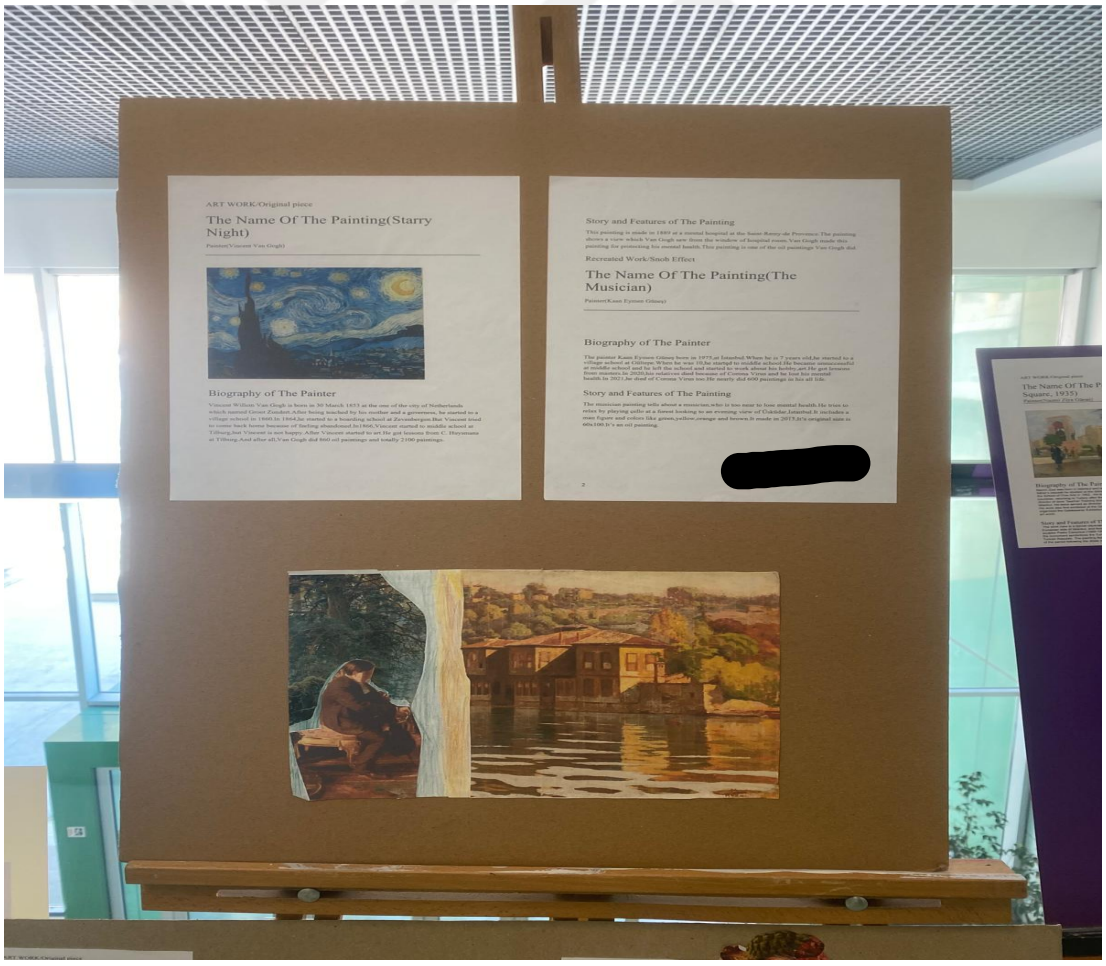
Appendix 7: Visuals of Student Works

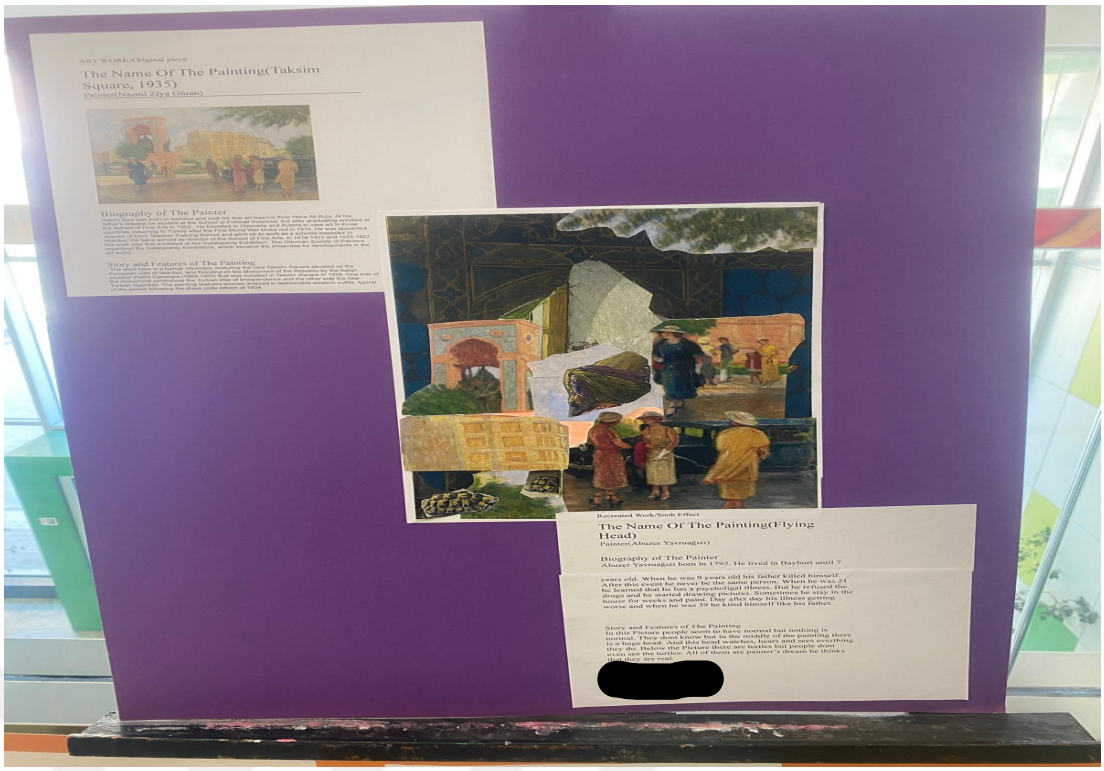
This appendix consists of a total of 18 visuals documenting the works produced by students at the end of the practice process. The visuals are not numbered and reflect the students' work. The students' names in the visuals have been concealed to protect personal data. This arrangement ensures that the presentation of the work complies with ethical guidelines.

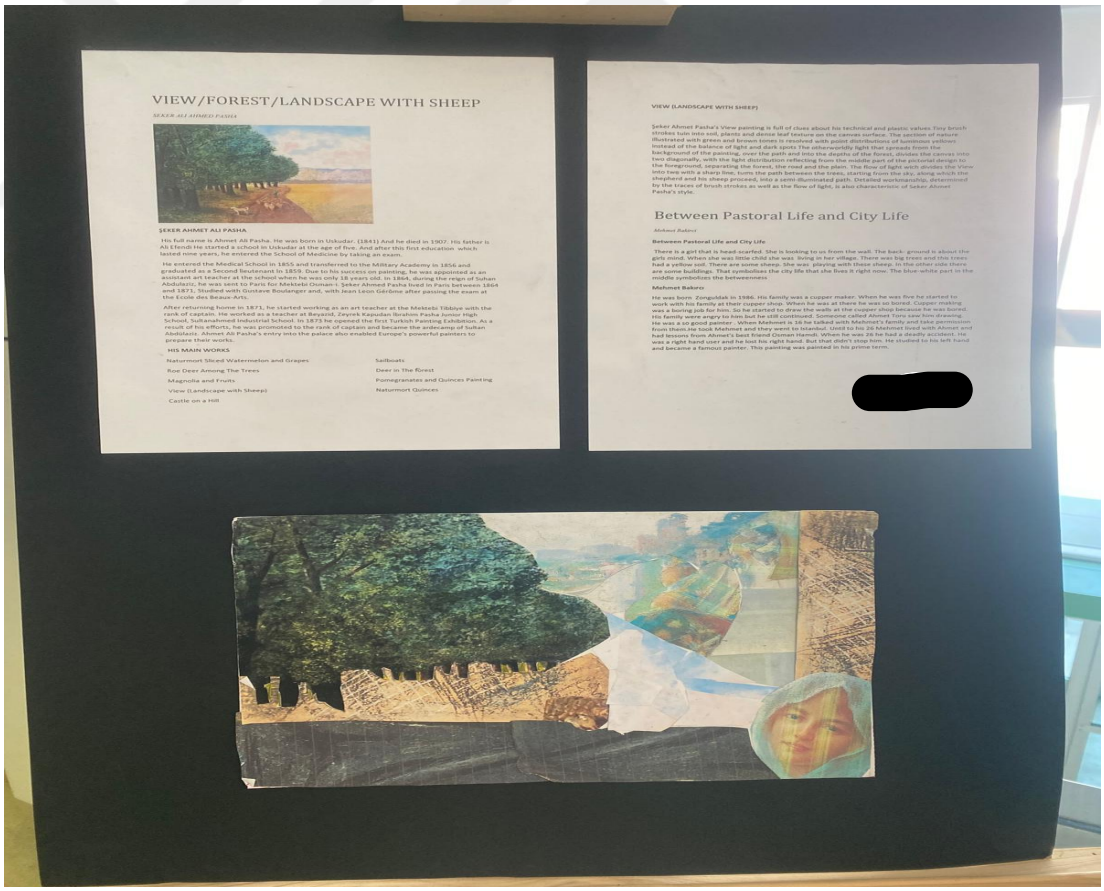




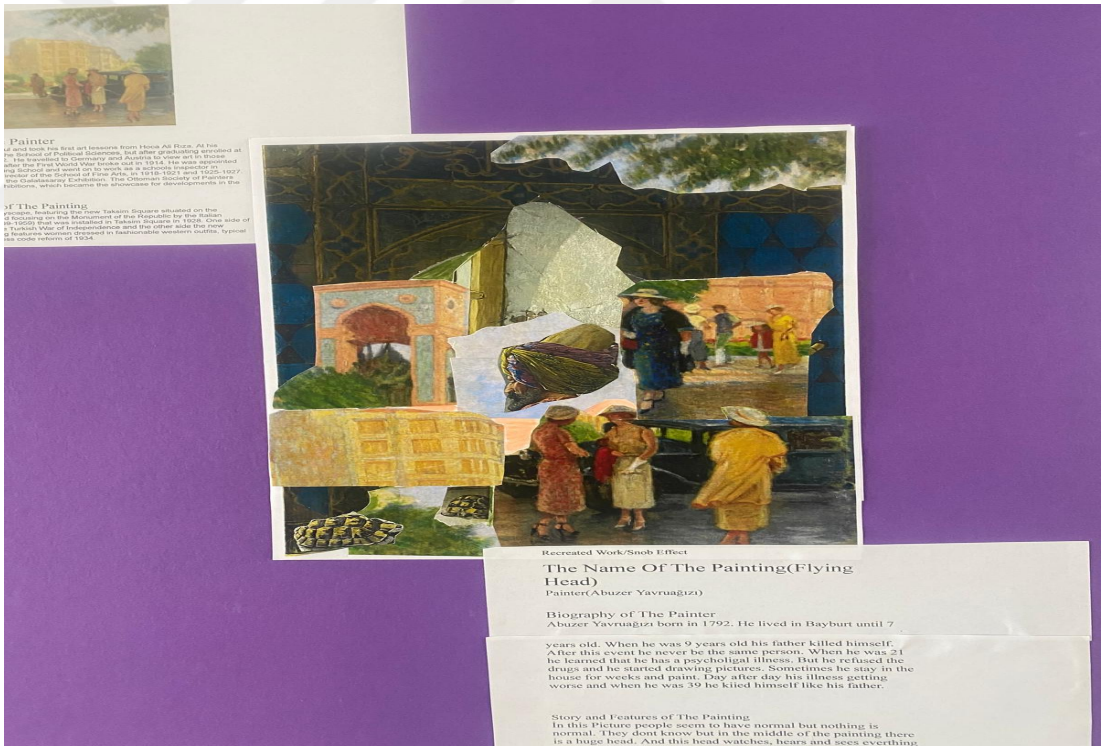



ART WORK/Original piece
The Name Of The Painting(Starry Night)
Biography of The Painter
Story and Features of The Painting
Recreated Work/Snob Effect
The Name Of The Painting(The Musician)
Biography of The Painter
Story and Features of The Painting


ART WORK/Original piece
The Name Of The Painting(Taksim Square, 1935)
Painter(Nazmi Ziya Güran)
Biography of The Painter
Story and Features of The Painting
Recreated Work/Sesh Effect
The Name Of The Painting(Flying Head)
Painter(Abuzer Yavruağzı)
Biography of The Painter
Abuzer Yavruağzı born in 1792. He lived in Bayburt until 7 years old. When he was 9 years old his father killed himself. After this event he never be the same person. When he was 21 he learned that he has a psychological illness. But he refused the drugs and he started drawing. He spent every day his illness getting worse and when he was 39 he killed himself like his father.
Story and Features of The Painting
In this Picture people seem to have normal but nothing is normal. They dont know but they are in a dream and in there is a huge belief. And there is a snake, bears and here everything is in peace. Where there are turtles but people dont care for the turtles. All of them are painter's dream he thinks that they are real.


VIEW/FOREST/LANDSCAPE WITH SHEEP
ŞEKER ALI AHMED PASHA
ŞEKER AHMET ALI PASHA
His full name is Ahmet Ali Pasha. He was born in Uskudar. (1841) And he died in 1907. His father is Ali Efendi He started a school in Uskudar at the age of five. And after this first education which lasted nine years, he entered the School of Medicine by taking an exam.
He entered the Medical School in 1855 and transferred to the Military Academy in 1856 and graduated as a Second Lieutenant in 1859. Due to his success on painting, he was appointed as an assistant art teacher at the school when he was only 18 years old. In 1864, during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz, he was sent to Paris for Mektebi Osmani-i. Şeker Ahmed Pasha lived in Paris between 1864 and 1871. Studied with Gustave Boulanger and, with Jean Léon Gérôme after passing the exam at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.
After returning home in 1871, he started working as an art teacher at the Mektebi Tibbiye with the rank of captain. He worked as a teacher at Beyazid, Zeyrek Kapudan Ibrahim Pasha Junior High School, Sultanahmed Industrial School. In 1873 he opened the first Turkish Painting Exhibition. As a result of his efforts, he was promoted to the rank of captain and became the ardeiamp of Sultan Abdülaziz. Ahmet Ali Pasha's entry into the palace also enabled Europe's powerful painters to prepare their works.
HIS MAIN WORKS
Naturmort Sliced Watermelon and Grapes
Roe Deer Among The Trees
Magnolia and Fruits
View (Landscape with Sheep)
Castle on a Hill
Sailboats
Deer in The Forest
Pomegranates and Quinces Painting
Naturmort Quinces
VIEW (LANDSCAPE WITH SHEEP)
Şeker Ahmet Pasha's View painting is full of clues about his technical and plastic values.Tiny brush strokes tuin into soil, plants and dense leaf texture on the canvas surface. The section of nature illustrated with green and brown tones is resolved with point distributions of luminous yellows. Instead of the balance of light and dark spots The otherworldly light that spreads from the background of the painting, over the path and into the depths of the forest, divides the canvas into two diagonally, with the light distribution reflecting from the middle part of the pictorial design to the foreground, separating the forest, the road and the plain. The flow of light with divides the View into two with a sharp line, turns the path between the trees, starting from the sky, along which the shepherd and his sheep proceed, into a semi-illuminated path. Detailed workmanship, determined by the traces of brush strokes as well as the flow of light, is also characteristic of Seker Ahmet Pasha's style.
Between Pastoral Life and City Life
Mehmet Bakırcı
Between Pastoral Life and City Life
There is a girl that is head-scarfed. She is looking to us from the wall. The back- ground is about the girls mind. When she was little child she was living in her village. There was big trees and this trees had a yellow soil. There are some sheep. She was playing with these sheep. In the other side there are some buildings. That symbolises the city life that she lives it right now. The blue-white part in the middle symbolises the betweenness
Mehmet Bakırcı
He was born Zonguldak in 1986. His family was a copper maker. When he was five he started to help his father. He was playing at their copper shop. When he was at there he was so bored. Copper making was a boring job for him. So he started to draw the walls at the copper shop because he was bored. His family were angry to him but he still continued. Someone called Ahmet Toru saw him drawing. He was a so good painter . When Mehmet is 16 he talked with Mehmet's family and take permission from them.He took Mehmet and they went to Istanbul. Until to his 26 Mehmet lived with Ahmet and had lessons from Ahmet's best friend Osman Hamdi. When he was 26 he had a deadly accident. He was a right hand user and he lost his right hand. But that didn't stop him. He studied to his left hand and became a famous painter. This painting was painted in his prime term.





Painter

of The Painting

Recreated Work/Snob Effect

The Name Of The Painting(Flying Head)

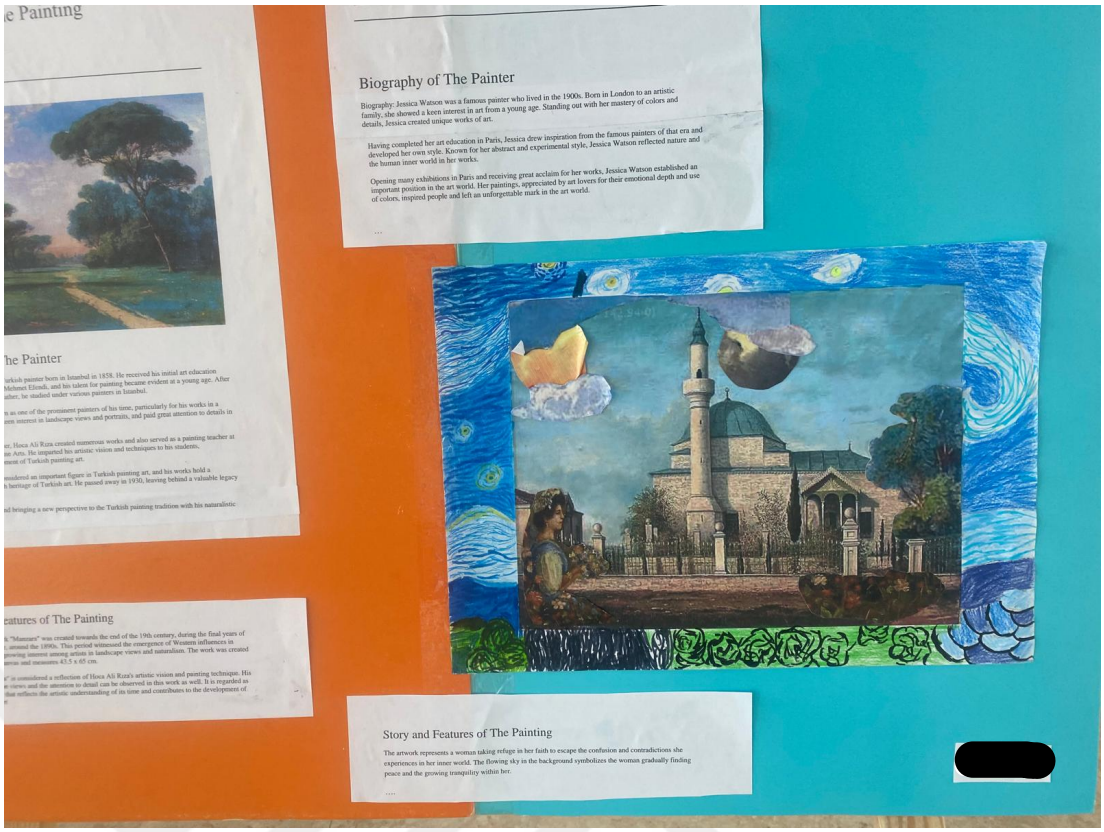
Painter(Abuzer Yavruağızı)

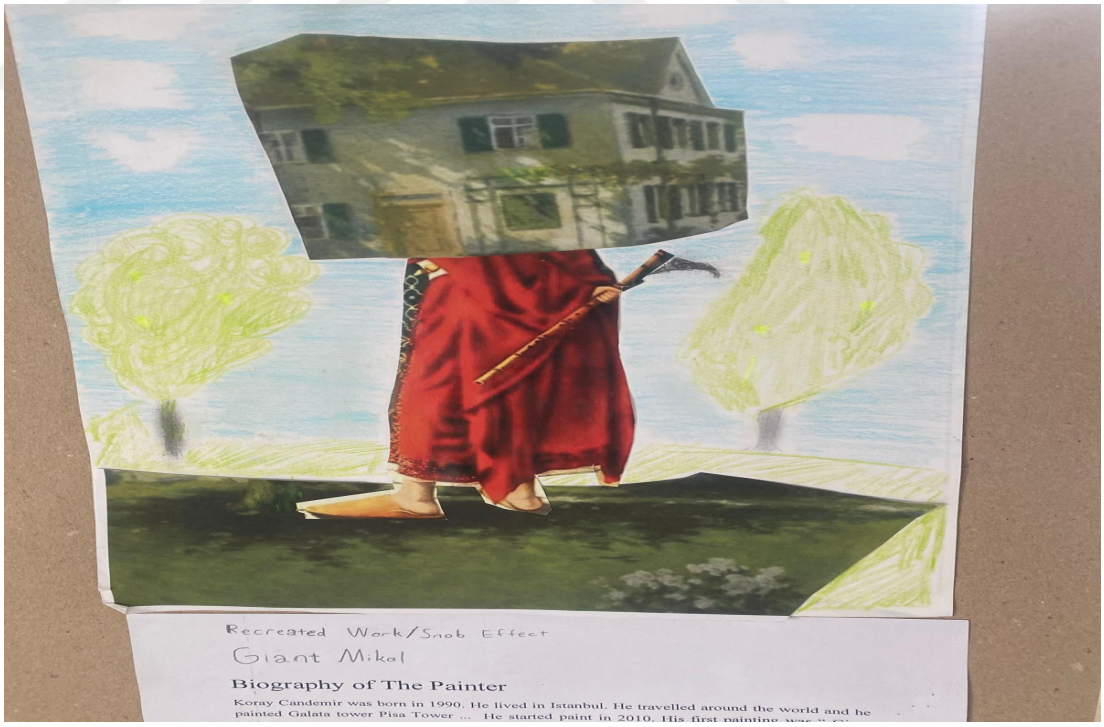
Biography of The Painter

Abuzer Yavruağızı born in 1792. He lived in Bayburt until 7 years old. When he was 9 years old his father killed himself. After this event he never be the same person. When he was 21 he learned that he has a psycholigal illness. But he refused the drugs and he started drawing pictures. Sometimes he stay in the house for weeks and paint. Day after day his illness getting worse and when he was 39 he kiled himself like his father.

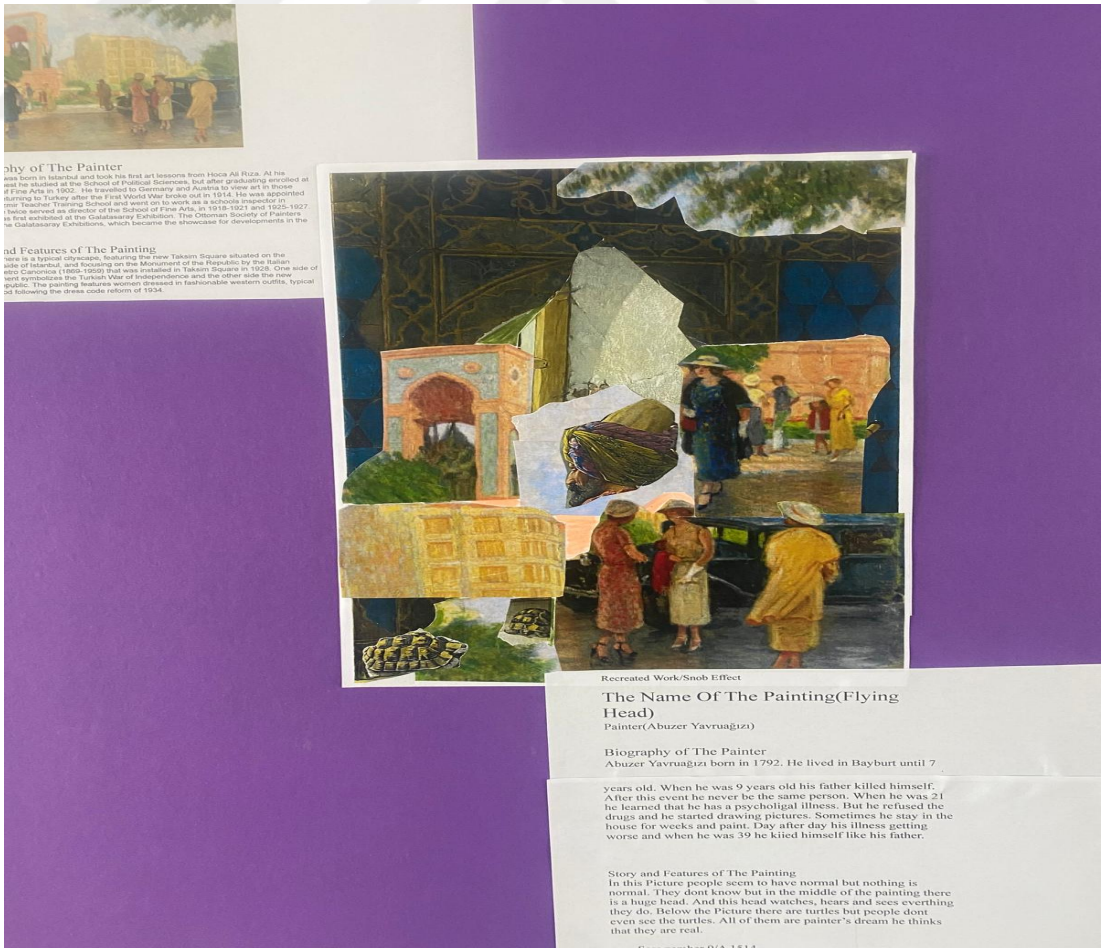
Story and Features of The Painting

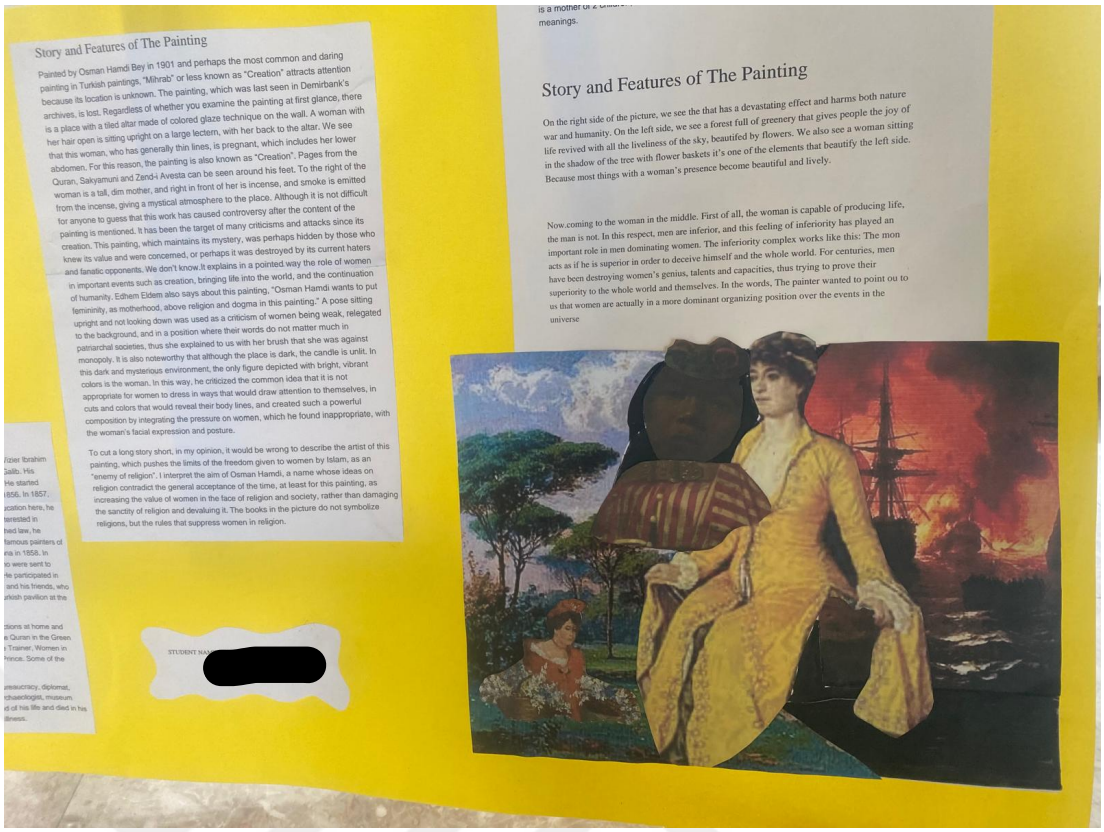
In this Picture people seem to have normal but nothing is normal. They dont know but in the middle of the painting there is a huge head. And this head watches, hears and sees everthing


e Painting
he Painter
Biography of The Painter
Biography: Jessica Watson was a famous painter who lived in the 1900s. Born in London to an artistic family, she showed a keen interest in art from a young age. Standing out with her mastery of colors and details, Jessica created unique works of art.
Having completed her art education in Paris, Jessica drew inspiration from the famous painters of that era and developed her own style. Known for her abstract and experimental style, Jessica Watson reflected nature and the human inner world in her works.
Opening many exhibitions in Paris and receiving great acclaim for her works, Jessica Watson established an important position in the art world. Her paintings, appreciated by art lovers for their emotional depth and use of colors, inspired people and left an unforgettable mark in the art world.
...
eatures of The Painting
Story and Features of The Painting
The artwork represents a woman taking refuge in her faith to escape the confusion and contradictions she experiences in her inner world. The flowing sky in the background symbolizes the woman gradually finding peace and the growing tranquility within her.
....


Recreated Work/Snob Effect
Giant Mikol
Biography of The Painter
Koray Candemir was born in 1990. He lived in Istanbul. He travelled around the world and he painted Galata tower Pisa Tower ... He started paint in 2010. His first painting


Recreated Work/Snob Effect
First Love
Görkem Duru BAYRAKTAR
Biograp
Görkem Duru
Story and
3


Recreated Work/Snob Effect
The Name Of The Painting(Flying Head)
Painter(Abuzer Yavruağızı)
Biography of The Painter
Abuzer Yavruağızı born in 1792. He lived in Bayburt until 7
years old. When he was 9 years old his father killed himself. After this event he never be the same person. When he was 21 he learned that he has a psycholigal illness. But he refused the drugs and he started drawing pictures. Sometimes he stay in the house for weeks and paint. Day after day his illness getting worse and when he was 39 he kied himself like his father.
Story and Features of The Painting
In this Picture people seem to have normal but nothing is normal. They dont know but in the middle of the painting there is a huge head. And this head watches, hears and sees everthing they do. Below the Picture there are turtles but people dont even see the turtles. All of them are painter's dream he thinks that they are real.



Story and Features of The Painting

Painted by Osman Hamdi Bey in 1901 and perhaps the most common and daring painting in Turkish paintings, "Mihrab" or less known as "Creation" attracts attention because its location is unknown. The painting, which was last seen in Demirbank's archives, is lost. Regardless of whether you examine the painting at first glance, there is a place with a tiled altar made of colored glaze technique on the wall. A woman with her hair open is sitting upright on a large lectern, with her back to the altar. We see that this woman, who has generally thin lines, is pregnant, which includes her lower abdomen. For this reason, the painting is also known as "Creation". Pages from the Quran, Sakyamuni and Zend-i Avesta can be seen around his feet. To the right of the woman is a tall, dim mother, and right in front of her is incense, and smoke is emitted from the incense, giving a mystical atmosphere to the place. Although it is not difficult for anyone to guess that this work has caused controversy after the content of the painting is mentioned. It has been the target of many criticisms and attacks since its creation. This painting, which maintains its mystery, was perhaps hidden by those who knew its value and were concerned, or perhaps it was destroyed by its current haters and fanatic opponents. We don't know.It explains in a pointed way the role of women in important events such as creation, bringing life into the world, and the continuation of humanity. Edhem Eldem also says about this painting, "Osman Hamdi wants to put femininity, as motherhood, above religion and dogma in this painting." A pose sitting upright and not looking down was used as a criticism of women being weak, relegated to the background, and in a position where their words do not matter much in patriarchal societies, thus she explained to us with her brush that she was against monopoly. It is also noteworthy that although the place is dark, the candle is unlit. In this dark and mysterious environment, the only figure depicted with bright, vibrant colors is the woman. In this way, he criticized the common idea that it is not appropriate for women to dress in ways that would draw attention to themselves, in cuts and colors that would reveal their body lines, and created such a powerful composition by integrating the pressure on women, which he found inappropriate, with the woman's facial expression and posture.

To cut a long story short, in my opinion, it would be wrong to describe the artist of this painting, which pushes the limits of the freedom given to women by Islam, as an "enemy of religion". I interpret the aim of Osman Hamdi, a name whose ideas on religion contradict the general acceptance of the time, at least for this painting, as increasing the value of women in the face of religion and society, rather than damaging the sanctity of religion and devaluing it. The books in the picture do not symbolize religions, but the rules that suppress women in religion.

STUDENT NA[redacted]

meanings.

Story and Features of The Painting

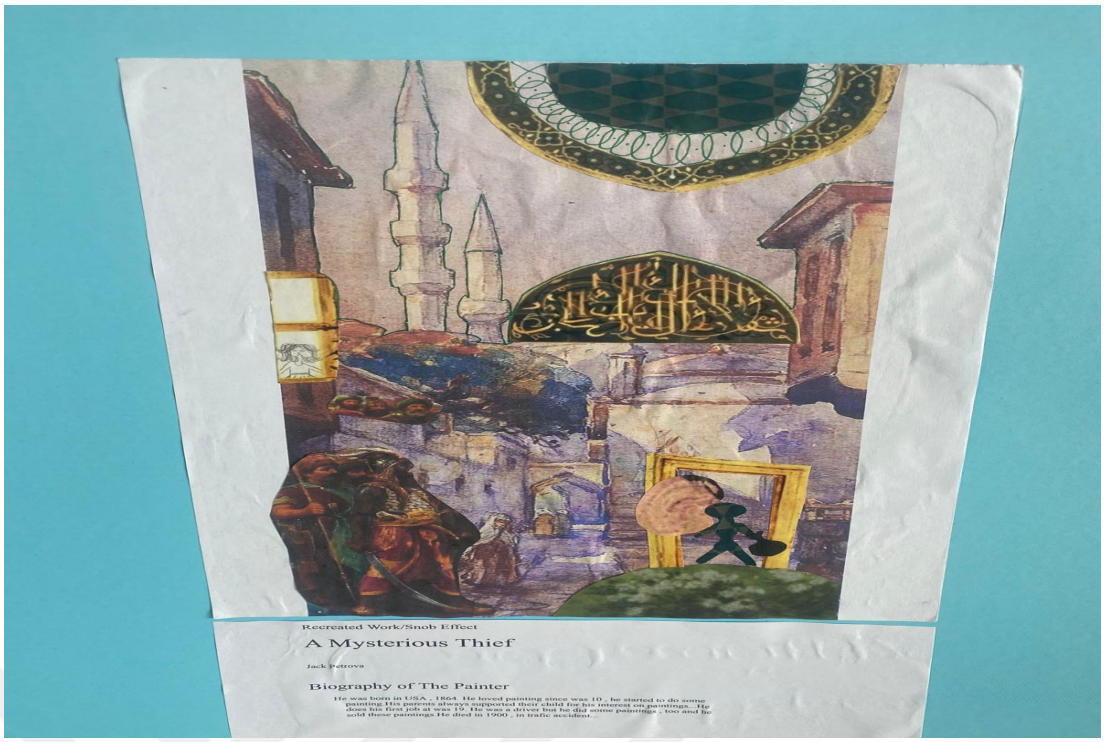
On the right side of the picture, we see the that has a devastating effect and harms both nature war and humanity. On the left side, we see a forest full of greenery that gives people the joy of life revived with all the liveliness of the sky, beautifed by flowers. We also see a woman sitting in the shadow of the tree with flower baskets it's one of the elements that beautify the left side. Because most things with a woman's presence become beautiful and lively.

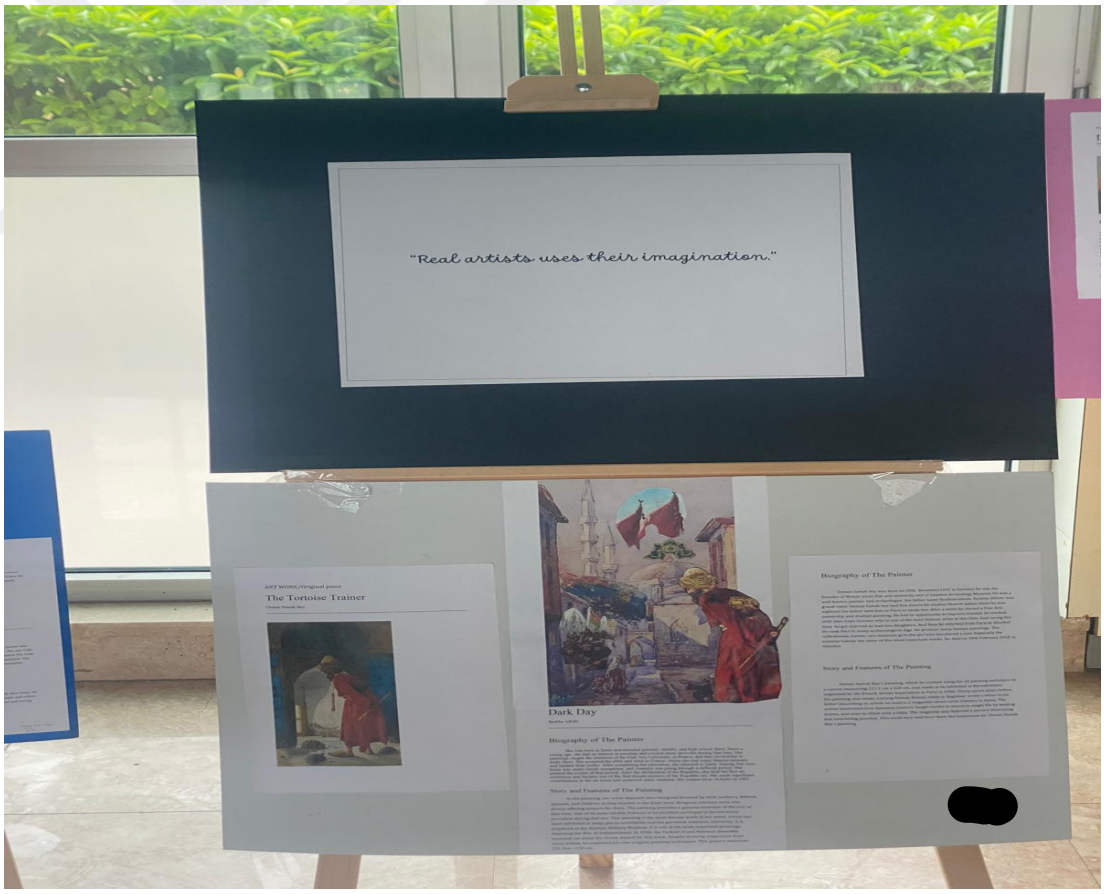
Now,coming to the woman in the middle. First of all, the woman is capable of producing life, the man is not. In this respect, men are inferior, and this feeling of inferiority has played an important role in men dominating women. The inferiority complex works like this: The mon acts as if he is superior in order to deceive himself and the whole world. For centuries, men have been destroying women's genius, talents and capacities, thus trying to prove their superiority to the whole world and themselves. In the words, The painter wanted to poimt ou to us that women are actually in a more dominant organizing position over the events in the universe








Recreated Work/Snob Effect
A Mysterious Thief
Jack Petrova
Biography of The Painter


"Real artists uses their imagination."
ART WORK/Original piece
The Tortoise Trainer
Dark Day
Biography of The Painter
Story and Features of The Painting
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