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"There Is Art in This Book!": Examining Family-Involved Art Activities from the Perspectives of Parents and Children

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What is already known on this topic?

- *Art education in early childhood develops children's creativity, fine motor skills, and aesthetic perception. children's picture books, used within art education as multilayered aesthetic structures formed jointly by text, illustration, and design, support the child's imagination, language development, and artistic perspective.*
- *The interaction established through children's picture books facilitates the child's ability to form connections between concepts and words, thereby supporting language development and laying the groundwork for family involvement between parent and child.*
- *Family involvement enhances the quality of preschool education, strengthens the emotional bond between parent and child, and contributes positively to children's social-emotional development.*

Abstract

Early childhood constitutes a critical period in which the most enduring and profound imprints of an individual's life are formed, and in which the first knowledge and skills related to life and art are acquired. Supporting the child socioculturally during this critical period and involving parents in the child's educational process are expected to provide significant benefits for children. The aim of this study is to examine parents' and children's views regarding family-involved art activities carried out with children's picture books. A case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, was employed in the study. Within the scope of the research, family-involved art activities were implemented twice a week over an 8-week period. Each week, one art-themed children's picture book was selected together with two parents and the researcher, and parallel art activities were planned around these books. Two parents participated in the study each week. In total, 16 parents and 16 children took part in the family-involved art activities. Subsequently, interviews were conducted with 10 parents and 10 children who agreed to participate, using a semi-structured interview form. The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed through content analysis. The findings that emerged from the views of parents and children were grouped under three main themes: views regarding family-involved art activities, the effects of family-involved art activities on parents, and the effects of family-involved art activities on children's development. The findings indicated that parents and children held positive views regarding family-involved art activities conducted using picture books, and that they reported these activities to have contributed to the development of parents' perspectives on art and to have supported the development of children's art-related skills. Based on these findings, recommendations for future researchers are presented.

Keywords: Art activities, children's picture books, early childhood, family involvement

Introduction

Early childhood is recognized as a critical period in an individual's development, with the foundations laid during this period known to have lifelong effects. The preschool period is one in which the child's development occurs most rapidly and learning capacity is particularly intense (Ministry of National Education, 2024). According to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of development, the child's development takes place through interaction with adults or more competent individuals, and this interaction enables the child to reach a developmental level that cannot be attained alone but can be achieved through the guidance of competent individuals, that is, the zone of proximal development. In early childhood, the learning process occurs through the child's active participation, social interactions, and experiences (NAEYC, 2020). Accordingly, it is important that children be active, that the learning process be experience-based, and that multifaceted learning environments be provided. In this context, art stands out as an important learning tool that contributes to the child's exploration and interpretation of the world (Öner, 2025). To support children's developmental processes, artistic programs should be incorporated into educational settings, and children should be provided with systematic art education (Akkurt & Boratav, 2018). In addition to the importance of offering art activities in early childhood, one of the most significant factors affecting the effectiveness of this process is the manner in which it is presented (Eisner, 2002). Accordingly, it can be said that children's picture books and family involvement activities may be effective in helping children engage with art.

Art Activities Through Children's Picture Books

In early childhood, the child's first educational encounter with art most often takes place through children's picture books. Children's picture books are not merely an educational tool; they are works possessing distinct artistic value, in which text, illustration, and design come together to form a cohesive whole (Sipe, 2001). These books can be regarded as multilayered aesthetic structures in which text and visuals are

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What does this study add on this topic?

- *The study presents an original example of practice in which family-involved art activities conducted through children's picture books are addressed from both parent and child perspectives, directly incorporating children's views; in this respect, it renders the child's perspective visible within family involvement research.*
- *The study reveals that participation in family-involved art activities increased the art activities parents carried out with their children at home and strengthened their knowledge of, and self-efficacy perceptions regarding, art activities.*
- *By concretely demonstrating that art is a powerful and accessible tool for family involvement, the study offers a practice-oriented model for incorporating regular and sustainable family-involved art modules into preschool education programs.*

presented in reciprocal interaction (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013). Through the combined use of text and images, children's picture books enable meaning to be constructed within a structure in which art, illustration, and written language complement one another (Martens et al., 2012). For this reason, it is important for children to engage with children's picture books early and intensively, so as to develop their creativity and acquire an artistic perspective (Külük, 2013).

As important as the child's early encounter and contact with books are the qualities and content of these books. The illustrations found in children's picture books are among the key elements that enrich children's imaginative world. In addition to being one of the primary sources of appeal that draw children toward a book, these visuals support children's imagination and develop their artistic perspectives (Al-Hinaai, 2021). In early childhood, the interaction established through children's picture books enables the child to form connections between concepts and words, thereby also supporting language development (Atılgan, 2021). In this respect, children's picture books foster interaction between child and parent, laying suitable groundwork for family involvement.

Family Involvement in Art Activities

The child begins to understand the world and life through the family; this relationship, whose foundations are laid in the early period, continues throughout life. In this context, it is not possible to exclude the family from the child's educational process (Çağdaş & Seçer, 2015; Köyceğiz et al., 2016). Parents should be encouraged to perceive schools as educational environments in which they can actively participate in idea development and planning processes (Sikes, 2007). Çakmak (2010) states that collaboration between teachers and families makes significant contributions to children's education and explains this through the metaphor of a relay race: although responsibility is gradually transferred to teachers over the course of the educational process, the family maintains its presence at every stage of the process.

When parents come to school and become involved in their children's learning processes, they convey to their children the message that the time spent at school and the educational activities carried out there are important and valuable. This interaction also has a positive effect on parents themselves. Parents who better understand the aims of the school and teachers not only participate more actively in the educational process but also provide their children with higher-quality support at home (Sikes, 2007). At this point, the primary aim of family involvement is to ensure the child's best interest through continuous communication and teacher-family collaboration within the educational institution the child attends (Epstein et al., 2002; İlhan Ildız, 2020). Indeed, current findings in the literature consistently confirm that the continuity of family involvement between home and school environments is a critical determinant of child development (Barger et al., 2019). According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory, the child's development is directly influenced by the interaction between the microsystems in which the child is embedded, such as the family and the school, and increased consistency between these systems renders the child's development more supportive.

Families and teachers believe that children's participation in art activities during early childhood makes significant contributions to their development (Kindler, 2010). Arizpe & Styles (2003) state that children are able to analyze the visual details in picture books more deeply under parental guidance, and that this process forms a cognitive schema. According to Öner (2025), while art holistically supports the child's cognitive, emotional, motor, and social skills during early childhood, the coordinated attitude of the family and the school throughout this process will further contribute to the child's development.

The Present Study

Art activities conducted in preschool classrooms are recognized as valuable tools for promoting children's active participation in the learning process. In addition to providing parents and children with shared, hands-on learning experiences, these activities can be flexibly adapted to accommodate diverse developmental needs (Epstein et al., 2002; Öner, 2025). Moreover, parental involvement extends beyond artistic activities to other domains of learning (Sikes, 2007). Art is likewise regarded as a tool that enables children to explore and interpret their surroundings (Manera, 2022) and supports their holistic development by allowing them to express themselves in various ways (Theodotou, 2019); the Reggio Emilia approach, too, positions children as active knowledge-constructors who learn through social interaction, while regarding parental involvement as a fundamental component of this process (Edwards et al., 2012). However, although the relationship between children's picture books and art (Al-Hinaai, 2021; Arıcı, 2023; Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Aydoğan, 2020; Galda & Short, 1993; Kara, 2022) and the relationship between family involvement and art in early childhood have each been separately addressed in terms of different dimensions such as social-emotional skills, cognitive competence, and aesthetic perception (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Szűcs et al., 2023), studies examining the intersection of these two fields in which both parent and child are jointly included in the process, structured through children's picture books, and centered on aesthetic experience remain limited. In this context, the present study addresses an art-based practice grounded in children's picture books from the combined perspectives of parents and children.

Family involvement is conceptualized as a multifaceted process encompassing parents' active engagement in their children's education through home- and school-based activities (Epstein et al., 2002;

Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). One of the theoretical foundations of this process is the family involvement model developed by Epstein (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). This model addresses six core dimensions and aims to maximize the child's development and learning through school-family collaboration. These dimensions are listed as follows: parenting, which encompasses parents' creation of supportive home environments; communication, which involves establishing effective communication between home and school; volunteering, which refers to parents' involvement in processes at school; learning at home, which encompasses the support of children's learning processes at home; decision-making, which involves parents' participation in decision-making processes; and collaborating with the community, which refers to the incorporation of community resources into education (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Within the framework of this study, the volunteering dimension of the family involvement model, that is, parents' involvement in the process to provide support at school, was addressed.

Incorporating family involvement into children's art-based learning processes may contribute to a more holistic learning experience in early childhood education. The sharing of experiences between child and parent supports the social dimension of learning, rendering the process more interactive. In this context, it is thought that family-involved art activities carried out through children's picture books may offer learning opportunities related to art by supporting both the child's development and parental involvement.

This study aims to contribute to the related literature by examining the reflections of artistic interaction within the family-child dynamic. Accordingly, it is anticipated that art activities structured around children's picture books will have a holistic and positive effect on both the child and the parent. The study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the views and experiences of parents who participated in family-involved art activities conducted through children's picture books, regarding the process?
2. What are the views and experiences of children who participated in family-involved art activities conducted through children's picture books, regarding the process?

Methods

In this study, the case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, was employed. Case study enables the researcher to examine a bounded program, event, process, or individuals in depth (Creswell, 2017). In this study, the case study design was used in order to understand how parents and children made sense of and interpreted their experiences.

Table 1.
Demographic Information of Participants

Demographic Information		***f***
Parents	Mother	8
	Father	2
Education level	Primary school	2
	Secondary school	5
	High school	1
	University	2
Occupation	Homemaker	8
	Self-employed	1
	Teacher	1
Parent age	21–30	2
	31–40	8
Child's age	60–72 months	10
Gender	Girl	5
	Boy	5
Total		10

Ethics Approval Statement and Informed Consent

Ethics committee approval for this study was obtained from the Yildiz Technical University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Report No: 20260309188, Date: March 2, 2026). After the ethics committee approvals were completed, the purpose of the study was explained to all participants, and an "Informed Consent Form" was signed. Consent was obtained from the children before their participation in the study.

Participants

The study group consisted of 10 parents with a preschool-aged child and 10 children enrolled in a preschool education institution. Criterion sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used to determine the study group. Purposive sampling refers to the selection of information-rich participants who can best illuminate the research problem (Creswell, 2017). Accordingly, the basic criteria determined for the participants in the study group were having taken part in the 8-week family-involved art activities and voluntarily agreeing to participate in the research. A total of 16 parents and children agreed to take part in the story-reading process that constituted the study group. However, only 10 of these parents agreed to participate in the interview process; 6 parents did not agree to participate in the study for various reasons, such as being busy or being ill. For this reason, views were obtained from the 10 parents and children who participated in the implementation process of this study. The demographic characteristics of the parents who participated in the study are presented in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, eight of the ten parents are female and two are male. Of the parents, two are primary school graduates, five are secondary school graduates, one is a high school graduate, and the remaining two are university graduates. All of the female parents who participated in the study are homemakers. One of the male parents is a teacher and the other is a furniture maker. Two of the parents who participated in the study are between the ages of 21 and 30, while all other parents are between the ages of 31 and 40. All of the children who participated in the study are between 60 and 72 months of age. Of the children, five are girls and five are boys.

Data Collection Tools

The data for this study were collected through semi-structured interview forms (for parents and children) and a demographic information form. The demographic information form includes questions concerning participants' age, gender, educational level, and occupation, as well as questions concerning their children's gender and age. The semi-structured interview forms for parents and children include questions related to the "There Is Art in This Book!" Parent-Supported Book Reading Process. The parent form contains nine questions, and the child form contains eight. In preparing the forms, an item pool was created in accordance with the research topic. The item pool was reviewed by six experts, and appropriate questions were selected. The questions were then revised in accordance with children's age and developmental levels and given their final form. Sample questions for parents include: "Do you carry out art-related activities with your child at home after participating in the activities? What kind of changes have you observed in your child after participating in family-involved art activities?" Sample questions for children include: "How did reading books and doing art activities with your mother and father in the classroom make you feel? Do you also do art activities at home? What do you do?"

The "There Is Art in This Book!" Parent-Supported Book Reading Process

The "There Is Art in This Book!" Parent-Supported Book Reading Process is an 8-week reading process implemented within the academic

year at a preschool education institution. The implementation began on March 3, 2026, was conducted every Tuesday and Thursday each week, and ended on April 30, 2026. This process aims to support children's aesthetic sensitivity, creativity, visual perception, and expressive skills through art-focused, high-quality children's picture books. Family involvement was systematically incorporated into this reading process. First, a single group meeting was held with all parents, during which parents were informed about the book-reading and art activities. Individual meetings were then held with parents, and the art activities to be used within the book-reading process were selected. Each book was selected to introduce the fundamental components of art such as color, line, form, emotion, artist, and technique in a manner appropriate to children's developmental level. The implementation process was carried out on a weekly basis. Each week, two different parents were invited to the classroom and actively involved in the activities.

In the first stage of the sessions, the selected children's picture book was read to the children by the parent. Interactive book-reading techniques were used during the reading process; under the teacher's guidance, children were supported in making predictions, examining the visuals, and expressing their feelings and thoughts. Books were selected according to the following criteria: they focused on art, were written and illustrated for preschool-aged children, and contained age and developmentally appropriate content. Accordingly, 16 books were selected. *The Dot* by Peter H. Reynolds, *The Sky Color* by Peter H. Reynolds, *Van Gogh: Paula and Vincent are Friends* by Anna Obiols, and *Hello Osman Hamdi: A First Encounter with the Artist* (Original Title: *Merhaba Osman Hamdi: Sanatçıyla İlk Buluşma*) by Ecem Alpsoy are examples of some of the books selected. As an example of implementation, the practice involving *The Dot*, the book selected for the first week, can be presented. The parents read the selected book, *The Dot*, to the children. During this reading process, the interactive questions previously determined in the individual meetings were asked to the children. Afterward, as in the book, all children were asked to draw different dots on blank paper using watercolor. Children who wished to do so were also given the option of using different pens and paints. Before the painting process began, the researcher and the parent guided the children on the technical use of watercolor. After the implementation, the children sat in a circle with the researcher, and the day was reviewed using photographs taken during the activity. In another example activity, the parents read the book *Van Gogh: Paula and Vincent are Friends* to the children. Van Gogh's works were examined and discussed with the children, who were asked to express their feelings about the works. Afterward, the children attempted to reproduce the Van Gogh works of their choice using different printing materials. Figures 1 and 2 contain visuals related to these activities.

Data Collection Process

After the ethics approvals for the research were obtained and the implementation, which lasted 8 weeks between March 3, 2026 and April 30, 2026, was completed, individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with the parents and children. In the interviews conducted with children, the children were invited to the interview and informed about the interview process using child-friendly language. Interviews were conducted in an empty classroom within the school environment that was already familiar to the children, with care taken to ensure a quiet setting free of distracting elements. The researcher and the child sat across from each other at a small table. The interviews were audio recorded with the consent of the parents and children. The interviews conducted with children lasted an average of 12 minutes, while the interviews with parents lasted an average of 23 minutes. These recordings were subsequently transcribed.

Validity and Reliability

To support the validity and reliability of the study, the validity and reliability strategies outlined by Creswell (2017) were employed. The validity strategies used in the study were rich, thick description, reflexivity, prolonged engagement in the field, and peer debriefing. In the interviews, the child and parent responses and the setting related to all themes were addressed in detail, providing a rich, thick description of the process. Reflexivity was supported by incorporating the researchers' interpretations of these views into the findings. The fact that the researchers making these interpretations were graduates of early childhood education, engaged in art activities themselves, and had

Figure 1.
The "There Is Art in This Book!" Parent-Supported Book Reading Process.

Figure 2.
Art Activities of the "There Is Art in This Book!" Parent-Supported Book Reading Process.

spent an extended period of time in the field as teachers further supports the validity of the study. To support the accuracy of the account, peer debriefing was incorporated both in the interview forms and in the code- and theme-generation processes. To support the reliability of the study, the interview transcripts were analyzed by two separate researchers during the analysis process to prevent errors, and cross-checks were performed. In addition, two researchers were involved in the content analysis process. The researchers met at regular intervals, and these meetings were recorded. Consensus on the codes and themes was reached during these meetings.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the data of the study. Baltacı (2019) emphasizes that data obtained through interviews are analyzed in four stages in content analysis. These stages were followed in analyzing the data of this study. First, in the data coding stage, the responses given by children and parents to the interview questions were coded separately. In this stage of the analysis, the interview transcripts were read by two researchers, and descriptive codes were prepared by the researchers based on the participants' statements. Next, in the stage of identifying codes, categories, and themes, the codes determined in the first stage were brought together and their shared characteristics were identified. In this stage, an inductive approach was used, without drawing on a predetermined framework, allowing the researchers to generate categories and themes from the codes (Miles et al., 2014). In the third stage, the codes, categories, and themes were organized to be consistent with early childhood research. In the final stage, the findings were presented in tables and interpreted (Baltacı, 2019; Eysenbach & Köhler, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Results

The data obtained through the semi-structured interview form prepared for this study were analyzed using the content analysis method. As a result of this analysis, three themes were generated, along with their associated categories and subcategories. The themes and categories of the study are presented in Table 2.

As a result of the content analysis conducted, three themes were generated in the study. These themes are: views on family-involved art activities, the effects of family-involved art activities on parents, and the effects of family-involved art activities on children's development. The findings of the study are presented below under headings corresponding to these themes.

Views Regarding Family-Involved Art Activities

The findings related to the theme of views regarding family-involved art activities are presented under the categories of positive feelings regarding family-involved art activities and positive thoughts regarding family-involved art activities. Parent and child views related to these categories and subcategories are presented in Table 3.

As shown in Table 3, data were obtained for the categories of feelings regarding family-involved art activities and thoughts regarding family-involved art activities. In the category of feelings regarding

Table 2.
Themes and Categories

Themes	Categories
Views regarding family-involved art activities	Positive feelings regarding family-involved art activities
	Positive thoughts regarding family-involved art activities
The effects of family-involved art activities on parents	An increase in parents' art activity practices at home
	An increase in knowledge regarding art activities
The effects of family-involved art activities on children's development	Art skills
	Social-emotional learning skills

Table 3.
Views Regarding Family-Involved Art Activities

Categories	Subcategories	Parent Code	Child Code
Feelings regarding family-involved art activities	Enjoying the activities	P1, P2, P6, P7, P8, P10	C1, C2, C3, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9, C10
	Feeling happy	P6, P7, P8, P10	C1, C6, C7, C8, C10
	Excitement	P2, P3, P6, P7, P10	C1, C2, C8
Thoughts regarding family-involved art activities	Positive effects for children	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	C1, C4, C6, C7, C9, C10
	Positive effects for parents	P1, P2, P3, P4, P8, P9, P10	–

family-involved art activities, most parents and children stated that they enjoyed these activities. Similarly, some parents and children reported that they felt happy and excited during the activities. In the category of thoughts regarding family-involved art activities, all parents were found to believe that the activities had a positive effect on their children. Most children likewise mentioned the positive aspects of the activities. In addition to these views, parents also mentioned that the activities had positive contributions for themselves. However, children did not express views regarding the positive effects on parents. Below are examples of parent and child views related to the category of feelings regarding family-involved art activities. Parent views are coded with the letter "P" and child views are coded with the letter "C"

P1: The statement "The reactions the children gave to the activity I did were so lovely, they were all so sweet. I really enjoyed it" shows that parents were particularly pleased with children's enjoyment of the process. This statement also supports the notion that children enjoyed the process as well.

C1: "…I learned different things, I was happy." Examples of views related to the category of thoughts regarding family-involved art activities are presented below:

P3: With the statement "They are developing better, their hand skills are developing more. They're communicating with their friends," the parent emphasizes that the process had positive effects on the child.

C4: With the statement "I learned about books. I looked at the books. I learned about pictures," the children emphasize that the pictures in the picture books, in particular, played an important role in their learning. The findings obtained from the theme of views regarding family-involved art activities indicate that, according to participant views, parents and children hold positive feelings and thoughts regarding family-involved art activities.

Findings on the Effects of Family-Involved Art Activities on Parents

The findings related to the category of the effects of family-involved art activities on parents are presented under the categories of an increase in parents' art activity practices at home and an increase in parents' knowledge regarding art activities. Parent and child views related to these categories and subcategories are presented in Table 4.

As shown in Table 4, data were obtained for two categories related to the theme of the effects of family-involved art activities on parents. In the subcategory of an increase in parents' art activity practices at home, it was found that, prior to participating in family-involved art activities, only three parents carried out art activities with their child at home. After participating in family-involved art activities, however, most parents reported that they engaged in art activities at home. Children supported these findings in the interviews as well. Parents and children stated that they experienced positive parent-child interaction

Table 4.
Findings on the Effects of Family-Involved Art Activities on Parents

Categories	Subcategories	Parent Code	Child Code
An increase in parents' art activity practices at home	Engaging art activities at home before the implementation	P1, P3, P6	–
	Engaging art activities at home after the implementation	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	C1, C2, C3, C6, C10
	Positive parent-child interaction	P1, P3, P4, P6	C1, C2, C3, C6, C7
An increase in knowledge regarding art activities	Learning the content of art activities	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	–
	Gaining implementation knowledge	P2, P3, P6, P8, P10	–

during the art activities process. In the category of an increase in parents' knowledge regarding art activities, most parents stated that they learned about the content of art activities, and half of them stated that they gained knowledge about how to implement art activities. Since the theme of the effects of family-involved art activities on parents is parent-focused, children's views related to this theme are quite limited. Examples of views related to the category of parents' engaging in art activities at home are presented below:

P9: The statement "It had a positive contribution. It is important to be able to look at the moments we spend together through the children's eyes. At home, we started doing the art activities I had researched more often." is considered an important statement supporting parents' involvement in these art activities. This statement shows that parents formed a bond with their children both at home and at school by looking at the process through the children's eyes.

C7: With the statement ''We threw, we cut, we glued. Then we put our box down.'' children shared their art-related experiences at home.

Examples of views related to the category of an increase in knowledge regarding art activities are presented below:

P10: With the statement ''Reading the book, doing activities related to the artists in that book, was so enjoyable. I got to see how I could do activities with artists I didn't know,'' the parent supports both the increase in their knowledge regarding art activities and the role of children's books in this increase in knowledge.

Participant views show that family-involved art practices have positive reflections at home. The fact that only three parents engaged in art practices with their children at home prior to the study also supports these views. The findings obtained from the theme of the Effects of Family-Involved Art Activities on Parents and its categories indicate that parents engaged in art activities at home after the activities and that their knowledge regarding art activities increased.

Findings on the Effects of Family-Involved Art Activities on Children's Development

The findings related to the theme of the effects of family-involved art activities on children's development are presented under the categories of art skills and social-emotional learning skills. Parent and child views related to these categories and subcategories are presented in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, data were obtained related to the theme of the effects of family-involved art activities on children's development. In the category of art skills, most parents and children expressed views that the activities were effective in helping children understand types and techniques of art. In addition, parents and children used statements

Table 5.
Findings on the Effects of Family-Involved Art Activities on Children's Development

Categories	Subcategories	Parent Code	Child Code
Art skills	Understanding types and techniques of art	P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	C1, C2, C6, C8, C10
	Engaging in artistic practice	P1, P3, P8, P9, P10	C2, C5, C6, C7, C9, C10
	Valuing art	P2, P4, P8, P10	C1, C2, C10
	Examining works of art	P1, P10	C2, C10
Social-emotional learning skills	Communication	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P10	C3, C6
	Collaboration	P1, P9	C1, C3, C7, C9

related to the subcategories of valuing art, engaging in artistic practice, and examining works of art.

In the category of social-emotional learning skills, most parents stated that family-involved art activities supported children's communication skills. Parents emphasized that their children asked them and their peers art-related questions during and after the activity process. Some parents stated that the activities supported children's collaboration skills. Children likewise used statements in the interviews related to the things they did together with their friends and parents. Examples of views related to the category of art skills are presented below:

P10: ''Through the books, the children learned about the artists and produced works similar to the artists' works.''

C2: With the statement ''We painted our picture black. Then we did like this on top of it,'' a view was obtained indicating knowledge and application of the scratch technique.

Examples of views related to the category of social-emotional learning skills are presented below:

P1: ''He also taught the art activities he learned at school to his younger sibling. He comes and tells us about the things he does with his friends.''

C10: ''My friend showed me. I was able to do it myself.''

Within the context of the theme of the effects of family-involved art activities on children's development and its categories, participants expressed views indicating that their awareness of understanding types and techniques of art, engaging in artistic practice, valuing art, and examining works of art had developed. In addition, participants stated that the activities supported family-child communication and collaboration skills.

Discussion

The study group of this study, which examines family-involved art activities from the perspectives of parents and children, consists of 10 parents and 10 children. Following the family-involved art activities, which continued twice a week for 8 weeks, the views of parents and children regarding the activities were obtained through semi-structured interview forms. The findings that emerged based on the views of parents and children are grouped under three main themes: views regarding family-involved art activities, the effects of family-involved art activities on parents, and the effects of family-involved art activities on children's development. In this section, the research findings will be discussed under subheadings organized according to these themes.

Views Regarding Family-Involved Art Activities

The findings revealed that both parents and children expressed positive feelings and thoughts regarding the family-involved art activities. Most parents and children stated that they enjoyed the activities, felt happy, and felt excited. Similarly, all parents indicated that the activities had positive effects on their children; most children likewise expressed these positive aspects. In addition, parents reported that the activities had positive contributions for themselves as well.

There are studies in the literature revealing that family-involved activities in early childhood are perceived positively by both parents and children. Parents in various studies have reported being interested in and willing to engage in family involvement activities implemented in preschool education institutions, and that the time spent with their children, isolated from various external stimuli, strengthened parent-child relationships (Kaya, 2002; Levickis et al., 2022). Although the number of studies addressing children's views on family involvement activities is limited, it has been found that family-involved activities make positive contributions to various adaptation processes for children, such as migration, and that children hold positive feelings and thoughts toward their parents' active involvement in school activities (Batuchina, 2014; Uzkul & Ada, 2026). The present study and the other research findings presented are consistent with one another, revealing that family involvement activities are perceived as a productive and positive process from the perspectives of both parents and children.

The reasons why parents enjoy engaging in family involvement are addressed in the model developed by Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1995). According to this model, parents experience a sense of parental fulfillment when they spend meaningful time with their children, and their motivation for involvement increases when they feel they are making a direct contribution to their children's development. Epstein & Sheldon (2023), argue that family involvement activities give parents the opportunity to rediscover their children, and that they therefore feel pride and happiness. This notion of rediscovery, emphasized in this theoretical framework, also emerges in the parent views examined under the relevant category (P1). The parent stated that seeing the children's different reactions, which they had not previously seen during the activity, made the process more enjoyable. Another perspective on parents' positive thoughts regarding family involvement activities is structured around feeling valued. Poissant et al. (2023) state that parents may hesitate to take part in family involvement because they feel unwanted at school. In this context, parents invited to participate in family involvement may have developed positive thoughts toward these activities because they felt valued. Accordingly, it can be said that in the present study as well, parents experienced a sense of contributing to their children's development by participating in regular art activities with them, and that their bonds with their children were strengthened as they gained the opportunity to discover new characteristics of their children by observing them in a different setting.

The Effects of Family-Involved Art Activities on Parents

The second theme that emerged from the findings of the study was the effects of family-involved art activities on parents. The data grouped under this theme indicated that parents viewed their participation in the activities positively, engaged in art activities at home more frequently, and increased their knowledge of art-related activities. Parents' reports of devoting more time to activities with their children at home following the family involvement activities can be explained by the fact that the implemented program increased parents' awareness of the dimensions and scope of early childhood education. This notion is supported by the study of Arabacı & Aksoy (2005), which found that systematically implemented family involvement activities increased participating parents' fundamental subject-matter knowledge regarding preschool education. From this perspective, it can be understood from parents' statements that parents whose knowledge of their children's learning experiences deepened through school and teacher support showed an increased tendency to create new learning environments at

home. Findings from Bosire (2026) and Kaya (2002), indicating that strengthened communication and increased trust between school and parents in early childhood lead to higher-quality time spent by parents with their children at home, support the finding in the present study that family-involved art activities encouraged parents to engage in new activities at home. Accordingly, it can be said that family-involved art activities strengthened parents' communication and collaboration with the school and teachers, thereby increasing parents' motivation to create new learning experiences at home. The increase in parents' effort to sustain these activities at home following the family-involved art activities can also be explained by the facilitative and unifying power of art. Through the art activities they carried out together with their children, parents experienced increased interaction and derived enjoyment from the experience of acquiring new skills (Babadağ, 2022). Regev & Snir (2014) state that the use of art in parent-child interactions provides a facilitative experience for parents in developing awareness within their relationships with their children and in expressing themselves more openly and without judgment.

Findings indicating an increase in parents' knowledge about art activities further support their heightened motivation to conduct these activities at home. Parents who participated in the program appear to have developed an awareness of art activities by discovering the open-ended, experiential learning opportunity offered by art (Burke & Cleaver, 2019). It is also considered an important element that parents reported developing a sense of self-efficacy regarding carrying out these practices at home, having gained experience with the variety and methods of art activities in early childhood through the family-involved art activities. Yoo (2022), in a study conducted with fathers, found that an increase in fathers' knowledge levels regarding artistic processes directly increased their confidence in guiding their children at home. Building on this, it can also be said that family involvement activities provide a form of parent education service by increasing parents' knowledge levels across various subject areas. According to Soukakou et al. (2024), family-based practices addressing different learning needs not only support children's development but also offer important opportunities to directly support family well-being by increasing parental knowledge and competence.

The Effects of Family-Involved Art Activities on Children's Development

The final theme that emerged from the research findings also includes parent and child views regarding the effects of family-involved art activities on children's development. The presence, in the views of parents and children following the family-involved art activities, of statements indicating that children showed development in their art skills and social-emotional development shows that integrating family involvement and art education in early childhood is an effective approach. Art skills in early childhood encompass multidimensional competencies such as drawing, painting, cutting-and-pasting, three-dimensional production, color knowledge, aesthetic awareness, and material use (Isbell & Raines, 2007; Wright, 2012). The views indicating that children showed development in their art skills following the art activities they carried out with their parents can be explained within the context of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978). In family-involved art activities, parental support particularly in areas such as using scissors, mixing colors, creating compositions, or working with three-dimensional materials may expand the child's zone of proximal development. The parent and child views examined under this category (P10, C2) likewise show that children used artistic skills and techniques together with their parents during family-involved art activities.

Within the scope of the present study, the parent and child views indicating that children showed development in their art skills are considered significant. There is extensive research in the literature demonstrating the relationship between art skills and neurodevelopment, academic achievement, social-emotional development, and motor development. This research shows that art-based activities conducted in early childhood support children's development of creative thinking, artistic productivity, aesthetic sensitivity, original expressive skills, and executive function skills, while also contributing to various domains such as problem-solving, self-expression, collaboration, and fine motor skills (Andersen et al., 2019; Brown et al., 2010; Dinham & Chalk, 2018; McArdle & Piscitelli, 2002). These findings confirm the developmental progress reported by both parents and children in the present study, thereby highlighting the significant contribution of family-involved art activities to children's growth.

Parent and child views indicating that children's social skills developed following family-involved art activities align with findings obtained from research on family involvement in early childhood. Research shows that parents' active participation in family involvement activities conducted at school meaningfully supports children's social skills (Liu et al., 2022; Otero-Mayer et al., 2025). It has also been reported that children whose parents participate in family involvement activities show stronger skills in sharing, collaborating, communicating, developing peer relationships, participating in classroom activities, and adapting to social environments, and that egocentric problem behaviors decrease (Cohen & Anders, 2019; Sheridan et al., 2010; Yaşar Ekici, 2017). In addition, visual art activities such as drawing and painting are known to influence dopamine release by stimulating the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for the brain's social-emotional regulation mechanism (Kaimal et al., 2016). Art-domain education such as visual arts, drama, and dance creates positive effects on children's creative thinking and problem-solving by offering particular opportunities for problem-solving and peer collaboration (Schneider & Rohmann, 2021; Winner & Hetland, 2008). In this context, within the views indicating that children showed development in social-emotional skills following family-involved art activities, the contribution of art activities to individuals' social-emotional well-being also appears to be an important element.

According to parent and child views following the family-involved art activities, the perceived progress in social-emotional learning skills can be explained by the fact that parents gained the opportunity to serve as role models for their children regarding social interaction across different settings. This is because, during family involvement activities, while parents model and reinforce interpersonal interactions for children, children are able to observe appropriate behavioral models and practice social interaction skills with their parents (Liu et al., 2022). Viewed in light of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), family involvement activities constitute an interaction among elements within the child's immediate environment (microsystem). The parent and child views examined under this category (P1, C10) in which children stated that peer relationships were influential in the acquisition of certain skills, and in which children attempted to transfer skills acquired at school to family members at home can be cited as examples of this interaction. Accordingly, it can be said that strengthening the interaction between family and school creates consistency between the two primary developmental settings in the child's life, thereby aligning desired behaviors, rules, and expectations across different settings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aims to make an original contribution to the literature by examining, through a qualitative approach, the effects of family-involved art activities in early childhood on both parents and children. In particular, the direct inclusion of children's views on the process

carries original value in rendering the child's perspective visible within family involvement research. The findings obtained reveal that family-involved art activities are not merely a practice that supports children's development but a holistic process that also empowers parents, deepens the school-family bond, and produces meaningful experiences for both parties. The study's most notable contribution is that it concretely demonstrates that art is a powerful and accessible tool for family involvement. Art-based activities bring parent and child together in a shared production process, thereby simultaneously supporting both the parent-child relationship and learning, as well as development.

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations can be proposed for relevant stakeholders. It is recommended that family involvement in preschool education institutions be planned not as one-off practices or mere information transfer, but as ongoing activities conducted at regular intervals in which parents play an active role in the learning process. It is considered particularly important to design art activities that can be sustained at home using low-cost materials, to organize parent guidance sessions, and to convey a process-oriented understanding of art to families. In addition, incorporating regular, sustainable, and accessible family-involved art modules into preschool education programs can help ensure that family involvement is implemented effectively and in line with its intended purpose.

This study has limitations in that not all parents who participated in the implementation took part in the data collection stage, and the data are based on self-report. Accordingly, given that the present study was conducted with a qualitative approach and a limited number of participants, it is of great importance to design quantitative or mixed-methods studies with larger samples in order to test the generalizability of the findings. In particular, the effectiveness of family-involved art practices could be tested using experimental designs with pretests and control groups. In addition, studies conducted across different socio-economic contexts and cultural groups are considered to contribute to developing a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of family-involved art programs.

Data Availability Statement: The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

Artificial Intelligence Usage Statement: During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used NotebookLM and Grammarly in order to organize voice records, improve language, and edit grammar. After using these tools/services, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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Informed Consent: Verbal assent was obtained from the participating children, while written informed consent was obtained from their parents.

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