

Teachers' Perceptions of Art and Cultural Education in Algerian Primary Schools: Difficulties and Pedagogical Challenges

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Abstract:

Despite the progress made by educational policies in Algeria in the field of artistic and cultural education, the reality in primary schools diverges significantly from the established guidelines.

This article examines the current state of arts and culture education in primary schools in Algeria, based on qualitative data collected through interactions with teachers to understand their perceptions and practices in cultural and artistic education. The aim is to understand their role as actors and to shed light on the obstacles and challenges impeding the success of this educational initiative.

Keywords: Artistic and cultural education; Primary schools; Teachers' perceptions; Obstacles; challenges.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Primary school is the cornerstone of children's education, as it is the foundation on which cognitive and social abilities and all subsequent learning processes develop. Its role is not only to impart knowledge, but also to socialise children and teach them values, norms and behaviours that facilitate their integration into society. Cultural and artistic education takes on this responsibility as culture, including the arts, is used as a pedagogical tool and as a methodology to achieve certain goals. Cultural and arts education broadens the scope of education and makes it enjoyable by breaking out of the classroom and traditional teaching methods. It also plays a crucial role in promoting the value of culture and preserving national heritage and traditions.

According to the National Curriculum Committee, the specific objectives of art education in Algerian schools are to raise the cultural level of pupils and to create culturally aware, open-minded, expressive and communicative individuals... Art education seeks to ensure pedagogical continuity through the harmonious development of cognitive, affective, emotional and aesthetic capacities. It must take into account the needs and aspirations of the students and develop their abilities in abstraction, expression, analysis, imagination and creativity. It must also provide them with a strong artistic culture so that they are able to understand artistic creation in its cultural, historical, civilisational and aesthetic dimensions. (Commission Nationale des Programmes, 2009, p 59)



Various studies confirm that "the practice of various forms of the arts, such as music, dance and visual arts, can contribute to improved academic performance, reading skills, creativity, critical thinking, resilience and the ability to work together. These activities also help to reduce stress, increase academic engagement, improve classroom behaviour and promote resilience and perseverance" (Unesco, Cadre de l'UNESCO pour l'éducation culturelle et artistique, 2024). Cultural education encompasses a wide range of activities and knowledge related to culture in its broadest sense. It includes not only the arts, but also history, literature, traditions, customs and cultural practices. Arts education is a more specific dimension of cultural education, focusing on practice and creativity in artistic disciplines and contributing to the development of specific skills and appreciation of different art forms. After the Seoul Conference (2010), the term 'Arts Education' was replaced by 'Arts and Cultural Education' (EAC), reflecting the desire to move beyond a purely disciplinary approach to a transdisciplinary vision. The aim is now not only to promote the importance of the arts as subjects, but also to forge close links between the arts and other areas of education, as part of a holistic, coherent and sustainable educational vision.

This article examines the reality of arts and culture education in primary schools in Algeria, based on qualitative data collected through interactions with teachers to understand their perceptions and practices in cultural and artistic education. The aim is to understand their role as actors and to highlight the obstacles and challenges that hinder the success of this education.

2. 2. Problematic and methodology:

2.1 Research Problem and Objectives

In the Algerian educational system, the development of artistic and cultural awareness among young learners is formally introduced through structured programmes in Visual Arts and Music Education at the primary level. According to official curricular documents (Companion document to the Primary Plastic Education Curriculum, 2016 and (Primary Music Education Curriculum Companion Document, 2016)), Visual Arts education comprises drawing, painting, and design, while Music Education involves both theoretical appreciation and practical singing. However, these subjects are given minimal instructional time—approximately 22 minutes per week for Visual Arts and 45 minutes for Music—raising questions about the effectiveness and practical integration of artistic education in early schooling.

Despite the inclusion of art education in national curricula, empirical observations and teacher testimonies indicate a disconnect between official policy and classroom reality. Art and cultural education often remain marginalised, both in terms of pedagogical emphasis and institutional support. Teaching responsibilities for these subjects fall primarily to Arabic language teachers, who are already tasked with a broad range of subjects, often without specialised training in the arts. The integration of art and cultural activities is further limited to occasional school events or extracurricular activities rather than being treated as a core component of the curriculum.

This study aims to investigate the following central research question: How do primary school teachers in Algeria perceive the implementation, significance, and challenges of artistic and cultural education (ACE) within their pedagogical practices?

To address this overarching question, the study is guided by the



following specific research questions:

- How do teachers conceptualise the role and place of "art" and "culture" within Algerian primary schools?
- How do teachers perceive the contribution of artistic and cultural education to pupils' cognitive, emotional, and social development?
- What material, institutional, and human resources are available to support the teaching of the arts in primary education?
- What are the key obstacles and pedagogical challenges teachers face in implementing artistic and cultural education?

The specific objectives of this study are :

1. To investigate how primary school teachers perceive the role and significance of artistic and cultural education (ACE) within the Algerian curriculum, including its educational value and impact on pupils' cognitive, emotional, and social development.

2. To examine the conditions shaping the implementation of ACE, with a focus on the availability of material, institutional, and human resources, as well as the key obstacles and pedagogical challenges faced by teachers.

2.2 Operational Definitions

To ensure conceptual clarity and consistency throughout the study, the following key terms are defined as they are used within the context of this research:

Artistic and Cultural Education (ACE): Refers to structured teaching and learning activities in the domains of visual arts (drawing, painting, design) and music (listening, appreciation, singing) as defined by the Algerian national curriculum for primary education. It also includes informal and extracurricular cultural practices within the

school context (e.g., celebrations, artistic performances, cultural outings).

Teachers' Perceptions: Refers to the subjective beliefs, attitudes, and interpretations held by primary school educators regarding the value, implementation, and challenges of ACE in their teaching practice.

Pedagogical Challenges: Refers to the difficulties faced by teachers in planning, delivering, and evaluating ACE, including lack of training, insufficient time allocation, inadequate resources, or institutional constraints.

This study is significant in multiple respects. First, it provides empirical insights into the practical implementation of a area—arts and culture—that is often overshadowed by core academic subjects in Algerian primary education. Second, it foregrounds the voices of teachers, who are key agents in the enactment of curricular intentions but whose experiences are rarely documented in existing literature. Finally, the study seeks to inform policymakers, curriculum developers, and educational authorities about the necessary conditions for fostering meaningful artistic and cultural education at the foundational level of schooling.

2.3 Methodology and research sample

The study adopts a qualitative, exploratory approach, aiming to capture in-depth understandings of teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding ACE. A semi-structured interview method was chosen to ensure consistency across key themes while allowing the flexibility to explore emerging insights.

In line with this approach, the fieldwork was conducted between 24 and 28 November 2024 in a public primary school located in the centre of Béjaïa, Algeria. Due to confidentiality concerns, the name of the institution is withheld at the request of the school administration.



To gain a well-rounded perspective, the sample consists of 10 participants, including the School Principal, Assistant Principal, and eight teachers (four male, four female). These teachers have between 3 and 22 years of professional experience and occupy various roles such as classroom teacher, component teacher, and head teacher. Their subject specialisations include Arabic (five teachers), French (two teachers), and Amazigh (one teacher).

To guide the interviews, the interview guide examines teachers' perceptions of artistic and cultural education (ACE) in primary schools. It focuses on questions concerning the perceived importance of arts and culture, the potential pedagogical benefits of ACE, and the attention given to cultural activities. Furthermore, it explores the level of institutional support, as well as students' reception of ACE classes. Practical dimensions are also addressed, including the use of teaching tools, adherence to official curricula, evaluation methods, and the material and organisational conditions. Finally, the guide investigates the organisation of cultural outings and the variety of activities offered to students.

Taken together, this qualitative inquiry provides a comprehensive overview of how ACE is operationalised within a specific Algerian primary school context and offers valuable insights into the systemic challenges faced, along with potential avenues for pedagogical improvement.

3. The importance of arts and culture at school

3.1. context of the study

Art education in Europe has its roots in drawing, which in the 17th century was an integral part of the primary school curriculum, along with reading, writing, singing and musical practice. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, drawing continued to occupy an important place in education, as educators saw it as a valuable tool for learning

crafts, observing nature, studying geography and other subjects. Over time, art education has diversified to include drawing, design and graphics, as well as the plastic arts such as sculpture and pottery.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) plays a key role in promoting cultural and artistic education worldwide, promoting the idea that arts education is a right for all and an essential part of human development. It also supports the integration of arts and culture into all aspects of education systems.

Arts education exists in most countries, but its content and importance varies greatly depending on the cultural policies and educational priorities of each country. Besides music, drawing and colouring, which are usually considered an integral part of art education, comparative studies (Bamford, 2006) (Fourreau, 2018) show that there are different perspectives on art education, shaped by different perceptions of public action in the field of culture.

Several curricula approach the concept of culture from a holistic perspective, emphasising its many dimensions, including artistic, historical, literary, geographical and social aspects. In Algeria, particular emphasis is placed on national culture, which gives students the opportunity to develop a deep understanding of their cultural heritage. As stated in the National Education Act: "Algerian schools must ensure the promotion of the values associated with Islam, Arabism and Amazigh" (Official Journal of National Education, No. 08-04, published on 23 January 2008, p. 10). In this context of national identity, the school becomes not only a place for the acquisition of knowledge, but also a crucible for consolidating respect for the historical, geographical, religious, linguistic and cultural heritage, as well as all the symbols that express this heritage (Official Bulletin of National Education, 2008, p. 9).

The modern approach to arts education is based on local action and partnerships and on cultural partners that include formal and informal actors inside and outside the school. In a formal setting, art education is embodied in a specific and standardised form of content within an institutional school environment. Informal education, on the other hand, is associated with everything that is not related to the school.

These actors include those involved in the educational institution, such as teachers, inspectors, educational counsellors, and those outside the school framework, such as artists, associations and cultural infrastructures. This intersection makes it possible to integrate actors both from within the school (teachers, educational counsellors, coaches, students) and from outside (associations, parents, cultural infrastructures). This approach emphasises a horizontal vision that is more localised (Maziere, 2018, p. 42). Artistic and cultural education is also part of the general framework of work in the field of culture. It is "the most effective means of cultural democratisation because it offers cultural actors the binding time that characterises the education system, in contrast to extracurricular activities that rely on the voluntary will of families and young people" (Bordeaux, 2013).

In Algeria, the directive of 16 April 1976 marked an important turning point by rehabilitating art education through the training of painting and music teachers in the Institutes of Technology of Education (ITE). In 1997, the first visual arts programme was launched with the aim of broadening students' knowledge and developing their artistic culture (Chafchaoui, 2002). Since 2004, educational reforms have intensified in order to adapt school programmes to the Algerian school's goal of providing cultural skills that combine national and global values. This has led to the production

of more attractive textbooks and the promotion of the integration of Algeria's artistic heritage into the curriculum.

However, despite these developments, the art education programme has not introduced new art forms beyond painting and music. The focus remains exclusively on the visual arts (drawing and painting) and music, while dramatic arts such as theatre are not included in official programmes, but are included informally through the organisation of theatre performances and concerts, often through voluntary initiatives.

The signing of the framework agreement between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of National Education on 9 March 2015 gave new impetus to artistic and cultural life in schools. One of the main results of this agreement is the creation of the "Committee for the Revitalisation of School Life", which includes professionals in the field of school activities (inspectors and teachers). Under the direction of this committee, the creation of cultural associations or art clubs responsible for organising and promoting cultural and sports activities has been mainstreamed in all educational institutions, with a budget allocated to each association. For example, in 2017, 12.3% of the Ministry of Education's budget was allocated to social and cultural activities in educational institutions (Ait Allaoua, 2021). More recently, official rhetoric reflects a growing desire to promote the integration of the arts into the national education system¹.

3.2. The reality of arts education in primary schools according to teachers

Achieving the objectives of artistic and cultural education in schools depends on the teacher's perception of the importance of arts and culture in the school environment, as well as the teacher's personal relationship with them and commitment to their professional roles. With the exception of official courses in music and art education, a

significant part of artistic and cultural activities remains extra-curricular and non-compulsory, but a voluntary effort on the part of teachers who have a passion for the arts and the ability to give, inviting them to inspire their students and give them a positive and rich vision of art and culture. In addition to passion and commitment, teachers should be aware of the basics of psychology related to the expressive development of children, so that they can recognise the personality of the learners according to their age and their physiological and mental development.

According to the teachers interviewed, the inclusion of art and culture in the education system is important, but it occupies a secondary position compared to other subjects considered essential, such as mathematics and languages, and is not new in the Algerian education system, since although the names have changed (from archives and drawing before to art education in 2016), the pedagogical practices have remained the same.

Art education is not a priority, at least in the current educational conditions, to satisfy the rumen, the head sings, but now there are much more important things than drawing and singing' (Component teacher, 22 years of experience, Arabic language).

Drawing and memorisation classes are a time for fun and entertainment, and there are even some colleagues who see it as a waste of time and use it to complete other subjects' (Teacher, 7 years, Arabic language)

The pupils are overwhelmed by the curriculum and the parents even more so, I understand their concerns because I am a parent too... We have introduced Amazigh, English, road safety... This is too much for a primary school pupil' (head teacher, 16 years' experience, Arabic language).

Pupils love art and music lessons, they are very curious and very enthusiastic about organising a cultural activity... It would be good to increase the number of school hours, one hour of music and one hour of drawing per week would be ideal... Children really need this to love school' (Primary teacher, 21 years' experience, French)

Arts education at primary level is perceived as a time for entertainment and fun and as an outlet for pupils, especially as it is taught in a less rigorous framework than other academic courses. The assessment of arts learning is lenient and often less structured and systematic, as these subjects are seen as 'course savers', helping to compensate for poor results in other subjects, which may lead to a reduction in the importance of these subjects. None of our respondents portrayed music or painting as complementary subjects that enhance pupils' performance in other subjects. In other words, teachers believe that primary school is not responsible for developing pupils' creative and expressive skills because they are secondary and 'innate', and in any case, less than one and a half hours a week cannot succeed in an unfavourable school context.

Art education differs from the teaching of other subjects in that it emphasises creativity, personal expression and the development of the student's sense of aesthetics and imagination. Therefore, if the teacher himself lacks such skills, it will be difficult for him to fulfil his role as a mentor. The teachers interviewed state that they have not received any specific pedagogical training in these subjects, either directly (training courses) or indirectly (seminars, conferences), and that they do not necessarily have a particular inclination towards artistic activities. Three respondents state that they have not seen the guidelines for these subjects published in 2016, and even for those who have seen them, they are not taken into account in teaching. The main practice in primary music classes remains rote learning and singing, and in art classes it is limited to colouring or freehand

drawing. What happens in the classroom does not seem to reflect either official guidelines or the content of textbooks, and teaching practices are dominated by traditional memorisation methods rather than interactive and creative ones.

The arts education programme is an unattainable project with the resources available, it needs a specialised teacher, someone who dedicates his time to it, we are overwhelmed with work, I don't have the time or energy to organise cultural activities' (Component teacher, 22 years' experience, Arabic language)

I never sing in class. For drawing, I print and ask my pupils in the second class to do the colouring' (Teacher, 3 years' experience, Arabic language)

All the official programmes are unrealistic, we never manage to implement them properly' (Head teacher, 27 years' experience, Arabic)

The name of the subject has changed, but the content that is actually taught to the students remains the same, which is learning songs and memorising from the textbook' (Component teacher, 27 years' experience, Arabic)

Our interviewees confirmed that there are many shortcomings that hinder the realisation of the objectives of cultural and artistic education in primary schools, especially the poor infrastructure, the lack of basic resources such as musical instruments, and overcrowded classrooms where some classes have more than 40 pupils. Educational follow-up is almost non-existent, as inspectors are not interested in it because these subjects are considered non-core. In addition, respondents point out that the number of school hours is not fully respected, with music and painting classes being scheduled on Thursday afternoons, at the end of the week. Projects carried out at the end of classes in other subjects, which informally include musical or artistic activities, are excluded in order to compensate for delays due

to overcrowded school programmes. The heavy curriculum leads teachers to focus more on passing exams and 'core' academic subjects, leaving little room for arts and cultural activities.

The same problem as with other subjects, the general framework of education is suffering. This applies to every subject. In these circumstances, either the teacher has a professional conscience and struggles to make the educational process successful, or he does not.' (Component teacher, 27 years of experience, Arabic language)

The school does not have any musical instruments, the teachers use their personal phones in the music classes that are taught in the regular classes... We don't have a special class for music or painting... we don't even have a library or a teachers' room' (Headteacher)

The role of teachers in delivering artistic education is marked by a constellation of significant challenges. These include insufficient access to appropriate resources, minimal institutional backing, and persistent infrastructural deficiencies. Moreover, artistic education suffers from a pervasive lack of recognition and value within the broader educational framework. The constrained instructional time allocated to this discipline further impedes the possibility of fostering deep learning experiences and the acquisition of substantive technical skills among students.

4. The challenges of cultural and artistic education in primary schools in Algeria.

4.1. Extra-curricular cultural activities in primary schools

The Ministry of Education, in its official correspondence and pedagogical documents, emphasises the need to create vitality and establish traditions in the organisation of various extracurricular cultural activities inside and outside the school². When we asked our interviewees about these activities, they all stressed that some of them

exist, but they are still rare and insufficient to create the necessary dynamism.

For cultural trips, you have to get permission from the Directorate of Education... These trips were banned after an unfortunate incident (students died during a school trip). From time to time we organise evenings with a clown or jugglers. On the initiative of the teachers, exhibitions are also organised on national holidays. We also invite associations such as amateur astronomers or environmental organisations. Our students take part in competitions in drawing, storytelling, poetry and even mathematics. The end of year party is a moment when we propose other activities, such as theatre, a fashion show of traditional clothes, dances and songs' (Assistant Headteacher)

According to the headmaster and deputy headmaster, the heavy pedagogical workload, the lack of adequate resources and budget (purchase of materials, unsuitable premises), administrative obstacles (lack of flexibility in the pupils' timetable, impossibility of reducing school hours) and the centralisation of decisions (for example, to organise trips, permission must be obtained from the academy) are among the reasons that do not contribute to the promotion of artistic and cultural education in primary schools.

Things are starting to move and we feel a certain dynamism starting in 2018, with students celebrating Yennayer and the birth of the Prophet. But we lack the most basic resources, the school budget is not even enough to buy ink and test papers. It is difficult, for example, to organise an end-of-year party: The square is too small to accommodate everyone and it's exposed to the sun. Fortunately, we can count on a few volunteer parents who help us finance gifts for the best students and organise the rest (chairs, buffets, etc.). (Assistant Headteacher)



The themes set for art competitions are often not of interest to all pupils, the deadlines do not correspond to the reality of the school... the educational system itself does not allow the development of cultural projects... it is impossible to devote a whole day to cultural activities with pupils' (head teacher).

Primary schools generally face considerable challenges in organising diverse and meaningful cultural activities. Financial constraints severely limit the budgets allocated to such initiatives, while many schools lack the necessary infrastructure—such as multi-purpose auditoriums or specialised facilities—to effectively host cultural events. These difficulties are further exacerbated by an intensive academic schedule that leaves minimal time for extracurricular engagement. Additionally, there is often insufficient collaboration with local cultural institutions, including museums, theatres, and arts centres, which further restricts opportunities to enrich students' cultural experiences.

I wish I could, but it's very complicated to organise. We don't have free afternoons, so we have to take hours from other people's lessons, and not everyone agrees with that. (Teaching Assistant, 5 years, French)

You have to inform all the other teachers, then you have to find money, and then you have to take the criticism and the complaints about little things like this, it's really a big problem... " (Headteacher, 16 years' experience, Arabic).

In my first years of work (I was single and had no children), I used to organise an end-of-year party every year... and the other teachers would stay at home, comfortable, and then come at the end to criticise us.... Now I am about to retire, tired, new teachers have to take over'. (Primary school teacher, 21 years' experience, French)

Everyone thinks of Amazigh folklore, every yenayer they expect me to organise events... My colleagues tell me: you don't have a big

burden... When I see the beautiful impact and the joy that these events have on my students, I am encouraged' (Component teacher, 19 years of experience, Amazigh language)

It takes a lot of time and effort to organise simple visits to a museum, for example; the school budget is not enough for some activities' (Component teacher, 22 years of experience, Arabic language).

The headteacher and deputy headteacher believe that the teacher is the main actor in cultural education in the school and that their inaction is one of the direct causes of the lack of cultural activities in the school.

When I receive flyers inviting us to celebrate a national or cultural event or competition, I pass them on to the teachers and urge them to take part, but frankly I have no real authority to impose anything on them... My powers are limited. There are four or five teachers who cooperate, but the rest are indifferent. (head teacher).

In many developed countries, extracurricular cultural activities are seamlessly integrated into the educational system, supported by well-established institutional frameworks that facilitate their consistent implementation. These frameworks provide structural support that enables active teacher participation and foster robust partnerships between schools and local communities. Such collaborations enhance the cultural offerings available to students through initiatives such as art projects, cultural excursions, and visits to museums and theatres, thereby enriching the educational experience while alleviating the workload on teachers. Conversely, in the Algerian context, the organisation of extracurricular cultural activities predominantly depends on the voluntary efforts of teachers. This voluntary nature, combined with the heavy demands of their primary teaching responsibilities, often results in reduced participation.

Consequently, this leads to irregularity and discontinuity in the activities offered, a narrower scope of cultural programming, and increased fatigue among volunteer teachers, all of which adversely impact their effectiveness and professional performance.

Our respondents do not deny that teachers are responsible for the limited cultural activities in schools, but they insist that institutional support and recognition of cultural initiatives in education play a crucial role in their effective implementation. Our respondents emphasise that the difficulty of working with colleagues, the mentality of apathy and indifference towards all extra-curricular activities, as well as the lack of support and denial of recognition are among the most important reasons that discourage them and reduce their cultural commitment at school. Differences between teachers in their commitment stem from the disparity that exists between them in their perceptions, cultural resources, technical skills, social networks or professional expertise.

I think that teachers are generally in favour of organising cultural activities, as long as they do not have to work too much overtime (Component teacher, 27 years' experience, Arabic language).

There is a prevailing mentality of 'I only care about my students, I will not bother to organise activities for other students' (Assistant teacher, 5 years, French).

I remember once I organised an educational game about tribal traditions for my pupils. A colleague from the department below me complained to the headteacher that my pupils were making too much noise... Another time we organised an end of term party and cleaned up afterwards. However, the colleague who taught in the department after me only complained about a few crumbs on the floor. This kind of situation really discourages me' (Component teacher, 19 years' experience, Amazigh language)

Many public cultural associations have been set up at local level in the fields of music, theatre and others, but they are often in a precarious situation due to a lack of resources, which leads to a short duration of their activities. These associations are often forced to improvise and operate in an informal framework. We are also witnessing the emergence of special cultural associations dedicated to the cultural presentation of children (painting, dance, music...). It is undeniable that the shortcomings of arts education in schools, especially with regard to music and theatre, have contributed to the development of this field outside schools (Chafchaouni, 2002, p. 47).

4.2. Challenges of Arts and cultural Education in Primary Schools

Algeria's increasing attention to arts and cultural education in primary schools is commendable, but insufficient. The status of 'the arts' in primary schools remains marginal, and cultural activities have not been sufficiently integrated into educational policies and programmes. In examining the status of arts and cultural education in primary schools in Algeria, we identified a number of challenges, the most important of which are:

Educational decision-makers (teachers, head teachers and inspectors) underestimate the benefits of arts education and cultural activities. Arts subjects are often considered secondary to 'core' subjects such as maths, science and languages. Teachers often focus on achieving immediate goals, such as completing school programmes for subjects that are considered core, making arts and cultural education secondary. Lack of teacher training and curriculum pressures in this area further marginalise these subjects. In addition, cultural and social influences mean that some social groups see the arts as a dispensable leisure activity or a special optional privilege for parents to take responsibility for, rather than an essential part of

compulsory education and personal development. This lack of awareness deprives students of a holistic education that develops creativity, critical thinking and openness to other cultures.

On the other hand, schools often suffer from a lack of funding, equipment and appropriate spaces for arts and cultural education (e.g. music rooms, art workshops, school theatres, etc.). The recommended reforms in arts and cultural education remain rhetoric without any real follow-up on the ground. This is evident, for example, in the attitude of education inspectors who ignore the subject altogether, and in the weekly time allocated to arts and music subjects, which is often limited and insufficient to develop pupils' artistic and cultural skills.

On the other hand, out-of-school cultural initiatives, where they exist, often lack continuity and follow-up. Workshops and cultural activities are usually occasional, without being integrated into an organised and sustainable pedagogical framework. The organisation of cultural activities by teachers remains a voluntary effort that depends mainly on the teacher's desire and personal commitment, which is an additional constraint that limits the development of these activities in Algerian schools.

5. CONCLUSION

In order to overcome the challenges of artistic and cultural education in Algeria, it is necessary to invest in material, financial and human resources and to rethink educational policies. In the following, we propose some procedural steps that can, in general, contribute to strengthening artistic education in schools and broadening the educational experience of students.

- Provide material resources by equipping schools with the necessary equipment such as musical instruments, visual arts materials and

appropriate infrastructure such as specialised rooms (music departments, art workshops, school theatres).

- Allocate a specific budget to support arts education as part of education reforms.

- Integrate the arts more systematically into school programmes and establish regular follow-up mechanisms by education inspectors to assess and improve pupils' performance in arts subjects. Impose more serious and formalised assessments.

- Launch awareness-raising campaigns targeting parents and students to change the prevailing perception that the arts are secondary subjects.

- Organise regular workshops to improve teachers' pedagogical and artistic skills.

- Allocate more time for arts education within the school timetable. Outside the timetable by organising extra-curricular activities. Flexible adaptation of school hours.

- Develop partnerships between schools, cultural institutions and the local arts sector, such as theatres, museums and cultural centres.

- Financial and artistic support from cultural and political institutions and parents' associations.

- Launching long-term artistic projects in each institution (school choirs, drama clubs, art exhibitions).

- Organising local and national art, music and drama competitions to motivate students.

- Recognising talented students and encouraging them to develop their talents in the artistic field.

- Institutionalise extra-curricular cultural activities and include them in the official responsibilities of teachers, with reward systems or incentives to encourage teachers' participation.

Finally, we emphasize that the success of the reforms in cultural and artistic education depends on the commitment of the various actors (teachers, headmasters, inspectors, the Directorate of

Education, the Ministry of Education, artists, cultural institutions, the family and society) and will only bear fruit if the professional conditions of teachers are improved and the education system as a whole is reformed.

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¹ In April 2022, the Ministry of National Education announced the creation of an "arts division" in general and technical secondary education, starting from the 2022-2023 academic year. The division will include four specialisations: Music, Visual Arts, Theatre and Audiovisual. Students in this division will take specialised subjects in the artistic field, in addition to general subjects, and will obtain a baccalaureate degree in one of these disciplines. In March 2022, a framework agreement was signed between the Ministries of National Education and Culture with the aim of framing young talent in the educational sector and strengthening the artistic dimension in the national education system. In April 2024, the first Baccalaureate of Arts was launched in Algeria, marking a decisive step in the recognition of the arts as a fundamental pillar of national education and culture.

In June 2024, the Minister of National Education announced a strategic review of the school curriculum to include more cultural and sporting activities. The proportion of these activities is expected to increase from 7 per cent to around 20 per cent of school time (This information has been gathered from the Algerian National News Agency www.aps.dz).

² According to the document accompanying the curriculum for primary plastic education (pp. 38-39), the teacher should help to create a more lively and active atmosphere inside and outside the school through extra-curricular activities that focus on

Within the school:

- Displaying learners' work on paintings hung on the school walls, or models of works by contemporary and ancient artists, as well as displaying products of folk and traditional arts.
- Positive activities in art clubs
- Decorating the classroom and making it a model of good organisation and beautiful results
- Beautifying the library and giving it an aesthetically pleasing look that helps create the right atmosphere for comfortable reading
- Organise flower pots and plants in the courtyard
- Coordinate the school garden with appropriate designs
- Choosing clothes and costumes for parties, as well as designing the invitation card or the necessary scenes, or distributing the lighting when acting or working on the stage.
- Organising periodic seminars in which the school family of students and teachers meet to discuss some artistic views, or a lecture on the problems of art in the present and past eras, or to watch an audiovisual film on a topic related to art education and its objectives.
- Contribute to a periodical or a bulletin board and display some selected models of students' art.
- Organise exhibitions on the occasion of national and religious holidays and provide an opportunity for learners to get to know each other better.

Outside the school:

- Organise tourist trips: Visits to museums, archaeological sites, urban areas, industrial vehicles, art galleries, nature, craft shops, artists' workshops, art schools.
- Organising art exhibitions that highlight the learners' creativity and their contact with the outside world.