



An Interior Architecture/Design Education Model within the Scope of New Approaches

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ABSTRACT

Interior architecture/design, which does not have a long history, first appeared and was institutionalized in the United States of America and then spread throughout the world. While its fields of education and profession developed at similar times, especially interior design and interior architecture, which are two different concepts related to the profession, have always been a matter of debate. Just like in the field of application, this discrimination has been reflected on education fields and formed two different applications of the profession.

This study suggests a gradual education model that will associate the basic concepts of interior architecture at a minimum level. With the education understanding of the information age, the European Union directives and the approaches in the United States of America in the field of interior architecture were taken as basis for the development of this model.

The suggested education model and the approaches forming the basic framework constitute the first step for a new curriculum that will meet the needs of the 21st century. This suggested curriculum will provide gradual authorization and the legal regulations necessary in work fields and help create the international criteria for accreditation studies.

Keywords: Interior Architecture Education, Structure of Education, History, Curriculum

INTRODUCTION

As of the 19th century, inventions started to change people's lives to a great extent and a rich variety of new needs arose in social life accordingly. In addition, new concepts and occupations emerged and people started to use new tools and equipment, which were accompanied by new social values and production of more information. In order to use



this new information appropriately, timely and effectively, it is necessary to have individuals who can access to this information directly and make use of it as efficiently as possible. The educational programs designed to educate such individuals in the related fields inevitably sparked radical changes in educational models and traditional occupations. Specialization in a field is the expected outcome of such developments. The occupations and fields of education institutionalized during this 200-year period were reshaped according to the recent demands of this new era and new occupations emerged depending on popular specialization areas. At this point, interior architecture/design emerged 100 years ago as both an occupation and field of education and spread across the world and started to become institutionalized.

SOURCES FOR INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE/ DESIGN EDUCATION

During the early 20th century, when interior architecture/design concept emerged, interiors used to be designed by different occupational clusters. The first professional applications in the field were observed in the United States of America (USA). The interiors uniquely designed according to the tastes and demands of users have always attracted considerable attention and made this occupation a popular one even at those times. The name given to the occupation in these early times was "interior decoration". Having initially focused on textile and furniture finishing process applications in the 19th century, interior decoration later started to deal with arrangements in spaces and furniture applications. These rapid developments inevitably revealed the need for the implementation of educational programs in the field and some universities started to offer courses aiming to meet such demands.

It was not until 1904 that courses in interior decoration became available. The New York School of Applied and Fine Arts-now known as Parsons School of Design-in New York City was one of the first to offer such courses (Piotrowski 1989: 4). Education in interior design was not readily available through American schools at this time...However, did the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts, which had been established as a school for painting in 1896, begin to offer courses in interior decoration. Those courses were initiated after the arrival of Frank Alvah Parsons, by which time there appeared to be a sufficient number of interested students (Tate and Smith 1986: 243).

Thanks to increasing popularity of the courses offered by Fine Arts programs at the early phases, people's interests in the final products and the related news published in visual and print media, people started to demand such courses more and more. Realizing the potential in the field, National Association for Decorative Arts and Industries started to work on an educational program in parallel with the requirements and demands of the



period. *Curricula for interior design education developed from three primary academic areas: As an outgrowth of the fine and decorative arts, as a component of home economics and as a specialized focus in architecture* (Veitch, 1992:27). Such a restructuring led to the creation of an original people-oriented concept whose applications focused on interiors. During this period, *most interior designers have been trained in either home economic departments or design schools. Their sense of architectural history influences their work, giving them a stronger understanding of space. Their concept of furnishings tends to be more sympathetic to the architectural whole'* (Kurtich and Eakin 1992:349).

The global spread of the idea "design" following the attempts of Bauhaus resulted in an important education model for any occupation that makes use of "invention" as a method. In other words, "design" radically affected not only education but also other occupations. As a result, a new direction was adopted in interior architecture/design education and the name "interior decoration" was changed into "interior design" in the following years. As a result of such changes, two different approaches to the occupation, which used to exist since the first professional applications in the field, became more apparent. Having emerged due to different content and applications by different occupational clusters in the earlier phases when there was no university education, these two different approaches were called "interior design" and interior architecture" at earlier times. It was inevitable that these different approaches have sparked and are still sparking hot discussions in the field in terms of both applications and the implementation of educational programs. What lies behind these discussions is the process of intellectual development from decoration to design and its vague and thin borderline with architecture.

Therefore, United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences felt the need to make separate definitions for both approaches. Accordingly;

Interior design (CIP Code 50.0408) is a program in the applied visual arts that prepares individuals to apply artistic principles and techniques to the professional planning, designing, equipping, and furnishing residential and commercial interior spaces. Includes instruction in computer applications drafting and graphic techniques; principles of interior lighting, acoustics, systems integration, and color coordination; furniture and furnishings; textiles and their finishing; the history of interior design and period styles; basic structural design; building codes and inspection regulations; and applications to office, hotel, factory, restaurant and housing design.



Interior architecture (CIP Code 04.0501) is an instructional program that prepares individuals for the independent professional practice of interior architecture—the processes and techniques of designing living, work and leisure indoor environments as integral components of a building system. Includes instruction in building design and structural systems, heating and cooling systems, safety and health standards, and interior design principles and standards (Institute of Education Sciences, 2015)

As we can understand from the definitions stated above, both definitions refer to a holistic scope focusing on the needs of interiors but complementing each other. The 100-year old controversy between interior design and interior architecture was discussed in a round table session during 2009 Fellows Forum at the Interior Design Educators Council Foundation (IDEC) International Conference held in St. Louis at the end of this conversation, the four futures posited for the discussion were as follows:

- 1. Interior design becomes licensed in all states and is identified as the sole profession dealing specifically with the interior environment. A collaborative design community flourishes between architects and interior designers.*
- 2. Interior design is one of the several terms used to identify professionals working within the interior environment. Others include interior architects, inter-space designers, etc. Routes to the practice are diverse and include, but are not limited to, passage of the National Council for Interior Design Qualification or National Council of Architectural Registration Boards exams.*
- 3. Interior architecture becomes the accepted term globally for those working with interiors. Interior architects are required to graduate from a Council for Interior Design Accreditation-accredited program and take the National Council for Interior Design Qualification exams.*
- 4. There is a split in the profession, with those focusing on residential design retaining the right to call themselves "interior designers" and those with a commercially based practice addressing health, safety, and welfare issues adopting the term "interior architect". (White 2009, xi-xii).*

These two studies conducted in the USA on interior design and interior architecture can be said to define two different realms of authority in the occupation and rate the development process in the field.

In fact, the situation is not different in Europe as well. There are ongoing discussions regarding the classification of interior architecture and its education. While European Union (EU) initiates certain attempts to create common principles at minimum acceptable



levels among member and candidate countries, the hottest debates in the discussions emerge with regards to the attempts to establish a common curriculum at university level based on commonly agreed principles. Due to different cultural and educational backgrounds of the countries, this standardization is quite difficult to achieve and brings radical changes that are likely to affect the field of education considerably.

In this respect, the study called Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC Directive, 2009) involves a two-phase application; namely academic recognition (Bologna Process) and professional recognition (graded authorization). Within the scope of academic recognition, a number of structural changes were made in education. Administrative structures of universities, educational programs, learning outcomes, credit system (ECTS) diploma and diploma supplement applications were structured and put into practice. Such practices led to more quality education, better evaluation and higher transparency (Kaptan 2009). In addition, there are still attempts to reach an agreement on acceptable common principles in occupations by preserving the existing information and practice variety.

However, the most important development observed is the classification of occupations that are similar to each other in terms of their qualities and content. *In Fields of Education and Training Manual*, for the Interior Architecture/Design education, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training made a classification with a simple explanation, which can provide the genuine knowledge for the education fields (table1).

Table 1: ISCED'97 Fields of Humanities and Arts (Andersson and Olsson 1999).

Fields of Humanities and Arts			
Broad Field	Narrow Field	Detailed Field	
2- Humanities and Arts	21-Arts	211-Fine Arts	
		212 Music and Performing Arts	
		213 Audio-visual techniques and media production	
		214 Design	<i>Costume design, Design of industrial products, Fashion design, Interior architecture, Interior design, Stage designing and Window dressing</i>
		215 Craft Skills	

In 214-Design (detailed field) gives an explanation for the professions: Design is the study of creatively combining line, form and fabric in designing and constructing e.g. fashion garments, industrial products and interiors. Programs with the following main



content are classified here: *Costume design, Design of industrial products, Fashion design, Interior architecture, Interior design, Stage designing and Window dressin* (Andersson and Olsson 1999).

ISCED'97 classifications, which triggered hot discussions in the field, were updated following the further attempts of occupational classification as part of International Standard Classification of Education ISCED'11. In this classification, "interior design" is classified under the title 214-Design (Detailed Field); however, "interior architecture" is not included in the list (Table 2) (ISCED'11 2012:73).

Table 2: ISCED'11 International Standard Classification of Education

Subject Erasmus Description	Subject codes	Isced Code	Subject ISCED Description
Agricultural Sciences	01.0	62	Agriculture, forestry and fishery
Agriculture	01.1	620	Agriculture, forestry and fishery (broad programmes)
Agricultural Economics	01.2	629	Agriculture, forestry and fishery (others)
Food Science and Technology	01.3	541	Food processing
Horticulture	01.4	622	Horticulture
Fisheries	01.5	624	Fisheries
Forestry	01.6	623	Forestry
Animal Husbandry	01.7	621	Crop and livestock production
Tropical/Subtropical Agriculture	01.8	629	Agriculture, forestry and fishery (others)
Others - Agricultural Sciences	01.9	629	Agriculture, forestry and fishery (others)
Architecture, Urban and Regional Planning	02.0	58	Architecture and building
Architecture	02.1	581	Architecture and town planning
Interior Design	02.2	214	Design

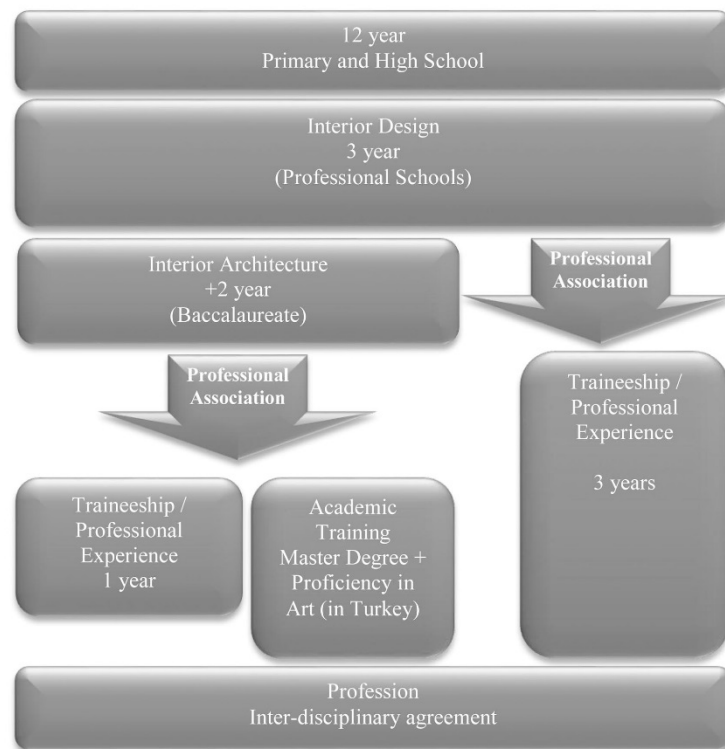
(ISCED'11 Subject Codes:

eacea.ec.europa.eu/intra_acp_mobility/funding/2012/documents/isced--subjectcodes.pdf)

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE/DESIGN EDUCATION MODEL

Despite uncertainties in the USA and EU regarding interior architecture/design, the origin of the field and definitions regarding practical applications are quite clear. However, there is not a standardized educational model based on minimum common criteria integrated with the information structure of the occupation, which is listed under the title "design". When considered from this perspective, it is necessary to educate individuals equipped with basic information about interior architecture/design, to determine certain application standards and to ensure information unity. This requirement can be realized by preparing education models and programs as demanded by the recent developments of this modern era. To achieve this purpose, the data obtained from the resources used during the development of the occupation in the USA, the studies by IDEC and EU ISCED'11 classifications were analyzed. Later, they were evaluated within the framework of general education model (breadth method), and a phased education model was proposed accordingly. This new interior architecture/design education mentality has the potential to allow graded authorization and to combine various application phases under a common structure.

Table 3: Structure of Interior Architecture/Design Education



This new education program involves 5-year education – first phase lasting 3 years and second phase 2- in the faculties called “Faculty of Design” or “Faculty of Art and Design”. The first phase is called “Interior Design / Interior and Furniture Design” and the second phase Interior Architecture/Interior Architecture and Furniture Design. The job titles achieved after graduation are “Interior Designer” and “Interior Architect” (Table 3). The diagram in Table 3 displays a structure defining phased education process and vocational proficiency after graduation. Both academic and professional works after the graduation ensure graded development of the occupation and the individuals involved.

This proposal presents a holistic structure that involves above mentioned two different approaches to the occupation. Therefore, it is dynamic enough to adapt to current design and education criteria without rejecting its historical background.

How to Structure the Interior Architecture/Design Educational Program

The next stage of the proposed two-phase education model for Interior Architecture/Design is the structuring of the educational program. There are four main concepts that should be considered while establishing an educational program; which are aim, scope, learning-teaching process and evaluation. It is necessary to explain these concepts to achieve a well-established educational program (Demirel, 1999). The examination of these basic concepts in terms of their relationships with interior



architecture/design forms a background structure to ensure the success of the education program.

1. Aim: Interior Architecture/Design, Interior Architect/Designer: The aim of the educational program is to furnish interior designers with the basic information and qualities of the occupation. According to International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI), interior designers *identify, research and creatively solve problems pertaining to the function and quality of the interior environment; Perform services relating to interior spaces including programming, design analysis, space planning, aesthetics and inspection of work on site, using specialized; Knowledge of interior construction, building systems and components, building regulations, equipment, materials and furnishings; Prepare schematics, drawings and documents relating to the design of interior space, in order to enhance the quality of life and protect the health, safety, welfare and environment of the public'* (IFI 2013).

The second concept "interior architecture/design", on the other hand, can be defined as "an occupation dealing with spaces used to meet the demands of individuals in terms of practicality, aesthetics and symbolic functions and designing these spaces in parallel with physical and psychological characteristics and actions of these individuals (Kaçar, 1998:56). In addition, practice-based user-space-function relationship is expected to include a structure built by designer according to a general thought-concept framework. It also has a structure that seeks for solutions to defined spaces, functions and most importantly user needs and demands at individual level.

2. Scope-Course Structures and The Elements of Interior Architecture/Design: The scope of interior design as an occupation is quite broad and complex. What causes this complexity is large number of elements used for the design of interiors (Waxman 1998). Therefore, it is necessary to collect considerable amount of information, to relate them to analyses and to make necessary interpretations in order to be able to design an interior. This situation requires the presence of practice-based information as well as technical, institutional and aesthetical one. The courses that form the scope and shape the educational program can be classified under certain groups such as technical drawing and presentation, theoretical and technical, history, practice, job experience and ideational courses.

The difference of interior architecture/design from other occupations is about understanding of interior, dealing with interior in functional, aesthetical and symbolic way, concept of user, economic and cultural quality of user and illumination of interior.



In this respect, furniture, material, color/texture, illumination, style and accessories are important components to be applied by designer to create the internal atmosphere of the space.

3. *Process-Design Process and Studios:* Design studios, where learning and teaching processes mainly develop, are the environments in the center of interior architecture/design education programs. They are the places where creativity is encouraged through experimental practices, user-space-function relationship is examined and all kinds of information such as technical, historical and aesthetical are combined. In basic terms, project generation is a theoretical education since projects are only about design phase and practice is out of this process. This theoretical education should be supplemented by practical applications. In other words, project experience should be turned into practical experience by implementing the student-centered education methodology of 21st century.

4. *Evaluation-Jury, Presentation and Project:* Objective evaluation of the courses listed under technical and theoretical categories can be realized by administering examinations prepared through traditional methods. However, the evaluation of the process in "studio" environments is quite different. What students acquire in studio courses should be evaluated through mutual interactions and observing the presentations made. Evaluation should be made on final product by taking into consideration the technical and aesthetical values of both product and process. Since individual evaluation is subjective, juries which consist of a number of educators and colleagues should be formed to make relatively more objective evaluation. Jury members should evaluate the work through constructive criticism in terms of design language, the skills applied to design spaces by using this language, design behavior styles, use of design methods, sketches and the ability to understand the theme. This process should not be assessed through grades, and "proficiency" should be used as evaluation criteria instead.

CONCLUSION

Producing and sharing information, which are the requirements of global culture, provide a sort of interaction among cultures located in far places. Modern age requires that not only local events but also products and tastes of global world should be shared. One of the significant outcomes of this situation is "restructuring" of societies, economies and countries etc, as well as occupations and vocational education programs. Prominent education model of "Information Age" is based on the integration of information and tastes at global level into vocational education and fields of applications. The graded authorization is possible depending on the individual's preference to use knowledge



received during education and how to use it. In other words, as job experience and knowledge in the area of specialization increase, more extensive use of authorization is observed; i.e. education continues even after graduation.

It is inevitable that the vocational framework of interior architecture/design should be defined and the occupation should be restructured in a way to meet current demands and needs. Similarly, it is not surprising that users of spaces who are provided with interior architecture/design services have both local and global tastes, needs and demands. Therefore, interior architecture/design assumes a role that establishes a direct relationship between global culture and users.

Two-phase education model proposed in this study highlights international common values as well as national ones. The content should be a global one furnished with theoretical and practical information required by the occupation and it should involve areas of application to a great extent. The most important factor to realize this goal is to revise educational programs in a way to cover interior architecture/design knowledge. The second important factor is to have educators equipped with knowledge and experience in the field of interior architecture/design.

The inclusion of international values in the program is expected to make it possible for both students and instructors to benefit from international exchange programs. In addition, such an approach will help interior architects/designers to see and examine various cultural contexts, which is believed to be necessary for them to be a real "culture person".

It is necessary to determine minimum criteria for educational programs in order to restructure the field of education. By doing so, it will be possible to standardize common shareholders in terms of content and practices. Common restructuring of educational programs might also result in the integration of following principles into interior design education such as transparency, involvement of shareholders, quality, creativity, variability, variety, accountability and common production principles, which are accepted as the administrative principles of information age. Finally, it will be possible to establish a healthy background for the relationships among education-industry-practice environments in order to have a modern structure.

Such a structure will ensure the presence of quality, art, science, aesthetics and ethical values during the provision of interior design services.



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