

A VIEW ON ACCREDITATION PROCESS IN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION; CASE OF DICLE UNIVERSITY

Mimarlık Eğitimindeki Akreditasyon Sürecine Mimarlık Bölümü Öğrencilerinin Bakışı: Dicle Üniversitesi Mimarlık Bölümü Örneği

Iclal ALUCLU¹
Bahar ACAR²
Mahir KORKMAZ³
Ozgur MURT⁴

Abstract

Reflects of magnificent developments in science and technology could be seen in all disciplines as well as architecture discipline. This situation has gained a new approach by acceptance of 20 th. Century modern architecture perception. The styles age before modern architecture represented a conservative and limited approach; however modern architecture represents more liberal approaches.

The architecture occupation is a dynamic and open to innovations, varying continuously. Therefore its education criteria are discussed all over the world. The Turkey, has signed many agreements with European Union (EU) at various areas like economy, social, political and education. The law is related to free Distribution of Services (FDS) and acceptance of occupational proficiency subject not only to medicine and law professions but also architecture and other professions. FDS, flexibility and transparency at education, student and instructor interchange, quality assurance at education and profession should be applied urgently to the profession.

"Innovations should be made at restrictions of architectural education and discipline" was declared at 3rd Architecture and Education Assembly which was held in 2005. There are 38 faculties of architecture in Turkey and each has different education styles. Dicle University (DU) Department of Architecture is one of them and is the only school to gives the education in the Southeastern Anatolia Region of Turkey.

In this study, a questionnaire was conducted in order to describe quality of the education, national accreditation appropriation, and physical situation of the Department. The questionnaire has two stages. In the first stage, the quality of the education, their desires and wishes were held; in the second stage, the situation related with building and their gladness were took into consideration

Keywords: Accreditation, architecture, education

Özet

Bilim ve teknolojideki olağanüstü gelişmelerin yansımaları; diğer tüm meslek disiplinlerinde olduğu gibi mimarlık disiplininde de gerçekleşmiştir. Özellikle 20. yüzyılda modern mimarlık anlayışının benimsenmesiyle yeni bir anlam kazanmıştır. Modern mimarlık öncesindeki üsluplar döneminde sınırları belli,

¹ Yrd.Doç.Dr., Dicle Üniversitesi Mimarlık-Mühendislik Fakültesi, 21280 Kampüs-Diyarbakır

² Y. Mimar, Diyarbakır Büyükşehir Belediyesi İmar Müdürlüğü

³ Y. Mimar, İstanbul Üniversitesi Rektörlük Yapı İşleri

⁴ Y. Mimar, İskenderun Belediyesi İmar Müdürlüğü

tutucu bir yaklaşım sergilenirken, günümüz modern mimarlık anlayışında daha özgürlükçü yaklaşımlar benimsenmiştir.

Mimarlık; dinamik, yeniliklere açık ve sürekli değişime uğrayan bir meslektir. Bu nedenle mimarlık eğitimi tüm dünyada yeniden sorgulanmakta, mesleki ve eğitim kriterleri açısından evrensel çerçevede ele alınmaktadır.

Türkiye; Avrupa Birliğine giriş sürecinde ekonomik, sosyal, siyasal ve eğitim gibi alanlarda anlaşmalar imzalamıştır. Hizmetlerin Serbest Dağılımı (GATS) süreci ile 'Mesleki Yeterliklerin Tanınması Hakkında Kanun Tasarısı', tıp ve hukuk mesleklerinde olduğu gibi mimarlık alanında da yükümlülükler getirmiştir. Hizmetlerin serbest dolaşımı, eğitimde esneklik-saydamlık öğrenci-öğretim elemanı değişimi ve hareketlilik, eğitimde ve meslek uygulamasında kalite güvencesi gibi konuların ivedilikle meslek yaşamına geçirilmesi gerekli kılınmaktadır.

Üçüncüsü Aralık 2005 de yapılan Mimarlık ve Eğitim Kurultayında, Mimarlık eğitimi ve disiplininde yeni yapılanmalara gidilmesi öngörülmektedir. Ülkemizde halen 38 adet Mimarlık Eğitimi veren YÖK'e bağlı Mimarlık Okulu vardır. Bu okulların kendilerine özgü eğitim stratejisinin olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Birbirinden çok farklı eğitim stratejisi benimseyen bu okulların bir eş kredileendirme ve aynı zamanda bu okulların kendine özgü yapılarını da koruyarak bir akranlaştırma stratejisi benimsenmiştir. Bu okullara her yıl yaklaşık iki bin öğrenci kaydolmakta bine yakın öğrenci mezun olup mimar kimliğini taşımaktadır.

Mimarlık okullarından biri de Diyarbakır'da bulunan Dicle Üniversitesi mimarlık bölümüdür. 1984 yılında kurulan okul bölgenin kültürel ve tarihi mirasının korunması ve tanıtımında önemli bir misyon üstlenmesi ile birlikte bölgenin tek mimarlık okuludur.

Çalışmada, Dicle Üniversitesinde verilen mimarlık eğitiminin niteliği, ulusal akreditasyona uygunluğu ve eğitimin verildiği binanın fiziki koşulları, öğrencilere uygulanan anketle belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. D.Ü. Mimarlık bölümünde okuyan 100 öğrenciye uygulanan anket iki aşamadan oluşmaktadır. Birinci aşamada; mimarlık eğitimi niteliği, eğitim süresi ve öğrencilerin eğitim sürecindeki istek ve düşünceleri, ikinci aşamada ise mimarlık eğitiminin verildiği binanın fiziki koşulları, eğitime uygunluğu ve öğrencinin memnuniyeti ile ilgili görüşleri irdelenmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Akreditasyon, mimarlık, eğitim

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "accreditation" derives from the Latin words "ad" (to somebody) and "credere" (rely on). The meaning of accreditation on our field of study is approval and acceptance or standard identification of the qualities of on education institution (YÖK, 2006).

It is well known that common criteria's adopted in academic world provide the opportunity of efficient comparison in the education process of universities and measurement of consistency of these criteria to the education system.

Today, internationally, accreditation includes arrangements such as degree equivalence and professional efficiency. There are various accreditation institutions in EU countries and the USA. In Europe with EU process, certain common criteria have been adopted and degrees have been accepted as equal to using this professional efficiency. In England, this process is carried out by Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) established in 1837; and Architect's Registration Council of the United Kingdom (ARCUK) established

in 1931. In the USA it is controlled by The National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB).

2. ACCREDITATION PROCESS IN ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN TURKEY

As in all academic education systems, in architecture education forming and applying common criteria will have contributions in improving science of architecture. Architecture is profession that has a dynamic, open to innovation and variable structure. Therefore, architecture education is re-inquired in all over the world and it is considered with as a universal profession and education criteria.

Performing of accreditation process is an important factor in the realization of modernization and continuity in education in our universities. In Turkey, from this point of view two universities have so far archived this process. An evaluation system prepared by a university of England is applied in the architecture departments of Istanbul Technical University and Yıldız Technical University in 1995 (Mimarlık, 2006). In this study background, programs, student activities, and quality of teaching of these universities have been evaluated.

Besides, providing the continuity of universities, missions and their own characteristics is needed too. As in other disciplines, many important problems are not analytical in the architecture education. These problems, as it is mentioned in the regulations in architecture education of UNESCO are arranged as:

Are architectural schools able to prepare young architects to a business life that is shaped by the demands differing and increasing gradually? What is the relationship between the education and application of architecture today? What are the education and course programs which allow choosing original ways directing to qualified profiles those are identified certainly? Are the young architects trained in a capacity to communicate with the representatives of other disciplines who are active in planning, management etc. on equal bases?

Will the architect be skilled in decision taking in political activities and taking a place in the political and directive decision processes? (2). This complex structure in architecture education is expected to be solved through only standardization in architecture discipline.

In Turkey, Architecture Accreditation Controlling Council (MIAK) is constituted from 7 persons. 5 of those persons are determined by the Communication Group of Director of departments in architecture schools (MOBBIG) and two representatives determined by Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (UCTEA). The criterions appropriated by Architecture Accreditation Council are determined under 9 basic headlines.

These are:

- Philosophy of the program
- The composition and structure of the program

- Knowledge and skills to be gained in graduation.
- Human resources
- Physical resources
- Financial resources
- Providing and improving quality
- Support and guidance for students
- Awarding systems

The basic aim of Architecture Accreditation Council is to improve architecture education through evaluation and perfection studies. In this manner, advancing prosperity of society is aimed through training well educated and qualified architects (Hacıhasanoğlu, 2006). Arrangement and choice of education programs are designated by architecture departments. At the same time, qualities of these programs are taken into consideration instead of their quantity (credits, hour etc.).

3. FIELD STUDY IN ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Today, existence of a large number of architecture schools and exponential increasing in the number of new architecture schools make accreditation process more difficult; although the graduates have equal rights, it is impossible to talk about an equal professional efficiency because of the un-equivalent training.

Accreditation process in Architecture Education usually affects students. In this process, request and satisfaction of the students are extremely important. So necessary technical and professional skills and plans will be given to the students in which conditions and how to gain professional perfection in application is argued in this process.

For this aim, a questionnaire has been applied to a hundred of architecture students, to understand what they think about quality and quantity of the education in our school and how they observe and interprets these improvements and processes in architecture education. The aim of the study is to determine the foresights of students in this process of Dicle University Architecture Department.

One of the schools takes place in this situation is Architecture Department of Dicle University in Diyarbakir that is located in the southeastern Anatolia region of Turkey. The department is established in 1984 and is only architecture school assuming the responsibility of protecting and advertising the cultural and histological inheritance of the region. In this accreditation process, working groups about accreditation were formed in the Engineering and Architect Faculty of Dicle University in January 2006. Architecture Department has taken place in this group and determined on accreditation strategy for architecture education in terms of the decisions taken in the 3rd Architecture and Architecture Education Council.

The quality of architecture education in Dicle University, its suitability with the international accreditation and the physical conditions were tried to determine through a questionnaire with students. Accreditation process was

introduced to Architecture students, and student representatives participated in the 3rd Architecture and Architecture Education Council.

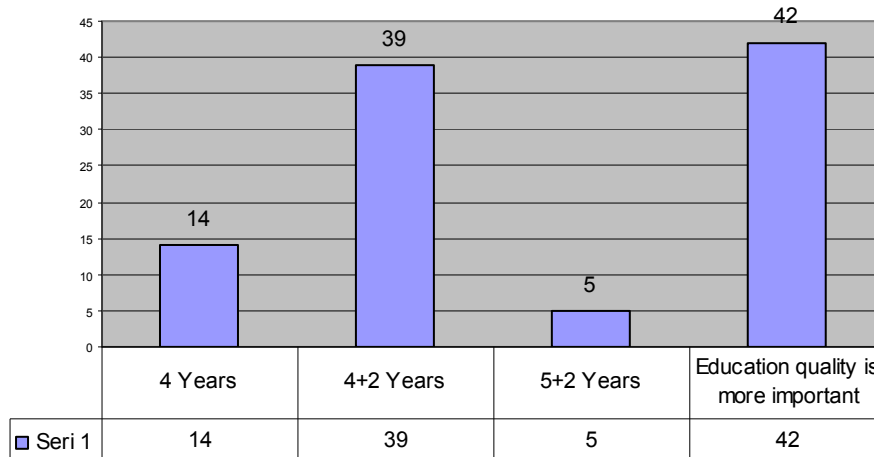
3.1. Questionnaire and Evaluation

The questionnaire applied to a hundred students attending in D.U. Architecture Department composed of two steps. In the first step, the quality of architecture education, education period, request and thoughts of students in this process are examined. In the second step the thoughts about physical conditions, its suitability to education and the satisfaction of the students are examined.

3.1.1. The Quality of Architecture Education, Education Period and the Foresight of the Students in This Education Process

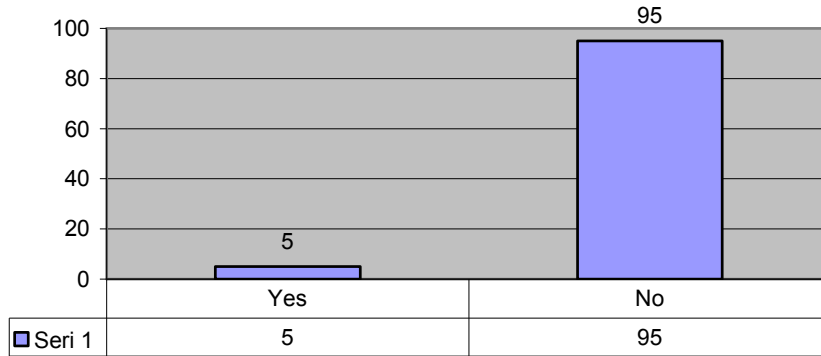
One of the decisions made in the 3rd Architecture and Architecture Education Council is about the period/time of architecture education. Most of the students affirmed the extension of education period positively. 42% of the students pointed out that important thing is not the period of education, but the quality of education. Only 14 %of the students pointed out that the current four year education is adequate. 39% of the students are in the thought of that 4+2 years education is better (Table 1).

Table 1: How many years must be the architecture education?



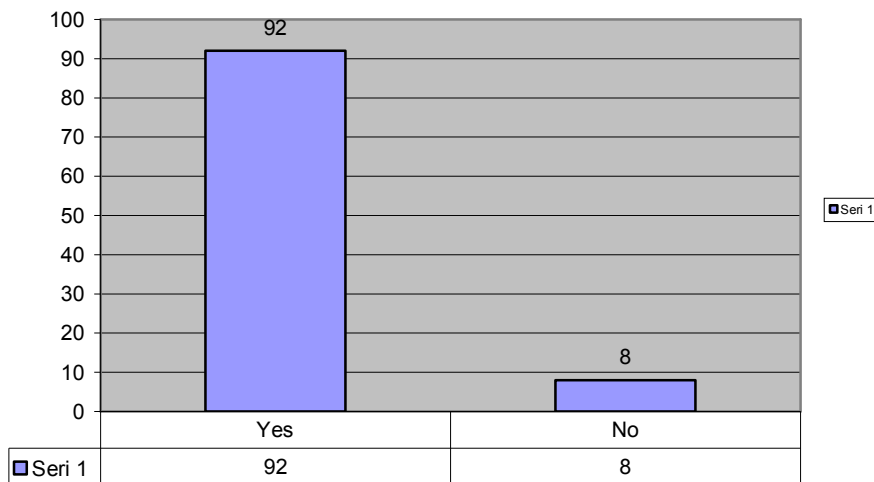
The ratio of the students thinking that architecture education adequate in the school is 5%. 95% of the students doesn't think that the education adequate and think that they will probably feel this deficiency in the business life. This question enlightens the necessity of accreditation process and brings out that this process should necessarily be started immediately (Table 2).

Table 2: The education for being architect in your school is enough or not ?

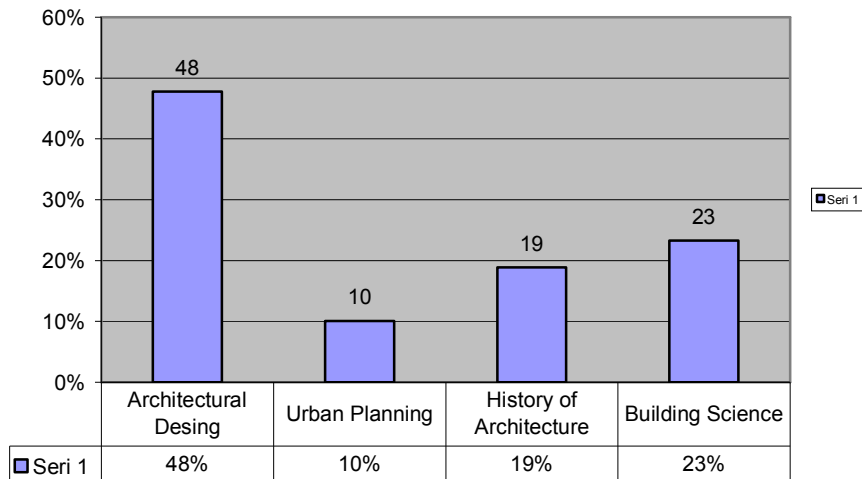


The ratio of students who wants to have foreign language education is 92%. They find it necessary to follow the international publications about architecture and Architectural education (Table 3).

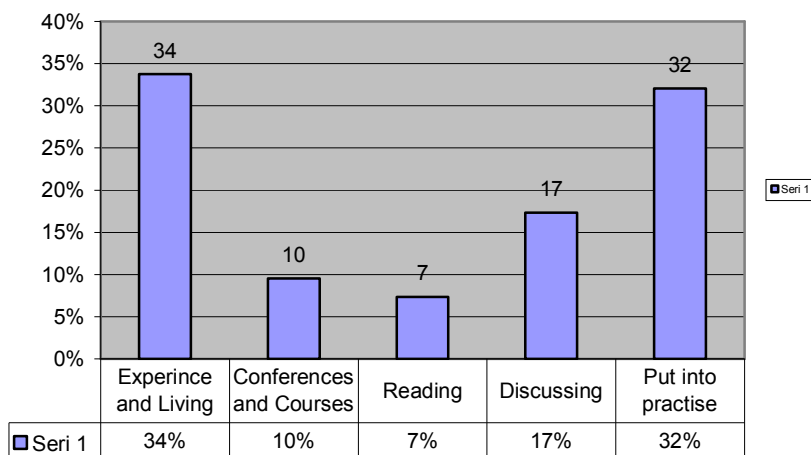
Table:3 Whif your architecture education, Do you want foreing language courses?



The students were asked in which field the architecture education should be oriented, and 48% of the students choose the theory of architectural design, 23% of the students choose construction, 19% of the students choose the history of art and architecture, and 10% of the students choose urban planning (Table 4).

Table 4: What the architecture education must be aimed at more?

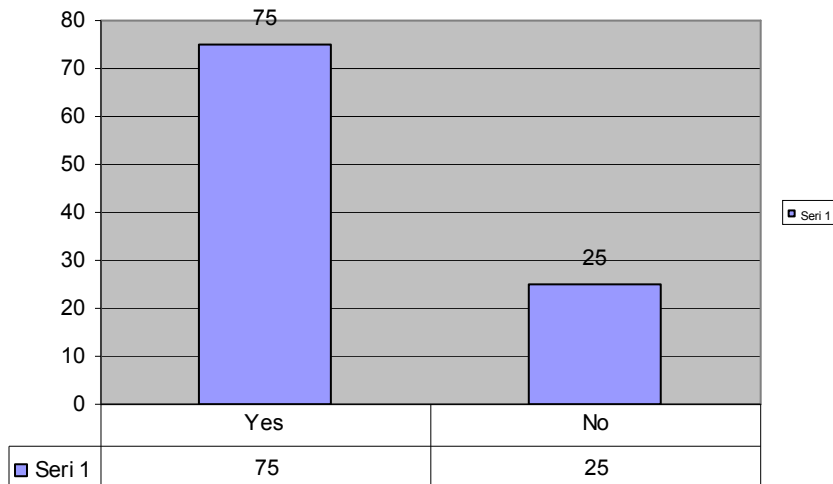
The students are asked which methods should be used in architecture education. The number of students who express teaching through observation is with the highest ratio of 34%. The ratio of the students who see the applications to be done in drawing rooms or laboratories is 32%. Consequently; participation to the trips and exhibitions throughout the education period will present vital contributions to the students design projects (Table5).

Table 5: Which methods do you want to be used in architectural education ?

25% of the students pointed out that they had no information about architecture and architecture education when they choose this department.

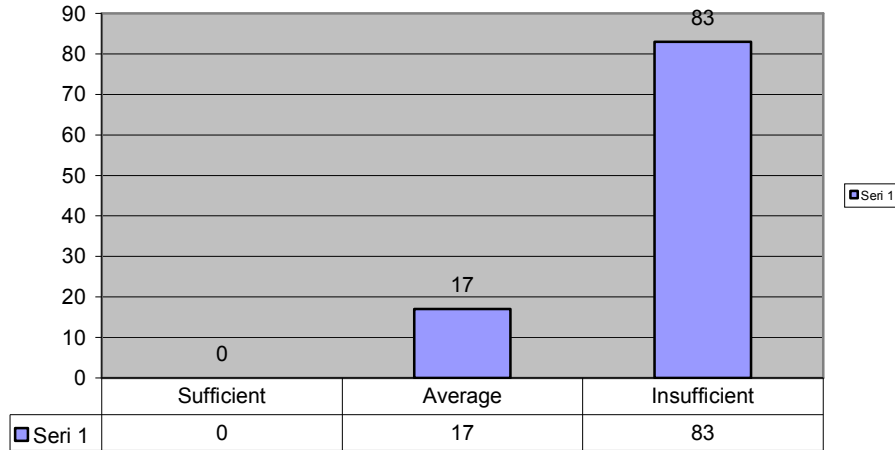
That only the mathematics' score is necessary to enter architecture schools in current student choosing and placing system and that how students are skilled at this job cannot be measured through different parameters cause students to start this education reluctantly and unconsciously (Table 6).

Table 6: Do you have any knowledge about architecture education ?



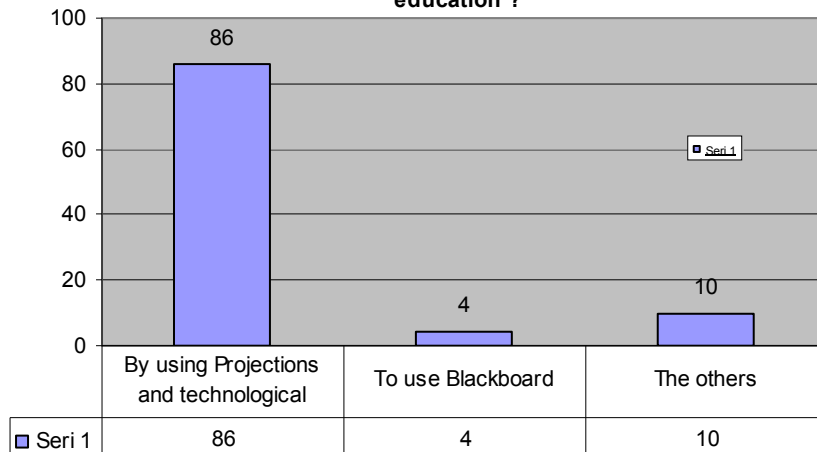
83% of the students find libraries inadequate and 17% of the students find them fairly adequate. The majority of the students find the publications in the faculty library inadequate. Even if computer technology and internet access opportunities improved, libraries are one of the necessities for universities (Table 7).

Table 7: Do you sufficient your library's publicatons for architectural education ?



Students want visually oriented education in architecture education. Therefore it is necessary to apply visual teaching methods more in the architecture classes, within the technological possibilities. As a matter of fact that 74% of the students finds using visual teaching techniques (cinevision, datashow, slide, etc.) inadequate and 86% of the students want to learn the lessons through using technological possibilities (Table 8).

Table 8: Which methods do you want to be used in architectural education ?



3.1.2. Physical Conditions and the Satisfaction of Students

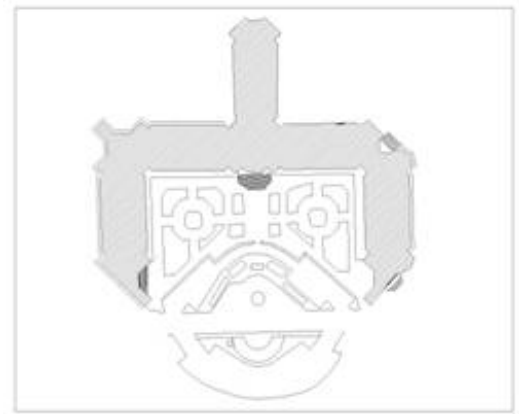
Physical conditions in architectural education are important. A good education can't be possible only through well-prepared syllabus, technological classrooms and qualified teaching staffs.

The students of our department were asked to evaluate if the conditions of building classrooms, workshops and canteen, etc. are adequate or not, and the following results are obtained.

68% of the students pointed out that the building of faculty should be evaluated as a part of architecture education and 66% of the students pointed out that the environmental arrangement should be evaluated as a part of architecture education (Picture 1-Plan 1).



Picture 1. In front of the Faculty



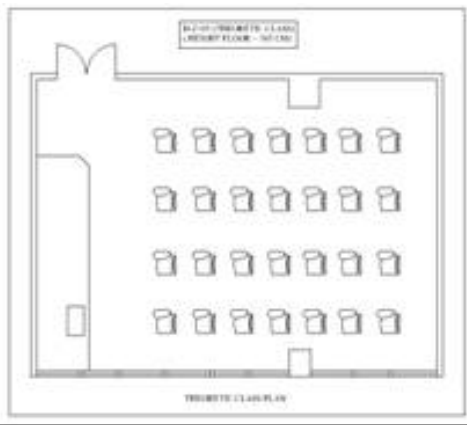
Plan 1. Land use plan of the Faculty

51% of the student pointed out that the building of Architecture Department of Dicle University was not on architectural work for reflecting the genuine of architecture. 96 %of the students pointed out that being the same of the other buildings in the University for Architecture Buildings were not appreciated. 61% of the students thought that architectural education should be given in a buildings planned with modern materials and architecture; 31% of them thought that architecture education should be given in a re-functioned

historical buildings in Suriçi region (Downtown and Historic part of the city of Diyarbakir) (Picture 2-Plan 2).



Picture 2. Picture of a classroom

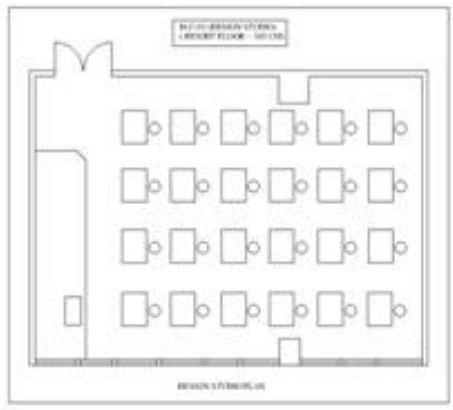


Plan 2. Plan of a classroom

58% of the students found the dimensions of theoretical classroom adequate. 69% of the students found the studios inadequate, 70% of them found laboratories inadequate and 85% of them found canteen inadequate. In the ventilation of spaces, 56% of students found dimension of theoretical classrooms adequate, 54% of the found drawing studios adequate, 54% of students found basement) (Picture 3- Plan 3).



Picture 3. Picture of a classroom



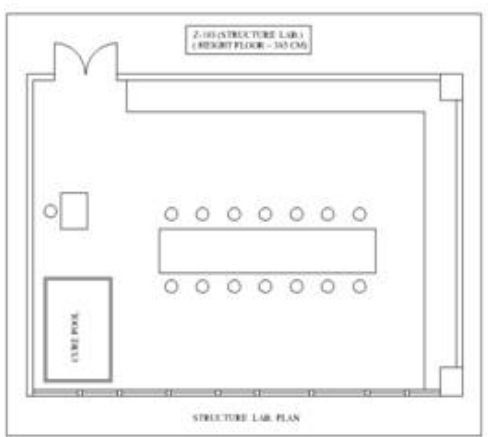
Plan 3. . Plan of a classroom

In the lighting of the places; theatrical classrooms with 64% ratio and planning studios with 56% ratios were found adequate and laboratories with 57% ratios and canteen with 97% ratios were found inadequate.

Students did not find acoustic and heating system adequate in the theatrical classroom, studios, laboratories and canteen. Places which are too hot in summer and can not be heated adequately in winter are mainly complained problems. The lack of equipments in classrooms and workshops is unfortunately not only the problem of Dicle University Architecture Departments but the problems of most of the architecture departments of the universities in Turkey (Picture 4-Plan 4).



Picture 4. Picture of a laboratory



Plan 4. Plan of a laboratory

The issue which students most complain about is thermal comfort. 97% of the students pointed out that heating in the studios are inadequate and 73% of the students pointed out that acoustic in these studios are inadequate. A general dissatisfaction about technical equipment also exists. This dissatisfaction has seen especially in laboratories and theoretical classrooms.

Students pointed out that of they spent 56% of their time in the classrooms, 28% of those in the corridors and 7% of those in the canteen. The reasons of the spending most of the time in the corridors instead of canteen are general comfort conditions which are not provided (Picture 5- Picture 6).



Picture 5. Picture of a canteen



Picture 6. Picture of a canteen

In most of the universities in Turkey summer school application has been started. Dicle University has accepted this application since 2005 and will start in 2006 summer semester. It is a must to form physical comfort conditions to educate students in the temperature which reaches 40° C in summer.

Students were asked to evaluate the physical structure of the faculty buildings in terms of the suitability for education in summer school. The dimensions of the place was found adequate with the ratio of 64% and the lighting was found adequate with the ratio of 59% but acoustic, heating and technical equipments were found inadequate.

Students cannot find the opportunity of studying every time in everywhere for the necessary applications in architectural education. Therefore it will be better to add studying workshops to reading and studying rooms in architecture schools.

With the studying workshops, students will have the opportunity to the study together for their drawings in trainings process, models and group works. 94% of the students pointed out that they wanted to do their work in school and 6% of those pointed out that they had place to the study but they did not want to.

4. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

There are approximately 40 architecture departments in Turkey and every year hundreds of architects are graduated. Besides the education in the schools where people, planning living places, are trained; the suitability of the buildings of these department to the education has an important role on training of these architects.

Architecture Department of Dicle University has been tried to evaluate through our students thoughts in two steps; the quality and the content of the education, and the suitability of physical conditions.

As we see in the questionnaire;

In the issue of the period of education which was most argued, students think that it will be better if the period of education is lengthened from 4 years to 6 years; but they mostly concern about taking the quality of the education to the highest level as much as possible. Generally they do not find architectural education in the school adequate and emphasize the necessity of applying accreditation process as fast and active as possible. In addition, they think that this enterprise will improve their study conditions in their business life after graduation.

Most of the students want to have a foreign language education. They see foreign language education necessary for following the changes and developments in architecture in changing and transforming world and for contributing these developments.

In Turkey, students are placed to facilities and departments through a central examination, as in other schools. In the evaluation of the examination the knowledge of mathematics and science are measured. In the questionnaire, students emphasized that they had no information about architecture and its education and they had not done their choice by coincidence. In secondary education institutions, skill of the students should be measured through various parameters by giving the knowledge of choosing job and introducing most of the occupations, as well as architecture.

In the consequence of the questionnaire and meetings, we have seen that students want technologically supported architecture education through technological materials. They want to be given applied education laboratories and to have their planning skills improved through organizing technical trips. They emphasize that architecture education should be given through architectural planning theories, construction knowledge, history of art and town planning. Even if computer and internet technology improve, libraries are one of the necessities for the universities; students do not find periodical and other publications inadequate.

When the physical conditions of the architecture building is thought, it is pointed out that the buildings does not reflect the genuine of architecture, the building should be evaluated as a part of architecture and A great deal of the students emphasize that architectural education should be given in a building planned with modern materials and modern architectural thinking such as a re-functioned historical building in Suriçi region.

Student's emphasized that classrooms, social places and visual education studios have remained behind our age technologically. The physical conditions of the buildings are seen as inadequate especially in terms of thermal comfort. In addition, the canteen in the basement and laboratories are seen as inadequate in terms of ventilation, lighting and width.

Besides the arrangements for accreditation, the needs and demands of the architecture students have been taken into consideration. These evaluations have been taken into account with the studies of accreditation process. For a qualified architecture education, in addition to teaching and learning, the physical conditions of the places for education should be adequate, and needs and demands of the students should be taken into account in a successful accreditation process. Studies have been started to improve the physical and functional situations and to accredit in architecture training.

The EU process will provide opportunity to foreign architects to work in Turkey. If we can not take architecture education in Turkey to the standards of others, we will face many problems, namely finding a job will be more difficult than ever. The more possible disharmony in the accreditation standards and professional practicality the more the work opportunity of our architects will be decreased

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