The Plurality Caused by Formal and Informal Education in the Field of Interior Architecture: An Evaluation on Furniture Design

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Abstract

The changeable, multicomponent and ambiguous nature of design can also be observed in the field of education; therefore, the state of plurality caused by the coexistence of formal and informal education becomes a subject matter which should be often negotiated and emphasized. Competitions are a part of informal education and they are recitation-based activities. In terms of their relation to formal education, competitions influence the process of creating the necessary grounds for new production and sharing. When the discipline of interior design is concerned, furniture design competitions are informal experiences which students of interior architecture can take part in. This paper aims to examine the plurality caused by the relationship between formal education and informal activity as in furniture design competitions whose number increases rapidly. The analysis of informal education, being one of the two components forming the structure of this study, is based on the data gained through the results of quantitative and qualitative research on two furniture design competitions. The competitions are analyzed according to their categories, number participants per year, educational institutions and branches of the winners. The analysis of formal education is based on an investigation of furniture design courses belonging to academic curriculum of students who won prizes in competitions.

Keywords: Furniture design, interior architecture education, furniture design competition, formal education, informal education

1. Introduction

Space is a form of void where various actions by people take place and the needs of users are fulfilled (Melikoğlu Eke, 2014). It locates its users, molds them and adapts itself to them, to its environment and values surrounding it. Gür also defines space as void where humans, human relations and the outfit necessitated by these relations take place while its limits are designated by the structure and character of the organization which it contains (Gür,1996). As one could infer from such definitions, space is a totality of correlations which are comprised of human relations to life and inanimate objects. In his study called Organic Architecture, Frank Lloyd Wright comments on the content of space and its relation to life as follows:

"It is quite impossible to consider the building as one thing, its furnishings another and its setting and environment still another. The spirit in which these buildings are conceived sees all these together at work as one thing. All are to be studiously foreseen and provided for in the nature of the structure. Incorporated (or excluded) are lighting, heating and ventilation. The very chairs and tables, cabinets and even musical instruments, where practicable, are of the building itself, never fixtures upon it" (Wright, 1910: 25).

Interior space in particular is the first periphery surrounding the individual and actions of him. In this regard, it is possible to describe interior design as an interdisciplinary field aiming to create spaces with different identity and atmosphere by interfering into special dimension, setting the furniture and treating the surfaces (Brooker and Stone, 2010).

Furniture is one of the components establishing the interior space and its atmosphere. The Turkish word 'mobilya' is a loan word from Italian 'mobilia' and Turkish Language Association (TDK) defines it as follows: A general term, möble, given to movables used for sitting, dining, studying and furnishing places where one sleeps (Turkish Language Society, 2019). Üst claims that the word mobilya has its roots in 'mobilis' meaning something that moves. It suggests any kind of property that is movable -in contrast to unmovable 'immobilia'- and that is used to furnish a house (Üst, 2015)

Booth and Plunkett describe furniture as "any element that is functionally independent of the walls, floors and ceilings that enclose the space in which it sits" (Booth and Plunkett, 2014: 7). While walls, flooring, windows and doors are considered to be parts of the architectural design of a building, furniture that is chosen to arrange the interior spaces is a concern of interior architecture as a profession. According to Ching, furniture provides the transition between interior space and the individual at a level of form and scale while functioning as a mediator between space and its users and enhancing comfort and practicality to interior activities (Ching, 2012).

Furniture not only strengthens the function of the space but it also exists as an aesthetic value within interior space. As a result, furniture becomes as important as other design components in forming the identity of the space. An interior architect is supposed to ponder over furniture as it is connected to design criteria such as scale, material size and color, each playing a role in perceiving the space.

A glance at the histories of architecture and interior architecture would reveal that during the modern architecture period, modernist architects like Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Mies Van der Rohe designed houses with architecture, interior space and furniture

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design in their minds. As Figure 1 shows, architecture - interior architecture and furniture design are interrelated and they affect one another.

Figure 1. A le petit cabanon house and a robie house (Bougot, nd.; Caulfield, nd.)

As it could be seen in those examples, the physical and aesthetic features of a building affect how the interior space is organized. The furniture has an important role in the interaction between interior space and its users. As Booth and Plunkett suggest, architect Norman Foster thinks that "furniture is the architecture in microcosmos" (Booth & Plunkett, 2014: 6). While designing a new interior space, an interior architect should ensure the unity of already existing elements of the building and the furniture in different scales because architectural spaces are not just objects defined through mathematical and physical elements but rather living entities which need tools like furniture as they include social and cultural changes in addition to people's life forms.

2. Formal and Informal Design Education

According to Turkish Language Institution, education is "directly or indirectly helping children and young people within schools or outside schools so that they can acquire certain skills and knowledge to find their places in the social life and develop their personalities" (Turkish Language Institution, 2019). Education is supposed to be based on planning and executed in every level. While formal education is based on the transfer of knowledge, informal education stands for acquisition of knowledge through experience and Yürekli and Yürekli (2004: 54) suggests that "it is established on a new reality and setting where hierarchies are destroyed and the existing system and its rules are disobeyed".

Design education represents an educational field which has its own requirements, conditions and methods. Design studio is the basis of design education during which the instructor / teacher mentors the student / learner in his way to reach knowledge and to produce new ideas. As Ciravoğlu (2003: 43) indicates, "traditional formal education which is built on master-apprentice relationship 'in which pre-defined knowledge is transferred to students". On the other hand, during informal education the facilitator and the participant experience the act of design together and produce together. Apart from following a certain curriculum, informal education creates its own dynamics. In this respect, informal education is a form of acquisition realized through 'learning by doing' as well as supporting imagination and being uncertain, limitless and creative.

Informal practices carry students to a different level of consciousness during design education. As Yürekli and Yürekli (1995: 66) suggest, such practices "provide the student with awareness towards himself and the world around him by developing him in intellectual and intuitional aspects". The limits of informal education are very broad and it can be the source of experiences related to profession which one learns during formal education. Workshops, exhibitions, meetings, seminars are examples of activities that can be done within informal education.

It is possible to build a connection between informal activities in which students create their own way of learning and formal education. That is why formal design education of modern day has its varieties. Students can join informal education at schools as well. Students receive formal and informal education together and their participation to informal education is supported by workshops, talks, seminars, and competitions so that students can discover new insights and improve their networks. Accordingly, this study examines furniture design competitions which reveal the importance of informality in interior architecture education.

3. Furniture Design in Interior Architecture Education

Compared to traditional art and architecture education, interior architecture education is fairly new and it started to develop at the beginning of 20th century as an extension of specialization and privatization of design professions. Interior architecture is a recitation-based field of design in which the designer builds the user-space-function relations in accordance with a general thought-concept frame (Kaptan, 2003; Çelik and Melikoğlu, 2007). The first application of interior design at a professional level made in the USA where the notion of specialization developed and affected both professional and educational spheres during the first decades of 20th century (Kaptan, 1999). The USA is the country where theoretical and practical infrastructure of interior architecture design as a profession was established and interior architecture education became institutionalized.

Although interior architecture appeared as a new professional branch at the beginning of 20th century, it was only in 1970's that education and training professionals was managed. Interior architecture education in Turkey started in 1925 at Sanayi-i Nefise Mekteb-i Ali (İstanbul Devlet Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi - Istanbul State Academy of Fine Arts) and today several universities have interior architecture departments (Kaçar, 1998). It could be suggested that the Beaux-Arts was the first model adopted in Sanayi-i Nefise Mekteb-i Ali Demir, 2008). Especially the education given at Interior Architecture Department of Marmara University, which was founded in 1957, was genuine and independent of architectural discipline, its dominance and decisiveness (Işıkgör, 2007). The Bauhaus model which was influential on interior architecture education for a long time was later replaced by the American model at Bilkent University's Interior Architecture Department.

When the course plans of interior architecture education at Turkish universities are examined, it could be observed that there are compulsory and selective courses on project-based construction, architecture history, building survey, restoration and physical environment control. However, furniture design courses hold a special place in interior architecture educational programmes as they distinguish interior architecture from other educations of design disciplines. The courses are given as lecture or laboratory or both. When the Interior Architecture and Environmental Design departments of nearly 60

universities in Turkey and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus were examined, it was noticed that course like Furniture History was lecture based while recitation hours dominate Furniture Application Studio. Courses like Furniture Structure, Furniture Identity, Experimental Furniture, Furniture Studio, Furniture Construction, Furniture Design, Space and Furniture included both lecture and recitation hours. What is more, the investigation into courses showed that there are interior architecture departments which focus mainly on furniture design and production. In such departments, furniture courses are handheld as studios / projects while the programme is enriched by recitation / lecture practices. In addition, it was noticed that some departments expect their students to actually produce the furniture at the end of the semester which they designed earlier. Consequently, students experience not only the designing process of furniture but also the production of that significant element constituting the interior space. Briefly, it could be concluded that higher education institutions offering interior architecture courses do care about furniture design and include it in the compulsory and selective categories of their educational curriculums as well as focusing on design and production realized during recitation hours.

4. Informal Education in Interior Architecture and Furniture Design Competitions in Turkey

Competitions provide equality of opportunity among professionals and different options in terms of design and production. Due to their conditions of contract, they are activities open to all groups and they work according to an election system. Design competitions are recognized as methods of design and production both in Turkey and in the world. According to the competition regulations of Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Engineering, Urban Design projects, Urban and Regional Planning and Fine Arts, a competition is defined as 'an organization arranged in order to choose an idea, a design, a project, a plan or a work produced in accordance with a designated field evaluated by a jury which is open to multiple participation' (Competition Regulation, 2002).

Competitions aim to yield the appropriate circumstances for improvement of cultural, artistic, scientific and environmental values through rivalry. They ease the way of choosing what is the most economic, functional and reformist among many options while identifying project owners. What is more, they promote fine arts, develop professions, strengthen ethic values and international competition potential. Disciplines in relation to designing in particular function as educational platforms where different forms of thought emerge while collaboration culture spreads and designers are led towards research. In addition to helping professionals better themselves, competitions offer informal experience to students outside school so that they can develop their own language and method of design.

Competitions are highly important for the informal education process in interior architecture just like it is for other disciplines such as architecture, graphics and product design. The number of competitions which help students improve their skills for questioning, discovery and finding solutions is not enough. In one of their studies concerning competitions organized for interior architecture students, Garip and Garip found out that out of 43 competitions, which were hold between 2007 and 2012, %40 focused on space, %49 focused on product and %11 focused on ideas (Garip and Garip, 2012). When furniture design competitions are concerned, it could be suggested that their number increased around 2000 and onwards. These competitions gained regularity and started to be supported by different institutions and organizations which fulfilled students' needs in

that field. The following Figure 2 shows the furniture design competitions organized between 2005 and 2020 in Turkey.
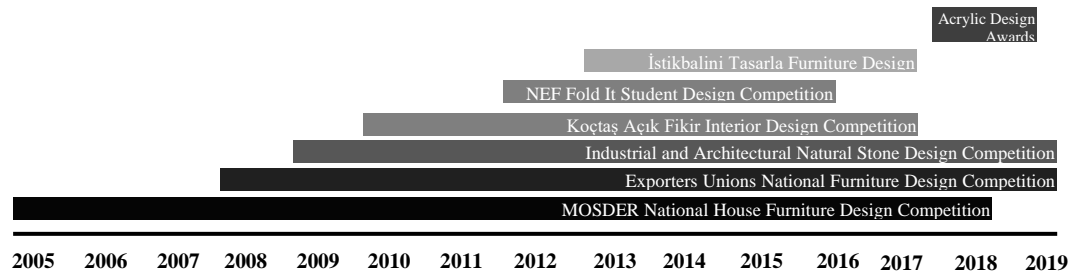

Acrylic Design Awards

İstikbalini Tasarla Furniture Design

NEF Fold It Student Design Competition

Koçtaş Açık Fikir Interior Design Competition

Industrial and Architectural Natural Stone Design Competition

Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition

MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition

2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019

Figure 2. Furniture design competitions arranged in different years

According to the analysis, competitions which have been effective as a model in forming and maintaining furniture design competitions since 2005 are; MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition (2005-2018), Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition (2008-2019), Industrial and Architectural Natural Stone Design Competition (2009-2019), KOÇTAŞ Açık Fikir Interior Design Competition (2010-2017), NEF Fold It Student Design Competition (2017), İstikbalini Tasarla Furniture Design Competition (2018), Acrylic Design Awards (2018-2019), While some of these stimulating competitions are not hold anymore, there have been other new ones added in those years which added variety. Therefore, this study focuses on MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition and Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition as they have been organized continuously and have contributed to furniture design and design education. The first Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition was held in 2008 and the 11th was in 2019. The competition is organized with the support of state and private institutions such as Ministry of Economics Coordinatorship, Turkish Exporters Assembly, Central Anatolian Exporters Assembly, İstanbul Exporters Assembly, Aegean Exporters Assembly and Mediterranean Exporters Assembly.

The competition stands out with its wide perspective and it states that its primal target is producing solution in furniture exportation in favour of competition and function as a mediator for design which have the potential for exportation (Anonymous, 2019). Other aims of the competition are given as follows;

- To contribute to the development of the sector by producing solutions which would transform the opportunities and hardships of the sector into advantage,
- To emphasize the importance of design for the industry and to promote the idea of design,
- To promote industrial design activities and attract attention to them,
- To enable KOBİ's (SME, small and medium sized enterprises) meet design which is the only way for them to export,
- To bring young and dynamic designer candidates interested in the sector together with firms, professional designers and producers from the sector,
- To ensure that talented children with the potential to be designers in the future are directed to design,
- To be a pioneer in the development of products which may have a voice in the furniture market of the future,

- To introduce innovative, rational, authentic, aesthetic, functional, producible, applicable, safe, environment friendly furniture designs which are also strengthened with R&D projects, technological details, fit for environmental health, applicable to quality conditions, easy to use, transport, carry, store, mount and demount therefore saving energy and material during production and usage.

The biggest difference of National Furniture Design Competition from other examples is that it includes the whole furniture sector and it brings design into life by the producer and the designer together while participants can also get employment opportunities at producing- exporting firms and receive educational support of from the state to study in different places like Domus Academia Italy, ABD- CCS College, and NABA (Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti) Italy. The competition evaluated students from primary and secondary education in a separate category and in doing so, it makes a long-term investment which would promote future designers. The competition is open to academics, professionals, undergraduate students and participants from high school, primary and secondary school in four different themes which are; house, office, kitchen-bathroom and smart furniture.

National House Furniture Design Competition by Turkish Furniture Industrialists Society (MOSDER) was first organized in 2005 and the 14th one was in 2018. The competition aims to promote young designer candidates and to support a design and brand focused vision in furniture sector. The number of participants increases each year and competitors are mainly from departments of interior architecture and industrial design competing for prizes in different categories such as sitting, lounge, resting, storage, protection, organization, supplementary furniture- accessories and furniture for the disabled. Projects presented to the competition are evaluated by academics, professional designers and leaders from the sector. Since 2010, the prototypes of finalists' projects have been produced by members of MOSDER and project owners are given Industrial Design Registration Certificates approved by Turkish Patent Institute (Mosder, 2018).

Both of the competitions analyzed within the scope of this study provide students of furniture design with various opportunities. It is curial that such competitions increase in number so that students can improve themselves outside the university, widen their perspectives and get engaged into a professional design activity as informal experience gained outside is crucial for the discipline they are in.

5. Findings

This paper is divided into two parts in terms of the method used. The first part is a literature research concerning interior architecture education, furniture design and furniture design competitions. The second part includes comprehensive statistical analysis of two furniture design competitions and interior architecture education curriculums of selected universities.

In the light of abovementioned information, this paper aims to focus on the relationship between formal education and informal activity as in furniture design competitions whose number increases rapidly. Informal education, being one of the two components forming the structure of this study, is based on the data analysis gained through the results of quantitative and qualitative research on MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition and Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition. The

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competitions are analysed according to their categories, number of participants per year, educational institutions and branches of the winners. The analysis of the second component of this study, which is formal education, is based on an investigation of furniture design courses belonging to academic curriculum of students who won prizes in competitions.

5.1. Analysis and Interpretation of Data Regarding Furniture Design Competitions

Furniture competitions are still being organized in Turkey. MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition and Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition are open to every student studying design. Competitors are often from departments of interior architecture, interior architecture and environmental design and industrial design. Analysis of these competitions reveal that Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University has the highest number of winners so far. 98 winners of MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition were students of interior architecture (48) and industrial design (50). When the fact that MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition is one of the first competitions in Turkey is concerned, it is understandable why there is a high number of participation from students from both departments.

Students offering projects to MOSDER- National House Furniture Design Competition and winning are from the following universities.

1. Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University
2. Marmara University
3. İstanbul Technical University and Kocaeli University
4. Bilkent University
5. Hacettepe University, Karadeniz Technical University, Gedik University
6. Yeditepe University, Okan University, Bilgi University, TOBB University of Economics&Technology and Anadolu University
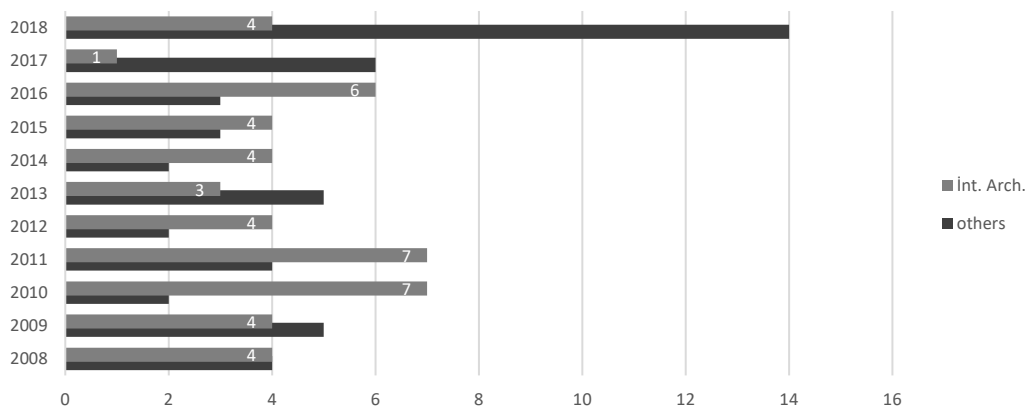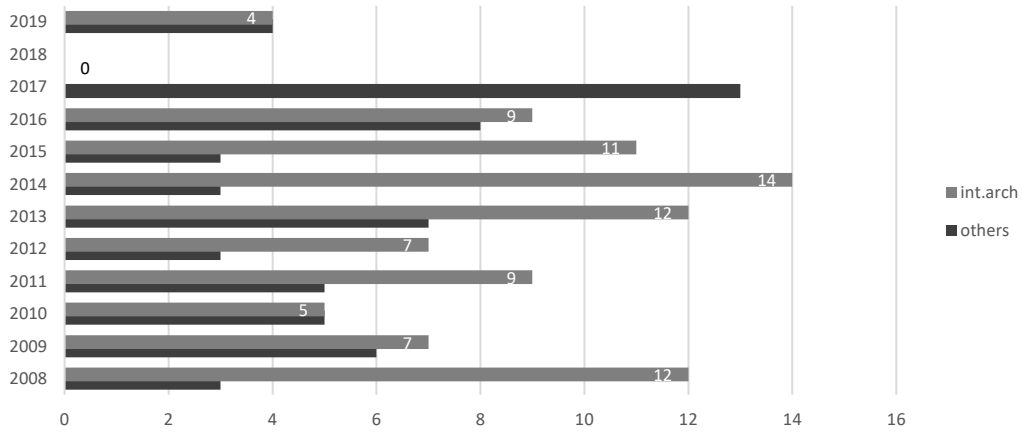

Figure 3. Distribution of students from interior architecture and other departments taking part in National House Furniture Design Competition (MOSDER)

148 students taking part in Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition (UIB) and winning between 2008 and 2019 were from interior architecture (89), industrial design and architecture departments (57) of 19 different universities. It was only interior architecture students winning from 13 universities out of 19 universities. It could be

suggested that Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition has promoted interest towards furniture design and interior architecture students have turned that into advantage. Universities from which interior architecture students took part in Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition are given below and the quantitative data is given in Figure 4.

1. Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University
2. Selçuk University
3. Marmara University
4. Kocaeli University
5. Başkent University
6. Akdeniz University
7. Hacettepe University
8. Yaşar University, Karadeniz Technical University and İstanbul Kültür University
9. Anadolu University, Izmir University of Economics and Beykent University

Figure 4. Distribution of students from interior architecture and other departments taking part in Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition (UIB)

An analysis for both competitions and their winners from interior architecture departments gives us the data below;
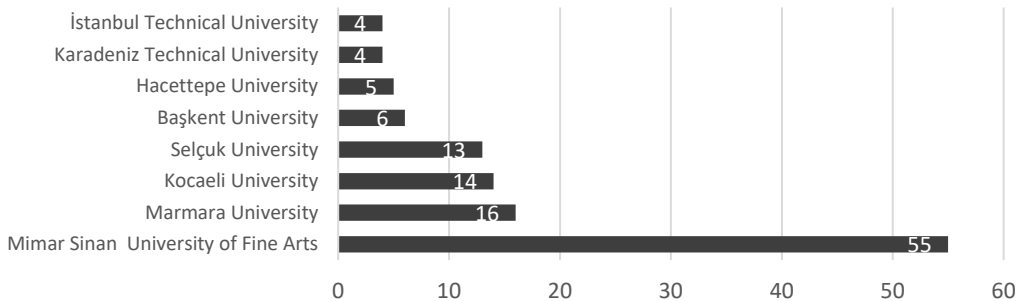
Figure 5. Distribution of interior architecture students as winners of furniture design competitions

Such figures show that it was students from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Department of interior architecture who won the highest number of prizes. What is more, Mimar Sinan

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Fine Arts University received another prize from MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition 2018 since they had the highest number of applications for the competition. Taking all these into account, one should ponder over the academic curriculum of interior architecture departments of those 8 universities.

5.2. Analysis and Interpretation of Interior Design Educational Curriculum

This study analyzed the academic curriculum of interior architecture departments and their compulsory-selective courses focusing on furniture with respect to the winners of MOSDER National House Furniture Design Competition and Exporters Unions National Furniture Design Competition. The curriculum details are taken from departmental academic packages of selected universities. In relation to the aims of this study, information is formulated by handling compulsory and selective courses separately. The data for which compulsory courses are analyzed are;

- The total amount of compulsory courses in the curriculum
- Lecture hours of the course
- Recitation hours of the course

The analysis made according to collected data is based on following information;

- Total number of compulsory course hours: C
- Total number of recitation hours within compulsory courses: CR
- Total number of lecture hours within compulsory courses: CL
- Total number of furniture-based course hours: F
- Total number of recitation hours within furniture-based courses: FR
- Total number of lecture hours within furniture-based courses: FL

Furniture-based compulsory courses of interior architecture curriculums are analyzed according to following ratios.

- The ratio of furniture-based course hours to the total number of compulsory course hours (F/C)
- The ratio of total recitation hours within furniture-based courses to the total number of recitation hours within compulsory courses. (FR/CR)
- The ratio of total lecture hours within furniture-based courses to the total number of lecture hours within compulsory courses. (FL/CL)
- The ratio of total recitation hours of furniture-based courses to total lecture hours of furniture-based courses (FR/FL)

Besides, the selective courses are analyzed and interpreted according to quantitative plurality and variety in furniture-based selective courses as students from other departments may as well choose such courses. The aim here is to identify how academic curriculums handle students' interest in furniture fields and their choice of selective courses. Table 1 and Table 2 show the analysis of interior architecture curriculums in relation to criteria designated by this study.

Table 1. The analysis of furniture-based compulsory courses offered in the curriculums of selected universities

	Course Title	Lecture	Recitation	Total number of compulsory course hours: C	Total number of lecture hours within compulsory courses: CL	Total number of recitation hours within compulsory	Total number of furniture-based course hours: F	Total number of recitation hours within furniture-based	Total number of lecture hours	F / C	FR / CR	FL / CL	FR / FL
Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University	Introduction To Furniture	1	2	146	73	73	16	12	4	0.10	0.16	0.05	3
	Structure In Furniture	1	2										
	Identity In Furniture	1	2										
	Experimental Furniture	1	2										
	Furniture Application Studio I	0	2										
	Furniture Application Studio II	0	2										
Marmara University	Furniture Studio I	4	2	195	113	82	24	12	12	0.12	0.14	0.10	1
	Furniture Studio II	4	2										
	Furniture Construction Systems I	1	2										
	Furniture Construction Systems II	1	2										
	Furniture Construction Systems III	1	2										
	Furniture Construction Systems IV	1	2										
Selçuk University	Furniture History	2	0	163	109	54	7	2	5	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.4
	Furniture Design	1	2										
	City Furniture	2	0										
Kocaeli University	Furniture Design and Construction Information I	2	2	176	130	46	8	4	4	0.04	0.08	0.03	1
	Furniture Design and Construction Information II	2	2										
Hacettepe University	History Of Furniture I	3	0	159	79	80	22	8	14	0.13	0.10	0.17	0.6
	History Of Furniture II	3	0										
	Furniture Construction Methods And Techniques I	2	2										
	Furniture Construction Methods And Techniques II	2	2										
	Furniture Design I	2	2										
	Furniture Design II	2	2										
Başkent University	History Of Furniture	2	0	155	101	54	6	2	4	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.5
	Furniture Design	2	2										
İstanbul Technical University	Space And Furniture	2	2	162	69	93	4	2	2	0.02	0.02	0.02	1
Karadeniz Technical University	Furniture History	2	0	147	90	57	6	2	4	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.5
	Furniture Design	2	2										

To Cite: MELİKOĞLU EKE, A. S, 2020. The plurality caused by formal and informal education in the field of interior architecture: an evaluation on furniture design. *IJEAD International Journal of Education in Architecture and Design.* 1 (1), pp. 16-31.

Table 2. A comparative analysis of furniture-based compulsory – selective courses in the curriculums followed at selected universities

	Compulsory Courses			Selective Courses		
	Course Title	Lecture	Recitation	Course Title	Lecture	Recitation
Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University	Introduction To Furniture	1	2	Computer Aided Furniture Design	1	1
	Structure In Furniture	1	2			
	Identity In Furniture	1	2			
	Experimental Furniture	1	2			
	Furniture Application Studio I	0	2			
	Furniture Application Studio II	0	2			
Marmara University	Furniture Studio I	4	2	Concept Furniture Design	2	2
	Furniture Studio II	4	2	Furniture Studio III	6	2
	Furniture Construction Systems I	1	2	Furniture Studio IV	6	2
	Furniture Construction Systems II	1	2	Furniture Studio V	2	2
	Furniture Construction Systems III	1	2	Free Furniture Studio I	6	2
	Furniture Construction Systems IV	1	2	Free Furniture Studio II	6	2
				Free Furniture Studio III	2	2
Selçuk University	Furniture History	2	0			
	Furniture Design	1	2			
	City Furniture	2	0			
Kocaeli University	Furniture Design and Construction Information I	2	2	Furniture Construction Techniques	2	1
	Furniture Design and Construction Information II	2	2	Furniture Desing In The Context Of Social Life	3	0
Hacettepe University	History Of Furniture I	3	0	Contemporary Furniture Design	2	0
	History Of Furniture II	3	0	Construction Tech. And Materials In Furniture	2	0
	Furniture Construction Methods And Techniques I	2	2			
	Furniture Construction Methods And Techniques II	2	2			
	Furniture Design I	2	2			
	Furniture Design II	2	2			
Başkent University	History Of Furniture	2	0	Environmental Equipment Systems	2	2
	Furniture Design	2	2			
Istanbul Technical University	Space and Furniture	2	2	Comtemporary Furniture Design	2	2
				Materials and Finishings in Furniture Design	2	2
				Urban Furniture and Space	3	0
Karadeniz Technical University	Furniture History	2	0	Culture And Furniture	2	0
	Furniture Design	2	2	Contemporary Furniture	2	0
				Detail, Deco. And Materials Of Furniture	2	0
				Sitting Element	2	0
				Natural Wood Materials For Furniture	2	0
				Urban Furniture Design	2	0

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6. Evaluation and Results

The data collected after the analysis of educational curriculum followed in the departments of interior architecture is given below:

The ratio of furniture- based courses to the total number of compulsory courses (F/C)

- Hacettepe University – 0.13
- Marmara University – 0.12
- Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University – 0.10
- Selçuk University / Kocaeli University / Karadeniz Technical University – 0.04
- Başkent University /– 0.03
- İstanbul Technical University – 0.02

The ratio of recitation hours of furniture-based courses to the total number of recitation hours within compulsory courses (FR/CR)

- Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University – 0.16
- Marmara University – 0.14
- Hacettepe University – 0.10
- Kocaeli University – 0.08
- Selçuk University / Başkent University / Karadeniz Technical University – 0.03
- İstanbul Technical University – 0.02

The ratio of lecture hours of furniture-based compulsory courses to total amount of lecture hours of compulsory courses (FL/CL)

- Hacettepe University – 0.17
- Marmara University – 0.10
- Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University – 0.05
- Selçuk University / Karadeniz Technical University – 0.04
- Kocaeli University / Başkent University – 0.03
- İstanbul Technical University – 0.02

The ratio of recitation hours of furniture – based courses to the number of lecture hours within furniture – based courses. (FR/FL)

- Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University - 3
- Marmara University / Kocaeli University / İstanbul Technical University - 1
- Hacettepe University – 0.6
- Başkent University / Karadeniz Technical University – 0.5
- Selçuk University – 0.4

According to evaluation data given above, the results could be presented as follows;

- Furniture courses constitute a significant part of compulsory courses at Hacettepe University, Marmara University and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. Consequently, it could be suggested that 'furniture' – as an important subject- is included within interior architecture education and curriculum. Students from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University have won the highest number of awards, which suggests that formal and informal education triggers one another.
- Educational models such as architecture and interior architecture are based on space design. The inclusion of recitation hours is important as students learn by

doing and develop their knowledge through experience. Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Marmara University, Hacettepe University and Kocaeli University have the highest number of recitation hours for furniture within compulsory courses. It may be suggested that by doing so, they enable students see the modelling of the furniture they design and support their future studies. Likewise, competitions aim to reach realization of designs and that is why recitation hours are crucial.

- When recitation hours on furniture are concerned, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University has the highest number, which is followed by Marmara University, Kocaeli University, and Istanbul Technical University in terms of their own education plans and number of lectures. Hacettepe University has the highest number of lecture hours for furniture. The reason for that is the intensity of courses called History of Furniture I and History of Furniture II.

- Hacettepe University, Marmara University and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University stand out when the variety in furniture-based compulsory courses of the selected universities is concerned. Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University stands out especially with thev recitation-based model while Hacettepe University offers a variety of recitation and lecture.

- There are two main points worth mentioning regarding selective courses. Marmara University and Karadeniz Technical University has the highest number of selective courses. In terms of variety, Karadeniz Technical University offers courses based on furniture depending on areas of interest. Although Hacettepe University and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University offer a lot of compulsory courses, selective courses are relatively less. However, this could also maintain balance within the whole curriculum. In this respect, Kocaeli University stands out with the balance between selective and compulsory courses.

- Since Marmara University and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University pay attention to making furniture a part of their education, more students apply to furniture design competitions compared to other universities. The formal and informal education they receive and their competition experiences result in a positive impact on their future professional practices and network building.

- The evaluation also draws attention to the potential of courses as motivating factors yielding interest in competitions. However, personal motivations should also take into account because Hacettepe University's curriculum has a high ratio of furniture courses but participation to competitions is still at a low level.

Instead of exposing the negative-positive sides of educational curriculums, this study aimed to discuss the state of plurality caused by the coexistence of formal and informal education. In doing so, it aimed to put forward the approach towards furniture that educational institutions-mostly winners of competitions- possess, the effects of competitions on the regulation of curriculums, whether furniture-based courses integrate themselves to competitions as well as the state of plurality. What is more, competitions have a crucial place in the context of design disciplines as a driving force in students' creativity, ways of thinking and developing design methods. Therefore, in addition to their role in education, it can be concluded that their contribution to the production processes should be understood and supported.

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Declaration of Competing Interest
The author has declared that no competing interest exists.

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Biography

Armağan Seçil MELIKOĞLU EKE
She was born in 1982 in Izmir. She graduated from Karadeniz Technical University, Department of Interior Architecture in 2005. She completed her master's degree in Karadeniz Technical University, Department of Interior Architecture in 2008. And she completed her doctorate education at Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, Department of Interior Architecture in 2014. She worked as a research assistant in Istanbul Kültür University Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design between 2010-2014. She still continues her academic studies as an assistant professor at Istanbul Kültür University, Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design. She participated in architectural, furniture and product design competitions and won the Adyton special prize in the "Office Furniture" category in the 1st National Furniture Design Competition. She continues to specialize in interior design, design education, habitable spaces. At the same time, she continues her academic studies at national and international level.