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ENHANCING SOCIAL INTERACTION THROUGH SPATIAL DESIGN: A CASE STUDY OF SOCIAL AREAS AND CANTEEN USE IN DOKUZ EYLUL UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract

Architectural education includes design approaches, practice and theory through specific curricula at universities. Informal education, consisting of the social environment and social activities in architecture, also contributes to the learning process. The quality of the physical environment that increases encounters and communication in architecture faculties is directly related to social interaction. This study aims to evaluate the social areas and canteen use in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building with a case study method, in a user-focused manner, and to develop suggestions that will enable the development of social areas to increase social interaction. In the first stage, it was analysed through observation method which areas and at what time intervals academicians and students used to socialize in the faculty of architecture. In the second stage, interviews were held with a sample group consisting of academicians and students to evaluate the social areas used. In the third stage, interviews were held with the sample group who experienced the canteen located in the basement before 2021 in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building and the canteen located in the garden after 2021, to compare the social life of the users between the two situations. As a result of the study, existing social areas were found to be inadequate and physical and spatial suggestions were developed for their improvement.

Keywords: Architectural education, Social interaction, Social spaces, Canteen design, İzmir, Dokuz Eylul University.

MEKANSAL TASARIMLA SOSYAL ETKİLEŞİMİ ARTTIRMA: DOKUZ EYLÜL ÜNİVERSİTESİ MİMARLIK FAKÜLTESİ'NDE SOSYAL ALANLAR VE KANTİN KULLANIMI ÜZERİNE BİR VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

Özet

Mimarlık eğitimi üniversitelerde belirli müfredatlar aracılığıyla tasarım yaklaşımlarını, uygulamasını ve kuramını içerir. Mimarlıkta sosyal çevreyi ve sosyal faaliyetleri içeren enformel eğitim de öğrenme sürecine katkı sağlamaktadır. Mimarlık fakültelerinde karşılaşma ve iletişimi arttıran fiziksel çevrenin niteliği sosyal etkileşim ile doğrudan ilişkilidir. Bu çalışma vaka analizi yöntemiyle Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Mimarlık Fakültesi binasında sosyal alanları ve kantin kullanımını kullanıcı odaklı değerlendirmeyi ve sosyal etkileşimi arttırmak için sosyal alanların gelişmesini sağlayacak öneriler geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Birinci aşamada gözlem yöntemiyle akademisyen ve öğrencilerin sosyalleşmek için mimarlık fakültesinde hangi alanları hangi zaman aralıklarında kullandıkları analiz edilmiştir. İkinci aşamada akademisyen ve öğrencilerden oluşan örneklem grubu ile kullanılan sosyal alanları değerlendirmek için görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Üçüncü aşamada Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Mimarlık Fakültesi binasında 2021 öncesi

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bodrum katında konumlanan kantin ile 2021 sonrası bahçede konumlanan kantini deneyimleyen örneklem grubu ile iki durum arasında kullanıcıların sosyal hayatını karşılaştırmak için görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Çalışma sonucunda mevcut sosyal alanlar yetersiz bulunmuş ve iyileştirilmesi için fiziksel ve mekansal öneriler geliştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mimarlık eğitimi, Sosyal etkileşim, Sosyal mekanlar, Kantin tasarımı, İzmir, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of architectural education is to provide design education and to train good designers who will become good designers. But other than that, it is an education model that aims to raise intellectual architects who are conscious, interested in their society and environment, and have a versatile and critical perspective (Hodgkin, 1985; Schön, 1985). Formal education in architecture teaches design approaches, practice and theory in line with a specific curriculum to ensure the emergence of the design product. Informal education refers to learning experiences that occur independently of formal educational institutions. Informal education takes place outside traditional classrooms in different environments such as internships, courses, seminars, workshops or community-based projects. During the learning process, students and teachers need to be in a social environment due to the need to work in teams, interact with people and socialize (Brown & Log, 2006). In educational institutions, students and academicians have socialization opportunities that increase their participation through exchanging information among themselves and each other, speaking, creating a discussion environment, and having fun. These opportunities depend on the capacity, quality and development of physical resources in educational institutions (Leiringer & Cardellino, 2011; Nair, 2017). Informal education contributes to architectural education as much as formal education. Learning spaces in architectural education are not limited to classrooms and the entire physical environment creates a potential (Yürekli, 2011). Social spaces, food and beverage venues, playgrounds, gardens and common work areas strengthen communication between students within educational institutions.

Nowadays, with the "physical sufficiency" approach, in the planning and design phase of universities, places with entertainment, food and beverage, sports, shopping and recreation functions are also given importance in addition to education and research functions (Büyükşahin, 2005). At this point, in research conducted on educational institutions in Turkey, the adequacy of social spaces was found to be negative (Erçevik & Önal, 2011). This study aims to provide a basis for identifying and improving social space deficiencies in university buildings.

This study hypothesises that although the existing social spaces and canteen in the Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture building were moved from the basement to the garden in 2021, they do not meet the need for social space. This study examines the adequacy of social spaces that contribute to social interaction and education, taking into account that the architectural profession progresses through the concept of 'human'. The study evaluates the use of social areas and canteen in the Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture building from a user-oriented perspective using a case study method. It aims to analyse how these areas are used by academics and students, to evaluate the adequacy of existing social areas and to make suggestions for the development of these areas to increase social

interaction. It aims to provide insights and practical suggestions for improving the physical and spatial quality of social spaces at the faculty through observation, interviews and comparative analysis of the canteen's past and present locations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of architectural education and its components

Learning theories summarize the practice of blended learning in terms of pedagogical foundation. According to Hadjerrouit (2008), learning theories are associated with three common models. These are the cognitivist, constructivist and socially situated learning models. There are different perspectives in learning theory that have emerged from different traditions (Mayes and De Freitas, 2004). Greeno, Collins, and Resnick (1996) defined the three models from a broader perspective, considering the nature and components of learning. These perspectives are:

- Associative/experiential perspective (learning as activity)
- Cognitive perspective (learning as achieving understanding)
- Situational perspective (learning as social practice)

On architectural education, Paul Klee said, “Prove, justify, support, build and organize, that's all good, but you can't achieve integrity with that.” He defined art as learning to reach integrity (Ipsiroglu, 1978). According to Rittel (1985), the first three qualities that can be taught in architectural education are skill, free-hand drawing and model making. Aesthetic knowledge, technical knowledge and application knowledge are acquired through these means. It also requires the development of awareness and critical abilities necessary to understand and cope with problems. However, there are different approaches in the education systems in architectural education institutions in Turkey: such as training researchers who can think multi-dimensionally, offering a teaching model based on knowledge transfer, or directing students to different channels due to its structure. (Balamir, 1992). However, architectural education should strive to encourage diverse thinking, the ability to convert experiences into design through various perspectives, and the capacity to connect with different disciplines (Yurtsever, 2011).

In architectural education, it is necessary to create alternative methods that combine concrete and abstract features and have an ambiguous, open-ended structure. In this respect, informal methods that are based on communication and experience, provide flexibility and develop different perspectives are being developed. Researchers state that architectural design education cannot be limited to the studio. The physical environment is the observation area of the architecture student and is part of the environment (Yürekli, 2011).

2.2 Importance of social interaction in educational environments

According to Aysel (2014), when educational institutions are considered a part of the city, they enable them to be perceived as social-common spaces or shared spaces, as well as

different space setups. Educational institutions should create opportunities for users to maintain student-student, student-teacher, and teacher-teacher relationships in an impartial, equal and unbiased environment through social spaces. In addition to the lessons, it should be aimed to obtain a social communication environment that offers a different learning and sharing opportunity and a space organization that will allow students flexible and versatile uses.

According to Crook & Mitchell (2012), the need for social learning enables the creation of informal learning areas in educational institutions. In this study, fieldwork was conducted to analyse how these spaces are used. As a result, it was revealed that informal learning spaces were frequently preferred but used by limited participants. It was emphasized that it is important for students to have access to a 'social environment' for studying. According to Tse, Daniels, Stables & Cox (2018), in the globalizing world of the 21st century, different perspectives on the future of education have been developed with new generation learning environments. This study includes the opinions of experts from different disciplines regarding educational approaches, school designs and practices. Three variables are mentioned for the development of new-generation learning spaces within the human-place-building framework: Context, time and purpose. Additionally, there are studies in the literature stating that the social and cultural spaces in educational institutions are directly related to the development of students individual and social aspects (Erçevik & Önal, 2011; Büyükşahin, 2005).

2.3 Previous studies on social spaces in academic settings

Literature reviews were classified thematically into studies on social areas in universities and studies on university cafeterias. The literature consists of studies about user evaluations of social areas at university campuses and examination of the use of university cafeterias.

Studies on social areas in universities

Brown and Long (2006) explain that educational spaces with traditional layouts such as lecture halls, conference halls and classrooms are a standardized educational approach, and stronger learning environments are created by supporting spaces and objects that develop social interaction among students. Büyükşahin's (2005) study is the first thesis study in Turkey regarding common areas on campus. Selçuk University has divided the common spaces used on its campus into two: spaces used for education, administrative purposes, meeting basic needs, and spaces used for recreation purposes. Information technology building, dining hall, cafeteria, cultural centre, amphitheatre and social facilities where needs such as shopping, eating, playing games and rest can be met, and sports facilities are places used for recreational purposes. In this study, it is stated that social spaces should be designed in an appropriate size, accessible and suitable for climatic conditions. It is stated that social spaces add value to educational campuses. In their study, Erçevik and Önal (2011) surveyed students of Koç University Sarıyer Campus (extra-urban campus), Bahçeşehir University Beşiktaş Campus (urban university), and Yıldız Technical University Yıldız Central Campus (inner-urban campus) in Istanbul. The use of social and cultural activity areas was examined

through surveys conducted with students studying at universities with different campus characteristics. As a result of the study, social and cultural activity areas were found to be inadequate in urban campuses and city universities. University students on non-urban campuses have a higher percentage of satisfactory results than students at universities with other campus characteristics.

Matthews, Andrews & Adams (2011) investigate the role of social learning spaces on the student experience through interviews with university students. The study result reveals that social learning spaces can contribute to increased student participation by encouraging active learning, social interaction and belonging among students. Moos (1978) investigated the relationship between the architectural features of the living environment of university students and their social environments using a survey method. As a result of the study, a significant relationship was found between the social life habits of the students and the physical characteristics of the places where they live their daily lives. Negm, Taha and Saadallah (2020) assert that social interaction plays a crucial role in university life. It aims to reveal the effects of the physical environment of a university in Egypt on social interaction through survey and mapping. As a result of the study, suggestions were developed to improve campus designs to increase social interaction. Norhati and Hafisah (2013) surveyed to examine students' use of social space at a university in Malaysia. As a result of the study, it was stated that cafeterias, libraries, designed study rooms and outdoor spaces between buildings were used most, respectively. Sarabi and Bahrami (2019) aim to create a place attachment model through the behavioural environments of architecture schools in Tabriz. According to the hypothesis of the model, place attachment has two aspects: spatial and social. In the study, data were collected through visual-based systematic field studies, mental mapping, behavioural mapping and interviews. As a result, the factors affecting place attachment in the faculty's meeting areas were expressed as the physical environment, activities, climate, views, privacy, furniture, and the environment of the meeting area.

Studies on university cafeterias

Chang, Suki and Nalini (2014) surveyed students about university canteens in Malaysia. In this study, it was concluded that students' satisfaction with the university cafeteria was mostly related to food quality, leaving aside staff, price and spatial features. Sarıkahya (2021) is related to interior features such as the architectural size of a university cafeteria in Afyon, placement of tables and chairs, service areas, design, material, comfort and colour of tables and chairs, lighting level, floor material and colour, ceiling material. conducted a survey. As a result of the study, it was emphasized that the answers given by gender varied, female students made a more detailed evaluation, and features such as the use of colour, lighting and ventilation should be taken into account in the design.

There are studies analysing the general features and campus area uses that are effective in the planning and design of the Dokuz Eylul University Campus. However, there is no study focusing on social areas related to campus use at Dokuz Eylul University. There are studies on studio use in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building; However, there is no study examining social areas. This study fills the gap in the literature by analysing

the encounter-socialization spaces and canteen use for students and academicians studying architecture in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Description of the case study approach

This study examines the social interaction in spaces where architectural education is given and the areas where this interaction takes place. Social areas and canteen usage in the Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture building were discussed with the case study method. Analyses were developed as a result of observing how the existing social areas in the study area are used by the users and conducting interviews with the users.

3.2. Field site

There are Architecture and City and Regional Planning departments at Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Architecture, where the study was carried out. The faculty of architecture building consists of a 3-storey, "U" shaped, deanery (administrative units) building in the middle and two symmetrical arms added to that building. One of the two symmetrical branches is the architecture department, the other is the city and regional planning department. Due to its structure, the "U" shaped building has an entrance courtyard in the middle. There are separate entrances for each section in the entrance courtyard. Different functions are located on each floor of the building. On each floor, there are studios, classrooms and academic rooms connected to each other by linear corridors. There are gallery spaces in the corridors that allow different floors to communicate visually with each other. The exit door from the deanery building to the backyard is actively used. The canteen is positioned as a prefabricated structure in the backyard (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Architecture

3.3. Data collection methods

This study, carried out in the Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture building, consists of 3 stages. In the first stage of the analysis of social areas in the Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture building, social interaction was analyzed by observation method in areas frequently used by students and academics. These areas were determined as corridors, classrooms, studios, design cellar, entrance courtyard, backyard, green areas around the building and canteen. Observations were carried out on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays between 10:00-11:00, 11:30-13:30 and 14:00-15:30**.** On the days of observation, the sky conditions are cloudy and 16 degrees on Monday, sunny at 19 degrees on Thursday, and sunny at 20 degrees on Friday. The data obtained was documented by taking notes and photographing with a Xiaomi 12 lite smartphone. The existence of variables affecting usage in areas of social interaction was examined through the cause-and-effect relationship. In the second stage, interviews were held with a sample group consisting of Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture students and academicians regarding the use of social space. In the third stage, two usage patterns were compared to examine canteen usage in a user-oriented manner.

In the second stage of the study, the following questions were asked to the participants during the interview.

Socio-demographic questions (Age, gender, marital status, city of residence, educational degree and last year of graduation)

General questions about social space use

- What are the social areas you frequently use in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building?
- Do you find the social areas in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building sufficient? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

During the interview in the third stage of the study, the following questions were asked to the participants in addition to the questions in the second stage.

Questions about canteen use:

- How does the canteen come to your mind when it was in the basement before 2021? What are the positive and negative aspects?
- After 2021, the canteen is located in a separate building in the garden. What are the positive and negative aspects of using this form?

3.4. Sampling strategy

In the third part of the study, interviews were held at Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture to evaluate two ways of using the canteen from the user perspective: the canteen

located in the basement before 2021 and the version created as a prefabricated structure in the garden after 2021. The 15 people who participated in these interviews were selected from people who had experienced both ways of using the canteen. It was aimed to evaluate the opinions of people who spent time in school in both time periods for different educational degrees, especially master's, master's students, master's dropouts (bachelor), bachelor and academicians. In the study, care was taken to ensure that the number of male and female participants was balanced. In the second part of the study, it was aimed to analyse the social areas at Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture in a user-oriented manner. For this stage, in addition to the participants in the third stage, 15 more participants who were experiencing the building in its current state were interviewed.

3.5 Data analysis

The recorded data were analysed thematically using the content analysis method. During the analysis process, keywords were determined according to the repeated discourses, the data were coded, the themes of the coded data were determined, and the themes were arranged and interpreted. As a result of these interviews, solution suggestions were developed to improve the social space adequacy in university buildings.

3.5. Ethical considerations

This study was approved by the Dokuz Eylul University, Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committees. (Approval Number: [E-87347630-659-1003968]). All participants provided informed consent before their inclusion in the study.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Participants' Demographic Characteristics

In the first stage of the study, observations were made in the Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture building. In the interview conducted in the second phase of the research, 21 female and 9 male participants, aged 26-48, who spent time at Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture, were determined in the group. The second phase consists of a group of 30 participants, seven master's students, five master's, two master's dropouts (bachelor), fourteen bachelor and two academicians (Figure 2). In the third stage, 15 participants, 7 men and 8 women, aged 28-48, who also participated in the second stage, were determined. The participants consisted of people who experienced both types of use of the canteen, the version in the basement before 2021 and the version created as a prefabricated structure in the garden after 2021. Three of them are graduate students, three master's students, three master's, two master's dropouts (bachelor), five bachelor and two academicians (Figure 3). Qualitative research techniques were used in the study and a purposeful sampling method was used. The interviews in the second stage lasted 7-12 minutes, and the interviews in the third stage lasted 15-20 minutes and were recorded. It is aimed to develop different perspectives as a result of interviews with participants with different education degrees and different age ranges.

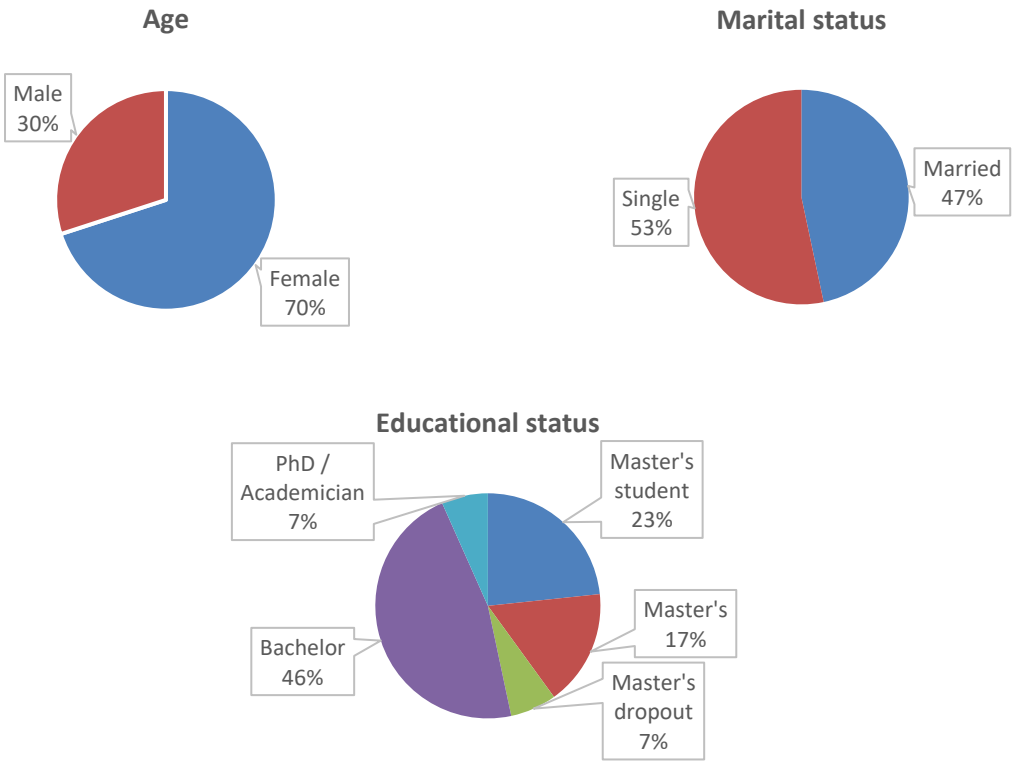


Figure 2. Age, marital and educational status in the second phase of the study

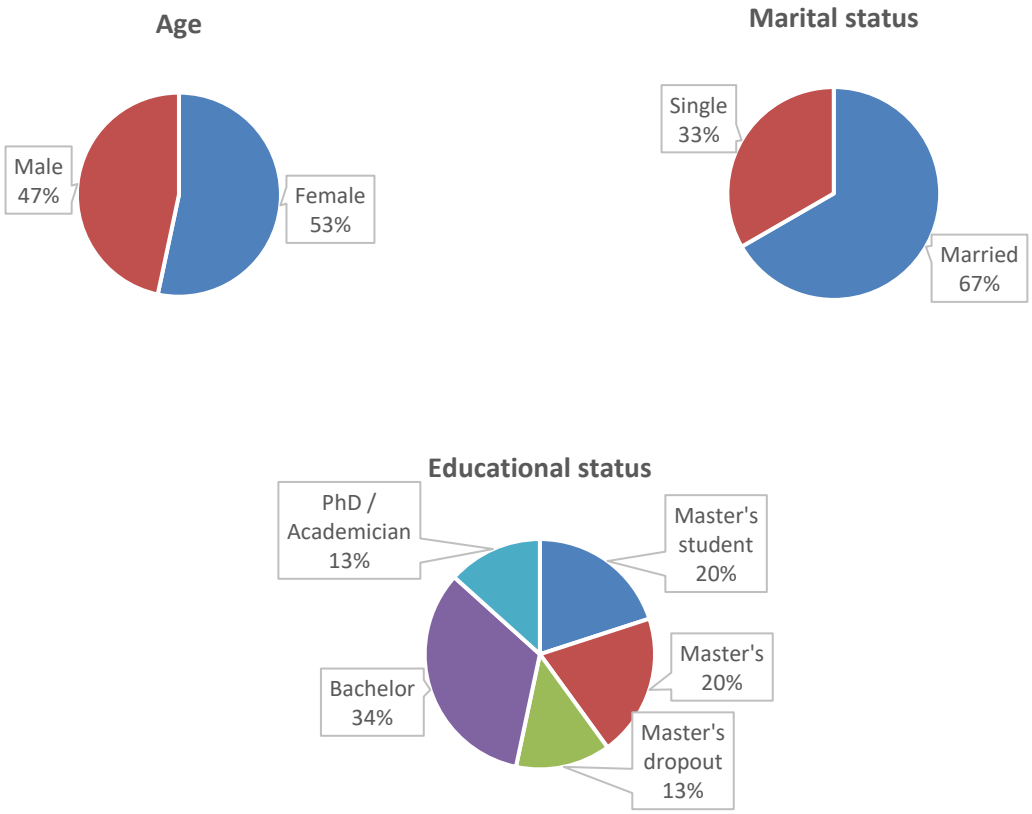


Figure 3. Age, marital and educational status in the third phase of study

4.2. Overview of Social Area Usage

According to the observation results, students frequently socialize in the garden, in the corridors between classes, and in the canteen (Figure 4, Figure 5 and Figure 6). During short class breaks, students socialize in front of the classroom or studio doors, around the gallery in the corridor, and in the furniture that provides the lecture hall in the basement, as seen in Figure 6 In case of a break in class, groups of students in two different classrooms/studios or groups of students in the same classroom/studio use the seating furniture on their floor and chat. As a common study area, a socializing environment is created at the 4-seat study tables positioned in niches close to the stairs on the ground floor and 1st floor, as seen in Figure 6 During long lecture breaks, lunch breaks or after classes, the garden and canteen are used to meet the eating, drinking and smoking needs of students, as seen in Figure 4 It has been observed that they generally socialize in groups by sitting on tables and chairs or near walls, as seen in Figure 5. While the days when the weather is rainy and cold are less preferred, it is stated that it is more crowded on the days when the weather is nice. The area on the basement floor, which was used as a canteen before 2021, was named a design cellar after 2021 and was converted into a working studio. Students who use the design cellar have the opportunity to socialize while doing joint work here. However, it was observed that the number of users was low compared to the number of tables and chairs (Figure 7). In the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building, the spaces where students and academics intersect are limited to the corridor in front of the academic rooms. Additionally, academics and students who go to the garden to smoke intersect in the garden.

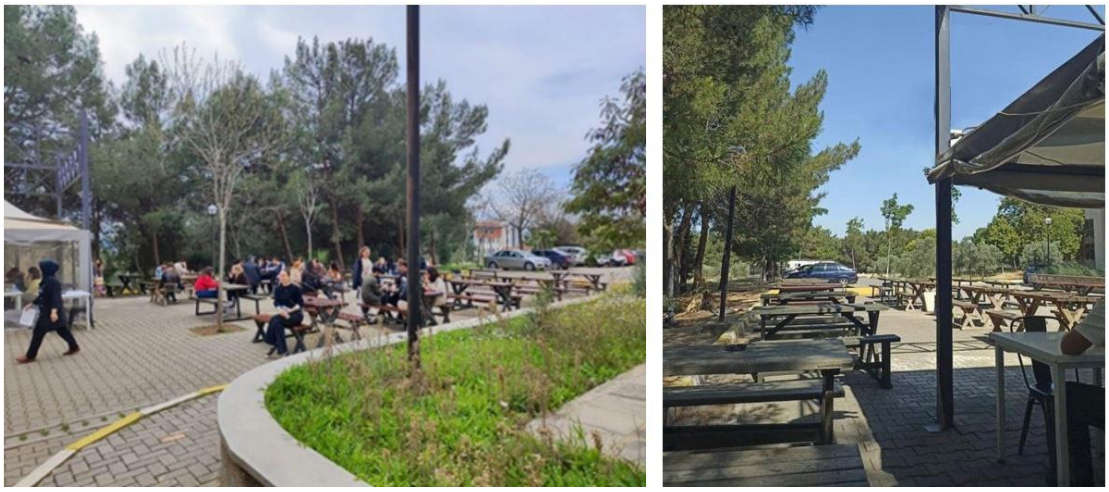


Figure 4. Garden use

Figure 5. Canteen use

Figure 6. Corridors

Figure 7. Design cellar

4.3. Evaluation of Existing Social Areas

The answers to the questions asked to the participants were analysed and classified according to the answers of the architects, who differed according to their educational level. In the questions aimed at examining the use of social areas, corridors, courtyards, canteens, gardens, studios, green areas and academic rooms are mentioned in the interviews to determine the frequently used social areas in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building (Table 1). Bachelor's degree graduates mostly work in studios, canteens, gardens and corridors; master's students from the canteen, corridor, and courtyard; academicians talk about academic rooms. Figure 8 shows which places were emphasized and how often, according to the answers given to the questions. All participants in the study stated that social areas were not sufficient. The necessity of joint work areas, event areas, workshop spaces, seating areas, coffee areas, intermediate spaces between indoor and outdoor spaces and shadow elements was mentioned for their development.

Table 1. Social space use based on interviews

SOCIAL AREA USE						
Social Areas in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building.						
Corridors	Courtyards	Canteens	Gardens	Green areas	Studios	Academician rooms
Suggestions for the Adequacy and Development of Social Areas in the Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Architecture Building						
Not Enough						
Joint Work Areas	Event Areas	Workshop Spaces	Seating Areas	Coffee Areas	Intermediate Spaces	Shadow Elements

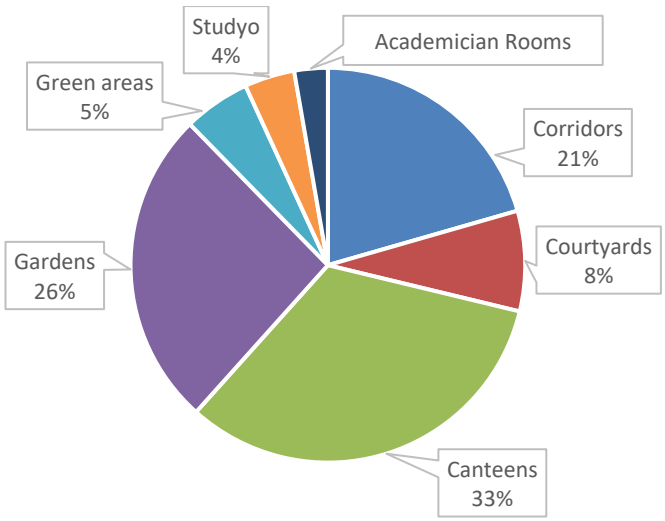


Figure 8. Social places mentioned in the interviews

Some of the answers given to general questions about the use of social space are quotations as follows:

“Since there were not many social venue options and time to spend there, we used to talk with our friends in the sitting areas in the corridor in the free time after classes. If we had time, we would go to the canteen” (*Participant 1*).

"Gardens. Where the canteen is now. It was a relaxing place with bird sounds in sunny weather, surrounded by nature…" (*Participant 3*).

“I don't find it enough. Most importantly, common working spaces such as workshops need to be increased. Perhaps furniture can be added to the corridor to create common social areas”
(*Participant 1*).

“I find it inadequate. There must be a major change of renovation project in the building. There are very few intermediate spaces where the interior and exterior intersect. Intermediate spaces should be increased” (*Participant 3*).

“… The place where we, as faculty members, mostly encounter each other and have the opportunity to have short conversations is the department chair and the area in front of it… During meetings, people typically gather at the entrances and exits, as well as in front of the meeting venues. But I don't remember sitting in or around the canteen with any of my friends for a long time. In fact, I don't even remember sitting in the canteen at the back. Apart from that, when we invite each other to tea or coffee in our own rooms, while doing a common task, we take a tea and coffee break, and during class breaks, we go to each other's rooms to have a drink and talk about subjects related to the course and have small conversations. There is a kitchen. Administrative and academic staff can have a small breakfast there from time to time, but not all the time..." (*Participant 5*).

“... Areas outside the building are used for socializing rather than inside the building. For the improvement of the areas within the building, can the points where you climb the stairs connecting the ground floor and basement floor, and the basement floor to the ground floor, and its immediate surroundings be considered as a socialization area? Additionally, there are areas where academician rooms and studios intersect with glass surfaces in the floor halls. Can those areas be turned into socialization areas?" (*Participant 10*).

“I definitely do not find the social venues sufficient. I think there are missing sub-spaces, which we can call interface and where we can feel more closedness, feature or spatiality without feeling like a point in a huge space...” (*Participant 5*).

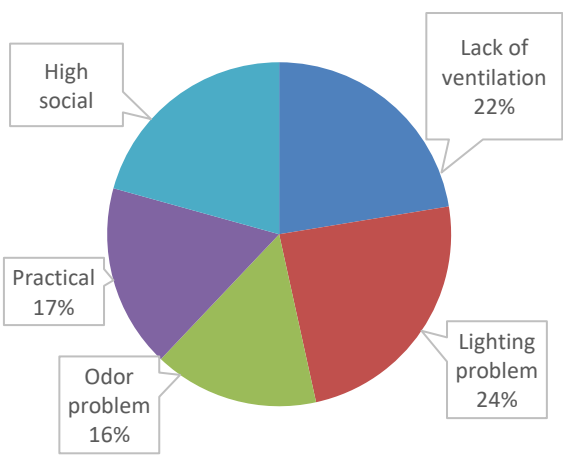
4.4. Comparison of Canteen Locations

In the comments-based questions regarding the use of the canteen, in the interviews about the negative features of the canteen located in the basement before 2021, it was mentioned that it was a stuffy, dark, artificial white lighting and sleep-inducing place (Figure 9). Its positive aspects are that it is large and spatially useful, useful for eating and drinking, has high crowds and social interaction, and has gaming machines. In the interviews about the features of the canteen, which is located as a separate prefabricated building in the garden

after 2021, intense cigarette smell, insufficient seating area, long shopping queue, lack of food alternatives, adverse weather conditions, and being far from classrooms are mentioned. Regarding its positive aspects, it is expressed as a pleasant place only in nice weather (Table 2, Figure 10).

Table 2. Canteen use based on interviews

CANTEEN USE				
While the Canteen is in the Basement				
Positive Aspects		*Negative Aspects*		
Practical	High social interaction	Lack of ventilation	Lighting problem	Odor problem
While the Canteen is in the Garden				
Positive Aspects		*Negative Aspects*		
Having fun in good weather		Odor problem	Heating / Adverse weather problem	Lack of seating space
		Ordering queue	Lack of food alternatives	Being away from classes



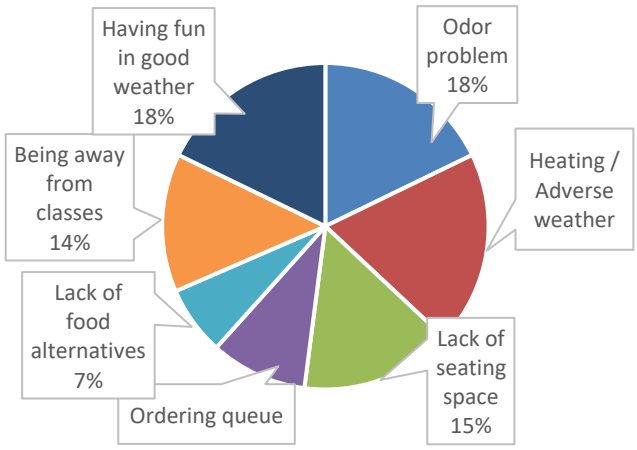


Figure 9. Answers Given in the Interviews for the Canteen in the Basement (left) and **Figure 10.** Answers Given in the Interviews for the Canteen in the Garden (right)

Quotation of some answers to questions about canteen use are as follows:

“The canteen in the basement was dark. There was a ventilation problem. However, it was a place heavily used by students studying both architecture and city-regional planning, especially during class breaks and lunch breaks. Even though it was a big area, there was no room available during most lunch breaks. There were pinball machines. While a group was playing football, a large group would watch them" (*Participant 1*).

“We weren't very happy with the basement, but we always ate there. It was like a dining hall once. Then the table d'hôte ceased to exist and became more like a cafeteria. It was stuffy and dark. We would sleep at the tables next to the heater between classes. When it's dark, of course"
(*Participant 2*).

“The positive aspect that revived it was the chance of accessing it from the same building, the opportunity to receive service. It was a large space where professors had the opportunity to meet and greet students from time to time, but it was not a comfortable place... It was a dark and depressing place. It's an icy place right now. In addition to being a cold and low-lit place buried in the ground, I think the lighting colour is also very effective…” (*Participant 5*).

“The seating area in the current canteen is very limited and it smells very strongly of cigarette smoke. It's too far from the classrooms and it's a problem to get anything during short class breaks. You have to go outside to reach the canteen. This is a problem on cold days, but in summer it is enjoyable to drink tea and coffee outdoors” (*Participant 1*).

“I have never sat in its open space. It's a place where there's a lot of smoking, it's closed with tarps, and it's not a comfortable place with cigarette smoke, the faint smell of people eating, and the buzz of students. I've never sat… (*Participant 5*).

“I think having the canteen in the building as a socialization area has a positive effect. I think it has a positive effect in terms of everyone being able to eat and drink in the canteen during lunch and spend the remaining time there by drinking tea and coffee after the meal..." (*Participant 10*).

“The canteen in the garden covers a very small area. It offers very limited opportunities for eating and drinking...” (*Participant 10*).

4.5. User Feedback on Social Area Improvement

- Common working spaces should be improved and increased.
- In order to spend more time in the corridors, it is necessary to increase the furniture and create sustainable activity areas.
- Intermediate spaces should be created where interior and exterior spaces intersect.
- Seating areas and shade elements should be increased in the courtyard at the entrance.
- Common spaces should be created where academics can meet and interact.
- Common spaces should be created where academics can meet and interact with students.
- The points where the stairs ascend and the glass-surfaced waste areas in the floor halls should be designed as social spaces.
- The space used as a design cellar should be made useful with warmer colours, materials and more appropriate lighting.

• In order to facilitate access to the existing canteen from the architectural side and to have a lively use of the basement hall, the garden gates on the architectural side must be made usable.

• Repositioning the existing canteen to use the space in front of it concerning the rear wall of the conference hall and spreading out by centring the parking area provides more equal access for the architecture and urban regional planning department.

• Some spaces where the building forms an exterior and façade surface should be considered as socialization spaces.

• The capacity of the existing canteen should be increased, the service area should be enlarged, and the seating area should be integrated into the canteen by spreading over a larger area with more architecturally qualified materials.

• The existing canteen should be repositioned towards the view, and intermediate spaces should be created with semi-open spaces that create a threshold for indoor and outdoor spaces.

4.6. Integration of Results with Literature

As a result of the observations, it was revealed that workshops and group studies were held in the corridors and gardens as social spaces. Yürekli (2011) similarly states that the physical environment is the education field of the architecture student. Crook and Mitchell (2012) stated in their study that students need social spaces where they can study. Yurtsever (2011) expressed the importance of cooperation with different disciplines in architectural education. Some of the participants in the study similarly stated that the development of social spaces would have positive contributions to interaction with other faculties.

There are studies in the literature stating that the social areas of universities in Turkey are inadequate (Erçevik & Önal, 2011). In this study, similar to the studies conducted by Brown and Long (2006), the importance of the need for social space in architectural education was revealed. As a result of the interviews, existing social spaces were evaluated in terms of capacity, accessibility, functionality, comfort, lighting level, ventilation quality, suitability for climatic conditions, physical space quality, view, furniture, activities and social interaction potential. Studies in the literature also analyse social spaces through similar factors (Büyükşahin (2005); Matthews, Andrews & Adams (2011); Moos (1978); Negm, Taha and Saadallah (2020); Sarabi and Bahrami (2019); Chang, Suki and Nalini (2014); Sarıkahya (2021). As a result of the interviews, it is recommended that spatial arrangements be made to increase academician-academician, academician-student and student-student interaction. Similarly, in the literature, Aysel (2014) stated that an equal and unbiased environment should be created for this interaction. In the interviews, the necessity of workshop spaces that combine architectural education and social interaction is mentioned. Tse, Daniels, Stables, and Cox (2018) similarly state that new-generation learning environments provide gains that develop different perspectives.

4.7. Implications for Design and Practice

The study revealed that common areas inside and outside the building should be increased and developed and existing spaces should be rearranged according to demographic diversity and variability of educational groups. Maintaining a healthy academician-academician, student-student, and academician-student relationship in architectural education ensures that architectural practices are developed within the architectural community and in interdisciplinary cooperation. Social spaces increase this interaction and contribute to the academic environment and architectural practices. At the same time, the spatial quality of places and educational motivation are directly related.

4.8. Limitations and Future Research Directions

The participants in the study were selected from the sample group who had experienced both states of the canteen to analyse the social areas and the past and present state of the canteen. For this reason, the experiences of undergraduate students, who are a large group of the school, were not included in the study. In future research on social areas in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building, it is recommended to evaluate spatial qualities through a scoring system and make a mapping. It is recommended that the data and suggestions in this study be used as a basis and that workshops and competitions be organized to develop social areas.

5. CONCLUSION

As a result of interviews with Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture students and academicians, the hypothesis of the study was confirmed and it was concluded that the existing social areas are insufficient. In the study, existing social areas were determined as corridors, courtyards, canteen, gardens, studios, green areas and academician rooms. In order to develop insufficient social spaces, common work areas, event areas, workshop areas, seating areas, coffee areas, intermediate areas between indoor and outdoor spaces and shade elements were suggested. It was stated that the canteen, which was used as a social space, had low architectural space quality and had ventilation, odour and lighting problems in its use before 2021, but it had high social interaction and useful circulation since it was inside the building. The canteen built in the garden after 2021 was found to be inadequate in terms of ventilation, climate conditions and capacity. In addition, the negative aspects are the odour problem caused by ventilation, long order queues, and limited food alternatives due to the closed area capacity. It has been stated that it has a positive use in nice weather. As a result of the study, suggestions were developed to increase and improve the social areas in the Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Architecture building in order to contribute to the learning environment by increasing communication and interaction.

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