

Conceptual frameworks in planning and designing educational spaces: A content analysis based typology

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In the past decade, the intrinsic effect of educational spaces on educational practices won recognition, leading to massive investment in (re)planning, (re)building, and (re)designing innovative educational spaces. However, the literature addressing educational spaces is still in its infancy. Moreover, the existing theoretical and empirical knowledge mainly addresses architectural aspects or pedagogical purposes of student attainment influenced by school space. Hence, while changes accumulate in physical school sites, little is known about how educational practices and spaces interact and what conceptual frameworks guide these interactions in planning processes in Israel and the world. The present interdisciplinary study asks: What conceptual frameworks stand behind processes of planning and designing educational spaces? Do these conceptual frameworks articulate to create a dialogue between education and space, and if so – how? To answer these questions, we conducted a qualitative inquiry based on content analysis of architectural and educational publications that address the processes of planning and designing educational spaces. We present five typological conceptual frameworks underlying these processes: engineering-industrial, scientific, patterns, hermeneutic-interpretive, and user experience. We base the typology on classifying different paradigmatic assumptions leading to various formats of education-space and learning-environment dialogues. The typology aims to generate an innovative professional discussion of policy and practice between educational designers and architects/designers during the planning and designing of new educational spaces.