

## Abstract

In this world of dynamic changes in the global scenario, empowering self-sufficient, creative, critical thinkers and successful professionals is vital. Key components of empowerment are self-perceptions of control and efficacy and the ability to act independently. It is the best way to achieve social integration, employment, professionalism, responsibility, and ethics. Architecture is a multifaceted field in which graduates must take responsibility from design to execution. The empowerment of an architect is ‘the capacity to provide the expected services and communicate the same using appropriate knowledge and skills.’ The need for the empowerment of fresh graduates is established by undertaking an integrative approach that includes a comprehensive review of existing literature and an investigation of issues in architecture education. This investigation incorporated in-depth interviews with 58 students and a focus group discussion with 110 students. The research presented in this thesis (a) identifies the factors that influence the empowerment of graduates and (b) develops an empowerment model. The research philosophy used here is pragmatism, where the study began by identifying a problem in its broadest context. This led to a systematic inquiry to understand and solve the problem for its usefulness in the real world. The methodological choice is mixed methods, using qualitative and quantitative techniques. This research has three main objectives: (1) identifying the factors affecting architecture education and practice by conducting 40 in-depth interviews and a questionnaire survey of 215 architects; the outcome of the first objective concretized the need for empowerment in terms of core knowledge and employability skills; (2) framing the indicators for core knowledge, employability skills, and empowerment through qualitative content analysis (of architectural development from 3500 BC to the present century, CoA Guidelines 2020, UIA documents, and 22 curricula from different architectural institutes); (3) The third objective is to develop an empowerment model using (a) the fuzzy Delphi method for the selection of criteria from 102 experts and (b) a structural equation model (SEM) through a survey of 264 architects. The research makes three significant contributions to the body of knowledge: (1) it develops an empowerment model, (2) it delivers a performance-based assessment tool, and (3) it provides empowerment strategies for architecture graduates through architectural education.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, Core knowledge, Employability Skills, Fuzzy Delphi, Structural Equation Modeling