Pedagogy in the Design Studio in Architectural Education

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Abstract

This is a workshop paper presentation on teaching and learning in the design studio in architectural education. It makes reference to the Departments of Architecture, Federal University of Technology, Akure Nigeria and Covenant University Ota Nigeria. It discusses the methods of teaching and mentoring of architecture students in studio work at the two Universities which are case studies from Nigeria. Design projects of architecture students of both Universities are discussed The paper asserts that the design studio is central to architectural programme and the practice of architecture; emphasising that architectural education centres round the design studio for achieving sustainable built environment.

Keywords:

architecture, built environment, curriculum, design studio, education.

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1. Introduction

Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching. The term generally refers to strategies of instruction, or a style of instruction. Pedagogy is also occasionally referred to as the correct use of instructive strategies. Effective learning results from quality pedagogy and this is thorough and lasting acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and values the teacher or the institution, has set out to impart (Felder and Brent, 1999).

The studio refers to the space where the student or the professional architect produces his or her drawings. However, the meaning of the design studio in architecture is not limited to the space; the design studio also describes the architectural design course which the architecture student takes to earn a degree. The design studio is the nucleus of architectural programme. Architectural education centres round the design studio for sustainable re-ordering and re-shaping of the built environment.

The design studio is taught in 4 (four) academic sessions (2nd year to 5th year) at The Federal University of Technology Akure Nigeria. It is a course that runs through both semesters of the academic session. The projects handled in each level are: institutional (200 and 300 levels), industrial (300 level), urban renewal (400 level) and mass housing (500 level). In the course of the semester Quick Approach projects are introduced to the students. Students are given a specific project which they must complete within a stipulated time-frame (between 12 and 48 hours) under a simulated examination condition.

At Covenant University Ota courses are run on semester basis. Mentors are appointed by the department and they guide and teach the students using appropriate methodology. Design studio is grouped into four: Housing Module (H), Urban Design Module (U), Institutional Module (I), and Industrial Module (IN). At 200 level, only Housing Module (H) and Institutional Module (I) are taught. The class is divided into two with instructors attached to each. A student is expected to complete the two modules at the end of the second year. At 300 and 400 levels, all the modules are taught. Each level is split into four with instructors for each module.

2. Plans for participants

Participants will be engaged in discussions on studio teaching methods that are in practice in Nigeria especially at the two Universities selected for the study namely The Federal University of Technology, Akure and Covenant University Ota. Samples of projects done by architecture students of both Universities in the past few years will be critiqued by participants. Participants will discuss modes of studio practices from other schools of architecture in comparison with the case studies from Nigeria.

3. Reference