

**THE GRIT OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENT'S CHOICE OF
INDUSTRIAL TRAINING PLACEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF BAYERO
UNIVERSITY KANO**



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Abstract

Industrial work experience scheme is a practical based academic training that cannot be undermined. It is aimed at complementing the academic knowledge obtained in the classroom with real-life experience. Architecture students go through intensive training in various industries that ranges from architectural firms, corporate organizations, construction companies, public institutions among others. Little is known of the determinants of their choice of places for attachment. This paper through a qualitative inquiry evaluated 400 level Architecture students of 2018/2019 session in Bayero University Kano after their 6 month Industrial Training (IT). In addition, 4 institution based supervisors from the university and 3 industry based supervisors were interviewed to ascertain the attributes and facilities associated with the places of industrial training. The quality and reputation of the industries were found to dictate the choice of the place of attachment by students. This suggests that the nature of the IT placement plays a significant role in strengthening and ensuring that the students get the actual practical skills required of them.

Key Words: *Industrial Training, IT placement, Architecture students, Choice*

1.0 Introduction

Industrial training program which is also known as internship program constitutes an essential part of the higher institution's requirements for award of degree. It is an avenue for the industries to provide students with a first opportunity to real-life work situation (Kannan, Kannan, Riso, & Monama, 2017). Through this industrial training, students develop their awareness on workplace behavior and build up their interpersonal skills. In addition it is also a training ground for students to learn the silent traits of their future discipline (Kannan *et al.*, 2017). When confronted with the problem solving tasks, students will summon their nexus of information and experiences in trying to overcome the work-based problems. This is what cannot be obtained in the classroom, yet, it is the kind of qualities that employers are searching for when hiring new workers (Rodzalan & Saat, 2012). Students can utilize internships to gain valuable real-

world experiences that will strengthen their positions, allowing them to gain an edge during the placement search (Neuman, 1999). The industries that provide the opportunity for the students varies and covers all walks of life. For Architectural training the centers range from Architectural firms, corporate organizations, construction companies, public institutions and lots more. The choice of placement is solely a student's responsibility. However, little is known of the factors influencing student's decision in choosing place to carry out their six month industrial training. This paper through a mixed method of inquiry seeks to evaluate the architecture students' criteria in selecting place for IT placement.

2.0 Principles and Objectives of Industrial Training

Industrial work experience scheme is important in every practical based academic training. According to (Cohen, 1970), it is

aimed at harmonizing the theoretical knowledge obtained in the classroom with practical experience. This enables any nation to build a strong technological base. Giant and prosperous nations are believed to have attained greatness through strong science and technological base (Ayoub, Osman, Jamaluddeen, Kofli, & Johar, 2013). Indeed, nation can only boast of a strong science and technological base when there is an appropriate application of theoretical knowledge.

Industrial Training has been applied by many countries of the world to develop their technological base. For instance, in the United State, the programme, according to Cohen (1970), is known with various names, such as "Internship, Cooperative Educational Experience and work Study" The effect of such training cannot be over emphasized. Similarly Collins (2000), observed that the success of each of the programmes is measured by the positive response of the students and the attitude of employers, who, in most cases hire them later.

Likewise, in the U.K. the Industrial Training Programmes, outside the usual internship for professionals, are organized under the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) launched in 1983 by the Manpower Service Commission (MSC) with increased scope to cater for more categories of youths (Comfort, Taylor and Varelids, 1983). The British government initiated the Programme because of the belief that the participants will be more qualified when they have opportunity of trying things out and making discoveries for themselves. Furthermore, in the then German Democratic Republic (Now unified Germany), the programme is based on part-study, part-work system where the learner moves between theory class and practical field.

Against this background, in Nigeria (Mofesola, 2012), Decree 47 of 1971 establishing the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was enacted. ITF became the first

Nigerian Federal Government parastatal established and charged with the responsibility of developing highly skilled manpower for the nation. As the Fund pursued the policy guidelines through its operations in the industry, it discovered a serious lack of practical skills of the indigenously trained engineers and technologists. It discovered that there is a big gap between theory and practice of practically inclined courses (Collins, 2000). Consequently, the Industrial Training Fund initiated the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) in 1973 and was aimed at helping to bridge the gap between theory and practice. It was designed to complement the efforts of the higher institutions' produced graduates that are theoretically sound, technologically balanced and practically oriented.

The scheme was designed to expose students to industrial environment and enable them develop occupational competencies so that they can readily contribute their quota to national economic and technological development after graduation. The major background behind the embarkment of students in SIWES was to expose them to the industrial environment and enable them develop occupational competencies so that they can readily contribute their quota to national economic and technological development after graduation (Kannan *et al.*, 2017).

The Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) was initiated in Nigeria by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in 1973 with the following objectives:

1. Provide an avenue for students in higher institutions of learning to acquire industrial skills and experiences during their course of study.
2. Prepare students for industrial work situations that they are likely to meet after graduation.

3. Expose students to work methods and techniques in handling equipment and machinery that may not be available in their institutions.
4. Make the transition from school to the world of work easier and enhance students' contacts for later job placements.
5. Provide students with the opportunities to apply their educational knowledge in real work situations, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice.
6. Enlist and strengthen employers' involvement in the entire educational process and prepare students for employment in Industry and Commerce (Information and Guideline for SIWES, 2002).

4.0 Industrial Training as a Gateway to Job Opportunity

Industrial training or workplace training at the undergraduate level is gaining popularity in the current educational system as it is really addressing the expectations of the employers. There are several benefits of Industrial training. Since the training is a structured program that aims to provide supervised practical training within a specified timeframe, it provides great opportunity for the students to expose themselves in a real life environment. Similarly, it connects the theoretical knowledge that the students learned in the classroom and practical skills gained from the outside environment (Cohen, 1970).

The employers mostly prefer to hire people with prior knowledge and skills so as to maintain business standards and to minimize employees training expenses. Thus, employability skills or job readiness skills are found to be the basic skills required in performing the job required. It also helps to get along with their fellow workers who are already on the ground with experience (Collins, 2000). The level of adaptability to

the working environment would be very high for the graduates who had obtained workplace training compared to the graduates without practical experience exposure. A successful industrial training tenure can be a powerful tool to increase graduates job opportunities (Ayoub *et al.*, 2013). Earlier studies on internship had revealed that the industrial training benefits both host organizations and students. The internship helps students to identify the employability skills and enable them to develop required skills to improve chances of impressing employers (Mofesola, 2012).

Employability is a capacity of an individual to secure occupation in a competitive job market (Ayoub *et al.*, 2013). The practicum provides real work experience to the students and also an opportunity for the employers to identify potential employees for their organization. Students are able to put together the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom with the practical knowledge and skills required to perform in the workplace (Nurul *et al.*, 2017). It a well endows chance to the educators to identify any mismatch between the courses/curriculum offered and practical experience gained through the students' feedback. By identifying the mismatch, educators were able to revisit the curriculum and put it in a way the industry demands.

The knowledge that the students gain from the industrial training does not only teaches process and art of learning but also allows the students refine their skills and knowledge (Nurul *et al.*, 2017). Studies have shown that trainees with outstanding performance in the workplace stand the chance of getting better opportunity of being identified by the host and absorbed for employment. It was found that graduates make use of the opportunity to impress the employers by performing their best during internship aiming for future rendezvous. Consequently, the students only realize the value of their education when they

undergo industrial training that exposes them to gain practical skills in a real life environment, develop new skills and knowledge, gain confidence, network with professionals for the future appointment, earn some money (Kannan *et al.*, 2017). Similarly, the educational institutions and industries are also keen in signing a memorandum of understanding as it benefits mutually. They found it to be an opportunity to promote their programs and graduates, with possibilities to establish and maintain a link with industries (Mofesola, 2012).

5.0 Research Methodology

The research is of both qualitative and quantitative approach. Initially, a questionnaire of 5 likert scale ranging from strongly disagree given as 1 and to strongly agree given as 5 were administered on 38 students of 400 level Architecture who have carried out their Industrial training programme from July 2018 to December

2019. It was tailored towards evaluating the students' perception on the factors considered in choosing IT placement. Thirty Two out of the 38 questionnaires were retrieved and used for analysis. Descriptive statistics using SPSS was used in analysing the data. Furthermore, 4 supervisors from institution and the 3 industry based supervisors were interviewed to establish the attributes concomitant with the places of industrial training. The interview was transcribed verbatim and analysed using classical content analysis.

60 Results and Discussion

After analysis, the study shows that architectural firms are the most preferred place of attachment by the students followed by construction companies (Table 1). Eighty Eight percent of the student did their attachment with reputable organisations where they are expecting to get the industrial knowledge required.

Table 3: Choice of IT placement

S/N	Place of Industrial Training	No of Students	percentage
1	Architectural Firm	18	56
2	Construction Company	10	32
3	Government Agency	3	9
4	Others	1	3

The responses further suggest that the choice of IT placement was mostly a dictate of the need for an industry that will provide the relevant experience the student requires. This can be seen in Table 2 and Figure 1 where a variable "Merit of Firm" has the highest mean value of 3.38.

Furthermore, "Peer Influence" was found to be the next factor that dictate the choice of

place of the 6 months Industrial training with the Mean value of 2.84. This value is above 2.56 found for "Proximity" and 2.06 found for "Stipends". The Result further shows that there is little or no any other factor responsible for informing the choice of place attachment by the students. This can be seen with the mean value of 1.50.

Table 2: Dictates of IT Placement

Parameters	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Proximity	32	2.56	1.544
Stipends	32	2.06	1.014
Merit of Firm	32	3.38	1.519
Peer Influence	32	2.84	1.322
None	32	1.50	.622
Valid N (listwise)	32		

The result from interview shows corroborate the findings from the survey. Interview with the institution based supervisors shows that majority of the students visited were not found in the office but on site. This suggests that the SIWES program is a good avenue for the students to acquire the practical skills required of them. In addition the few found in office were busy with activities directly related to the experience required of them to acquire. Similarly, interview with the industry based supervisors has also shown how skills such as drafting, office management and clerical works are acquired.

7.0 Conclusion

Since students develops their awareness on workplace behavior and build up their

interpersonal skills through industrial training, it becomes pertinent that places of attachments must be suitable enough to justify the essence of the training. Similarly, understanding the predisposition of the places of such attachments determines whether the objectives of the industrial training can be achieved. Considering the diverse nature of architectural discipline, therefore determining why architecture students' choose a particular industry for the training is a fundamental step towards achieving the objectives of the programme. It will go along way to in making sure the students go to the most suitable and appropriate industries ideal for architectural training.

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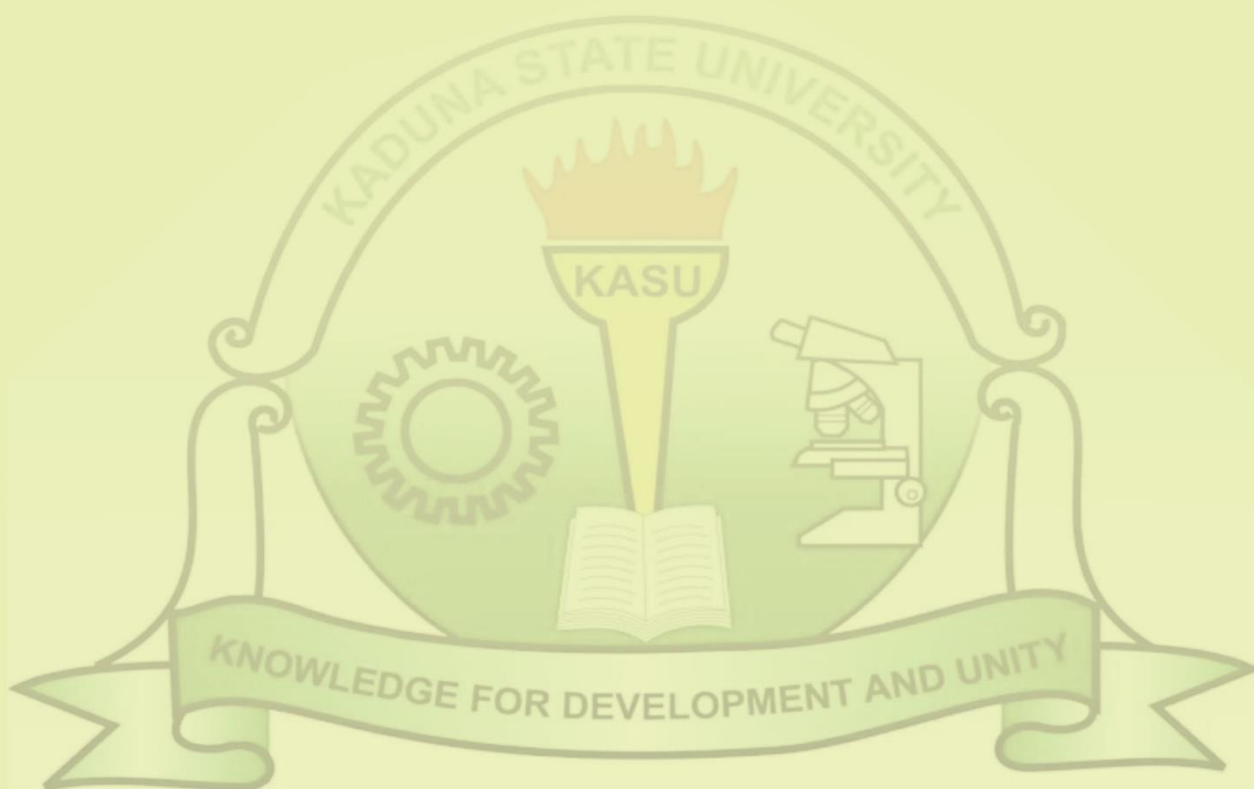
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