

ANALYSIS OF BUILDERS FORTUNE IN BUILDING PROFESSION IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY

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The provision of shelter is ancient in origin as man's next need after food and clothing. However, the building profession in many nations is modern in registration as fallout from the industrial revolution, increasing urbanization and now globalization. Division of labour has opened the work of the Master-builders to more specializations among which is the building profession itself. Thus the builders has to imbibe more technicalities in order to interface with either building industry practitioners in joint efforts to harness the present resources for the future. Furthermore, the factors for the production of buildings, namely finance, land, technology, materials and skills lay in many different hands who must be brought in as a key collaborator in a free market economy. The professional builder of whatever rank, station or calling must understand his field of practice sufficiently to create innovations as means of relevance and progress. Modern projects scale and complexity demand collaborative synergy and dynamic multi-tasking across defined professional roles rather than divisive competition.

Therefore to become a better managers of earth resources, the profession must learn its evolutionary history for charting its future course as mankind tackle together the current social economic and environmental challenges: widespread, social unrest, economic distress, climate change, desertification, energy sources and pollution.

THE BUILDING PROFESSION

Building came up as distinct from the 'parent' professions as we may observe architecture, engineering, surveying etc essentially to complement those fore runners within the ambit of organized planning. Historically, the building profession was organized in the western world in response to the emergence of the industrial revolution C 1760 onwards, while physicians advocated for better sanitary conditions for slum dwellers. Building codes and planning laws are meant for regulating new construction, thus prescribing minimum requirements for fire protection, sanitation and safe tip and also to upgrade old building out of their deficiencies.

The 'Garden Cities' concept of Ebenzer Howard and the Barlow Commission on Location of industries merged with the reconstruction of Britain after WW2, leading to new cities and improved standards for multiplied dwellings. The USA also came up with the enactment of tenement housing laws, first by New York and later by other states.

About the same town associations of fire insurance under wositex formulated building codes, and although these had no force of law, compliance was obtained

by setting prohibitive insurance rates on buildings of unsatisfactory construction (Weinberg, 2008) while zoning laws regulate the locations, use, and size of various building types, modern building codes set standards for planning and layout, egress, passages and exits, daylight and ventilation.

The Nigerian Building code (Federal Republic of Nigeria 2006) adopted nationwide also established ratings for materials and construction for strength and safety and specified standard for equipments like elevators, fire escapes, for plumbing, heating, fire fighting and electrical installations and even for storage of hazardous materials. Although the national building code has been approved by the states since 2006 its acceptance has been minimal in the building industry.

A building professional is expected to have basic knowledge and develop competencies for engaging allied professionals in the building industry such as the architect, the town planner, the surveyors to land, quantities and estate, the engineers Whether civil/ structural, mechanical and electrical, geo-technical, etc. (S)he must also be able to engage artisans and tradesmen in various trades and jobs to the point of training and instructing them suitably. “Blocklaying and Concreting” (Obande), a book by the Head of Department (Building) at Kaduna Polytechnic, Bldr. M. O. Obande on is a good pointer in a good direction; more of such from all professionals and We can foresee good materials for training from the academic front.

The builder whether as a consultant, teacher, constructor or contractor at whatever station or rank needs core competencies as man power training in the following areas among others.

- **Interpretation of Design and Shop Drawings;**

By this, a builder can interface with an architect’s concept and/or various engineering inputs for executing the building works with accuracy and resolving matters such as operations and future maintenance without acrimony: his own innovations in construction can also help in developing better technology but not for distorting the concept anyway. British architect Tom Wright’s vision for the Burj-al-Arab, Dubai was achieved by the collaboration of all, and has transformed UAE into a tourist cum business hub of the world.

- **Materials scheduling and procurement**

The gains for the project here are for understanding of the material needs of the project with time schedules in order to avoid unnecessarily clogging the site with materials not yet needed in the overall cost picture. BIM (short for Building Information Modelling) can also help in the programming and scheduling of work in these days of innovative software.

- **Specifications of Materials and Technology**

Where the materials are available and the manufacturers invest in research, development and deployment of new materials, a builder must continuously follow the market trends and make active participation in feedback on using all materials.

- **Work programming and scheduling;**

A major area of the competence of a builder is the programme of work to fit within a realistic time frame, thus avoiding time and cost overruns, while work scheduling breaks up elements or components of the project into achievable milestones.

- **Site management;**

The organizations of the project site for delivery of materials, the machinery and the workmen for efficiency and best practices, the welfare and comfort of all participants is on the builder.

- **Site Safety and Occupational Health;**

Many dangers present on construction sites are best tackled with a checklist of the sources or channels of those dangers, preventive measures and remedial courses of actions to take.

The Nigerian built environment structure is very peculiar and interesting in all respect. A distinct seven (7) respective professions drive the activities of the built environment namely:

Architect - Architectural design

Builder - Building production management/construction

Estate surveyor and valuer - property valuation

Land surveyor - Land survey

Quantity surveyor - Costing/construction accountant

Structural engineer - structural design

Town planner - Town and regional planning design.

PROSPECT FOR BUILDERS AND WOULD BE BUILDER

Owing to acceptability of builders in recent time till date, there are good job opportunity for builders. Why many organizations today and few young builders should avail themselves with this opportunity being the youngest among the previously captioned seven professions in the built environment.

Some of the organizations are: federal ministries e.g

- (a) works & housing, environment, agriculture, defense, foreign, almost all the federal agencies and parastatal.
- (b) State ministries and their parastatals.
- (c) Army, navy, air force, police, immigration, custom, prisons, civil defense.
- (d) Local government - The 772 local government in Nigeria has work space for builders.

Starting point for engagement with federal government or the agencies.

B.Sc holder: Builder Grade II Level 8

M.sc Holder: Builder Grade I Level 9

Terminal post and level director of building Grade Level 17

Starting point with state government and their agencies

B.Sc holder: Builder Grade II Level 8

M.sc Holder: Builder Grade I Level 9

Terminal post and level director of public building grade level 16.

Local government organization starting point

B.Sc holder building Grade II level 08

Terminal point director of works, housing land and survey grade level 16

A builder could be opportune to rise to grade level 17 known as head of local government administration.

The ascending order of the grade levels

Grade level 08 Builder Grade II

Grade level 09 Builder Grade I

Grade level 10 Snr Builder

Grade level 12 Principal Builder

Grade level 13 Chief Builder

Grade level 14 Ass. Director Building (state)

Grade level 15 Deputy Director Building (state)

Grade level 16 Director (state)

Grade level 16 Deputy Director (federal)

Grade level 17 Director federal

CONCLUSIONS

I am delighted to be among the student and lecturer of our noble profession today in this reputable university of note and the permitted opportunity to deliver this paper. Each professions must develop its practitioners in sufficient numbers and increasing quality in order to interface and forge the required alliance for strategic national development.

This call for more than passing glances from across the professional divides, but a robust network of hands in synergy without clamour or sabotage so that all would grow in all ramifications.

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