

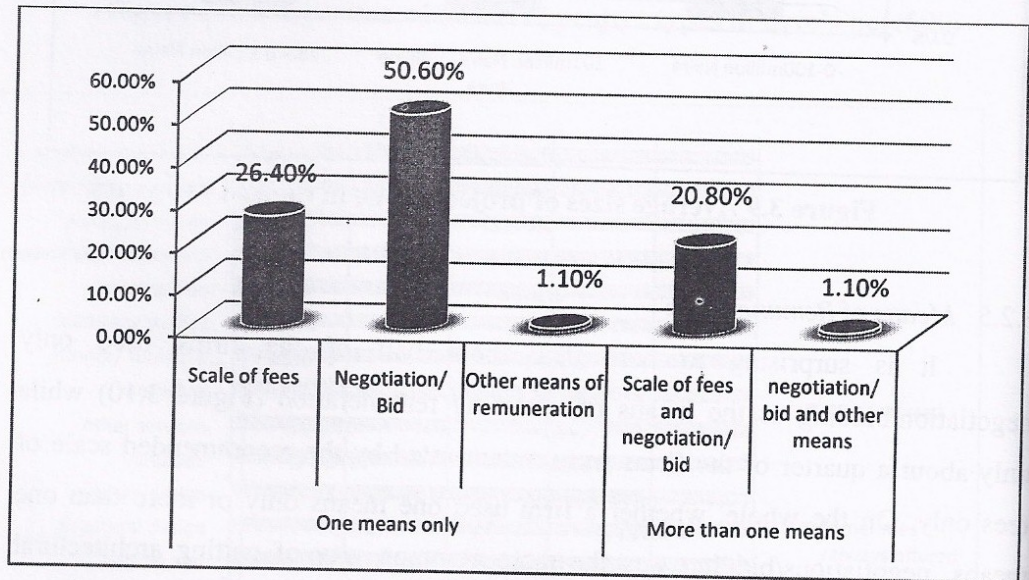
*It is difficult to collect fees, especially when it is the scale of fees. Nobody wants to pay the scale of fees anymore, most people want to negotiate. If they negotiate, they are more likely to pay. Clients are not willing to pay you but they are ready to pay money on their construction, buy you materials... Even banks will never give you your correct fees. You have to bid .....*

Participants in the interviews however noted that

*.....if you work for government, they might not pay you immediately but they will pay you.*

One of the interviewees was however of a contrary opinion stating that remunerations by government agencies were also negotiated,

*Even the Federal Ministry of Works wants to negotiate; they treat you as a contractor. The situation is worse every day and it is either you negotiate or they pay you nothing. They sometimes offer you 40% or you take nothing..... you have to negotiate in most cases. Now, when they talk about negotiation, it is just pure corruption.*



**Table 3.10: Means of remuneration**



### 3.2.6 Perception of the firms' performance

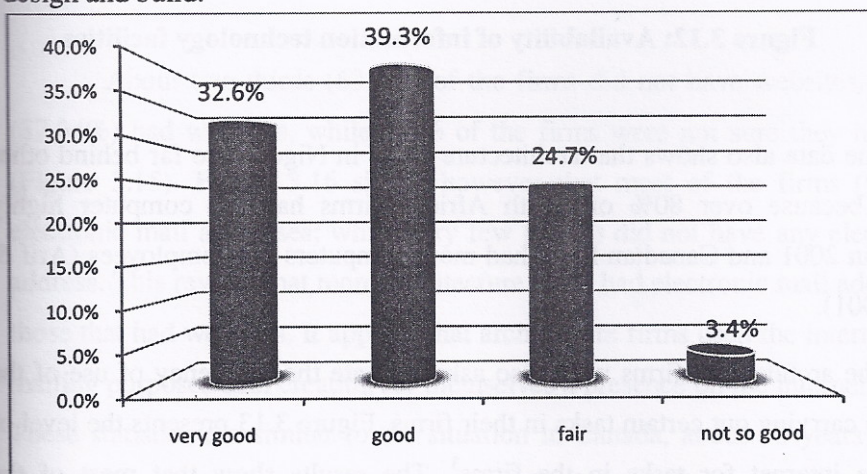
The findings from the questionnaires showed that architecture firms were satisfied with their level of success in terms of profit (Figure 3.11). The interview results were however contrary to this. One of the interviewees lamented that

*...architecture firms are not doing well.....We have to do other things to generate money to at least pay the overhead in the office.*

It is however possible that most architecture firms actually did make profit but had problems managing their finances as suggested by the statement of one of the interviewees.

*Many times, we do not follow any particular rule in managing finances.....That is why the firm gets broke after some time. We are supposed to run it (architecture firm) as normal businesses. The other thing is that architects and other people in consultancies sometimes find it difficult to separate profit from cost of running the project. They are not able to tell what the profit is.*

On the other hand, it is possible that indeed architecture firms were not doing well because the services delivered traditionally were limited to design and supervision. This may explain why they had to include design and build.

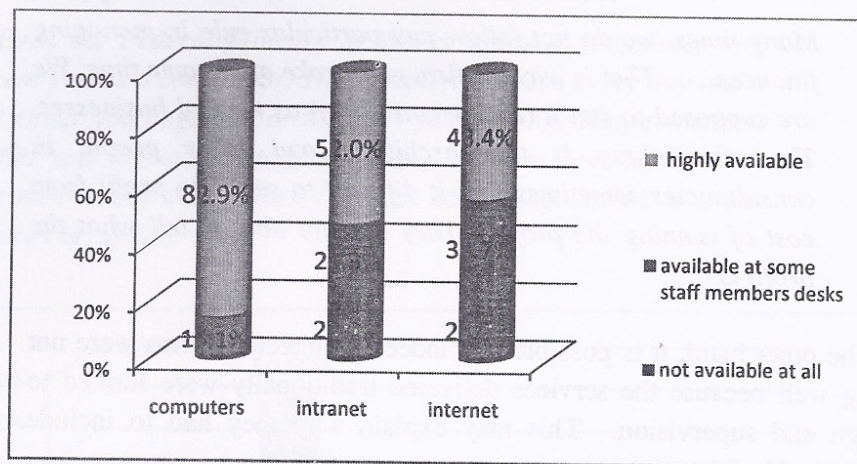


**Figure 3.11: Perception of the firm's success**



### 3.3 Information technology characteristics

The firms were asked to indicate how available IT facilities such as computers, internet, and intranet were in their firms<sup>2</sup>. The architecture firms could be said to have scored below average in the availability of information technology facilities, as less than half (43.4%) of the firms indicated that the facilities were highly available (Figure 3.12). The results (Figure 3.12) show that the most available information technology facility in the architecture firm was the computer, while the least available facility was the internet. This probably implies that architecture firms in Nigeria are at the initial stages of the adoption of IT facilities.



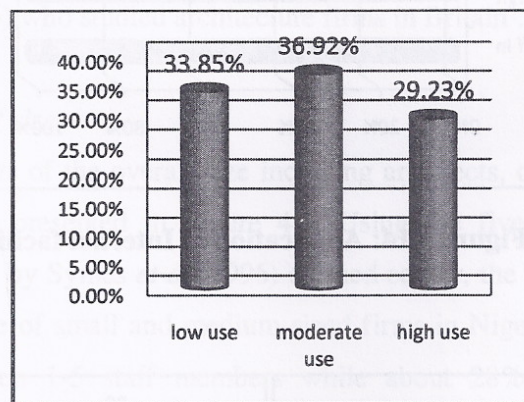
**Figure 3.12: Availability of information technology facilities**

The data also shows that architecture firms in Nigeria are far behind other countries because over 80% of South African firms had the computer highly available in 2001 and Canadian firms had more computers than employees (Arif & Karam, 2001).

The architecture firms were also asked to rate the frequency of use of the internet in carrying out certain tasks in their firms. Figure 3.13 presents the level of use of the internet for tasks in the firms<sup>3</sup>. The results show that most of the architecture firms used the Internet to carry out office tasks moderately. Most of the



architecture firms used the Internet for information search, correspondence with other professionals and graphic presentation (Figure 3.14). The firms used the internet the least for communications in the office. The situation is similar to other countries such as South Africa, where it is used least for communications (Arif & Karam, 2001). It appears that architecture firms in Nigeria used the internet more as a channel to source information, than a weapon of competition or managing clients and projects. This suggests that there is an underutilization of the potentials of the internet because Kambil, (1997) found that the internet provides a weapon for an organization to gain competitive advantage and have a brand new channel to exchange information and conduct business.

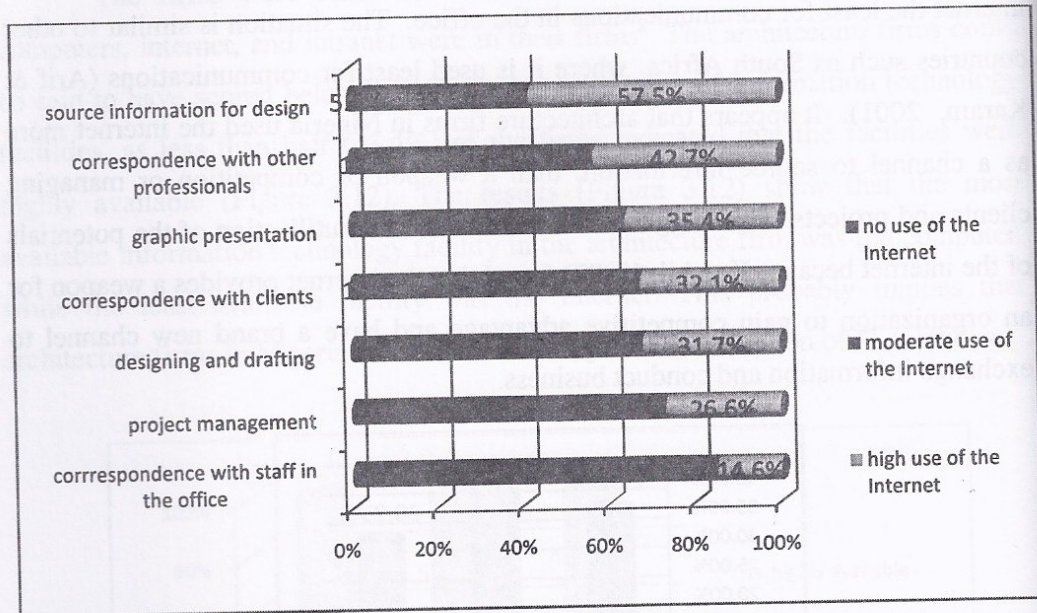


**Figure 3.13: Degree of use of internet facilities**

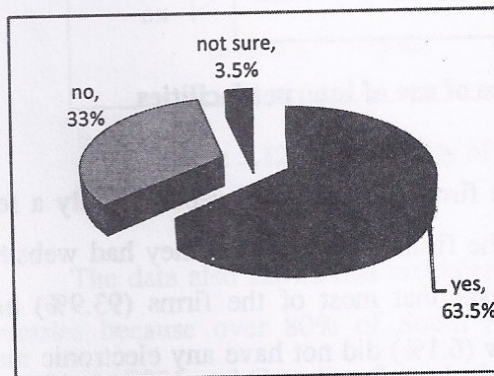
About two thirds (63.5%) of the firms did not have websites, only a few (32.94%) had websites, while 3.5% of the firms were not sure they had websites (Figure 3.15). Figure 3.16 shows however that most of the firms (93.9%) had electronic mail addresses; while very few (6.1%) did not have any electronic mail address. This reveals that more architecture firms had electronic mail addresses than those that had websites. It appears that architecture firms used the internet more for mailing purposes than creating for themselves a presence on the internet worldwide. These statistics are similar to the situation in Canada, about 10 years ago, where about 27% of architecture firms reported having a web page (Arif & Karam in 2001) and in Malaysia in 2000 where about 24% of firms had web sites. It may be



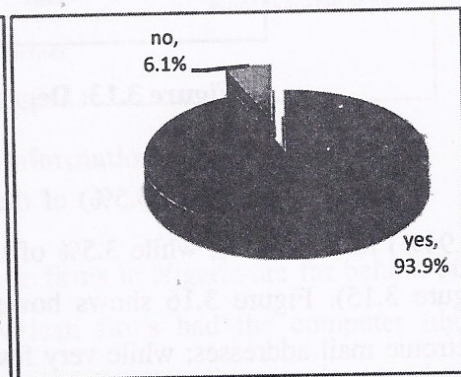
suggested therefore that in terms of presence on the worldwide web, Nigerian firms are at least a decade behind.



**Figure 3.14: Application of Internet facilities**



**Figure 3.15: Website of the architecture firm**



**Figure 3.16: Electronic mail addresses of architecture firms**



## 4.0 Workforce and organizational structures

### 4.1 Firm size

The idea of firm size often needs to be well defined. Sometimes, it may represent the number of qualified architects only and at other times, it may include other staff members and professionals. In this study the size of the firm is described along three dimensions: the number of staff members overall, the number of architects and the number of other professionals. In each dimension, the sizes are described along a five-way split: very small (1-5); small (6-10); medium (11-20); large (20-40) and very large (above 40). This is similar to the classification of architecture firms by Symes *et al* (1996) who studied architecture firms in Britain<sup>4</sup>.

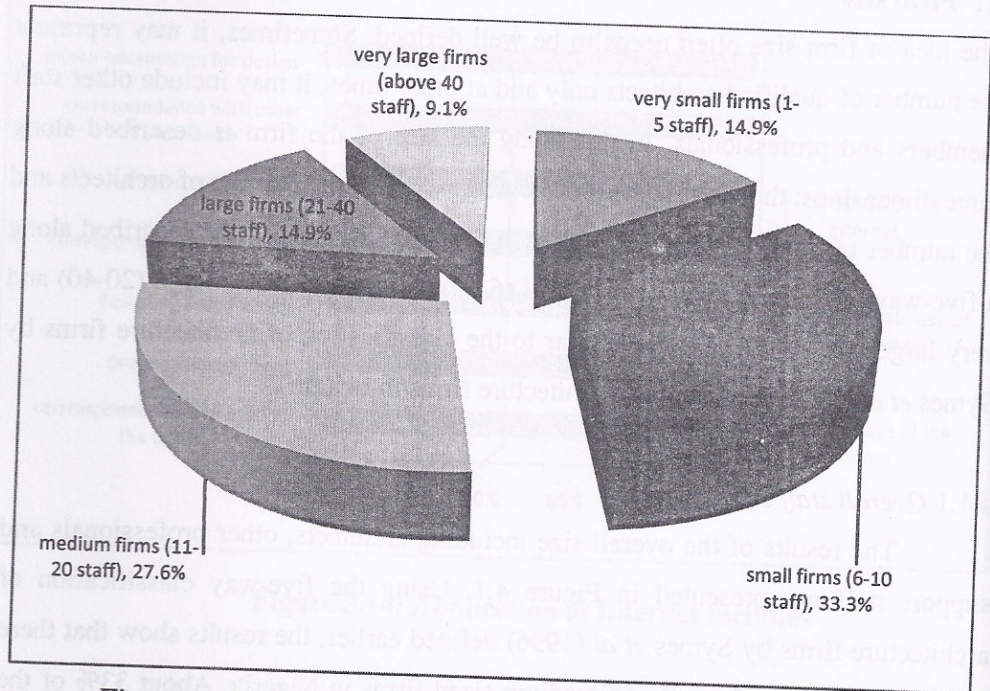
#### 4.1.1 Overall staff size:

The results of the overall size including architects, other professionals and support staff are presented in Figure 4.1. Using the five-way classification of architecture firms by Symes *et al* (1996) defined earlier, the results show that there is a predominance of small and medium sized firms in Nigeria. About 33% of the firms had between 1-5 staff members while about 28% had than 6-10 staff members. In all, more than 60% of the firms had 10 or fewer staff members. This probably suggests a low level of specialization of work process of Nigerian firms because Kumar *et al* (1999) found that larger numbers of staff are associated with firms with specialized work process. It might also mean that the small or medium sized nature of Nigerian firms was the result of increasing technological dependence because small and medium sized firms are associated with high-technology (Dholakia & Kshetri, 2004; and Arif & Karam, 2001) and the increasing use of the computer technology reduces the employment of architects in South Africa. However, this is not likely to be the case because the results in the previous chapter show that the use of IT in Nigerian architecture firms is low.

In comparison with US firms, Nigerian architecture firms have larger sized firms because in US firms, almost 80% of the firms had less than 10 employees.



Nigerian firms however have similar sizes with South African firms because about 62% of firms in South Africa had 1-5 employees (Arif & Karam, 2001).

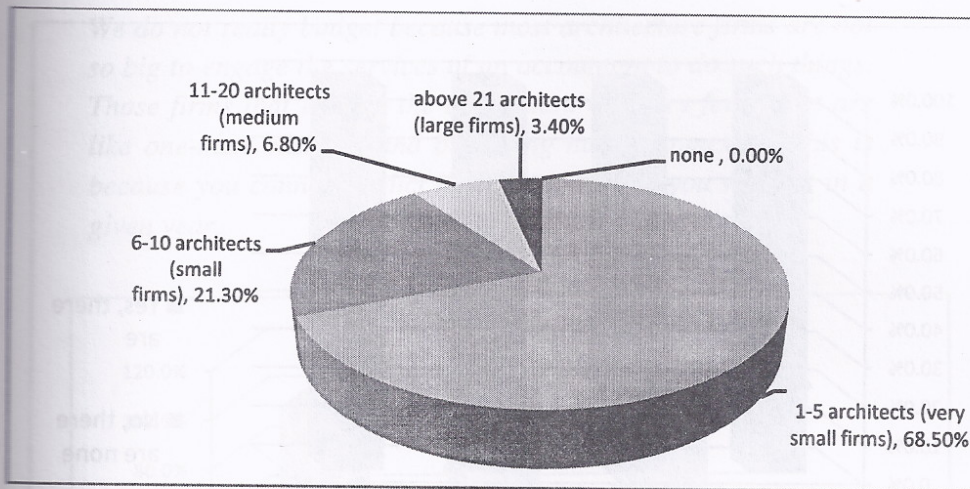


**Figure 4.1: Total number of staff in architecture firms**

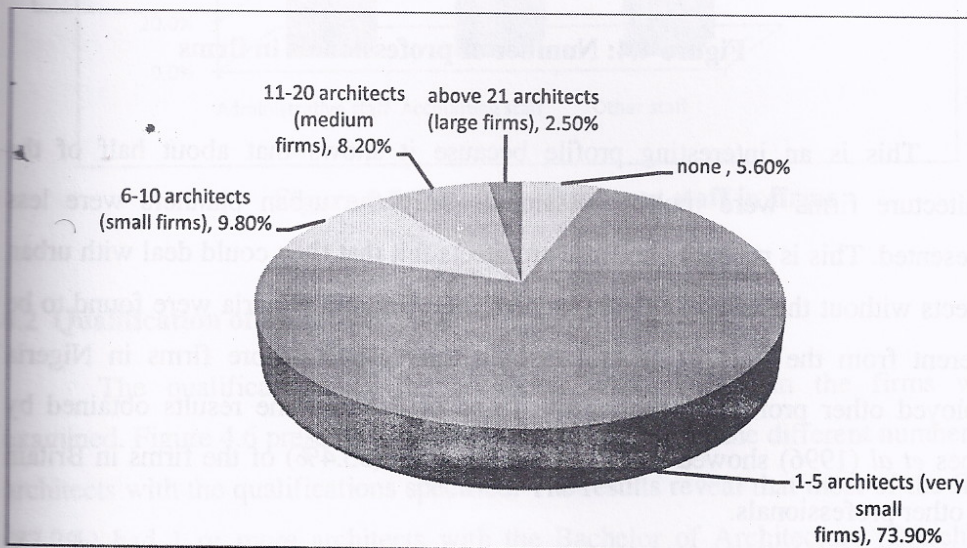
#### 4.1.2 Number of architects:

The results show in Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 compares the number of architects in Nigerian and British firms. Most (68.5%) firms in Nigeria were very small (1-5 architects) in terms of the number of architects. This is different from the results of the study by Symes et al (1996) who found that in Britain, 73.9% of the architecture firms had between 1 and 5 architects. Also, 21.3% of the firms in Nigeria had between 6 and 10 architects compared with the 9.8% of the firms in Britain. While 6.8% of the firms in Nigeria had between 11 and 20 members of staff, 8.2% of the firms in Britain had between 11 and 30 architects. It however appears that large firms are more dominant in Nigeria than in Britain. This implies that British and Nigerian architecture firms do not have similar profiles with respect to numbers of architects in the firms.





**Figure 4.2. Number of Architects in Nigerian firms**

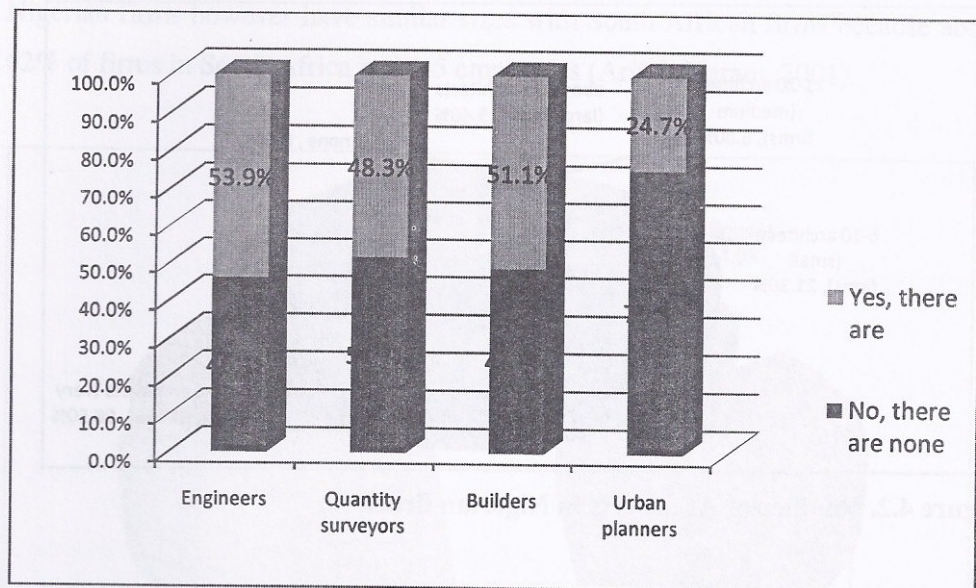


**Figure 4.3 Architects in British firms (Source: Symes *et al*, 1996)**

#### 4.1.3 Other professionals:

An examination of the number of professionals in the firms reveals that while about half of the firms (48.3%, 53.9% and 51.1%) had quantity surveyors, engineers and builders respectively; most (73.3%) of the firms did not have urban planners (Figure 4.4).





**Figure 4.4: Number of professionals in firms**

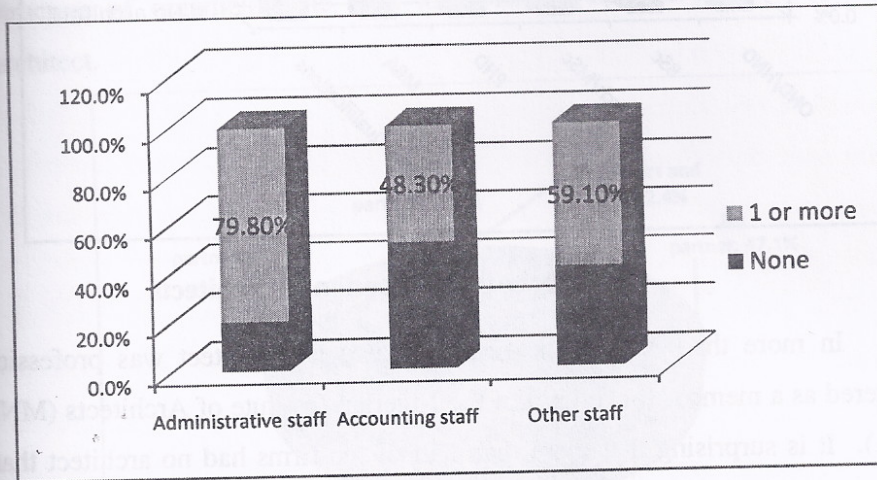
This is an interesting profile because it shows that about half of the architecture firms were multi-professional. Only the urban planners were less represented. This is probably because architects felt that they could deal with urban projects without the help of urban planners. The firms in Nigeria were found to be different from the ones in Britain also in this respect. More firms in Nigeria employed other professionals than the firms in Britain. The results obtained by Symes *et al* (1996) showed that only about a third (35.4%) of the firms in Britain had other professionals.

#### 4.1.4 Support Staff:

The results in Figure 4.5 show that while more than half of the firms (79.78%) had 1 or more administrative staff member; less than half (48.31%) of the firms had 1 or more accounting staff member; and 59.1% of the firms had other staff members such as receptionists, technologists, drivers and messengers. It is surprising that almost half of the firms did not have accountants as members of staff. This finding supports the findings from the interviews, in which one of the interviewees noted that:



*We do not really budget because most architecture firms are not so big to engage the services of an accountant to do such things. Those firms that engage the accountant are very few. Most are like one-man business and budgeting hardly comes in. This is because you cannot predict how much income you will get in a given year.*

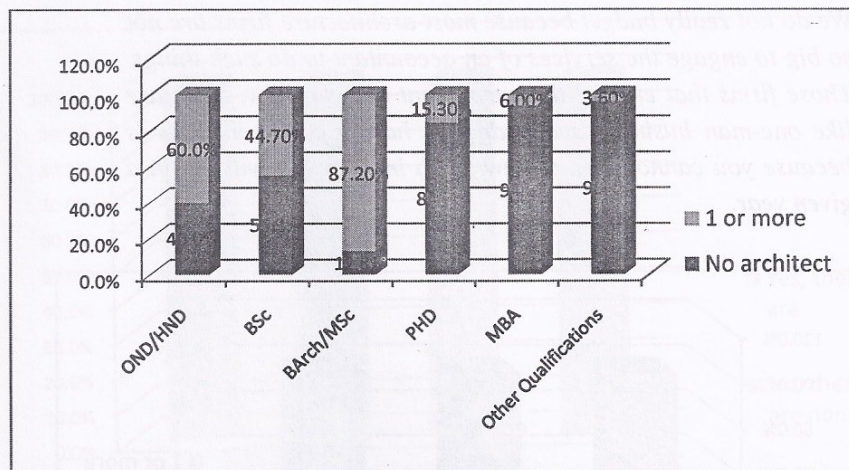


**Figure 4.5: Number of support staff in firms**

#### 4.2 Qualification of architects:

The qualifications of the architects who worked in the firms were examined. Figure 4.6 presents the number of firms that had the different numbers of architects with the qualifications specified. The results reveal that most of the firms (87.2%) had 1 or more architects with the Bachelor of Architecture (BArch) or Master of Science (MSc) qualifications and 12.8% did not any have graduate architects. In addition, more than half of the firms (60%) had members of staff with the Ordinary National Diploma (OND) or Higher National Diploma (HND) in architecture. Most of the firms (84.7%, 94.0% and 96.4%) did not have any architect with the doctorate (PhD), Masters in Business Administration (MBA) or any other qualification such as Post Graduate Diploma in Management Science, and the Post Graduate Diploma in Architecture.





**Figure 4.6: Qualification of architects**

In more than half of the firms (58.5%) no architect was professionally registered as a member (or fellow) of the Nigerian Institute of Architects (MNIA or FNIA). It is surprising that more than half of the firms had no architect that was professionally registered. One of the interviewees stated that the probable reason for this was that

*...once they (architects) have been trained to the point of registration, they pack their luggage and they want to go and establish somewhere else....*

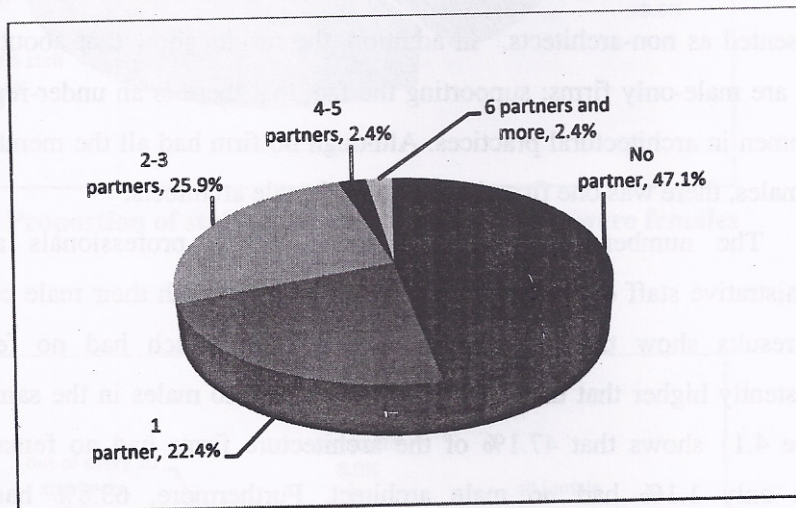
This result is more surprising because only about one-third of the firms themselves were not registered with ARCON as shown in Fig 3.3. The probable explanations for this are that some of the firms which were registered with ARCON used the names of registered architects to secure their registration or that the architects were registered with ARCON but not with NIA.

#### 4.3 Designations

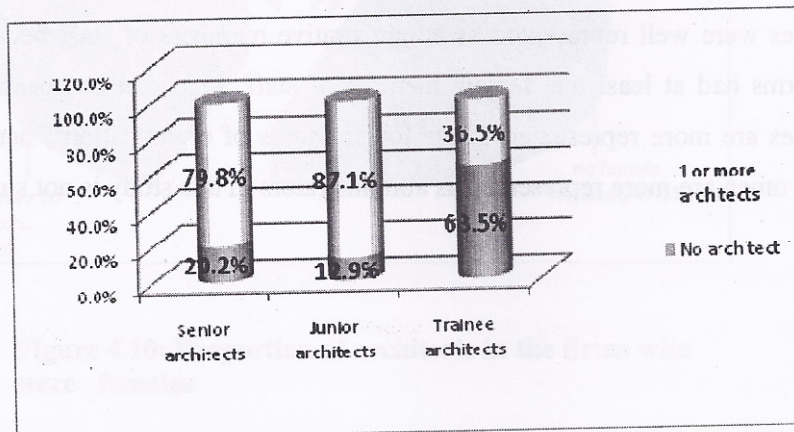
Figure 4.7 also shows that 52.9% of the firms had partners; while Figure 4.8 shows that 79.8% of the firms had senior architects, and 87.1% of the firms had junior architects. The fact that there were no partners in 47.1% of the firms could



probably be explained by the fact that 52.3% of the firms were owned by sole principals (Figure 3.2). Most (63.5%) of the firms did not to have any trainee architects (Figure 4.8); only 36.5% of the firms had trainee architects. However, most of the firms had junior (87.1 % of the firms) and senior (79.8% of the firms) architects. What these results indicate is that most firms designed a hierarchical structure of organizing the firm and planned upward career mobility for the architect.



**Figure 4.7: Number of partners**



**Figure 4.8 Designation of architects**

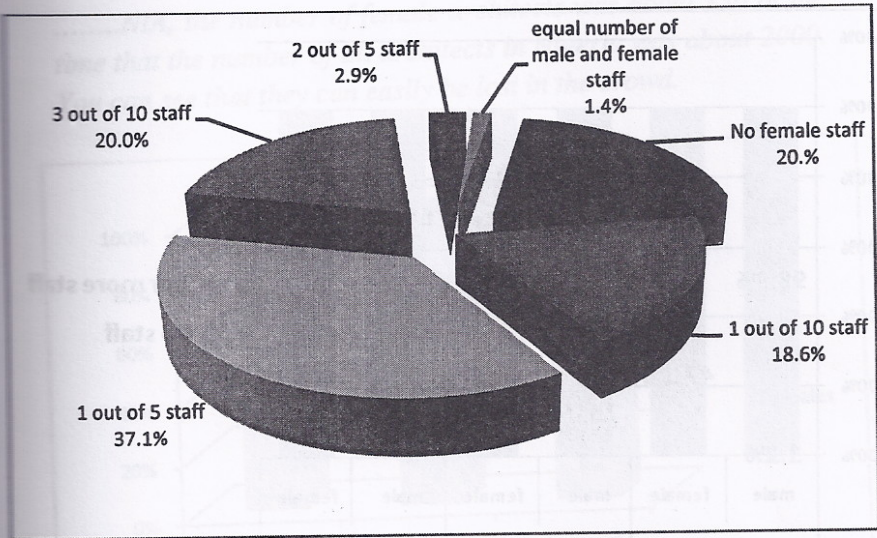


#### 4.4 Gender

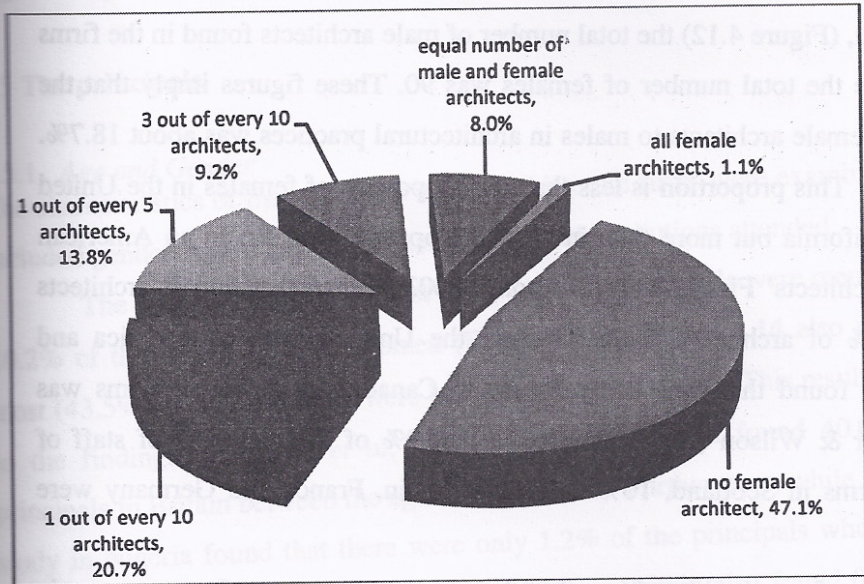
In investigating the gender profiles of the architecture firms, the study first examined the proportion of the overall members of staff of the architecture firms who were women and second, the proportion of architects that were women. Figure 4.9 shows that 20% of the firms had no female members of staff at all and Figure 4.10 shows that almost half (47.1%) of the firms had no female architect. This indicates that females are not equally represented in architecture firms and are more represented as non-architects. In addition, the results show that about half of the firms are male-only firms; supporting the fact that there is an under-representation of women in architectural practices. Although no firm had all the members of staff as females, there was one firm that had only female architects.

The number of female architects, female professionals and female administrative staff of the firms were also compared with their male counterparts. The results show that the proportions of firms which had no females was consistently higher than the proportions which had no males in the same category. Figure 4.11 shows that 47.1% of the architecture firms had no female architect while only 1.1% had no male architect. Furthermore, 63.8% had no other professional that was female while only 25% had no other male professional. Half (50%) of the firms however had no female administrative member of staff while only 39.2% had no male administrative member of staff. Again the results show that females were well represented as administrative members of staff because half of the firms had at least one female member of staff. Indeed it has been found that females are more represented in the lower cadres of organizations, hence the fact that women are more represented as administrators in this study is not surprising.



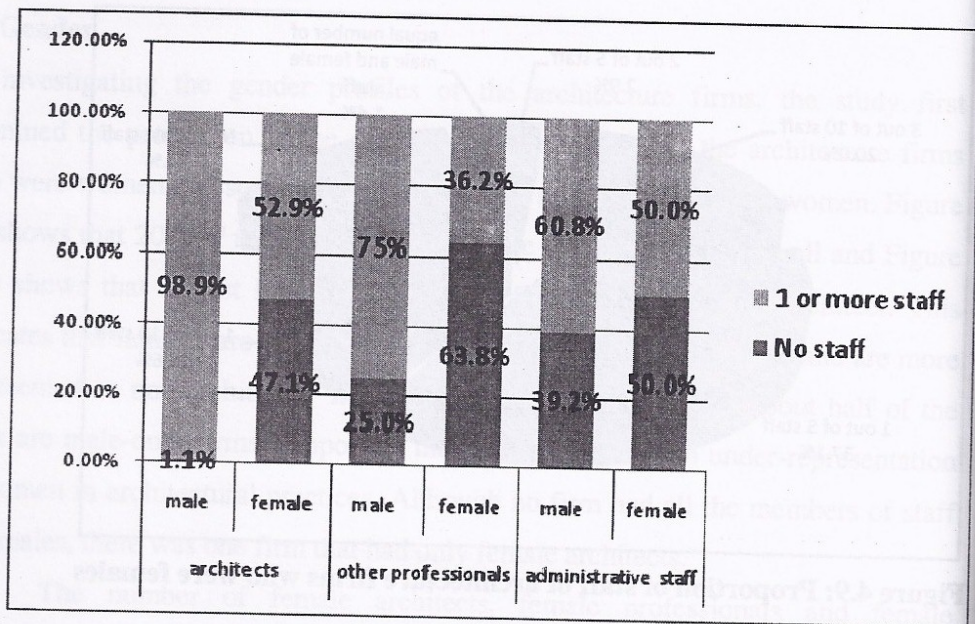


**Figure 4.9: Proportion of staff of architecture firms who were females**



**Figure 4.10: Proportion of architects in the firms who were females**





**Figure 4.11: Gender of professionals**

Overall, (Figure 4.12) the total number of male architects found in the firms was 392, while the total number of females was 90. These figures imply that the proportion of female architects to males in architectural practices was about 18.7%. (Figure 4.12). This proportion is less than the proportion of females in the United States and California but more than in some European countries. In an American Institute of Architects' Firm Survey, Anthony (2003), found that female architects comprised 27% of architects in the firms in the United States of America and Fowler (2003) found that 20% of architects in Canadian architecture firms was female. Fowler & Wilson (2004) also found that 9% of the members of staff of architecture firms in Scotland, 10% to 16% in Spain, France and Germany were female.

Findings from the interviews also showed that there were fewer women in practice generally and attributed this to the low number of females who graduate from architecture schools.

*....let me talk about my own time in school. We had only three females. You can see that when they come out, they will easily be swallowed up by the male population. Also, when I was in*



.....NIA, the number of female architects was about 150 at the time that the number of all architects in Nigeria was about 2000. You can see that they can easily be lost in the crowd.

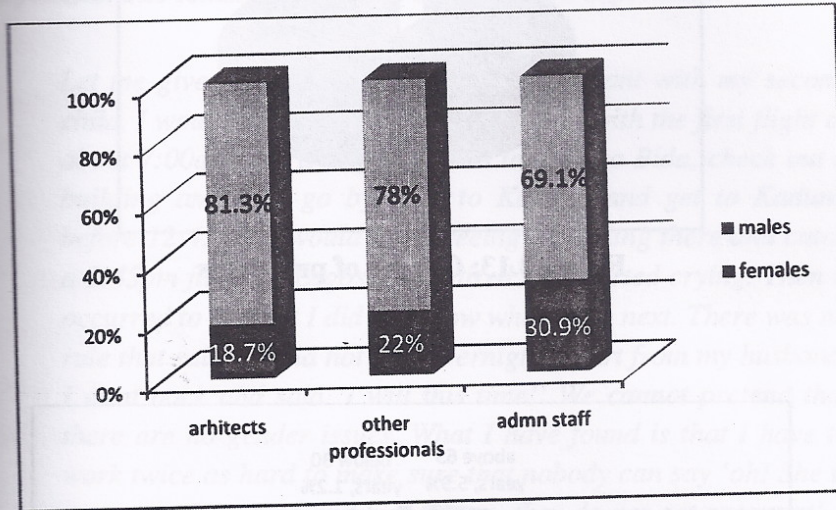


Figure 4.12 Overall gender profile

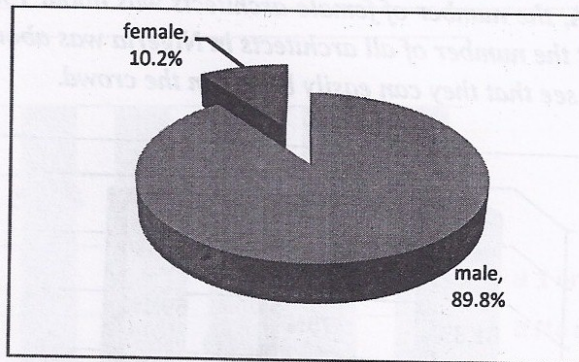
#### 4.5 The principals

##### 4.5.1 Age and Gender

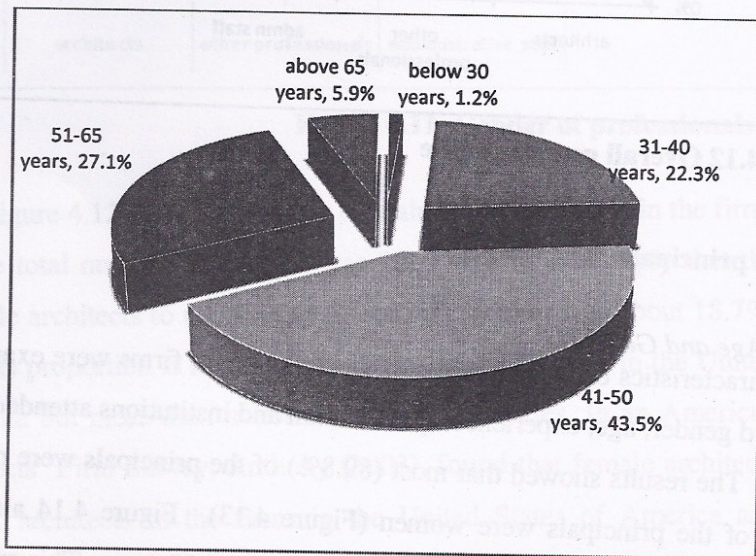
The characteristics of the principals of the architecture firms were examined. These included gender, age, experience, qualification and institutions attended.

The results showed that most (89.8%) of the principals were men, and only 10.2% of the principals were women (Figure 4.13). Figure 4.14 also shows that most (43.5%) of the principals were between 41 and 50 years. This result is similar to the findings of Symes *et al*, (1996) in Britain, which found 40.0% of the principals in Britain between the ages of 40 and 49. Furthermore, while the present study in Nigeria found that there were only 1.2% of the principals who were less than 30 years, the study by Symes *et al* (1996) in Britain also found 0.8% of the principals were less than 30 years. These results suggest that most principals are middle aged men and women and the age profiles in Nigerian and British firms are similar. This appears reasonable because being a principal implies maturity and experience.





**Figure 4.13: Gender of principals**



**Figure 4.14: Age group of principals**

The predominance of the male principal may be related to the challenges faced by female principals; some of which were highlighted by two participants in the interview sessions. One of the participants, (who was male), stated that female principals found it hard to get clients.

*“.....some clients tend to look down on women thinking that a woman cannot handle a site. Some clients do not think it is okay, so to speak, they do not believe they will get the best out of such.”*



The view of the female architect was that the real challenges of women were related more to family work balance and gender discrimination rather than competence. The female interviewee cited her own experience:

*Let me give you a story, when I was pregnant with my second child, I would take off from Lagos to Abuja with the first flight at about 7:00am; see a building, then take off to Bida, check out a building and then go by road to Kaduna and get to Kaduna before 12:45pm. I would finish seeing a building there and catch a 1:45pm flight to Lagos. I was tired and started crying. Then it occurred to me that I did not know what to do next. There was no rule that said I could not stay overnight, apart from my husband. I went back and said 'I will this time!' We cannot pretend that there are no gender issues. What I have found is that I have to work twice as hard to make sure that nobody can say 'oh! She is pregnant. Let us go and hire a man, they do not get pregnant'. I am not too sure anyone has actually discriminated against me yet, maybe they did and I did not know. I have found out that men are more ambitious. Women are more relationship centered. Most of the men we went for these courses together (points to certificates on the wall) have the certificates on their walls. I (earlier) did not, I was more concerned about my family and I had pictures of my husband and children. I just said to myself 'we all went for these courses together,' so I put them up. Men are more ambitious.*

The interviewees were indeed of the opinion that female architects were often challenged by family issues suggesting that this may account for the few number of female architects in practice. One of the principals interviewed commented that he had no challenges with female architects in his firms

*...except when they get married.....the single ones do better.*

Along the same line, one of the principals categorically stated that

*...we cannot pretend that there are no gender issues. What I have found is that I have to work twice as hard to make sure that nobody can say 'oh! She is pregnant. Let us go and hire a man, they do not get pregnant...*



This probably explains why gender equity both in hiring and task allocation to staff members ranked low in the culture of architecture firms. In fact, one of the female principals commented that she

*"...find(s) it easier to work with men because women do not work at my pace.*

#### 4.5.2 Experience

The results further showed that most (71.8%) of the principals had worked in one or two firms previously (Figure 4.15). Very few of the principals (3.5%) started their own firms without working in any other firm first. It appears that previous working experience was an important attribute of a principal. The participants also reported (in the interviews) that they had worked in other firms as employees before starting their own firms.

*... I worked in two places (firms) before I started my firm.*

Another principal narrated:

*...after my youth service, I stayed back at Ibadan, worked in ....., then came back to ..... because I knew that one day I will start my own firm. In 1988, I felt I was ripe enough to start my own firm.*

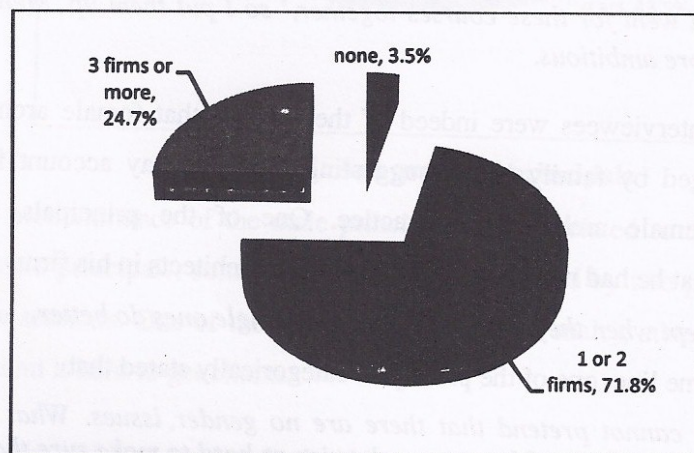
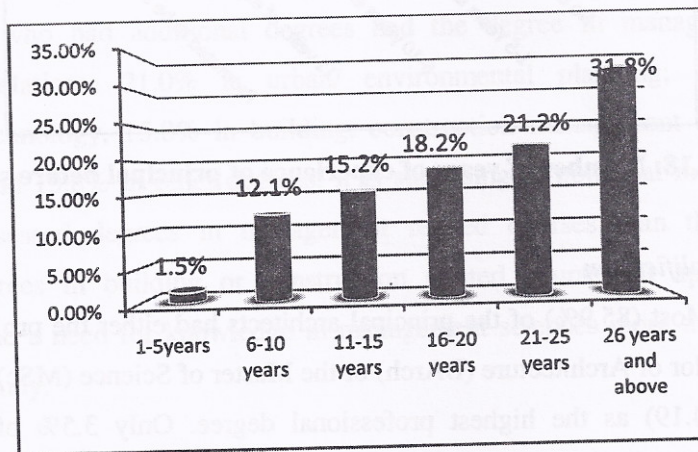


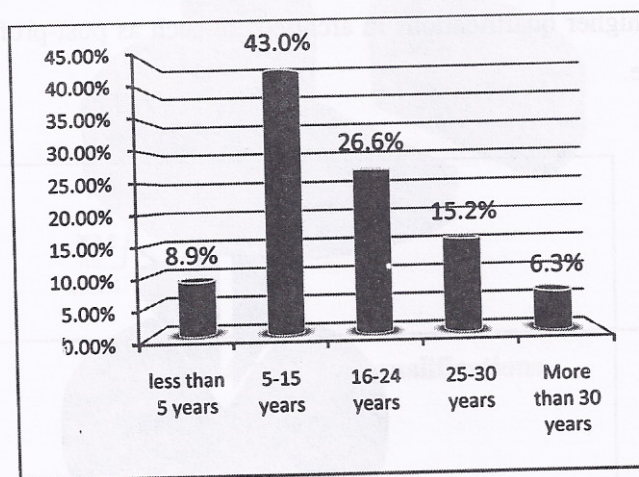
Figure 4.15: Number of firms that principal previously worked



Most of the principals had practised for more than 15 years (Figure 4.16). This suggests that most of the principals of architecture firms could be said to be fairly experienced. They however appear to have registered with the Architects Registration Council of Nigeria (ARCON) much later because only very few of the principals had been registered for more than 15 years (Figure 4.17). The results in Figure 4.18 shows that most (74.2%) of the principals had worked for 10 years or less before starting their own firm. This was also confirmed by the interviews.

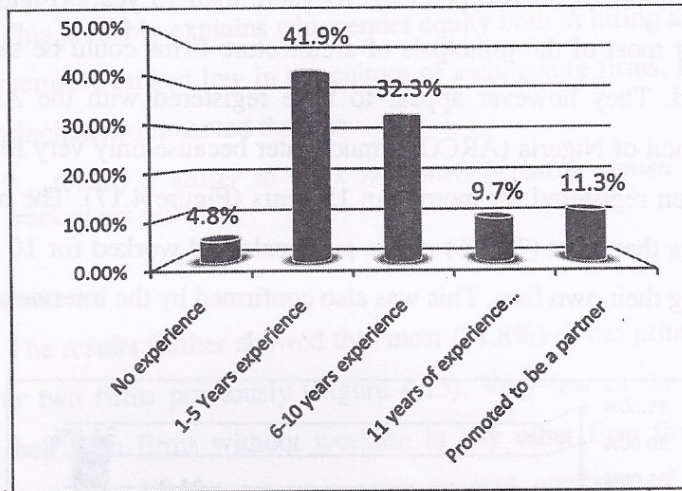


**Figure 4.16: Number of years of experience of principal**



**Figure 4.17: Length of registration of principals with Architects Registration Council of Nigeria (ARCON)**

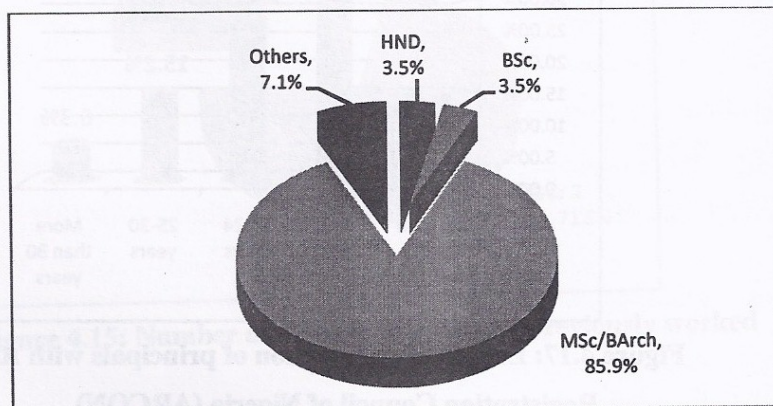




**Figure 4.18: Number of years of experience of principal before starting firm**

#### 4.5.3 Qualification

Most (85.9%) of the principal architects had either the professional degree of Bachelor of Architecture (BArch) or the Master of Science (MSc) in Architecture (Figure 4.19) as the highest professional degree. Only 3.5% of the principals possessed the Higher National Diploma (HND) or the Bachelor of Science degree (BSc) in architecture as the highest professional qualification. Very few (7.1%) possessed higher qualifications in architecture such as post-professional masters in architecture.



**Figure 4.19: Highest qualification of principal**