

Architecture Education - A Perspective

Prologue

Architecture profession bestows an individual with the creative liberty and procedural cognition to cast ones logical mind's eye and concerns into tangible realities, this would pave way for evolution of newer built icons for the nation as well at global context in future both at micro and macro settings. The things that we human beings build or evolve are the result of our endeavors in two directions; on the one end we proclaim accomplishment of a purpose – a built environment to accommodate certain activities and on the other to nurture an expression that could communicate desired response based on the context (1).



Fig. 1 Design Studio - Activity Sessions

“Architecture is a social act and the material theater of human activity.” Spiro K Kostof

Architecture Studio

In the early stages, the studio as an analogical learning environment borrowed and adopted the domain of the artist’s creative activity space, which was personal in nature. Gradually, the studio environment was formalized to allow for more creative as well as complex pedagogical pursuits with more number of students. The culture of the architecture studio was linked to learning–preparation of drawings from which buildings could emerge.

With time transition has brought about drastic changes in the outlook of the learning atmosphere and approach. The studio got transformed from the apprentice to the atelier and then to institutionalized environments for learning architecture. Practice and the philosophy of the masters infiltrated the studio, as in Bauhaus in Germany, and to a large degree influenced the established means and methods. Study of new building materials, techniques of their application, and influence due to market forces along with the concern for rationalism seemed to dominate the designers mind more than the romanticized approach of the earlier days. In recent years globalization has brought about a number of radical changes that are offering new pedagogical challenges and possibilities (2).



Fig. 2 Diverse Learning Scenarios

Present Scenario

Today, the word "architect" refers to a licensed professional. The journey for a successful realization of a professional academic program leading to a under graduate degree in architecture is spread through a span of five years. The qualification for the initial phase of the course is gained through clearing National Aptitude Test in Architecture (NATA) conducted by National Institute of Advanced Studies in Architecture, Pune. NIASA is an educational unit of the Council of Architecture. The standards of education being imparted in the professional institutions (constituent colleges/departments of universities, deemed universities, affiliated colleges/schools, IITs, NITs and autonomous institutions) is governed by Council of Architecture (Minimum Standards of Architectural Education) Regulations, 1983, which set forth the requirement of eligibility for admission, course duration, standards of staff & accommodation, course content, examination etc (3).

The pedagogical approach during the tenure of the course is based on proper molding of various domains of transmission and transaction of learning – cognitive, effective, perceptive and psychomotor realms. In broad-spectrum inputs from various core disciplines as well as peripheral areas are integrated in the design studio to evolve concrete process oriented solutions for architectural issues.

Architectural design, per se, is not to be seen as a subject of study by itself, but an opportunity to bring together into a comprehensive whole the subject matter and knowledge acquired from peripheral area of study. If we accept Design as the soul of learning architecture – it is omnipresent. It has no physical existence, but like the human soul is present only as a “spirit.” One can therefore say therefore, that “Design” is the result of a process of integration of the real and the palpable material that is provided by other areas of study that are essentially of an applied nature and the emotive response of the learner. As such, Design ought to be seen not as a “subject” of learning but an application of what is learned from support subjects to Design. The studio is like a crucible where all applied knowledge and the essentials of design melt into each other to obtain a unified whole (4).



Fig. 3 Workshop & Seminar - Activity Sessions

The academic program takes the candidates through an expedition where learning is not limited to the institutional environment. Travel, industrial exposure, workshops, interactive sessions with professionals and various off campus activities play a vital role. Development

of clarity and a valid perception regarding the Body of Knowledge which constitutes the Domain of Architecture, would lead to realization of a successful profession.

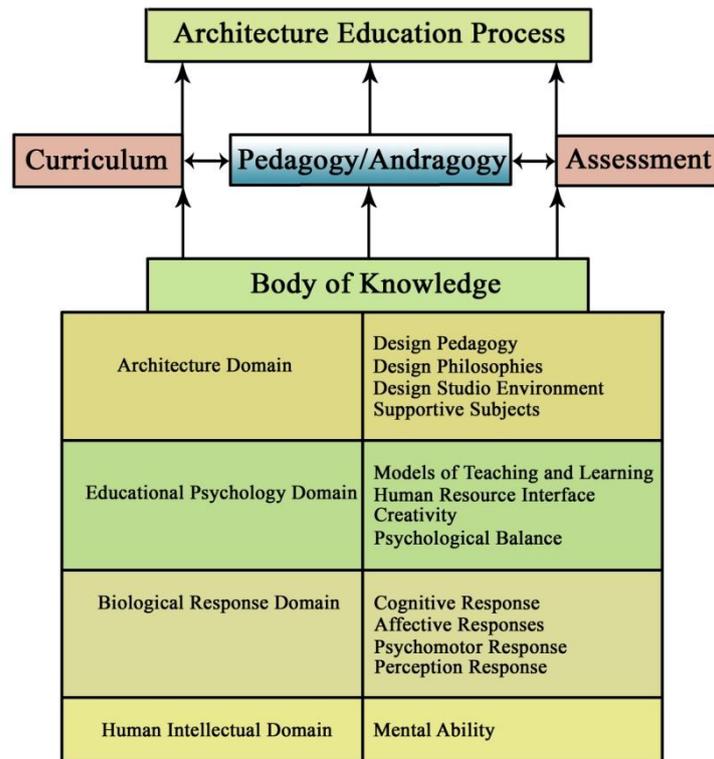


Fig. 4 Body of Knowledge – Critical Domains

Why Architecture Course?

From Students Desk – Mr. Bibin Cheriyan, 2nd Year Architecture Student.
MES School of Architecture

It is in human nature to appreciate and admire a work of art. But only a few get to make such pieces of aesthetic realities. It's even rarer for people to get a chance to 'build' master pieces. When it comes to choosing a career nowadays, a cloud of uncertainty looms over a 10+2 student. There is always the pressure from all sides for the student to opt for the easiest and the most popular option. At the end of the day, it comes down to taking the 'most trodden' path for a majority of them. However, classifying architecture as the path less taken would still be an understatement – keeping in mind its potential to transform our society, invent new ideas, new solutions, create new spaces in ways that we never knew; or realize a long cherished dream. Architecture is undoubtedly the best option for such people. Back in the olden days they used to say that an architect is 'a scholar of all arts' owing to the fact that he played the roles of an artist, an engineer, and a manager all simultaneously. Even now architecture is in the league of one of the most attractive professions on earth due to the above reasons. But architecture is also not the easiest of ways; nor should it be taken for

granted. It requires the utmost passion, dedication, hard work and patience to make a mark as a successful architect.

Source of Photographs – Author

SOA's depicted in the narrative illustration –

1. MES School of Architecture, Malappuram, Calicut University, Kerala.
2. Tamil Nadu School of Architecture, Coimbatore, Anna University, Tamilnadu.

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