INTERIOR DECORATION PRACTICES AMONG HIGH, MIDDLE AND LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC HOUSEHOLDS OF KISUMU TOWN, KENYA

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late father Tobias; mother Jane; uncle Obare; brothers and sisters; husband George and children Arthur, Ronald, Steven and John; and to the glory and honour of the almighty God.

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ABSTRACT

This was a descriptive survey research whose purpose was to generate and document information on interior decoration practices among high, middle and low socio-economic households of Kisumu town. Among the variables considered were socio-economic status, interior decoration practices, interior decoration knowledge and income.

The objectives of the study were to: (a) determine the factors that influence the choice and arrangement of furnishings among the households of Kisumu town, (b) identify the sources of information and materials used in interior decoration by the households of Kisumu town, (c) identify problems that hinder effective home decoration among the respondents, and (d) establish the respondents' satisfaction with the existing furnishings in their homes.

The data were collected using an interview schedule and observation checklist. A total of 120 respondents were interviewed from Milimani, Migosi and Ondiek estates. The respondent was the person in the household who makes major decisions on house furnishing. The data were analysed by the use of descriptive statistics and measures.

Results showed that age, occupation, and education determined the estate one lived in, hence the choice of furnishings. The households in high socio-economic status income could afford bigger houses and expensive furnishings. However, these households were few and mostly from Milimani estate. Majority of the respondents faced financial constraints and this was a major setback in house furnishing.

Public exhibitions, agricultural shows, association with friends, newspaper advertisements, electronic media, home magazines and displays were common sources of information on house furnishing while seminars and workshops were least common.

It was observed that most households had sofa sets, coffee tables, sideboards and carpets owing to their functional nature. Some of the least common items included easy chairs, cushions, chair-covers, teddy bears, divans, live and artificial plants. Woodcarvings, aquariums, coral reefs and batik were scarce too. This was attributed to the fact that they were so expensive that they could only be found in a few households of Milimani and Migosi estates.

From the study's findings it has been recommended that awareness be created on locally available materials. This can be done by paying visits and holding demonstrations on their use in house furnishing by the Home Economics extension workers.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Allen (1991), defines interior decoration or design as "the decoration or the design of the interior of a building or a room." In other words, it is the layout and decoration of an architectural interior. According to Sherwood (1972), interior design or decoration is the art of planning, selecting and arranging various items in a room. Makunda (1997), describes interior design as the planning and designing of man-made spaces. Thus, in the home, interior design involves planning for harmonious colour schemes and the selection and arrangement of fabrics, carpets, furniture, lighting devices and accessories to satisfy different needs of the occupants.

According to Lennon, Fairhurst and Peatross (1991), furnishings and interiors have not been studied extensively, but there is evidence that environmental artifacts such as housing style and type of interior furnishings do affect impressions of individuals (Altman and Chemers, 1984; Cherulnik and Bayless, 1986; Miles and Leathers, 1984). Hayward (1977) and Harrison (1974), as cited by Lennon, *et al.* 1991) suggest that the residents' motivations, feelings and aspirations are revealed in the way they select and arrange material objects. Thus, the way a person selects and displays the articles one possesses conveys important information about the person and certainly affects others' impressions of the person as well as the interior itself.

The home environment is the most personal of all spaces. It provides for the setting of intimate relationships, a refuge from the world, a confirmation of self, a locus of community and a symbol of continuity (Brower, 1988). Of all the arts, those centred around the home are the most widely practiced, influential in daily living and the most revealing (Faulkner and Ziegfeld, 1956). To a certain extent, home life is shaped by the houses together with the hard and soft furnishings displayed. The daily activities and moods of the individuals are strongly affected by these factors (Sherwood, 1972; Forster, 1985; Lewis, 1987).

Furnishings are a vital part of interiors and cannot be considered in isolation (Ndirangu, 1988). The space, openings (doors and windows) and furnishings all form part of the interior environment. Therefore, the selection and arrangement of furnishings will depend on the amount of space available, existing colour on the walls and the users of that space among other factors.

Furnishing is easier if one understands its definite function of helping individuals carry out the many activities desirable in meeting their needs for daily living. It is done according to personal needs because living space affects one's self-concept and this strongly influences how individuals behave and their effectiveness in whatever they do. An empty room suddenly becomes familiar when one displays a favourite picture or memento (Sherwood, 1972). The arrangement of personal space reflects a person's principles, knowledge, skills and attitudes. A person who values neatness will carefully organise his/her space. Some people, however, want space for noisy activities while

others prefer a room where they can enjoy quieter activities. Irrespective of the size of the space, people need the opportunity to express their own preferences and ideals of beauty. Even with limited resources, thoughtful planning and careful application of knowledge and skills leads to satisfaction of the users.

Since all buildings are designed to serve some human purpose, the most admired interior decoration projects are the ones that have delivered a high level of satisfaction (Pile, 1988; Rutt, 1967). A satisfying interior is one in which the user's efforts to arrange furniture and introduce personal accessories are evident. However, many interiors, including some by skilled designers fall far short of serving human needs in an optimal way (Pile, 1988). The causes of such failures are varied and one of them could be the non-involvement of the users in the decoration process. Many people in Kenya today are not aware that even a humble and simple home can be made to look beautiful and satisfy the individual needs of the user.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

House furnishing is often given little emphasis in most homes in Kenya. Even where limited resources are available for interior decoration, there is lack of proper planning and arrangement of furnishings. Some people assume that a beautiful home requires a lot of money, hence they buy very expensive furnishings. Unless these are carefully selected, beauty may not be achieved and may not necessarily satisfy the needs of the users.

According to Pile (1988), modern habits and ways of life give a powerful motive for striving to make the indoor spaces as satisfying, useful, pleasant and supportive as

possible. For example, today's adolescents are more outgoing than before and would want this reflected in their spaces. Thus, the residential interiors ought to be arranged by their occupants to allow for some level of personalization. There is need to investigate the people's tastes and preferences as they decorate their homes and the satisfaction derived from doing so.

Lack of local literature on interior decoration creates reliance on foreign literature. A look at a foreign magazine may make people believe that one needs a lot of money in order to have a beautiful interior. Interior decoration is, therefore, treated as an alien concept that is for the foreigners who have the time and money to spend on it. The people are not aware that locally available materials can be successfully used for decoration. The kind of materials used for decoration therefore, needs to be established.

Ndirangu (1988), in an investigation of interior designs of some Coastal and Nairobi restaurants, emphasized the need for a "homely" look in their interiors. Makunda (1997) has also expressed a similar sentiment in his investigation of a children's home. However, there seems to be no documented information on research done on interior decoration in the home. There is, therefore, need to investigate the interior decoration practices in residential homes and especially, in high, middle and low socio-economic groups.

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to generate and document information on interior decoration practices among high, middle and low socio-economic groups in urban households of Kisumu town.

1.4   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To investigate factors that influence the choice and arrangement of furnishings among the households of Kisumu town.

2. To identify the sources of information and materials used by the households of Kisumu Town.

3. To identify problems that hinder effective home decoration among the respondents.

4. To establish the respondents' satisfaction with the existing furnishings in their homes.

1.5   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study will add to the existing body of knowledge in interior design. The results will be useful to professional interior decorators and entrepreneurs and enable them advise and serve their clients appropriately.

The study will provide empirical data that can be used as a basis for providing consumer education. Through the Kenya Consumer Watch the findings will enable consumers make wise choices when purchasing various furnishing articles for the home. Furthermore, the study reveals the actual interior decoration needs of the consumers, hence, manufacturers would be able to produce appropriate furnishing articles for the consumers.

Data collected from this study should be useful to curriculum planners and developers in the Ministry of Education and the Kenya Institute of Education. The results could be used in expanding the scope of Homescience Education at all levels of education. Moreover,

the results form a basis for further research in interior design.

Based on the findings, the study also proposes certain recommendations which when implemented will lead to improvements in interior decoration in the homes, making the houses more welcoming and beautiful to be in. The results should also be useful to the respondents, home economics extension workers, furnishing retailers and scholars.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study was limited to a sample drawn from Kisumu Municipality. Thus, generalisations of the results to other parts of Kenya should be done with caution.

2. Kisumu Municipality represented urban residential homes in a contemporary society. Being a contemporary urban setting, the sample was not representative of the rural setting.

1.7 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted based on the following assumptions:

1. All the respondents made, or at least, contributed to the major decisions concerning house furnishing.

2. The respondents' houses were furnished, or at least had some form of furnishings.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Accessories: Additional objects such as pictures, wall clocks and trophies used in a room to add beauty.

Attitude: How favorable or unfavorable a person feels towards an object,

concept or situation.

Furnishings: A collective term for both hard and soft furnishings.

Hard furnishings: Furniture such as tables, wall units, chairs and stools.

Home: The house and its surroundings plus all that is inside it.

House: The physical structure that people live in.

Interior Decoration: The planning and execution of the layout and decoration of a house's interior.

Interior Decoration

Knowledge: The information or understanding that one has concerning interior decoration. This is information received through formal education, interaction or experience.

Interior Decoration

Practice: The process of planning, selecting and arranging furnishings.

Memento: A souvenir or reminder of the past (Forster, 1985).

Resource: An available supply that can be drawn upon when needed, and the ability to deal with a situation effectively. In interior decoration, it is the ability to use the available materials creatively in furnishing.

Skill: The practical techniques employed in arrangement of furnishings.

Soft furnishings: Articles of decoration used in the home such as lampshades, cushions, curtains, carpets, rugs, table clothes and loose covers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, literature was reviewed under the following sub-topics:

- Development of Interior Design.

- Aims of Interior Planning and Furnishing.

- The process of Home Furnishing.

- Related Studies.

2.1   DEVELOPMENT OF INTERIOR DESIGN

From prehistoric times, man had always been imaginative, talented and deeply sensitive to the drama of his life. According to Hammerton (1954), mankind has slowly and painfully been fulfilling a creative mission in evolving out an organized life-scheme centred on a supreme good comprising truth, beauty and righteousness. Therefore, he was compelled to picture it in stone, on canvas and on paper with brush and pen (Welty, 1965; Faulkner and Faulkner, 1975). Historically, most interiors were put together very successfully as a natural part of the building structures. Ancient societies developed forms of huts, tents and igloos to solve problems of shelter in a particular climate. Then they took their few possessions inside, just as one can arrange a tent while camping. The resulting interior was practical and in its own way handsome (Pile 1988).

Developing civilizations found appropriate ways of building more elaborate structures

that created their own kind of interiors. For example, among the Greeks, houses exhibited strong colours in textiles and other elements such as hangings, cushions and coverings. Other utilitarian objects such as cups, dishes and vases provided decorative accents. According to Pile (1988), many of the Roman interiors had realistic wall paintings that depicted everyday scenes. They made use of the mosaic technique to provide decorative treatment of the walls. In Europe, it was the French Government that made the rest of the countries conscious of interior furnishing (Ball, 1960). The French introduced a style of furnishing that the American travellers bought and carried to the west. The Americans later started producing furnishings of good taste to serve the various needs of the users.

In Africa, the art of house furnishing is not new. Among the Egyptians for example, interior decoration was evident in the custom of carving and painting walls with written and illustrated inscriptions. Their tombs also yielded a wide range of objects including furniture, which was well preserved, placed inside to accompany the body into an after life providing it with some of his accustomed luxuries. (Pile, 1988; Hammerton, 1954). Their housing interiors suggested spaces with only minimal furniture, lively colour in wall decorations and woven materials. According to Churchill (1993), the colonial settlers who came to Africa enhanced the appreciation of interior decoration by creating their own styles. These styles reflected not only classic English tastes, but also the local surroundings and lifestyles that they became accustomed to. The intense heat of the African climate also dictated, to a great extent, the type of decoration and furnishings that were most popular. Until modern times, houses have always been designed and built according to traditions that took into account the occupants' way of life (Pile, 1988). The

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furnishings evolved from similar traditions, created interiors compatible with both the enclosing structures and inhabitants' needs and customs.

Traditionally, there were two types of huts in Kenya: permanent and portable. Within these, each group of people had its own typical style of construction and decoration. Agriculturalists made their own permanent huts of "withy" and mud walls with grass roofs while pastoralists made their portable huts of " withies" covered with hides or mats woven with a pattern on the inside or mats woven with a pattern on the inside and thatching on the outside; although the maasais made their huts of "withies" and a mixture of mud and cowdung (National Museums of Kenya). The hearthstones were the focal point of a hut. The sleeping quarters were usually behind partitions with beds made of hides or mats resting on logs. According to Welty (1965), the furnishings were few, simple and often essential. The main articles of furniture were wooden stools. Each adult had his own stool, the shape of which indicated its owner's status. Occasionally, you could find shelves hung on a wall, from rafters of a hut, on the underside of a bed and was used for storing utensils and other possessions (National Museums of Kenya). Its frame, which was made by women, was made from a branch of an acacia tree interwoven with strips of leaves from a wild sisal plant. There was another type that was made of wooden frames from a hazel shrub interwoven with string probably made from the bark of a wild fig tree. The design forms of various articles reflected the particular way the people went about organizing their activities (Somjee, 1978).

Nowadays, our modern habits and ways of life give us a powerful motive for attempting

to make the indoor spaces we occupy as satisfactory, useful, pleasant and generally supportive as possible. Probably the great majority of residential interiors are arranged by their occupants. This often provides for some level of personalization, which allows the user to adjust the interior to his or her own taste. Thus, putting together a domestic interior becomes a very personal affair (Lane and Serle, 1990; Pile, 1988).

2.2   AIMS OF INTERIOR PLANNING AND FURNISHING

The appearance of the home should be worth its high purpose of providing a place for the promotion of the spiritual, intellectual and physical growth of the family as well as to furnish a shelter for this growth (Forster, 1985; Rutt, 1967). Beautiful home surroundings constitute the most important factor in the development of visual good taste, for through daily contact with beauty, a lasting appreciation of beauty evolves. However, beauty is not the only objective in planning and furnishing a home. In addition, the home should be expressive of the personality of the owners and most of all, should function effectively (Lewis, 1987; Rutt, 1967). Thus, the ultimate goal to be attained in home furnishing is the successful integration of the three objectives: beauty, expressiveness and functionalism.

2.2.1   Beauty

Beauty is a major concern to the home decorator. The word beauty can be used freely to describe all well designed and pleasing things. In the home, forms, colours and textures may be appreciated for their own sake rather than what they present (Miller and Schlitt, 1985). However, it is important to understand that the concept of beauty differs with time and place, with purpose and context (Pile, 1988). An article may be seen as beautiful or

as ugly by various viewers applying different standards (Pile, 1988; Lewis; 1987; Reekie, 1972; Ball, 1960). Thus, people's definitions of beauty may be no more than their reactions to certain situations that they either like or dislike, attitudes that may arise from extraneous sources. Pile (1988) explains that people find it easy to like what is familiar, what is popular or fashionable, what one has learned to like from family, teachers or friends, from books, magazines and advertisements. Almost everyone can remember having different tastes at some time in the past, tastes that have changed with growth, education and experience.

According to Miller and Schlitt (1985), aestheticians view beauty as the appreciation of pure sensory experiences. Thus, an interior environment rich in sensory stimuli should be provided so that it becomes an important dimension of personality. People are willing to spend time, effort and money on interior decoration because they wish to have beautiful surroundings. They want to interact and socialise in beautiful surroundings because as Kaiser (1997) puts it, beauty is attractive and inspires all manners of positive attributions. Beautiful surroundings can make one feel good and release him or her from tensions (Lewis, 1987).

2.2.2   Expressiveness

One way to approach the subject of selecting, decorating and furnishing a house is to seek to express some definite idea or theme (Rutt, 1967). According to Lewis (1987) furnishing interiors gives one an outlet for self-expression. Sometimes, this expressiveness is referred to as the character or personality of the home. A well-designed

room therefore, should have some form of expressiveness to send a message of cheer, rest or power (Rutt, 1967). Residents' motivations, feelings and aspirations are revealed in the way in which they arrange their furnishings (Lennon, *et al.*, 1991).

Consciously or unconsciously the following ideas may be expressed in homes; repose, naturalness, sophistication, intimacy, formality, warmth, coolness, delicacy or strength. Lewis (1987) explains that in a bid to express a theme or an idea, some people seek to impress others with their wealth or importance and so select highly ornamented and expensive furniture. Others may make the mistake of trying to imitate the furnishings of other people and this may not serve to express their own ideas. Several themes may be expressed in house decoration, examples of which include formality or informality, naturalness, modernism and owner's personality.

Formality

Formality results when a room gives the feeling of a strict, firmly established unchanging order (Faulkner and Faulkner, 1975). In homes where formality is expressed they usually depict dignity, strength, reserve and impressiveness. Such houses require a strict separation between private areas and public front regions of the home, (Miller and Schlitt, 1985). Features that contribute to this include unbroken lines, large spaces, symmetrical balance and pronounced regularity. Formality increases when the forms seem stable and precise, when surfaces are smooth and when proportions make one feel upright. According to Rutt (1967), the family that creates this type of home generally lives a conventional, dignified and ordered life.

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2.2.2.2 Informality

Naturally, informality is desired in home surroundings. Informality, friendly hospitality and intimate charm are expressed through various means. Bright warm colours and simple comfortable furniture have these characteristics (Miller and Schlitt, 1985; Rutt, 1967). Informality is expressed through modest size, asymmetrical balance and broken lines. In such homes guests are allowed into the private areas and are encouraged to do things for themselves.

2.2.2.3 Naturalness

Naturalness as a type of informality expresses a character of simplicity, hand made quality, sincerity, thrift, playfulness, originality or protest against artificiality (Rutt, 1967). Factors that contribute to the attainment of the natural effect are the use of native materials and styles, handwork showing natural irregularities in structure and inexpensive materials. In such a house, fine finishes are often avoided.

According to Rutt (1967) persons with highly trained taste often prefer articles of natural or peasant construction because such products of more organized society are too often artificial. The average interior decorator is not usually interested in a primitive or natural effect in her home, but creative ones have found out that the simplicity and realness of this type of furnishing are expressive of their own ideas. They believe that the creative spirit does not thrive in luxurious or sophisticated surroundings.

2.2.2.4 Modernism

The families that choose modern furnishings are often young, courageous, experimental, impersonal and logical (Rutt, 1967). They are interested in a style that is expressive of their own day.

2.2.2.5 Owner's Personality

The personality of the owner determines the idea to be expressed in a home. Qualities sincerely characteristic of the family that is to live with it should be the basis for home furnishing. Cooper (1970), as quoted by Miller and Schlitt (1985), maintains that the interior of the home represents the private interior of the person. Homes and rooms often take on the "personality stamp" of the occupants and this may suggest that a person's private environment reflects the person's interests through decorating (Hansen and Altman, 1976). An interest that has permanent significance, and not a mere passing fad, should provide the inspiration for a plan of decorating and furnishing. If a family likes to do things in a formal way, that attitude should affect its choice in home furnishings. On the other hand, if a family has an informal stay-at-home attitude it should select more simple furnishings.

Functionalism

The homes of today should function by giving maximum service, comfort and pleasure for the minimum care. According to Pile (1988) and Rutt (1967), every phase of home furnishing should be based on function. The furniture is arranged in functional groups for study, reading, conversation, socialisation, relaxation, writing or music.

The selection of individual articles should be governed by a critical judgement of how well they will fulfill their functions. The form or shape of the furniture selected is always related to its function. The right shape is one that will function best (Pile, 1988; Lewis, 1987; Forster, 1985; Rutt, 1967).

2.3 THE PROCESS OF HOME FURNISHING

One important job of a home is to protect people from weather, wind, rain and extreme heat or cold. A warm living room comforts one when he comes home on a cold day. A room can be warm and comfortable simply by organizing it in a pleasing appearance, having adequate storage facilities and enough space for various activities.

People live by doing many activities such as cooking, entertaining, working, carrying out hobbies and exercises (Forster, 1985). People also possess hundreds of objects such as books, records, pots, pans, furniture, family pictures and other numerous articles. All these can be organized to offer a satisfying aesthetic environment to the user. One good way of organizing space is to make a floor plan (Foster, 1985; Simon and Schuster, 1953).

2.3.1 Making a Floor Plan

According to Forster (1985) and Rutt (1967), the floor plan must be made to scale if they are to be useful. Small cutout patterns are made to represent every piece of furniture because they are easier to move around than the actual furniture. Forster (1985), explains that by using a floor plan one can see how furnishings will look in a particular layout or arrangement of furniture. By using it in purchasing furniture, one can make sure that his

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choices are the right sizes and shapes for the house.

2.3.1.1 Choosing Furniture

The primary issue of choosing furniture, whatever its source, is quality. Good furniture can last for a very long time while poorly made furniture quickly disintegrates (Pile, 1988; Lewis, 1987). Function relates to the furniture's purpose. Almost all furniture has a practical use and good furniture serves that effectively and reliably. Apart from the functional role of furniture, they symbolise a material attachment to an individual's home, which ultimately affects and determines his relationship with the place of residence (Lewis, 1987). Different uses call for specific qualities and characteristics. For example, storage furniture must be sized to hold whatever it will contain efficiently and conveniently.

Aesthetic success is probably the hardest element of furniture quality to evaluate. Furniture that is well designed in terms of function, structure and beauty gives a high level of satisfaction when carefully arranged (Pile, 1988).

2.3.1.2 Arranging Furniture

To arrange furniture in a room requires no great talent. Often, people do not start furnishing by buying everything, but they have some old pieces, which they bought or inherited for use in their previous living premises. How to adapt these to new wall and floor measurements, supplement them attractively and not overshoot the budget is the question that faces every family (Simon and Schuster, 1953). Careful preliminary plans of orderly arrangement are necessary for the creation of beautiful comfortable rooms. Just as the artist works with paints to compose a picture, the landscape designer uses plants and

so the interior decorator constructs with furniture and accessories (Rutt, 1967).

According to Forster (1985) and Rutt (1967), balance is the basis of good furniture arrangement, in that each of the four sides of the room should seem about equally heavy to produce a feeling of equilibrium. Furthermore, passageways must be located so as not to interfere with the function of the furniture groups (Pile, 1988). Thus, approaches to doorways are kept clear. There should be easy access to various articles, for example the radio and bookshelves.

According to Pile (1988), furniture should be arranged to conform to the architecture of the room. Large pieces could be placed parallel to the walls to avoid violating basic lines. Straight chairs placed against the walls would look best. Rutt (1967) explains that furniture should be combined in groups for service, conservation of space and for beauty. The groups become focal centres that make the arrangements logical and useful. They are based on activities such as conversation, writing, reading and enjoying music.

Within the aforementioned groups' unity in line, texture, scale and colour is necessary. Variety is also needed to stimulate interest (Miller and Schlitt, 1985). Difference in bulk and height could be desirable too. Texture and colour variation provides relief from features that would otherwise be monotonous. Large, empty spaces between groups of furniture help to achieve a desirable uncluttered effect in a room. Furthermore, spaces between parts of a group should be less than spaces between groups (Rutt, 1967). The appearance of furniture can be greatly enhanced by creative use of fabrics.

2.3.2. Decorating with Fabrics ✓

Fabrics are useful to soften, blur and blend to give a feeling of warmth and welcome, and to link colour and pattern in a room (Miranda, 1990). Fabrics humanise our homes because of their responsiveness to our needs. They make us more comfortable, control light coming through windows and give privacy without solid walls, insulate against extreme heat and cold, and absorb noise (Faulkner and Faulkner, 1975). In fact, fabrics provide easily removable and cleanable coverings for tables and beds, as well as upholstery for chairs. Beyond these service functions, they bring beauty and individuality unlike that of any other material. According to Pile (1988), they introduce a sense of softness, curvature and flexibility into a space, making a hard or bare looking room seem soft, comfortable and humane. Clever use of colour in fabrics transforms the atmosphere of a room. With their vast range of colours, textures and qualities they offer unlimited design possibilities.

Churchill (1993) and Rutt (1967) advise that when selecting fabrics, it is advisable to take along a sample of upholstery materials or some threads from the carpet. These can be used to select the appropriate materials. The pattern on the fabric should depend on the amount of pattern already in the room. In the same way, the colour chosen will depend on the colours that already exist in the room. Clever use of colour in fabrics transforms the atmosphere of a room. The texture of the drapery must also agree with the style and mood of the room. With their vast range of colours, textures and qualities, fabrics offer unlimited design possibilities in room-by-room decoration (Pile, 1988).

2.3.3 Decorating Rooms in the House

Wharton and Codman (1978) explain that before decorating a room, it is essential to consider what purpose the room is to be used for. It is not enough to label it with a general designation as a "library" or a "bedroom", but the library or bedroom best suited to the person who will use it. Seldom should a room be completely furnished all at once, but it should grow according to a well-organised plan. Whether the room is being furnished for the first time or is undergoing modifications, the mood and function of the room should be determined. Allen (1985) suggests that once this is done, inappropriate ideas should not be allowed to divert the unified atmosphere desired. On the other hand, no rooms should adhere so rigidly to a theme that it becomes monotonous. Harmony with diversity should be the ultimate goal.

Privacy, as a need, is fundamental in house furnishing. Each room in a house presents a unique problem according to its individual use: some are made to sleep in, others are for eating, studying or conversing. Whatever the uses of a room, it is seriously interfered with if it is not preserved as a small world by itself (Lewis, 1987; Wharton and Codman, 1978).

The component parts of an undecorated room are its floor, ceiling, wall spaces and openings. The openings consist of the doors, windows and fireplace. All these form an important part of the decoration process. In deciding upon a scheme of decoration, it is necessary to keep in mind the relation of furniture to ornament, and of the room as a whole to other rooms in the house (Wharton and Codman, 1978). Every house should be

decorated according to a carefully graduated scale of ornamentation culminating in the most important room of the house. However, this must be carried out with such due sense of the relation of the rooms to each other that there shall be no violent break in the continuity of treatment. Concerning colour use, the fewer the colours used in a room, the more pleasing and restful the result will be. For greater aesthetic appearance, the use of accessories is important.

2.3.4 The Use of Accessories

Accessories, as described by Forster (1985) and Rutt (1967), are the elements that bring charm, individuality and vitality to a room. Accessories help to stress the decorative idea of a room and can be the ultimate expression of the style of furnishing that is employed. They form the heart and soul of a room, introducing humour and interest (Scattergood, 1997). Furthermore, accessories can portray the very essence of the theme of a home. By using accessories, the persons decorating the homes also have a special opportunity to express their originality and personality (Forster, 1985). The accessories can either be functional (such as ashtrays and lamps) or decorative (such as pictures and plants).

Furnishings depend on accessories for charming effects. Decorative accessories supply the indispensable finishing touches to a room as dress accessories do to a costume. Accessories are not chosen for their beauty alone but also for what they can do to promote the appearance of the room as a unit. Pile (1988) advises that accessories should be placed at important points in a room. There they create the focal centres to give the eyes pleasant resting-places. By holding the attention at the points of interest, they simplify

and unify the design of a room. Lewis (1987) gives the following guidelines on the choice of accessories:

Expressiveness

The accessories should be chosen to express the same idea as the home itself. Each accessory should be there for a purpose. It may be useful, beautiful or meaningful to you.

The Design

The accessories should blend with the general design feeling of the home. Accessories should have the same general line and form as the furniture.

Colour

An accessory should be carefully related in colour to the furnishings of the room where it is placed.

2.4 RELATED STUDIES IN KENYA

Very little research has been carried out locally on interior decoration. However, Ndirangu (1988) carried out an investigation on some Nairobi and Coastal restaurants. He sought to establish the nature of spaces and how effective they were in creating a better-built environment. The findings indicated that the restaurants required improvements if they were to cater for different guests. They needed interiors in which different types of guests could enjoy the food and company and to ensure that they remembered the experience to enable them return in future. Thus, he called for a domestic approach to the interior decoration of restaurants to make them look homely.

Gichuki (1982) investigated the interiors of some children's homes in Mombasa and Nairobi. He highlighted the dilemma faced by the resident child as a result of the institutional character of the home, and recommended the introduction of small-scale domestic environments that give the feeling of a residential home. Makunda (1997) in his study of "The Domestic Approach to the Design of a Children's Home (Kabete Children's Home) found out that the home was lacking in various aspects such as privacy, comfort and personal identification. The colours used on the walls and for furnishings were particularly dull and unexciting to the children. Thus, both Gichuki (1982) and Makunda (1997) recommended a domestic "homely" approach to the interior decoration of children's homes. Reasons why this domestic homely approach is desired is worth investigating. There is no documented information on research locally done on interior decoration of residential homes. This intrigued the researcher to carry out an investigation of interior decoration of residential homes and establish the reasons why residential interiors are desirable in other institutions.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this study was to investigate interior decoration practices among Kisumu town households. In this chapter, methodological procedures used in this study are outlined. The chapter focuses on:

- Research Design.

- Area of Study.

- Population and Sampling Procedures.

- Research Instruments.

- Data Collection Procedures.

- Data Analysis.

3.1   RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive survey design was used in the study. The survey was used because it explores the relationship between variables in their natural setting as they occur. Variables are not introduced by the researcher but measures can be taken (Sproull, 1988). This kind of design also yields a sizeable volume of data that can be classified by type, frequency and central tendency (Miller, 1991). The purpose of a survey research is to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking the individuals their perceptions, attitudes, behaviour or values (Moore, 1983). Since the study was exploratory, this design was suitable because the information gathered was used to

describe various characteristics that influenced interior decoration practices, and in particular house furnishing, among the respondents.

3.2   THE STUDY AREA

The study area chosen was Kisumu Municipality in Winam Division of Kisumu District, Kenya. The District borders Nyando, Nandi, Bomet, Vihiga and Siaya Districts. A projection made by the Kisumu District Development Plan (1997-2001) indicates that the population should stand at 260,944 persons in 1999, distributed among an approximate number of 47,690 households (GoK, 1997). It is however, not known how these households are distributed in the various estates within the municipality.

Kisumu town is made up of the industrial, commercial, recreational, transportation, public purpose, educational, agricultural and residential zones (Town Hall, Kisumu). All the estates fall under the residential zone. The Municipality has three types of estates namely:

The public estates. These are owned by the council and rent is paid directly to the Town Hall. Some of the public estates include Lumumba, Ondiek, Anderson, Arina, Makasembo, Argwings and Mosque.

Tenant Purchase. The ownership of the houses is transferred to the tenants through loans from the council. Examples of the tenant purchase estates include Okore, Tom Mboya and Migosi.

Housing constructed by individuals and private companies. Individuals or companies buy land and thereafter construct the houses. Dunga, Manyatta, Nyalenda and Kenya Re are examples of such houses constructed by individuals

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and private companies. Milimani estate does not fall into any of these groups but it is an exclusive estate within the municipality inhabited by different groups of people.

The estates are further grouped into low, medium and high-density areas. In the low-density areas, individual plots can be as big as 2 acres, while in the high-density areas, an individual plot can be as small as 0.05 of an acre. It is assumed that the households of the low socio-economic status live in the high-density areas (Town Hall, Kisumu).

A majority of the population within the municipality depend on income from salaries and wages, farm enterprises, commercial businesses and self-employment (GoK, 1997).

The Municipality was chosen because it is the largest and most important urban centre in Western Kenya with various commercial activities. Thus, it gave a contemporary urban setting that was desirable in this study. Furthermore, no study of this kind has ever been carried out in this area.

3.3   POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

3.3.1   Population

The target population of this study was Kenyan families of African origin, residing in Kisumu Municipality's estates of low, middle and high socio economic levels. Using the Town Hall's classification of estates, the accessible population was residents drawn from Milimani, Migosi and Ondiek. The respondent was any person, male or female, who had the decision- making power concerning home furnishings.

3.3.2 Sampling

Using the Municipality's classification of estates, purposive sampling was used to select Milimani, Migosi and Ondiek estates. Purposive sampling was preferred because it reduces the cost of preparing the sample and fieldwork (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999; Neuman, 1997; Fisher, Laing, Stoeckel and Townsend, 1991). Due to stringent security measures taken by the residents in Milimani estate, it was difficult for the researcher to penetrate it using simple random sampling. Therefore, snowball sampling (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999) was used to identify 40 respondents. This kind of sampling also enabled the researcher to exclude the Asians, who form a majority of the residents, from the study's sample. This was done to get uniform representation from all the three estates. Migosi estate had 2000 plots and each plot should consist of two units each. Since there were no records of complete and incomplete units, a central point was identified. From this point, 10 households each were selected from four different directions. Ondiek estate consists of 100 units. To identify the respondents, systematic random sampling was used. Every second house was selected until 40 respondents were obtained. Random sampling was preferred to give everybody an equal chance of being selected. The sampling process is shown in the following diagram:

Flowchart (sampling procedure)

```
              ┌─────────┐
              │ ESTATES │
              └─────────┘
           ╱       │        ╲
          ╱        │         ╲
    ┌───────┐  ┌────────┐  ┌─────┐
    │ High  │  │ Middle │  │ Low │
    └───────┘  └────────┘  └─────┘
        │          │          │
      ┌───┐      ┌───┐      ┌───┐
      │ 1 │      │ 1 │      │ 1 │
      └───┘      └───┘      └───┘
        │          │          │
       40         40         40
   Respondents  Respondents  Respondents
```
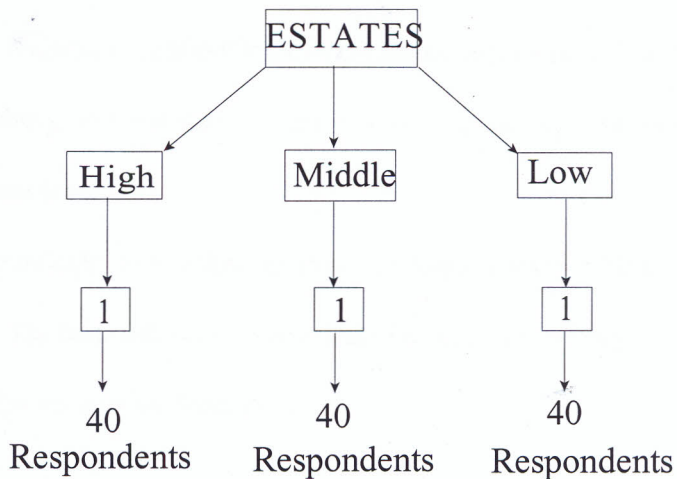
3.4   DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTRUMENTS

The investigation was carried out using an interview schedule and observation checklist. The interview schedule included both structured and semi-structured questions. It was designed to reveal facts about current conditions and interior decoration practices among the respondents. The interview was considered useful because it yields a high response rate (Miller, 1991). It also allowed the researcher to understand and capture the respondent's answers through probing and prompting. The interview also required the presence of the researcher that made it possible to make and record observations.

The observation checklist was used to identify the furnishing items used by the respondents. Observation is a data collection method in which the researcher observes phenomena and records the characteristics of the phenomena.

The following variables were measured:

Interior Decoration Practices

The respondents were asked various questions on their planning, choice and arrangement of furnishings in the house in relation to their knowledge, skills and preferences.

Education level

The respondents were asked to give the highest level of formal education they had attained. The respondents were also asked whether or not they had any formal or informal knowledge on interior decoration.

Income

The researcher read to the respondents various categories of income. They were asked to indicate the category in which their income fell.

Socio-economic status

This variable was measured by the estate one lived in.

3.4.1   Pre-testing of the Instruments

The instruments were pre-tested to check for bias and flaws in design. Pre-testing also helped to improve the familiarity of the researcher with the instruments that were used for data collection.

The data for pre-testing were collected from 12 respondents (10% of the total number of the respondents) with similar characteristics as the study's sample but they were excluded in the final sample. The results of the pre-testing were used to improve the instruments, that is, to correct any questions that were ambiguous, unclear or unreliable. The results

improved the efficiency of the researcher in data collection.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The interviews were set up to take place in the respondents' homes, thus, enabling the interviewer to observe and record information. Arrangements were made with each respondent to meet them at a time convenient to them. Before the interview, the respondent was assured that all the statements they were to make would be held in strict confidence and for research purposes only. The researcher talked to each respondent and created rapport so as to gain the person's confidence. As this conversation took place, the researcher also observed furnishings used in the room. This information was recorded on the checklist. The observations were limited to the sitting/living and dining areas.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively to address the research objectives. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in data analysis. Descriptive statistics and measures of central tendency such as percentages, means, standard deviations and cross tabulations were used to organize, describe and summarize the data on socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents. The qualitative data were summarised into common themes, coded and analysed quantitatively. Results from the checklist were used to identify the furnishing articles used by the respondents and to elaborate the findings from the interviews. The results were presented in form of tables, frequency distributions, a pie chart and a bar graph.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This study was exploratory and the main purpose of was to generate and document information on interior decoration practices among high, middle and low socio-economic households of Kisumu town. To represent each of the above groups, respondents were drawn from Milimani, Migosi and Ondiek Estates.

4.1 IMPORTANT VARIABLES

The researcher intended to gather information from the individuals who determined the purchase and arrangement of furnishings in the households visited. The main variables explored were socio-economic status, interior decoration practices, interior decoration knowledge and income.

4.2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

4.2.1 Gender

The gender of a respondent is believed to have an influence on selection and arrangement of furnishings.

Figure 1   Gender of the Respondents
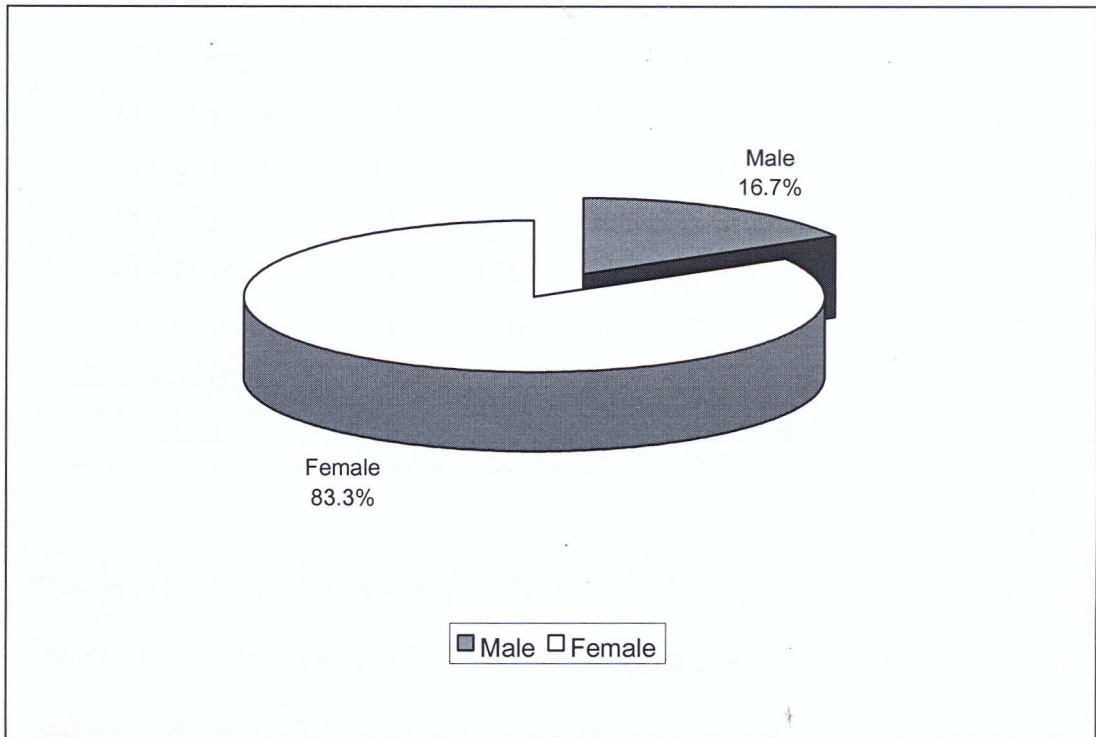
Results in Figure 1 indicate that 100 (83.3%) of the respondents were females while only 20 (16.7%) were males. This could be due to the fact that females are often more concerned about house furnishing than men. Sometimes, women are also considered to have better taste than men in house decoration

4.2.2   Age

The age of the respondents is observed to influence a person's choice on house furnishings. A young homemaker's choice of furnishings is bound to be different from an older person's.

Table 1:   **Respondents age group by estate**

Age group	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
25 – 29 years	10	25.0	2	5.0	-	-	12	10.0
30 – 34 years	10	25.0	13	32.5	2	5.0	25	20.8
35 – 39 years	8	20.0	13	32.5	13	32.5	34	28.3
40 – 44 years	7	17.5	6	15.0	12	30.0	25	20.8
45 – 49 years	4	10.0	1	2.5	11	27.5	16	13.3
50 years and above	1	2.5	5	12.5	2	5.0	8	6.7
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

$$N = 120$$
$$Mean\ age = 38$$

Results in Table 1 exhibit that a higher percentage of the respondents (28.3%) fell within the 35 – 39 year's age group. The other common age groups were 30 – 34 years (20.8%) and 40 – 44 years (20.8%). Only 6.7% fell in the age group of 50 years and above. Kisumu being an urban area, it is expected that most of the respondents in the study would belong to the working population that is normally between 26 – 55 years.

The results also reflect that most of the respondents were relatively young, with 71 respondents falling within the age groups of 35 – 39 years and below. In comparison, Migosi and Milimani had more respondents whose ages ranged between 30 – 44 years and 35 – 39 years, respectively. This could be attributed to the fact that Ondiek is a low – income estate and would therefore attract people with a low income, most of whom could have just started working. On the other hand, Milimani is a high-income estate and so may only attract those who are well established financially, most of whom may be 35 years and above.

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4.2.3   Marital status

Marital status does influence one's selection and arrangement of furnishings. Spinsters'
or bachelors' choice of furnishings will differ from those of a family comprising of
parents and children.

Table 2:   Marital status by estate

Marital status	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
Single	7	17.5	3	7.5	3	7.5	13	10.8
Married	30	75.0	28	70.0	32	80.0	90	75.0
Widowed	2	5.0	5	12.5	4	10.0	11	9.2
Divorced	-	-	1	2.5	-	-	1	0.8
Separated	1	2.5	3	7.5	1	2.5	5	4.2
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N=120

Table 2 indicates that 90 (75%) respondents in the sample were married and only 13
(10.8%) were single. The distribution of the married respondents in the three estates was
almost equal. Comparatively, a higher percentage of the single respondents were from
Ondiek estate (17.5%). This could be because most of the respondents from this estate
are younger, and may not have fully established themselves, in order to settle down to a
married life. Therefore, they chose the estate as a residential area due to its low rate of
rent.

4.2.4 Occupation

The occupation of an individual is bound to influence the person's choice of house furnishings. The individuals with better paying jobs are expected to select furnishings that would otherwise be out of reach for those individuals with low paying jobs.

Table 3:   Respondents' occupation by estate

Occupation	Ondiek n	Ondiek %	Migosi n	Migosi %	Milimani n	Milimani %	Total sample N	Total sample %
Medics	-	-	1	2.5	1	2.5	2	1.7
Paramedics	2	5	6	15.0	2	5.0	10	8.3
Legal workers	-	-	-	-	4	10.0	4	3.3
Social workers	1	2.5	-	-	2	5.0	3	2.5
Bankers	-	-	-	-	3	7.5	3	2.5
Managers	-	-	-	-	4	10.0	4	3.3
Business	1	2 .5	-	-	7	17.5	8	6.7
Architects/Engineers	-	-	-	-	3	7.5	3	2.5
Housewife	2	5.0	-	-	2	5.0	4	3.3
Educationists	-	-	5	12.5	1	2.5	6	5.0
Insurance Agents	-	-	1	2.5	1	2.5	2	1.7
Accountants	-	-	1	2.5	1	2.5	2	1.7
Office support staff	5	12.5	4	10.0	2	5.0	11	9.2
Pensioner	-	-	1	2.5	-	-	1	0.8
Senior civil servant	9	22.5	19	47.5	6	15.0	34	28.3
Junior civil servant	20	50.0	2	5.0	1	2.5	23	19.2
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

Information in Table 3 denotes that 34 (28.3%) were senior civil servants. There was only 1 (0.8%) pensioner, 2(1.7%) medics, insurance agents 2 (1.7%) and accountants 2 (1.7%). However, the results indicate that there were more civil servants in Migosi 19 (47.5) and Ondiek 9 (22.5) than Milimani 6 (15%). This could be due to the fact that civil servants are not paid as highly as those in the private sector and other occupations. Therefore, they opt to seek cheaper accommodation in estates like Ondiek and Migosi. It

is also important to note that most of the respondents in occupations that are considered prestigious were from Milimani such as legal workers 4 (3.3%), managers 4 (3.3%), architects and engineers 3 (2.5%), and business 7 (5.9%).

Only 1 (0.8%) junior civil servant was from Milimani and this could be attributed to the fact that Milimani residents were highly educated, therefore, they had better paying jobs or flourishing businesses. People in occupations that are often considered less prestigious inhabited Ondiek and Migosi estates. Thus, Milimani residents would choose higher quality furniture as compared to Migosi and Ondiek respondents.

4.2.5   Education level

The homemaker's level of education is normally associated with the standard of living, as higher levels of formal education are associated with improved standards. The person is also expected to make wise choices even in house furnishing.

Figure 2:   Highest education level by estate
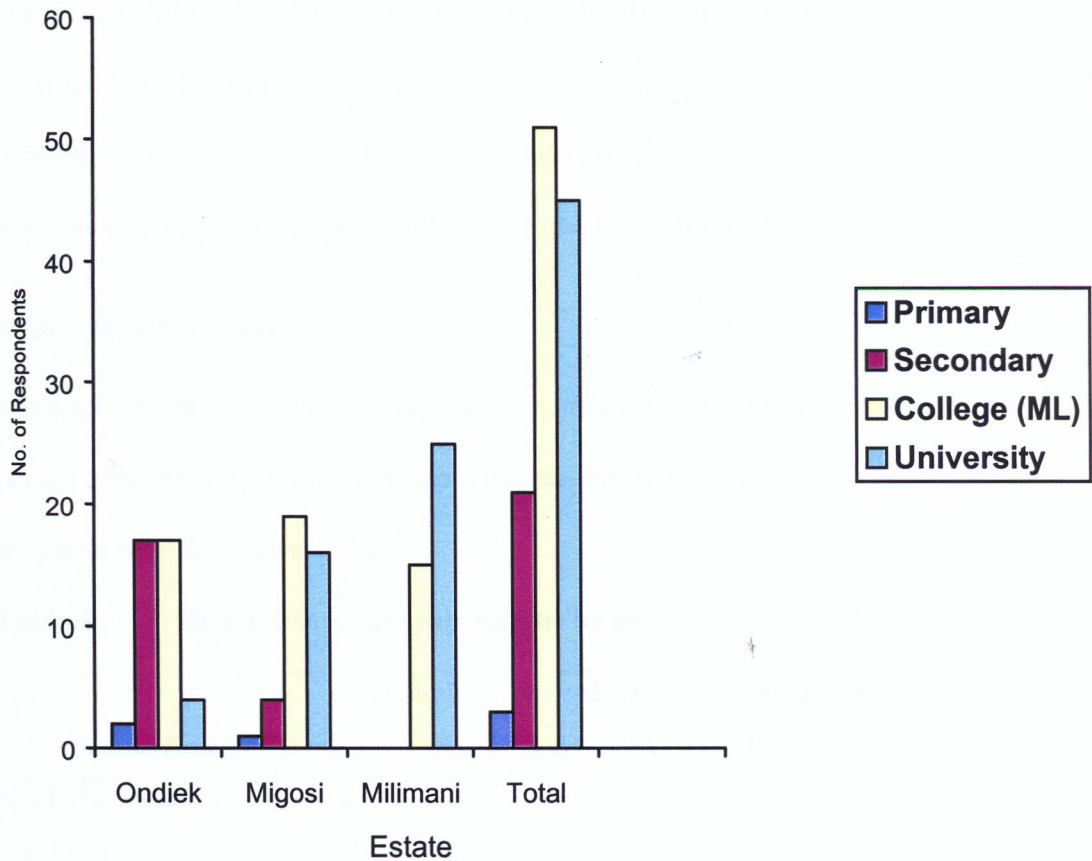
The results in figure 2 indicate that most of the respondents 51 (42.5%) had received college training while 45 (37.5%) had attained university education. Twenty-five (62.5%) of the Milimani respondents had received university education compared to the respondents from Migosi 16 (40%) and Ondiek 4 (10%). It is also important to note that all the respondents from Milimani 40 (100%) had either middle level college or university education.

Those people who have a high educational level are often associated with good living. They are likely to get better paying jobs hence a higher income. The high income would enable them to afford high rent, mortgage or buy the plot and construct their own houses. As a result of the high income, the Milimani residents would also be willing to spend more on elaborate furnishings than their counter parts in Migosi and Ondiek. This also explains why very few junior civil servants came from Milimani.

4.2.6   Monthly income

The respondents' income was an important variable because it gives an indication of the person's purchasing power. It influences the selection of house furnishings, as people can only own what they can acquire.

Table 4:   **Respondents' monthly income by estate**

Income(Kshs)	Ondiek n	Ondiek %	Migosi n	Migosi %	Milimani n	Milimani %	Total sample N	Total sample %
None (Dependent)	2	5.0	-	-	-	-	2	1.7
5000 and below	17	42.5	-	-	1	2.5	18	15.0
5001 – 10000	10	25.0	7	17.5	2	5.0	19	15.8
10001 – 15000	9	22.5	18	45.0	-	-	27	22.5
150001 – 20000	2	5.0	8	20.0	5	12.5	15	12.5
20001 & above	-	-	7	17.5	32	80.0	39	32.5
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

Respondents' mean income (Kshs):

Ondiek   =   6,855
Migosi   = 14,375
Milimani = 20,625

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Data presented in Table 4 show that majority 39 (32.5%) of all the respondents earned Kshs. 20,000 and above, while only 2 (1.7%) had no income of their own. However, majority 17 (42.5%) of the respondents from Ondiek earned less than Kshs 5,000 per month. None of the respondents from Migosi and only 1 (2.5%) from Milimani had a monthly income below Kshs. 5,000. Milimani had the highest number 32 (80%) of respondents with a monthly income above Kshs 20,000, while Ondiek had none and Migosi had 7 (17.5%) only. These findings could be attributed to the fact that Milimani residents had better paying occupations, compared to the Migosi and Ondiek residents. Milimani had a mean income of Kshs. 20, 625, Migosi Kshs 14,375 and Ondiek Kshs. 6,855. The differences in the mean income could be because Ondiek had a higher percentage of civil servants (72.5%) than Migosi (52.5%) and Milimani (17.5%), yet they are not paid as well as those in other occupations. Majority 38 (95%) of the respondents from Ondiek earned a monthly income of Kshs. 15,000 and below. All the respondents (100%) from Migosi earned between Kshs. 5,000 and Kshs. 20,000 or more, while thirty-seven (92.5) of the Milimani respondents earned between Kshs 15,000 and Kshs 20,000 or more. Two (5%) of the respondents from Ondiek had no income of their own, but depended on the spouse's income whose amount could not be established.

According to Odak and Seba (1974), the direction of the economy and geographical conditions to some extent determine material culture, for example, in the type of buildings and residence, food, furniture and other items used by the individual. When the economy is strong, people earn more. Therefore, it is expected that those people with a higher monthly income like the Milimani residents would spend more on the selection

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and purchase of house furnishings while those with a lower monthly income are likely to spend a higher percentage of their income on food and other basic necessities.

4.2.7   Source of income

Table 5:   **Respondents' source of income by estate**

Source of income	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total Sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
Salaried employment	32	80.0	29	72.5	14	35.0	75	62.5
Business	1	2.5	1	2.5	9	22.5	11	9.2
Business and salaried employment	5	12.5	9	22.5	15	37.5	29	24.4
Casual labour	-	-	-	-	1	2.5	1	0.8
Pension	-	-	1	2.5	-	-	1	0.8
Spouse's income	2	5.0	-	-	1	2.5	3	2.5
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

The results in Table 5 disclose that 75 (62.5%) of all the respondents relied on salaried employment while only 1 (0.8%) relied on casual labour and spouse's income respectively. Another 29 (24%) had both business and salaried employment, most of whom 15 (12.5%) came from Milimani estate. Only 1 (2.5%) respondent from Milimani and none from Ondiek and Migosi relied on casual labour. This differs from what was expected, that majority of the respondents from Ondiek were casual labourers. This could be attributed to the reason that the estate is owned by the municipal council and is situated within the town centre precincts. Its rate of rent is also low. Therefore, it attracts a large majority of the employed population. The casual labourers are, therefore, pushed to the slum areas of the town such as Nyalenda and Obunga. The casual labourer from Milimani could be having a well-paid spouse so they could afford to live in the estate.

The source of income is an important variable as it gives an indication of the earnings of an individual. It is expected that people who might be having two sources of income boost their purchasing power. Therefore, they can buy what others may consider costly. They can also afford to buy sophisticated and intricate house furnishings that other people may consider luxurious.

4.2.8   Number of household members

The number of members in a household is bound to influence the choice of house furnishings and even the arrangement of various articles in the house. A household with fewer members would have enough space for various activities and articles than that with many members.

Table 6:   **Number of household members by estate**

Number of h/h members	Ondiek n	%	Migosi n	%	Milimani n	%	Total sample N	%
1	5	12.5	1	2.5	-	-	6	5.0
2	4	10.0	2	5.0	5	37.5	9	7.5
3	5	12.5	1	2.5	3	7.5	9	7.5
4	2	5.0	3	7.5	12	30.0	17	4.2
5	7	17.5	11	27.5	16	40.0	34	28.3
6	5	12.5	6	15.0	4	10.0	25	12.5
7	2	5.0	4	10.0	1	2.5	7	5.8
8	4	10.0	6	15.0	1	2.5	11	9.2
9	2	7.5	3	7.5	-		5	4.2
10	3	2.5	-	-	-		3	2.5
11	1	-	-	-	-		1	0.8
12	-		2	5.0	-		2	1.7
15			1	2.5	-		1	0.8
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

The results in Table 6 point that 34 (28.3%) had households of 5 members each, most of whom 16 (13.3%) came from Milimani estate. Most (95%) of the respondents from Milimani had households of 6 members or less. In Migosi, 33 (82.5%) respondents had households that comprised 5 members or more, while 34 (85%) respondents from Ondiek had households of between 1 and 8 members each.

The above results could be attributed to the fact that Ondiek estate attracts different kinds of people because of its low rate of rent. Those people who have just started working and are still single or those who are working but are lowly paid are bound to live in it. Respondents from Milimani had smaller households probably because they were financially stable and could decide on exactly what they wanted in life. They could also choose to have smaller families so as to provide each member with enough space and the necessary furnishings. More educated individuals also know the advantages of small families and are informed about family planning (Hailu, 1993).

4.2.9 Size of house

The size of house has a direct influence on the type and size of furnishings to be bought. A person who has a large house with unlimited space can choose different sizes and shapes of furniture while a person with a smaller house and limited space may be forced to choose smaller pieces that can fit in the available space.

Table 7:   Size of house by estate

Size of house	Ondiek n	Ondiek %	Migosi n	Migosi %	Milimani n	Milimani %	Total sample N	Total sample %
1 – 2 rooms	12	30.0	-	-	-	-	12	10.0
3 – 4 rooms	15	37.5	5	12.5	-	-	20	16.7
5 – 6 rooms	13	32.5	16	40.0	3	7.5	32	26.7
7 – 8 rooms	-	-	19	47.5	30	75.0	49	40.8
9 rooms and above	-	-	-	-	7	17.5	7	5.8
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

The results in Table 7 portray that 49 (40.8%) of all the respondents had 7 – 8 roomed houses. Majority (75%) of the respondents from Milimani had 7 – 8 roomed houses compared to the respondents from Migosi (47.5%) and Ondiek (0%). All the 40 (100%) respondents from Ondiek had houses that were either 5 – 6 roomed or smaller, while 35 (87.5%) of the respondents from Migosi had houses that ranged from 5 – 6 roomed to 7 – 8 roomed.

These results could be attributed to the fact the respondents from Milimani had better paying jobs and so could afford to either rent, buy or build bigger houses.

4.2.10 Status of occupancy

The status of occupancy in a residential house is important because it influences the kind of furnishings to be bought.

Table 8:   **Status of occupancy by estate**

State of occupancy	Ondiek n	Ondiek %	Migosi n	Migosi %	Milimani n	Milimani %	Total sample N	Total sample %
Rented	36	90.0	26	65.0	14	35.0	76	63.3
Owned	4	10.0	14	35.0	26	65.0	44	36.7
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

It is demonstrated in Table 8 above that 76 (63.3%) of all the respondents had rented their houses. However, 26 (65%) of the respondents from Milimani owned their houses while only 14 (35%) from Migosi and 4 (10%) from Ondiek owned their houses. It is interesting to note that majority of the Ondiek respondents (90%) and Migosi respondents (65%) had rented their houses. It is expected that the people who own the houses they live in would select costly and longer lasting furnishings, as they would not be threatened to vacate the premises. The fear of the furnishings not fitting in the new premises is, therefore, eliminated. Thus, the respondents from Milimani would be expected to buy more elaborate furnishings.

4.3   INTERIOR DECORATION PRACTICES

4.3.1   Knowledge on interior decoration

It is believed that an individual who is knowledgeable in interior decoration will carefully select house furnishings and skillfully arrange them. One who has interior decoration knowledge is expected to employ the elements and principles of interior design in house furnishing.

Table 9:   Knowledge on interior decoration by estate

	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total sample	
	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%
No	17	42.5	14	35.0	8	20.0	39	32.5
Yes	23	57.5	26	65.0	32	80.0	81	67.5
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

The results in Table 9 reflect that 81 (67.5%) of all the respondents admitted to having some interior decoration knowledge. However, 32 (80%) of the Milimani respondents had interior decoration knowledge while only 26 (65%) and 23 (57.5%) came from Migosi and Ondiek respectively. This could be because majority of the Milimani respondents had attained higher educational levels than their counterparts.

According to Pile (1988), interior decoration involves the weaving together of the building structure planning of spaces and considering the effects of colour, pattern, texture and light as a whole. To furnish a house, therefore, one needs to understand the total structure in relation to the furnishings. Since interior design is a concept that few people are familiar with in Kenya, it was surprising that majority admitted to having the knowledge. This could be attributed to the fact that majority of the respondents had formal education so they could be having some elementary perceptions on interior decoration.

4.3.2   Acquisition of interior decoration knowledge

When asked where they had acquired the interior decoration knowledge, forty one (34.2%) of all the respondents stated that they acquired their interior decoration

knowledge through exposure while only 23 (19.2%) and 17 (14.2%) acquired their knowledge through college and school respectively. Most (65%) of the respondents from Milimani acquired their knowledge through exposure compared to those from Ondiek (12.5%) and Migosi (25%).

These results could be attributed to the fact that most of the respondents from Milimani had acquired university education and would therefore be more informed than their counterparts from Migosi and Ondiek. Thus, even though interior decoration may not have been their line of study, they used other forums to get information.

4.3.3   Knowledge on house furnishing

This variable sought to establish whether the respondents had any knowledge on house furnishing. It is expected that one who is knowledgeable on house furnishing would plan, select and arrange furnishings according to the space available and the needs of the users of the house they live in.

The respondents were asked whether they had any knowledge on house furnishing and results disclose that 112 (93.3%) admitted to having knowledge on house furnishing. All the 40 (100%) respondents from Milimani had knowledge on house furnishing while 37 (92.5) from Migosi and 35 (87.5%) from Ondiek admitted to having knowledge on house furnishing too. This could be because most of the respondents from all the three estates had some formal education and are in some formal employment. Therefore, they could easily understand and acquire knowledge on house furnishing.

4.3.4 Respondent's perception of house furnishing

This variable sought to capture the respondents' understanding of house furnishing.

Table 10:   Respondent's perception of house furnishing by estate

Perception	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total sample	
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
Buying furniture for the house	10	25.0	7	17.5	22	55.0	39	32.5
Arranging furniture	6	15.0	15	37.5	3	7.5	24	20.0
Buying and arranging furniture	8	20.0	11	27.5	11	27.5	30	25.0
Orderly arrangement of furnishings in the house	4	10.0	2	5.0	1	2.5	7	5.8
Decorating the house	8	20.0	2	5.0	3	7.5	13	10.8
Not applicable	4	10.0	3	7.5	-	-	13	10.8
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

The results in Table 10 establish that 32.5% of all the respondents understood house furnishing to mean buying furniture for the house, 22 (18.3%) of whom came from Milimani estate. Only 30 (25%) understood house furnishing to mean both buying and arranging furniture. The least common (5.8%) reason given was that of orderly arrangement of furnishings in the house. These results differ from what was expected. It was assumed that majority of those who admitted to have some knowledge in house furnishing would understand it as buying and arranging of both hard and soft furnishings.

These unexpected results may be due to the assumption that the duty of house furnishing ends with the purchase of the articles. Since the Milimani respondents were generally

financially stable they could change their furniture when they deemed necessary. Therefore, they would simply understand house furnishing to mean buying of furniture. To test the understanding of the respondents on house furnishing, a series of statements were read to the respondents. They were to give their approval or disapproval of the statements. They were to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Table 11 represents the results.

Table11: Respondents' understanding of interior decoration by estate

Indicator	Estate	Strongly disagree N	%	Disagree n	%	Undecided n	%	Agree n	%	Strongly agree n	%
Furnishing a house is important	Ondiek	1	2.5	1	2.5	-	-	11	27.5	27	67.5
	Migosi	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	20.0	32	80.0
	Milimani	-	-	1	2.5	1	2.5	15	37.5	23	57.5
Good furnishings must be expensive	Ondiek	6	15.0	12	30.0	-	-	7	17.5	15	37.5
	Migosi	3	7.5	20	50.0	3	7.5	7	17.5	7	17.5
	Milimani	6	15.0	13	32.5	-	-	20	50.0	1	2.5
It is important to consider the colour of walls when furnishing.	Ondiek	-	-	5	12.5	5	12.5	13	32.5	17	42.5
	Migosi	-	-	-	-	1	2.5	16	40.0	23	57.5
	Milimani	-	-	2	5.0	1	2.5	25	62.5	12	30.0
Curtains, chairs and other furnishings must be the same colour	Ondiek	4	10.0	10	25.0	5	12.5	13	32.5	8	20.0
	Migosi	4	10.0	17	42.5	2	5.0	10	25.0	7	17.5
	Milimani	1	2.5	23	57.5	-	-	16	40.0	-	-
Furnishings must be considered among other household priorities	Ondiek	2	5.0	3	7.5	2	5.0	24	60.0	9	22.5
	Migosi	-	-	4	10.0	2	5.0	17	42.5	17	42.5
	Milimani	2	5.0	4	10.0	-	-	15	37.5	19	47.5

Statement	Location										
Furnishings from showrooms are better than local carpenters	Ondiek	7	17.5	16	40.0	1	2.5	5	12.5	11	27.5
	Migosi	11	27.5	17	42.5	2	5.0	5	12.5	5	12.5
	Milimani	4	10.0	24	60.0	-	-	11	27.5	1	2.5
Good furniture styles must be comfortable for use	Ondiek	1	2.5	8	20.0	-	-	15	37.5	16	40.0
	Migosi	1	2.5	1	2.5	-	-	14	35.0	24	60.0
	Milimani	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	20.0	32	80.0
Furnishings chosen must suit a person's lifestyle	Ondiek	5	12.5	2	5.0	5	12.5	13	32.5	15	37.5
	Migosi	-	-	1	2.5	-	-	18	45.0	21	52.5
	Milimani	-	-	1	2.5	-	-	14	35.0	25	62.5

Generally, most respondents strongly agreed that furnishing a house is important (68.3%). Likewise, a majority of the households also strongly agreed with the following statements: Good furniture styles must be comfortable for use (60%), furnishings chosen must be suitable for its use (61.7%) and furnishings chosen must suit a person's lifestyle (50%). The fact that many of the respondents were in general agreement with the latter could have some cultural implications. Even though Kisumu, is a cosmopolitan town, many of the inhabitants are Luos who come from the surrounding districts, and the Luos are believed to be very conscious about their social status. Hence the view that furnishings ought to reflect a person's lifestyle.

Twenty-two (18.3) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 57 (47.5) disagreed that furnishings from showrooms are better than those from local carpenters. This could be due to the fact that there were some very skilled carpenters who were also used to produce some of the furnishings in the showrooms, so they could also be used by individuals to produce the same kind of furnishings.

Majority of the respondents were in general agreement with the following statements: Furnishing a house is important (96.6%), it is important to consider the colour of the walls when furnishing (88.3%), furnishings must be considered among other priorities (84.2%), good furniture styles must be comfortable for use (90.8%), furnishings chosen must suit a person's lifestyle (88.3%), most good furniture must be made of hard wood (75.8%) and furniture chosen must be suitable for its use (99.2%). However, the respondents generally disagreed with the following statements: good furnishings must be expensive (50%), curtains, chairs and other furnishings must be of the same colour

(49.2%) and furnishings from showrooms are better than those from local carpenters (65.8%).

The above results indicate that majority of the respondents were positive towards interior decoration as they agreed with most of the statements. When the responses were studied by estate, there were no distinct differences between the three estates. However, Migosi respondents generally agreed that furnishing a house is important (100%). Milimani had 95% and Ondiek 95% agreeing with the statement. On good furnishings must be expensive, 55% of the respondents from Ondiek and 52.5% from Milimani generally agreed with the statement while 57.5% of the respondents from Migosi disagreed with the statement. Most (97.5%) of the Migosi respondents agreed with the statement that it is important to consider the colour of the walls when furnishing, while 92.5% from Milimani and 75% from Ondiek agreed with the statement too.

Most of the Milimani respondents (60%) disagreed with the statement that curtains, chairs and other furnishings must be the same colour, while only 52.5% of the respondents' from Migosi disagreed with the statement. 52.5% of the respondents from Ondiek agreed with the above statement. These results could be due to the fact that the respondents from Milimani had higher educational levels and so they could be aware that colours do not have to be the same to create harmony.

Most of the Migosi (85%) and Milimani (85%) respondents generally agreed with the statement that furnishings must be considered among other priorities. More of the Migosi (70%) and Milimani (70%) respondents generally agreed with the statement that

furnishings from showrooms are better than those from local carpenters, than the respondents from Ondiek (57.5%). All respondents (100%) from Milimani generally agreed with the statement that good furniture styles must be comfortable for use, compared to the respondents from Migosi (95%) and Ondiek (77.5%). More of the Milimani (97.5%) and Migosi (97.5%) respondents generally agreed with the statement that the furnishings chosen must suit a person's lifestyle, than the respondents from Ondiek (70%). On the statement that most good furniture must be made of hardwood, 90% of the respondents from Milimani, 72.5% from Migosi and 65% from Ondiek generally agreed with it. However, all the respondents from Ondiek (100%) and Migosi (100%) generally agreed with the statement that furniture chosen must be suitable for its use, compared to those respondents from Milimani (97.5%).

The above results indicate that majority of the respondents across the three estates were generally positive towards house furnishing. This could be due to the reason that majority of them had knowledge on house furnishing. It could also be due to the fact that majority had formal education and were in some formal employment so they were generally exposed. In this way they learnt more on house furnishing.

To further test the knowledge of the respondents, the indicators were assigned scores. For each correct answer, a score of 1 point was given. Incorrect answers scored 0.

Table 12: Percentage Scores of Respondents' knowledge of house furnishing

		Scores					
		1		0		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
a.	Furnishing a house is important	116	97.5	3	2.5	119[*]	100
b.	Good furnishings must be expensive	57	48.8	60	51.2	117[**]	100
c.	It is important to consider the colour of the walls when furnishing	106	93.8	7	6.2	113[***]	100
d.	Curtains, chairs and other Furnishings must be the same colour	54	47.8	59	52.2	113[****]	100
e.	Furnishings must be considered among other household priorities	101	87.1	15	12.9	116[+]	100
f.	Furnishings from showrooms are Better than those from local Carpenters	38	32.5	79	67.5	117[++]	100
g.	Good furniture styles must be Comfortable for use	109	90.8	11	9.2	120	100
h. i.	Most good furniture must be made of Hardwood	91	78.4	25	21.6	116[+++]	100
j.	Furniture chosen must be suitable for its use	119	98.3	1	0.8	120	100

*	1 respondent was not sure about this indicator.
**	3 respondent were undecided
****	7 respondents were undecided.
+	4 respondents were undecided
++	3 respondents were undecided.
+++	4 respondents were undecided.

The results in Table 12 point that 119 (98.3%) were aware about suitability of furniture chosen to their use. Only one (0.8%) was not concerned about suitability of furniture chosen to their use. One hundred and sixteen (95.9%) seemed informed that furnishing a house is important. This indicates that the respondents valued the issue of furnishing their houses. Table 12 also points that 109 (90.1%) of the respondents were aware that furniture styles must be comfortable for use. Therefore, they placed emphasis on comfort of the furniture styles when buying. The colour of the walls was an important aspect when furnishing and 106 (87.6%) were aware of this. It was interesting to note that only 38 (31.4%) seemed to be aware that furniture from showrooms are not necessarily better than those from local carpenters. In fact, they could produce similar or better furniture given the facilities required.

The above results could be attributed to the fact that all the respondents had received formal education. Therefore, they were more informed and so could consider several aspects before furnishing their houses.

From the scores in Table 12, knowledge index was calculated and those that fell between 1-4 were rated as low. Those that fell at 5 were rated average while those that fell between 6-9 were rated high. The knowledge index shows whether one is informed in a given area.

Table: 13 Percentage distribution of rate of knowledge of the respondents

K index		n	%
2-4	(low rate)	5	4.1
5	(average rate)	14	11.7
6-9	(High rate)	77	64.2
		96*	100

*24 respondents were not sure.

The results in Table 13 exhibit that only 5 (4.1%) respondents had a low rate of knowledge on house furnishing that ranged between 2-4, while 14(11.7%) had an average rate of 5. Majority (64.2%) had a high rate of knowledge that ranged between 6-9. These results could be attributed to the fact all the respondents had received formal education. Majority had also admitted to having knowledge on interior decoration and house furnishing. This gave them the desire to look for information to enable them keep pace with what is current in house furnishing.

4.3.5   Sources of information

Information sources are bound to influence an individual's choices in the selection and purchase of house furnishing articles.

Table 14:   Sources of information by estate

Source	Estate	n	%	Total sample N(%)
Home Magazines	Ondiek	38	95.0	
	Migosi	37	92.5	
	Milimani	37	92.5	112(93.3)
Exhibitions/Shows	Ondiek	38	95.0	
	Migosi	38	95.0	
	Milimani	40	100	116(96.7)
Displays	Ondiek	35	87.5	
	Migosi	35	87.5	
	Milimani	40	100	110(91.7)
Newspaper advertisements	Ondiek	37	92.5	
	Migosi	36	90.0	
	Milimani	40	100	113(94.2)
Association with friends	Ondiek	38	95.0	
	Migosi	38	95.0	
	Milimani	39	97.5	115(95.8)
Electronic media	Ondiek	36	90.0	
	Migosi	37	92.5	
	Milimani	40	100	113(94.2)
Workshops/seminars	Ondiek	5	12.5	
	Migosi	7	17.5	
	Milimani	16	40.0	28(23.3)

N = 120

The results in Table 14 shows that public exhibitions and agricultural shows had the highest percentage (96.7%) in informing the respondents. However, all the other sources were quite informative with over 108 (90%) of all the respondents admitting to having been informed through them. Only 8 (23.3%) received information through seminars or workshops. The results indicate that all the respondents had access to various sources of information. Workshops and seminars were least informative probably because of the diverse occupations of the respondents.

4.3.6 Decision-maker on house furnishing

Table 15: Decision-maker on house furnishing by estate

Decision-maker	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total sample	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
The lady of the house	16	40.0	14	35.0	10	25.0	40	33.3
Couple	12	30.0	20	50.0	26	65.0	58	48.3
The whole family	5	12.5	2	5.0	3	7.5	10	8.3
Husband	7	17.5	4	10.0	1	2.5	12	10.0
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

The results in Table 15 indicate that 58 (48.3%) of all the respondents made house-furnishing decisions as couples. Comparatively, 20 (50%) of the respondents from Migosi made decisions as couples compared to those from Ondiek (30%) and Milimani (48.3%). Only 10 (8.3%) of the respondents made decisions as families, while 12 (10%) respondents said furnishing decisions were made by the husband. Forty (33.3%) of the respondents said that the lady of the house made furnishing decisions. Since majority of the respondents was females, they seemed to play a major role in decision-making concerning home furnishing.

4.3.7 Reason for decision-making

This variable sought to establish the reasons why the individuals mentioned made the house furnishing decisions.

Several reasons were given by the respondents for decision-making. Those respondents who said the lady of the house made house furnishing decisions felt that they did so because they had better taste (12.5%). Some ladies who made decisions on their own did

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so for various reasons: the husband was polygamous (0.8%), the husband was unpredictable (0.8%), they lived alone (12.5%) or they were the only ones employed (10%). Those who made decisions as couples said they did so either to share costs (17.5%), to avoid conflicts (9.2%) or that the house belonged to both of them (20%). Respondents whose husbands decided on the furnishings to be bought did so because they had the money (7.5%). The most common (20%) reason given was that the house belonged to both husband and wife.

4.3.8   Frequency of furniture buying

This variable sought to establish how often the respondents purchased furniture.

Table 16:   Frequency of furniture buying by estate

| | Ondiek | | Migosi | | Milimani | | Total sample | |
Frequency	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
Rarely	20	50.0	17	42.5	3	7.5	40	33.3
Occasionally	19	47.5	23	57.5	37	92.5	79	65.8
Often	1	2.5	-	-	-	-	1	0.8
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N =120

It is evident in Table 16 above that 79 (65.8%) bought furniture occasionally. Most (92.5%) of the Milimani respondents bought their furniture occasionally compared to Migosi (57.5) and Ondiek (47.5). Half (50%) of the Ondiek respondents rarely bought furniture while one (2.5%) often bought furniture. The respondent who often bought furniture could have been doing so because of buying cheap furniture that needed to be changed frequently. None of the Migosi and Milimani respondents often bought furniture. These results could be attributed to the fact that furniture are items that last long and

therefore may not need to be changed as often as soft furnishings. According to Lewis (1987), furniture is a big investment and so can only be bought occasionally.

4.3.9 Place of furniture buying

Furniture outlets preferred by the respondents were an important variable as it gave an indication of a person's socio-economic status. It is expected that a person of high socio-economic status would go for imported furniture in exclusive outlets unlike a person of low socio-economic status.

Table 17:   Place of furniture buying by estate

Place	Estate	n	%	Total sample %
Show rooms	Ondiek	3	7.5	
	Migosi	8	20.0	
	Milimani	30	75.0	41(34.2)
Hire purchase shops	Ondiek	13	32.5	
	Migosi	16	40.0	
	Milimani	6	15.0	35(29.2)
Carpenters/Jua Kali	Ondiek	31	77.5	
	Migosi	37	92.5	
	Milimani	28	70.0	96(80.0)
Auctioneers	Ondiek	-	-	
	Migosi	1	2.5	
	Milimani	1	2.5	2(1.7)
Open-air markets	Ondiek	3	7.5	
	Migosi	6	15.0	
	Milimani	1	2.5	10(8.3)

* Multiple responses allowed

The results in Table 17 show that the most popular outlet for furniture buying was that of carpenters or jua kali artisans (80%). However, 30 (75%) of the Milimani respondents

preferred showrooms and 28 (70%) also preferred carpenters. Most of the respondents from Migosi (90%) and Ondiek (77.5%) preferred carpenters or jua kali artisans. The least preferred outlet by all the respondents was that of auctioneers (1.7%), open air markets (8.3%) and hire purchase shops (29.2%).

These results could be attributed to the fact that most furniture in showrooms is imported and therefore very costly. This could be the reason why majority of the respondents from Migosi and Ondiek shunned them. The respondents from Milimani estate preferred furniture from showrooms because of their uniqueness and good quality. The Milimani respondents also preferred carpenters or jua kali artisans because they could make the furniture to suit their exact requirements. This made it possible for them to buy the type of fabric that suited their taste and existing colour scheme then the carpenters made them according to their specifications. Therefore, they did not have to be tied down by what was available in the shops.

Auctioneers were shunned by most respondents because probably they did not offer one freedom of choice. The other reason could be that auctions are usually carried out during working hours when most people are in the offices. There could also be the fear of being followed by the former owners of the furniture since they were believed to have been recollected from them for failure of honouring some form of credit advanced to them. Hire purchase shops were shunned probably because they were believed to have high interest rates.

4.3.10 Basic number of furnishings

This variable sought to establish the respondents' idea of the basic number of furnishings.

Table 18   Basic number of furnishings by estate

Number of house furnishings	Ondiek N	Ondiek %	Migosi n	Migosi %	Milimani n	Milimani %	Total sample N	Total sample %
One sofa set, table, dining and side board	14	35.0	13	32.5	15	37.5	42	35
Two sofa sets and tables	3	7.5	2	5.0	-	-	5	4.2
Two sofa sets and one table	3	7.5	6	15.0	3	7.5	12	10
Depends on space available	1	2.5	7	17.5	1	2.5	9	7.5
Depends on money available	14	35.0	4	10.0	2	5.0	20	16.7
Enough to satisfy the users	5	12.5	8	20.0	19	47.5	32	26.7
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

It is expressed in Table 18 that 42 (35%) of all the respondents said one set (sofa, coffee table, dining and sideboard) was basic. Thirty-two (26.7%) felt that each household should have enough furniture to satisfy their needs. Majority (47.5%) of the Milimani residents felt that each household should have enough furniture to satisfy their needs

while 37.5% felt that one sofa, one coffee table set and one dining set was basic. Majority (32.5%) of the Migosi respondents felt that one sofa, coffee table and dining set each was basic and respondents from Ondiek (35%) also expressed this.

These results could be attributed to the fact that there was no set basic number of furnishings one could have. Therefore, depending on the resources and amount of available space, a person could set his or her own limits in the number of articles to own.

4.3.11 Frequency of curtain buying

This variable was sought to establish how often the respondents bought curtains. The respondents were asked how often they bought curtains.

Majority (71.7%) of all the respondents bought curtains occasionally. Most (90%) of the Milimani respondents bought their curtains occasionally compared to those from Migosi (65%) and Ondiek (60%). Only 10% from Ondiek and 10% from Migosi often bought curtains. A total of 26(21.7%) of all the respondents said they rarely bought curtains. These results could be attributed to the fact that curtains did not need to be changed as often as clothes. Therefore, they could be occasionally or rarely bought.

4.3.12 Place of buying

This variable sought to establish the outlets used by the respondents to purchase curtains.

Table 19:   Place of curtain buying by estate

Outlet	Estate	n	%	Total sample N(%)
Shops	Ondiek	6	15.0	
	Migosi	14	35.0	
	Milimani	16	40.0	36(30.0)
Open-air markets	Ondiek	32	80.0	
	Migosi	29	72.5	
	Milimani	13	32.5	74(61.7)
Made by tailor	Ondiek	10	25.0	
	Migosi	21	52.5	
	Milimani	29	72.5	60(50.0)
Make by self	Ondiek	19	47.5	
	Migosi	14	35.0	
	Milimani	12	30.0	45(37.5)
Other outlets	Ondiek	-	-	
	Migosi	1	2.5	
	Milimani	-	-	1(0.8)

*   Multiple responses were allowed

It is reflected in Table 19 that 74 (61.7%) bought their curtains from the open-air markets.

Half (50%) had their curtains made by tailors, while 36 (30%) bought their curtains from

shops. Some (37.5%) respondents made their curtains by themselves while only 1 (0.8%)

had other outlets.

Majority (72.5%) of the Milimani respondents had their curtains made by tailors while

majority of the respondents from Ondiek (80%) and Migosi (72.5%) bought their curtains

from the open-air markets.

These results could be attributed to the fact that the second hand curtains got from the

open-air markets were fairly priced and made from unique materials so they appealed to

the users. Good fabrics from the textile shops were expensive and if they were to be made

by commercial tailors, the cost would go up. Therefore, they would be shunned by respondents from Ondiek and Migosi, but appeal to those from Milimani. Probably, the respondents from Milimani preferred going to the shops as it gave them freedom of choice unlike the open-air articles that offered limited freedom of choice.

4.3.13 Adequacy of space

The amount of space available to a person influences his choice of furnishings. The respondents were asked whether the space they had was adequate or inadequate. Seventy-six (63.3%) of all the respondents had adequate space while 44 (36.7%) had inadequate space. Majority (97.5%) of the Milimani respondents had adequate space compared to those from Migosi (55%) and Ondiek (37.5%). Most of the Ondiek respondents (62.5%) had inadequate space. This could be because most of the Ondiek estate houses were rented. Therefore, they were not designed to suit individual needs. The respondents owned majority of the houses in Milimani. This enabled them design the houses according to their individual needs so they found the available space to be adequate. The Milimani respondents also had more rooms (5 – 6 roomed and above) and fewer household members.

4.3.14 Reasons for inadequacy

The respondents who felt that the space they had was inadequate were asked to give the reasons why they felt so.

Table 20:   Reasons for inadequacy

Reason	N	%
We are too many	7	5.8
The space is too small	40	33.3
Not applicable	73	60.8
Total	120	100

N = 120

The respondents gave two reasons: either they were too many (5.8%) or the space was too small (33.3%) (Table 20). Since most of the respondents who had inadequate space came from Ondiek and Migosi, the space available was unsatisfactory because they were either too many or the space was just too small. One respondent from Migosi said thus;

"*My two children, a boy and a girl, share a bedroom and this is not healthy*".

This was also evident from the observations made that majority of the rooms were either small or moderate in size.

4.3.15 Reason for adequacy

The respondents who felt that they had adequate space were asked why they felt so.

Table 21:   Reasons for adequacy

Reason	N	%
We are few	15	12.5
The house is big enough	36	30.0
Each person has enough space	25	20.8
I am alone	2	1.7
Not applicable	42	35.0
Total	**120**	**100**

N=120

Majority (30%) of the respondents who had enough space felt that the house was big enough. The other reasons given for adequacy of space were: each person had enough space (20.8%), they were few (12.5%) or that the person lived alone (1.7%) (Table 21). Most of the respondents who had adequate space came from Milimani estate. Since the houses were generally owned they designed them according to their needs. Therefore, the rooms can be large or each individual could be assigned a personal room. According to Lewis (1987), the important goal of every family is to try and ensure comfort for each person. Since they Milimani residents were financially stable, they could afford to accord each individual enough space in the house.

4.3.16 Grouping of furniture

This variable sought to establish whether the respondents grouped their furniture according to intended use. It is expected that one who is knowledgeable in house furnishing would group the furniture according to use.

Table 22:   **Grouping of furniture by estate**

	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total Sample	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
No	7	17.5	3	7.5	1	2.5	11	9.2
Yes	33	82.5	37	92.5	39	97.5	109	90.8
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

N = 120

The results in Table 22 indicate that 109 (90.8%) of the respondents grouped their furniture according to use. Majority (97.5%) of the Milimani respondents, 92.5% from Migosi and 82.5% from Ondiek grouped their furniture according to use. This could be because majority of the respondents had knowledge on house furnishing. According to

Lewis (1987) interior space is divided into areas according to its intended use. Allen (1985) also confirms that grouping of similar items can be a unifying factor. They can give balance and can pull together unrelated furniture. Thus, the respondents could have realized that it would be more convenient to use the furniture when grouped together. These results concurred with the fact that majority of the respondents had knowledge on house furnishing.

4.3.17 Members' participation in furniture arrangement

Involvement of household members in furnishing arrangement was an important variable. It is expected that if household members were involved in arranging their spaces, a sense of belonging would be developed and they would be more satisfied with their surroundings.

The respondents were asked whether they involved family members in furniture arrangement. Seventy-seven (64.2%) of all the respondents involved the household members in furniture arrangement. Most (80%) of the respondents from Milimani involved the household members in the arrangement compared to those from Migosi (57.5%) and Ondiek (55%). Only 43 (35.8%) of all the respondents did not involve the household members in furniture arrangement. These results could be attributed to the fact that users of a given space in the house will be more comfortable in a place that they have organized by themselves. According to Barclay and Champion (1967), if a person's room is clean, neat, well arranged and colourful, the person will enjoy inviting friends to share it. This could be achieved if the person was involved in arranging it. The other reason could be that these respondents live in an urban centre, had received formal education and

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were exposed. Therefore, they understood the need to allow all household members to participate in furniture arrangement. When users are involved in the process, they find it easier to accept the result. They feel that the resultant space is their own.

4.4 Satisfaction with existing furnishings and space

This variable sought to establish the respondents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the furnishings they had, their way of arrangement and the available space.

Table 23: **Members satisfaction with existing furnishings**

Indicator	Estate	Dissatisfied		Fairly satisfied		Satisfied	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Number/Amount of furnishings	Ondiek	6	15.0	18	45.0	16	40.0
	Migosi	4	10.0	24	60.0	12	30.0
	Milimani	-	-	19	47.5	21	52.5
Amount of available space	Ondiek	18	45.0	10	25.0	12	30.0
	Migosi	12	30.0	14	35.0	14	35.0
	Milimani	2	5.0	5	12.5	33	82.5
Way of arrangement	Ondiek	2	5.0	12	30.0	26	65.0
	Migosi	-	-	17	42.5	23	57.5
	Milimani	-	-	24	60.0	16	40.0
Colours used	Ondiek	6	15.0	13	32.5	21	52.5
	Migosi	2	5.0	17	42.5	21	52.5
	Milimani	1	2.5	4	10.0	35	87.5
Size of the rooms	Ondiek	18	45.0	9	22.5	13	32.5
	Migosi	10	25.0	16	40.0	14	35.0
	Milimani	2	5.0	6	15.0	32	88.0
House design	Ondiek	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5	-	-	1	2.5
	Milimani	1	2.5	-	-	-	-
The paint used	Ondiek	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5	-	-	-	-
	Milimani	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kitchen size	Ondiek	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Migosi	-	-	1	2.5	-	-
	Milimani	-	-	-	-	-	-

N = 120

The results in Table 23 suggest that majority (50.8%) of all the respondents were fairly satisfied with the number of furnishings they had, while 40.8% were fully satisfied. Only 8.3% were dissatisfied with the number of furnishings. It is important to note that 21

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(52.5%) of the respondents from Milimani were satisfied with the number of furnishings they had, 19 (47.5%) were fairly satisfied while none was dissatisfied. Majority of the respondents from Migosi (60%) and Ondiek (45%) were fairly satisfied. This may be attributed to the fact that Milimani residents had a higher income than their counterparts from the other estates. They could therefore buy the kind of furniture and the number they desired.

Majority (82.5%) of the Milimani respondents was satisfied with the amount of available space while only 35% from Migosi and 30% from Ondiek were satisfied. Majority (45%) of the respondents from Ondiek was dissatisfied with the amount of available space. This may be attributed to the fact that the houses in Ondiek were either 2-bedroomed or smaller and yet the households were large. It was also observed that majority of the rooms in the houses in Ondiek were small. This created a situation where the rooms were small and yet the users were many.

Majority (65%) of the respondents from Ondiek were satisfied with their way of arrangement compared to Migosi (57.5%) and Milimani (40%). This could be due to the fact that Milimani respondents were endowed with more space than their counterparts in Ondiek and Migosi. So they arranged the furnishings in the most suitable way. They also saw possibilities of re-arrangement whenever it was necessary. Due to limited space, the respondents from Ondiek had no choice but to be satisfied with the kind of arrangement they had. It is important to note that none of the respondents from Migosi and Milimani were dissatisfied with the way of arrangement while two (5%) of the respondents from Ondiek were dissatisfied.

Most of the Milimani respondents (87.5%) were satisfied with the colours used while only 52.5% of the Ondiek and Migosi respondents were satisfied. This may be due to the fact that the choosing of colours was often a very personal affair. What appealed to one may not necessarily appeal to another. As such a person had to be happy with what had been chosen.

Majority (88%) of the respondents from Milimani were satisfied with the size of rooms compared to 35% from Migosi and 32.5% from Ondiek. However, 18(45%) respondents from Ondiek were dissatisfied with the size of rooms and nine (22.5%) were fairly satisfied. Ten (25%) of the respondents from Migosi were dissatisfied while 16(40%) were fairly satisfied. This could be due to the fact that majority of the Milimani residents owned their houses, thus, the rooms were designed in sizes that suited their needs.

The respondents also expressed other issues that they were dissatisfied with such as house design (1.7%) and the paint used (0.8%). One respondent was fairly satisfied with the kitchen size.

The above results concur with what was observed, that most of the Milimani respondents' rooms were large and they had enough spaces between the furniture for movement. They also tried to harmonise their colours as much as possible.

4.5 Problems faced in house furnishing

This variable sought to establish the problems the respondents faced in furnishing their houses.

Table 24: **Problems faced in house furnishing by estate**

Problem	Ondiek		Migosi		Milimani		Total sample	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
None	3	7.5	1	2.5	3	7.5	7	5.8
Financial	23	57.5	23	57.5	10	25.0	56	46.7
Lack of space	5	12.5	5	12.5	-	-	10	8.3
Getting the right colours/materials	1	2.5	4	10.0	15	37.5	20	16.7
Both financial and lack of space	4	10.0	4	10.0	-	-	8	6.7
Lack of space and getting right colours	1	2.5	1	2.5	-	-	2	1.7
Financial, lack of space and getting right colours	1	2.5	2	5.0	1	2.5	4	3.3
Poor tailors	-	-	-	-	1	2.5	1	0.8
Conflict of interest	1	2.5	-	-	8	20.0	9	7.5
House is poorly constructed/Not ours	1	2.5	-	-	2	5.0	3	2.5
Total	**40**	**100**	**40**	**100**	**40**	**100**	**120**	**100**

N = 120

Results in Table 24 indicate that the major problem faced by the respondents in furnishing was financial (46.7%). The other problem that was mentioned (16.7%) was that of getting the right colours or materials. It is noted that most respondents from Ondiek (57.5%) and Migosi (57.5%) faced financial difficulties in furnishing their houses, while most of the Milimani respondents (37.5%) had problems in getting the right colours or materials desired. This could be due to the fact that majority of the Milimani respondents had well-paying jobs or businesses. The only major problem that could arise to them was that of getting the right colours or materials. They also had enough space and so the problem of space may not have arisen.

4.6 Influence on choice of furnishings

The variable sought to establish the indicator that had the most influence on choice and purchase of house furnishings. It is often expected that one who has knowledge on house furnishing would consider various factors before making any purchases.

The most influential indicator was quality of materials (85.8%). Other indicators that also always influenced choice of furnishings were: Texture of material (79.2%), space available (75.8%) cost of the article (75.8%) and comfort of the users (68.3%).

It is evident that most of the indicators always influenced the respondents and this could be attributed to the fact that majority of the respondents had knowledge on house furnishings. The indicator that least influenced the respondents was credit facilities (30.8%). This could be due to the high interest rates charged or articles that were bought on some form of credit.

Table 25: **Influence on choice of furnishings by estate**

Indicator	Estate	NEVER		SOMETIMES		ALWAYS	
		N	%	n	%	N	%
Existing colour scheme	Ondiek	2	5.0	14	35.0	24	60.0
	Migosi	-	-	14	35.0	26	65.0
	Milimani	-	-	4	10.0	36	90.0
Shape of furniture	Ondiek	2	5.0	10	25.0	28	70.0
	Migosi	2	5.0	15	37.5	23	57.5
	Milimani	-	-	25	62.5	15	37.5
Size of furniture	Ondiek	1	2.5	11	27.5	28	70.0
	Migosi	-	-	16	40.0	24	60.0
	Milimani	1	2.5	24	60.0	15	37.5
Texture of the material	Ondiek	-	-	11	27.5	29	72.5
	Migosi	-	-	11	27.5	29	72.5
	Milimani	-	-	3	7.5	37	92.5
Quality of the material	Ondiek	-	-	13	32.5	27	67.5
	Migosi	-	-	3	7.5	37	92.5
	Milimani	-	-	1	2.5	39	97.5
Space available	Ondiek	-	-	11	27.5	29	72.5
	Migosi	1	2.5	8	20.0	31	77.5
	Milimani	-	-	9	22.5	31	77.5
Cost of the article	Ondiek	1	2.5	8	20.0	31	77.5
	Migosi	-	-	10	25.0	30	75.0
	Milimani	-	-	10	25.0	30	75.0
Comfort of the users	Ondiek	6	15.0	30	30.0	22	55.0
	Migosi	1	2.5	15	37.5	24	60.0
	Milimani	-	-	4	10.0	36	90.0
Credit facilities	Ondiek	5	12.5	18	45.0	17	42.5
	Migosi	6	15.0	22	55.0	12	30.0
	Milimani	16	40.0	16	40.0	8	20.0

N = 120

When the indicators were studied by estate, it was interesting to note that Milimani respondents, compared to Ondiek and Migosi, were always influenced by the following indicators: Existing colour schemes (90%), texture of materials (92.5%), quality of material (97.5%), space available (77.5%), and comfort of the users (90%). While most

of the above indicators also always influenced Migosi respondents, the estate had a higher percentage on space available (77.5%). The respondents from Ondiek were always influenced by the following indicators: shape of furniture (70%), size of furniture (70%), cost of the article (77.5%) and credit facilities. Only 8 (20%) of the Milimani respondents were always influenced by credit facilities.

These results indicate that majority of the respondents were informed and so were aware of the considerations they had to make before making purchases. The respondents from Milimani were particularly more informed than the other respondents from Migosi and Ondiek. That could be the reason why they shunned buying furnishings on credit.

4.7   Furnishings used by the respondents

People use different kinds of furnishings to decorate their homes. However, there are certain kinds of furnishings that are common in most homes. The furnishings observed and identified in the living and dining areas of the respondents are given in Tables 26a, 26b and 26c.

Table 26a: Percentage distribution of hard furnishings used by respondents

Hard furnishings	N	%
Sofa sets	115	95.8
Coffee tables	116	96.7
Dining sets	96	80.0
Wall units	81	67.5
Side boards	80	66.7
Easy chairs	6	5.0
Television cabinet/trolley	5	4.2
Cupboard	1	0.8

N=120

Table 26b: Percentage distribution of soft furnishings used by respondents

Soft furnishings	N	%
Carpets	91	75.8
Cushions	9	7.5
Chair covers	34	28
Divans	4	3
Teddy bears	2	1.6
Valances	1	0.8
		N = 120

Table 26c: Percentage distribution of accessories used by respondents

Accessories	N	%
Trophies	39	32.5
Pictures	114	95.0
Live plants	59	49.0
Artificial plants	52	43.0
Calabashes	39	32.5
Aquarium	3	2.5
Cowries shells	5	4.0
Wall clocks	21	17.5
Wood carvings	8	6.6
Coral reefs	3	2.5
Calendars/charts	4	3
Fans	1	0.8
Traditional trays	3	2.5
Small drums	1	0.8
Wall mats	2	1.6
Batik	1	0.8
		N = 120

The results in Table 26a portray that 115 (95.8%) respondents had sofa sets. Only 5 (4.2%) had none. The results also indicate that 116 (96.7%) had coffee table sets, while only 4 (3.3%) had none. This may be due to the fact that sofa sets and tables are functional and so could be considered as necessities. According to Scattergood (1997), the living room has become the centre of people's lives. It is the place where people entertain, relax, watch television, pursue hobbies and read. Therefore, it would be

impossible to carry out these activities without chairs to sit on and tables to place items on. The results also indicate that 96 (80%) respondents had dining sets, 81 (67.5%) had wall units and 80 (66.7%) had sideboards. Only 6 (5%) had easy chairs, 5 (4.2%) had television cabinets/trolleys and 1 (0.8%) had a cupboard. This could also be due to the fact that dining sets, wall units and sideboards are basically functional. Thus, the respondents considered them to be necessary unlike the easy chairs, television cabinet/trolleys and cupboards that could have been considered as luxurious additional articles.

On soft furnishings (Table 26b), it is worth noting that 91 (75.8%) had carpets, while 34 (28%) had chair covers. Only 9(7.5%) had cushions, 4 (3%) had divans, 2 (1.6%) had teddy bears and 1(0.8%) had valances. Carpets were a common feature in most homes probably because the respondents considered them as an integral part of home furnishing. According to Faulkner and Faulkner (1975), carpets add warmth, visual softness texture, resilience, quietness and a friendly intimacy to floors. They give rooms a furnished look even with little furniture. Carpets explicitly relate the floor to upholstered furniture, curtained windows and clothed occupants. With their varied colour, texture and pattern, they contribute markedly to the character of homes. The respondents did not use most of the other soft furnishings. Teddy bears could have been used by the respondents who had them because they considered them as decorative articles, whereas they are often used in children's rooms. It was interesting to note that respondents considered them as articles that added beauty in the living room. Very few of the respondents had divans and valances probably because they were considered luxurious, therefore, not necessary.

According to Coetzee and Bergh (1997), many people feel that the skills required to make their own soft furnishings are beyond them. This could be another reason why many of the respondents shunned valances and other soft furnishings that could be personally made.

The results in Table 26c indicate that the most commonly used accessories among the respondents were pictures (95%), live plants (49.2%), artificial plants (43.3%), trophies (32.5%) and calabashes (32.5%). Very few of the respondents used other accessories. This could be due to the reason that these accessories were readily available at minimal costs. For example, live plants could be picked and planted from a friend or a neighbour. The other accessories that were not very common among the respondents included wall clocks (17.5%), wood carvings (6.7%), cowrie shells (4.2%), calendars/charts (3.3%), aquarium (2.5%), coral reefs (2.5%), traditional trays (2.5%) wall mats (1.6%), fans (0.8%), small drums (0.8%) and batik (0.8%). This could be due to the reason that articles such as woodcarvings, aquarium, wall mats, fans and batik are fairly expensive and so could be out of reach for majority of the respondents. For example, aquariums are prestigious and yet expensive to maintain. They could be within reach for the people in the high socio-economic status. Other accessories such as woodcarvings, drums and batiks are often made to attract tourists so they were considered expensive too. Interestingly, in the traditional society, drums were mainly used as musical instruments. The Kikuyus had a lion carving that was the symbol of a chief because a chief wore a lion badge in his hat of office. The carved lion was kept in the chief's hut (National Museums of Kenya). While only one respondent had displayed the fan in the living room as a

decorative item it could be possible that more respondents had them in other rooms for their functional purposes.

Table 27: **Hard furnishings by estate**

Furnishing	Estate	n	%	N	% 1 set	n	% 2 sets	n	% 3 sets	n	%
Sofa set	Ondiek	35	87.5	23	57.5	12	30.0	-	-		
	Migosi	40	100	18	30.0	20	50.0	2	5.0		
	Milimani	40	100	8	20.0	22	55.0	10	25.0		
Coffee table set	Ondiek	37	92.5	31	77.5	6	15.0	-	-		
	Migosi	39	97.5	28	70.0	8	20.0	3	7.5		
	Milimani	40	100	31	77.5	8	20.0	1	2.5		
					4-seater		6-seater		8-seater		10-seater
Dining set	Ondiek	19	47.5	4	10.0	15	37.5	-	-	-	-
	Migosi	36	90.0	3	7.5	23	57.5	8	20.0	2	5.0
	Milimani	40	100	2	5.0	21	52.5	16	40.0	1	2.5
Wall unit	Ondiek	15	37.5								
	Migosi	28	70.0								
	Milimani	38	95.0								
Side board	Ondiek	23	57.5								
	Migosi	23	57.5								
	Milimani	34	85.0								
Easy chairs	Ondiek	6	15.0								
	Migosi	-	-								
	Milimani	-	-								
Television	Ondiek	1	2.5								
cabinet/trolley	Migosi	2	5.0								
	Milimani	2	5.0								
Cupboard	Ondiek	1	2.5								
	Migosi										
	Milimani										

N = 120

The results in Table 28 show that 32 (80%) of the respondents from Milimani had 2 sofa sets and above compared to 22 (55%) from Migosi and only 12 (30%) from Ondiek,

respectively. This could be due to the fact that most of the Milimani respondents had large rooms and so could afford to have more sofa sets. This was also observed with other furnishings such as dining sets where 38 (95%) of the Milimani respondents had 6-seaters and above compared to 33 (82.5%) from Migosi and 15 (37.5%) from Ondiek. Most of the Milimani respondents (95%) had wall units compared to 70% from Migosi and only 37.5% from Ondiek. Majority (85%) of the Milimani respondents had sideboards while only 57.5% of the respondents from Migosi and another 57.5% from Ondiek had them. Only 6 (15%) of the respondents from Migosi and Milimani had easy chairs. Two respondents (5%) each from Milimani and Migosi had television trolleys compared to only 1 (2.5%) from Ondiek. Only 1 (2.5%) respondent from Ondiek had a cupboard.

These results could be attributed to the fact that majority of the respondents from Milimani had a higher income than those from Migosi and Ondiek. Therefore, they could buy, rent or build bigger houses that could accommodate the kind of furniture they owned. Because they had larger rooms than their counterparts in Migosi and Ondiek, they had more furniture too.

Table 28:   Soft furnishings by estate

Soft furnishing	Estate	N	%
Carpets	Ondiek	22	55.0
	Migosi	29	72.5
	Milimani	40	100
Cushions	Ondiek	3	7.5
	Migosi	6	15.0
	Milimani	-	-
Chair covers	Ondiek	7	17.5
	Migosi	21	52.5
	Milimani	6	15.0
Teddy bears	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	2	5.0
	Milimani	2	5.0
Divans	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5
	Milimani	1	2.5
Valances	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	-	-
	Milimani	1	2.5

N = 120

The results in Table 28 exhibit that 40 (100%) of the Milimani respondents had carpets while 29 (72.5%) from Migosi and only 22 (55%) from Ondiek had them. None of the respondents from Milimani had cushions while 6 (15%) from Migosi and 3 (7.5%) from Ondiek had cushions. According to Scattergood (1997), even though carpeting needs more maintenance, it offers softness, warmth underfoot and a sense of wall-to-wall comfort. It also has insulating qualities that prevent footsteps from echoing around the house. These could be some of the reasons why all the Milimani respondents had carpets.

Chair covers were observed among 21 (52.5%) respondents from Migosi, seven (17.5%) from Ondiek and only six (15%) from Milimani. More of the Migosi respondents had chair covers probably because they were protective devices for their chairs. Being people of average income they could afford good quality chairs, which they would want to stay for a long time. The only way to preserve them, therefore, would be the use of chair covers that could be removed and washed. The Ondiek respondents could have shunned chair covers because they preferred easy-to-clean materials on their chairs.

No respondent from Ondiek and only two (5%) respondents from Migosi and Milimani respectively, had teddy bears. Only one (2.5%) respondent from Migosi and none from Ondiek had divans. Only 1 (2.5%) respondent from Milimani had valances. Very few respondents had teddy bears, divans and valances probably because they may have been considered luxurious. It is interesting to note that the few who had them were from either Migosi or Milimani whose income was higher than that of the respondents from Ondiek.

Table 29: Accessories by estate

Accessory	Estate	n	%
Trophies	Ondiek	10	25.0
	Migosi	11	27.5
	Milimani	18	45.0
Pictures	Ondiek	36	90.0
	Migosi	38	95.0
	Milimani	40	100
Live plants	Ondiek	16	40.0
	Migosi	18	45.0
	Milimani	25	62.5
Artificial plants	Ondiek	13	32.5
	Migosi	16	40.0
	Milimani	23	57.5
Calabashes	Ondiek	18	45.0
	Migosi	8	20.0
	Milimani	13	32.5
Aquarium	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5
	Milimani	2	5.0
Cowrie shells	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	2	5.0
	Milimani	3	7.5
Wall clocks	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	8	20.0
	Milimani	13	32.5
Wood carvings	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	5	12.5
	Milimani	3	7.5
Coral reefs	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5
	Milimani	2	5.0
Calendars/charts	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	4	10.0
	Milimani	-	-
Fans	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5
	Milimani	-	-

Traditional trays	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	3	7.5
	Milimani	-	-
Small drums	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5
	Milimani	-	-
Wall mats	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5
	Milimani	1	2.5
Batik	Ondiek	-	-
	Migosi	1	2.5
	Milimani	-	-

N = 120

The results in Table 29 indicate that all the respondents from Milimani (100%) had pictures compared to those from Migosi (95%) and Ondiek (90%). More respondents from Milimani (45%) had trophies compared to those from Migosi (27.5%) and Ondiek (25%). Most of the respondents from Milimani (62.5%) had live plants while only 45% from Migosi and 40% from Ondiek had them. Also, more Milimani respondents (57.5%) had artificial plants compared to those from Ondiek (52%) and Migosi (40%).

These results could be due to the fact that the Milimani respondents had more resources to spend on accessories than their counterparts from Migosi and Ondiek. More of the respondents from Ondiek had artificial plants probably because they were long lasting and did not need to be changed. Interestingly, more of the respondents from Ondiek (45%) had calabashes compared to those from Milimani (32.5%) and Migosi (20%). This could be due to the reason that calabashes are reasonably cheap and so could be easily afforded by the respondents to form part of the decoration. Calabashes were also readily available because they were produced from the surrounding areas of the town.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

5.1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to generate and document information on interior decoration practices among high, middle and low socio-economic households of Kisumu town. The study sought to establish factors that influenced the choice of furnishings among the respondents and to identify sources of information and materials used. The study also sought to establish whether there were any problems that hindered effective home decoration among the respondents.

5.1.2 Research Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. Investigate the factors that influence the choice and arrangement of furnishings among households of Kisumu town.

2. Identify the sources of information and materials used in interior decoration by the households of Kisumu town.

3. Identify problems that hinder effective home decoration among the respondents.

4. Establish the respondents' satisfaction with the existing furnishings in their homes.

Literature reviewed indicated that furnishings and interiors have not been studied extensively. However, most interiors from the ancient to the present societies were

successfully put together as a natural part of the building. The review also revealed that beauty, expressiveness and functionalism were the main aims of interior planning and furnishing. Furniture, fabrics and accessories were mainly used in interior decoration.

5.1.3   Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used in the study. Using a sample of 120 households, data was gathered from Milimani, Migosi and Ondiek estates within Kisumu Municipality. 40 households were randomly selected from each estate. An interview schedule and an observation checklist were used to elicit information from respondents pertaining to the research objectives. Interviews were set up to take place in the respondents' houses at a time convenient to them. This enabled the researcher to make and record observations as well. The data was coded and summarised by use of descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequency distributions. Means, as a measure of central tendency, were calculated for selected variables such as age and income.

5.1.4 Major findings

Analysis of data collected revealed that various factors influenced interior decoration practices and in particular home furnishing. The results on the respondents' demographic factors indicated that majority were females compared to males. Most of the respondents were middle-aged, with the mean age being 38 years. Majority of the respondents fell between the ages of 25-34 years. Majority of the respondents were married and their occupations varied. All education levels were represented from Primary school to

University level. All the respondents had formal education. However, majority of the respondents from Ondiek estate were found to occupy jobs that were not as well paying as those from Migosi and Milimani estates. Thus, the mean income of the respondents from Ondiek was lower than that of the respondents from Migosi and Milimani. Salaried employment was the major source of income for most of the respondents.

The results also revealed that the respondents from Milimani were endowed with more space and fewer household members, therefore, their choice of furnishings was unlimited. They had bigger houses compared to their counterparts from Migosi and Ondiek. Most of the Milimani respondents owned their houses and this enabled them to select costly and longer lasting furnishings, as they would not be threatened to vacate the premises.

Many respondents admitted to having knowledge on interior decoration and house furnishing, which was mainly acquired through exposure. They also understood furnishing as the buying of furniture for the house. The most influential indicator was quality of materials followed by space available, cost of the article and comfort of the users.

Public exhibitions and agricultural shows were found to be the most popular sources of information. This was because they brought together many furnishing retailers in one place. Therefore, a person could get to know what was available in the market with minimal movement. Other sources, which were found informative, were home magazines, newspaper advertisements, association with friends, electronic media and displays. Home magazines often have captivating stories and illustrations. Through

friends, one got to know the varied articles available for furnishing. Seminars and workshops were least informative probably because they were not common features within the diversified occupations of the respondents.

Couples mainly made house-furnishing decisions, although the ladies seemed to play a major role in the decision-making process. The respondents felt that the ladies had better taste than men did in selecting house furnishings. This was because people perceived furnishing as a lady's task in the home. On frequency of furniture buying, results indicated that majority bought their furniture occasionally. This was attributed to the fact that furniture is a big investment and so can only be bought occasionally.

The most popular furniture outlet was that of carpenter or jua kali artisans. This was because the carpenters could make the articles to the exact requirements desired. More of the Milimani estate respondents preferred buying furniture from showrooms to other outlets such as hire purchase shops, carpenters auctioneers and open-air markets. The respondents also felt that there was no distinct standard number of furnishings, but each family should have enough to satisfy the users. Like furniture, curtains were also bought occasionally and majority of the respondents preferred to buy them from the open-air markets.

The results also revealed that more than half the respondents had adequate space because their houses were big enough for all the members. The other respondents had inadequate space and the major reason given was that the houses were too small for all their activities. It also emerged that furniture arrangement was a family matter so majority of

the respondents involved the family members in arrangement.

On satisfaction with existing furnishings, the results revealed that most of the respondents from Milimani were satisfied with:

(a) The number of furnishings they had.

(b) Amount of available space.

(c) Colours used.

(d) Size of the rooms.

More respondents from Ondiek estate were satisfied with their way of arrangement than those from Migosi and Milimani. This was attributed to the fact that they had small spaces while Milimani respondents were endowed with more space, therefore, they often saw new possibilities of re-arrangement whenever necessary.

Results showed that the major problem faced by the households was financial. Also significantly mentioned was the problem of getting the right colours or materials for furnishing. Interestingly, most of the respondents who faced financial difficulties were from Ondiek and Migosi estates. This was because they had less paying jobs compared to the respondents from Milimani. The problems that least featured were poor construction of houses, poor tailors and conflict of interest.

Results revealed that majority of the respondents from the three estates strongly agreed that:

(a)   Furnishing a house is important.

(b)   Good furniture styles must be comfortable for use.

(c)   Furnishings chosen must be suitable for its use.

(d)   Furnishings chosen must suit a person's lifestyle.

Generally, majority of the respondents also agreed that:

(a)   It is important to consider the colour of the walls when furnishing.

(b)   Furnishings must be considered among other priorities.

(c)   Most good furniture must be made of hard wood.

Majority of the respondents disagreed that:

(a)   Furnishings from showrooms are better than those from local carpenters.

(b)   Good furnishings must be expensive.

(c)   Curtains, chairs and other furnishings must be of the same colour.

Generally, the respondents from the three estates exhibited a high rate of knowledge on house furnishing. This was attributed to the fact that majority had formal education and had admitted to having knowledge of house furnishing.

On materials used for furnishing, the results showed that majority of the respondents had sofa sets, coffee tables and sideboards. This was attributed to the fact that these were functional items and were, therefore, necessary. Carpets were also common in many homes. Among the items that were least common were easy chairs, trolleys, chair covers cushions, divans, teddy bears and valances. The most common accessories observed were pictures, live plants and artificial plants. Trophies and calabashes were common too. Wall clocks, wood carvings, cowrie shells, calendars, aquarium, coral reefs, traditional trays, wall mats, fans, drums and batik were least common. This was because some of the items

were expensive and so out of reach for many people.

5.2   CONCLUSIONS

In view of the preceding findings it can be concluded that:

1. Financial constraints were major setbacks in acquisition of furnishings. It was evident that people desired to have better furnishings than what they had but they did not have enough money.

2. Credit facilities are generally disfavoured even among the low socio-economic groups.

3. Public exhibitions, agricultural shows, association with friends, newspaper adverts, electronic media home magazines and displays are commonly used as sources of information. Other impersonal communication channels like workshops and seminars are unpopular owing to their formal nature.

4. Although there were some differences in interior decoration practices between the three socio-economic groups, the middle and high socio-economic groups acted more or less in the same way.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is need to create awareness on the use of locally available materials for home furnishing. Homemakers need to be encouraged to develop creativity in using cheap materials to create beautiful interiors.

2. In order to enhance familiarity and use of these materials, the Home Economics

Extension workers could pay visits and hold demonstrations on how they can be used in house furnishing.

3. There is need to market the use of locally available materials through the print and electronic media. This would inform the households on the unlimited possibilities they have.

4. Furnishing manufacturers should use marketing strategies that enable them reach many households, even those of the low socio-economic status. This will enable them to make articles that suit everyone's economic status.

5. There is need to expand the Home Science curriculum to encompass Interior Design, especially in the institutions of higher learning. This will allow for more research to be carried out in the discipline.

5.3.1 Suggestions for further research

Further research could be carried out as follows:

1. A similar study could be carried out using larger samples from other urban centres in Kenya.

2. A comparative study of similar nature could be carried out between the rural and urban households.

3. A comparative study could be carried out between different races in Kenya.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Respondent No: _____ Sex: _____

Name of estate: _____

The interviewer will carefully read out each of the following questions to the respondent and check in or fill in the response that best describes the respondent's answer.

SECTION 1: SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1.   What is your age bracket?

      25 - 29 years_____

      30 - 34 years_____

      35 - 39 years_____

      40 - 44 years_____

      45 - 49 years_____

      50 years and above_____

2.   What is your marital status?

      Single _____   Divorced _____

      Married _____   Separated _____

      Widowed _____

3.   What is your occupation?   _____

4. What is your monthly income (in Kshs)?

   Above 20,000 _____

   15,001 - 20,000 _____

   10,001 - 15,000 _____

   5,001 - 10,000 _____

   Below 5,000 _____

   None _____

5. What is your source of income?

   Salaried Employment _____

   Business _____

   Both business and salaried employment _____

   Casual labour _____

   Others (specify) _____

6. What is the total number of your household members_____

7. How big is your house?

   1 - 2 rooms _____

   2 - 4 rooms _____

   5 - 6 rooms _____

   7 - 8 rooms _____

   9 rooms and above _____

   Other (specify) _____

8. Do you own it or have you rented it? _____

9. What is your highest level of formal education?

No education _____

Primary _____

Secondary _____

College _____

University _____

Other (specify) _____

Professional Qualifications _____

SECTION II

INTERIOR DECORATION PRACTICES

10a) Do you have any knowledge on interior decoration?

Yes _____

No _____

b) If yes, how did you learn about it? In school/college_____

Others (specify)_____.

11a) Are you familiar with the term house furnishing?

Yes _____

No _____

b) If the answer is yes, what does it mean to you?

_____

_____

The following statements will be read to the respondents. They will be asked to indicate whether they Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA), are Undecided (U), Disagree (D) or Strongly Disagree (SD).

Indicators	SA	A	U	D	SD
Furnishing a house is important					
Good furnishings must be expensive					
It is important to consider the colour of the walls when furnishing					
Curtains, chairs, carpets and other furnishings must be the same colour					
Furnishings must be considered among other priorities in household budgeting					
Furnishings from showrooms are better than those made by local carpenters					
Good furniture styles must be comfortable for use					
Furnishings chosen must suit a person's life style					
Most good furniture must be made of hardwood					
Furniture chosen must be suitable for its use					

The following statements will be read to the respondents. They will be asked to indicate whether they Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA), are Undecided (U), Disagree (D) or Strongly Disagree (SD).

Indicators	SA	A	U	D	SD
Furnishing a house is important					
Good furnishings must be expensive					
It is important to consider the colour of the walls when furnishing					
Curtains, chairs, carpets and other furnishings must be the same colour					
Furnishings must be considered among other priorities in household budgeting					
Furnishings from showrooms are better than those made by local carpenters					
Good furniture styles must be comfortable for use					
Furnishings chosen must suit a person's life style					
Most good furniture must be made of hardwood					
Furniture chosen must be suitable for its use					

12. The following are some sources of information, state whether they inform or do not inform you.

Source of information	Informs	Does not inform
Home magazines		
Exhibitions/Shows		
Displays (Showrooms or Open-air markets)		
Newspaper advertisements		
Association with friends		
Electronic media		
Any other		

13.a) Who decides on what furnishing is to be bought for the house?_____

b)   Please state why _____

_____

14 a)   How often do you buy furniture?

        Rarely   _____

        Occasionally   _____

        Often   _____

b)   Where do you buy the furniture from?

        Showrooms   _____

        Hire purchase shops _____

6

Carpenters (Jua Kali) _____

Auctioneers _____

Open-air markets_____

15. What do you consider as the basic number or amount of house furnishings?

_____

_____

16a) How often do you buy curtains and tablecloths?

Rarely _____

Occasionally _____

Often _____

b) Where do you buy them from?

Shops _____

Open-air market (mitumba) _____

Have them made by tailor . _____

Make them yourself _____

Other outlet (specify) _____

17.a) Do all members of your household have enough space in the house to satisfy their

needs?

Yes _____

No _____

b) Please state why_____

18. When you arrange your furniture in the house do you group them according to

use?

Yes _____   No   _____

19.   Do all the members of the household participate in the arrangement of furniture?

Yes   _____

No   _____

20.   When you look around the house are you satisfied, fairly satisfied or dissatisfied

with following:

Parameter	Satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Dissatisfied
Number and amount of furnishings			
Amount of available space			
Way of arrangement			
Colours used			
Size of rooms			
Others (specify)			

21. What are some of the problems you encounter in furnishing your house?

_____

_____

SECTION III

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CHOICE OF FURNISHINGS

22.   The points listed below will be read to the respondents. The respondents will indicate whether they always, sometimes or never influence them when buying furnishings.

Indicators	Always	Sometimes	Never
Existing colour scheme in the house			
Shape of furniture			
Size of furniture			
Texture of the materials used			
Quality of article			
Amount of space available in the house			
Cost of the article			
Comfort of the users			
Availability of credit facilities			

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

The researcher will make the following observations in the living/sitting and dining areas.

The researcher will tick or record the best description of the situation.

1. Type of house

    Permanent _____   Semi-permanent   _____

2. Size of the room

    - Large _____

    - Moderate _____

    - Small _____

3. Is there enough space between the different pieces of furniture for movement.

    Yes _____   No   _____

4a. General colours used   (b)   Dominant colour

    - Similar _____   _____

    - Contrasting _____   _____

5. Does the room look crowded?

    Yes_____   No_____

6. What is the general colour scheme used?

    - Monochromatic (based on one basic colour)_____

    - Analogous (based on 3 - 5 colours next to each other on colour wheel)_____

    - Triadic (based on 3 colours equidistant apart)_____

- Complementary (based on 2 or more opposing colours)_____

- Tone on tone (based on 2 colours next to each other on colour wheel)_____

- No co-coordinated colour scheme _____

7. What is the general condition of the furnishings?

New_____ Old_____

Clean_____ Dirty_____

8. Presence, number and placement of the following items:

Item	(❋) OR (x)	Number	Where displayed
Sofa set(s)			
Coffee table set			
Dining set			
Carpet(s)			
Wall unit			
Side board			
Trophies			
Pictures			
Live plants			
Artificial plants			
Calabashes			
Others (specify)			

2