

STRUCTURE OF DESIGN FIRMS WITHIN NAIROBI: CASE STUDY OF A+ PLUS INTERIORS, AVOCADO CREATIVE STUDIOS AND DALBERG DESIGN

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Abstract

Background: Design is evolving and today there is as much emphasis on the processes as there is on the product. **Problem:** A great deal of research on design projects has been looked at, but very little has been conducted on how “design firms” actually function in Kenya. Every design firm has a unique company structure and the way they operate. This varies from company to company. For instance, the company structure of an interior design firm is different from graphic design firm while some components like having designers in similar in both companies.

Objective: This paper looked at design practice in Nairobi's design firms.

Design: It used a case study method through observations, desktop research, literature review and interviews.

Setting/Scope: Three Design firms which included A+ plus Interiors, Avocado Creative Studio and Dalberg Design in Nairobi.

Subjects/Respondents: Creative directors, managers, designers, accountants and managers.

Results: This study sought to understand and highlight the company structure of three design firms stated. The results points to a generic structure with minimal divergence of systems. **Conclusion:** Every design firm has its own special company structure. However, regardless of what type of company structure is used in a firm, the structure should be clearly defined. The goal should be to build the fewest management level and have the shortest chain of command, the unit staff needs to be able to see where their tasks fit into common tasks of the organization, and the organization structure should enhance and not impede communication

Key Words: *Interior Design, Company Structure, Design Practice, Graphic Design, Participatory design, multidisciplinary*

Introduction

A design practice is a firm; small or big that brings together designers with diverse capabilities to provide creative solutions to common social and industrial needs.

A+ plus interiors is a private interior design company located along Mombasa road at vision plaza, Nairobi. According to the director and founder, Mr. Charles Kyeti, the company was started back in 2011 when the director was still in third year at the University of Nairobi. It was called Skiza interiors and it had two partners. Although the company was at its beginning stage, they had several jobs including painting Christmas deco's, graphic design and landscaping jobs. The