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.