

# Integration Of Design Thinking In Leather Product Development Within Kenya's Informal Sector

Benta G.A OGUDA; Coletta R. MATAYO, Mugendi K. M'RITHAA  
Department of Fashion Design & Marketing, Machakos University  
P. O. Box 136-90100, Machakos, Kenya

## Abstract

*Design is an integral part of the productivity of the leather sector. The leather industry is shifting from its traditional roots in an attempt to revive its fortunes, through the adoption of design and design thinking approaches. While Kenya boasts of abundant availability of raw hides and skins, constituting the main raw materials for the leather industry, the weak position of the manufacturing sector and its inability to produce higher value-added products has hampered the full exploitation of these resources. The growing awareness of design thinking as a key driver in the craft industries has the potential to transition the leather industry in a completely new and more sustainable direction. Employment in Kenya's leather industry is estimated at 14,000 with the informal sector accounting for 10,000 workers (over 71%). The informal leather sector is however severely disadvantaged by low adoption of professional design expertise leading to poor quality products. Insufficient funding coupled with a lack of access and/or awareness on design services to aid in product development and differentiation has resulted in most Kenyan leather being produced and sold as a commodity with little quality or design differentiation. With limited access to the domestic market occasioned by the influx of second-hand leather goods and competition from cheap/synthetic leather substitutes from China and other countries, many Kenyan producers are seeking to diversify their export markets. Following an urgent need for competitiveness in design and product development for accelerated economic growth and eradication of poverty, this study sought to conduct an audit on the uptake and integration of design thinking among the leathercraft designers in the informal sector in Kenya. Using an exploratory study, the authors engaged respondents from Kariokor Market in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Purposive sampling was used to select stall owners who doubled up as representatives of Kenya Cobblers Association. Semi-structured research questionnaires and interviews were administered to the sampled respondents and the findings were used to answer the key objective of the study. Study findings show that Kenya's informal leather sector did not engage professional design knowledge and services in product development. Results further showed the concepts of branding and packaging design were similarly not adopted.*

**Keywords:** *design differentiation; Design Thinking; informal sector; leather craft; sustainable product design and development; value chain.*

## 1.0 Introduction

Globally, leather is one of the most traded commodities. World leather trade is constantly growing and is estimated at over US\$100 billion a year. In 2013, trade in leather footwear

accounted for US\$53.5 billion, representing approximately 50% of the global revenue from general leather trade. Demand for leather and leather goods is outpacing supply around the world. Despite Africa's leather industry having many natural advantages (as a valuable by-product of the pervasive livestock and allied meat industries), it risks losing out on emerging opportunities in a robust and dynamic global market. Subsequently, the expanding global demand for leather goods such as boots, fine leather, handbags, and auto upholstery, has remained an unrealized industrial and entrepreneurial opportunity for African countries such as Kenya – these countries unfortunately remain marginal and far too frequently, insignificant players in the global business of leather products.

The main concerns are on Kenya's ability and capacity to expand its leather industry, improve its competitiveness in leather and leather goods, increase exports and employment, and build a viable and sustainable industry that could propel the country towards inclusive prosperity. Kenya, like most African countries, is primarily an exporter of raw hides and skins, as well as wet blue leather, and have a low production capacity for finished leather wherein lies the value-addition that would generate meaningful economic activity (Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development, 2015).

Additionally, Kenya which was once a major leather footwear center for East Africa, has presently relegated to being a small exporter of leather and leather goods worth a paltry US\$140 million (or 0.14 percent of global exports) in 2013. Kenya is also substantially less competitive in all productivity metrics than global leaders such as China, Italy and Vietnam, with the exception of raw material supply and access. Consequently, the former loses out on opportunities for increases profitability through the design and production of quality leather products (Mudungwe, 2012).

Global imports of new low-cost footwear entering Kenyan and East African markets, as well as second-hand imported footwear flooding domestic markets, have weakened its competitive position. Kenya is now a low-cost manufacturer of undifferentiated, low-end shoes and boots, with an annual production of 3.3 million pairs of leather footwear, mainly for domestic consumption. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2013), Kenya's leather sector accounted for just 2% of formal manufacturing jobs and 1.3 percent of manufacturing value-added products in 2013. The leather industry's current structure distributes capital very broadly and unevenly to a limited number of traders/manufacturers (Mutinda, Onyancha, & Muchiri, 2019). The dearth of affordable and accessible capital within the broader *jua kali* (or informal) sector has been identified as a significant challenge to small, micro and medium entrepreneurial actors (*ibid*).

The largest leather goods subsector in Kenya is footwear, with the handbag subsector being the most competitive in global markets. Kenya's exports of leather handbags, travel ware, and cases in 2013 (US\$2.2 million) were nearly quadruple those of Ethiopia (US\$0.57 million) in the same year. Kenya can enhance its reputation for high-quality handbags, travel accessories, and cases by enhancing product quality, establishing the “Made in Kenya” brand, and establishing a mass customization delivery capacity. Opportunities also exist for the manufacture of other leather product categories, such as belts, industrial boots, and gloves.

Due to the fact that tanneries constitute the most capital-intensive and jobs-light segment of the value chain, the industry has failed to generate any significant levels of employment due to the sociotechnical and socioeconomic barriers to entry. The current model of competition in the leather industry, as well as the dominant business models, both struggle to capture growth opportunities and spread wealth extensively (Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development, 2015).

Another significant barrier to competitiveness (both domestically and internationally) is the preponderance of imitated popular product ranges. The tendency of most producers to be risk-averse and more inclined towards copying, rather than ideating and designing innovative products has been observed in the context of study (Mutinda *et al.*, 2019). To ameliorate the aforementioned situation, a creative design-led strategy is deemed to not only to be desirable, but arguably more pragmatic and profitable approach for both producers and customers alike. This realization informed the focus of this study towards interrogating ways by which designerly thinking could be integrated into leather product development within Kenya's informal sector – such a design-led approach is deemed germane within the context of the country's unrealized potentiality in the leather sector.

## **2.0 Design Thinking for Leather product development**

*Design Thinking* is a *Human-Centred Design* approach that seeks to generate deep insights in the quest for innovation solutions. Design Thinking (as popularized by the Stanford d-school) is found at the intersection of three essential components: *social desirability*, *economic viability*, and *technical feasibility*. Further, there are five key iterative stages in a typical Design Thinking process - *empathize*, *define*, *ideate*, *prototype*, and *test* (see Figure 1).

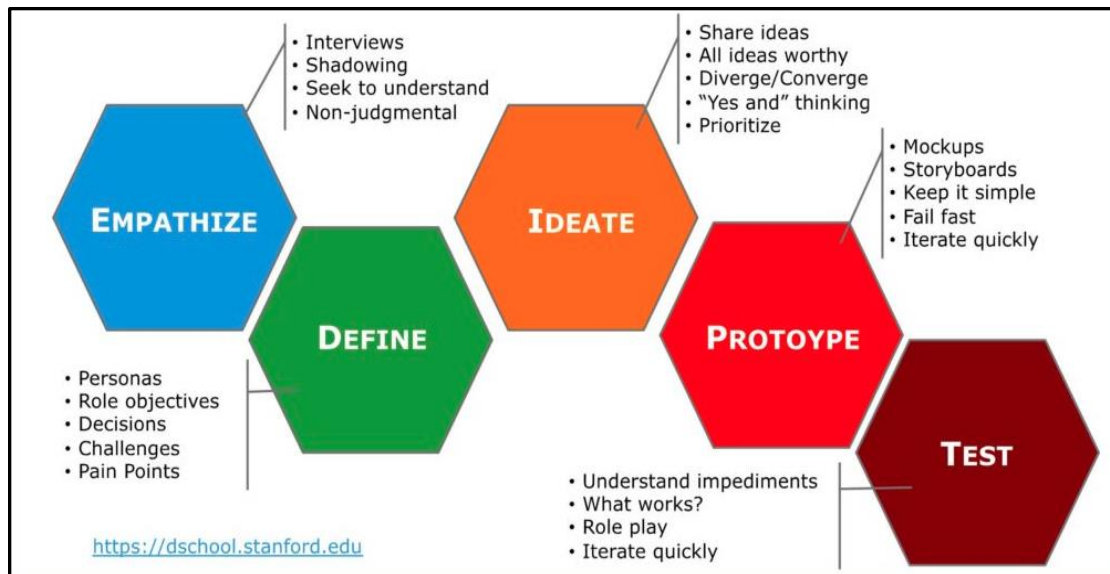


Figure 1. The Stanford Design Thinking process (source: <https://lvivity.com/design-thinking-process>)

As discussed herein at its heart, Design Thinking seeks to provide innovative solutions to diverse sociotechnical and socioeconomic challenges by snagging with potential end users in an empathic way so as to generate useful and meaningful insights (M'Rithaa & Jamie, 2012). In so doing, Design Thinking offers a cost-effective set of tools to participants that should result in superior products, services and solutions by employing a participatory and inclusive ethos focusing on latent needs that would otherwise pass unappreciated and unexplored. To this end, producers can deploy Design Thinking to co-create more user-friendly, desirable, sustainable and profitable leather products.

### 3.0 Infusion of Design Thinking for Sustainable Leather Finishes

Leather is viewed as one of the most durable and repairable materials available and thus considered a sustainable material. Contrary to the belief that animals are raised for leather use, the leather industry could be viewed as one that plays out a circular economy capacity to upcycle the waste (hides and skin) produced from the meat and dairy ventures (Omoloso, Wise, Mortimer & Jraisat, 2020). This makes leather one of the most sought materials for footwear and bag manufacturers around the world.

However, the production, processing, and finishing of leather is not entirely sustainable and thus it is essential to beware of this fact. Vezzoli (2018) points out that design choices should be aimed at resources (materials and energy sources) with lower impact while offering equal

terms of service or functional unit with the life cycle of a product. In leather finishing, for instance, some of the processes including dyeing employ the use of chemical-based dyes that harm the environment hence not meeting the sustainability threshold. This accordingly implies that eco-design is fundamental in leather product design and development.

A sustainable supply chain offers several benefits. It helps to reduce waste generated which leads to considerable cost savings across the whole supply chain as well as helps in earning reasonable profits by each member in the supply chain. The solid waste from the leathercraft also ends up in dumping sites resulting in pollution of air and water sources. This poses an environmental threat and if not appropriately treated, could present genuine ecological, social, and monetary issues. (Singh & Gupta, 2013)

Hides and skins are the primary crude material for the leather industry, and by using them, we decrease potential piling landfills with animal hides, thus supporting the "circular economy industry" nature of leather. Be that as it may, tanneries are characterized by the utilization of critical amounts of synthetic substances, energy, and water, and could be labor or capital intensive, contingent upon the locales of the world and level of innovation or potentially development. This is contrary to the sustainability goal in the design practice. Solid and liquid wastes are also discharged, which if not properly treated or managed, could pose serious environmental, social, and economic issues. As a result, research to improve the sustainability of the industry processes has continued to proliferate (Omoloso *et al.*, 2020.)

Leather as a raw material for product design is assessed to check the status of the surface, to be sure that it does not have any structural or/and mechanical defects such as holes, uneven continuity of finish, or even cracks. For instance, in footwear, frequent use of shoes exposes them to water, which can, in time, infiltrate into the layers of leather and after a while deteriorate the inner structure of leather (Serenko *et al.*, 2014) and finally destroy it. It is therefore essential to ensure that they are given a waterproof treatment to mitigate this.

This study observed that the majority of producers focused on prototyping and finishing – this is analogous to the *prototype* stage of the aforementioned design-led methodology – only one of five stages. There is therefore a need to embrace Design Thinking right from the outset of the leather product development process so as to ensure innovative ways of finishing leather that yield leather products that are sustainable and socially desirable. Finished leather results in varied textures, flexibility, colour, and finish. Applied finishes for leather products include dyeing, brush colouring, printing, embossing, oiling, napping, embroidery, beading among

others. Some of these processes employ environmentally friendly inputs, but unfortunately, the significant majority of processes employed in dyeing, printing, and painting have been found to make use of toxic chemicals – these are harmful to both the users and the environment (Kanagaraj, Senthilvelan, Panda & Kavitha, 2015). Consequently, there is a need to move towards eco-friendly finishes that will in effect lead to better health for the producers as well increasing productivity hence resulting in improved incomes (*ibid*). Cleaner, eco-friendly waste management approaches are also essential for a sustainable leather industry in Kenya and around the world.

#### **4.0 Leather Product Branding and Packaging Design**

According to *Kenya Leather Industry Diagnosis, Strategy and Action Plan* (2015), the leather industry needs to think and experiment with long-term restructuring to improve its competitiveness. Many producers of leather goods in Kenya have expressed difficulty in accessing global markets. In the formal sector, different brands or workshops rarely collaborate to amass the scale the industry lacks. In rare cases where there are opportunities to create linkages with international clients and where generation of product orders occur, producers in Kenya often fail to meet the size and quality requirements of the orders. Part of this could be linked to poor product differentiation, branding, and packaging. Despite the increasing quality and scale of companies like Sandstorm, Kenyan brand recognition is insignificant, due to lack of accessibility to the global market (*ibid*).

All successful and competitive industries require a continuous supply of critical skills and new competencies and Kenya's leather sector is no exception. The sector needs to have a competitive edge by attracting new customers while maintaining the existing ones better than its competitors. According to the Strategic Plan (KLDC, 2017), change of consumer preferences and fashion drives product development thereby improving industry earnings. One of the strategies that have been proposed is product differentiation. Leather product differentiation strategies include product development, product branding, and packaging design. For brands to distinguish themselves from similar products in the markets, Bhasian (2016) suggested the adoption of a differentiation strategy at the product level. This suggestion implies that product differentiation involves making a product to have features that are distinct from others by making it more fascinating to a specific target market.

Among the proposed drivers of change in the global leather and leather products industry is branding. According to Turner (2000), branding will continue to be important not only for

sport but for all kinds of shoes. According to Carter (2014), the creation of a strong brand and strong differentiation is the key to achieving success in the business world today. This research opines that a good brand name can make a difference, helping to communicate something important about Kenya's leather products. Carter (*ibid*) also indicated that characteristics of a product, its presentation, the emotional response it brings about, pricing, brand story, and the experience of the end-users are key factors to interrogate and incorporate.

According to the *United Nations Industrial Development Organization* (UNDP) 2010 report, most developed markets for leather goods are saturated. Promoting products with a local identity is imperative for producers as a means of maintaining market share. Previously seen as a social investment, cultural heritage has been revitalized and given an economic value. Just like is the case with most leather goods in Kenya's informal sector, UNDP (2010) opines that products, styles, and uses linked to each country's cultural heritage may provide a valuable instrument for growth for small and medium enterprises. This approach could lead Africa to transfer to her products the shapes, colors, and styles of her culture thereby gaining an independent developmental and marketing path in the leather and footwear industry.

A total leather product is much more than a physical product and probably needs packaging as well as branding. Although known to offer protection to the commodity and aid in product identity, packaging design is majorly concerned with promotion. According to Verghese (2015), packaging is one of the elements that can support the implementation of efficiency and sustainability-oriented strategies. Packaging can become the major factor in a new marketing strategy by significantly improving the total products in Kenya's informal leather sector. Better packaging may enable some relatively small enterprises to compete successfully in the leather goods market. In today's market, design requirements have been added in product packaging to improve the differentiation, with Bramklev (2009) identifying the commercial, the logistics, and the environmental functions as three major aspects in packaging,

While several related studies have been carried out on product branding and performance, these studies focused on well-established outlets in varied industries. Ahmed, Parnar and Amin (2014) in a study on the function of packaging on consumer buying habits found a positive relationship between packaging and consumer buying decision. The study identified packaging elements such as wrapping design, material, color, and originality as key considerations by consumers when purchasing a product. Dhurup, Mafini and Dumasi (2014) opined that business success greatly depends on the augmentation of product packaging through good pricing and brand knowledge strategies that advance brand loyalty. In seeking to explain the

function of packaging on consumers 'buying behavior Mazhar, Daud and Bhutto (2015) found that packaging was the most essential factor in brand success. Onyedikachi and Ugochukwu (2015) recommended sufficient packaging strategies by manufacturing companies, at the point of package designing. In a Kenyan study on differentiation strategy and performance of Bata Shoe company outlets in Nairobi, Kobia (2018) found that product development, product branding, and packaging design positively impacted customer performance. The study recommended the allocation of sufficient resources to product design and product improvement.

Similar to Ethiopia which is set to brand its leather and leather products made of sheepskin to the Japanese market and beyond, Kenya can also find ways to brand and distinguish its sheep and goat skins and hides to other countries. Among the recommendations given by the Kenya *Leather Industry Diagnosis, Strategy and Action Plan* (2015) to increase access to markets and induce greater demand for Kenyan leather and leather products is the development of a leather marketing entity to increase awareness, coordinate branding, and promote exports. This is a task that is achievable if the informal sector which employs 10,000 workers (over 71%) out of the 14,000 in the leather industry is effectively engaged in such strategies.

## **5.0 Research Approach**

The study utilized the case study design in order to satisfy the objective of the study. Purposive sampling was used in identifying and selecting three informants who were especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This provided the researchers with the justification to make analytical generalizations from the sample studied (Sharma, 2017). The selected participants were two males and one female respectively. Selection of the participants was based on their position as the representatives of Kenya Cobblers Association and leather artisans in Kariokor. Their wealth of knowledge regarding the operations in the informal leather sector in Kenya was also considered and was the basis of 'deep-dive' insights offered by the participants.

The participants were briefed about the intention of the study. Consent of participation was sought from each participant. Personal interviews for each participant were then administered using the questionnaire guide. The responses were recorded in audio and also written down. Each respondent was allowed to provide additional information deemed relevant to the issues under investigation. The researchers also captured supportive images of leather products, tools and equipment through photography.



**5.1 Location of Study**

The study was conducted in Kariokor Market, a facility located in Starehe constituency, Nairobi City County. Built in 1924 during the colonial era, the market is situated on the North Eastern side of the city. It borders Racecourse road to the north, Ziwani to the east, Ngara to the west and the Nairobi Central Business District (CBD) to the south. The map of the study location is presented in Figure 1 below:

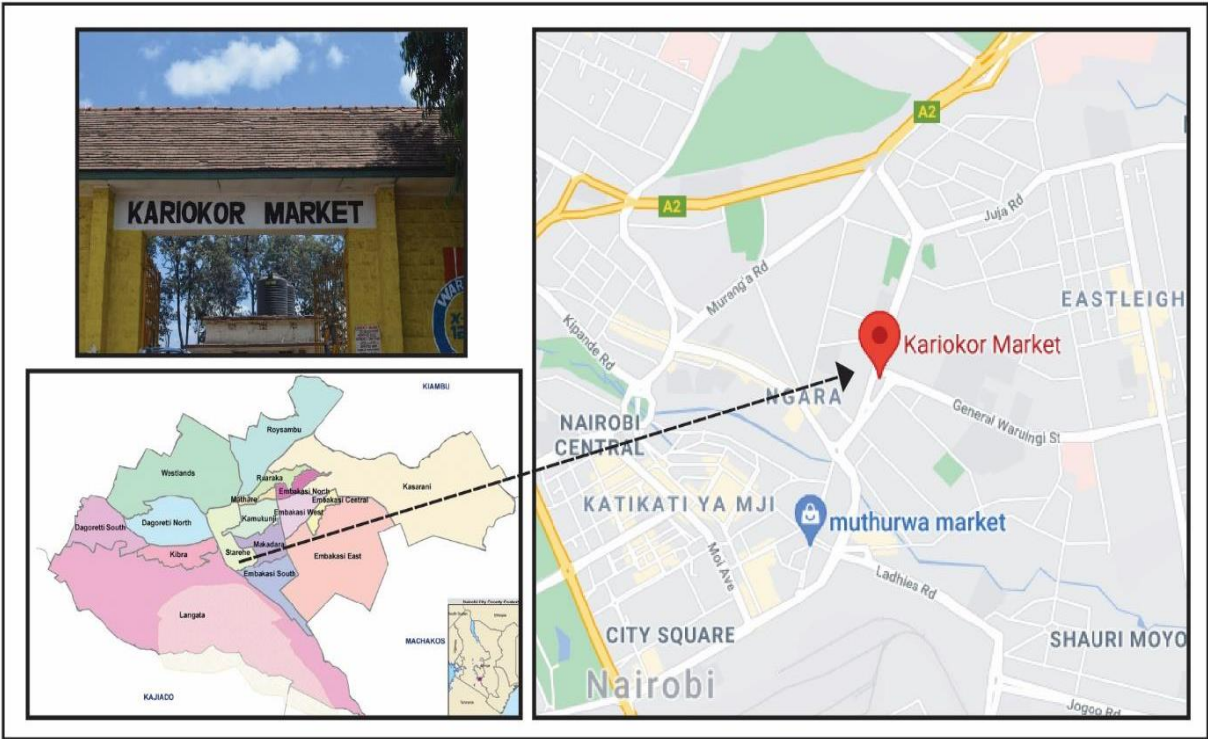


Figure 2: Map of Kariokor Market  
Source: Google maps (2021)

The study area is located on the North Eastern side of the city. The Kariokor cluster borders the CBD to the south, Ngara to the west, Ziwani to the east and old Racecourse Estate to the north. The study area borders the CBD which is the hub of many important activities including commerce, administration, education, religion and culture, recreation, communication and so on. Its evolution is strongly attached to the establishment and growth of the CBD area and the neighbouring residential estates and activities. Many commercial enterprises were attracted to this part of the town to tap the opportunities offered by the numerous residents who inhabit the neighbouring estates.

## 6.0 Findings and Discussion

This study sought to establish the integration of designerly ways of thinking in leather product development within Kenya's informal sector. The study further sought to establish the adoption of branding and quality packaging design among practitioners in this sector. Kariokor Market in Nairobi City County, having the highest number of workers in the informal leather sector was selected as the study site. A summary of the findings is presented in the sections below.

### 6.1 Demographic details of the respondents

Findings show that the market has a membership of 7000, with 5000 members actively operating

within stalls in the market. 55% of the workers in the informal leather sector are aged between 18-30 years. Those aged between 31-50 years form 35% of the population, while those above 50 years are only 10%. The summary is provided in Figure 2 below:

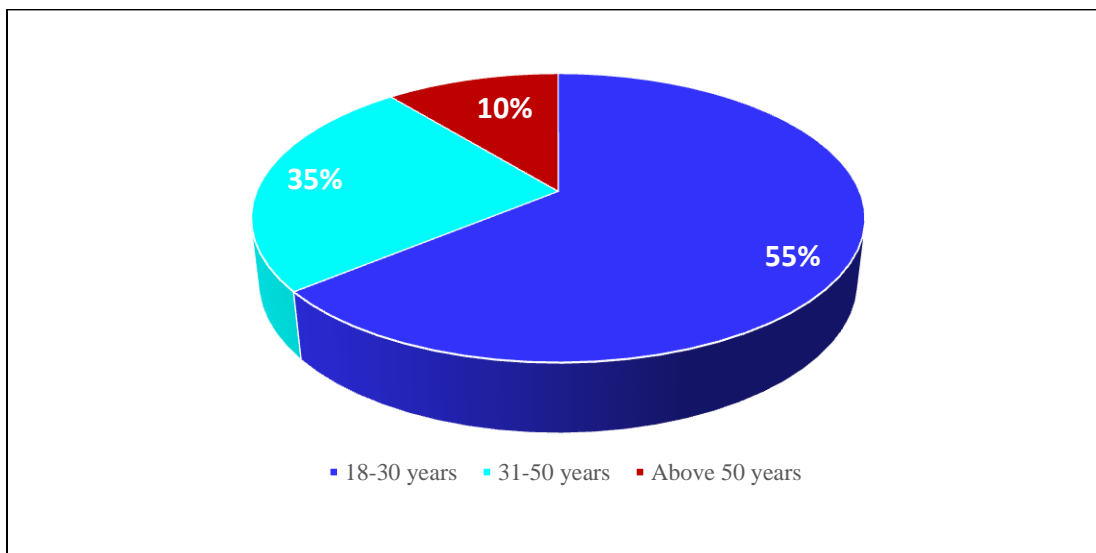


Figure 3: Age range of workers in the informal leather sector in Kenya

While all the three respondents had acquired tertiary education, the highest level of education attained by an estimated 56% of these workers was primary school level. 34% of the workers had attained secondary education while only 7% had skilled technical training beyond secondary school. The remaining 3% had college and tertiary education. These findings are in line with the observation by Mudungwe, (2012) that the majority of the artisans in the Kenya leather sector had secondary school certificate-level qualifications. The findings also resonate

with the 2015 report by the *United Nations Development Program* (UNDP) that Kenya's informal sector is characterized by low levels of education and training.

Findings show that the participants had undertaken additional training courses in leatherwork at the *Animal Health and Industry Training Institute* (AHITI) - *Kabete*, a public Technical and Vocational Training Centre (TVC) located in Nairobi County. However, the training did not have substantial coverage on product design. All the respondents concurred that they needed additional training in other relevant areas as expressed by one male participant:

*“Most of our members try very much to cope with challenges in the leather market. However, the general feeling of the membership is that training in areas like business technology, product designing, book keeping and marketing would offer added advantage to the practitioners in this industry.”*

Although findings showed that most members had not embraced design thinking in product development, there was great awareness of the need for creative design input in the leather industry among the members. One participant expressed concern over poor design skills as quoted below:

*“Although we are aware that good design contributes much to the likeability of leather products by clients, we have no design knowledge and much of the time we have to copy designs from each other”.*

This resulted in poor product differentiation, since everyone copies from another. One participant expressed the frustration of coming up with a new design as quoted below:

*“It is very difficult to come up with a new product in this market. When your product sells well, everyone will rush to copy from you, thereby flooding the market. This in turn will force you to lower the cost of your product in order to stay afloat”.*

The study established that the informal leather sector lacked creativity with respect to product development. While the *world bank report* (2015) on the Kenya leather sector indicated lack of qualified personnel as one of the impediments in the development, this study found lack of design knowledge and competence as one to be another key factor ailing this sector. It was reported that none of the practitioners engaged the services of qualified designers as this was beyond their financial muscle. While Kenya Leather Development Council strategic plan (2017/2018-2021/2022) opines that consumer preferences and fashion drives product

development leading to improved earnings, this has not been the case in Kenya's informal leather sector. The sector attracts clientele of low income; hence their preference may not drive product development substantially. While the respondents agreed to the need for serious designing, most practitioners were not very enthusiastic about exploring beyond the commonly accepted designs. The sentiments expressed by one respondent were as follows:

*“We in the jua kali leather sector cannot afford the services of qualified designers. Although we need new and beautiful designs, I am not sure if the products would sell quickly. The kind of clients we serve are not sophisticated and they don't even have the money to pay for new designs”.*

Regarding the sources of their designs, the study established that most design were obtained from sample pieces provided by the clients. In other cases, leather items obtained from the second hand goods market would be dismantled and the templates traced out to create new designs. The internet was also quoted as a major source of design ideas. The respondents acknowledged that the use of mobile phone of technology was an interesting eye opener. Mobile phone technology was reported to have enhanced access to design ideas for leather goods. They were able to copy such designs in an effort aimed at creating new products in the Kenyan market. They were also enabled to access new markets/clients. This led to increased amount of work, resulting in job creation opportunities for the youth as expressed by a participant:

*“The mobile phone has been the most useful too since the outbreak of COVID 19 pandemic. It has been interesting accessing new designs online because we work for fewer hours due to the curfew restriction in Nairobi. Although these designs are not originally ours, they still help us a lot in coming up with new ideas. Evening hours are spent searching for design and communicating with clients. I think it's a good gadget”.*

All respondents concurred that there was a need to engage with qualified designers in co-creation of leather products so that there would be no need to copy from each other. This according to them could result in a healthy co-existence among the practitioners, where one would not need to hide their designs to prevent it from being copied by other competitors. In seeking to compare products across different stalls, the researchers found minimal difference in design of similar products and lack of creativity or very basic design in other leather goods.

Figure 3 shows a comparison of leather sandals across stalls in Kariokor market, Nairobi

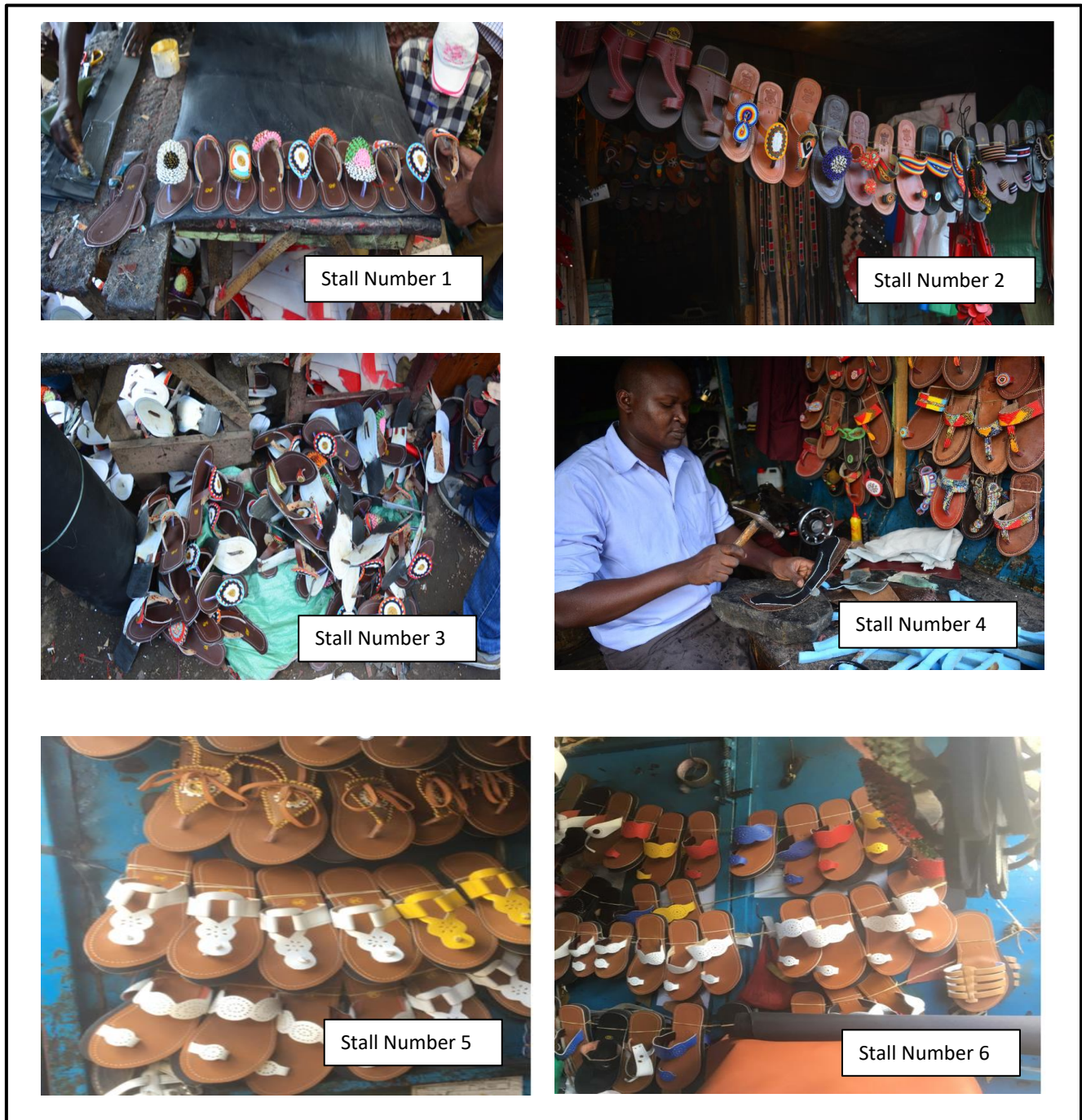


Figure 4: Leather sandals across stalls in Kariokor market, Nairobi  
 Source: Researchers' Collection (2021)

Figure 5 shows other leather goods found in Kariokor market.



Figure 5: Leather goods across stalls in Kariokor market, Nairobi  
 Source: Researchers' Collection (2021)

While Adimo (2018) confirms differentiation as one of the strategies that firms employ in order to gain a competitive advantage over other firms, findings of this study showed minimal product differentiation in Kenya's informal leather sector. Mutinda, Onyonka & Muchiri (2019) suggest a positive correlation between SME growth and development and education and training of workers. This could partially explain the low uptake of design in Kenya's informal leather sector.

This study also sought to understand the adoption of branding and good packaging in Kenya's the informal leather sector. Findings show that most stall owners did not adopt any form of branding and hence it was difficult to differentiate between leather goods from most stalls. This is despite the suggestion by Bhasian (2016) on the adoption of differentiation strategy at the product level for brands to distinguish themselves from the similar products in the markets. The few practitioners who attempted to brand simply screen printed the company name on the product. This was seen as a temporary measure since the printed image would fade after a short period of time. Most did not own registered companies and their products did not go

through any quality assessment process. The respondents noted that the type of clients served did not care about brand name and simply needed affordable leather goods. Most stall owners had no contact with majority of their clients to get feedback on the quality of their products. They mainly relied on return customers to know if their products were good.

The study also established that products were packaged in ordinary carrier bags with no company name. These packages were however reported to be environment friendly and recyclable. Any form of elaborate packaging design was seen as added cost that the clients would not afford. It was also evident that most practitioners in Kenya's informal leather sector did not link good packaging design to marketability of a product. One responded explained:

*“The concept of branding and good packaging is foreign around here. We cannot afford to package like big companies such as Bata. This will only add costs and our clients cannot pay for that. Most of us are in this trade for survival, so any extra input that involves money cannot work, unless we get support from elsewhere”.*

These sentiments point to greater need for collaboration between the informal sector and the institutions offering design courses.

## **7.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

There is urgent need for Kenya's informal leather sector to embrace Design Thinking in product development. The study recommends collaborative engagements between the informal leather sector in Kenya and design schools in various universities in the country. This could result in better design and product development that could boost productivity, export and employment opportunities in this sector.

The study also recommends the deployment of Design Thinking methodology through a design-led conceptual framework that could be adopted by Kenya's informal leather sector as detailed in Figure 6.

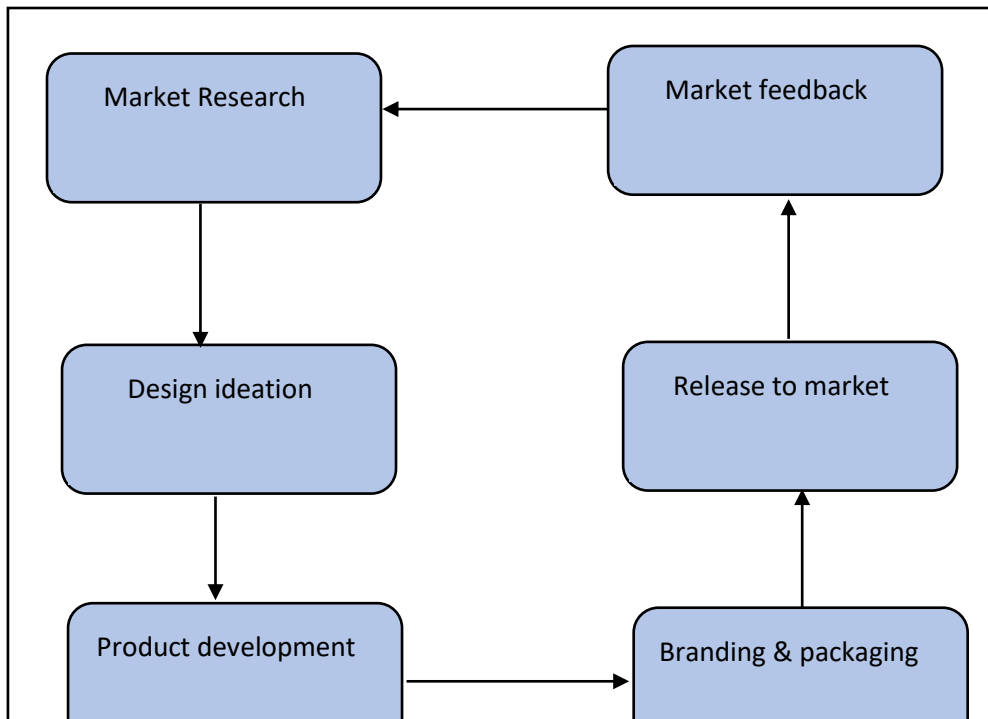


Figure 6: Design-led Approach for leather product development  
 Source: Researchers' model (2021)

In conclusion, the study found that design-led methods such as Design Thinking are not utilized in leather product development. As elaborated in Figure 1, Design Thinking has five distinct stages for the process to lend its full utility and potentiality to users, namely: *empathize*, *define*, *ideate*, *prototype*, and *test*. The leather producers participating in this study only focused their attention on the *prototype* stage. Consequently, specific design interventions should be implemented in future with an emphasis on a holistic and integrated approach to Design Thinking - this approach will arguably result in superior leather products that are socially desirable, technically feasible and economically viable.

### Bibliography

- Adimo, A.A. (2018) Relationship Between Product Differentiation Strategies and Organizational Performance in Sameer Africa Kenya Limited. *British Journal of Marketing Studies*, 6(3): 60-72.



- Ahmed, R., Parnar, V., & Amin, M., (2014). Impact of Product Packaging on Consumer's Buying Behavior. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, **120** (2): 145-157.
- Bhasin, H. (2016, May 9). *Marketing Mix of Gucci*. Retrieved from: <http://www.marketing91.com/marketing-mix-of-gucci/>
- Bramklev, C. (2009). Proposal for a generic package development process. *Packaging Technology and Science*, **22**(3): 171-186.
- Carter, L. (2014). Brand Differentiation: 30 Ways to Differentiate Your Brand. (April 27), <http://www.personadesign.ie/brand-differentiation-30-ways-to-differentiate-your-brand/>
- Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Dhurup, M., Mafini, C. & Dumas, T. 2014. The Impact of Packaging, Price and Brand Awareness on Brand Loyalty: Evidence from The Paint Retailing Industry. Art. AOSIS Open Journals. Acta Commercii 14(1). Pp 1-9.
- Kanagaraj, J., Senthilvelan, T., Panda, R. C., & Kavitha, S. (2015). Eco-friendly waste management strategies for a greener environment towards sustainable development in the leather industry: a comprehensive review. *Journal of Cleaner Production*. 89(2) 1-17.
- KLDC. (2017). *Kenya Leather Development Council (2017/2018-2021/2022) Strategic Plan*. Nairobi: KLDC.
- Kobia, F. K. (2018). *Differentiation Strategy and Performance of Bata Shoe Company Outlets in Nairobi City County, Kenya*. Unpublished Masters thesis. Kenyatta University.
- Mazhar, T., Daud, M., & Bhutto, N. (2015). Impact of Product Packaging on Consumers Buying Behavior: Evidence from Karachi. *Journal of Marketing and Consumer Research*, **16**
- Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development. (2015). *Kenya Leather Industry: Diagnosis, Strategy and Action Plan*. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- M'Rithaa, M. K., & Jamie, A. (2017). *Advancing the Afrikan lions' narrative: the quest for a sustainable future for all....* Retrieved from <http://www.cesa.co.za/sites/default/files/GAMA2017Prof Mugendi.pdf>
- Mudungwe, N. (2012). *Kenya Footwear Cluster Baseline Analysis*. Addis Ababa: COMESA/ALLPI.

- Mutinda, S.S., Onyancha, O. D. & Muchiri, N. P (2019). *Analysis of Technology Adoption by the SMEs/Artisan in Leather Products Manufacturing Processes in Kenya. Journal of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Volume 16, Issue 5*
- Okello, E. E. (2016). *Revival of Production in the Footwear Industry in Kenya: the case of Kariokor in Nairobi*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi.
- Omoloso, O., Wise, W. R., Mortimer, K., & Jraisat, L. (2020). Corporate Sustainability Disclosure: A Leather Industry Perspective. *Emerging Science Journal*, 44-51
- Onyedikachi, E., Ugochukwu, N. (2015). The Effect of Packaging Characteristics On Brand Preference for Cosmetics Products in Abia State, Nigeria. *British Journal of Marketing Studies* 3(8): 79-9.
- Pasquali, G. P. (2018). *When Value Chains Go South: Governance and Upgrading of the Kenyan Leather Sector*. Oxford: University of Oxford.
- Porter E. M. (2008). The five competitive forces that shape strategy, *Harvard Business Review*. Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation.
- Sharma, G., 2017. Pros and cons of different sampling techniques. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3(7): 749-752.
- Singh, S. C., & Gupta, D. (2013). Sustainability: A Challenge for Indian Leather Industry. *Journal of Supply Chain Management Systems*.2 (4) 37-43.
- Turner, R. (2000). Design and Business: Who Calls the Shots? *Design Management Journal*, 11 (4): 42–47.
- UNIDO. (2010). *Future Trends in the Leather and Leather Products Industry and Trade*. Vienna: UNIDO.
- Vezzoli , C (2018). *Design for Environmental Sustainability*. London: Springer
- World Bank Group. (2015). *Kenya Leather Industries, Diagnosis, Strategy and Action Plan*. Nairobi: World Bank.