Interior Design in Relation to Malaysian Construction Industry; The Realism

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ABSTRACT

Realism as a noun or realistic as an adjective bring the same definition of referring to the artistic, literary or practical approach of representing life, subjects or situations accurately and objectively as they appear in reality, often without exaggeration. It signifies a focus on truth, practicality and daily life. The realism of interior design is crucial and foundational to its relationship with the Malaysian construction industry. It transforms an abstract creative vision into a detailed, buildable, legally compliant, and financially viable set of instructions. Without realism, a design is essentially a beautiful piece of art that cannot be executed, leading to costly delays and project failure. In construction, time is money. Realism directly impacts the project timeline. Realistic design is the primary tool for managing project risk, which is paramount in the construction sector. An unrealistic design often ignores the actual cost of specialized materials, custom fabrication, or labour-intensive installation methods. A realistic design, developed with input from cost estimators, provides an accurate Bill of Quantities, preventing unexpected budget overruns. A design that violates building codes, fire codes, or accessibility standards (e.g., ADA) is not just unrealistic; it's illegal. The objective of this study is to establish the realism of interior design in relation to Malaysian construction industry and the importance of understanding the reality of Interior Design Scope of Work Details (IDSoWD) in a way to manage and complete the works realistically on time, without or with minimising delays. This study shows strong analysis on the perception of realism in interior design works. In essence, realism is the professional competency that separates a conceptual artist from an interior design professional. It ensures the construction industry can execute the design with efficiency, costcertainty, and compliance, transforming the design into a tangible, high-quality finished space. Realistic designs account for the practical lead times of materials and the duration of specialized trades. It is expected that this study can help more studies that will be done in the future. This realism consciousness in interior design should be awakening to all related project team members in ID construction industry, whereby the earlier involvement of interior designer in any project, by coordinating the related scope of works meticulously and avoiding re-work and re-do repeatedly during the construction period, saving more time and cost.

Keywords: Construction, Interior Design, Professionalism, Realism

INTRODUCTION

Interior design in relation to construction industry is a professional and integrated relationship to comply each other towards clients' problem solving and needs. In the coming years, interior design or interior architecture has the potential to occupy the very centre of architectural design practice. As a proportion of all dollars spent within the construction market, the sector of "alterations" has risen to new heights during the last decade. This trend is projected to continue as demographics and other factors, such as commercial vacancy and an increasingly mobile workforce, lead the industry to devote less market share to new construction and more to renovating existing facilities. In a future likely characterized by increasing resource scarcity, finding the most appropriate solution to a given design problem may mean favouring an inventive reimagining of current infrastructures rather than a focus on new construction (Baker, 2014). Claiming this central role in an altered practice will require

interior design or interior architecture practitioners to develop new attitudes and analytical skillsets for future success (Ewing et al., 2010).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Relation of Interior Design in Construction Industry

At a time when ideas, people, and products move around the globe at unprecedented speeds and scales, interior design or interior architecture theory is called on to explore questions and practices that extend beyond the comfortable and the familiar. Instead, they allow for the exposure of "differences" and "biases," translating into mediums for dialogues around the role of design in processes that can create marginalization and inequality. Exploring how interiors inform life in a world of movement adds new layers to our understanding of what it means to be human and complicates the questions scholars and designers need to be asking. In what ways does movement change the human experience of space and place? How are interiors impacting meaning-making processes? What are the implications of this understanding for theory development and how it can translate to education, policy, and practice? Answering these questions takes an interdisciplinary approach, one where design-related discourses are fused with knowledge from fields such as anthropology, sociology, philosophy, psychology, geography, and gender/ethnic studies (Hadjiyanni et al., 2018). The interior design sector is intricately connected to the construction industry, playing a significant role in both economic development and the enhancement of living standards. Figure 1 depicted the interior design in relation to construction industry in Malaysia specifically and world generally.

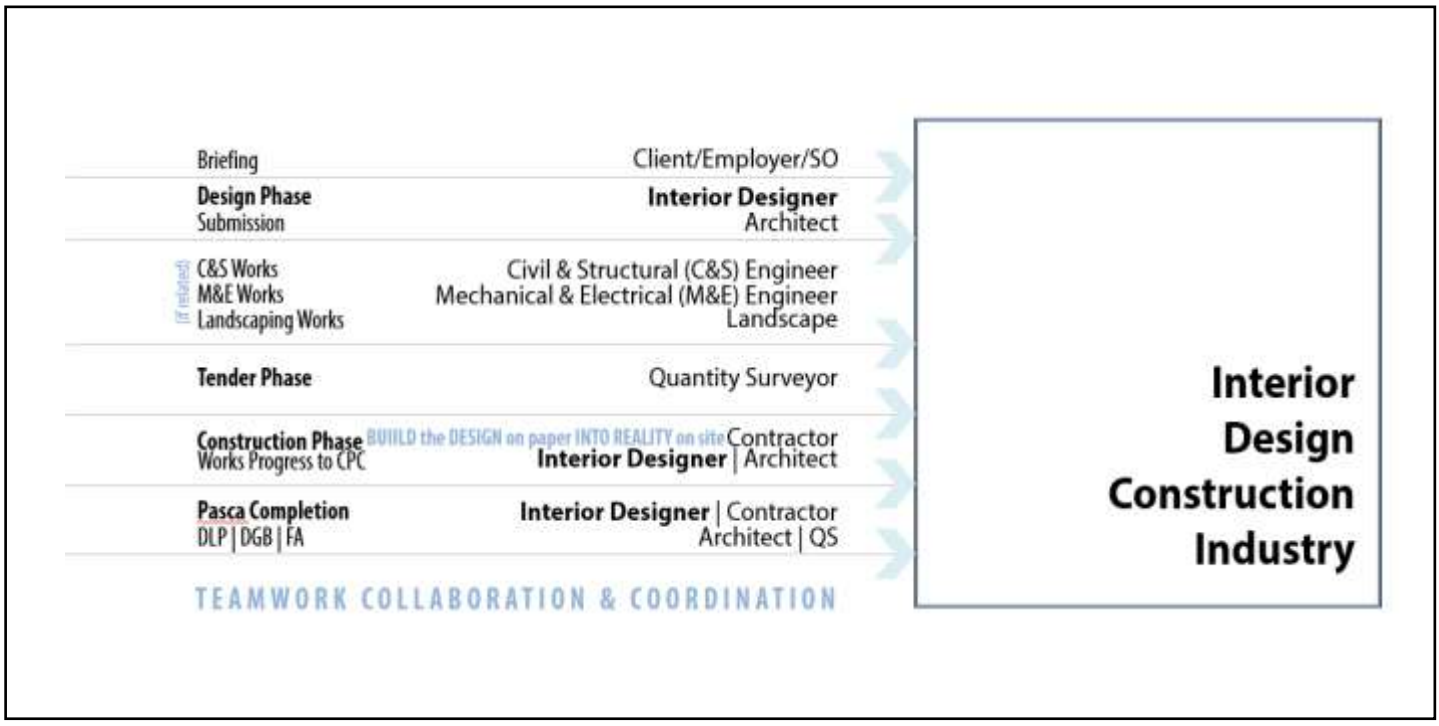

Figure 1: Relationship of Interior Designer and other related project team members in ID construction industry

Defining the Professionalism in Interior Design

Interior design is the art and science of enhancing the interior of a building to achieve a healthier and more aesthetically pleasing environment for the people using the space. An Interior Designer (ID) is someone who plans, researches, coordinates, and manages such enhancement projects. Interior design is a multifaceted profession that includes conceptual development, space planning, site inspections, programming, research, communicating with the stakeholders of a project, construction management, and execution of the design (Pile, 2003).

In defining the professional practice of interior design, the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) provides the following description of its scope:

"Interior design is a multifaceted profession in which creative and technical solutions are applied within a structure to achieve a built interior environment. These solutions are functional, enhance the quality of life and culture of the occupants, and are aesthetically attractive. Designs are created in response to and coordinated with the building shell, and acknowledge the physical location and social context of the project. Designs must adhere to code and regulatory requirements, and encourage the principles of environmental sustainability. The interior design process follows a systematic and coordinated methodology, including research, analysis and integration of knowledge into the creative process, whereby the needs and resources of the client are satisfied to produce an interior space that fulfils the project goals" (Friedrichs, 2010).

Prior to the desired spatial identification of the consumers, efficient execution of interior projects is a critical feature of the profession as well as in the construction industry. Interior design is claimed as part of the architectural industry, but the presence and significance of it has not been clearly indicated in the wheel of the Architectural, Engineering and Construction Industry (AEC), although the profession is much closer to its clients. As completion of construction projects, interior design work is said (Noorhani et al., 2021). Wright (2006) has supported that construction projects are growing, and that their difficulty involves numerous practitioners and specialists; in addition, the demand of the market has been challenged for the interior design profession. He argued that while different experts in the built environment have carried out the mission, they can often overlap, their education, expertise, training and skills being different from the practise of interior design. In order to provide the preferred spatial identity with proper security of their health, comfort and safety, it stated the client should understand these differences (Wright, 2006).

In interior project organisation and implementation practise include the SOW (Scope of Work), teamwork, collaboration, technical expertise, project management. In the preliminary survey of Noorhani et al., 2021 study stated that, the key problem in an interior design project is the lack and conflict of SOW. The lack of SOW and procedures has been the most critical problems for interior designers, while the lack of information about project management has been a source of conflicts between the design and construction processes by interior designers (Noorhani et al., 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This research employs mixed-methods of both qualitative and quantitative analysis approach. Primary data were collected through contract documents content analysis from Jabatan Kerja Raya (JKR) Contract, Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM) Contract, progress reports, minutes of meeting etc. The main objective of this study was to obtain first-hand information as the core dataset. Simultaneously, secondary data were gathered from various sources to support the primary findings and contextualise the research topic such as from other related interior design private and confidential project documents. Through these documents, the researcher could systematically categorise the data according to predefined themes. The transcription of information and data obtained were analysed in detail so that the study results could be presented intelligibly.

FINDINGS

The Realism of Interior Design Scope of Work Details (IDSoWD)

An interior designer is impossible to work alone, whereby all related parties in project team members from the highest in hierarchy to the lowest and smallest part of the works should play each role to build a complete interior design or interior architecture. However, the mastermind and main ideas are always come from the interior designer or interior architect who start the work from scratch.

In realism, a necessity of synthesis for each phase from designing, tendering process, construction stage, pasca completion of construction works in details in a way to realise the nature of interior design responsibilities. All of these are tied closely as per stipulated in the interior design construction contract. Every scope of works and details are related to each other which is working by stages. Thus, delays can occur in every phase of the scope

of work details. This delay issues are crucial in each and every detail of work inch by inch, whereby each of the details are depending one to another work stages progress.

Previous research generally studies the interior design project delivery process, work development plan and others were not specific to the details of scope of work in interior design deeply. Hence, this study is to focus on the Interior Design Scope of Work Details (IDSoWD) in relation to Malaysian construction industry as per presented in Table 1. These phases, scope of work and details are depending on the types of interior design construction contract implemented. However, mostly the details are remained as it is by means that they are strongly related to each other as per stated. The details in this IDSoWD have been derived from related document contracts as informed previously from JKR Contract, PAM Contract, progress reports, minutes of meeting etc. and other related interior design private and confidential project documents.

Table 1 shows that there are a few phases in IDSoWD to be understood and executed concurrently or overlapping by all related parties to make sure the project scope of works inter-relation to each other although by different work scope and sub-contractors but related to each other by stages from start to finish. Starting from the Design Phase, Tender Phase, Construction Phase, Completion Works/Dateline, Defects Liability Period (DLP), Design Bond Guarantee Period (DGB) to the Final Account. Each of these phases consist scope of work details for Interior Design project execution cycle.

In Design Phase, the Scope of Work (SoW) are mainly Designing works in Interior Design (ID), Preparation of Cost Estimation and Submission Works usually by the appointed Architect, then proceed to Design and Drawings Preparation for Preliminaries, Cost Estimation, Client's Approval, Submission to Authorities; Pihak Berkuasa Tempatan (PBT), Jabatan Bomba dan Penyelamat (BOMBA) etc. (If related). Next stage is Tender

Phase whereby the all the preliminaries Design has been firmed (ID)/locked for the Tender Document Preparation by appointed Quantity Surveyor (QS). All related and approved Design, Drawings and Bill of Quantities (BQ) Preparation for Tender Document Works, Bidding/Direct-Nego and Award by Letter of Award and Acceptance (LOA) to the successful Contractor.

The most important and crucial stage is the Construction Phase whereby at this time, all proposed and approved drawings need to be made it into reality on site by the appointed Contractor. At this stage, it looks like the responsibilities heavily on the Contractor's shoulder. Realistically, it is on all related parties' shoulder whereby they play important roles in each of their part. Contract Document Preparation and Construction Drawings will be issued by the Interior Designer to Contractor. The Contract Document has to be Signing-off, then Contractor should do preparation for Bond Guarantee (BG), Insurances (Workmen's Compensation; WC & Contractor AllRisks; CAR), Drawing's analysation, and if any discrepancy, the Contractor should submit the Request for Drawings (RFD)/Request for Information (RFI).

On the day of Site Possession or Commencement Date for works execution on site, the Demolitions for Existing Building/Spaces which mostly related to Renovation, Refurbishment/Upgrading/Alteration/Enhancing/Styling/ New ID works). The Site Possession, Kick-off Meeting, Site Briefing, Commencement of the Construction Works on Site will be handled by Interior Design Consultant as a team leader. Contractor should do the settingout for New Works (Building Works; internal/external), Ceilings, Walls, Doors, Floorings) by means that the Building Envelope/External (Basis Floor, Basic Wall, Basic Opening Cover/Windows & Roofing) need to be ready/cover up from water elements such rains before proceed other internal/ID scope of works as the interior design elements are sensitive to weather.

If there are any Civil & Structural (C&S) Engineer Works required, such as the Extension works for new Building/new Structure for new extended spaces, brickworks, concreting, steel, I-Beam, cantilevered for new ID, new sewerage system, gas supply system, authorities' application, new strong structure to hold up big and heavy Crystal Chandeliers. In ID scope of work, mostly there are no exception to Mechanical & Electrical (M&E) Engineer Works or if it is related, whereby there are Plumbing/water connection system, gas supply system, lightings, wirings, relocations/new electrical supply/DB power upgrading/water sprinkler & fire safety system/authorities' application/Special Light fittings (Crystal Chandeliers etc.).

In Interior Design/Interior Architecture Works, there should be the Fittings and Furnishing Works to be carried out either on site/in-situ or off-site/in manufacturer/factory. This including new wall treatment (Wallpapers/wainscoating/veneer/internal partition/acoustic panel/MDF wall cladding/timber/marbles/quartz/ glasses/aluminium/steel/new paints/textured wall etc.), new floor finishes (Marbles/granites/quartz stones/timber laminated/SPC/vinyl/solid timber/carpets/tilings/raised floor etc.), new doors (Timber/glass/aluminium/Sliding/ swing etc.), new windows treatment (Aluminium/glass/timber/blinds/curtains etc.), new sanitary system (Water Closet/Special and Customise for Royal Ensuite/basin/sink/tap/towel ring etc., new built-in furniture (Cabinetry works/receptionist counter/director's cabinet/filings/kitchens/wardrobes/filings/display cabinets/tv cabinets etc.), new loose furniture (Workstation cubicles/director's working desk/director's high back chair/office chair/sofa/arm chair/benches/coffee & side table/bed & beddings/dining sets/dressings/loose cabinets etc.), new electrical appliances (Ceiling fan/Air-Conditioner/washer machine/microwave/oven/machines etc.), other special works (Internal signages for offices/Special Order and Customise items etc.). During this Construction Phase, there a few notes to be executed concurrently together such as Site Meetings, Client and Consultant Meetings, Progress Meetings, Ahead(+)/Delay(-), Progress Reports, Site Inspections from Kick-off Meeting, Day of Site Possession, Site Management, Contractors Meetings, Day-to-day Workload, Manpower, Contract Administration and Project Management etc.

Landscape works could be projected together in ID contract in some situation whereby Client requires small/minor works for landscaping in their spaces, either external or internal landscape and hard or soft landscape depends on their requirements such as indoor and outdoor potted plants/make good the existing within building compound/minor landscaping/soil excavation for new sewerage system upon extension/renovation & upgrading of sanitary system/grass turfing.

Finally in Construction Phase, the stage of Testing & Commissioning (T&C) should be carried out whereby Site inspection, running T&C for a few times of period depends on scale of projects and interior elements to be tested. If there are any failure or hick-ups in between, the rectification works can be solved it out before handing over.

Upon the Completion of Works/Dateline, the Signing-off Certificate of Handing Over Project for the Occupation by Employer/Owner/Client/End-user whereby the Certificate of Practical Completion (CPC) to be issued. This is on the Handing over keys in big or small ceremony as a formality with attendance of related project members/launching/new corporate office moving in/new gallery/showroom/service centre/new house/Royal Wedding etc. During this Completion of Works, Contractor is required to submit As-Built Documents to Employer/Client consist of As-Built Drawings, Manuals, T&C Report, Warranties etc. as per stipulated in the Contract Document.

Way forward upon the Completion of Works/Dateline, the Contractor handed over the project with the responsibilities of Defects Liability Period (DLP) they would carry it out within stipulated period as per in contract such as Upon Project Completion with the issuance of CPC and DLP will be on schedule (3/6/12 months or 2 years or more whereby the Time depends on Project Scale). This part sometime has been overlooked by the ID scope of work in any other studies whereby the Design Bond Guarantee (DGB) Period which is it depends on Type of Contract and Project Scale (e.g., 5 years - JKR PWD DB; Jabatan Kerja Raya – Public Works Department – Design & Build Contract).

In Final Account, this stage should be implemented upon the Expiration of all related period (DLP/DGB) and issuance of Certificate of Making Good Defects (CMGD). Final Defects Inspection should be carried out by all project team members on site to finalise the works before issuing of CMGD. Meanwhile for Design Guarantee Bond (DGB), somehow it will take more longer than DLP period which means, by the time of expiration of DLP, DGB still on going until specified time as per stipulated in the contract document. This implementation mostly for JKR PWD Form of Contract, meanwhile in PAM Contract, it depends on type and value of project. Let say, if the Contract Sum (CS) amount is RM1.5M, the DGB is 5% from the CS which means equal to RM75K to be hold/retention money for five (5) years upon CPC issued. If DLP within 2 years, CMGD will be issued after 2 years provided that all defects have been rectified, whereas DGB expiration is another 3 years to go. Only then the Final Account Certificate will be issued, certified and closed properly.

Table 1: Interior Design Scope of Work Details (IDSoWD) in Relation to Malaysian Construction Industry

Phases	Scope of Work	Details
Design Phase	**Design (ID), Cost Estimation & Submission Works (Architect)**	Design & Drawings Preparation for Preliminaries, Cost Estimation, Client's Approval, Submission to Authorities; PBT, BOMBA etc. (If related)
Tender Phase	**Design Firmed (ID)/Locked for Tender Document Preparation (QS)**	Design, Drawings & BQ Preparation for Tender Document Works, Bidding/Direct-Nego & Award (LOA) to Contractor
Construction Phase	**Contract Document Preparation & Construction Drawings issued to Contractor Demolitions for Existing Building/ Spaces (Mostly related; Renovation, Refurbishment/Upgrading/Alteration/ Enhancing/Styling/New ID works)**	Contract Document Signing-off, preparation Bond Guarantee (BG), Insurances (Workmen's Compensation & Contractor All-Risks), Drawing's analysation, discrepancy (if any), RFD/RFI Site Possession, Kick-off Meeting, Site Briefing, Commencement of the Construction Works on Site
	Setting-out for New Works (Building Works; internal/external), Ceilings, Walls, Doors, Floorings)	Building Envelope/External (Basis Floor, Basic Wall, Basic Opening Cover/Windows & Roofing) need to be ready/cover up from water elements such rains before proceed other internal/ID scope of works
	Civil & Structural (C&S) Engineer Works: (If related)	Extension works for new Building/new Structure for new extended spaces, brickworks, concreting, steel, I-Beam, cantilevered for new ID, new sewerage system, gas supply system, authorities' application, new strong structure to hold up big & heavy Crystal Chandeliers
	Mechanical & Electrical (M&E) Engineer Works: (If related)	Plumbing/water connection system, gas supply system, lightings, wirings, relocations/new electrical supply/DB power upgrading/water sprinkler & fire safety system/authorities' application/Special Light fittings (Crystal Chandeliers etc.)
	Interior Design/Interior Architecture Works, Fittings & Furnishing Works	New suspended **ceiling** (Plaster ceiling, gypsum ceiling etc.)

	On Site/In-Situ or Off-Site/ **In Manufacturer/Factory Notes:** **Site Meetings, Client & Consultant** **Meetings, Progress Meetings,** **Ahead(+)/Delay(-), Progress Reports,** **Site Inspections from Kick-off** **Meeting, Day of Site Possession, Site** **Management, Contractors Meetings,** **Day-to-day Workload, Manpower, Contract Administration** **& Project Management etc.**	New **wall treatment** (Wallpapers/wainscoating/veneer/internal partition/acoustic panel/MDF wall cladding/ timber/marbles/quartz/glasses/aluminium/steel/ new paints/textured wall etc.)
		New **floor finishes** (Marbles/granites/quartz stones/timber laminated/ SPC/vinyl/solid timber/carpets/tilings/raised floor etc.)
		New **doors** (Timber/glass/aluminium/Sliding/swing etc.)
		New **windows treatment** (Aluminium/glass/timber/blinds/curtains etc.)
		New **sanitary system** (Water Closet/Special & Customise for Royal Ensuite/basin/sink/tap/towel ring etc.)
		New **built-in furniture** (Cabinetry works/receptionist counter/director's cabinet/filings/kitchens/wardrobes/filings/display cabinets/tv cabinets etc.)
		New **loose furniture** (Workstation cubicles/director's working desk/director's high back chair/office chair/sofa/arm chair/benches/coffee & side table/bed & beddings/dining sets/dressings/loose cabinets etc.)
		New **electrical appliances** (Ceiling fan/Air-Conditioner/washer machine/ microwave/oven/machines etc.)
		Other **special works** (Internal signages for offices/Special Order & Customise items etc.)
	Landscape Works	Indoor & outdoor potted plants/make good the existing within building compound/minor

		landscaping/soil excavation for new sewerage system upon extension/renovation & upgrading of sanitary system/grass turfing
	Testing & Commissioning (T&C)	Site inspection, running T&C for a few times of period depends on scale of projects and interior elements to be tested
Completion of Works/ Dateline	**Signing-off Certificate of Handing Over Project; Occupation by** **Employer/Owner/Client/End-user (CPC issued)** **Contractor to submit As-Built** **Documents to Employer/Client**	Handing over keys in big or small ceremony as a formality with attendance of related project members/launching/new corporate office moving in/new gallery/showroom/service centre/new house/Royal Wedding etc. As-Built Drawings, Manuals, T&C Report, Warranties etc.
Defects Liability **Period (DLP)**	**Upon Project Completion with the issuance of CPC and DLP will be on schedule** **(3/6/12 months or 2 years or more; Time depends on Project Scale)**	
Design Bond **Guarantee (DGB)** **Period**	**Depends on Type of Contract & Project Scale (e.g., 5 years - JKR PWD DB)**	
Final Account	**Upon the Expiration of all related period (DLP/DGB) and issuance of CMGD**	

Realistically, the establishment of IDSoWD shows that how important to understand and analyse the details of scope of work as well as each role of project team members in interior design projects. It has been proved that the IDSoWD extremely related to these main aspects of interior design in relation to Malaysian construction industry as the following justification:

Economic and Environmental Impact

(i) Economic Contributions

Interior design significantly contributes to the economic status of various industries, including construction, retail, hotels, and office spaces (Ni et al., 2024). It is a crucial part of the construction industry, influencing project delivery and management.

(ii) Environmental Considerations

The sector also plays a pivotal role in environmental sustainability. There is a growing need for specific actionable standards to assess and implement sustainable practices in interior design, which is often overlooked in broader architectural assessments (Rashdan et al., 2024).

Integration with Architectural Design

(i) Workflow and Specifications

Interior design specifications are closely related to building-related specifications, and there are similarities in the workflow between interior design and architectural design (Ni et al., 2024). However, conflicts can arise if there is a lack of integration between the two, affecting the overall living experience and failing to meet the needs of citizens (Lei, 2020).

Trends and Future Directions

(i) Renovation Over New Construction

There is a growing trend towards renovating existing facilities rather than focusing on new construction. This shift is driven by factors such as commercial vacancy, an increasingly mobile workforce, and resource scarcity (Brause, 2018). Interior architecture is expected to occupy a central role in this altered practice, requiring practitioners to develop new attitudes and analytical skills (Brause, 2018).

(ii) Commercial Interior Design

The demand for commercial interior design and fit-out projects are increasing, with the architectural, engineering, and construction (AEC) industry paying more attention to this area. The design-build (DB) project delivery method is widely used for its effectiveness in meeting stakeholders' objectives such as cost, time, quality, and client satisfaction (Tolentino et al., 2025).

Challenges and Opportunities

(i) Sustainability

There is a critical gap in the literature regarding the sustainability of interior design. Developing comprehensive criteria and tailored guidelines for assessing interior (Rashdan et al., 2024).

(ii) Innovation and Efficiency

The construction sector is often seen as inefficient and conservative. Bridging the gap between product-focused building product producers and project-focused contractors can enhance innovation within the sector (Rundquist et al., 2013).

Construction industry is facing with a lot of problems mainly associated to its inefficient work process. This phenomenon has been manifested by frequent news and critics about project delay and inferior quality. Therefore, there is an urgent need for construction industry to improve this situation. Many efforts by the expertise have been done to improve the performance of the construction industry reputation such as using alternative procurement system, adoption of tools and management philosophy from other industry and using to new technological advancement such as the used of modular construction in Malaysia. There are also a lot of problems associated to construction such as poor site management, redundancy of activities, project delay and lack of focus to customer/end users' requirement (Taib, 2010).

In the context of the study, the interior design in relation to construction industry within Malaysian interior design projects. Thus, the Malaysian interior design construction contract is applied and implemented.

RESULTS

As a results, the realism of interior design is critically important in its relation to Malaysian construction industry. A successful project relies on the interior designer's vision being practical, technically feasible, and accurately communicated for construction execution. The realism in aspect of a design is directly proportional to the detail

and quality of the construction documents provided. Without this precision, the construction team must make assumptions, which frequently leads to change orders, delays, and cost overruns – making the final result less like the original vision. Adding to that, a realistic design must respect the fundamental constraints of the building and the industry. A design must align with the existing or planned structural integrity, as well as the paths of mechanical systems, plumbing pipes, and electrical conduit. An unrealistic design might require costly and complex structural modifications or repositioning of core services (Mueller, 2025).

Two major factors in construction realism are cost and time. A realistic design uses materials and systems that fall within the client's established budget. Highly custom elements, imported fixtures, or rare materials may be aesthetically perfect but are fiscally and logistically unrealistic if they strain the budget (Rana, 2025). Interior design specifications are only realistic if the products can be sourced and delivered on time. Many unique finishes, custom furniture, or specialized fixtures can have lead times of several months, which must be factored into the overall construction schedule (Mueller, 2025).
The highest degree of realism is achieved through early and continuous collaboration. When the interior designer is brought in at the architectural or planning stage, they can ensure the aesthetic and functional vision aligns with the structural and technical plans before construction begins. The designer acts as the key link between the client's vision and the contractor's execution, translating the artistic intent into actionable construction steps and resolving issues that arise on-site (often through Requests for Information – RFIs) (Mueller, 2025).

Therefore, realism is not the opposite of creativity in interior design; it is the foundation for successful execution. An experienced interior designer operates as a professional who blends aesthetic vision with a deep, practical knowledge of materials, construction methods, codes, and project management (Taylor, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Ontologically as a summary, the realism of interior design is absolutely crucial to Malaysian construction industry because it serves as the bridge between creative vision and physical execution. A realistic design minimizes risk, ensures financial and legal compliance, and is the key factor that determines if a project will be completed on time, on budget, and to the expected quality. Construction is not a perfect process. Realistic designers understand construction tolerances – the acceptable slight variations in dimensions. They detail how custom elements (like millwork) will interface with walls and floors that may not be perfectly square or level, using shadow gaps, trim, or adjustment mechanisms. The final product of a realistic interior design is the robust set of Construction Documents (CDs), which are the formal contract between the client, designer, and builder.

Therefore, the realism of interior design is not merely a preference; it is a crucial professional requirement that directly determines the success or failure of a construction project. It transforms an abstract concept into an accurate, buildable, and compliant set of instructions for the construction industry. For good measure, this study will allow academia and industry players emancipate and diversifying for comprehension of the realism of interior design in relation to the Malaysian construction industry, extensively.

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