

Abstract

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Integrating Nanotechnology in the Design Process: An Ethnographic Study in Architectural Practice in Egypt

Design and building technology are widely separated in the architectural professional practice, an issue often discernible in developing countries. Architects mostly acknowledge building materials and technology as facilitators for design near final design stages a process that might dismiss many of the benefits that could have been attained were it engaged early on within a framework of informed appropriation of technology. This paper presents the findings of an ethnographic study that investigates how this gap could be bridged by means of understanding how nanotechnology – both as process and product – affects designer's rationale early on in the design process. The study provides a thick description of the design decision making process of a group of architects working on a residential project in an architectural firm in Egypt, and how it was affected by nanotechnology design knowledge at early design stages.