

The Explanation of the Characteristics of Interior Environments on Psychological Health and Occupational Behavior of Employees in Office Spaces (Scope of Analysis: Municipality Complex of Tabriz Metropolitan City)

Mohammad Dabdabeh*, Bita Bagheri Seygalani², Sara Pourmokhtar³

*1. PhD Graduate, Architecture & Urban Planning Department, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran.

2. Assistant Professor of Architecture Department, Miyaneh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Miyaneh, Iran.

3. PhD in Architecture, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran.

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ABSTRACT

Research Problem:

In recent decades, workplace environments have gained attention as a key factor influencing employees' mental health and occupational behavior. Studies indicate that indoor environmental characteristics such as lighting, color schemes, ventilation, and spatial layout significantly impact psychological well-being, motivation, job satisfaction, and stress reduction. In office settings, access to natural light, air quality, and ergonomic design can enhance productivity while fostering a sense of workplace comfort and job fulfillment. Researchers argue that workplaces should not be reduced to mechanical, confined spaces where employees function devoid of human needs. As multidimensional beings, humans require environments that address tangible and intangible needs, facilitating functional, psychological, and social interactions. In offices, adequate lighting, thermal comfort, visual aesthetics, and varied spatial zones are critical, as they profoundly influence mental health, motivation, and performance. Modern office environments play a pivotal role in shaping employees' environmental and psychological well-being. With growing emphasis on optimal workspace design, creating vibrant yet tranquil settings—both physically and psychologically has become a priority for improving work quality. Indoor environmental parameters (thermal, acoustic, visual, and air quality) directly affect comfort and health, thereby impacting efficiency and psychological welfare. These factors can also influence productivity and job performance, with short- or long-term changes yielding measurable effects. Conversely, environmental stressors (e.g., pollutants, poor conditions) may impair employee health and efficiency. Workspace design must account for both physical and psychological needs to boost morale, reduce stress, and enhance output. Negative perceptions of workplace conditions can lead to absenteeism or turnover, ultimately affecting organizational performance. Thus, prioritizing employee welfare not only reduces costs but also elevates institutional productivity. Historically, building design focused on technical and structural aspects, sidelining indoor environmental quality. However, research reveals that even internationally standardized buildings may fail to deliver high occupant satisfaction, underscoring the need for human-centric design principles. Cultural dimensions further shape occupational behavior and mental health. Shared values, beliefs, norms, and behavioral patterns influence workplace attitudes and interactions. For instance, collectivist cultures may emphasize teamwork and mutual support, while individualist cultures prioritize self-reliance. Gender roles, organizational hierarchies, and communication styles also modulate employee responses to workplace environments. Organizations aligning corporate culture with societal norms typically report higher job satisfaction, productivity, and mental well-being. Thus, cultural factors must be integrated into policy analyses to comprehensively address occupational behavior and mental health. In summary, indoor environments significantly impact psychological welfare and occupational behavior. By optimizing lighting, ventilation, and noise control, offices can shape subjective evaluations and preferences. Enhancing these parameters fosters innovation, comfort, and purpose while mitigating stress and fatigue.

Research Question:

What are the key indoor environmental features affecting employees' health and well-being, and how do these parameters influence their behavior in terms of magnitude and mechanism?

Research Method:

This mixed-methods study (quantitative and qualitative) employs a descriptive-analytical strategy to examine the multidimensional effects of office environments on users. The research unfolds in two phases: Literature Review: Document analysis identifies key parameters of indoor office environments and Conceptual Framework: A path analysis model maps the impact of environmental parameters on mental health and occupational behavior.

The Most Important Results and Conclusion:

The results indicate a positive relationship between the qualitative characteristics of interior environments and employees' psychological health and behavior. Ignoring environmental needs negatively affects employee behavior and motivation. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the role of interior environments in improving psychological health and job satisfaction among employees at the Tabriz Municipality Complex. Proper design principles in workspaces can enhance productivity, improve work-life quality, and empower human resources, ultimately improving overall organizational performance.

It is recommended that the interior architectural design of municipal offices be updated based on modern environmental metrics, emphasizing maximum use of natural light and efficient ventilation. Studies have shown that natural light and optimal air quality can enhance mental health and improve job performance. Therefore, providing guidelines for maximizing natural daylight and incorporating advanced ventilation systems in interior design is essential. To foster constructive social interactions and strengthen employees' sense of belonging, creating informal collaborative spaces, relaxation areas, and private nooks is advised. These spaces should be designed to accommodate both group interactions and personal privacy. This approach not only strengthens social networks but also reduces anxiety and stress caused by work pressures, positively impacting employees' long-term mental health across various departments. The importance of office layouts and equipment selection in line with ergonomic standards cannot be overstated. It is recommended that workspace designs emphasize flexible layouts and adjustable ergonomic features in furniture. Optimizing layouts and adhering to ergonomic principles can directly reduce occupational fatigue and work-related injuries while enhancing productivity a sentiment strongly felt among employees in the Tabriz Metropolitan Municipality. Based on design principles, incorporating natural elements such as plants, outdoor views, and access to natural scenery in the workplace can promote relaxation, increase job satisfaction, and reduce stress among employees. Thus, it is suggested that interior designs ensure these elements are accessible to staff, maximizing their psychological benefits. To create a dynamic and adaptive work environment that responds to changing conditions and employee needs, implementing smart systems for regulating and monitoring environmental factors such as lighting, ventilation, and temperature is crucial. These systems should feature automated adjustments to maintain optimal conditions and prevent environmental stressors. Designing employee welfare and support programs grounded in scientific research on mental health and staff needs can foster a sense of well-being and job security. Such policies may include access to psychological counseling, stress-reduction workshops, and mental health promotion initiatives.

KEYWORDS

Interior Environments, Psychological Health, Office Spaces, Municipality Complex Of Tabriz, Tabriz Metropolitan City.