Psychological Comfort in Built Interiors: An Interpretative Study Based on Four Human Personality Types

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Abstract - Psychological comfort in interior built spaces is a significant but often neglected design aspect that heavily weighs on human satisfaction and well-being. Conventional design methodologies focus on physical comfort parameters-thermal, visual, and acoustic comfort but the user's psychological experience remains poorly explored. The given study analyses psychological comfort as a lived quality influenced by spatial design and subjective perception. The study took the concept of psychological comfort from the classical theory of temperament, defining four basic personality types (sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic) and their variation in responses to interior environments. The literature review, behavioural interpretation, and spatial analysis on interior design variables such as lighting, colour, space scale, enclosure, materiality, and hierarchy were examined to see how these factors affected psychological comfort across personality dimensions. The result evidenced that psychological comfort is subjective, personality-dependent, and associated with emotional involvement in space. It also pointed out that human-centred and inclusive design approaches become necessary for maintaining mental well-being with functional and aesthetic quality in interior spaces.

Key Words: Psychological comfort, built interiors, human personality, spatial perception, interior architecture

1. INTRODUCTION

The feeling of comfort within designed interiors is not limited to specific aspects of the environment. Though specific aspects like temperature and lighting are important within designed interiors to enhance a comfortable feeling of relief and ease of physical nature, it is important to note that the feeling or impression of a specific designed space and its influence on users' mental and emotional well-being is also vital enough to affect or influence users' comfortable experiences. The concept of psychological comfort is best described as a feeling of mental ease and safety in a specific environment or designed space.

Current approaches to interior design focus on aesthetic value, efficiency, as well as optimization of spatial value. Nonetheless, users often complain of discomfort in environments they deem overwhelming, restrictive or monotonous, even if they are technically comfortable. This necessitates an in-depth look into

how users perceive comfort from a point of view different from technical comfort. Due to various temperaments, emotional sensitivity, as well as behavioral characteristics in different individuals, there cannot be comfort for all users from a psychological point of view.

This particular research aims to examine the facets of psychological comfort from the perspective of the overall personality of humans. Likewise, the study provides an attempt to associate the parts of interior space with four main personalities from classical times. In addition to this, this particular paper aims to present the proposition that psychological comfort concerns an interaction rather than being static.

2. Psychological comfort in built environment

Psychological comfort may be defined as that state where occupants feel mentally relaxed, emotionally secure, and cognitively at ease in a setting. It is nevertheless going to be based on spatial clarity, scale, proportion, sensory stimulation, privacy, control, and familiarity. Interiors with psychological comfort are those that make wayfinding straightforward, where the use of space is intuitive, and users feel emotionally safe.

The factors contributing to psychological comfort include:

- Sense of enclosure or openness
- Predictability and legibility of space
- It keeps a balance between stimulation and calmness
- Privacy and personal control
- Emotional response to materials, colours and light

A psychologically comfortable interior reduces stress and supports positive behavioural responses. Conversely, poorly designed interiors may lead to anxiety, fatigue, irritability or withdrawal, even when physical comfort conditions are adequate.

3. Human personalities and spatial perception

Human understanding of space is significantly affected by their personalities. Classical temperament theory classifies all types of human behaviour into four categories of personalities. These have been identified as **sanguine, choleric, melancholic** and

phlegmatic. Although modern psychologists have a wider understanding of the complexity of a person's personality, these categories provide a framework of interpretation.

Further, the specific type of personality has its tolerance for stimulation, the need for control, sensitivity to emotions, and the order of space. Therefore, the same space can be perceived as comfortable by one occupant and uncomfortable to another.

3.1 Sanguine personality and spatial preference

Individuals with a Sanguine personality are energetic, social and expressive. They respond positively to interior spaces that are lively, open and visually stimulating.

Fig -1: Interior environments reflecting sanguine comfort preferences

A. Comfort preferences:

- Bright colors such as yellow, coral and turquoise
- Large windows and daylight access
- Flexible furniture layout
- Open-plan interiors
- Decorative elements

B. Discomfort triggers:

- Dark or enclosed spaces
- Lack of social interaction zones
- Poor lighting
- Rigid layouts

For Sanguine users, comfort is associated with activity, movement, and visual interest. An environment that feels dull or isolated may lead to dissatisfaction despite adequate physical conditions.

3.2 Choleric personality and environmental control

Choleric individuals are decisive, ambitious and leadership oriented. They prefer spaces that reflect structure, discipline, and authority.
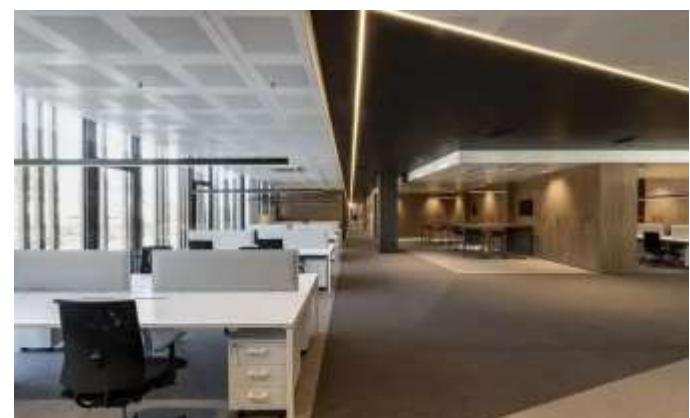

Fig -2: Structured spaces associated with choleric personality

A. Comfort Preferences:

- Dark, neutral, or bold color palettes
- Spatial hierarchy and zoning
- Controlled lighting
- Minimal distractions
- Clean, defined layouts

B. Discomfort triggers:

- Visual clutter
- Unstructured circulation
- Excessive ornamentation
- Poor acoustic control

For Choleric personalities, comfort is strongly related to control and efficiency. A disorganised environment may create psychological stress even if environmental conditions are adequate.

3.3 Melancholic personality and sensory sensitivity

Melancholic individuals are emotionally sensitive and thoughtful. They have a strong response to environmental subtlety.
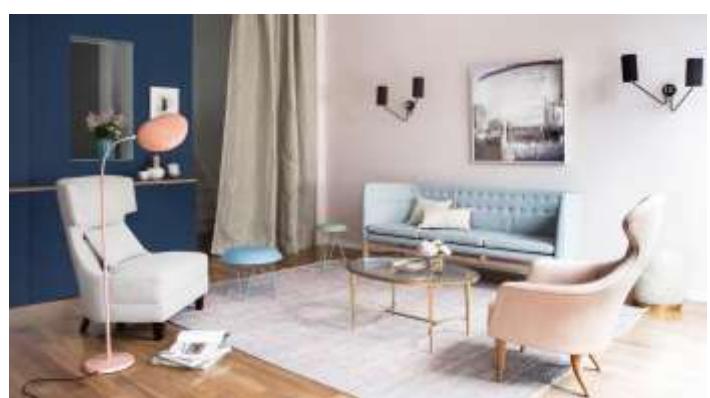
Fig -3: Calm and minimal interiors preferred by melancholic users

3.4 Phlegmatic personality and need for stability

Phlegmatic individuals are calm, patient and stable. They prefer comforting and emotionally secure environments.

Fig -4: Warm and familiar spaces aligned with phlegmatic comfort perception

A. Comfort Preferences:

- Earth tones
- Soft textures
- Warm lighting
- Comfortable furniture
- Familiar spatial layouts

B. Discomfort triggers:

- High contrast colours
- Overstimulating decor
- Frequent spatial changes

Comfort for phlegmatic personalities is linked with emotional security and physical ease.

Personality	Preferred Colors	Lighting	Space	Comfort Trigger
Sanguine	Bright and warm	Natural	Open	Visual stimulation
Choleric	Dark and neutral	Controlled	Structured	Order and dominance
Melancholic	Pastels	Soft light	Compact	Quietness
Phlegmatic	Earthy	Warm	Cozy	Emotional security

Table - 1: Comparative Comfort Matrix

4. Psychological Dimension of Comfort

Comfort perception goes beyond environmental performance. People experience spaces emotionally through memory recall, their values system, temperament, and psychological associations.

A technically conformable interior also has the potential to create emotional stress because of:

- Confusing circulation
- Excess visual stimulation
- Lack of personal space
- Social discomfort

This confirms that:

Comfort is an emotional experience supported by architecture

5. Application to Interior Architectural Design

Architects cannot customise spaces for each personality type individually, but design strategies can accommodate diversity by:

- Creating quiet zones and social zones
- Using adaptable lighting systems
- Introducing neutral base colours with flexible accents
- Designing intuitive circulation
- Controlling noise using materials
- Offering spatial variety

Interior design should therefore address:

- Emotional comfort
- Sensory balance
- Personal control
- Spatial clarity

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The study further points out that psychological comfort is subjective and deeply connected with individual personality

traits, noting that an interior environment designed to fulfill the needs of one type of user may be involuntarily causing discomfort in another. Thus, designers need to design flexible, adaptive and layered interiors to accommodate the diverse psychological needs for psychological comfort.

Inclusive interiors can be achieved through the use of transition spaces, flexible lighting, varied scales of space, and combined uses. By gaining an understanding of comfort pertaining to personality, designers are able to anticipate the reactions of users and create spaces that would increase emotional well-being.

7. Limitations of the study

• The study adopts the classical four-personality framework as an interpretative tool, which simplifies the complexity of human behaviour and may not fully represent the wide spectrum of individual personality traits.
• Psychological comfort is inherently subjective and influenced by personal experiences, cultural background, and situational factors, which may vary beyond the scope of this research.
• The research is primarily based on literature review and conceptual interpretation rather than extensive empirical user surveys or physiological measurements.
• The influence of age, gender, socio-economic background, and cultural differences on psychological comfort has not been analysed in depth.
• The findings focus on interior environments and may not be directly applicable to all building types or outdoor spaces.
• Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the conclusions are interpretative and aim to provide design insights rather than statistically generalised results.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Psychological comfort is one of the most important but undervalued aspects of interior architecture. In this research, it was proven that physical conditions do not solely determine whether built interiors are comfortable or not; rather, comfort is highly subjective to the human personality and emotional perception of the environment. In linking the human personality types to four different psychological comfort types, this study has set out a framework within which diverse experiences can be understood by users in interior spaces. A design thinking approach integrating psychological comfort should make interiors more inclusive, humane, and responsive to the needs of humans. Future research can elaborate on this framework by conducting empirical studies, user surveys, and interdisciplinary collaboration between architecture and psychology.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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