

The Impact of Art on Corporate Interiors: Creating a Relaxing and Productive Workspace

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Abstract: *The main purpose of this research is to create a platform for creative design development and how art impacts human behavior. Art has a deeper relationship with design and architecture. It is used in different spaces like the residential, commercial, institutional, corporate, and hospitality sectors. Since the average modern office worker spends 8 to 10 hours a day at their desk, art plays a significant role in corporate offices. The study's goal is to evaluate how art affects corporate interiors and human behavior, how it will create a relaxing and soothing environment, how it will change human behavior, the application of art in corporate interiors, and the dynamism of art on the visual and sensory compositions of the human senses. The perception and aesthetic of corporate interiors to create a physiological connection between the employees and the workspace is a challenging design aspect. Through this paper, the importance of art in corporate interiors is emphasized.*

Keywords: Art, corporate, interiors, workplace

1. Introduction

Art always creates an involvement of the user who is using the space. By this, people learn to appreciate art and also start taking an interest in the importance of taking a pause from their daily routine. Art has a deeper relationship with design & architecture. Art is used in different spaces like residential, commercial, institutional, corporate, & hospitality. In the corporate industry, art helps create the corporate identity and the brand image. Art plays an important role in corporate offices as the modern office worker spends around 8–10 hours of their day at their workstation. Many times, people have the misunderstanding that a healthy environment is only gained through a physical environment; other than that, mental health is also important. Art and colors in interiors focus on achieving mental calmness and peace. To keep mental peace, people need to meditate and relax. A relaxing place where one can find peace is also important for the person who is working the whole day. This is the place where one can relax and escape from the hectic schedule of the day; it is the place where one can increase productivity after the relaxing time and create a positive impact. It is very important for the healthy and spiritual development. It is essential to incorporate folk art into design so that people remain connected with their art and culture. (Dash, 2018)

The aim of the study is to analyze the effect of art on corporate interiors & on human behavior, including how it will create a relaxing and soothing environment, how it will change human behavior, the application of art in corporate interiors, and the dynamism of art on the visual and sensory compositions of the human senses. The perception and aesthetic of corporate interiors to create a physiological connection between the employees and the workspace is a challenging design aspect.

2. Aim

The purpose of this paper is to study the art, their impact on

corporate interiors, and how to incorporate them into corporate interiors.

3. Objective

- To inspire the concept of art in interior design.
- To understand the specific applications of art in modern interior design.
- To understand the close relationship between art & corporate interiors.
- To understand the impact of art on the interior space.

4. Art in Corporate Interiors

4.1 Why is art necessary in the workplace and how should it be chosen?

Art can be an important aspect of a workplace as it contributes to the overall atmosphere, creativity, and wellbeing of the employees. Here are some reasons why art is necessary in the workplace:

- **Aesthetics:** Art can add visual interest and beauty to the space, creating a more pleasant and inviting atmosphere.
- Displaying art in the workplace can elevate employee performance, mood, & physical wellbeing, as well as bolster interpersonal bonds between employees and clients.
- **Brand identity:** Art can reflect the values and mission of a company, contributing to its brand identity and establishing a unique recognizable image.
- Art can usefully function as a landmark, helping people travelling through a space remember where they have been.
- The office can easily become a place of stress and tension, and people become cognitively exhausted after prolonged periods of highly focused work.
- Restore mental energy and reduce stress.
- **Inspiration and creativity:** Art can inspire creativity and innovation among employees, leading to more dynamic and innovative ideas.

- The presence of artwork or interesting sculptures also helps bridge the communication gap between the employees of different hierarchies.
- **Employees wellbeing:** Art can contribute to a positive and welcoming atmosphere within the workplace, promoting employee’s wellbeing and job satisfaction.

According to a University of Exeter study, *Alexander Haslam & Dr. Craig Knight*, employees in an office with art are **15 percent more productive**. The study also revealed that 94 percent of employees surveyed believe that art enhances the work environment, while 78 percent and 64 percent of employees said, respectively, that art reduces stress and promotes creativity.

By bringing out-of-the-box thinking and a strategic approach to art into workplace design, organisations can change perspectives, inspire brand loyalty, increase employee productivity, and create a positive culture.

Creating a positive workplace impact through art selection

Office interior design is about the selection of the right décor and even art. Office art can increase the happiness of employees with its brightness. Studies suggest that featuring art in the office increases productivity. Art also increases the level of comfort for both customers and workers.

A few essentials to consider while selecting the right artwork:

- **Consider the space:** Take into account the size, layout, and lighting of a space when selecting art. Larger pieces may be suitable for larger spaces, while smaller pieces may be more appropriate for smaller spaces. In offices, art should be displayed in areas that are frequently visited by employees and visitors, like conference rooms, waiting areas, and chillout zones. Greeting people with some different kind of artwork when they are entering the office may also be a great idea.
- **Reflect company values:** Choose art that reflects the values and mission of the company. This can help establish a unique and recognisable brand identity. At present, art is used to communicate about the brand. It is elegant and beautiful to look at.
- **Colour consideration:** Mix and match different styles and mediums of art to create visual interest and stimulate creativity. Colour schemes typically feature two or three tones. These could be either complementary or in contrast with each other. Colour has a major impact on emotions and productivity. Colours like yellow & orange are linked to positivity.
- **Incorporate local artists:** Consider using art from local artists to support the local community and add a unique touch to the workplace.
- **Paintings aren't the only form of art;** they're not the only option to pursue. Beautiful, artistic photographs will have a greater impact. The same applies to graphics and sketches. Black-and-white art is also an option. Small sculptures add a bit of dynamic appeal to the office design. Mosaics, patchwork, quilts, or folk art can also be used.

4.2 How can looking at art affect the human brain?

Art is very important in both the home and workplace, as it enhances the interior and makes the surroundings more interesting and pleasant to look at. One study had shown that *"looking at artwork is beautiful as it stimulates the part of the brain responsible for pleasure and a feeling of falling in love."*

In a recent study by **Professor Semir Zeki, chairperson in Neuroaesthetics at University College London**, participants were placed in a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner to measure the blood flow to certain parts of the brain while being shown a series of 30 images of artwork. The findings showed that the increase in blood flow to that part of the brain was directly related to how much the participant liked the image shown."

Professor Semir said, "What we found is that when you look at art, whether it is a landscape, a still life, an abstract, or a portrait, there is strong activity in that part of the brain related to pleasure." According to **Zeki**, "The reaction was immediate. What we found was that the increase in blood flow was in proportion to how much the painting was liked." "It tells us art induces a feel-good sensation direct to the brain." (Mendick, 2011)

Looking at a piece of artwork for a few minutes can engage the creative parts of the brain and be more productive. Studies show that even just looking at art can boost creativity. Here are some ways that art can affect the brain:

Table 1: Ways that art can affect the brain

Increased dopamine release: The brain releases the dopamine, a chemical associated with pleasure and reward, when we look at art that we find beautiful or aesthetically pleasing.	Enhanced creativity: Exposure to art can stimulate the brain’s creativity and problem-solving abilities, leading to more innovative thinking and ideas.
Improves memory: Viewing art can improve memory retention and recall by stimulating the brain’s visual processing centers.	Reduced stress: Looking at art can have a calming effect on the brain, reducing levels of stress hormones such as cortisol.
Improved mood: Art can have a positive impact on mood, leading to feelings of happiness and wellbeing.	Increased empathy: Viewing art can increase empathy and emotional intelligence by stimulating the brain’s mirror neuron system, which is responsible for empathy and social cognition.

4.3 Can art in the office boost creativity?

Yes, art in the office can boost creativity. Exposure to art can stimulate the brain’s creativity and problem-solving abilities, leading to more innovative thinking and ideas. Here are some ways that art can boost creativity in the office:

Table 2: Ways that art can boost creativity in the office

Inspiration: Art can inspire creativity and innovation among employees by providing visual stimulation and ideas for new concepts and designs.

Visual interest: Art can add visual interest and variety to the office environment, creating a more dynamic and engaging atmosphere that can stimulate creativity.
Brainstorming sessions: Art can be used as a tool for brainstorming sessions, where employees can gather around a piece of art and use it as a starting point for ideation and creative thinking.
Relaxation: Art can have a calming effect on the brain, reducing levels of stress hormones such as cortisol, which can help to create a relaxed and open mindset that is conducive to creativity.
Collaboration: Art can be used as a point of discussion and collaboration among employees, encouraging the sharing of ideas and the development of creative solutions.

"Art works: how art in the office boosts staff productivity", discusses how having art and creativity in the workplace can make employees more productive, less stressed, as well as improve their general wellbeing.

In one article written by **Kristie Brewer**, she writes, "Contrary to what your boss might say, being distracted at work is not always a bad thing. If the object of your distraction is a work of art, it can actually boost productivity, lower stress, and increase wellbeing." (Brewer, *Artworks How Art In The Office Boosts Staff Productivity*, 2011)

The article goes on to discuss how **Knight and his team** conducted an experiment to find out what the most effective type of workspace was by having the participants work for one hour each in four different styles of working environments.

The types of working environment were:

- **Lean:** Containing only the things necessary to do the tasks.
- **Enriched:** featuring art and plants which were already arranged.
- **Empowered:** the same art and plants but participants could choose where to put them.
- **Disempowered:** participants could arrange the art and plants themselves – but the experimenter then undid these personal touches and reverted to the enriched layout. (Brewer, *Art works: how art in the office boosts staff productivity*, 2016)

Brewer goes on to say, "The team found that people who worked in the enriched office worked about **15% faster than those in the lean office and had fewer health complaints**—this figure then doubled for those who worked in the empowered space. As those who'd seen their personal touches undermined, their productivity levels were the same as those in the lean space." (Brewer, K. 2016)

The conclusion of this study is that "The employees will be most happy and productive if they are allowed the power to personalize their own space; this would mean that if an employee was allowed to choose their own artwork, for example, they might feel even more comfortable and relaxed than if the artwork was chosen for them."

4.4 Does experiencing visual art reduce stress and anxiety levels?

Stress is the biggest problem in the modern work environment, a problem that can also lead to further health issues caused by high blood pressure, a lack of sleep, and anxiety.

The fact that looking at beautiful fine art reduces stress levels could have many other benefits as a knock-on effect from lower stress levels, as high stress levels can also seriously affect the immune system.

In a short film supporting the "National Art Pass", **Semir Zeki**, Professor of Neurobiology and Neuroaesthetics at the University College London, discusses the results of a series of experiments he designed in an effort to understand what happens in our brains while we are looking at art. From the results of the study, Zeki concluded that "when a person views a piece of art that they perceive to be beautiful, their brain is flooded with the pleasure chemical dopamine, which gives the viewer feelings of intense pleasure similar to feelings of love and desire." (Furnd, 2011).

This shows that "Yes, experiencing visual art can reduce stress and anxiety levels. Here are some ways that visual art can have a calming effect on the brain:

Table 3: Ways that visual art can have a calming effect on the brain

Mindfulness: Looking at art can promote mindfulness, helping individuals to focus on the present moment and reducing feelings of stress and anxiety.
Relaxation: Visual art can have a calming effect on the brain, reducing levels of stress hormones such as cortisol and promoting relaxation and calmness.
Aesthetics: Exposure to aesthetically pleasing art can stimulate the brain's reward centers, leading to the release of dopamine and feelings of pleasure and well-being.
Positive distraction: Viewing art can serve as a positive distraction from stressors in the environment, providing a temporary escape and promoting feelings of calmness and relaxation.
Emotional expression: Art can provide a way for individuals to express and process emotions, which can help to reduce feelings of stress and anxiety.

4.5 What are the dangers of stress in the workplace?

As the stress level in the population is increasing because of work and the office, it can lead to many health problems these days. Employees are always having some sort of target to hit, putting pressure on themselves and causing anything from a mild amount of stress to an intolerable amount that can cause health problems, resulting in the employee having to take time off work. The symptoms of stress can vary from person to person and can be physical, emotional and behavioral. Here are some common symptoms of stress:

Table 4: Common symptoms of stress

Physical symptoms: Headaches, muscle tension, fatigue, sleep disturbances, digestive problems, and changes in appetite.
Emotional symptoms: Anxiety, irritability, mood swings, depression, and feeling overwhelmed.
Behavioral symptoms: Changes in eating or sleeping habits, withdrawing from social activities, procrastination, and increased use of drugs or alcohol.

Cognitive symptoms: Difficulty concentrating, memory problems, and racing thoughts.

Interpersonal symptoms: Conflict with coworkers, family, or friends, and social isolation.

These issues may appear minor at first, but they eventually give rise to other issues. Taking action on this is very important, as is taking preventive steps as well.

Apart from clearly being damaging to the person involved, an employee taking a lot of time off work can also hurt the company in the long run, firstly because it can cost the company money to pay for cover staff, and secondly because staff having to take time off work for sickness can put pressure on the rest of the team, meaning that some people might have to work extra hours to make up the loss, which in turn can lead to those staff becoming stressed.

It is important to note that experiencing occasional stress is normal, but chronic or excessive stress can have negative effects on physical and mental health. If stress symptoms persist or begin to interfere with daily life, it may be helpful to seek professional support or make changes to manage stress levels.

4.6 Can having art in the office strengthen a brand?

Art is the best way to communicate without using words; thoughtful placement of fine art in the workplace can strengthen the brand's image for both employees and prospective clients while visiting the workplace. First impressions are very important, and displaying art related to the type of brand and brand subject on the walls in the office gives a clear message of what the brand is all about and tells a story about the company. Using brand colours within artwork can also help strengthen a brand. Here are some ways that art in the office can strengthen the brand:

Table 5: Ways that art in the office can strengthen the brand

Enhancing the company's image: Art can communicate a company's values and culture, and help to project a positive image to employees, clients, and visitors.
Differentiation: Art can be used to create a unique and distinctive atmosphere in the workplace, which can help to differentiate a company from its competitors.
Reflecting brand identity: Art can be used to reflect a company's brand identity, and to reinforce key messages or themes.
Creating a positive work environment: Art can contribute to a positive work environment by enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the office, and promoting feelings of creativity and inspiration among employees.
Supporting corporate social responsibility: Art can be used to promote a company's commitment to corporate social responsibility, by showcasing the work of local or underrepresented artists, or by promoting sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Doris Anderson, an art consultant at D' or Art consultants refers to this in her article (5 ways art can reflect your brand). She writes, "Incorporating your corporate colors and values can reinforce your corporate culture. You can have a literal representation of your values, or you can have a mural or other artwork to depict your values and culture. When your art is created specifically to your brand, it may

then be incorporated on your website, annual reports and gift giving."

By creating a unique and inspiring workplace, companies can differentiate themselves from their competitors, attract top talent, and build a positive reputation in the marketplace.

4.7 Psychological factors that affect human perception of art in corporate interiors

"There is no doubt whatever about the influence of architecture and structure upon human character and action. We make our buildings and afterwards they make us. They regulate the course of our lives." Winston Churchill, addressing the English Architectural Association, 1924. While designing a place where users are going to spend almost 8–10 hours of their day, it is important that interior designers be involved because they are the creators of the interiors and are adding features to the interiors that affect human behavior. "The interdisciplinary field of study that focuses on the interplay of individuals and their surroundings". (Galindo, 2000)

There are several psychological factors that can affect human perception of art in corporate interiors. These factors can influence how people interpret and respond to art, and can ultimately shape their overall perception of the office environment.

Some of the key psychological factors to consider:

Table 6: Key psychological factors

Cognitive processing: How people perceive and interpret art is influenced by their cognitive processes, including attention, memory, and problem-solving abilities. Different individuals may interpret the same artwork in different ways based on their cognitive processes.
Emotional response: Art can evoke strong emotional responses in people, which can influence their overall perception of the office environment. Depending on the type of art and the emotions it evokes, people may perceive the office as positive, negative, or neutral.
Cultural background: Cultural background can influence how people perceive and interpret art, as different cultures have different artistic traditions and conventions. What is considered "artistic" in one culture may not be in another.
Personal preferences: People have personal preferences when it comes to art, which can influence their perception of the art in corporate interiors. For example, some people may prefer abstract art, while others may prefer representational art.
Context: The context in which art is displayed can also influence people's perception of it. For example, if an artwork is displayed in a prominent location, people may perceive it as more important or valuable than if it were displayed in a less prominent location.

Employees will feel more valued if they have a pleasant and attractively designed office, as this suggests that the management cares about the wellbeing and environment of the employees rather than just treating them like robots.

When talking about the arts, we take into consideration the five senses and how each of them perceives various combinations of sight, sound, and smell through the use of

folk arts and colours and materials, bringing in natural sound, stress level changes, and many other things.

Overall, human perception of art in corporate interiors is influenced by a complex interplay of cognitive, emotional, cultural, personal, and contextual factors.

4.8 Art impacting the 5 senses of the human

Art has a big role in impacting the senses of human beings. Art includes paintings, sculptures, textile art, product art, etc.

Talking about the different senses. Like,

Sight: Visual art is the most common form of art that impacts the sense of sight. Paintings, sculpture, photographs, and visual art forms can capture the attention of viewers and evoke different emotional response depending on the subject matter, colors and compositions. Colors of art, detailing work, the concept of art, seeing the art for a long time, types of patterns and designs, etc. cause the blood circulation of the human body to increase, which helps in impacting human behavior directly as it makes the person calm and happy.

Hearing: Sound art is a form of art that utilizes sound as its primary medium. It can be experienced through headphones or speakers. The sound of art is also important for human behavior, when it directly goes to the human ear has different impacts; sometimes it is soothing, or the sound of a bell, the hollow sound of terracotta, etc. has an impact on human behavior.

Touch: The texture of the art also plays an important role in visual art. Tactile art is a form of art that can be touched and felt by the viewer. It expands our mental engagement with physical spaces. Texture like rough, smooth, silky, etc. Examples include sculptures, textiles, and ceramics.

Smell: The smell of some of the art works will affect human behavior. Scented art is a form of art that engages the sense of smell. The sense of smell plays a very important role in the physiological effects of mood, stress, and working capacity. Fragrances affect brain activities. It includes perfume, oils, aromatic creations, terracotta, marble stone, etc. It evokes different emotional responses and create a calming or energizing effect on the viewer.

Taste: It is the least associated with interiors. It mostly refers to how our environment influences our eating experience. The sense of taste is impacted by the ambience created within our surroundings. This sense will mostly work for the design of the dining area of the office.

In last, art can impact all five senses of the human body, creating a multi-sensory experience that engages the viewer and evokes different emotional responses.

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