



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Management

TO STUDY THE DIFFERENCE IN PERCEIVED SATISFACTION WITH VARIOUS INDOOR ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES

KEY WORDS: environment, gender, perceived satisfaction, correlate, Design, Built environment

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, many organizations have been trying new designs and techniques to construct office buildings, which can increase productivity, and attract more employees. There has been much debate over whether public sector employees are more satisfied with Indoor environment variables, relative to their private sector counterparts, and how this satisfaction affects their productivity. Present study aims to study the difference in perceived satisfaction with various indoor environment variables in government and private sector employees. The total of 660 employees from various offices of Chandigarh was recruited as sample. The age range of the sample was between 25 to 60 years. Sample was divided into two group- Group I consisted of 476 employees working in Government offices and Group II consisted of 184 employees working in private sector. Results reveal that when Government and Non Government employees were compared on all office environment variables significant differences were found on satisfaction with Furniture and Noise. Non Government employees appear to be more satisfied with Furniture and Noise condition of their offices as compared to employees working in Government offices.

Introduction

Over the year's surveys in several office buildings have shown that crowded work places, job dissatisfaction and physical environment are the main factors affecting productivity. Majority of employees believed that the office environment has a direct influence on their well-being and self assessed productivity. When dissatisfaction with the environment and job were high there was a low level of self assessed productivity. Various literature pertain to the study of multiple offices and office buildings indicated that the factors such as dissatisfaction, cluttered workplaces and the physical environment are playing a major role in the loss of employees' productivity (Carnevale, 1992, Clements-Croome, 1997).

There has been much debate over whether public sector employees are more satisfied with Indoor environment variables, relative to their private sector counterparts, and how this satisfaction affects their productivity. In a lone study Salama (2012) studied the impact of the spatial qualities of the workplace on architects' job satisfaction. Private sector architects indicated that they felt very positively about the relationship between their workspace and their work tasks. Supportive work environments were characterized by appropriate acoustics and space variations and flexibility. On the other hand, public sector architects are not entirely concerned with the architectural agenda. There is dearth of studies in this area in west as well as in India. Present study is being undertaken to probe into this area.

Methodology
Sample

A total of 660 employees from various offices of Chandigarh were recruited as sample. The buildings used in this study were of different government and non government offices in Chandigarh city. The age range of the sample was between 25 to 60 years. The employees who were working for the last three years in a particular organization were considered for inclusion in this study. The minimum educational qualification of the selected subjects was graduation. In the present study sample was divided into two groups Group I consisted of 476 employees working in Government offices and Group II consisted of 184 employees working in private sector.

Questionnaire

The data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher with the help of experts. The questionnaire is adapted and modified version of already existing scales of occupants' satisfaction with indoor environment quality (IEQ) components of other buildings by different researchers. The questionnaire items were developed to reflect the satisfaction/comfort/productivity components of the office environment. The questionnaire for the study contained 44 total items pertaining to employees' general demographics and satisfaction with thermal, acoustic, and lighting conditions. The

items of the questionnaire were related to the occupants' satisfaction of the IEQ components of thermal, acoustic, and lighting conditions. They were rated by the occupants based on a five-point Likert-type scale (1= "very dissatisfied" to 5 = "very satisfied").

Data Analysis

For result findings and in-depth analysis of the different components of office environment on the productivity of the office employees, statistical techniques of t test has been used. SPSS 16 software as research tool for data analysis was used for this research.

As per the compiled research study sample data, 73.3 percent office employees' were Government employees and 26.6 percent were Non Government employees. The response of overall samples according to the category of organization and the significance of mean differences between Government and Non Government employees on various variables of office environment and productivity of are presented in Table 1

Table 1 Significance of Mean Difference in Scores of Office Design Components between Govt. (N=476) and Non-Govt. (N=184) Employees

Variable	Govt /NonGovt	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	t
Furniture	Govt	476	3.0583	.73441	.03366	-.25964	-4.232**
	NonGovt	184	3.3179	.62899	.04637		
Noise	Govt	476	2.9449	.57855	.02652	-.09863	-1.977*
	NonGovt	184	3.0435	.56492	.04165		
Temperature	Govt	476	3.0142	.44625	.02045	-.01843	-.481
	NonGovt	184	3.0326	.42900	.03163		
Lighting	Govt	476	2.9480	.76986	.03529	.02953	.449
	NonGovt	184	2.9185	.72768	.05365		
Spatial Arrangement	Govt	476	3.1801	.75775	.03473	-.00599	-.092
	NonGovt	184	3.1861	.73249	.05400		
View Window	Govt	476	2.9076	.81555	.03738	.08012	1.129
	NonGovt	184	2.8274	.82220	.06061		
Nature Plants	Govt	476	2.5672	.83316	.03819	-.13522	-1.838
	NonGovt	184	2.7024	.88327	.06512		
Productivity	Govt	476	3.5625	.72577	.03327	-.17527	-2.745**
	NonGovt	184	3.7378	.76075	.05608		

** Significant at .01 levels & * Significant at .05 levels

It may be observed from the table 1 that statistically significant mean differences were found between government and non

government employees with regard to Furniture ($t=4.232, p<0.01$), Noise ($t=-1.977, p<0.05$) variables of office environment. However, government and non government employees did not show significant mean differences in nature/plants ($t=-1.838$), Temperature ($t=-.481$), Lighting ($t=.449$), Spatial Arrangement ($t=-.092$), View Window ($t=1.129$) variables of office environment.

In the present study when Government and Non Government employees were compared on all office environment variables significant differences were found on satisfaction with Furniture and Noise. Non Government employees appear to be more satisfied with Furniture and Noise condition of their offices as compared to employees working in Government offices.

Salama (2012) studied the impact of the spatial qualities of the workplace on architects' job satisfaction. Private sector architects indicated that they felt very positively about the relationship between their workspace and their work tasks. Supportive work environments were characterized by appropriate acoustics and space variations and flexibility. One private sector employer believed that "the interaction present in open plan offices helped employees complete their work tasks." Another employer argued that the overall design and environment of the office was important for employees to enthusiastically complete their work tasks. Employees felt a "sense of pride" about their work environment when the design of the office and the architecture agenda was well thought of. Employees were then more likely to be more efficient and productive. On the other hand, public sector architects are not entirely concerned with the architectural agenda. One public sector organization stated that despite the fact that its office was not very different from other public sector buildings in Belfast, the organization had set goals to achieve with regards to service ability to employees. The same organization emphasized the importance of information technology in helping employees complete their work tasks. By and large, public sector architects felt that change and improvement was necessary for their workplace to fully support work tasks. Public sector organizations claimed that such improvements are underway. Improvements generally involved restructuring the office to achieve a more open layout.

In recent years there has been an increase in public awareness about the effects of the indoor environment on employees comfort and health. In light of growing concerns about productivity, much more attention has focused on the indoor environment in private set up in India. In government offices making any change in the infrastructure is a very tedious process because of various official procedures.

This research study is adding to the existing body of knowledge in environmental psychology by providing insights into employees' perception of their office environment.

References

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