

# The Role of Environmental Surroundings in Shaping Feelings, Moods and Behaviors - A Qualitative Analysis

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**Abstract:** Environmental psychology is a branch of psychology that studies the relationship between human beings and the external environment. It explores the effects of the physical environment on human behavior. This study aimed at understanding the influence of environmental factors on people's moods, feelings and behaviors. Interviews consisting of 10 open-ended questions were conducted on five participants, 2 males and 3 females with ages ranging from 21-23, in different environmental settings: room, street, store room, cafe and party. Analysis of the responses indicated that factors in the environment like sound, visuals, spacing, time played a role in the participants' moods, emotions and behaviors.

**Keywords:** Environment- settings, Environmental perceptions, moods, behaviors

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## 1. Introduction

Environmental psychology is the discipline that studies the interplay between individuals and the built and natural environment. This means that environmental psychology examines the influence of the environment on human experiences, behavior, and well-being, as well as the influence of individuals on the environment, that is, factors influencing environmental behavior, and ways to encourage pro-environmental behavior. Brunswick (1903–1955) and Lewin (1890–1947) are generally regarded as the 'Founding fathers' of environmental psychology. Neither of these scholars had significant empirical work that we would classify today as environmental psychology. However, their ideas, such as the interaction between physical environment and psychological processes and studying human behaviors in real-life settings instead of artificial environments, were influential for many later studies on human–environment interactions.

Nurse, J., Woodcock, P., & Ormsby, J. (2003) aimed to increase understanding of how the prison environment influences the mental health of prisoners and prison staff using qualitative study with focus groups. Results showed prisoners reported that long periods of isolation with little mental stimulus contributed to poor mental health and led to intense feelings of anger, frustration, and anxiety.

Environmental psychology studies human–environment interactions at different scale levels, from domestic surroundings and the neighborhood to cities, nature reserves and countries, and even the planet as a whole.

A study used structural equation models on 792 adolescents who responded to highly structured interviews. The effect of objective environment on mental health was mediated through its influence on perceived neighborhood.

Environmental support mitigated negative perceptions of the environment and the effect of the perceived environment on mental health, while exposure to violence augmented the negative effect of the perceived environment. (Stiffman, A. R., Hadley-Ives, E., Elze, D., Johnson, S., & Dore, P. (1999).

Impact of environment on adolescent mental health and behavior: structural equation modelling. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 69(1), 73.) Guite, H. F., Clark, C., & Ackrill, G. (2006) examined the strength of association between physical and social factors in the built environment and mental well-being, and to determine which factors are the most important. A postal survey based on a theoretical model of domains that might link the physical and urban environment with mental well-being was sent. At the univariate level significant confounders that were associated with poorer mental well-being were being female, 85+ years, unemployed or retired, on housing benefit, council tenant, two or more children, and having requested-housing. Better mental wellbeing was associated with being aged 65 years to 84 years.

Pelgrims, I., Devleeschauwer, B., Guyot, M., Keune, H., Nawrot, T. S., Remmen, R., ... & De Clercq, E. M. (2021) defined associations of combined long-term exposure to air pollution, noise, surrounding green at different scales, and building morphology with several dimensions of mental health in Brussels. The epidemiological study was carried out based on the linkage of data from the national health interview surveys (2008 and 2013) and specifically developed indicators describing each participant's surroundings in terms of air quality, noise, surroundings. The results suggest that traffic-related air pollution (black carbon, NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>) exposure was positively associated with higher odds of depressive disorders.

## 2. Methodology

A structured interview consisting of the 10 questions was conducted. The questions were kept constant for all the participants. The responses were recorded and analyzed to determine how the environments were influencing the participant's moods, feelings and emotions.

### 2.1 Participants

A total of 5 participants were involved in the study. 3 of the participants were females and 2 were male, with their ages ranging from 21-23 years. 3 of the participants were students and 2 were working professionals.

### 2.2 Interviews

The interviews consisted of 10 questions. The participants were briefed upon the process of the interview and rapport was established. The interview questions were kept open-ended and focused on their emotions, the influences of space, their personal preferences, the impacts of noise, their perceptions of visual elements, and the influence of time. The questions remained the same though they were framed differently for some participants.

## 3. Responses of participants in respective environments during the interviews

Participant 'N' (Street setting)

"So, right now, we are standing in a very crowded street. There are a lot of vehicles present and a lot of traffic, and a lot of noise as well since it's right outside of college so people are talking and there are a lot of people coming and going, so a lot of movement, It's a very happening place.

And there are also a lot of buildings around. Most of them are educational workplaces and stuff. But there's also a lot of cafés, eateries, and shops.

Recently, last week, actually, I was trying to cross this road that we're standing on, and vehicles came suddenly from both sides, and I was kinda stuck in the street for a while. And since this is a road that I do have to cross a lot, that actually affected me because it's made me afraid to cross this road and any road, since I'm always constantly worried about how many people, the speed at which vehicles are coming. Even if we do take precautions, it's very unpredictable, so that kind of left a long-lasting impact on me as well.

I do tend to avoid the actual street as much as possible since the amount of people and the speed at which vehicles come is just very overwhelming at times. But one place I generally like to visit is a cafe that's present on the street because it's very contrasting from the actual road. It's a quiet place and the smells and the scents and the people there are also very welcoming. It's a place where even though the street makes you anxious, going to that place calms you down.

Usually, being on the street, the sounds are always predominant. No matter what time you're here, it's a very happening place. There's always noise and there's always a crowd. Every time I'm here, it's always very overwhelming, so I've constantly had to help myself through being on this road- It's just a constant struggle to just be on this, be in this area and observe, just do what I'm supposed to do here. Since I'm supposed to be regular here, it's helped in helping me manage it better. But at the same time, I don't think I'll never get used to the noise in the crowd.

The crowd density in general is just very distracting to me because no matter where I want to go, if I want to go to the stationery store, there's a crowd there. If I want to go to the cafe, there's a crowd outside the cafe. If I want to go to the grocery store as well, there are a lot of people there, so it gets very distracting. I often tend to forget the reason I came there as well because it's just so much stimulus to intake all the time that it gets very distracting for me as well.

Even now, there are a lot of people around us while I'm trying to answer these questions. So at times, I'm suddenly not able to focus on the questions as well. But at the same time, I think the amount of people does tell you that there are a lot of facilities here and there's a lot of things to access, which kind of tells you that- it's a lively environment. It's not that the people around and the vehicles on the street are not stimulating, but at the same time, the amount and the intensity at which they are there is kind of overwhelming.

I would try to reduce the amount of traffic on the road since this is a college environment and there are a lot of people around here and pedestrians, especially, I don't think it's that safe for this amount of vehicles to be there on the street. I would try to reduce that by making a separate path just for pedestrians or a separate route for the cars and vehicles on the street. But I'm not sure to what extent I'll be able to implement that.

I'm pretty sure no one in this area finds this environment particularly pleasing because like I said, if you look at the people around here, you can see that no one's really smiling or no one's really happy. I'm pretty sure you could generalise this, but at the same time, I'd say it is also quite subjective because I come from a pretty calm environment, so this is overwhelming to me, but for people who grew up in an environment like this, it

might offer them a sense of comfort as well to know that there are so many people around and there's so much to do.

I think if I'm here for a longer amount of time, I would adapt to this environment more, I think in the short run, it would be good for me to be used to this environment. But in long term, I don't think in the future that would help me because the noise especially would probably affect my hearing and my general mental ability, my mental capacity. But in the short run, I think just not being in this environment for a long amount of time would probably also be negative, because it would be too much to take in every time I am here and I wouldn't be able to adapt to this environment, which I think in a growing society, in a developing society, we do need to eventually get used to traffic and people. It might be bad, but at the same time, the times when I'm not in this environment I would be particularly more appreciative.

I would ask them (people) to mentally prepare themselves first to be in a very crowded environment. And it's not only negative, there's a lot to look forward to here as well, to meeting new people and you know, observing the vehicles going and thinking about where. It's a good place for people watching, but at the same time, they need to prepare themselves for the amount of noise, the amount of people they're about to encounter and in general, if they're a calm person or a person that likes, prefers quieter environments, then they should be able to adapt to this environment because you won't be able to do anything here if you're okay with noise. So they should just prepare themselves for the noise.”

Participant 'A' (Storeroom setting)

“It's too hot and congested in here. So I was in this room, and it was too hot, so I wanted to go out of the room, and the door was jammed, It wasn't opening, so I got anxious about it, why it's not opening, and it was already too hot in here. So near the door, I would say, because of some ventilation, I could get there. But I avoid the inside and middle of the room. Sometimes it gets loud and sometimes it is quiet, on and off. Sometimes it's irritating, and sometimes it's not. The art supplies in here are pretty much interesting.

I would like the management to put a fan in here for ventilation purpose. If they (people) want some personal space, of course, they can use this room. But also at the same time, it's too hot and humid in here, so they have to deal with it. Stay near the door for ventilation. Don't stay here for much longer.”

Participant 'M' ( Café setting)

“Well, right now I'm at a café. I can hear a lot of people talking. It causes me a bit of distress, and I'm under a time constraint. I'll be leaving in a bit.

The last time I was here, my experience was not that great. I don't know if I can quote PDA, but, yes, that did happen, and it made me very uncomfortable. No matter which environment I'm in, I tend to choose corners as they seem to give me comfort. And also because I like the strange coldness that comes with it. People not knowing how to use cutlery properly? That would be one. And also the laughter kind of annoys me. I usually like sombre colours, but at this moment it's just red. Although it is appealing to my eyes, it kind of is distracting. I must say, (I'm) not so comfortable. But my company was good. It still is good. So I'm okay.

I would go with less people, but I cannot, unfortunately, drive them out. But it's been okay. I just want lesser people, calmer music, and that would be good. Well, I think I'm kind of introverted, and I like calm spaces where I don't have to equate everything into how I'm feeling. I just want it to be how it is. I think if I said no, that would discredit all of architecture, and I don't think I would want to do that. And right now the atmosphere is happening. It's a very happening thing coming right now. I think that would definitely affect my mood. Usually when I step into a cafe, it's for a longer period of time, and it gives me a sense of calmness, which leads me to being more productive. But as of right now, I don't feel like I will be productive anytime soon. I would let them (people) know that these so and so hours are rush hours. Do not be here at that time. And the best time to be here is somewhere around 4:30- 5.”

Participant 'S.C' (Room setting)

“I'd say (the room is) dim because I only have yellow lights in here because I'm in a basement. I'd say spacious and I'd say comfortable. I can't think of something that's left a lasting impression on me, but I can think of just like something that happened. So, I guess, okay, I'm in my room right now, and it's a big room, but it's in the basement. Sometimes it does feel claustrophobic, even though it's not really small. It's pretty big.

So, a couple of days ago, I just cleaned my room and arranged some stuff differently, and now it feels much bigger and I don't feel claustrophobic anymore. I feel like I have space to breathe. When I'm here, I mostly spend my time either on my desk or on my bed, and I turn the TV around, so it's facing me if I'm on my desk or if I'm on my bed. And If I avoid the space, it'll probably be my walk-in closet just because I don't really need to go there much. I have a lot of stuff in there, so it's not as spacious. It started becoming spring recently, so I can hear birds and stuff anymore. I left the window open so I can just listen to the birds chirp and the morning noises

and stuff like that. It makes me feel good, especially considering the past few months have just been winter and cold, darkness, etc. Now it's nice to see that nature is back to being alive now.

So the lights I have in here are a yellowish light rather than a white-ish light, and I hate that so much. It makes the room feel dim. It makes me feel like I'm in a 1960s movie or something, rather than having a bright white light. It makes me feel weird. I don't like it one bit. I'm alone in my room right now, but there's two other roommates, but I don't really talk to them that much. So I'm pretty comfortable with the amount of people that there are in my environment right now.

If I could control one thing, it'd probably be the light, obviously, and I'd make it much brighter, or I'd make the ceiling a bit taller. Right now, if I raise my hand, I can touch the ceiling, and I don't like that. I'd probably make the ceiling much taller and the light much brighter. Not brighter, but like, whiter. Why? Because the room feels dim now and the ceiling also makes me feel somewhat claustrophobic. I'd rather have the ceiling much higher up. The way it's designed, there's not much design going on, really. It's just a room. It's just a rectangular room with a walk-in closet on the side. I guess it's supposed to be homely, which I can see the vibe. But also, if you remove all the furniture, it looks more like a large storage. No, actually, I'm not sure. I think this was meant for living since it has a walk-in closet. But yeah, I'm not sure. I think once I come in here after long days of work, I do like being in here for an hour or two. But if I stay here for more than that amount of time, especially without stimulation, especially if I'm not talking to someone doing something, I get the need to go out and do stuff. I'd probably make sure that they see the walk-in closet because that's also pretty big. I think I value a lot that this place is pretty big. I think that's one of the main things I like about it. I think it's spacious, I can walk around in my room without bumping into stuff, and that's something I value a lot."

#### Participant 'S.P' (Party setting)

"(The place is) fun, peaceful and calm. Last time I was at a party, I had a small panic attack. I can't seem to remember why exactly it was, but I remember feeling very tired and helpless. I was sweating and my heart was pounding. Again, I don't remember why exactly, but I do remember having a mild panic attack.

I'm not specifically avoiding certain areas, and neither am I drawn to it. When they play my favorite song, I feel happy. Kind of happy to see that everyone enjoys the same music that I do, kind of vibe. Because it's dark and I can barely see anything. In turn, I don't find anything visually appealing or distracting. As for the number of people, I'm not really sure about how it feels. But I usually prefer crowds with lesser number of people. I don't find it too comfortable because I have too many people in my personal space I'd like it to be a bit colder.

Right now, it feels a bit too sultry. Not hot, specifically, but it is because the song and dance, it can get to become hot and tired. I'd like it to be a bit colder. I don't know if the design actually influences how people behave here. But I would say yes, to some extent, the atmosphere does play into what we talk about and how people tend to behave, but I can't really say for sure. As for my change in mood or energy level, I definitely feel significantly more energetic.

I am in a better mood in general because of the atmosphere and hanging out over there. If I were to recommend this place to someone, I don't think I'd give them any advice because I think this is a very subjective thing to feel. I don't know if it would be proper for me to give them advice on how to enjoy this particular place. I'm not sure whether I can give a satisfactory answer for that."

## 4. Results and Discussion

Results from the qualitative interview deduced the following themes:

### 4.1 Theme 1: Role of previous experiences on current perceptions of environment

The participants reported a range of states they were put in due to their past experiences in their environments. It could be inferred through the narration of previous experiences, that factors like uncertainty and a fast-paced environment elicited feeling of anxiousness. temperature and congestion were found to influence and evoke moods like irritability, and the behaviors of other individuals shaped the feelings experienced in the environment. For instance, Participant M reported experiencing feelings of discomfort upon witnessing individuals sharing intimate moments in the environment. For other participants, the amount of spacing in the environment heavily influenced feelings.

### 4.2 Theme 2: Nature of spaces and its influence on participant preferences

The spaces in the environment were found to shape most of the participants' preferences based on the emotions evoked by these spaces. From the responses, it could be understood that spaces that were chaotic in nature, lead to the experiencing of anxiousness. However, spaces with certain scents and smells that were likely to be produced in café like settings, ensured feelings of calmness. It was also found that spaces carrying hot and

humid temperatures aggravated feelings of irritability and anxiousness. Spaces with more ventilation provided some ease and comfort. Those spaces that were not easily sighted by individuals were found to provide more comfort. Places that were spacious in nature had drawn participants. Places that were not spacious in nature were something participants wished to avoid.

#### **4.3 Theme 3: Impact of sound and visual elements on feelings and moods**

It could be inferred that both auditory and visual elements impacted most of the participants' moods and feelings. From the responses, noisy, chaotic sounds resulted in feeling overwhelmed. The visual of population density evoked feelings of distractibility as well. The unpredictability of noise occurrence played a huge role in evoking feelings of frustration. However, the presence of art related visual elements elicited interest and curiosity within a participant. On the other hand, sounds involving cutlery usage and heightened volumes of laughter seemed to pose as a contributing factor for discomfort for the participant in the cafe setting. It was also noticed that colours that were sombre in nature tended to evoke feelings of distractibility within the participant. Sounds related to nature, its liveliness, the chirping of birds elicited positive emotions within a participant. However, elements that were visually dim led him to express distaste. Sounds aligning to a participant's taste in music elicited happy emotions.

#### **4.4 Theme 4: Influence of population density and time on moods**

A high population density elicited feelings of overstimulation, overwhelm and discomfort while low population density elicited feelings of comfort. Participants N and A associated long term exposures in their environments with negative impacts on their health. Participant N reported hearing and mental capacity decline whereas Participant A reported that increased irritability because of the humidity. Other participants associated long term periods with favorable impacts. Participants M and S.C predicted a boost in productivity due to longer exposure and S.P predicted increased levels of energy and better moods.

### **5. Conclusion**

Environmental factors can also impact one's mental health in the way they impact one in psychological parameters. For example, the environment might impact one's stress levels. This can affect one's mental wellness overall, either enhancing psychological health or can open the possibility for the onset of mental illnesses. For participant N, the facilities in the environment like the cafes, shops elicited positive emotions and feelings within her, while the noise and crowds evoked unfavorable emotions and feelings. For participant A, the art supplies and the access to personal space served as factors that evoked positive attitudes, whereas the temperature and congested nature in the space evoked negative attitudes. For participant M, the density of the population played a huge role in determining her moods and feelings in the environment. For participant S.C, the spacious room evoked positive feelings in his environment, whereas the height between the floors and ceiling, along with the lights in his room generated feelings of uneasiness. For participant 5, the temperature of the environment played a vital role in influencing his views and feelings.

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## 7. Appendix

Interview verbatim

Participant 'N'

T: This is Trisha pursuing a diploma course at Jain University and I'm here interviewing N, in a street that is outside a college setting. Hi, N. How are you today?

N: I'm doing great. How are you?

T: I'm doing good. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions about your environment right now?

N: Sure. No problem.

T: Okay. So, N, can you firstly describe to me the atmosphere you are put in right now?

N: So, right now, we are standing in a very crowded street. There are a lot of vehicles present and a lot of traffic, and a lot of noise as well since it's right outside of college so people are talking and there are a lot of people coming and going, so a lot of movement. It's a very happening place. And there are also a lot of buildings around. Most of them are educational workplaces and stuff. But there's also a lot of cafés, eateries, and shops.

T: All right and, can you please tell me or narrate to me a recent experience you had in this environment that left a long-lasting impression on you?

N: So recently, last week, actually, I was trying to cross this road that we're standing on, and vehicles came suddenly from both sides, and I was kinda stuck in the street for a while. And since this is a road that I do have to cross a lot, that actually affected me because it's made me afraid to cross this road and any road, since I'm always constantly worried about how many people, the speed at which vehicles are coming. Even if we do take precautions, it's very unpredictable, so that kind of left a long-lasting impact on me as well.

T: When you're here right now, do you find yourself drawn to certain areas or do you find yourself avoiding certain areas? If so, then tell me why.

N: I do tend to avoid the actual street as much as possible since the amount of people and the speed at which vehicles come is just very overwhelming at times. But one place I generally like to visit is a cafe that's present on the street because it's very contrasting from the actual road. It's a quiet place and the smells and the scents and the people there are also very welcoming. It's a place where even though the street makes you anxious, going to that place calms you down.

T: All right. Can you think of a time when the sounds in this environment were noticeable or predominant and how did that affect you?

N: I mean, usually, being on the street, the sounds are always predominant. No matter what time you're here, it's a very happening place. There's always noise and there's always a crowd. Every time I'm here, it's always very overwhelming, so I've constantly had to help myself through being on this road- It's just a constant struggle to just be on this, be in this area and observe, just do what I'm supposed to do here. Since I'm supposed to be regular here, it's helped in helping me manage it better. But at the same time, I don't think I'll never get used to the noise in the crowd.

T: Okay, is there anything specific you find visually appealing or visually distracting in this environment? Also, tell me how that affects you.

N: I mean the crowd density in general is just very distracting to me because no matter where I want to go, if I want to go to the stationery store, there's a crowd there. If I want to go to the cafe, there's a crowd outside the cafe. If I want to go to the grocery store as well, there are a lot of people there, so it gets very distracting. I often tend to forget the reason I came there as well because it's just so much stimulus to intake all the time that it gets very distracting for me as well.

T: And talking about the current situation you are in right now, and when you look at the number of people around you right now, how is that affecting you at the present?

N: So even now, there are a lot of people around us while I'm trying to answer these questions. So at times, I'm suddenly not able to focus on the questions as well. But at the same time, I think the amount of people does tell you that there are a lot of facilities here and there's a lot of things to access, which kind of tells you that- it's a lively environment. It's not that the people around and the vehicles on the street are not stimulating, but at the same time, the amount and the intensity at which they are there is kind of overwhelming.

T: All right. Imagine you could control any one thing right now in this environment. What would you change and why?

N: I would try to reduce the amount of traffic on the road since this is a college environment and there are a lot of people around here and pedestrians, especially, I don't think it's that safe for this amount of vehicles to be there on the street. I would try to reduce that by making a separate path just for pedestrians or a separate route for the cars and vehicles on the street. But I'm not sure to what extent I'll be able to implement that.

T: All right. Now it's pretty clear that the environment you're put in right now is obviously influencing how you feel and your moods. Do you think this is generalised? Do you think this happens to a lot of people?

N: I'm pretty sure no one in this area finds this environment particularly pleasing because like I said, if you look at the people around here, you can see that no one's really smiling or no one's really happy. I'm pretty sure you could generalise this, but at the same time, I'd say it is also quite subjective because I come from a pretty calm environment, so this is overwhelming to me, but for people who grew up in an environment like this, it might offer them a sense of comfort as well to know that there are so many people around and there's so much to do.

T: All right, and now, if you were to be in this environment for a longer time than you're usually here, or if you were here for a shorter time than usual, do you think that would also affect your moods or your feelings?

N: Definitely, because I think if I'm here for a longer amount of time, I would adapt to this environment more, I think in the short run, it would be good for me to be used to this environment. But in long term, I don't think in the future that would help me because the noise especially would probably affect my hearing and my general mental ability, my mental capacity. But in the short run, I think just not being in this environment for a long amount of time would probably also be negative, because it would be too much to take in every time I am here and I wouldn't be able to adapt to this environment, which I think in a growing society, in a developing society, we do need to eventually get used to traffic and people. It might be bad, but at the same time, the times when I'm not in this environment I would be particularly more appreciative.

T: Okay, and your last question is, if you could recommend this place or this environment to someone, what advice would you give them before they step into this environment?

N: I would ask them to mentally prepare themselves first to be in a very crowded environment. And it's not only negative, there's a lot to look forward to here as well, to meeting new people and you know, observing the vehicles going and thinking about where. It's a good place for people watching, but at the same time, they need to prepare themselves for the amount of noise, the amount of people they're about to encounter and in general, if they're a calm person or a person that likes, prefers quieter environments, then they should be able to adapt to this environment because you won't be able to do anything here if you're okay with noise. So they should just prepare themselves for the noise.

T: All right. So we have come to the end of our interview. Thank you so much, N, for doing this.

N: Thank you so much for having me.

#### Participant 'A'

T: This is Trisha from the PGD Diploma Counselling Psychology course, currently interviewing A. We are currently in a store room. Okay, so A, firstly, can you describe the atmosphere you are put in here?

A: It's too hot and congested in here.

T: Okay. Could you narrate to me a recent experience you had here in this environment that left a lasting impression on you?

A: So I was in this room, and it was too hot, so I wanted to go out of the room, and the door was jammed, It wasn't opening, so I got anxious about it, why it's not opening, and it was already too hot in here. Yeah.

T: Okay. When you're right here, right now, what are certain areas here that you like to avoid and certain areas that you are drawn yourself to?

A: So near the door, I would say, because of some ventilation, I could get there. But I avoid the inside and middle of the room.

T: Okay. And why do you avoid the middle of the room?

A: Because it's too hot.

T: Okay. So now can you tell me what sounds are most noticeable in this environment right now? And is that affecting you?

A: Yeah. The usual voices we hear in classroom only, because it's attached to the classroom.

T: And how is that affecting you?

A: Sometimes it gets loud and sometimes it is quiet, on and off. Sometimes it's irritating, and sometimes it's not.

T: And is there anything specifically, visually appealing to you right now in this environment?

A: Yeah, the art supplies in here are pretty much interesting.

T: Okay. Right now, How comfortable are you feeling with the number of people here in this environment?

A: As of now, it's just me and my friends, so it's chill.

T: If there is anything here you would like to change, what is that one thing you would want to change?

A: I would like the management to put a fan in here.

T: Okay. And why is that?

A: For ventilation purpose.

T: Okay, and do you think anyone who enters the space, do you think their emotions, their moods, feelings are going to change?

A: Of course. I mean, if they want some personal space, of course, they can use this room. But also at the same time, it's too hot and humid in here, so they have to deal with it.

T: Okay, and say you were in this place for longer than usual or for a shorter period of time. Do you think that would influence the way you behave or your moods in general?

A: Of course, I'll be irritated because of the humid.

T: Okay and If you were to recommend a place like this to somebody, what is some advice you would want to give before they enter a space like this?

A: Stay near the door for ventilation. Don't stay here for much longer.

T: Okay, thank you.

#### Participant 'M'

T: This is Trisha from PGD Counseling psychology, currently interviewing M at a cafe. So, M, can you please describe the atmosphere you're put in right now?

M: Well, right now I'm at a cafe. I can hear a lot of people talking. It causes me a bit of distress, and I'm under a time constraint. I'll be leaving in a bit

T: Okay. And can you tell me about a recent experience you had in this environment that left a lasting impression on you?

M: The last time I was here, my experience was not that great. I don't know if I can quote PDA, but, yes, that did happen, and it made me very uncomfortable.

T: All right. And when you're here, do you find yourself drawn to certain areas, or do you find yourself avoiding certain areas? Why?

M: No matter which environment I'm in, I tend to choose corners as they seem to give me comfort. And also because I like the strange coldness that comes with it.

T: Okay. Now, can you think of a time when the sounds in this environment were particularly noticeable, and how did that affect you?

M: People not knowing how to use cutlery properly? That would be one. And also the laughter kind of annoys me.

T: Okay. And is there anything specific you find visually appealing or distracting in this environment, and how does that affect you?

M: I usually like sombre colours, but at this moment it's just red. Although it is appealing to my eyes, it kind of is distracting.

T: Okay. And how comfortable do you feel right now with the number of people around you?

M: I must say, not so comfortable. But my company was good. It still is good. So I'm okay.

T: And if there was one thing you could change here, what would that be and why?

M: I would go with less people, but I cannot, unfortunately, drive them out. But it's been okay. I just want lesser people, calmer music, and that would be good.

T: Why is that?

M: Well, I think I'm kind of introverted, and I like calm spaces where I don't have to equate everything into how I'm feeling. I just want it to be how it is.

T: Okay, and do you think the way this space is designed influences people's moods or how they behave here?

M: Absolutely. I think if I said no, that would discredit all of architecture, and I don't think I would want to do that. And right now the atmosphere is happening. It's a very happening thing coming right now.

T: Okay. And say, if you could stay here for longer than usual or, like, for shorter periods of time, do you think that would affect your mood or your energy levels?

M: Yes, I think that would definitely affect my mood. Usually when I step into a cafe, it's for a longer period of time, and it gives me a sense of calmness, which leads me to being more productive. But as of right now, I don't feel like I will be productive anytime soon.

T: Okay. And if someone was to come here, what advice would you give them to keep in mind before they enter this environment?

M: I would let them know that these so and so hours are rush hours. Do not be here at that time. And the best time to be here is somewhere around 4:30- 5.

T: Okay. Thank you so much.

M: Thank you for interviewing me.

#### Participant 'S.C'

T: This is Trisha currently pursuing a diploma in Counselling Psychology, interviewing S.C in his room at his PG. Can you please describe the atmosphere you're put in here in three words?



SC: I'd say dim because I only have yellow lights in here because I'm in a basement. I'd say spacious and I'd say comfortable.

T: Could you tell me about a recent experience you had in this atmosphere that left a long-lasting impression on you?

SC: For the first one, I can't think of something that's left a lasting impression on me, but I can think of just like something that happened. So, I guess, okay, I'm in my room right now, and it's a big room, but it's in the basement. Sometimes it does feel claustrophobic, even though it's not really small. It's pretty big. So, a couple of days ago, I just cleaned my room and arranged some stuff differently, and now it feels much bigger and I don't feel claustrophobic anymore. I feel like I have space to breathe. That's for the first one.

T: When you're here, do you find yourself drawn to certain areas or avoiding others, and why?

SC: When I'm here, I mostly spend my time either on my desk or on my bed, and I turn the TV around, so it's facing me if I'm on my desk or if I'm on my bed. And if I avoid the space, it'll probably be my walk-in closet just because I don't really need to go there much. I have a lot of stuff in there, so it's not as spacious.

T: Could you think about a time where the sounds in the atmosphere you are in right now were particularly noticeable?

SC: It started becoming spring recently, so I can hear birds and stuff anymore. I left the window open so I can just listen to the birds chirp and the morning noises and stuff like that. It makes me feel good, especially considering the past few months have just been winter and cold, darkness, etc. Now it's nice to see that nature is back to being alive now.

T: Is there anything in this environment that you find visually appealing or distracting?

SC: Ya, so the lights I have in here are a yellowish light rather than a white-ish light, and I hate that so much. It makes the room feel dim. It makes me feel like I'm in a 1960s movie or something, rather than having a bright white light. It makes me feel weird. I don't like it one bit.

T: Do you feel comfortable with the amount of people in here or around here right now?

SC: I'm alone in my room right now, but there's two other roommates, but I don't really talk to them that much. So I'm pretty comfortable with the amount of people that there are in my environment right now.

T: If you could change an element here right now in this environment, what do you think that would be and why?

SC: If I could control one thing, it'd probably be the light, obviously, and I'd make it much brighter, or I'd make the ceiling a bit taller. Right now, if I raise my hand, I can touch the ceiling, and I don't like that. I'd probably make the ceiling much taller and the light much brighter. Not brighter, but like, whiter. Why? Because the room feels dim now and the ceiling also makes me feel somewhat claustrophobic. I'd rather have the ceiling much higher up.

T: What do you feel about the idea that the way this room or this space is designed could influence how a person might behave here?

SC: The way it's designed, there's not much design going on, really. It's just a room. It's just a rectangular room with a walk-in closet on the side. I guess it's supposed to be homely, which I can see the vibe. But also, if you remove all the furniture, it looks more like a large storage. No, actually, I'm not sure. I think this was meant for living since it has a walk-in closet. But yeah, I'm not sure.

T: Have you noticed or do you feel that your moods or your energy levels might be affected depending on the amount of time you are spending in this environment?

SC: Yes. I think once I come in here after long days of work, I do like being in here for an hour or two. But if I stay here for more than that amount of time, especially without stimulation, especially if I'm not talking to someone doing something, I get the need to go out and do stuff.

T: If you could recommend this place to anybody or talk to anybody about it, what is one thing you would advise them to do or just one thing you would like to tell them?

SC: I'd probably make sure that they see the walk-in closet because that's also pretty big. I think I value a lot that this place is pretty big. I think that's one of the main things I like about it. I think it's spacious, I can walk around in my room without bumping into stuff, and that's something I value a lot.

Participant 'S.P'

T: This is Trisha pursuing a diploma in Counselling Psychology currently interviewing

S.P, and we are currently at a house party. Can you describe the atmosphere you are put in right now? SP: Three words: fun, peaceful, calm.

T: Could you tell me about a recent experience you had that left a lasting impression on you?

SP: A recent experience? Last time I was at a party, I had a small panic attack. I can't seem to remember why exactly it was, but I remember feeling very tired and helpless. I was sweating and my heart was pounding. Again, I don't remember why exactly, but I do remember having a mild panic attack.

T: Do you find yourself drawn to certain places or avoiding certain places, and why?

SP: Do I find myself avoiding certain areas or drawn to certain areas? I don't think so. I don't know. I've never really thought much about it, but I don't think so. I'm not specifically avoiding certain areas, and neither am I drawn to it.

T: Can you think of a time when the sounds in this environment were noticeable to you, and did that affect you in any way?

SP: Times when the sounds in this environment were particularly noticeable? Probably when they play my favorite song, because obviously, when they play my favorite song, I feel happy. Kind of happy to see that everyone enjoys the same music that I do, kind of vibe.

T: Do you find yourself visually drawn to a certain place here, or do you find anything that is visually distracting?

SP: Visually appealing or distracting? To be honest, no. For both of them because it's dark and I can barely see anything. In turn, I don't find anything visually appealing or distracting.

T: How comfortable do you feel with the number of people around you right now?

SP: As for the number of people, I'm not really sure about how it feels. But I usually prefer crowds with lesser number of people. I don't find it too comfortable because I have too many people in my personal space. Yeah.

T: If you could control any element right here in our environment, what is it one thing you would want to control and why?

SP: If I could control one aspect of the environment, it would be the temperature. Yes. I'd like it to be a bit colder. Right now, it feels a bit too sultry. Not hot, specifically, but it is because the song and dance, it can get to become hot and tired. I'd like it to be a bit colder.

T: Do you think the way this place is designed might influence how people behave here?

SP: I don't know if the design actually influences how people behave here. But I would say yes, to some extent, the atmosphere does play into what we talk about and how people tend to behave, but I can't really say for sure.

T: Do you feel like your levels of moods and energy might change depending on how long you are in your environment, as in, do you think time plays a role in affecting your energy levels or your moods?

SP: As for my change in mood or energy level, I definitely feel significantly more energetic. I am in a better mood in general because of the atmosphere and hanging out over there.

T: If you would recommend this particular space to someone, what is one thing that you would want to tell them or you would want to advise them?

SP: If I were to recommend this place to someone, advise? I don't think I'd give them any advice because I think this is a very subjective thing to feel. I don't know if it would be proper for me to give them advice on how to enjoy this particular place. I'm not sure whether I can give a satisfactory answer for that.