

Implementation Of Personalization In The Interior Of Cubicle Workspace

Sriti Mayang Sari
{sriti@petra.ac.id}

Petra Christian University Surabaya, Indonesia

Abstract— Office interiors today still play an important role in human life, because employees spent most of their time in the office. Many employees who work in offices occupy cubicle workspaces; small, cube-shaped space sealed off by boards made of wood, glass, or other materials as a room divider. Many studies stated that working in the cubicle space for a long time will cause discomfort, stress, and disrupts work productivity for its users. To reduce the foregoing, many employees personalize their workspace, as Wells explained that about 70% of American employees tend to personalize their workspace. In this study, personalization of space refers to the decoration, modification, or rearrangement of space per under its users so that they are comfortable when engaged in it. The purpose of this study is to find out how the personalization implemented and what is the meaning of the interior of the cubicle workspace for its users. This research used mix method (qualitative and quantitative) with a case study of an interior lecturer room Petra Christian University in Surabaya. The conclusion of this research indicate that the form of implementation of space personalization varies, such as personal items that show their territorial identity and territory. The implementation of psychological personalization of space makes users comfortable and happy to work in a space that suits their character, and the meaning of personalization is to express your identity and as a second home. Personalization is an important thing to consider to implement in the workspace.

Keywords— *personalization, interior, workspace, cubicles*

1 Introduction

Office interiors today still play an important role in human life, because employees spent most of their time in the office. A workspace is one of the most important spaces in an office because this is a place where the employees do their main activities or tasks and other various office works. All of these activities also have their own physical and psychological needs too, so that the employees can work more comfortably and productively. There are still many offices with cubicle type workspace, semi-open, small-sized, cuboid-shaped workspaces that are sealed off with boards made of wood, glass, or other materials as a room divider. any studies stated that working in the cubicle space for a long time will cause discomfort, stress, and disrupts work productivity for its users, even Clive Wilkinson, a famous architect (he helped convert Google from "cubicle land" to the modern Googleplex) said, "Cubicles are the worst - like chicken farming,". "They are humiliating, disenfranchising and isolating."

To reduce discomfort and stress working for a long time in the cubicle workspace, many employees personalize their workspace. Employee personalization of office environments is a common phenomenon in American businesses ^[1]. Research suggests that more than 70% of employees personalize their workspaces ^[2]. Personalization does not only refer to distinguishing oneself, but that the term also refers to making oneself familiar with a place, both at home and in the organization, although at the organization in less extent than at home ^[3]. ^[4] The term personalization comes from environmental psychology: "It describes the display of personal or work-related items or the arrangement of the workspace to distinguish the occupant from others."

When people are satisfied with their workspace, they are likely to be more satisfied with their jobs ^[5]. ^[6] When people are more satisfied with their jobs, they are apt to do them better. Workspace personalization has been found to have many additional benefits for employees, such as enhanced levels of job satisfaction, satisfaction with the work environment, psychological well-being, and physical health ^{[2],[4],[7]}. And according to ^[8] personalization is also related to creativity in ^[9]. The purpose of this study is to find out how the personalization implemented and what is the meaning of the interior of the cubicle workspace for its users. It is hoped that the results of this study can help designers to create interior workspaces that are more compatible with their users, both physically and psychologically.

2 Methods

The first step of this research is to find suitable literature studies (journals, books, and documents) related to personalization, interior offices, cubicle workspaces, and psychological approaches that support research. Then, field observations were carried out to collect physical data in the form of documentation of cubicle workspace photographs with the details. In this study, the case study is the interior lecturer room in the Faculty of Art and Design, Petra Christian University in Surabaya, Indonesia, which consists of 14 cubicle workspaces. The participants are also the users of the room of interior lecturers, amounting to 14 employees. In-depth interviews were conducted with the employees to find out how the implementation and meaning of personalization in the interior of the cubicle workspace. These cubicle workspaces are analyzed based on literature, interviews, and items placed in these spaces. The items placement showed that the employees are trying to personalize their own cubicle space. Lastly, after all the steps are completed, an interpretation of the results of the interview is carried out to find out the meaning of the personalization of the cubicle workspace.

3 Result and Discussion

The discussion in this study was carried out in three stages. First, identifying the implementation of personal items displayed in the cubicle workspace of interior lecturers in the Faculty of Art and Design, Petra Christian University, Surabaya, Indonesia. Second, the reason behind why they display these items. And the third stage is interpreted from the results of the earlier stages. The results of the identification of personal items displayed in their cubicle workspace are displayed in table 1 below:

Table 1 Display of Personal Things

Displaying personal items at cubicle workspace	Total percentage
Family/friend pictures	72,73 %
Personal belongings	81,82 %
Diploma/certificate	36,37 %
Plants	45,45 %
Addition of physical objects in the cubicle workspace	63,64 %
Others	21,42 %

The percentage results in table 1 are clarified in the following chart:

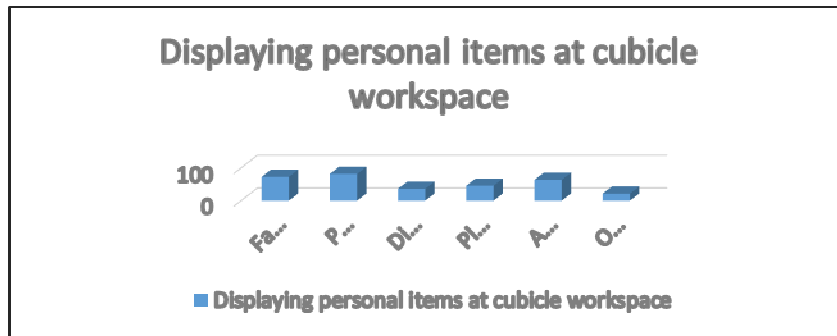


Fig. 1. Chart of Personal Things Displays

In table 1 and chart 1, the results of the identification of the implementation of the items displayed in the interior lecturers' cubicles can be seen. It turned out that the most items displayed is personal belongings item, by 81.82%. They displayed a lot of their personal collections. Second most items displayed is a photo of family/friends, by 72,73%, and the least displayed is a diploma or certificate display, by 36.37%.

The next step is to find out why or why they personalize their cubicle workspace. Table 2 shows these reasons. Based on the analysis, it turned out that the most popular reason they personalize their cubicle workspaces is to express identity and to show workspace belongs to you, by 90.91%.

Table 2 Reasons for Personalization of Cubicle Workspace

Displaying personal items at cubicle workspace	Total percentage
Family/friend pictures	72,73 %
Personal belongings	81,82 %
Diploma/certificate	36,37 %
Plants	45,45 %
Addition of physical objects in the cubicle workspace	63,64 %
Others	21,42 %

The percentage results in table 2 are clarified more clearly in the following chart:

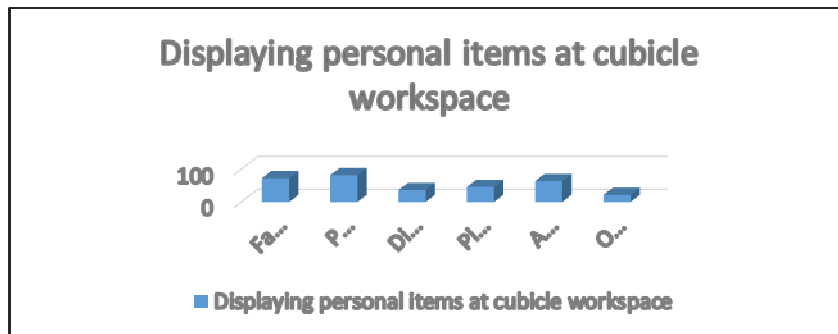


Fig. 2. Chart of Reasons for Personalization of Cubicle Workspace

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of personalized cubicle workspace is important. The employees (refer to interior lecturers) agree that there are two equally important reasons for personalizing their cubicle workspace. This cubicle space can help to express their identity and show to other employees that this cubicle is my work area and mine only. They display photos of family/close friends or personal items that characterize themselves as an example to express their identity. For example, a lecturer displaying his favorite items with various forms of cows from pillows, tissue cases, pencil cases, dolls, to accessories filling his cubicle. Another example, a lecturer expressed his cubicle workspace by displaying miniature traditional houses and statues from various regions in Indonesia. He is showing his identity and status as a lecturer in history and culture. Then, by 81.82%, showing status is the next reason they personalize their cubicle workspace. They display student work such as interior mockups, furniture mockups, macrame, and other things to show their status as lecturers according to the courses they teach.

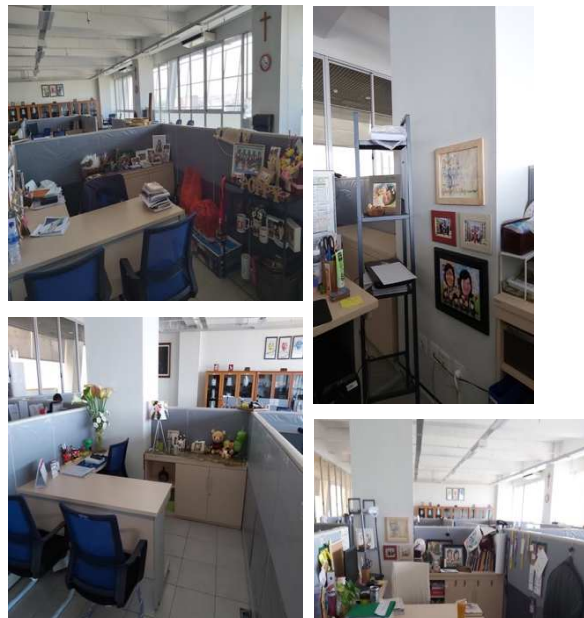


Fig. 3. they are showed several implementations of the workspace personalization of the research object lecturer.

Indirectly, the implementation of personalization for expressing identity, the individual's emotion, and show workspace belongs to them fulfills the reasons for the other points

'controlling and regulating interactions'. The lecturers can control and manage their interactions with students, friends, or other guests when they are visiting lecturers' cubicle workspace. By personalizing them they create a 'virtual privacy boundary' that should not be violated.

The results of interviews in this study indicate that they agree with personalizing the cubicle workspace that can create a feeling of pleasure, comfort while working, thus increasing their work productivity, and reducing stress. They personalize their cubicle workspace as comfortable as possible and show the cubicle as 'my room', a space that shows who they are, their identity. Based on the results of the analysis that has been done, it can be concluded that the meaning of cubicle workspace personalization for interior lecturers at Petra Christian University is their identity and as a second home. They spend around 10-11 hours a day in the office: they're working, eating, and preparing other needs in the cubicle workspaces. By personalizing their cubicle workspaces, they made themselves as comfortable as possible which is suitable for their own characters.

4 Conclusion

Personalization is an important thing to consider to implement in the workspace. Its implementation in space varies, such as personal items that show their territorial identity and territorial space. The implementation of psychological personalization of space makes users comfortable and happy to work in a space that suits their character. Thus, this action can reduce stress levels and increase work productivity. The meaning of personalization in the cubicle workspace is to express self-identity and as a second home for its users, where they spend a long time in it. For interior designers, it is expected that by understanding the importance of implementing personalization in the cubicle workspace and its positive psychological influence, this can be an important consideration in their design decisions.

References

- [1] M. Wells and L. Thelen, "What Does Your Workspace Say About You?: The Influence of Personality, Status, and Workspace on Personalization," *Environment and Behavior*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 300–321, 2002.
- [2] B. M. Margulis and E. Konar, *Using design to increase productivity*. New York: Buffalo, 1984.
- [3] S. Brunia and A. H. Gosselink, "Personalization in non-territorial offices: a study of a human need," *Journal of Corporate Real Estate*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 169–182, 2009.
- [4] E. Sundstrom, "Symbolic workspace: self-identity and status," *The Psychology of the Physical Environment in Offices and Factories*, vol. 11, pp. 217–251, 1986.
- [5] J. Veitch, K. Charles, K. Farley, and G. Newsham, "A Model of Satisfaction with Open Office Conditions: COPE Field Finding," *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, vol. 16, pp. 269–276, 2007.
- [6] S. Augustin, *Place Advantage: Applied Psychology for Interior Architecture*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009.
- [7] L. Wells, M., and Thelen, "What Does Your Workspace Say About You?: The Influence of Personality, Status, and Workspace on Personalization," *Environment and Behavior*, vol. 34 (3), pp. 300–321, 2002.
- [8] J. M. McCoy, "Symbolic workspace: self-identity and status," *The Psychology of the Physical Environment in Offices and Factories*, vol. 11, pp. 217–251, 2000.
- [9] M. Wells, L. Thelen, and J. Ruark, "Workspace Personalization and Organizational Culture: Does Your Workspace Reflect You or Your Company?," *Environment and Behavior*, vol. 39, no. 5, pp. 616–634, 2007.