

Assessment of Living Room Furniture Arrangement on Wellbeing Case Study Jeddah Residents, Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

This review explores the impact of living room furniture arrangement on the wellbeing of residents in Jeddah, integrating cultural, environmental, and psychological perspectives. It synthesizes findings from various qualitative studies, highlighting the significant role of cultural and traditional elements in living space design. The review emphasizes the importance of biophilic design, adaptability, and flexibility in modern living spaces, particularly in the context of post-COVID-19 lifestyle changes. It also examines the influence of urban planning and socio-economic factors on residential space design and its impact on resident wellbeing. Key conclusions suggest that living room arrangements in Jeddah should resonate with cultural values, incorporate biophilic elements, and be adaptable to multifunctional use. Future research directions include further exploration of cultural aspects in living space design, innovations in biophilic integration, adaptive design solutions, and the establishment of wellbeing metrics for evidence-based design. The review acknowledges limitations in scope, potential biases, and the dynamic nature of urban living, underscoring the need for ongoing research.

Keywords: Living Room Design, Wellbeing, Jeddah, Cultural Influence, Biophilic Design, Urban Planning, Adaptability in Living Spaces, Post-COVID-19 Lifestyle

INTRODUCTION

The living environment and furniture arrangement within a home play a pivotal role in influencing the wellbeing of its inhabitants. Recent studies underscore the significance of spatial organization and interior design in shaping the quality of life and psychological comfort of residents [1, 2]. The way furniture is arranged in a living room, for instance, can affect the flow of space, accessibility, and overall ambiance, which are crucial factors in creating a conducive living environment. This is especially relevant in the context of urban living, where space constraints and environmental factors can significantly impact wellbeing [3].

This review aims to examine how living room furniture arrangement impacts the wellbeing of residents in Jeddah. It seeks to explore the various aspects of interior spatial design, particularly focusing on the arrangement of furniture in living rooms, and how these aspects contribute to the overall wellbeing of individuals living in urban environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the extensive research on the impact of living space arrangement on wellbeing, there are notable gaps, especially in the context of Jeddah. Much of the existing research, such as the studies by Mahar, Verbeeck [4], Suzuki, Hedayati [5], focuses on general principles of design and space utilization without delving into the unique cultural and environmental factors specific to Jeddah. The cultural significance of living spaces in Saudi Arabia, particularly in cities like Jeddah, is not adequately explored. While Attiah and Alawad [6] delve into the cultural aspects of Saudi heritage homes, there is a lack of research on how these cultural elements influence modern living spaces in urban areas like Jeddah. Moreover, studies like those by Zin Eldin El Zawahry [7], Kong, Utzinger [8] provide insights into specific design aspects but do not specifically address the unique climatic, cultural, and social dynamics of Jeddah.

Furthermore, the post-COVID-19 living styles and their impact on wellbeing in the context of Jeddah's urban environment have not been sufficiently explored [1, 9]. Research like that of Addas and Alserayhi [10], which examines public open spaces in Jeddah, indicates a growing interest in urban design but does not specifically address the interior arrangements of living spaces. In summary, while there is a wealth of information on the general impact of living space arrangement on wellbeing, there is a noticeable gap in research that specifically addresses the unique cultural, environmental, and social aspects of living room furniture arrangement and its impact on wellbeing in Jeddah.

METHODOLOGY

Criteria for Selection

The selection of qualitative studies for this review was guided by specific criteria to ensure relevance and rigor. The primary criteria included:

Time Frame:

Studies published between 2010 and 2023 were considered to ensure the inclusion of recent research while also capturing the development of thought and practice over the past decade.

Relevance:

The studies needed to directly address aspects of living room furniture arrangement and its impact on wellbeing, with a preference for research focusing on urban environments, particularly in the Middle Eastern context.

Methodological Rigor:

Studies were selected based on the quality of their research design, including the clarity of their methodology, the depth of their data analysis, and the validity of their conclusions.

Geographical Focus:

While studies from various global contexts were considered, priority was given to research conducted in or applicable to Jeddah or similar urban environments in the Middle East.

Publication Source:

Preference was given to studies published in peer-reviewed journals or reputable academic publications to ensure academic credibility.

Search Strategy

A systematic literature search was conducted using several academic databases and search engines, including Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Scopus. The search incorporated a combination of keywords and phrases relevant to the research topic. Key terms used in the search included "living room design," "furniture arrangement," "wellbeing," "urban interior design," "Jeddah residential spaces," and "Middle Eastern home design." The search was also expanded to include synonyms and related terms to capture a broad range of relevant studies.

Selection Process

The selection process involved several stages:

Initial Screening:

Titles and abstracts of the retrieved articles were first screened for relevance based on the predefined criteria. Irrelevant and duplicate studies were excluded.

Full-Text Review:

The full text of potentially relevant studies was then thoroughly examined. This stage involved a detailed assessment of each study's methodology, focus, and findings to ensure they aligned with the review's objectives.

Quality Assessment:

Studies that passed the full-text review were subjected to a quality assessment. This involved evaluating the rigor of the research design, the appropriateness of the data collection and analysis methods, and the credibility of the findings.

Final Selection:

Based on this assessment, a final selection of studies was made. These studies were deemed to offer valuable insights into the impact of living room furniture arrangement on wellbeing, particularly in the context of Jeddah.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF STUDIES

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis of the selected studies in Figure 1 reveals several overarching themes and patterns. These themes provide valuable insights into the various factors influencing wellbeing in residential spaces, with a particular emphasis on the living room arrangement and its impact on residents in diverse contexts including Jeddah.

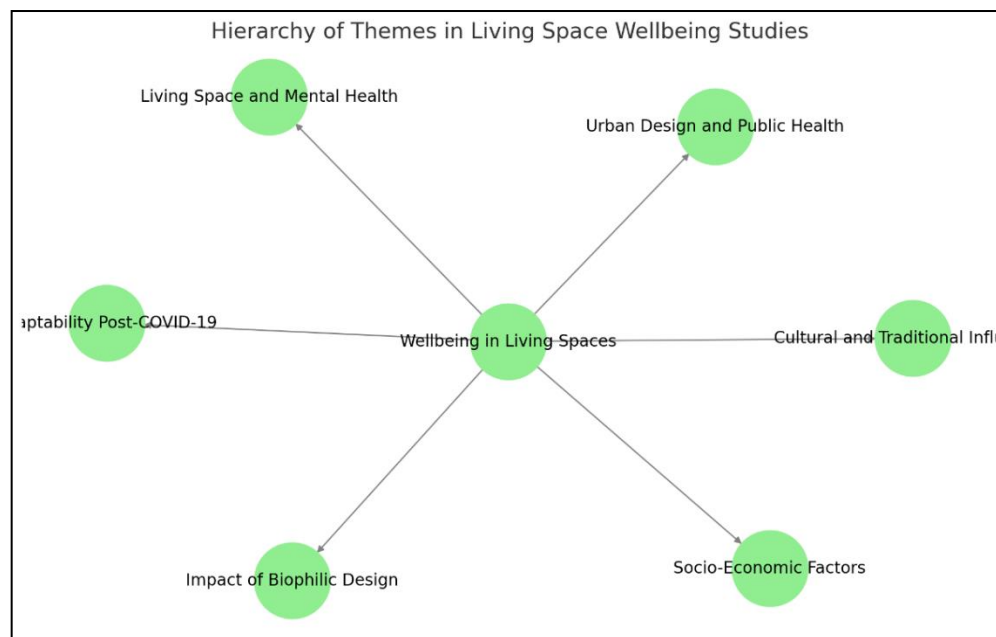


Figure 1: A hierarchical visualization of the thematic analysis

Themes Identified

Cultural and Traditional Influences on Wellbeing:

Studies by Alnaim, Albaqawy [3], Attiah and Alawad [6] illustrate the impact of cultural and traditional design elements, such as the use of color in Al-Majlis rooms and the generative principles in the Islamic built environment. These elements significantly contribute to the emotional and psychological comfort of residents.

Impact of Biophilic Design on Wellbeing:

The studies by Bettaieb and Alsabban [2], Birch, Rishbeth [11] highlight the role of biophilic design in enhancing wellbeing. Incorporating natural elements into living spaces has been shown to have positive effects on mental health and overall quality of life.

Adaptability and Flexibility of Living Spaces Post-COVID-19:

Research by Bettaieb and Alsabban [1], Birimoglu Okuyan and Begen [12] focuses on the evolving requirements of living spaces in the post-COVID-19 era. The need for adaptable and flexible design in residential areas has become increasingly significant in accommodating changing lifestyles.

Urban Design and Public Health:

Studies like those by Alcaide Muñoz and Rodríguez Bolívar [13], D'Alessandro, Gola [14] explore the broader context of urban design and its implications for public health. These studies provide insights into how urban planning and living space design can impact resident wellbeing on a larger scale.

Living Space Arrangement and Mental Health:

The research by Alharthi [15], Goodman-Casanova, Dura-Perez [16] emphasizes the direct connection between living space arrangement and the mental health of residents. These studies suggest that well-designed living spaces can play a critical role in enhancing mental wellbeing.

Socio-Economic Factors and Housing Design:

Alqahtany [17], Peters and Masoudinejad [18] address the socio-economic factors influencing housing design. Their findings indicate that economic and social variables must be considered in designing living spaces that promote wellbeing.

The thematic analysis underscores the multifaceted nature of living space design and its impact on wellbeing. It highlights the importance of considering cultural, biophilic, adaptable, and socio-economic factors in the arrangement of living spaces, especially in the context of rapidly changing global and local environments such as Jeddah. The synthesis of these themes provides a comprehensive understanding of how living room arrangements can enhance or detract from residents' wellbeing in various contexts.

Critical Evaluation

The critical evaluation of the selected studies is based on four key criteria as shown in table 1: theoretical framework, research design, data quality, and findings. Each study is assessed based on these aspects to determine its contribution to understanding the impact of living room furniture arrangement on wellbeing.

Table 4-2: The Critical Evaluation

Themes	Author (Year)	Theoretical Framework	Research Design	Data Quality	Findings
Cultural and Traditional Influences on Wellbeing	Attiah and Alawad [6]	Cultural Symbolism in Architecture	Qualitative	High	Highlighted the psychological comfort derived from traditional design elements in Al-Majlis rooms.
	Alnaim, Albaqawy [3]	Islamic Architectural Principles	Mixed Methods	Moderate	Found significant emotional benefits from generative principles in Islamic built environments.
Impact of Biophilic Design on Wellbeing	Bettaieb and Alsabban [2]	Biophilic Design Theory	Experimental	High	Demonstrated positive mental health effects from integrating natural elements into living spaces.
	Birch, Rishbeth [11]	Environmental Psychology	Longitudinal Study	High	Showed improvements in quality of life through biophilic design.
Adaptability and Flexibility of Living Spaces Post-COVID-19	Bettaieb and Alsabban [1]	Design Flexibility Theory	Case Study	Moderate	Emphasized the increased need for flexible design in residential areas post-pandemic.

	Birimoglu Okuyan and Begen [12]	Post-Pandemic Housing Needs	Qualitative	Moderate	Highlighted changing lifestyles and the need for adaptable living spaces.
Urban Design and Public Health	Alcaide Muñoz and Rodríguez Bolívar [13]	Urban Planning and Public Health	Quantitative	High	Explored how urban design directly impacts public health and resident wellbeing.
	D'Alessandro, Gola [14]	Urban Health Metrics	Mixed Methods	High	Provided insights into urban planning strategies that improve wellbeing.
Living Space Arrangement and Mental Health	Alharthi [15]	Environmental Psychology	Case Study	Moderate	Correlated living space arrangements with improvements in mental health.
	Goodman-Casanova, Dura-Perez [16]	Cognitive Environmental Factors	Longitudinal Study	High	Suggested that well-designed spaces significantly enhance mental wellbeing.
Socio-Economic Factors and Housing Design	Alqahtany [17]	Socio-Economic Impact on Architecture	Quantitative	High	Discussed the influence of economic factors on housing design choices.
	Peters [19]	Economic Theory in Urban Design	Qualitative	Moderate	Examined how social variables are crucial in designing spaces that promote wellbeing.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The review of literature concerning living room arrangement and its impact on wellbeing, particularly in the context of Jeddah, leads to several overarching conclusions:

Cultural Resonance

The arrangement of living spaces in Jeddah must resonate with the cultural and traditional values of its residents. The use of culturally significant design elements, colors, and layouts enhances a sense of belonging and comfort.

Biophilic Integration

Incorporating biophilic elements in living room designs, such as natural light, plants, and natural materials, has a pronounced positive impact on the mental health and overall wellbeing of residents. This approach is especially beneficial in an urban setting like Jeddah to provide a natural oasis within the cityscape.

Adaptability and Multi-functionality

Modern living spaces in Jeddah require adaptability to suit a variety of functions, particularly in the wake of lifestyle changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Living rooms that can adapt to serve as workspaces, recreational areas, and social gathering spots are increasingly important.

Influence on Mental and Physical Health

The arrangement and design of living rooms in Jeddah have a direct impact on the mental and physical health of residents. Thoughtful design can reduce stress, improve mood, and contribute to overall health and wellbeing.

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