

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INTERIOR DESIGN AND NON – INTERIOR DESIGN STUDENTS PREFERENCES VIS-À-VIS HOME FURNISHINGS

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted among college students at Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore in the year 2023 to examine the design and colour preferences for home furnishings. The researcher selected 200 students from different disciplines to assess their preferences for home furnishings. One hundred samples were taken from the discipline of interior design, and another hundred from Homescience Extension Education, English, and Tamil disciplines. The results recommended that the interior design students preferred light colours for curtains and beddings. The statistical analysis revealed that at a significance level of 5%, the selection of curtain had the highest value, 15.560. Personal tastes significantly influenced 63.5% of the students in their selection of the furnishings.

Keywords: Colour, Consumer perception, Design, Home furnishing, Interior

INTRODUCTION

A home is more than just a location for family members to reside; it is also a place for the owner to unwind, relax, and express his or her individuality. Therefore, interior design and decoration of living spaces must be more aesthetically appealing and varied. The interior design plays a significant role in decorating the interiors (Anita *et al.*, 2017). The term “Interior furnishing” means any type of furnishing made in whole or in part of fabric or related material and intended for use or which may reasonably be expected to be used, in homes, offices, or other places of assembly or accommodation. Furnishings include decorative items such as cushion covers,

curtains and draperies, tablecloths, cushions, bedspreads, blankets, pillows, and linens, as well as accessories used to decorate a home or room (Tugba *et al.*, 2020).

In the modern world, the necessity and use of furnishings are not new; rather, they have evolved and developed in tandem with human needs and demands. The designs, colours, and prices of fabrics for home furnishings were mostly favored by consumers (Devi *et al.*, 2019). The design entails a significant social transformation that extends beyond the creation of a new or improved product. It provides an object its identity, and its form is a potent tool for creativity. To generalize what consumers want, other than

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colour choice, it will be necessary to take into account individual perception, and consumer behavior regarding home furnishings. Colour preference is also an essential factor in architecture and interior design, as people prefer to reside in environments with an appropriate colour scheme, where they feel comfortable (Wenzel *et al.*, 2012).

Raizada (2012) opined that colour is an important determinant in consumers' product selection decisions, and it may also impact their perceptions of product quality. The colours are extremely important because they bring happiness, festivity, and vitality into our lives. Increasingly, colour influences the sales of a wide variety of products today. The manufacturer must ascertain the colours that consumers prefer or the factors that influence their colour selection.

This study aimed to investigate the design and colour preferences of the 200 students in relation to home furnishings. In addition, it examines the factors that influence the choice of design and colour for home furnishings that students prefer. This study revealed that personal preference, knowledge, experience, and functional factors influence

students' selection of design and colour, as depicted by the study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of the study was to determine the design and colour preferences of students regarding household furnishings. The research was conducted between January and April 2023. This study employed techniques of purposive sampling for its methodology. The interview schedule was meticulously devised to assess demographic variables such as age, major subject, level of study programme, knowledge-based questions pertaining to interior design and selection of design, colour for home furnishings, and selection factors. For the study, curtains, bedding, carpets, table linen, and placemats were chosen as home furnishings. For the analysis, colour harmonies such as monochromatic, analogous, complementary, and triad harmony were utilized, and for home furnishings, natural, geometric, and basic designs were chosen. Two hundred female students from the Avinashilingam Institute of Home Science and Higher Education for Women in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, were selected from the Interior design (ID), Non –

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the selected students (n=200)

S.No.	Demographic characteristics	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Age (years)		
	18 or below	27	13.5
	19 to 20	158	79.0
	Above 21	15	7.5
2	Discipline		
	Interior Design	100	50
	Non – Interior Design	100	50
3	Under-graduation		
	II yr.	53	26.5
	III yr.	147	73.5

Interior design such as English, Home Science Extension and Tamil in their second and third years of undergraduate study. The primary data were used to acquire information, while secondary data were gathered from books and scholarly articles to enhance the study. The frequency distribution of respondents' responses was determined through descriptive statistical analysis. The interview schedule was used to select respondents who would interpret the variables in depth. To analyze the interpretation of the data, percentage and Chi-square test analyses were utilized as statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic characteristics of the selected students

The purpose of the survey was to determine the preferences of female college

students on a variety of home furnishings that could be used in the home. The students chosen were in their second and third years of study. The vast majority of the respondents (79.0%) belonged to the age range between 19 and 20 years (Table 1). One hundred of the selected respondents were studying interior design as their primary field of study and hundred students were pursuing disciplines other than interior design, including Home Science Extension, English and Tamil. A majority of 73.5 percent of students selected were from third - year under graduation.

Knowledge of the fundamentals of interior decoration, design, and colour selection for home furnishings

The level of student knowledge regarding interior decoration, colour harmony, and selection of design for home furnishings

Table 2. Students' level of knowledge on interior decoration, colour harmony and design selections (n=200)

S.No.	Level of Understanding	Interior Design Percentage (%)	Non- Interior Design Percentage (%)
1.	Fundamentals of interior decoration		
	Greater	80	-
	Medium	20	14
	Vague	-	20
	Poor	-	66
2.	Colour harmonies		
	Greater	60	-
	Medium	32	-
	Vague	02	24
	Poor	06	76
3.	Selection of design for home furnishings		
	Greater	75	-
	Medium	25	09
	Vague		45
	Poor	-	46

was assessed by administering study-specific knowledge-related queries. The following Table depicts the students' level of knowledge regarding these topics.

Table 2 shows that a maximum 80 percent of the respondents from interior design department stated that they had greater understanding on fundamentals of decorating the interiors. A total of only 20 percent of the respondents had medium understanding on decorating the interiors and 66 percent of the respondents from other disciplines stated poor

understanding on decorating the interiors. Regarding the knowledge on selection of colour harmony 60 percent respondents from interior design had greater understanding on selection of colour harmony for interiors and 76 percent of respondents from other disciplines had poor understanding on selection of colour for interiors. Furthermore, 75 percent of the respondents from interior design had greater understanding on selection of design for home furnishings. Nearly 46 percent respondents from other disciplines had poor understanding in selection of design for home furnishings,

Table 3. Most preferred colours for selected home furnishings among students (n=200)

S.No.	Selected Furnishing Items	Selected Colours	Interior Design n=100	Non- Interior Design n=100	Total n=200	Percentage (%)
1	Curtains	Light	57	47	104	52.0
		Bright	20	29	49	24.5
		Dull*	19	10	29	14.5
		Dark	04	14	18	9.0
2	Beddings	Light	66	60	126	63.0
		Dark	21	20	41	20.5
		Bright	08	17	25	12.5
		Dull*	05	03	08	4.0
3	Carpet	Dark	57	51	108	54.0
		Multi	28	26	54	27.0
		Light	15	23	38	19.0
4	Sofa and Cushion covers	Light	49	42	91	45.5
		Dark	30	28	58	29.0
		Multi	21	16	37	18.5
5	Table Linen	Light	21	06	27	13.5
		Multi	20	05	25	12.5
		Dark	17	04	21	10.5
6	Table mat	Dark	34	12	46	23.0
		Light	16	03	19	9.5
		Multi	12	02	14	7.0

Note: Dull colour indicates, colour with low intensity

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and 45 percent of students stated on vague understanding in the selection of design for home furnishings.

Preferences of design and color for home furnishing

Design and colour play an increasingly essential part in the sales of furnishings. The maker must identify the designs and colours that people like or discover. This will give them a better understanding of the needs and wants of consumers (Kennamer, 1986). The study outcome showed that the preferences of students on design and colour preferences for home furnishings to decorate the interiors. The

colour choices for home furnishings are given in the Table 3.

In the course of this research, consideration was given to curtains, bedding, carpets, table linen, and table mats. Regardless of the field of study that the students are pursuing, a maximum of 52 percent and 63 percent of the students who were chosen expressed their preference for light colours for curtains and bedding respectively. This is due to the fact that lighter colours will make the space appear more open and brighter (Savavibool and Moorapun, 2017). Darker hues were picked for carpets by more than half of the students because of the high likelihood that they will become soiled

Table 4. Highly preferred design by the students for home furnishings (n=200)

S.No.	Selected Furnishing Items	Selected design	Interior Design n=100	Non-Interior Design n=100	Total n=200	Percentage(%)
1	Curtains	Natural	56	49	105	52.5
		Plain & simple	29	34	63	31.5
		Geometric	15	17	32	16.0
2	Sofa and cushion-covers	Plain & simple	41	58	99	49.5
		Natural	33	31	64	32.0
		Geometric	26	11	37	18.5
3	Carpet	Natural	30	40	70	35.0
		Geometric	43	32	75	37.5
		Plain& simple	27	28	55	27.5
4	Beddings	Natural	41	41	82	41.0
		Plain & simple	42	39	81	40.5
		Geometric	17	20	37	18.5
5	Table linen	Plain & simple	55	42	97	48.5
		Natural	37	50	87	43.5
		Geometric	08	08	16	8.0
6	Table mat	Natural	47	32	79	39.5
		Plain & simple	40	27	67	33.5
		Geometric	13	26	39	19.5

quickly, whereas multi- coloured options were chosen by 27 percent of the students for the same. As a result of the fact that the students from other disciplines were not particularly knowledgeable about the other furnishings, the response to these items was extremely limited. According to Yu *et al.* (2018), many practitioners confess to a lack of knowledge upon which to base their colour decisions. While the vast majority of students majoring in interior design favored light or white table linen, dark colours were preferred for table mats. The Table 4 displays the results of the design preferences of surveyed students.

Regardless of the field of study that the students are pursuing, a maximum of 52.5 percent of students favored conventional design with the natural motif for curtains, while 49.5 percent selected plain colours for sofa and cushion coverings. Among interior design students, 42 percent proposed solid colours for bedding, 55 percent for table linen, and 47 percent of the students preferred natural design for table mats. The largest percentage of interior design students who offered geometric patterns for carpet was 43 percent. On the whole irrespective of the major they

study, 40 percent and 41 percent of respondents liked a conventional design of natural motif for their carpet and bedding. 48.5 percent of the student's preferred plain or simple design for their table linen. Table 5 displays the colour and colour harmony preferences of the students for living and bedroom decoration.

Despite the fact that the students of interior design were aware of colour harmonies that the other students were not aware of, just a few students of interior design responded for the most favoured colour harmony and other students from different disciplines did not answer the questions. When asked about the reason why they did not respond to the question, they responded that when selecting colour harmony for their interiors, they will pay emphasis to the available design and colour in the stores rather than a particular colour harmony. The students who responded offered a monochromatic colour harmony (the hue pink) for the living room, and they suggested blue colour for the bedroom since they considered it should reflect a cool shade. As these students are female students, they would have preferred pink hues for the living room

Table 5. Interior design students' preferences on colour and colour harmony for living and bedrooms (n=100)

S.No.	Colour harmony	Living room	Percentage	Bed-room	Percentage
1	Monochromatic	Pink	29.0	Blue	34.0
2	Triad	Red, yellow, blue	22.0	Yellow-orange, blue-green, Red-violet	22.0
3	Complementary	Blue and orange	19.0	Yellow and purple	14.0
4	Split Complementary	Yellow orange, blue, purple	14.0	Yellow. Purple, blue purple	15.0
5	Analogous	Violet, blue-violet, blue	16.0	Blue-violet, blue, blue-green	15.0

and blue for the bedroom. Jiang *et al.* (2020) stated that girls prefer pink and purple colours whereas, boys preferred red, and both genders preferred blue. Furthermore, a few interior design students suggested direct complimentary colour schemes of blue, orange, yellow and purple for the living room and the bedroom, respectively. The students recommended that a primary colour triad could be used in the living room while an intermediate colour triad could be used in the bedroom. The responses for the split complementary and analogous colour harmonies are extremely limited compared with other colour harmonies.

Influencing factors for the selection of design and colour in home furnishings

The decision to purchase home furnishings was influenced by a variety of factors, including design, brand, colour, consumer awareness, and convenience (Nigar, 2021). This study examined how much of an impact the choice of design and colour may have on the final product of a home furnishing project. For the purpose of this study, several influencing elements, such as knowledge, personal taste, and experience with selection,

ideas contributed by members of the family and friends, and functional factors such as colour fastness, durability, washability, and abrasion resistance were chosen. Table 6 outlines the elements that are considered when making decisions on the selection of design and colour of home furnishings.

More weightage was given to their own personal taste when choosing the furnishings for their homes by 63.5 percent of the students, regardless of the academic field in which they are enrolled. It was noteworthy to observe that just 43 percent of students who pursue Interior design placed priority on applying their knowledge in the process of selecting home furnishings for their homes. It is encouraging to see that the thoughts and opinions of members of the family were taken into consideration when selecting furnishings for the home by 26 percent of the respondents from the other disciplines. When it comes to the selection of furnishings for interiors, it is disheartening to learn that functional factors were not accorded a great deal of importance. As a result, it is essential to raise students' levels of awareness regarding the functional factors that should be addressed while

Table 6. The factors that influence selection of design and colour for home furnishings
(n=200)

S.No.	Influencing Factors	Students in different disciplines			
		Interior design =100	Non-Interior Design =100	Total =200	Percentage (%)
1	Personal taste	66	61	127	63.5
2	Knowledge	43	14	57	28.5
3	Opinions of family members and friends	16	26	42	21.0
4	Experience	07	09	16	8.0
5	Functional factors	01	02	03	1.5

*Multiple responses

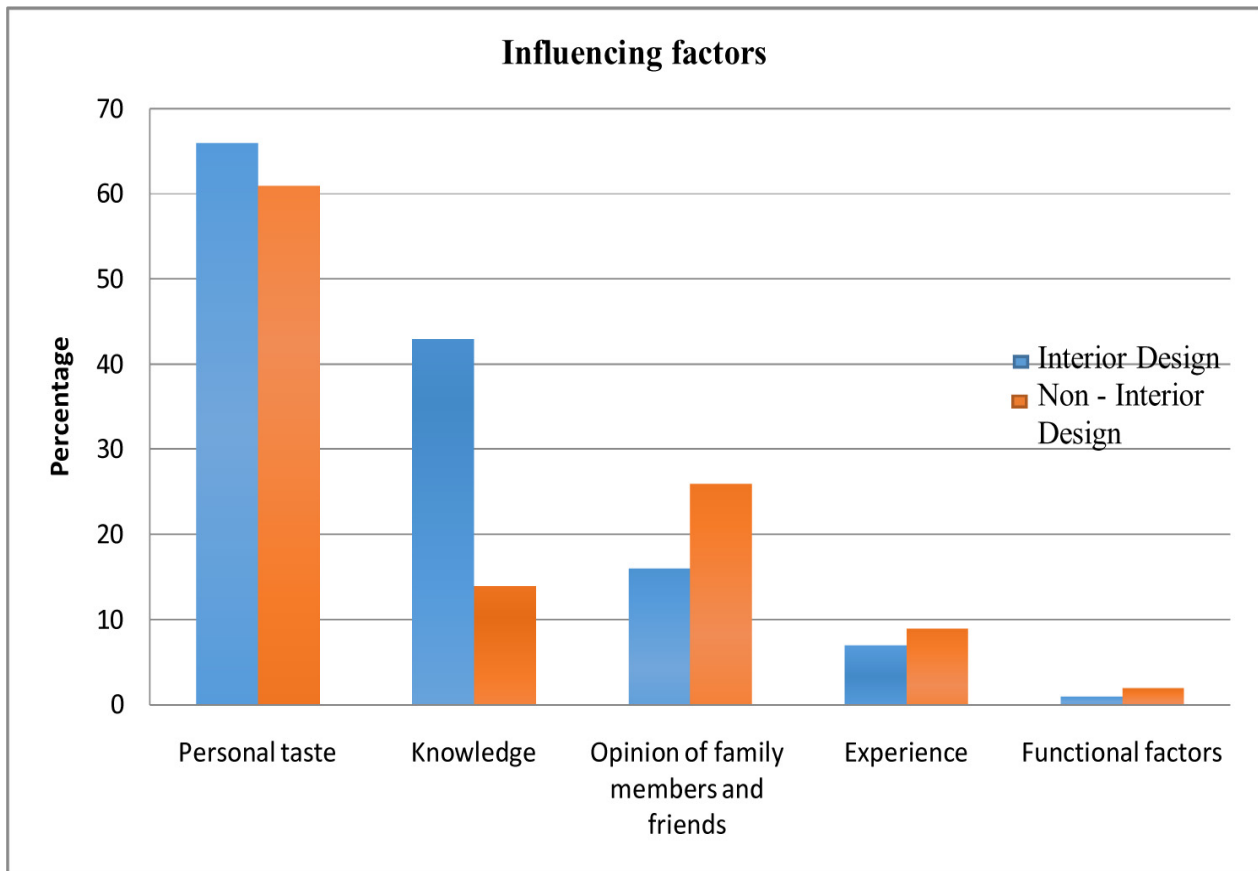


Figure 1. Graphical representation of influencing factors on selection of design and colour for home furnishings

Table 7. Chi-Square test analysis of student preferences for interior furnishing X^2 value

S.No.	Preferences	Furnishing Items	X^2 value	df	Significance
1	Colour	Curtains	15.560	6	*
		Beddings	5.543	9	NS
		Carpets	9.683	6	NS
2	Design	Curtains	7.346	6	NS
		Sofa and cushion covers	19.992	9	*
		Carpets	21.597	9	**
		Beddings	15.309	12	NS
		Table linen	6.176	6	NS
		Table mat	9.479	6	NS

*:Significant at 5% level, **:Significant at 1% level, NS-Not significant, df – Degrees of freedom

choosing home furnishings. A graphical representation of influencing factors is shown in Figure 1.

Chi-square test analysis of student's preferences for interior furnishing

Furnishings are one of the most demanding and emerging fields, full of scope of innovation and creativity. Interior furnishings, in particular convey a message to make space unique and reflect the personalities of users (Anita *et al.*, 2017). The findings of the statistical study of the student's preferences for interior decoration and colour, as well as design selections of selected home furnishings are presented in Table 7.

Table 7 represents the results of the Chi-Square test for the student's preferences of design and colours for home furnishings. In the analysis of the colour preferences of students, the colour selection for curtains had the highest value, 15.560, with a difference of 6 and a significance level of 5%. In addition, the selection of colours for carpets and rugs has not reached a noteworthy level. Next, to evaluate the students' choice of design for sofa and cushion covers, a significant level of 5% and a value of 19.992 were obtained. Carpet design reached a significant level of 1%, with a value of 21.597. The selection of designs for bed covers, table linens, and table mats has not reached a significant level.

CONCLUSIONS

Design and colour are of utmost importance when selecting home furnishings for interior design. Consequently, this study was conducted to examine the design and colour preferences of students with regard to home furnishings. The study revealed that the majority of interior design students prefer monochromatic colour harmony with pink and blue for living room and bedroom decoration respectively. In selecting colours for domestic

furnishings, the colour palette reflects the psychological influences of adolescent girls. The study also revealed that students do not adequately consider functional factors. Therefore, it is essential to educate the students on functional factors while selecting furnishings. This study facilitated consumer-centric design and colour applications in design activities, putting consumer contentment at the forefront.

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