

Assessment of Cafe Design Criteria in a Consumerist Society: An Approach on Place Attachment

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Abstract : There is little doubt that concepts such as space and place have become more common considering that human beings have grown more apart and more than having contact with each other, they are in contact with objects, spaces, and places. Cafés, as a third place which is neither home nor workplace, have attracted these authors' interests, who are industrial and interior designers. There has been much research on providing suitable cafés, customer behavior, and criteria for spatial sense. However, little research has been carried out on consumerism, desire for variety, and their relationship with changing places, and specifically cafes in term of interior design. In fact, customer's sense of place has mostly been overlooked. In this case study, authors conducted to challenge the desire for variety and consumerism as well as investigating the addictive factors in cafés. From the designers' point of view and by collecting data through observing and interviewing café managers, this study investigates and analyzes the customers in two cafes located in a commercial building in northern Tehran (a part of city with above average economic conditions). Since these two cafés are at the same level in terms of interior and spatial design, the question is raised as to why customers patronize the newly built café despite their loyalty to the older café. This study aims to investigate and find the criteria based on the sense of space (café) in a consumerist society, a world where consumption is a myth. Going to cafés in a larger scale than a product can show a selection and finally who you are, where you go, which brand of coffee you prefer, and what time of the day you would like to have your coffee. The results show that since people spend time in cafés more than any other third place, the interaction they have with their environment is more than anything else, and they are consumers of time and place more than coffee or any other product. Also, if there is a sense of consumerism and variety, it is mostly for the place rather than coffee and other products. To satisfy this sense, individuals go to a new place (the new café). It can be easily observed that this sense overshadows the sense of efficiency, design, facilities and all important factor for a café.

Keywords : place, cafe, consumerist society, consumerism, desire for variety

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