

Coworking Spaces Phenomenon in Kuwait: Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aims to investigate 1) the advantages and disadvantages of coworking spaces for coworkers, 2) interior design factors that attract entrepreneurs to work/rent coworking spaces.

Research questions: To reach the purpose of the study, three questions were developed. 1) What are the various advantages and disadvantages offered by the co-working space to working individuals? 2) What interior design factors influence the individual's perception on co-working space selection? 3) What social factors influence the individual's perception of co-working space selection?

Methods: A quantitative research approach was used in this study by employing an online survey questionnaire. A purposive sampling technique was employed in this study. The population of this study is all individuals, freelancers, employers, business owners who are utilizing co-working spaces in Kuwait.

Results: the findings of this study indicated an important role of interior design facilities toward coworking spaces. The physical environment of the coworking space is an important factor for renting coworking spaces. Besides that, the social aspect is considered highly important between members.

Research limitations/implications: Due to the conceptual approach and specific case of Kuwait, the discussions lack generalizability. The paper provides valuable insight into the factors that can help practitioners, interior design educational programs, and coworking business owners for improving Kuwait's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Keywords:

Coworking spaces, Interior Design, Kuwait, Entrepreneurs

المخلص

هدف الدراسة: تهدف هذه الدراسة الى معرفة: (١) إيجابيات وسلبيات العمل في مساحات العمل المشتركة، (٢) عوامل التصميم الداخلي المؤثرة في جذب اهتمام أصحاب ورواد الأعمال للعمل / للاستئجار في مساحات العمل المشتركة. **أسئلة البحث:** هناك ثلاثة أسئلة للبحث، (١) ماهي إيجابيات وسلبيات العمل في مساحات العمل المشتركة؟ (٢) ماهي عوامل التصميم الداخلي التي تؤثر على انطباعات المشتركين في اختيار مساحات العمل الجماعية؟ (٣) ماهي العوامل الاجتماعية التي تؤثر على انطباعات المشتركين في اختيار مساحات العمل الجماعية؟

منهجية الدراسة: استخدمت الدراسة كلا من المسح والاستبيان، باستخدام الأسلوب الكمي بما في ذلك الأسئلة المغلقة. تم استخدام عينة مستهدفة وهي أصحاب الاعمال المشتركين في مساحات العمل المشتركة منهم يعملون كموظفين ومستقلين وأصحاب مشاريع صغيرة.

نتائج الدراسة: أشارت نتائج الدراسة الى أهمية عناصر التصميم الداخلي للاشتراك/ العمل في مساحات العمل المشتركة. تعتبر البيئة الداخلية لمساحات العمل المشتركة من أهم العوامل للإيجار في مساحات العمل المشترك. بجانب التصميم الداخلي، تعتبر العوامل الاجتماعية من الأمور المهمة للغاية للمشاركين في مساحات العمل المشتركة.

حدود وتطبيقات الدراسة: بسبب قلة عدد عينة البحث وطبيعة المجتمع الكويتي، لا يمكن تعميم نتائج البحث الى دول أخرى. يعطي هذا البحث معلومات جوهرية وأساسية للمتخصصين، والمصممين الداخليين، وملاك واداريين مساحات العمل المشتركة لتطوير بيئة الاعمال في الكويت.

الكلمات الافتتاحية:

مساحات العمل المشتركة، التصميم الداخلي، الكويت، رواد الأعمال

1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been an exponential growth of coworking spaces that may disrupt the way businesses operate. People can now work from home or other locations rather than in a traditional office setting thanks to recent technological advancements. In the last 15 years, work practices have been evolved and transformed into new collaborative, competitive environments (Mitev, et al., 2018). Coworking spaces are workplaces that are shared by workers who are not affiliated with the same company or project. The movement of coworking spaces has led many entrepreneurs, freelancers, and independent businesspersons or mobile employees to use these environments as their business places (Foertsch, 2013). Many people prefer to work remotely or as a freelancer because they value meaningful work, autonomy, and flexibility in terms of schedules and work pace/content. (Garrett, et al., 2017). Prior to renting a place in coworking environments, those independent professionals used to work from homes or coffee shops (Spinuzzi, 2012). Co-working spaces offer a wide range of benefits to individuals to interact, collaborate, conduct business, and network in an entrepreneurship environment (Fuzi, 2015). The Covid induced restrictions have reduced the physical visits to co-working spaces, but previous studies have shown that work from home (also known as telework) can reduce job satisfaction and lower productivity (Bueno, et al., 2018) due to lower levels of social interaction and personal feelings of isolation, family conflicts (Mayerhoffer, 2021). In this regard, co-working spaces offer a friendly environment where individuals, entrepreneurs, freelancers can work together, share ideas, and improve creativity, productivity (Mitev, et al., 2018). Co-workers must pay a nominal amount to space provides based on the amenities provided. Apart from social connections, the co-workers look for many features including interior design, internet facilities, parking, and eating facilities while selecting a co-working space.

The cooperation received from people with different background, educational qualifications offer collaborative opportunities to generate, share and discuss ideas. Such openness options are proven to improve the confidence, efficiency, productivity of the individuals utilising the co-working spaces (Jorgenson & Vu, 2016). Many studies have analysed the benefits of co-

working places, but they largely focus on productivity, job satisfaction and operational costs etc. (Lee, et al., 2007). However, very few studies have tried to analyse the advantages, disadvantages of the co-working space. In this study, we aim to investigate the effect of interior factors (both physical, non-physical) on selecting a co-working space for an individual working person. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this study is one of the preliminary studies analyzing the effects of interior factors on co-working selection, retention.

The co-working spaces are increasing exponentially worldwide, it is estimated that the rise of co-working spaces records a growth rate of 21.3% every year (Risio & Seet, 2020). According to the Authors' direct findings and data gathered from several reports and websites, the co-working spaces in Kuwait in the last four (4) years are increased by 210% (All Office Centers, 2021). As of November 2021, there are 10 active co-working office spaces in Kuwait. The Government of Kuwait plans to encourage young entrepreneurs and young students to contribute to the country's economic growth (Abu-Aisheh, 2018). Co-working office spaces are the necessary places for Entrepreneurship through relationships—navigating from creativity to commercialization.

This study would add value to Kuwait Vision 2035, which aims to transform Kuwait into a world-class financial and commercial center, through several aspects. One of them is introducing social and economic empowerment programs targeting youth and small and medium-sized enterprises. Hence, this study helps interior designers and coworking business managers to facilitate coworking built environments and support Kuwaiti entrepreneurs who plan to work in such offices. Facilitating a better environment for enterprises can help in promoting economic growth in the state of Kuwait for achieving the 2035 vision. The study helps interior designers who are hired to design efficient and desirable coworking environments to know the design factors that influence individuals to subscribe to coworking spaces. Furthermore, this study would shed the light on the communities that are being created in such places and the outcomes of the social interactions with tenants.

Many studies have discussed the benefits of co-working spaces on individual productivity, social support received, flexibility, and opportunities to collaborate (Weijjs-Perrée, et al., 2018),. But none of the studies has tried to explore the factors affecting co-working space selection. This exploratory study tries to fill the gap by analyzing the factors affecting co-working space selection and the benefits offered by these modern working spaces. Three research questions are defined:

Research questions

- i. What are the various advantages and disadvantages offered by the co-working space to working individuals?
- ii. What interior design factors influence the individual's perception on co-working space selection?
- iii. What social factors influence the individual's perception of co-working space selection?

We first describe the theories that explain why people feel attached to places like co-working spaces and their expectations from co-working spaces using psychological theories. Then we follow the survey method to collect the data from co-working people for gathering data about the perceptions of individuals about the co-working spaces. We analyze the data and discuss our findings to improve the interior design and suggest the best co-working management techniques.

2. Review of Literature

Theoretical background:

The place attachment theory:

Coworking spaces are an open plan offices equipped with all office amenities, including a social interaction area, shared resources, a coffee shop, cubical offices, and a meeting or conference room and private offices. As mentioned by Gerdenitsch et al. (2016) coworking is linked to a strong sense of attachment to space and emotional support. Some behavioral and environmental psychology theories have tried to explore the relationship between human attachment to the working place. The place attachment theory is one of the important psychological theories which investigates the attachment of a person to an environment or a place (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2014). Humans willingly/unwillingly form emotional connections with people, groups, objects, and places. These emotional associations are a powerful characteristic of human life that inform our sense of identity, create meaning in our lives, facilitate community, and affect action (Lewicka, 2011). According to this theory, the selection of working space depends on the emotions, attachment, comfort parameters, conditions of the setting, etc. People judge the new places in accordance to how these places fit according to their expectations.

Theory of Social support

Shumaker and Brownell, (1984) present the concept of social studies by analysing vast literature. They mentioned social support as an exchange of resources between at least two individuals intended to enhance the wellbeing of the recipient. Verbal and Non-verbal communications at the workplace play an important role in influencing the wellbeing of workers. Social support provides an opportunity to share feelings with co-workers which reduced loneliness, anxiety, sympathy fear, provides suggestions and support for improving the well-being of workers (Collins, et al., 2016). Thus, social support has a great impact on personal and professional life. Apart from physical assents people often try to find professional relationships to share their ideas, emotions with colleagues at co-working spaces (Brinkø, et al., 2014). There are many ways to have social support in a shared workstation environment, which are social interaction, sharing knowledge, and collaboration (Spinuzzi, 2012). A collaborative workplace has a strong influence on improving communication and collaborative work, as a result cultivating entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Cabral & Winden 2016). Gerdenitsch et al. (2016) has used a survey method to analyse the effect of social factors on the wellbeing and productivity of co-workers and they found that social support has a significant positive effect on productivity and self-efficacy. The field of interior design studies the relationship between humans and places in a way that fosters the interaction between them. Yet, how can an interior designer facilitate and boost the social interaction between coworkers in a working environment, specifically in Kuwait, is still not clear.

Factors affecting co-working space selection:

The trend and passion of the young generation are changing at a rapid rate, the changing lifestyles and new business opportunities have influenced space providers to design new workplaces while taking care of costs and environmental impacts (Kojo & Nenonen, 2016). So, the design, interiors, facilities are important factors for co-working space selection.

Even though the number of coworking spaces has increased, scientific research has yet to adequately address this emerging co-working office environment (Rus & Orel, 2015; Garrett et al., 2014). Studies analysing co-working space characteristics largely focus on external factors including geographical location, transportation facility, plan layout, exterior aesthetics, lease, and rental options in the Netherlands (Weijs-Perrée, et al., 2018), Netherlands, Germany, and the Czech Republic (Appel-Meulenbroek, et al., 2020). Koevering (2017) in his study carefully reviewed the available literature to find out the most preferred facilities expected by co-workers in the workspace. It was found that users preferred modern, homey open plot layouts in co-working spaces. This study has listed the top two motivations for choosing a co-working space given priority to the opportunity to network with others followed by a vibrant and creative atmosphere. Inggar et al. (2018) study is one of the preliminary studies that have listed some of the important interior factors that influence co-workers' comfort in office space. They identified important factors such as space, texture, line, form, lighting, color, temperature, sound, freshness/enjoyment, and architectural style through personal observations and questionnaires. The limitation of this study is it is based on limited observations in one city of Indonesia. This study has also classified the co-working spaces into four categories based on the facilities provided and feedback obtained from the users. Based on the interior designs, the four classifications are Minimalist – Scandinavian, Industrial, Modern Contemporary, Colonial Modern. In their survey, based on the preference of users this study has found that the Minimalist – Scandinavian interior design was the most preferred interior design chosen by the co-workers. Users have mentioned that cleanliness, simplicity, and the use of bright color settings in the minimalist style can bring up some value expected in a co-working.



Figure 1: Coworking space. (INDUSTRIOUS)



Figure 2: Coworking space.

Grazian (2019) has carefully reviewed the facilities offered by the world's top 15 co-working spaces and listed some common key services offered by these co-working spaces. Along with regular office desk, computer, high-speed internet connection, seminar and conference facilities, coffee shop and other beverages, in-house mail and printing facilities, common reception and security, surveillance cameras. lounge spaces. This study has not mentioned that the interior features have a significant effect on workplace selection along with distance, rental charges, and flexibility to visit the workspace. Co-working spaces shall use impressive interior decorations to impress the users. The creative and sustainable aesthetics of the workplace can build the reputation of co-working space on multiple media channels which promote the business (Davies & Tollervey, 2013). The choices and expectations of co-workers change with their age and time spent in the office space (Rothe et al., 2011). The office space design is intended to provide employees with the best working environment. Thus, people in the built

environment can get a physical and psychological sense of comfort, security, and relaxation. Coworking spaces now appear as hybrids halfway between a coffee shop, a home office, and a traditional office (Simonelli & Monna, 2018). Thus, the built environment needs more academic attention to study the most effective and appealing sensory factors—which are sight, sound, touch, and smell—for coworkers. A gap exists in the literature on the interior design factors that emotionally bind coworkers to their spaces.

3. Research Methodology

A quantitative research method was employed in this study by employing a survey questionnaire. The population of this study is all individuals, freelancers, employers, business owners who are utilizing co-working spaces in Kuwait. Since it consumes time and cost for covering the entire population, a sample from this population is drawn randomly. A purposive sampling technique was employed to obtain the data from the respondents. A web-based questionnaire was prepared for obtaining details about factors influencing co-working space selection. The survey instrument for this study was developed based on the findings of previously published research on coworking spaces. The questionnaire used for data collection is attached as Appendix. A.

We have used our professional contacts and browsed co-working space providers' details. A list of co-working spaces was generated including their contact details, seating capacity, services offered along with charges for using these amenities. This list contains details of all co-working spaces functioning in Kuwait. We contacted these coworking spaces via email, WhatsApp and visited some offices directly to request their participation. Based on our preliminary visits and response to requests, a total of 50 participants are agreed to participate in the study.

About the questionnaire and response rate:

The self-administered questionnaire is designed after conducting an extensive literature review on the co-working space concept. Some of the questions were adapted from previously published research (Waxman, 2004), while others were developed by the researchers for the study (see Appendix A). This survey questionnaire is divided into four parts. The first part covers the background, the problem statement of the research which help the respondents to understand the purpose of the research. The second part covers the demographic details of the respondents. The third part of the questionnaire covers the items to measure individual perception about the ambient features that they are expecting in a co-working space. The final part of the questionnaire measures the individual's perception about the role of social support, co-working opportunities, the response to the third and fourth parts of the questionnaire are measured in a five-point Likert scale where one (1) indicates very low expectations and five (5) indicates very high expectations. Initially, we have approached 93 co-workers for participating in the study. Out of 93, only 61 participants are responded to the request and agreed to participate. The questionnaire responses were obtained physically (19 members), via Email (23 members), WhatsApp (7 members). The overall response ratio was 65%. Out of 61 responses, 11 were incomplete and removed from further analysis. So, the final analysis is based on the 50 responses.

Participants were invited to take part in the survey and were informed that their participation was voluntary, that no information gathered could be used to identify them, and that their identities would be completely anonymous. Among the 50 responses, there were 31 male and 19 female respondents.

Validity & Reliability of the questionnaire

The face validity of the questionnaire was verified by taking opinions from the faculty guide of the author of this study. Pilot testing was conducted among a group of ten persons to validate the research instruments. The pilot testing ensured the readability and clarity of the instruments' statements. Also, it ensured that the survey and interview protocol measured the construct that it is intended to measure. After conducting the pilot testing, the researchers refine the questionnaire based on the feedback received from the participants of the pilot study.

Data analysis

The quantitative method is used to seek answers for close-ended and partially close-ended questions. The Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to code analyze data. The researchers analyzed the data by illustrating the mean values, frequencies, and percentages for each item in the survey.

4. Results

Demographics

The total number of responses was received from fifty ($N=50$) respondents. Sixty-two percent ($n=31$) of the participants were males, while thirty-eight percent ($n=19$) were females (figure 3). Given the current opportunities in Kuwait, the sample shows a higher level of women co-workers. Participants covered a narrow range of age groups. The largest age group represented was between 31 and 40 years old (52%), followed by the age group between 20 and 30 (30%), followed by the age group between 41 and 50 (18%) (figure 4). Most of the participants hold Bachelor's degree (41%), followed by a high school degree (32%), and diploma holders (20%). It was an important note that the majority of the co-workers have a minimum of bachelor's degree qualification (figure 5). Participant's occupation varies, (50%) are full-time employees, followed by the business owner (28%), followed by part-time employees (16%), and freelancers (6%).

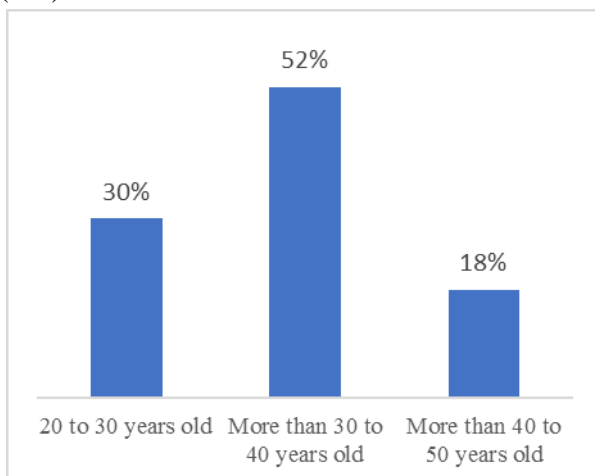


Figure 3: Gender of participants.

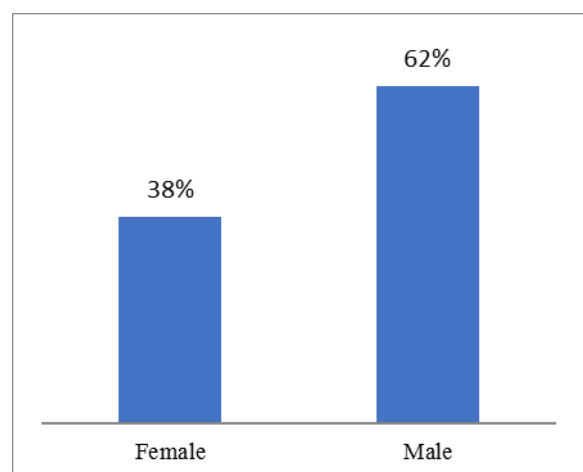


Figure 4: Age category of participants.

Full-time employees have chosen to work from co-working space due to providing facilities to improve productivity. Half of the participants (50%) have rented hot desk/ open space desk, followed by meeting room access only of (38%), and the private office of (12%) (figure 6). When asking participants how often they come to this place, the highest rank is daily (26%), 3 times a week (14%), followed by 2 times a week (14%), and once a week (6%).

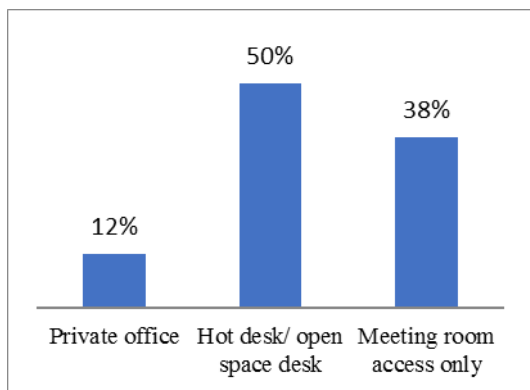


Figure 5: Last degree achieved.

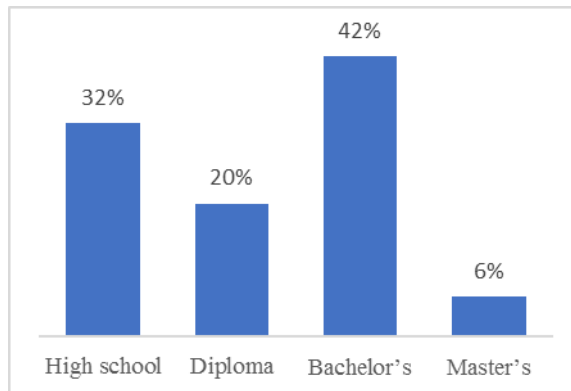


Figure 6: Type of rented space.

Perceptions

When asking participants about the main features for choosing the coworking spaces, the top first feature participants focus on when selecting coworking space is appropriate natural lighting (74%), followed by a silent place to work (66%), followed by the beauty of interior design and décor (58%), followed by comfortable furniture to work and hung out with customers and coworkers (56%), similarly Appropriate artificial lighting in the workspace (56%), followed by availability of private offices to work in privacy (54%), having Coffeeshop inside the workplace (44%), Coworkers work in the same or related fields (34%) (see table 1). The findings of this study match with previous findings of Weijts-Perrée et al., (2019) that a creative and attractive atmosphere is one of the main reasons for workplace selection. Natural lighting not also improves productivity but also improves the health and wellness of co-workers (Soori & Vishwas, 2013). Comfortable and cleanliness of furniture space including interior décor will create convenient conditions for working (Ravindu et al., 2015). Open-plan working spaces may not offer desired privacy, also cause noise, concentration, and privacy problems, the co-working space owners must try to develop dedicated personal, event spaces with required furniture and privacy arrangements.

Table 1. Main features for choosing coworking spaces

What are your main features for choosing coworking spaces	Percent
Appropriate natural lighting in the workspace.	74%
The Silent place to work	66%
The beauty of interior design and decor	58%
Comfortable furniture to work and hung out with customers and coworkers.	56%
Appropriate artificial lighting in the workspace.	56%
Availability of private offices to work in privacy.	54%
Coffeeshop inside the workplace	44%
Coworkers work in the same or related fields.	34%

When asking participants about the main reasons for working/ renting in coworking spaces, the top first reason is improving the social interactions between members (60%), similarly benefit of full facilities (Wi-Fi, phone, reception...etc) inside coworking spaces (60%), followed by increasing work productivity (46%), followed by enhancing networking with other members (40%), followed by Providing flexibility in the workplace(38%), followed by gain self-efficacy (30%), reducing renting cost (30%), followed by Increase performance satisfaction (24%) (see table 2). Social interaction between co-workers, helping each other, sharing thoughts is recognized as an important aspect of co-working spaces (Schöpfel, et al., 2015). Although in co-working spaces the colleagues or co-workers often change, creating a permanent host or a contact point or a small group who can stimulate the interactions between the co-workers can be an important future study to improve productivity.

Table 2. Reasons for renting a coworking space

Reasons for working/ renting a coworking space	percentage
Benefit full facilities (Wi-Fi, phone, reception...etc.)	60%
Improve social interactions between members.	60%
Increase work productivity	46%
Enhance networking with other members.	40%
Provide flexibility in the workplace	38%
Gain self-efficacy	30%
Reduce renting cost	30%
Increase performance satisfaction	24%

The main disadvantages of working at coworking spaces are being noisy space (58%), lack of privacy (50%), small personal space (44%), lack of sense of ownership (36%), low safety and security (24%), Lack of independence (22%), lack of natural light (18%), other reasons (4%) such as small offices/ desks and difficulties in changing the design of the private offices (see table 3). Many of the co-workers have mentioned that noise in the workplace is a major disadvantage as it may cause distraction, lack of privacy, etc. This issue can be addressed by acoustic settings, noise cancellations mechanisms etc. Behavioral issues such as loud speaking, cigarette smoking, intense fragrances, etc. also cause disturbance to privacy. Unintentional, informal discussions often affect workers' productivity and have an inverse effect on task performance (Ondia, 2019). Understanding the key features of the physical environment helps us to understand the relationship between privacy and conversations in workspaces. Users' primary concerns remain safety and cleanliness, and the unexpected restrictions imposed by Covid-19 have raised awareness of cleanliness and hygiene.

Table 3. Disadvantages of working at coworking spaces

Disadvantages of working at coworking spaces	Percentage
Noisy space	58%
Lack of privacy	50%
Small personal space	44%
Lack of sense of ownership	36%
low safety and security	24%
Lack of independence	22%
Lack of natural light	18%

When asking participants an open-ended question which is "in your view, how can we promote the efficiency of the coworking spaces?", about half of the participants answered this question. The answers to this question were grouped into similar themes and concepts grouped around the phenomena is called categorizing. The most frequent answers to this question are having a full-serving coffee shop, having a lounge for members to communicate, availability of parking lots, flexibility in resizing private offices, improving privacy, and organizing events with members to network. The connectivity and short breaks at the cafeteria offer refreshments to workers as it improves communication and coordination with potential users.

Table 4. The importance of the design features

Statement	M	SD
Place cleanliness.	4.62	.709
The visual appeal of the furniture.	4.51	.882
The colors are used in the interior of the space.	4.36	.845
The overall interior décor of the space.	4.32	.887
The comfort of the furniture.	4.3	.883
The aroma of the place.	4.28	.877
Acoustic (sound reduction) level.	4.28	.971
Natural lighting	4.26	.896
Artificial lighting	3.53	.952
Background music.	2.23	1.183

(M= mean value/ SD= Standard deviation)

Ambient Design Features

The findings of the study show that coworkers rank the ambient interior design features nearly in the same importance. For example, participants ranked the top design feature as place cleanliness (Mean [M] = 4.62), followed by the visual appeal of the furniture (M=4.51), followed by the colors used in the interior of the space (M=4.36), followed by the overall interior décor of the space (M=4.32), followed by the comfort of the furniture (M=4.3), followed by the aroma of the place (M= 4.28), followed by acoustic (sound reduction) level (M= 4.28), followed by natural lighting (M= 4.26), followed by artificial lighting (M= 3.53), followed by background music (M= 2.23) (see table 4)

Socialization

Ranking the top aspect for coworkers in socialization is Chatting with other members would broaden horizons and ideas (M= 4.02). This was followed by socialization with the staff (M= 3.61), enjoying watching members while at the space (M=3.59), hearing interesting, informative and innovative business ideas at the coworking space (M= 3.55), participating in group meetings organized by co-work space members (M= 3.43), hearing interesting conversations while I am at the coworking space (M= 3.36), socialize with other entrepreneurs in the space (M= 3.34), participate in group meetings organized by the coworking space management (M= 2.86) (see table 5).

Table 5. The importance of socialization aspects for coworkers

Statement	M	SD
Chatting with other members would broaden horizons, and ideas about many aspects.	4.02	1.285
I socialize with the staff	3.61	1.205
I enjoy watching members while at the space	3.59	1.106
I hear interesting, informative, and innovative business ideas at the coworking space	3.55	1.355
I participate in group meetings organized by myself or members	3.43	1.283
I hear interesting conversations while I am at the coworking space	3.36	1.313
I socialize with other entrepreneurs in the space	3.34	1.18
I participate in group meetings organized by the coworking space management	2.86	1.173

(M= mean value/ SD= Standard deviation)

5. Conclusion

The rise of co-working spaces helps people to work independently, they provide a resourceful environment for improving skills, business, productivity, and wellbeing. This study offered new insights into the preferences for co-working space characteristics that co-workers expect when choosing where to work, which bridges the gap. Analysis of survey results helped us to understand the perceptions of co-workers in physical and social factors for selecting the co-working space. The findings of this study highlight the role of interior design within coworking spaces, showing how it is a powerful tool to convey the coworking space's vision, as the project of environmental design that highly influences human experiences. Lack of privacy, noise at the workplace remain the major concerns that negatively influence workplace selection and productivity. The natural lighting facilities, ventilation, availability of fully operational cafeteria, lounge facilities, comfortable furniture are preferred the physical amenities. In this way, the coworking environment can be designed more efficiently. Owners and contractors of coworking spaces can make more thoughtful decisions about the development and establishment of coworking spaces.

5.1 Research recommendations

The recommendations extracted from this study are summarized as follows:

- Co-working space management should survey their clients to find out their perceptions of and attitudes towards their business environment.
- When designing coworking spaces, interior designers should consider the flexibility of rented spaces. This means that the private offices can be resized to meet the needs of the clients.
- Because the interior design of coworking spaces is important, owners and administrators should pay special attention to choosing visually appealing furniture and wall colors, as the study found that these are the most important interior design features to consider.
- Co-working spaces administration provides updated facilities for renters as benefiting from facilities is considered the top reason for renting a coworking space.
- It is critical and highly desirable for coworkers to improve their social interaction. This could be accomplished by creating a social area or lounge where all peers can gather for weekly meetings and events. Coworkers should be able to connect and socialize with one another through events organized by the administration.
- Interior designers should concentrate on enhancing privacy in the space and lowering noise levels. This could be accomplished by using curtain wall shades or smart glass, which can change from clear to opaque in an instant.

6. Limitations and future scope

6.1 Limitations

This study has a few limitations. Due to the ongoing pandemic situation, we have collected the data using an online questionnaire which has reduced the response level. Secondly, we have not physically interacted with individual/focus groups, otherwise, we might get more interesting results. The finding of the study is a snapshot of coworkers' perceptions in Kuwait at a certain time that may vary if the study was conducted in other decades with a higher sample size.

6.2 Future Research

The limited literature support has restricted us to consider a few factors that are affecting co-working space selection. Future research studies should be conducted among coworkers through using a qualitative method, employing face-to-face interviews or focus groups. This research has highlighted some important factors, future studies can develop a conceptual framework for generalizing the study's findings. Although this study has considered the perceptions of co-workers only, the administration or owners of co-working spaces can be interviewed for identifying the challenges in providing the expected facilities, The purpose of this research would be to investigate place attachment phenomena among coworking places members. Also, further study should interview coworking spaces administration and owners to investigate several topics, which are area selection of the business, factors attracting new members, social responsibility, and place attachment.

Appendix A (Survey)**Dear participant,**

You have been invited to participate in an academic study on coworking spaces. Coworking spaces are defined as shared, workstations, office environments for independent professionals where they work alongside on open-plan office environments. The main objective of this questionnaire is to gather general information concerning entrepreneurs' perceptions and expectations of coworking spaces. Please be advised that all your responses to this survey will be kept confidential. If you are interested in knowing more about the research findings, then the researcher will be more than happy to send you the results upon your request.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated,

Demographics:**1. Gender**

Male Female

2. Age category:

- Less than 20 years old.
 20 to 30 years old.
 More than 30 to 40 years old.
 More than 40 to 50 years old.
 More than 50 years old.

3. Type of rented space:

- Private office
 Hot desk
 Virtual office

4. Last degree achieved?

- High school Diploma
 Bachelor's Master's
 Doctorate degree None of them

5. Occupation?

- Self-employed (businessowner) Freelancer
 Full-time employee Part-time employee
 Working student Others, please write

6. How often do you come to this place?

- Daily 2 times a week
 3 times a week Once a week
 2 times a month Once a month
 Others, please write.....

7. How long have you been renting in this place?

.....Months

Perceptions

Please read each statement carefully and then check (√) the responses that best show your opinion.

8. What are your main features for choosing coworking spaces (select all that apply)?

- The beauty of interior design and décor
- The silent place to work
- Comfortable furniture to work and hung out with customers and coworkers.
- Availability of private offices to work in privacy.
- Coffeeshop inside the workplace
- Appropriate natural lighting in the workspace.
- Appropriate artificial lighting in the workspace.
- Coworkers work in the same or related fields.
- Others, Please write.....

9. What are the main reasons for working/ renting a coworking space (check al that apply)?

- Improve social interactions between members.
- Enhance networking with other members.
- Provide flexibility in the workplace
- Increase work productivity
- Benefit full facilities (Wi-Fi, phone, reception...etc)
- Gain self-efficacy
- Increase performance satisfaction
- Reduce renting cost
- Others, please write

10. What are the disadvantages of working at coworking spaces?

- Lack of privacy
- Small personal space
- Lack of sense of ownership
- Noisy space
- Lack of independence
- Lack of natural light
- low safety and security
- Others, please write

11. In your view, how can we promote the efficiency of the coworking spaces?

.....

.....

Ambient Design Features

Please read each statement and then rate each statement from (1 = Very low; 5 = Very high). Choose **don't apply (D/A)** if you are not sure about the statement or it does not apply to the workplace.

N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	D/A
12	Natural lighting						
13	Artificial lighting						
14	Background music.						
15	Acoustic (sound reduction) level.						
16	The aroma of the place.						
17	Place cleanliness.						
18	The visual appeal of the furniture.						
19	The comfort of the furniture.						
20	The colors used in the interior of the space.						
21	The overall interior décor of the space.						

Socialization

Please read each statement and then rate each statement from (1 = Very low; 5 = Very high). Choose **don't apply (D/A)** if you are not sure about the statement or it does not apply to the workplace.

N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	D/A
22	I socialize with other entrepreneurs in the space						
23	I socialize with the staff						
24	I participate in group meetings organized by the coworking space management						
25	I participate in group meetings organized by myself or members						
26	I enjoy watching members while at the space						
27	I hear interesting conversations while I am at the coworking space						
28	I hear interesting, informative and innovative business ideas at the coworking space						
29	Chatting with other tenants would broaden horizons and ideas about many aspects.						

Thank you for your participation,

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