

Interior Design
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Lecture - 5
Summary and Discourse (Week1)

Namaste, Hello, everyone. Good to see you again in my NPTEL course on interior design. We are at lecture number five today, and it is a summary on all the discussions we have had so far during the week one of this course. And we already kick started the discourse on interior design as, you know, a discipline profession. And we try to understand, you know, what are the historical aspects related to interior design?

What is its scope? And then what kind of, you know, interior spaces, kinds of interior spaces do we come across? And then nuances when we talk about interior design, decoration, architecture. Also, a very, very important discussion on costing, career. And of course, some case studies and examples from the world of interior design.

So, I'm going to just summarize and give a sort of an overview or like a small crash course based on this one week's discussions that we have had so far. So, let's start with interior design definition, understanding its history and scope. And we have extensively, of course, talked about all of these in respective lectures. And since this is a summary, it's just a consolidated overview over here. So, we did try to understand that interior design is a combination of art, science, technology that manipulates space, form, texture, color, light to enhance the quality of human life.

So, whenever we talk about interior design, we do talk about human behavior, human psychology, human experiences, and how through these spaces there is an enhancement to the quality of human life. And then while we are doing this, how do we... manipulate space, form, texture, color, light, or use them to the best advantage for creating spaces that enhance the quality of human life. And it is also very important to understand that there is a profound art, science, and technology; all of these put together which result in this kind of a resultant and in this kind of a creation of an experience. So, the scope of interior design, as we discussed, is quite vast.

It ranges from practical to conceptual and artistic. And there are different kinds of spaces that we come across. Retail spaces, workspaces, living spaces, public spaces,

restorative spaces, and transient spaces, to name a few. We also tried to understand a few popular roles interior designers get to play. So, of course, interior designer or the principal interior designer, consultant, furniture designer as a very specialized domain within the interior design field.

Overarching theme, product designer, lighting designer. That's very, very interesting, actually. Also, sometimes interior decorator. But we are largely talking about interior design and interior architecture as a profession. And we discussed in one of the lectures during this week why we need more skillful, professional, and technical training to be an interior designer rather than what is required to be.

an interior decorator. Although decoration or decor does become an important part of interior design, so that's also an important role that could be assigned to one of the members of the team. Also, exhibition designer, there could be set designer, the design of accessories and furnishings, colour expert, that's also very fascinating. So, expertise on lighting, expertise on colour. That, I think, requires a lot of technical understanding and the science when we say that we need to understand the science in the interior design.

That's all the science that we need to understand to be able to design the colors properly. Interior landscaping and expertise on that. And we did talk about adaptive reuse, repurposing of spaces. So, restoration and renovation specialist also, because there is a huge demand for projects like this in the industry. And we are seeing this, you know, discourse globally.

And there is now a worldview established that, you know, we need more and more interior designers also for this specific domain. So, there are plenty of projects and understanding this and gaining an expertise in that area could become a niche and, you know, a career defining move. So that's also interesting. Model making, fabrication, educator or academician like me. So, I try to actually do both a little bit of consultancy as well for interior design projects.

Entrepreneurship and we have the culture of startups these days. So, you know, entrepreneurship, which focuses on interior design, amalgamation of interior design with craft. So also, the role as a craft designer. So, I sort of explored this domain as well. And it's very, very interesting to

See how these roles and, you know, the domains are ever expanding with the change of time and technology, change of market demand, etc. So, there is virtually no limit on the possibilities for interior designers to be able to contribute and make their

designs seen in the world. And it sometimes just takes a little time to identify your niche and then pursue it. And it's good to identify if there is some alignment with a specific expertise or area so that we can just deepen our understanding of that subject and then try to perform to perfection. So, we did also talk a bit about the history of interior design and how did this profession come into being?

And, you know, when did we start coining this discipline, so-called interior design? And when did interior architecture emerge? We did see all of that. So, in the early 1900s, the term interior decorator was first used in America. And it was used for those who had a combination of good taste, common senses and natural talent to interpret and address design related issues.

But they did not have an academic credential or a degree to be called interior decorators or interior designers. So, Elsie de Wolfe became the first interior decorator, and a design commission was given to her. And in 1913, she published the first interior design book, which is 'The House in Good Taste'. It's a very good reference.

It's a very, very important contribution because it was done way back in 1913. And it is sort of designated as the first published book on interior design. And then, Dorothy Draper was the first documented commercial interior decorator. She established a design firm in 1923. So very, you know, heartwarming and overwhelming.

And, you know, in 1923, these women were already establishing the foundation of the discipline called interior design and, you know, leading to its gradual evolution. We tried to understand, you know, some cave paintings and how this innate need of communication among humans is part of their psychology, behavior, and day-to-day needs. You know, these paintings and these decorative aspects or, you know, some kind of lines or some kind of vocabulary which we see in these famous caves of Lascaux. They also shaped our understanding of what interior decoration or interior design is.

Could be, and you know, we do use wallpapers and tools for communication and storytelling to date. So, we can definitely look at these caves as examples from, you know, rock-cut architecture in India and cave paintings in India and across the globe, across different civilizations, actually, where we see, you know, these kinds of tools become a medium of storytelling and how we have sort of adapted them in a very contemporary manner. The expressions have changed, but we still utilize such tools, paintings, highlights, and accents for creating storytelling within interior spaces and also for aesthetic purposes. We did talk a bit about the pioneers of interior design,

especially talking about India. And we could come across some very, very interesting names and examples, although this list is not exhaustive. It's very, very limited.

And there are a lot of people who have contributed to the pedagogy and practice of interior design. But these are just to name a few, starting with Sunita Kohli, who is the Padma Shri, you know, awardee, and the government of India conferred this honor on her in 1992. We have Shabnam Gupta, there is Lipika Sud, Gajanan Upadhyay, M.P. Ranjan, Samira Rathod, Bijoy Jain, Abhishek Chadha, Ambrish Arora.

So, there are a lot of people, actually. Like I said, it's very difficult to put the names in one slide or two slides. But these are some of the ones that probably I'm biased towards, maybe because I like their works a lot. So, no disrespect to the people whose names you do not see here. But everybody has contributed hugely. We also talked about the stages of an interior design project.

So, starting from the furniture layout, civil layout, then there is a plumbing layout, electrical layout, ceiling layout. It's very important part of interior design drawing portfolio. The reflective ceiling plan, ceiling layouts, floor layouts, all of them. And yes, the elevations. So, elevation design is a very, very inevitable, crucial and vibrant part of interior design project.

It communicates the designs very well. The clientele can actually read the elevations and understand and get a perception of what a space would look like, how the four walls will look like or the facade will look like. So that's very important. We also tried to understand the nuances focusing on interior design, decoration and interior architecture. And we did try to understand while interior decoration primarily deals with 2D surfaces, surface treatments, some decorative elements and also adornment of spaces by creating artistic spaces.

Interior design, on the other hand, is a very skillful professional discipline and it requires a professional degree course to be able to deliver to the best of the capacity. Although not all the designers whom you see in the market do have a professional degree in interior design. But I would recommend if you want to pursue a career in interior design, please do go for a professional degree. It does help, you know, in shaping your understanding and then makes you industry ready. Then we continued our discussion on interior design and then how it has been treated with a lot of uncertainties and getting reduced to interior Decoration Day by day.

And we are just trying to not understand this discipline as the art and science of human behavior and then creating functional spaces, rather reducing it more and more

to decorative aspects and to combat all these uncertainties. And you know, to try to bring interior design to its original glory. There was the introduction of the discipline of interior architecture in 1970s, precisely 1972. And here interior architecture meant designing of interiors in architectural terms. To loosely or simply put it, you know, for sort of summarizing and making you understand well, interior architecture is a cohesive term.

And, you know, it concentrates on form, function, emotions, aesthetics, structure, everything put together holistically. So not seeing the four walls within a room bereft of the site on which they are situated or, you know, without the structural details that go into the making of that. Even the landscaping or the furniture that has been sort of custom designed and not just randomly put together, you know, bought from somewhere. But putting a thought to it, why there is an important, you know, need to be able to decide and take decisions where a certain element goes, what material is utilized and how things come together. catering to form functional, having the emotional quotient in that design while also looking at these structural aspects.

So that is what interior architecture actually promoted and it became very popular actually over a period of time and we have more and more degree courses on interior architecture if I talk academically plus of course professionally also. There is a profound respect and, you know, wide acceptance now for interior architects. And we try to understand a bit more in detail what distinguishes interior architecture from the other disciplines. In the sense that it acknowledges also the enclosing structure and the context, not just, you know, simple plane or a surface or a micro level detail in isolation. And it does employ the sensory stimuli of sound, touch, smell, sight, and it does create a holistic experience within an interior space.

Then we try to understand that it, you know, concentrates on three-dimensional space, volume and not just 2D surfaces. And there is a profound understanding of light, color and material and different aspects to create spaces which are meant for, you know, human comfort and well-being. So those were the discussions that we had focusing on interior decoration, design and interior architecture. Then we had some discussions where we tried to understand the costing of interior design projects and what are the career prospects if one studies interior design. Also, as a profession, what could be the directions in which one could take a leap.

So, we started by understanding the scope of work and an interior designer could of course be a freelancer or a salaried employee, someone in the role of contractor, etc.,

An interior designer could limit themselves to just the planning and design development or could carry on the execution and decoration part as well. They could even take a very small or a particular space, just designing a kitchen or just designing a nursery or like one room within the entire space. So, it's all possible and the scope could be discussed with the client. And depending on the scale of the budget, the scope could also, you know, contract or expand.

And there is a certain sort of a flow of activities, a flow of exercises that we usually follow while working on an interior design project. We had a discussion on that, starting from the site documentation to the handover. What are the different stages or in what order one proceeds? We try to understand that as well during our discussions. And in a nutshell, what we discussed in detail during that particular lecture, these are the most popular ways of computing the cost of an interior design project.

And the interior designer could be paid an hourly rate. There could be a percentage cost per square foot for the project. There is a markup on products, which we discussed, and there was also the concept of lump sum fees that we came across. We also tried to understand the market, and we saw some companies or firms or popular interior design companies that offered some salary ranges for interior designers. So this is part of a market survey, and we came across names like Interior Design Group and IKEA.

Many of you might already know it. It's becoming popular. Interior Concepts, there is Design Group, and of course, Gensler, and more companies like Sleek International and others. There was also a discussion on how these salaries may differ or vary based on which city you are working in, the demand for interior design projects in that city, or the trends or vogue followed there. We saw some top respondents, and the most frequent names were from IKEA, Interior Concepts, or Interior Design Group.

There was this salary, which is like a per annum salary that we see here. There are other groups and other ranges that we come across. So, based on your level of involvement. Level of customization versus mass production or some very interesting details, like making furniture for space optimization. If there is very little space in a place like Mumbai and we want to create furniture.

which helps in optimizing space through foldability, portability or whatever, like modularity, these kinds of attributes. So, depending on your role and involvement and the level of customization and detailing and designing, the salary varies. We understood the importance and role of client questionnaire as an important part of

process while working on interior design projects and how these questionnaires help in formulating a brief, which then forms the foundation for the project because we get to know the likes and dislikes of the clientele, their dreams, their expectations, their particular choices, the way they live, all of that. And it gives a clear understanding what kind of details could be incorporated in the project. Also, like what kind of information we could get through these questionnaire designs.

We had a little discussion on that. So, of course, the personal information and budget. Also, you know, if there is any preference for vastu compliance or climatology or any kind of a particular consideration which goes by family lineage, etc. Also, specifications for the project, numbers of rooms to be designed, whether, you know, there is some kind of a specific requirement which the client wants like a walk-in closet, etc., So we get this kind of information and then it comes handy while designing the project and trying to satisfy the client.

So a number of seating that is desired in living and dining rooms, what are the different provisions which are required for the bedroom, different requirements related to kitchen and, you know, bathroom areas, etc. We also saw some case studies and examples and this shaped our understanding of interior design holistically. We saw a very diverse range of projects actually. So, there were some residential ones, some luxurious interiors, some low-cost interiors. So, it's like a very, very opposite way of designing something very luxurious to low cost.

But it's the role of the designer and their understanding of materials, costing, and the client's requirements that makes it possible to achieve this variety. We also saw some international commercial projects, as well as some commercial projects in the context of India. These were very visual, and we tried to put this entire plethora together to create an understanding of the field of interior design. While discussing all of that, we also explored the academia-industry interrelationship how, as part of pedagogy and academics, one comes to understand interior design and learns its important elements and principles. Then, through studio exercises and courses, we align ourselves on how to actually work on-site.

What are the different stages? What are our roles? Finally, we also work on live projects, preparing ourselves to be industry-ready. Along with professionally built, awarded, and recognized projects, we saw practical applications and environmental concerns, ratings, and how these projects gain international recognition and celebration. So, we followed this entire thread throughout the week that just passed.

We'll continue building on this discussion and expand our understanding of interior design as a discipline and its future. So, I'm including this quote as part of the summary. Everything is designed. Whatever we see around us has some aspect of design. But only a few things are designed well.

So, designing is not easy, and to achieve simplicity is the most difficult. And for that, one has to have a lot of training, and only then will your efforts appear minimal because you have already been trained a lot to reach that perfection. This is our next lecture. Like I said, we will talk about the principles and elements of interior design.

We will see some examples.

We will also try to understand what composition is, especially with regard to interior spaces, and why it is important in the field of interior design. Some references I have included, which you could look at. This is a very, very useful book. Some websites.

Thank you.

I'll see you in the next one.