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The Colour Theme Preferences for Elegant Residential Interior Design in Mosul City, Iraq

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ABSTRACT

The interior space should achieve the users' needs to achieve a high elegance and satisfaction level. Residential interior design in Mosul City in Iraq has less attention from the users and designers in terms of managing the colour theme. The technological era with imported interior design elements provided various options for designing interior spaces. Chaos in the arranging and coordination of interior design elements results from indifference to interior design principles linked to colour themes. The mismatching between users' needs and designers' purposes creates a negative elegant value. Therefore, the research problem is "The lack of strategies to deal with the colour theme in the residential interior design depending on the users' needs". The study aims to identify the preferences for colour themes of elegant interior design in the residential interior space in Mosul City. The methodology applied a quantitative-qualitative approach using the survey, observation, and interview instruments. The visual observation of the interior design elements in furniture companies in Mosul City creates a platform for the availability of the material that provides a range of colour themes in Mosul City. The result showed that elegant design linked to nature and traditional factors of colour theme, while walls, furniture companies, and decorative are the influential elements.

Keywords:

Residential Interior Design; Traditional Colours; Furniture companies; Elegant Design; Satisfactional Design

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1. INTRODUCTION

The attention to elegant interior design increased in the Mosul City community during the openness to the international market in terms of interior design elements. The strategy of design elegant and satisfying interior design should follow the users' desires, especially in residential interior spaces. The availability of interior design elements in various colours affects the users and designers to harmonize and coordinate colours to create elegant or acceptable colour themes. The availability of various colours of the interior design elements could lead to creating difficulties in the decision in design or arranging process by the users or designers. The technological era affected the designers' and users' choices because of the wide range of interior design elements with various colours. Nowadays, interior design elements are varied in type, tone, texture, and colour theme. The walls, floor, ceilings, decorative elements, furniture, lighting elements, windows, doors, and plant elements are the main resources of the colour theme in interior design and elegant interior design[1], [2]. Colour is the most significant characteristic that links the interior design elements in one theme, which creates a type of unity in design [3]. Colour as an interior design element has a significant effect on the interior design aesthetic value [4], [5]. Colour themes can affect the interior space and users physically and psychologically. The effects of chaos can be represented as dissatisfaction of the users and recognise the interior space as crowded and non-designed space.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENTS

The main problem linked to the selection process of the colour theme for existing interior design in the residential buildings and the confusion of choosing interior design elements from the retails and furniture companies in Mosul City led to creating chaos in the colour plan.

Moreover, the usual changing and replacing the materials after time or before it shipped to customers are the main observed difficulties that face the users of interior space, designers, and furniture companies. The lack of studies and guidelines on colour themes connected with users' needs in the residential interior space. Therefore, designers and companies can face difficulties in achieving users' needs in colour, which is needed to study in-depth for the market requirements. The research problem is "The lack of strategies to deal with the colour theme in the residential interior design depending on the users' needs". To solve the problem, two research hypotheses issued, which are "there are preferences of the colour theme by the users in Mosul city for the interior design of residential spaces" and "specific interior design elements have a role in affecting the colour theme to create an elegant interior space". The research aims to identify the range of preferences colour themes of interior design elements in the designing of interior space in a residential space in Mosul City in Iraq that designers can use as a guideline in the design process.

3. PREVIOUS STUDIES

The researchers discussed the colour impacts and characteristics in interior design on six levels. The current study categorised the previous studies into main themes. Each theme discussed a set of variables related to using colour and its effects:

3.1. Feelings and emotions

The colour influences feelings and emotions and affects the users' moods directly. The vividness and happiness are the main measurable variables that can observed as a reaction to the colour atmosphere. Moreover, colour-evoked emotion is different according to the users' gender[2]. The interior space function types can influence the reaction toward the colour theme. The same colour theme in privet spaces such as a bedroom or living room, and public spaces such as a retail or office room can perceived in various feelings and emotions [6]. Colour is a method to understand the users' feelings according to the expression of the colour atmosphere. The users of the interior space can act their feelings positively or negatively. Various feeling types can be reached by using colour in the interior design, such as pleasure, attraction, stimulation, strangeness, fear, and excitement. Colour theme can influence it positively or negatively [7]. Harmony refers to the creation of a consistent and pleasant colour combination where the colour differences are accurately used. Harmony can be generated

following the characteristics of pleasant, consistent with the theme, united, and diverse [8].

3.2. Physical characteristics

The second level is related to the perceiving physical characteristics of the interior space. The literature discussed the impacts of colour on the physical characteristics, which affect the users' perception process in the interior space. The colour affects physical characteristics virtually. The illusion is the main effect that can change the interior space's physical setting [5], [9]. The colour can change virtually the spaces' size, scale, depth, height, arrangement, and openness. Various settings available to apply colour themes for changing the interior physical configuration depending on the colour elements [4]. The colour of walls, ceilings, floors, materials, furniture, and decorative materials have a parallel impact on the interior space characteristics [10]. The colour theme has a psychological effect on the users' perception of the physical characteristics of the place such as size, distance, weight, or temperature [5], [8]. Ban (2016) identified the use of colour in the interior space as an element of visual impact on the physical characteristics of that space. The colour plan can influence the interior space in terms of boundaries, size, narrowness, and expend

3.3. Colour elements

The Hue, Value, and Chroma of the colour are the elements of configuring the physical appearance of the colours. Colours are created by the integration between the hue, value, and Chroma, which are the three colour elements and create the colour tones, categorised in groups or pairs with a unique name and code [12]. The users' mental images of the colours are different. Ten users can name the same colour by ten different names but could match the original colours [13]. The tone of the colour is identified as a feature of the colour, which can be in limitation groups between bright-dark, coldwarm, strong-weak, or light-deep [14]. Figure (1) shows the dimensions of the colour elements. Each colour is located within the 3D sphere of the colours.

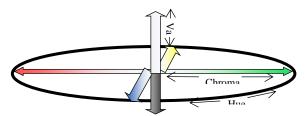


Fig 1. The configuration of the colour depends on the colour elements. Adopted from [12]–[14].

The colour elements' function is to give every single colour its visual appearance, brightness, and brilliance degree, which makes it distinguished from the others. Each group of colours have different impacts on the interior space, which can perceived and expressed by the users depending on the colour and its elements [5].

3.4. Colour meanings, interpretations, and culture

Each culture has special preferences for using colour in the interior and exterior space of the buildings linked to the traditions, memory, and cultural values. The use of white, black, red, or any other colour could be acceptable by one culture and not satisfactory by another. The process of choosing a specific colour to create the colour theme in interior design should consider the meanings and expressions of that theme from the recipients. The psychological impact of the colour reflects the real meanings of the interior space. Richness, wisdom, decorum, simplicity, luxury, complexity, unity, and peace are the most common expressions discussed in previous studies [2], [5]. Table (1) shows the abstracted meanings of colours in view of culture and humans as the description of literature and theory of colour. Researchers divided the colours into two groups. The main colours included Blue, Green, Red, and Yellow. The Secondary colours included Purple, Brown, and Black [8].

Table 1. The meanings of Colours, adapted from [8], [15]–[17]

Colours	meanings	Sources
Black	Night; bold; deep; lost; serious; death; elegant; powerful; expensive.	[15], [16]
Red	Blood, aggressiveness, passionate, strength, powerful, assertiveness, vitality, fear, speed, danger	[15]–[17]
Blue	authority, nautical, dignity, security, confidence, classic, stability, trust, spirituality and faith	[8], [15]
Green	healthy, fertile, freshness, environmentally conscious, natural, reliable, appetite	[8], [15], [16]
Yellow	youth, friendly, positive feelings, sunshine, surprise, cowardice, energetic, caution	[8], [15], [17]
White	purity, truthfulness, faith, pristine, contemporary, refined, airy	[15]
Brown	earthy, wholesome, delicious, rich, rustic, warm, natural	[15], [17]
Purple	sophistication, mystery, spirituality, dramatic, wealth, royalty, youth, creative	[15]

Orange							
	exuberance, spontaneous,						
	optimistic, speed						
Pink	,,,						
	flirtatious						
Grey	conservative, classic,	[15]					
	responsible, dull, sombreness,						
	authority, neutral, logical,						
	rich, practical, reserved, trust						
Silver	sleek, modern, classy	[15]					
Gold	history, autumn, earthiness,	[15]					
	richness, tradition,						
	conservative, expensive,						
	valuable, prestigious						
Cream	Cream classic, soft, comforting,						
	natural, smooth						
Teal	serene, sophisticated, water,	[15]					
	coolness						
Light	Light calming, patient, cool, water,						
Blue	contentment, trusting						
Bronze	Nature; Healthy, Strength,	[16]					
	growth, experience						
Turquoise	Tradition, growth, eminence,	[8]					
	infertility, sterility, dignity,						
	health						

Mahdi Nejad et al., (2018) mentioned two groups of colours (Main colours and Secondary colours). The main colours are Blue, Green, Red, and yellow. Each colour has special characteristics. The Blue colour represents perfect peace and a sign of truth and trust. Moreover, the blue colour reflects the feelings of surrender, loyalty, and eternity and symbol of lasting traditions and values. The Green colour represents work, effort, thought, faith, and self-awareness, which falls under the calming colour associated with nature. Red colour represents the life force and all forms of desire and passion. This colour refers to results and success. Red is mostly used in advertisements and commercial brands to attract customers. The Yellow reflects the fleeting happiness, expansion, and easy mind. The Secondary colours included Purple, Brown, and black. The Purple colour combines the dominative nature of red and the peaceful surrender of blue and represents assimilation and indecision. Brown colour indicates the need for physical, comfort, and pleasure. Covering a wide area of an environment with this colour creates a heavy atmosphere and may cause depression. Black reflects the feeling of emptiness, withdrawal of interest, hasty conduct, and unwise behaviour. Black colour has a thick and heavy energy and represents the environment as static and negative [8].

The colour has a symbolic meaning related to cultural values. Colours can provoke specific emotions or thoughts and a phenomenon throughout history. Perceptions of colour lead cultures to develop their symbols and meanings based on such colours. In Arab culture, colours have meanings according to position. However,

colour is one of the design elements in Islamic architecture to reflect the interpretation of the place [18]. Moreover, extracting the original colour from traditional urban sites can reflect the meanings of originality of the scene [19]. There is a systematic methodology of using colour in Islamic architecture, such as respecting the users' needs. Moreover, using the colours mentioned in the Ouran. The use of colour should not hide the true material or its defects. For interior design, studies indicated that Islamic and Arab interior design uses cold colours and is compatible with the environment. As for the colours used in the decorations, the diversity of the chromatic value and its degrees is used to distinguish some geometric shapes in the decoration and make them contrast with the background [18], [20]. Ban (2016) discussed the importance of using traditional colours in interior design to reach the aesthetic value of the space, traditional colours for a group of users can be different from other groups, it is all about the emotional relationship with colour [11].

Thanoon (2012) and Alsaydan and Dhannoon (2022) highlighted a group of colours used in Islamic architecture, which have special meanings in Islamic culture [18], [21]. The white and green colours related to the first dome in the first Masjid in Islam. Moreover, the white colour is related to purity, goodness, optimism, good luck, honesty, and mercy. The white colour comes with black to reflect the succession such as the succession of the Day and Night. Most of the studies referred to the use of colour in the Arab region to the colours mentioned in the Quran, such as yellow, Blue, black, white, green, red, gold, and silver [8], [18], [20].

3.5. Effective interior design elements with colour

The interior space included design elements, which are physical and visual. The floors, ceiling, walls, doors, windows, glass, furniture, pants, ornaments, decorative items, and even electronic devices included colours are the main elements of the colour theme components of the interior design. Savavibool and Moorapun (2017) concluded that the most effective interior design element with colour is furniture. The furniture is the linking point between the ceiling and the floor, and which colour theme, can be identified by these elements [5]. Ban (2016) mentioned that walls and furniture should be more intention by the designers, which are the essential elements that create the theme of the interior design. Mohammed et al. (2013) identified furniture and accessories as the most affected elements in the interior design colour theme, which can give the final touches to the interior design theme [7]. The furniture and decoration colour can change the impact of interior design characteristics and appearance [2]. The natural colour perception within the social arena may be used in the maintenance or renegotiation of relationships. However, the perception of colour can be affected by the form or materials that are covered by this colour [22].

3.6. The principles of elegant interior design

The value of users' satisfaction doesn't present the quality of space because the satisfaction value represents the users' needs. The satisfaction value is connected to the principles of elegance in which elegant design is highly valued by various users. In contrast, the satisfied design does not necessarily reflect elegance principles, especially in terms of colour theme. The elegancy can be reached in interior design by the matching between the visual elements and the users' needs which are physiological and psychological [11]. Therefore, satisfaction affects the elegancy value of the place. However, colour has a role in affecting users' moods. Ban (2016) identified the use of colour in interior design as a factor to enhance the satisfaction value of the place, which aesthetic interior space can reached by the integration of the colour theme with users' desires. The elegancy represents the strangeness and deepness of the design meanings, which the colour type can reflect the elegancy of the place by the meaning of the colour itself and its relationships with another colour, such as black and white colour [2]. The well-planned interior design can be recognised by the satisfaction and comfort of the user' in the space. Satisfaction can make the interior space more usable and functionally successful [6].

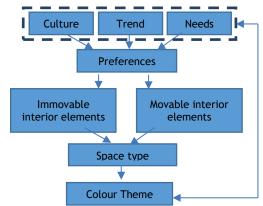


Fig 2. The conceptual framework. (Source: The researcher)

3.7 Related Studies

Few of literature discussed the colour and its effects on the interior design and cultural needs in Mosul city as a focus of this study, which covers mostly in the previous sessions. However, general studies related to the colour theme and its influences on the cultural and interior design reviewed in the current session, which can enhance the study in terms of methodology and variables. The study of Jain and Nayak (2023) discussed the theories linked to the effects of colour on the aesthetic of interior space, which considered colour as an essential element to perceive the interior area. The study attempts to find out the effects of choosing a colour on the age group people to highlight the importance of integration between the interior space and human behaviour. The study applied a mixed methodology using surveys and interviews with various age groups people. The study concluded that colour can enhance to recognize the objects depending on the group case. Moreover, colour theme (palate) for pre-school preferred to be bright and exciting, which reflects the nature of the activity in the place. While elementary and high school preferred to be warm and cool theme. The interior spaces of offices can be in a kind of beige and vibrant colours, which enhances the users to focus on the work. Obviously, for old age people preferred to use the dull colour theme. Therefore, each group of people have a preference colour theme depending on age, community, and culture [23].

The study of Ćurčić, Keković, Ranđelović, and Momčilović-Petronijević (2019) focuses on the importance of colour as one of the fundamental elements of space quality in the interior design of housing buildings and public buildings. The study aims to analyse the effects of colour on the users in terms of the area type. The study applied an experimental approach and concluded that colour played an important role in the design as a production depending on the interior space type and the purposes of use. Moreover, the day and night interior space should considered in the selection of colour theme. The colour selection could consider the climate, culture, psychological, and orientation factors. The study highlighted that the rooms facing the north can use the warm colours, while the rooms facing the south are recommended to use cool colours. Red, as one of the warmest colours is very stimulating, but can cause irritating and disturbing sensations. For that reason, this colour is not suitable for bedrooms or relaxation spaces [24].

On another hand, Kuang and Zhang (2017) found that colour has an integrational relation with the process of designing internal spaces and social culture to enhance the aesthetic consciousness. The

study highlighted the relation between the colour types with the expressions in the rooms to reach the impression of elegant life. It related to the personal needs of the users and social culture in general. The study presented the priority of choosing colour and its relationship with interior design elements such as furniture. However, the problem is how to make the interior space integrated with the various colours of the furniture without reflecting the chaos. The researchers recommended adding bright or warm colours in specific places in the design if the overall interior space reflects the dull and/or dark theme. The study tested the use of colour principles to identify the healthy, aesthetic, and elegant interior space evaluated by the user. Moreover, hue contrast, colour brightness contrast, and colour purity can affect the interior design mood, which should considered by designers to address the psychological impact of the colour on the users [25].

4. METHODOLOGY

This study applied a quantitative approach using survey and checklist tools. The random sampling technique applied to select the respondents for the survey from the customers of furniture shops in Mosul City. The visual observation of the furniture and interior design elements of shops creates a platform for the availability of the material that provides a range of colour themes in Mosul city. Moreover, observing the existing interior design of the houses in Mosul was selected randomly to find the colour theme as the existing themes in these houses.

The survey sheet was designed with three sections. The first section is related to the participant's general information. The second section included the variables of satisfaction and the elegant needs of the users. The last section is related to the meaning and purposes of preferred colours. The survey included closed-end questions (table 2). Moreover, the researcher observed and recorded the most interesting colour theme for the customers while visiting the furniture showroom and listed it with the colour palette for each design.

Table 2. The Survey sheet used to collect data from Mosulian users during their visit to the furniture showrooms in Mosul. (the researcher)

rumture showrooms in wosur. (the researcher)										
Sample No:			Shop name				•			
Gender			Age			Quarter address				
1	Which area in your house want to be included in a colour theme in your house, please numbered them in a sequence of important to you (1 to 8)									
	Master bedroom	Bathroom			Bathroom		Entrance			
	Living	kitchen		Cor	ridor		Guest room			
2	Which part of interior space you think is important in the overall colour theme(1 to 5)									

The in-depth interview method was applied to validate the data and the results from the survey, where the interviewees were selected according to a purposeful sampling strategy to select experts in

Neutral

Which part of the interior design should be in a

Main

furniture

disagree

Strongly disagree

accessories

the area of furniture marketing and design. The were selected from well-known experts international furniture industry branch Companies in Mosul (Istikbal, Karash, Belona). The interview questions focus on the Mosulian peoples' needs in terms of colour theme and which interior spaces are the most interesting for customers to design. Interviews conducted with customers during the window-shopping in the above furniture companies to compare the results with their needs. Therefore, interviews with three families in each furniture company were conducted using nonstructured interview strategies. The questions related to their preferences in selecting colour themes and applying these themes in the interior space.

5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The cultural effects on the users of interior space in the houses and apartments in Mosul City follow two lines. For the first line, the results show that most of the users are impacted by cultural values and needs, which affect their choices in managing the colour theme in the interior space of residential spaces. Therefore, the palate drove from (Brown, gold, cream, Bronze, and silver) colours (Figure 3), which were used in designing and harmonising the interior spaces in Mosul's houses with a rate of 43% from the respondents. However, 87% of the 43% added a contrasting colour to the theme, such as Indigo, Teal, Maroon, and Orange, which is mostly used in living and guestroom spaces.



Fig 3. The most colour theme used and interested by the users in Mosul City.

The movable elements of interior design in the living and guest rooms used the light colour from the theme at a rate of 98%. Users determined the needs for cleaning and the lifetime of the furniture used by guests which may affect the colour and fabric if using a dark colour. The results show that contrast colours are used for the curtains and immovable elements, such as one side of the wall in the room or art and hanging elements. The results show that the second line of colour theme is following the international trend.

The results show that 62% of the respondents selected the living and guest rooms as important spaces to design with the colour theme. The rate of 27% of respondents selected the Kitchen and entrance space as the second most important interior space, which reflects the interest of the Mosulian users to show the visitors the level style of the family, which is one of the cultural impacts.

Celling

Strongly

distinctive colour?

floor

agree

walls

The interview results confirm the course of selecting these themes for the selected interior space. Moreover, the expertise mentioned that the second source of selecting the colour theme and furniture style is the international trend, which is usually presented in the international furniture exhibition one year before customers start following it. The expertise highlighted that Mosulian people are more open-minded to international trends, where kitchen design is nowadays more important to be designed than in other areas, especially in small areas of houses or apartments. The results of interviews with customers highlighted the important view of the users in choosing the colour and spaces that need to be applied. The customers validate the outcomes of the research by confirming the colour types and purposes of use. However, one of the customers (50-55 age) interviewee mentioned:

"For our family, we use the brown theme with one or two contrasting colours, and we keep at least one room in the house with this theme because this theme remembers us of my big family house in Dawasa quarter in Mosul, the brown theme gives the interior space more richness and elegancy than other colours". (Interview No. 5, Istikbal Furniture Company – Mosul Branch)

The results highlighted that designing and selecting colour themes for the main interior design elements have a role in selecting the furniture and other interior design elements. However, walls, ceilings, and main furniture in one interior space are the most preferred choice by the respondents to follow the colour theme in the design, which focuses on one or two sides of the walls. The preferences of Mosulian people in selecting the colour are influenced by cultural needs and values in addition to following the trend, which considers also, form the cultural impacts. Mostly, the colour theme reflected the Middle East orientation, which colour palate included Brown, Gray, Blue, and green with various Chroma levels. These colour themes and the method and location of used. The result confirmed the effect of cultural needs and values on the users in Mosul to select and design the residential interior spaces. The Mosulian people preferred dark themes for the daily used interior space, while the other spaces, such as guest rooms, they preferred light themes with one contrasting colour which enhanced the luxury value of the interior space.

The results of the site visit and observing the furniture colour theme show that furniture can enhance the interior space level in terms of elegance and luxury. However, the people varied in their choices, but overall, the most furniture

interested the users for living room, guest room, and kitchen in sequence, which matched with the interview and survey results. Figure (4) shows the most considered colour themes in one of the well-known furniture companies in Mosul.





Fig 4. The most considered colour themes by the users in Mosul city according to the record of Istikbal Furniture Company Branch) 2019-2022.

The results show minor differences in colour theme preferences between the gender types based on the nature of females whose 86% preferred bright and light themes especially for the kitchen and ber room area. While the males preferred the theme (Indigo, Teal, Maroon, and Orange) with one or two contrasting colours, which is more effecint than the other theme especially in Mosul City because of the cultural needs and climate. The females responded for the guest room to apply a dark theme because of the daily cleaning and will take a long time to be affected by the climate in terms of cleaning. Moreover, the dark theme reflects the need to show the elegance and richness of the design as the interviewees mentioned. Most of the interviewees are living in areas around the University of Mosul (Alandulus Quarter, Alshurta Quarter, Alkafa'at Quarter, Nerkal Quarter, and Almuhandissen Quarter), where they originally from Mosul city and they have a nostalgia to use the selected colour theme that mentioned in the above paragraphs. The interviewees mentioned that international trends influence the preference of colour theme, but not in the direction of overall change, but changing some colour in the theme, especially the contrast colour. However, the researcher observed the change in preferences by reviewing the history of some furniture companies in Mosul, which international trends, which affect the decision of choosing the furniture colour theme by 43% of customers. The choice of colour theme is subject to various influences. However, the interveiwees and responses confirm that the most affected influences are international trends and social-cultural needs in addition to the functional needs.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Interior spaces' atmosphere influenced by the colour theme of these spaces. It can be created by the interior design elements, which influence the

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تفضيلات السمة اللونية لتصميم داخلي سكني انيق في مدينة الموصل، العراق

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الملخص

ان الفضاءات الداخلية بجب ان تلبي احتياجات المستخدمين لتحقيق مستوى عالٍ من الأناقة والرضا. لا يحظى التصميم الداخلي السكني في مدينة الموصل باهتمام كبير من قبل المستخدمين والمصممين من حيث إدارة السمة اللونية. قدم العصر التكنولوجي مع عناصر التصميم الداخلي المستوردة خيارات متنوعة لتصميم الفضاءات الداخلية. الفوضى في ترتيب وتنسيق عناصر التصميم الداخلي تنتج عن اللامبالاة بمبادئ التصميم الداخلي المرتبطة باللون. إن عدم التطابق بين احتياجات المستخدمين وأغراض المصممين يخلق قيمة أنيقة سلبية. ولذلك فإن مشكلة البحث تتمثل في "عدم وجود استر اتبيبيات للتعامل مع موضوع اللون في التصميم الداخلي السكني حسب احتياجات المستخدمين". تهدف الدراسة إلى التعرف على تفضيلات موضوعات الألوان للتصميم الداخلي الأنيق في الفضاء الداخلي السكني في مدينة الموصل طبقت المنهجية منهجًا كميًا ونو عيا باستخدام أداة المسح واستمارة الملاحظة والمقابلة. إن الملاحظة البصرية لعناصر التصميم الداخلي في شركات الأثيق بر تبط بالطبيعة والعوامل التقليدية لسمة اللون، في حين أن الجدران والأثاث والديكور هي العناصر الأكثر تأثيرا على قيمة الفضاءات الداخلية السكنية كما اكدت ذلك نتائج المقابلة.

الكلمات الدالة:

التصميم الداخلي السكني، الإلوان التقليدية، الاثاث، التصميم الإنيق، التصميم المُرضى