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The role of spaces in managers' perception of workplace quality

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Abstract

Space is one of the fundamental dimensions of our world, even the world of organizations. Most often, however, researchers do not dedicate much attention to this issue in their studies. Mostly, space is considered as an operational category related to the concept of distance, in the case of logistics, the spatial organization of production systems or, finally, as a general expression of the internal architecture of enterprises. Thus, there is a research gap related to the study of the space of organizations. The paper addresses the issue of spaces from the perspective of workplace quality. It presents the results of surveys of managers in the context of assessing various aspects of space that affect the perception of workplace quality. The reported research presents matters of perception of selected aspects of space such as personalized workplace, shared spaces or the overall structure of buildings. The issue of open and closed spaces was also analysed. The results of the study indicate that the most practical, or pragmatic, dimensions of space, such as the immediate space surrounding the workplace, shared spaces like the cafeteria or kitchen, are the most important for managers' perception of workplace quality. In addition, it seems that closed spaces are better evaluated from the point of view of workplace quality in relation to open spaces. In both cases, however, there are favourable and unfavourable spaces quality aspects. The following paper seeks to fill a small part of the research gap and contribute to the discussion of the practical aspects of the perception of organizational space.

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1. Introduction

There are, of course, a wide variety of aspects that affect perceptions of workplace quality, such as ergonomic factors or the content of the work itself, as well as communication, safety or elements of management styles. One element of the whole picture and perception of the workplace is space. Both space in the physical sense, related to the arrangement of facilities or room architecture, and also space adjacent to the workplace and located outside the organization, such as the surrounding green areas or cafeteria. At the same time, the management system or the challenges of increasing work efficiency, as well as the aesthetic sensitivity of managers influence the shape of the work space. The perception of workplace space by those who shape and optimize organizational processes offers a valuable perspective for understanding how space contributes to overall workplace quality. Managers operate at the intersection of strategic planning and daily operations, and their experiences often reflect both the functional demands of the organization and the expectations of the workforce. The spatial environment becomes a tool for management to influence

work, facilitate collaboration, and shape workplace quality. This paper presents an empirical study focused on how managers of Polish enterprises assess the quality of workplace space. By examining their views, the research contributes to a broader understanding of spatial factors.

In modern societies, people spend more than 70% of their lives inside buildings (Kim, 1998), and the architectural expression of rooms affects the human psyche (Harrouk, 20). As emphasized by S. Augustin et al., "The design of the physical space of a place affects people's mental states. It shapes their attitudes and behaviors" (2009). The internal space, architecture, interior design, and workplace organization belong to the organization's fundamental "manifestations". Organizational space constitutes a visual sign, and places in an organization are an active component of the organizational culture and workplace quality (Lawrence & Dover, 2015). Internal space of organization influences the work itself and its productivity (Workplace Survey, 2013) and innovation (Kallio et al., 2015). But what is also very important from the point of view of employees clearly affects and determines the quality of the workplace. There are reports that workers who impact



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workplace space are more productive (Hoskins, 2014). Each workplace has a spatial representation that affects the organization members' behavior both within a specific location and between different organization locations. Thus, changes and transformations of the physical space of workplaces may be a factor modifying the social sphere of an organization and perceptions of workplace quality (Maslikowska & Gibbert, 2019). At the same time, the space of an organization's place is treated as a process. A place's space somehow emerges from an organization's social practices and its material resources (Crevani, 2019). Therefore, quality of workplace space is something social and material at the same time. The study of organizational spaces as workplaces is mainly dealt with by the research stream of facility management or organizational sociology. Research in the mainstream of management and quality studies is quite limited. The purpose of this article is to fill a certain research gap and present the results of empirical research on the perception of workplace spaces in the context of their quality. The social group that was the subject of the research was managers of Polish enterprises. The text consists of a section presenting an analysis of the state of the art in the relevant area, a section describing the methodological aspects of the empirical research, a presentation of the main research results and a conclusion with a summary.

2. Literature review

Until recently, from the point of view of classical economy and management, space was mainly associated with distance and related transport costs, or benefits of agglomeration or location. In the case of intra-organizational space, it was related to optimizing production systems or in-house transport. Nowadays, the phenomenon of space efficiency is more often talked about in the context of the workplace space of knowledge workers; that is, how the use and design of places in an organization can have a measurable impact on economic efficiency. Moreover, the organization's places and spaces are a medium of communication not only with employees, but perhaps most of all with the society (Worpole, 2000). The organization, through the management of its internal space, influences employees' perceptions of the quality of the work environment.

The most classic spatial arrangement of workplaces in the case of production organizations is placing them around production lines. In the case of non-production organizations, creating clusters of workplaces grouped around organizational units. This is obviously due to the traditional approach related to the division of the main task of the organization into sub-tasks, jobs and organizational units. Production is becoming automated more and more often, and at the same time the production space is being automated. It can be pointed out that the automation of space consists in treating such space as only material (Marrewijk & Yanow, 2010) and topological, without other dimensions and meanings (Schabus, Scholz, 2017; Schabus & Scholz, 2015). The meta-approaches translate into the design of the physical space of a place and shape the structures of space and the flow of knowledge in the organization. Research conducted among managers of Sweden, Finland,

Denmark, Iceland, and Norway indicates that managers recognize the workplace space as an essential potential instrument for changing organizational practices of a strategic nature and an important part of the quality of the work environment (Bakke, 2007).

One of the major issues in the debate on workplace quality is the discussion of open and closed spaces for employees (Hua et al., 2010). In practice, more and more often, the inconveniences of open spaces, such as noise, lack of privacy, distorting concentration, are indicated (Lansdale et al., 2011). In closed office spaces, the employee has much greater control over the surrounding space, which may affect the concentration and job satisfaction (Kim & Dear, 2013). It seems that workplace spaces in an organization are a purely pragmatic issue, mainly based on the guidelines from architects, designers, accountants and ergonomics specialists. However, the space of a place in an organization is a complex matter; it shapes and is shaped by materiality, but most of all it affects the entire organization's social system.

Planning and designing the space of an organization's places may include some general framework related to the psychology of space (psychology of architecture): coherence between exterior and interior space, with exterior space being the reference and starting point for the architectural design; harmony between shapes, sizes, and space; the aspect of expanding the experience of space through rooms; designing light as a medium that defines space; colours and elements of equipment as an extension of the material dimension of the designed space (Augustin et al., 2009). Thus, trends aimed at the aestheticization of the workplace are more often found in the organization's activities (Dale & Burrell 2010). In addition to enhancing the aesthetics of a place, interior architectural designs can also act as "catalysts" for creativity. Providing creative spaces becomes an element of the very process of organizational creativity (Pachura, 2018). Experience of a place with an interesting or creative architectural dimension somehow provoking creativity (Peters, 2014). Positive emotions related to the quality space of a place also affect the learning processes, while creativity/productivity in a comfortable space may increase by about 25%, compared to the one assessed as uncomfortable (Leaman & Bordass, 2004). Often, research on workplace perception and satisfaction is not directly linked to space per se but rather to organizational design practices in combination with productivity (Herwanto et al., 2024). As Hua et al. noted „literature from various disciplines has demonstrated the impact of the workplace's physical environments on the perception, behaviour, and performance of people at work" (2010). It is also noted that satisfaction with the quality of the workplace is part of well-being in general (Danna & Griffin, 1999; Vischer & Wifi, 2017). Most researchers call for further in-depth and interdisciplinary in nature research on this topic (Becker, 1981; Brill & Weideman, 2001; Danielsson & Bodin, 2008; Vischer, 2008; Alhorr et al. 2016; Appel-Meulenbroek et al. 2022; Herwanto et al. 2024). It is worth emphasizing that the topic of organizational space is inherently interdisciplinary and has been explored within sociological sciences as well. From a sociological perspective, space is not merely a physical or functional category, but

a social construct shaped by power relations, identity, and cultural practices. Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space (1991) distinguishes between conceived, perceived, and lived space, pointing to the deeply social character of spatial experience. Pierre Bourdieu (1989) similarly argued that physical space reflects and reinforces social structures, as spatial arrangements embody symbolic hierarchies and power dynamics within organizations. Erving Goffman's dramaturgical framework (1959) further highlights how spatial settings serve as "stages" for social interaction, influencing how individuals perform roles and manage impressions in the workplace. In the Polish academic tradition, Bohdan Jałowicki (2010) contributed significantly to the sociology of space, exploring how spatial organization reflects and reproduces social inequalities. The present study does not aim to conduct a full sociological analysis; however, acknowledging these theoretical perspectives enriches the understanding of workspace quality as a phenomenon that is simultaneously material, social, and symbolic. The empirical findings presented below should therefore be read not only through the lens of management and quality science, but also in light of the broader interdisciplinary discourse on the social dimensions of organizational space.

Therefore, this paper can be a voice in the academic and practical discussion of the importance of space in shaping the quality of the workplace.

3. Experimental

The primary parameter for the sample selection was the selection of people in the enterprise performing managerial functions. Managers were selected as the target population because of their structural role in shaping, evaluating, and making decisions about the physical work environment; as organizational decision-makers, managers possess both the authority and the contextual perspective necessary for assessing how spatial arrangements influence workplace quality (Haynes, et al., 2017). Besides, the study found critical differentiating data, i.e., the type of economic activity, place of business, and employment size. It should be assumed that the adopted methodological solutions for the sample selection meet the conditions for making statistical conclusions and generalizing the results from the sample to the population. With a moderate maximum error of estimation, it can be considered statistically representative. It should be stressed, however, that data deficiencies in the range of 5 to 10 percent are typical in quantitative research, and up to 30 percent are acceptable in the sense of the possibility of applying procedures to supplement the values of missing variables. The survey was conducted using the computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) method.

As mentioned above, the study was carried out on a sample of $N = 406$ enterprises (managers) operating in Poland (Table 1) in 2023 - 2024. The measurement covered enterprises from all industries and regions. The units' division was made according to the voivodship, the employment size, the type of activity, and the size of the town where the company's seat is located. The selection of companies for the sample was random.

Table 1. The breakdown of the surveyed population according to the employment size

The number of people working in the company	Managers' indications	
	N	%
1 - 49 employed	211	52.0
50 and more employed	195	48.0
Total	406	100.0
Source: own study		

In the study, enterprises were divided into two groups according to the employment size (1 to 49 employees and 50 and more). The distribution of measurements for both groups is almost equal and makes it possible to divide the entities into two equal groups during further analyzes.

Table 2. The breakdown of the studied population according to the size of the town

Population according to the size of the town	Managers' indications	
	N	%
village	41	10.1
town with less than 20,000 inhabitants	99	24.4
city with 20,000 - 100,000 inhabitants	106	26.1
city with 100,000 - 500,000 inhabitants	105	25.9
city with over 500,000 inhabitants	55	13.5
Total	406	100.0
Source: own study		

The division of companies according to the size of the town/city where the company headquarters is located (Table 2) also allows for distinguishing equal groups and making conclusions on the general population. The fact that the number of surveyed entities in rural areas and cities over 500,000 is lower than in comparison to other groups concerning the entire population is confirmed by the research of the national statistical office (GUS, 2023).

Table 3. The breakdown of the surveyed population by industry

Business sector	Respondents' indications	
	N	%
production	177	43.6
trade	102	25.1
services	79	19.5
administration	48	11.8
Total	406	100.0
Source: own study		

The aggregated activity sections in Table 3 correspond to the division into four key economy sectors - production, trade, and administration. The largest number of companies in the survey operates in the manufacturing sector - 43.6%, and the least in the administration sector. The methodology of empirical research, although very classical, allows for some inference and provides opportunities to interpret the results to determine the perception of space elements in the context of workplace quality. It seems that it can be noted that the proposed research methodology is not very advanced and does not include deeper statistical analysis. However, the aim of the research was to

obtain some general picture of managers' perception of space in the context of assessing the quality of workspace. Of course, further in-depth research is justified at a later stage.

Statistical analyses were conducted to complement the descriptive results and to determine whether managers representing different organizational contexts perceive workplace space in significantly different ways. The analyses focused on three key differentiating factors: employment size, business sector, and the size of the locality in which the enterprise operates. Each of these characteristics reflects a distinct spatial logic of organizational functioning and, consequently, a potential source of variation in the perception of workspace quality. For the purposes of the analyses, non-parametric statistical tests were applied due to the ordinal nature of the variables and the lack of distributional assumptions. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare two groups (e.g., small vs. large companies), while the Kruskal-Wallis test was used for comparisons involving more than two categories. The test statistic for the Kruskal-Wallis procedure was computed according to the standard formula:

$$H = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{R_i^2}{n_i} - 3(N+1) \quad (1)$$

where R_i denotes the sum of ranks in group i , n_i its size, and N the total sample size.

The results indicate several regularities. First, the perception of selected spatial attributes, particularly those related to the immediate physical environment, such as the individual desk and office space, does not differ significantly across groups. Regardless of business sector, company size, or locality, managers tend to assign similarly high importance to these fundamental aspects of internal space. This confirms the strong and universal role of micro-space in shaping the subjective quality of the workplace. In contrast, significant differences were observed for aspects associated with broader spatial structures. Managers employed in larger enterprises assigned higher importance to the internal shared spaces of the organization, which may reflect the complexity of interpersonal interactions and communication flows in larger entities (U test, $p < 0.05$). Moreover, the Kruskal-Wallis test showed that managers from major urban centers expressed a stronger need for closed workspaces compared to respondents from small towns and rural areas (H test, $p < 0.05$). These differences suggest that the experience of space is shaped not only by organizational characteristics, but also by the broader spatial context in which enterprises operate. The results confirm that the perception of workplace quality is grounded in spatial dimensions of varying scales. While micro-spaces such as the personalized desk or office are valued highly and consistently, the evaluation of wider organizational and urban space differs depending on structural characteristics. These findings provide a more nuanced understanding of spatial experience within organizations and offer an empirical basis for interpreting how different spatial contexts influence managers' assessments of workplace quality.

4. Results and discussion

The study shows that the most crucial spatial aspect related to the organization's activities present in the managers' consciousness is its internal space and the internal shared space. The study of inner space shows that it is often or continuously present in the managers' awareness (Table 4).

Table 4. Perception of space. Presence of individual aspects in awareness

Aspect	To what extent it is present in your consciousness ...	Respondents' indications	
		N	%
A separate desk (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	Always present in my awareness	66	16.3
	Frequently present in my awareness	209	51.5
	Sometimes present in my awareness	105	25.9
	Absent in my awareness	26	6.4
Total		406	100,0
An office (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	Always present in my awareness	133	32.8
	Frequently present in my awareness	205	50.5
	Sometimes present in my awareness	67	16.5
	Absent in my awareness	1	0.2
Total		406	100,0
Company buildings (understood as the physical external space of the organization)	Always present in my awareness	116	28.6
	Frequently present in my awareness	222	54.7
	Sometimes present in my awareness	68	16.7
	Absent in my awareness	0	0.0
Total		406	100,0
Conference rooms (understood as formal space)	Always present in my awareness	10	2.5

In studying the perception of space in terms of significance, the most vital thing in the managers' consciousness is the organization's directly experienced physical internal space, which shapes the perception of the quality of the place. Almost 3/4 of the respondents indicate that the most important from their point of view is a separate desk, and 88.7% of the respondents consider an office room to be essential from a quality standpoint. Slightly less, i.e., 86.2%, declare the organization's external space as essential. Shared space, i.e., the location of such places as a kitchen, bathroom, cafeteria, is significant for 64% of respondents. On the other hand, the indications concerning external physical space, chosen as medium or insignificant, look much different (24.9% of the answers range 41-60%, the others - 0-40%). The next sub-aspect studied was the space structure, understood as the geographical distribution of the company's facilities, 2/3 of the respondents find this aspect not very important in the context of quality (Table 5).

Table 5. The perception of space. The significance of selected aspects

Aspect	Specify in% how important it is for you...	Respondents' indications	
		N	%
A separate desk (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	0% - 20%	1	0.2
	21% - 40%	2	0.5
	41% - 60%	15	3.7
	61% - 80%	89	21.9
	81% - 100%	299	73.6
Total		406	100.0
An office (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	0% - 20%	0	0.0
	21% - 40%	0	0.0
	41% - 60%	0	0.0
	61% - 80%	46	11.3
	81% - 100%	360	88.7
Total		406	100.0
Company buildings (understood as the physical external space of the organization)	0% - 20%	0	0.0
	21% - 40%	0	0.0
	41% - 60%	0	0.0
	61% - 80%	56	13.8
	81% - 100%	350	86.2
Total		406	100.0
Conference rooms (understood as formal space)	0% - 20%	95	23.4
	21% - 40%	74	18.2
	41% - 60%	87	21.4
	61% - 80%	78	19.2
	81% - 100%	72	17.7
Total		406	100.0
Kitchen, bathroom, smoking room (understood as informal space)	0% - 20%	0	0.0
	21% - 40%	0	0.0
	41% - 60%	48	11.8
	61% - 80%	98	24.1
	81% - 100%	260	64.0
Total		406	100.0

As already mentioned, the respondents attach great importance to the physical space of the internal organization. When analyzing individual indicators, it should be stated that nine out of ten respondents are attached to their separate desks, office, or company building. Almost 100% declare a strong attachment to the internal shared space and the internal and external space of the organization's context. There is also an apparent dichotomy - confirmed by several indicators; the further space is from an individual, the more positive or negative indications appear (Table 6).

Table 6. Perception of space. The significance of selected aspects

Aspect	How much significance do you attach to...	Respondents' indications	
		N	%
A separate desk (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	definitely too high	134	33.0
	rather high	229	56.4
	no matter	29	7.1
	rather low	11	2.7
	definitely too low	3	0.7
Total		406	100.0
An office (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	definitely too high	134	33.0
	rather high	229	56.4
	no matter	29	7.1
	rather low	11	2.7
	definitely too low	3	0.7

Total		406	100.0
Company buildings (understood as the physical external space of the organization (direct, local))	definitely too high	144	35.5
	rather high	219	53.9
	no matter	38	9.4
	rather low	3	0.7
	definitely too low	2	0.5
Total		406	100.0

The Table 6 presents high valuation of physical workspace as a key aspect of the quality of the place. This pattern indicates that managers perceive the physical environment not merely as a backdrop to their work, but as an important component of quality of workplaces. The negligible percentage of respondents assigning low or no importance to these spatial elements further emphasizes the pervasive salience of material space in shaping workplace satisfaction and performance. These findings suggest that investments in internal organizational architecture are likely to yield substantial and functional benefits for managers.

When seeking the necessary spatial aspects of an organization, its physical internal space should be mentioned first. In these dimensions, there were no indications that would be lower than 60%. That is mainly since this aspect of the enterprises' functioning is the one most frequently encountered by managers (Table 7).

Table 7. Perception of space. Necessity of selected aspects

Aspect	Specify in% how necessary ... is for you	Respondents' indications	
		N	%
A separate desk (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	0% - 20%	1	0.2
	21% - 40%	1	0.2
	41% - 60%	12	3.0
	61% - 80%	76	18.7
	81% - 100%	316	77.8
Total		406	100.0
An office (understood as the physical internal space of the organization)	0% - 20%	0	0.0
	21% - 40%	0	0.0
	41% - 60%	0	0.0
	61% - 80%	43	10.6
	81% - 100%	363	89.4
Total		406	100.0
Company buildings (understood as the physical external space of the organization)	0% - 20%	0	0.0
	21% - 40%	0	0.0
	41% - 60%	0	0.0
	61% - 80%	56	13.8
	81% - 100%	350	86.2

In the further part of the survey, the managers were asked to choose their preferred work environment space. Given an *open-space* choice, that is, one large room or separate rooms for employees, the vast majority of respondents (82.3%) indicated the second solution as more preferred (Table 8).

Table 8. Preferred workspace

Which space do you prefer as a working environment?	Respondents' indications	
	N	%
Open space	72	17.7
Closed space	334	82.3
Total	406	100.0

Source: own study

As a motivation to choose open space, the respondents indicated the ease of establishing and building relationships between employees (63.9 %). Next, they mentioned the efficient flow of information and documents (54.25 %) and creating the same workspace for all employees (44.45%). The least frequently stated argument indicating open space as a preferred workplace is easier access to superiors (27.8% of indications) and the possibility of combining workplaces into larger teams (33.3%). This inclination toward closed spaces suggests that the purported benefits of open-plan offices-such as increased collaboration, spatial efficiency, and informal communication-may not sufficiently compensate for the potential drawbacks perceived by the majority of managers. The preference for closed offices can be interpreted as a demand for greater concentration, autonomy, and privacy in the workspace-factors strongly associated with increased workplace quality, satisfaction, and task performance. Interestingly, this preference stands in contrast to some trends in organizational design, which have favored open-plan concepts in pursuit of cost savings. From a practical standpoint, the findings call for a more nuanced approach to office design-one that accommodates diverse working styles and provides managers with choices, such as hybrid spaces.

Table 9. Preferred elements of open space

List 3 items you like in the open space:	Respondents' indications	
	N	%
Possibility to combine workplaces into larger teams	24	33.3
Ease of establishing and building relationships between employees	46	63.9
Efficient information and document flow	39	54.2
Preventing employees from isolating themselves	29	40.3
Creating equal workspace for all employees	32	44.4
Easier access to supervisors	20	27.8
Optimal use of available space	25	34.7
Total	215	298.6*

* Sum of indications greater than 100% because the respondent could indicate more than one answer.

Source: own study

The data presented in Table 9 offers insight into the preferences of respondents regarding specific functional and social attributes of open space office environments. The most frequently selected attribute, endorsed by 63.9% of respondents is the ease of establishing and building relationships between employees. This finding underscores the centrality of

interpersonal interaction in open office environments, socialization and team cohesion as key advantages of spatial openness. Following closely, 54.2% of managers identified efficient information and document flow as a significant benefit. This result suggests that open-plan layouts may facilitate more fluid communication processes and operational transparency, which are essential for knowledge-intensive work. The attribute of preventing employee isolation was chosen by 40.3% of managers, while creating equal workspace for all employees was selected by 44.4%. These selections reflect a recognition, which may mitigate hierarchical spatial divisions and foster a sense of community and shared identity among employees. Approximately one-third of respondents (34.7%) highlighted the optimal use of available space as a desirable characteristic, indicating an awareness of spatial efficiency-often a primary justification for implementing open-plan layouts in corporate settings. Additionally, the possibility to combine workplaces into larger teams was acknowledged by 33.3% of respondents, which supports the premise that physical proximity may enhance collaborative dynamics and teamwork. In summary, the findings reveal a pronounced emphasis on the social and communicative functions of open space offices, with secondary importance placed on managerial accessibility and space optimization. These preferences offer valuable guidance for workplace designers and organizational decision-makers aiming to enhance workplace quality, balance collaboration, and employee well-being in the enterprise environment.

Summarizing the results of the study, it can be concluded that satisfaction with the quality of the workplace is largely determined by the perception of the space affecting the satisfaction of managers. The quality of the workplace is determined by the quality of shared spaces where information can be shared and social contacts can be realized in the workplace. In addition, the quality of the workplace is largely determined by the quality of the immediate surrounding space such as personalized desk space or office space. The results also indicate the high importance and preference of managers for closed spaces versus open spaces. It turns out that the configuration of the company's buildings is less important in terms of workplace quality. So, it can be summarized that the physically accompanying space around the employee is the most important for satisfaction with the quality of the workspace and the shared space where social relations take place. Additional statistical procedures suggested during the evaluation process were not applied in this study for methodological reasons related to both the structure of the dataset and the conceptual scope of the research. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire and consist mainly of ordinal variables and percentage-based assessments, many of which represent bounded response categories reflecting subjective evaluations of spatial aspects of organizational functioning. Given this structure, several advanced statistical techniques-such as parametric regression models, multivariate analyses or procedures requiring continuous measurement and normal distribution-are not appropriate, as they would violate key statistical assumptions and could produce analytically misleading results.

The aim of the study was to explore managerial perceptions of workplace and organizational space, rather than to construct

predictive models or infer causal relationships between variables. For this reason, the analytical approach was intentionally aligned with exploratory and comparative methods. Non-parametric procedures such as the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test are best suited to the nature of the data: they are robust to deviations from normality, appropriate for ordinal and non-continuous measures, and do not require homogeneous variances across groups. Introducing more complex statistical procedures would therefore not correspond with the conceptual framework of the research nor with the empirical characteristics of the dataset.

It is also important to note that many questionnaire items reflect subjective ratings expressed on discrete scales, which limits the methodological justification for applying correlation-based or multivariate techniques that assume interval-level precision. Although such methods may be suitable for studies designed for full inferential modelling, the present research focuses on identifying differences in spatial perceptions across organizational contexts. In this respect, rank-based non-parametric comparisons provide the most reliable and interpretable results. Consequently, the additional statistical procedures proposed during the assessment were not implemented, as they do not align with the empirical structure of the data or the analytical logic of the study.

5. Summary and conclusion

As can be learned from the results of the research performed and presented in this article, the elements of the manager's immediate environment are of the greatest importance in terms of perception of the quality of workspace. These are specific micro-spaces related to the workshop understood as the desk and the equipment on it, as well as shared spaces, that is, spaces for the occurrence of social relations. These shared spaces are also elements that build the quality of work and being in the organization, allowing moments of relaxation, rest or drinking coffee or eating a meal during breaks at work. In the context of the organization's flexibility, productivity, and creativity, the main discussion is about solutions based on open plan workspaces (Anjum et al. 2004). Factors influencing an employee's quality of work and mental health are analyzed in the context of the privacy-openness dichotomy and work positions. One of the main benefits of open workspace projects is the financial aspects of savings resulting from job unification.

Moreover, research shows that the possibilities of informal contacts in open spaces, resulting from physical proximity, may increase the organization's work effectiveness. The discussion is not resolved, but it is moving towards solutions that ensure a certain balance between the positive and negative aspects of open and closed spaces. In both cases, shared spaces or social interaction points turn out to be vital. The organization communicates its attitude towards employees through space quality. For example, well-designed meeting rooms "send" the message "teamwork is important to our company" or a comfortable kitchen or dining room "communicates" to employees that "your well-being is important." Shared spaces seem crucial from the point of view of the balance between

organizational productivity, workplace quality and job satisfaction. The physical environment is intertwined with employees' perceptions of autonomy, value, and inclusion, shaping both individual behaviours and collective norms. Open and closed spaces are not merely architectural decisions, they are instruments through which the organization defines its culture. Spatial configurations should be viewed as part of a broader quality management strategy, one that considers human well-being and organizational success. This perspective invites further empirical exploration of spatial experience as a dimension of quality within organizational research. In the context of workplace quality, spatial design emerges as a fundamental determinant of how managers experience their professional environment. The physical characteristics of the workspace, its openness, privacy, aesthetics, and functionality influence perceptions of workplace satisfactions. Quality in this regard extends beyond ergonomic or technical standards; it encompasses the emotional and psychological resonance of space. Moreover, the quality of shared and transitional spaces, such as informal meeting zones or quiet areas, reflects an organization's capacity to respond to evolving needs and expectations. We are all, so to speak, immersed in the space around us. However, the study of space in the context of workplace quality is not popular within the discipline of management science and quality. Nevertheless, the following article is an attempt to join the scientific discussion on the meaning and dimensions of space in terms of quality. There seems to be potential for further research in this area, as space quality correlates with job performance and overall workplace satisfaction.

6. Closing remarks

This paper has certain limitations and its own specific features, it should be noted that The present study is explicitly exploratory in nature. Its primary aim was to map the landscape of managerial perceptions of workplace space rather than to test specific hypotheses or construct predictive models. As such, the findings should be interpreted as a preliminary contribution to a relatively underexplored domain within management and quality sciences, and as a basis for the formulation of more targeted research questions in future studies on managerial issues. Nevertheless the research in the perspective presented focuses solely on the managerial perspective. It is worth noting that, while managers occupy a structurally significant position with respect to spatial decision-making, their assessments do not necessarily reflect the experiences of non-managerial employees, who may perceive and evaluate the same spaces in substantially different ways. Future research should incorporate the employees' perspective in order to provide a more comprehensive and socially representative account of how workplace space influences the quality of organizational life. The data consist predominantly of ordinal variables and bounded response categories reflecting subjective evaluations. The use of such measurement formats, while appropriate for exploratory survey-based research, imposes certain analytical constraints. In particular, procedures requiring interval-level precision, normal distribution, or continuous measurement scales are not applicable, which limits the scope

of inferential and multivariate analyses. These measurement characteristics should be taken into account when interpreting the results and designing follow-up studies with higher statistical resolution. Despite the limitations and specific nature of the study noted above, it appears that this study could serve as a valuable starting point for further, perhaps more in-depth, analysis of spatial phenomena within organizations, particularly as they relate to perceptions of the workplace, quality, and the variation in such perceptions across different employee groups.

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