

THE EFFECTS OF CLASSROOM INTERIOR DESIGN ELEMENTS ON EIGHTH
GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

A Dissertation

by

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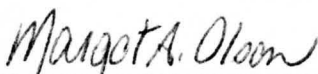
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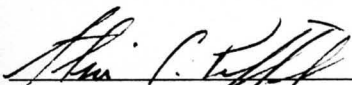
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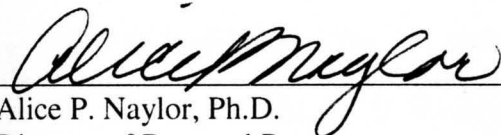
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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF CLASSROOM INTERIOR DESIGN ELEMENTS ON EIGHTH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

(May 2008)

Caimen Leigh Ruff, B.S. Appalachian State University

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The purpose for this study was to determine, and to begin to quantify, the effects of classroom interior design elements on student psychological well-being. The research was conducted using the Student Classroom Interior Design Survey (SCIDS) to survey 230 eighth grade language arts students about how they felt about the interior design elements in their classrooms. The participants were from seven schools, public and private, urban and rural, from six counties in the Northwestern and Southern Piedmont regions of North Carolina. The conditions of the classrooms investigated were recorded using the Classroom Design and Furnishings Checklist (CDFC). The framework of SCIDS is based on Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs and Steele's (1973) Functions of Physical Settings. The participants indicated on a Likert scale of 1-5 how much they agreed with the SCIDS item statements representing five developmental levels. The

classroom interior design elements discussed in this dissertation are lighting, acoustics, HVAC, air quality, safety, security, classroom size, density, personal space, flexibility, furniture, color, and technology.

The participants indicated considerable dissatisfaction with 10 of the 22 SCIDS items representing a variety of classroom interior design elements. Descriptive statistics revealed a more than 50% level of dissatisfaction with flooring, carpeting, furniture, and individuality of their classrooms. Students from classrooms with non-traditional layouts scored higher on SCIDS. All five Levels of SCIDS were shown to have significant ($p<.05$) differences among the schools.

The results indicate that the interior design elements in classrooms do have psychological effects on students. Findings reveal that the requirement to provide an equal education to all students is not being met in the physicality of the facilities. Classroom interior design elements are important and they influence ways students and teachers behave. The data indicate that further research is needed on all aspects of classroom interior design.