

Research on Space Design and Social Aspiration of Co-Working Mode

Interiors Buildings Cities Graduation Project

AR3AI100 Research Course

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1. Introduction

With the influence of virtual technology and the concept of decentralization, office space has entered a new stage of development. At the same time, more and more companies and enterprises have a relatively small scale, and large office space is no longer their primary choice. Therefore, fragmented office space will have more demands in the future. As for the co-working mode, I would like to conduct a detailed discussion on its internal cooperation mode and finally think about how to design office space to adapt to this co-working mode from spatial means.

Co-working has not a long history. It has the characteristics of space sharing, facility sharing, information sharing, etc., which meets the diverse work needs of freelancers. In 2005, the first official co-working space was established in the United States (Bacevice et al., 2019). Later co-working spaces such as WeWork and SOHO (small office home office) appeared in different regions and became chain enterprises. I want to combine these space patterns with the office spaces of different periods described in the previous case in chronological order to discuss office space development, which is also a study of the development of work patterns.

I want to focus on the co-working model and discuss its internal composition and operating mechanism in detail for my research topic. At last, I want to discuss this mechanism with the co-working space currently in use, analyze its advantages and disadvantages, and propose improvements.

2. Academic positioning

The past few weeks have been the research and discussion of various workspaces and thoughts. From these precedents, I feel the deficiencies of various office spaces and their development trends. In addition, through the study of reading, I have understood banking history and banking system, which may be difficult for me to obtain in other ways. My general insight is that the development of these systems from the past to today is a continuous, decentralized concept, whether it is for the development of office space or the financial system itself.

By learning Francis Duffy's articles, I have gained insights into the types of buildings in various periods. The study of these precedents reflects how the floor's layout is affected by the work model for the transition from centralized to decentralized. From the beginning, we can understand how the traditional, centralized workspace works. For example, Frank Lloyd Wright-designed the Larkin Administration building in 1904, where clerk sits on both sides of female employees, and managers supervise employees from a higher perspective. In addition, the workers' desks have a fixed size to limit the activities of the workers. This centralized and efficient layout makes the office space mechanical and lacks human rights, reflecting the company's management model at that time-centralized power and neglect of human rights. Next, as the work content of employees becomes more specific, individuals or employee organizations have a clear space, and the architectural organization changes accordingly, which transforms from the original open space to an independent space. For example, the National Social Insurance Board designed by Sigurd Lewerentz in 1932 shows an entirely new way of organization. But we can see that these independent office spaces have a clear hierarchy, which

hinders the transmission of knowledge and reflects the inequality of this space for the connection between the secretary office and the manager office (Rendell, Penner and Borden, 2000).

Then, we changed from an independent space to an open space again, but the new one is called "landscape space office," which was an early (1950s) movement in open-plan office space planning that typically used irregular geometry and organic circulation patterns (Saval, 2014). The Osram building designed by Quickborner / Henn was the best example in 1965. Unlike the original open office in the United States, the linear arrangement of desks and chairs has been completely abandoned and replaced by a completely random arrangement. The area is divided as necessary by the curved sound insulation board and the potted plants. These objects also isolate the line of sight and noise, and to a certain extent, ensure the privacy of the personal working environment. "Office landscape" has unavoidable flaws in actual use. In the large-level open office space, due to the influence of noise, poor natural lighting, lack of natural ventilation, the landscape office space fails to take into account the work efficiency of the office space when creating an equal and harmonious collective office culture atmosphere. Despite these problems, I think such a flat model further reflects the flattening of the management model and the blurring of the boundaries between levels and is a manifestation of the decentralization of power.

Another example is the SAS Headquarters designed by NIELSTORP+ in 1987, which further reflects the changes in decentralized rights. Satisfaction is the main driver of office design. With the rejection of office landscapes in the 1970s, office design continued to evolve towards cellular workplaces. Private, independent climate control, daylight, openable windows, and outdoor views are considered essential to employees' health (Meel, 2001). On the plane layer, the main feature is a spacious internal street. At the workplace level, you can see huge differences. The entire office space is broken down into several groups with independent collective space for their management system.

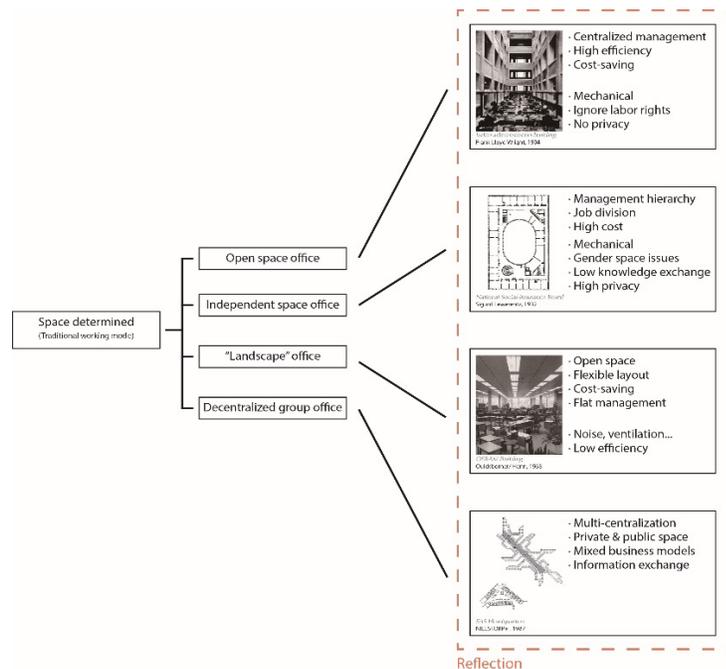


Fig. 1. Typologies of traditional working space (Own analytical drawing)

Architects' freedom is limited under a huge management system, and architecture is a reflection of current society (Duffy, 1980). This sentence is not only reflected in the foundation of business management, but also in other aspects. Perhaps, we can now feel the significance of decentralization from various aspects. In addition to the evolution of space, the development history of banks and today's currency system also show a kind of thinking triggered by decentralization. Through the reading and seminars, I have learned a lot of knowledge about the financial system. With the disappearance of the central bank, people have multiple modes such as bitcoin, crowded funding, and peer-to-peer transactions, and some of these transaction methods are different from each other. Fiat currencies such as Euros or U.S. dollars are linked. For example, Bitcoin is a purely decentralized product. It does not belong to any centralized authority and is not associated with any legal national currency, and people can use Bitcoin to buy more and more goods. At the same time, for example, China and India's suppression of citizens' investment in Bitcoin can also be seen as a centralized authority's struggle against virtual currencies (Perumal, 2021).

3. Reflective problematization

Through the description of the development of architectural space, banking, and currency, I want to express that part of the product of human civilization in past history is the transition from centralization to multi-centralization and then to decentralization. This includes the development of science and technology and the pursuit of various cultures by humanity. Perhaps for a specific system, its structure may not be firm because of its development, but because it allows for differences, it will present a kind of internal homogeneity. In terms of space, the architect hopes to maintain the equality of each individual by some means the equality of the use of space. Therefore, we broke the wall of the independent space, removed the furniture that restricted the behavior of employees which at the same time meant a denial of the central space. On the other hand, we may not need a physical space to work and get paid in the future. Now, we only need a computer to calculate to get Bitcoin as a salary, which can be regarded as any kind of legal currency to buy commodities. This kind of behavior does not serve any company or organization, and people do not have their own superiors and subordinates. Today, human beings have part of their own virtual space for work, and the question is, what is the next goal for architects who design physical spaces?

As described before, the workspace will present a new model due to the development of virtual technology and the impact of the decentralized value. In this regard, the boundaryless organization^[1] and co-working office models have become a certain stage of the future work model, which appears after the multi-centralized workspace mentioned above. Co-working spaces include co-working spaces and various work mechanisms. Its workspace is divided into the physical workspace and virtual workspace. Different workers or working communities can share one office and have different types of communication or meeting spaces in order to promote information exchange. In addition, the virtual co-working space is a platform that facilitates the work management and communication of community members with common occupations or interests. Since co-working is designed to serve small-scale groups and individuals, its target users include young freelancers, artistic creative designers, IT and digital media workers, and other small businesses. There are various internal operating mechanisms for different organizations and individual co-working offices.

During the period of COVID-19, the home office has become the main way people work, and at the same time, some of its drawbacks have gradually emerged. Compared with home office, the advantages of co-working office are mainly reflected in: First, a well-designed office space can reduce the interference of various factors at home, such as family, children, pets, neighbors, etc., make work more focused and work more efficient; Secondly, the various communication places in the co-working space can bring more business and private social interactions to the workers, enabling the workers to communicate with more talents in other business fields. Finally, the co-working space can provide a formal business environment compared with complete office facilities, it is cheaper and less risky than renting or buying by yourself, and there is no need for maintenance at all.

In the next research period and the studio, I want to study in-depth the types of co-working physical spaces and different internal operation modes and hope to reflect what I've learned in my design. At present, I have a limited understanding of the types of co-working spaces, I think to a certain extent, co-working may be regarded as the epitome of various types of office space in the past, which means that it inherits some of the previous space problems. On the other hand, for the co-working space, its biggest feature is to promote communication. At the same time, due to the decentralized management concept and the influence of the digital platform, this kind of communication in the office space has changed from the previous linear and one-direction to reticulated and diverse. For individuals, the information received by workers might be many times that of the past, which means changes in work content and efficiency. I want to know whether this method of information exchange is beneficial for co-working spaces. At the same time, along with other virtual collaboration platforms, the boundary between users' public and private spaces may become blurred. Therefore, it is worth considering that the co-office model may not only facilitate the use of userspace but also be regarded as a blurring of private space.

Therefore, as a space designer, I want to know how the communication space in the office space should be designed suitable for the individual, or what kind of function the communication space should have to meet the needs of different users rather than a simple open space with several furniture. However, the communication space is only a part of the co-working space. For other spaces, how can they be designed to be compatible with the virtual co-working platform? Based on the theme of decentralization, what effect will the co-working space model have in the future? And how it is designed to maintain the uniqueness and spatial rights of each worker. For my research plan, I would like to conduct a detailed study on the physical space and working mode of the co-working office, and evaluate its advantages and disadvantages and make suggestions for future improvement.

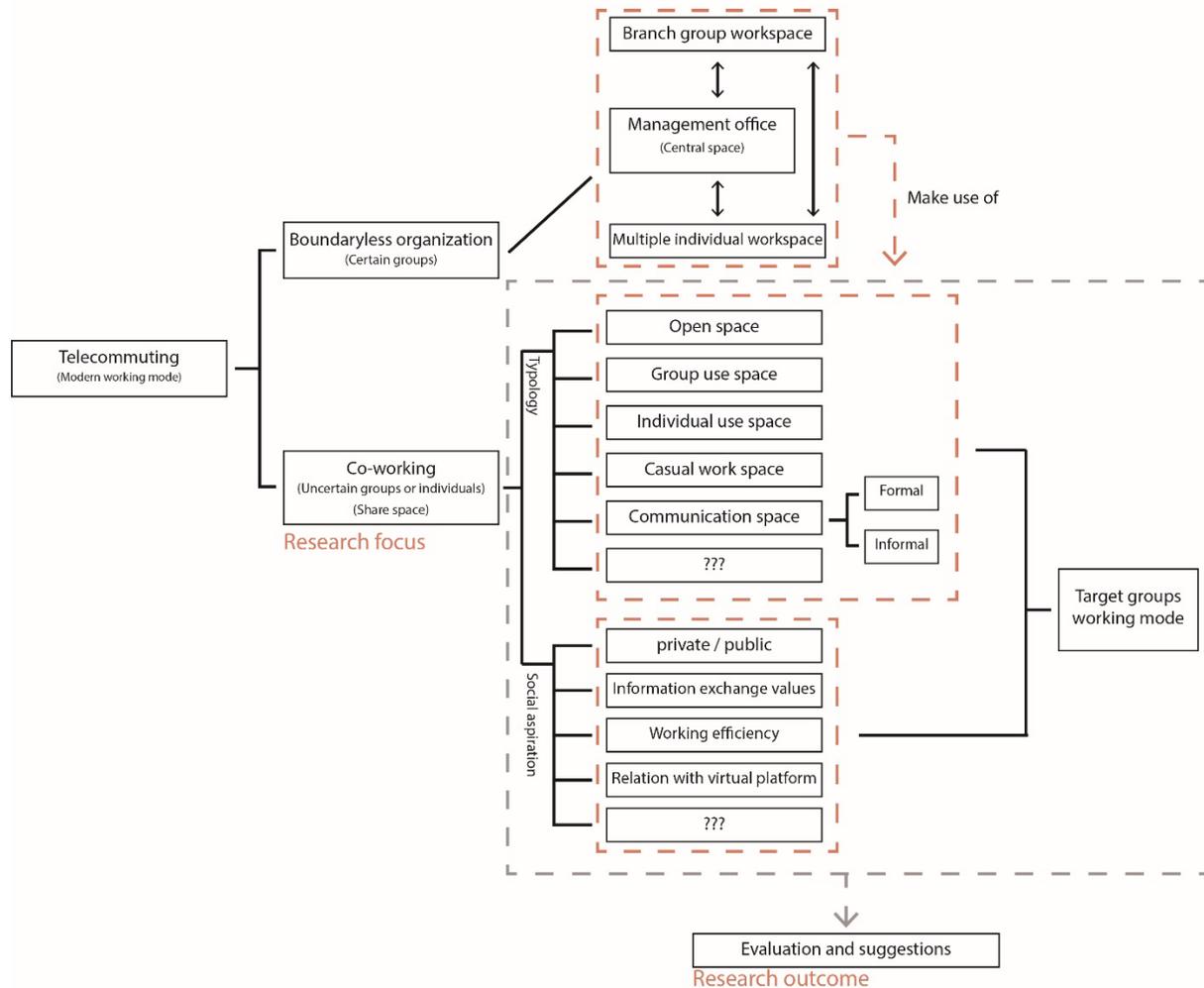


Fig. 2. Structure of research plan (Own analytical drawing)

4. Methodology

The following research methods are mainly used in the research process:

1. Literature reading: By collecting and reading various domestic and foreign monographs, essays, magazines, documents, and web pages related to joint office and modern office space design theory, summarize the research results and methods of the predecessors.
2. Case analysis: Through books, the Internet, etc., extensive collection and research of cases of co-working space, through analysis and comparison, summarized and summarized the similarities and differences of various projects.
3. Field research: Visit the existing co-working space in the Netherlands, and record the usage through photos and other methods. Such as StartDock and Hackers & Founders in Amsterdam, Nomadz in The Hague, and other office spaces in Rotterdam.

Reading List:

Books:

Breaking the Barriers between Companies: Co-Working Office in the Era of Sharing by Daqing Mao.

This book was written by the founder of China's co-working space real estate. It discusses in detail the development and the present mechanism of co-working service industry.

All Together Now: The Co-living and Co-working Revolution by Naomi Cleaver, Amy Frearson.

This book summarizes the author's own design experience and case studies of shared spaces in the Netherlands, Sweden and other regions.

Design for coworking in Honolulu by Elliot J. Lazo.

This is a doctoral dissertation, which includes its research on co-working space typology and some case studies, and finally includes a personal project he involved.

Articles:

Research on the Development of Co-Working Space and Its Impact on Innovation in the Information Era by Wang Jing, Zhen Feng, Feng Jing.

The Design of Co-working Space and its Urban Expression Method by Jing Zuo.

Notes

1. Boundaryless organizations will often make use of the latest technology and tools to facilitate the breaking down of traditional borders, such as virtual collaboration and flexible working. With regard to employees, they may have more responsibility for their own projects and targets

and be more able to achieve results in a way that's appropriate for the project at hand. Retrieved from <https://www.hrzone.com/hr-glossary/what-is-a-boundaryless-organization>

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