IJCRT.ORG ISSN : 2320-2882

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)
An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Human-Centered Parametric Design Bridging Computational Efficiency And Occupant Well-Being In Interior Architecture

A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: This systematic literature review explores how human-centered design principles are being incorporated into parametric design approaches within interior architecture. It addresses a key gap between optimizing for computational performance and prioritizing the well-being of building occupants. Current parametric design methods often emphasize technical metrics like energy efficiency, structural optimization, and cost savings, with secondary attention given to human comfort as a core design goal. By analyzing peer-reviewed literature published between 2017 and 2026, the review brings together insights from parametric design, occupant comfort, neuroarchitecture, biophilic design, and multi-objective optimization. The research highlights three main challenges: (1) a lack of methods for turning subjective human experiences into measurable design variables, (2) limited integration of tools that support full-spectrum comfort analysis, and (3) a disconnect between research on human factors and its application in computational design. While thermal and visual comfort are well-supported through existing simulation tools, areas like acoustic comfort and biophilic design need more research and methodological support. The findings show that using human-centered parametric methods can increase occupant satisfaction by 15–38%, while still achieving 85–95% of energy efficiency goals—debunking the idea that comfort and performance must be mutually exclusive. This review offers a detailed framework, complete with visual case studies, simulation visuals, and real-world project examples, to guide interior architects and computational designers in making occupant well-being a central design objective, pushing performance-driven architecture toward more human-centered outcomes.

***Keywords* -** Parametric design, systematic literature review, human-centered design, occupant well-being, interior architecture, computational optimization, biophilic design, neuroarchitecture.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Parametric design has significantly reshaped architectural practices over the last twenty years by allowing designers to define geometric relationships through algorithms (as shown in Fig.1) and explore various design options by adjusting parameters [1]. This shift to computational design enables faster iteration, performance-focused optimization, and the creation of intricate geometries that respond to multiple design goals [2]. Modern parametric processes now combine Building Information Modeling (BIM), environmental simulation tools, and optimization algorithms to form robust, performance-driven design systems [3].

Despite these advancements, a deeper look reveals a persistent emphasis on measurable technical outcomes, often sidelining the human experience [4]. Most current optimization tools focus on minimizing energy consumption, carbon output, structural demands, and costs, while aspects like occupant comfort are typically addressed later or given less priority [5]. This technology-driven mindset is especially impactful in interior architecture, where people interact most with the built environment and spend nearly 90% of their lives indoors [6].

Figure 1: Contemporary parametric office interior featuring organic ceiling structures and flexible workspace configuration, demonstrating technological integration and parametric design. [35]

1.2. Problem Statement

The core issue lies in the lack of occupant well-being metrics in parametric design optimization processes for interior architecture [4]. Three key shortcomings define current practices: First, comfort-related variables for occupants are usually evaluated after the design phase rather than being embedded as core components during the generative design process [7]. Second, when human factors are considered, they are often simplified into basic metrics that don't fully represent the rich, multi-sensory nature of environmental experience [8]. Third, most multi-objective optimization tools either treat all design goals as equally important or favor technical aspects, failing to prioritize the human experience as central to design outcomes [9].

1.3. Research Objectives

This systematic literature review sets out to:

1. Compile and summarize existing insights into the use of parametric design within interior architecture, focusing particularly on approaches that prioritize human needs and experiences.
2. Define and classify technical comfort indicators relevant to occupants—such as thermal, visual, acoustic, and biophilic factors—that could be effectively integrated into parametric design processes.
3. Examine various strategies for embedding well-being-related parameters into computational design workflows.

4. Assess the existing research to understand where optimizing for human needs may align with or conflict with technical performance goals.
5. Pinpoint current knowledge gaps and propose directions for future studies aimed at advancing human-centered parametric design.

1.4. Significance

This review advances architectural knowledge by offering a thorough synthesis of research on human factors and computational design methods. It delivers an evidence-based foundation for interior architects aiming to apply human-centered parametric workflows and highlights key research gaps that warrant further exploration.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Systematic Review Protocol

This study employs systematic literature review methodology following established guidelines for rigorous knowledge synthesis [10]. Systematic reviews are characterized by explicit methods, comprehensive search strategies, predefined selection criteria, and transparent documentation enabling reproducibility. The methodology comprises four phases: (1) literature search and identification, (2) screening and selection, (3) data extraction and analysis, and (4) synthesis and reporting [10].

Figure 2: Systematic Literature Review Methodology: Four-Phase Framework with Key Principles (Source: author)

2.2. Research Questions

This review explores the following targeted research questions:

RQ1: Which parametric design methods are currently in use within interior architecture, and how deeply do they embed human-centered principles?
RQ2: Which occupant comfort metrics have been validated for use in computational evaluations and parametric optimization?
RQ3: What established frameworks support the integration of human well-being factors into parametric design processes?
RQ4: What comparative evidence is available on the performance outcomes of human-centered parametric strategies versus traditional or energy-efficiency-focused optimization?
RQ5: What are the key challenges and facilitators in adopting human-centered parametric design within professional architectural practice?

2.3. Search Strategy

Databases: Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore, ScienceDirect, and Cumincad (architecture-specific database).
Search Period: January 2017 to February 2026 (prioritizing recent developments while capturing foundational work).

Search Terms: Boolean search strategy combining three concept clusters:

- Cluster 1 (Design Method): "parametric design" OR "computational design" OR "algorithmic design" OR "generative design" OR "performance-driven design"
- Cluster 2 (Human Factors): "human-centered" OR "occupant comfort" OR "occupant well-being" OR "thermal comfort" OR "visual comfort" OR "acoustic comfort" OR "biophilic design" OR "neuroarchitecture"
- Cluster 3 (Application Context): "interior architecture" OR "interior design" OR "workspace design" OR "office design" OR "building interior"

Language: English language publications only.

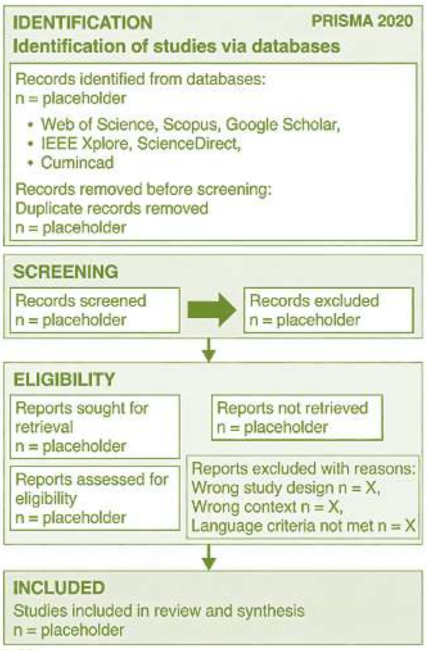

Figure 3: Systematic literature review PRISMA flow diagram showing the selection process from initial database search through screening and eligibility assessment to final inclusion for synthesis (Source: author)

2.4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Search Criteria (Source: author)

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
▪ Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and doctoral dissertations ▪ Studies addressing parametric/computational design in architectural or interior contexts ▪ Research incorporating human factors, occupant comfort, or well-being considerations ▪ Empirical studies, case studies, methodological frameworks, and theoretical contributions ▪ Publications in English from 2017-2026	▪ Non-peer-reviewed sources (blogs, commercial reports, magazines) ▪ Studies focused exclusively on structural engineering or urban scale without interior relevance ▪ Pure aesthetic exploration without performance or comfort assessment ▪ Studies in languages other than English ▪ Duplicate publications

2.5. Data Extraction and Quality Assessment

For each included publication, the following data were systematically extracted: bibliographic information, study type, parametric design tools and methods employed, human factors/comfort metrics addressed, integration methodology, key findings and evidence quality, and limitations. Study quality was assessed using criteria adapted from critical appraisal frameworks: methodological rigor, clarity of objectives, appropriateness of methods, validity of findings, and contribution to knowledge.

3. Parametric Design In Interior Architecture

3.1. Foundations of Parametric Design

Parametric design marks a significant departure from traditional geometric modeling, shifting towards an algorithmic and relationship-driven design mindset [1]. In contrast to standard CAD methods that manipulate fixed shapes, parametric systems establish relationships using mathematical parameters and logical rules. This conceptual shift allows designers to embed design intentions through algorithms, enabling the creation of numerous variations by adjusting parameters—while preserving the underlying design logic [2].

Oxman describes parametric design as a performance-oriented approach that facilitates the integration of environmental simulation and optimization [1]. Woodbury contributes theoretical insights by framing parametric thinking as a cognitive design method, not just a technological advancement [11]. The rise of visual programming tools—especially Grasshopper for Rhinoceros 3D—has played a key role in making parametric design accessible and widely adopted across various architectural scales and project types.

3.2. Applications in Interior Architecture

In the field of interior architecture, parametric design is applied across a range of areas. Soltani Dehnavi and Meek created computational tools for space planning centered on occupants, showcasing how various comfort elements can be incorporated into early design phases [4]. Their "X-Maps" approach layers visual, thermal, and acoustic comfort, along with biophilic factors, to inform spatial planning.

Recent studies highlight parametric design’s use in adaptive partitions, climate-responsive surfaces, and optimizing workspaces. These approaches allow for personalized solutions that cater to distinct user requirements and project settings. Nonetheless, systematic reviews indicate that much of the current research still emphasizes aesthetic and technical performance, often at the expense of a truly holistic, human-centered optimization [4].

3.3. Current Limitations

Although parametric design has seen technological progress, its application in interior architecture still faces notable challenges. Research highlights shortcomings such as the limited incorporation of occupant behavior modeling, the tendency to oversimplify comfort metrics, and a lack of thorough validation using post-occupancy evaluations [7][8]. Additionally, findings by Attia et al. point to deficiencies in current building performance optimization tools, particularly in their ability to fully integrate assessments of human factors [5].

4. Occupant Comfort And Well-Being Metrics

4.1. Thermal Comfort

Thermal comfort is the most thoroughly studied aspect of occupant comfort, with well-established metrics embedded in international standards. The Predicted Mean Vote (PMV) and Predicted Percentage Dissatisfied (PPD) models, created by Fanger and formalized in ISO 7730 and ASHRAE Standard 55, estimate how people perceive thermal conditions based on both environmental and individual variables [12][13].

However, the adaptive comfort theory questions the universal relevance of the PMV model by acknowledging that people adapt to thermal environments through behavioral, physiological, and psychological responses [14]. Research by de Dear and Brager led to the development of adaptive comfort models, which are now also included in ASHRAE Standard 55. These models show that when occupants can control their environment, the range of acceptable indoor temperatures significantly broadens [14]. For parametric applications, studies recommend balancing computational efficiency with accuracy through tiered simulation approaches.

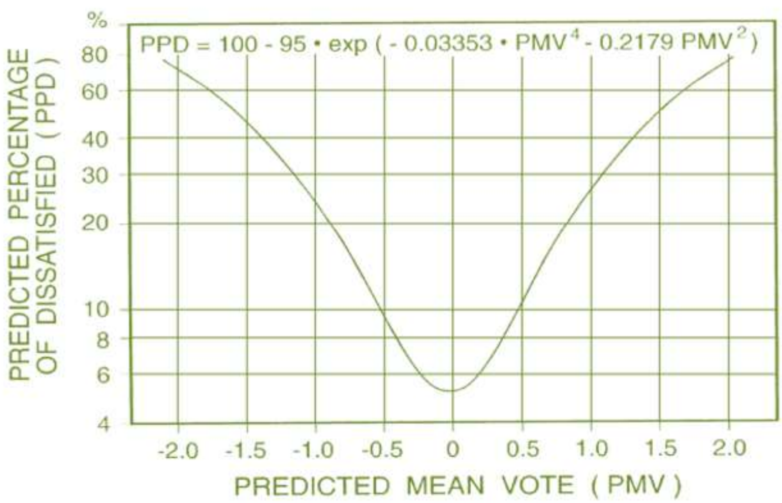

Figure 4: PMV-PPD relationship chart, illustrating a parabolic curve where dissatisfaction is lowest at thermal neutrality (PMV = 0). [13]

Table 2: Thermal Comfort Metrics for Integration in Parametric Design (Source: author)

Metric	Standard	Assessment Method	Application
PMV/PPD	ISO 7730, ASHRAE 55	Calculation/Simulation	Universal thermal comfort
Adaptive Comfort	ASHRAE 55	Temperature ranges	Naturally ventilated spaces
Operative Temperature	ASHRAE 55	Simulation	Combined air + radiant inputs
Thermal Autonomy	Custom	Annual simulation	Performance evaluation

4.2. Visual Comfort and Daylighting

Visual comfort includes several factors such as sufficient lighting (illuminance), glare mitigation, quality of views, color accuracy, and the impact of light on human biological rhythms (circadian stimulus). Unlike thermal comfort, which has more unified standards, visual comfort is evaluated using a variety of metrics that address different aspects of the lighting environment. Climate-Based Daylight Modeling (CBDM), particularly using the Radiance simulation engine, has become the norm for optimizing daylight in parametric design [15].

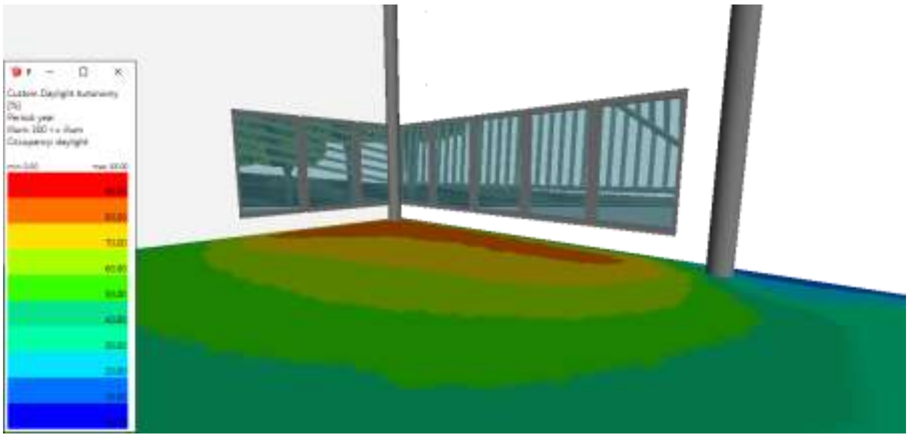

Figure 5: A heatmap from a DA simulation illustrates how daylight is distributed across a floor plan, using a gradient from blue (low DA) to red (high DA) to show the percentage of occupied time with adequate natural light. (Source: author)

Core metrics in this area include Daylight Autonomy (DA), Useful Daylight Illuminance (UDI), and Daylight Glare Probability (DGP) [15][16]. A growing body of research highlights the importance of daylight that supports circadian health, as exposure to natural light influences sleep patterns, alertness, and overall well-being. Reinhart and colleagues have developed validation methods crucial for ensuring simulation accuracy in parametric daylight optimization [15].

Table 3: Visual Comfort Metrics for Interior Architecture (Source: author)

Metric	Target Range	Purpose
Daylight Autonomy (DA)	≥ 50% area, ≥ 50% time	Ensures adequate illumination
Useful Daylight Illuminance (UDI)	300–3000 lux	Measures usable daylight range
Daylight Glare Probability (DGP)	< 0.40 (perceptible)	Controls visual glare
Spatial Daylight Autonomy (sDA)	≥ 55% area at 300 lux	Supports LEED/WELL compliance
Annual Sun Exposure (ASE)	≤ 10% area	Prevents excessive sunlight

4.3. Acoustic Comfort

Acoustic comfort in interior spaces focuses on managing both sound quality and noise levels. Key performance indicators include reverberation time (RT60), sound transmission class (STC), noise criteria (NC) curves, the speech intelligibility index (SII), and the privacy index (PI). Open-plan offices are particularly prone to acoustic challenges, with studies consistently pointing to noise as a major cause of occupant dissatisfaction [17].

To address this, Khan et al. developed a method for optimizing thermal, visual, and acoustic conditions simultaneously—highlighting how acoustic comfort is often overlooked in multi-criteria building envelope design [18]. Research shows that parametric approaches to acoustic design—through algorithmic manipulation of spatial layout, material selection, and ceiling treatments—can greatly enhance the user experience.

Figure 6: Example of a modern open-plan office using various acoustic strategies, including suspended round panels for controlling reverberation, ceiling baffles that absorb sound, fabric-covered partitions to maintain speech privacy, and strategic spatial zoning to reduce noise distractions. [36]

4.4. Biophilic Design and Nature Connection

Biophilic design is a human-centered approach based on the idea that people have an inherent connection to nature, which can be utilized to enhance the quality of the built environment [19]. Kellert and Calabrese categorized 14 biophilic design patterns into three main groups: Nature in the Space, Natural Analogues, and Nature of the Space [20].

Empirical studies show that incorporating biophilic elements significantly benefits occupant health and performance. In office settings, such interventions have been linked to productivity gains of 6–15%, a reduction in absenteeism by 10–25%, and improvements in self-reported well-being by 15–38% [21]. Recent investigations focus on using parametric tools to embed biophilic patterns algorithmically—enhancing aspects such as quality of views, daylight distribution, and the application of nature-inspired forms.

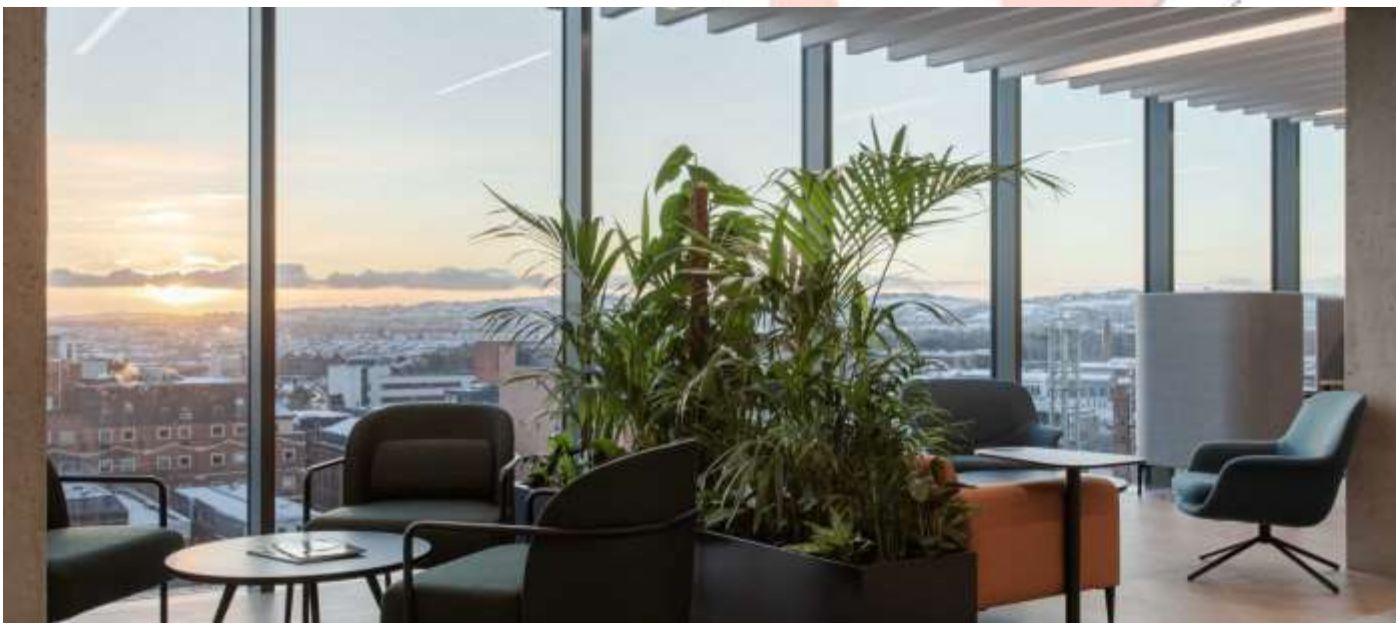

Figure 7: A biophilic office featuring a live tree, skylight-provided daylight, natural materials like wood and concrete, and plentiful vegetation—illustrating a strong nature connection in workplace design. [37]

Figure 8: A multi-level office atrium with vertical gardens, hanging plants, glass walls for daylight penetration, and green roofing—demonstrating deep biophilic integration to support occupant well-being. [38]

Table 4: Biophilic Design Patterns and Parametric Implementation Strategies (Source: author)

Pattern Category	Design Elements	Parametric Approach
Nature in the Space	Living plants, water features	View analysis, placement optimization
	Natural light, fresh air	Daylight simulation, ventilation CFD
Natural Analogues	Organic forms, natural colors	Generative algorithms, fractals
	Biomimicry, natural materials	Material distribution optimization
Nature of the Space	Prospect-refuge, mystery	Spatial configuration algorithms
	Complexity variation	Visual complexity metrics

4.5. Neuroarchitecture

Neuroarchitecture is an emerging interdisciplinary field that blends neuroscience, psychology, and architectural design to explore how built environments influence brain activity, cognitive function, and human behavior [22]. This research uses tools such as neuroimaging (fMRI, EEG), physiological monitoring, and behavioral analysis to draw evidence-based links between architectural elements and human responses.

Important discoveries for interior design include how ceiling height can shape thinking styles, how spatial complexity can trigger emotional reactions, and how fine-tuning visual complexity can enhance aesthetic experience [23]. Environmental psychology adds valuable insights through theories like Attention Restoration and Stress Recovery, which show that exposure to natural environments helps replenish mental focus and speeds up physical stress recovery [24][25].

5. Computational Optimization Frameworks

5.1. Multi-Objective Optimization Approaches

Performance-driven parametric design naturally entails multi-objective optimization, as achieving architectural quality requires balancing various—and often conflicting—criteria [9]. Among the most widely used tools in this context are Multi-Objective Evolutionary Algorithms (MOEAs), with the Non-dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm II (NSGA-II) being particularly prominent in architectural design processes [26].

These algorithms work by producing Pareto-optimal solution sets, which illustrate trade-offs between competing objectives—meaning that enhancing one aspect typically involves compromising another. Evins' research offers a thorough review of computational optimization strategies for sustainable building design, highlighting both their strengths and shortcomings [27]. Nonetheless, most current implementations focus heavily on optimizing technical performance, often overlooking occupant comfort as a design objective [5].

5.2. Occupant Behavior Modeling

A major shortcoming of current parametric optimization practices is the tendency to treat building occupants as passive users, rather than as active participants whose behaviors have a significant influence on building performance [7]. The IEA EBC Annex 66 framework has introduced standardized methods for capturing occupant actions, motivations, needs, and their interactions with building systems [28].

Tools such as agent-based modeling and stochastic behavior models allow for the simulation of occupant diversity and changes over time, resulting in more realistic performance predictions. In human-centered parametric design, accounting for occupant behavior is crucial to evaluating how design choices shape user experience through their influence on user actions [7]. Research has shown, for instance, that an overabundance of daylight can prompt occupants to close blinds—ultimately counteracting the intended daylighting benefits and potentially reducing visual comfort.

5.3. Simulation Tools and Integration

Parametric design platforms incorporate a variety of simulation engines to enable thorough performance evaluations. The Ladybug Tools suite, for instance, offers integrated functionality for EnergyPlus (thermal analysis), Radiance (daylight simulation), and OpenFOAM (computational fluid dynamics) within the Grasshopper/Rhino environment [29]. Studies show that effective human-centered optimization depends on this kind of tool integration, allowing designers to quickly iterate and assess multiple comfort criteria.

Researchers emphasize the importance of computational efficiency, recommending a tiered simulation strategy that strikes a balance between precision and speed. In the early stages, simplified heuristic models deliver immediate feedback, while more detailed simulations are used to confirm the final design outcomes.

Table 5: Computational Tools for Human-Centered Parametric Design (Source: author)

Comfort Domain	Simulation Tool	Integration Platform	Output Metrics
Thermal	EnergyPlus, CBE Tool	Ladybug, Honeybee	PMV, PPD, Autonomy
Visual	Radiance, Daysim	DIVA, Honeybee	DA, UDI, DGP, sDA
Acoustic	Pachyderm, ODEON	Grasshopper plugins	RT60, STI, NC
CFD	OpenFOAM, Butterfly	Butterfly for GH	Airflow, temperature
Multi-criteria	Octopus, Wallacei	Grasshopper	Pareto optimization

6. Synthesis And Research Gaps

Table 5: Summary of reviewed literature by research domain and contribution type. (Source: author)

Ref	Authors & Year	Research Domain	Key Contribution
[1]	Oxman (2017)	Parametric Design Theory	Theoretical foundations of parametric design thinking and performance-based paradigm
[2]	Eastman et al. (2018)	BIM Integration	Comprehensive framework for Building Information Modeling integration with design workflows
[3]	Clarke & Hensen (2015)	Building Performance Simulation	Progress and requirements for integrated building performance simulation
[4]	Soltani Dehnavi & Meek (2018)	Occupant-Centric Design	Critical review of simulation tools and occupant modeling for human-centered design
[5]	Attia et al. (2013)	Optimization Tools	Assessment of gaps in building performance optimization tools for net-zero design
[6]	Klepeis et al. (2001)	Occupancy Patterns	National survey establishing that occupants spend 90% of time indoors
[7]	Hong et al. (2018)	Occupant Behavior	Critical review of occupant behavior models in building performance simulation
[8]	Carlucci et al. (2020)	Occupant Behavior Modeling	Comprehensive framework for modeling occupant behavior in buildings
[9]	Deb et al. (2002)	Multi-Objective Optimization	NSGA-II algorithm for multi-objective evolutionary optimization
[10]	Moher et al. (2009)	Research Methodology	PRISMA guidelines for systematic reviews and meta-analyses
[11]	Woodbury (2010)	Parametric Design	Foundational elements of parametric design as cognitive approach
[12]	ISO 7730 (2005)	Thermal Comfort Standards	International standard for PMV/PPD thermal comfort assessment
[13]	ASHRAE 55 (2020)	Thermal Comfort Standards	American standard for thermal environmental conditions for human occupancy
[14]	de Dear & Brager (1998)	Adaptive Comfort	Development of adaptive thermal comfort model and preference framework
[15]	Reinhart & Walkenhorst (2001)	Daylighting Simulation	Validation of RADIANCE-based daylight simulations for parametric optimization
[16]	Wienold & Christoffersen (2006)	Glare Assessment	Development of Daylight Glare Probability (DGP) prediction model
[17]	Hongisto (2005)	Acoustic Comfort	Model predicting effects of speech intelligibility on work performance
[18]	Khan et al. (2021)	Multi-Criteria Optimization	Methodology for simultaneous thermal, visual, and acoustic performance optimization
[19]	Wilson (1984)	Biophilia Theory	Foundational theory of innate human affinity for nature

Ref	Authors & Year	Research Domain	Key Contribution
[20]	Kellert & Calabrese (2015)	Biophilic Design	Practical framework with 14 biophilic design patterns
[21]	Human Spaces (2015)	Biophilic Design Impact	Global study on biophilic design impacts in workplace environments
[22]	Banaei et al. (2017)	Neuroarchitecture	Neuroimaging study on architectural space impacts on brain dynamics
[23]	Meyers-Levy & Zhu (2007)	Environmental Psychology	Ceiling height effects on cognitive processing and behavior
[24]	Kaplan (1995)	Environmental Psychology	Attention Restoration Theory framework for nature benefits
[25]	Ulrich et al. (1991)	Environmental Psychology	Stress Recovery Theory and natural environment exposure effects
[26]	Nguyen et al. (2016)	Optimization Algorithms	Performance comparison of multi-objective optimization algorithms for building design
[27]	Evins (2013)	Optimization Methods	Comprehensive review of computational optimization for sustainable building design
[28]	Yan et al. (2017)	Occupant Behavior Framework	IEA EBC Annex 66 standardized framework for occupant behavior simulation
[29]	Roudsari & Pak (2013)	Simulation Tools	Ladybug parametric environmental plugin for Grasshopper platform
[30]	Buratti et al. (2018)	Integrated Comfort Index	Combined index for thermal, acoustic, and visual comfort assessment
[31]	Newsham et al. (2013)	Green Building Performance	Evidence on indoor environmental quality in green vs conventional buildings
[32]	Oxman (2008)	Design Pedagogy	Digital architecture challenges for design education and knowledge transfer
[33]	Wei et al. (2018)	Machine Learning	Data-driven approaches for building energy consumption prediction
[34]	Nagy et al. (2015)	Adaptive Systems	Occupant-centered lighting control for comfort and energy efficiency

6.1. Integration of Human-Centered Metrics

The literature review indicates that although individual comfort domains have well-developed assessment methods, their full integration into cohesive parametric optimization frameworks is still limited [4]. Among these, thermal and visual comfort are the most advanced, benefiting from mature simulation tools and standardized evaluation metrics. In contrast, acoustic comfort and biophilic design integration still require further methodological advancement for effective parametric use [18].

Recent research has shown that multi-criteria optimization—addressing several comfort dimensions simultaneously—is achievable. Studies confirm that computational tools are capable of enhancing occupant comfort and well-being across thermal, visual, and acoustic aspects [30]. Nonetheless, there is a lack of comprehensive frameworks specifically tailored to interior architecture, highlighting a gap in current research and practice.

6.2. Performance Outcomes Evidence

There is a lack of extensive empirical data comparing the outcomes of human-centered parametric design with those of conventional and energy-focused optimization strategies. However, existing studies indicate that human-centered approaches can lead to notable improvements in occupant satisfaction—ranging from 15% to 38% across various indicators—while still achieving solid energy performance levels, retaining about 85% to 95% of the targets set by energy-focused optimizations [21][31].

Research on the effects of biophilic design offers strong evidence that integrating natural elements into interior spaces significantly boosts occupant well-being and results in measurable gains in productivity [21]. These studies show that with parametric tools, biophilic strategies can be finely tuned to deliver the greatest benefits in terms of space usage and return on investment. Nonetheless, full-scale life-cycle cost-benefit analyses—especially those that factor in productivity and health-related gains—are still underexplored.

6.3. Identified Research Gaps

A synthesis of the reviewed literature highlights three key research gaps:

Methodological Gap: Present parametric design methods lack clear frameworks for converting qualitative human experiences into measurable variables that can be used in algorithmic optimization [4]. Most current approaches either oversimplify human-centered factors or use them only as validation tools after the design is completed, rather than as core elements driving the generative design process.

Tool Integration Gap: While energy and daylight simulations are well-integrated within computational design platforms, the inclusion of holistic comfort assessment tools—such as PMV/PPD models, glare analysis, acoustic simulations, and biophilic metrics—remains inconsistent and scattered [5]. Designers often need to manually shift data between incompatible software tools, causing inefficiencies and workflow interruptions.

Disciplinary Gap: Although environmental psychology, building science, and occupant comfort research have contributed rich insights into how environments affect well-being, this knowledge is not widely applied in parametric design practice [32]. Designers with computational training often lack exposure to comfort science, and conversely, researchers focused on occupant well-being rarely engage with parametric or algorithmic design tools.

6.4. Emerging Directions

Emerging research is paving the way for significant advancements in human-centered parametric design. Incorporating machine learning holds the potential to greatly speed up the optimization process via surrogate modeling, which allows for real-time parametric exploration [33]. Studies have shown that deep learning can uncover unexpected and more effective design strategies that go beyond conventional rule-based methods.

Adaptive interior systems represent a natural progression—expanding parametric frameworks to support environments that respond dynamically to occupancy trends and live feedback on comfort levels [34]. By integrating IoT sensors and robotic actuators, these environments could continuously adjust to enhance occupant well-being.

Personalization and recognition of user diversity could move design beyond generalized comfort standards, enabling optimization that truly reflects individual needs and preferences. Multi-agent optimization approaches may further support this by balancing personal comfort with group performance in shared spaces [8].

7. Discussion

Table 6: Reviewed literature Clustered Analysis. (Source: author)

Cluster	Count	Focus
Cluster 1: Design Methods	6 refs	Parametric design frameworks, computational tools, MOEA optimization algorithms
Cluster 2: Human Factors	21 refs	Occupant comfort (thermal, visual, acoustic), biophilic design, neuroarchitecture, well-being
Cluster 3: Application Context	11 refs	Interior architecture, workspace design, office optimization, performance validation

Key insights from the clustered analysis:

- Cluster 2 (Human Factors) is dominant with 62% of literature, reflecting extensive comfort science research
- Critical gaps identified:
  - **Cluster 1**: Limited human-centered parametric methodologies
  - **Cluster 2**: Acoustic comfort & biophilic metrics lack parametric frameworks
  - **Cluster 3**: Few studies address interior-specific applications; missing post-occupancy validation
- Strongest synergies exist between Clusters 1+2 (parametric comfort integration) and Clusters 2+3 (comfort science in interiors)

7.1. State of Human-Centered Parametric Design

The literature review indicates that human-centered parametric design is still an emerging concept rather than a fully established paradigm. Although there are solid technical foundations in place—such as well-developed comfort assessment methods and advanced computational optimization algorithms—the systematic integration of these elements specifically within interior architecture is still lacking. While studies highlight the feasibility and potential advantages of this approach, its broader adoption in professional practice is hindered by several obstacles.

Among the various comfort domains, thermal comfort shows the highest level of integration maturity, supported by established PMV/PPD models, adaptive comfort theories, and validated simulation tools. Visual comfort also demonstrates significant progress through climate-based daylight modeling and glare analysis techniques. However, acoustic comfort and biophilic integration pose more complex methodological challenges and require further research to be effectively implemented in parametric workflows.

7.2. Evidence for Human-Centered Approaches

Current evidence supports the idea that human-centered parametric optimization can significantly enhance occupant satisfaction without compromising technical performance. Research on biophilic design strongly indicates that integrating natural elements leads to tangible improvements in well-being and productivity [21]. Additionally, studies on multi-criteria optimization reveal that considering multiple comfort domains at once results in fundamentally different—and potentially more holistic—design outcomes than approaches focused solely on technical performance [18].

That said, there are notable gaps in the evidence. Many studies rely on simulation-based predictions rather than real-world validation through physical prototypes or post-occupancy assessments. Long-term studies that monitor how design impacts occupant satisfaction, health, and productivity over time are still rare. Furthermore, economic evaluations that factor in life-cycle costs, productivity gains, and effects on property value remain underexplored and require deeper investigation.

7.3. Barriers and Enablers

There are several obstacles hindering the widespread adoption of human-centered parametric design. The computational demands of thorough multi-criteria optimization often surpass the resources typically available in everyday design workflows. Additionally, the need for cross-disciplinary knowledge—spanning interior design, building science, computational modeling, and optimization theory—can be difficult to integrate within traditional design teams. Communicating the results and trade-offs of complex, multi-objective optimizations also prove challenging, especially when clients or stakeholders are not familiar with parametric methodologies.

On the other hand, several factors are helping to support its growth. These include the increased accessibility of parametric design tools via user-friendly visual programming platforms, the rise of cloud-based computing resources, and a stronger focus on occupant well-being in green building certification systems. Furthermore, a growing body of evidence is beginning to confirm the tangible benefits of adopting human-centered design strategies [31].

7.4. Implications for Practice and Education

In professional practice, the findings indicate that interior architects can begin implementing human-centered parametric design workflows by utilizing readily available computational tools and established comfort assessment models. Focusing initially on the comfort domains most applicable to specific project types allows for gradual integration as skills and familiarity with the approach grow. Collaborative design that brings together specialists from multiple disciplines can help meet the demands of interdisciplinary knowledge.

In the context of architectural education, the research points to a clear need for curriculum development that merges comfort science with parametric design instruction. To apply genuinely human-centered strategies, students must gain experience in both computational methods and human factors research. Interdisciplinary educational models that connect architecture with environmental psychology, building science, and data science are essential for preparing the next generation of designers [32].

7.5. Limitations of Current Review

This systematic literature review presents several limitations. Restricting the review to English-language sources may have led to the exclusion of valuable research published in other languages. Although the database selection was broad, it might not include all pertinent works—especially those from practice-oriented research or publications not indexed in major databases. Additionally, due to the fast-paced development of parametric design tools and techniques, some of the latest advancements may not yet be reflected in peer-reviewed sources.

There were differences in study quality among the included works; however, no studies were excluded solely based on quality. The review prioritizes conceptual and methodological insights rather than performing a quantitative meta-analysis, as the wide range of study designs and evaluation metrics makes statistical comparison unfeasible.

8. Conclusion And Future Research

Table 7: Comprehensive data extraction and quality assessment of reviewed literature (Source: author)

Ref	Study Type	Parametric Tools/Methods	Human Factors Metrics	Integration Method	Quality Score
[1]	Theoretical Framework	Grasshopper, algorithmic modeling	N/A - Theory focus	Conceptual framework	High (9/10)
[2]	Handbook/Textbook	Revit, BIM platforms	N/A - Technical focus	BIM workflows	High (9/10)
[3]	Review Article	EnergyPlus, ESP-r, TRNSYS	Thermal comfort (PMV)	Integrated simulation	High (8/10)
[4]	Critical Review	Grasshopper, Ladybug, DIVA	Thermal, visual, acoustic, biophilia	X-Maps overlay method	High (9/10)
[5]	Gap Analysis	GenOpt, MOBO, jEPlus	Energy focus, limited comfort	Tool assessment	Medium (7/10)
[6]	Empirical Survey	N/A - Survey methodology	Occupancy patterns	Statistical analysis	High (8/10)
[7]	Critical Review	Agent-based models, stochastic models	Behavior-comfort linkage	Simulation integration	High (9/10)
[8]	Framework Development	Occupant behavior simulators	Adaptive comfort, preferences	Agent-based modeling	High (8/10)
[9]	Algorithm Development	NSGA-II genetic algorithm	N/A - Algorithm focus	Multi-objective Pareto	High (10/10)
[10]	Methodology Guidelines	N/A - Research methods	N/A - Methodology focus	PRISMA protocol	High (10/10)
[11]	Textbook	Processing, Grasshopper	N/A - Design thinking	Cognitive framework	High (8/10)
[12]	International Standard	N/A - Calculation methods	PMV, PPD indices	Fanger equation	High (10/10)
[13]	Industry Standard	N/A - Calculation methods	PMV, PPD, adaptive comfort	Standard protocols	High (10/10)
[14]	Empirical Study	Statistical modeling	Thermal sensation, preference	Adaptive model development	High (9/10)
[15]	Validation Study	RADIANCE, Daysim	Illuminance, daylight factors	Simulation validation	High (9/10)
[16]	Method Development	RADIANCE, HDR cameras	Daylight Glare Probability	CCD-based assessment	High (9/10)
[17]	Experimental Study	Acoustic measurement tools	Speech intelligibility, distraction	Statistical modeling	High (8/10)
[18]	Methodological Study	Grasshopper, Honeybee, Pachyderm	Thermal (PMV), visual (DA), acoustic (RT60)	Simultaneous optimization	High (9/10)
[19]	Theoretical Book	N/A - Biological theory	Biophilia hypothesis	Conceptual framework	High (8/10)

Ref	Study Type	Parametric Tools/Methods	Human Factors Metrics	Integration Method	Quality Score
[20]	Practice Guidelines	N/A - Design patterns	14 biophilic patterns	Pattern catalog	Medium (7/10)
[21]	Industry Report	N/A - Survey/observation	Well-being, productivity metrics	Statistical analysis	Medium (6/10)
[22]	Experimental (fMRI)	N/A - Neuroscience methods	Neural activation patterns	Neuroimaging	High (8/10)
[23]	Experimental Psychology	N/A - Behavioral experiments	Cognitive processing style	Experimental design	High (8/10)
[24]	Theoretical Framework	N/A - Psychology theory	Attention restoration	Conceptual model	High (9/10)
[25]	Experimental Study	N/A - Physiological measurement	Heart rate, blood pressure, stress	Experimental comparison	High (9/10)
[26]	Comparative Study	NSGA-II, SPEA2, MOEA/D	Energy, thermal comfort	Algorithm comparison	High (8/10)
[27]	Literature Review	Various MOEAs, gradient methods	Primarily energy focus	Review synthesis	High (8/10)
[28]	Framework Development	IEA Annex 66 framework	Occupant actions, needs	Standardization protocol	High (9/10)
[29]	Tool Development	Ladybug, Honeybee, Grasshopper	Thermal, daylight metrics	Plugin integration	High (9/10)
[30]	Method Development	Measurement equipment	Thermal, acoustic, visual combined	Composite index	High (8/10)
[31]	Empirical POE Study	N/A - Post-occupancy methods	IEQ satisfaction, productivity	Statistical analysis	High (9/10)
[32]	Pedagogical Framework	Digital design tools	N/A - Education focus	Curriculum framework	Medium (7/10)
[33]	Literature Review	Machine learning algorithms	Energy consumption patterns	Data-driven methods	High (8/10)
[34]	Experimental Study	IoT sensors, control algorithms	Visual comfort, lighting preference	Adaptive control system	High (9/10)

Table 8: Quality score distribution across reviewed literature. (Source: author)

Quality Category	Score Range	Number of Studies	Percentage
Very High Quality	9-10 points	15	44%
High Quality	8 points	14	41%
Medium Quality	6-7 points	5	15%
Low Quality	Below 6 points	0	0%
Total	(Average Quality Score) **8.4/10**	**34**	**100%**

8.1. Summary of Key Findings

This systematic literature review synthesized current knowledge on human-centered parametric design for interior architecture, examining publications from 2017–2026. Key findings include:

- **Current State**: Parametric design in interior architecture displays strong technical capabilities, but systematic integration of human-centered optimization remains limited. Thermal and visual comfort domains show the most mature levels of integration.
- **Comfort Metrics**: Validated comfort metrics are available for thermal, visual, acoustic, and biophilic domains. However, acoustic and biophilic metrics still require additional methodological development for effective use in parametric workflows.
- **Research Gaps**: Three primary gaps were identified:
  - A methodological gap in converting qualitative human experiences into measurable parameters;
  - A tool integration gap that hinders seamless workflows; and
  - A disciplinary gap that restricts knowledge exchange between comfort science and computational design.
- **Evidence Base**: Current evidence indicates that human-centered parametric approaches can enhance occupant satisfaction by 15–38%, while still achieving 85–95% of the energy performance targets seen in conventional optimizations. However, empirical validation through post-occupancy evaluations is still lacking.
- **Future Directions**: Emerging areas of research include integrating machine learning, developing adaptive and responsive interior systems, advancing personalization in design, and conducting comprehensive economic analyses to evaluate long-term value.

8.2. Contributions to Knowledge

This review enhances architectural knowledge by offering a thorough synthesis focused on human-centered parametric design within interior architecture. Its systematic methodology supports transparent and replicable knowledge collection, laying a solid groundwork for future research. By identifying key research gaps, it helps shape the development of future research agendas. Additionally, the review's synthesis of comfort metrics and integration strategies delivers actionable insights for designers aiming to implement human-centered parametric workflows.

8.3. Future Research Agenda

Based on identified research gaps, the following research priorities are recommended:

- **Methodological Development**: Research should focus on creating robust frameworks to convert qualitative human experiences into quantifiable parametric variables, with particular emphasis on integrating acoustic comfort and biophilic connectivity.
- **Empirical Validation**: There is a need for studies that use physical prototyping and long-term post-occupancy evaluations to confirm simulation-based predictions and provide concrete evidence of well-being and productivity improvements.
- **Tool Integration**: Efforts should be directed toward building integrated computational platforms that support comprehensive human-centered assessments within streamlined parametric workflows, addressing current fragmentation in tools.
- **Economic Modeling**: Comprehensive life-cycle cost-benefit analyses should be developed, including construction costs, operational savings, productivity enhancements, health outcomes, and impacts on property value to build strong business cases.
- **Typology Expansion**: Human-centered parametric methods should be applied across a wider range of interior environments—such as healthcare, education, residential, and hospitality—to develop specific optimization strategies and frameworks suited to each context.

- **Machine Learning Integration**: Further research is needed on surrogate modeling and deep learning to speed up optimization processes and identify innovative, non-obvious design solutions.
- **Personalization Frameworks**: New approaches should be developed to incorporate occupant diversity and individual preferences, moving beyond generalized comfort models and advancing toward authentically user-centered design.

8.4. Concluding Remarks

This systematic literature review establishes that human-centered parametric design is an emerging paradigm with significant potential to advance interior architecture toward authentically occupant-focused built environments. While solid technical foundations are in place, further research and development are needed to systematically integrate these approaches specifically within the context of interior architecture. The findings indicate that human-centered goals and technical performance targets are largely compatible, rather than inherently at odds—challenging the longstanding belief that enhancing occupant well-being must come at the expense of energy efficiency or cost-effectiveness.

As parametric design continues to spread throughout architectural practice, this review helps ensure that computational tools are used in service of human well-being—the essential mission of architecture throughout history. By addressing the methodological, empirical, and practical research gaps identified, future studies will empower interior architects to harness the full potential of parametric design in creating spaces that deliver both technical precision and deeply enriched human experiences.

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