

How Different Environments Affect My Creativity

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Submitted to:
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Submitted for:
ENGL 2089.014,.015

Respectfully submitted on:
10/29/27

Research Question: How do different environments affect my creativity and ability to come up with new ideas?

Introduction

Creativity is an important part of everyday life. It allows people to develop new ideas, solve problems, express themselves, and imagine different possibilities. Creativity is often associated with artistic activities, but it can also be used when planning a schedule, choosing an outfit, decorating a space, thinking of a business idea, or finding ways to become more productive. Although creativity is sometimes viewed as a natural ability, the environment a person is in may also influence how easily they can think of new ideas.

My interest in this topic comes from noticing that my surroundings can affect my mood, focus, and inspiration throughout the day. For example, when I am in a clean and organized room, I often feel more prepared to work and think clearly. When I spend time outside in the sunshine or in a park surrounded by nature, I find myself thinking about different ideas and possibilities. In contrast, a noisy environment or a messy workspace can make it harder for me to concentrate.

The purpose of this research project is to explore how different physical environments influence my creativity and ability to generate ideas. I am especially interested in how lighting, organization, nature, noise, comfort, and the design of a space affect my creative thinking. By comparing my personal observations with existing research, I hope to identify the environments that help me feel most inspired and productive.

Background and Previous Research

Previous research suggests that creativity may be connected to more than an individual's imagination or personal abilities. The physical environment can also play a role in shaping creative experiences. Researchers have examined how characteristics such as lighting, visual details, natural elements, privacy, and the arrangement of a space relate to creative thinking.

Lee and Lee (2023) conducted a scoping review examining the relationship between physical environments and creativity. Their review included 33 studies and considered environmental factors such as lighting, visual stimulation, plants, windows, privacy, spatial variety, and opportunities for personal reflection. This source is particularly relevant to my project because it examines many of the same environmental characteristics that I notice in my everyday life.

Rhee et al. (2025) examined indoor environmental attributes and creativity through a systematic review of 46 experiments from 34 studies. Their research considered factors such as nature, window views, furniture, spatial layout, color, lighting, air quality, and social relationships. This review is useful because it identifies several features of indoor environments that can be compared with my observations of bedrooms, study spaces, coffee shops, and other locations.

McCoy and Evans (2002) investigated the potential role of the physical environment in fostering creativity. Their study considered characteristics such as visual detail, views of nature, natural materials, colors, and surfaces. They also examined differences in creative performance between environments rated as having higher and lower creativity potential. This research supports the importance of considering the physical characteristics of a space when exploring creativity.

Blomberg and Kallio (2022) reviewed the physical context of creativity and presented a framework for investigating how physical spaces relate to creative processes. Their work is relevant because it

encourages researchers to consider the relationship between creativity and the environments in which people think, work, and interact.

Together, these sources provide a foundation for my project. They suggest that environmental characteristics are worth examining when studying creativity. However, the purpose of my research is not to prove that one environment will make everyone more creative. Instead, I want to understand how different spaces affect my own experiences and whether my observations connect with the patterns discussed in previous research.

Research Methods

To investigate my research question, I collected personal observations about situations in which I noticed myself developing ideas, concentrating, or feeling inspired. Rather than focusing on a single location, I considered different environments that I experience throughout my day.

My observations included spending time in my bedroom, sitting in a quiet room, working in an organized space, studying in a coffee shop, sitting outside in the sunshine, and spending time in a park. I also considered how conditions such as lighting, temperature, background noise, clutter, privacy, and visual stimulation might influence my thoughts.

I organized these observations by identifying the environmental characteristics involved and describing how each setting affected my thinking. I then compared the patterns in my observations with the topics examined in the research by Lee and Lee (2023), Rhee et al. (2025), McCoy and Evans (2002), and Blomberg and Kallio (2022).

This approach allowed me to examine creativity in the context of my everyday experiences. However, my observations are personal rather than the results of a controlled experiment. I did not systematically measure the number or originality of ideas produced in each environment. Therefore, my findings describe patterns I noticed rather than establishing that a particular environmental feature directly causes creativity to increase or decrease.

Personal Observations and Case Studies

1. Clean and Organized Spaces

One of the most noticeable patterns in my observations is the difference between a clean and an unorganized space. When my bedroom or workspace is clean, I feel less distracted by the things around me. I can focus more easily on what I want to accomplish and spend more time developing my ideas.

When my room is messy, I sometimes begin thinking about the things I need to clean or organize instead of concentrating on my original task. This can interrupt my thought process and make it harder to finish an idea.

Organization appears to be especially helpful when I want to plan ways to become more efficient at work or school. Preparing my space, gathering my supplies, and removing unnecessary distractions help me feel ready to begin.

These observations connect with the broader focus of Lee and Lee (2023) and Rhee et al. (2025), whose reviews consider how the physical arrangement and characteristics of a space relate to creativity. My experience suggests that organization may support the concentration needed to develop ideas, although it does not necessarily mean that an organized environment will always produce more original ideas.

2. Quiet Rooms and Background Noise

Another important factor is the amount of noise in my environment. When I sit in a quiet room, I find it easier to organize my thoughts and concentrate on an idea without interruption. A quiet environment gives me time to reflect and think through different possibilities.

In contrast, loud conversations and excessive background noise can make it difficult to finish my thoughts. When I am trying to concentrate, interruptions may cause me to lose track of an idea or switch my attention to something else.

However, I have also noticed that being around people can sometimes provide inspiration. For example, sitting in a coffee shop can make me notice the way people interact, the decorations in the space, or the atmosphere of the business. These observations can inspire ideas about fashion, social media, business, or interior design.

This suggests that noise and social activity do not always affect creativity in the same way. A quiet environment may be more useful when I need to develop an existing idea, while a public environment may give me new things to notice. The amount of stimulation that feels helpful may depend on the task and my ability to concentrate.

3. Natural Light and Time Outdoors

Spending time outdoors is another situation in which I notice creative thinking. When I sit outside in the sunshine, I often feel inspired to think about activities, plans, and new possibilities. For example, I have thought of fun date ideas while sitting outside and considered what to get my sister for her birthday while spending time in a park.

Looking at the sky, watching clouds, and observing the surrounding environment can also encourage me to imagine different places, designs, and possibilities. These experiences suggest that nature provides visual details and a change of surroundings that can give me something new to think about.

Natural light also seems to influence how I feel. A bright room can make me feel more awake and motivated, while dim lighting can help me relax but sometimes makes me feel tired. This difference suggests that lighting may affect my creative experience partly through my mood and energy level.

My observations relate to the environmental factors examined by Lee and Lee (2023), Rhee et al. (2025), and McCoy and Evans (2002), particularly their consideration of natural elements, window views, and lighting. My experiences are consistent with the idea that these features are worth studying, although they do not establish that sunlight or nature will improve creativity in every situation.

4. Comfortable and Calm Environments

Comfort is another factor that appears to influence my ability to think. When I sit somewhere comfortable, I can relax and brainstorm without feeling rushed. A calm environment allows me to slow down and consider different options before deciding what to do.

Uncomfortable conditions can have the opposite effect. If a chair is uncomfortable or a room is too hot or too cold, I may focus more on the discomfort than on the task. Stressful surroundings can also make it harder for me to concentrate and develop ideas.

My morning routine is another example of how the environment and my daily habits may work together. When I have time to pray, practice gratitude, get ready, and organize my belongings, I feel more prepared

for the day. This observation suggests that my creative experience may depend not only on the room itself but also on how I enter and use that space.

Although my project focuses on physical environments, these observations remind me that the environment and my personal state of mind cannot always be separated. A comfortable space may be helpful partly because it allows me to feel calmer and more prepared to think.

5. Unfamiliar Places

Unfamiliar environments offer a different kind of inspiration. In these places, I tend to notice details that I might overlook in my usual surroundings. These can include furniture, colors, clothing styles, decorations, and the way a business presents itself.

When I study in a coffee shop, I sometimes imagine how I would decorate it if I owned the business. I may also think about how the layout, atmosphere, or visual appearance influences the experience of customers.

Clothing stores and boutiques provide similar opportunities. Looking at clothing displays, colors, and outfit combinations can inspire fashion ideas. These observations encourage me to think about why certain designs work together and how a space can influence people's interests.

Unfamiliar environments may be useful because they expose me to different visual details and experiences. At the same time, crowded or busy spaces can become overwhelming if there is too much activity.

This suggests that new environments can provide inspiration, but their usefulness depends on the balance between interesting stimulation and distraction. A space can offer many ideas without necessarily being the best place to concentrate on one idea for a long time.

6. Personal Spaces and Visual Stimulation

My bedroom is an example of how the same environment can support different kinds of thinking depending on its conditions. When I am lying in bed, I may imagine different nail designs or outfits I could try. When the room is organized, I may find it easier to brainstorm ways to improve my productivity. When the lights are dimmed, I may feel relaxed enough to reflect, although I may also become tired.

Decorations, personal belongings, colors, and patterns can provide inspiration. Bright and colorful spaces may encourage me to think about fashion, room design, or creative projects. A plain environment with fewer distractions may be more useful when I want to concentrate on one idea.

These experiences suggest that visual stimulation can have both positive and negative effects. Interesting objects may spark new ideas, but too many visual details can divide my attention. The most helpful environment may depend on whether I am trying to generate several ideas or develop one idea more deeply.

Summary of Findings

Across my observations, several patterns emerged. The most important finding is that different environments appear to support different parts of my creative process. Some settings help me focus and organize my thoughts, while others inspire me to imagine new possibilities.

Clean and organized spaces, quiet rooms, and comfortable surroundings seem particularly helpful when I want to concentrate or develop an idea. Natural light, parks, coffee shops, clothing stores, and unfamiliar environments often give me visual inspiration and encourage me to think about new possibilities.

However, not every environmental feature has a consistently positive effect. Dim lighting can help me relax but may also make me tired. Public spaces can provide inspiration but can become distracting when they are too noisy or crowded. Visual stimulation can spark ideas, but excessive stimulation can make it harder to concentrate.

The following table summarizes the main patterns I noticed.

Environmental factor	My observation	Possible role in creativity
Clean and organized	I feel less distracted and more prepared to work.	Supports focus and idea development.
Quiet environment	I can organize my thoughts more easily.	Helps me concentrate on ideas.
Noise and interruptions	I sometimes lose track of my thoughts.	Can interfere with concentration.
Natural light and sunshine	I feel more awake, motivated, and inspired.	May support energy and idea generation.
Nature and outdoor	I imagine new activities, designs, and possibilities.	Provides visual inspiration and opportunities for
Coffee shops and public	I notice people, decorations, and business designs.	Offers new observations and perspectives.
Comfort and temperature	I can focus better when I am physically comfortable.	Reduces competing distractions.
Visual stimulation	Colors, patterns, and decorations inspire ideas, but too much can	Can encourage idea generation or divide
Unfamiliar environments	I notice details that I might overlook in familiar places.	Provides new material for creative thinking.
Personal routines	Prayer, gratitude, and organization help me feel prepared.	May support the mindset I bring to creative tasks.

These findings do not show that one environment is best for every type of creativity. Instead, they suggest that the relationship between creativity and the environment depends on the task, the surroundings, and how I respond to them.

Discussion

My research question asks how different environments affect my creativity and ability to come up with new ideas. Based on my observations and the research I reviewed, I believe the answer is that

environments can influence my creative experience in different ways, particularly by affecting my concentration, comfort, mood, and exposure to new ideas.

One important distinction is between generating ideas and developing them. When I spend time outdoors or visit a coffee shop, I may notice something that inspires a new idea. These settings give me opportunities to observe different details and imagine possibilities. However, when I want to organize my thoughts, plan a task, or work through an idea carefully, a quiet and organized room may be more useful.

This distinction also helps explain why a busy environment can sometimes be helpful and sometimes be distracting. The activity around me may provide new information and visual inspiration, but it can also compete with the attention I need to finish a thought. Creativity may therefore benefit from different environments at different stages of the process.

The existing research provides useful support for examining these patterns. Lee and Lee (2023) and Rhee et al. (2025) review a range of physical environmental characteristics associated with creativity research. McCoy and Evans (2002) focus more specifically on physical characteristics and creative performance, while Blomberg and Kallio (2022) provide a broader framework for understanding the physical context of creativity.

My personal observations are consistent with the importance of these environmental factors, but they are not sufficient to establish cause and effect. Other influences, such as my mood, the time of day, the task I am working on, and my level of energy, may also contribute to my experience. In addition, the observations do not involve standardized creativity tests or comparisons of the number and originality of ideas produced in different settings.

A future version of this project could improve on these limitations by recording observations over several days and completing the same brainstorming activity in different environments. I could record the number of ideas I generate, how original I consider them to be, how focused I feel, and how easy it is to develop the ideas further. Comparing these observations could provide a more systematic understanding of which environments work best for different creative tasks.

Conclusion

This project explored how different environments affect my creativity and ability to come up with new ideas. By reflecting on my everyday experiences and comparing them with existing research, I identified several environmental characteristics that appear to influence my creative thinking.

Clean, organized, quiet, and comfortable spaces seem helpful when I need to concentrate and develop ideas. Outdoor environments, natural light, coffee shops, and unfamiliar places often inspire me by giving me new things to notice and think about. At the same time, excessive noise, clutter, uncomfortable conditions, and too much visual activity can interfere with my concentration.

The most important conclusion is that creativity does not appear to depend on one perfect environment. Different settings can serve different purposes, and the most useful environment may depend on whether I need inspiration, focus, or time to develop an idea.

This research has helped me recognize that I can be more intentional about the spaces in which I work and think. By paying attention to my surroundings and preparing my environment for the task I want to complete, I may be able to create better conditions for my own creative process. Although my findings are based on personal observations rather than a controlled experiment, they provide a starting point for understanding how everyday environments shape my experience of creativity.

References

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