

Design of Built-Spaces and Enhanced Psychological Wellbeing by Limiting Effect of SBS: An Analytical Study across Students in Indian Universities

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Abstract : Sick Building Syndrome (SBS) is a situation in which inhabitants of a building develop illness symptoms or get infected with a chronic disease as a result of the building in which they reside or work. Certain symptoms tend to get more severe as an individual spends more time in the building; however, they generally improve with time or even disappear when they leave that space. Though 'Design of Built-Spaces' is a crucial factor in regulating these symptoms but it still needs to be identified further as to what specific design features of a 'Built-Space' trigger sick building syndrome (SBS). Much of the research work present to date is focused on the physiological or physical sickness caused due to inappropriate built-space design. In this paper, the psychological aspects of sick building syndrome (SBS) will be investigated across the adult population, more specifically graduate students in India trying to settle in back to their previous physical work environments, i.e., campus, classrooms, hostels, after a very long hold which lasted more than a year due to lockdowns during Covid-19 crisis all over the world. The study will follow an analytical approach and the data will be collected through self-reported online surveys. The purpose of this study is to enquire causal agents, diagnosable symptoms and remedial design of built spaces which can enhance the productive level of built environments and better facilitate the inhabitants by improving their psychological wellbeing, which is the most uprising concern. The fact that SBS symptoms can be studied only within the initial few weeks as an occupant starts interacting with a built-environment and leaves as the occupant leaves that space or zone, the post-lockdown incoming of students back to their respective campuses provides an opportunity to clearly draw multiple conclusions of the relationship that exist between the Design of Built-Spaces and Psychological Sickness Syndrome associated with it. The study will be one of a kind approach for understanding and formulating methods to improve psychological wellbeing within a built-setting by better identifying factors associated with these psychological symptoms, including anxiety, mental fatigue, reduced attention span and reduced memory span as refined symptoms of SBS discussed in 1987 by Molhave within his study.

Keywords : built-environment psychology, built-space design, healthcare architecture, psychological wellbeing

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