

Reviewing the Effect of Healing Design on Mental Health Establishments in the Context of India

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Abstract : This paper focuses on the application of general healing design theories to modulate them into case-specific and contextual design considerations. Existing literature focuses on the relationship between architecture and mental health. Primary case studies are selected in India to focus on the effect of a specific location on design considerations. They are qualitatively analysed to further contextualise the inferences from the literature study. An academic project is cited as an example to apply the learnings from the study and understand the influence of various parameters on the design process for further conclusion. Literature studies, case studies and hypothetical design applications helped in finding the different ways of achieving the similar goal of a sensitive approach toward mental health. Along with salutogenic parameters, category of establishment, age group, location of the site and user preference plays a crucial role in the design process. Design of mental health establishments, especially in India, has to involve transparency between stakeholders and users. Owing to different climatic zones and diverse sociocultural traditions, the approach toward healing should adapt accordingly. It should be an effort towards striking a balance between contradictory elements of healing design and resolving the dilemmas with sensitivity and consensus. Lastly, the design should not force a person towards communication or companionship but rather let the person realise that naturally through the healing process.

Keywords : contextual healing design, deinstitutionalisation, Indian mental healthcare establishments, environmental psychology, salutogenesis, therapeutic design

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