

HAPPINESS IN ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT

Happiness is not an end result, it is a concept that ascribes living and life. And architecture plays a relevant role in consummating happiness of any individual. Architecture is a developmental process that ultimately leads to the happiness of people. And both the elements are integral. The external environment encompasses what we are and who we are. In the current age of technology, the role played by architecture in consummating personal happiness is central. Architecture has a direct clout to the mind and mentality of an individual, which has been ascertained by several researchers. The setting and the internal and external atmosphere of any space can affect an individual, causing to positively or negatively shift their state of mental being. Architecture can be deemed as the creator of emotions that can alter the way one perceive and experience spaces.

Key words: Architecture, Happiness, Emotions, External Environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since time immemorial, savants, writers and theorists have endeavored to decipher what happiness is and what bequeaths it. Happiness is not an end result but an amalgamation of various elements that ultimately accords to it. There is no single factor that contributes towards a person's internal and external happiness, differing from one individual to the other (Vanrie, 2014). The environment one lives in is an acute agent that encases happiness and happiness and architecture are complementary. The external environment one lives in sets a critical backdrop to who one is and what one does. The design of the external environment affects the well-being and the health of any individual by having long term implications in the quality of life. In the early times, architects were merely fixated on the objective considerations like daylight, acoustics, accessibility etc. The studies cognate to architecture has revealed the relevance of engaging the built environment as something more than a static entity. It revolutionized the field of architecture, shifting the primary consideration in to facilitating not only physical comfort but also emotional and mental comfort. As stated by Alain De Botton in *Architecture of Happiness* (2006), "One of the greatest causes of both happiness and misery is the quality of our environment: the kind of walls, chairs, buildings and streets we are surrounded by". Botton (2006) analyses and assess how the human needs and desires are conveyed in to architecture. With people being growingly aware on the exigency of design of the environments they reside in, the need for well-structured architecture is on the rise (Butterworth, 2000).

The alliance between architecture and happiness have received limited attention, historically. The holistic awareness on the role of architecture in the health and wellbeing of people has changed the world's view on architecture and its place in the current world. It is deemed as the reflection of the values that persists in the society (Dombrovskis, 2007). The technical facets of a building are not as significant as the symbolic repute of it and one of its primary aim is to prompt an emotion (Dombrovskis, 2005). In the current world bound of technology and virtual experiences, the consequential role architecture plays in the wellbeing that is in the real-time circumstances are exceptional. The architects of today are uniformly focused on not only the structural construction of the buildings but also on the mental and emotional approach it encompasses. Various researches on the vast field of architecture has tried pointing out the essence of wellbeing and the methods and the need for consolidating it in to the process of architecture. And that, the mood and setting of architecture directly influences the people who are surrounded by it. Beauty plays a major role in amending an individual's mood and architecture speaks to people in various ways (Vanrie, 2014). Architecture solely does not contribute towards the happiness of an individual, but also cause sadness, anger, despair and other various emotions as well. Essentially, architecture is described a platform for human exuberating and happiness i.e. a consolidation of capital human functioning and positive feelings (Huppert, 2013).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Effect of the built Environment with Subjective Well-Being

According to Butterworth (2000), built environment is the setting and backdrop by which one lives their life. The built environment is a direct impactor on the senses, emotions, one's sense of community and the basic wellbeing. As per the Health Community Design (2010), the built environment is encompassed of all the physical parts where one lives and works and is a direct influencer of a person's level of physical activities. The built environment directly influences the body weight and lifestyle of people, i.e. it is through physical activities an individual can maintain a healthy physique. But with the absence of sidewalks, bike paths, recreational and sports infrastructure and walkable neighborhoods, the physical activities are limited; affecting the wellbeing of the individuals (Reyburn, 2013). By increasing the subjective wellbeing, the possibilities of implementing architecture as a tool for flourishing is enhanced (Stevens, 2014).

2.2. Influence of the architecture on happiness

According to Ann (2014), a changing strand in the architecture filed has transformed in the people's view on the field. Interior architecture functions as a platform for human happiness. It incorporates architecture as a dynamic and exuberant platform that enables the carrying out of relevant and meaningful activities. The Positive Design Framework developed by Desmet and Pohlmeier (2013) combines the three different components which all aims to elevate the pleasure and minimize the difficulties. Design for pleasure, design for personal significance and design for virtue all are direct influential factors in determining the happiness of any individual (Elisabeth, 2014). As per the findings of Gispén (2014), designs of buildings affects the intuitive factor of happiness more than the subjective element. A well-structured building can positively alter the mood of an individual. Being happy in an environment is not consequential to the architecture of the building, but is in accordance with the ability to do what one wishes for with and within the architecture (Elisabeth, 2014).

2.3. Factors affecting happiness of people

According to Soto (2010), people with different personality characteristics tend to ordeal various calibers of subjective wellbeing and happiness. As per the findings of Layard (2003), various factors contribute towards creating the happiness of an individual. The most common out of them are, job security, personal and political freedom, monetary security, secure family etc. The influential factors can differ from one person to other, as stated by Soto (2010), for example, for a student changing of the educational curriculum can be the cause of happiness whereas for an adult, a discount sale at the mall can act as the factor causing happiness (Bacon, 2012). The influential factors of happiness can vary according to various aspects, such as economic factors, personality factors, external factors, demographic factors, institutional factors, environmental factors etc. (Hu, 2012).

3. CONCLUSION

The relation between architecture and happiness are unambiguous. The idea that architecture can cause happiness to an individual has been an area that has been explored with limited scope. But, it has been viewed that, with the change in the course of time the population is being educated on the relevance of architecture as a symbolic factor rather than just a technical aspect and the current study has explored that arena. Various studies have been carried out to assume and analyse the effect of architecture on building happiness amongst individuals in the current era. The study has evaluated the ascendancy of architecture and happiness on the wellbeing of people by investigating the findings of other researchers on the current topic. It has been assessed that, architecture is something that aids the meaningful, virtuous and pleasurable experiences that contribute towards the wellbeing of the people.

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