

IC - (20990) - EFFECT OF FLEXIBILITY OF HOME ON RESIDENT'S PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

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Background and objectives

Residential environments support many psychological needs and behaviours that are important for wellbeing. However, not all homes are flexible enough to adapt to resident's different and changing needs. And nor is the effect of flexibility of home on wellbeing empirically explored. Therefore, this paper presents two studies that investigate if homes with more flexible built environments, as measured on an architectural (AF) and behavioural (BF) basis, support higher psychological wellbeing in residents.

Process and methods (for empirical research)

In an online mixed-method survey, 187 UK residents rated flexibility of their homes on a scale based on the two sub-dimensions of flexibility, and rated satisfaction of their basic eudaimonic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (BPNT; Deci and Ryan, 2000), and hedonic needs of positive and negative affect (SWB; Diener, 1984b) that are important for wellbeing. Residents were asked to list rooms, objects and features at home that supported their need satisfaction (AF), including any changes they had made to their home (BF).

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

Flexibility of home explained 21% and 15% of variance in hedonic and eudaimonic need satisfaction scores respectively, suggesting that a more flexible home could support higher psychological need satisfaction. A list of rooms, objects and features, and types of changes made at home were identified and subsequently used to create an objective measure of AF and BF. The psychometric properties of these measures and the relationship between flexibility and wellbeing are being explored in an ongoing follow-up survey (N = 214).

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

The findings provide rich insights into the elements of a home that are associated with psychological wellbeing. It has implications in creating design guidelines for new homes or changing policies for retrofitting existing homes, thereby supporting residents in achieving higher wellbeing in a world where home environments are becoming increasingly important.

Palavras-chave : psychological wellbeing, residential environments, Flexibility of home