Education, Design and Practice – Understanding skills in a Complex World

- Paper / Proposal Title:
  How to measure User’s Happiness in Educational Environment.

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- Abstract (300 word) There is a considerable interest between scholars and urban designers to bring and measure the feeling of happiness among the open space’s users, therefore they have used different tools to measure, monitor and assess the user experience in the open spaces. This study aims to examine the potential of using cognitive map compared to the structured questionnaire method to assess the feel of happiness for students in an educational environment. The study is conducted in Effat University, Jeddah, KSA, where a wide number of students participate to assess their feelings in the campus’s open spaces, using separately two different methods; Cognitive Map and Questionnaire. The main goal is to develop the cognitive map as a measuring tool to achieve the greatest accuracy, depth and correct understanding of students’ feelings. The comparison between the two methods shows the possibilities of
utilization and difficulties in each method. The researchers recommend the cognitive map to be used in a complementary study that are built on multi-research methods. However, this study shows the efficiency of using cognitive map in measuring happiness level and transferring students' feelings. The users feel, perceive, and remember mostly what evokes their emotions; they draw happy spaces with more details while giving little attention to the spaces’ details that they dislike. However, it is not necessary that the most memorable space to be the happy one, sometimes the bad memories and inconveniences influence the users’ minds much more. It is interesting to see the students draw the happy spaces greener in the contrary to reality and draw the unhappy spaces rigid with black cross lines and hatching. Actually, the students give more attention to what they feel, and the cognitive image of space become clearer when evoking strong feelings.

The other recommendations are proposed to develop the campus’ open spaces and move toward a happier efficient environment for its students by providing access to green areas, which is highly selected to be the main requirement to feel happiness, enhancing the level of thermal comfort in the open spaces by shading devices and trees, and providing a comfortable seating that promoting social activities between students and instructors. The research is limited to young female students, Effat campus, Jeddah City, KSA. The research results can be used to develop the happiness assessment methods in an urban discipline.

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Alshimaa A. Farag an assistant professor in architecture department, Effat University, KSA. She holds a Philosophy of Doctorate degree in Urban Design from Zagazig University, Egypt since 2016. She is a LEED Accredited Professional in Neighborhood Development (LEED AP ND) and Home (LEED AP Home). She is currently teaching courses in Urban Design, Landscape Architecture, and Architecture Design Studios at the College of Architecture and Design, Effat University. She is an EDRA member as she has special interests in human behaviors and their interrelationships with built environment especially in the Middle East.

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university level and in 2015 she won the prize of the excellence in teaching. She has special interest in new urban design movements and specifically designing pedestrian friendly streets. She participated in national and international conferences with research papers in the same field. She also worked as a reviewer for the papers submitted to the 1st Memaryat Conference held in Effat University, KSA and a reviewer for the research projects proposals submitted to Effat University Research Center.