

## Lessons from child participation in the process of designing child-friendly spaces architecture. (Case Study: Bojnourd Therapeutic Spaces)

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### Abstract

Children are an important part of the citizenry of any society. They are also different mentally, physically, in personality, and in behavior. The look and needs of adults are different. Children are always exposed to adults by different environments. Hospitals are one of the environments in which children generally interact and spend time in their lives. In the meantime, therapies are often undesirable and frightening to them. Therefore, the fundamental issue of establishing an emotional bond between the child and the therapeutic environment is considered as one of the effective factors in the process of treating children. Therefore, it is necessary to address the issue of designing desirable therapeutic spaces for children. The purpose of this study was to investigate the doctrines of child participation in the design process of child-friendly spaces (Case Study: Bojnourd Therapeutic Spaces). The research began with the question, "What are the general principles of designing child-friendly therapeutic spaces?" The research method is descriptive with a practical purpose. The statistical population of the study consisted of 6-12 year old children living in Bojnourd who had at least one hospitalization history. The sample size consisted of 50 boys and girls who were selected by purposeful sampling. Due to the lack of appropriate physical or mental conditions in hospitalized children, they were less likely to cooperate with the interviewer. Therefore, children who were previously healthy and hospitalized were used. They were observed during the period of August and September 2019. The method of data collection was library, observation and open interview. Theoretical foundations of the research were extracted from library resources. Studies show that there are many tools for engaging with children. Painting was chosen as a tool for engaging with children. Since children will participate maximally when they are confident the outcome of their collaboration is practical, the interviewer shared with the children at the beginning of the discussion that "We want to help you design a hospital based on your ideas". The interviewer also committed to all the children and their parents that all of the respondents' personal information was kept with the research team. The children expressed their ideas and ideas in their paintings. At the end of each painting, the child was asked to describe his or her painting. The examiner noted the important points behind each sheet. The paintings were quantitatively analyzed by experts in the field of child psychology and architecture. The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics using Excel 2010 software and inferential statistics using SPSS 25 software. Findings showed that the characteristics of desirable therapeutic environment are summarized in terms of children, respectively, in three domains: architectural features, personnel behavioral principles and the existence of specific characteristics in therapeutic spaces. The result of the research in the field of architectural features showed that the teachings of child participation in the process of designing child-friendly therapeutic spaces consist of five principles. These include focusing on the design of inpatient rooms, the controlled design of outdoor and green spaces, the inpatient room as a home, the childlike appearance in the entrance design, and the childlike appearance in the form and outline of the building.

**Keyword:** Child, participation, emotional connection with space, child-friendly therapeutic environment, architectural design process.

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