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Urban Squeeze: How do Land Prices shape our built environment and health?

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ABSTRACT:

It has been seen in recent times that the skyrocketing land prices in metropolitan cities have led to squeezed spaces. Efficient land use and saving every square foot is important but the scenario has changed quickly. Nowadays people are creating much smaller spaces with inadequate ventilation, directly affecting the user's health. According to the report on the impact of buildings on health, by the World Health Organization, the symptoms with no aetiology are nausea, headaches, and sinus-related issues. In 1983 WHO identified these problems and coined the term: "Sick building syndrome".

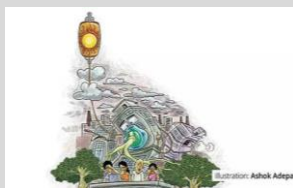


Figure 1: Is your living space making you sick? © Provided by The Times of India (10)

This issue became more widespread as humans spend 90% of their lives inside buildings [1][2]. This constrained environment limits a person's mobility and functionality. A study conducted in 2013 by Abdel-Hamid et al [3] identified some causes that include poor light and ventilation, lack of sunlight, uncomfortable temperature and humidity etc. Another study was conducted by Chang et al. [4] that found some relation between SBS and the presence of VOCs and chemicals in the environment. This paper investigates the relationship between increasing land prices, Urban squeeze and Sick Building Syndrome in different cities categorized into 4 distinct tiers according to the population. The study was conducted in an urban setting through an online survey of people from various cities. We had identified whether the walls that shield us also weave the whispers of sickness and predict whether the problem is contagious and will slowly contaminate other developing cities.

Keywords: Architecture, Confined Spaces, Health, Land Prices, Sick Building Syndrome

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