

‘Therapeutic environments for mental health: an evidence based approach for inpatient care’



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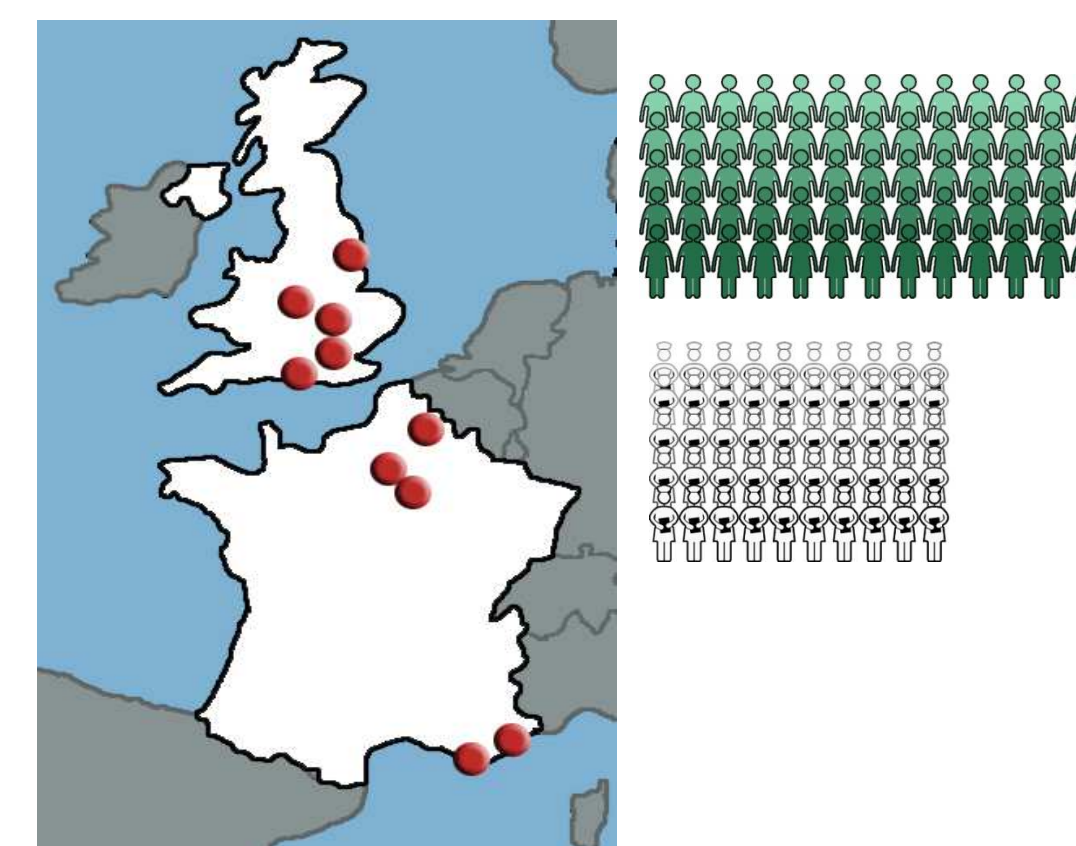
Introduction

This research set the ground on the unexplored area of environments for community care, **exploring service users’ needs and how these are met.** It also set to identify limits of pre-existing architectural frameworks in order not to compromise the therapeutic outcome. For that purpose, it revisited the concept of domesticity in a critical and independent way, through evidence-based, empirical research. It questioned normalisation theory for lacking the complexity to address the needs of mentally ill people.

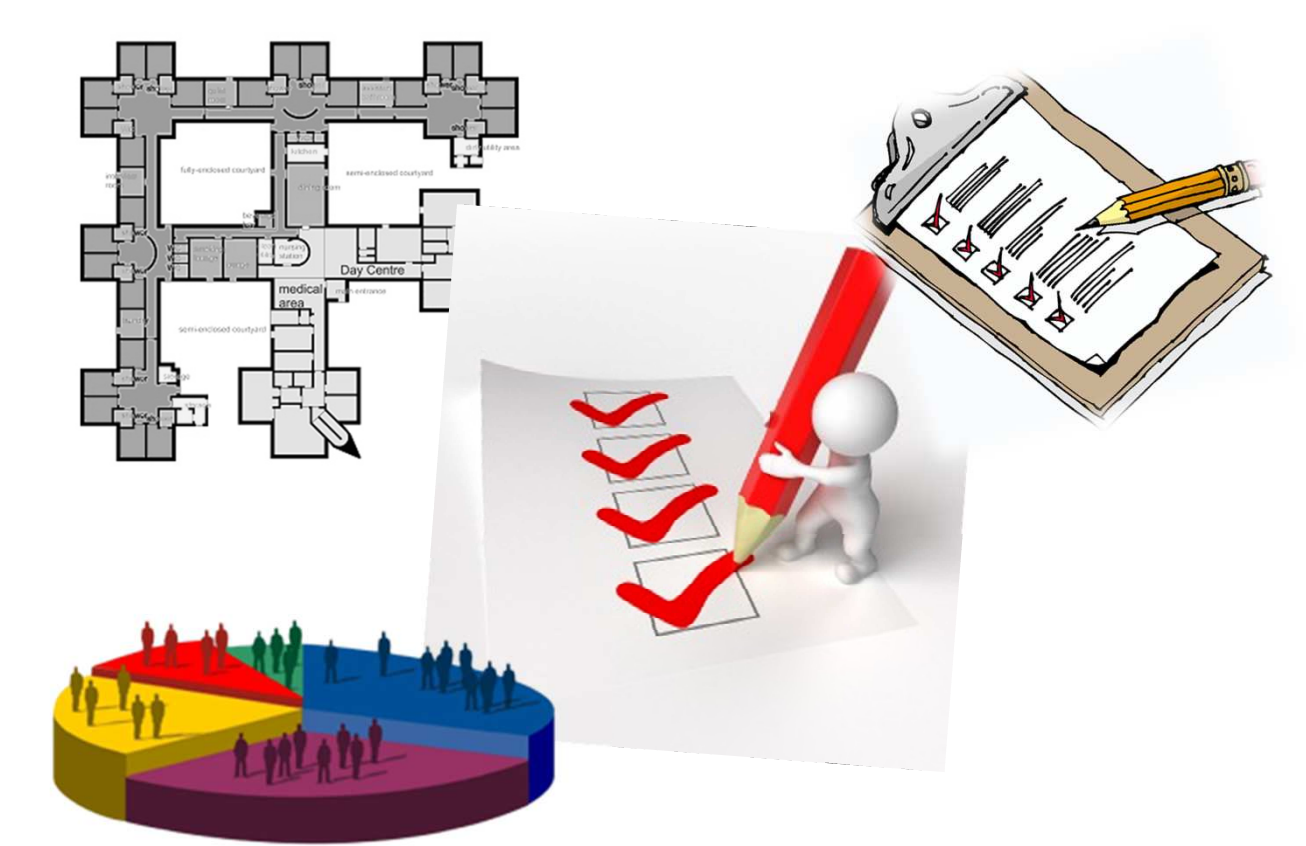


Methodology

Methodology comprised **auditing of 10 facilities in France and the UK** in terms of spatial organisation, regime, salutogenic qualities, analogies of areas per use and user group. Then, a detailed **architectural checklist of 215 points** identified the institutional traits of each facility. Finally, 115 staff and service users’ interviews juxtaposed the findings to users’ experience.



The case studies: The sample

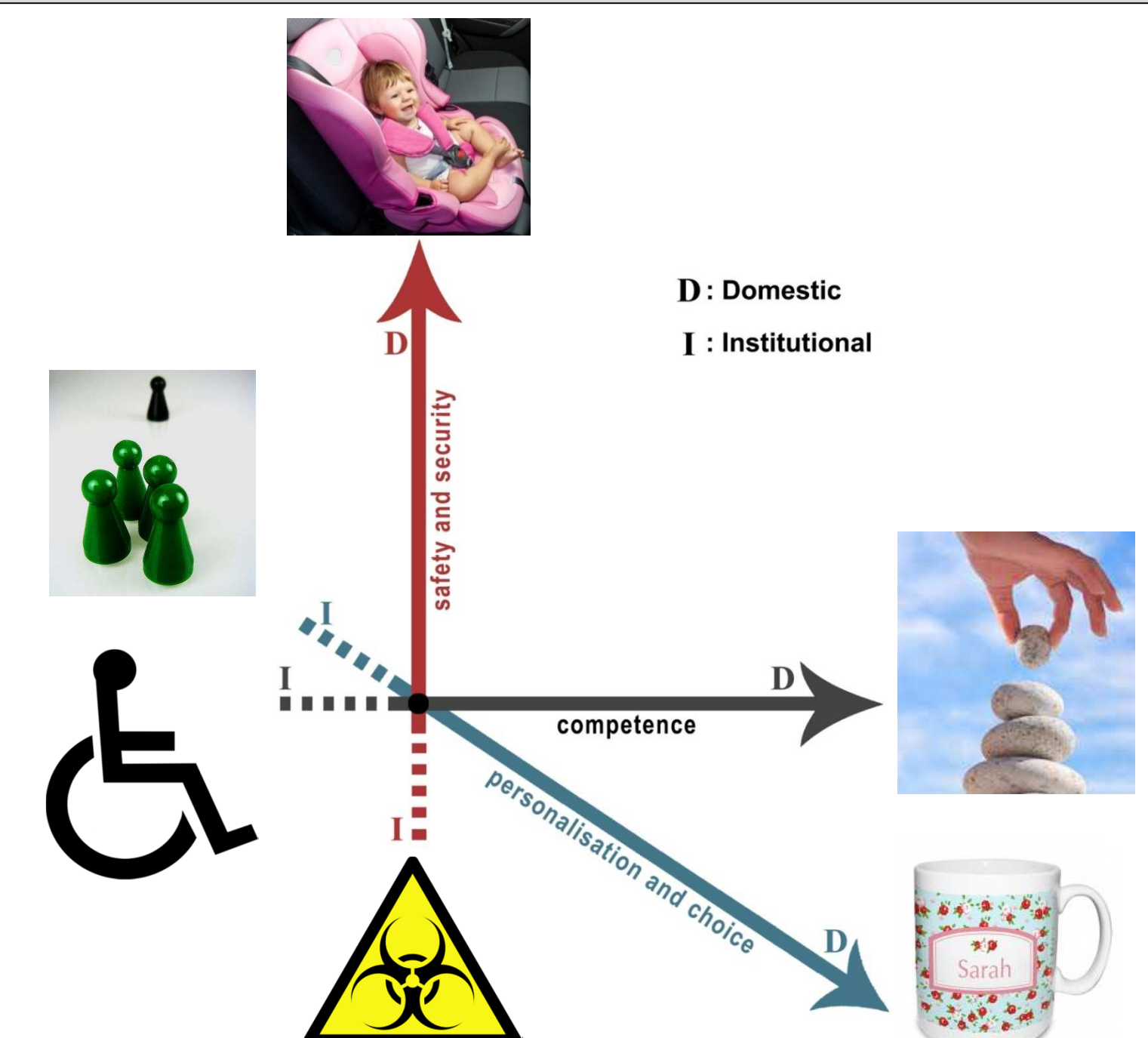


Qualitative and quantitative analysis

Results

The research developed an integrated framework, named the **SCP Model**. That framework identified all three major consequences of mental illness: the one connected to dangerousness, the one corresponding to disability and finally the one related to social exclusion. Therefore, it created a three-dimensional framework comprising of three major axes that can be employed for the design and the evaluation of mental health facilities. The model is expandable and flexible to be applied in the entire spectrum of mental health projects.

SCP Model



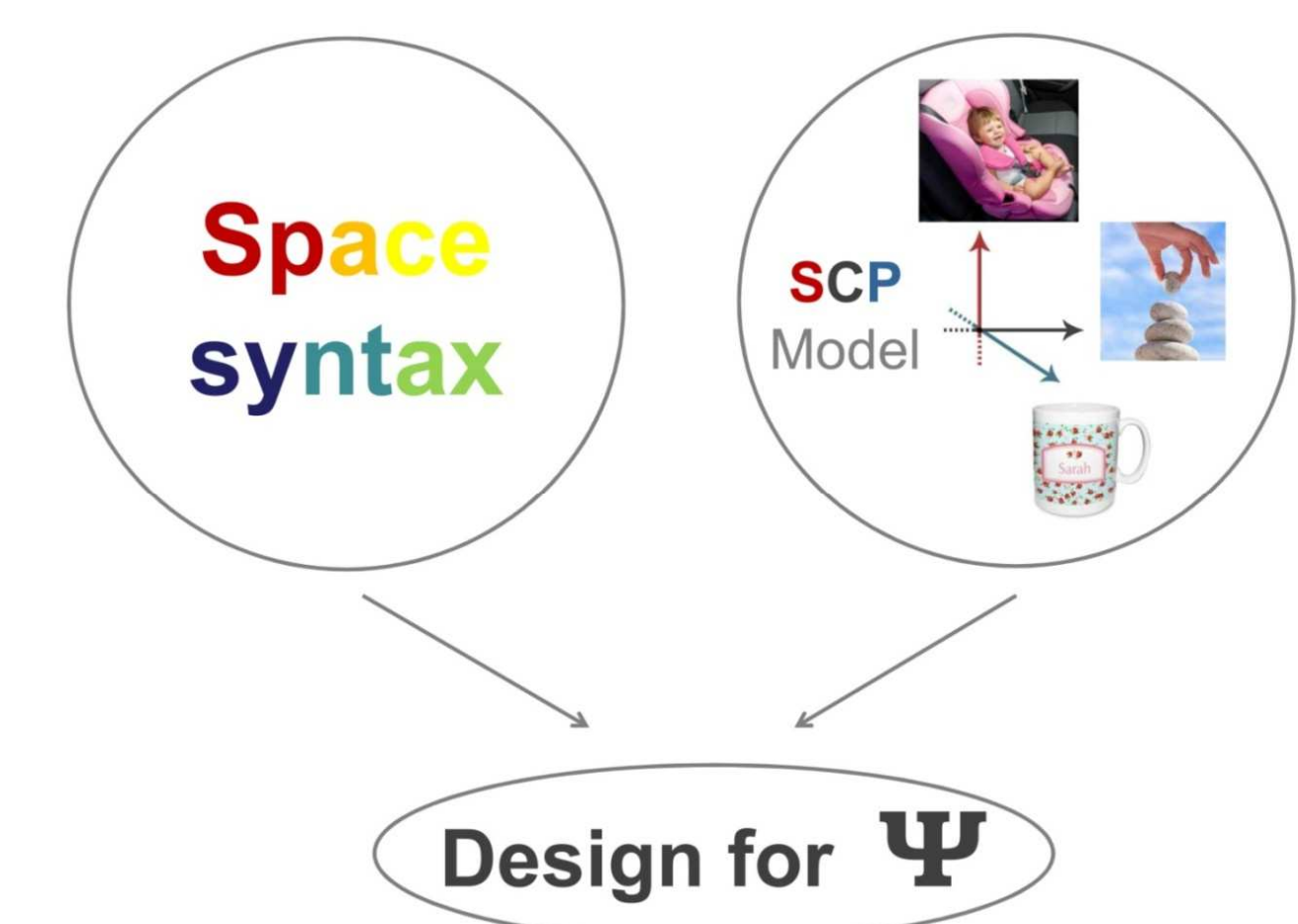
D : Domestic
I : Institutional

Conclusions and Implications

The research exposed the inadequacies of normalisation theory as disabling the satisfaction of all spectra of service users’ needs. Instead, a fit for purpose environment proved more therapeutic.

The research benefits designers as they can have scientific references instead of assumptions as the basis of their plans, the providers of care as inadequate buildings increase the cost of care considerably, service users as they achieve a better quality of life, staff as their burnout reduces and most of all European society as enabling environments for mental health increase social integration.

Finally, the research generated an area for future investigation: **the social complexity between mental health buildings and institutionalisation.** The juxtaposition of the psychosocial analysis of the psychiatric space (as explored by the SCP model) and the social logic of psychiatric space (as explored by SPACE SYNTAX) is the main research question of the PEMETH research project that is currently running at the Bartlett School of Architecture (UCL).



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Acknowledgements and links

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For future information on the progress of PEMETH, one could  the PEMETH project on Facebook (under the title «Design for Mental Health»)

