AN APPRAISAL OF HOUSING SATISFACTION IN SOUTH AFRICA LOW INCOME HOUSING SCHEME

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Abstract
Post-occupancy evaluation techniques have been developed to provide a means for evaluating occupant responses to changes in an environment and linking this response to physical measures of that environment. POE has been used to evaluate the performance of buildings after they have been built and occupied for some time. This paper presents findings on the social and physical factors which influence residential satisfaction in four different government Housing Subsidy locations in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. Data obtained from the occupant survey were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics. Findings arising from the survey revealed that the respondents were satisfied with their overall housing situation, but had complaints about certain aspects of the housing unit. However, the respondents informed that most of their housing needs were not being met. Also, a comparison is also made of the perceived factors of dissatisfaction amongst the housing subsidy occupants. It is recommended that a wider systematic coverage of the subject through investigation and diagnostic POE and occupants’ need assessment should be carried out in housing subsidy schemes in South Africa.

Keywords
Post occupancy evaluation, housing satisfaction, housing subsidy, Government policy

INTRODUCTION

The way a building functions when it is used is essential for both whether or not it is regarded as a success and constitutes an asset for its owners and occupants (Lu, 1999). A systematic evaluation of buildings in use is an effective way to produce this knowledge in relation to the planning of new buildings and not least for the development and change of existing buildings that are not satisfactory to the occupants (Blakstad et al., 2010). However, there are many concepts, definitions and methods that are relevant to a building’s quality, standard and condition. Most of these are associated primarily with a building as a physical object and not with its usability. An important approach to usability of building is that a building in itself has no value, but has value only when it is used and satisfies the occupants.

Universally there are growing efforts to undertake the appraisal of occupied buildings in response to the quest for more efficient buildings to meet occupants’ satisfaction and sustainability challenges. This is because sustainable development is a primary concern to the present world and it formed the main theme of the report “Our