

Public Policy Research on Social Sustainability through Well-being Design - An Evaluation of Public and Transitional Housing for Hong Kong's Long Term Social Sustainability and Urban Inclusion

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Abstract

Hong Kong is characterized by a hyper-dense urban morphology where land scarcity and high population concentrations necessitate a compact, vertical living model. Within this challenging environment, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) plays a pivotal role, managing an extensive portfolio that provides affordable accommodation for approximately half of the city's population. While historical focus has remained on supply volume and spatial efficiency, the 2024 Chief Executive's Policy Address signals a strategic shift toward qualitative improvements through the introduction of the "Well-being Design Guide." This research responds to this policy evolution by proposing a systematic Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) of Transitional Housing (TH) and Public Rental Housing (PRH) projects.

The primary objective of this study is to empirically evaluate the efficacy of the "Well-being Design Guide" in enhancing resident satisfaction and social sustainability. By investigating key dimensions such as age-friendliness, community connectivity, and biophilic "green living" elements, the research seeks to determine how architectural interventions translate into perceived quality of life. This is particularly salient for Transitional Housing and the burgeoning Light Public Housing (LPH) initiatives; although intended as short-term relief, the social sustainability of these environments is crucial for fostering mental resilience and social cohesion among vulnerable cohorts.

Methodologically, this research adopts a robust mixed-methods approach to bridge the gap between architectural intent and resident experience. The framework integrates the Fuzzy Delphi Method and the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) to establish a weighted hierarchical criteria index, supplemented by large-scale questionnaire surveys and focus group discussions. This multi-dimensional analysis investigates how residents across diverse housing typologies respond to specific well-being measures, providing a scientific basis for prioritizing design interventions.

The findings will offer evidence-based insights to inform the Housing Bureau's long-term housing strategy. In the short term, the proposed POE framework provides a rigorous diagnostic tool for refining current LPH and PRH developments. In the long term, the research contributes to the discourse on high-density social sustainability, empowering policymakers to transcend functionalist paradigms and implement design standards that fundamentally enhance the standard of living for Hong Kong's public housing residents.

Keywords

Social Sustainability, Hong Kong Housing Authority, Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE), Well-being Design, High-Density Urbanism, Public Policy.