

EXPLORING THEORIES OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN HOUSING RESEARCH

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The purpose of this study was to review theories used in housing research over the time period from 1989 through 1999. Articles published in *Housing and Society*, *Environment and Behavior*, and *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal* were examined. Of the 115 articles identified, 73% cited theory. Thirty-four theories were reviewed in this research. Theory plays an essential role in housing research as it guides the development of research questions, selection of methodologies, and interpretation of results. Most importantly, the utilization of theory is necessary for the advancement of knowledge in housing.

RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION OF OLDER ADULTS IN AGE-SEGREGATED FACILITIES

Sandra G. Reynolds and Julia O. Beamish

The purpose of this study was to investigate the residential satisfaction of town home residents of an independent living facility. Twenty-one residents of a private-pay retirement facility with an assisted living facility on site participated in focus groups to explore themes of residential satisfaction. Seventy-nine residents responded to a follow-up mail survey. Results show that residents expected safe and supportive environments and stability in the environments they had chosen. These older residents valued good design and construction, friendly neighbors, privacy, efficient handling of maintenance concerns, and accessible management. The residents were most satisfied with neighborhood and housing characteristics and least satisfied with maintenance and management. Residents of nonsubsidized housing, who have more housing choices, may have high expectations of quality and maintenance. Managers should be aware of residents' expectations of responsiveness and friendliness. Loss of control to management may be an ongoing concern.

AMERICA'S CAPITAL AS THE CLASSROOM

Anne L. Sweaney and Teresa A. Mauldin

Washington, DC, has been the site of a course offered by the Department of Housing and Consumer Economics, University of Georgia, since 1991. This article describes the development of the off-site course, course mechanics, examples of activities, and considerations for faculty who may wish to develop a similar course. Student comments about the course have been positive, reinforcing the advantages of providing students with first-hand experiences of housing and consumer economics issues.

ENERGY STAR: INTRODUCING A NEW COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

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In 2002 the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service entered into a partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to help educate consumers about Energy Star. Energy Star is a label that identifies energy-efficient products, and one of its associated educational programs is designed to deliver information and tools to consumers so they can select energy-efficient solutions for their housing. This article describes Energy Star and the activities of Cooperative Extension offices in 17 states to promote the Energy Star program. These activities included the mailing of Energy Star brochures and other energy conservation materials to county Extension educators, the creation of a poster, and the development of a web site. Future plans of the partnership, including evaluation, are discussed.

HOME ENVIRONMENTS AND ALLERGEN AVOIDANCE PRACTICES IN A HOT, HUMID CLIMATE

Benjamas Kutintara and Kathleen R. Parrott

The purpose of this research was to examine home conditions, housing satisfaction, and allergen avoidance practices of people with allergic rhinitis, focusing on female patients who lived in an urban area in a hot, humid climate. The Morris and Winter theory of housing adjustment provided the theoretical base. A sample of 41 female allergy patients aged 20 to 77 years completed a screening questionnaire and an in-depth questionnaire. Dwellings were visited to conduct home observations and to take photos. Dust mite allergens were reported as the most common allergy triggers. Presence of cockroaches, furry pets, molds in bathrooms, and molds in kitchens were the most common problematic home conditions. Allergen avoidance practices were not followed regularly, such as using allergen-proof pillowcases and sheets, washing bedding in hot water, and using an exhaust fan. Respondents who received recommendations from doctors were most likely to follow allergen avoidance practices. There was a significant negative relationship between problematic home conditions and housing satisfaction in terms of health issues. A significant negative relationship between age and allergen avoidance practices was also found. Obstacles that prevented respondents from improving their homes in order to avoid allergens included the cost of products and emotional attachment to pets.

FINANCIAL PROFILE OF FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS IN NORTHERN UTAH

Lucy Delgadillo

Using a structured survey, the purpose of this study was to identify the benefits of First Time Home Buyer Workshops in Northern Utah, identify approaches used by workshop participants to locate and purchase a home, identify types of mortgage loans used by new homeowners, and build and test an empirical model of financial stability among new homeowners. The results of this research show that more than one-half of the participants were experiencing some kind of financial strain at least in the short term, as measured by a financial index. Many first time home buyers were applying up to 50% of their income to their regular mortgage payments and had no savings to cover maintenance, emergencies, or repair costs for their newly purchased homes.

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COMMENTARY ON UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Roberta Null

This commentary examined the development of the universal design concept, including the adoption of the seven principles of universal design. Family and consumer sciences professionals, many being Housing Education and Research Association members, played important roles in this development with educational demonstration projects. The utilization of environmental programming and the importance of universal design in meeting the needs of all users as the American population ages were also discussed.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN: CLARIFYING A COMMON VOCABULARY

Carolyn J. Deardorff and Craig Birdsong

The topic of universal design has become more prevalent in the educational and consumer literature over the last decade. Some of this literature utilizes multiple terms synonymously with universal design. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of experts in universal design regarding definitions of universal design and related terminology. Questionnaires were mailed to 55 experts in the field of universal design. These sample members were current and former members of the National Advisory Council at the Center for Universal Design, other leaders in universal design organizations, and authors located in the literature. Twenty-three useable questionnaires were returned. The findings revealed a general sense of agreement with the most prevalent definition of universal design. Several other terms had a stronger degree of agreement than others. Experts' written comments noted the overlap or repetitive nature of terms. Dictionaries were used for further clarification. As a result this research clarified a common terminology by revising two definitions, eliminating one term and its definition, and illustrating through a new model the interrelationships among terms.

EFFECTS OF FUNCTIONAL DISABILITY, PERSONAL ASSISTANCE, AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT FEATURES ON THE RELOCATION OF OLDER PERSONS

Kyung Sook June

Functional ability is an important criterion to predict the capability of older persons to maintain their independent living. This study focused on the effects of built environment features and personal assistance to ameliorate functional disability and reduce the likelihood of relocation. Using longitudinal data from the Asset and Health Dynamics among the Oldest Old survey, relocation behaviors were analyzed for 6,225 respondents aged 70 and older. Findings indicated that disability in basic activities of daily living or in lower body activities among older persons increased the likelihood of their entrance into an institutional setting. However, they were less likely to enter an institution when their homes were equipped with built environment features such as ramps, railings, or grab-bars. Personal assistance did not significantly reduce the likelihood of a residential move or institutionalization for those with a disability in basic activities of daily living.

HOUSING BOOTH AT THE REALITY STORE: A COMMON GOAL OF HOUSING EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Carla C. Earhart

Reality Store is a national project of the Business and Professional Women's organization with the purpose of creating opportunities for middle school and/or high school students to experience "reality" for a few hours. Housing faculty and students at Ball State University participated in the event by developing and hosting a housing education booth for the Reality Store held for 160 eighth graders at an area middle school. Participating in such an event proved to be beneficial to all those involved and provided momentum for participating in other similar events in the future.

FUNCTIONAL DISTANCE EFFECT ON SOCIAL INTERACTIONS IN MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING IN JORDAN

Majd Al-Homoud

A variety of studies of residential settings have focused on social interactions as they influence the relationship between activity patterns and environmental satisfaction. It has been shown that differences in distance of available site functions may be effective in determining different patterns of interactions in residential settings. This study examined the relationship between social interaction and functional distance. The total sample size was 200 multi-family householders from the Al-Rawda Housing Complex in the city of Amman, Jordan. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire. Results of the study revealed that the theoretical functional distance affects the different patterns of social interaction. Distance from the local mosque was an important motivator for social interaction, as residents made frequent trips to this place of worship. Additionally, distance from children's play areas was an important motivator for social interaction. Neighborhood entrance and open spaces differentially affected social interaction. Floor level, housing unit area, and width and length of corridor were other important motivators of social interaction.

HOW ASSESSED VALUES VARY BETWEEN MANUFACTURED AND SITE-BUILT HOUSES

John I. Gilderbloom and William P. Friedlander

This study examined the impact of model upscale manufactured housing ordinances that mandate engineering, design, and site guidelines so that the housing can be integrated into existing neighborhoods. Comparisons included assessed values of each type of unit, effects of manufactured units on the value of adjacent or nearby site-built units, and the amenities afforded by each type. Generally, site-built units had higher assessed values than manufactured units. However manufactured units, with the addition of a greater number of amenities, raised their assessed values but not as much as adjacent site-built units.