

Understanding Co-Living Experience through University Residential Halls - A Pilot Study

Authors : Michelle W. T. Cheng, Yau Y.

Abstract : Hong Kong continues to be ranked as the least affordable housing market in the world, making co-living a feasible alternative in this high-density city. Although the number of co-living residences has increased in Hong Kong, co-living as a housing typology is still a new concept for many. Little research has been conducted on this new housing typology, let alone the co-living experience. To address this gap, this study targeted student residents in university residential halls as it is a more controlled environment (e.g., with established rules and guidelines regarding the use of communal facilities and housing management) for studying co-living experiences in Hong Kong. To date, no research study has systematically identified anti-social behavior (ASB) in co-living spaces. Since ASB can be influenced by factors such as social norms and individual interpretation, it has an elastic definition that results in different levels of acceptance. Unlike other types of housing, co-living spaces can be potentially more influenced by the neighborhood as residents share more time and space. As a pilot study, this research targeted one university residential hall to examine student co-living experiences. To clarify, the research question is focused on identifying the social factors that impact the residential satisfaction of those who co-living in residential halls. Quantitative data (n=100) were collected via a structured questionnaire to measure the residential environment, including ASB, social neighboring, community attachment, and perceived hall management efficacy. The survey was distributed at the end of the academic year to ensure that respondents had at least one year of first-hand experience living in a co-living space. To gather qualitative data, follow-up focus group interviews were conducted with 16 participants who completed the survey. The semi-structured interviews aimed to elicit the participants' perspectives on their co-living experience. Through analyzing their co-living experiences, the researcher identified factors that affected their residential satisfaction and provided recommendations to enhance their co-living experience.

Keywords : co-living, university residential hall, anti-social behaviour, neighbour relationship, community attachment

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