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ASSESSING BUILDING PERFORMANCE: ITS EVOLUTION FROM POST-OCCUPANCY EVALUATION

Wolfgang F.E. Preiser, Jack L. Nasar

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Abstract

This article chronicles the evolution of the field of postoccupancy evaluation and visual quality (aesthetic) programming and evaluation from their origins in the 1960s, and describes their transformation into current developments in systematic building performance and visual quality assessments. Major components of post-occupancy evaluations are highlighted, and examples of outcomes presented. This consumer-oriented approach is part of a new democratic paradigm embodying autonomy, self-organization, ecology, sustainability, adaptation, and continuous improvement. Methods range from qualitative self-reports of likes and dislikes to quantitative multivariate analyses, from verbal scales to observations of use, and last but not least, expert judgments. The paper discusses questions about the future of this field, its viability, cost-effectiveness, and benefits for all stakeholders. It concludes with the examination of a recent project, reported in the book *Designing for Designers* that used distributed technology to systematically evaluate the performance of 17 contemporary architecture school buildings from around the world. The approach is discussed, as well as methods, lessons learned, and ways in which the methodology and findings apply to other kinds of facilities and future developments in the field.

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Keywords

Building performance evaluation; environmental aesthetics; post-occupancy evaluation; performance concept; visual quality programming; POE training workshop

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