END-USER PERSPECTIVES ON WOOD IN HOUSING

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AGENDA

CONSUMER MYTHS
In construction industry

CONSUMER STUDY
Case & data

END-USERS & WOOD IN HOUSING
Reservations & Positive associations
Communication & End-user inclusion
CONSUMER MYTHS

The assumptions of the actors in construction industry about consumers and their needs

Future resident impossible to identify
Consumers are conservative
Consumers lack designer competence
Living in rental is secondary
Less modification possibilities in multistorey buildings
No added value in differentiation of housing

(Rask et al. 2008, 41)
CASE & DATA

• Wooden residential building (2-storey balcony access house)
  – New residential area
  – Characteristics: outdoor activities (nature), kindergarten, city-center by foot
  – Some of the apartments equipped with designated yard

• Qualitative consumer interviews (Katri Palonen)
  – 7 interviews: 5 female, 2 male, age 28-58
  – All interviewees lived nearby (<5 km)
END-USER PERSPECTIVES (1/3)

• Fire resistance, durability, stability (Gold ja Rubik 2009, 303)

"I’ve been wondering whether the house is as durable as the stone high-rise, and also I’m little concerned about the fire safety.” - Consumer 4
END-USER PERSPECTIVES (2/3)

- Sensitivity for moisture and soft wood
  - Wood is not wanted in (wet) sanitary facilities
  - Fear of mould – issues of old wooden houses scare
  - Also skeptical of durability on "heavy-use" surfaces (e.g. cleaning and cooking)
• End-users don’t know wood well – prejudices remain (Wang ym. 2014, 350)

"I don’t know at all which good technical qualities it has compared to concrete. That I know, that wooden buildings tend to be colder, their energy class is not so good, but other than that I can’t say.” Consumer 1
POSITIVE ASSOCIATIONS TOWARDS WOOD

• Well-being, aesthetics, eco-friendliness

"It is a plus that it is not a stone monster. This I realised only later that it is a really great thing." – Consumer 3

"Wood is like clean, soft, and quiet, atmospheric, such things belong to it." – Consumer 2

• Wooden home: cozy, ecological, beautiful (Karjalainen 2002)

• Wood is considered domestic material
PRICE IS RELATIVE…
TO QUALITIES

”A: it depends how the wood is used, if it has some better qualities than concrete, then I could pay [more than from concrete].” – Consumer 5

”A: I would probably figure out why it is more expensive, I would need some expert view, I don’t understand these myself, but if it would be well argued, and it wouldn’t be too expensive, (…). If someone who understand and is not biased would say that it is worth to buy, (…), then yes.

Q: What are the qualities that could promote wood?

A: Probably mainly longer life of less need to renovate, in the long run, to make it worth.” - Consumer 6
"Then the constructor sent huge amount, 90 pages, of all kind of construction technical details, what kind of screws they’ve used and so on. I didn’t want to know so much about the screws, but rather clearly said these are the foundations, and these are the walls, (…) Or I think it was confusing.” - Consumer 5
TURNING APARTMENT INTO A HOME

• Construction business makes apartments – end-users make homes

• Interior and exterior design turns an apartment into a home

"An interior designer had planned the color schemes and they were good enough for me.” - Consumer 1

"To turn it [yard] into an extra living room, maybe with wood materials some benches and flower arrangements. (...) home is more than the apartment, indoors.” - Consumer 5
...IS A TWO-WAY PROCESS

"I would have rather chosen own color on the wall, not that cold white (...) Because white is, there is tens of different shades of white and it might look dull or kind of warm or whatever. It’s this trend now, but (...) I don’t want any grey. I would like to have some other colors. Might be that my apartment becomes a happier place still.” - Consumer 5

- Living with family - remember pets:

  "...we chose stove in the changes, for example, by the criteria that the dogs cannot scrub them.”
  - Consumer 3
• Construction industry: focus from the process to the end result (Karjalainen 2002, 387–388)
• Post-purchase services (also Autio ym. 2011, 25)
  • Communicate:
    – Share clear, illustrative information with consumers (e.g. progress reports, pictures)
    – Promote qualities of wood (e.g. expert views)
  • Listen & include:
    – Offer individual solutions for interior and furniture design
    – Involve residents in milieu planning
THANK YOU!


