ABSTRACT

This study explored a totally new area of research, by carrying out a behaviours study of how parents with children are negotiating with our built environment, specifically on escalators usage. Taking the major role in caring for children and old people who cannot go so fast or so far, parents are often excluded or discouraged from using public buildings and spaces.

Using a mixed method design of having two phases, namely the observational research phase and survey research phase, this research attempted to investigate how young families negotiate with these difficult/less safe element in the internal built environment (escalators), the reasons behind them and the possible area of improvements. This study aims to build a family-friendly environment through improving escalator safeness.

In the observational research phase, 200 samples of the targeted group is observed in 5 shopping centers as questions are gathered from their behaviours. The answers are then obtained through the survey research phase where 300 samples are obtained through a cluster sampling procedure. In addition, opinions from management teams and escalator manufacturers are also seek.

The research findings conclude that escalator knowledge of parents are seriously lacking. Although parents do recognize escalator as a ‘dangerous’ element to themselves and their families, little efforts is put in to practice extra care during the ride even with the guidance of instruction notices. Reasons gathered include finding it too troublesome and unnecessary, too self-confidents and underestimating the danger of the situation.

With a majority of them feeling that more attention should be given regarding the safe use of escalators in order to improve the current state of environment, organization of safety campaigns and creating safety awareness through proper channels are proposed. Improvement in the designs such as having larger holding space and adequate signboards were also mentioned.