ABSTRACT

Without the provision of efficient and useable accessible toilets, people with disabilities cannot carry out their intended activities over a long period of time in public buildings. Not only will these force them to shy away from these public places, but also to the able-bodied accompanying them.

This dissertation attempts to evaluate the design of accessible toilets in fifty public buildings, based largely on the minimum requirements dictated in the Code on Barrier-free Accessibility in Buildings 1995. From this evaluation, the usability of such toilets in meeting the needs of the wheelchair bound is determined, with further supporting evidence provided from the users themselves, through a simple survey.

The case studies reveal that many accessible toilets in public buildings deviate in one way or another from the requirements of the Code. This is attributed to the lack of understanding on the part of the Designers behind the rationale of such requirements and also lack of consideration on their part.

The users revealed that certain deviations away from the Code are acceptable, but also highlighted that certain washroom accessories and layout do require improvements and changes to be made to the Code’s requirements, hence suggesting that more design attention is needed to improve the toilets’ usability. Users also cited recommendations that can be made to allow the toilets to be utilised in a less ‘stressful’ manner.