

Review of: "Operating status of public toilets in the Hutong neighborhoods of Beijing: An empirical study"

Dan Wu¹, Tai Pong Lam²

¹ London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, University of London

² University of Hong Kong

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Overall this is a well-written and interesting paper to read. We would like to just share a few thoughts for further discussion.

1. The authors mentioned in the introduction that 'In 2003, 658 courtyard dwellings (siheyuan) were selected from thousands of candidates for protection' and in 2015, the country started the Toilet Revolution which did not include most of Hutong neighborhoods. Out of curiosity, we wonder how representative the Hutong neighborhoods are of the country and what size of the Beijing population would be affected by not upgrading public toilets in Hutong neighborhoods to protect historical heritage. Despite the unique cultural construction in the Chinese setting, the findings and sub-systems created in the study however can still shed light on public toilet renovations and how to assess the quality of public toilets.
2. We believe that the findings have important implications for improving various aspects of public toilets in Hutong neighborhoods. But we also wonder what would be the solution of solving these identified issues, and in the meantime, preserving the Hutong cultural heritage. How big of a role that public toilets would play in heritage protection and what are the trade-offs for not renovating public toilets from the population health point of view?
3. We also had a couple of questions about the fault probabilities. The authors identified the fault probabilities of the four subsystems as '0.79, 0.96, 0.96, and 0'. We are not quite sure if we understand what these scores actually mean as we don't seem to see a clarification for that in the paper. Then, we wanted to ask about the potential streamlined application and wider use of this fault probability calculation system. Because these measures were developed based on a set of standard indicators established by the country, is it possible to create a self-instructed website for assessing public toilets in other places? This would hold a huge potential of applying the system in other parts of the country as well as in other low- and middle-income countries in the world.