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PROBLEMS AND DISSATISFACTIONS ENCOUNTERED BY FAMILIES

IN AN INDIAN HOUSING PROJECT

by

Al Jean Snow

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Home Economics and Consumer Education

Approved:

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Credit for the origin of this study belongs to Edith Nyman who sparked in me an interest in research.

Thanks and grateful appreciation go to Jane McCullough who picked up the project at the midway point and patiently supervised and directed all of the writing herein. With her help I have come to realize what good research is all about.

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Al Jean Snow

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## ABSTRACT

Problems and Dissatisfactions Encountered by Families  
in an Indian Housing Project

by

Al Jean Snow, Master of Science

Utah State University, 1978

Major Professor: Jane McCullough

Department: Home Economics and Consumer Education

The problems and dissatisfactions experienced by thirty Ute Indian families as they relocated into new federally subsidized homes were studied. A researcher administered interview guide was developed which produced data that could be analyzed using descriptive statistics. Four recommendations to improve the relocation process in future housing projects were framed.

(52 pages)

## INTRODUCTION

### Statement of the Problem

America's affluence is not shared equally by all of its citizens. Living amongst the vast majority of Americans who enjoy a standard of living unequalled in the world's history are some 19.4 million poor or low-income families. In 1974 Troelstrup estimated that one in every eight Americans was living in poverty. The United States Department of Commerce (1974) defined poverty as an annual income of \$5,038 for a non-farm family of four.

In 1971 the U.S. Bureau of Census published estimates of the percentage of ethnic groups in the United States who were living in poverty. The ethnic group which had the highest percentage of families with an income below the poverty line was the American Indian. Eighty percent of Indian families on reservations were living in poverty compared to 33.6 percent of Black families, followed by 29.2 percent of Puerto Ricans and 28 percent of Mexican Americans. At the same time only 9.9 percent of the white population in America was living in low-income or poverty conditions.

One of the problems of low-income families is being forced to live in inadequate and substandard housing. This problem was recognized by the United States government as early as 1949 when it set the goal to provide adequate housing for every family in the United States (American Indian Policy Review Commission, 1977). In 1964 the Department of Housing and Urban Development was organized to encourage the orderly

growth and development of communities and coordinate Federal-State programs aimed at relieving congestion and eliminating slums (Wilhelms, Heimerl and Jelley, 1966).

In 1977 the Department of Housing and Urban Development (Senate Hearing, F.Y. 1977) estimated that seven million Americans were living in substandard housing. The features they noted as characteristic of substandard housing in their 1975 housing survey were no bathroom or a shared bathroom, plumbing in poor condition, a leaky roof, and overcrowded conditions. The survey further noted that housing costs were becoming a burden to many American households. Five million homeowners had mortgage payments in excess of twenty-five percent of their income, while ten and one-half million tenants paid more than twenty-five percent of their income for rent. It was estimated that sixty percent of America's families could not afford to buy a median-priced new home.

In an attempt to ease some housing problems the Department of Housing and Urban Development has sponsored modernization programs for existing housing units and construction of new units. A rather typical example of the new housing construction programs HUD is involved in is the project recently completed in the Fort Duchesne, Utah area for the Unita-Ouray Ute Indians. In early 1977 fifty federally subsidized new homes were built for families belonging to the tribe. Tribal leaders anticipate that similar building projects and other types of housing programs will continue as funds are made available.

Moving Indian families into new homes, however, may not be the whole answer to their housing problems. Morris (1974) found that Indians experienced housing problems as they moved from reservations into towns or cities because of a lack of experience in keeping up a house. If



the new homes have features that the families are not familiar with the items may be misused or not used at all.

When Heath (1974) studied federally initiated economic programs on the reservations across the United States, he found that programs worked best when they were in harmony with the need and goals of the people involved. A Cornell study (Fitchen, 1977) recommended that housing programs be designed on the basis of an understanding of the particular situation, needs, goals and adaptive patterns of the people involved.

As far as the researcher could determine the families for whom the Unita-Ou-ray homes were built were not consulted as to their goals, needs and wants. In a personal interview with the Assistant Regional Administrator, Office of Indian Programs for Region VIII (Hallett, 1977) it was indicated that the actual needs and preferences of the Indian families involved in the Fort Duchesne housing project were not surveyed or measured prior to the planning stages of the project.

How do the families in the Unita-Ou-ray project feel about their homes? What features were they prepared to use? What features do they actually use? What were the problems the families experienced as they moved? Could these problems have been reduced or eliminated by approaching the planning phase differently? Would the money have been better spent if the future residents had been included in the planning phases, or are the families satisfied with their homes?

#### The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine problems and dissatisfactions encountered by the Ute Indians in their new homes with a view to improved planning in future projects.

Objectives

I. To determine common problems and dissatisfactions associated with the relocation of the fifty Ute Indian families.

II. To develop recommendations to improve the relocation process in similar future Indian housing programs.

Definition of Terms

BIA Bureau of Indian Affairs

HUD Department of Housing and Urban Development

IHA Indian Housing Authority

PHA Public Housing Authority

UIHA Ute Indian Housing Authority

Standard features. The equipment and features that were installed in each of the housing units in the particular housing project being studied, namely; radiant heat, humidistat, electric range and a frost free refrigerator freezer.

Relocation process. The process, beginning with the initial planning of the homes, the construction of the units, moving the families into the homes and the families becoming familiar with the homes.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Housing for the Disadvantaged

In defining housing situations for the poor and disadvantaged it becomes necessary to establish some housing standards or norms. . . . .  
Montgomery (1974, p. 11) defined the home as "the hub of a family's private world," and as a "place to shed the stresses of the world." According to Montgomery there are five housing related needs that are common to people of all cultures. He listed these as: a sense of place, relatedness, privacy, psychological stimulation and creativity. Winters and Morris (1977, p. 8) classified family needs in a slightly different way. They listed five categories of housing needs as; "space, structure type, tenure, quality and neighborhood." Although most Americans seem to accept and abide by cultural privacy norms, Winters and Morris found it more difficult for low income families to practice these rules. "Poor families, minority families and almost all cultural and ethnic groups in the United States seem to espouse and try to adhere to similar rules; however, they obviously are not all able to meet the requirements of those rules."

Stenlieb (1973, p. 11) believes that in the 1970's we have been able to shift the emphasis from "improving the absolute quality of housing -- the reduction of very severe overcrowding, providing more adequate toilet facilities and the like--to one of comparative quality of housing."

From an anthropological perspective, Fitchen (1977, p. 7) dealt with some of the causes of poor housing. She stated, "It's important to

realize that people are well aware of the inadequacies of their housing, but feel they have to put up with such conditions because they cannot afford better. Money saved on housing is money earned towards other competing needs, and the most effective way to keep housing costs down is to accept inferior dwellings." Additionally, she feels that families often compromise their real desires for, "reality--bedraggled houses huddled along back roads does not represent the occupants' preference for slums and squalor but rather, their adjustment to poverty." (Fitchen, 1977, p. 8)

According to Human Ecology Report (1976, p. 14) present estimates say that "there are 23.1 million households that are housing poor." The editor of the above article quotes Gwen Bymers as saying,

The society that has successfully put most American adults on wheels, that has produced enough food to feed the nation and help other nations feed their people, that has even put some of its people on the moon, has not been able to provide adequate shelter for a significant portion of the population.

The disparity in housing is evidenced by the deprivations low-income families endure. Stenlieb (1973, p. 56) quotes a 1968 Health, Education and Welfare study saying "at least half of all assistance recipients live in housing that is deteriorated, dilapidated, unsafe, unsanitary and overcrowded." According to Grigsby and Rosenberg (1975, p. 31-32) "Low-income families are deprived with respect to housing in a number of different ways. Their homes are frequently in disrepair, as well as lacking in: space, privacy and ventilation; cooking, bathing and heating facilities." Further they feel that "These dimensions of housing needs are but a small subset of the total array of deprivations which low-income families must endure."

Because of the high percentage of reservation Indians who live in poverty, inadequate housing facilities are commonplace on reservations.

It has been calculated for example that 90% of the Indians live in substandard housing. But substandard, when applied to the reservation Indian, is actually a euphemism for a rural slum of shacks and one room huts. The wickiups of grass, log and canvas of the Apaches, the earth and log hogans of the Navajo, the sod igloos of the Pueblo Indians may house legends of enchantment, but the living conditions of the occupants are less than enchanting to Public Health Service Doctors. (Blaustein and Woock, 1968)

Although the statement was made ten years ago it is unlikely that great changes would have occurred.

#### Housing Programs for the Disadvantaged

Since its inception in 1964 the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been the governmental agency responsible for responding to the housing needs of our rapidly urbanizing American population. HUD programs that are currently active and available for low and middle income families seem to generally fall into two categories, home ownership for low income families and low income rental assistance.

(Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977a)

Home-ownership programs. Under the home-ownership category there are basically seven programs that apply directly to low income families. These programs are (1) Home Ownership Assistance for Low and Moderate Income Families (Revised Section 235), (2) Home Ownership for Low and Moderate Income Families, (3) Housing in Declining Neighborhoods, (4) Special Credit Risks, (5) Home Owner's Emergency Relief, (6) Mobile Homes (Title 1), (7) Indian Housing.

There are several features that are common to a majority of the home ownership programs. First is the financial aspect. According to the stipulations of these programs the Department of Housing and Urban

Development works with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to insure mortgages on the housing units involved. Additionally, funds can be made available to local housing authorities for the construction or rehabilitation of existing units.

Some features are unique to individual programs. These include age of neighborhood, size of dwelling, credit record and credit rating of the borrower and the urgency of need. One ownership assistance program is designed to increase housing on reservations. This program, called Mutual-Help housing, allows the owner-occupant to earn equity in the home by contributing the building site, the materials, labor and/or cash toward the home's construction. Under this system the occupant is responsible for maintenance of the unit.

Rental programs. Currently the Department of Housing and Urban Development sponsors three programs to provide rental facilities specifically for Indian reservations. The programs available are (1) Low Income Rental Assistance (Section 8), (2) Low Rent Leased Public Housing (Section 23), and (3) Low Income Public Housing.

The basic similarity among all of the rental programs is the provision allowing the Department of Housing and Urban Development to make up the difference between what the low income person is able to pay, not to exceed 20-25% of his adjusted monthly income, and the fair market rent cost for adequate housing.

The major difference among the existing programs is the way the housing is obtained. Under a Rental Assistance program the low income person selects housing that meets certain Housing and Urban Development standards of safety and sanitation as well as being in the range of fair

market rent as determined by the department. The difference between what the person can afford to pay for rent and the actual rent is then made up by the department.

In low rent leased public housing, the Department of Housing and Urban Development pays annual contributions directly to local housing agencies. These agencies then lease decent private units to low income families and offer them at rent prices the family can afford.

The third method of providing low rent units comes under Low Income Public Housing. With this program local housing agencies develop and operate low rent public housing projects. Several different methods are used to produce the housing. Under a conventional bid system the local public housing agency (PHA) acts as its own developer. They acquire sites, draw up their own architectural plans and then advertise for competitive bids for construction. Under a "Turnkey" program the PHA invites private developers to submit proposals. They select the best bid and agree to buy the project upon completion. A local PHA may acquire from the private market, existing housing, whether or not the housing has been rehabilitated.

These same methods of providing rental units can be used by Indian Housing Authorities on reservations. (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977a)

#### Housing Programs for Indians

Some 25 years after the 1937 Housing Act established public housing programs for the United States, it was expanded to specifically include American Indians. In 1961-1962, an amendment to the 1937 law determined that "Indian Tribes had legal authority to establish, under Indian law, tribal housing authorities which could develop and operate low-rent public

housing projects." (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 1975 p. 3) This ruling allowed those tribal organizations, who under their individual constitutions had established the legislative power to provide for health, safety, peace and morals on the reservation, to function as a legislative body in establishing Indian Housing Authorities (IHA). (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 1975)

The Indian housing authorities have been an important element in Indian housing because they serve as the auxiliary to administer and deliver the three Housing and Urban Development public housing programs that constitute the majority of the Indian housing effort. The three programs are Low-Rent Public Housing, Mutual-Help Homeownership and Turnkey III Homeownership. (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b)

Low-rent housing. This program is primarily the same for Indians as for non-Indians. The rental units constructed under this program can be either houses or apartments. If the units are constructed in the "conventional" way, they are built by a contractor under contract with the local Indian Housing Authority. The IHA then makes units available to tenants whose incomes fall within a prescribed limit in relation to the local median income. Rent is collected on the units, although a HUD operating subsidy is available to the IHA to help in extreme poverty cases when a family is unable to make the payment. (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b)

Mutual-help homeownership program. This program was established in 1964 by HUD in conjunction with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to provide housing for families who could not afford even low-rent public housing,



as well as to provide a home ownership option to families. This program provides a "strong incentive for participants to aid in the building and maintenance of their own homes." (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 1975 p. 5) Under this program either the participant or the tribe furnishes the land. The homebuyer's equity, in amounts approved by HUD is supplied through an agreement to furnish labor on the housing unit. Once the units are built, homebuyers are "responsible for the maintenance and utility costs for the unit and pay a fee for the operation and administration of the tribal housing authority." (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 1975 p. 5) The owner makes a monthly house payment, based on income, to increase his equity in the house.

Under the Mutual-Help housing program there are three basic arrangements for financing construction. These programs include conventional, semi-turnkey and full turnkey. Under the conventional system HUD supplies the local IHA with financial assistance for building materials and specialized labor. The participants then supply their own labor as down payment and maintenance as part of each monthly payment. In the semi-turnkey mutual help, the local IHA contracts part of the construction with a contractor. Then under supervision, the homebuyer completes the remainder of the housing construction as his down payment and equity. In a full turnkey mutual help program the IHA contracts out the entire job of construction to a contractor, who uses the labor of the homebuyer. (Peake, 1977)

Turnkey III homeownership program. This program was initiated by HUD in 1968 and was later expanded to include Indian Reservations. Under

this program homebuyers obtain equity in an existing home by agreeing to maintain the home. (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b) Equity also accrues through "payments which will produce an average monthly payment at least 10 percent in excess of an established 'breakeven amount.'" (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 1975 p. 6) Break even amounts are determined by the IHA to include amounts due to home ownership reserve, operating reserve and non-routine maintenance reserve.

#### Problems of Indian Housing Programs

The problems encountered with the housing programs available to Indian families seem to fall into four categories: (1) administrative problems, (2) cost of construction and related expenses, (3) project completion and quality and (4) failure to consider family needs. A review of the literature showed these problems to be deterrents to achieving standard housing for Indians in most areas of the United States.

Administrative problems. One of the most serious problems the housing programs for Indians face is that "there does not exist a coordinated administrative structure for delivery of these services. Responsibility for housing, in particular is spread across many agencies which each have their own goals, budget and planning cycles and administrative structures." (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b p. 7-8) There are three agencies working with housing, each with its own areas of responsibility. They are Housing and Urban Development (HUD), construction of dwellings; Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), roadways to each dwelling unit; and Indian Housing Authority (IHA), providing water and sewage lines. Despite many attempts to coordinate efforts,

each agency functions primarily independent of the others. This "lack of coordination leads to a variety of delivery problems." (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b p. 7-8) Delivery problems include no lead agency, lack of BIA and IHA support services and the need to deal with multiple agencies in order to obtain complete service and information.

Frustration with the inefficiency of this program was expressed by Loie Brooks, Executive Director of the National American Indian Housing Council. "The problems that we in Indian housing must cope with are concerned more with bureaucratic red tape than with discrimination." (Brooks, 1977 p. 292)

Ormiston (1977 p. 294) suggested that the problem of managing and enforcing policy was not just a federal government problem.

Indian housing authorities have their own set of rules and regulations promulgated by HUD. Contributing to enforcement problems are the overlapping operations of other federal agencies that fund social programs within the jurisdiction of the individual tribes. As a result, Indian housing programs have traditionally been a difficult administrative responsibility for HUD.

Cost. High development costs have also caused problems for the Department of Housing and Urban Development in their efforts to provide adequate housing on the reservation. "The total development cost of HUD Indian housing units appears to be substantially higher than the cost of other new housing construction." (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b p. 10) As an example, HUD (1977b) estimated that the cost of an Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) housing unit built on a reservation in fiscal year 1976 was \$38,000 compared with an average cost of \$25,000 for an ACC public housing unit built elsewhere during the same time period.

It is not definitely known why costs have been so high but several possible reasons have been suggested by HUD. These included such things as Minimum Property Standards. These standards allowed units to be built in harmony with cultural background. "Indian homes, for example, traditionally have fireplaces." (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b p. 12) Additions allowed because of the Minimum Property Standards, could increase the cost of building a culturally responsive home significantly. Davis-Bacon Standards provided that reservation Indians working on Mutual-Help housing be compensated at a journeyman's pay level regardless of whether their skills were at that level. Indian Preference Contracting has also had an influence on development costs. This allows a Native contractor bidding as much as 15% higher than a non-Native to be given preference over a non-Native bid. The actual cost of constructing a particular unit type in areas available to Indians can be significantly higher because of such things as climatic conditions, remote locations, scattered sites, availability of materials and skilled labor, as well as local customs. The overall cost of developing the lot itself, has escalated because most of the less expensive lots have already been developed. Therefore lot preparation and utility development costs on project lots are higher than regular lot development costs. "It has been suggested that if all of the costs associated with putting an Indian unit in place were considered, the total cost per unit would exceed \$100,000." (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b p. 11)

Quality. High construction cost may not be completely indicative of quality. According to Ormiston (1977, p. 294) "investigations have been prompted by complaints about the quality of construction of many houses built under the auspices of the mutual-help programs." The Department

of Housing and Urban Development (1977b) reported that sometimes Indians assisting in construction of Mutual-Help homes lose interest in the project leaving much of the work to women, who are already committed to child care duties or lack the stamina to carry on the work. "This in turn, may result in poor quality units." (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b p. 19) Some Indian Housing Authorities have been accused of accepting improperly constructed units. These units tended to deteriorate more rapidly than others. "It has been suggested that a properly designed Indian housing unit is one which needs little or no maintenance. It is probable though, that such a design would conflict with other HUD standards and Indian needs." (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977b, p. 23)

Family needs. Another serious difficulty with Indian housing programs is their failure to look at the needs of the people they are dealing with, and failing to meet those needs. Montgomery and McCabe (1973, p. 2-3) suggested that failure or near failure of many government programs could be traced to the fact that they are "initiated and administered without benefit of research."

A different approach was suggested by the National Institute of Health Training Program at Cornell University (Fitchen, 1977). They suggested an approach that takes into account the situations, needs, goals and values of the families and provides options for them in their housing decisions. "Even when housing for low-income families has been studied, the emphasis has been on structural quality as opposed to individual and/or family needs." (McCray and Day, 1977, p. 244)

Heath (1974, p. 111) feels that in order for meaningful economic and social growth to take place on the reservation, "Indian communities

and their needs should be understood in terms of their history." One of the needs Brooks (1977, p. 292) listed as most important to the Indians is location of the housing. When location was not considered, Indian residents faced "all the complications of earning a living, obtaining utilities, transportation and all the other problems that exist in a rural setting."

Often as a consequence of disregarding the needs of Indian residents the situation described by Uriel Foa has occurred. He explained that relatively new housing projects have turned into slums "possibly because their dwellers were provided with houses, but not with self-pride and a sense of community." (Foa, 1971, p. 345)

#### Summary

Adequate and comfortable shelter that is in harmony with ones' needs, values and personal goals is important to consumers of all income levels. When important housing decisions are made by government agencies on behalf of the families, family and individual differences are often not taken into account. Such has been found to be the case so far in attempts to provide housing for Indian families living on reservations.

Data on Indians and reservation housing is inadequate, unreliable, incomplete and generally in conflict with other data. We have little or no information about our clients, nor do we have a good basis for estimating current or future need. (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1977, p. 34)

## METHODS OF PROCEDURE

Sample

In April of 1975 the Ute Indian Housing Authority, under the direction of the Department of Housing and Urban Development office in Denver, initiated a project to build fifty Mutual-Help homes for eligible members of the Ute Tribe. Eligibility was determined on the basis of tribal membership, need, sign up and attendance at 12-14 housing authority meetings.

Construction of the houses began in September 1976. They were completed in May of the following year. Five of the homes were ready for occupancy by December of 1976. The remaining families relocated between January and May of 1977.

The respondents for this research were all of the families who were participating in the housing project being studied and who were available and willing to participate. As the possible number of respondents was small it was decided to interview all of them.

Written permission to visit the families was obtained through the Ute Tribal Housing Authority Director, Tom Appaha. Arrangements were made with the project contractor to obtain a list of the families and their addresses. Original research plans included an interview with all fifty families participating in the project. However, three homes were unoccupied at the time the research was conducted, ten families were not home during the initial try to contact them nor during two subsequent

visits. Therefore it was possible to contact only thirty-seven families. Of the families contacted, seven declined to participate, leaving thirty families as subjects for the research project.

### Instrument

The data collection instrument was a four part, researcher designed, semi-structured interview guide. Selected demographic information, husbands', and wives' levels of education and number of children at home, was collected from the participants. The demographic data were collected in order to study possible relationships to problems encountered by the families resulting from moving to their new homes.

The first section of the interview guide dealt with problems they had with equipment that was standard in each home and required the owner to control or adjust in order to use it. This included the humidistat, electric heating system, electric range and frost free refrigerator-freezer.

Part two of the guide included questions about the participants' readiness to handle the financial aspects of homeownership. Questions were asked to determine if house payments, home owners insurance and utility bills were new experiences and were difficult to manage.

The questions in the third section concerned the purchase of new furnishings and equipment by the family and the difficulties encountered in making the purchases. Suggestions the family would make to someone else preparing for a similar experience were sought.

The concluding section of the interview guide was an open-end question designed to determine the most common problems experienced by the families in relocation into their new housing. The purpose of this



question was to obtain information that might be helpful to agencies planning a similar housing project.

#### Collection of Data

Visits with the thirty families were conducted during the summer of 1977. The building contractor agreed to let the researcher accompany him on a routine visit to the new home owners. The visit was designed to certify that workmen had added additional insulation to each home's ceiling. After checking on this matter and attending to any other problems or questions of the homeowners, the contractor introduced the researcher to the owners. It was felt that the contractor's presence added validity to the responses received because of the rapport he had established with the families. The study was introduced as a way to determine problems encountered and alleviate them in future projects. The researcher asked the questions and recorded the responses in order to further probe or clarify as necessary. The responses appeared candid, open and honest to the interviewer. Interviews ranged in length from thirty minutes to one hour.

#### Analysis

Questions 1 through 7 were used to measure the families' familiarity with the standard features of their homes and the degree of readiness to maintain and operate the home. Data from these questions were totaled to determine the number and percentage of families in each of the four categories: (1) Prepared/a new experience, (2) Prepared/not a new experience, (3) Unprepared/a new experience, (4) Unprepared/not a new experience. Comments of the participants were used to support and clarify

the results. Two additional questions were asked to determine what new furniture had been purchased as a result of moving into a new home and the difficulty encountered in making the purchases.

Data from question 10, which asked for the three most serious problems the family encountered in relocation, were the basis for the recommendations made under Objective II. Comments were analyzed to determine what changes could be recommended in the relocation process that might alleviate some of the problems and dissatisfactions of the families. Four recommendations were developed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present investigation was concerned with the housing problems and dissatisfactions experienced by fifty Ute Indian families who moved into Mutual-Help housing constructed on the Uinta-Ouray Reservation in Fort Duchesne, Utah. Additionally, it was concerned with framing recommendations, based on participants' comments, to help make the process easier for others involved in similar relocation.

### Description of Sample

The demographic data about the families were incomplete, perhaps because of the private nature of the respondents. Ute Indians are not always willing to share information about themselves with strangers. In response to question 1, how many children are at home, 2 out of 30 gave no reply, with 28 responding. The number of children at home ranged from zero to seven the average number being 2.3.

In response to a question about education levels the data was once again sketchy, with 13 out of 30 families giving no reply. The responses ranged from "some", meaning less than high school graduation, to completion of four years of college.

Objective 1. To determine common problems and dissatisfactions associated with relocating fifty selected Ute Indian families.

Question 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 were used to gather data for objective one. The possible answers to the questions were (1) Prepared/a new experience, (2) Prepared/not a new experience, (3) Unprepared/a new experience,

(4) Unprepared/not a new experience. Comments were solicited from the participants to add support to the findings.

Question 1. The question stated: When you moved into the new house how well were you prepared to use the humidistat?

Answers fell into three of the possible categories with category three being the most common response. (Table 1)

TABLE 1  
WHEN YOU MOVED INTO THE HOUSE WERE YOU  
PREPARED TO USE THE HUMIDISTAT?

	Number	Percent
1. Prepared/a new experience	3	10
2. Prepared/not a new experience	3	10
3. Unprepared/a new experience	20	67
4. Unprepared/not a new experience	0	0
No response	4	13
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>100</u>

Twenty-three of the 26 who responded to the question indicated that the use of the humidistat was a new experience. Twenty of the 23 felt it was an experience they were not prepared to handle. Comments made by the respondents further support the idea that this particular feature was not understood by the families. One indicated that the device was "to control odors." Many of the humidistats were not set at any level and many were improperly set. Some were set so low that the humidistat fan turned on every time food was boiled on the range. Others were set

so high that it was unlikely the fan could perform as designed even if humidity reached the level set on the humidistat. Clearly the majority of the respondents did not understand how to properly use the humidistat.

Question 2. The question stated: How well were you prepared to understand and/or regulate the central radiant heating system? Responses to the question fell in all four categories with category three receiving the majority of the responses. (Table 2)

TABLE 2

HOW WELL WERE YOU PREPARED TO UNDERSTAND AND/OR REGULATE  
THE CENTRAL RADIANT (ELECTRIC) HEATING SYSTEM?

	Number	Percent
1. Prepared/a new experience	4	14
2. Prepared/not a new experience	3	10
3. Unprepared/a new experience	21	70
4. Unprepared/not a new experience	1	3
No response	1	3
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>100</u>

Comments made about the heating system by the respondents indicate it was a problem in some cases and was a new experience that they were not prepared for and did not understand. Some comments were, "I dislike it because it gives me headaches." "It feels cold because there is no hot air circulation." "You have no heat when the power goes off." "It is not good because you can't put hooks in the ceiling for plants, lamps or native artifacts." Two of the homemakers interviewed did not

understand how to read the thermostat and the attached thermometer. They were concerned that the thermometer read 70° even though the thermostat was turned to off. It appears that radiant heat was an experience that a majority of the families were unprepared to deal with adequately.

Question 3. The question stated: How well were you prepared to use and care for your electric self-cleaning range? Upon further investigation it was found that the ranges that had been installed in the homes were not self-cleaning. The question was re-worded to eliminate self-cleaning. Responses to the question fell into three of the possible four categories. The majority of the responses fell into category two, prepared/not a new experience.

TABLE 3  
HOW WELL WERE YOU PREPARED TO USE AND CARE  
FOR YOUR ELECTRIC RANGE?

	Number	Percent
1. Prepared/a new experience	1	3
2. Prepared/not a new experience	20	67
3. Unprepared/a new experience	6	20
4. Unprepared/not a new experience	0	0
No response	3	10
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>100</u>

The results imply that most of the families had had previous experience with an electric range. It is interesting to note that electric cooking was a new experience for which six of the families were unprepared.

Comments of some of the home owners indicated that they wished they had been given a choice as to the model of range they would have. One homemaker who had previously had a self cleaning oven and who was physically handicapped, would have liked one in her new home. Another participant indicated a preference for a model with two large electrical units rather than the traditional three small and one large burner. Those for whom an electric range was a new experience commented that it was difficult to adjust the temperature setting to the desired level.

Question 4. The question stated: How well were you prepared to use and care for your frost free refrigerator/freezer? Responses were recorded in three of the possible categories. The most frequent response being category two, prepared/not a new experience.

TABLE 4  
HOW WELL WERE YOU PREPARED TO USE AND CARE FOR  
YOUR FROST FREE REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER?

	Number	Percent
1. Prepared/a new experience	3	10
2. Prepared/not a new experience	16	54
3. Unprepared/a new experience	9	30
4. Unprepared/not a new experience	0	0
No response	2	6
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>100</u>

For twelve of the responding families the use of a frost free refrigerator was a new experience. Nine of those families felt it was an experience for which they were unprepared.

Question 5. The question stated: How well were you prepared to handle the house payments? Responses were received in three of the four categories. One family's response did not fall into any of the four categories as they had not yet been billed and consequently had made no payments.

TABLE 5  
HOW WELL WERE YOU PREPARED TO HANDLE  
THE HOUSE PAYMENTS?

	Number	Percent
1. Prepared/a new experience	1	3
2. Prepared/not a new experience	19	64
3. Unprepared/a new experience	7	24
4. Unprepared/not a new experience	0	0
No response	2	6
No payment made	1	3
Total	30	100

The responsibility of paying rent was not a new experience for a majority of the families involved. However, for eight of the thirty families it was a new experience and for seven of those eight families it was one they did not feel adequately prepared to handle.



House payments of the respondents ranged from a low of \$17.00 per month to a high of \$187.00 per month, with an average payment of \$72.00. The comments and concerns expressed dealt mainly with the fact that eventual ownership of the homes was unlikely because they had been built on Tribal land which cannot be privately owned. After all payments have been made the physical structure will belong to the family, but as the land it is built on cannot belong to them, the home can only be sold to another tribal member or to the Ute Indian Housing Authority. Concern was also noted about the house payment scale. The method of determining how much house payments were to be was unclear to some of the home owners.

Question 6. The question stated: Is paying for the house insurance a problem?

Upon further investigation of the housing program it was learned that the Indian Housing Authority covers all of the houses with a group insurance policy. Consequently the question was eliminated from the interview guide.

Question 7. The question stated: Were there new bills to pay that you did not have in your other home? Responses to the question fell into three of the possible categories, with half of the respondents feeling that the situation was one for which they were prepared as they had encountered it before.

TABLE 6  
 WERE THERE NEW BILLS TO PAY THAT YOU DID NOT  
 HAVE IN YOUR OTHER HOME?

	Number	Percent
1. Prepared/a new experience	1	3
2. Prepared/not a new experience	15	50
3. Unprepared/a new experience	4	13
4. Unprepared/not a new experience	0	0
No response	10	34
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>100</u>

Paying bills was a new experience for five of the families in the study and for four of those families it was an experience they were not prepared to handle.

Question 8. The question stated: Did your move require you to buy new furniture? Response categories were yes, no or no response.

TABLE 7  
 DID YOUR MOVE REQUIRE YOU TO  
 BUY NEW FURNITURE?

	Number	Percent
Yes	17	57
No	9	30
No response	4	13
Total	<u>30</u>	<u>100</u>

The second part of the question asked whether or not the selection of this furniture was difficult. Replies indicated that it was difficult for four of the nine families who responded to the second part of the question. As there are no furniture stores on the reservation they had to travel at least 15 miles to get to a furniture store. They also felt that they had a difficult time trying to select quality furniture because of the expense involved.

Objective 2. To develop recommendations to improve the relocation process in similar future Indian housing programs.

Question ten asked for the three most serious problems the family had encountered in their housing relocation. The responses and comments to question ten were the basis for four recommendations to improve the relocation process in similar future Indian housing programs. Responses and comments from questions one through nine added support to the recommendations. The recommendations are: (1) to include families in the planning phases of the project, (2) provide families with individual

options, (3) make homes more environmentally and culturally appropriate, and (4) to use the money allocated to acquaint the participating families with their new homes for that purpose.

Recommendation 1

Include the families in the planning phases of the project. Several families commented that they were unsure about the reasoning behind various aspects of the project. One of these aspects was the construction phase of the house. They would have liked to have been involved more as the house was being built. As the homes were prebuilt and shipped to the lot in a nearly completed form this would have necessitated a trip to the plant in Salt Lake City where the homes were constructed. This trip could have been used to familiarize the families with the features of the house and the appliances that would be in it.

Not all the families interviewed felt that they understood the costs of the housing and the obligations and benefits that accompanied it. Many did not understand how their housing payment had been determined. Only two of the thirty families interviewed knew that the Ute Indian Housing Authority carried a blanket home owners insurance policy on their home. This would indicate that the remaining families had not been sufficiently involved with the project to understand it clearly.

The families did not have much input into the basic interior planning of the homes. Some of the families interviewed expressed a desire for features that were different from those in their home. Perhaps an informal survey could have assessed some of the most common preferences of the participants before the homes were constructed. It appears that it would have been an advantage to the families participating in the project to have been more involved in the planning and construction phases of the project.

Recommendation 2

Provide families with some options. Numerous comments were received indicating that families would have liked their homes designed to meet their needs. Five families indicated that one of the three most serious problems with their home was lack of a utility room for home laundry. Four families would have liked a separate dining and living room area. Three expressed a desire for a larger kitchen. Three other families felt that they would have enjoyed a fireplace. Two families would have preferred a larger bathroom and two others wanted two windows per bedroom for cross ventilation. Other features that were desired were a back entrance to the outdoors, a cement driveway, a larger refrigerator, larger living area, larger closets, more than one bath, choice of paint in various rooms, windows above kitchen sink and a self-cleaning oven. Another opinion expressed was that it would have been more profitable to the family if the housing could have been made available to them in a larger city away from the reservation. They felt that they were "going backward, there are more opportunities away from the reservation."

In a project with fifty families it would be impossible to completely satisfy each individual family's preferences and wants. Constructing the houses with the amount of money allowed would further restrict the flexibility. A possible solution might be to determine an amount of money that could be available to each family for options of their choice. The possible options and their cost could be specified on a list given to the family. Each family would consequently get the same basic house but would also be able to include some features in their homes that they most preferred.

Recommendation 3

Make homes more appropriate environmentally and culturally. Comments that led to this recommendation were basically in two categories, environmental consideration and cultural consideration. Many families had experienced problems with screen doors being caught in a gust of wind and bending beyond repair. The respondents felt that the wind should have been taken into consideration in planning the house orientation. Another family would have preferred a Southern orientation in order to take advantage of the sun. The decision to install a humidistat in an extremely dry climate also appears to be lack of environmental consideration that may need to be scrutinized in the future. One of the respondents was concerned that there were no nearby street lights in the rather secluded neighborhood and also that the homes were so far from fire protection

Culturally the homes could have been more appropriate according to the comments of the participants. One interesting comment was "Indians don't like to live in circles." Some felt that they should be able to spread their homes out on their own land. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (1977b) is aware that Indian homes traditionally have fireplaces, but in the project studied they made it extremely difficult for the families to have one by requiring that the entire cost of the fireplace be paid in advance.

Recommendation 4

The money allocated to acquaint the families with their new homes should be used for that purpose. "HUD provisions provide \$500.00 per unit to acquaint occupants with new homes." (Brooks, 1978) Evidence that the money allocated for this purpose would have been well spent if it had been

used to familiarize the families with their new homes comes from looking at the accumulated data. For 77 percent of the families the humidistat was a new experience. For 84 percent of the families the radiant heating system was a new experience. To 23 percent the use of an electric range was something new. Using a frost free refrigerator was a new experience for 40 percent of the responding families. For 27 percent of the families a monthly house payment was a new experience. Paying bills was a new experience for 17 percent of the families. Fifty-seven percent responded that the move had necessitated buying new furniture. As many of the items surveyed had been a new experience and a frustrating experience to many of the families, they might indeed have benefitted from some training prior to moving into their new homes. Training about how to operate and maintain the house and how to use and care for the equipment in it would have been useful. The training could have possibly been conducted during the meetings of the IHA which the applicants were required to attend. Equipment that was standard to every house could have been explained and demonstrated. A county home agent could have been a resource person to share information and printed materials and would have been available for follow-up.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problems and dissatisfactions encountered by Indian families as they relocated into modern Mutual-Help housing were investigated. An instrument was developed to assess the homebuyers' familiarity with some of the standard equipment and features of their new homes. Responses were then used as the basis for developing recommendations to improve the relocation process in similar future housing projects.

The instrument, in the form of an interview guide, was personally administered by the researcher. Although the research design called for all fifty families involved in the project to be interviewed, it was not possible to do so. Interviews were completed with thirty of the families.

Two objectives were investigated:

I. To determine common problems and dissatisfactions associated with the relocation of the fifty Ute Indian families.

Problems and dissatisfactions encountered by the families fell into six categories.

- A. Structural
- B. Planning and room arrangement
- C. Interior-equipment and furnishings
- D. Access to community facilities
- E. Lot, orientation and neighborhood concerns
- F. Satisfying cultural and environmental needs of the families



II. To develop recommendations to improve the relocation process in similar future Indian housing programs. The recommendations developed centered around four areas of dissatisfaction.

1. For a majority of the families involved in the project the operation and understanding of standard features in their homes was a new experience that they were unprepared to handle.

2. Many of the families would have liked to have been more involved in the planning and construction phases of the project.

3. Some families desired a degree of flexibility in floor planning and space allocation.

4. Some training in the use and care of standard features included in the homes, beyond what was done would have been helpful for the families involved.

#### Limitations

The following limitations were recognized for this study:

Sample. Because of the difficulty of finding all families home not everyone who participated in the housing project was involved in the research project. If the data had been collected during the winter or fall rather than during the summer when Indian families typically vacation, more of the families could have been interviewed. With all fifty families responding the results may have been different.

Interviewer. The fact that the interviewer was not a member of the Ute Indian Tribe may have had some effect on the responses received. Although the responses seemed candid to the interviewer there were some "no response" answers on each question which might have been avoided if the interviewer had been a Tribal member.

The project. Because the survey dealt only with families who were participating in Mutual-Help housing the results cannot be generalized to all low income housing programs or projects.

#### Recommendations

Recommendations for future studies in this area might include the following considerations.

1. More complete demographic data might be obtained if sought toward the end of the interview when the subject is more at ease with the interviewer.
2. The interview guide should be revised and expanded so that it is possible to frame and test hypotheses.
3. To insure that the questionnaire is meaningful to the respondents and geared to their level it should be pretested using individuals who resemble, as closely as possible, the intended sample.
4. Develop a method, other than an interview guide, to ascertain how prepared the future residents of a housing project are to use the features and equipment that will be included in the house.
5. Questions about previous living conditions could provide valuable insights into attitudes toward the new homes and the problems and dissatisfactions with them.
6. Researcher involvement intermittently throughout the development of the housing project would have been advantageous when gathering data.

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## APPENDIX

## PERSONAL DATA

Number of children in family \_\_\_\_\_.

Number of years of education completed by the husband \_\_\_\_\_.

Number of years of education completed by the wife \_\_\_\_\_.

## STANDARD HOUSE FEATURES

1. When you moved into the new house how well were you prepared to use the humidistat?

\*1                                    2                                    3                                    4  
-----|-----|-----|-----|

If you had a friend moving into a similar house, what would you suggest to prepare her to move in?

2. How well were you prepared to understand and/or regulate the central electric heating system?

1                                    2                                    3                                    4  
-----|-----|-----|-----|

If you had a friend moving into a similar house, what would you suggest to prepare her to move in?

Is it satisfactory or is there another system you would have preferred?

3. How well were you prepared to use and care for you electric range?

1                                    2                                    3                                    4  
-----|-----|-----|-----|

If you had a friend moving into a home with such a range, what would you suggest to prepare her to use it?

\*1 Prepared/a new experience

2 Prepared/not a new experience

3 Unprepared/a new experience

4 Unprepared/not a new experience

4. How well were you prepared to use and care for your frost-free refrigerator and freezer?

1                                  2                                  3                                  4

---

If you had a friend moving into a home with a similar refrigerator, what would you suggest to prepare her to use it?

#### FINANCIAL

5. How well were you prepared to handle the house payments?

1                                  2                                  3                                  4

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If you had a friend moving into a home where she would face similar payments, what would you suggest to prepare her for the move?

6. Is paying for the house insurance a problem?

1                                  2                                  3                                  4

---

7. Were there new bills to pay that you did not have in your other home?

1                                  2                                  3                                  4

---

Gas?

Electric?

If you had a friend moving into a home where new bills would be encountered, what would you suggest to prepare her for this increased cost of living?

8. Did your move require you to buy new furniture?

Was the selection of this furniture difficult?

How could someone have helped you to be more prepared to buy new furnishings?

9. What things did you buy for :

Kitchen: chairs, tables, small appliances

Living room: stereo, TV, chairs, sofas, tables, lamps, drapes

Bedroom: bed, mattress, dresser, lamps, tables

Bathroom :

10. Considering the problems we've talked about today, what would you say were the three most important and/or serious ones that you experienced?



UTE INDIAN HOUSING AUTHORITY

Uintah and Ouray Agency

FORT DUCHESNE, UTAH 84026

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August 30, 1977

Ms. Al Jean Snow

Roosevelt, Utah 84066

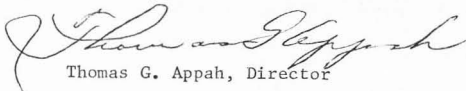
Dear Ms. Snow:

This letter is to give formal approval for you to carry out your research project with the Tribal Housing Authority on the Ute Indian Reservation. Our office has a great interest in this study and the information that will be generated from the individual housing participants. We recognize the need to have the individual tribal members better trained in the use of the modern equipment which is a part of these new homes. Your study as outlined will do much to help our people improve their living standards and hopefully make better use of and more proper care of these homes.

Our Housing Authority would remind that you make available copies of your study when the work is completed.

If you have further questions please call me at the Housing Authority Office, 722-4656.

Sincerely,



Thomas G. Appah, Director