THEORITICAL FOUNDATION OF HOUSING RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Efa Tadesse Debele¹ and Taye Negussie²

¹Addis Ababa University
²Affiliation not available

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Abstract

Despite the magnitude of urban housing problem the attention given to this issue is very neglectful. Rapid urbanization stimulates dynamics in urban centers that escalate urban housing dynamics. Several personal and structural constraints become hurdles for urban poor or low income group to access affordable and adequate housing. Thus, to secure their livelihood and to meet housing need different coping mechanisms are being operated. So, prior to see housing empirical scenario it is better to identify systematized knowledge of housing or epistemology of housing.

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*Efa Tadesse Debele¹, Department of Sociology, PhD Candidate at Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa and affiliated to Samara University, Ethiopia
*Taye Negussie², Department of Sociology, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Abstract

Housing issue is not well theorized and housing knowledge gap is not well substantiated. Theoretically, housing subject has been neglected in major social theories. Practically, despite the magnitude of urban housing problem the attention given to this issue is very neglectful. Rapid urbanization stimulates dynamics in urban centers that escalate urban housing dynamics. Several personal and structural constraints become hurdles for urban poor or low income group to access affordable and adequate housing. Thus, to secure their livelihood and to meet housing need different coping mechanisms are being operated. So, prior to see housing empirical scenario it is better to identify systematized knowledge of housing or epistemology of housing.

Keywords: Epistemology; Housing Study; Housing Research; Sociology of Housing

Housing study entails consideration of existing policy tendencies, major social theories orientations, methodological debates and substantives realities (Kemeny, 1992). This implies housing study should indicate practical realities that need to contextualize housing in existing social setting. Epistemological framework of housing becomes key concern of theorists. Even existing housing researches have deprived housing subject its own theoretical framework. Kemeny contributed breakthrough in scaffolding housing with its epistemological framework.

Thus, theoretical and epistemological foundation of housing needs to be considered in developing housing theory and designing housing research (Kemeny, 1992:168). Thus, researchers who are interested in housing research expected to entertain these gaps. Housing as any social reality should be examined via sociological imagination by which we can indicate interaction between housing and existing structural frameworks (Mills,
Prior to constructing epistemological framework of housing subject researchers need to question so far defined housing problems by policy makers. In fact, similar tendencies exist in social sciences which mean accepting previous status quo as it is. Debele et al. (2020) indicated that housing research framework lacks theoretical and epistemological foundation.

Theoretical framework of housing study potentially can be constructed based on the existing substantive interaction between housing related topics and issues which only requires technical and expertise knowledge (Ruonavaara, 2018). Housing issue is specific in different contexts because housing can be shaped by the systems surrounding it. So, housing need to be understood from its social, cultural, political, historical and spatial contexts which may give full picture about housing system and its key characteristics. In fact, housing should be considered from different dimensions and it has multiple aspects which give profound importance for human being to live meaningful life (Debele et al., 2021). Currently, housing agenda attracted the attentions of many scholars which may gives future prospects of housing subject. It is expected that housing abstraction and its institutionalization in higher education is a major recommended point by academicians working in housing and related area (Debele et al., 2021).

Housing subject is contested topic in terms of disciplinary ground, conceptual framework, theoretical framework and its own jargons (Ruonavaara, 2018). Housing by itself is broad concept and requires consideration of multidimensional analysis. In fact, grand sociological theories or perspectives such as Marxism, functionalism and interpretivism have been slightly entertained in housing research (Ruonavaara, 2018).

In line with this, Napier et al. (2018) asserted that philosophical foundation of housing research need to consider key philosophies particularly positivism, realism, interpretism and pragmatism. It is obvious that different theories have been utilized to describe and explain the same thing. But, why housing issue as subject did not develop its own consistent philosophical and theoretical basis. Consistent theorization of any subject requires scaffolding of housing and its integral concepts compilation. In this regard, Debele (2019) indicated that even if there is huge potential and resources to launch housing epistemology the scholarly reaction is insignificant yet its theoretical and practical aspects shows big lacuna.

Ruonavaara (2018) further noticed that housing subject has two options to be theorized well. The first is via developing its own overarching theoretical object. The second is utilization of other disciplines theoretical packages particularly Sociology and Geography are in the first order to be chosen. This opens unsettled agenda among concerned scholars to entertain ideas on the subject.

References
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