OSUN GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

Journal of the Department of Geography,
Osun State University, Osun State, Nigeria

Volume 6, 2024

ISSN: 2695 - 1959

Editor-in-Chief
Prof. Olusegun Ekanade

Published by the
Department of Geography, Osun State University,
Osun State, Nigeria

EDITORIAL BOARD

CONTENTS

Editorial Board ii

Contents iii

Preference for Green Space on Urban Residential Plot in Ibadan, Nigeria 1
S. A. Adejumo

Assessment of Indigenous Knowledge on Housing Constructions in Akure South, Nigeria 11
S. O. Fashuyi, B. O. Owolabi, A. A. Fakere. and Y. A. Ishola

Air Quality Condition of Artisanal Gold Mining Sites During the Dry Season in Niger State, Nigeria 17
A. A. Idris, J. S. Ndace, S. D. Abubakar and I. Yusuf

Examining Residents' Perceptions of Economic Losses Due to Flooding in Niger State 22
Y. M. Kodan, H. M. Liman, S. N. Jiya and C. O. Okwuwa

Assessment of Socio-economic Impacts of Cottage Industries in Niger South, Niger State, Nigeria 31
N. Ndako, S. A. Mashi, J. Y. Magaji

Effects of Cottage Industries on Ambient Air Pollution In Niger South, Niger State, Nigeria 38
N. Ndako, S. A. Mashi and J. Y. Magaji

Assessment of Mining-induced Land Degradation in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria 48
B. O. Balogun, A. G. Ojo, O. E. Aluko, and L. I. Alage

Assessing the Effectiveness of Traditional Practices in Green Leafy Farming in Peri-urban Areas of Ibadan, Nigeria 59
S. Ojolowo and J. Talabi

Spatial Temporal Analysis of Road Network Density in Ile-Ife Metropolis, Nigeria 79
F. T. Oladapo and M. O. Olawole

Characterization of the Impact of Urban Development on Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Akure Environ, Ondo State Nigeria 84
O. O. Fabiyi and O. Fajilade

Rainfall Variability and its Effect on the Yield of Sorghum and Farmers' Adoption of Climate Smart Agricultural Practices in Bauchi State, Nigeria 95
E. Ikpe, P. A. John, U. D. Omede, E. M. Onah and Y. J. Alhassan

Tourism and Regional Development: A Geographical Perspective **105**
E. E. Adeniyi and A. M. Tunde

Living within Gated Communities: Analysis of Determinants and Residents' Perceptions of Safety In Ibadan Metropolis **114**
S. A. Adeniyi, M. O. Obidiya and K. I. Adewuni

Insecurity in Public Transport: A Growing World Concern **123**
V. Afolabi and R. A. Asiyanbola

Note to Contributors **133**

OSUN GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW
Published by the Department of Geography, Osun State University, Osun State, Nigeria
ISSN: 2695 - 1959 Volume 6, 2024; 114 - 122

LIVING WITHIN GATED COMMUNITIES: ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANTS AND RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

Gated communities have rapidly gained momentum in Nigeria. These types of communities tend to be more popular among upper- and middle-income class residents. The objectives of this study are to develop a typology of gated communities in the study area; identify drivers of mobility into gated communities in the study area; and analyse residents' perception of crime and safety in selected gated communities. The data for were collected from primary and secondary sources. The research design was cross-sectional survey design while multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Two sets of questionnaires were administered. The first set of questionnaire was 600 copies of questionnaire administered to the residents, while the second set of questionnaire was 60 copies of questionnaire distributed to the community heads or any reputable resident of the community. Data were then subjected to descriptive statistics, cluster analysis and regression analysis. Findings revealed that there are two types of gated communities in the study area. These were named as security zone community and prestige (name-bearing) communities. It was revealed that perceived safety from violence or property crime is one of the drivers of movement into gated communities. With respect to the perception of crime and safety by the residents of gated communities, it was observed that there were diverse perceptions or views by the residents. It was shown that few respondents believed that their community is located in an area that made residents feel increasingly vulnerable. The result shows that residents believed they are safer in gated communities compared to those in non-gated communities. The study thus recommended that gated communities should be more security inclined by having private patrol companies/dogs, bright lighting, direct emergency buttons on the wall/phone, and the visual access to the local police.

Keywords: Gated communities, Determinants, Safety, Ibadan metropolis, Typology.

Introduction

In the last two decades, gated communities (GC) have rapidly gained momentum in Nigeria. These types of communities tend to be more popular among the upper and middle-income class residents than the low-income class residents (Numbeo, 2016). A GC is a residential housing estate containing rigidly controlled entrances for pedestrians, bicycles and automobiles and is often distinguished by a closed perimeter of walls and fences. GC have a variety of security devices, such as gates, walls, cameras, security personnel, dogs, and other types of surveillance. There are several factors that have been linked with the rise in the movement to gated estates the topmost being security.

GC have experienced phenomenal growth worldwide due to increasing fear of urban crime and violence. One of the major issues in urban centres or semi-urban areas has been the fear of crime and crime itself. Residential areas are prone to different crimes such as burglary/theft, murder, rape etc. In countering the issue of crime in neighbourhoods, residents consider safety a fundamental need. According to Lemanski (2004), many city dwellers alleviate the fear of violence in two main ways: by urban form, with protective walls, and by altered lifestyle, with restricted movement and limited social interaction.

Several studies have acknowledged that crime may be more concentrated in particular places than others

(Johnson & Bowers, 2010, Steinführer et al., 2016). Certain places within an urban environment have higher crime rates and fear of crime than others. Crime rates are higher in some areas but not others because of various factors, such as house type and factors affecting natural surveillance, which may influence crime placement (Johnson & Bowers, 2010). Social factors also influence crime and fear of crime. However, physical characteristics may also contribute to crime and fear because the design of the physical environment plays a vital role in fostering or preventing opportunities for crime (Hedayati-Marzbali et al., 2012). As a result of the various forms and increase in crime.

Therefore, the objectives of this paper are to develop a typology of gated communities in the study area, identify drivers of mobility into gated communities in the study area and analyze residents' perception of crimes and safety within the selected gated communities. Furthermore, the null hypotheses set were that (i) there was no significant relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of the residents and mobility into gated communities and (ii) that there was no significant relationship between income level of residents and perception of crime and safety in gated communities.

The Study Area

Ibadan is the capital city of Oyo State with a population of 1,338,659 according to the 2006 census. The population of Ibadan is then projected to year 2022 and now stands at 9,903,457. *Ibadan lies within latitude 7° 19' 08.1" and 7° 29' 12.51" of the equator, and longitude 3° 47' 15.01" and 4° 01' 02.21"* (Makinde, 2020). Ibadan has 11 local government areas. The metropolis comprises of five local government areas including Ibadan North, Ibadan North- east, Ibadan Southeast, Ibadan Southwest and Ibadan Northwest. The metropolis was carved out for this study (See Figure 1).

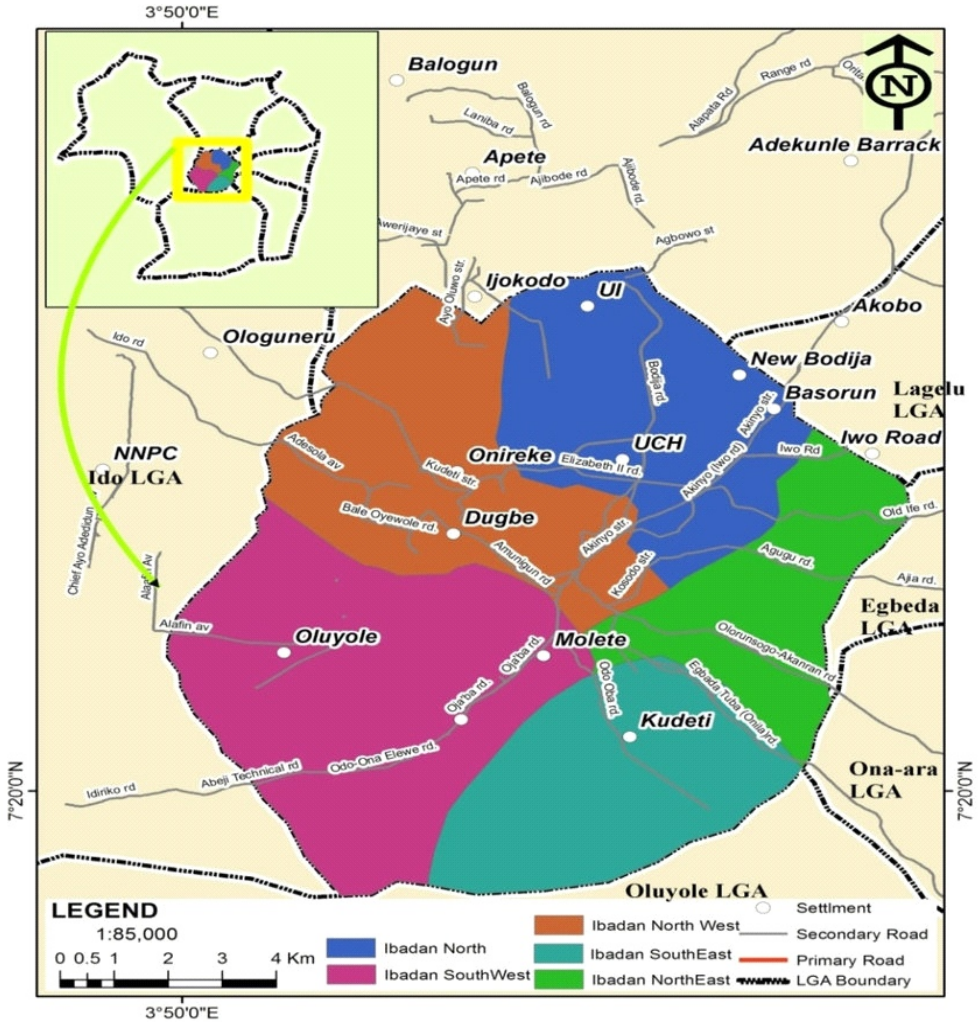

Figure 1: Map of the Study Area

Research Methodology

The research design used for the study was a cross-sectional survey design. It is majorly used for population-based surveys (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).The study population is the entire gated communities in the Ibadan metropolis, which comprises five local government areas: Ibadan North, Ibadan Northeast, Ibadan Southeast, Ibadan Southwest, and Ibadan Northwest.

A random sampling technique was used for this study. Simple random sampling was used to choose residents of the gated communities. Twelve (12) gated communities were randomly selected in each Local Government Area, totalling sixty (60) gated communities. The lists of communities were obtained from Oyo State Ministry of Environment. Secondly, systematic random sampling was used to select households within selected gated communities. Ten (10) households were chosen from each gated community, totalling 600 households. Houses were chosen systematically at every 2nd interval in each gated community. Also, the community leader or any male community residents were selected randomly. This aggregation will help overcome low response rates in some individual gated communities. The random sample will also represent the general profile of residents in the study area.

The data for this study was primarily collected with the aid of research questionnaire. The questionnaire was in two (2) sets. The first set of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to objective one alone. The community head or any reputable community resident answered it. The second set consists of questions related to the respondents' socio-economic status. It also consists of questions that encompass round objectives 2 and 3. Six hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the residents, and 60 copies were distributed to the community head or any reputable community resident in each of the selected gated community. The questionnaires were taken to the respondents personally, administered, and collected by the researcher and research assistants. Once the questionnaire was received, they were coded and edited for completeness and consistency.

The analysis entailed descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze primary data to meet the research objectives. The quantitative data were interpreted, inferences were made, and graphs, tables, percentages, and frequencies were presented descriptively. Each table was followed by logical explanations or interpretations of the results. Cluster analysis was used to analyze the first objective. This method of analysis was preferred because it helps group similar entities, providing a typology that characterizes and understands the diversity within the study area. The second and third objectives, including the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, were descriptively analyzed. The hypotheses were also analyzed using regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

Socio-demographic status of the respondents

Socio-demographic status typically refers to various characteristics of a population that can be used to categorize individuals or groups. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents were captured and the findings were discussed which helped to contextualise the findings. Socio-demographic statuses of the respondents were defined by their sex, age, marital status, educational qualifications and income status.

Table 1 describes the socio-demographic status of the respondents. The Table reveals that 68.9% males constitute majority of the respondents that reside in the study area. Many of them partook in this study because they saw themselves as the head and are in a better position to answer the relevant questions. Only a few females (31.1%) tend to be the head of the house, while other female respondents stood in the gap for their husbands.

Table 1 further describes the age of the respondents. It was indicated that most of the respondents fall within the age bracket of 31-40 years and constitute 30.1% of the total respondents followed by 25.5% respondents that fall within the age bracket of 41-50 years of age. Other respondents fall within 51-60 years, below 30 years and above 30 years, making a total of 44.4% of respondents. This means that most of the respondents were still agile and energetic based on their age group. Thus, they are very active in providing responses.

In addition, Table 1 describes the marital status of the respondents. Based on the responses, the majority of the respondents were married. Only a few respondents 10.0%, were single, while 0.5% of respondents were divorced/separated. It further

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Items	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	394	68.9
	Female	178	31.1
	Total	**572**	**100**
Age	Below 30 years	75	13.1
	31-40 years	172	30.1
	41-50 years	146	25.5
	51-60 years	81	14.2
	60 years and above	98	17.1
	Total	**572**	**100**
Marital Status	Single	57	10.0
	Married	512	89.5
	Divorced/Separated	3	0.5
	Total	**572**	**100**
Educational Qualifications	SSCE/GCE	33	5.8
	NCE/OND	68	11.9
	BSC/BA/HND	362	63.3
	M.A/M.Sc/Ph.D	67	11.7
	Other Professional Cert	42	7.3
	Total	**572**	**100**
Income Status	50,000-100,000	273	47.7
	101,000-200,000	123	21.5
	201,000-300,000	77	13.5
	301,000-400,000	43	7.5
	401,000-500,000	35	6.1
	501,000 and above	21	3.7
	Total	**572**	**100**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

describes the educational qualifications of the respondents. From the findings it could be discovered that all the respondents have gone through one form of education or the other. However, most of the respondents had HND/BSC/BA, making 63.3% of the total respondents. Only a few of the respondents, 5.8%, had SSCE/GCE. This shows that the respondents will have the ability to understand the subject matter. The income level of the respondents was described in Table 1. It could be deduced that most of the respondents earned a reasonable income within a month which thus makes it easy for them to live in a gated community. From the findings, 82.7% earn between N50,000 and N 300,000.

From the findings, majority of the respondents were educated and this could have influenced their decision to move into gated community. Also, most of the respondents earn reasonable income that could aid in their movement into gated community.

Analysis of objective 1: Typology of gated communities

This section deals with the major types of the gated communities under study. It was discussed under the following headings: gating features, security features and records or frequency of crime. Cluster analysis was used in analyzing respondents' responses.

Based on the first theme regarding the typology of gated communities, two typologies of gated communities were derived from the findings. These were classified as security zone communities and prestige (name-bearing) gated communities, similar to Blakely & Snyder, (2015). The cluster 1 represents the prestige (name-bearing) *category, while cluster 2 represents security zone category. A security zone community refers to a residential area or neighbourhood that is enclosed by physical barriers such as walls, fences, or gates, with controlled points of entry and exit. On the other hand, prestige (name-bearing) gated communities are communities that only wish to be attributed with the name "gated community" with little or no sense of absolute security.* From the findings, it can be deduced that the majority of the gated communities in the sampled areas are security inclined compared to prestige (name-bearing) gated communities. However, the level of security intensity or quality in some areas or local governments differs. Samonda, Bodija, Jericho, Akobo, Oluyole, and Iyaganku have better security quality than Oke-Ado, Beere, and Scout Camp areas amongst others. These areas are fenced, have security

guards, and good street lights among many others. This is in line with the findings of Blakely and Synder (2015) about prestige and security-zone gated communities.

Analysis of objective 2: Drivers of mobility into gated community

The mobility into gated communities in various parts of the study area was due to some features hereby referred to as drivers. This could be physical, social and economic in dimensions. This section thus focuses on the drivers of mobility into gated communities in the study area.

According to Table 2, 31.8% of respondents indicated that they chose to live in a gated community due to its proximity to their workplace, while a majority of 56.8% disagreed, suggesting other reasons for their choice. Similarly, only 15.6% of respondents cited convenience to friends and relatives as a motivating factor, whereas 84.4% disagreed. Safety from violent or property crime was a significant reason for 78.1% of respondents, aligning with Lund's (2011) study, though 21.9% did not agree. A minimal number of respondents associated their presence in a gated community with leisure activities, contrasting with the 77.6% who disagreed. Additionally, only 13.5% were motivated by the good design of the apartments, similar to Ghonimi et al. (2010), with 77.4% disagreeing. Regarding affordability, 39.7% agreed it was appropriately priced, 6.0% were undecided, and a majority disagreed. Constant power supply was a significant factor for 76.0% of respondents, with 24.0% disagreeing. Most respondents cited easy access to social amenities and infrastructure as a reason, although 27.0% disagreed and 6.8% were undecided. Furthermore, 79.7% agreed that a

Plate 1: A typical example of manually controlled gate at Oluyole

Plate 2: An example of a gate controlled automatically at Ikolaba GRA

Table 2: Drivers of Mobility

STATEMENTS	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total
Close to my working place						
Freq	100	82	65	189	136	**572**
%count	17.5	14.3	11.4	33.0	23.8	**100**
Convenient to friends or relatives						
Freq	53	36	-	192	291	**572**
%count	9.3	6.3	-	33.6	50.9	**100**
Safety from violent or property crimes						
Freq	211	236	-	46	79	**572**
%count	36.9	41.3	-	8.0	13.8	**100**
Convenient to leisure activities						
Freq	49	50	29	258	186	**572**
%count	8.6	8.7	5.1	45.1	32.5	**100**
Good design in the apartment property						
Freq	44	33	52	179	264	**572**
%count	7.7	5.8	9.1	31.3	46.2	**100**
Appropriate price to live in						
Freq	111	116	34	100	211	**572**
%count	19.4	20.3	6.0	17.5	36.9	**100**
Constant power supply						
Freq	223	212	-	49	88	**572**
%count	39.0	37.1	-	8.6	15.4	**100**
Easy access to various kinds of social amenities and infrastructural facilities						
Freq	187	192	39	70	84	**572**
%count	32.7	33.6	6.8	12.2	14.7	**100**
Peaceful/conducive environment						
Freq	245	211	10	57	49	**572**
%count	42.8	36.9	1.7	10.0	8.6	**100**
The gated community consists of rich and famous people and offer privacy and isolation for the wealthiest society.						
Freq	72	45	40	191	224	**572**
%count	12.6	7.9	7.0	33.4	39.2	**100**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

peaceful and conducive environment influenced their choice, while 18.5% disagreed. Lastly, the presence of affluent and famous individuals or the desire for privacy and seclusion did not primarily influence most respondents' decisions, although a minority considered these factors important.

Objective 3: Residents' perceptions of crime and safety in selected gated community

The survey results reveal that while only a few respondents felt that their community's location necessitated road or street closures due to increased vulnerability, a significant majority (85.3%) disagreed with this notion. Most respondents (72.9%) believed that the enclosed community has effectively reduced opportunistic or impulsive crimes such as theft, burglary, and pick-pocketing, although 21.2% disagreed. Additionally, 66.0% strongly agreed that security technologies like CCTV, electric fences, and gates provide a sense of security, while 28.8% disagreed. A notable 77.4% strongly felt that unnoticed disorderly behaviour indicates neglect, leading to more disorder and fear, whereas 22.6% disagreed. Furthermore, 77.8% supported the restriction of external bikes and cars after 11 pm, but 22.2% disagreed. There was a small agreement (14.3%) that proximity to a police station offers a sense of security, with a significant 82.5% undecided. Lastly, while 63.5% felt that absolute safety is assured in the gated community, 32.7% disagreed, reflecting mixed feelings about the overall effectiveness of the security measures.

Testing of research hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and mobility into gated communities.

Table 3: Perception of Crime and Safety

STATEMENTS	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total
This community is located in an area that made residents felt increasingly vulnerable and subsequently adopted the road/street closures as a means ofsafeguarding their lives and properties.						
Freq	42	32	10	223	265	**572**
%count	7.3	5.6	1.7	39.0	46.3	**100**
This enclosed community has reduced some opportunistic or impulsive crimes such as theft, burglary, pick-pocketing and snatch-and-grab crimes which are mostly committed by opportunistic criminals						
Freq	215	202	34	73	48	**572**
%count	37.6	35.3	6.0	12.8	8.4	**100**
The use of technologies such as CCTV and electric fences, dogs, walls, gates etc gives sense of security.						
Freq	229	148	30	79	86	**572**
%count	40.0	25.9	5.2	13.8	15.0	**100**
If disorderly behaviour is unnoticed in this community, then it conveys that no one cares, leading to further disorder and finally creating a sense of fear among residents.						
Freq	213	230	-	71	58	**572**
%count	37.2	40.2	-	12.4	10.1	**100**
No external bike, car etc is allowed in this community once its 11pm						
Freq	253	192	-	60	67	**572**
%count	44.2	33.6	-	10.5	11.7	**100**
This community is located near the police station/barracks and this gives me a sense of security.						
Freq	43	39	472	10	8	**572**
%count	7.5	6.8	82.5	1.7	1.4	**100**
Absolute safety in this gated community is sure or certain.						
Freq	201	162	22	76	111	**572**
%count	35.1	28.3	3.8	13.3	19.4	**100**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

Table 4: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.039	0.335		21.036	0.000
	Predictors	0.582	0.024	0.773	16.587	0.002

a. Dependent Variable: Mobility into gated communities

Table 5: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.426	.487		9.094	.000
	Income Level	.560	.026	.744	22.909	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Perception of Safety

The proposed regression model thus becomes Y = 7.039+ 0.582_{X1} + Since P (0.00) < β (0.05), H_0 is rejected, meaning that the relationship or relevance between socio-economic predictors and mobility into gated communities is statistically significant both at 1% and 5% level of significance. Since the significance is 0.000, which is far less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis (H1) is accepted and thus concludes that there is a significant relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics and mobility into gated communities.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between income level of residents and perception of safety in gated communities.

The proposed regression model thus becomes Y = 4.426+ 0.560_{X1} +ε.Since P (0.00) < β (0.05), H_0 is rejected, meaning that the relationship or relevance between income level and perception of safety in gated communities is statistically significant both at 1% and 5% level of significance. Since for the significance is 0.000 which is far less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis (H1) is accepted and thus concludes that there is a significant relationship between the income level of the respondents and the perception of safety in gated communities.

Discussion of Findings

The second theme explored the drivers of mobility into the gated community. Most respondents agreed that safety from violent or property crime; constant power supply; easy access to various kinds of social amenities and infrastructural facilities; and a peaceful/conducive environment are reasons for their mobility into a gated community. These findings are similar to the works of Ozkan and Kozaman (2006), Lund (2011) and Ghonimi et.al (2010).

The third objective was analysed based on the resident's perceptions of crime and safety in selected gated communities. Majority of the respondents believed that gated community has reduced some opportunistic or impulsive crimes such as theft, burglary, pick-pocketing and snatch-and-grab crimes which opportunistic criminals mostly commit. In general, most respondents believed that using technologies such as CCTV and electric fences, dogs, walls, gates etc give a sense of security. More so, most respondents agreed that if disorderly behaviour is unnoticed in this community, then it conveys that no one cares, leading to further disorder and finally creating a sense of fear among residents.

The first hypothesis revealed a significant relationship between socio characteristics of the respondents and mobility into gated communities. The second hypothesis also revealed a significant relationship between the respondents' income level and perception of safety in gated communities.

Conclusion

Residential environments are fundamental for people, and safe homes and communities have received significant attention from architectural researchers, residential managers, and residents. The conclusion of this research is that gated communities of residential environments affect residents' perception and reality of safety. The results of this study support that people's perceived safety and crime experiences are fundamentally related to territoriality, as the literature indicated. Thus it was concluded that residents perceived safer in gated communities when compared to residents in the non-gated communities. Newman (1973) and Taylor et al. (1984) also indicated that residents felt safer in their residential areas when they were provided with territoriality. However, people's perceptions of safety in gated communities and in perceived gated communities were not critically different. This means that "the exclusive territoriality provided by fully controlled gate systems and fences" does not guarantee residents' perceived safety.

Based on the conclusion of the study, it is recommended that other factors should be considered beyond the physical territoriality to create safe gated communities for residents. Those include patrol services by private patrol companies/dogs, bright lighting, direct emergency buttons on the wall/phone, and visual access to the local police.

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