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## Are gated communities indispensable for residents?

Gated communities (GCs) – that is, residential areas with restricted access – have recently become widespread around the world. This study focuses on two GCs in Diyarbakır, one of the largest cities of southeast Turkey. The purpose of the study was to determine the satisfaction levels and preferences of residents of these communities. The findings, which revealed high resident satisfaction levels, show that residents chose to live in these

communities mainly because of safety and prestige. The results of the study also indicate that long-term residents of GCs have a fear of living outside this kind of arrangement, which is reflected in a fear of moving.

**Keywords:** gated community, safe area, resident preferences, resident satisfaction levels, security, fear of crime

## 1 Introduction

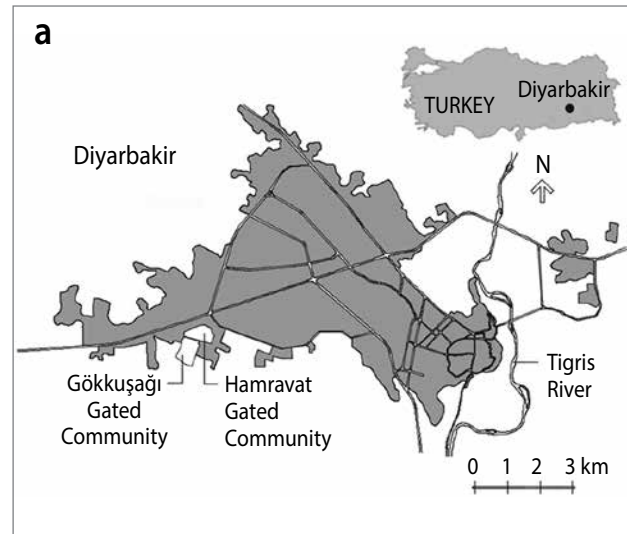
Gated communities (GCs) can be found in many cities around the world (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Grant & Mittelsteadt, 2004). They are mostly preferred by the upper class and upper-middle class, and they offer the perception of a safer zone (Roitman, 2005). Therefore, their marketing generally emphasises safety in addition to other characteristics of their construction, such as high status and distinction (Blandy, 2006). Not surprisingly, these new living spaces have attracted researchers' attention. There is a wide array of research related to GCs, including their definitions, characteristics, types and resident preferences. This study examines residents' satisfaction levels in GCs with regard to the houses, their immediate environment and neighbourhood relations. In addition, the study also focuses on why residents prefer living in gated or safer communities.

This study is based on the proposition that residents' satisfaction indicates that GCs will be increasingly preferred in the future. The following research questions were asked in the study:

1. What are residents' satisfaction levels in the two GCs in Diyarbakır?
2. What are their reasons for living in a gated community?
3. What are their preferences related to GCs and what are their reasons?

## 2 Research background

The social and physical characteristics of a house and its milieu are indicators of housing conditions. Housing satisfaction, one of the indicators of housing performance (Paris & Kangari, 2005; Adriaanse, 2007; Andersen, 2011), reflects residents' adaptation to these features (Lu, 1998). Residents' subjective comments indicate the levels of this adaptation (Wiesenfeld, 1992; Amerigo & Aragonés, 1997; Liu, 1999). Residents' life quality can also be represented by their satisfaction levels (Chi & Griffin, 1980; Wiedemann & Anderson, 1985; Amerigo & Aragonés, 1990; Liu, 1999; Lu, 1999; Sendi, 2013; Aigbavboa & Thwala, 2014). Higher satisfaction levels pertaining to the built environment may show a harmony between residents' actual situation and their preferred housing conditions, whereas lower satisfaction levels could indicate the opposite (Bonaiuto et al., 1999; Winstanley et al., 2002; Rapoport, 2004; Pevalin et al., 2008; Moola et al., 2011; Bekleyen & Korkmaz, 2013; Tsenkova, 2014; Grum & Kobal Grum, 2015; Rogatka & Ramos Ribeiro, 2015). Hence, dissatisfaction may create a desire to move, which sometimes leads to actual movement (Lu, 1998; Opoko et al., 2015).



**Figure 1:** a) map of Diyarbakır; b) location of gated communities (a: illustration: Ayhan Bekleyen; b: source: Internet 1).

A residence is regarded as part of its surroundings. Accordingly, the relationship with neighbours is one of the determiners of housing satisfaction because strong social bonds within the neighbourhood reduce both the fear of crime and the desire to move (Newmann, 1972; Andersen, 2008; Vera-Toscano & Ateca-Amestoy, 2008; Yau, 2012; Shrestha, 2013; Jurkovič, 2014). As stated by Richard M. Carpiano (2007), neighbourhood relations may even have a positive effect on residents' health. Another benefit of these relations is related to security. Because friendly neighbours are on alert against any threat from strangers, a secure environment is created (McDonnell, 2006). Neighbourhood attachment levels are enhanced with the perception that a good neighbourhood makes the residence a safer place. This enhancement will also lead residents to keep an eye on their environment (Brown et al., 2003; Comstock et al., 2010). The objective characteristics of the neighbour-

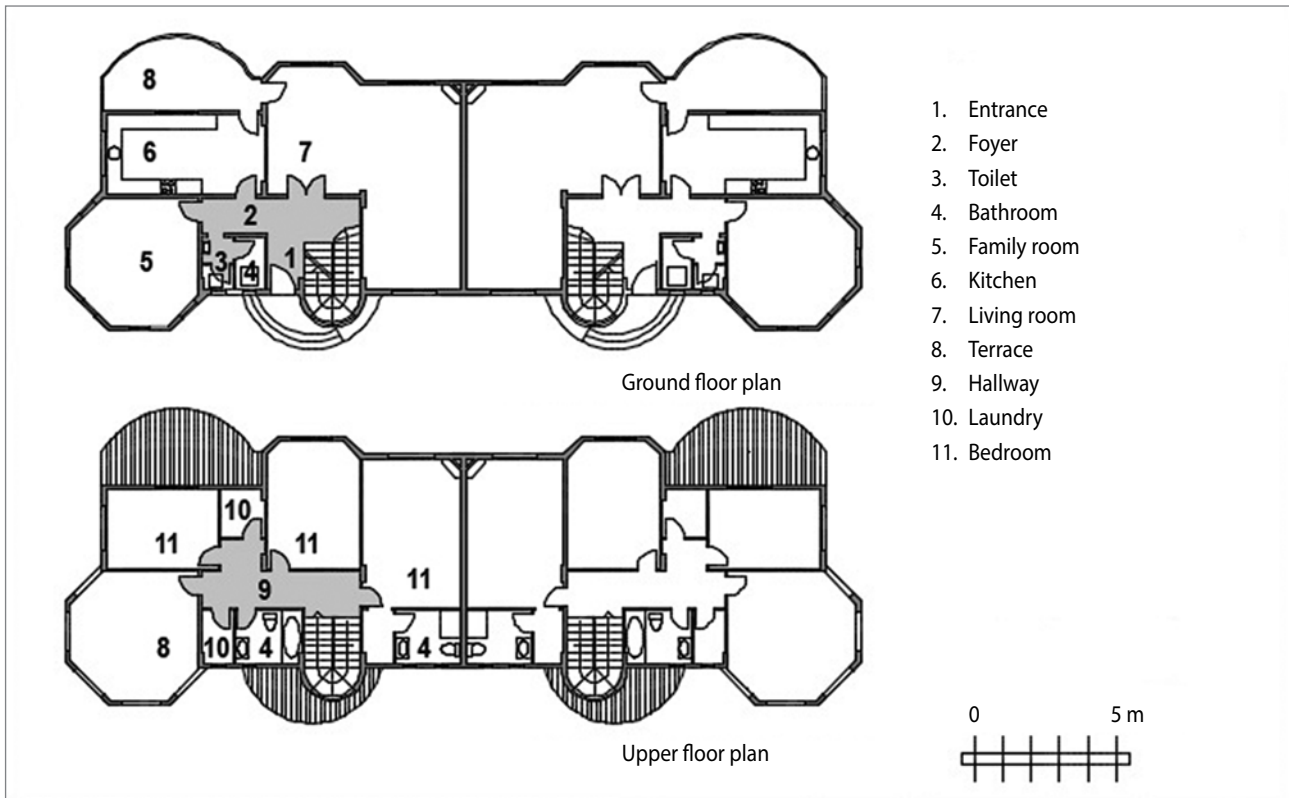


Figure 2: Floor plans of duplexes in the Hamravat Gated Community (illustration: adapted from the original project by Metropol Co. Ltd.).

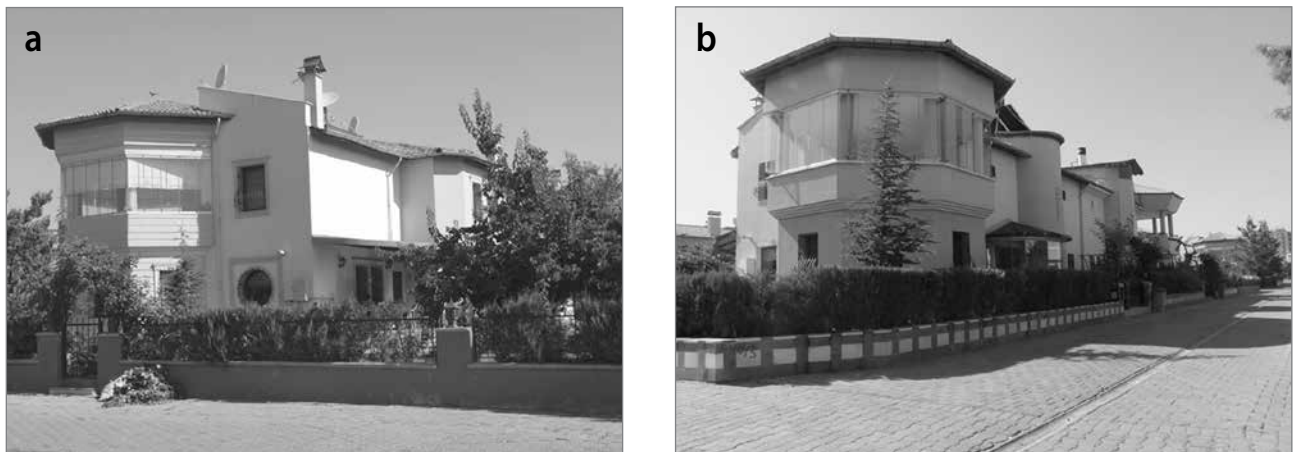


Figure 3: a) front and b) back views of duplexes in the Hamravat Gated Community (photo: İlham Yılmaz-Ay).

hood should also support this tendency because the physical environment has an effect on shaping perceptions of crime and safety (Rollwagen, 2014).

Gated communities (GCs), the modern version of an ancient city form, were first built at the end of the twentieth century and soon became symptomatic of modern living spaces. These communities are more like security zones (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Lang & Danielsen, 1997; Ellin, 2001; Grant & Mittelsteadt, 2004; Bekleyen & Dalkılıç, 2011; Yılmaz-Ay, 2013). “They have security devices such as walls, fences, gates, barriers,

alarms, guards and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras” (Roitman, 2005: 304). The need for GCs may stem from “the rise of insecurity and fear of crime, the deficiency of the state in providing basic services to citizens, increasing social inequalities, the advancing process of social polarization, as well as an international trend encouraged by developers” (Roitman, 2005: 304–305). Fear of violence and crime is the main reason why people move to these communities (Low, 2003). Compared to the heterogeneous structure of other communities, GCs reflect a more homogenous structure with residents from the upper or upper-middle class (Roitman, 2005).

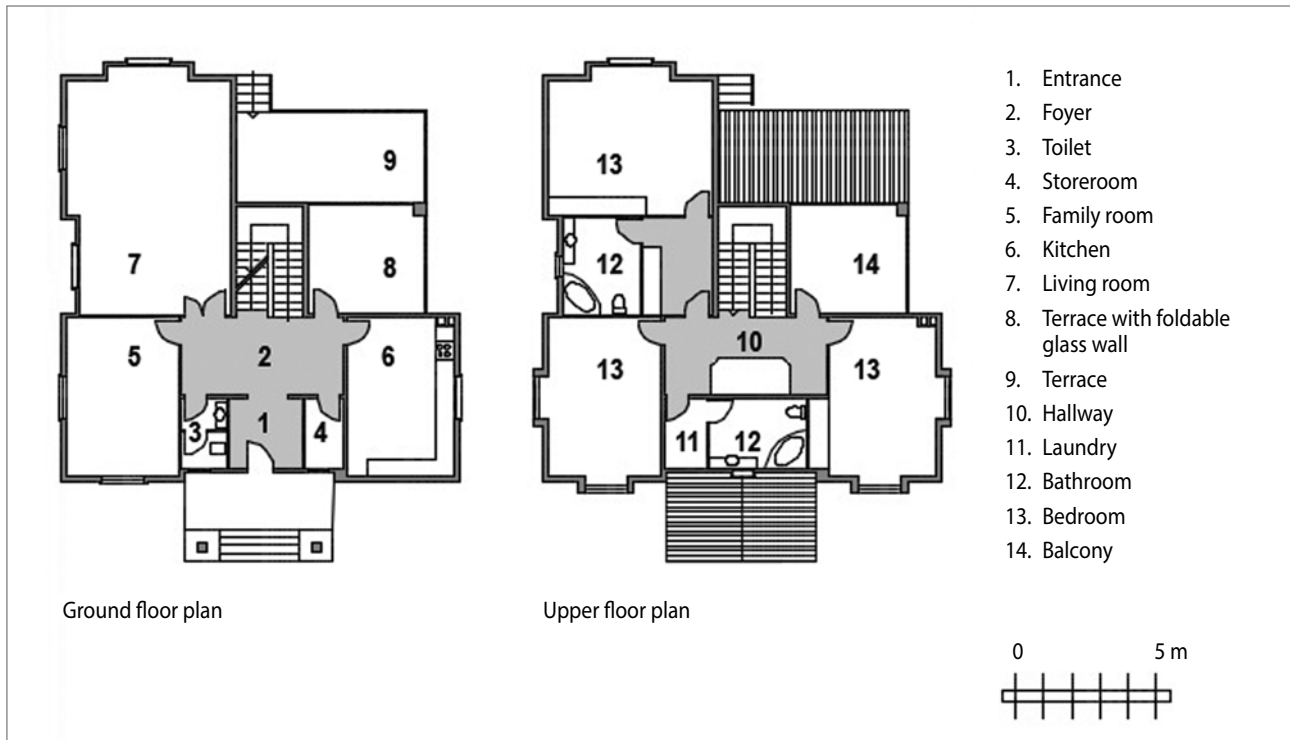


Figure 4: Floor plans of detached homes in the Gökkuşuğu Gated Community (illustration: adapted from the original project by Metropol Co. Ltd.).



Figure 5: a) front and b) back views of detached homes in the Gökkuşuğu Gated Community (photo: İlham Yılmaz-Ay).

Security is a strong motivator for those that want to live in GCs (Atkinson & Flint, 2004; Asiedu & Arku, 2009; Polanska, 2010). However, studies examining the security levels of GCs have revealed interesting findings. Some studies indicate that GCs attract criminal behaviour such as burglary (Breetzke et al., 2014), and some others show that they do not truly meet security standards. For instance, in a study about GCs in Canada, Jill Grant (2005: 282) indicates that most security conditions are not met in the sample communities because “fences are quite low (1.2 m or less) [and] guards and video surveillance are rare, except in the most exclusive projects”.

Studies focusing on the fear of crime imply that GCs may be dystopian reflections of future cities (Atkinson & Flint, 2004). On the other hand, people in various parts of the world have diverse attitudes towards gated communities because of their lifestyles and needs. For example, Yasser Mahgoub and Fatma Khalfani (2012) have observed that people in Qatar prefer living in detached homes rather than in gated communities.

Although GCs were first developed to meet residents’ security needs, they were presented as more prestigious and privileged living spaces over time as a marketing strategy (Blandy, 2006).

Later, these communities became well known for their high status (Richter & Goetz, 2007; Çekiç & Gezici, 2009; Almatarneh & Mansour, 2013). People had a desire to live in GCs because they wanted to have a better lifestyle, represented by several factors such as “the avoidance of the problems in a city, e.g. people asking for money and food; and the search for social homogeneity, status and exclusivity within some social groups in the context of a general process of impoverishment of the society” (Roitman, 2005: 305). In other words, these communities became widespread around the world with the demands of opulent people.

Although social bonds are not the main reason for moving to GCs (Blandy & Lister, 2003), it has been observed that this community type improves neighbourly relations (Garip & Şener, 2012). The reason for this improvement may stem from the fact that the residents live in a restricted area (Edgü & Cimşit, 2011). Within this protected area, social bonds and neighbours’ support also help residents develop a sense of safety (Grant, 2005).

### 3 Method

#### 3.1 Sampling

This study examined residents’ satisfaction levels in GCs and focused on their preferences and the bond between them and the community. A descriptive research method was used in the design of the study, which focused on two GCs in Diyarbakır, a city in southeast Turkey. This city has attracted migration from rural areas for various reasons, such as the lack of job opportunities in the area and the drawn-out conflict in the region. The first GCs in the city were built after 2000. Two GCs in the city of Diyarbakır – the Hamrvat Gated Community and Gökkuşığı Gated Community – were examined as part of this study. These communities were selected because they were the first GCs in the city and they are larger than the others.

The study involves two GCs (Figure 1). The Hamrvat Gated Community (HGC) has 305 houses, most of which are duplexes (Figure 2 and 3). It was privately built in 2002 for members of upper class. The Gökkuşığı Gated Community (GGC), which was completed in 2007, has 256 detached homes (Figures 4 and 5).

#### 3.2 Participants

Thirty-three residents from HGC and twenty-seven from GGC agreed to take part in the study. The total number of participants was sixty and 90% of them were female. Among the female participants, 53% were housewives. Administer-

ing the questionnaires was rather challenging due to attitudes displayed by the community administrators and some residents of the GCs. Because of constraints by the community administrators, the questionnaires could only be administered during the daytime. Male residents were not usually at home during that time, and those that could be found were not as eager as women to answer the questionnaires. Because women traditionally spend more time within the residence and take care of the children, it made more sense to administer the questionnaires to women rather than men.

Half of the respondents were university graduates and all of them owned their houses. Fifty-two per cent of the residents were over forty. There were fewer than five household members in 72% of the houses. The average time of home ownership was more than five years in HGC (94%) and less than three years in GGC (100%; Table 1).

#### 3.3 Research instruments

A questionnaire technique was used to collect data in the two GCs selected. A demographic information sheet was prepared to obtain background information about the participants. The main questionnaire consisted of three parts, the first of which was related to residents’ satisfaction levels pertaining to the residence, neighbours and neighbourhood. The second part examined residents’ satisfaction levels in detail, asking for opinions about housing quality and environmental features. Finally, opinions related to the house and its immediate environment were examined. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the research instrument was found to be 0.73. The first and second parts of the questionnaire consisted of four-point Likert-type questions with a scale ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*, and the third part consisted of two options.

#### 3.4 Data analysis

The findings were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. After the descriptive statistics were calculated, a Mann–Whitney *U* Test was administered to determine the difference between the nonparametric data obtained from the average scores of two independent samples.

### 4 Results and discussion

#### 4.1 Satisfaction levels in the two GCs in Diyarbakır

The conceptual framework for this part of the study was formed based on the classification by Maria Amerigo and Juan Ignacio Aragonés (1997), who evaluated residential satisfac-

**Table 1:** Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.

	Hamravat Gated Community	Gökkuşığı Gated Community	Total
	<i>n</i> = 33	<i>n</i> = 27	<i>n</i> = 60
	<i>F</i> (%)	<i>F</i> (%)	<i>F</i> (%)
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	5 (15)	1 (4)	6 (10)
Female	28 (85)	26 (96)	54 (90)
<b>Age</b>			
20–30	4 (12)	2 (7)	6 (10)
31–40	12 (36)	11 (41)	23 (38)
> 40	17 (52)	14 (52)	31 (52)
<b>Occupation</b>			
Housewife	19 (58)	13 (48)	32 (53)
Public sector	9 (27)	12 (44.5)	21 (35)
Private sector	5 (15)	2 (7.5)	7 (12)
<b>Education</b>			
Primary education	5 (15)	1 (4)	6 (10)
Secondary education	14 (42.5)	10 (37)	24 (40)
Bachelor's degree	12 (36.5)	13 (48)	25 (42)
Master's degree	2 (6)	3 (11)	5 (8)
<b>Marital status</b>			
Married	29 (88)	27 (100)	56 (93)
Single	4 (12)	0 (0)	4 (7)
<b>Household size</b>			
2	3 (9)	5 (18.5)	8 (13)
3	8 (24)	5 (18.5)	13 (22)
4	11 (33.5)	11 (41)	22 (37)
5 or more	11 (33.5)	6 (22)	17 (28)
<b>Length of residence (years)</b>			
1	0 (0)	2 (7)	2 (3)
2	1 (3)	20 (74)	21 (35)
3	0 (0)	5 (19)	5 (8)
4	1 (3)	0 (0)	1 (2)
5 or more	31 (94)	0 (0)	31 (52)
<b>Tenure status</b>			
Owner-occupied	33 (100)	27 (100)	60 (100)
Rented	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

tion by considering three aspects: the neighbourhood, neighbours and house. As seen in Table 2, the residential satisfaction levels were quite high in the two communities. Although no statistically significant results were found when the two communities were compared, GGC had higher satisfaction levels in terms of the house and neighbourhood, but HGC had a higher result for neighbours. Compared to non-gated communities in the same city, the satisfaction levels of the residents in the GCs were quite high. For example, Nail Mahir Korkmaz (2007), who examined house satisfaction levels in a non-gated community in the same city, found that 76.7% of

participants were satisfied with their houses. This finding is low compared to the result obtained in this study (HGC = 91%, GGC = 100%).

The questionnaire also asked detailed questions about the house and its environment such as the size of the house and its rooms; the number of rooms, kitchen, bathroom and garden; the external appearance of the residence; play areas for children; pedestrian routes and sports areas; management; community security; home security; the effects of living in a restricted area; and transport facilities. Table 3 shows that

**Table 2:** Residents' satisfaction levels related to living area.

Communities	Satisfaction				Mean	Percentage of satisfaction
	4	3	2	1		
<b>House</b>						
HGC	11	19	3	0	3.24	91
GGC	8	19	0	0	3.30	100
<b>Neighbourhood</b>						
HGC	9	19	6	1	3.00	79
GGC	8	16	3	0	3.19	89
<b>Neighbours</b>						
HGC	11	22	0	0	3.33	100
GGC	9	16	1	1	3.22	93

Note: 4 = very satisfied, 3 = satisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied; HGC = Hamravat Gated Community ( $n = 33$ ), GGC = Gökkuşığı Gated Community ( $n = 27$ )

the satisfaction levels for all of these items were quite high in both communities. The only item that lowered the satisfaction levels was the one asking about plumbing systems, which had often failed.

When the two communities were compared, some statistically significant differences were found in certain areas (Table 3). The residents of HGC were significantly more satisfied with social activities compared to the residents of GGC ( $U = 260.00$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). As already stated, HGC consists of duplexes whereas GGC is mainly composed of detached homes. Residents' satisfaction levels concerning the distance between houses were quite low in HGC compared to GGC ( $U = 312.00$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Another question asked about the immediate environment of the communities. The satisfaction level in GGC was lower compared to HGC ( $U = 259.50$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This may stem from the fact that tall buildings near GGC violated the privacy of the houses in the community. In Turkey, cities have so far generally been developed vertically. However, the new policy of the Turkish government, introduced in 2014, urges developers to build horizontal cities. If followed properly by citizens, this policy may prevent similar problems in the future.

Summing up the results, it can be concluded that the satisfaction levels were found to be high in the sample communities. The high satisfaction levels may be connected to the fact that all of the residents were homeowners. A number of studies have indicated that homeowners generally have higher house satisfaction levels (Elsinga & Hoekstra, 2005; Grinstein-Weiss et al., 2011; Tech-Hong, 2012). It was also found that 98% of the participants were satisfied with living in a restricted area (i.e., in a gated community).

## 4.2 Reasons for living in a gated community

Various reasons were obtained as a result of the data analysis performed for this study. This part of the study explores the underlying reasons for residents' desire to live in a GC in depth.

### 4.2.1 Security

The results of previous studies have indicated that the existence of GCs is based on a need for security (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Atkinson & Flint, 2004; Grant & Mittelsteadt, 2004; Roitman, 2005; Asiedu & Arku, 2009). Similarly, the findings of this study show that the participants think their communities and houses are safe (90% and 93%, respectively). These results, presented in Table 3, prove that the residents find this community type better in terms of security. However, when the participants were asked about shortcomings in security, it was found that there were still some examples of crime in these GCs. As shown in Table 4, 10% of the participants witnessed crime in their communities and 23% did not find their houses safe against burglars. When asked about the cause of this perception, most respondents (60%) mentioned security weakness at the entrances of the communities. The total percentage of satisfaction with security contradicts this finding. This contradiction can be explained by the effect of the good relations between neighbours (McDonell, 2006; Carpiano, 2007). Such restricted communities increase neighbourhood attachment and the tendency of neighbours to protect their living spaces (Brown et al., 2003; Comstock et al., 2010). Accordingly, the fact that the residents know one another closely (92%, Table 2) may have an effect on their perception of safety.

From the results of this study, it is possible to conclude that the main reason the participants preferred these communities was

**Table 3:** Residents' satisfaction levels related to the house and community characteristics.

	Communities	Satisfaction				Mean	Percentage of satisfaction	Total percentage of satisfaction
		4	3	2	1			
<b>Size of house</b>								
	HGC	8	25	0	0	3.24	100	97
	GGC	8	17	2	0	3.22	93	
<b>Number of rooms</b>								
	HGC	8	22	3	0	3.15	91	92
	GGC	8	17	2	0	3.22	93	
<b>Sizes of rooms</b>								
	HGC	10	23	0	0	3.30	100	95
	GGC	7	17	3	0	3.15	89	
<b>Kitchen</b>								
	HGC	10	20	2	1	3.18	91	83
	GGC	8	12	7	0	3.04	74	
<b>Bathroom</b>								
	HGC	5	22	4	2	2.91	82	80
	GGC	9	12	6	0	3.11	78	
<b>Garden</b>								
	HGC	9	19	4	1	3.09	85	88
	GGC	10	15	2	0	3.30	93	
<b>Plumbing system</b>								
	HGC	0	8	12	13	1.85	24	28
	GGC	1	8	12	6	2.15	33	
<b>Aesthetic appearance of residence</b>								
	HGC	2	26	4	1	2.88	85	82
	GGC	3	18	5	1	2.85	78	
<b>Child play area</b>								
	HGC	5	20	8	0	2.91	76	82
	GGC	5	19	2	1	3.04	89	
<b>Raising children here</b>								
	HGC	15	16	2	0	3.39	94	93
	GGC	7	18	2	0	3.19	93	
<b>Pedestrian routes</b>								
	HGC	4	20	9	0	2.85	73	73
	GGC	4	16	5	2	2.78	74	
<b>Social activity</b>								
	HGC	9	20	4	0	3.15**	88	70
	GGC	4	9	10	4	2.15**	48	
<b>Sports areas</b>								
	HGC	3	25	5	0	2.94	85	83
	GGC	6	16	4	1	3.00	81.5	
<b>Management of community</b>								
	HGC	4	16	10	3	2.64	61	65
	GGC	1	18	6	2	2.67	70	
<b>Distances between houses</b>								
	HGC	2	16	13	2	2.55*	55	65
	GGC	5	16	6	0	2.96*	78	



	Communities	Satisfaction				Mean	Percentage of satisfaction	Total percentage of satisfaction
		4	3	2	1			
<b>Population outside community</b>								
	HGC	6	9	13	5	2.48**	45.5	35
	GGC	0	6	8	13	1.74**	22	
<b>Security of community</b>								
	HGC	12	17	4	0	3.24	88	90
	GGC	8	17	2	0	3.22	93	
<b>Home security</b>								
	HGC	11	20	2	0	3.27	94	93
	GGC	9	16	2	0	3.26	93	
<b>Living in a restricted area</b>								
	HGC	15	17	1	0	3.42	97	98
	GGC	11	16	0	0	3.41	100	
<b>Transport facilities</b>								
	HGC	3	15	14	1	2.60	55	57
	GGC	1	15	9	2	2.56	59	

Note: 4 = very satisfied, 3 = satisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied; HGC = Hamravat Gated Community (n = 33), GGC = Gökkuşuğu Gated Community (n = 27); \* p < 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01

the need for safety in spite of the weaknesses. Those responsible for security could easily solve these problems by taking some additional measures. These findings were presented to the managers of both communities.

#### 4.2.2 Living in a prestigious area

Eighty per cent of the participants regard their residences as modern, and 83% think they are good value for money (Table 4). Here, the word *modern* is used in the sense of ‘up-to-date’ and ‘of good quality’. This shows that the residences are accepted by the residents. Moreover, the participants think that they live in a respectable area (82%) and a place of high status (78%), and 93% feel themselves to be part of this living area. These findings are consistent with the findings of Sonia Roitman’s study (2005).

#### 4.3 Preferences related to GCs and reasons

Ninety-three per cent of the residents are very satisfied with raising their children in a restricted area (Table 3) because a safe atmosphere makes them feel at ease and less anxious. The good relations among the neighbours (92%) show that dialog and cooperation are at the highest level among neighbours (Table 4). This allows the neighbours to keep an eye on children. Similar results were found by William M. Rohe et al. (2013), who stated that, unlike tenants, home owners tend to stay in the same neighbourhood for a long time and

have a tendency to control their living area. Surveillance not only helps control the environment but also decreases the level of anxiety among residents (Rollwagen, 2014) by creating a secondary security zone within the community.

In addition to providing a safe and prestigious living space for residents, GCs also create an attachment to place. One interesting finding of the study is that 40% of the participants are afraid of living outside of a GC (Table 4). The percentage is higher in HGC (54.5%) than in GGC (22%;  $U = 301.50$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This may be due to the fact that the residents of HGC have been living in a restricted area for a longer period of time.

Based on the findings of this study, it is possible to conclude that the existence of GCs, which are considered safe and prestigious living spaces, depends on the feelings they give to their residents: being privileged and far from crime. At least for some residents, this is proved by a fear of living outside of the gated community. Considering that the communities are defensible and far from crime, they feel an attachment to the place and create their own world in this restricted area. On the other hand, the feeling of being privileged implies another factor: it shows that the value of their real estate will increase in the future (Le Goix, 2005). This feeling of attachment indicates that mobility will be at a minimum (Andersen, 2011).

Residents’ perception of being privileged can be reflected by their opinion that the neighbourhood where they live is re-

**Table 4:** Residents' opinions related to houses and immediate environment.

Question	Community	F (%)	
		Yes	No
<b>Have you observed any crime in your living area?</b>			
	HGC	3 (9)	30 (91)
	GGC	3 (11)	24 (89)
	Total	6 (10)	54 (90)
<b>Do you feel that you belong to this place?</b>			
	HGC	31 (94)	2 (6)
	GGC	25 (93)	2 (7)
	Total	56 (93)	4 (7)
<b>Is your house worth the money you spent?</b>			
	HGC	29 (88)	4 (12)
	GGC	21 (78)	6 (22)
	Total	50 (83)	10 (17)
<b>Would it frighten you to live outside the gated community?</b>			
	HGC	18 (54.5)*	15 (45.5)
	GGC	6 (22)*	21 (78)
	Total	24 (40)	36 (60)
<b>Do you think that your house is safe against burglary?</b>			
	HGC	27 (82)	6 (18)
	GGC	19 (70)	8 (30)
	Total	46 (77)	14 (23)
<b>Do you know your neighbours?</b>			
	HGC	30 (91)	3 (9)
	GGC	25 (93)	2 (7)
	Total	55 (92)	5 (8)
<b>Do you think that your house is modern?</b>			
	HGC	25 (76)	8 (24)
	GGC	23 (85)	4 (15)
	Total	48 (80)	12 (20)
<b>Do you think that you live in a respectable neighbourhood?</b>			
	HGC	29 (88)	4 (12)
	GGC	20 (74)	7 (26)
	Total	49 (82)	11 (18)
<b>Do you think that you live in a high-status neighbourhood?</b>			
	HGC	28 (85)	5 (15)
	GGC	19 (70)	8 (30)
	Total	47 (78)	13 (22)
<b>Do you think that the entrances to the gated community are controlled properly?</b>			
	HGC	12 (36)	21 (64)
	GGC	12 (44)	15 (56)
	Total	24 (40)	36 (60)

Note: HGC = Hamravat Gated Community ( $n = 33$ ), GGC = Gökkuşuğu Gated Community ( $n = 27$ ), \*  $p < 0.05$

spectable and high status, and worth the money they paid. Later, this attitude may lead to an increase in the overall value of the place. Studies by Edward J. Blakely (1999) and Douglas S. Bible and Chengho Hsieh (2001) predicted that the housing value of GCs would increase. Moreover, as stated by Jill Grant and Lindsey Mittelsteadt (2004), wealthy families living in these communities are content with the comfort of having neighbours from similar social background. In other words, the wealth of the other residents is also an indicator of living in a prestigious neighbourhood. To sum up, these communities may be favoured even more in the future based on implications in various studies (Ellin, 2001; Webster, 2001; Stoyanov & Frantz, 2006; Roitman, 2010; Ülkü & Erten, 2013). Without doubt, this will also lead to an increase in the property value of the GCs (Blakely, 1999; Bible & Hsieh, 2001).

## 5 Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that residents' satisfaction levels pertaining to house, neighbours and neighbourhood are rather high in the sample communities. Minor causes of complaints, such as the plumbing system and high buildings around the communities, do not outweigh the high satisfaction levels. Residents' reason for living in a gated area is similar to that of other residents of GCs around the world: the desire to live in a safe and prestigious area. The findings also reveal that the feeling of place attachment is strong.

Living in a safe and restricted area and raising children in an atmosphere that is far from crime changes residents' perception of security. This secluded lifestyle isolates them from the outside world and later it becomes an indispensable part of their lives. In addition, strong relations with neighbours continue to exist in this restricted environment. After experiencing this lifestyle, residents may even find it intolerable to live in a house outside a GC because they envision detached homes as risky and unsafe based on their previous experiences. Considering the present situation in the world, it seems that the tendency to live in a wealthy and homogenous group will continue with the construction of more communities of this type. As mentioned above, many studies have stated that the overall value of GCs will increase in the future due to the fact that they have a positive effect on their residents and high satisfaction levels. In other words, what is known about GCs justifies the prediction that they will be indispensable for residents in the future.

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