Analysing environmental satisfaction in gated housing settlements: A case study in İstanbul

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Abstract:
In Istanbul, gated communities have been increasing in number all around the city, particularly since the 1980s, and there has been an ongoing demand since then. This paper mainly tries to examine the users' relationships with the housing environment and focuses on the issues of "satisfaction" and "residents' evaluation of their physical and social environments" in gated settlements. Housing environments have a mechanism that includes "spatial", "functional", and "social" relations. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to understand how residents define their social and physical environments within this mechanism, and to find out some environmental characteristics that affect their satisfaction in order to provide some clues to the environmental quality of the housing environments without walls around and gates with security control. A case study was carried out in four gated settlements in Istanbul, and a questionnaire was given to 200 residents which essentially contained open-ended and multiple-choice questions. Data gathered from the open-ended questions provided a wide range of concepts that define the settings in different scales, while the data gathered from the multiple-choice questions presented the statistical findings with respect to satisfaction. The results show that the residents' "satisfaction" with their social and physical environment is at a considerably high level. This situation demonstrates the importance and significance of the studies in this field while there are many discussions related to the negative effects of these settlements.

Keywords: *Satisfaction, evaluation, environmental quality, gated settlements, housing studies.*

1. Introduction
A householder has various needs with respect to the environment in which he lives and he expects to be satisfied socially and physically. Today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the urban environment is changing rapidly and people are searching for environmental quality in their work and living spaces. In many parts of the world, there is a strong tendency towards privately governed places; there are some differences and similarities when comparing them, but their main characteristics separate them from public urban spaces. According to Webster et al. (2002), one of the most striking features of recent urbanization is the rise in popularity of privately governed

residential, industrial, and commercial spaces; the phenomenon is a spontaneous one and it has spread rapidly in many countries in the last two decades of the twentieth century. In many respects, the gates are a metaphor for the social processes at work in the nation's political and social landscapes (Blakely and Snyder, 1997).

Low (2006) defines a gated community as an example of a new form of social ordering called "spatial governmentality" that focuses on concealing or displacing offensive people or activities rather than eliminating them. Social order is produced by creating zones where the protected group is shielded from others' behaviour (Low, 2006). Gated communities restrict access not just to residents' homes, but also to the use of public spaces and service roads, parks, facilities, and open spaces contained within the enclosure (Low, 2003). According to Webster and Glasze (2006), private neighbourhoods create new micro-societies. There is a great deal of literature on the emergence, effects, and spread of "gated communities" in different parts of the globe. Studies show that there is a global spread of this type of housing settlements. "Gates" function as a symbol of the inequalities between the power that controls the gates and those excluded by them (Sanchez and Lang, 2002).

According to anecdotal evidence and research from various regions of the world, the global growth in private communities has been influenced by the American experience (Webster et al., 2002). Aalbers (2003) notes that the first gated communities were retirement settlements in Southern Florida and California, where those over a specified age could take refuge from increasingly violent urban areas. Such communities flourish in societies with vast income disparities and are a particular feature of development in the US, Latin America, and South Africa (Minton, 2002). Grant (2003) mentions that gated or walled communities have proliferated in America in the last decade, and appear increasingly in regions such as the Middle East, Australia, South Africa, and Central and South America; developers estimate that eight out of ten new residential projects in the US involve gates, walls, or guards; media reports suggest that gated communities are also on the increase in Canada. According to Webster et al. (2002), in Europe there are so far relatively few private residential neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, an increase in a similar kind of housing is apparent in some European countries. In addition, the subject has been also given attention in Asia (Leisch, 2002) and North Africa (Kuppinger, 2004).

In Istanbul, gated housing settlements have been in a rapidly developing construction process spreading all around the city, particularly since the beginning of 1980s; these are characterized as settlements for middle-income families and luxury housing for high-income communities. According to Keyder and Oncu (1993), it is not possible to understand the transformation of Istanbul within 1980s by isolating it from political context of the period; particularly after 1983, the government's- which is the operator of liberalization strategies- attention on Istanbul is significant. Again, within the same period, in conjunction with the establishment of Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKI), a rapid construction process had started. Under the influence of a globalizing economic and socio-cultural structure, changes in social structure of the urban environment brought about different housing settlements in order to satisfy different life-styles' needs. Gorgulu (2003) notes that 20 years housing experience in Istanbul has been stressing alternative living environments and a new type of Istanbul citizens which do not know the urban metropolis, which live inside the city limits,

however establish their own creation of virtual worlds with closed circles of life. Demands together with the new life-styles had a significant role on the emergence of gated housing settlements in Istanbul.

Today, the number of new housing settlements is increasing and they are presented as "new life styles" to the citizens. Construction companies mostly tend to present a qualified life style in different ways and, besides, most of them also search for well-known architects. Today, the underlined housing settlements in İstanbul are in considerable demand and it has been observed that the residents of these settlements are extremely satisfied with their environment despite living far away from the central city and the urban facilities located in the centres. Therefore, this paper mainly tries to examine the users' relationships with the gated housing environments and focuses on the issues of "satisfaction", and "residents' evaluation of their physical and social environments". The purpose of the study is to understand how residents define their social and physical environments, and to find out some environmental characteristics that affect their satisfaction in order to provide some clues to the environmental quality of the housing environments without walls around and gates with security control.

2. Satisfaction with the social and physical environments in housing settlements

One of the most significant purposes of architectural design is to create environments that users are satisfied with and where they can live in harmony with their environment in the human-environment interaction system. In many studies on person-environment relations it is claimed that the housing environment affects the residents' social, psychological, physical, and emotional features (Newman, 1972; Yeung, 1977; Brower, 1996; Manzo, 2005; Sanoff, 2006a). In the scope of this research, the residents' relationship with their environment is analysed through the physical and social characteristics of the environment.

There is a strong bond between satisfaction and the components that determine people's relationships with their physical and social environments. According to Becker (1977), to create environments that not only "work" but that will be used and are rewarding for those who inhabit and use them, designers must understand the kinds of associations different people have with the buildings and other design elements and how these associations and interpretations of physical cues affect peoples' feelings of self-esteem, their social standing in the community, and their relationships with their families, friends, and neighbours. Brower (1996) defines residential functions as activities and meanings associated with housing and notes that all people need to satisfy residential functions.

There have been many discussions about the relationship between social and physical environments in the social and geographic literature and the field of environmental psychology. From a geographic perspective, Golledge and Stimson (1997) note that the important question confronting geographers as social scientists is "how do people sort themselves out in [urban] space?" When studying "housing", a subject which requires the most attention with respect to social and physical dimensions, Kemeny (1992), as a social scientist, suggests that the socio-spatial relationships centring on housing focus on the interaction between "household" and "dwelling" and "their combined effect".

Researchers from various fields have examined the relationship between residents' satisfaction and the physical and social aspects of the residential environments. Sanoff (2006b) notes that there is an important relationship between "spatial arrangements" and "social behaviour" since both have effects on "satisfaction". He defines the "non-physical variables" that affect the relationship between physical space and social behaviour. These non-physical dimensions are relations with neighbours, attitudes and behaviour toward the neighbourhood community, social self-concept and aspirations, personal and family relations, psychological state (optimism-pessimism), and reactions to the neighbourhood environment (Sanoff, 2006b). Friendliness is mentioned in a number of studies as being important for neighbourhood satisfaction (Brower, 1996). Munson (1956) assumes that six of the ten most important features of a good neighbourhood are concerned with the attributes of the neighbours, and Troy (1973) suggests that half of overall satisfaction is explained by satisfaction with the social environment.

3. Method

In this research, data was collected through a questionnaire given to 200 respondents and statistically analysed. The questionnaire used mixed questions including "multiple-choice questions" related to the "frequency of social and physical interaction" in the settlements and "satisfaction with the social and physical environments", and "open-ended questions" to gather subjective data. The questions were grouped according to different scales such as the "settling scale", "building scale", and "apartment unit scale" and different components such as "physical", "social", and "administrative" to categorize the data.

3.1 Case selection

The case study was carried out in four different gated settlements that were designed and constructed in the 2000s in Istanbul (Figure1). The "Antrium Housing Settlement", "My World Housing Settlement (Suncity District)", "Evidea Housing Settlement", and "Narcity Housing Settlement (C District)" were selected for analysis.

Each setting had social spaces such as "open/close recreation areas", "sports areas", "pre-schools", "cafe-restaurants", etc., which were separated from the outer environment by walls and could be reached after entering through security control. In order to gather consistent data, the criteria for selection were determined as follows:

- to have been designed and constructed in the same period,
- to have inhabitants with the same income levels, and
- to have a certain number of housing units.

3.2 Survey instrument

A questionnaire was designed to collect data about satisfaction levels, interaction of the residents with the social and physical environments, and subjective findings about the users' relationships with their environments. Therefore, two types of questions were used: (1) open-ended questions and (2) multiple-choice questions.

Open-ended questions were asked to understand "the best-liked" and "the least-liked" features and the features related to their "wants" within the residential environments. The answers were categorized and grouped into three major categories. Although open-ended questions are not easy to evaluate and give subjective information, they are very helpful for obtaining

different words that can be used to describe the physical environments (Sanoff, 1973; 1991). In this study, this technique helped to understand which words were mainly used to (1) describe the settings and (2) find out what the environmental cues were that affected how the participants evaluated the settings in terms of "liked" or "disliked".

Figure 1. *Selected housing settlements from Istanbul (1:Url-1; 2:Url-2; Garip, 2009; 3:Url-3; 4:Url-4).*

The "multiple-choice questions" contained questions about the following:
- frequency of social interaction
- satisfaction with the social environment
- frequency of use, and
- satisfaction with the physical environment.

The answers obtained from the multiple-choice questions provided statistical data that shows the condition of social networks, physical interaction, and the satisfaction levels of the participants.

4. Research findings
4.1 Findings from open-ended questions (overall satisfaction)
In this study, this technique was used in order to understand how residents define their social and physical environments, and to discover the cues that

affect their relationship with the environment positively or negatively. A similar classification technique was used by Sanoff (1991) to explain the visual characteristics of the physical environment. The participants used more than 700 descriptive words to explain their residential environments. The adjectives were than classified into three major categories: the "physical environment", "social environment", and "administration-services". The classification of descriptive attributes is shown in the above table (Table1). The descriptive words were grouped with respect to their similarities in terms of meaning. The categorization was done by two colleagues, who agreed 90% with the similarities between the adjectives. For instance, features such as the "colours of the buildings", "quantity of housing units", and "coating" were grouped under "physical environment" while features such as "neighbour relations", "social activities", and "people" were grouped under "social environment". Features such as "security", "information", and "charges" were grouped under "administration-services".

Table 1. *Classification of descriptive words*

	PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	ADMINISTRATION -SERVICES
	Settling scale	Building Scale	Apartment unit scale		
FUNCTION / SPACE	-Plan/idea/design -Life style -Application -Quantity of housing units -Social spaces -Sports areas -Pools -Cafe/restaurant -Environmental design -Transportation -District -Surroundings -Entrances/exits of site -Parking areas -Guest parking -Children playing areas -Park for children -Playing areas -Pre-school -Fences -Wind -Mosque -Cinema -Shopping area -Health-beauty center -Pub/bar -Emergency room	- Elevators - Appearance - High building blocks - Horizontal building blocks - Colors of the buildings - Main entrance - Interior/exterior coating - Mailboxes - Interior spaces of building blocks - Architectural characteristics - Changings - Entrance of storage spaces - Air condition system - Heat insulation - Acustic isolation - Privacy	-Interior organization of housing unit -Panorama -Garden -Balcony -Dublex -Interior coating	-Neighbor relations -Social relations -People -Friends -Family -Neighbors -Children -Teens -Chats -People outside of the site -Social activities -To bring up children -Use of social spaces -To have different opinion -Neighborhood -Differences -Site regulations	-Security -Maintenance -Administrating -Construction firm -Direction -Service -Information -Charges -Investment value
QUALITY	-Qualified -Regular -Pleasant -Nice -Spacious -Quiet/peaceful -Clean air -Pozitive energy -Look like holiday village -In the mood for summer house -Noisy -Hygienic/clean -Modern -Comfortable and easy -Dependent from outside -Optimum	-Quality of architecture -Quality of materials -Stability -Simlicity -Modest -Spacious -Look like hotel building	-Quality of the housing unit -Quality of materials -Functional -Comfortable -Appropriate -Nice -Spacious	-Cultivated -Crowded -Sensitive to environment -Friendly -All manner of people -Elite -Qualified -Social -Sincere -Compoundable -Cheerful -Respectful -Irreverent -Selfish -Insensitive -Kind	- High amount of fees - Expensiveness

In addition, descriptive words related to the spaces, quantitative characteristics, and usage of them were categorized as "function/space" while adjectives and qualitative descriptions were categorized as "quality".

The positive and negative usages of the words were also important and taken into consideration (Figure 2). In the scope of this research, the evaluation of the subjective data is explained below;

- Features of the "physical environment" in the settling scale were mostly evaluated "positively"
- Participants defined the features related to "administration/services" "positively"
- Data gathered from the open-ended questions shows that the residents mostly focused on and were concerned with the "settling scale" of the "physical environment". The findings show that they put more importance on the physical environmental characteristics than the social environment and administrative features.
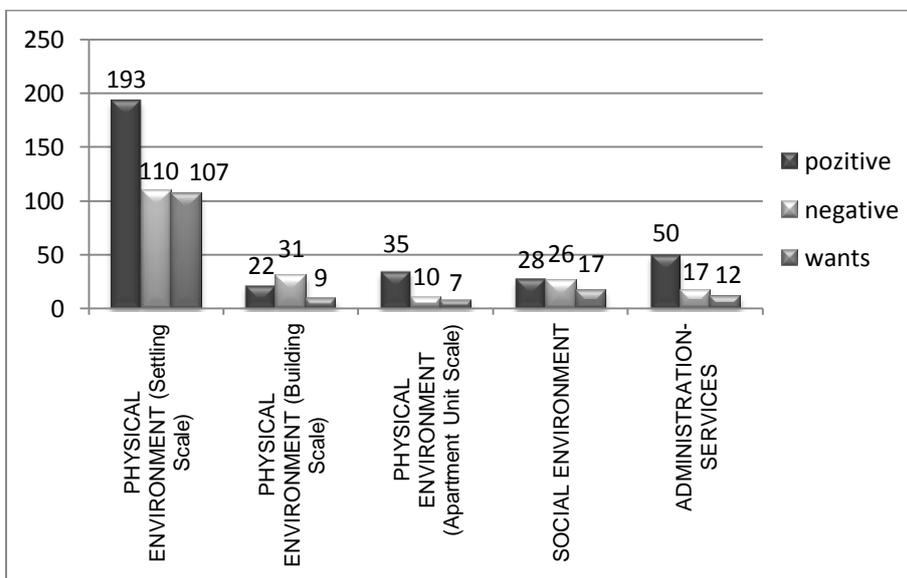

Figure 2. Positive and negative usage of descriptive words for the settings.

4.2 Findings from multiple-choice questions

The social interaction of the residents in the settings was investigated through questions about the frequency of social interaction. Table 2 briefly shows that the residents interacted well with their social environment. 84% of the residents frequently greeted their neighbours inside the apartment blocks and 81% of them inside the settlements. In comparison, it can be seen that the "visiting neighbours" activity was not as frequent as the "greeting neighbours" activity.

The level of satisfaction of the residents with social interaction was investigated through ranking their satisfaction with "greeting neighbours" inside the settings and inside the apartment blocks, and "visiting neighbours" inside the settings" and inside the apartment units. The great majority of the participants were satisfied with their social interaction (Figure 3). Unless they were satisfied with all of the defined activities, in parallel with the frequency, the satisfaction levels with the "greeting" activity and "visiting neighbours" activity showed a difference. 95% of the participants were satisfied with

"greeting neighbours in the apartment blocks", while 23% were unsatisfied with the same activity when it took place "inside the apartments".

Table 2. Frequency of social interaction

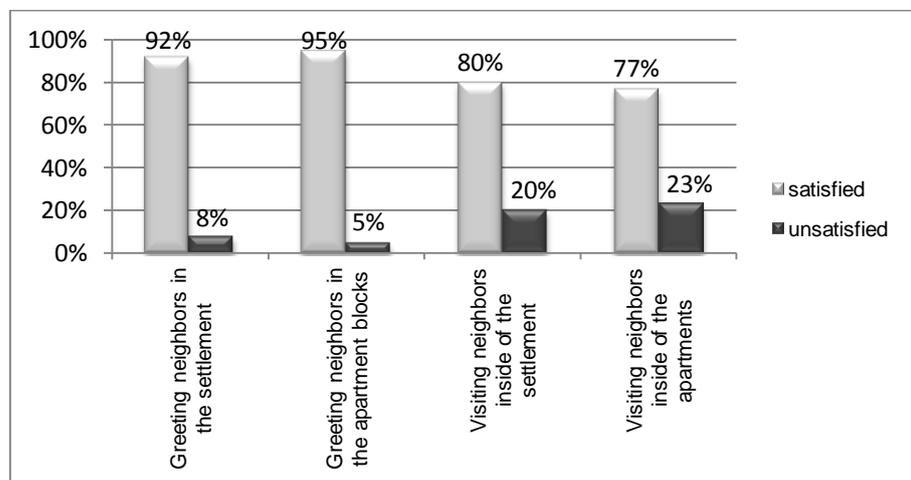| SOCIAL INTERACTION	Greeting neighbors in the settlement		Greeting neighbors in the apartment blocks		Visiting neighbors inside of the settlement		Visiting neighbors inside of the apartments	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Frequently	161	81%	167	84%	33	16%	35	17%
Sometimes	34	17%	31	15%	118	59%	110	55%
Never	5	2%	2	1%	49	25%	55	28%
TOTAL	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**

Figure 3. *Satisfaction with social environment*

The physical interaction of residents in the settings was investigated through questions about the frequency of using social spaces (Table 3). The most frequent physical interaction took place in the "private balcony/garden" (47%) and "open recreation areas" (35%) and the least frequent physical interaction took place in "health-beauty centres" (50%) in the neighbourhood.

Table 3. Physical interaction with neighborhood

PHYSICAL INTERACTION	Retail shops		Restaurants/ cafes/bars		Sports areas		Open recreation areas		Health-beauty centers		Private balcony/ garden	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Frequently	57	29%	46	23%	59	30%	70	35%	20	10%	94	47%
Sometimes	119	59%	130	65%	118	59%	109	55%	80	40%	74	37%
Never	24	12%	24	12%	23	11%	21	10%	100	50%	32	16%
TOTAL	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**	**200**	**100%**

The satisfaction of the residents with their physical environments was investigated through ranking their satisfaction with social spaces. The residents of the selected housing settlements were most satisfied with the

use of "sports areas" (86%) and "open recreation areas" (83%), while they were least satisfied with the "health-beauty centres" (50%) (Figure 4).
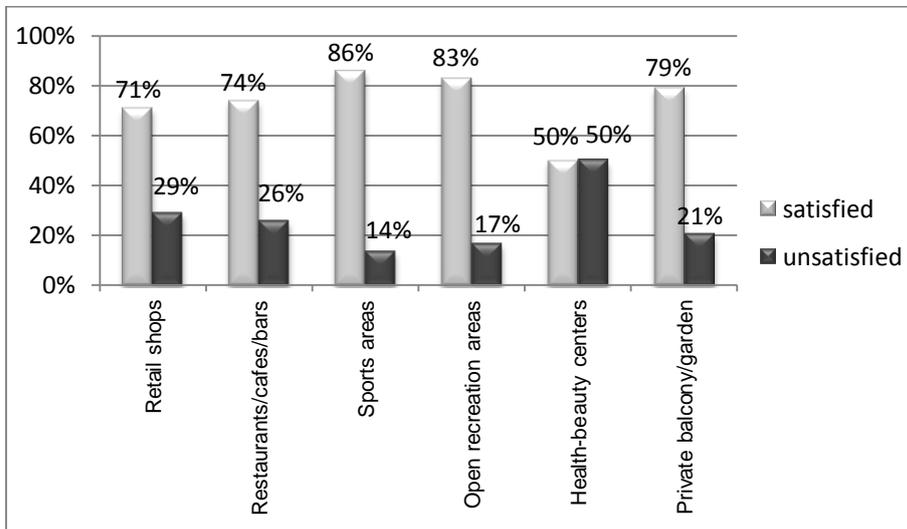

Figure 4 *Satisfaction with physical environment*

5. Results

The data gathered from the multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions, gave us important evidence for characterizing the settings in different scales within the gated housing environment. It was clear that the inhabitants were satisfied with their residential environments both physically and socially.

The findings from the open-ended questions helped us to define the positive and negative features of the settings. Due to the users' descriptions of their residential environment, it is executed that the parameters of overall satisfaction can be categorized as "physical environment", "social environment", and "administration-services" in the framework of "function" and "quality". The words used for the descriptions of the settings played an important role, and the positive and negative tendencies of the descriptive words were also significant (Table 1 and Figure 2). The features related to the "physical characteristics of the settling scale" tended to be the most positive features. And the physical environment, particularly in the settling scale, plays an important role in rating these settings as "liked" or "disliked." In relation to this, it can be suggested that these features were effective in the sense that the residents were satisfied with their social and physical interactions in the "settling" scale rather than in the "building" or "apartment unit" scales.

People living inside the gated settlements are isolated from the outer environment not only in their homes, but also in common spaces such as parks, open spaces, sports areas, recreation areas which are located within the housing settlements. Particularly these common spaces and their qualities together with the apartment itself come into prominence while this kind of settlements in Istanbul are being observed. When the residential users purchase their apartments, they and their relatives also have the right to use the social common spaces of the settlements. The results indicating the positive tendency of the residents on describing the physical

characteristics of the settling scale can be explained by considering their expectations of satisfiying their common needs while they are not able to meet these requirements within the urban public environment. Urban dwellers are moving to specialized areas -where they feel more secure and more satisfied- from urban housing areas that do not answer the needs of environmental and vital qualities. For further studies, it is significant to evaluate the relations between housing environments and public spaces within the urban space, by means of comparative case studies in order to increase environmental quality and constitute a balanced social and physical environment.

The research shows that the satisfaction levels of the residents with both their physical and social residential environments are considerably high. This situation demonstrates the importance and significance of the studies in this field while there are many discussions related to the negative effects of these settlements. Herein, studies related with the causes of the residents' preferences and what attracts the urban dwellers to move to the gated settlements come into prominence.

Within the study, it is explored that the inhabitants were mostly satisfied with outdoor uses such as sports and open recreation areas; and in the small scale, their satisfaction with balcony/gardens -semi-private spaces where the social interaction took place- were considerably at high levels. Frequency of and satisfaction with the social interaction are high, and it is mostly on a "greeting" level. These results essentially show that use of social common spaces, and semi-private spaces that establish relations with the social spaces plays an important role on formation of social interaction and accordingly relationships between neighbors in gated housing settlements.

6. Conclusions

Today, in Turkey as well as in other countries round the globe, there is a rise in and growing popularity with respect to privately governed residential, industrial, and commercial spaces. Particularly in big metropolises, as well as in Istanbul, there is a rapidly developing construction process in the form of gated housing settlements and other private constitutions, due to the increasing demand. The research presented in this paper primarily tries to understand the relations between residential satisfaction and the characteristics of the gated settlements, while searching for some clues that affect the residents' satisfaction levels.

There are numerous ongoing discussions and academic studies on gated settlements while surprisingly the satisfaction levels of the people living inside these settlements are high and the demand is increasing. The study shows that environmental factors, especially the physical characteristics of the settling scale, have an effect on the residents' evaluations. The residents use the social spaces and social interaction mostly takes place in the social spaces rather than the private spaces (apartment units).

This study provides an updated perspective for evaluating the gated settlements that are increasingly growing in number in Istanbul, and aims to investigate the factors that increase the satisfaction levels of the users by means of analyzing the current samples. The study tries to discover the environmental characteristics that affect the environmental quality of and satisfaction with gated housing settlements. Any further studies should make

comparisons with non-gated settlements. Satisfying the needs of the residents physically and socially will provide a more livable urban life and enhance the quality of residential environments without the need for boundaries to surround them as well.

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Dışa kapalı konut yerleşimlerinde çevresel memnuniyetin irdelenmesi: İstanbul'da bir alan çalışması

Dünya'da ve Türkiye'de yaygın bir eğilim haline gelen "dışa kapalı konut yerleşimleri" ve sosyal/fiziksel çevrede yarattığı etkiler, çeşitli araştırma alanlarında farklı yaklaşımlarla ele alınmaktadır. İstanbul'da, düyanın diğer kentlerinde olduğu gibi dışa kapalı konut yerleşimlerinin sayısı her geçen gün artmaktadır. Özellikle 2000'li yıllardan itibaren uygulanan konut projelerinin neredeyse tamamı, farklı ekonomik ve sosyal sınıflara hitap eden farklı yaşam senaryoları ve kurguları ile dışa kapalı yerleşimler olarak oluşturulmaktadır. Bu makale, temel olarak söz konusu konut yerleşimleri içerisinde yaşamakta olan konut kullanıcılarının konut çevreleri ile ilişkilerini Çevresel Davranış Çalışmaları çerçevesinde irdelemekte; "kullanıcıların sosyal ve fiziksel çevrelerini nasıl değerlendirdikleri" ve "memnuniyetleri" konuları üzerine odaklanmaktadır. Konut çevreleri, "mekansal", "fonksiyonel", ve "sosyal" ilişkileri içerisinde barındıran bir mekanizmaya sahiptir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, konut yerleşimlerinde yaşamakta olan kullanıcıların bu mekanizma içerisinde fiziksel ve sosyal çevrelerini nasıl tanımladıklarının anlaşılması ve kullanıcı memnuniyetini etkileyen çeşitli çevresel verilerin elde edilmesidir.

Günümüz kentlerinin en çarpıcı özelliklerinden biri, konut yerleşimleri, ticari mekanlar, ofis yapıları gibi büyük ölçekli yapıların özel yönetimlere sahip olmaları ve güvenlik sistemlerinin gittikçe daha güçlü hale geldiği çevreleri oluşturmalarıdır. Yapılan araştırmalara göre bu olgu, yirminci yüzyılın son yirmi yılı içerisinde ülkeler arasında gerçekleşen hızlı sıçramalar ile yaygınlaşmaktadır. Sözkonusu çevresel değişimin

önemli bir parçası olan dışa kapalı konut yerleşimleri farklı biçimlerde dünyanın her yerinde hızla yaygınlaşmakta, ülkemizde de bu durum oldukça net olarak hissedilmektedir. Bu makalede, İstanbul'da seçilen dışa kapalı konut yerleşimlerinde sosyal ihtiyaçlar üzerine odaklanan ve 2010 yılında tamamlanmış olan "Dışa Kapalı Konut Yerleşimlerinde Sosyal İhtiyaçların Fiziksel ve Sosyal Etkileşim Çerçevesinde İrdelenmesi" başlıklı doktora tezi kapsamında yürütülen araştırmanın verileri kullanılmıştır.

Araştırma kapsamında İstanbul'da seçilen dört dışa kapalı konut yerleşiminde bir alan çalışması gerçekleştirilmiş ve 200 konut kullanıcısına "açık uçlu" ve "çoktan seçmeli" soruların yöneltildiği bir anket çalışması uygulanmıştır. Alan çalışmasının gerçekleştirildiği konut yerleşimleri, "Antrium", "My World (Suncity)", "Evidea" ve "Narcity (C Bölgesi)" olarak belirlenmiştir. Açık uçlu sorulardan elde edilen veriler, kullanıcıların, konut yerleşimlerinin farklı ölçeklerde "fiziksel ve sosyal özelliklerini" tanımlarken ağırlık verdikleri kavramların ortaya konmasını sağlamış; çoktan seçmeli sorulara verilen cevaplar ise kullanıcıların sosyal ve fiziksel çevrelerinden memnuniyet düzeylerini istatistiksel olarak sunan verilerin elde edilmesine olanak vermiştir.

Açık uçlu sorulardan elde edilen verilerin analizinde ele alınan tanımlar anlamsal yapılarındaki benzerlikler gözönünde bulundurularak üç ana başlık altında kategorize edilmiştir, bunlar; "fiziksel çevre", "sosyal çevre" ve "yönetim-işletme" olarak tanımlanmıştır. Veriler değerlendirilirken tanımlayıcı kelimelerin olumlu ve olumsuz kullanımları da dikkate alınmıştır. Kullanılan teknik, kullanıcıların (1) çevrelerini tanımlarken ön plana çıkan kavramların, ve (2) konut yerleşimlerini "pozitif" ya da "negatif" olarak değerlendirmelerini etkileyen çevresel verilerin anlaşılmasına yardımcı olmuştur. Açık uçlu sorulardan elde edilen en önemli bulgulardan biri, konut kullanıcılarının en fazla olumlu buldukları özelliklerin "yerleşim ölçeği"nin "fiziksel özellikleri" olduğunun ortaya çıkmasıdır. Bu durum, kullanıcıların yerleşim ölçeği kapsamında gerçekleşen fiziksel ve sosyal etkileşimden memnuniyetlerinin daha yüksek düzeyde olmasını da açıklamaktadır. Dışa kapalı konut yerleşimlerinde yaşayanlar sadece evlerinde değil, aynı zamanda yerleşim alanı içerisindeki ortak kullanım mekanlarında, servis alanlarında, parklarında, ve açık mekanlarında da dış çevreden yalıtılmış durumdadır. Bu tür yerleşimlerin İstanbul'daki örneklerinde özellikle ortak kullanım alanları olan sosyal mekanlar, rekreasyon alanları, çevre düzenlemeleri ve tüm bunların nitelikleri de önem kazanmaktadır. Konut kullanıcıları, konut yerleşiminden ev satın aldıklarında sadece evin kendisini değil, yerleşimin sosyal mekanlarını kullanım hakkını da elde etmiş olurlar. Elde edilen bulguya göre, kullanıcıların yerleşim ölçeğinde fiziksel özellikleri olumlu olarak tanımlamaları, kent içerisinde yer alan ve dışa kapalı olma özelliği olmayan konut çevrelerinde karşılayamadıkları birtakım gereksinimleri söz konusu yerleşimlerde karşılayabilme beklentileri ile ilişkili olarak açıklanabilir. Kentliler yaşam çevrelerini, beklenen çevresel ve yaşamsal nitelikleri karşılayamayan kamusal alanlardan kendilerini daha güvenli ve mutlu hissettikleri özelleşmiş alanlara taşımaktadır. İleride yapılacak araştırmalarda, karşılaştırmalı alan çalışmaları ile kentsel mekan içerisinde konut çevresi-kamusal mekanlar arasındaki ilişkilerin değerlendirilmesi ele alınmalıdır.

Etkileşim verilerini elde etmek üzere konut kullanıcılarına yöneltilen çoktan seçmeli sorular şu şekilde gruplandırılmıştır:
- Sosyal etkileşim sıklıkları
- Sosyal çevreden memnuniyet
- Mekan kullanım sıklıkları
- Fiziksel çevreden memnuniyet

Etkileşim verilerinin analizi ile elde edilen sonuçlar, kullanıcıların fiziksel ve sosyal çevrelerinden memnuniyet düzeylerinin oldukça yüksek olduğunu göstermektedir. Dışa kapalı konut yerleşimlerinin kentlerin sosyal ve fiziksel yapısına çoğunlukla olumsuz etkilerinin tartışıldığı düşünüldüğünde, bu durum, bu alandaki çalışmaların gerekliliği ve önemini bir kez daha ortaya koymaktadır. Bu noktada konut kullanıcılarının bu yerleşimleri tercih nedenlerinin ve kentlileri bu tip yerleşimlerde yaşamaya iten nedenlerin araştırılması önem kazanmaktadır.

Çalışma kapsamında kullanıcıların konut çevresi ile fiziksel etkileşimleri sosyal mekanları kullanımları üzerinden analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlar, konut kullanıcılarının konut yerleşimlerinde yer alan sosyal mekanları kullandıklarını, buna ek olarak en fazla "özel balkon-bahçeleri"ni, bir başka deyişle yarı-kamusal niteliğe sahip mekanları kullanmayı tercih ettiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Yerleşimler içerisindeki sosyal etkileşim düzeyinin oldukça yüksek olması ile birlikte bu etkileşimin daha çok "selamlaşma" düzeyinde olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu durum göstermektedir ki konut yerleşimi içerisinde yer alan sosyal mekanların, açık alanların, ortak kullanım alanlarının ve tüm bu alanların "ev" ile ilişkisini kuran "balkon-bahçelerin" kullanımları ile birlikte yerleşim içerisinde sosyal etkileşim ve buna bağlı olarak komşuluk ilişkileri gelişmektedir.

Mimari tasarımın en önemli amaçlarından biri insan-çevre etkileşim sistemi içerisinde kullanıcıların memnun olduğu ve çevreleriyle uyumlu olarak yaşayabildikleri ürünler ortaya çıkarabilmektir. Bu çalışma, İstanbul'da sayıları hızla çoğalan dışa kapalı konut yerleşimlerinin değerlendirilmesi için güncel bir perspektif oluşturmakta, mevcut örnekleri analiz yöntemi ile burada yaşayan kullanıcıların memnuniyet düzeylerini artıran etkenlerin araştırılmasını ve ortaya konmasını, böylelikle yerleşimleri çevreleyen sınırlar olmadan da yüksek düzeyde çevresel kalite ve sosyal etkileşimi sağlayacak çevresel veriler için ipuçları elde etmeyi amaçlamıştır.