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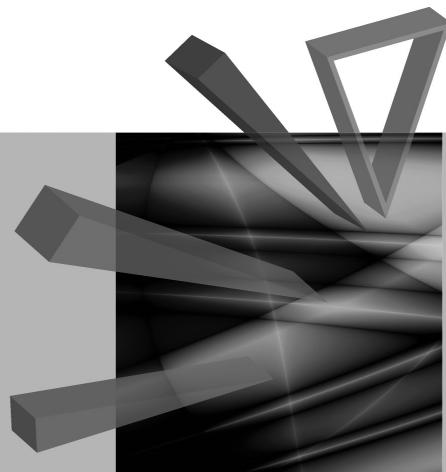
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IMPACTS OF GATED HOUSING ESTATES ON HOUSING VALUES: CASE OF KONYA, TURKEY

Abstract: The aim of this study is to investigate the structural, environmental and accessibility parameters of gated housing estates which are increasing rapidly in Konya city and have a great impact on the housing values. It was found that the structural features of a housing unit are more important than the environmental features and accessibility parameters in Konya city, even if they are in the gated housing units. And security is also substantially important for the people like in the other cities of Turkey and the world.

Keywords: gated housing estates, housing value, Konya.

1. Introduction

Demographic, economic, social and cultural changes experienced in societies accompanied by globalisation have led to the emergence of a dual urban structure in which power and weakness are centred between wealth and poverty and have caused the reflection of this dual structure on urban space. Today, this situation indicates a more diverse character and dimension. Contrary to the historical city perspective, disintegration and isolation that came with economic, social and cultural differentiation have today destroyed all common public spaces in the midst of this dual structure and led to their separation from each other and the traditional urban fabric [Uysal 2003]. The biggest factor in this separation is the phenomenon of “the unknown” that has emerged in those cities whose populations suddenly increased to high levels with migrations. This phenomenon of the unknown frightened people and thus caused them to withdraw from the public space and privacy gained value. Fast and continual progress of the changes experienced in the 20th century bring along certain insecurities felt in societies [Ellin (Ed.) 1997]. The weakening of relationships among people emerges as gated housing estates which are the spatial reflections of social segregation. The emergence of gated housing

estates thickened the line between the segregated urban pieces, and the real or symbolic walls that separate the wealthy from the poor were gradually built.

When observed in terms of the effects of gated housing estates on cities, such communities are seen as “fortified city blocks” where high-income groups who intend to be defined as elite and exclusive withdrew to [Caldeira 1996; Blakely, Snyder 2000; Kurtuluş 2003]. Two important facts can be emphasized related to gated housing estates; the first is that gated housing estates generally offer a particular lifestyle, and the second is that they provide security, which is the argument used as the primary reason for being gated.

When the historical development of gated housing estates is analysed, it is observed that gated housing estates are not a new phenomenon. Those settlements which are surrounded with walls existed in urban planning for a long time and have basic characteristics similar to today's gated housing estates. But, they differ from the previous examples with their evolution, structures and organisations.

Spatial separations that emerged as the result of those housings which appeal to high-middle income groups have affected the society and started to define the characteristics of the modern city. Concepts like alienation, individualism, social differentiation and urban segregation have become key words for defining the structure of new cities. Another important reason for the segregation of the housing areas occupied by high-middle income groups from the rest of the city is that residence has become an object of consumption alongside the communication possibilities increasing with globalization. New production techniques and materials that appeared with the industrial revolution caused the development of urban infrastructures and private housing equipment of the 20th century [Tümer 2006]. Such an improvement is an important means for marketing the residence as an object of consumption. With the effect of globalization, middle and high income groups seeking a better life have been moving to these residence blocks emerging on the peripherals of the city at an accelerating pace.

When approached on an urban and residential scale, gated housing estates appear to have a number of advantages and disadvantages. High quality of life, security, controlled traffic, playgrounds for children, easier protection of privacy, creation of a feeling of belonging to a community, existence of private management, social activity opportunities and suitable recreation areas can be thought of as the advantages of gated housing estates. On the other hand, there are some disadvantages such as the loss of the heterogeneity found in city life, isolation, spatial and social segregation and polarisation. In these kinds of housing estates, especially children cannot socialize with the public because common areas or public transport vehicles pass at a certain distance from the residences, vehicles like fire trucks and ambulances face problems when entering the settlements in states of emergency. As a result of this kind of disadvantages, the gradual decline of public spaces can be observed. In this situation, it can be said that the

advantages that these housing estates provide mostly affect the residents, whereas the disadvantages have effects on the physical and social state of the whole city [Burke 2001; Özgür 2005; Atkinson 2006].

In most of the literature, gated housing estates are regarded as the results of neo-liberalism and the global restructuring leading to class polarization and concerns about safety and security [Davis 1992; Caldeira 2000; Glasze, Alkhayyal 2002; Low 2003; Coy, Pöhler 2012; Jürgens, Gnad 2012]. Many studies conducted in different contexts show that the fear of crime is a leading motivation to move to a gated community [Blakely, Snyder 1997; Wilson-Doenges 2000; Low 2001; Atkinson, Blandy 2005]. Economic considerations are also important. A home in a gated community may be a better investment than one outside the walls, especially over the long term [Aalbers 2001].

These communities have been started to observe from the 1980s onwards in the many metropolitan areas of the world. They have emerged in different parts of the world. At first, these communities rapidly increased in California and in the following years they emerged in the rest of the U.S. and in the countries of Europe, Latin America, Asia, Middle East, Russia, South Africa, the Arab world and also Turkey that have different levels of economic development and have emerged not only in the metropolitan areas of existing capitalist countries but also in the certain cities of post-socialist countries that have become recently acquainted with the capitalist urbanization processes [Low 2001; Kurtuluş 2011; Tanulku 2012; Almatarneh 2013]. Therefore, there can be said that gated housing estates are a global phenomenon, most extensively documented in the U.S. [Blakely, Snyder 1997] and are now developing and becoming a major trend in the housing market in many countries [Caldeira 1996; Giroir 2003; Senyapılı 2003; Grant, Mittelsteadt 2004; Akgün, Baycan 2012]. Although gated housing estates generally show a lot of similarities around the world, there are some differences between the examples found in developed and developing countries in terms of certain factors such as the primary reasons for development, organisation styles, etc.

As neo-liberal policies went hand-in-hand with the developments in the world during the second half of the 1980s, Turkey entered a new era. Turkey met with the phenomenon of gated communities after the 1980s, when substitution policies were abandoned and liberal policies became effective. The changes and developments were firstly seen in Istanbul and continue to build in the other metropolitan cities of Turkey. Konya city, which is the sample area of this study, is one of the metropolitan cities of Turkey which was exposed to these types of development after 2000s.

The aim of the study is to investigate the structural, environmental and accessibility parameters of gated housing estates, which affect housing values. According to this aim, the spatial characteristics of the gated housing estates that have appeared in the Konya metropolitan area after 2000s and the relationship of

these communities with the whole of the city were examined. In the context of the study, first of all, gated housing estates were evaluated from the Turkey perspective in general and their reflections to the Konya city in more specific way. Afterwards, the statistical results of a questionnaire application which was conducted on a sample of a total of 200 housing units (approximately in 100 gated housing estates) in Konya city were given. Statistical results are the results of regression analysis.

2. Gated housing estates in Turkey

After 1980s, the efforts to attract global capital played an important role in the organization of urban space in Turkey. In this era, development of transportation, communications and production technologies were the main stipulations for integration within the global economy. As new regulations that sought to attract multinational companies and investments to the country have emerged, Istanbul has been the most preferred city by the global capital [Hacısalihoğlu 2000; Keyder, Savran 2000]. In this process, Istanbul underwent various changes in its commercial and residential areas. The globalization process is reflected in urban areas not only with prestigious business centres and shopping centres but also with the rapid development of gated communities, a new form of elite urbanism, a new lifestyle [İnal Çekiç, Gezici 2009]. Therefore, gated communities of Turkey appeared as a consequence of socio-cultural and economic changes related to globalization and economic restructuring like the other countries of the world as mentioned before [Topcu 2013].

After 1980s, in Turkey, the effects of economical politics, economic recovery, revival in construction sector and expanding of markets increased the housing construction. New mass housing legislation was also effective in this process [Topcu 2013].

In Turkey, interest for gated communities, especially in Istanbul, has increased rapidly. This situation has been reflected in the national literature with different dimensions: global, economic, physical, psychological [Hacısalihoğlu 2000; Keyder, Savran 2000] and their effects on social segregation and tension within the urban environment [Kurtuluş 2002]. The “luxury-showy consumption” that has been identified with the rich living spatially separate from society also became a much debated dimension of gated communities. Deprivation of public spaces by privatization of land has been another focal point of national academic literature [Kurtuluş 2002].

The studies conducted in Turkey show that the emphasis is on the lifestyles of those who chose to live in gated housing estates and the idea of identifying themselves as members of a group segregated from “urban crowds” [Ayata, Ayata 1996; Öncü 1997; Bali 1999; Kurtuluş 2003; Şenyapılı 2003].

Today, gated housing estates in Turkey have also increasingly become a profitable segment in the real estate market and provide a new marketing angle for developers as offering security, status/prestige and new lifestyle. And these communities generally increase the housing market values [Le Goix 2007]. Correspondingly, this study investigated the parameters which affect the housing values of gated housing estates.

When we look at their location choices, in many cases, we can see that gated housing estates for the upper classes (i.e. gated towers, residences) or other type of high rise gated housings are generally accompanied by non-residential developments, such as shopping centres or office complexes, which bring jobs into the neighbourhood [Topcu 2013].

There is a big demand for these high-standardized communities which started from Istanbul city and are built in the other cities of Turkey like Ankara, Izmir, Konya; they are built in the inner or outer city and they have become popular production style. Kemer Country, Acarkent, İstanbul İstanbul, Beykoz Mansions, Alkent 2000, Zekeriyaköy Houses, Bahçeşehir, Ataşehir, Mashattan, Uphill Court are the gated community examples from İstanbul and Mesa, and Portakal çiçeği valley and Dikmen valley are the examples from Ankara city.

In parallel with the developments in the world, gated housing developments in Turkey affect the Konya city like the other metropolitan cities of Turkey in a short time. Since the beginning of 2000s, gated housing productions started to rise in Konya city.

3. Development process of gated housing estates in Konya

Since the beginning of 2000s, gated housing productions started to rise in Konya city. Within the last ten year period, luxurious gated housing estates that appeal to upper middle classes rapidly emerged in the property market in Konya city. As the social structure in the city was influenced by this rapid change, social differentiation also started to become apparent. Furthermore, together with the effects of problems in housing areas such as the increase of density, air pollution, parking, inadequate green spaces and increasing traffic problems, housings in the form of gated housing estates were marketed as a commercial property that offers prestige and better social facilities in the city, rather than security and accommodation. Supported by the political decisions of local governments, this process served as a catalyst for the rapid growth of the city. This caused the high income group living in the central districts of the city to move outside the city centre or to more controlled high locations. This tendency takes shape as gated but luxurious developments. Figure 1 shows the magnitude of this flourishing phenomenon in Konya city.

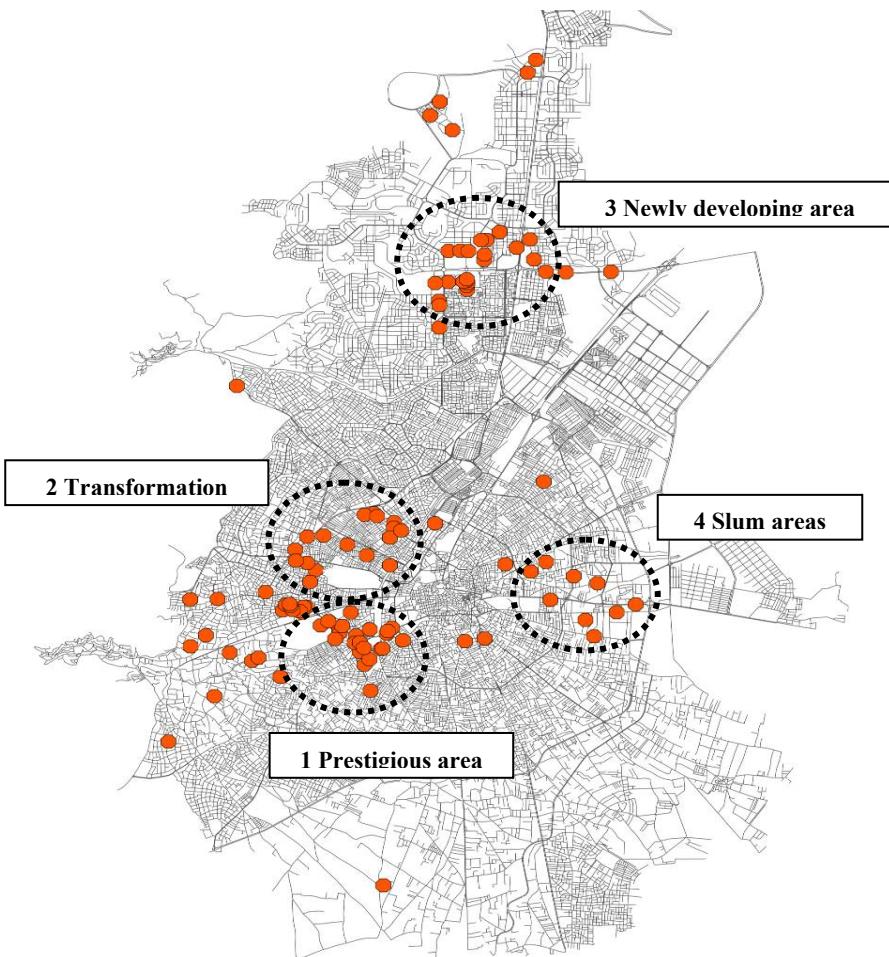


Figure 1. Locations of gated housing estates in Konya city

Source: own elaboration.

Luxury buildings with car parking areas, green areas, kindergartens, swimming pools etc. began to be built in Meram District which is near the city centre. They were not built very far from the city centre because of the transportation problems. Afterwards, upper income groups began to move to outer parts of the city centre in time. These were constructed by big enterprises' own designers and architects who work on behalf of them in line with the market's demand with a marketing anxiety. New speedy production techniques (tunnel module, etc.), prefabricated façade elements, import and domestic luxury materials (such facings as metal, marble, ceramics, granite, reflected glasses, etc.) were used in these projects [Yıldız Kuyrukçu, Ulusoy 2012].



Photo 1. Prestigious district



Photo 2. Newly developing district



Photo 3. Transformation area



Photo 4. Slum area

Source: photo by the author.

When we look at the whole city map of Konya (Figure 1), we can observe that gated housing estates are generally located in four main different district types. These types are: (1) prestigious areas of the city, (2) main transformation area, (3) newly developing areas, and (4) slum areas of the city. They are generally built in the similar visual characteristics whatever their locations are (Photos 1–4).

4. Method of the study

Within the scope of the study, the effect of gated housing estates in Konya city was evaluated based on economic value, that is, the housing value. Within this framework, a total of 27 parameters were determined for evaluating the housing values. A questionnaire was applied in 200 housing units (approximately in 100 gated housing estates) in order to examine the housing value within the structural, environmental features and accessibility characteristics of the housing. While the structural and

environmental characteristics were found with the aid of questionnaire application, the accessibility characteristics were calculated by the walking distances of each housing unit to the nearest public transport, shopping mall, educational institutions, sanitary facilities, etc. (Figure 2).

After questionnaire application and calculating nearest distances from the selected housing units, a step-by-step linear regression analysis was made by using all the data gathered from the case areas and they were evaluated in terms of the above parameters (Figure 2). In the regression analysis, housing values¹ were used as dependent variables and all the other data were used as independent variables. This analysis was made by using SPSS 17 package programme.

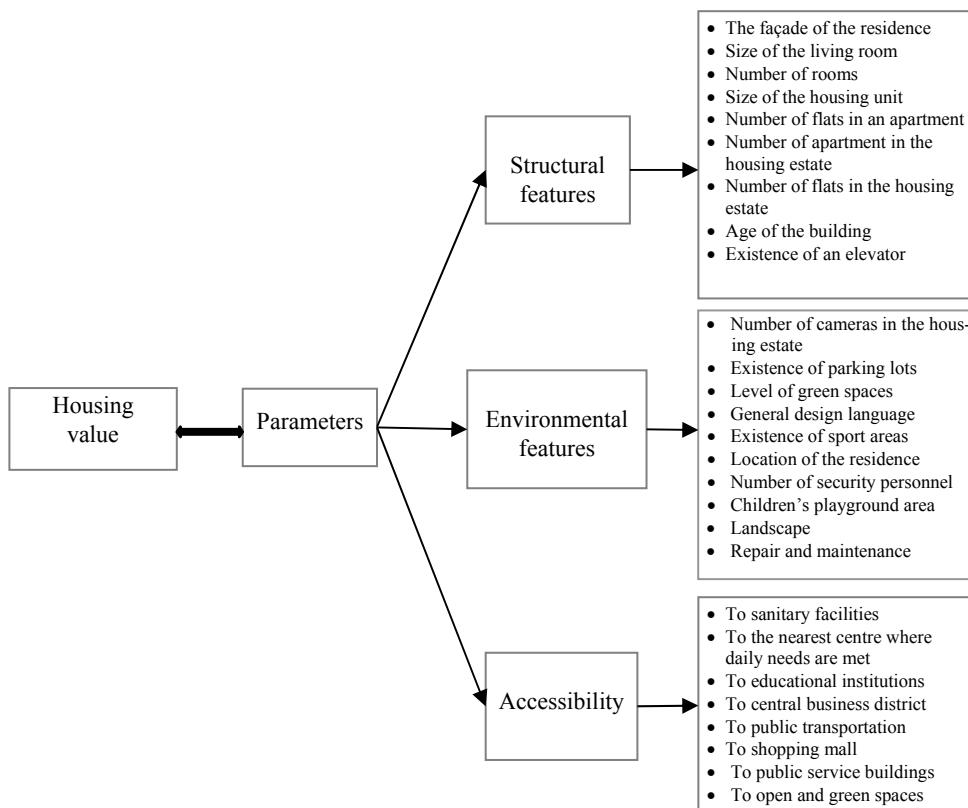


Figure 2. The parameters used in the study

Source: own elaboration.

¹ The housing unit values were taken from the real estate agencies, gated housing estate administrations.

5. Findings

According to the results of step-by-step linear regression analysis, there are some meaningful parameters related to the housing value. The following were effective on housing values: area of the residence, number of rooms, existence of security, existence of car park, distance to the educational institutions, existence of an elevator, number of cameras in the housing estate, location of the residence. In other words, 8 parameters among the 27 parameters are significant (adjusted $R^2 = 0.764$) for explaining the whole system on affecting the housing values (Table 1). It means that eight parameters are meaningful with the percentage of 76.4 for explaining the system. On the contrary, 19 parameters are insignificant in the system. The most affecting parameter is the size of the housing unit. And the second affecting one is number of rooms. In other words, we can say that the most affecting parameters are related to the structural features of the unit. The others are mostly environmental features of the unit except existence of the elevator and the distance to the educational institutions. We can say that the structural characteristics of the residence are more effective on housing value compared to its environmental characteristics; furthermore, the existence of security and a camera system in the housing estate are also effective. It is seen that the existence of a view and the distance to public transport do not have a significant effect on housing values. This reveals that residence is considered as a marketed commercial property rather than a means of accommodation.

Table 1. The results of step-by-step linear regression analysis

Model summary				
Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	Std. error of the estimate
1. Size of the housing unit	.789	.622	.620	59 761.95216
2. Number of rooms	.819	.670	.667	55 941.25894
3. Existence of security personnel	.831	.690	.685	54 408.05717
4. Existence of parking lots	.845	.714	.708	52 386.07917
5. Distance to the educational institutions	.859	.737	.730	50 348.51767
6. Existence of an elevator	.870	.757	.750	48 523.91673
7. Number of cameras in the housing estate	.875	.766	.758	47 732.14129
8. Location of the residence	.880	.774	.764	47 098.68004

R^2 indicates how well the parameters fit a statistical model.

Source: own elaboration.

6. Conclusions

It is obvious that gated housing estates are increasing in number with the dominance of the market forces and marketers' strategies which appear to be the real

directors of urban change. Their decisions are rather important for the future of the city. These estates affect the cities' social and physical identities because of the similar visual characteristics. In addition, their location decisions can affect and change the economical values of its vicinity. It can be a catalyst for the increasing housing values around it. Therefore, these types of estates are important firstly for the future of the city and also for urban planners, architecture and the other related persons and institutions too.

We can understand from this study that structural properties of the housing units – generally interior properties – are more important than the environmental properties for the consumers. It can be thought of as a normal result because the people of Konya rather prefer and usually like to use their home as a social space. And, also for these people the security is substantially important like in other cities of Turkey and the world. The results showed that “distance to the educational institutions” is an important parameter when we consider out of the walls. Because they do not have educational institutions inside the walls of the gated housing estates.

In conclusion, it can be said that these types of settlements are developing rapidly and affecting the whole city in physical, social and economic ways. Therefore, related persons and institutions should cooperate with one another to decide the future of the city to the effect that they manage the urban development dynamics in a positive way.

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WŁYW ZAMKNIĘTYCH OSIEDLI MIESZKANIOWYCH NA WARTOŚĆ MIESZKAŃ: PRZYKŁAD KONYA W TURCJI

Streszczenie: Celem niniejszej pracy jest zbadanie strukturalnych i środowiskowych parametrów ogrodzonych osiedli mieszkaniowych, które szybko rozwijają się w mieście Konya i mają ogromny wpływ na wartości mieszkań. W artykule przedstawiono analizę przestrzenną rozmieszczenia osiedli w mieście Konya w Turcji.

Słowa kluczowe: osiedla zamknięte, wartość mieszkań, Konya.