

SATISFACTION OF RESIDENTS WITH GATED COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE: THE CASE OF NAIROBI COUNTY; KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The residents in gated communities (GC) in Nairobi, Kenya have been promised elusive life with high expectations of convenient lifestyle without knowing the high cost of maintenance of the shared facilities. The prospective buyers have remained ignorant of existence of any guidelines and policies that operate in the gated housing development. This has led to developers having an upper hand whenever disputes arise. This study investigates how the residents of gated community rate the level of satisfaction of GC lifestyle the existing challenges. The recent popularity and phenomenal growth of gated communities in Kenya raises interesting questions such as; what are the needs of residents that want to live in GC? Are these needs fulfilled and satisfied by this lifestyle? If so how is this being done? Again this paper looks at the challenges faced by residents here. In general this paper tends to look at the level of satisfaction among the current gated community residents in the social, physical and economic environment. During research data was collected from 8 GC using cross-sectional survey research method. The data on the level of residents' satisfaction was based on the respondents' perceptions and researchers' observations. Up to 67% of the residents identified lack of clear guidelines of how the gated communities were managed as major challenge. Almost, 56% of homeowners and tenants complained about high service charges. 74% of the residents living in gated communities were satisfied with this type of housing development because of improved standard and quality of life and has enhanced security especially of children; it is vibrant, harmonious and inclusive in comparison to none-gated houses. Other reasons depicting satisfaction were; privacy, high sense of belonging to the place and proximity to social facilities. The study recommended mainstreaming of Homeowners Associations (HOAs) in the urban management structure and clear property conveyance contracts that defines the ownership rights of the shared facilities and amenities.

KEYWORDS: Gated Community, Perceptions, Satisfaction, Residents

INTRODUCTION

Gated communities (GCs) have become recognizable forms of housing developments in cities and city suburbs. Today, more than 20,000 communities in the United States of America are in gated housing, a population in excess of 8 million. Those figures continue to rise and there is no indication that current trends will slowdown in the immediate future. In Africa, the concept of gated communities has experienced phenomenal growth. This has been the case of South Africa, which since the early 1990's, especially in the metropolitan areas of Gauteng has witnessed a growth in gated communities. In Nigeria today, the concept of gated communities is a fast growing response to safety and security as

indeed all over the country there is rampant insecurity within the non-gated communities (Ajibola et al., 2011). In Kenya, the modern phenomenon of GCs started in Nairobi and is fast spreading to other towns, rapidly gaining popularity in the housing sector with 90 per cent of all such developments having occurred within the last 5 years. According to Hassanali (2009), there is a growing trend and belief in healthy living within a gated community.

In the growing scholarly debate on gated community development, the proponents of GCs such as Ajibola, et al. (2011) state that in terms of economic sustainability, GCs provide a good basis for improving a standard, security and quality of the value of residential properties. This view is based on the feeling by residents in such neighborhoods.

Studies indicate that in the lives of many, especially in families, the neighborhood matters. The concern is majorly on the design of their environment, the quality of housing and public buildings that inhabited, the services required and more crucially, the networks and groups that they belong to in their neighborhood.

According to Smith (2008), sustainable neighborhoods need to be a central concern of community development. In the past few years, GCs have rapidly increased in Kenya especially among urban upper and middle class residents. This phenomenon is visible in the adverts on housing carried out in all forms of marketing media such as newspapers and magazines, radio, television, real estate product exhibitions and network marketing platforms. Developers, marketing parcels of land and complete houses, promise the goodies of GCs in advertising brochures using fascinating terms such as: relaxed, friendly ambience, serene, quiet, secure, safe, manicured lawns, immaculate fairways, carefully crafted water features, meticulous landscaping of the highest possible standards, among others.

The residents in gated community have been promised elusive life that creates high expectations of convenience in private facilities without knowing the high cost of maintenance of the shared facilities. The prospective buyers have also remained ignorant of existence of any guidelines and policies that operate in the gated community housing development. This has led to developers having an upper hand whenever disputes arise. This study investigates how the residents of gated community rate the level of satisfaction of GC lifestyle given the existing challenges. The recent popularity of gated communities in Kenya raises interesting questions such as; what are the needs of residents in GC? Are these needs fulfilled and satisfied by this lifestyle? If so how is this being done? Again this paper looks at the challenges faced by residents here. In general this paper tended to look at the level of satisfaction among the current gated community residents in the social, physical and economic environment. The study was carried out within the Nairobi City County boundaries in the period between September 2014 and September 2015.

Definition of Gated Communities and the Needs of Their Residents

Senkatuka (2009) notes that community refers to a group of people often living in a specified physical space, who identify with the area and overtime have developed common interests based on their proximity to each other. Senkatuka further states that people in a community may be able to cooperate in addressing a common issue.

Ghonimi et al. (2010) argues that there is difference between the practice of the theories of GCs and the theories of good communities. Ghonimi et al. expands this argument by saying that there is a division between an inserted westernized, gated pattern and the required compatible pattern that has unique characteristics of the African metropolis.

Senkatuka (2009) argues that the concept of community is strongly related to the concept of neighborhood. Senkatuka further defines the neighborhood as a physical area with people in it and their relationship with each other. As a result, Senkatuka differentiates between the neighborhood concept and a community concept stating that the community

concept has a stronger social dimension and a weaker geographical dimension while the concept of neighborhood has a more formal administration dimension and geographical dimension and brings in a concept that neighborhood community has a physical, and a social dimension.

In this study, the term community is used to refer to a neighborhood that is gated or enclosed neighborhoods with controlled access through gates that transit existing roads, villages and complexes. These neighborhoods provide the residents enclosed therein with a range of non-residential amenities such as schools, offices, shops, golf courses, recreation facilities, community facilities, clubhouses, maintained open spaces, among others.

The houses are constructed with some specific designs, by private developers and there are rules set by the same developers that members of that particular community must abide with to live in that neighborhood as renters or homeowners. Neighborhood communities enjoy benefits and bear the negative effects of their neighborhood in varying degrees (Senkantuka, 2009).

Senkantuka (2009) further states that a sense of community is highest in areas with homogeneity that is where people possess similar culture, values and beliefs. Senkatuka further states that there are four elements of sense of community namely: membership or feeling of belonging, influence or making a difference to the group, integration, fulfillment of needs and shared emotional connections such as history, common places, time together and similar experiences. In addition to the above research carried out in the United States of America revealed three elements such as physical, social and economic environments influence or contribute to the sense of community through enhanced social interaction and satisfaction within neighborhoods.

Brower (2005) argues that neighborhoods may have properties that can generate a sense of community and thus enumerates; attracting people who get along, community organizations as vehicles for collective action, creating conditions for collective action for example, land use regulations, design controls, common ownership of land, self-governance, having aspects or qualities that remind residents of events in their collective memory, catering for stable long term residents who own homes, encouraging leisure time use, arranging houses and spaces in a manner that encourages social contact, including facilities that bring people together under conditions conducive to meeting and interacting such as parks or schools, having a suitable size for area wide organizations and having clear physical boundaries.

Brower adds that neighborhoods developed by one developer have a unified composition, which may help generate a sense of community by attracting like-minded people who are prepared to work together and thus jump-start the process of building a sense of community. This is normally a developer lead achievement with no input from residents. Xavier (2008) perceives the GC as an object that promotes a high degree of community spirit through informal social interactions. Further, Xavier notes that GCs provide an environment of enjoying privacy and peace of mind and homogeneity within community.

Finally, a house should be seen as a product that serves the needs of the residents and hence the resident's perceptions, as the user, are critical in rating its performance. Ilesanmi (2010) states that residents play a critical role in housing delivery process because they are the ultimate consumers of the housing product and stresses that overlooking the residents' perception at all levels of policy, planning and implementation of the residential environment, would fail the housing delivery process. It's therefore important for policy makers to note that an effective housing delivery process needs stakeholders from the public sector, private sector and public participation. Neighborhood

Muiga (2009) notes that the provision of neighborhood recreation facilities creates a sense of belonging in a diverse population. Horn (2001), in a study carried out in Pretoria, South Africa, established that lack of facilities is perceived as a negative neighborhood characteristic in both the black townships and in the less affluent white neighborhoods. This indicates that lack of neighborhood facilities may lead the resident dissatisfaction. Ilesanmi (2010) further stresses the correlation between the physical characteristics of the residences and residents' satisfaction, thus indicating that physical environment is a dominant predictor of residents' satisfaction. In addition, there is a correlation between the role of residents' perception in mediating between the physical characteristics of their residential environment, and their levels of satisfaction (Ilesanmi, 2010).

In view of the above arguments, there is need to explore and determine the perceptions of the residents of GCs, on their social interactions and how life in gated communities has affected their interaction. The quality of the physical environment is an important consideration in determining the satisfaction of the residents of GC.

Lifestyle of Gated Community

The Kenya housing landscape has changed, and there is a lot of value in GCs. Those that are well managed have been quite essential in spurring growth as they offer the greatest return on investments. Gated communities are not just defined in terms of merely buying a house, but also a lifestyle. The lifestyle includes the provision social and commercial amenities. The convenience that this brings to the doorstep of the householder is immense. With today's commuter lifestyles, homeowners place a premium on convenience and proximity to services and facilities.

Residents of gated communities are secure since access controls ensure that criminal incidents are rare. As a result, privacy is also ensured. The neighborhoods are also free from road traffic and speeding in the inner streets is reduced thus making it safer and calm for children to walk, play and ride bicycles (Ghonimi et al., 2010).

The status of life inside GC is high. Residents enjoy higher standards of home quality and maintain their homes in good condition within the community, with homeowners gaining higher pride of ownership. Community centers host events that promote group activities that make families to get to know each other. GC also creates a scarcity effect which entails fewer homes being available within the neighborhoods and this adds more value to the property (Ghonimi et al., 2010).

The Challenges Faced by Residents of Gate Community

Affordability and Pricing of Gated Community Houses: Kariuki (2014) states that, out of 40 million Kenyans only 20 per cent own the houses that they live in and this relates to the high cost of mortgage. Hassanali (2014) adds that, mortgage interest rates are still way out of reach, even for some of the middle-class Kenyan workers. The Hass Property Index Report 2014 indicates a takeoff in asking prices and concludes that high property prices and run away interest rates are the blight of home ownership in Kenya. According to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (2015) the 2012/2013 Kenya National Housing Survey Report over 90 % of financial institutions interviewed indicated that they did not have specific products geared towards savings for mortgages. Mortgage interest rates in December 2010 and December 2011 were 14.36 % and 16.36 % Kariuki also adds that mortgage loans stand at roughly 20,000 which is valued at a little over Ksh.120 billion. Mortgage repayment is thus out of the reach of many because of a high percentage earn less than 100,000 shillings. With these earnings, they cannot afford a mortgage of a 5 million house with a repayment of 70,000 shillings a month at 16 % interest rate.

Among the Kenyan population, those employed in the formal sector with a clear structure for mortgage is about 2.2 million while the self-employed population that does not access mortgage products, is 12 million. Lack of access to home ownership has been attributed to high construction costs, coupled with the high interest rates charged on mortgages that have reduced Kenyans to the status of perpetual renters (Kariuki, 2014). Hassanali (2014) observes that property prices are rising by the millions every year, with the caution for developers to read the signs of the times and start pricing their housing properties reasonably. This is an indication that despite the high cost of land and construction, developers limit the access to housing by over pricing houses to gain unreasonable profits.

Unaffordability of this magnitude is not sustainable and there is need for stakeholders in the housing sector, to step-up efforts towards more Kenyans owning their homes. Lack of the prerequisite infrastructure and lack of clear policy guidelines on home ownership drags delivery in the housing sector.

Service Charge: Olingo (2015), states that although the gated communities have unmatched conveniences, compared to the ungated neighborhoods, they also pose intricate challenges in maintenance of resources and amenities. In Nairobi, the monthly service charge ranges from Kshs. 1500-100,000, depending on the range of services offered and the location of the development. High-end apartments and villas in the suburbs set a high service charge because of the perceived prestige of the locality.

There are challenges experienced in relation to service charge management such as residents who ride on others to pay for services causing acrimony within a community where status is a serious consideration. However, there are some homeowners who have fallen prey to profiteer developers who set exorbitant service charge in densely populated gated communities thus pocketing millions of shillings in the process because the more the residents in a gated community the lower the charges as a result of the economies of scale. However, there are services that even the committee cannot set prices on such as water and electricity. However, others like internet, cleaning, and security is a matter of discussion and agreement with the homeowners thereby choosing what costs suits them.

The dilemma that many gated communities face is whether to form an owner's management company or out-source the management of the estate to professional real estate companies. Depending on the choice, which has either merits and demerits, it is important to choose one from the onset and lay down the regulations which everyone in the GC should follow (Olingo, 2015).

Operational Challenges of Gated Living: The GC come with high operational prices. It costs Home Owner Association (HOA) fees to pay for security guards, maintain public infrastructure including roads, annual renewal of leases, water, sewers, swimming pool, among others. Such costs pose a challenge for residents to afford. Yet, the security of GC is dependent on security system of the surrounding areas. Automated gates can be breached, for example, the service provider may master the security codes and an unauthorized car can tailgate and pass through.

McKenzie (2005) argues that GC contain residents who are openly hostile to the structures to which they have signed up and therefore, such GC might face potentially massive problems of affordability due to the large repair bills for common facilities and infrastructure. The possibility that GC contain some kind of built form that is not fashionable is becoming increasingly apparent.

Atkinson and Blandy (2005) warn that gradually, the number of resident disputes and conflicts with their management companies suggest at least as many problems as are in other normal developments for example, an American

study revealed that 41% of management companies suffer major problems in rule violations. While an overwhelming number of HOAs have been or are in court with residents, the outcome is unmistakably skewed in favor of the associations. With so many disputes between associations and their residents, there is indication that for many gated communities, what seemed as their dream residence, or utopia in the beginning is suddenly not as attractive, now that they are resident (Blakely and Snyder, 1997).

RESEARCH METHODS

This section explains the methods used for the study. It outlines the study design, study sites, target population, sample size and sampling procedures. It presents data collection tools, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and data presentation techniques used for effective interpretation in order to adequately answer the research question. It also explains how a study of gated communities, generally perceived as inaccessible, was carried out to explore residents' perceptions and their satisfaction levels assessed.

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The study was concerned about complex real life phenomenon of people. Human behavior varies from place to place, and it is influenced by context and time. Cross-sectional study designs are useful when studying one or more variables within a given population, at one point in time. They are useful for establishing associations rather than causality and for determining prevalence rather than incidences as would be the case for an observational study (Mann, 2003). The benefit of cross-sectional design is that it allows the researcher to relate many different variables at the same time with little or no additional cost (Obala, 2011). This means that researchers recorded information about their subjects without manipulating the study environment. The cross-sectional research design was the most preferred in this particular study, because it was observed that it would enable the researcher to investigate perceptions of the GC residents in order to assess the satisfaction level of the residents.

The researcher selected gated communities within the Nairobi County that were complete, occupied and most accessible for the study. The target population was the residents of gated community', whether as homeowners or tenants. The pilot study revealed that some houses in the gated community had merely been sold off the plan and were awaiting occupation. The study covered only the lifestyle and prestige type aspects of gated communities. These units had controlled access, with non-permeable physical boundaries enclosing the neighborhood that completely denies the general public access to the enclosed private space, facilities and amenities. The house designs include semi-detached marionette and flats. Gated neighborhoods, without shared community facilities and amenities, unbound by a set of regulations, and covenants that regulate the behavior of residents and the management of the shared properties were not covered in the study. Neighborhoods with through roads open to public were also not studied. Community management officers within the neighborhoods were identified as interviewees.

Considering the size of Nairobi, the study area, there was, need to obtain diverse information on the topic of GC. A multiple cluster sampling was undertaken to sample the gated community's districts of Nairobi. Three out of the eight Nairobi administrative districts was selected. These include Embakasi district in the eastern part, Westland's or Parklands district on the western side and Kasarani district on the northern side of the Nairobi Central Business District. The research team visited all gated communities in the selected districts, in order to identify those that meet the criteria for lifestyle and prestige type of gated communities as per the scope of the study and to develop the list for random sampling.

A list of gated communities in Nairobi County compiled by Knight Frank indicates that by 2013, there were one

hundred gated communities. However, the list was not comprehensive as some of the gated communities listed did not meet the minimum criteria of lifestyle and prestige aspects of gated communities required by the study. However, the researcher found eighty fulfilled the criteria of target population. According to Mugenda (2001) in descriptive studies, a sample size of 10% of the accessible population is enough. As a result, the researcher considered a random sample of three gated communities per district, with the aim of getting nine gated communities, thus giving slightly more than 10% of the target population.

In Westland's district, there are two constituencies namely: Dagoretti North and Westlands. Dagoretti North, which formed the random sample, has five wards namely; Kilimani, Kawangware, Gatina, Kileleshwa and Kabiro with 29-gated communities in the constituency. Due to the high population of gated communities concentrated in the constituency, Kileleshwa ward was randomly sampled out of the five wards. Kileleshwa ward had twelve gated communities in total and three of the communities were selected randomly. The sampled gated communities were; Chiluma Apartments, Dulexe Plaza and National Housing Corporation (NHC) Park in Kileleshwa ward. In Embakasi District there were fewer GC than in Westland's and hence the researcher randomly sampled GC at the constituency level rather than the ward level. Out of the five constituencies, Embakasi East was randomly sampled. There were five GC within the constituency out of which three were randomly sampled namely; Greenspan Housing, Nyayo Estate Embakasi and Simba Villa. In Kasarani, one constituency, Roysambu, was randomly sampled out of the two in the district. There were only two-gated communities and therefore both were studied. The total number of GCs sampled was eight as indicated in Figure 1.

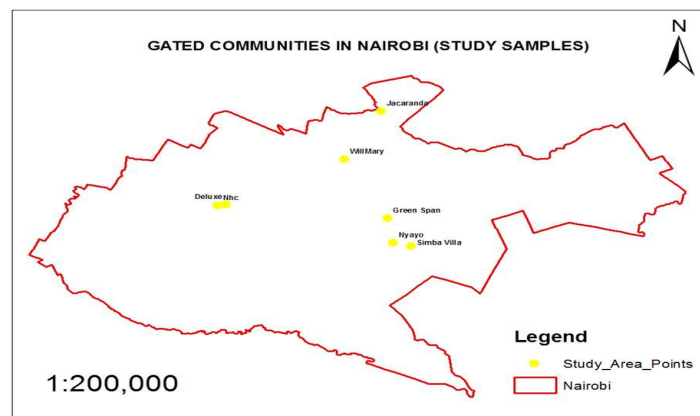


Figure 1: Location of the Gated Communities Studied

Source: Survey, 2015

Since there was no list of residents of gated communities available, the first step was to map the communities and establish their population. The researcher made visits to the clusters selected; interacted with residents from the cluster area for example, guards, in order to identify the neighborhoods and the number of households that formed the scope of this study. After gaining a better sense of the population available, the researcher worked out a representative sample of gated communities in each cluster as a ratio, based on the population and density characteristic. The second step consisted of sampling residents within the chosen neighborhoods. The researcher applied a simplified formula for proportions, derived by Yamane (1967), to calculate sample sizes. In this formula, the researcher desired a 95% confidence level and a maximum variability (P) of 0.5 and ± 17 per cent precision.

The study employed various research instruments for collection of quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative

data was collected through a household survey. Qualitative data was collected from all categories of respondents through guided questionnaires in addition to observation checklists. The use of various tools and approaches further facilitated the acquisition of detailed and comprehensive data ensuring that there were no obvious gaps in the study results. The following tools were used for the data collection process.

The researcher used an observation checklist in the study for all GC. This list was appropriate because it did not require the researcher to ask questions but rather to observe the physical structures of the GC and recorded the information first hand in the spaces provided in the checklist. A camera was used to record the observations and capture information in the form of photographs.

Questionnaire for residents of the gated community was applied to residents and it investigated the demographic characteristics of the GC households and the general practices of residents that have implications for the social, economic and environmental aspects on residents' satisfaction.

Interview schedule for neighborhood manager or developer was used for a dual purpose; one, to capture data from the developer of the particular gated community and secondly, to collect data from the manager of the company in charge of the day-to-day running of the GC. The data collected from this group focused on the motivation for developing the GC, the size of the developments, facilities provided and management, the challenges faced, the future of GC as well as their perceptions of satisfying their residents' needs.

The main field survey involved interviews with residents, developers and management companies' staff done between Septembers to December 2014. It also involved observation of the physical environment of the GC and the behavior of residents as they interact with the spaces within. Field notes were taken real-time and recorded in notebooks.

Except for the residents of GC, the study used the method of structured interviews to collect data for the other categories of respondents such as developers and management as initially proposed. Although it was envisaged that the oral interview method would be used to collect data from the residents of GC, as part of safeguarding against a high non-return rate, it was not possible to carry out oral interviews. Because of the nature of the target respondents, several issues were raised such as urban elites feeling that oral interviews were for the illiterate and thus preferred to fill in the questionnaires.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were not viable due to the non-availability of the participants. The nature of gated community residents, as the researcher found out during the household survey and through the interviews with the management, made it impossible to hold focus group discussions. It was indicated that the residents of GC are never committed even to attending the Annual General Meetings (AGMS) and Special General Meetings (SGMs) that address their neighborhood issues. The researcher thus opted to peruse minutes of the meetings and accessed the residents' group email in order to capture the issues that affect the community. The method adopted had several advantages in that, the residents expressed their issues without interference from the researcher.

The interviewed key informants included five developers and management companies of the following gated communities. These were Willmary Development, Simba Villas, Greenspan Housing, Jacaranda Gardens, Dulexe Plaza and Nyayo Estate Embakasi. In some cases, the developer would respond even in the managers section. In the worst cases situation, developers had handed over the management of the GC long before, and could not be traced to answer some specific questions. Some developers were unwilling to respond. However, those available provided good insight, filling the

gaps effectively. For this category of respondents, time was a major limiting factor, given that some respondents requested more time to consult colleagues because they could not solely answer all the questions and this only prolonged the data collection period. However, the interviews were rich with information that gave good insights to the study.

Direct observation was important to ascertain the status of built forms. Physical observations were made of the features of house blocks, infrastructure, community facilities and elements of the natural environment such as the vegetation, natural water courses and landscaping features. The data collected during observation was recorded. The researcher also filled in the checklist, and wrote out notes on new information not previously expected. More data was recorded in form of photographs.

In order to answer the research question on the level of satisfaction among the current gated community residents in all aspects of social, economic and physical environment, it became critical to properly define the units of analysis. As Yin (2003) points out, it is important to define a unit of analysis that would facilitate the investigation of various aspects of the study phenomena. The identified units of analysis for the study are developers, residents and neighborhood management companies. The study allowed that in each community sampled, one member of staff from the managing company, and a proportionate sample of residents, regardless of whether they own or rent the house they live in would be interviewed. A total of five structured interviews were carried out with Developers of GCs and management companies. A total of 400 residents' questionnaires were issued and 186 of them were filled in and returned for analysis.

Data was processed as presented as follows. For the qualitative data, the questionnaires were first sorted into location and the respondents' category. The responses were then coded for data entry and entered into a Microsoft Excel flat file and then transcribed. In cases where more than one respondents were interviewed based on the same questionnaire, the data was organized into themes. The data was cleaned through editing errors and entering data into in new excel flat files, while retaining the original flat file. The study used an interpretative approach draw inferences of the analyze data. Narrative and performance analysis was applied in order to discover and reveal repeated similarities in the perception of respondents', particularly on the challenges of the management of GC, and the implications of gated communities in Nairobi.

Tools were applied in the presentation of the findings for information generated from the field survey. The tools included photographs, graphs and tables. Maps were also used, specifically to illustrate the location characteristics and patterns in the study area. Data from oral interviews was presented in the form of narratives. Descriptive statistics in form of percentages were used to analyze data, enabling the researcher to describe the distribution of various variables in the study.

RESULTS

Definition of Gated Community

The planning and design of studied gated communities had fulfilled the definition of gated community since they had provided for both social and physical dimensions. The designers had provided social spaces that promoted a sense of community, hence creating a sense of belonging through provision of such activities as presented in Table 1.74% of residents perceives the community as: secure for children, vibrant, harmonious and inclusive, this is evident in the Jacaranda Gardens community, where parents and their children participate in the neighborhood 'NyumbaKumi Open Day' (Figure 3).

The social spaces reflected fulfillment of social values and urban culture of the residents. The residents felt social spaces were also a reflection of the interaction between physical, social and economic realities of their lives.

The physical dimension was expressed in the definition of the enclosures and housing built forms. All gated communities that were fenced had common entrances, and were guarded 24 hours. The security and privacy of residents were ensured by the physical elements. The residents emphasized that the main reason for preferring the gate communities was the security provide.

Table 1: Gated Community Activities Showing Sense of Community and Social Interaction

	Activities	GC 1	GC 2	GC 3	GC 4	GC 5	GC 6	GC 7	GC 8
1	That created sense of place and social interaction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Likeminded people sharing		✓	✓			✓	✓	
3	Involvement in community activities (organization)	✓	✓	✓			✓		
4	Sharing corrective actions	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
5	Sharing memorable events	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
6	Sharing leisure time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Houses design layout done in away enhancing communal living			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
8	Planning GC to include social and recreation facilities that bring people together	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: Author, Field Survey 2015

Key

GC 1-Jacaranda Gardens	GC 3-Duluxe Plaza	GC 5-NHC Kileleshwa Park	GC 7-Simba Villas
GC 2-Willmary Development	GC 4-Chiluma Apartments	GC 6-Nyayo Embakasi	GC 8-Greenspan Housing

The different demographic aspects of the residents are presented in figures 2 to 8.

Demographic Information of the Respondents

The response rate was 47% of the 400 administered questionnaires. The respondents for GC residents were specifically the household heads or their spouses. 52% of the respondents were male while the rest were female. 41%, were aged between 26-35 years, with an almost equal proportion aged 36-45 years. 68% of the respondents were married, and 92% of them had at least a bachelor’s degree. Of the respondents, 82% were professionals, 13% being businesspersons. Most of the 63%) respondents earned between 100,000 and 300,000 Kenya shillings (Figures 2 to 8).

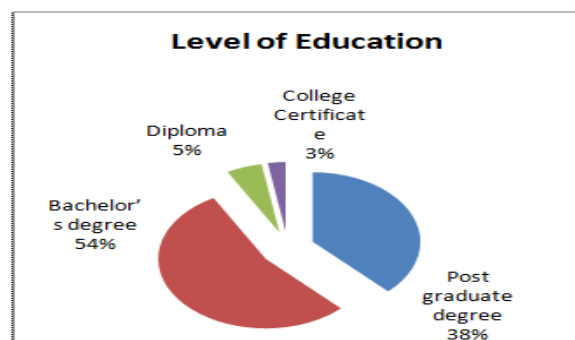


Figure 2: Educational Level of GC Residents

Source: Survey, 2016

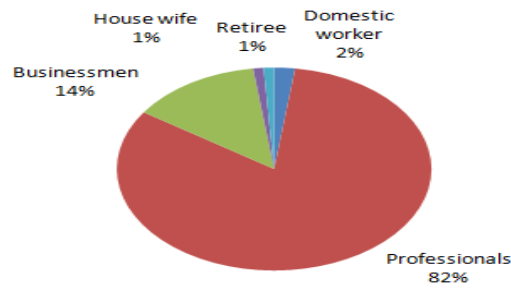


Figure 3: Occupational Engagements for GC Residents
Source: Survey, 2016

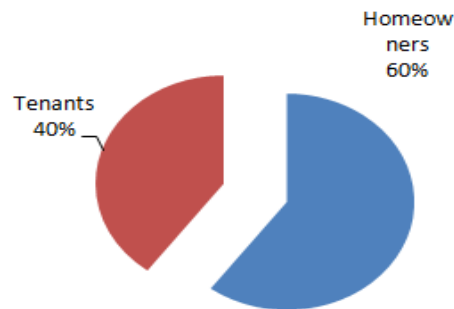


Figure 4: Tenancy Rights for GC Residents
Source: Survey, 2016

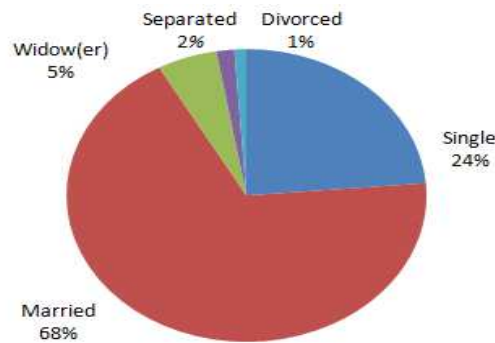


Figure 5: Marital Status of GC Residents
Source: Survey, 2016

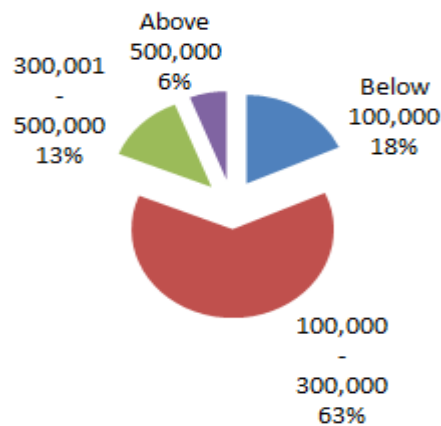


Figure 6: Family Income for GC Household HEADS
Source: Survey, 2016

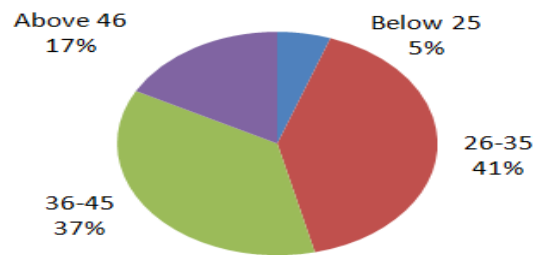


Figure 7: Age of the Respondents
Source: Survey, 2016

Desired Needs of Residents of Gated Communities

The resident desired to participate in upcoming gated community development and wanted to be involved in the matter of GC decision making in management. The study found that the residents of gated community attach a lot of importance to the quality physical facilities provided in the development and desire that the upcoming developments consider a range of social and recreational facilities apart from residences in the overall development.

Lifestyle of Gated Community

The bivariate analysis in the study reveals several aspects that contribute more to residents' satisfaction than others (show results). This was captured on the question of the likelihood of a resident recommending GC to a close friend or a relative. The characteristic of the residents and the nature of their residences were taken as indicators of satisfaction.

The study analysis revealed that residents who had stayed longer in the GC were more likely to recommend GC to a close friend or relative indicating that the level of satisfaction rises as one gets used to the gated lifestyle. This could be an indicator that when one is relatively new to the community, they may feel harassed by the restrictions and enclosed lifestyle and thus a lower level of satisfaction. This was also the case when it came to safety.

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Majority of the residents identified security and privacy being some of indicators that made them are satisfied of the GC. These aspects of GC were achieved by providing the physical features such as enclosures defined by the gates, boundary fences and houses for security guards at the entrances. GC was guarded 24 hours. All visitors were screened before allowed to visit any residence. The residents were contacted and informed about the identity of the visitors before entering the compound. This control of access control had also reduced the crime and violence within the GC environs. The guards were also given clear instructions not to allow hawking within the GC compounds. This checked on people with bad intentions entering the compound in disguise of being merchandise sellers.

Most of the studied gated communities had the children play areas well secluded and quiet. This was achieved by limiting the vehicular traffic within the children recreational areas. This was a positive design and planning attitude of GC

since it considered the needs for different age groups in GC. 54% of residents are satisfied with the provision of social facilities for instance safe dropping and picking of school going children facilities (Table 2, Figures. 8 and 9). Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12 confirm that GC residents feel their neighborhoods are secure as children can play freely without guardian or parent’s surveillance.

This study mirrors the study by Horn (2001) of Pretoria, revealing that residents of serviced neighborhoods, with no social facilities have low-levels of satisfaction while those with well-serviced neighborhoods are highly satisfied and do not perceive their neighborhoods as temporary platforms waiting for outward mobility (Figures. 13, 14 and 16).

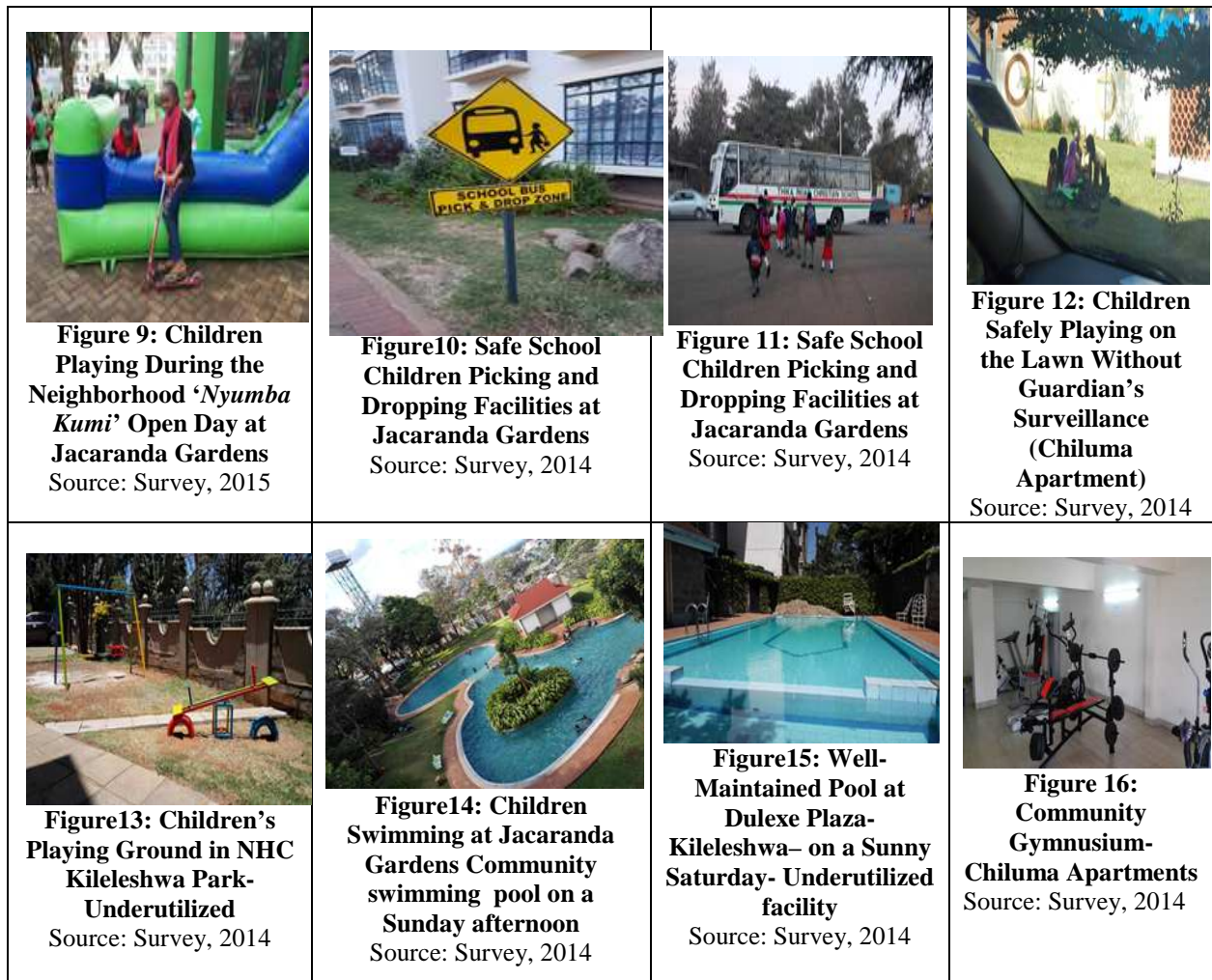


Figure 9: Children Playing During the Neighborhood ‘Nyumba Kumi’ Open Day at Jacaranda Gardens
Source: Survey, 2015

Figure10: Safe School Children Picking and Dropping Facilities at Jacaranda Gardens
Source: Survey, 2014

Figure 11: Safe School Children Picking and Dropping Facilities at Jacaranda Gardens
Source: Survey, 2014

Figure 12: Children Safely Playing on the Lawn Without Guardian’s Surveillance (Chiluma Apartment)
Source: Survey, 2014

Figure13: Children’s Playing Ground in NHC Kileleshwa Park- Underutilized
Source: Survey, 2014

Figure14: Children Swimming at Jacaranda Gardens Community swimming pool on a Sunday afternoon
Source: Survey, 2014

Figure15: Well-Maintained Pool at Dulexe Plaza- Kileleshwa- on a Sunny Saturday- Underutilized facility
Source: Survey, 2014

Figure 16: Community Gymnasium- Chiluma Apartments
Source: Survey, 2014

Table 2 presents the facilities enjoyed by residents the studied gated communities.

Table 2: Type of Social and Recreational Facilities Found in Studied GCs

Type of Facilities	GC 1	GC 2	GC 3	GC4	GC 5	GC 6	GC 7	GC 8
Nursery school	✓					✓	✓	✓
Gymnasium	✓			✓	✓			
Swimming pool	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Shopping mall	✓							✓
Medical clinics								
Playing Ground	✓			✓	✓			
Community centre	✓			✓				✓
Golf courses								

Club house	✓			✓	✓			✓
Open spaces	✓	✓			✓			✓
Other commercial centers	✓						✓	✓

Source: Author, Field Survey 2015

Key

GC 1-Jacaranda Gardens	GC 3-Dulexe Plaza	GC 5-NHC Kileleshwa Park	GC 7-Simba Villas
GC 2-Willmary Development	GC 4-Chiluma Apartments	GC 6-Nyayo Embakasi	GC 8-Greenspan Housing

The proximity of these facilities made all the difference in regards to quality of life in GC. Majority of the residents desired convenience in their location in order to minimize travel distance from their residences. These facilities again bonded the residents as they shared them building bonding social capital.

Majority, 74% of residents were happy with the solid waste management while services scored an average between 36 to 49% scores. It was observed that the GC had hired refuse collectors who collected the garbage at centralized location every week. The refuse cubicles were located next to the gatehouses and were well secured from birds and wild animals.

The management had deployed ground men who ensured the grounds were well kept and the swimming pool were regularly cleaned. The ground men also ensured all the common spaces such as staircases were clean at all the time. The guards secured the compounds both day and night as they also put on the security lights on in the evening and put them off in the morning. It was these small things catered for within the GC that made the residents feel satisfied on the service rendered by management and all this lead to feeling of pride by residents.

Challenges Faced by Residents of Gated Community

The study revealed several conflicts between the developers and residents. Most of the conflicts were related to undelivered promises made by the developers to residents. Other conflicts were triggered by misunderstandings on the ownership of the common facilities. In some cases, the residents associations had taken the developers to court. Some of the cases discovered are; the Simba Villas Developer (Kenya Commercial Bank) refused to hand over the swimming pool to the community attempting to sell it to them as a separate item from the house unit. The pool remains unused until the case is resolved. The residents association lost the case with the arbitrator’s award favoring the developer. The Willmary Development developer received some compensation from the Garden City Mall developer for land surrendered to them to allow expansion of access road to the mall. The Willmary residents felt that they deserved a share of the compensation since it is part of their commonly owned land, and which according to the Sectional Property Act 2009 they should own as tenants–in-common. Other communities have resolved to resolve the cases out of court. Such include, Jacaranda Gardens where a club house, a gymnasium and a nursery school were built to completion only to be let out as offices to a private company instead of the planned purposes. In the same neighborhood, a commercial complex has taken four years for its construction to commence. More so, the children’s playing ground was never provided for in the community design layout. In Nyayo Estate most public amenities such as the commercial blocks have not been developed. in Greenspan Housing, the swimming pool and gymnasium has not been developed. This finding clearly indicates that developers have violated the stipulated 10% surrender of neighborhood land to public utilities and the Nairobi City County has not enforced this rule despite the use of subdivision guidelines to guide GC developments.

About 46% of residents felt their workers or visitors were inconvenienced at gate control point. Residents sometimes experience inconveniences. This is because some GC limit the time when contractors are allowed in to work on houses, especially towards the weekends and holidays. Contractors, suppliers and visitors may experience delay at the gate waiting for clearance and because some GC are located far from commercial centers, suppliers may experience time loss and transport costs, and this irritates and disturbs those who are not used to GC. The maintenance of good and quality life in gated community has come with expenses that in some cases the residents felt they were excesses.

The residents who were paying mortgage felt the financial cost to own a GC house was high. This was because the interest rate of the mortgage kept on fluctuating upwards while their revenue base remained the same. As time goes by, the GCs houses were becoming expensive because of costs of land and construction of houses. This was highlighted by residents who also stressed there should set margin profit of the developers. They felt the developers were taking advantage of housing situation and increased their profit margin at a high percentage. For example, if one compares the unit price of Ngara Civil Servant Housing Scheme (NCSHS) in Nairobi, which is a typical GC development by the government and was officially opened in 2012, it is evident that private developers overprice the unit costs. The Ngara Civil Servant Housing Scheme is a development with 656 houses, a jogging track, a shopping mall, one thousand parking lots and a nursery school. The development is in a prime location along the Thika Superhighway in close proximity to the CBD. Two-bedroom and three-bedroom units were offered at KES 3.2 million and 4.2 million, respectfully in 2010. In contrast, the NHC Kileleshwa Park, a three-bedroom unit was selling at KES 12 million in 2010. In Kasarani, a two-bedroom unit, bought off-plan in Jacaranda Gardens, located 20 kilometer from the CBD and 6km off the superhighway was offered at KES 5.6 million and a three bed roomed KES 6.7 million in 2010 and is currently selling at 8 million.

Arising from this situation, the GCs houses were becoming premises for the privileged in the society. The key informants' interviewees indicated that this type of neighborhood planning should be made accessible to majority of citizen through guideline policy on housing financing system. This would help to achieve the government goal of housing her people. Further, the residents felt that the mortgage structure should be more attractive to the self-employed section of the population. In addition, it was the wish of the residents that the governments come up with a guaranteed scheme that would cushion lenders from the perceived risks of the self-employed. The tax regime could be amended so that all mortgages are tax deductible and indicate to Kenyans the benefits of mortgaging as opposed to renting. Reduction of the cost of construction to bring the home prices to an affordable level another strategy that could be employed. Finally, the government could set the pace by laying out infrastructure before the developer commences construction, thereby reducing the overall costs of construction by about 20-30 per cent.

Another challenge pointed out by majority (57%) of the residents was high cost of service charge. The majority of residents felt they were overcharged by Management who were basing charges on the location of the GC housing development instead of the actual expenses incurred in sustaining and maintaining the common services rendered. The Management were costing the prestige of premises and the services therein rather than the coming up with real cost of having buildings kept in secure, safe working and clean conditions. Residents (24%) felt shortchanged. The main shared services offered by Management were areas of security, cleaning and renewal of leases; and maintaining internet, lifts, water, electricity, boreholes, roads, swimming pools, and sewerage system among others.

The Management in some cases outsourced property management services. 25% of GC studied outsourced management service while 75% had in-house management. The residents stressed for fair play in the management of the

GCs common facilities. On management of the GC, 50 per cent of residents agree that the response by the management to their complaints is efficient. The most used mechanism of dispute resolution is dialogue.

They wanted to be allowed to participate the decision-making processes. These would allow fair increment of service charge and ensure quality service was being offered. They proposed need for consensus drafted guidelines for the service provision between the Management and residents. **The** residents of gated communities wanted to sign an agreement to ensure that the rules and regulations of accountability were followed. They further wanted consequences of non-conformity spelt out clearly for residents and that such consequences were reinforced at all times. In their view they felt this would minimize conflicts and provides a mechanism for addressing any disagreement that would arise. In addition, on service charge they stated it was better for buyers, committees, developers and the management company to set and agree on the amount. Inflation could be factored in and regular audit of the funds demanded by members to ensure transparency.

The last challenge that the residents (30%) mentioned was lack of honesty by the developer on the house structures. 30% of residents complained that they had to incur extra cost to repair newly entered houses some parts of buildings had poor workmanship and were falling off. These include poor finishes on the floor skirting and ceiling. The doors and windows in some building were made of low quality materials that could not last long without incurring high maintenance cost for example, some door were made of imported aluminum folds that were not locally repairable by local artisans. The sliding windows were as well made of aluminum that had sealants that allowed rainwater inside the buildings. Developers did these type constructions to cut cost but still demanded high price for house units. These were nagging problems to the homeowners since they had initially made to believe the houses were in good conditions. This was a major challenge since the residents expected technical aspects of buildings had been fulfilled through the professionals and approving local authorities involved in overseeing such development before sales of houses. In all cases the occupation certificates had been issued by approving local authority after inspection of structures to certify they meets human habitation conditions. The parties involved in approving the release of these houses into the market were questionable their professional integrity, the residents said.

The time of buying the house the residents in one of the gated community's scheme were promised the social and recreation facilities within the compound under development belonged to them for a common use. Incidentally after the facility was completed the developer later on changed his mind and leased the facility to an outsider. The resident had no access to it. This has made the residents to go to court to fight for their right. The case is in court. This case demonstrates how unscrupulous developers are make a good idea of housing planning and design of GC to turn to a nightmare to residents. The residents stress that the government should step in and regulate this GC housing development to get rid of unfaithful developers who are short changing the residents in the name of enriching themselves fast. While majority of residents (81%) believe the GC developments were solving their social problems; they stressed that the rising nagging problems relating to management must be sorted out through legislation that respects the rights of all parties involved.

Level of Satisfaction of Gate Communities' Residents

This study investigated level of satisfaction among gated community residents in the three GC within Nairobi County, Kenya. The study revealed that the residents were satisfied with gated living. When asked if they enjoyed staying in the GC, majority of the respondents responded in the affirmative 'yes' accounting for 94 % of respondents. Further, the study established that gated communities residents had a high level of satisfaction indicated by 84 % of the respondents stating that they would recommend GC houses to their close friends and relatives, while, 78 % stated that even if they were

to relocate from their current GC, they would still move to a GC house.

The study established that the GC was the most preferred form of housing in Nairobi. This form of housing had high prospects. The satisfaction of residents living in the GC was high, and the developments enjoy goodwill from the local authority.

DISCUSSIONS

One of the important contribution of this study is the bringing together of existing knowledge from different disciplines, to address the issue of GC residents' satisfaction. This study argues that, while it is an urban challenge to equitably meet the housing needs of all social classes of the urban societies, gated community neighborhoods can satisfy residential needs and wants if particular conditions exist. In addition, this paper contributes to a knowledge gap between the gated community theory and its implementation. The existing housing development framework in Kenya, does not address the unique needs of the gated community; this concerns the densification of residential zones with gated communities without upgrading the size of the capital infrastructure like sewer, water supply mains and connecting roads. This issue threatens the GC residents' satisfaction because, if the blockage of sewer lines and water shortage persists, the residents are likely to become dissatisfied, and relocate to the environmentally cleaner peri-urban zones.

This thesis advances the neighborhood concept according to Johnson, (2015) in supporting the physical boundaries enabling control of urban space and inculcating sense of belonging among residents thus increasing their sense of responsibility over their own residential space; this resonates with recommendations made by the National Crime Prevention Council of Singapore (2003). Advancing the same concept, this thesis underscores the importance of provisioning social amenities to the GC neighborhood since it raises the level of satisfaction of residents, reducing high mobility from one neighborhood to another since lack of services is a negative neighborhood characteristic (Horn, 2001). Lastly, the study supports the strengthen and empowerment of the HOAs of GCs and recommends mainstreaming the HOAs with other urban governance structures to enhance their effectiveness; the findings revealed that the residents have faith in them and believe they are capable of effective and efficient neighborhood management. The paper advances the theory of gating defensible space by Newman (1972) and the practices of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). The study reveals that through physical enclosure and tight access controls, GCs have managed to keep off gang activities and other forms of residential threats. At the same time, they have managed to eliminate the free-rider effect on their provision of social facilities and services.

The study adds to the body of knowledge that in the era of privatization and attaching commercial value of goods and services, the urban space and residential services such as residential security are not spared. Considering that Kenya's economy is capitalistic in nature, the Club Goods theory explains the popularity of gated communities in Nairobi. The middle-income, urban elites prescribe to the privatized lifestyle and have no problem with paying a premium to eliminate the free-rider effect among them, and in erecting physical barriers that deny access to non-members. By doing that, divisibility of 'public goods' such as inner streets, recreation, lawns and parks, among others are attained. More so, the paper adds to the knowledge that with the development of GCs, the effectiveness and efficiency of neighborhood services has been achieved because the residents feel secure and are satisfied with service delivery indicating functionality and convenience of Nairobi GCs as a commodity.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that:

- To help engender community feeling, the size of GC reflect a better understanding of how people develop community feelings and how different members of communities interact GC promoted community spirit through informal interactions in small groups.
- To create a self-sufficient community, the developer provided the GC with all services necessary to support homeowners and tenants. The residents paid services charges to sustain and maintain these services.
- The sharing of these services such as swimming pool, health clubs, parking e.t.c created a feeling of sense of belonging to the residents. All this services were accessible on foot. Cars were used when travelling outside the GC, otherwise walking was encouraged.
- The design and planning of gated community encouraged like-minded people to come together to share an image of their lifestyle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that:-

- There is need for mainstreaming of Homeowners Associations (HOAs) in the urban management structure.
- There is also need for clear property conveyance contracts that define the ownership rights of the shared facilities and amenities and outline developers' responsibilities over the same.
- The government lay out infrastructure before the developer commences construction, thereby reducing the overall costs of construction thus encouraging affordability and increase of GC houses.
- There should also be public participation to facilitate inclusive decision making to enhance satisfaction of residents in gated communities.

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