

Relationship between Socio Demographic Factors and Residential Satisfaction Among Iranian Immigrants' Homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between socio demographic characteristics and residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Data was collected from 235 participants using self-administered questionnaire. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed household size, total earned income, education years, and length of residence in Malaysia had significant relationship with residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Kuala Lumpur in the study area. However, there was no significant relationship between age, number of children, length of residence in current house, price of residential unit, number of bed rooms, number of living rooms, number of bath rooms, number of dining rooms, type of house and residential satisfaction of the immigrants' homeowners. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that residential satisfaction did not differ between employment status of the respondent. Independent t-test revealed that there was no significant difference between gender and residential satisfaction of the participants. These relationships indicate that those who are higher income, bigger household size, and high level education are more satisfied. It is recommended that policy makers and planning authorities should give more emphasis on the development of housing conditions of Iranian immigrants' homeowners to enhance their residential satisfaction.

Keywords: Socio demographic characteristic, residential satisfaction, housing, neighborhood, immigrants' homeowners

Housing is so significant that its impacts on the welfare of people are regardless of their socio demographic characteristics (Muhammad & Bichi, 2014). It contains recreational facilities, services and other economic and social activities that develop quality of life (Jiboye and Omoniyi, 2013). Accommodation is one of the basic human desires that has influence the wellbeing, health of people and families and a priority for the attainment of living standard (Muhammad & Bichi, 2014; Jiboye and Omoniyi, 2013). Achievement of a dwelling depends not only on how effectively the house affords the situation for activities of daily living but also on the opinions of its inhabitants (Potter, Chocoin, Speicher, 2001). Evaluation of inhabitant's opinions about their accommodation surroundings is not limited to the general assumptions of measuring physical acceptability of an accommodation (Jiboye, 2009). Residential satisfaction is a measure of families' opinions and responses about the conditions of their residential surroundings (Lu, 1999). Consequently, insight into the issues that relate to family's residential satisfaction would be framework for future policy of housing for development of their life quality (Dunstan et al., 2005; Jiboye, 2010).

The concept of residential satisfaction has many explanations and applications depending on the context it occurs. The concept has been studied in some arenas related to housing studies and it studies date back to the 1940. Family's satisfaction with residential neighborhood determines their life quality and an attainment of their desires and needs (Waziri, Yusof, Salleh, 2013).

Residential satisfaction is seen as the difference between actual and preferred accommodation situations (Galster & Hesser, 1981; Galster, 1987). It is furthermore viewed as an assessment of circumstances of residential surroundings by persons with regards to their personal requirements, expectation and attainments (Amérigo & Aragones, 1997). Residential satisfaction indicates absence of complaints with the situations and is sign of congruence amongst the actual and preferred accommodation conditions, whereas residential dissatisfaction indicates existence of complaints and degree of incongruence amongst actual and preferred residential conditions (Vera-Toscano & Ateca-Amestoy, 2008). According to Jansen (2014) residential neighborhood can be assessed using three approaches illustrious by Amole (2009) Purposive approach indicate that satisfaction as a measure of the extent to which the surroundings facilitates the inhabitant's aims. Aspiration gap is another approach which sees satisfaction as a measure of the gap amongst inhabitants actual and desired

needs. This approach related with inhabitant's perceptions of housing and neighborhood. Bonaiuto, et al. (2004) claimed that this approach concerns with inhabitants interpretations on housing quality as against experts valuations and can used for town-planning purposes.

Residential satisfaction has been theorized as an active process in accommodation adjustment of residential mobility model developed by (Morris & Winter, 1975; Morris & Winter, 1978). They postulated that families evaluate their accommodation situations in relation to household norm and societal norm which are likely to be incongruent. Therefore, incongruence amongst the actual accommodation situations of the family and accommodation norms in the society results to a housing deficit. This housing deficit leads to residential dissatisfaction which results in housing adjustment by the families. The families can adjust accommodation through reviewing their housing desires, by making in-situ adjustment through accommodation modifications and lastly adjust thru residential mobility (Mohit & Nazyddah, 2011). Research have shown that there is association amongst residential satisfaction and socioeconomic characteristics of the families (Zanuzdana, Khan, Kraemer, 2013; Ibem & Aduwo, 2013; Li, & Wu, 2013).

The significance of socio demographic factors in predicting residential satisfaction of families has been stressed in many research. For instance, Zanuzdana, Khan, Kraemer (2013) found in their research on residential satisfaction related to health and significance of amenities in Dhaka, Bangladesh found that residents with high income, a smaller household, high level of education, being female and being an owner of a dwelling are positively correlated with residential satisfaction. In contrast, Li, & Wu (2013) studied residential satisfaction of inhabitants in China and their findings revealed that demographic characteristics of the participants were not related to residential satisfaction except level of income because most of them engaged on economic activities. In Nigeria, Makinde (2014) studies on the influences of socio demographic characteristics on residential satisfaction and the findings show that there is significant difference in level of satisfaction of the inhabitants in the housing features such as household size, length of residence, gender and age, whereas no significant difference was found amongst residential satisfaction and marital status. Thus, these research shown complex association amongst residential satisfaction and socio demographic characteristics of the inhabitants.

Previous studies on residential satisfaction focused on the residential satisfaction of residents in their countries in both developed and developing countries. However, there are few research on residential satisfaction among immigrants in host countries. Based on these

arguments, this research aimed to evaluate the association amongst socio demographic characteristics (age, household income, household size, number of children, level of education, employment, length of residence in Malaysia, length of residence in current house, price of residential unit, number of bed rooms, number of living rooms, number of bath rooms, number of dining rooms, and type of house) and residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Therefore, the study examines the relationship between background characteristics and residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners.

Method

Samples

The data for this study consisted of 402 Iranian immigrants homeowners in Malaysia and were selected using a systematic random procedure from regions of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. A face-to-face interviewing technique was used for data collection, which was conducted in the respondent's home.

Measurements

Residential Satisfaction Scale. Residential satisfaction scale has received sufficient reliability and validity among Iranian immigrants' homeowners. This scale demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.97$).

Sociodemographic Variables. Sociodemographic variables included: age, number of children, length of residence in current house, price of residential unit, number of bed rooms, number of living rooms, number of bath rooms, number of dining rooms, type of house. Sex was coded in a binary format, males (coded as 1) as compared to females (coded as 0). The level of educational attainment was measured by high school, bachelor, master, and PhD. Household income, length of residence, price, and number of rooms was measured by a self-reporting scale in which respondents were asked to report their monthly household income, price of residential unit, and length of residence.

Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted with The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21). Ranges, frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations were

computed to describe data preliminarily. Bivariate analyses were conducted using a series of Pearson correlations, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and independent t-tests. Preliminary exploratory data analysis was performed to appraise for missing values, detect outliers, and check for normality. Missing observations were treated by the ‘pairwise’ deletion method.

Findings

Relationship between socio demographic characteristics and residential satisfaction

The analysis in Table 1 below shows the results of relationship between socio demographic characteristics and residential satisfaction using Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis. The findings revealed that, there was significant relationship between size of household ($r= 0.29$, $p= P<.01$), length of residence in Malaysia ($r=-.15$, $P\leq.05$), education years ($r= .18$, $p<.01$), and total earned income ($r= .28$, $p<.01$) with residential satisfaction of the respondents.

Table 1

Pearson correlation coefficient of socio-demographic factors and residential satisfaction

Demographic Data	r	p-value
Age	-.03	.61
Size of household	.29**	P<.01
Number of children	.10	.12
Length of residence in Malaysia	-.15*	P≤.05
Length of residence in house	-.10	.12
Price of the residential unit	.04	.51
Education years	.18**	P<.01
Total earned income earner	.28**	P<.01
Number of bed rooms	.12	.07
Number of living rooms	-.05	.48
Number of bath rooms	-.01	.97
Number of dining rooms	.04	.52
Type of house	.06	.35

* $P\leq.05$, ** $P\leq.01$

The finding of ANOVA reveals that there was no significant difference in the residential satisfaction of the respondents based on employment status ($(F(2) = .30, P=.75)$), indicating that residential satisfaction of the respondents does not vary with employment status. Also, result shows that being employed in public sector or private/self-employed does not make overall residential satisfaction to differ among them.

The finding of Independent t-tests shows also that there was no significant difference in the residential satisfaction among male ($M=199.61, SD=36.26$) and female ($M=213.04, SD=32.72$); ($t(233)=-2.68, P=.09$).

Table 2

Mean scores of residential satisfaction according to socio- demographic factors

Variable		n	Mean	SD	t	F
Sex	Male	164	199.61	36.26	-2.68	
	Female	71	213.04	32.72		
Employment	Retired		204	31.10		.29
	Work private		201.44	35.51		
	Own business		205.37	37.34		

Discussion and Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between socio demographic characteristics (age, household size, household monthly income, education, gender, price of residential unit, number of bed rooms, number of living rooms, number of bath rooms, number of dining rooms, type of house, and length of stay) and residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Hashim (2003), argued that residential satisfaction relates positively with social integration. The significant positive and association among household size and residential satisfaction of the respondents is contrary with the findings of previous studies (Mohit, Ibrahim, Rashid, 2010; Ukoha, Beamish, 1996; Tan, 2011), while the finding is in line with studies by Cook(1988) and Adams (1992) that found a positive association between larger household size and residential satisfaction. This indicates that the larger the size of the family the more the satisfaction, while the lower the family size, the lower the satisfaction. Furthermore, the cultural tradition of many African and Asian societies which values the contributions of children in farm works, domestic works, household businesses and household outputs is likely to have influence on their desires to get more children hence, large household size. In these societies, children provide a form of risk insurance in an uncertain environment and an investment in old-age security for their families (Okezie, Ogbe, Okezie, 2010). Consequently, households with more members might have high satisfaction than those few members and vice versa.

With regard to positive association between family income and residential satisfaction, the finding is contrary with Teck-Hong (2012) that found negative association between family income level and residential satisfaction but consistent with Adriaanse (2007) and Lovejoy et al. (2010). This indicates that immigrants' homeowners with more income have higher satisfaction than those with lower level of income. This could be because those with high level of income have opportunities for housing repairs and for getting more housing amenities which are likely to increase their level residential satisfaction. Conversely, household with

low level income could not have these chances and as result, their level of satisfaction would become low.

Frank & Enkawa (2009) shown that higher income motivates move to better dwelling in an attractive neighborhood, which may leads to relatively greater level of satisfaction. Education level had significant relationship with residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' households in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This indicated that differences in education level among immigrants' homeowners could influence residential satisfaction. The finding indicates that employment status of the participants had no significant association with their level of residential satisfaction, whether retired employment or private/self-employed did not make level of satisfaction among Iranian immigrants' homeowners differ. This is finding was contrary to previous studies (Lovejoy, Handy, Mokhtarian, 2010; Mohit, Ibrahim, Rashid, 2010). This could be because majority of the respondents were engaged in petty trading and other self-employment activities that may earned them much. Therefore, similarity make makes the satisfaction not to differ among the respondents in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. On the total number of rooms, number of bedrooms, living rooms, and bath rooms, the findings showed that they are not correlation with residential satisfaction.

It is in contrary to studies by (Elsinga, Hoekstra, 2005; Vera-Toscano, & Ateca-Amestoy, 2008; Mohit, Ibrahim, Rashid, 2010) indicated housing space needs correlate with residential satisfaction. The finding of the current study indicates that length of residence had significant and negative correlation with residential satisfaction. This finding was consistent with the findings of Onibokun (1974). It was contrary to the findings of (Mohit, Ibrahim, Rashid, 2010; Zanuzdana, Khan, Kraemer, 2013; Li, 2013) who found positive association between length of residence and residential satisfaction. The current finding indicates that the level of residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners was negative related to their length of residence. This could be because majority of them move to the another country with different culture. Thus, their length of residence influence negative affect on residential satisfaction.

In this research, Pearson's product moment correlation, ANOVA and independent t-tests were used to determine the association between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction of the participants. The finding revealed significant positive association between family income and residential satisfaction which indicates, family income has impact on residential satisfaction of the participants. This means that participants with higher the income have the higher residential satisfaction. Likewise, the finding indicated that

the size of household relate positively with residential satisfaction which indicates that participants with large household size have showed higher satisfaction. Also, the findings shown that households with higher level of education have the higher level of residential satisfaction. However, no significant differences in residential satisfaction among employment status of Iranian immigrants homeowners. Finally, the length of stay of the respondents in the current neighborhood was negatively related to residential satisfaction as shown in the study. The research revealed the need to consider the socio demographic characteristics in any effort towards improving residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners. The findings provide clear understanding of residential satisfaction theories that postulated the influence of socio demographic characteristics of the families on residential satisfaction.

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