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## The Concept of Neighbourhood in Contemporary Residential Environments: An Investigation of Occupants' Perception

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### Abstract

The dwelling occupant satisfaction is related to the efficiency of the combination of numerous factors stemming from the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the various components of the residential environment. Those components exist at a whole scale ranging from an interior space within the housing unit to the whole urban environment. This study aimed to explore the immediate social and physical environment around the dwelling unit, which is often referred to as “neighbourhood”. In addition to the physical space that the concept reminds, the term neighbourhood is also used to describe a socially distinguished area depending on residents' perception. In the traditional sense, this physical space is outlined with virtual boundaries that are traced differently in the minds of each individual according to the life style and type of social interaction and the type of use of the physical environment. The perceptions of residents' in relation with this neighbourhood area are also affected with both physical and social characteristics of the concerned environment.

This paper aimed to investigate the situation of the neighbourhood concept in contemporary urban residential environments by making use of the data obtained from two distinct independent housing researches conducted in Turkey. The analysis and evaluation of the findings together with an overview of the literature reflecting the traditional and contemporary neighbourhood concepts in Turkish residential environments, reveals that changes are about to occur in the definition, creation and experiencing of the neighbourhood issue. The evaluation of the literature, manifestos and approaches of most housing institutions and policy builders in the contemporary world expose a rather increasing interest to the issue of neighbourhood as the concept constitutes an important component of residential satisfaction.

The findings of this study indicate that the neighbourhood feeling in contemporary urban environments is now less dependent on the sharing of common close physical residential environment due to housing initiatives driven by liberal / random land use options, financial viability and profitability. The benefits expected of the use of the close physical environment is disregarded due to possibilities obtained with increasing mobility and transportation facilities. The remote activities and life styles of dwelling occupants become the basic factors that shape the social environment. The segregation of the close social environment from the close physical environment is a major source for residential environment dissatisfaction. A conclusion drawn from the findings is that the physical properties of the close built environment may act as sources of dissatisfaction if the residents' perception of neighbourhood notion is disregarded during residential environment design. Hints to increase dwelling occupants' satisfaction from the residential environment lies in redefining the neighbourhood concept through creating adequate, functioning, distinct, value added common spaces that ease admittance and social interaction. However, those spaces shall be a part of the urban tissue. The long-term effects of physical segregation, clustering of the residential environments, creating of sprawl type settlements shall be re-evaluated.

### Introduction

Most approaches in current housing researches concentrates on the physical attributes of single dwelling units and exclude the fact that the dwelling units rarely stand alone in a given physical space. People tend to form communities and communal living patterns since the early ages of the humanity for practical, economical, sociological and psychological reasons. The fact that most of those reasons are still valid in today's society pushes some housing researchers to seek the reasons behind the current trends of settlements disregarding the traditional neighbourhood concept. The neighborhood as an element of the housing environment has a strong impact on residential satisfaction, and influences the perception of residents' well being. The physical and social conditions of neighborhoods shape the residential life in each quarter, and in various studies it has been found that the perception of crime and safety is strongly linked to social conditions within a city quarter.

Several definitions may be given to describe the physical layout of the neighbourhood. It is considered in this paper that the physical space of the neighbourhood in relation with the residential environment consists of the following:

- The private space of the flat/dwelling,
- The collective space of the residential building complex,
- The public space of the surrounding areas

In the following chapters a detailed definition of the neighbourhood concept is made based on existing literature, indicating the distinguished social and physical aspects. The specific attributes of the neighbourhood concept in traditional Turkish urban culture are explained with a projection to the situation in today's urban context in Turkey. The approaches of the national and global institutions and policy makers are exemplified in order to underline the differences of the perception of the issue in national and global platforms at the level of policy making. Having scanned the current literature and contemporary approaches to the concept, and following the evaluation of the results obtained by the compilation of two surveys on the issue of housing, the need to reconsider the notion of neighbourhood in the current status of the contemporary Turkish residential environment becomes apparent.

## **The Concept of Neighbourhood**

### **Definition**

The term neighbourhood is often used to describe the sub-divisions of urban or rural locations such as cities, villages, and towns. In its purest definition, a neighbourhood is the vicinity in which people live. People live next to or near one another in sections of an area and form communities. Those sections have some particular physical or social characteristics that distinguish them from the rest of the settlements. The basic physical attributes of the space defined by the term neighbourhood have been described in detail by Duany, Zyberk, and Alminana (2003). Accordingly, the neighbourhood is a comprehensive planning increment. The clustering of neighbourhoods forms towns, villages, and cities. The neighbourhood varies in population and density to accommodate localized specific conditions. The size is limited so that a majority of the population is within walking distance of its centre where the needs of daily life are available. The centre of the neighbourhood provides facilities for transit stops, work places, retail, community events, and leisure activities. The streets provide alternate routes to most destinations at an equitable manner for both vehicles and pedestrians. Due to the incremental development there is a mixture of large and small houses, shops, restaurants, offices etc. Civic buildings (schools, theatres, worship areas, clubs, museums, etc.) are often placed in the centre. At that location open spaces, playgrounds, and parks are also provided (Duany, et al. 2003).

It has been demonstrated that the physical layout of the neighbourhood may help democratic initiatives to be encouraged and a balanced evolution of society is facilitated. Through providing a full range of housing types, civic buildings and workplaces, age and socio-economic classes are integrated and the bonds of an authentic community in relation with the physical environment.

At that sense the concept of neighbourhood is used also to describe the social environment formed by communities at distinguished urban sections. The social composition of the residential environment is constituted by a set of physical spaces integrated with each other through a hierarchical order. Those physical spaces range from a simple interior space in a dwelling unit to the whole urban land. The concept of neighbourhood forms an integral part of the residential environment. While attempting to assess the dwelling occupants' satisfaction from the overall residential environment, it should be considered that different performance criteria apply to different physical components of the residential environment. Those components and the relevant performance criteria are evaluated with a user / user group and physical space interaction.

The term "community" as used in conjunction with the notion of neighbourhood can be defined as the social group that resides in a specific locality and that shares some common resources, and common values. Therefore the people forming a community have their own social, economic, and political characteristics. Those characteristics develop in time with ongoing social interaction that can hardly be separated from the physical properties of the concerned environment. The set of characteristics that belongs to a particular community join together to form the identity of a larger community, the one that belongs to citizenship. The community concept within the overall setting of the residential environment is where the residential satisfaction mostly depends on the social composition and type of interactions. Therefore the process of a dwelling occupant satisfaction evaluation focussed on social aspects, shall primarily target the neighbourhood and the relevant community.

### **The approaches to the neighbourhood issue at national and global scale**

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, housing has been accepted as an essential part of the right to benefit from a decent standard of living in many countries. All local, national, and international authorities have their responsibilities in the housing sector. The governments and local authorities are evaluated according to their capacity to provide all citizens with dwellings of good quality, at an acceptable cost, in safe neighbourhoods, and in pleasant living environments.

An overview of the current housing and urbanization policies in Turkey reveals that the neighbourhood and residential environment issues are rather neglected both in policy-making attempts and practical applications. A recent example to that statement can be shown through evaluating the explanations for the law prepared to arrange municipal activities and to restructure municipalities proposed to Turkish Parliament in March 3, 2004 quoted the following about the neighbourhood issue (İBMM, 2004):

The administration of the neighbourhoods shall be rearranged and a participatory approach shall be adopted. The neighbourhood administrator's duties and responsibilities shall be redefined to increase activity and efficiency. The establishment of new quarters shall be simplified. The establishment of quarters shall be by municipal assembly decision and mayor approval.

The sole reference to the neighbourhood in relevant section of the proposed (draft) law is limited to the administration issue and aims to overcome the difficulties in the creation of new settlements. Equally, the targets of the principal organization for the provision of housing in Turkey; Housing Development Administration remains limited to following statements (TOKİ, 2005):

Through the context of the recent government policies, the priorities of Turkish Housing Development Administration can be stated as follows: Preventing unauthorized squatter constructions and renewal of squatter areas; Improving sensitivity to quality in settlements; Rehabilitation and improvement of the existing housing stock; Establishing adequate recreational areas.

The specified examples indicate that the issues of residential environment and neighbourhood have not been adequately taken into account in existing and planned housing policies or in the minds of responsible national institutions that produce those policies.

However, the tracking of the recent related activities by leading global institutions show a totally different picture. WHO (World Health Organization) Regional Office for Europe dedicated a special interest to the neighbourhood concept in recent years. The "Housing and Health Program" conducted by the institution is presented with ideas as quoted below (WHO, 2004);

The immediate housing environment and the neighbourhood represent an everyday-landscape, which can either support or limit the physical, mental and social well being of the residents. Although such impacts are broadly accepted, the concrete relationship between environmental quality and health / well-being has so far not been fully understood. For many years, the housing environment has been acknowledged as one of the main settings that affect human health. Living and housing conditions are the basis for many aspects that affect residential health.

With these principles, the program on housing and health launched a project on the immediate housing environment in 2002, looking at the impact of the surrounding area on resident satisfaction. The project paid special attention to sociological aspects and mental well being, and aimed at gaining a better understanding of the various mechanisms through which the physical and social neighbourhood environment may affect health both in negative and positive ways. Accordingly, a technical meeting on the immediate environment has been conducted in Utrecht, Netherlands in 30 April 2002. This meeting reviewed a survey tool / methodology designed to collect data on the residential environment and the satisfaction of the residents with their immediate environment. A larger expert meeting that was held in Freiburg, Germany in 14-15 November 2002 followed this meeting, which discussed, reviewed and proposed definitions of the immediate housing environment; suitable methods and factors to be measured in order to assess the quality and the impact of the immediate housing environment.

### **Evolution of the neighbourhood concept in traditional and contemporary Turkish city**

The urban life where the social, economic and cultural interactions are much more complex compared to rural settlements, is characterised with an accentuated familial privacy in Turkish traditional residential environments. The traditional dwellings are organised to protect familial privacy while forming a strong physical and social border for the neighbourhood composed of them. (Özdemir, 1986) The dead-end street is the most typical physical layout stemming from the privacy based neighbourhood concept. An overlook to a Muslim city has a layout reminding a labyrinth. Paths and walkways hardly follow a linear form. This organization is in fact an extension of the dwelling privacy to outdoor space. The construction of a new house and relevant door, window openings are subject to communal decisions to avoid any

disturbance to the privacy of an adjacent existing house (Raymond, 1995). This understanding inevitably includes communal decisions to the architectural forming of the physical environment.

The neighbourhood concept is therefore a cultural value in traditional Turkish city. Neighbourhoods form the urban tissue of the city both physically and socially. The neighbourhood physical setting is primarily composed of the mosque (worship area), the market (shops), the street and dwelling units. The social setting is based on the values of social support, fraternity, and the sense of belonging so as to form a rather closed community. The traditional Turkish neighbourhood community is however not economically, ethnically or religiously segregated. It is common to find people from different religions, socio-economic status, and occupations in same neighbourhoods (Ortaylı, 1999).

Cengiz Bektaş (2001) reports his dialogue with an old traditional building master to exemplify the basic approach that formed traditional Turkish residential settlements. When he asks the master about the rules of building erection, he simply replies that the basic rule is to obtain neighbours consent. He explains that the most important criteria is to avoid vision to the privacy of adjacent buildings, and not to block the vista, sunlight, and air flow of an existing building during a new construction (Bektaş, 2001).

The concept of neighbourhood in traditional built environments and rural settlements constituted a strong sense of attachment, identity, admittance and belonging for inhabitants. That traditional notion evolved with the physical aspects shaped through ages, with familial relations, and with relations that endured through several generations. The traces of this neighbourhood understanding were transmitted to urban environments by squatter housing during the last decades of the 20th century. Rapid urbanization and rural-to-urban migration in Turkey since the 1950's has increased the rate of urban population from 18.5 per cent in 1950 to 64.6 per cent in 1997. The urban population rose from 4.8 million to nearly 40 million over the same period. Populations living in cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants almost doubled in one decade throughout the 1960's. As a result of the inability of both the private and public sectors to provide decent and affordable accommodation to rural migrants, the number of squatter houses in Turkey increased from 240.000 in 1960 to 2,5 million in 2000. During the late 1960s and into the 1970s, the squatting process gradually became more commercialised as squatters began selling or renting out their units. From the late 1970's onwards, the process became even more commercialised as private firms and developers took on the responsibility of securing the land, designing the project, and constructing the units. The self-help nature of squatting was replaced by the profit motive (Keleş, 2001).

The urban environment in contemporary Turkish cities now suffer from the effects of squatting, illegal and unplanned developments that destroyed the traditional physical and social structure. The housing constructions mostly continue as sprawl type of developments in the outskirts of towns and cities. The high-rise settlement blocks with inadequately planned physical environment characterise most of the contemporary developments.

## **Research for the Current Status of Neighbourhood Concept**

### **Evaluation of Existing Surveys**

While attempting to explore the status of the neighbourhood concept in current settlement patterns and in order to evaluate the dwelling occupants' perception of their close environment, this paper made use of two published researches. The first and more general research is the "Turkish Housing Survey (1999)", that aimed to obtain indicators for Turkey to be included in the Housing Indicators Programme prepared by the UN Human Settlements Commission and the World Bank to compare the operation of the housing sector to those of other various countries (Turkish Housing Survey, 2004). This survey covered dwellings in settlements having a population over 2.001, and the overall sample size has been 34.320 dwellings. The research has been conducted in 7 different geographical regions and 9 selected province centres. The findings have been published in two volumes. The first volume covers the status of the overall country, and the second volume gives detailed information about the 9 selected province centres. This paper made use of the findings for the overall country and concentrated on the section related to the capital city of Ankara. The decision for the concentration on the city of Ankara is made in order to be able to compare the evaluated data to that of the second research that this paper made use of the findings. This second source study was conducted in Ankara in 1992 by İmamoğlu, V., İmamoğlu O., and Pamir, H. with a total number of 874 housing occupants (595 female and 279 male adults) in various housing estates selected with a consideration to explore diverse socio-economic status groups, and central versus suburban locations (İmamoğlu, et al. 1996). In the following chapters both studies have separately evaluated in terms of findings and results that seemed relevant to assess the perceptions, approaches, and tendencies in relation with the close environment and neighbourhood concept. Eventually, the extracts and comments of both surveys are compiled to be able to draw conclusions.

### 1999 Turkish Housing Survey

Until the performance of the Turkish Housing Survey in 1999, the information about housing in Turkey was gathered by a restrictive set of questions collected during population censuses and by the questions of certain surveys about the housing units occupied by the households. In order to obtain detailed and more concentrated data on the status of housing, the Turkish Housing Survey was conducted in 1999. The findings of the survey have been published in 2004. The survey targeted the following;

- Evaluation of the standards of the existing housing stock in Turkey,
- Obtaining information on the ownership status and finance of the houses,
- Definition of the proportion of unlicensed buildings,
- Determining the social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the households

According to the findings of the survey; the total number of household in Turkey is 13.000.250, the population of the households is 50.117.033 and the average household size is 3,8 people. The rate of owner occupied dwellings is 63,8% in Turkey (60,2% in urban areas and 76,3% in rural areas). Some basic statistical information related to housing (building types) in Turkey is given in Table I below:

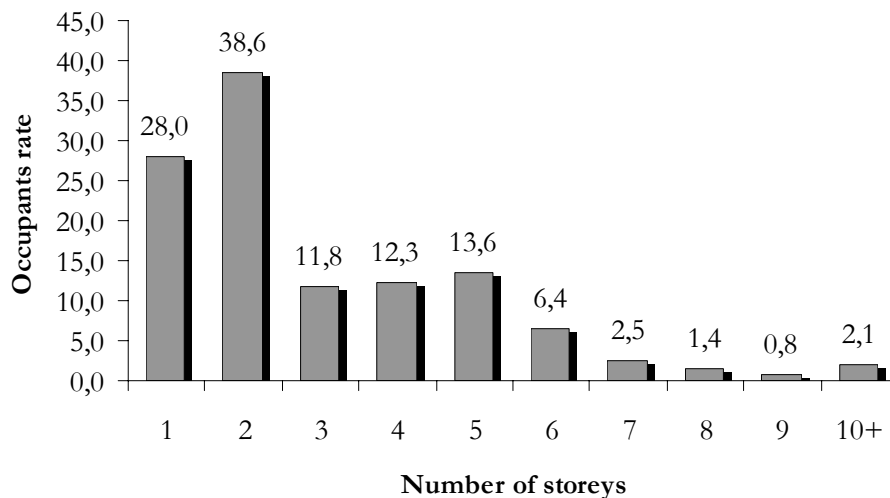
Table I. Housing in Turkey basic statistical information according to building types

Type of Building	Household rate (Urban) (%)	Household rate (Rural) (%)	Household Rate (Total) (%)
Single Detached House	39,6	80,3	48,9
Detached House in an Housing Estate	0,6	1,1	0,7
Multi storey Block	51,0	14,7	42,7
Multi storey Block in an Housing Estate	8,8	3,9	7,7

The information given in the table indicates that more than half (51%) of the urban households are living in apartments situated in multi storey blocks, which is the most common type of habitat in contemporary Turkish cities. Almost all of the dwelling types labelled as single detached houses are squatter housing in urban areas (39,6%), and farmhouses in rural areas (80,3%). The term "housing estate" is used to define the downtown or suburban sprawl type of housing. They are generally closed, contoured residential lands constituted of a mix of detached houses, and apartment blocks. Therefore, it is not quite misleading to add the ratios of the detached houses and multi-storey blocks in housing estates. The addition of the housing estates' household rates gives a total ratio of 9,4% which is rather high as we know that almost all of this type of settlements are relatively new constructions.

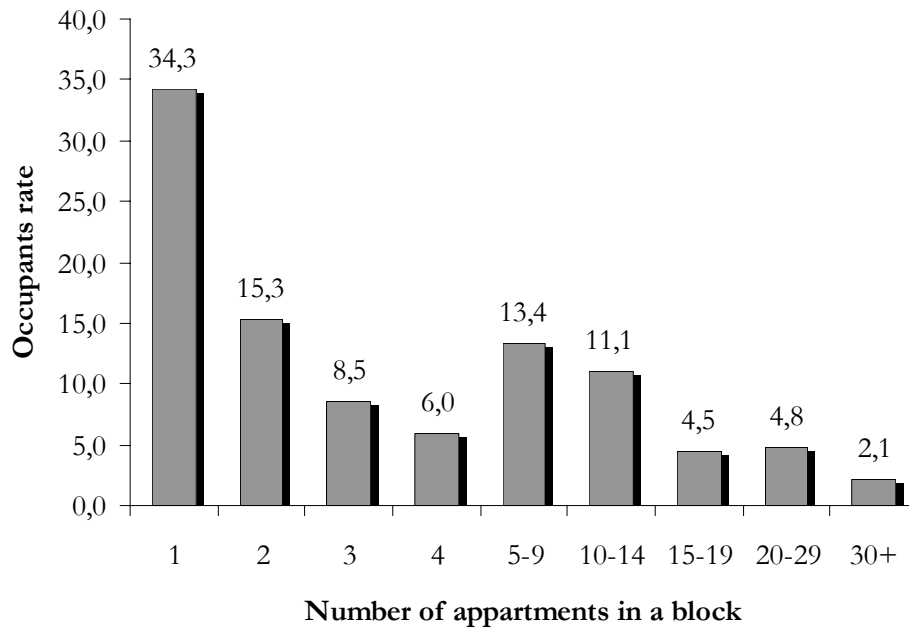
In order to be able to evaluate the communal living patterns the number of storeys of the residential buildings and the number of flats (apartments) in an housing block have also been explored. The Figure 1 indicates the ratios of households distributed according to the number of storeys of the housing block.

Figure 1. Statistical data related to multi-storey living



The Figure 2 indicates the ratios of the households according to the number of apartments within the housing block they reside with the use of Turkish Housing Survey data.

Figure 2. Statistical data related to number of apartments in a residential block



While evaluating the above given graphics, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> columns of both graphics shall be disregarded based on our comment above that these portions represent squatter housing. It is seen that the majority of the household living in residential blocks reside at 4-5 storey buildings, and the number of apartments in those blocks vary between 5 to 14 housing units. The ratio of the households living with 15 to 30 neighbours in their buildings is far from being negligible. An overview of the Turkish urban residential patterns therefore reveals that more than half of the urban population live in rather dense high-rise buildings, almost forced to a communal living.

The Turkish Housing Survey indicates that 70,7% of the urban households states that they are not satisfied with their housing environment. 79,9% of those non-satisfied occupants wants to move to a single detached house. The ratio of the non-satisfied occupants that wants to move to “housing estates” is 18,7%. Even a rough evaluation of these figures helps explaining the current tendencies of replacing the squatter housing with suburban sprawl type of housing in urban areas.

#### 1999 Turkish Housing Survey (City of Ankara)

Concentration on the findings of the survey about the city of Ankara reveals the following figures; the total number of household in Ankara is 834.654, the population of the households is 3.010.507 and the average household size is 3,6 people. The rate of owner occupied dwellings is 58,2% in the city of Ankara. The basic statistical information related to housing (building types) in is given in Table II below:

Table II. Housing in Ankara basic statistical information according to building types

Type of Building	Household rate (%)
Single Detached House	29,1
Detached House in an Housing Estate	1,2
Multi storey Block	56,6
Multi storey Block in an Housing Estate	13,2

The information given in the table indicates that the rate of households living in multi-storey apartments in Ankara (56,6%) is higher from the Turkish average (51%). The single detached houses / squatter housing is lower. The total household rate living in housing estates is 14,4%. The graphics for multi-storey living and the number of apartments in a residential block are given in figures 3 and 4 respectively.

Figure 3 Statistical data related to number of storeys in “multi-storey housing” (Ankara)

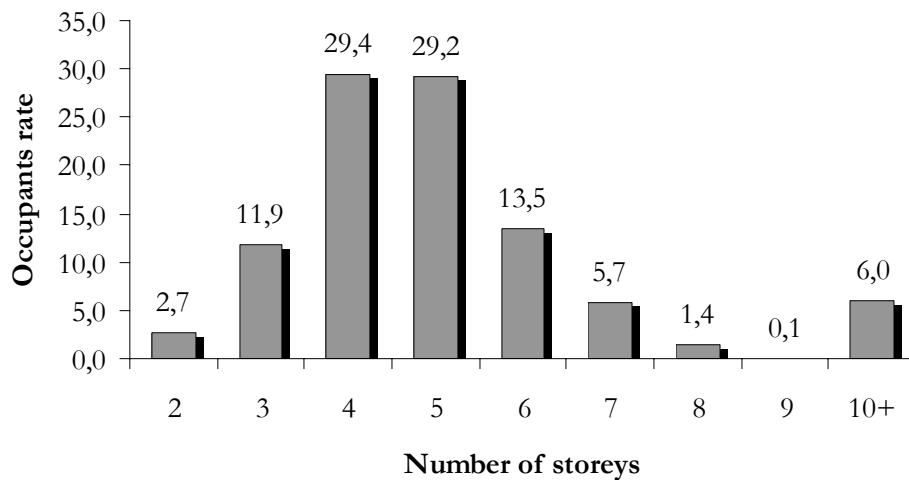
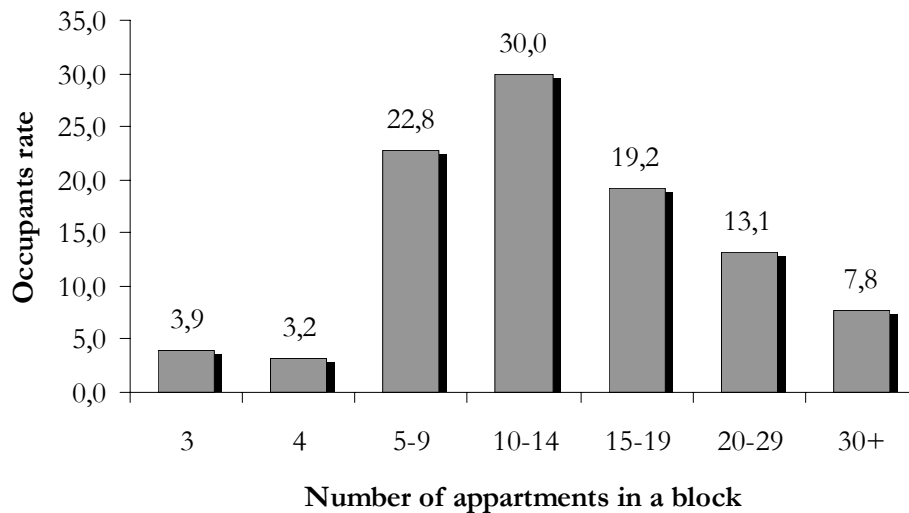


Figure 4. Statistical data related to number of apartments in a block in “multi-storey housing” (Ankara)



The graphics given for the city of Ankara for multi-storey housing represents a denser urban residential pattern compared to the situation in the rest of Turkey. It is seen that the ratio of the household living in residential blocks of 4-5 storeys is 58,6%, and the number of apartments in those blocks vary between 5 to 19 housing units. The ratio of the households living with more than 20 neighbours in their buildings is 20,8%. The Turkish Housing Survey indicates for Ankara that 77,3% of the urban households states that they are not satisfied with their housing environment. 77,7% of those non-satisfied occupants living in multi-storey housing wants to move to a single detached house. 32,5% of the non-satisfied multi-storey housing occupants wants to move to detached or multi-storey houses within the “housing estates”.

### People, Home and Environment Research in Ankara

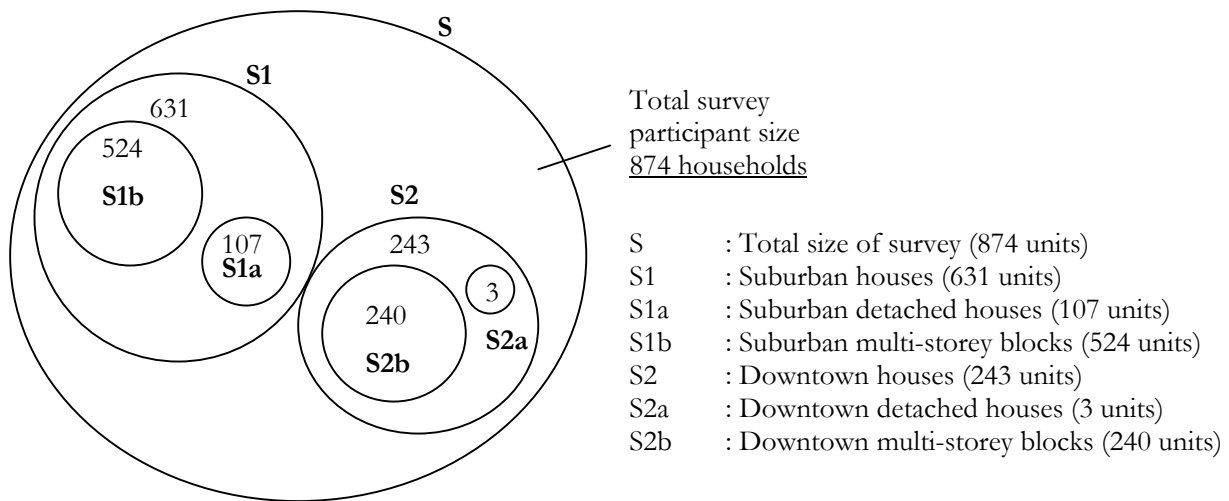
The second source study conducted in Ankara in 1992 by İmamoğlu, V., İmamoğlu O., and Pamir, H. in various housing locations, explored three kind of socio-economic groups located in diverse central and suburban housing estates (The composition of the participants in accordance with building types and location is given below in Figure 5.). The questionnaire included inquiry related to following issues;

- General characteristics of dwellings and household,
- Respondents' evaluations of their homes, environments, neighbours, and neighbourhoods,
- Attitudes and judgements concerning city life, housing and environments in general.

The total number of household (housing units) questioned within the content of the survey is 874; the average household size is 3,65 people. The rate of owner occupied dwellings is 64%. Out of the 874 housing units included within the survey; 631 units were in suburban locations, and 243 units were in downtown locations. 83% of the suburban housing units were multi-storey blocks (90% above 4 storeys), and 17% were detached houses. In downtown locations 99% were multi-storey blocks (95% above 4 storeys). The survey revealed that the number of apartments in a housing block varied between 15 and 38, and the average number for the totality of the survey has been 24,83.



Figure 5. The Composition of Survey Participants in accordance with building type and location



A summary of the conclusions of the research concentrates on the neighbourhood issue as quoted below:  
 The families, who reside in detached houses and who on the whole appear to be more satisfied with their living environments relative to those living in apartments, also seem to be more satisfied with their relationships with the neighbours; and report more support among neighbours whom they perceive as being more similar to themselves. On the other hand, in the lower SES areas, relationships with the neighbours appear to be denser (involving more frequent contacts with more people).

It is seen that the mentioned research explored the issue of neighbourhood through questioning some characteristics of the dwelling occupants. One of these characteristics was the perception of people on how much they find their neighbours similar to themselves in terms of life quality (material capacities and economic status) and life style (traditions, hobbies, political views etc.). The research revealed that people find their neighbours similar to themselves at a rate of 70% in terms of life quality, however they find them similar at a rate of 47% in terms of life style. Other parameters that the research explored were the number of contacted families that reside at the close environment, the frequency of those contacts, the type of relations established with contacted neighbours, and the perceived coherence and satisfaction. A detailed breakdown of the explored parameters and results obtained from this survey related to the close environment and neighbourhood is given in Table III. The meaningful divisions according to suburban-downtown locations, socio-economic groups, detached house versus multi-storey blocks are indicated.

Table III. Summary of the evaluations related to neighbourhood

Explored issues	Suburban						Downtown		
	Detached houses			Multi-storey blocks			Multi-storey blocks		
	SES-L	SES-M	SES-U	SES-L	SES-M	SES-U	SES-L	SES-M	SES-U
(1)				51,7	50	62,7	44,6	57,0	59,3
(2)				38,2	80,5	64,6	45,7	64,2	27,2
(3)							52,5	65,4	68,1
(4)	62,6	74,0	74,0	64,4	66,6	69,6			
(5)	85,2	54,8	66,5	81,2	41,2	50,0	50,0	49,0	71,2
(6)							42,8	36,5	33,7
(7)				64,0	57,0	54,5	67,5	60,5	58,0
(8)	69,3	67,4	74,5	64,8	63,0	69,6			

The first enumerated column of the table labelled as “explored issues” consists of the following items:

- (1) Feeling of insecurity
- (2) Satisfaction from the close environment
- (3) Satisfaction from the dwelling
- (4) Perception of the neighbours as similar to themselves
- (5) Number of socially interacted people in the close environment
- (6) Frequency of social interaction with people in the close environment
- (7) Type of social interaction with people in the close environment

(8) The perceived coherence with people living in the close environment

The findings have been distributed among suburban and downtown residents. The detached houses in the downtown section is not included as the survey size is quite small. All enumerated items are given an evaluation index in the original survey. The values in the above given table are re-arranged so as to express a rating over 100 through derivation of the original indices by considering lower, average and maximum rates to ease perception. The abbreviation SES stands for "socio-economic status", and the abbreviations of L, M, and U mean "lower", "medium", and "upper" respectively. Empty rows are where the original source indicates no meaningful variance.

A general overview of the table yields the following comments:

1. The feeling of security is higher in downtown locations. People in upper SES feel more insecure. The findings does not indicate meaningful difference between block residents and detached house occupants, however authors of the survey state that block type of housing inhabitants feel more secure than detached house occupants.
2. The satisfaction of the close environment is higher in suburban locations except for lower SES.
3. Satisfaction from the dwelling does not vary according to housing type and location.
4. The perception of neighbours as similar to themselves does not vary among suburban and downtown locations. People living in detached houses find their neighbours more similar to themselves except for lower SES groups.
5. The number of socially interacted neighbours is greater in downtown multi-storey housing compared to suburban multi-storey housing except for lower SES groups. Inhabitants of suburban detached houses have more neighbours than the residents of both suburban and downtown multi-storey housing.
6. The frequency of social interaction does not vary according to housing type and location.
7. The social interactions are denser (closer) in downtown locations.
8. The perceived coherence with neighbours does not vary according to housing location. Residents of detached houses feel more coherence compared to multi-storey housing residents.

### **Comparison of both studies to extract general conclusions related to neighbourhood**

The evaluation of the Turkish Housing Survey aimed to understand the common housing building types in Turkey and in Ankara specifically. Accordingly the data related to the basic indicators of housing and the households' distribution in relation to the building types are extracted. As stated above the housing type referred to as detached houses were rather neglected as almost all of this kind of housing represents the squatter developments in cities. Eventually the communal living patterns were explored through investigating the multi-storey block type of residents. The distribution of the occupants according to the number of storeys of the building they reside and according to the number of housing units in a single block are extracted from the survey findings. The Turkish Housing Survey provided rather general information related to the satisfaction of residents of the housing units and residential environment. This information is limited to the following items:

- The occupants' satisfaction status with the housing unit and residential environment,
- Occupants' preferred dwelling type that they want to move to feel more satisfied.

The second source survey "People, Home and Environment" provided more detailed information about the user satisfaction and assessments of dwellers related to their close environment and physical and social components of neighbourhood relations. However, the size of participant size of this second source study is relatively small compared to the first source study. Therefore this paper aimed to enlarge the findings of the second survey to the scale of the overall city to assess the general tendencies related to neighbourhood issue. In order to be able to generalize the findings of the second source survey to the size of the Turkish Housing Survey, the data about the distribution of the households according to building types and locations is used through juxtaposing the relevant parameters. Accordingly the household rate of single detached house in Table II is excluded; the remaining part (100%-29,1%=70,9%) is redistributed in accordance with building types as shown in Table IV, below.

Table IV. Distribution of the household according to building types in Ankara (squatter housing excluded)

Type of Building	Household rate (original data) (%)	Household rate (revised data) (%)
Single Detached House	29,1	0,0
Detached House in an Housing Estate	1,2	1,6
Multi storey Block	56,6	79,8
Multi storey Block in an Housing Estate	13,2	18,6

Eventually the housing types used in the first source study are converted to the typology and division of the second source study through use of parameters such as the number of storeys of the blocks, number of apartments in the block, occupants' means and median time of transportation to work place, ownership status etc. The distribution of the participants of the second source survey according to the subdivisions (suburban-downtown) and according to the SES (socio-economic status) reveals the following:

Table V. Distribution of participants of the second source survey according to SES

Type and Location of Building	Household rate (%)	Lower SES (%)	Medium SES (%)	Upper SES (%)
Single detached house (Suburban)	1,6	51,3	24,9	23,8
Multi-storey block (Suburban)	18,6			
Multi storey block (downtown)	79,8	35,0	32,9	32,1

Accordingly, it is seen that nearly 80% of the housing occupants in Ankara live in multi-storey housing in downtown locations. The remaining 20% live in suburban locations, and very few of them reside in detached houses. In order to compile the findings of the second source study with the Turkish Housing Survey, the values in Table V are applied to those of Table III as weight coefficients.

Table VI. Compilation of both survey data

Explored issues	A. Housing type and location			B. Housing location		C. All housing
	Suburban		Downtown	Suburban	Downtown	All location
	Detached	Block	Block	All type	Block	All type
	All SES	All SES	All SES	All SES	All SES	All SES
(1)	53,9	53,9	53,4	53,9	53,4	53,5
(2)	55,0	55,0	45,8	55,0	45,8	47,7
(3)	59,4	59,4	61,8	59,4	61,8	61,3
(4)	68,2	66,2	66,8	66,3	66,8	66,7
(5)	73,2	63,8	56,5	64,6	56,5	58,1
(6)	39,1	39,1	37,8	39,1	37,8	38,1
(7)	60,0	60,0	62,1	60,0	62,1	61,7
(8)	70,1	65,5	65,7	65,9	65,7	65,8

The first enumerated column of the table labelled as "explored issues" has the same order as given to explain Table III above. A general overview of the Table VI yields the following results:

1. The feeling of insecurity is lower in downtown locations. The overall city rating is almost average, so the residents neither feel insecure, nor they feel quite secure.
2. The satisfaction from the close environment is higher in suburban locations. The overall city rating is slightly below average.
3. Satisfaction from the dwelling is higher in downtown locations. People are satisfied from the dwelling more than they are from the close environment.
4. The occupants of detached houses perceive their neighbours similar to themselves much more than the residents of downtown or suburban blocks, which mean that housing blocks in suburban areas and downtown are more socially mixed.
5. The social interaction with neighbours is higher in detached houses' occupants by far compared to block housing residents.
6. The frequency of social interaction does not vary much according to housing type and location, and is quite low for the overall city.
7. The density of social interactions is slightly high in downtown locations.

8. The perceived coherence with neighbours is much more higher in the occupants of detached houses compared to the suburban or downtown block housing residents.

With an attempt to comment the results in the light of the characteristics of traditional and contemporary Turkish urban environment summarized in previous chapters, and from a point of view that explores the status of neighbourhood relations we may reach to some essential conclusions. The result showing higher grades for the feeling of insecurity in suburban locations is remarkable as it is known that most of these settlements are relatively new developments and the security measures are greater compared to central habitations. This result may stem from the occupants' feeling of being away from the city centre, and / or due to weak neighbourhood relations. The relation of the feeling of security with the neighbourhood social interaction issues is explained in a study of Apak, S., Ülken G., and Ünlü A. (2001) within the content of a research conducted in a mass-housing compound in Istanbul where the concept of feeling of security is said to be an indicator of the life quality that is linked to the anxiety or possibility of crime vulnerability (Apak et al., 2001).

It is not misleading to state that higher grade of satisfaction from the close environment in suburban residents compared to downtown locations is an expected result as the physical / natural environment quality is far more better than city centres in such areas. Identically the dwelling satisfaction grades' being higher in downtown area may also be expected due to several reasons such as the material value of the dwelling, occupation period, central location, sound infrastructure etc.

The results related to the neighbourhood relations' having higher grades in detached houses compared to communal housing (items 4, 5, and 8 on above given list) are rather surprising as well. It is possible to expect higher grades of social interaction and neighbourhood relations in dense and populated housing blocks. This issue may be explained by the proposition that the perception of control over the physical environment and the satisfaction from the physical environment are factors that help the establishment of coherent and dense social interaction (İmamoğlu E.O., 1992). The barriers over human being's perception of environmental control increase the feeling of weakness and insecurity. This is also closely related with the perception of privacy. The concepts of privacy and intimacy are in fact widely discussed in the field of architectural psychology. Several researches indicate that the increasing privacy is not contradictory to social relations. Contrarily the findings show that the feeling of privacy and relevant psychological comfort (protection of privacy) correlates with increasing social interaction. The perception of privacy in housing environment is explained to feel less exposed to the vision and hearing of others. Accordingly, higher degrees of perceived privacy increase the level of social interaction between people (Pamir, 1979).

The results related to the frequency and densities of social interaction (items 6, and 7) are evaluated as expected outcomes as well. The social relations' being denser in downtown housing is probably related to the higher grades of occupancy time.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the compilation of the surveys above, and considering the current debates in the housing sector in Turkey, an apparent movement of the downtown inhabitants to suburban locations is sensed especially in the example of Ankara. A comparison of the neighbourhood perceptions of downtown and suburb residents reveals that the notion of neighbourhood is about to lose its original and traditional meaning in the daily life of people. The basic indicators for those comments are lower degrees of the feeling of security, and the sense of privacy, which are considered as factors that decrease social interaction, participation and social support. The current trends for the creation of physical properties of the suburban housing and especially high-rise settlement modes reduce the feeling of communal sharing of common close physical environment.

It is not misleading to accuse public and private housing initiatives driven by liberal / random land use options solely targeting financial viability and profitability for the current status of housing as indicated by several researchers (Keles, 2001; Duany, et al. 2003). The benefits expected of the use of the close physical environment is disregarded due to possibilities obtained with increasing mobility and transportation facilities. The remote activities and life styles of dwelling occupants thus become the basic factors that shape the social environment (Ökten, A., Şengezer, B., Hökelek, S., 2003). This issue causes the segregation of the social environment from the immediate physical environment.

Conclusions in the light of above summarized issues reveal the need to revive the neighbourhood concept that can help attaining the residential satisfaction for which considerable resources are activated. An effective consideration for the new settlements would be to attempt unifying the social and physical environment of residents.

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