# NEIGHBORHOOD SATISFACTION IN MODERN AND OLD NEIGHBORHOODS IN ISTANBUL

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## Abstract

There is growing interest among academics and policy makers in both Turkey and abroad to monitor social progress. As a result of this, much activity is focused on measuring quality of life, via the development and implementation of subjective indicators.

Neighborhood satisfaction would appear prima facie to be a more appropriate variable to use as a measure of the overall quality of neighborhood life. This paper undertakes a case of neighborhood satisfaction on the European side of İstanbul.The objective of the paper is to determine how the characteristics such as age, education and occupation influence quality of life in different locales.

Finding out who is most satisfied with their neighborhoods should provide policy makers with information on where to target neighborhood improvements.In this paper a descriptive analysis is developed by using data taken from 2002 survey, first in a modern neighborhood Ataköy and second in a traditional Bosphorus village Arnavutköy.

## 1. Introduction

Since 1950's, rapid growth of İstanbul due to rural migration increased the gap between the quality of life in different locales of the city. While some of the modern districts gained comparative advantage, the historical ones started to loose population due to deterioration of urban environments. Thus, districts of İstanbul and their neighborhoods are going into continuous social, economic and structural transformation. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationships between city dwellers and their urban environments with respect to residential satisfaction in modern and old neighborhoods in İstanbul. People's satisfaction with their social and physical environments are evaluated with respect to their characteristics such as age, education and occupation.

Increasing concern for the future of cities and for the well-being of city dwellers, and the deterioration of many urban environments, has led in recent years the emphasis given to the study of the city in many respects. Understanding the nature of the person-environment relationship is the quint-essential planning problem. In the context of the built environment this can be interpreted as a concern with the degree of congruence or dissonance between city dwellers and their urban surroundings (Michelson,1977; Rapoport ,1985). This focus on environmental quality has emerged as a key area of research in urban planning and over recent decades considerable effort has been directed toward assessing the quality of different residential environments (Pacione,1990). This line of research may also provide a more manageable scale within which to measure any change in the target population's circumstances and evaluate the impact of a given intervention (Chaskin,1998).

The residential satisfaction is a relative rather than an absolute term whose precise meaning depends on the place, time and the purpose of the assessment and on the value system of assessor. The task is enormous and there is a wide range of disciplines are involved in the field such as architecture, planning, sociology, psychology and urban geography.

Various personal, demographic and social characteristics appear to play an important role in residential satisfaction. Length of residence (Hunter,1974); (1978); (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974); (Goudy,1977);(1982); (Newman and Duncan,1979); (St. John et.al.,1986); socio-economic status (Marans and Rodgers,1975): (St. John and Clark,1984); age (Marans and Rodgers,1975); (Goudy,1982); (Barrasi et.al.,1984) appear to be factors influencing

neighborhood satisfaction. Physical structure and the physical environment also appear to play a role in community satisfaction (Wirth, 1938); (Guest and Lee,1983); (Bardo and Dökmeci,1990; 1992).

Nature of physical surroundings, and access to services and facilities and their quality are found to be related to residential satisfaction (Marans and Rogers,1975). According to (Duncan,1971); some families have no need for a garden while others enjoy tending a fair-sized area. Some wish to live close to a town center for the convenience, others do not mind a journey to work if they can live in more open surroundings (Pacione,1990).
Personal factors may also affect residential satisfaction, including previous housing experience (Fried and Gleicher,1961), the degree of integration of the individual into society (Tauber and Levin ,1971), the individual's reference group (Merton,1968), the person's sociopsychological attitude toward society in general (Gans,1967), people's social customs and traditions (Duncan ,1971) and people's need for privacy (Topcu, et.al.,2003).

Finally, in addition to the characteristics of the house, neighborhood and resident, the habitability of a residential setting can be affected by city management systems, for example standard of garbage collection and other local services (Onibokun,1974)

The centrality of the residential environment for individual quality of life has been established (ltman and Wandersman ,1987); Altman and Werner (1985); Francescato, Weideman and Anderson (1987)). The organization of the paper is as follows. Research design is explained in the second section. Section three shows the results of the cross-tabulation. Final section is devoted to a conclusion.

**2. Method**

Two systematic samples (from random starts) of residents were drawn from planned modern neighborhood (N=265), namely Ataköy, and (N=288) from a traditional Bosphorous village, namely Arnavutköy, which is more centrally located. Residents of Ataköy tend to be more middle-class, while Arnavutköy is populated by traditional working-class, urban residents and new migrants from the Black Sea Region. Arnavutköy has begun to experience urban gentrification and displacement of the traditional population.

Cross-tabulation was administered to both samples. The questionnaire was organized in four groups. First group consisted of 63 questions and the questions are about the satisfaction with the house, number of neighbors, quality of neighbors, green areas in the neighborhood, quality of community services and facilities, comparison of the existing house with the previous one, desire to move to another neighborhood. The second group is about the family structure. The third group is about the quality of facilities and how often residents use them. The fourth group is about personal information, age, sex, lenght of stay and previous residential location. The results are evaluated and given in the following section.

**3. Results**

More people are satisfied with their home in Ataköy (90,55 %) than in Arnavutköy (81,5 %). Satisfaction with home is positively correlated with the educational level of people in Ataköy. However, in Arnavutköy, people with primary and university education are more satisfied than people with high school education. With respect to profession, houseviwes are least satisfied while students are the most satisfied in Ataköy. In Arnavutköy, employees, houseviwes and students are more satisfied than the other groups. With respect to age, young and old people are more satisfied than the middle aged ones in Ataköy. In Arnavutköy, old ones are more satisfied than young ones.

In Ataköy, more and more people (74.82%) accept that their present home is better than the previous one, than Arnavutköy (51.5%). In Ataköy, this ratio is increased as the education level is increased. However, in Arnavutköy, people with primary and university education are more satisfied than people with high school education. With respect to age, in Ataköy satisfaction with the existing home among young people is higher than the older people. However, in Arnavutköy the reverse result is obtained.

More people accept Ataköy as a beautiful place to live (89.15%) than Arnavutköy (64.4%). This ratio doesn't change much with respect to education in Ataköy but it increases as the level of education increases in arnavutköy. With respect to professions, housevives are more satisfied in Ataköy than the other groups. According to age, middle age group people are more satisfied than the other groups in Ataköy. In Arnavutköy, satisfaction increases as the people's age increase.

The ratio of people who want to live in another neighborhood is higher in Arnavutköy (22.3%) than in Ataköy (11.19%). In Ataköy, the ratio doesn't change with respect to education. However, in Arnavutköy, more people with primary education want to go to another area than the other educational groups. With respect to age groups, more people in middle age groups want to go to another place than the other age groups in Ataköy. In Arnavutköy, there are more young people who want to go to another place than the other age groups.

There are more people who feel they belong to Ataköy (84.96%) than Arnavutköy (72.7%). This ratio is higher with the people with primary and university education than the other groups, in Ataköy. In Arnavutköy, more people with university education feel they belong here, than in other groups. With respect to age distribution, more young and aged people feel they belong to Ataköy than the other age groups. In Arnavutköy, more middle age and aged people feel they belong here than other age groups.

Ther are more people who think that people don't care for the environment in Arnavutköy (67.2%) than in Ataköy (20.28%). In Ataköy, this ratio decreases as the educational level decreases. However, in Arnavutköy, this ratio decreases as the educational level increases. With respect to age distribution, this ratio decreases as the age of people increases in Ataköy. In Arnavutköy, this ratio is higher for the young and old age groups than the middle age group.

More people in Arnavutköy (62.9%) than in Ataköy (59.79%) claim that there are excellent shopping facilities in their community with respect to other districts of İstanbul. People with primary education are more satisfied with the shopping facilities than the other groups in both Ataköy and Arnavutköy. With respect to age groups, young and over aged people are more satisfied than the middle age groups in ataköy. In arnavutköy, satisfaction with the facilities increases as the age of people increases.

There are more people who are satisfied with the schools in Ataköy (66.7%) than Arnavutköy (47.0%). With respect to education, there is not much change between the different groups in Ataköy. In Arnavutköy, people with high school education are less satisfied with the schools in their neighborhood. With respect to age groups, in Ataköy, young people are more satisfied

than the older groups. However, in Arnavutköy old people are more satisfied than the younger ones.

More people in Ataköy (79.72%) believe that public facilities are well kept than Arnavutköy (64.3%). This ratio decreases as the educational level increases in Ataköy and in Arnavutköy. According to the age groups, this ratio is higher for the old people than young people both in Ataköy and Arnavutköy.

More people like Ataköy (64.34%) due to nice families in their neighborhoods than Arnavutköy (57.2%). In Ataköy, this ratio doesn't change with respect to educational level of people. With respect to age groups, in Ataköy, this ratio is higher for the old people than the young people. Similarly, in Arnavutköy, this ratio is gradually increasing from the young to the old ones.

More people in Arnavutköy like their neighborhood (37.5%) due to relatives in their community than Ataköy (16.43%). In Ataköy, this ratio is higher for the primary school graduates, as well as in Arnavutköy. With respect to age groups, in Ataköy, middle age and over aged people have higher ratio than other groups, as well as in Arnavutköy.

More people in Arnavutköy (44.0%) complain about their neighbors' children than in Ataköy (8.74%). In Ataköy, this ratio doesn't change much with respect to education and occupation. In Arnavutköy, this ratio increases as the educational level increases. In Ataköy, this ratio is higher for the middle age groups than the other groups. In Arnavutköy, the results are the reverse because ther are more children playing on the streets than Ataköy.

Most of the people in Ataköy (86.36%) and Arnavutköy (82.2%) believe that there is less crime in their locales compared to other districts of İstanbul. In Ataköy, this ratio doesn't change much with respect to education. In Arnavutköy, this ratio is high for the primary school graduate and lower for the university graduates. In Ataköy, this ratio doesn't change much with respect to age groups. In Arnavutköy, this ratio is higher for the old people than younger ones.

Ther are more people in Ataköy (95.84%) who believe that green areas contribute to the beauty of their environment than the people in Arnavutköy (32.2&). This ratio doesn't change

much with respect to age, education and occupation. In Arnavutköy, this ratio decreases as the education increases. With respect to age groups, this ratio is higher for the middle age groups than the other groups.

## 4. Conclusion

This study compares the residential satisfaction in modern and historical neighborhoods. According to the results, since the old people feel lonely in the modern neighborhoods, it is necessary to establish the facilities which will provide social integration of the old people in the modern neighborhoods. It is also necessary to improve the physical environment and housing conditions in the historical neighborhoods. It will be useful to provide playground for the children in the historical neighborhoods in order to keep the children away from bothering neighbors. It is also necessary to improve the green areas in the historical areas in order to make these places more attractive for the people.

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