28TH ANNUAL PACIFIC RIM REAL ESTATE SOCIETY CONFERENCE

ONLINE VIRTUAL 19TH JANUARY 2022

DRIVERS OF GATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS IN GHANA

(CASE STUDY: GREATER ACCRA REGION)

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ABSTRACT

Gated communities continue to proliferate cities across the world. Like other countries, Ghana has seen growth in the development and demand for gated communities over the last few years. The phenomenon manifests in all forms of property advertisements and most new residential developments in the capital city.

The paper explores drivers for gated community developments in Ghana using the Greater Accra Region as a case study by identifying the push factors influencing residents to move into gated neighbourhoods. The results of this study are expected to influence urban housing policy decisions towards developing sustainable urban housing typologies.

Data was collected from purposively selected gated communities through a survey of residents and interviews with key stakeholders. The residents were asked to rank particular selected drivers, which were derived from an extensive literature review. The key drivers identified were security, land title security, location, facilities and services and community living.

Keywords: Gated community, Development, Drivers, Housing, Greater Accra Region, Ghana.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Gated communities (GCs), over the last few years, have rapidly increased in Ghana. Homes in gated communities are gradually becoming popular among the urban high and middle-class residents. A casual observation of Ghana's urban housing market indicated an increasing demand for gated communities, and developers are also interested in providing them. GCs are noticeable in the city centres and suburban areas, and they are visible in most housing adverts carried in all forms of marketing media.

The proliferation of gated communities is not only in Ghana but has been an international spectacle over the last few decades. The gated community phenomenon through the late 1990s has become a topic of interest for academics and policymakers. This heightened interest has led to various views and debates on the gated community phenomenon. Despite the increased interest of scholars in understanding gated communities internationally, research on the phenomenon in West Africa, and specifically Ghana, is limited (see Brunn and Frantz, 2006). Few studies (see Grant, 2005; Asiedu and Arku, 2009; Adja-Sai,2010; Obeng-Odoom et al., 2014; Sarpong, 2016; Ehwi et al. 2018) have sought to explore the gated community phenomenon and studies on the drivers of the phenomenon represent a small percentage of the limited research.

This study seeks to answer the question: what are the major drivers of gated communities in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana? The objective is to establish the drivers of the gated community development from residents' perspective and identify the possible future trend of gated community demand in the Greater Accra region. The compelling motive for undertaking the study is to ensure that the reasons why residents move into gated communities are identified and documented.

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The paper first proceeds to present an overview of the extant literature on the topic globally and the developments in Ghana. Then progresses to describe the methodology used in the research. Results are discussed together with findings, and the paper concludes with some recommendations and government policy implications. Overall, the study results will go a long way in influencing urban housing policy decisions, clearly demonstrating the underlying reasons for the rapid growth of Gated community developments from the resident's perspective to develop sustainable urban housing policies. It will also augment the gated community literature in Ghana.

2.0 GATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS: OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many researchers have considered defining a gated community (GC), leading to different terms and definitions. Terms used to refer to gated communities include enclosed neighbourhoods, urban fortress, suburban enclave, and security villages (Landman 2000), fortified neighbourhoods (Atkinson and Blandy, 2005), fortified enclaves and closed condominiums (Caldeira, 2000) as well as gated enclaves and enclosed neighbourhoods. These terms are mostly geographically and structurally influenced. In India, similarly, protected communities are referred to as colonies (Xavier, 2008).

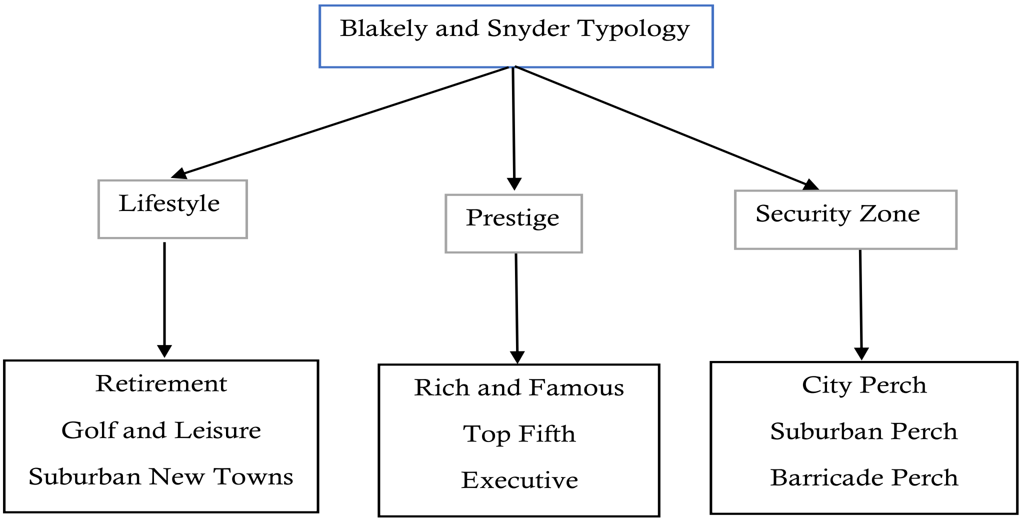
Blakely and Snyder (1997, p.2) suggested that "gated communities are residential areas with restricted access that usually makes public spaces private. They are security developments with designated perimeters, usually walls or fences and controlled entrances that are intended to prevent penetration by non-residents." Atkinson and Blandy (2005) also defined gated communities as walled or fenced housing developments to which public access is restricted, characterised by legal agreements which tie residents to a shared code of conduct and usually collective responsibility for management. These two definitions highlight the physical elements, legal framework, and spatial analysis of gated communities. Other authors define gated communities with an emphasis on the socioeconomic status of residents, type of housing and the voluntary aspect of living in gated communities (see Roitman, 2010; Mahgoub and Khalfani, 2012; Rafiemanzelat, 2016). The myriad definitions lead to situations where researchers disagree on what a gated community is, thus stressing the complexities faced in the absence of a standard description.

Gated communities have increased across the USA and the globe over the last few decades. In 2001, the US Census Household Survey found that 7 million households, approximately 16 million people, or 6% of all households, were living in gated and walled residential communities (Sanchez & Lang 2002; Sanchez, Lang & Dhavale, 2005) and by 2003, this number had reached 32 million (Smets, 2009). More recent estimates than these are challenging to obtain. Given the strong consumer demand for homes in gated communities and lucrative potential for residential developers, there is little doubt that the current number of GCs has increased considerably from earlier estimates (Branic and Kubrin, 2018).

Gated communities have gained popularity in other regions such as the United Kingdom (Atkinson and Flint, 2004), Middle East (Glasze and Alkhayyal, 2002), South Africa (Breetzke and Cohn, 2013; Durington, 2006) and Central and South America (Landman and Schonteich, 2002; Caldiera, 2000). Though in Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, the development of gated communities is not so widespread, almost every country has some examples (Blandy et al., 2003). The national study of gated communities in England by Atkinson et al. (2003) revealed the existence of over 1000 gated communities by 2004. Apart from some developed countries, gated communities are also growing in cities of developing countries, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia (see Metwally and Abdalla, 2013; Salah and Ayad, 2017).

Some researchers (see Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004; Blandy, 2006; Aalbers, 2001) have developed typologies of GCs based on their research interests and the urban patterns of the case studies. One of the popular classifications of gated communities is defined by Blakely and Snyder (1997), who developed a typology based on the social characteristics of gated communities in the USA. In this typology, Blakely and Snyder (1997) identified three types of gated communities: lifestyle, prestige, and security zone communities. They further categorised the three main types into nine. Lifestyle communities focus on leisure activities with recreational facilities, shared amenities, and shared services, including retirement villages, golf communities, or suburban new towns. Prestige communities operate as symbols of wealth and status for image-conscious residents who focus on the exclusivity of the neighbourhood. Prestige communities include the rich and famous communities, top fifth communities, and executive communities for the middle class. Finally, security zone communities reflect a fear of outsiders. It is formed not by developers but by their inhabitants because of the fear of crime and outsiders. This category includes the city, the suburban, and the barricade perch. These are 'perch' because the gates are built by residents rather than by developers. Figure 1 below presents the typology.

Figure 1: Blakely and Snyder Typology of Gated communities



Source: Blakely and Synder (1997)

For many people, the expression "gated community" implies imagery of wealthy, tranquil and upper-class neighbourhoods. However, there is considerable variation across the demographic landscape of gated communities, as noted earlier above in Blakely and Snyder's (1997) definition. Various literature on gated communities promotes this affluent view of gated communities arguably because that is the most predominant type in many countries. For instance, in Vietnam, they are termed "elite enclaves", which are meant exclusively for and can be afforded only by the super-rich (Provost and Kennard, 2016). However, GCs are not the same everywhere in terms of their structure, morphological arrangement, and target group in the property market. In some contexts, gated communities are targeted at groups based on ethnicity, religion, or ideology (see Leisch, 2002). Vesselinov et al. (2007) identified a trend positing that gated living is no longer the option for the top tier of society only (also see Wilson-Doenges, 2000). Thus, the belief that gated communities are mainstays of affluence is not always accurate; instead, one might argue that affluent, high socioeconomic status GCs represent a model of gated communities.

Many researchers have studied the reasons for the proliferation of gated communities across the globe. Security, privacy and exclusivity, prestige, lifestyle, facilities, and amenities are some of the drivers identified for the rise and patronage of gated communities in various countries (see La Grange, 2018; Salah and Ayad, 2018; Blandy and Lister, 2005; Muiga and Rukwaro, 2017; Giglia, 2008; Atkinson and Flint, 2004; Aydın-Yönet and Yirmibeşoğlu, 2009; Hapsariniaty, Sidi and Nurdini, 2013; El-Ekhteyar and Furlan, 2016)

2.1 GATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS IN GHANA

Through the late 1980s and early 1990s, the state reduced its direct role in providing houses (GSS, 2014). It opened up the housing market for private sector participation following Structural Adjustment and other World Bank recommendations. One of the main goals of the World Bank's support for the housing sector was to increase the involvement of the private sector in housing delivery, thus resulting in the announcement of incentives for private sector investment in the housing sector in the 1988 Budget. Consequently, the Housing Ministry held a meeting in February 1988 to mobilise all private developers to formalise their role in housing. Most of the individual developers at the time were building contractors, rarely venturing into real estate housing on a minor scale (Tweneboa, 2006, as cited in Sarfoh, 2010). Among the few who were bona fide private developers, the majority were businesses owned by Arabs, reflecting the novelty of private real estate in the indigenous Ghanaian society. This mobilisation culminated in the Ghana Real Estate Developers Association (GREDA) formation in July 1988 with 40 members (Sarfoh, 2010). GREDA has about 160 member firms (GREDA, 2020; Baako, 2021)

The introduction of neo-liberalised policies resulted in over a hundred real estate development companies whose primary housing market is within Accra and Tema Metropolis. Among these is TAYSEC Construction Limited, Regimanuel Gray Limited, Trasacco Valley and Golden Gate Hospitality, all of which belong to the Ghana Real Estate Developers Association (GREDA). These Estate Developers undertake gated communities, condominiums, single structures, semi-detached buildings, apartments, offices, and commercial buildings (Adja-Sai, 2010). One para-statal institution that has been at the forefront of the provision (either directly or in partnership with other private developers) of high income and middle-income housing is the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT). SSNIT also happens to be the largest state-run pension fund management institution in Ghana. This shows that although the Government of Ghana seeks to adopt a hands-off approach to housing developments, it remains very active in this process.

Grant (2005) indicates that the activities of private developers targeted the diaspora market with a premium increasingly placed on exclusivity. This led to the remarkable growth of gated residential communities over the last decades. For example, as of June 2004, Grant (2005) identified 23 gated communities in the Accra metropolis, with most of them comprising houses and a few apartment complexes at varying stages of completion. When completed, there will be 3,572 houses and 72 apartments in gated developments. Sarfoh (2010) also highlighted the growth in this sector. In his research in April 2007, Sarfoh (2010) identified 64 gated communities in Accra Metropolis. By the end of 2011, Kufour (2011), as cited by Obeng-Odoom et al. (2014), identified 22 more of such communities in the Metropolis. Given the growth in real estate companies and consumer demand, there is little doubt that the number of gated communities has now increased considerably from earlier estimates. Gated communities have started springing up in other regions in Ghana.

Few studies have probed the reasons for the growth of gated communities in the Ghanaian property market. Transnationals and diaspora market, exclusivity, security, government policies on real estate development, prestige, and quality of service were identified as the reasons for the patronage of gated communities in Ghana (Obeng-Odoom et al. 2014; Adja-Sai, 2010; Grant, 2005; Arku and Asiedu, 2009)

The literature on the drivers of gated community development is limited in the Ghanaian context. This paper seeks to augment the literature on the drivers of gated community development in Ghana by considering the Greater Accra region, the region with most of the gated communities in the country.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research adopted the case study design, making it possible to investigate contextual conditions relevant to a phenomenon (Yin, 2003). Residents of gated communities constituted the specific unit of analysis, while the Greater Accra Region (GAR) was the geographical scope from which the gated communities for the study were sampled. We selected the Greater Accra region because it houses most of the gated communities present in Ghana (Kufour, 2011). It doubles as Ghana's political and administrative capital, and it is the centre of much of Ghana's economic activities, including the real estate market.

We used a mixed methods methodology by combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques, concepts, and data (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Creswell, 2014). The data used in the study came from ongoing doctoral research fieldwork investigating the key drivers of gated community developments in Ghana and the United Kingdom. Primary data was collected using a survey questionnaire administered to residents living in gated communities.

Five gated communities were selected using three criteria. The first criterion was that the gated community should be completed and on the market for more than three years. The reasoning behind this criterion sought to avoid selecting a community and later discover that the community is uncompleted; hence residents have yet to move in. Since the research seeks to gather the residents' lived experiences, the three-year minimum of the gated community being on the market will allow residents time to gather enough experiences to share. Secondly, at least a gated community should be selected in the inner-city, middle-core and peri-urban areas of the GAR. This was to balance the region's representation and prevent the concentration of the selected gated communities at a side of the region. The third criterion was getting permission from the estate management team to conduct the research. This criterion was crucial because, without permission, it is impossible to research those gated communities. Also, accompanying the permission, the communities' managers had to indicate their willingness to help get the survey questionnaire to the residents since the researcher was not allowed into the community and the managers knew the resident's schedules and availability. Following the criteria, five gated communities were purposively selected. The five gated communities comprised two gated communities in the inner-city, one in the middle-core and two in the peri-urban areas.

We collected data through audio-taped face-to-face interviews with developers, managers, academics, and residents living in the gated community. Secondary data came from journal articles, websites, and gated community brochures.

The survey data was collected between February and March 2020. Managers of the gated communities were visited, and questionnaires were handed over to be distributed to the residents— a questionnaire per household. The managers collected the questionnaires after the residents had filled them for collection by the researcher. Participation was voluntary. Gated communities whose managers agreed to do this were included in the survey. Table 1 below details the number of questionnaires administered to various gated communities and the response rate for the survey.

Table 1. Population, sample size and response rate achieved in the gated communities in the GAR study area

	LV Gated Community	UC Gated Community	MC Gated Community	DP Gated Community	RP Gated Community	Total
Population	183	102	155	40	107	
Questionnaire administered	30	30	20	20	20	120
Completed Retrieved Questionnaire	14	18	10	20	12	74
Response Rate	47%	60%	50%	100%	60%	62%

Source: Author's fieldwork, 2020

In Table 1, the total number of completed questionnaires (74) retrieved out of the 120 administered translated to an average response rate of 62% and a non-response rate of 38% (entails both returned but unfilled and not returned).

The survey data was analysed using descriptive statistical techniques. The data was analysed by using the SPSS software. Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word software were used to generate graphs, diagrams, and tables. For confidentiality, all information was reported as a whole, and no information on individual gated communities was revealed.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Drivers of gated communities

To determine the drivers of gated communities from the residents' perspective, we used a survey questionnaire to ask respondents to rank seven factors on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the least important factor and 5 being the most important factor in terms of motivating their purchase. Table 2 below presents a summary of their responses.

Table 2: Questionnaire responses: Residents motivating factors for living in gated communities (n=74)

Motivations (Not mutually exclusive)	Most Important	Very Important	Total of the Most and very important	Important	Indifferent	Not Important
Security	59% (44)	31% (23)	90% (67)	4% (3)	3% (2)	3% (2)
Land title security	54% (40)	27% (20)	81% (60)	12% (9)	5% (4)	1% (1)
Location	34% (25)	39% (29)	73% (54)	19% (14)	7% (5)	1% (1)
Facilities and Services	26% (19)	32% (24)	58% (43)	26% (19)	7% (5)	9% (7)
Community Living	22% (16)	32% (24)	54% (40)	19% (14)	16% (12)	11% (8)

Source: Field Survey, 2020 (Frequencies in Bracket)

In summary, from Table 2, Security and Land Title security were crucial drivers of gated communities with 90% and 81% of the respondents, respectively. Location, Facilities and Services and Community Living followed.

4.1.1 Security

Security was a key driver considered by residents of gated communities. Security was emphasised in Table 2, with a total of 90% of the residents considering this choice as the most important and very important motivating factor. In addition to this, 4% also considered security as an important factor. Security as a major driver in residents' choice of living in gated communities was corroborated by the findings from the few interviews conducted with some residents in gated communities. The quote below was from one interviewee (A middle-aged woman).

> *"Well, you need to experience living here. In fact, uh, security-wise I will say you're good to go. I have the opportunity to live outside a gated community and within a gated community. What happen is that with outside a gated community, uh, there are some areas where you live, the attack on you is enormous especially in terms of upbringing and all that. There are some areas that you live that that you become the number one target whenever any, wherever there is any robbery attack. And so, when you have even young children, you find it difficult leaving them with a house girl…"* (GC Resident)

From the quote, the interviewee believed living in nongated communities made one prone to attacks mostly those belonging to the privileged class in the society. The safety provided by living in a gated community is thus considered valuable. She also expressed concern about the safety of raising children in an open society as compared to the gated community, where the boundaries of the community can control the activities and social life of the children.

We asked residents about the security experience in their previous residential location before moving into the gated community. 41% of the respondents indicated they had faced some security issues in their previous residences, while 59% stated they had no problems. Of those who had security issues in their previous areas, we established that 'Theft' was the most indicated security issue with 27% of the respondents, followed by robbery and invasion of privacy with 17% each. Break-ins followed with 13%. Other security issues indicated were violent neighbours, noise, and traffic.

We have highlighted that neighbourhood and property security is a key factor that influences the decision of residents in a gated community. From the survey, we can demonstrate that gated communities are not security issues free. However, due to the controlled nature of the neighbourhood in the gated community, residents have an assurance of reduced security problems. The interviews with the managers of the gated communities indicated that due to the importance of security to their residents, they try their best to make their community security incidence free. They observed that the more the community has security issues, the more difficult it is to get residents into the neighbourhood and the harder it gets to keep the existing residents from moving into other secured locations.

The managers indicated that security in the gated communities is better due to some measures that are non-existent in the open neighbourhood. They stated that aside from the control over the entry and exits of the community, the presence of police stations, the use of certified and registered artisans for maintenance works, the existence of streetlights in the community, and other rules and regulations in the community help make the gated community more secured.

Most studies (see Muiga and Rukwaro, 2017; Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Jürgens and Gnad, 2002) describe gated communities as defensive and security neighbourhoods with security seen as the lead driver in most cases. The result of this study thus reveals a similar outcome in the Ghanaian context.

4.1.2 Land Title Security

Aside from residential security, the respondents indicated land title security as one of the significant drivers considered by residents of gated communities. In Table 2, 81% of the respondents identified land title security as at least a very important factor that influenced their residency in the gated community. Also, 12% considered this factor significant, with only 6% indicating land title security as insignificant in their decision to live in a gated community.

The land sector in Ghana is characterised by myriad issues, ranging from the acquisition stage to land title registration (Mintah et al., 2020). These problems have led to the search for solutions by the state and individuals. To establish why land title security is a motivating driver of residents to gated communities, we asked respondents about their experiences with land acquisition. Figures 2 and 3 show their responses.

Figure 2: Questionnaire Response: Have you had any problem acquiring land in the past?

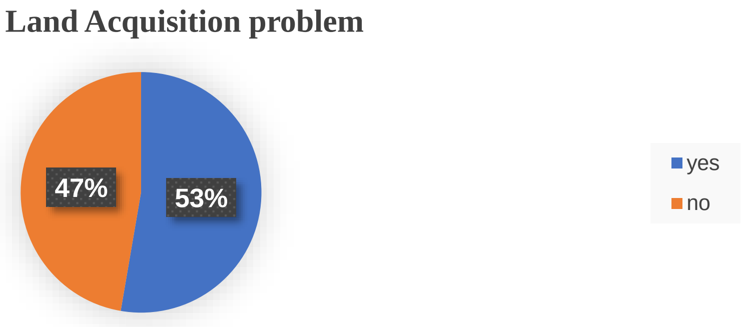
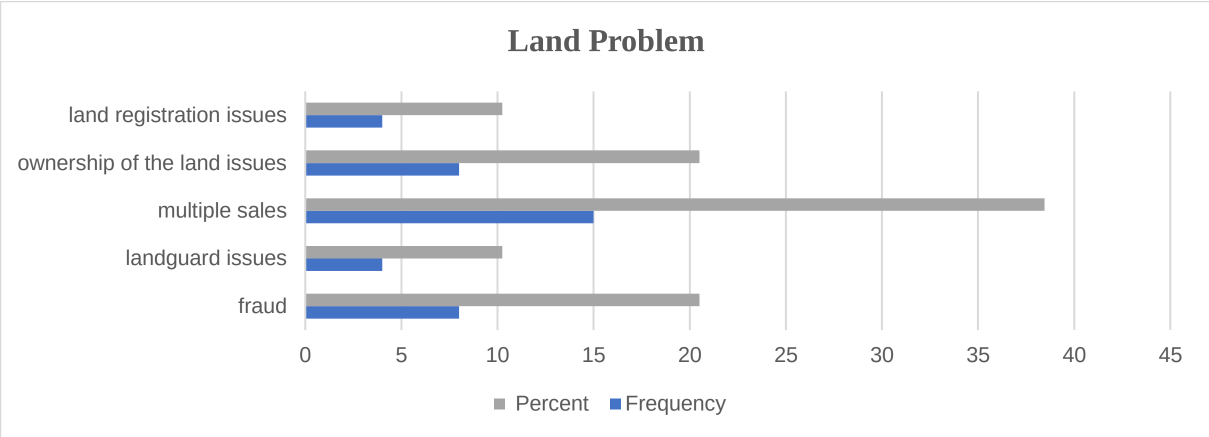


Figure 3: If yes, what was the problem?



From Figures 2 and 3. above, 53% of those surveyed had encountered problems acquiring land in the past. Out of this 53% (39 out of 74 respondents), Multiple sales was the problem encountered most, 38%. Fraud and ownership of land issues followed with 21% each. Landguardism and land registration problems were the least faced, with 10% each. 'Multiple sales' is when a particular land is sold to more than one person or where many people claim ownership of specific land. "Landguardism" is where due to mistrust in the land sector, gangs and armed men are hired to guard a purchased land. These people use illegal force to threaten and ward off competing rivals.

Interviews with some residents and managers supported land title security as a significant driver. Some gated community developers and managers asserted that the search for land title security tends to push many residents into gated communities. The interviewees believed that to relieve the stress and difficulty in acquiring land from families and chiefs for development, individuals prefer to buy properties from developers. Developers knowing this revealed that 'secured land title' was one of their primary marketing pitches. The quote below helps emphasise this point.

> *"It is also a major factor. It is also a factor, because for any private individual to build, looking at how unsafe, our land acquisition is so cumbersome, so it is rather safer to go to these real estate places to purchase a house or rent it from them. I think that gives them the peace of mind."* (Developer 1)

From the quote above, the developer stated that residents preferred gated communities to acquire land and build their properties because of the stress and issues involved in the land sector. Thus, the appeal of gated communities insulating the individual from the problems makes it the preferred choice of contemporary residents. However, the developers implied that the land sector problems are not curtailed by gated communities but instead shifted from the residents to the developers. Some developers of gated communities tend to acquire the land, register the title, build the properties, and lease or assign the interest in the property to the resident. The developers indicated that at every stage, from land acquisition, land registration, and finance mobilisation to construction, the development process is crippled with problems. Thus, residents would buy into gated communities rather than build their property in a nongated community.

Research has shown that gated communities differ in typology, drivers, and history in different contexts (Gulumser, 2005; Brunn and Frantz, 2006). The land title security driver is a new contextual driver in the literature due to the peculiar land sector issues experienced in Ghana. Thus, this driver may be non-existent in a case study with a more structured and effective land sector.

4.1.3 Location

Gated communities are spread across the case study area. The location of the gated communities is either strategic or not. Most of the developers interviewed highlighted that the location of their gated communities was not strategic. They noted that it was more to do with the availability, affordability, and non-encumbrance of land. The developers revealed that due to the issues in the land sector, they made use of any land they could acquire if it had no problems. The quote below emphasises this view.

> *"Uh, I think it's mostly kind of on the fact that we were able to get land in here. Yes. So that drives the decision first. Um, land is a very difficult thing to talk about locally. It is fraught with so many problems, so even though you might have a concept or an intention to go somewhere and acquire land and do a certain kind of project, you might not be able to find it because land is not available. So, you, you take what you get."* (Developer 2)

It is evident from the quotes above that the location of some gated communities is based on making use of the land available. As indicated by some developers, this reality negatively affects production because they are forced to the fringes of towns by their quest for hassle-free and cost-effective land. At the same time, others also showed that their location at the periphery of the case study area turned out to be a blessing as it now serves as a community for people who want to stay away from the choked city centre.

Location, from Table 2, is one of the main drivers of gated communities for residents. 73% of the respondents indicated location as a key motivating factor in their choice of gated community living, while an additional 19% also suggested this driver as necessary. Location of gated communities to amenities such as schools, airports, and health facilities are crucial. Gated communities with schools, hospitals and police stations will not be concerned with the location of these amenities outside the community. Decisions to live in the city centre or the region's periphery drive some gated communities' demand. Identifying the proximity of gated communities to some critical landmarks as crucial, developers have used the proximity of their gated community to the Kotoka International Airport as a significant marketing pitch. After analysing over 20 brochures and websites of gated communities, the distance from the airport is mainly highlighted.

4.1.4 Facilities and Services

One of the drivers from Table 2 is the facilities and services provided by gated communities. 58% of the respondents indicated this motivating factor as essential. Additionally, 26% also suggested that facilities and services were an important factor. However, 16% of the respondents indicated this driver was indifferent and insignificant in their decision to reside in the gated community.

Some interviewees (i.e., academics) also indicated the importance of facilities and service provision in gated communities to its demand. The quote highlights this point.

> *".... Um, and especially when the state has struggled to provide the infrastructure. Then the developer who tries to do something that at least presents a better form than what the state can provide, you know, people begin to become very attracted to it. Because, you know our assemblies haven't been able to provide infrastructure for our communities, they don't provide roads, water, so you have to do it yourself, and so, a developer coming in to do that in an organised way becomes very attractive to people. "* (Academic 2)

Due to the lack of amenities and other facilities, any developer who tries to do something better than what exists gets to attract those who can afford it. Services and facilities such as decent roads, constant water supply, electricity, and community playgrounds are non-existent in some parts of the region. Thus developers provide these services and facilities in the gated communities. The respondents stated that individuals would be willing to pay for these services than wait for the government to provide them. This factor fuels the demand. Developers identifying this gap include the provision of these facilities and services as an essential marketing pitch.

Estate management services such as security guards, waste management, property management, among others, serve as motivating factors to individuals who will not have the time to undertake such functions. The respondents stated that the luxury of travelling and being assured of a safe home upon return was an important motivation in residing in a gated community.

4.1.5 Community Living

The 'community living' driver is the fifth motivating factor for residents of GCs observed from the survey (see Table 2). In Table 2, a total of 54% of the participants suggested the search for community living was a crucial factor that influenced their decision to move into the GC. Furthermore, 19% considered this factor an important motivating factor and 27% indicated this driver as indifferent and not critical in deciding to live in a gated community.

In the literature (see Almatarneh, 2013; Atkinson and Flint, 2004), the search for community living led residents to move into gated communities. This research seems to affirm the belief that residents consider buying into a gated community as more than just buying a property. Instead, they seek to buy into a community of people with similar status and interests.

4.2 The Satisfaction of Residents and Possible Future Implications

This part of the study sought to identify how satisfied residents in the gated communities are based on their motivating factors. We asked residents to rate their living experience in the communities using a scale of 1-5, with 1 being dissatisfied and 5 being satisfied.

Table 3: Questionnaire Responses: How would you rate your living experience in the gated community based on your expectations? (n=74)

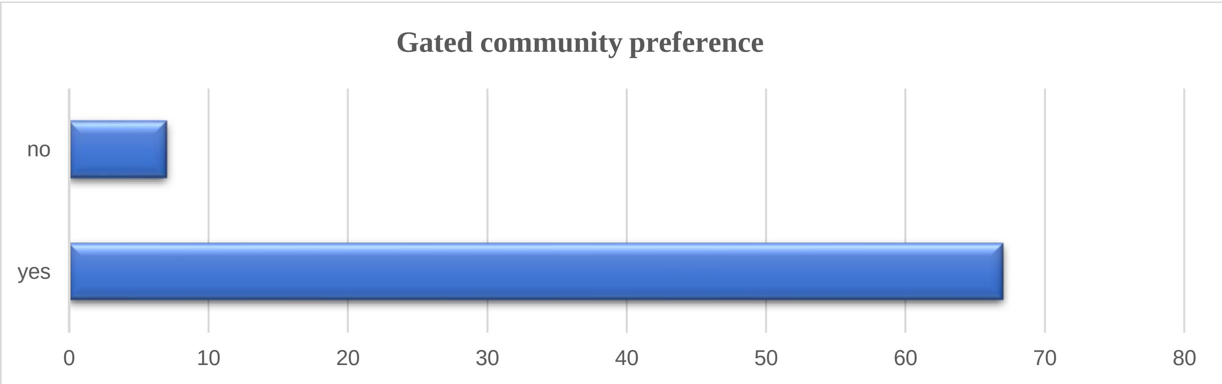
Motivating Factors	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Total of Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
Security	72% (53)	24% (18)	96% (71)	3% (2)	1% (1)	-
Land title security	65% (48)	15% (11)	80% (59)	16% (12)	-	4% (3)
Facilities and Services	46% (34)	28% (21)	74% (55)	18% (13)	4% (3)	4% (3)
Community Living	49% (36)	32% (24)	81% (60)	11% (8)	5% (4)	3% (2)
Location	61% (45)	28% (21)	89% (66)	4% (3)	1% (1)	5% (4)

Source: Field Survey, 2020 (Frequencies in Bracket)

The summary of responses in Table 3 shows that most respondents considered their expectations and motivations of moving into the gated community met. Most of the respondents, about 96%, expressed their fulfilment with the security provided by the gated community. However, about 3% and 1% of the respondents remained neutral and disappointed, respectively. The location of the gated community follows security as the motivating factor residents expressed as being most satisfied. Also, 81%, 80% and 74% of the respondents were pleased with the motivations for community living, land title security and facilities and services provided by the gated community, respectively.

Based on the overwhelming satisfaction rate expressed by the residents of the gated communities, we asked respondents about the possibility of moving into another gated development if they were to move out of their current neighbourhood.

Figure 4: Questionnaire Responses: Will you prefer to live in a gated community if you move out of this community?

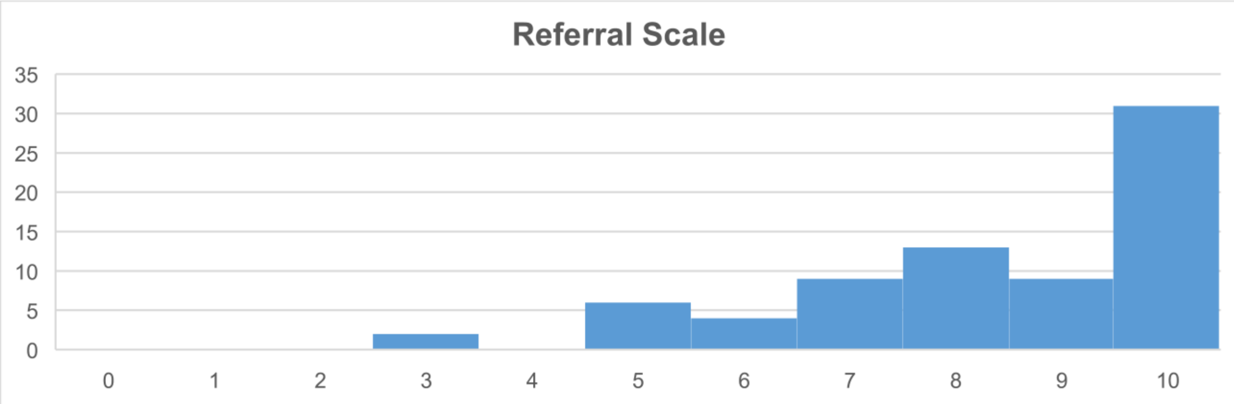


From Figure 4 above, 67 respondents out of the 74 sampled, representing 91%, expressed the desire to continue residing in a gated community even if they are to vacate their current community. However, 9% of the respondents stated that they would prefer an open neighbourhood to a gated community if they move out of their present gated community.

The participants that indicated their preference to move into another gated community gave reasons that correspond to their motivations and satisfaction of their living experience in their current gated community. The few that indicated their desire to live in a nongated community after moving out gave reasons. One reason was the unhappiness with the restrictions attached to the usage of their properties in the gated community. The residents would prefer to move into a society where conditions are non-existent. This reason relates to the study of Asiedu and Arku (2009), which recorded that some gated community residents revealed their unhappiness with the rules and regulations attached to the usage of their property. Another reason given was the individualistic nature of the residents in the gated community. The respondents indicated that they would prefer to move into an open community to socialise with the larger community.

We further asked the respondents to rank the possibility of referring and recommending a gated community living to another person, using the scale of 0-10, with 0 being not likely to 10 highly likely.

Figure 5. Using 0-10 How likely are you to recommend gated community living to another, where 0 is Not at all to 10 Highly likely?



From Figure 5. above, the mode of this distribution was 10 (highly likely). 31 out of 74 respondents, representing 42%, indicated they are highly likely to recommend gated community living to others. About 97% (From choice 5-10 on the scale) are likely to refer others to gated community living. Only 3% are likely not to refer others to the gated community living.

The managers of the gated communities indicated that the most used and effective way of getting new residents was through referrals by residents and old residents. The presentation in Figure 4 thus supports the opinion that the residents of gated communities are satisfied with most of the services provided and their expectations; therefore, they would recommend it to others.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In a period where government participation in the supply of housing has reduced to providing an enabling environment for the private sector, innovative and market-led housing units have emerged. One of these is gated communities, which though not an entirely novel phenomenon, has seen a significant increase in its production and demand over the last few years. Gated communities in Ghana are an urban housing spectacle as most of the gated communities can be found in the Greater Accra Region (GAR), with a few coming up in other regional capitals in Ghana.

This study explored the gated community phenomenon in Ghana. It specifically looked at the drivers pushing the growth and spread of gated communities from the perspective of the main stakeholders, residents. The study has provided empirical insight from five gated communities, focusing on the major motivations, the satisfaction of residents' living experiences, and the possible trend of gated communities' growth through potential referrals by residents. We achieved the objective of identifying the main drivers of gated communities in the Greater Accra region in this study, namely, Security, Land Title Security, Location, Facilities and Services, and Community Living.

The paper identified that security for lives, property and land title were the significant drivers considered by residents of GCs in the GAR. Gated communities in the literature have been known as secure havens for residents, and we confirmed that in this study. Most of the residents believed that due to boundaries and regulations in the gated community, they felt more secure than they would in the nongated community. What also emerged, which was new to the literature, was the driver of land title security. This can be attributed to the contextual problem of land tenure and administration issues in the GAR. Residents asserted that buying into an already built community was safer than buying into an open community and building themselves. Thus gated communities are being seen as a solution to land tenure security problems by residents. However, developers established that gated communities do not solve the land sector problem but instead divert the burden from the residents to the developers.

The paper also found out that the satisfaction levels of the residents in the gated communities are high. Thus residents do not plan to move into a nongated community. The residents were also willing to refer others to the gated community living. The high satisfaction and referral potential indicate that gated communities are not likely to go out of existence anytime soon but rather may continue to see a rise in the number of gated communities and their residents.

The policy implications of this study are multiple and obvious. First, the likely increase in the development of gated communities needs to be met with relevant planning and other regulations to keep the growth in tandem with government expectations. Also, since gated communities help transfer the burden of land title insecurity away from the household/homeowners, it is an avenue worth exploring by the land administration officials. In the same vein, the findings in this study show that efforts to sanitise the land administration sector will indirectly boost demand for and investment in housing. The same holds for efforts to improve security. Finally, the study demonstrates that residents value facilities and services and calls for increased investment in communal facilities in Ghana's communities.

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