International Journal of
Finance
(IJF)

SOCIAL CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RELATED FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTION OF AREAS OF RESIDENCE IN KENYA: A SURVEY OF NAIROBI RESIDENTS

Grace W. Njoroge Kahura and Prof. Joe K. Kamaria

CARI Journals

International Journal Finance
ISSN 2520-0852 (Online)
Vol. 2, Issue No.1, pp 17 - 41, 2017
www.carijournals.org

SOCIAL CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RELATED FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTION OF AREAS OF RESIDENCE IN KENYA: A SURVEY OF NAIROBI RESIDENTS

[1*] Grace W. Njoroge Kahura
[1*] Post graduate student: United States International University
*Corresponding Author's Email: gracewanga@gmail.com

[2] Prof. Joe K. Kamaria
Lecturer: United States International University

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose the study was to investigate the social cultural and environmental related factors influencing the selection of areas of residence in Kenya in the case of Nairobi residents.

Methodology: The researcher used descriptive research design. The scope of the study was limited to Nairobi County. The study identified a population of 985,016 households in Nairobi County out of which a sample of 150 respondents were used. Random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from each category. The study used primary data that was collected using questionnaires. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data was then analysed in terms of descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages.

Results: Results indicated that majority of the respondents found social-cultural factors such as safe neighborhood, relations with neighbors, nearness to family and friends, noise level, degree of crowding, size of household, social class and quality of schools in the neighborhood as being important while choosing their places of residence. The results indicated that the most important social cultural factor is quality of schools in the neighbourhood, followed by safety of neighbourhood, degree of crowding, and social class. The least ranked factors were relations with neighbors, community stability, nearness to family and friends, noise level, and size of household. Results indicated that majority of the respondents attached a lot of importance to environmental factors while choosing their places of residence since most of them disagreed with the statement that they would live in an area with poor drainage systems. On the other hand, majority of the respondents agreed to the statements that cleanliness of the neighborhood was important, running water is important, they would pay more for houses that conserve the environment such as energy-efficient housing, knowledge of the materials used to construct a house is necessary.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study recommended that that social-cultural factors are very important aspects to consider when choosing place of residence. Therefore, it is advisable to take note of such factors as safe neighbourhood, degree of crowding

among others before concluding on where to reside. It is also recommended that it would be significant to prioritize environmental factors such as drainage systems, availability of running water, and cleanliness of the neighbourhood among other environmental factors while concluding a decision on where to reside. It is also recommended that landlords should put into consideration such factors since majority of their potential tenants' decision to reside in a given area will in most cases be influenced by such factors.

Keywords: *social cultural factors, environmental factors, selection, areas of residence*

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Neighborhoods are physical areas within which people organize their lives, base a significant portion of their social time and therefore connect with the world outside the home (Jargowsky, 1994). Urban neighborhoods usually cover around 2000 homes, 5000 people, a typical primary school catchment. Neighborhoods often have sharp boundaries, either physical or atmospheric, but the layers of neighborhood life are like an onion with a tight core and a loose outer skin (Gottlieb, 1998).

Neighborhoods have three interlocking aspects: the home and immediate surroundings – the elements people pay as much as they can to secure; services such as shops and schools which reflect the social composition of the neighborhood; and the neighborhood environment, giving an intangible but powerful signal of who we are and how we should behave (Jargowsky, 1997). Neighborhoods offer a sense of familiarity and security to the people who live there, which counters fear of the unknown, even where the neighborhood is poor, run-down or unpopular (Katz, 1999).

Neighborhoods can break down if the three elements; home, services, environment are disrupted to a point where security disintegrates. If decline is very rapid, then even the sense of familiarity can go. It is the issue of neighborhood breakdown and rescue that concerns government because school failure and crime, their top social preoccupations, are neighborhood problems (Gottlieb, 1998). Poor education and crime fuel the movement outwards, creating large rifts in society and leaving much poorer neighborhoods behind (SEU, 1998).

According to Owusu (1999), housing invariably means shelter for most people, especially for the lower working class in most societies. Housing also represents a core element in human settlement. Owusu (1999) further observed that new immigrants from Ghana to Canada tend to choose sub-urban areas to settle down. In addition, they tend to concentrate within certain neighborhood and even residential apartments due to mainly affordability. Jones (2004) on his study of Glasgow observed a relationship between mobility and housing sub-markets.

Colom and Mole (2008) found that for decades housing choice changes in response to changes in social, economic and demographic factors such as age, education and income level. Personal factors that may be specific to different individuals such as experience, involvement and time pressure often play an important role in housing choice decision. Moreover, Sirgy (2005) observed that psychological factor such as occupant's image affects homebuyer's evaluation process, which coupled with the factors mentioned previously shape the final housing choice. This mean the choice is made mainly on perception.

Zheng et al (2006) found that whether the housing is subsidized or not also influences significantly the direction of which to move. The author further note that a majority of Chinese households face three obstacles in making housing choice decisions: blurred or incomplete property rights leading to problems in reselling their own house, limited access to housing finance and mortgage facilities, and mismatch between the job-market and housing-market locations. Location allows access to employment and income (Li et al, 2007). Precarious employment, varying sources of income and unexpected expenditures force tenants to rely extensively on familial solidarity and informal networks, while minimizing unnecessary expenses on utilities, services or transportation. Hence, the importance of living near relatives or friends, within easy access to school or work place, with an adequate provision of utilities in or near home and with a sufficient level of social infrastructure in the vicinity (Liu et al, 2008; Li, 2007).

UN-Habitat (2006) observed that the level of security may be less fragile in inner city areas because of the density of social networks and the availability a wide range of housing options due to the variety of job opportunities and income levels, in peripheral informal settlements, security may be more problematic as there are fewer options available. The Ministry of Housing (2004) noted that the phenomenon of rapid urbanization being experienced world-wide has brought about many challenges, the most critical being a general deterioration of the living standards of an increasing majority of urban dwellers. In Kenya, the problem of urban housing is characterized by an acute shortage in the number of dwellings, overcrowding in the existing housing stock as well as the existence of sub-standard human settlements such as extensive slums and squatter settlements (Nabutola, 2004).

UNCHS (2003) observed that mobility has become an inherent part of life for many Asians. Whether it is to pursue higher education, seek a job to supplement the family income, negotiate an economic transaction, take administrative action, or build a professional career, one cannot avoid the city in the conduct of study, work, trade or leisure. Freshly graduated students and other young tenants wanting to gain experience are always on the look-out for new and better paid jobs and change jobs frequently (Owusu, 1999).

1.1 Problem Statement

According to the Ministry of Housing (2005), Improvement of housing for the Kenyan population is a major concern. This concern has been influenced by the fact that the improvement in housing stock is a strategically important social and economic investment. In addition, well-planned housing and infrastructure of acceptable standards and affordable cost when combined with essential services affords dignity, security and privacy to the individual, the family and the community as a whole (Ministry of Housing, 2005).

In many developing contexts, the so-called pro-poor housing programmes often provide accommodation of poor standards, in remote locations, with little consideration to the residents' lifestyle and livelihood strategies (Golubchikov, 2012). It is seldom, especially in developing countries, that the social, cultural, environmental, and economic facets of housing are addressed in an integrated fashion (Golubchikov, 2012). For example, affordable housing is commonly considered on a cost basis, while environmental and social issues (including people preferences,

lifestyles, and cultural aspirations), as well as economic impacts are thought to be addressed separately or totally ignored (Golubchikov, 2012).

When choosing where to live, Sirgy (2005) observed that psychological factor such as occupant's image affects homebuyer's evaluation process, which coupled with the factors mentioned previously, shape the final housing choice. This mean the choice is made mainly on perception. Therefore the housing policies must appeal to what the individual aspects to be or is proud to be associated with. This will require housing to be look at from all the different aspects of society. Golubchikov (2012) advocates a more holistic approach, which recognizes the multiple functions of housing – as both a physical and social system – and which seeks to enhance and harmonize the environmental, social, cultural, and economic dimensions of housing.

Global studies concentrate of two major issues; demand and supply of housing (Chow & Niu, 2009). Studies that focus on demand include Chow and Niu (2009) who concentrated on the supply and demand for housing in China and concluded that income and prices were significant factors influencing the demand of housing. The supply related factors were price of housing and the cost of construction. However, Chow and Niu (2009) treated all agents as homogenous and failed to address the qualitative factors that influence the individual choice of residence. Gans and King (2003) evaluated the policy Options for Housing for Low Income Households and concluded that the problem of housing affordability is easily stated: low income households are unable to purchase housing services that satisfy minimum levels of quality. However, Gans and King (2003) failed to address the qualitative aspects that influence the individual choice of residence.

Local studies are also inadequate since they only concentrate on the supply and demand of affordable housing without addressing the qualitative factors affecting the individual choice of residence. For instance, Nabutola (2004) focused on affordable housing in Kenya and took a case study of Policy on Informal Settlements, and concluded that Land Tenure, Financing, Legal Framework, Building Materials and Appropriate Technology seem to be the greatest challenges to affordable housing in both rural and urban areas. These factors led to informal settlements in towns and rural areas alike. The study had a gap since its focus was on policies affecting the supply of housing units and it failed to address the underlying qualitative individual factors influencing the choice of a residence.

Bellagio Study and Conference Center (2005) conducted a study on housing market in Kenya and concluded that the steady rural-urban migration and the annual population growth rate of the urban areas have led to the rapid growth of informal settlements. However, the study failed to discuss the qualitative factors influencing the individual choice of residence. The main research gap stems from the scarcity of studies on this area and the failure to address the qualitative factors influencing the individual choice of residence. Thus, this research study sought to investigate the underlying factors which result in Kenyan individual choosing to live in the areas they currently live in. Thus, this research study sought to investigate the social cultural and environmental factors which result in Kenyan individual choosing to live in the areas they currently live in.

1.2 Research Questions

i. To what extent do social cultural factors influence the choice of location of residence?

ii. To what extent do environmental factors influence the choice of location of residence?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Most individuals find themselves attached to a particular region and lack a proper reason why they are attached to it. Loken (2011) notes that individuals from a certain region tend to behave in a particular manner and possess similar attributes. Loken (2011) found that moving close to one's childhood home in Netherlands can offer two advantages: closer interaction with parents, and access to other social ties, such as a network of old friends. The author found evidence that the principal attraction is to the parents, although childhood home also matters. For women, 33 % live closer to their childhood home versus 46 % closer to their parents. For men the picture is roughly the same, but they are slightly more likely to live closer to their childhood home (38 %) and less likely to live closer to their parents (41 %).

Rakodi (1997) notes that different races choose to live in specific areas within metropolitan cities and rarely move from those areas. Rakodi (1997) further notes that Kenya is no exception noted that this is due to historical factors. Racial segregation was promoted by the early European settlers and this resulted essentially in ethnic tripartition of Nairobi, with the Europeans overwhelmingly inhabiting the north-western and western areas of high rents and land values, and the Asians predominating in the north-eastern parts, while Africans were relegated to the densely populated areas to the east and south). Rakodi (1997) also observed that this residential segregation has been reduced since the attainment of independence and the exodus of the European and Asian population, although ethnic partition has not been completely eradicated. Thus, three distinct sections can still be recognized today in Nairobi. There is the high-income residential region to the north and west of the CBD formerly devoted exclusively to the European residents, but which now accommodates a few affluent Africans and Asians. The second discrete section of Nairobi is Eastlands, where the predominantly African working class resides. The third distinct area is the Parklands-Eastleigh area, which houses the majority of the Asian population.

Lack of attention to the cultural dimensions has been one of the challenges facing what has in many other respects been considered as highly successful large-scale low-cost housing development and slum resettlement programme (UN-Habitat, 2011a). The author observed that cultural inexperience of people who live in vertical apartments rather than their detached houses has created a number of tensions and concerns. UN- Habitat (2002) notes that in Malta, low-income families, elderly people and single parent families often live in areas from which out-migration is intensive and the quality of housing is poor. In order to stimulate the families to remain in their homes, the government offered these households grants for organizing repairs of their dwellings. Direct grants were paid to the households upon receipt of the renovation bills, subject to allowed activities and amenities installed.

Golubchikov (2012) says a well-designed residential neighborhood represents a more attractive living environment that increases residents' satisfaction and sense of belonging, raises community spirit and encourages social interactions. Good social relationships have positive impacts on physical and mental health, but also on economic resilience and productivity – if people are better connected with each other, they share news, knowledge and skills and help each

other to cope with various everyday challenges– from assisting in childcare to providing small loans and to creating joint ventures. Strong ties and trust among people within neighborhoods have been associated with better health.

Wood (2008) noted that social and economic conditions in neighborhoods can also influence health by affecting access to employment opportunities and public resources including efficient transportation, an effective police force, and good schools. Not all neighborhoods enjoy these opportunities and resources equally, however, and access to neighborhoods with health-promoting conditions varies by a household's economic and social resources. Sampson (2002) notes that just as conditions within our homes have important implications for our health explains, conditions in the neighborhoods surrounding our homes also can have major health effects. Social and economic features of neighborhoods have been linked with mortality, general health status, disability, birth outcomes, chronic conditions, health behaviors and other risk factors for chronic disease, as well as with mental health, injuries, violence and other important health indicators.

Lee (2002) noted that the physical and social environments in neighborhoods can be overtly hazardous for example, polluted or crime-infested. They also can severely limit the choices and resources available to individuals. For example, an individual's ability and motivation to exercise and avoid smoking and excessive drinking can be constrained by living in a neighborhood that lacks safe areas for exercise, where intensive tobacco and alcohol advertising targets poorer and minority youth and liquor stores are plentiful, and where healthy role models are scarce. For example, studies have shown that a neighborhood's socioeconomic conditions can affect whether its residents smoke, have healthy diets, and practice safe reproductive behaviors.

Heinrich (2007) noted that people are more likely to be physically active when they live in neighborhoods with better resources for exercise, such as parks and walking or jogging trails; with less litter, vandalism and graffiti; and with street patterns that present fewer pedestrian obstacles. Many characteristics of the physical environment supermarkets and parks, for example can also be thought of as characteristics of the service environment. According to UNCHS (2003), research indicates that renting and sharing clearly is a feature of the earlier stages of the life cycle. Tenants tend to be younger than owners and are often single: students, recent migrants, simple wage-workers, factory workers or single professionals. Couples who rent tend to have fewer children than owners. Sharers are very similar to renters, but they have friends, fellow employees or relatives in the city who are able to provide them with shelter, whereas many tenants have no such fall-back option.

UNESCAP/UN-Habitat (2006) noted a demographic patterns and economic necessities are often closely linked. Due to lower mortality rates at birth and growing life expectancy, households span three to four generations. There are more people to take care and to be taken care of. The fact that there are more mouths to feed, increases pressure on households and communities. When resources become rare, religious or ethnic frictions may set off conflicts that lead to forced or voluntary migration.

Loken (2011) observed that young adults, when they leave school and establish independent households, must decide where to live. Residential location can be a decisive life choice, rivaled in importance only by the choice of a partner and a career and often closely connected with those

decisions. Migration from a childhood home by young men and women in search of job opportunities or marriage partners means forgoing the benefits of proximity to parents and other kin, and relinquishing the economic and social value of hometown networks. As urban ways invade every aspect of daily life, traditional allegiances to real and fictive kin are remodeled in view of new economic necessities, demographic patterns and societal changes.

Loken (2011) observed that the location decisions of young couples are important mediators of the flow of services between generations. Intergenerational care patterns tend to be matrilineal, with daughters providing more care to parents than sons, and maternal grandparents having more contact with children. If power relations in the family, or other factors such as father son economic ties, bring about patrilocal residence patterns for the families of non-college educated men, this could weaken such ties, and increase the family's reliance on outside care services for children and the elderly.

Chiuri and Del Boca (2010) found that the closer family ties of Southern European countries are reflected in substantially later average ages of leaving the parental home, but in all countries daughters leave home earlier than sons. The author notes that the home-leaving decisions of young women are more responsive to labor and mortgage market conditions and less responsive to education than young men. Young single women also tend to be more concentrated in urban areas than young men and, with continuing rural-urban migration, he argues that cities offer women both job opportunities and access to more attractive men, in terms of earning power and status. Edlund (2005) observed that this movement of single individuals in response to labor and marriage market conditions implies that distance from parents will depend on urban-rural origin and on human capital, and that these effects may be different for men and women.

The immergence of the so-called "power couples", in which both partners have high levels of education and establish careers, also examines the influence of human capital and job markets on the location decision. Costa and Kahn (2000) hypothesize that educated couples are increasingly located in large metropolitan areas because it is easier to find two jobs commensurate with their skills in large labor markets. However, Compton found no support for this co-location hypothesis. Instead they find that only the education of the husband matters for location and that observed patterns are better explained by higher rates of power couple formation in metropolitan areas.

UN- Habitat (2002) observed that housing has also to be flexible and responsive to various and changing needs of residents, including those associated with elder groups, people with limited mobility, as well as with children and women. Today, for example, most houses and residential settings are not flexible enough to meet the need of the elderly group. A house design can ensure access by wheel chairs, so that people can stay in the same house as they age.

Another important consideration in housing choices is the type of neighborhoods' design. Myers and Gearin (2001) carried out survey evidence which shows that the preference for centrally located town houses in walkable neighborhoods' is more than twice as great in older households. They suggest that this preference combined with changing demographics, notably an aging population and a decreasing number of households with children in the US, will bring about a significant increase in demand for such housing.

Murdock (1967) show that about three-quarters of societies with identified residence rules are patrilocal while 13 percent are matrilocal. The causes and consequences of these intergenerational residence traditions have been the subject of much research, particularly in anthropology. In contrast, Loken (2011) observed that modern societies tend not to have fixed rules regarding proximity to or co-residence with kin, and residence of a young couple will generally be independent of both sets of relatives this is known as neolocal residence. In Norway, Married and cohabiting partners who come from different places must make a joint decision about where to settle: near the place where he has family and social ties, near her place of origin, or far from both. This choice can affect the relative wellbeing of the two partners and may have important consequences for how services flow in the extended family. In particular, grandparents who live nearby will be more involved in the upbringing of grandchildren, and in return may receive more visits and care in old age (Loken, 2011).

The geographic proximity of parents and adult children has important implications for intergenerational contacts, transfers and, potentially, emotional ties (Lawton, Silverstein & Bengtson, 1994). Research has examined the determinants and consequences of distance between elderly parents and their children (Hank, 2007). Cox (2003) found that married men live significantly closer to their parents than do married women, even if they have children, and that this difference cannot be explained by differences in education, age at marriage, or other characteristics. At age 34, married men are 8.36 percentage points more likely to live in the same neighborhood as their parents than married women, and 5.54 percentage points less likely to live in another region of the country. Since care giving ties across generations tend to be stronger on the maternal side). Young men tend to leave the parental home at a later age than do young women on average (Chiuri & Del Boca, 2010). Studies using data from other countries such as the United States find that adult women live closer to their parents than do adult men (Compton & Pollak, 2009).

Leonetti, Nath and Hemam (2007) found there are several reasons to expect that patrilocal residence might be associated with female disadvantage. If daughters live with their in-laws, they will not be available to care for their parents in old age, and the expected return to educational and other investments in girls will be lower than the expected returns to investing in boys indicate that young women without investments in girls will be lower than the expected returns to investing in boys. Also, geographical isolation makes it difficult for a woman's family to monitor and protect her wellbeing after marriage. In societies in which husbands and their families have coercive power over wives, cultural practices have emerged that reduce the threat of mistreatment of wives residing with their husband's family. Women appear to reap health benefits from remaining in their mothers' homes, rather than joining their husbands' household, and so do children.

The character of the developments indicates a demand-led instead of an infrastructure-led type of development. The housing, commercial and office developments are now exerting undue pressure on the existing level of infrastructure. An estimated 89 per cent of Nairobi's population is supplied with water through house connections, communal watering points, and water kiosks. The remaining 11 per cent obtain their water supplies from boreholes. The major health problems related to inadequate water supply and sanitation are centred on the poor urban areas. None of these areas has an adequate water supply. Informal settlements are entirely dependent on

public water kiosks. Thus residents restrict their water purchases to levels that are barely adequate. The city has a growing problem of water supply which has its roots in the original choice of the site. Nairobi was not originally planned to be a large conurbation and the available water resource was sufficient only for a smaller population. To meet the growing demand, water has to be pumped from locations outside the city. However, apart from occasional water shortages, especially during the dry seasons, the basic problem has been one of distribution. Annual expenditure on water and sewerage declined dramatically in real terms between 1981 and 1987 - capital expenditure by 91 per cent and expenditure on maintenance by 68 per cent and the situation has not shown any significant improvement since then (Mazingira Institute, 1993).

The sewage produced in urban areas consists of waste water, industrial effluent, and storm water, which may enter sewers through faulty or damaged manholes. The inadequate capacity of existing treatment plants results in the disposal of untreated sewage into Nairobi River and other small streams. This poses a health hazard to users of such streams. Approximately 58 per cent of Nairobi's population is served by the existing waterborne sewerage system, which suffers from a number of problems, including poor maintenance, illegal connections, use of toilets for the disposal of garbage, and deliberate blocking of sewage pipes for irrigation. The remainder of the population is served by septic tanks, conservation tanks, or pit latrines, which contribute to the pollution of groundwater and of piped water owing to seepage into pipes when the pressure is low.

The sewerage lines require to be upgraded in order to adequately service the increased levels of sewage discharge due to rising levels of development (Mwaura, 2006). The problem manifests itself in the form of blocked sewerage pipes and overflowing liquid. This has also reduced water supplies particularly during the peak periods. The developers adopt the coping strategy of sinking boreholes or allowing for underground reservoir tanks and booster pumps to raise the water to the roof storage tanks (Mwaura, 2006). High volumes of surface water run-off is generate which particularly exerts pressure on the existing road network and the river line drainage way leaves. This has led to problems of flooding coupled by the wearing off of the road surfaces since the roads have not been widened and upgraded with commensurate increase in the widths of the storm water drainage channels (Mwaura, 2006).

It is common is many areas of Nairobi to find waste thrown on side of the road. The collection and disposal of solid wastes in Nairobi has become increasingly infrequent. It is estimated that, in 1994, 800-1,000 tonnes of refuse were generated per day, out of which fewer than 200 tonnes were collected. The NCC has the responsibility of collecting and disposing of solid wastes. However, lack of resources, especially vehicles, and the general apathy of residents have led to uncollected waste piling up in several parts of the city. Some private companies now operate, and privatizing waste collection has been considered as a possible remedial measure, but has not yet been adopted as official policy. As Nairobi grows and the volume of refuse increases, the NCC should promote reclamation, re-use, and recycling of materials as a way of reducing the problems. Such activities could create employment for a section of the population as well as being a source of raw materials. Even accessible facilities such for firefighting is not available or very limited (Mwaura, 2006).

Urban air pollution is a widespread environmental hazard. It has been seen that levels of different air pollutants in cities of developing cities are generally higher than those of developed ones, still

very few cities overall stay below the recommended levels by the World Health Organization (WHO). In most cities in the world, the road transport sector is the largest contributor of these urban air pollutants, as well as to high levels of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons, among other substances. These high levels contribute to various respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses. Various epidemiological studies have clearly linked transport-related contaminants to asthma, bronchitis, heart attacks, and strokes.

Exposure to pollutants is elevated in urban areas with high traffic volumes and heavily travelled highway corridors (Peace et al. 2004; Zeka et al. 2005). High levels of vehicle-related emissions have been linked to high density traffic sites Street canyons (streets lined with tall buildings that impede the dispersion of air pollutants) and areas very close to busy roads typically have a high concentration of emissions (Longley et al., 2004). These areas may also contain a high concentration of people, including pedestrians and cyclists, or people within buildings alongside the road. Individual drivers or passengers of cars are also exposed to vehicle-related emissions. Individuals at all stages of their life are at risk from traffic pollution, however, the severity of the hazard varies with age and underlying medical condition (Hoek et al., 2006).

The groups most vulnerable to urban air pollution include infants, the elderly, and those suffering from chronic respiratory conditions. For example, from 1999 to 2009, 25.6 per cent of the children in Bangalore, India, suffered from asthma (Majumdar, 2010). WHO estimates that nearly 2 million premature deaths in the world are caused by air pollution, where road transport is one of the major contributors to these premature deaths due to its effects on outdoor air pollution (WHO, 2008). Urban air pollution also has a huge economic cost. 2000, approximately 15,100 cases of chronic bronchitis and 7,200 cases of premature deaths in Shanghai were due to fine particulates (PM10), and resulted in a cost of US$ 880 million (UNEP, 2007).

Perhaps the most commonly studied and most frequently reported health effect associated with traffic-related pollution are those associated with respiratory morbidity. Numerous studies have found an association with vehicle emissions and a diversity of respiratory symptoms and diseases. These adverse outcomes range from acute symptoms like coughing and wheezing to more chronic conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Exposure to fine PM and ozone have been associated with these conditions. Studies have produced varying results on the relationship between NO2 exposure and respiratory health. NO2 is most clearly associated with cough (Sunyer et al. 2006), however, it is uncertain as to whether it acts as an indicator of traffic related pollution, rather than having a direct adverse health effect (Pattenden et al. 2006).

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out through descriptive survey design that involves gathering of facts, opinions and views of residents on the factors that influence the choice of residence among Nairobi Residents. The target population for this research study included the entire households in Nairobi County. According to 2009 Census, the entire households are 985,016 (KNBS, 2009). This study adopted random sampling method. The survey instrument of collecting primary data was used for this study, structured as a questionnaire. Data analysis was done using SPSS. Data was represented in easy to interpret methods like tables and charts.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 100 responses/questionnaires were received out of a possible 150 questionnaires. This indicated that a response rate of 66.67% was obtained.

4.2 General Information of Respondents

4.2.1 Gender Distribution of the Respondents

From the study findings, both male and females constituted equal shares (50%:50%) of the respondents. The findings compare well with those of Kenya Census 2009/2010 which found that the gender distribution in Kenya was almost equal.

4.2.2 Level of Education of the Respondents

From the study findings, majority of the respondents (30%) were middle level college graduates while 29% of the respondents were university graduates. Twenty Six percent (26%) of the respondents were secondary leavers while 15% were post graduates. The findings imply that most of the respondents were literate thus it is assumed that they were able to interpret the questions posed to them with ease.

4.2.3 Age of the Respondents

The study findings also showed that majority of the respondents (29%) were between the age of 30 to 39 years old while 26% were aged between 40 to 49 years old. Twenty four percent (24%) of the respondents aged between 18 and 29 years old and finally 21% of the respondents were aged 50 years and above. The finding implies that most of those who responded to the question were below the age of 50 and this is in line with Kenya 2009/2010 census which noted that majority of people in Kenya are young.

4.2.4 Marital Status of the Respondents

59% of the respondents were married while only 41% of the respondents were single.

4.2.5 House Ownership by the Respondents

The study findings further revealed that majority of the respondents (52%) indicated that they were renting while 32% indicated that they had built their own houses and 16% indicated that they had bought the houses they were living in. The finding implies that most of the respondents were still renting which might have forced them to prefer certain areas of residence.

4.2.6 Monthly Income Range of the Respondents

From the study findings, majority of the respondents (45%) indicated that they were earning less than 50,000 monthly while 21% indicated that they were earning an amount between 150,000 and 250,000 monthly. Nineteen percent (19%) of the respondents indicated that they earned an amount between 50,000 and 150,000 monthly and finally 15% of the respondents indicated that they earned more than 250,000 monthly.

4.3 Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Choice of Residence

4.3.1 Safe Neighborhood

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to safe neighborhood when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (61%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 35% rated it as moderately important. However, (4%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as most important.

Table 1: Safe Neighborhood

	Frequency	%
Least important	0	0%
Lowly important	0	0%
Moderately important	35	35%
Important	61	61%
Most important	4	4%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.2 Relations with Neighbors

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to relations with neighbours when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (49%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 44% rated it as moderately important. However, (7%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as lowly important.

Table 2: Relations with Neighbors

	Frequency	%
Least important	0	0%
Lowly important	7	7%
Moderately important	44	44%
Important	49	49%
Most important	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.3 Nearness to Family and Friends

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to nearness to family and friends when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (41%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 39% rated it as moderately important. However, (20%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as lowly important.

Table 3: Nearness to Family and Friends

	Frequency	%
Least important	0	0%
Lowly important	20	20%
Moderately important	39	39%
Important	41	41%
Most important	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.4 Noise Level

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to noise level when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (39%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 38% rated it as moderately important. However, (22%) of the respondents indicated that they rated noise level as lowly important and 1% rated it as least important.

Table 4: Noise Level

	Frequency	%
Least important	1	1%
Lowly important	22	22%
Moderately important	38	38%
Important	39	39%
Most important	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.5 Degree of Crowding

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to degree of crowding when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (56%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 36% rated it as moderately important. However, (7%) of the respondents indicated that they rated noise level as lowly important and 1% rated it as most important.

Table 5: Degree of Crowding

	Frequency	%
Least important	0	0%
Lowly important	7	7%
Moderately important	36	36%
Important	56	56%
Most important	1	1%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.6 Community Stability

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to community stability when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (55%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as moderately important while 35% rated it as important. However, (8%) of the respondents indicated that they rated community stability as lowly important and 2% rated it as least important.

Table 6: Community Stability

	Frequency	%
Least important	2	2%
Lowly important	8	8%
Moderately important	55	55%
Important	35	35%
Most important	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.7 Size of Household

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to size of household when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (39%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 38% rated it as moderately important. However, (22%) of the respondents indicated that they rated size of household as lowly important and 1% rated it as least important.

Table 7: Size of Household

	Frequency	%
Least important	1	1%
Lowly important	22	22%
Moderately important	38	38%
Important	39	39%
Most important	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.8 Social Class

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to social class when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (56%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 36% rated it as moderately important. However, (7%) of the respondents indicated that they rated social class as lowly important and 1% rated it as most important.

Table 8: Social Class

	Frequency	%
Least important	0	0%
Lowly important	7	7%
Moderately important	36	36%
Important	56	56%
Most important	1	1%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.9 Quality of Schools in the Neighborhood

The respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to quality of schools in the neighborhood when they chose the house they currently live in. Majority (72%) of the respondents indicated that they rated it as important while 28% rated it as moderately important. Four percent (4%) of the respondents indicated that they rated quality of schools in the neighborhood as lowly important however, 1% rated it as most important. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Quality of Schools in the Neighbourhood

	Frequency	%
Least important	0	0%
Lowly important	4	4%
Moderately important	23	23%
Important	72	72%
Most important	1	1%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.3.10 Ranking of Social Cultural Factors

The means of the social cultural factors were ranked in order to establish their order of importance. The results indicate that the most important social cultural factor is quality of schools in the neighbourhood, followed by safety of neighbourhood, degree of crowding, and social class. The least ranked factors were relations with neighbors, community stability, nearness to family and friends, noise level, and size of household.

Table 10: Ranking of Social Cultural Factors

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Quality of schools in the neighborhood	100	2	5	3.70	.560	1
Safe neighborhood	100	3	5	3.69	.545	2
Degree of crowding	100	2	5	3.51	.643	3
Social class	100	2	5	3.51	.643	4
Relations with neighbors	100	2	4	3.42	.622	5
Community stability	100	1	4	3.23	.679	6
Nearness to family and friends	100	2	4	3.21	.756	7
Noise level	100	1	4	3.15	.796	8
Size of household	100	1	4	3.15	.796	9

4.4 Environmental Factors Influencing Choice of Residence

4.4.1 Areas with Poor Drainage

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they would live in an area with poor drainage whereby a majority of 56% of the respondents disagreed with the statement while 36% of the

respondents were neutral about the statement. However, 7% of the respondents agreed and 1% strongly disagreed.

Table 11: Areas with Poor Drainage

	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	0	0%
Agree	7	7%
Neutral	36	36%
Disagree	56	56%
Strongly disagree	1	1%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.4.2 Cleanliness of the Neighborhood is Important

The respondents were asked to indicate whether cleanliness of their neighbourhood is important whereby a majority of 65% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 20% of the respondents were neutral about the statement. However, 12% of the respondents strongly agreed and 3% disagreed.

Table 12: Cleanliness of the Neighbourhood

	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	12	12%
Agree	65	65%
Neutral	20	20%
Disagree	3	3%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.4.3 Running Water is Important

The respondents were asked to indicate whether running water is important whereby a majority of 62% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 35% of the respondents strongly agreed bringing to a total of 97% of those who both agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. However, 3% of the respondents were neutral about the statement.

Table 13: Importance of Running Water

	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	35	35%
Agree	62	62%
Neutral	3	3%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.4.4 Houses that Conserves the Environment

The respondents were asked to indicate if they would pay more for a house that conserves the environment such as energy-efficient housing whereby a majority of 63% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 20% of the respondents were neutral about the statement. However, 17% of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Table 14: House that Conserve the Environment

	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	0	0%
Agree	63	63%
Neutral	20	20%
Disagree	17	17%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	**100**	**100%**

4.4.5 Knowledge of the Materials Used to Construct a House before choosing it

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they usually seek to know the materials used to construct a house before choosing it whereby a majority of 71% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 20% of the respondents were neutral about the statement. However, 7% of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Table 15: Materials used to construct the Houses

	Frequency	%
Strongly agree	2	2%
Agree	71	71%
Neutral	20	20%
Disagree	7	7%
Strongly disagree	0	0%

4.4.6 Level of Satisfaction with your Current Place of Residence

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they are satisfied with their current place of residence whereby a majority of 46% of the respondents indicated that they are satisfied while 30% of the respondents indicated that they are dissatisfied. However, 24% of the respondents indicated that they are very satisfied with their current place of residence.

Table 16: Level of Satisfaction with Current Place of Residence

	Frequency	%
Very dissatisfied	0	0%
Dissatisfied	30	30%
Satisfied	46	46%
Very satisfied	24	24%
Total	**100**	**100%**

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study attempted to find out the extent to which social cultural factors influence the choice of location of residence in Kenya. Results indicated that majority of the respondents found social-cultural factors as being important while choosing their places of residence since they rated the social-cultural factors as being important while choosing their residential areas. These socio-cultural factors include: safe neighborhood, relations with neighbors, nearness to family and friends, noise level, degree of crowding, size of household, social class and quality of schools in the neighborhood. The findings imply that cultural factors influence the choice of location of residence.

The study also sought to determine the extent to which environmental factors influence the choice of location of residence in Kenya. Results indicated that majority of the respondents attached a lot of importance to environmental factors while choosing their places of residence since most of them disagreed with the statement that they would live in an area with poor drainage systems. On the other hand, majority of the respondents agreed to the statements that cleanliness of the neighborhood is important, running water is important, they would pay more for houses that conserve the environment such as energy-efficient housing, knowledge of the materials used to construct a house is necessary. The findings imply that environmental factors influence the choice of location of residence.

5.2 Conclusions

It was possible to conclude that social-cultural factors such as safe neighbourhood, degree of crowding, and quality of schools in the neighbourhood among others are important aspects to consider while choosing place of residence and that such factors in most cases always influence one's decision to reside in a certain area. The results indicate that the most important social cultural factor is quality of schools in the neighbourhood, followed by safety of neighbourhood,

degree of crowding, and social class. The least ranked factors were relations with neighbors, community stability, nearness to family and friends, noise level, and size of household.

It was possible to conclude that environmental factors such as drainage systems, cleanliness of the neighbourhood, running water among others are important aspects to consider while choosing place of residence. It is also possible to conclude that such factors in most cases always influence one's decision to reside in a certain area.

5.3 Recommendations

Following study results, it is recommended that social-cultural factors are very important aspects to consider when choosing place of residence. Therefore, it is advisable to take note of such factors as safe neighbourhood, degree of crowding among others before concluding on where to reside.

Following study results, it is recommended that it would be significant to prioritize environmental factors such as drainage systems, availability of running water, and cleanliness of the neighbourhood among other environmental factors while concluding a decision on where to reside. It is also recommended that landlords should put into consideration such factors since majority of their potential tenants' decision to reside in a given area will in most cases be influenced by such factors.

5.4 Suggested Areas of Further Research

The study recommends that further investigation be done on the underlying factors that influence the selection of residence in other urban areas such as Mombasa, and Kisumu. The same study can be replicated to smaller town such as Eldoret, Nakuru, Meru Town, Thika Town. Further studies should investigate the determinants/factors influencing the values/rents/prices of house in Nairobi. Such a study would assume a hedonic approach and would model the hedonic prices of real estate against the social cultural factors, cost/economic factors, environmental factors, accessibility factors. The output of such a study would be to estimate the degree of change of change in rents/prices when the factors change.

REFERENCES

Banister, D. & Anable, J. (2009). Transport policies and climate change. In S. Dovoudi, J. Crawford and A.Mehmood (eds.), *Planning for Climate Change: Strategies for Mitigation and Adaptation for Spatial Planning.* London: Earthscan.

Bell, M.L, Ebisu. K., Belanger, K. (2007). Ambient air pollution and low birth weight in Connecticut and Massachusetts. *Environ Health Perspect*; 115(7):1118-1125.

Bellagio Study and Conference Center (2005). *Setting the context: Kenya more than shelter: Housing as an instrument of economic and social development*. A Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies International Housing Conference.

Bordone, V. (2009). Contact and proximity of older people to their adult children: A comparison between Italy and Sweden. *Population, Space and Place*, 15, 359-380.

Briggs, A., Burgess, S., McConnell B. & Slater H. (2006). *School choice in England: Background facts*. CMPO working paper, 06/159

Chiuri, M. C. & Del Boca D. (2010). Home-leaving decisions of daughters and sons. *Review of Economics of the Household*. 8, 398-408.

Chochran, W. G. (1963). *Sampling Techniques* (Third Edition.). Wiley. ISBN 0-471-16240-X.

Chow, G. C. & Niu, L. (2009). *Demand and supply for residential housing in urban China*. Princeton University and WISE, Xiamen University

Compton, J. & Pollak R. A. (2009). *Proximity and coresidence of adult children and their parents: Description and correlates.* Working paper, University of Michigan.

Compton, J., & Pollak R. A. (2007). Why are power couples increasingly concentrated in large metropolitan areas? *Journal of Labor Economics*, 25, 475-512.

Consuelo C. M. & Cruz M. M. (2008). Comparative analysis of the social. demographic and economic factors that influence housing choices in Spain in 1990 and 2000. *Urban Studies*. 45(4), 917-941.

Daily Bread Food Bank. (2002). *Fact sheet: turning our backs on our children: hunger + decrepit housing = unhealthy, unsafe children*. Toronto: Daily Bread Food Bank.

Dales, R., Burnett. R.T., Smith-Doiron. M., Stieb, D.M., Brook, J.R. (2004). Air pollution and sudden infant death syndrome. *Pediatrics*;113:628-631.

De Rosa, M., Zarrilli, S., Paesano, L., Carbone, U., Boggia, B., Petretta, M. (2003). Traffic pollutants affect fertility in men. *Human Reprod*;18:1055-1061.

Dennis, A. (1999). *Place of worship supplementary planning.* Guidance No,9. London Borough of Croydon.

Dunn J.R. (2002). *A population health approach to housing: A Framework for Research*. Ottawa: National Housing Research Committee and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Edlund, L. (2005). Sex and the city. *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 107, 25-44.

Fack, G. & Grenet J. (2007). Do better schools raise housing prices? Evidence from Paris School Zoning',mimeo.

Frank (2012). *Solution to provision of affordable housing in Kenya*. January 2, 2012. www.a4architect.com

Gallent, N. & Kim K. (2001). The long run relationship between house prices and rents. *Finance and Economics Discussion Series*, No. 2004-50, Board of Governors of the federal Reserve System.

Golubchikov,O. & Badyina A. (2012). *Sustainable housing for sustainable cities a policy framework for developing countries*, UN-Habitat.

Hank, K. (2007). Proximity and contacts between older parents and their children: A European comparison. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69, 157-173.

Hills, J., Le Grand, J. & Piachaud, D. (eds) (2002). *Understanding social exclusion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hoek, G., Meliefste, K., Cyrys. J, Lewne, M., Bellander, T., Brauer M. (2002). Spatial variability of fine particle concentrations in three European areas. *Atmosphere Environ;*36:4077-4088.

Hunt, B., & Badia, M. (2005). *United Kingdom: Selected issues*. IMF Country Report, No. 05/81

Lee R.E. & Cubbin C. (2002). *Neighborhoods context and youth cardiovascular health behaviors*. Am J Public Health 92(3):428-36.

Leinberger C.B. (2005). *Turning around downtown: Twelve steps to revitalization*. Metropolitan Policy Program. The Brookings Institution.

Li, L. H. (2009). Community attachment and housing choice in Hong Kong. *Property Management*, 2009, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 42-57.

Loken, K., Lommerud, K., & Lundberg, S. (2011). Your place or mine? *On the residence choice of young couples in Norway, Discussion Paper* No. 5685.

Longley, I. D., Gallagher, M. W., Dorsey J. R., Flynn, M., Bower, K. N., & Allan, J. D. (2004). Street canyons aerosol pollutant transport measurements. *Sci Total Environ;*334-335:327-336.

Macintyre S., Ellaway A. (2003). Neighborhoods and health: An overview in: Kawachi L., Berkman L.F.,eds. *Neighborhoods and Health*. Oxford University Press, New York 20-42.

Majumdar, S. (2010). *More and more kids falling prey to asthma in Bangalore*. DNA. (Available at http://www.dnaindia.com/bangalore/report_more-and-more-kidsfalling-prey-to-asthma-in-bangalore_1342244)

Matrix Consultants (1998). *Inventory of Nairobi Slum.*

Mazingira Institute. (1993). *The information presented on various aspects of the city of Nairobi in graphs, charts and maps*. Paper presented to Nairobi City Convention, 27-29 July, Charter Hall, Nairobi, Kenya.

Mumford L. (1955). *The roaring traffic's boom*. The New Yorker

Pastor, Jr. M. (2001). *Geography and opportunity, National Research Council*, Smelser NJ, Wilson WJ, Mitchell F, eds. America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences.Vol 1. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press: 435-468.

Pattenden, S., Hoek, G., Braun-Fahrlander, C., Forastiere, F., Kosheleva, A., Neuberger, M. (2006). NO2 and children's respiratory symptoms in the PATY study. *Occup Environ Med*;63:828-835

Peace, H., Owen B., & Raper D.W. (2004). Identifying the contribution of different urban highway air pollution sources. *Sci Total Environ*; 334-335:347-357Pollak, R. A. (1989). *The Theory of the Cost of Living Index*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Pratt, B., & Loizos, P. (1992). *Choosing research methods*- data collection for development

Rainer, H., & Siedler ,T. (2009). O brother, where art Thou? The effects of having a sibling on geographic mobility and labour market outcomes. *Economica*, 76.

Richardson, L. & Le Grand, J. (2002). *Outsider and insider expertise: The response of residents of deprived neighborhoods to an academic definition of social exclusion*. Social Policy and Administration, 36(5):496-515

Roback, J. (1982). Wages, rents and the quality of life. *Journal of Political Economy, December* 1982,1257-78

Rubinowitz, L. S. & James E. R. (2000). *Crossing the class and color lines*: *From public housing to white suburbia.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Sampson, R (2002). *Assessing neighborhood effects*: *Social processes and new directions in research*. Annu Rev Sociol.28:443-478.

Sarnat, J. A., Holguin, F. (2007). Asthma and air quality. *Curr Opin Pulm Med*; 13:63-66

Scott W. A. (2007). Mismatches and unmet need: Access to social services in urban and rural America. *National Poverty Center Working Paper Series*, no. 07-14, June 2007.

Sirgy, M. J., Grzeskowiak, S. & Su, C. (2005). Explaining housing preference and choice: The role of self-congruity and functional congruity. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, Vol. 20, No. 4pp. 329- 347. ,

Sram R. J, Binkova, B., Dejmek, J., Bobak, M. (2005). Ambient air pollution and outcomes: a review of the literature. *Environ Health Perspect* 113:375-382.

Sunyer, J., Jarvis, D., Gotschi, T., Garcio-Esteban, R., Jacquemin, B., Aguilera, I. (2006). Chronic bronchitis and urban air pollution in an international study. *Occup EnvironMed*; 63:836-843

Sweetser, D. A. (1963). *Asymmetry in intergenerational family relationships*. *Social Forces*, 41, 346-352.

UNCHS (2003). *Rental Housing*: *An essential option for the urban poor in developing countries.* Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

UN-Habitat (2006). *State of the World Cities 2006-2007*. Earthscan/United Nations Human Settlements Program.

UN-Habitat (2011a). *Condominium Housing in Ethiopia*: The Integrated Housing Development Programme. Nairobi: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

Wandeler, D. K. (2006). *Lessons from rental housing*. Paper presented at the International Symposium on Architecture and Housing Rights, held at the School for Architecture and Design, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Bangkok, 31 May-3 June 2006

Winkleby, M., Cubbin, C., Ahn, D. (2006). *Effect of cross-level interaction between individual and neighborhood socioeconomic status on adult mortality rates*. Am J Public Health; 96(12):2145-2153.

Wood R. (2008). *Where we live matters for our health: Neighborhoods and health, commission to build a healthier America*. workers. Oxford: Oxfam publications.

World Health Organization (2008). *Air quality and health*. WHO online article.(Available at http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs313/en/index.html)

Wu W. P. (2006). Migrant intra-urban residential mobility in Urban China. *Housing Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 5, pp. 745-765

Zeka, A., Zanobetti, A., Schwartz, J. (2005). Short term effects of particulate matter on cause specific mortality: Effects of lags and modification by city characteristics. *Occup Environ Med*; 62:718-725.