

RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATISFACTION, OF ANCIENT AND  
MODERN NEIGHBOURHOODS IN SLEMANI CITY, KURDISTAN- IRAQ.

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All praises to Allah Almighty for the strengths and his blessings in completing my this  
research

Dedicated to my family especially my beloved Mother( Sabriah), Father(Taeb), my  
lovely nephew kaka Zhir who suffered a lot for being away from me, and all sisters  
and brothers, and real friends who supported me and helped me, and all relatives who  
encouraged me to continue this research. Alhamdwlilah.

## ABSTRACT

The concern for the quality of life in urban centres has led to an increasing interest among policymakers and planners on how to measure those variables that influence the perceived neighbourhood satisfaction amongst residents. This study examines the residential environmental satisfaction, of old (Malkendi) and new (Bakhtiari nwe) neighbourhood in Slemani city, Kurdistan-Iraq. A household survey 200 respondents were randomly sampled in each of the two neighbourhoods. Descriptive and Inferential statistical techniques (Chi square, t-test and correlation spearman rank) were used in the data analysis. Findings from the study showed that significant difference exists in the level of neighbourhood satisfaction among the two neighbourhoods. Respondents from the new neighbourhood were more satisfied with the physical environment attributes (road network, building design, open space and green space) and social environment than those from the old neighbourhood. It was also found that the demographic characteristics of the respondents significantly influence to their level of perception of neighbourhood satisfaction except for gender. Also, the respondents' choice of neighbourhood with respect to safety and provision of facilities/services was found to be significantly related to their level of neighbourhood satisfaction. Policy makers and planners should try to revitalize the infrastructures especially road networks, green space and building structures in the old neighbourhood to ensure that residents' welfare and satisfaction are met. Further research should probe in reasons why there are variations in neighbourhood satisfaction among the demographic sub-groups as this would help planners during planning and designing of neighbourhoods to ensure that the needs of every group in the population is met. Increasing the sample size for the future research to more than two neighborhood will equally give a better representation of the city.

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## ABSTRAK

Penekanan terhadap kualiti hidup di pusat-pusat bandar telah menarik minat penggubal dasar dan perancang bandar mengenai cara untuk mengukur pembolehubah yang mempengaruhi tahap kepuasan kejrangan dalam kalangan penduduk. Kajian ini mengkaji persepsi kepuasan penduduk terhadap alam sekitar di kawasan kejrangan lama (Malkendi) dan baru (Bakhtiari nwe) di bandar Slemani, Kurdistan-Iraq. Kaji selidik isi rumah terhadap 200 responden yang dipilih secara rawak di kedua-dua kawasan kejrangan telah dijalankan. Teknik-teknik statistik deskriptif dan inferens (ujian Chi-Square, ujian-T dan ujian korelasi peringkat Spearman) telah digunakan dalam analisis data. Hasil kajian menunjukkan perbezaan yang ketara terhadap tahap kepuasan kejrangan bagi kedua-dua kawasan kejrangan. Responden dari kejrangan baru didapati lebih berpuas hati dengan ciri-ciri persekitaran fizikal (rangkaian jalan raya, reka bentuk bangunan, kawasan lapang dan kawasan hijau) dan persekitaran sosial berbanding dengan responden dari kawasan kejrangan lama. Penemuan kajian turut menunjukkan ciri-ciri demografi responden kecuali jantina mempengaruhi tahap persepsi kepuasan kejrangan. Selain itu, maklum balas responden mengenai pemilihan kejrangan berkenaan dengan aspek keselamatan dan penyediaan kemudahan awam/perkhidmatan adalah didapati berkait rapat dengan tahap kepuasan kejrangan. Penggubal polisi dan perancang bandar harus bertindak untuk membaik pulih infrastruktur seperti rangkaian jalan raya, kawasan hijau dan struktur bangunan di kawasan kejrangan lama bagi memastikan bahawa kebajikan dan kepuasan penduduk dipenuhi. Penyelidikan lanjut mengenai perbezaan di antara kepuasan kejrangan dalam kalangan demografi kumpulan kecil perlu dilakukan untuk membantu perancang semasa merancang dan mereka bentuk kawasan kejrangan demi memastikan keperluan setiap kumpulan penduduk dipenuhi. Saiz sampel yang lebih besar dengan menggunakan lebih daripada dua kawasan untuk penyelidikan pada masa depan akan memberi gambaran kepada bandar tersebut dengan lebih jelas.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background**

Residential environment quality and satisfaction is among the basic conditions for quality of life, as well as the main support for the economic activities, culture and society. Due to the diversity of personal senses of looking at things as well as the varied lifestyles, people's demands, preferences and evaluations of their neighbourhood environment are equally becoming more diversified (Ge and Hokao, 2005). The focus on urban neighbourhoods by decision makers has caused a renewed interest in neighbourhood quality of life and satisfaction (Parkes et al., 2002). Policy makers are now looking at those attributes that contribute majorly in predicting satisfaction and how they interact with the physical and social environment. A large body of literature exists on neighbourhood satisfaction (Bonaiuto et al., 1999; Bonaiuto et al., 2003; Coker et al., 2007; Gidlow et al., 2010; Lovejoy et al., 2010). However, Permentier et al., (2010) noted three main groups of determinants on neighbourhood satisfaction: subjective evaluations of neighbourhood attributes and evaluation of the dwelling, personal/household characteristics and objective neighbourhood characteristics. Parkes et al., (2002) observed that subjective evaluations of neighbourhood attributes are much more important in explaining neighbourhood satisfaction than personal/household

characteristics and objective neighbourhood attributes. What people perceive of an environment rather than what the environment is most times determining their level of satisfaction. Although neighbourhood satisfaction could be seen as a universal concept since it bothers on the environmental quality of life relevant to physical, and social aspect of a geographic location, Westaway (2009), noted that knowing the most important aspects in assessing neighbourhood satisfaction is difficult to arrive due to the fact that studies vary in the range of variables they incorporate and their sample population. However, assessing environmental quality of life and neighbourhood satisfaction has become a basis for initiating public policies and fund disbursement through identification of those areas in the community that need improvement of services, facilities and revitalisation (Sirgy and Cornwell, 2002). Changing residential landscape, environment and functions impact on the quality of life and the resident satisfaction in any neighbourhood (Temelová and Dvorakova, 2011). Neighbourhood feeling in the present day urban environment does not depend much on sharing of common physical residential environment rather the individual activities of dwelling occupants that shape the social environment (Gokhan, 2005).

Studies have shown that communities do not have the same level of infrastructure likewise individuals who reside in them and that individuals with a varied cultural background may live in a neighbourhood and yet not share similar views regarding environmental features (Schell and Ulijaszek, 1999; Caughy et al., 1999). The study of urban quality of life is best conceptualized at the neighbourhoods because they represent the immediate living environment where people live most of their lives (Slavuj, 2011). Chapman and Lombard (2006) observed that neighbourhoods that are unable to address and adequately satisfy perceived needs of residents are liable to losing their inhabitants to those areas that can address their needs. The present study, will examine the level to which there are differences in neighbourhood satisfaction of the neighbourhood by residents. The probable outcome will be examined of those factors that are important in resident's view of their neighbourhood.

## **1.2 Statement of problem**

The importance of neighbourhood environment to urban dwellers cannot be overemphasized, it remains the most fundamental basis of life because where people live or spend the majority of their lives affect their economic, social, health, and mental well-being. As a result, neighbourhood can affect one's educational attainment, life expectancy, and income and so on. Neighbourhood is a major aspect of our daily lives and a less than satisfactory neighbourhood may result in poor health outcomes and can compel residents to relocate elsewhere (Chapman and Lombard, 2006). Neighbourhood satisfaction helps residents in evaluating the difference between the actual and desired situations (ideal). Most people in developing countries are still lacking the basic necessities of life such as water, shelter, health facilities, good road network, electricity etc. The lack of basic needs of live by many in the developing countries could be due to mismanagement of public funds by leaders, lack of adequate manpower to harness the resources available, political instability and lack of planning by local authorities. Since the fall of the last military regime some years ago, cities in the Kurdish region of Iraq have been facing a series of problems such as electric, water, roads, noise and air pollution. Also ethnic tensions, violence crime and tension among the political groups have helped in increasing the problems. All these affect both the social and physical environment in the different neighbourhoods across the cities in Iraq, including Slemani.

## **1.3 Research questions**

- 1) Are there any differences in level of satisfaction among the residents of the new and old neighbourhood?
- 2) Is the background of the residents influence their level of environmental neighbourhood satisfaction with their neighbourhood.

- 3) Is there any relationship between residents' levels of satisfaction and neighbourhood choice factors?

#### **1.4 Aim and objectives of the study**

The overall aim of the study is to evaluate the neighbourhood satisfaction of residents in old and new residential areas of Slemani city, Iraq. To make it easier the aim is divided into three objectives.

##### **Objectives**

- 1) To examine the social and physical level of environmental neighborhood satisfaction of the new and old neighbourhood of Slemani city.
- 2) To compare the level of neighbourhood environmental satisfaction between the old and new neighbourhood, and also to examine how the background of residents influence the level of satisfaction.
- 3) To analyze the relationship between residents level of satisfaction and neighbourhood choice factors.

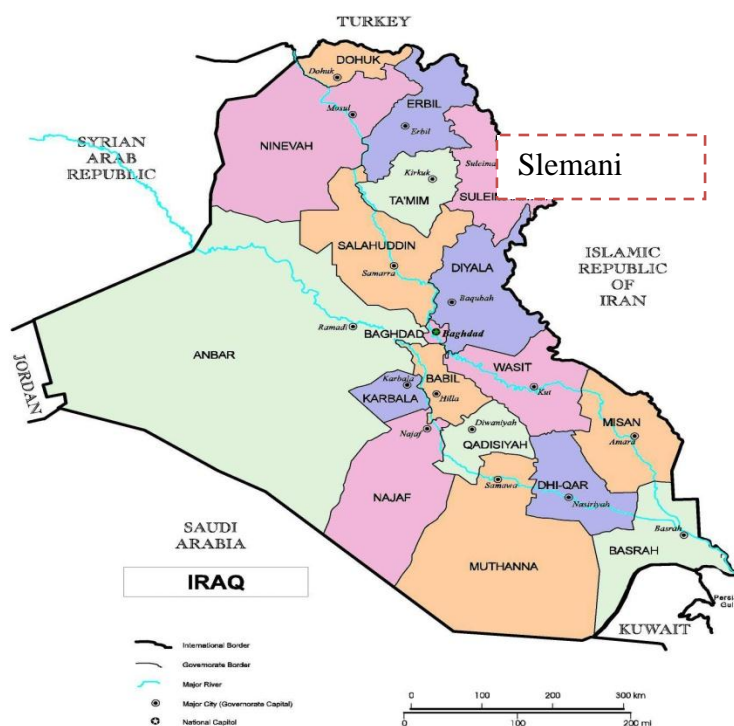
#### **1.5 Scope of study**

- 1- To identify the indicator or attributes to be used in measuring environmental satisfaction. This will be based on the literature review on the previous study done as were.
- 2- Conduct empirical study on two neighbourhoods in Slemani city one is the old and the other is new neighbourhood.

- 3- To compare the level of residential environmental satisfaction between the old and new neighbourhood; and also examine how the factors related to the background of the residents influence the level of satisfaction
- 4- The factor of the choice of neighbourhood is also examined and relate to the level of satisfaction.

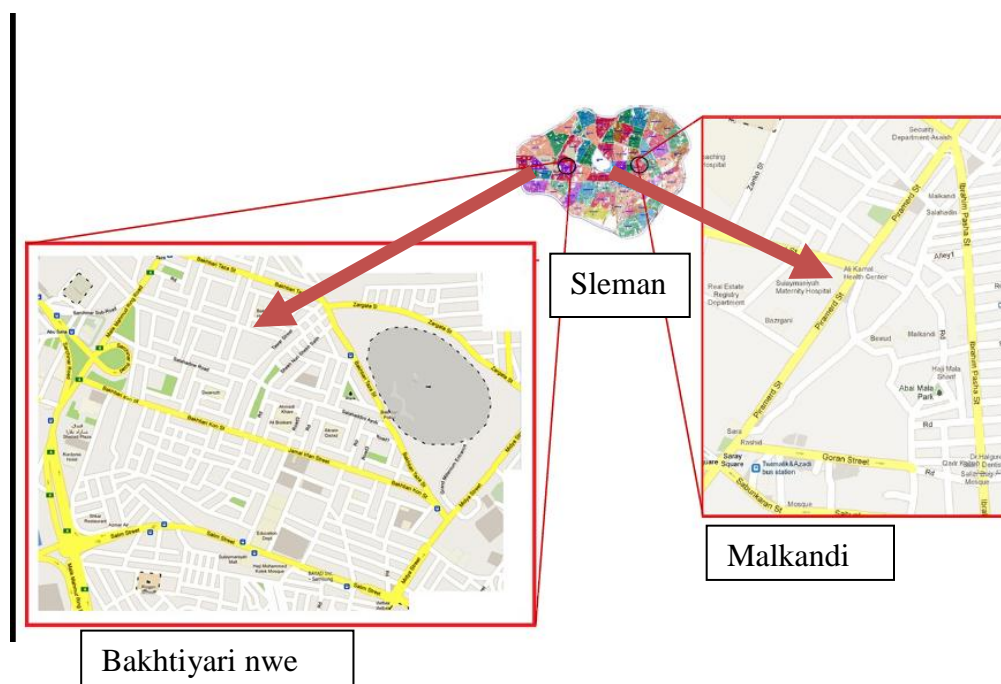
The concept of quality of life has many domains which could be investigated in an urban centre; the present study will focus on physical, social and environmental domain of quality of life only. The physical environment will focus on roads, green areas, noise pollution, architectural, town planning and sanitary condition. For the social environment, crime, recreation, health and education will be examined.

## 1.6 Study area



**Figure.1.1** Map display the location of Slemani city in Iraq

The present study will be carried out in two neighbourhoods of the city of Slemani. The first neighbourhood Malkandi is located in the old (core) of the city while the second Bakhtiari nwe is located in the newer part. Malkandi is the oldest neighbourhood in Slemani. It was established in 1784 and it forms the nucleus of Slemani. It has a pentagon shape and consists of eight districts divided mainly by straight roads which were designed in the 1950s and 60s. Within the districts are a number of historical networks of irregular and winding roads. Most of the historical buildings here are preserved as the origins of Kurdish culture. Due to the land use mix in this neighbourhood, heavy vehicular traffic is always experienced. Bakhtiari nwe located in the western part of the city has a well laid road network, street arrangement and green areas. The present study seeks to gain useful insight into the neighbourhood satisfaction of residents in the old (Malkandi) and (Bakhtiari nwe) modern residential neighbourhoods in Slemani city of Kurdistan-Iraq.



**Figure 1.2** Map appear the location of the two neighbourhoods in Slemani



## **1.7 Research methodology**

### **1.7.1 Research Approach**

The study adopted a quantitative approach which involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of data using statistical techniques. A cross-sectional survey using a well-structured questionnaire was used in eliciting information from respondents. The first is the theoretical base of the study through which domains are defined and indicators developed. This phase involves setting up criteria through the use of questionnaires. The second involves carrying out survey, data collection, analysis and making conclusions about resident satisfaction in the area under consideration. In this study, past research carried out on neighbourhood satisfaction formed the basis upon which indicators were developed for questionnaire design. After the designing of the questionnaire, the next stage involved the data collection, analysis and making some deductions. The secondary data came from the Urban Planning department at Slemani.

### **1.7.2 Units of analysis**

The unit of analysis that was used for this study is individual. Male and female household heads were sampled during the survey. Children were not sampled. The reason for choosing household heads is based on the fact that decisions regarding relocation, renting, purchasing of plots and buildings of the house in any particular neighbourhood are largely determined by the household head.

### **1.7.2 Sampling method**

The stratified random sample approach was adopted in selecting the sample size of the entire Slemani city. This involves the stratifying the city in two, the ancient and modern neighbourhoods. In the ancient neighbourhood, Malkandi was selected while Bakhatiyari nwe was selected in the modern neighbourhood. In each of these two neighbourhoods, 200 respondents were sampled making a total of 400 for both neighbourhoods.

### **1.7.3 Data analysis/techniques**

The data was analyzed using the special package for social science statistics (SPSS) 16 version. Both inferential and descriptive statistics will used during the analysis. The descriptive statistics include: frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation and charts. For the inferential statistics, (t-test, correlation, chi square) were used. The detail description and the methodology are described in chapter four.

## **1.8 Significance of study**

This study provides an insight and understanding of the feelings of residents in Slemani city towards their neighbourhood. The current level of deprivation and insecurity in Iraq has affected all facets of life making it difficult for people to clearly define their needs. This is because of the long years of military dictatorship which the citizenry has passed through under the regime of the late Saddam Hussein. Slemani and other cities in the Kurdish region, had suffered longer years of neglect during this period. Secondly, the study will reveal the current level of infrastructural development as perceived by respondents in the old and new neighbourhoods with a view to knowing the causes of satisfaction or dissatisfaction among residents. This information is

necessary as it will help in guiding policy makers and urban planners on ways of creating a better living environment for the city dwellers.

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