



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCES AND SATISFACTION AMONG
IRANIAN IMMIGRANT HOMEOWNERS IN KUALA LUMPUR,
MALAYSIA***

BAHARE FALLAHI SERISH

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MALAYSIA**

By

BAHARE FALLAHI SERISH

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

May 2016

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Chairman : Professor Ahmad Hariza Hashim, PhD
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The discussion on migration and mobility to other countries are attracting concern many in Iranian society. Numerous studies have investigated the underlying factors of residential satisfaction among inhabitants. Nonetheless, very few research have focused on the residential satisfaction, particularly among Iranian immigrants' homeowners residing in another countries. Hence, the present study aimed to examine whether sociodemographic characteristics and residential preferences (i.e. housing preferences and neighborhood preferences) simultaneously predict residential satisfaction. Additionally, the study examined the role of housing preferences and neighborhood preferences as mediators between socio demographic characteristics and residential satisfaction. This study involved 235 Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia which are selected at systematic random. Data were obtained from a cross-sectional survey and analyzed using "The Statistical Package for Social Sciences" (SPSS 21). Majority of the respondents (71.5%) reported moderate residential satisfaction. Using multiple regression analysis a significant model emerged ($F_{(8, 226)} = 28.440, p \leq .001, R = 0.708, R \text{ Square} = 0.502$), where housing preferences and neighborhood preferences as well as household income significantly contributed to the prediction of residential satisfaction. Next, a series of 3-step multiple regression analyses and Sobel- test were conducted to examine the mediating effect of neighborhood preferences and housing preferences on the relationship between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction. The analysis revealed that housing preferences significantly mediated the relationship between years of education, household size, and residential satisfaction. Also, findings showed that neighborhood preferences statistically mediate the relationships between years of education, household income, household size, and residential satisfaction. The results provided both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, findings supported and extended the Residential Satisfaction Model and Housing Adjustment Theory by adding residential preferences (housing preferences and neighborhood preferences) as a mediating factor. One of the important practical implication is that designers, planners should integrate preferences into housing and neighborhood as an important resource into their work for the development and maintenance of residential satisfaction of immigrants living in their host country.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KEINGINAN DAN KEPUASAN KEDIAMAN DALAM KALANGAN PEMILIK
RUMAH IMIGRAN IRAN DI KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Perbincangan berkaitan dengan migrasi dan mobiliti ke negara lain telah menarik perhatian ramai dalam masyarakat Iran. Pelbagai kajian telah dilakukan bagi meneliti faktor yang mendasari kepuasan terhadap tempat kediaman dalam kalangan penghuninya. Walau bagaimanapun, tidak banyak kajian yang memfokuskan pada kepuasan perumahan, khususnya dalam kalangan pemilik rumah imigrasi Iran yang menetap di negara lain. Oleh itu, kajian ini dilakukan untuk memeriksa sama ada ciri-ciri demografi dan keinginan kediaman (iaitu keinginan perumahan dan keinginan kejiranan) kedua-duanya dapat meramal kepuasan kediaman. Kajian ini juga mengkaji peranan keinginan perumahan dan keinginan kejiranan sebagai pengantara dalam hubungan antara ciri-ciri sosiodemografi dan kepuasan. Kajian ini melibatkan 235 pemilik rumah imigran Iran di Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yang dipilih secara rawak. Data diperolehi melalui survei keratan rentas dan dianalisis menggunakan SPSS 21 (The Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Majoriti responden (71.5%) melaporkan kepuasan kediaman yang sederhana melalui analisis regresi berganda muncul model yang signifikan ($F_{(8, 226)} = 28.440$, $p \leq 0.001$, $R = 0.708$, $R^2 = 0.502$), iaitu keinginan perumahan dan keinginan kejiranan serta pendapatan isi rumah secara signifikan menyumbang kepada ramalan kepuasan kediaman. Seterusnya, suatu siri analisis 3 langkah pelbagai regresi dan ujian Sobel dilakukan bagi memeriksa kesan pengantara keinginan kejiranan dan keinginan perumahan terhadap hubungan antara faktor sosiodemografi dengan kepuasan kediaman. Hasil analisis mendapati bahawa keinginan perumahan secara signifikan menjadi pengantara hubungan antara tahun pendidikan, saiz isi rumah dan kepuasan kediaman. Di samping itu juga, hasil kajian menunjukkan keinginan kejiranan secara statistik menjadi pengantara hubungan antara tahun pendidikan, pendapatan isi rumah, saiz isi rumah dan kepuasan kediaman. Hasil kajian memberi implikasi teori dan praktikal. Secara teori, hasil kajian menyokong dan menambah Model Kepuasan Kediaman dan Teori Pelarasan Perumahan dengan menambah keinginan kediaman (keinginan perumahan dan keinginan kejiranan) sebagai faktor pengantara. Implikasi praktikal penting yang lain adalah pereka, perancang perlu mengintegrasikan keinginan perumahan dan kejiranan sebagai sumber yang penting dalam membangunkan dan mengekalkan kepuasan imigran yang tinggal di negara tuan rumah.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 26 May 2016 to conduct the final examination of Bahareh Fallahi Serish on her thesis entitled "Residential Preferences and Satisfaction among Iranian Immigrant Homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Residential satisfaction is the degree to which the environment meets a person's needs and aspirations (Lu, 1999). The degree to which these are met is dependent on a person's evaluation on the physical, social and personal elements that are available in the areas such as high quality of physical environment, the availability of community services and housing quality (James, Carswell, & Sweaney, 2009; Sirgy & Cornwell, 2002). Satisfaction is also defined as a measure of the gap between consumers' actual and aspired needs (Galster, 1987a). Residential satisfaction is a complex feeling as it encompasses satisfaction with the dwelling unit and satisfaction with the neighborhood and the area (Onibokun, 1974). According to Ogu (2002), the concept of residential satisfaction is often employed to evaluate residents' perceptions and feelings for their housing units and the environment surrounding them. The concept of residential satisfaction has also been used as a key predictor for individual's perception on general "quality of life" (Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976). Some scholars have argued that residents' perception of their environment defines the quality of their lives (Ogu, 2002).

According to Nelson and Preston (2005), Braubach (2007) and Hur and Morrow-Jones (2008), residential satisfaction is important since dissatisfaction with one's community can reduce a person's well-being and quality of life and it could influence their decision to move from the area (Amole, 2009; James et al., 2009). Individual's subjective evaluations on their housing and neighborhood determine the way they respond to residential environment and form the basis of demands for public actions. Low level of residential satisfaction is postulated to precede housing and mobility behavior (Rossi, 1955; Speare, 1974). If individual feels dissatisfied with their current housing or neighborhood, they might consider relocating and moving to a different unit. It is also considered as a useful criterion in the evaluation of housing because it indicates the general levels of success, measures the users' affective and cognitive responses, points out the irritating aspects of dwelling environments, and predicts user responses to future environments. It helps to identify the contribution of various factors to satisfaction, the differences between diverse types of factors and the relationships between various dimensions of the residential environment. In addition, satisfaction is considered an important indicator of the quality of life, well-being and happiness (Eyles & Wilson, 2005; Mccrea, Stimson, & Western, 2005). Furthermore, residential satisfaction is recognized as a major component of overall life satisfaction (Campbell et al., 1976). According to Shaner (1984), the lack of satisfaction might lead to a decline in perceived quality of life. Increasing the degree of satisfaction is the ultimate goal of many official housing policies; therefore it would consider the utmost importance to assess residential satisfaction in areas directly affected by public policy. Knowledge about the factors that shape residential satisfaction is therefore critical for understanding of household mobility decision processes appropriately. Residential satisfaction studies have been used to help researchers and developers understand the current trends in housing and predict market changes for the near future.

A residential satisfaction study is a consumer-oriented approach to understand the housing condition from the consumers' view as compared to other market-oriented approaches which focuses on the investigation of physical features and the condition of housing (Lee, 2008).

Moreover, the perception of occupants toward their housing condition can be studied by examining their residential satisfaction. The concept of residential satisfaction has been studied by many researchers (Barcus, 2004; Kahana, Kahana, & Kercher, 2003). Previous studies on residential satisfaction have examined the relationship between the characteristics of the family and the dwelling unit (Farrell, Aubry, & Coulombe, 2004; Varady & Carrozza, 2000). These studies have taken into account the family characteristics because of the influences of these factors on determining residential satisfaction of the family. Other researchers such as Spear (1974), and Morris et al. (1976) found that the desire to alter one's residence or move to another dwelling is a result of low residential satisfaction. Poor housing condition bring negative results such as housing dissatisfaction (Pinderhughes, Nix, Foster, & Jones, 2001). Emerson, Chai et al. (2001), Myers and Gearin (2001) and Vogt and Marans (2004) all argued that preferences of residence have significance influence on satisfaction. The factors that may influence residential satisfaction include housing preferences (Ibem & Amole, 2013; Tao, Wong, & Hui, 2014), neighborhood preferences (Hur & Bollinger, 2014; Zhigang & Wu, 2013) and socio demographic characteristics (Chen, Zhang, Yang, & Yu, 2013; Vera-Toscano & Ateca-Amestoy, 2008).

This research investigated residential satisfaction among Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia, because Malaysia has become one of the most attractive places to travel and investment destinations for Iranian. In Malaysia, immigrants can buy any type of properties with the exception of properties valued less than RM 500000, low and medium cost residential units, and properties standing on Malay Reserved land. However, it was announced in budget 2014 that immigrants and foreigners could only buy property with a minimum value of RM1 million, an increase from RM 500000. It was part of policy of housing to impose stricter restrictions to curb speculation by local and foreign investors in the real estate market (Wong & Musa 2014).

This new wave of Iranian immigration to Malaysia has been interesting and impressive in recent years. According to the official report of Iranian embassy in Malaysia, more than 70,000 Iranians are living in Malaysia, which seems to be doubled yearly over the past five years (Rahmandoust, Ahmadian, & Shah, 2011). This research has investigated the degree of satisfaction among the Iranian in Malaysia with their housing and their new neighborhood as compared with their previous residence in Iran. The purpose of this study is to examine the resident's satisfaction with their environment and housing, especially because they are moving into a new country far away from their homeland. The new element for this study is that it focuses on residential satisfaction among immigrants moving into a new place farther away from their previous place with different culture, as many of the other studies done on residential satisfaction focused on those involved in short distance and within their area country and neighborhood countries (Mohit, Ibrahim, & Rashid, 2010; Rossi, 1955; Salleh, 2008).

Hence, the objective of the study is to identify factors, and mediators (housing preferences, neighborhood preferences) that may have impact on residential satisfaction amongst Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Residential satisfaction is the “obvious gap between inhabitants’ needs and the real situation around them in their residential area. In other words, residential satisfaction means the satisfaction of an individual or a member of a family from its residential area. This concept has multiple features and represents the satisfaction of the individual of their house, neighborhood and the area they live in (Shaterian, Oshnooi, & Ganjipour, 2012). Evaluating the satisfaction level of the residences is extremely sophisticated and depends on many individual and non-individual factors. There are several different variables identified which could influence residential satisfaction or dissatisfaction are as follows, housing type, neighborhood facilities, structure type, building features, housing condition, dwelling units, environmental facilities, neighborhood factors and social environment factors (Salleh, 2008).

In the past three decades, one of the main problems in Iran is related to poverty and high growth rate of population, which lead to housing problems, especially in fulfilling housing demand that are affordable to the population. Nevertheless, there is an increasing emphasis on restricting the family size to control the rate of population growth; the large scale of unemployment in the rural areas and smaller towns and cities has emerged dramatically. As a result, they have to find alternative to make a living. Since there are limited employment opportunities in rural areas, they migrated to the cities, and the entire scenario leads to concentration of population in a few selected cities. Over the past 50 years, population of Iran has experienced a three-fold increase (from 19 to 60 million), while population of cities has undergone a six-fold growth (from 6 million to 36 million) and the number of cities with over one million population has risen from 2 to 6 during the period 1966- 2001 (Kazemipour & Mirzaie, 2005; Sheykhi, 2007). Furthermore, all of the major metropolitan cities are located in more developed provinces like Tehran. Nearly one-fifth of urban population of Iran lives in Tehran (Kazemipour & Mirzaie, 2005).

The rapid pace of urbanization in Iran has created unhealthy, semi-standard and nonstandard housing and in some locations even slums (Sheykhi, 2007). Urbanization expansion due to immigration from villages to cities has turned the issue of housing to a great problem especially in terms of quality of housing. For example, housing shortages, unacceptable qualities, old textures, inappropriate accesses of housings to urban services are among urbanization consequences (Zanganeh, Varesi, & Zangiabadi, 2013). Currently, there are more than one million units of housing shortages in Iran. In 1996, the number of housing with one or two rooms declined from 73.8 percent to 21 percent and there is an inclination for housing with higher number of rooms. The numbers of housing with three to six rooms have shown an increment in Iran. However, in the last decade the number of housing with one to two and three to four rooms has increased, while housing especially with 6 rooms and more is decreasing (Azizi, 2004). In the past, 100 square meters was considered small in size, whereas nowadays 75 square meters is normal (Azizi, 2004; Rahimberd & Zarabi, 2011). Another aspect of housing problem in Iran is the issue

of homeownership because of the increase in the price of house. The rate of home ownership in 1986 was 77 percent, however, during the last three decades; the rate of home ownership has been gradually decreased to 67.9 percent. Conversely, the rental rates during the last three decades have increased to 11.9 and 22.9 percent in 1986 and 2006 respectively. Iran's property price has increased rapidly over the last few years (Meidani, Zabihi, & Ashena, 2011). Over the years from 1990 to 2008, prices of houses in Iran rose by almost 330%. The reasons for the high price in housing are associated with the increase in the price of materials and growth of workers' wages (Meidani et al., 2011; Rahimberd & Zarabi, 2011).

Housing situation and environment are key predictors of individual's perceptions on general quality of life. Life satisfaction means fulfilling the social needs, desires, interest and demands and the ability to identify them with the neighborhood. Life satisfaction is a situation in which needs and desires are met; if they cannot fulfill their needs and desires it would result in dissatisfaction, which could also result in residential mobility. They move to different places in order to fulfill their expectation and needs (Oswald, Wahl, Mollenkopf, & Schilling, 2003; Pavot & Diener, 2008; Schimmack & Oishi, 2005).

One of the reasons for mobility and migration to other countries is to improve the quality of life. The quality of life include satisfaction with housing, schools, health services, safety and security (Cutter, 1982; Diener, 1995; Evans, 1994), jobs and incomes (Westaway, 2006). It seems that, these are the reasons given by many of Iranian who already moved to another country to increase the quality of life (Naghdi, 2010). By comparing the annual income before and after moving to another country, one can see that the salary for an educated people in Western countries are roughly five and six times more than those who live in Iran (Garousi, 2003, 2005; Naghdi, 2010). According to Garousi (2003), under the current economic situation in Iran, it is almost impossible even for those who are highly educated to own a house in Iran. Furthermore, financial instability, high interest rates, poor financial insurance, and high annual inflation rates are among factors, which lead to poor financial infrastructure in Iran. One of the key problems that have direct negative effect on educated employees who live in Iran is the unequal low increase of income as compared to the annual inflation rate. This is one of the basic financial problems experienced by most of people in Iran (Garousi, 2003). According to Statistical Center of Iran, the average annual income for an urban household was IRR 130,301,445 in 2011. At the same time the average annual rental costs for a house with 75 square meters was IRR 71,786,700 in Tehran. It means that 55% of households' income is allocated to rental costs in Tehran. Similarly, the average price of house with 75 square meters was IRR 1,671,075,000 in Tehran in 2011. Therefore, that household income for a year in Tehran is just 7.79% of the price of a 75-square meter house (Fereidouni, 2012; Garousi, 2003). In fact, for Iranian urban households, expenditures on housing represent around 30 percent of total household expenditures (Fereidouni, 2012). Therefore, for most of the educated Iranian living in Tehran it remains like a dream to own a home unless they get two or even more jobs at the same time. This economic condition influences the migration decision of many educated people in order to achieve a better quality of life (Garousi, 2003). It has been estimated that four to five million Iranians living abroad, mostly in North America, Europe, Persian Gulf States, Turkey, Australia and the broader Middle East (Hakimzadeh 2006). Also, in recent years Iranian had invested all over the world in Asian and in western countries (Hakimzadeh 2006; Rahmandoust et al., 2011). For example,

in Dubai, Iranian expatriates have invested an estimated of \$200 billion since economic growth has encouraged Iranian to invest in Dubai real estate sector (such as apartments and villas) in order to achieve higher profits. In Dubai, 10 to 30 percent of real estate transactions involve Iranians (Fereidouni, Masron, Malek, & Ooi, 2010). Another country that Iranians consider potential in the housing market in recent years is Malaysia (Rahmandoust et al., 2011).

Many Iranian immigrants' especially those who migrated to Europe countries such as Sweden are not satisfied with the housing price whereas, they are satisfied with the social security in the neighborhood (Naghdi, 2010). Murdie (2008) found that Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Canada satisfied with the dwelling type and size of the house.

There are lacks of studies with regards to Iranian immigrants' settlement in their host countries especially in Malaysia. The present study attempts to fill this gap in the literature. With regards to the above mentioned issues, the goals of this study are to identify factors contributing to residential satisfaction among Iranian immigrants' homeowners living in Kuala Lumpur, as well as to examine the mediation effect of residential preferences on predictors of residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners.

This thesis identifies the residential satisfaction among recent group of Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia. Malaysia was selected due to high rate of Iranian immigrants', the multicultural social structure, in combination with relatively open social liberties (Affrunti & Ginsburg, 2012). According to the official report of Iranian embassy in Malaysia, more than 70,000 Iranians are living in Malaysia (Rahmandoust et al., 2011). This study focuses on residential satisfaction because it refers to the feeling of contentment when one has achieved what he needs or desires in a house. It is an important indicator which has been used as a key predictor of an individual's perceptions on general quality of life (Mohit et al., 2010).

As mentioned above, this study focus on residential preferences and satisfaction among Iranian immigrants that move from one developing country to another developing country and invest in real estate market and bought a house. However previous studies identified immigrants' settlement in developed countries because most of immigrants move from one developing country to another developed country. Thus identify residential satisfaction and preferences has been not yet studied in developing countries among immigrants.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions of this study are as follow:

1. What are the socio-demographic profiles among Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia?

2. What are the housing conditions among Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia?
3. What are the housing conditions of Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Iran?
4. What are the levels of preference perceived by the Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia?
5. What are the levels of satisfaction perceived by the Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia?
6. Are there any relationship between socio demographic factors, neighborhood preferences, housing preferences, and residential satisfaction?
7. To what extent socio demographic factors predict housing preferences and neighborhood preferences?
8. To what extent socio demographic factors and residential preferences (housing preferences and neighborhood preferences) predict residential satisfaction?
9. Do neighborhood preferences mediate the relationships between socio demographic factors, and residential satisfaction?
10. Do housing preferences mediate the relationships between socio demographic factors, and residential satisfaction?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

General Objective

Generally, the aim of this study is to determine the relationship between socio demographic factors, residential preferences (housing preferences and neighborhood preferences) and residential satisfaction among Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Additionally, the present study determined the extent to which the relationship between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction is mediated by the residential preferences (neighborhood preferences and housing preferences) of immigrants' homeowners.

Based on the general objective, the specific objectives of the study are outlined as follows:

1. To describe the socio-demographic profile among Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia.
2. To describe housing condition among Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia.
3. To identify the level of residential preference (housing and neighborhood) perceived by the Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia.
4. To identify the level of residential satisfaction/dissatisfaction perceived by the Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia.
5. To compare previous housing in Iran and current housing in Malaysia.
6. To examine the relationship between socio demographic factors, neighborhood preferences, housing preferences and residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
7. To determine whether socio demographic factors predict housing preferences and neighborhood preferences.

8. To determine whether socio demographic factors and residential preferences (housing preferences and neighborhood preferences) predict residential satisfaction.
9. To examine the mediating effect of housing preferences on the relationship between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction.
10. To examine the mediating effect of neighborhood preferences on the relationship between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction in Iranian immigrants' homeowners in Malaysia.
2. There is no significant relationship between socio demographic factors and housing preferences.
3. There is no significant relationship between socio demographic factors and neighborhood preferences.
4. Socio demographic factors do not significantly predict housing preferences and neighborhood preferences.
5. Socio demographic factors and residential preferences (housing preferences and neighborhood preferences) do not significantly predict residential satisfaction.
6. The relationship between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction is not significantly mediated by housing preferences.
7. The relationship between socio demographic factors and residential satisfaction is not significantly mediated by neighborhood preferences.

1.6 Significant of Study

There is limited knowledge on the residential satisfaction status as well as its predictors and factors that may sustain the residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners, this study aimed to identify the significant factors contributing to the residential satisfaction among Iranian immigrants' homeowners. Furthermore, this study attempted to examine the mediating effects of housing preferences and neighborhood preferences on the residential satisfaction of Iranian immigrants' homeowners. Marshall and Rossman (1999) argued that a study is significant and should be conducted, if it contributes to knowledge, be useful and meaningful to policymakers, and suggests practical implications to practitioners.

Contribution to knowledge: It is expected that the finding from this study add to the emerging literature on housing research regarding to influencing factors of residential satisfaction among immigrants' homeowners. In addition, the present study gives valuable information on how socio demographic factors, neighborhood preferences, and housing preferences might influence residential satisfaction.

Relevance to policymakers: In view of the fact that this research attempted to provide important scientific information concerning the significant predictors of residential satisfaction among Iranian immigrants' homeowners, this study impels housing policy

makers to develop programs to maintain and enhance the residential satisfaction of immigrants' homeowners. Moreover, it is expected that knowledge obtained from this study will help policy makers to pay more attention to vulnerable homeowners who are experiencing low level of satisfaction in housing and neighborhood.

Contribution to practice: Since this study has tested the mediating effects of housing preferences and neighborhood preferences on the residential satisfaction of homeowners, this may provide some scientific information to planners, designers, and housing professionals working to use housing preferences and neighborhood preferences as an important resource for their work toward the development and maintenance of residential satisfaction. The result of this study might also promote a greater awareness on the importance of housing preferences and neighborhood preferences among policy makers and planners.

Contribution to research: Since few studies have attempted to examine the effects of housing preferences and neighborhood preferences on the residential satisfaction of immigrants' homeowners in a developing country, this study will provide unlimited opportunities for future studies.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Residential Preference

Conceptual Definition: Morris and Winter (1978) referred residential preferences as the expression on the quantity and quality of housing features that residents would like to have. Families choose to live in places that match their preferences, for both neighborhood characteristic and housing characteristic as a factor in housing and neighborhood choice.

Operational Definition: In this study, residential preference is measured by two indicators; housing preference and neighborhood preference. Housing preferences and neighborhood preferences scales were rated on a 5 Likert with 1 (not very important) to 5 (very important).

Residential Satisfaction

Conceptual Definition: Residential satisfaction, defined as the feeling of contentment when one has achieved what he needs or desires in a house. Also, residential satisfaction measures the difference between household's actual, desired housing and neighborhood condition (Galster, 1987b). Moreover, when the level of contentment with current housing conditions is low, they will experience stress and dissatisfaction. The term may refer to the entire continuum of satisfaction from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. Thus, the level of satisfaction is deduced in addition to the idea of a state of being satisfied.

Operational Definition: In this study, residential satisfaction of the homeowners is measured by two indicators, including housing and neighborhood. Residential satisfaction scale is rated on a 5 Likert with 1(not very satisfied) and 5 (very satisfied).

Homeowner

Conceptual Definition: Homeowner defined as a person who owns their own home (Aaronson, 2000).

Operational Definition: In this study, homeowners include Iranian immigrants' owning a house in Malaysia.



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