COMMUNITY PROBLEMS OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS IN RESIDENTIAL COMPLEXES

PROBLEMAS COMUNITÁRIOS DOS PROFESSORES UNIVERSITÁRIOS EM CONJUNTOS RESIDENCIAIS

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Abstract

This study addresses a significant issue in the lives of university professors and their families, namely housing-related problems and their impact on academic, social, and psychological life. The present research seeks to reveal the nature of these residential complexes and the availability of infrastructure services, public services, maintenance services, and the fees collected from residents. It also proposes a number of recommendations intended to help resolve some of the problems existing within university faculty residential compounds. To achieve this aim, the researcher selected a sample of 140 university professors representing 140 households living in housing units within residential complexes, constituting the study population. A questionnaire was employed as the primary data-collection instrument. The study reached several findings, most notably that the main infrastructure problems in the residential complexes were related to markets and electricity. Furthermore, the majority of the sample experienced difficulties with public services, particularly schools and medical clinics, in addition to disparities in service quality between government-run and private (investment) complexes.

Keywords: Problems. University Professors. Residential Complexes.

Resumo

Este estudo aborda uma questão significativa na vida dos professores universitários e de suas famílias, a saber, os problemas relacionados à moradia e seu impacto na vida acadêmica, social e psicológica. A presente pesquisa busca revelar a natureza desses complexos residenciais e a disponibilidade de serviços de infraestrutura, serviços públicos, serviços de manutenção e as taxas cobradas dos moradores. Além disso, propõe uma série de recomendações destinadas a ajudar a resolver alguns dos problemas existentes nos complexos residenciais do corpo docente universitário. Para atingir esse objetivo, o pesquisador selecionou uma amostra de 140 professores universitários, representando 140 famílias que moram em unidades habitacionais dentro de complexos residenciais, constituindo a população do estudo. Um questionário foi utilizado como principal instrumento de coleta de dados. O estudo chegou a várias conclusões, sendo a mais notável que os principais problemas de infraestrutura nos complexos residenciais estavam relacionados a mercados e eletricidade. Além disso, a maioria da amostra enfrentou dificuldades com serviços públicos, particularmente escolas e clínicas médicas, além de disparidades na qualidade do serviço entre complexos administrados pelo governo e complexos privados (de investimento).

Palavras-chave: Problemas. Professores Universitários. Complexos Residenciais.

1 GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

1.1 Research problem

Housing constitutes the foundation of stability and security for both the individual and the family. Since the home represents the محور of an individual's social life, it should function as a safe haven where one lives with peace, security, and dignity. Therefore, attention must be directed toward providing optimal residential environments with adequate services and toward resolving various social problems within faculty housing complexes.

Accordingly, the research problem is formulated through the following questions:

1. What is the lived reality of professors in these residential complexes?
2. Did the high prices of private residential complexes influence their decision to reside in these compounds?
3. Do residents suffer from deficiencies in infrastructure services such as electricity and water, and in public services such as schools and hospitals?
4. Do residents play an effective role in addressing the problems faced by these housing complexes?
5. To what extent does the media contribute to highlighting the problems within these complexes?

1.2 Importance of the study

The importance of the study lies in identifying social, environmental, economic, service-related, educational, media-related, health, and security factors, and in monitoring and measuring their impact on the psychological and social well-being of university professors. It also aims to understand the lived experience of faculty members in residential compounds in order to provide suitable housing that reduces the high financial burdens they may face elsewhere.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The present study aims to:

1. Provide an overview of the nature of these residential complexes, including infrastructure services, public services, maintenance services, and the fees collected from residents;

2. Examine social interaction within these complexes and the residents' living conditions and social relations;

3. Present a number of proposals and recommendations that may contribute to solving some of the problems within university faculty residential complexes.

1.4 Research concepts

1.4.1 Problem

Robert Merton defined a social problem as the contradiction and discrepancy between what exists in society and what a particular group within that society desires it to be, arguing that action and its associated values and norms determine the problem.(1)

A social problem may also be defined as a situation affecting a number of individuals who believe— or are believed by others in society— to be a source of difficulties. Thus, a social problem is both an objective condition and a socially interpreted, subjective phenomenon.(2)

1.4.2 University professor

A university professor is any person who holds a postgraduate or doctoral degree in a field of scientific knowledge and works in higher education teaching.(3) University professors are knowledge transmitters responsible for the proper functioning of the pedagogical process at the university and perform various duties, including teaching, academic advising of students, conducting scientific research, and supervising it.(4)

1.4.3 Residential complexes

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) defines residential complexes as fully serviced areas representing a modern concept of urban residential development. They typically include diverse housing units suitable for different socio-economic levels, as well as road networks, pedestrian pathways, and public services.(5) A residential complex has two dimensions: a physical environment enabling the establishment of a neighborhood, and a social aggregation of groups with shared purposes.(6)

Residential complexes have also been described as the balanced development of all capacities and potentials within a defined entity, whether an individual, a group, or a community. From another perspective, they are urban developments implemented according to planned schemes overseen by local authorities, equipped with public facilities, and regulated to prevent disorder and uncontrolled construction.(7)

Integrated residential complexes are therefore residential areas with complete facilities and services, representing a modern approach to urban development. They include diverse housing units suited to various social and economic levels, in addition to pedestrian paths, transportation routes, commercial activities, public services, and communal facilities.(8)

2 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 Community services and their problems in residential complexes

2.1.1 Health services

Health services constitute one of the most fundamental pillars supporting the organization and development of urban societies and represent key elements in economic, social, and civilizational progress. This is achieved through the provision of healthcare facilities such as health centers, hospitals, pharmacies, and related services. These activities are performed by specialized professionals to safeguard people's well-being and

are delivered through various forms, most notably preventive, consultative, therapeutic, and rehabilitative services.(9)

Healthcare services are among the most essential human needs due to their direct relation to life and well-being. The level of healthcare services in any city or country reflects its ability to control and confront epidemics and diseases, as well as the extent to which the concept of public health is embodied within society, thereby indicating the country's economic and civilizational advancement.

In residential complexes, problems related to health services include the absence of clinics or hospitals within or near the complex, a shortage of physicians, and insufficient availability of medicines. Additionally, the long distance to healthcare facilities makes access difficult. All of these factors negatively affect resident families, increasing disease prevalence, reducing stability, and significantly lowering quality of life.(10)

2.1.2 Educational services

Educational services are a means of revealing students' intellectual and creative capacities at all educational levels by providing the requirements and resources necessary for learning. Consequently, educational services are among the essential services that should be available within residential complexes, as these complexes represent a microcosm of the city in which cultural, social, and economic aspects are embodied. Their presence helps prepare an educated and mature generation.

Incorporating such services into the fundamental design of the complex ensures the achievement of the intended function while applying standards that guarantee efficiency—particularly safety standards for primary school students due to the short distances between residences and schools within the compound.(11)

Education significantly influences both individual and societal life. It contributes to reducing ignorance and poverty, as it is an effective tool for cultural, social, economic, and political development. It also helps transform present realities into a more prosperous future; Japan's post-war recovery through prioritizing education is often cited as a prominent example of this impact.

Challenges facing educational services include limited financial resources, poor distribution of educational institutions within cities or residential complexes, shortages in teaching staff, and population growth that disrupts the balance between population size and available services.(12) Achieving beneficiary satisfaction requires the provision of schools designed according to recognized standards and equipped with necessary facilities such as playgrounds, modern laboratories, and educational technologies. Furthermore, virtual learning environments should complement traditional schooling.

Among the educational problems in residential complexes are the absence of nearby schools, which forces families to send their children to distant areas, and the lack of school transportation services. Consequently, inadequate educational services weaken quality of life, widen social and economic disparities, and reduce opportunities for sustainable development within the residential complex.(13)

2.1.3 Market and café services

Markets play an effective role in exchange and communication, functioning as commercial centers for goods and services and as gathering places for interaction and the exchange of ideas. Their presence within a neighborhood or residential complex enhances opportunities for social interaction and reduces the need to travel to external markets, thereby improving quality of life.

Cafés, on the other hand, are recreational venues where friends meet, discuss daily matters, play traditional games, and share tea or coffee. They are particularly attractive to men, especially older adults, across various social classes. Thus, cafés contribute significantly to strengthening social relationships and expanding neighborhood networks. They may also serve as sources of income and vary according to social function, with some catering to athletes and others to elderly patrons.

Despite their benefits, sustaining markets and cafés requires adequate population density and careful local planning. They may also cause inconvenience, such as traffic congestion due to parked cars and crowding. Conversely, their absence creates other problems, including difficulty for low-income residents in accessing affordable food, weakened social cohesion and sense of belonging, increased transportation costs and travel time, and higher congestion within the complex.(14)

2.1.4 Religious services

Religious services, such as mosques, attract individuals from all social levels and function as social and educational institutions. The mosque helps preserve cohesion among Muslims in general and among residents of the residential complex in particular, strengthening cooperation, affection, and mutual understanding. It is an essential facility that fosters social bonds, including neighborly relations, and fulfills cultural, educational, religious, and social roles that promote interaction and social proximity.

The absence of religious facilities leads to dissatisfaction with housing and weakens social cohesion due to reduced regular interaction among residents. It may also increase congestion around the complex on specific days—such as Fridays—when residents travel elsewhere for congregational prayers, in addition to diminishing awareness and cultural engagement within the residential community.

2.1.5 Sanitation and waste collection services

Waste collection services in residential complexes are a fundamental component in maintaining residents' health and improving quality of life. Poor sanitation services may result from the absence of proper waste collection organization, insufficient waste containers, inadequate coordination and funding for sanitation activities, and a lack of awareness programs and cooperation among residents. Improper disposal practices, such as burning waste or dumping it in undesignated areas, lead to environmental pollution. Community participation and cooperation among residents represent effective means for addressing sanitation and waste collection problems.(15)

2.1.6 Population mobility and weak services

Local residential mobility, also referred to as internal migration, can be defined as population movements reflecting individuals' desire to leave an area where living conditions have become difficult due to insufficient social, health, and educational services and to relocate to areas offering better services and living conditions.

For example, rapid urban population growth has rendered institutions unable to provide adequate services related to transportation, housing, education, and healthcare. Consequently, many residents migrate to other cities or central urban areas seeking higher living standards and better access to cultural, social, and transportation services.(16)

2.1.7 The impact of housing on human health

Housing has great importance for both public and individual health. At certain times, allergic conditions known as "sick building syndrome" emerged, referring to polluted indoor air and its harmful effects on occupants. Studies have demonstrated the influence of residential stability on population health: areas characterized by frequent residential turnover tend to suffer more mental and physical health problems than areas with social cohesion and residential stability, where home ownership rates are higher and rental rates lower.

Researchers have also identified neighborhoods with deteriorated housing conditions and weak social structures as environments conducive to mental illness. Many studies have established a relationship between unhealthy housing conditions—such as inadequate health services in residential complexes—and the spread of social and health problems, including:

- Higher crime and delinquency rates compared with normal levels in unhealthy residential areas;
- Negative psychological impacts on vulnerable groups such as the elderly and children, leading to increased mortality due to socially related illnesses associated with unsuitable living conditions;
- Increased rates of fires and accidents compared with appropriate and healthy residential areas.(17)

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Summary of findings

1. The study results indicate that the majority of the sample, amounting to **83.6%**, suffer from infrastructure-related problems;

2. The most significant infrastructure problems were related to **markets (76.1%)**, followed by **electricity (64.1%)**;

3. The findings also showed that a majority of respondents (**74.3%**) experience difficulties with public services;

4. Among public service problems, **schools (76.9%)** ranked first, followed by **medical clinics (67.3%)**;

5. The results further revealed that population distribution within residential complexes is influenced by the availability of services, with a proportion of **92.9%** indicating this relationship;

6. The study demonstrated a disparity in service quality between government residential complexes and private (investment) complexes, reported by **97.1%** of respondents;

7. According to the respondents, one of the primary causes of the disparity in service quality between public and private complexes is the **high cost of services (73.5%)**.

3.2 Recommendations

1. Strengthen security within residential complexes and consider residents' psychological well-being, particularly in terms of privacy and tranquility;

2. Provide essential public services, including educational and health services such as schools, nurseries, health centers, markets, and waste collection services;

3. Adopt standards of transparency and fairness in the distribution of housing units according to years of service, academic rank, and social status;

4. Improve infrastructure services within these complexes by providing green spaces, children's recreational areas, and reliable internet, electricity, and water services;

5. Highlight the problems of university faculty residential complexes by enhancing the role of journalism and media in conveying the reality of these communities.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.