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Safety Perceptions and Micro-Segregation: Exploring Gated- and Non-Gated-Community Dynamics in Quetta, Pakistan

Asifa Iqbal [1,*], Tahira Shaukat [2] and Humaira Nazir [3]

[1] Department of Computer and Geospatial Sciences, University of Gävle, 80176 Gävle, Sweden
[2] Department of Architecture, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences, Quetta 87600, Pakistan; arch.tahira@gmail.com
[3] Department of Architecture and Environmental Design, Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi 75300, Pakistan; hnazeer1991@gmail.com
* Correspondence: asifa.iqbal@hig.se

Abstract: Crime impacts residential neighborhoods not only through the loss of life and property but also by instilling a widespread fear among residents. To combat this fear, physical security measures like safety locks, gates, and high perimeter walls have proven effective in both developed and developing nations. This trend has led to the increased popularity of gated communities in Pakistan as a preferred housing choice. In addition to encouraging micro-segregation, these developments also attract a large number of residents. In order to better understand the differences in residents' fear of crime in relation to their health and socio-economic status, this paper compares residential housing schemes in Quetta, Pakistan (gated and non-gated). Surveys and on-site observations in four different residential areas of the city underpin the methodology. The results suggest that past experiences of crime victimization strongly affect feelings of safety in both gated and non-gated communities. The study highlights the complex relationship between the perception of safety, health and well-being, socio-economic status, and the type of community, highlighting how these factors collectively influence respondents' experiences and create micro-segregation.

Keywords: residential neighborhoods; fear of crime; gated communities; non-gated residential housing; Quetta; Pakistan

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1. Introduction

The increasing incidence of crime has emerged as a significant global concern [1]. It has led to a heightened sense of insecurity among residents [2]. Consequently, the fear of crime and its prevalence in residential areas has become an alarming phenomenon [3]. This fact has motivated numerous researchers to examine the studies regarding crime prevention and fear of crime in residential settings as well as the use of different technologies by law enforcement agencies for security purposes [4,5]. Consequently, our understanding of the elements that shape the fear of crime and the potential adverse outcomes has significantly expanded [6–10].

Fear of crime, defined as 'an emotional response marked by feelings of danger and anxiety', arises in response to the potential for physical harm [11]. Since the late 1960s, it has evolved into a significant concern for communities, necessitating both a social response and systematic action. The link between the physical structures in urban environment and crime has been thoroughly investigated in the realm of urban planning and design [12]. These circumstances can trigger particular types of criminal activity. For example, street robberies are more likely to occur when individuals are alone. In contrast, burglary becomes more viable in areas with secret entrances, while pickpocketing becomes more prevalent in crowded streets. Due to increased crime rates in cities, there has been a growing demand for gated communities, as they are considered a rational reaction to the escalating levels of crime [13].

Gated communities are characterized by their enclosed nature, typically designed with the construction of boundary walls and fences that limit public access to the development for non-residents [14]. They show the characteristics of micro-segregated areas [15]. Numerous aspects such as the desire for privacy, exclusivity, convenience, and a growing concern among residents to separate themselves from other segments of society are considered to be the main reasons [16,17]. However, crime and the fear of crime is the most prevalent worldwide explanation for the expansion of these communities [13].

In some nations, gated communities are regarded as a strategy for crime prevention and easing concerns regarding crime [18]. Moreover, Lynch [17] also stated that these communities provide residents with a heightened sense of security within their enclosed walls and gates. Lipman and Harris [19] reported that security was a crucial factor for the decision of 70% of residents to opt for a gated community as their new residence. Over the past two decades, economic instability and a lack of job opportunities have given rise to criminal activities, particularly in major cities across Pakistan. People living in non-gated communities become victims of crimes easily [20]. On the other hand, compact cities and rapid urbanization has led to a severe housing shortage. This scarcity has made housing unaffordable for a majority of the population, primarily due to a limited housing supply and high housing values [21]. It is important to mention that the public sector has proven inadequate in addressing this housing demand. Consequently, the private sector has taken on the role of developing housing projects in various suburban areas of Pakistan's cities [22]. The compact cities and criminal activities have changed the development patterns of cities and paved the way for new type of developments like gated communities and apartment blocks [23]. Balochistan, one of Pakistan's most underprivileged and less-developed provinces, is home to Quetta, which serves as both the provincial capital and the country's ninth largest city [24].

Situated in the north-western part of Balochistan, the Quetta district encompasses an area of 2653 square kilometers. This district plays a key role in connecting two countries from trade and communication. Quetta city encompasses the metropolitan area and cantonment. This urban area consists of a population exceeding 1 million and experiences high population density. Between 1998 and 2017, the average population growth rate in this region was 3.05% per annum [24]. In Quetta, the prominent ethnic groups include Pashtoon, Baloch, Hazara, and Punjabi. Quetta city faces the coexistence of typical urban and social life alongside the persistent threat of terrorism [25]. Various areas within Quetta have been adversely impacted by terrorist attacks and related activities. The safety perceptions of these neighborhoods differ between local authorities and the residents themselves [26]. Given the escalating crime rates and security concerns, a significant marketing factor has been evolved in relation to gated communities. For the purposes of this research, a gated community is characterized as "a secured private residential zone within an urban setting enclosed by boundary walls and featuring authorized access points through gates or checkpoints, supplemented by security measures like CCTV cameras and adequate street lighting" [27]. Further, a non-gated community is described by Mahar et al. [27] as "a public housing scheme lacking boundary walls or gates, allowing unrestricted traffic flow, with security responsibilities falling on individual property owners". It is considered that the perception of safety and risk of being victimized among residents are affected by the type of community they live in, their fear level related to crime, and their socio-economic status, thereby affecting their overall health and well-being.

On the other hand, while there is a common belief that segregated communities offer enhanced safety compared to non-segregated ones, the accuracy of this belief remains relatively unexplored [28]. In addition, despite the efficiency of physical security measures to minimize the fear of crime in segregated communities, the problems of the rise in security concerns and fear of crime in non-segregated communities are not discussed in the small cities of Pakistan. This issue emphasized the need for exploring the factors associated with safety perception in gated and non-gated communities.

Therefore, in order to understand how residents in both gated and non-gated communities perceive safety in Quetta city, this paper aims to assess the perception of safety of individuals residing in gated versus non-gated communities, in order to achieve the following objectives: firstly, it aims to explore variations in the perceptions of fear of crime among residents of gated and non-gated communities, considering both their actual encounters with crime and their perception of it. Secondly, the study aims to establish the correlation between the sense of well-being and overall health, and the choice between gated and non-gated communities. Lastly, the research aims to understand people's preferences for gated or non-gated communities based on socio-economic factors such as income levels and social class and to discuss how the differences in safety perception promotes the further development of micro-segregation.

This competitive study contributes to enhancing the understanding of the varied relationship between the built environment, socio-economic status, and safety perception in different community setups. Further, by considering health and socio-economic factors and their relationship with the perception of safety, this goes beyond the analysis already carried out in different papers. This multidimensional approach provides another perspective on looking into the other factors influencing residents' safety perception and well-being in segregated and non-segregated areas.

1.1. Literature Review

Gated and Non-Gated Communities and Their Relationship with Fear of Crime

Gated communities and housing enclaves are commonly recognized as micro-segregated areas that foster a sense of privilege, facilitating a voluntary detachment and withdrawal from both spatial and social interactions by the wealthier residents [28]. A gated community (GC) is defined as a residential micro-segregated area where individual lots are enclosed by fencing, and access to the community as a whole is unregulated [29]. Access control is typically achieved through the use of fencing or gating elements, often complemented by additional security systems such as closed-circuit television (CCTV), security personnel, guard dogs, and other measures. In contrast, non-gated residences in this study refers to lack of fencing and any access control mechanisms, either at individual house level or at the neighborhood level [29]. Gated communities have become the favored choice for many homebuyers, both on a global scale and within local contexts [30]. One of the factors is socio-economic level, which is contributing to the formation of gated communities as micro-segregation, and it gives information about the different behaviors of people through the specific location of the micro-area [31]. Moreover, Morgan [32] identified the factors causing the emergence of gated communities as micro-segregated areas, include socio-economic and demographic segmentation, political integration and a desire for prestigious lifestyle and high security. However, this detachment creates a hindrance in collaboration and engagements among the residents of gated communities as well, and eventually causes the loss a of sense of community [17].

Prestige, lifestyle, and security-zone communities are the three main categories into which these gated communities are usually divided. The primary features of lifestyle communities are shared amenities, entertainment venues, public areas, and recreational opportunities [33]. Prestige communities are exclusive neighborhoods designed for individuals who prioritize social status and image-conscious living. These communities use their gated entrances as symbols of the residents' elevated social status [33].

In contrast, security-zone communities, categorized as 'city perches', 'suburban perches', and 'barricade perches', place top importance on ensuring the safety and security of their residents. These communities can be found in various settings, spanning from urban city centers to suburban areas and across economically diverse neighborhoods. In all cases, the presence of gates serves as a primary defense against perceived or real threats [19]. In developing nations, gated communities adopt diverse designs and labels primarily intended to prevent the entry of individuals considered "unrelated" or "unautho-

rized individuals" [33]. This leads to urban gating, which supports micro-segregation and causes social stratification among residents both inside and outside specific buildings [30].

The main reasons behind opting to live in these gated communities were driven by concerns such as the fear of crime, which has risen due to rapid changes in racial demographics and escalating incidents of vandalism and burglary across the US. These factors were often mentioned as pivotal reasons for opting for gated communities, as indicated by research [15,19]. Another study by Bandauko et al. [34] has shown that the rise in crime is one of the reasons behind the emergence and formation of gated communities as micro-segregated areas.

Another commonly cited reason is the pursuit of a sense of community; however, research conducted in both the US and the UK has not provided substantial evidence to support this claim [17,35]. On the other hand, research in [36] shows that the presence of boundary walls and fences restricts collaborative actions and engagements among the residents of gated and non-gated communities. Additionally, people living in the close proximity of gated communities have a sense of community confined to the people inside the urban gating.

Recent studies on gated communities (GCs) in developing countries have increasingly focused on demand-based arguments, similar to trends observed in developed nations [37]. These findings parallel many of the patterns seen in developed countries. For instance, Coy and Pöhler [38] suggest that fear and safety are prominent motivations for residents living in GCs in Brazil and Argentina. Conversely, Leisch [39] highlights fear and safety as the primary factors influencing the Chinese minority population's choice to reside in Jakarta. Adetokunbo [40] argues that families in Lagos Mainland, Nigeria, choose gated communities for security, exclusivity, and status benefits.

This perspective is supported by several scholars who view GCs as thoughtful efforts by the wealthy to distance themselves from harsh urban realities, including inadequate urban infrastructure and services, rising crime rates, and the fear of crime [41,42]. The fear of crime includes a broad spectrum of emotional and practical responses to criminal activities on both an individual and community level [43]. Farrall et al. [44] propose that fear of crime is often regarded as an indicator of one's susceptibility to becoming a victim of crime. The chances of becoming a crime victim tends to add to one's fear of crime [44]. However, the perception of fear of crime can be different for the individual, influenced by the circumstances under which one experiences it [45], the design and environment of the area [46], and social and psychological factors [47]. It is important to note that the measurement of fear of crime differs across various research studies [4]. Past studies have generally evaluated fear of crime as either an emotional reaction or anxiety connected to criminal activities [48]. However, context plays a crucial role, as some people might feel fearful of crime despite being statistically less prone to victimization [4].

Numerous factors, including the physical surroundings [49], the social environment [50], victimization [51], and issues related to specific types of crime in the neighborhood [7] have been found to influence people's fear of crime in international studies. The physical environment, as noted by [49], plays an important role in shaping fear of crime, especially for those with limited mobility or physical strength [52]. This vulnerability relates to environmental disorder, like abandoned cars and vandalized property [53]. Furthermore, the broken windows theory [54] suggests that evident indicators of crime and disorder in urban areas, like broken windows and public misconduct, can lead to increased crime. This perception of disorder can heighten residents' fear of crime [55]. Makinde [56] conducted a study on the fear of crime using three variables: territoriality, surveillance and milieu. Their findings indicated correlations between these variables and the creation of a sense of safety for the public.

A study by [57] found correlations between design features, crime rates, demographics, and residents' feelings of safety. On the other hand, Weidemann et al. [58] examined nine factors related to safety, including concerns about children, strangers, and noise; the presence of friends nearby and social interactions; surveillance and loitering; the

perception of crime, vandalism, and the likelihood of being a victim of crime; contentment with privacy and control; yard space, security systems, and community watch initiatives; and perceptions of crime reporting, police presence, overall neighborhood appearance, and wayfinding.

Furthermore, another key factor to consider is the social environment, which encompasses subjective elements related to social issues and economic dynamics within families, all tied to human relationships [50]. Additionally, problems associated with crime in neighborhoods are frequent contributors to the feeling of fear of crime. The next element influencing the fear of crime is victimization. Pandiani et al. [51] highlighted the fact that direct victimization relates to individuals who have personally experienced a crime. In contrast, indirect victimization involves fear of crime stemming from hearing about crime incidents, either through the experiences of crime victims among people around the individual or from media reports [51]. Those who have directly fallen victim to a crime are often characterized by heightened feelings of fear and anxiety [44]. This heightened sense of fear makes them more cautious about crime and their personal safety [59]. On the other hand, research by [60] indicated that victimization of crime caused the avoidance of those places instead of fear of crime, among the most fearful women.

Regarding crime-specific measures, Brunson et al. [61] conducted interviews with 94 public-housing residents to measure their fear of crime by looking at physical incivilities such as levels of vandalism, graffiti, and litter in proximity to their homes, as well as social incivilities like noise levels, the presence of strangers, and illegal activities. Age and physical appropriation also played roles in shaping these perceptions. Another study [17] indicated that communities were perceived as safer when they had more children and longer-term residents.

On the contrary, our understanding is that living in gated or non-gated communities effectively decreases an individual's possibility of criminal victimization, and fear of crime remains limited [13]. Shedding light on this subject, Jalili et al. [62] conducted a study in Ekbatan, the Middle East, which showed no substantial impact on residents' fear of crime or their sense of community. The enclosed and guarded nature of these living environments often discourages residents from actively engaging in safeguarding their neighborhood, leading to a diminished sense of responsibility for their place of residence [62]. Gating is generally considered a short-term solution to the issue of crime, since it may result in social segregation. Additionally, as per the study of [63], socio-economic level, age and gender have a significant effect in understanding the fear of crime and victimization experience.

Additionally, the study by [64] indicated that there is a negative correlation between fear of crime and mental and physical wellbeing. On the other hand, ref. [33] associated fear of crime with social classes in Lahore, Pakistan, emphasizes the fact that residents with higher incomes encounter fewer crimes compared to those from lower- or middle-income backgrounds, irrespective of their residence in gated or non-gated communities. The residents' perception of insecurity is closely linked to the prevalence of crimes within their community. Additionally, residents of gated communities tend to express greater satisfaction with the implemented measures for safety and security. Interestingly, there are 25 times as many reported crimes in non-gated areas as there are in gated communities [33].

Abdullah et al. [29] revealed that residents in individual gated residential areas are more fearful than people living in non-gated communities in Malaysia. The authors associated this phenomenon with lifestyle, community relations and the surrounding environment, all of which have an impact on how people perceive crime [29]. In another study, Kim [65] found that residents of Houston, Texas, felt safer overall in gated communities (GCs) as opposed to non-gated communities (NGCs). Mohit and Abdulla [3] conducted an investigation into safety levels in both gated communities (GCs) and non-gated communities (NGCs), considering residents' experiences with crime and their perceptions. Their results revealed that residents' perception of safety is influenced by both their personal experiences of crime and those of their neighbors. Surprisingly, their study found no major variations in how residents perceive safety in GCs and NGCs. This finding contradicts the

conclusions drawn by [59,66], who asserted that people in gated communities felt safer than those in non-gated ones. As a result, the study suggests that erecting gates may not be an effective means of providing a safer living environment [3].

In contrast, Addington and Rennison [67] demonstrated that households in gated communities (GCs) had a lower incidence of burglary victimization compared to non-gated communities (NGCs). Additionally, a number of other studies have suggested that there are not any appreciable differences in general crime rates between areas that are gated and those that are not [17,19,68,69]. According to the existing literature, the design of the built environment can play an important role in shaping criminal behavior. Likewise, crime prevention strategies such as target hardening, territorial features, and enhancing natural surveillance can effectively contribute to reducing criminal incidents [3].

Thus, the ongoing debate regarding the impact of gated communities (GCs) on crime rates continues, necessitating further research across diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts to explore these associations. In light of this, the present study seeks to investigate this phenomenon in Quetta, Pakistan. Unfortunately, there is a lack of scientific literature that addresses the presence of gated communities within the urban landscape of Quetta, despite their undeniable existence throughout the city. Various gated communities in Quetta city have different security measures, ranging from simple fenced complexes to fortress-like facilities equipped with high walls, CCTV surveillance, and security guards. These communities are located across different areas, from the city center to the suburbs. It is important to note that the fear of crime can vary among different housing schemes and is not exclusively dependent upon whether a community is gated or not. The fear of crime is shaped by a number of factors, including the general safety and security measures put in place inside a particular housing scheme, the current crime rates in the surrounding areas, and residents' perceptions. Therefore, conducting in-depth research, engaging with residents, and gathering information about crime trends, security protocols, and safety initiatives within each housing scheme is important.

The research hypothesis formulated for the study includes the following:

1. Residents in gated communities tend to perceive a higher sense of safety and a lower risk of crime victimization compared to those in non-gated communities.
2. Individuals who experience high levels of fear related to crime often report poorer health conditions. Crime victims often report a decline in their sense of wellbeing and overall health.
3. Individuals with higher socio-economic status generally experience a higher number of criminal incidents and tend to have higher levels of worry about being victims of crime.

2. Materials and Methods

An exploratory research approach was used in this study, to investigate the dynamics between gated and non-gated communities. Four residential areas in Quetta were examined: two gated and two non-gated. From each category, one high-income and one middle-income area were selected, illustrating the impact of social class on crime fear. Figure 1 shows the location of study sites including Jinnah Town (high-income, gated), Chaman Society (high-income, non-gated), Arbab Town (middle-income, non-gated), and Chiltan Housing (middle-income, gated). The survey aimed to understand differences in fear of crime between gated and non-gated residential areas in Quetta.

Systematic observations of these areas were conducted on two weekdays in January 2023, from 01 a.m. to 7 p.m. The tools used for this survey include detailed field notes to capture the qualitative information, like contextual information, and the overall environment of the communities. Further, maps and drawings were used to record the information and features within the areas. Mobile cameras were used to capture visual data during observation for later analysis.

The questionnaire was designed after carefully reviewing the existing literature related to gated and non-gated communities and the safety perceptions of residents. The survey

questionnaire (5-point Likert scale), comprising 27 closed-ended questions, was divided into three segments. Information on demographics, socio-economic and household characteristics and housing features was gathered in the first section. The second section explored residents' lifestyles, including walking habits and daily activities. The third section focused on participants' crime experiences and safety perceptions within their housing societies, differentiating between high-income/low-income and gated/non-gated areas. Questions aimed to assess perceptions on three key indicators: (1) overall area environment; (2) personal experiences of crime; and (3) safety concerns. The questionnaire commenced with a brief research introduction, ensuring participant anonymity and voluntary involvement.

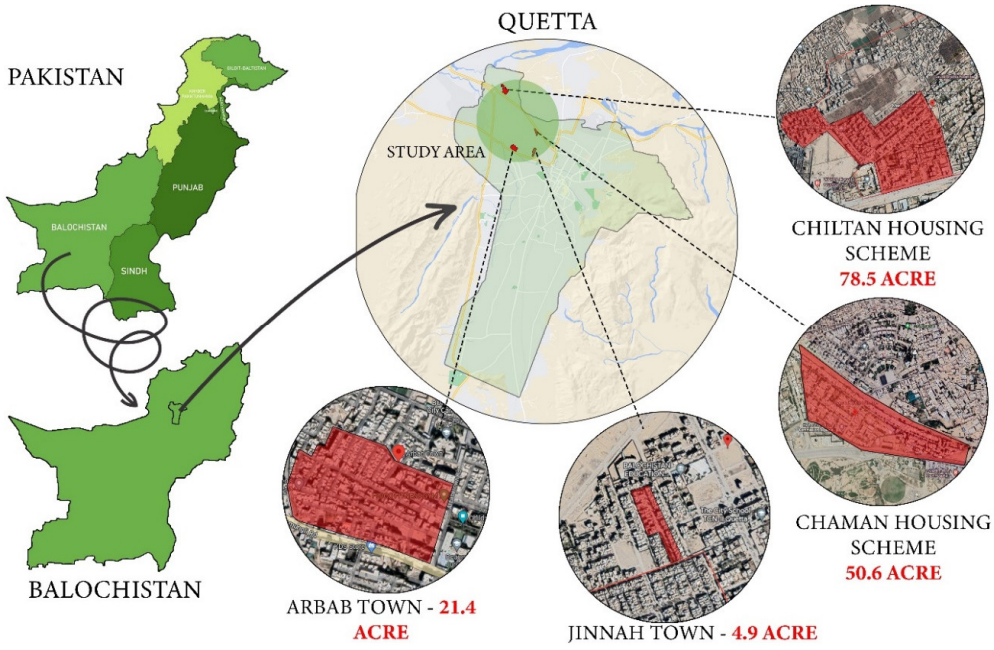


Figure 1. Case study area showing location of Quetta city in Pakistan and selected housing schemes in Quetta city.

The survey was carried out using a systematic random sample method. The second author supervised a survey team that knocked on the doors, asking residents to fill out the questionnaire. The survey was initiated with a random starting point, with a sample consisting of every third house number. Twenty-five homes from each housing scheme were selected to survey, making a total number of 100 residences. By using this method, biases resulting from differences in sample sizes can be avoided and a more balanced comparison of gated and non-gated communities can be made. Additionally, our results' statistical validity ensures that every housing scheme is fairly represented in the analysis, decreasing the possibility of sampling bias and increasing the accuracy of our findings. We also had to consider practical factors like time and resource limitations, which affected our choice to restrict the number of responders from each region. This approach helped us to use our resources more effectively and still collect enough data for analysis by maintaining a constant sample size.

Collected responses were compiled in Excel sheets and visually represented using charts like bar and pie charts. All responses underwent manual verification for completeness. Subsequently, data analysis was conducted using SPSS (v29). Initial analysis involved drawing frequency distributions of key variables. Furthermore, to describe and summarize the characteristics of the compiled data, descriptive statistics has been used, including the calculation of mean and standard deviation. In addition, correlation analysis comprised of the Pearson correlation coefficient was run to test the relationships between variables to identify any significant correlations between different factors related to fear of crime and residential characteristics.

2.1. Framing the Case Study Area

With more than a million residents, Quetta is the provincial capital of Balochistan and one of Pakistan's most populous cities. It is located at latitudes 30°03′ N to 30°27′ N and longitudes 66°–44′ E to 67°–18′ E, nestled among four mountains. The region is mountainous, with heights ranging from 1254 to 3500 m above sea level. Hence, it historically consisted of grazing land and mountains, with diverse flora and fauna. This rapidly growing city functions as a key commercial hub, especially along the main trade route leading to Afghanistan. Its strategic importance has further intensified with the advent of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), bestowing global significance on Quetta. The upcoming railway link connecting Quetta to the Gwadar port is poised to play a crucial role in facilitating future economic activities in the region. The climate in Quetta is cold and semi-arid, with large seasonal variations. Summer temperatures often range from 24 to 26 °C (75 to 79 °F), whereas winter temperatures are typically between 4 and 5 °C (39 to 41 °F).

Following the 1935 earthquake, Quetta city was originally designed to accommodate a population of 50,000–80,000. Up until 1947, Quetta remained a small town, often referred to as "small London" [70]. However, a surge in population ensued due to rural–urban migration, transforming Quetta into a bustling city. In addition, the 1980s witnessed the growth of slum areas fueled by the influx of Afghan refugees. Ongoing development of new housing schemes in various regions contributed to the expansion of settlements, solidifying Quetta's status as a densely populated city [71]. According to the 2017 census, Quetta's population surpassed one million, marked by a majority of Pashtun and Baloch residents, a Hazara minority, and smaller diverse communities, lending the city a multicultural character [24]. The city has a Pashtun majority followed by Balochis, Hazaras, Brahui, Punjabis and Muhajir people [72]. Over the past five decades, Quetta has undergone significant transformations from its original planned capacity of 50,000 residents. Presently, nearly half of the city's population resides in slums (Kachhi Abadi settlements). The ongoing development of new housing schemes poses a challenge by encroaching on valuable agricultural land [71]. However, new housing schemes are justified to cope with the challenge of crime because the city has a heightened population density, a consequence of Afghan refugee inflows and rural-to-urban migration, leading to an escalation in crime rates and terrorism [26].

The complexity of violence in Quetta is intense, characterized by complicated layers and historical dependencies. It has been significantly shaped by activities in state construction, as well as by tribal and ethnic conflicts, alongside the impacts of transnational warfare. Unprecedented violence targets the Hazara community, and Punjabi communities as well as security forces are merging with the deficiencies and inefficiencies existing in urban administration, thus forming a juxta city where state bodies are coping with internal power struggles within unstable security and governance mechanisms, while individual state actors navigate the maze of an inefficient political setting. In 2012 and 2013, the Hazara Shi'i community became the biggest target when gated communities of Hazara observed massive bombardment inside Hazara residential areas and multiple targeted gun and bomb attacks [26]. Therefore, the following paragraphs present the study of different housing areas.

2.2. Case Study 1

Jinnah Town, situated along Samungli Road, with an area of 4.9 acres, is one of the well-established and popular high-income, gated residential schemes in Quetta known for its well-planned layout, wide roads, and availability of basic amenities such as water, electricity, gas connections, and CB Public School and Degree College. Major landmarks comprise the Ziarat Samdu Agha Cemetery, $2\frac{1}{2}$ km northeast, the Akhtar Ali Stadium, $3\frac{1}{2}$ km east, and the Cantonment General Hospital, 4 km east. Jinnah Town has witnessed significant development over the years and has become a preferred choice for many residents in Quetta. This housing scheme has a diverse set of amenities, including supermarts, general stores,

ice cream shops, and a bank. It also has tea stalls/shops, restaurants, a library, and several snooker/gaming points, a public school, and a degree college. However, it is smaller in size, with 83 houses and a population of about 415 individuals with various beliefs and ethnic backgrounds (Table 1). Figure 2a depicts a perspective of a residential street, while Figure 2b illustrates a security guard positioned at the entrance of Jinnah Town.

Table 1. Details of amenities in the four chosen housing schemes, gathered from on-site inspections.

Areas/Spaces and Amenity Details			Chaman Housing: Non-Gated Housing Scheme	Arbab Town: Non-Gated Housing Scheme	Chiltan Housing: Gated Housing Scheme	Jinnah Town: Gated Housing Scheme
Public Spaces	**Commercial activities**	Shops/Tea stalls and tea shops	8	14	14	6
		Hotels/ Restaurants	2	2	1	2
		Grocery stores/ general store	1	11	16	11
		Supermarts	1	2	2	3
		Snooker and Gaming points	0	3	1	4
		Bank	0	0	1	1
		Tailer shops	0	3	2	0
		Medical stores	0	2	2	0
		Community hall	0	0	1	0
		Commercial buildings with shops on ground floor	2	0	0	0
		Mosque	1	2	2	Grand Mosque (1)
		Parks	Community Park (1)	None	3 parks	None
		Auditorium and cinema	None	None	None	None
No. of houses			200 houses	265 houses	665 houses	83 houses
Total population			3350 people	550 people	5400 people	415 people



(**a**) (**b**)

Figure 2. (**a**) View of a residential street in gated housing (Jinnah Town) (left). (**b**) Security guard at the entrance of Jinnah Town (right).

2.3. Case Study 2

Chiltan Housing represents a relatively recent gated residential development situated on the main Airport Road in Quetta. Spanning an expansive 78.5 acres and perched at an altitude of 1615 m, it benefits from a strategic position in close proximity to Khrotabad and Shaikh Manda. Prominent landmarks in the vicinity include the Red Crescent Surgical Hospital, Sheikh Mānda Railway Station, Baleli Railway Station (4 km west), and Sor Bridge (4 km south). Chiltan Housing has become a favored choice among individuals and

families seeking budget-friendly housing options. Despite being a newer development, it currently has limited infrastructure and amenities compared to more established schemes. The scheme provides various amenities, including two supermarkets, three general stores, three tailoring shops and eight other shops (Table 1). Additionally, it features 14 shops, a community hall, a medical store, a clinic, and a snooker/gaming point. Of a considerable size, Chiltan Housing comprises over 665 houses and hosts a population ranging between 5200 and 5500 individuals, representing a diverse mix of various beliefs and ethnic backgrounds. Figure 3a presents a view of a commercial street, while Figure 3b shows a residential street facing the park in the Chiltan Housing Scheme.



(**a**) (**b**)

Figure 3. (**a**) View of a commercial street in a gated housing scheme. (**b**) View of residential houses facing the park.

2.4. Case Study 3

Arbab Town, a notable non-gated residential area in Quetta, has an elevation of 1638 m and is sited neighboring to the localities of Malik Abdullah Jan and Christian Town. Major landmarks include Sheikh Mānda Railway Station, 4 km north, and the Refugees' Hospital, 4 km north. It offers a variety of housing options for middle-income people, with the total land area of 21.4 acres. The scheme is known for its well-maintained infrastructure and provision of basic facilities. Arbab Town has good connectivity to major areas of the city. It has a slightly more extensive set of amenities, with two commercial buildings that include ground-floor shops, fourteen shops, a medical store, a clinic, two restaurants, two gyms, and a snooker/gaming point. The area comprises over 265 houses and has a diverse population of over 500 individuals with various beliefs and ethnic backgrounds (Table 1). Figure 4a depicts a view of a commercial street, while Figure 4b shows a residential street in Arbab Town.



(**a**) (**b**)

Figure 4. (**a**) View of a commercial street in Arbab Town. (**b**) Residential area in Arbab Town.

2.5. Case Study 4

Chaman Housing Scheme is non-gated residential scheme in Quetta, boasting an elevation of 1675 m. This locality is conveniently located in close proximity to Kili Malak Kabir and Gulshan Town. Major landmarks include the Askary Park, Ziarat Samdu Agha Cemetery, Akhtar Ali Stadium, Jinnah Market and Cantonment General Hospital, $2\frac{1}{2}$ km southeast. It caters to the housing needs of the high-income population and covers an area

of 50.66 acres. It offers various housing options, including residential plots and houses. However, it is important to consider the infrastructure, amenities, and access to basic facilities when evaluating this scheme. It features a modest array of amenities including shops, hotels, and a grocery store. The area accommodates over 200 houses and has a population exceeding 350 individuals (Table 1). Figure 5a depicts a view of a residential street, while Figure 5b illustrates a commercial street in the Chaman Housing Scheme.



(**a**) (**b**)

Figure 5. (**a**) View of a residential street. (**b**) View of a commercial street in the Chaman Housing Scheme.

3. Results

The study focuses on evaluating fear of crime in relation to health and socio-economic status across two gated and two non-gated communities in Quetta, Pakistan. It specifically aims to explore the disparities in gated versus non-gated housing schemes in Quetta. The findings and discussions are presented on an area-by-area basis, providing detailed insights into the unique characteristics of each community, Jinnah Town, Arbab Town, Chiltan Housing, and Chaman Housing. Each housing scheme has its unique features and facilities, with gated communities like Chiltan and Jinnah Town offering a broader range of amenities compared to the non-gated Chaman and Arbab Town. The population density and diversity also varies, with Chiltan housing being the most populous and diverse. Additionally, while all areas have mosques, only Chaman and Jinnah Town have parks, and none of the schemes features an auditorium or cinema (Table 1). Respondent sample size, and a descriptive analysis of indicators related to demography and economic activities, are presented in Table 2.

Gated communities are typically characterized by controlled access points and the presence of security personnel (see Figure 2b), aiming to provide enhanced security and privacy for residents. Common features include surveillance systems (in terms of security guards, security patrols, and restricted entry), which collectively contribute to a reduced fear of crime. The presence of physical barriers and safety measures fosters a perception of a safer environment, offering residents greater peace of mind. However, despite living in gated communities, respondents express concerns about their health, and 64% of them feel insecure at night. Chiltan Housing, a middle-class gated community selected as a case study, shows evidence of micro-segregation and hesitance among respondents to participate in outdoor activities due to safety concerns. This is reinforced by the fact that 64% of the respondents express a sense of insecurity at night, despite residing in a gated community. Adding to these safety worries, a significant 48% of the community's population is very worried about becoming victims of crime, and 36% have reported being victimized several times. These findings collectively portray a picture of a community struggling with health and safety issues, despite being a gated area that typically promises enhanced security.

In Jinnah Town, an upper-class gated community, a significant 88% of the respondents report not feeling healthy, and a similar high percentage, 84%, tend to avoid morning or evening walks. This avoidance of outdoor activities might be linked to safety concerns, underscored by the fact that 48% of the respondents have experienced being victims of crime multiple times. Despite these concerning health and crime statistics, a notable majority of 68% still feel safe during nighttime. This paradoxical situation highlights a unique aspect of living in Jinnah Town, where, despite health concerns and a high incidence

of crime, and growing micro-segregation, the measures in place in this gated community still instill a sense of security among its respondents, especially at night.

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of indicators assessed for demography and economic activities (n = 100).

Case Studies		Chaman Housing	Arbab Town	Chiltan Housing	Jinnah Town	Total		
		Non-Gated	Non-Gated	Gated	Gated			
No. of Respondents		25	25	25	25	100		
		Respondents (%)				Total (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age	16–24	4%	60%	24%	36%	33%	2.39	1.197
	25–34	12%	16%	28%	20%	19%		
	35–44	36%	24%	16%	28%	26%		
	45–54	44%	0%	8%	8%	20%		
	55–64	4%	0%	4%	0%	2%		
Marital Status	Single	4%	16%	20%	0%	10%	1.97	0.502
	Married	88%	76%	80%	100%	86%		
	Divorced	4%	4%	0%	0%	2%		
	Widowed	4%	-	0%	0%	1%		
	Other	-	4%	0%	0%	1%		
Economic Activities	Employed	24%	68%	0%	36%	34%	2.49	1.259
	Unemployed	0%	16%	8%	20%	11%		
	Self-employed	60%	4%	44%	16%	31%		
	Student	8%	28%	40%	24%	20%		
	Retired	0%	4%	8%	4%	4%		
Income Status	≤20,000	0%	0%	16%	0%	4%	4.36	1.345
	20–30 k	4%	20%	8%	0%	8%		
	30–40 k	4%	28%	4%	0%	11%		
	40–50 k	4%	32%	8%	8%	16%		
	>50 k	84%	16%	40%	84%	52%		
	Refused	4%	4%	24%	8%	10%		
	Other	12%	8%	16%	8%	11%		

Non-gated communities are more open and approachable than gated communities because they do not have physical barriers or regulated entrance points. Because of the perceived lack of protection, those who live in open neighborhoods frequently have a greater fear of crime than those who live in gated communities. However, the actual level of fear can vary, based on the overall safety and security conditions of the area. In the Arbab Town area (middle class, non-gated) the statistics indicate that in the middle-class, non-gated area (Arbab Town) a significant majority of respondents (76%) perceive their neighborhood as healthy, and engage in morning or evening walks (76%). Yet, concerns regarding nighttime safety are evident, with 32% feeling unsafe compared to 68% who feel safe in their neighborhood. The community shows a relatively balanced distribution of income across three categories (20%, 40%, and 40%). Furthermore, a significant link is observed between residents' sense of health in their neighborhood and their propensity to participate in walks, with 76% of those feeling healthy also engaging in walking activities. Additionally, there is a connection between feeling secure at night and a lower level of worry about crime victimization, as 68% of those feeling safe at night report being not-very or not-at-all concerned about crime (see Figure 6).

Chaman Housing, an upper-class non-gated community, presents a mixed scenario in terms of resident lifestyle and safety perceptions. On one hand, a majority of respondents (84%) report being in good health and actively participate in morning or evening walks, suggesting a positive and active lifestyle within the community. On the other hand, a significant portion of these respondents, 68%, express concerns about safety at night, indicating underlying safety issues despite the area's upper-class status. Additionally, the

community shows an uneven income distribution, with a notable 84% of its respondents falling into the higher income bracket of earning above 50,000 per month. This disparity in income levels could potentially contribute to the varying perceptions of safety and lifestyle within the area.

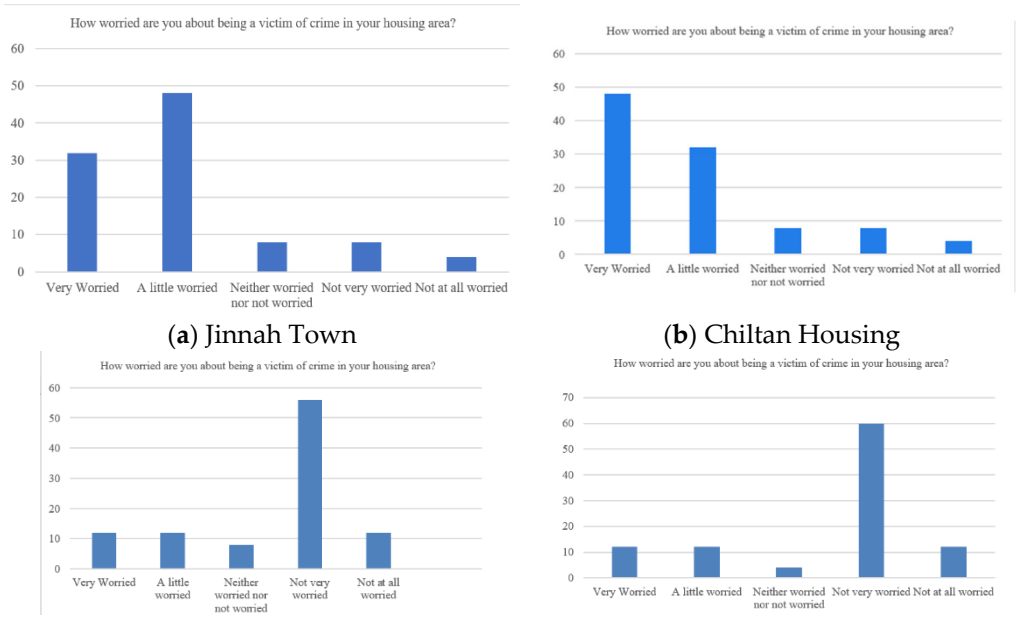


Figure 6. Perception of safety in four selected housing schemes.

Table 3 shows the relationships among various factors within gated and non-gated communities. In gated housing, the correlation between concern about crime and the actual experience of crime victimization shows a negative correlation (−0.371, *p*-value = 0.008). Additionally, the propensity to go for walks and the worry about crime in gated community housing also shows a negative correlation (−0.675, *p*-value = 0.000). However, a negative correlation that is not statistically significant was found between crime victimization experience and feeling safe at night (−0.223, *p*-value = 0.120). On the other hand, a strong positive correlation exists between being a victim of crime in the last 24 months and both feeling unsafe and reduced outdoor activity. This indicates that victimization significantly impacts safety perception and lifestyle (0.582, *p*-value = 0.000). Interestingly, there are no significant correlations between health conditions or feeling healthy in the neighborhood and other variables. Contradicting the third hypothesis, there is a negative correlation (−0.314, *p*-value = 0.026) that indicates people of a higher socio-economic class are less likely to worry about becoming victims of crime in their gated community.

In contrast, in non-gated housing schemes, the correlations are generally weaker, though there are still significant findings. There is a significant negative relationship (−0.399, *p*-value = 0.004) between being a victim of any crime in the last 24 months or witnessing a crime and feeling safe at nighttime in the neighborhood. Additionally, there is a significant negative relationship (−0.280, *p*-value = 0.049) between being a victim of any crime in the last 24 months (or witnessing a crime) and health condition. When testing the third hypothesis, the correlation between the worry about being a victim of crime and social income status (−0.342, *p*-value = 0.015) supports the idea. This statistically significant result indicates a moderate inverse relationship between socio-economic status and worry about being a victim of crime in the non-gated housing area.

Table 3. Correlation between safety perception and crime victimization, impact of fear of crime on health and well-being and socio-economic status in gated and non-gated communities (n = 100).

		Safety Perception and Crime Victimization			Fear of Crime on Health and Well-Being			Socio-Eco. Status	Employment Status	Housing Schemes
		A1	**A2**	**A3**	**A4**	**A5**	**A6**	**A7**	**A8**	***n* = 100**
A1	Pearson Correlation		−0.371 **	−0.223	−0.675 **	0.060	0.092	0.171	−0.314 *	Gated Housing schemes
	Significance (2-tailed)		0.008	0.120	0.000	0.681	0.525	0.234	0.026	
A2	Pearson Correlation	−0.371 **		0.454 **	0.582 **	0.072	−0.080	−0.215	0.087	
	Significance (2-tailed)	0.008		0.001	0.000	0.618	0.583	0.134	0.547	
A1	Pearson Correlation		−0.143	−0.071	0.239	−0.093	−0.202	−0.188	−0.342 *	Non-Gated Housing schemes
	Significance (2-tailed)		0.323	0.625	0.095	0.520	0.159	0.191	0.015	
A2	Pearson Correlation	−0.143		−0.034	0.280 *	0.123	0.399 **	−0.072	0.063	
	Significance (2-tailed)	0.323		0.817	0.049	0.396	0.004	0.621	0.664	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). A1—How worried are you about being a victim of crime in your housing area? A2—Have you been a victim of any crime in the last 24 months? A3—Do you feel safe at nighttime in your neighborhood? A4—Do You go out for a morning/ evening walk in your neighborhood? A5—How is your health condition in general? A6—Do you feel healthy in your neighborhood? A7—Which income group do you belong to? A8—Which of the following best describe your employment status?

4. Discussion of the Results

Respondents of both gated and non-gated communities show varying levels of concern about crime, regardless of whether this reflects their actual experience of crime victimization. Interestingly, those who are more worried tend to feel less safe. This finding fully aligns with the first hypothesis, which suggests that residents living in more segregated communities are more likely to feel safe and less likely to become victims of crime than those of non-gated communities. These results directly contradict the findings of [29], who reported that residents of gated residential areas show higher levels of fear than those people living in non-gated communities.

Additionally, a slight trend was observed in the relationship between the inclination to go for walks and the worry about crime in gated community housing, which highlighted the fact that increased worry about crime correlates with a reduced likelihood of going out for walks. This finding contrasts with the findings presented by Gul et al. [73], who argued that perception of crime does not prevent people from walking in their neighborhoods. Moreover, the evidence linking crime victimization experience and feeling safe at night is not substantial. Surprisingly, we have not found any other studies to confirm this result, as most of the studies primarily focus on perceived safety rather than crime victimization [60].

Overall, our respondent's responses support the idea of that people have been victims of crime in the last 24 months and as a result they feel unsafe and unengaged in reduced outdoor activity. These findings are consistent with a previous study conducted by [44], which identified the fact that individuals who have directly fallen victim to a crime are often characterized by heightened feelings of fear and anxiety. Additionally, Gul et al. [74] found that increased perception of crime is associated with decreased physical activity.

Interestingly, the correlations between health conditions or feeling healthy in the neighborhood and other variables are not significant. This suggests that personal health perceptions are less influenced by safety concerns or victimization experiences within this context. Therefore, while safety concerns and victimization may affect aspects like outdoor activities and feelings of safety, they do not have a direct influence on how residents

perceive their health status or sense of well-being within their community. These results are somewhat in line with the research conducted in New Zealand by [64], which found that negative mental- and physical-health effects are more strongly correlated with the fear of crime than actual crime rates. This aligns with the idea that perceptions of safety and fear of crime can significantly impact individuals' health outcomes, regardless of actual crime rates in the neighborhood. In light of these insights, it is suggested that improving safety measures can positively impact residents' willingness to engage in outdoor activities and overall community well-being, and can strengthen community ties.

People with higher socio-economic status are less likely to worry about becoming victims of crime in their gated community. Contradicting the third hypothesis, this means that as socio-economic status increases, worry about being a victim of crime decreases. This implies that individuals with higher incomes are less concerned about crime victimization, which goes against the hypothesis. Therefore, the text provided does not support the hypothesis but rather presents evidence to the contrary. This research aligns with earlier contributions by [33], which indicated that residents with higher incomes experience fewer crimes compared to those from lower- or middle-income backgrounds, regardless of whether they live in gated or non-gated communities.

In non-gated housing schemes, the relation between being a victim of any crime or witnessing a crime and feeling safe at nighttime in the neighborhood could be attributed to increased safety measures or a psychological adaptation within gated communities. This finding supports the first hypothesis and emphasizes the impact of personal or observed victimization on safety perceptions. Furthermore, the relationship between being a victim of any crime or witnessing a crime and health condition highlights how different types of housing can affect perceptions of safety and well-being. Experiencing or witnessing a crime in the last 24 months is associated with poor health condition, implying that crime exposure can directly affect physical or psychological well-being [64]. Additionally, the correlation between the worry about being a victim of crime and social income status supports the third hypothesis. This contradicts previous findings of [63], which are that the residents of high-income communities have a higher level of worry about property crimes and personal victimization. In our study, higher socio-economic status is associated with less worry about crime, possibly due to better access to healthcare, healthier lifestyles, or living in safer, better-off neighborhoods.

The study's results demonstrate the connection between safety perception, socio-economic status, and micro-segregation in urban environments. It reveals that worry about crime and the actual experience of crime victimization affect people negatively. Residents of gated communities who express higher concern about safety are less likely to feel safe, supporting the hypothesis that people living in more-segregated neighborhoods typically feel safer [15] and are less likely to become victims of crime. However, this contradicts previous research suggesting that homeowners in gated residential areas are more fearful than those in non-gated communities. The study also suggests that increased concern about crime is associated with reduced outdoor activity. This highlights the influence of safety perceptions on lifestyle choices. Moreover, individuals with higher socio-economic status are less likely to worry about becoming victims of crime in their gated community, indicating a further divide based on socio-economic class. This self-segregation can further increase existing divides within communities, leading to the formation of micro-segregated enclaves based on perceived safety. As a result, neighborhoods or districts may create social stratification [30], as individuals search for locations where they feel safer and more comfortable.

5. Conclusions

Gated communities, by their nature, offer a sense of exclusivity and controlled access, which can impact the sense of community cohesion. Non-gated communities, being more open, might foster greater interaction and a sense of belonging among respondents, though this comes with its own set of safety concerns.

The results generally corroborate the theory that people who live in gated communities feel more secure and are less likely to become victims of crime than people who live in non-gated communities. The tendency to go for walks when worrying about crime, as well as the negative correlations between fear about crime and actual victimization, demonstrate how citizens' perceptions of safety affect their actions and way of life. Additionally, the significant impact of crime victimization experiences on feelings of safety and outdoor activity highlights the intense psychological and behavioral consequences of crime within gated communities.

On the contrary, in non-gated housing schemes, the correlations are generally weaker, though still significant. The negative correlation between experiencing or witnessing crime and feeling safe at nighttime as well as crime exposure and poorer health conditions aligns with the hypothesis, indicating that personal or observed victimization significantly impacts safety perceptions. Similarly, the correlation between crime exposure and poorer health conditions supports the notion that crime can have detrimental effects on individuals' physical and psychological well-being. In non-gated communities, micro-segregation may manifest differently, with respondents from diverse socio-economic backgrounds often living in closer proximity and potentially experiencing more intermingling of social groups.

Lastly, socio-economic status plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions of crime and overall safety. It also contributes to micro-segregation by providing information about the different behaviors of people based on their specific micro-area locations. Moreover, this factor has a significant impact on the concerns and experiences of respondents in their respective communities. Surprisingly, evidence suggests that individuals with higher socio-economic status in gated communities exhibit lower levels of worry about crime victimization, contrary to expectation. This highlights the complexity of socio-economic factors in shaping perceptions of safety within different housing contexts.

The data presented here face several potential limitations and biases that should be considered. Firstly, the relatively small sample size of 100 respondents might not accurately reflect the broader population of all social classes in a gated and non-gated neighborhood. It is important to note that the research design is exploratory in nature, with the goal of understanding community dynamics rather than drawing firm conclusions. Given that our study is exploratory in nature, our intention was to present a descriptive analysis of the data to identify potential patterns and relationships. This approach allows for a holistic understanding of the data, rather than focusing solely on statistically significant findings. Secondly, we would like to make it clear that we opted for a uniform sampling approach to support fairness and consistency across all study areas. This method involved selecting an equal number of respondents from each area. By doing so, we aimed to mitigate potential biases arise from uneven sample sizes and facilitate a more equitable comparison between gated and non-gated communities. Furthermore, maintaining an equal representation of respondents from each study area supports the statistical validity of our findings. It ensures that every area contributes equally to the analysis, thereby reducing the risk of sampling bias and increasing the reliability of our results. Additionally, practical considerations, such as time and resource constraints, played a role in our decision to adhere to a consistent sample size across study areas. This approach allowed us to manage resources efficiently while still obtaining enough data for analysis. Moreover, the reliance on self-reported measures for health and safety perceptions could introduce individual biases or inaccuracies, due to subjective interpretation. Similarly, the self-reported nature of the data also raises concerns about response bias or inaccuracies due to memory recall issues. Additionally, the absence of numerical values in the data restricts the scope of statistical analysis that can be performed. Another prominent limitation is the lack of information regarding the total population in each housing area, which impedes the ability to gauge the representativeness of the sample. Furthermore, there are no concrete data on the actual number of crimes in these areas, which adds another layer of uncertainty to the findings. These factors collectively suggest that while the data provide valuable insights, they should be interpreted with caution, considering these potential constraints.

Future studies could concentrate on identifying the key elements that influence perceptions of nighttime safety, delving into why certain individuals feel more vulnerable to crime, and investigating how income levels affect health and safety perceptions within neighborhoods. These data could prove valuable for guiding decision-making processes or shaping policies, particularly by emphasizing the need to tackle safety issues and encourage health-enhancing activities like walking, in these communities. The findings highlight the importance of addressing safety concerns and promoting health-enhancing activities in both gated and non-gated communities. For gated communities, this might involve evaluating the effectiveness of existing security measures and reassessing the impact of micro-segregation on safety and community dynamics, while for non-gated areas, enhancing safety could involve community-based initiatives or improved public safety infrastructure. Additionally, the findings could inform the allocation of resources towards crime prevention measures in the area, ensuring a more targeted and effective approach to enhancing community safety and well-being.

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