

## **Examining Housing Values for young families in Kuwait: The Case of Almutlaa City**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to investigate Almutlaa City residents' housing needs, as well as their housing values, which influence their residential design. This study uses an online survey questionnaire as part of a quantitative research approach. Participants were notified of the survey via social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram. A total of two hundred and nineteen (N= 219) Almutlaa residents took part in this study. Kuwaiti people assigned to build homes in Almutlaa City were invited to take part in this study using a purposive sampling technique. The findings of this study revealed that interior design facilities play an important role in Almutlaa housing design. The top economic value in the study is healthy housing, while the top social value for the study participants is a home that provides freedom. The top two psychological values for families in Almutlaa City are comfortable and beautiful dwellings. This paper provides useful information about the factors that can assist practitioners, interior designers, and educational programs in designing for young families in Kuwait.

**Keywords:** Public Housing; Almutlaa City, Urban housing; Household Needs; Housing Design

## قياس القيم السكنية للأسر الشابة في الكويت: مدينة المطلاع نموذجاً

### الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى معرفة حاجات ومتطلبات والقيم السكنية لسكان مدينة المطلاع السكنية وتأثيرها على تصميم منازلهم. لذلك تم عمل هذه الدراسة للمساهمة في توجيه سياسة الإسكان في الكويت وتوفير قاعدة علمية وعملية يمكن أن تدعم صناعة العديد من القرارات الإسكانية في الكويت وتساهم في توفير المساكن الملائمة بشكل أفضل للأسر الكويتية المستحقة لها. شارك في هذه الدراسة مئتان وتسعة عشرة (٢١٩) مشارك من أهالي مدينة المطلاع. استخدم في هذه الدراسة المنهج الكمي للبيانات التي تم جمعها من خلال استخدام استبانة الكترونية تم إرسالها إلى عينة مستهدفة تتكون من أسر كويتية تم تخصيص لهم مساكن في مدينة المطلاع. تبين نتائج الدراسة أن التصميم الداخلي للمسكن يلعب دوراً مهماً في تشكيل المساكن في مدينة المطلاع. من أهم القيم السكنية الاقتصادية في الدراسة هي المسكن الصحي الذي تدخله أشعة الشمس والضوء الطبيعي والهواء النقي. بينما وجدت الدراسة أن أعلى قيمة اجتماعية هي المسكن الموفر للحرية، بينما كان أعلى القيم النفسية الخاصة بالسكن هما المسكن المريح والمسكن الجميل. قدم الباحثان في نهاية الدراسة مجموعة من التوصيات والتطبيقات لأقسام التصميم الداخلي والعمارة في الجامعات الكويتية، المؤسسة العامة للرعاية السكنية، بالإضافة إلى القطاعين العام والخاص في دولة الكويت.

**الكلمات الافتتاحية:** البيوت الحكومية، مدينة المطلاع، احتياجات الأسرة، تصميم البيت، الكويت

## 1. Introduction/Background

Adjusting housing costs is a common challenge for builders and construction companies because families are always looking for affordable homes with basic amenities (Hafez et al., 2021; Glaeser & Gyourko, 2017). In Kuwait, housing is provided by individuals, corporate systems including private institutions, commercial enterprises, and the government. Kuwait runs a large housing project to provide low- and middle-income people with affordable housing so they can benefit economically and socially. The housing provided by the government does not meet demand; most people must wait a long time, and the rising cost of construction materials is preventing the government from quickly completing pending projects (Al-Nakib, 2014). The cost of housing provided by commercial enterprises, on the other hand, may be infeasible for the urban low-income families (Parviz & Nabil, 2004). These houses are usually built to a standard plan aiming to provide housing at a reasonable cost to every socio-economic level of society. However, this type of housing is beyond the reach of the urban low-income families not only because of cost considerations but also because planners do not represent their interests. According to previous studies, the government and construction companies did not consider the social, economic, and cultural needs of the local people when building these houses (Alawadi, 1979). Builders frequently use models and standards that are unrelated to the needs and expectations of residents (Al-Khalat, 1988), so understanding the needs of residents is critical.

Architects and interior designers are globally facing challenges in understanding clients' needs. The housing (both interior and exterior) requirements vary from one customer to the other, and designers must deal with local cultures, regulations, judgement, experiences, and environmental conditions (Postma et al., 2012). The public housing program in Kuwait shows one of the main challenges of sustainability due to building unsuitable houses that do not meet citizens' needs and requirements (Mahgoub, 2009). Apart from the customer needs, the hot, arid, and harsh environment also bring additional costs which may not be considered during the project's initial planning phase (Al-Khalat, 1988). Housing issues in Kuwait are well researched for many decades but most of the studies have focused on external issues such as government support, project costs, long waiting period, housing quality etc. (Parviz & Nabil, 2004; Koushki et al., 2005). End-users

usually modify government housing projects shortly after it was delivered to them, resulting in additional costs and efforts.

Since the 1950s, Kuwait has become one of the Gulf States to provide housing welfare to its citizens through the establishment of government agencies and authorities. The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) is responsible for distributing governmental housing neighborhoods and units (PAHW, 2021; Soliman, 2017). The PAHW provides two types of public services, which are finished housing units, and housing plots. Every Kuwaiti was able to receive KD 70,000 cash and 450 sq meters of land for construction of their house, now the waiting period is increased to more than 12 years (Koushki, 2005). The rapid boom in housing needs has attracted the attention of both qualified and non-qualified contractors to enter the business. Due to the incapability of inexperienced contractor's interior designing, housing quality, project completion, material usage is becoming a big issue (Hafez, 2001). Soliman (2017) mentioned that the lack of communication between the different government units caused a delay in housing project completion. Almutlaa City is one of the housing projects that was designed to offer housing plots for citizens so they can design and construct those units by themselves (NewKuwait, 2022). It is Kuwait's largest housing project, with plans to provide homes for 400,000 people in 12 suburbs, as well as schools, mosques, mini-markets, and healthcare facilities (Kuwait Times, 2020).

According to studies conducted by Alawadi (1979) and Al-Khalat (1988), construction companies did not prioritize locals' social, cultural, and family needs in housing projects. The goal of this survey is to learn more about how Almutlaa City residents' expectations influence residential design. It also investigates the most important housing values for Almutlaa City residents. This study will help the construction industry and the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) in Kuwait to find out the housing values, needs and wants of households desiring to inhabit this city. The outcome is intended to help architects, interior designers, urban planners, and educators in better understanding the relationship between the housing design motives and the housing industry.

This study is expected to add an essential value to the Kuwait Vision of 2035, which aims to transform Kuwait into a world-class financial and commercial center, through several pillars, one of which is creating a

sustainable living environment (Newkuwait, 2019). This ensures the availability of living accommodation through environmentally sound resources and tactics, which includes mega housing welfare for citizens such as the Almutlaa Residential City project. Hence, this study will help the PAHW, architects and interior designers to better construct housing units maximizing their efficiency which would help in promoting the economic growth in the state of Kuwait for achieving the 2035 vision.

### **Operational Definitions**

For the purpose of this study, several operational definitions were adopted. Values are defined as “desirable transitional goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity.” (Schwartz, 1994). Housing values in this study refer to the social, psychological, cultural, and economic values such: health, safety, comfort, convenience, human relations, privacy, economy, and social status; as well as the cultural meanings of home and home ownership.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Designing and building housing units depend on several factors (Soliman, 2017). Housing preferences selection is a multi-criteria decision-making problem that requires a great understanding of personal interest and external factors (Moghimi & Jusan, 2015). Several authors have listed intrinsic factors that influence housing design such as floor area, the number of rooms, location of bathrooms, bedrooms, interior decoration, natural lighting etc. (Opoku & Abdul-Muhmin, 2010; Fierro et al., 2009) and extrinsic attributes such as garden area, outdoor space, exterior space (Sidi, 2010; Wang & Li, 2006). The sociocultural requirement of the family is an important factor shaping the housing unit. A study conducted by Alnajadah (2008) has found that youngsters in Kuwait give most importance to housing values for families, after ownership, are hospitality and comfort. Mahgoub (2009) asserted that one of the main reasons for a citizen to modify governmental housing units is meeting the family's social and cultural needs. Therefore, investigating the current needs for citizens in a certain area would reduce housing modifications due to meeting most of the household needs. Literature related to various familial needs and their association to housing is discussed below.

## **Lifestyle and Personal Choices on Housing Design**

Studies in this regard essentially consider housing at a much higher platform than mere provision for shelter. The shelter can be a mere commodity for survival, but a house or a home plays a great role in the existence of a human being in society along with assuring survival (Sidi, 2010; United Nations, 1974). When demographic characteristics are insufficient to explain consumer behavior, lifestyle is one of the most popular concepts in understanding consumer behavior (Lee et al., 2007). Since the early 1990s lifestyle concept is used to understand the selection of housing, some authors have considered location, structural type, tenure factors in this analysis. In the conceptual framework proposed by Beamish et al. (2001) explains the relationship between lifestyle on housing preferences and values. Lee, et al. (2007). have expanded on this theoretical framework by collecting data from (210) people in a survey study. The findings of this study show that lifestyle has a significant impact on homeownership, location, community considerations, and future housing plans. Furthermore, lifestyle has a moderate impact on interior design preferences and housing activities. The lifestyle of a person is primarily influenced by factors like age, family type and size, social class, income, values etc. (Dean, 1953).

The lifestyle of a person changes over time. Al-Mumin et al., (2003) studied lifestyle effects on electricity consumption in Kuwaiti houses. Electricity consumption is increasing continuously for the last four decades, which shows the significant effect of the western lifestyle on traditional Kuwaiti families. They require additional storage/facilities washing area, a TV area, air conditioning requirements all over the home. In a study conducted by Irani and Armstrong, (2016) architects working in large construction companies were interviewed, and the findings reveal that the new generation's lifestyle expects contemporary furniture and interior designs, increased independence, and a focus on cultural values and traditional lifestyles in new housing. The lifestyle of a person is said to be a unique factor, but it is undoubtedly shaped by demographic factors like age and household size and socioeconomic factors like income and education (Beamish et al., 2001). According to a recent study from Iran, there is growing concern about hygiene factors in housing, and access to open-air, ventilation, natural lighting, and fresh water is becoming increasingly important (Zarrabi et al., 2021). The Covid-19 virus has impacted people's

awareness of sewage, sanitation systems and it has also impacted the lifestyle and eating habits of people (Serrano-Jiménez, 2020). A better understanding of changing lifestyles in society is crucial in determining the nature and essential components of housing in a locality. Most Kuwaitis want their homes to reflect traditional Kuwaiti architecture and have some iconic building images in mind when designing the exteriors of their homes (Mahgoub, 2007).

### **Familial Social and Cultural Needs**

The basic criteria for evaluating housing needs are family and cultural needs. Throughout the family life cycle, members of the household continuously assess their housing conditions and determine their needs. This behavior was explained by the theories proposed by Svend Riemer (1943), Morris and Winter, (1975). Cultural norms are influenced by religion, locality, and community in which the residents are living in. The income and real-life situations also influence cultural needs. A study conducted by Chiu (2004) selects social and cultural sustainability as two important concepts in sustainable housing, as they converge and diverge at different points. The study makes use of the results of the survey method concludes by stating the difficulties in framing comprehensive and universal standards of evaluation in diverse sociocultural and geographic contexts of human settlements. El-Haddad, (2003) tried to collect the data from major gulf countries and his study concluded that urbanization and modernization has a dominant effect on the housing needs of Arabian families for becoming nuclear, and more emphasis is given to independent and contemporary housing. One study indicates that people living with parents often plan to include a larger dwelling space for family events such as marriage, small events, and childbearing events etc. (Mulder & Lauster, 2010). A recent study on young people's perception of housing indicates that young people are inclined to use a full house for themselves instead of using portion of the house for renting purposes (Mackie, 2006). Offering hospitality to relatives and others is a part of Arab culture and there should be a separate room for hosting the guests to maintain the privacy of family members. So, the need of offering hospitality to friends, family, relatives mandate a separate room as reported by Sobh and Belk (2011).

This is in line with the findings of Lau et al., (2006) who identified that housing structures are often designed without considering the specific

familial sociocultural needs, thereby making the structure less than optimal for its inhabitants. The societal changes that have happened over time have influenced the housing requirements and understanding these are essential for efficient housing design. However, there are fewer studies that studied how hospitality and accommodation are received by guests and relatives, more research in this direction helps to improve the quality of hospitality offered to guests (Sobh & Belk, 2010).

### **Family Economic Value**

Housing is directly associated with income levels. The higher the income earning, the more the household plans to get a bigger house with all amenities and increased privacy (Sidi, 2010). Housing costs are determined by a variety of factors, including savings, lifestyle choices, eating habits, expenditures, income sources, and financing. A study by Kang & Choi (2004) scrutinizes the economic logic of apartment unit designs using two basic approaches. The functional approach considers an apartment as a home where people live, and the economic approach considers it as a property highlighting its economic value. Of the parameters involved in the study, use-value corresponds to the characteristics the apartment exhibits as a home and exchange value are related to its economic aspects as property. The study points out that the physical characteristics of the apartment are fundamentally affected by the use-value and the exchange value. It arrives at two basic conclusions. Firstly, the apartment plan is structured in such a way to increase the effective area, enhancing the property value. Secondly, factors that are found to increase the effective area have more actual and potential exchange value. While the study (Kang & Choi, 2004) is limited to South Korea, the results agree with those conducted in other geographic regions. For example, Sidi (2010) affirms that elements of apartment planning must be analyzed with the economic factors associated. Even if the dwellers raise complaints about their respective houses, they seem to have achieved satisfaction from the economic value of the dwelling as properties or assets.

### **Familial Psychological Values**

Social scientists use different methods in assessing the choices and requirements of people in designing tailor-made dwelling places for them. Studies have shown that families respond well to spaces catering to their requirements and housing conditions have an impact on the wellness, quality of life, and even overall health of the inhabitants (Rioux, 2005). This could

be in part due to the design of the house, as well as the neighborhood. A housing project with access to educational, socioeconomic, and political centers and one that encourages interaction among its residents are more likely to enhance the wellbeing of inhabitants as per the review carried out by Gibson et al. (2011). Also, arrangement of personal space such as sleeping space i.e., bedrooms, reading space, play area, Tv watching area needs to be separate and spacious and calm to maintain privacy and comfort (Koppe, 1955). Some studies also suggest that people with lower income levels buy furniture and interior objects for utilitarian reasons, people with high incomes pay much attention to the grandeur and contemporary looks of interior designing and furnishing (Dunn, 2000). The conceptual framework proposed by Bratt, (2002) shows a significant effect of physical attributes of housing, neighborhoods conditions on family wellbeing. The safety and quality of neighborhoods, affordable and stable, secure housing locations can lead to a healthy living environment.

The psychological impact of housing on a family, specifically children, is well understood. Housing design that promotes safety and social interactions have been linked to better child development, better adolescent mental health, and an overall better standard of living for the residents. This is especially true when considering low- and medium-income households (Coley et al., 2013).

### **Literature Gap**

A comprehensive review of literature relevant to the proposed study highlights certain important aspects to be considered. Conceptually modern housing in the present scenario is much more than what is traditionally understood to be a house in an evolving society. Defining it as a mere space for shelter is far behind from understanding the present socio-political, economic, and cultural understanding of the concept. Housing in the present context must inculcate values related to lifestyle, family values, recreations, health factors, child and geriatric care and everything modern lifestyle demands (Tomáš, 2019).

The literature reviewed in this section highlights the importance of considering both the emotional and economic aspects of living in designing houses as housing affects humans and human needs define houses. Extensive research is possible in this field making use of multiple techniques in designing housing projects which would enhance the living quality of people

simultaneously fulfilling their emotional and economic needs (Gewirtz, 2007). Utilizing modern technology can make the planning and implementation process easier as well (Benros & Duarte, 2009). It is expected that interior designs and architectural frameworks involved in housing projects in Kuwait can benefit constructively from such future-oriented studies.

### 3. Methodology

The main purpose of this research is to identify the housing preferences of residents of Kuwait City. Since the majority of the residential construction projects are currently happening in Almutlaa City, we have taken this area as our sample in this study. A quantitative research approach was employed in the study by using a survey questionnaire. The survey was carefully designed to obtain the interior and exterior choices of the residents in their new housing plan. A purposive sampling technique was used, only Almutlaa's future residents were invited to participate. The size of the population is approximately 28,000 householders. The data was collected over one month from August 15<sup>th</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup> of 2022.

### Geography and Demographics of the Study

The State of Kuwait is in South-West Asia, on the North-Western tip of the Arabian Gulf bordered by the Arabian Gulf, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Republic of Iraq. The total area of the country is around 17,818 SQ. KM. Kuwait is divided into six governorates, which are Alasimah, Hawalli, Farwaniya, Mubarak Alkabeer, Ahmadi, and Jahra. As of December 2018, the total population in Kuwait was around 4,621,000 and Kuwaitis were 1.403 million (PACI, 2019). There is a total of 220,888 Kuwaiti families in the country with an average of seven (7) members per family (PACI, 2019). As of 18th June 2019, the number of residential requests at the Public Authority for Housing and Welfare waiting for public housing ranged from years 1985 to 2019 a total of 93,583 requests waiting for public housing.

### Participants

The targeted population in this study is Kuwaiti citizens that have been allocated in Almutlaa City. The targeted population was retrieved from

a) social media platforms such as Instagram and Tweeter which have accounts dedicated to Almutlaa City Residents, b) personal connections.

### **Research Instrument**

The survey contained 3 sections, which are household needs and wants, family values [economic, social, and psychological], and demographic information [gender, age, household number, property sector location]. Since the mother language of the participants is Arabic, the researchers developed an Arabic version of the survey (see appendix A). The instrument was adopted by previously published research (Alnajadah, 2008).

### **Data Collection**

The data was collected via an online survey questionnaire that was distributed to the participants. The survey was developed through the Survey Monkey website and distributed to the participants through their phone messages, using WhatsApp and Telegram applications. Participants' contact information was gathered through third-party non-profit organizations that are responsible for Almutlaa communications. Participants were invited to take part in the survey, and they were informed that their participation was voluntary, and their identities were completely anonymous.

### **Data analysis**

Quantitative data analysis was employed in this study. The quantitative method is used to seek answers to close-ended and partially close-ended questions. The Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to code and analyze the collected data. The researchers analyzed the data by illustrating the mean values, frequencies, and percentages for each item in the survey.

### **Validity**

Validity is a measure of the accuracy of an instrument for measuring the construct it is intended to measure. All measuring instruments used in this study were validated to increase their precision. Face validity of the questionnaire was conducted among two professors working in the field of social sciences. In addition, a pilot testing was conducted among a group of ten (10) persons to check the readability of the research instruments. The pilot testing ensured the readability and clarity of the instrument statements.

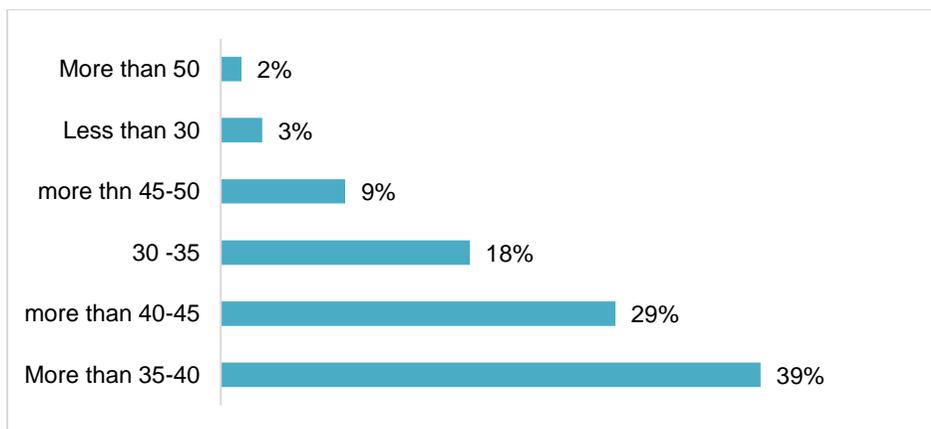
After conducting the pilot testing, the researchers refined the instrument based on the input provided by the pilot study respondents.

#### 4. Findings

##### Demographics

A total of two hundred and nineteen responses were received (N=219), about 56% of them were males (N= 123) and around 44% were female (N= 96). Most of the participants aged 35- 40 years old (39%), followed by 40-45 years old (29%), followed by 30-35 years old (18%), followed by 45-50 years old (9%), followed by participants less than 30 years old (3%), and participants above 50 years old (2%) (figure.1).

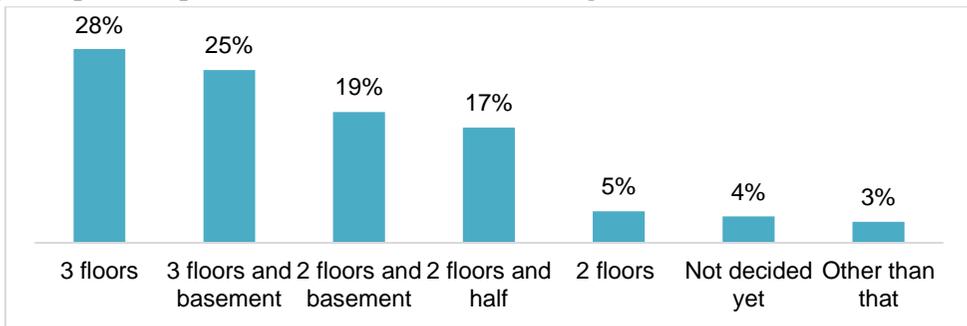
The total of the household of the participants was by 2-4 persons (49%), followed 5-7 persons (37%), followed by 10-8 persons (13%), followed by more than 10 persons (1%). The highest total household income, including spouse and husband incomes, is 1001-2000 Kuwaiti dinar (36%), followed by 2001-3000 Kuwaiti dinar (33%), followed by 3001-4000 Kuwaiti dinar (17%), followed by more than 4000 Kuwaiti dinars (8%), around (4%) of the participants do not know, and participants less than 1000 Kuwaiti dinar were (2%).



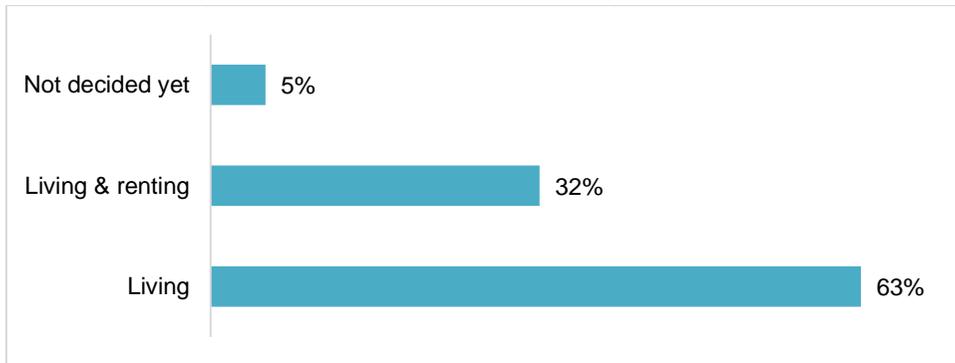
**Figure 1. The age group of participants.**

Most of the participants of the study prefer to build their houses as a 3-floors house (28%), followed by 3-floors and basement (25%), followed by 2-floors and basement (19%), followed by 2-floors and a half-floor (17%), followed by 2-floors only (5%), and (4%) of the participants have decided yet

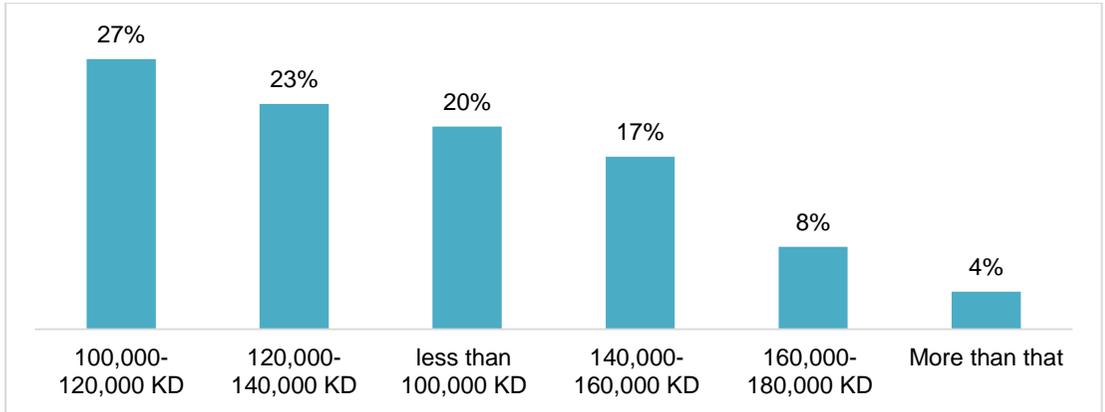
while (3%) of the respondents responded other than that (figure 2). The study participants have planned to design their houses as personal residents (63%), for both personal residents and investments (32%), while (5%) of the participants have not decided yet (figure 3). Most of the participants anticipate the total cost for building their residents will be 100,000-120,000 Kuwaiti dinar (KD) (27%), followed by 120,000-140,000 KD. (23%), followed by less than 100,000 KD (20%), followed by 140,000-160,000 KD (17%), followed by 160,000-180,000 KD (8%), while (4%) of the participants expected to cost more than that (figure 4).



**Figure 2. Preferences for housing size in floors.**

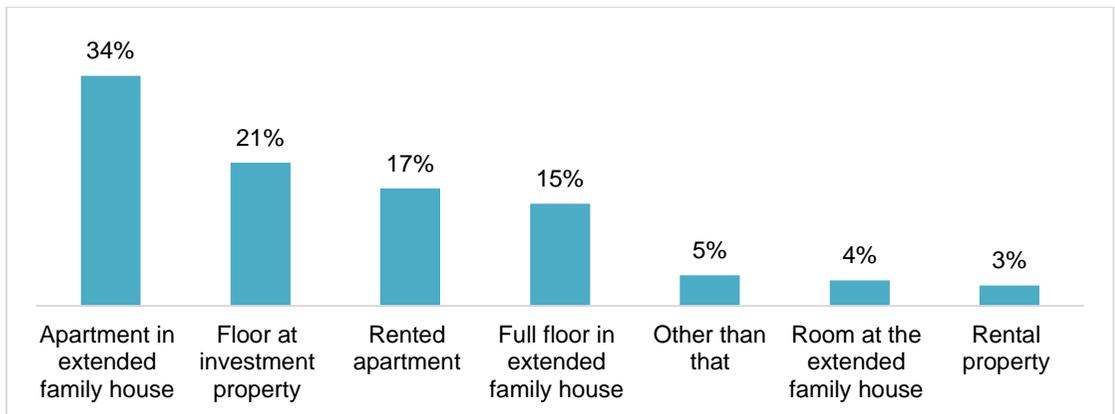


**Figure 3. Participants' decisions on their housing**

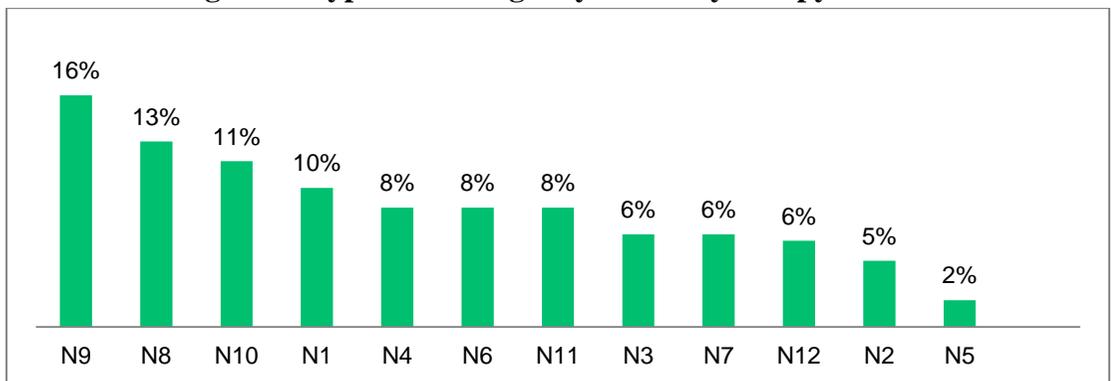


**Figure 4. Participant's anticipation of the cost for building their residents**

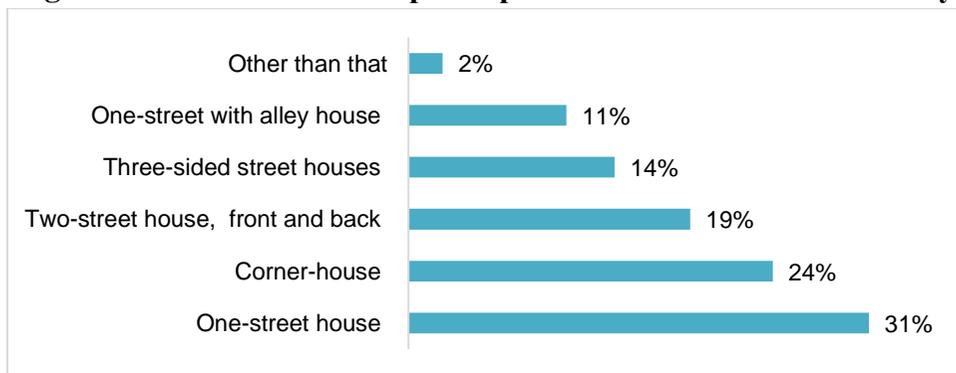
When asking participants about their current living residents, the top responses of the study participants is an apartment in an extended family house (34%), followed by living in the full floor at investment property (21%), followed by living in a rented apartment (17%), followed by living in the full floor in the extended family house (15%), followed by living in a room at the extended family house (4%), followed by living in a rental property (٤%), while only (5%) reported other than that (figure 5). When asking participants in which area of Almutlaa the location of their land, the highest number of the respondents were from block N9 (16%), followed by Block N8 (13%), followed by Block N10 (11%), followed by N1 (10%), followed by Block N4 (8%), followed by Block N6 (8%), followed by Block N11 (8%), followed by Block N3 (6%), followed by Block N7 (6%), followed by Block N12 (6%), followed by Block N2 (5%), and lastly living in Block N5 (2%) (figure 6). When asking participants about the position of their houses, the highest responses were a one-street house (31%), followed by corner-house (24%), followed by the two-street house, one on the front and one on the back (19%), three-sided street houses (14%), followed by a one-street with alley house (11%), while only (2%) reported other than that (figure 7).



**Figure 5. Type of housing they currently occupy**



**Figure 6. The location of the participants' lands inside Almutlaa City**

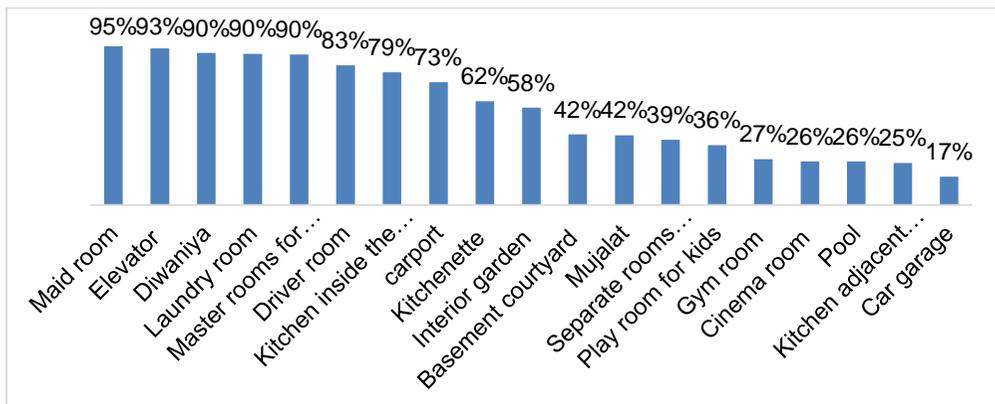


**Figure 7. Positions of participants' lands/houses**

### Needs and Wants of Almutlaa City residents

When asking participants, what are the essential requirements and spaces that they hope to include in their house, participants reported that the highest essential space is the home servant room and bathroom (95%),

followed by elevators (93%), followed by *Dewanya*, which is the male guest room, (90%), laundry room (90%), master rooms for all spouses and their children (90%), followed by driver room and its facilities (83%), followed by full kitchen inside the house (79%), followed by carport (73%), followed by kitchenette (62%), followed by the interior garden (58%), followed by basement courtyard (42%), *Mujalat*, which is a male unformal reception room with floor seating, (42%), followed by separated rooms for the boys and girls with bathrooms (39%), followed by playroom for kids (36%), followed by gym room (27%), followed by theatre room (26%), similarly swinging pool (26%), full kitchen adjacent to the house (25%), and lastly car garage (17%) (Figure. 8).



**Figure 8. Essential requirements and spaces needed by participants**

### Family Economic Value

The finding of the study shows that the top economic values of housing for participants are healthy housing (48%), followed by excellent residential location (37%), followed by economic housing (10%), and lastly expandable dwelling (5%) (table 1)

**Table 1. Economic values of housing**

#	Rate	Housing Value	N	Percentage
1	1	Healthy housing: clean house with daylight excess and fresh air.	64	48%
2	2	Excellent residential location: this residence is located near most of the important public amenities for me and my family.	50	37%
3	3	Economic housing: the expenses of this housing are proportional to the total monthly income of its residents.	13	10%
4	4	Expandable dwelling: a dwelling in which people can build additional rooms and facilities when needed.	7	5%

**Family Social Value**

The social value of housing for Almutlaa residents is a home that provides freedom (46%), followed by a family dwelling (21%), followed by a dwelling prepared for amusement and entertainment (18%), followed by a dwelling whose residents feel equal with others (6%), followed by a suitable residence for hospitality (5%), and a socially respected dwelling (5%) (Table 2).

**Table 2. Social values of housing**

#	Rate	Housing Value	N	Percentage
1	1	A home that provides freedom: a home that disposes of its people freely and without imposed external controls.	67	46%
2	2	Family dwelling: a comprehensive dwelling for all family members and encouraging their interaction with each other.	31	21%
3	3	A dwelling prepared for amusement and entertainment: a dwelling that contains all the means of entertainment and the development of hobbies to ensure that one can spend the most enjoyable leisure time when inside a dwelling.	26	18%
4	4	A dwelling whose residents feel equal with	9	6%

		others: a dwelling that preserves its people's sense of their human value and makes them feel their importance and equality with others from their neighbors and the people of their community		
5	5	A suitable residence for hospitality: this residence provides its residents and visitors with the appropriate place and facilities for the success of all social activities held in it.	7	5%
6	5	A socially respected dwelling: a dwelling that its people are proud of and admired by others to distinguish it from others.	7	5%

### Family Psychological Value

The finding of the study illustrated that the top psychological value for families is comfortable dwelling (31%), followed by a beautiful dwelling (28%), followed by a home prepared for comfort (17%), followed by safe housing, (9%), followed by a reassuring dwelling (7%), a dwelling prepared for personal seclusion (6%), and lastly a comfortable dwelling for the mind (2%) (see table 3).

**Table3. Psychological Value of housing**

#	Rate	Housing Value	N	Percentage
١	١	Comfortable dwelling: a dwelling that provides you and your family with all the reasons for psychological and physical comfort.	56	31%
٢	٢	Beautiful dwelling: a beautiful dwelling from inside and out in its colors and design.	51	28%
٣	٣	A home prepared for comfort: an elegant and organized home that contains all the necessary electrical appliances and tools to serve you and your family and to reduce everyone's fatigue in cleaning and managing it.	30	17%
٤	٤	Safe housing: This housing provides its residents with security and protection from all evils and fears.	16	9%

٥	٥	A reassuring dwelling: a dwelling that belongs to and whose family is assured of it, and they are not afraid of losing it by demolishing it or being expelled from it.	13	7%
٦	٦	A dwelling prepared for personal seclusion: the inhabitants of this dwelling can seclude themselves to rest and do what they want without being disturbed or intrusive by one of the dwellers.	10	6%
٧	٧	A comfortable dwelling for the mind: a dwelling in which none of its inhabitants is disturbed.	3	2%

### *Family housing values*

For the study, the researchers gathered, grouped, and ranged the housing values based on the percentages of the responses to illustrate the importance of each value in comparison with other values. As can be seen in the table (4), the top first housing related value is healthy housing (48%), followed by a home that provides freedom (46%), followed by excellent residential location (37%), and followed by a comfortable dwelling (31%). after that, a beautiful dwelling (28%), a family dwelling (21%), a dwelling prepared for amusement and entertainment (18%), a home prepared for comfort (17%), economic housing (10%), and safe housing (9%). after those values, a reassuring dwelling (7%), a dwelling whose residents feel equal with others (6%), and equally valued a dwelling prepared for personal seclusion (6%). Three equally important values are expandable dwelling (5%), a suitable residence for hospitality (5%), and a socially respected dwelling (5%), followed by a comfortable dwelling for the mind (2%).

**Table 4. Housing values for the family**

#	Rate	Housing value	N	Percentage
١	١	Healthy housing	64	48%
٢	٢	A home that provides freedom	67	46%
٣	٣	Excellent residential location	50	37%
٤	٤	Comfortable dwelling	56	31%
٥	٥	Beautiful dwelling	51	28%

٦	٦	Family dwelling	31	21%
٧	٧	A dwelling prepared for amusement and entertainment	26	18%
٨	٨	A home prepared for comfort	30	17%
٩	٩	Economic housing	13	10%
١٠	١٠	Safe housing	16	9%
١١	١١	A reassuring dwelling	13	7%
١٢	١٢	A dwelling whose residents feel equal with others	9	6%
١٣	١٢Rep.	A dwelling prepared for personal seclusion	10	6%
١٤	١٣	Expandable dwelling	7	5%
١٥	١٣Rep.	A suitable residence for hospitality	7	5%
١٦	١٣ Rep.	A socially respected dwelling	7	5%
١٧	١٤	A comfortable dwelling for the mind	3	2%

## 5. Discussions

According to the findings of the study, the top five (5) housing values for Almutlaa City residents are healthy housing, a home that provides independence, an ideal residential location, a comfortable dwelling, and a beautiful dwelling. Three of them are related to the role of interior designers in the built environment, as they are partly responsible for granting residents freedom while also making the residence attractive and comfortable. This demonstrates the necessity of collaborating with interior designers from the beginning of the house-building process. This differs from what (Alnajadah, 2008) discovered in his research, which revealed that owned housing, safe housing, healthy housing, a house designed for pleasure and entertainment, and family living were the top five housing values. This illustrates the behavioral changed and in housing values for citizens over time.

The top five (5) critical areas and requirements for study participants are a servant room and bathroom, followed by elevators, Dewanya, and laundry room, according to the findings. This could be acceptable because many of the participants live in extended family homes with limited privacy and share service rooms with family members. Because the existing homes

were built 30 years ago, several extended family homes lack elevators or were not meant to accommodate multiple family servants. In addition, many extended family homes include a communal washroom rather than a separate laundry room for each apartment. This is expected to be uncomfortable for families, or sometimes they would facilitate the kitchen or one of the bathrooms to use the washer and dryer. Keeping the ongoing pandemic in mind, some studies (Zarrabi et al., 2021) have already shown that people now paying more attention to personal hygiene so a washroom facility might be necessary to maintain the hygiene.

It's worth noting that more than half of the participants are millennials or people between the ages of 23 and 40 years. This age group has requirements and desires that are very different from their counterparts. According to the data, most of the participants have between one and five children. As a result, creating a two-story and half-house that meets their dwelling demands will suffice. It is important to note that about half of the study participants live in their extended family houses which may have influenced their social value toward freedom. This justifies that freedom is highly admired by the study participants as extended family dwelling does not provide full freedom for its residents.

## **6. Recommendations and Implications**

The recommendations extracted from this study are summarized as follows:

- As the top two housing values for young families are healthy housing and house provides freedom, architects and interior designers must take into consideration in their design natural lights, fresh air, and appropriate ventilation of the house. Also, freedom in the housing can be emphasized through designing separate master suites for each person in the house or designing separate zone for each family member.
- Beautiful housing, family-oriented housing, entertained housing, and comfortable housing are four (4) of the most significant values associated with interior designer work. This underlines the significance of the interior designer in achieving household housing values. Because Almutlaa City families place a low value on hospitality, architects and interior designers should reduce the size of the male and female reception areas as much as possible and provide solutions for male reception

locations such as placing Diwaniya on the rooftop or in the backyard to take advantage of the designed house for their essential needs.

- Because approximately one-third of the participants intend to reside and rent their homes, it is critical to research the rental trend in Almutlaa City and the return on investment before opting to construct the third floor for renting. The findings of the study can help PAHW in designing the future public housing programs in the state of Kuwait.

## 7. Limitations and future scope

This research does have some limitations. We collected data via an online questionnaire due to the ongoing epidemic, which resulted in a lower response rate. This study may have missed important information that was not covered in the questionnaire due to the lack of physical interaction with individuals or focus groups. The findings of the study represent a snapshot of Almutlaa City housing values, demands, and requirements in Kuwait at a specific time, which may differ if the survey were conducted in other decades with a larger sample size.

Future research studies should be conducted among Almutlaa City residents through using a qualitative method including face-to-face interviews, focus groups, or content analysis for their housing floorplans. This kind of analysis would provide deep information about the household cultures, values and wants. Researchers can investigate the main challenges that young Kuwaitis face when building their homes in the future. In addition, further research should be conducted with architects, interior designers, and owners of engineering consulting firms to learn more about the factors that influence Kuwaiti households when designing their homes, as well as the housing values of their clients from their perspective. Further research should investigate the housing values, needs, and desires of Kuwaiti citizens aged 18 to 50 in other Kuwaiti cities.

## 8. Conclusion

Housing policies and protocols in Kuwait are based on the economic, social, and psychological values of housing. Housing values, demographic data, family beliefs, thoughts, needs, and requirements are all important

factors to consider when building a home, according to the study. Through the design of public dwellings, Kuwait's housing sector, particularly PAHW, would benefit from investigating the housing values and requirements suitable for young families. The public housing programs in Kuwait's design dwellings, as shown by Mahgoub (2009) does not meet citizens' needs and requirements. Due to issues with house planning, material selection, and lack of communication, citizens and the government have suffered financial and non-financial losses. This research demonstrates some key practical recommendations for meeting residents' housing needs by incorporating their personal, cultural, social, and economic needs into the planning and construction of sanctioned houses.

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