

Gated Communities (GCs): A Physical Pattern of Social Segregation

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ABSTRACT Gated Communities are becoming of a great significance in Jordan recently, particularly in the high-income areas of Amman. Al-Andalusia is the first Gated Community project in Jordan, which appeared for the purpose of creating a fully enclosed service compound for some specific Jordanian families and other categories of people classes. The present study discusses the theoretical background that affected the project design to evaluate the designers' intentions in revealing the social interaction between the community residents. The study also investigates the reasons behind residents' preference of living in a Gated Community. The results show that fear of crime and security factor are the most significant parameters affecting people's choice. Qualitative research methods, such as questionnaires and interviews will be used for both; residents of Al Andalusia and those who live in non-gated neighborhoods. The study suggests that Gated Community (GCs) concept is influenced by the resident's desire for security, class segregation, and a modern private atmosphere. It is also noted that the conditions of the surrounding urban area is an important factor affecting the GCs development. Hence, the increasing in crime rates, unhealthy settlements, urban congestion, growing squatter habitations and the lack of facilities are major reasons affecting the existence of GCs. As concluded from the observations GCs are becoming the symbol of social segregation (between insiders and outsiders), because of its gates, perimeter fences and security guards. All these elements that act like barriers, are usually erected to keep outsiders out, which seems to effectively segregate the rich from the poor families.