COMPARISON OF CHILDHOOD AND CURRENT RESIDENTIAL LOCATION SATISFACTION AFTER RELOCATION OR STAYING

Wahid Ramadhan Sisan*, Hanson Endra Kusuma**
*) Master Student, Department of Architecture, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia
**) Department of Architecture, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia
e-mail: wahid12sisan@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study is based on the premise that residential satisfaction in adulthood may be influenced by satisfaction with childhood residential locations. Residential location is not only a physical setting but also part of the interactive process that shapes an individual's relationship with their environment through sensory experience, memory, and perception. Data were collected through open-ended questionnaires distributed to adult respondents from various demographic and geographic backgrounds. The responses were qualitatively analyzed using open coding, axial coding, and selective coding methods. The results revealed a significant correlation between satisfaction with childhood residential locations and satisfaction with current residences after relocation or staying, including housing location choices. These findings provide valuable insights for urban planners in designing residential environments that accommodate the diverse preferences of the community. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of considering childhood experiences in understanding future housing location needs.

Keywords: Experience, Location, Perception, Qualitative, Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Individual satisfaction levels at residential locations can be influenced by several factors, such as proximity to the workplace, access to public transportation, housing facilities, and more (Kalesaran et al., 2013). Beyond these factors, an individual's background—such as childhood experiences in specific locations—also shapes their perceptions of what constitutes a comfortable residential environment (Altman et al., 1980).

Residential experiences significantly impact individual preferences in selecting desired living locations (Wijaya et al., 2018). Individuals who had positive childhood residential experiences—such as access to public facilities, safe neighborhoods,

strong social relationships, and a pleasant atmosphere—tend to seek residential locations with similar characteristics as adults (Pramova et al., 2022) Conversely, those with less favorable experiences—such as noisy environments, limited facilities, or unsupportive social surroundings—often seek residences that offer improvements in these aspects (Putra et al., 2015; Sibarani et al., 2023).

These past experiences shape individuals' perceptions of what is considered ideal in a residential location, thereby influencing their decisions in choosing a place that aligns with their needs and desires. Research on the correlation between satisfaction levels at childhood residences and perceptions of residential location choices emphasizes the factors affecting these decisions. Initial perceptions of an environment significantly influence preferences and views of future residential locations (Widya et al., 2023).

However, there is still a lack of in-depth studies exploring whether residential satisfaction developed during childhood continues to influence satisfaction in adulthood—particularly in the context of relocation or staying in the same place. This gap limits our understanding of how place attachment and familiarity influence adult residential satisfaction (Tang et al., 2022; Widya et al., 2023; Yumnahanin & Rukayah, 2023).

This study addresses this gap by examining the extent to which satisfaction with childhood residential locations affects satisfaction with current residential locations in adulthood. It also investigates whether individuals who remain in their childhood residential areas tend to report higher satisfaction levels than those who relocate.

Therefore, the guiding research questions are:
1. To what extent does satisfaction with childhood residence influence satisfaction with current residence in adulthood?
2. Does remaining in the same residential location lead to higher satisfaction compared to relocating?

THEORY / RESEARCH METHODS

Familiarity Concept

Familiarity can be understood as the sensation or feeling of recognizing a situation or environment, even without explicit knowledge of when or where the experience previously occurred. Several mechanisms explain familiarity, involving implicit memory and split perception, or separate processing of perception.

Implicit Memory Explanation: Familiarity is often triggered by unconscious prior experiences that relate to elements of the current situation. A person may encounter a situation that is visually, auditorily, or contextually like past experiences, which are then associated with existing memories without the ability to identify them specifically. This phenomenon frequently results in a strong sense of familiarity, even though the individual cannot recall the original triggering event (Brown & Marsh, 2010).

Single-Element Familiarity: Familiarity can sometimes arise from a single element connected to other memories. For instance, one element in a new environment

such as a lamp or a particular piece of furniture may evoke a sense of familiarity if it resembles something from previous memories. This phenomenon suggests that familiarity can emerge from implicit associations formed between specific elements in the environment (Brown & Marsh, 2010).

Gestalt Familiarity Explanation: Familiarity may also stem from a general similarity or the "overall framework" of the current situation resembling a previously experienced one. For example, the layout of an environment resembling another layout, such as a campus or tourist destination, can evoke a sense of familiarity without requiring detailed similarities (Brown & Marsh, 2010).

This concept of familiarity is closely related to how residential environments influence satisfaction levels. Specific elements or layouts that are familiar and align with an individual's prior experiences can enhance comfort and satisfaction in each environment (Reski & Tampubolon, 2019; Yustika et al., 2022).

Sense of place and Place Attachment Theory

Sense of place is a concept that studies the relationship between humans and their residential environment (Clark, 2012). It refers to the emotional and cognitive meanings attached to a place and how individuals interpret their environment. This meaning is shaped through personal experiences and collective cultural narratives. According to Cross (2001), sense of place is a multidimensional construct that includes six types of relationships: biographical, spiritual, ideological, narrative, commodified, and dependent (Table 1).

Table 1. Relationship to Place

Relationship	Type of Bond	Process
Biographical	Historical and familial	Being born in and living in a place, develops over time
Spiritual	Emotional, Intangible	Feeling a sense of belonging, simply felt rather than created
Ideological	Moral and Ethical	Living according to moral guidelines for human responsibility to place, guidelines may be religious or secular
Narrative	Mythical	Learning about a place through stories, including creation myths, family histories, political accounts, and fictional accounts
Commodified	Cognitive (based on choice and desirability)	Choosing a place based a list of desirable traits and lifestyle preferences, comparison of actual places with ideal
Dependent	Material	Constrained by lack of choice, dependency on another person or economic opportunity

Source: Jenifer Cross, 2001

Each type of relationship reflects the various ways people form connections with their residential environment. Biographical relationships, for instance, are rooted in personal history and long-term residence, while commodity-based relationships arise when people select housing locations based on ideal attributes. Dependency

relationships reflect constrained housing choices due to external factors such as employment or family (Cross, 2001).

More broadly, these forms of attachment influence residents' perception and acceptance of their living environment. Research by Severcan (2019) highlights how children's satisfaction with mass housing is shaped by their ability to develop emotional ties and familiarity with their surroundings—illustrating the importance of place attachment in early life stages. Similarly, (Wang & Wang, 2020) found that residential satisfaction post-relocation in Beijing was significantly influenced by previous attachment to the original environment, revealing how emotional bonds and perceived place continuity affect long-term satisfaction and adaptation.

Place attachment plays a critical role in shaping identity and the evaluation of new environments, particularly in the context of relocation or residential change. The strength of this attachment can either enhance satisfaction or create resistance toward new places. Thus, understanding place attachment is essential to explain why some individuals remain satisfied after relocating, while others seek continuity by staying in their childhood environment.

In the context of this study, these theoretical frameworks explain how familiarity and place attachment shaped during childhood can influence adult perceptions of residential satisfaction, both for those who relocate and those who remain in the same place.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was carried out through an online questionnaire, which was distributed using a non-random sampling method employing a snowball technique. Initially, the questionnaire was sent to one individual, who then forwarded it to others (Kumar, 2011). This method facilitated a diverse respondent pool. The questionnaire included questions about the respondent's demographic profile, followed by inquiries regarding their residential location, satisfaction levels, and the factors contributing to their satisfaction.

The respondents in this study were diverse in terms of gender, with 61% male and 39% female. The sample also encompassed different generational cohorts, with 76% of respondents identifying as Gen Z and 24% as Gen Y. The marital and parental status of the respondents varied, with 14% married with children, 3% married without children, and 83% unmarried. Geographically, respondents were classified into three categories: coastal (15 respondents), coastal-mountainous areas (36 respondents), and mountainous regions (20 respondents).

Data Analysis Methods

This study employs a three-stage analysis process: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Creswell, 2013). Open coding involves segmenting meaning from open-ended questionnaire responses and categorizing them into several groups. The final result of this analysis is a correspondence analysis between fixed variables and their influencing factors. Axial coding examines the relationships between variables through correspondence analysis across different analytical units, revealing the

significance of the analysis. The outcome of this stage is a dendrogram showing the cluster relationships among categories. Selective coding formulates a final hypothesis from these relationships, with the hypothesis diagram serving as the study's conclusion, illustrating the significance of the relationship between childhood residence satisfaction levels and satisfaction in current residence locations.

In the axial coding process, an additional column is added by combining satisfaction levels with residential location, allowing this analysis to explore the relationship between satisfaction levels in childhood residential locations and current residential locations, as well as desired residential preferences. The satisfaction scale includes five levels: the lower the level (1), the more dissatisfied, and the higher the level (5), the more satisfied.

To support the quantitative interpretation of relationships between variables, JMP statistical software was used to perform correspondence analysis, hierarchical cluster analysis, and chi-square tests. These tools helped confirm the significance of observed correlations and visualize relational groupings among satisfaction levels and residential location types.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study uses open-ended questions, allowing respondents to answer with argumentative opinions, reflecting their responses and experiences. Therefore, it requires segmenting meaning, coding, subcategories, and categories to simplify and organize these answers. One respondent's answer can fall into two to four segments, depending on the reasons for residential location satisfaction.

The data from the open-ended questionnaire is processed through three different open coding stages: open coding for childhood residential satisfaction reasons and open coding for current residential satisfaction reasons. In the open coding for childhood residential satisfaction reasons, responses are grouped into 10 categories that reflect reasons for satisfaction in childhood residences as illustrated in Figure 1. The most frequently cited factors are accessibility, natural and physical environment, and social environment. This suggests that during childhood, satisfaction is largely influenced by how freely children can interact with their surroundings such as walkable environments, greenery, and social interaction within the neighborhood.

This aligns with the biographical and narrative dimensions of *sense of place*, where personal history and stories about one's environment contribute to emotional bonding (Cross, 2001). The dominance of natural elements and safety also reinforces place attachment as described by Severcan (2019), who emphasized children's reliance on sensory and environmental familiarity in forming emotional bonds with place. These factors indicate that satisfaction in childhood is not purely functional but deeply tied to experiential and emotional factors, which may persist into adulthood and shape later preferences.
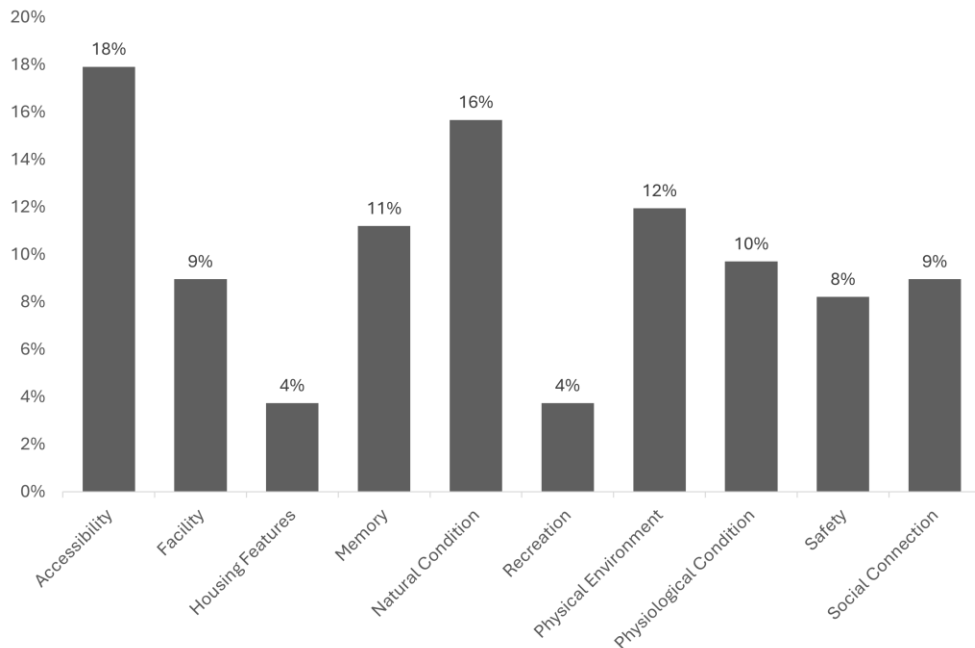
Figure 1. Satisfaction Categories for Childhood Residence

In the open coding process for current residential satisfaction, responses were categorized into 11 categories. Figure 2 shows that the physical environment, public facilities and accessibility are the three most frequently mentioned factors contributing to satisfaction in current residential locations. These include elements such as clean air, greenery, organized spatial layout, and access to amenities like education, healthcare, and transportation.

This change highlights how functional and practical considerations become more prominent as individuals take on responsibilities such as work, family, and mobility. The importance of housing comfort and workplace proximity reflects an increased demand for efficiency and convenience in everyday life.

Nevertheless, elements such as the natural environment and social interactions, though less frequently mentioned than in childhood, remain relevant in shaping residential satisfaction. Their continued presence suggests that early experiences, especially satisfaction during childhood, still influence adult preferences, even if they are expressed through more practical considerations. This supports findings by (Wang & Wang, 2020), who argue that adult residential satisfaction is influenced by the degree of continuity or emotional resemblance to past environments.
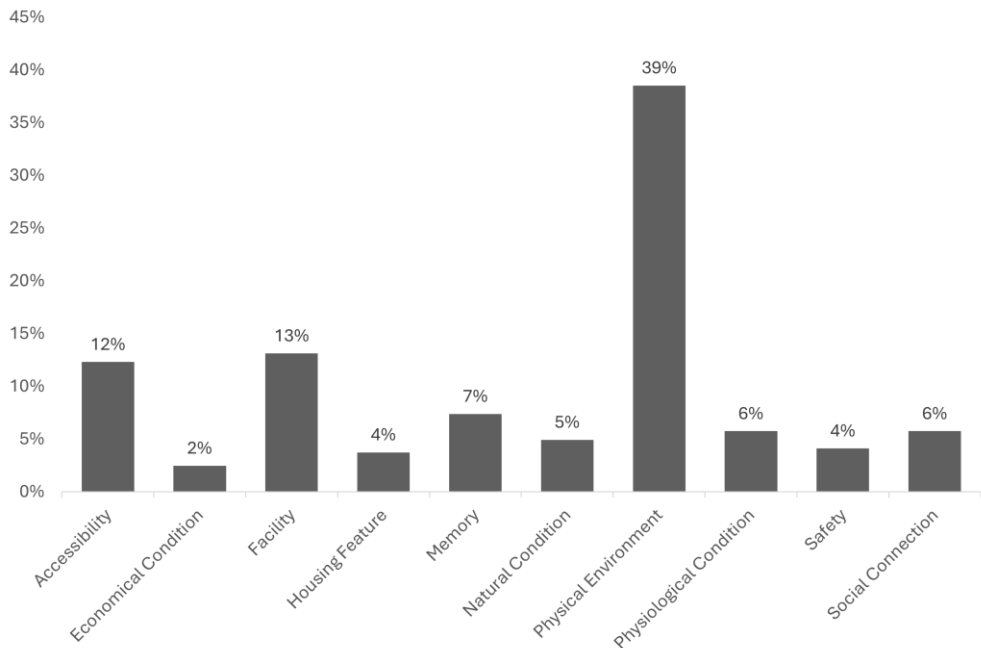
Figure 2. Satisfaction Categories for Current Residence

The consistent presence of categories such as accessibility, safety, and the physical or natural environment across both childhood and current residential satisfaction suggests that certain foundational values in residential location preferences remain stable over time. While the relative importance of these factors may shift depending on life stage and evolving needs, their continued relevance indicates a lasting influence of early residential experiences on how individuals perceive and evaluate satisfaction with their current residential locations.

Correspondence Analysis of Childhood Residential Satisfaction and Current Residential Satisfaction

This correspondence analysis was conducted to understand the relationship between satisfaction at childhood residential locations and satisfaction at current residential locations. The residential locations in this study are categorized into three geographical types: Coastline Area (CA), Between Coast and Mountains (BCM), and Mountains (MT). The explanation is as follows:
1. Coastline Area (CA) includes areas directly bordering the coast or sea with elevations ranging from 0 to 300 meters above sea level (mdpl).
2. Between Coast and Mountains (BCM) refers to transitional areas between lowland coastal areas and mountain regions, often described as uplands or hills with elevations from 300 to 700 mdpl.
3. Mountains (MT) represents locations situated at elevations above 700 mdpl.

7

Figure 3 shows a mosaic plot used to visualize the relationship between two qualitative variables: childhood residential location satisfaction and current residential location satisfaction. In a mosaic plot, the width of each column represents the proportion of data within one variable, indicating the number of respondents in each category, the wider the column, the larger the group. The height of each stack within the column reflects the distribution of the second variable, where taller segments indicate a higher proportion of respondents in that satisfaction category.
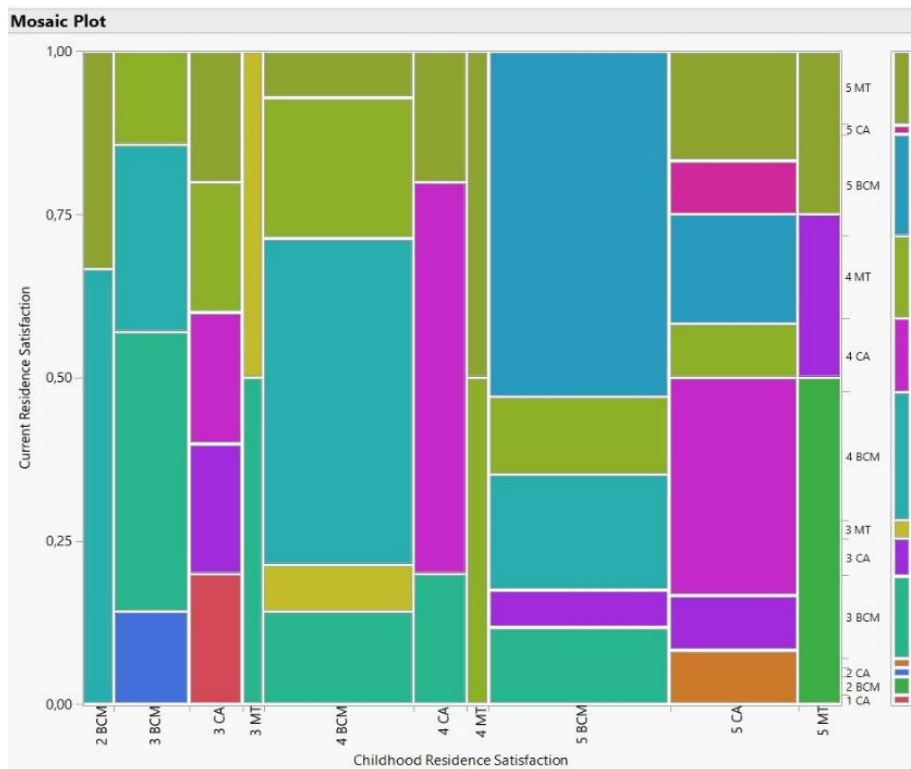
Figure 3. Correspondence Analysis

The diagram shows that most respondents spent their childhood living in areas BCM, with satisfaction levels predominantly at scales 4 and 5, indicating high satisfaction. This group is followed by respondents who lived in CA during childhood and reported satisfaction at level 5. The analysis further reveals that respondents who were satisfied with their childhood residential locations, particularly in the BCM and CA, tend to maintain similar levels of satisfaction in adulthood especially when residing in comparable geographic locations. This suggests a continuity of satisfaction, where positive early experiences in specific residential settings contribute to sustained satisfaction in later life.

The correspondence analysis thus reveals a meaningful connection between early residential satisfaction and current perceptions of place, especially when the geographic characteristics are maintained. This finding reinforces the role of place familiarity and environmental continuity in shaping long-term residential satisfaction,

supporting previous research by Wang and Wang (2020), which found that satisfaction after relocation is significantly influenced by perceived environmental resemblance to previous homes.

The correspondence analysis reveals a significant relationship between satisfaction in childhood residential locations and satisfaction in current residential locations. As shown in Table 2, the Pearson chi-square value is *p <0.001*, indicating a statistically significant correlation between the two variables. This finding highlights a meaningful connection between early residential satisfaction and current perceptions of place, particularly when geographic characteristics are maintained. It reinforces the role of place familiarity and environmental continuity in shaping long-term residential satisfaction, supporting previous research by Wang and Wang (2020), who found that satisfaction after relocation is strongly influenced by the perceived resemblance between new and former environments.

Table 2. Correspondence Significant Ratio

Tests			
N	**DF**	**-LogLike**	**RSquare (U)**
71	108	65,143357	0,4118
Tests		**ChiSquare**	**Prob>ChiSq**
Likelihood Ration		130,287	0,0711
Pearson		174,823	**<,0001***

Note: The Pearson test is considered more robust in this context.

After the analysis above, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted to create a hypothesis model. The dendrogram in Figure 5 represents the result of the hierarchical analysis, showing four clusters of satisfaction levels from current residential locations (black) and childhood residential locations (red). Before interpreting the dendrogram (Figure 5), please refer to Figure 4 as a guide to help read and understand the hypothesis model more clearly.
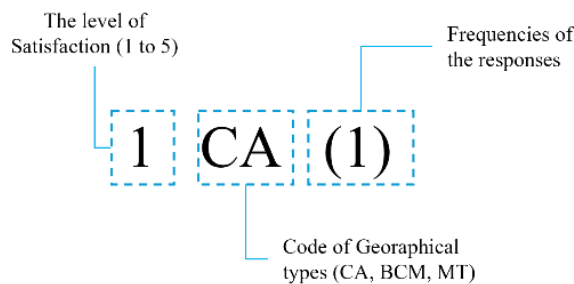

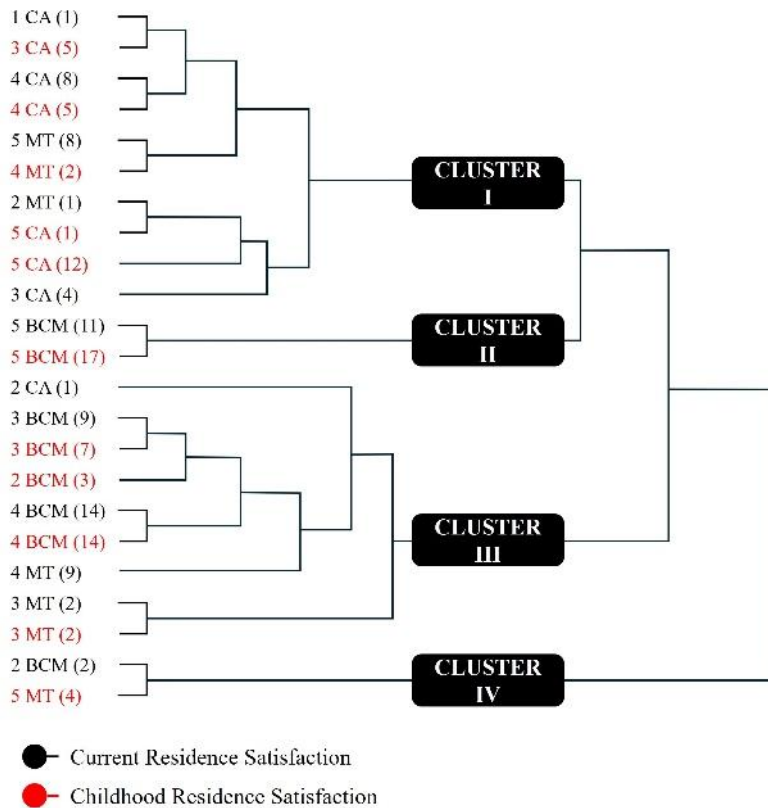**Figure 4.** Code of the Variables

Figure 5. Hypothesis Model by Clusters

Based on the dendrogram above, the hypothesis model relationships can be simplified as follows:

First Cluster shows respondents who moved residences may feel satisfied or dissatisfied with their current living location. Those who did not move residences may feel satisfied or dissatisfied, and some even feel more satisfied with their current location, as illustrated in Figure 6.
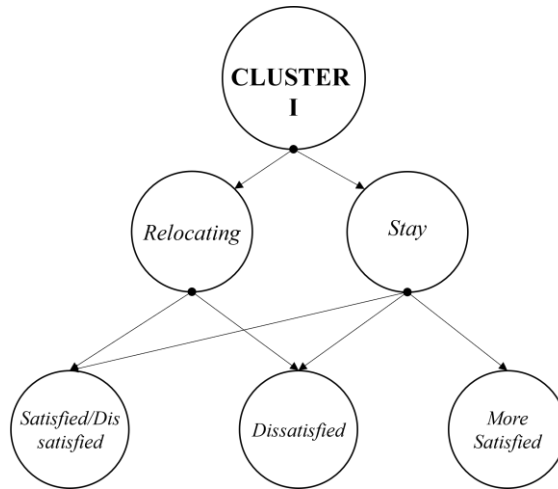
Figure 6. Cluster I Level of Satisfaction

Second Cluster, this cluster indicates that respondents who remained in the same residential location as their childhood home tend to report a high level of satisfaction with their current living environment, as illustrated in Figure 7.
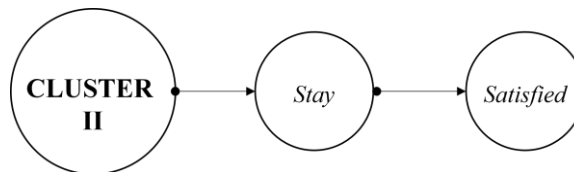

Figure 7. Cluster II Level of Satisfaction

Third Cluster, as illustrated in Figure 8, the third cluster shows that both respondents who relocated and those who remained in their childhood residential locations generally report increased satisfaction with their current residence. However, a distinction emerges, respondents who relocated tend to report lower levels of satisfaction, whereas those who continue living in the same location as their childhood home maintain a higher level of satisfaction.
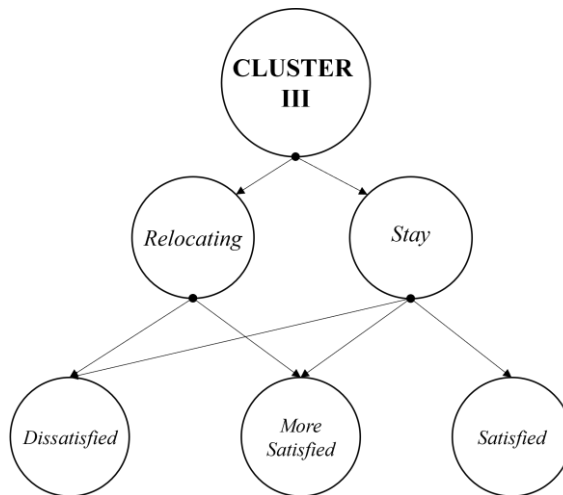
Figure 8. Cluster III Level of Satisfaction

Fourth Cluster, the fourth cluster indicates that respondents who currently live in a different residential location from their childhood home tend to report lower levels of satisfaction with their present living environment, as illustrated in Figure 9.
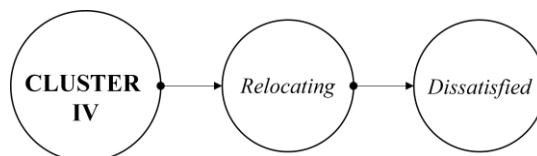

Figure 9. Cluster IV Level of Satisfaction

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study indicate that satisfaction with childhood residential locations has a significant influence on how individuals perceive and evaluate their current living environments. While childhood satisfaction is shaped by various factors such as physical environment, accessibility, and social context, it contributes meaningfully to the formation of expectations and preferences in adulthood. This finding answers the first research question, confirming that early residential experiences continue to shape satisfaction in later life.

Additionally, the study finds that individuals who remain in the same residential location as their childhood home tend to report higher levels of satisfaction compared to those who relocate. This supports the second research question, suggesting that residential continuity fosters a stronger sense of familiarity, place attachment, and emotional connection, which in turn contributes to greater satisfaction. In contrast, those who relocate often experience a decline in satisfaction, particularly when the

new environment lacks characteristics that resemble or emotionally connect with their childhood surroundings.

Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of early place-based experiences in shaping long-term residential satisfaction and provides valuable insight for planners and designers aiming to create environments that resonate with users' lived experiences and personal histories.

REFERENCES

Altman, I., Rapoport, A., & Wohlwill, J. F. (1980). *Human Behavior and Environment /ADVANCES IN THEORY AND RESEARCH* (Vol. 4).

Brown, A. S., & Marsh, E. J. (2010). Digging into Déjà Vu: Recent Research on Possible Mechanisms. In *Psychology of Learning and Motivation - Advances in Research and Theory* (Vol. 53, Issue C, pp. 33–62). https://doi.org/10.1016/S0079-7421(10)53002-0

Clark, M. (2012). Achieving Memorable Places: 'Urban Sense of Place' for Successful Urban Planning and Renewal? In I. Convery, G. Corsane, & p Davis (Eds.), *Making Sense of Place: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (1st ed., pp. 119–132). Boydell & Brewer.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Cross, J. E. (2001). *What is Sense of Place?* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282980896

Kalesaran, R. C. E., Mandagi, R. J. M., & Waney, E. (2013). ANALISA FAKTOR-FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI KEPUTUSAN KONSUMEN DALAM PEMILIHAN LOKASI PERUMAHAN DI KOTA MANADO. In *Jurnal Ilmiah Media Engineering* (Vol. 3, Issue 3).

Kumar, R. (2011). *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Pramova, E., Locatelli, B., Valdivia-Díaz, M., Vallet, A., Quispe Conde, Y., Djoudi, H., Colloff, M. J., Bousquet, F., Tassin, J., & Munera Roldan, C. (2022). Sensing, feeling, thinking: Relating to nature with the body, heart and mind. *People and Nature*, *4*(2), 351–364. https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.10286

Putra, Z., Rahayu, S., & Bagus. (2015). Faktor-faktor yang Mempengaruhi Pemilihan Rumah. *Teknik PWK*, *4*(4), 681–691.

Reski, I., & Tampubolon, A. C. (2019). *Faktor Penentu Preferensi Tipe Hunian di Kalangan Mahasiswa*. *17*(1).

Severcan, Y. C. (2019). Residential relocation and children's satisfaction with mass housing. *Metu Journal of the Faculty of Architecture*, *36*(2), 61–84. https://doi.org/10.4305/METU.JFA.2019.1.1

Sibarani, G. A. H., Kusuma, H. E., & Riska, A. S. (2023). Three conceptual models of restorative environments based on user's restorative experience in the COVID-19 pandemic period. *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering*, *22*(6), 3115–3127. https://doi.org/10.1080/13467581.2023.2172344

Tang, A., Kusuma, H. E., & Riska, A. S. (2022). Preferensi dalam Memilih Hunian Menapak dan Vertikal oleh Generasi Y dan Z di Indonesia. *Review of Urbanism and Architectural Studies*, *20*(1), 87–97. https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.ruas.2022.020.01.9

Wang, F., & Wang, D. (2020). Changes in residential satisfaction after home relocation: A longitudinal study in Beijing, China. *Urban Studies*, *57*(3), 583–601. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098019866378

Widya, A. T., Kusuma, H. E., & Lubis, H. A. (2023). Exploring housing quality perception and attitude groups through annoyance on vertical public-housing: online user review: case study—apartment in Bandung City, Indonesia. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, *38*(3), 1651–1688. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-022-10001-1

Wijaya, A. S. C., Kwanda, T., & Rahardjo, J. (2018). Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Keputusan Pembelian Rumah dan Apartemen Kelas Menengah bawah di Surabaya, Gresik, dan Sidoarjo. *Dimensi Utama Teknik Sipil*, *5*(1), 22–29. https://doi.org/10.9744/duts.5.1.22-29

Yumnahanin, W. D., & Rukayah, S. (2023). Correlation Between Visual Characters and Sense of Place In Kampung Pelangi Semarang. *Journal of Architecture & Environment |*, *22*(2), 141–152.

Yustika, F. puspa, Ridlo, M. A., & Widyasamratri, H. (2022). PREFERENSI GENERASI MILENIAL DALAM MEMILIH HUNIAN STUDI KASUS: DKI JAKARTA, JAKARTA BARAT, DAN YOGYAKARTA. *Jurnal Kajian Ruang*, *2*. http://jurnal.unissula.ac.id/index.php/kr