

# Preferences of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) for a Residential Property: A Conjoint Analysis

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## Abstract

The primary aim of this study is to determine the preferences of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in Qatar for residential property. A quantitative non-experimental research design utilizing conjoint analysis was employed in the study. A total of two hundred (200) working Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) participated in the investigation, selected through a stratified random approach. Results revealed that the location of a residential property is the most significant attribute. At the same time, size or area is the least significant attribute that is being considered by the respondents as depicted in the individual and aggregate model. Further, the most preferred attribute combination for a residential property for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) is a single-detached dwelling near a school in a mixed-use environment with an area of 201 to 500 square meters and a price range of 1.9 million to 3.0 million. On the other hand, the least preferred attribute combination is a condominium unit in proximity to a workplace situated in a mixed-use environment with an area of 100 - 200 square meters and a price range of 4.1 million to 6.0 million.

## Keywords

Business, Residential Property, Overseas Filipino Worker, Conjoint Analysis, Qatar, Philippines

## 1. Introduction

Knowing what people prefer for housing is essential for studying and planning for the real estate industry. Lamudi Philippines, Inc. (2015), a real estate marketplace, presented an increasing demand of nearly four million for affordable housing for Filipinos, estimated to reach 6.5 million units by 2030 due to rapid urban devel-

opment and population growth. However, [Ordinario \(2017, 2019\)](#) stated that due to affordability, there is a disparity in land ownership and distribution in the Philippines because only about one-third of Filipinos own their properties. He added that low and middle-income Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) find it hard to buy a house because of financial constraints and low disposable income levels despite the many payment options implemented by the Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF) and real estate companies. According to the report of the Philippine Association of Service Exporters Inc. ([PASEI, 2015](#)), many homebuyers, including OFWs, decided to rent a house rather than buy their own homes.

Owning a home has been a dream and is considered one of the fundamental components of a high standard of life. A house owner feels secure, has freedom, and enjoys privacy. People consider owning a home as highly essential because this is viewed as crucial for the family's strength to stand and endure against odds and life challenges ([Kakoti, 2021](#)). Moreover, real property housing units are considered high-value holdings that people can possess to indicate wealth and socioeconomic status ([Coffee et al., 2013](#)). Thus, buying a house is regarded as an achievement for every person.

Despite this claim, OFWs are considered by real estate property developers as the number one target market for residential property ([Lamudi Philippines, Inc., 2018](#)). There are around 2.3 million OFWs around the globe as of September 2017, and 5.5 percent of them are located in Qatar ([Philippine Statistics Authority \[PSA\], 2018](#)). Given this information, understanding the dynamics and choice behavior of OFWs towards acquiring residential property becomes even more relevant to both the real estate developer and real estate marketer because this will provide them inputs in creating appropriate structure designs and in providing suitable offerings that attract and match the preference, requirements, and capacity of the OFWs and homebuyers, particularly the low-income earners ([Magpoc, 2017](#)).

### 1.1. Attributes for Residential Property

Residential or housing products come in different styles and have varied attributes, including location, building layout, home atmosphere, etc. Similarly, housing units with better dwelling features encourage and intensify housing buyers to buy properties because these features will be the basis of choices of preferences for housing consumers when choosing, selecting, or purchasing a residential property ([Rahadi et al., 2015](#)). Hence, the supply of housing in the market should be diverse enough to provide or meet the different preferences and needs of the house buyers and accommodate households with varying levels of income ([Flambard, 2017](#)).

Regarding Filipinos who worked abroad, one preference for residential property is the geographical *location*. [Hei and Dastane \(2017\)](#) pointed out that location is an essential part of a property for home seekers when buying a housing unit. When the housing structure is near "social amenities," consumers' willingness to purchase the property improves. [Chia et al. \(2016\)](#) and [Mohd Thas Thaker and](#)

Sakaran (2016) added that the site of the house is somewhat connected to the accessibility of amenities. Also, the location has been acknowledged as the value or worth of a residential property (Coffee et al., 2013; Abidoeye & Chan, 2016; De & Vupru, 2017).

It showed that nearness to the school is the most influential locational factor. Residential location choice refers not only to accessibility but also to the kind of neighborhood and dwelling attributes, including household features. These attributes, such as accessibility, city quality, and social locality features, will pass a thorough evaluation on the part of the consumer to decide (Popoola et al., 2016), with proper family consultation as well. Furthermore, residential property location is an attribute that encompasses not just the degree of utility of accessibility to the center of commercial business but also to social and economic facilities (Abidoeye & Chan, 2016). Also, population density has an impact on choosing a location.

In addition, access to quality healthcare services can determine many's choices of where to live. Hence, a residential location near or with easy access to the hospital can improve the community's welfare (de Freitas et al., 2024). Similarly, a house near a workplace is convenient because it eliminates the need for lengthy bus rides and makes it simple to walk to work (Rothwell, 2023). Also, Skora et al. (2024) stress that those living far away take longer to commute and go to work daily and are more likely to have a higher possibility of moving to a place or migrating.

However, if migration would incur higher costs, preferably commuting every week would be an option. Lastly, a dwelling near a central business district is another significant residential factor that enormously affects land price value (Pareek & Kumar, 2024). Also, according to Jie et al. (2023), the central business district area is where different types of service groups are visible, including a well-developed transportation system that draws people.

Property *price* is another preference among OFWs when seeking or looking for residential property, and it is regarded as the second factor in buying a house. In the studies of Dziauddin et al. (2015) and Dziauddin and Idris (2017), it has been revealed that the worth or value of a residential property is based mainly on its physical design qualities and slightly on the closeness to locational characteristics. Also, Glumac and Wissink (2018) pointed out that property age significantly influences house prices. Peng & Chen (2016) added that the cash outlay invested for the alterations and additions to the house would cause a change in the house price. It has been highlighted that the upsurge in house prices is partly accredited to the developments made to the house.

However, real estate products are unique (Rahadi et al., 2015), and because of their exceptional qualities, it is hard to place a specific price label for the product. The price of real estate products largely depends on the real estate developer's previous knowledge and experience. Also, Kavarnou and Nanda (2014) state that house prices in neighborhoods with more attractive features are higher than in neighborhoods with less remarkable attributes. In many cases, the price is equivalent to its market value. Joshua Adegoke (2014) described market value as the

amount of money the buyer agrees to pay the seller in exchange for a property. However, [Mohd Thas Thaker and Sakaran \(2016\)](#) explain that residential property prices, akin to any other goods and services available in the market, are also affected by the rule of demand and supply.

Lastly, in the real estate market, the initial price information of a property serves as the price anchor for prospective homebuyers. Many others consider the anchor price to be the previous purchase price. At some point, buyers and sellers think about the property's value. Hence, someone authorized to estimate the price or worth of the property will establish an anchor at that cost. The initial or asking price is also used to evaluate the property value ([Singh et al., 2023](#)). However, according to [Han and Feng \(2024\)](#), when land prices increase, the cost of building homes will increase as well, which leads to a reduction of housing supply in the market and cannot meet potential demand. [Safaralizadeh et al. \(2024\)](#) added that housing supply and demand are two factors that significantly affect housing price variations or fluctuations.

Another factor that is being considered by OFWs when choosing or buying a residential property is the *environment* where the residential property is located. Homebuyers look for an improved place where they can happily and safely live together with their family. Hence, a better residential neighborhood or environment is highly preferred. A good neighborhood is described as a place where people can interact with one another and act as part of society. However, whether the residential environment is good or bad depends on a person's perspective ([Demir, 2016](#)). Whatever the case, the effects of residential neighborhood features on the resident's quality of life have always been relevant to homeowners because this could affect the well-being of the people ([Moore et al., 2013](#)). A neighborhood is an area outside the house where the residents or occupants can travel on foot or stride for about 10 to 15 minutes ([Adams et al., 2013](#)).

Due to the worldwide development of industries where agricultural lands are transformed into industrial zones, many people have moved from rural to urban areas, causing significantly high demands for housing or dwelling in urban places. Real estate developers introduced several housing projects in suburban areas to address this internal or domestic migration ([Kurvinen & Vihola, 2016](#)), and the population has grown where people use cars and public transportation ([Kim et al., 2023](#)). Nevertheless, these suburban areas have served the need of the homebuyers to be closer to their workplaces. Also, one popular characteristic of an excellent residential environment is a walkable neighborhood. In an earlier study conducted by [Nakamura et al. \(2018\)](#), they pointed out an immediate connection between the advantages of the walkable neighborhood and those of "mixed-use" improvement. This idea is supported by [Demir \(2016\)](#), stating that residents prefer a residential neighborhood where the distance to the workplace and other essential services and facilities is pretty close.

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) also see the *floor size or area* of the dwelling as vital when looking for a perfect home. Floor size refers to the total area size

of a constructed floor measured in square meters (Lee, 2016; Dziauddin & Idris, 2017). Meanwhile, the site area, also in square meters, refers to the whole size of the lot where the house is built (Peng & Chen, 2016). Housing buyers consider the house space significant, especially among large households. A skilfully planned home can maximize the area and leave more open spaces for possible expansion, while a house that is not skilfully planned can be too costly in terms of constant renovations and improvements (Downtown, 2013).

In the words of Mastroeni (2022), accentuated that people seek and anticipate a house that seems to be precisely made or constructed for their family because buying a residential property that is not convenient for the household would create an uncomfortable living in the long run. Also, if the house is limited in space for the family, the buyer will tend to expand to suit their needs. However, for many years, due to internal migration, residential dwellings have become smaller (Lee, 2016). This could be attributed to the increase in the price of building houses. Families with smaller households and those without children trade a home with smaller spaces close to the workplace and a good environment (Grennan, 2017).

Another popular attribute many OFWs consider for residential property is the building *type*. People's choice of real estate products differs depending on their inclinations or dispositions (Katyal & Dawra, 2016) because these products have distinctive characteristics (Rahadi et al., 2015). Moreover, a study in Malaysia by Wang et al. (2018) classified the housing units into two types; the "horizontal" or landed residential property, which includes bungalows and houses with terraces; and the "vertical" or rise residential property which includes flats, apartments, and condominiums. These housing units have different neighborhoods that are not the same and provide the needs of every household depending on their needs and preferences.

However, choosing what type of residential property is influenced by price. There is a disagreement between the housing cost and the homebuyers' disposable earnings (Friedman, 2013). In the works of Swasto (2018) expressed that "vertical or multi-story" residential units are better options for small households than bungalow houses as this lessens the expenses of preserving the building and provides different opportunities and experiences of living in the cities. In an article published in a newspaper by Thomarat (2013), he pointed out that single-detached housing units built on more extensive land may go well with specific groups of the population but not for those households with fewer disposal earnings like the undergraduates and retirees who are dependent only of their pensions.

Similarly, as mentioned above, a condominium is one of the vertical housing structures. Another newspaper published an article ("Buying a Condominium", 2013), which pointed out that living in a condominium has been considered the best alternative for individuals who live in a metropolis because this type of housing is comparatively free from responsibility. These dwellings have pleasant lifestyles as building facilities are walkable, lessening the time spent going to the workplace, malls, and other points of interest.

In addition, Anderson (2016) mentioned that "condos and townhouses" are

considered to be worth more than they cost and hence have value for money. In an article in another newspaper by Doughty (2019), she described a townhouse as a house in a town that could be semi-detached or terraced. In recent years, apart from condos, townhouses have been a popular property among millennials, young professionals, and married couples because of their affordability and practical use (Daily Herald, 2018). On the other hand, Hohenadel (2024) defined a rowhouse/s as a low-rise building constructed nearly the same and arranged side by side where the roofs meet the exterior wall and are called terraced houses in the United Kingdom, Australia, and other parts of the world.

The five attributes of residential property included in the study, namely, location, price, environment, size or area, and type, are among the most important features or factors preferred by Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in choosing or selecting a residential property. However, there are other essential factors that OFWs may ponder depending on household needs before choosing a residential property according to their preferences. Therefore, this study could still be enhanced and developed. Nonetheless, the five attributes used and determined in this study still need to be tested in the chosen framework that can present analysis and contributions to the book of knowledge.

## 1.2. Study Objectives

The study's primary purpose is to determine the preferences of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) towards residential property. Specifically, the study intends to achieve the following objectives: 1) to determine the relative importance and utility value of the following attributes in determining the preferences of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) for a residential property in terms of location, price, environment, size or area and type; 2) to ascertain the individual and aggregate models for residential property preferences among Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs); 3) to assess the most and least preferred attribute combinations of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) for a residential property. Essentially, the study will test the assumption, stating that the five attributes, namely location, price, environment, size or area, and type, are not important in determining the OFWs preferences for a residential property in Qatar.

Preference studies such as this inquiry require theoretical underpinnings from which the study is anchored and supported. Relevant theories are employed to better understand and appreciate the contentions and contexts of the study. Essentially, the study is anchored on the Random Utility Theory. The theory explains that the probability of choosing a product is based on the perceived maximum utility of the choice as rationalized by the person being an informed decision-maker. The possibility of choosing the decision-maker's perceived utility of the best alternative is greater than all other available alternatives (Cascetta, 2009). Random utility theory is used in this study to model the preferences of Overseas Filipino Workers for a residential property.

Another relevant theory that supports this inquiry is the Choice Theory by Wil-

liam Glasser. The theory models human decision-making in the context of personal, internal control rather than external control. Internal control is highlighted, knowing that only the person can control their choices, actions, and judgments and that information can only be shared with others (Peterson, 2000). In this study, the theory could help explain how and why OFWs make choices as they do relative to their effort to satisfy the five basic needs that are common to all humanity.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study with the associated variables. The researcher considers the five attributes of residential property that OFWs prefer. It includes the *location*, which refers to where the property is positioned or placed in the best and good site (Hei & Dastane, 2017); a *price* which refers to the current market price of the property enforced by the real estate industry (Kok San, 2016); an *environment* which refers to the surrounding conditions of a place where people can live peacefully and free of noise, pollution, and traffic (Chia et al., 2016); *floor size or area* which refers to the size of the house itself, usually measured in square meters (Peng & Chen, 2016); and *type* which refers to the kind of residential buildings which could be either landed houses or horizontal houses (Wang et al., 2018). The primary variable of the study is to identify the most preferred combination of residential property attributes in the context of OFWs based on utility value.

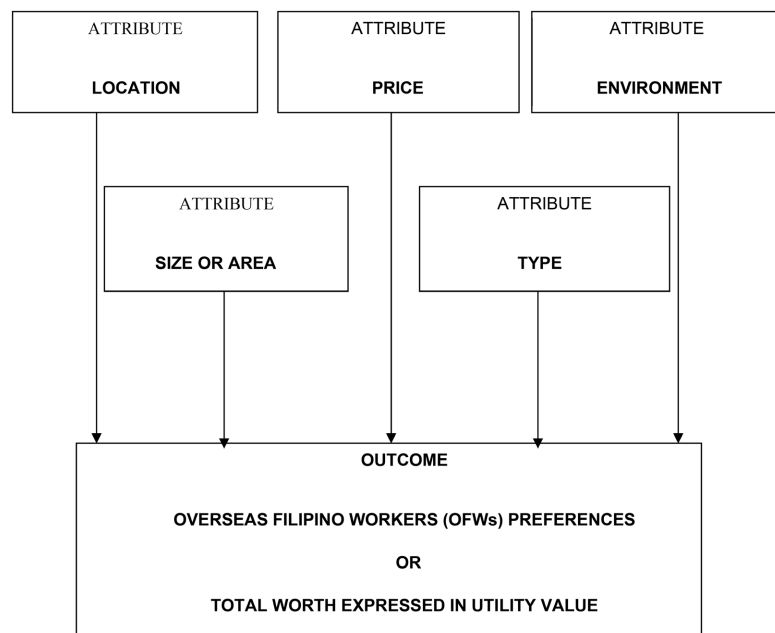


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study.

This study is specifically and equally relevant and beneficial to OFWs, not just those based in Qatar but also those working in other countries. This paper advocates for OFWs' awareness of the importance of real estate properties, particularly residential ones. It enables them to make informed plans and decisions on acquiring such while working abroad and enjoying relatively high earnings. In the pro-

cess, the study will help address the call for the achievement of UN-SDG number 1 (no poverty) and number 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Research Respondent

A total of 200 OFWs in Qatar participated in the study. These OFWs were professionals who were working in Qatar. The number of study participants was reached using the Raosoft sample size calculator with a 5 percent margin error and 95 percent confidence level (Raosoft, Inc. 2004). The appropriate sample size is validated by Orme (2010), saying that a sample size ranging from 150 to 1200 is already enough for conjoint studies to warrant strong or robust, reliable, and credible results. Also, for a survey type of study that uses a simple random procedure, a sample size of 200 observations is enough (Hashim, 2010).

The respondents were chosen using a stratified, random sampling technique. This sampling technique allows the researcher to group its participants into groups with similar, identified characteristics first, then randomly select them. Random sampling is an approach wherein there is a fair chance of selection for each participant in the sampling frame for the study (Crossman, 2020). The sample was stratified based on several variables such as sex, employment sector, work status, job position and residency. These variables were selected to ensure diversity and effective representation of the target population. Further, to minimize bias, recruitment was conducted at different times of the day and across multiple locations (parks, malls, corniches) to capture a broader range of individuals from different backgrounds.

This study selected OFWs who satisfied the inclusion and exclusion criteria to participate. The study participants were OFWs who provided services to different companies and industries in Qatar. They were legal OFWs of legal age, male or female, holding a supervisory position, and must have a valid Qatar Identification Card as proof of his/her visa residency. Those working OFW dependents living in Qatar are not part of the study.

### 2.2. Materials and Instrument

The study used a researcher-made instrument, initially administered through Key Informant Interview (KII) to 18 OFWs in Qatar, to determine the most preferred attributes for a residential property as lifted from the literature and related studies. The researcher uses the full-profile method in designing the OFWs' residential preferences for evaluation by creating combinations of attribute levels. The full-profile conjoint method has been a popular approach to measure attribute utilities. The full-profile method can generate a large number of profiles of factors and their levels, but this can be reduced using the fractional factorial design (Jang & Choi, 2018).

Also, this study used the orthogonal array software design to generate plan cards that were used in the final survey questionnaire. The orthogonal array also

allows for generating factor-level combinations, known as holdout cases, which are rated by the subjects but are not used to build the preference model. The generated plan cards contain 20 items equally distributed to five attributes: location, price, environment, size or area, and type, including four holdouts. The scale scored 1, representing the option “not preferred,” to 5, representing the “most preferred” option. The questionnaires consist of the respondents’ personal information and the choices for residential property attributes.

### **2.3. Design and Procedure**

This study employed quantitative, non-experimental research utilizing conjoint analysis. [Quick and Hall \(2015\)](#) described quantitative research as a kind of research that works with numerical data. They further asserted that quantitative, non-experimental studies analyze information obtained from existing sources that establish the association of the variables under observation. Also, as [Belli \(2008\)](#) emphasized, unlike the experimental approach, the non-experimental design encompasses variables that the researcher does not control and are examined as they happen or occur.

On one hand, the conjoint analysis described by [Malhotra \(2010\)](#) is an analysis that tries to determine or find out the relative importance that consumers affix to leading attributes along with the utilities they attach to the same level of attributes. Conjoint analysis places assigned values to the levels of each attribute so that the resulting values or utilities attached or connected to the stimuli complement, as closely as possible, the input evaluations provided by the respondents. The fundamental postulation is that any stimuli, such as products, brands, or stores, are appraised as attributes. The technique is the most appropriate research design to use in this study since the study aimed to predict the best possible combination of attributes of the OFWs preference towards residential property.

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following statistical tools were used to interpret and analyze the data gathered comprehensively. The tools include Pearson’s  $r$ , which was used to identify the utility value and the significance of the data gathered to determine the relationship between observed attributes and estimated preferences; Conjoint Analysis, which was used to identify the OFWs’ most and least preferred attribute for a residential property; Kendall’s Tau which was employed to identify the data holdouts and the level of utilities per residential property attribute; and Additive Model was used to measure the total utility of residential property preferences among OFWs in Qatar where the highest and the constant of utility estimates of levels of five attributes were added to determine the total utility.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **3.1. Relative Importance and Utility of Overseas Filipino Workers for a Residential Property**

The relative importance of the five identified attributes for residential property of

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) is presented in **Table 1**. Importance measures are relative to the relevant range and attribute levels. The analysis revealed that location is the most important attribute preferred by OFWs, with an overall relative importance of 24.929 percent. The choice of the attribute can also be defined from the utility estimate shown for each level of an attribute. The attribute with the highest utility estimate is the most significant attribute level. Proximity to a school obtained the highest utility estimate of 0.019 and is generally preferred by OFWs, followed by proximity to the hospital with a utility estimate of 0.004. Meanwhile, proximity to the central business district and the workplace yielded a negative utility estimate of  $-0.011$  and  $-0.012$ , respectively. Many OFWs purchase homes for their families or as an investment, so proximity to essential services and business districts is a key factor. Additionally, good locations tend to have higher property appreciation, making them attractive for long-term financial security.

**Table 1.** Importance of the attributes of a residential property.

Attribute	Importance Values	Attribute Levels	Utility Estimate	Std. Error
Location	24.929 integrates with ERP	Proximity to school	0.019	0.046
		Proximity to hospital	0.004	0.046
		Proximity to central business district	$-0.011$	0.046
		Proximity to workplace	$-0.012$	0.046
Type	23.671	Single-detached	0.068	0.046
		Row House	0.055	0.046
		Townhouse	0.035	0.046
		Condominium	$-0.157$	0.046
Price	20.147	From 1.9 M to 3.0 M	$-0.182$	0.032
		From 3.1 M to 4.0 M	$-0.363$	0.064
		From 4.1 M to 6.0 M	$-0.545$	0.096
Environment	16.443	Suburban	0.014	0.041
		Mix-use	$-0.012$	0.035
		Walkable Neighborhood	$-0.002$	0.041
Size	12.193	From 201 - 500 sq-m.	0.166	0.096
		From 100 - 200 sq-m.	0.111	0.064
		Less than 100 sq-m.	0.055	0.032
(Constant)			0.142	0.084

Type ranked second in the relative importance of attributes, garnering a value of 23.671 percent. Three of the attribute levels got positive results. OFWs are more

attracted to a single-detached residential property with the highest utility estimate of 0.068, followed by a row house with a utility estimate of 0.055 and a townhouse of 0.035. Meanwhile, the condominium got a negative result of  $-0.157$ , meaning OFWs do not favor this type of residence. The type of property matters for most OFWs as it aligns with lifestyle preferences and financial capacity. The choice also reflects long-term plans, whether for personal use, rental income, or retirement.

Following location and type is the price. It ranked third with a relative importance of 20.147 percent. All the attribute levels got negative utility estimates. The price ranged from 1.9 million to 3.0 million, got  $-0.182$ , 3.1 million to 4.0 million,  $-0.363$ , and  $-0.545$  from 4.1 million to 6.0 million. This is expected as the higher the price, the less it attracts homebuyers, at least for those whose earnings are modest. However, since OFWs often have a higher purchasing power due to foreign earnings, many are willing to pay a premium for a well-located and suitable property type. Flexible financing options, such as bank loans or in-house financing, may also lessen the weight of price in decision-making.

Meanwhile, environment ranked fourth with a relative importance of 16.443 percent, where two of the attribute levels, mixed-use ( $-0.012$ ) and walkable neighborhood ( $-0.002$ ), exhibited a negative outcome and sub-urban got a positive outcome of 0.014, which means OFWs prefer to live in the area away from the busy metropolis. The reason for this rank is that while OFWs prefer peaceful and secure communities, they may compromise slightly on this aspect if the location and type meet their primary needs.

Lastly, the size ranked fifth with the lowest relative importance of 12.193 percent. All the attribute levels showed positive results, but the size containing an area from 201 - 500 square meters got the highest utility estimates of 0.166, which means OFWs preferred a bigger area for a home dwelling. Property size was ranked last perhaps because many OFWs prioritize functional and well-designed spaces over sheer size. A strategically located, well-structured property may be preferred over a larger but less accessible home.

The study's results, Preferences of OFWs for a residential property, were assessed by examining the relative importance and utility estimate of identified attributes. The relative importance of the attributes influences the changes in the attribute level range. This is how they affect one another when measuring the preferences of a particular respondent. The least preferred attribute gets the least value. OFWs' preferences generated results from conjoint analysis showing that the location of a residential property is the most important attribute while the size or area is the least important attribute of a residential property.

For the OFWs in Qatar, location is the most important attribute of a residential property. The preference of the OFWs intensifies the notion that the decision to purchase a house has varied factors to consider. The results of this study were validated by previous empirical studies by [Dziauddin and Idris \(2017\)](#), [Abidoye and Chan \(2016\)](#), [Coffee et al. \(2013\)](#) and [Davis et al. \(2017\)](#) that location is the most important or essential variable considered by many homebuyers regardless

of disposal revenue levels because the location is believed to be the most significant contributing characteristic of property values.

On the contrary, OFWs are not sensible about the residential size given its lowest importance value. Even though this attribute has the least or most negligible value, its importance still cannot be ignored because, as [Downtown \(2013\)](#) argued, house size is relatively essential, especially for large households. Smartly designed houses will reduce space, while poorly designed houses would incur additional costs to renovate and open some spaces. [Mastroeni \(2022\)](#) also added that the house could be destroyed or abolished, and the new owner will create a new one to suit the household's needs.

### 3.2. Individual and Aggregate Models of a Residential Property

The presentation of individual and aggregate preferences signifies whether the individual preference ties in the overall results. Individual and aggregate models will show which attributes and attribute levels are desirable from one OFW respondent to the other OFWs. In this study, three Overseas Filipino Workers in Qatar were chosen and illustrated in [Table 2](#). Utility estimates were arranged and compared.

**Table 2.** Individual and aggregate models of a residential property.

Attribute Levels	OFW 6		OFW 27		OFW 121		Overall Sample	
	Important	Utility	Important	Utility	Important	Utility	Important	Utility
	Values %	Estimate	Values %	Estimate	Values %	Estimate	Values %	Estimate
<b>Constant</b>	integrates with ERP			1.633		-1.072		0.142
<b>Location</b>	<b>42.308</b>		<b>8.871</b>		<b>22.449</b>		<b>24.929</b>	
Proximity to school		0.750		0.062		0.063		0.019
Proximity to hospital		-0.250		-0.188		0.063		0.004
Proximity to central business district		-0.250		0.063		-0.188		-0.011
Proximity to workplace		-0.250		0.062		0.062		-0.012
<b>Type</b>	<b>21.154</b>		<b>53.226</b>		<b>22.449</b>		<b>23.671</b>	
Single-detached		0.250		0.813		0.063		0.068
Row House		-0.250		-0.187		-0.188		0.055
Townhouse		0.250		0.062		0.062		0.035
Condominium		-0.250		-0.688		0.063		-0.157
<b>Price</b>	<b>7.692</b>		<b>20.968</b>		<b>4.082</b>		<b>20.147</b>	
From 1.9 M to 3.0 M		0.091		-0.295		-0.023		-0.182
From 3.1 M to 4.0 M		0.182		-0.591		-0.045		-0.363
From 4.1 M to 6.0 M		0.273		-0.886		-0.068		-0.545

## Continued

<b>Environment</b>	<b>21.154</b>	<b>8.871</b>	<b>22.449</b>	<b>16.443</b>	
Suburban		-0.167	-0.167	0.083	0.014
Mix-use		0.333	0.083	0.083	-0.012
Walkable Neighborhood		-0.167	0.083	-0.167	-0.002
<b>Size</b>	<b>7.692</b>	<b>8.065</b>	<b>28.571</b>	<b>12.193</b>	
From 201 - 500 sq.m.		0.273	-0.341	0.477	0.166
From 100 - 200 sq.m.		0.182	-0.227	0.318	0.111
Less than 100 sq.m.		0.091	-0.114	0.159	0.055

As shown in **Table 2**, the individual and aggregate models capture the preferences of attributes for a residential property of OFWs. It can be seen in the table that OFW 6 is conscious of location, having an importance value of 42.308 percent. While type and environment got the same importance value of 21.154 percent, coming second, price and size are the least preferred attributes for OFW 6, having the same results of 7.692 percent. For OFW 6, a preferred dwelling is proximate to a school (0.750), it must be a single detached or a townhouse and in a mixed-use environment (0.333), having a price range of 4.1 million to 6.0 million (0.273) with a size from 201 - 500 square meters (0.273).

On the other hand, OFW 27 is a type-conscious buyer, putting an importance value of 53.226 percent to type; the price that has an importance value of 20.968 percent ranked second, and location and environment came third, garnering the same importance value of 8.871 percent while size is the least preferred attribute for OFW 27 with an estimate of 8.065 percent. OFW 27 tends to choose a residence that is in proximity to the central business district (0.063), in a mixed-use or walkable neighborhood (0.083), with a lesser price ranging from 1.9 million to 3.0 million (-0.295). Also, OFW 27 prefers a small place of less than 100 square meters (-0.114) and would love to reside in a single detached house (0.813).

Lastly, OFW 121 is a size-conscious buyer, giving these attributes an importance value of 28.571 percent, followed by location, environment, and type, putting the exact value at 22.449 percent. The least of his/her concerns is the price, with an estimated utility value of 4.082 percent. This OFW prefers a house located in proximity to a hospital or a school (0.063), in a mixed-use or suburban area (0.083), and with a price range from 1.9 million to 3.0 million (-0.023). Also, OFW 121 favors an area from 201 - 500 square meters (0.477) and a house that is either a single detached or a condominium (0.063).

### 3.3. Most and Least Preferable Attribute Combination of a Residential Property

As regards the part-worth utility model, the total utility can be seen from the combinations of part-worth utilities. The computation of the total utility follows by adding the marginal utility value of each attribute's attribute-level combinations

and the value of the constant to be derived in the conjoint estimation ( $TU = \text{Constant} + MU1 + MU2 + MU3 + MU4 + MU5$ ). The preference model estimated can be used to calculate the total utility for the alternative product profiles. The total utility and the order of preference of the sixteen attribute profiles of residential property of Overseas Filipino Workers are in **Table 3**.

**Table 3.** Most and least preferable attribute combinations of a residential property.

ID	Constant	X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>3</sub>	X <sub>4</sub>	X <sub>5</sub>	Total Utility	Rank
Card 8	0.142	0.019	-0.182	-0.012	0.166	0.068	0.201	1
Card 6	0.142	-0.012	-0.182	-0.002	0.166	0.035	0.147	2
Card 2	0.142	0.004	-0.182	0.014	0.111	0.035	0.124	3
Card 15	0.142	-0.011	-0.182	-0.012	0.111	0.068	0.116	4
Card 1	0.142	0.004	-0.182	-0.012	0.055	0.055	0.062	5
Card 7	0.142	-0.012	-0.182	-0.012	0.055	0.055	0.046	6
Card 16	0.142	0.019	-0.363	-0.002	0.111	0.055	-0.038	7
Card 12	0.142	-0.012	-0.363	0.014	0.055	0.068	-0.096	8
Card 5	0.142	0.019	-0.182	0.014	0.055	-0.157	-0.109	9
Card 11	0.142	-0.011	-0.363	-0.012	0.055	0.035	-0.154	10
Card 14	0.142	-0.011	-0.182	-0.002	0.055	-0.157	-0.155	11
Card 3	0.142	-0.011	-0.545	0.014	0.166	0.055	-0.179	12
Card 4	0.142	0.004	-0.363	-0.012	0.166	-0.157	-0.220	13
Card 10	0.142	0.004	-0.545	-0.002	0.055	0.068	-0.278	14
Card 9	0.142	0.019	-0.545	-0.012	0.055	0.035	-0.306	15
Card 13	0.142	-0.012	-0.545	-0.012	0.111	-0.157	-0.473	16

Noted, however, that while the basic additive model for total utility does not capture potential interactions between attributes or account for heterogeneity in preferences among different subgroups of OFWs, it certainly provides a structured and interpretable framework for understanding key factors influencing residential property preferences. More advanced modeling approaches, such as discrete choice models with interaction effects or latent class analysis, could provide a more nuanced understanding of heterogeneity in decision-making. Nonetheless, the findings remain valuable as the results provide practical insights for policy-makers, real estate developers, and financial institutions catering to OFWs, while also laying the groundwork for future studies to explore more complex relationships in decision-making.

As presented in **Table 3**, the ID that got the highest preference for residential property among Overseas Filipino Workers is card number 8. A dwelling in proximity to a school (0.019), situated in a mixed-use environment (-0.012), with a

size from 201 to 500 square meters (0.166), with a price range from 1.9 million to 3.0 million (−0.182), and preferably a single detached (0.068), which gathered a total utility of 0.201. Moreover, the second most preferred combination of Overseas Filipino Workers for residential property is Card 6. This is a dwelling near a workplace (−0.012), preferably a townhouse (0.035), where the price is not so high, ranging from 1.9 million to 3.0 million (−0.182). In a walkable neighbourhood (−0.002), the size or area is 201 - 500 square meters (0.166) which gathered a total utility of 0.147.

Furthermore, the third most preferred combination of OFWs for a residential property, as revealed, is Card 2. This is a house located near a hospital (0.004), which is a townhouse (0.035), where the price is reasonably achievable from 1.9 million to 3.0 million (−0.182). The environment is far from the metropolis and is in a suburban area (0.014) where the size or the location is not so big but adequate, from 100 to 200 square meters (0.111) that got a utility of 0.124. On the other hand, the least preferred combination for residential property is card ID number 13, a dwelling that is near a workplace (−0.012), in a mixed-use environment (−0.012), that has an area size from 100 - 200 square meters (0.111), with a price ranging from 4.1 million to 6.0 million (−0.545), and the residence is a condominium type (−0.157) having a total utility of −0.473.

The results support the study conducted by [Flambard \(2017\)](#), which found that socio-demographic characteristics influence an individual or the family's decision towards a residential property and the dwelling features apart from the price. The outcome also validated [Thomarat's \(2013\)](#) notion that single-detached houses in a big area fit the requirements of some "demographic groups," especially high-income earners. Also, OFWs want to buy a house of their choice that will not drag them into debt and should be within the capacity to pay. They choose a price range from 1.9 million to 3.0 million.

This finding supports the previous study by [McCord et al. \(2014\)](#), which stated that there has been a demand for immediate attention to inexpensive and reasonable housing in recent times. Based on the results, the respondents are price-conscious homebuyers who chose the lowest price range and disliked high-range prices. This parallels the idea of [Kok San \(2016\)](#) that property price is a significant factor for homebuyers to consider before purchasing a dwelling and that they will go for the less expensive ones.

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendation**

The preference for residential housing is influenced by the location of the property founded by the results of this study. As to the relative importance of the attributes, respondents indicated that the house's location is the most significant attribute. At the same time, the size of the dwelling is the least important attribute of a residential property. As for the attribute levels of location, proximity to a school is the most preferred, while a house with a size or area of less than 100 square meters is the least preferred attribute level.

Hence, the researcher recommends that real estate housing developers consider the significance of the location in developing residential structures in their plans and programs. Housing developers may incorporate the location's proximity to critical institutions like schools, hospitals, workplaces, and central business districts. Developers need to consider the elements of safety, convenience, and harmonious living for prospective homebuyers, regardless of the booming demand for housing.

Based on the study's findings, the preference for a residential property validates the random utility theory (RUT) that the choice for a product, among other alternatives, depends on the perceived utility a person can enjoy over this product (Cascetta, 2009). RUT posits that individuals select the option that maximizes their perceived utility, which is shaped by both observable attributes and unobservable factors. Similarly, the choices of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) for residential property also point toward the choice theory by William Glasser (Peterson, 2000), which states that the choice of a product behaves to satisfy the basic needs of the decision-maker. Naturally, individuals weigh trade-offs based on available options. OFWs prioritize fundamental attributes before secondary, reflecting a strategic approach to property selection.

However, the study has its limitations. The paper is focused on determining the preferences of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) for a residential property in Doha, State of Qatar. The researcher didn't go to places other than Qatar's capital city, Doha. OFWs seen in parks, corniches, and malls are the only respondents of this study. The researcher did not go house to house to conduct the survey. This research reflected Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) handling supervisory positions. Moreover, non-supervisory or rank and file and dependents of OFWs are not included or covered in the study. The researcher recommends further studies involving OFWs in Qatar or anywhere in the Middle East relative to this subject matter. To understand more profoundly how the identified attributes or variables regarding preference for residential property could lead to a more robust and established outcome.

Further, the data gathered for this research study were from 200 respondents. Although this meets the minimum required response for statistical analysis, a higher or more significant number of respondents could have impacted the study's results. More responses are needed, a maximum of 1200 respondents, which yield more effective results for conjoint analysis.

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## **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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