Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Literature review on Quality of life

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4.3 Literature on Quality of urban life
Concept of Quality of Urban Life

The "quality of urban life" is an assessment of all round development of human beings. The welfare approach and "well beings" of a community are not new concepts; they are relatively new technical terms to indicate nations that are probably as old as mankind. Communities throughout history have been concerned with the welfare of the well beings of their members.

The "quality of urban life" is a culture based concept in the sense that this phrase means different things to different people. In the developing quality of urban life has been a topic of common discussion among the geographers, sociologist, and economist and up to some extent politicians. Sociologist referred it to the satisfaction of needs and wants of the population.

The meaning of quality of urban life differs from region to region and time to time means having a spatiotemporal dimension. 1960's has been regarded as the period of economist dominance in this field of study. After that humanistic concept, such as environmental quality, social well being and the quality of urban life became prevalent in geographic research in 1970's. Since, the geographers are seriously concerning the subject in a changing global scenario and means awareness towards the environment.

If we see the related studies at a glance, the quality of life mainly depends upon.

(i) Economic state of the sample or economic status.

(ii) Geographical state of the sample or geographical status
The economic condition of people varies from person to person each other depending upon the resources. So the meaning of quality of life differs from region to region and place to place. The quality of urban life also much depends upon the geographical factors e.g. the quality of life in cold region For example, U.S.A., Canada, U.S.S.R. and so on, in comparison to African states and Asian provinces.

The quality of life is unique to each life style, based on ethnic class, cultural interest, education and tradition. Each one has its own value base.

In the field of medical geography the importance of spatial consideration was evident in the studies of Snow (1854). Patterns of social well being and quality (the two term are used here synonymously) and the distribution of social malaise in cities was studied by Charles Booth in 1893 using a set of six variables, including measures of poverty, crowding and mortality to construct a composite index of social conditions for the neighborhoods of Victorian London. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that is only within the last decade or so that pattern of deprivation and variation in the quality of life has been central concern with geography, Concern with those sections of the community who found themselves, the victims rather than the beneficiaries of national and local government away from the promotion of economic growth to the improvement of quality of urban life.

There is fairly large amount of research works on urbanization in the developed and developing world but there studies have been mostly concerned with socio-economic and technical changes taking place in the urban centers.
Though there have been studies in environment degradation and the quality of urban life especially in western world, these investigations has been comparatively few. As has been mentioned earlier, it is recent area of geographical research. There have been virtually no studies in human well-being and quality of life in Indian cities and other cities of the developing world.

Perhaps the most significant works in quality of life research in recent years has occurred in the field on indicators. Developing good indicators of quality of life is vital. Since without a strong independent measure of the core concept itself, progress in empirical work as well as in theoretical reasoning will be effectively blocked. It is rather surprising at times even annoying to see how reluctant many researchers are to state explicitly what they consider to be the connotative meaning of “quality of life”, However most practitioners reveal their definitions preference in their empirical work.

Human well-being is presently incapable of measurement in a generally accepted way and probably always will be. The system generating it can never be specified exactly, or even approximately in the near future, in any event it is in a constant state of change. As at the international level, income alone is unlikely to be a satisfactory general measure of human well-being. Indeed the higher the levels of affluence, the more people may look to non-material sources of satisfaction. In the United States, the geographical pattern of such conditions as housing quality, education and health tend to follow income quite closely. But other such as crime adopt different forms, some of the most
affluent states (e.g. New York and California) have the worst figures for crime, delinquency, drug addiction and other symptoms of social disorders.

There are two obvious ways of determining criteria of human well-being or life quality. The first is to drive them from theory in psychology or sociology. The problem there is that despite certain similarities in the views expressed there is no generally accepted social theory setting out the precise conditions unambiguously defining human well-being along with their relative weights, this problem has recognized.

The second method is to ask people how they view their own state of well-being, satisfaction or happiness. There has been consideration interest in the direct monitoring of the quality of life via survey, research in recent years.

The presidential commission for a National Agenda for the ethics had a penal on the quality of life. Their report adds: when you ask people what they mean by quality of life, their resource consists of a blend of tangibles and intangibles place where we can enjoy a better family life. There are good schools, convenient to recreational facilities.

**Characteristic of Quality of urban life**

**Demographic Characteristic**

Demographic indicators are very important while studying about human well-being or the quality of urban life of the people, because population makes a great impact on their living condition. Generally speaking the more the population increase greater is the strain on the infrastructural facilities available in the region.
In the developing countries urbanization is not due to any marked industrial development, but only due to the poverty and increasing pressure of population on land in rural areas. People in rural areas are very poor and most of them unemployed they come to the city to earn their livelihood. A vast majority of them work as domestic servants, laborers, and do other petty jobs. Since their income is very low they are unable to live in decent dwellings and do not have access to even the basic urban amenities e.g. drinking water, sanitation and health care. High rate of urbanization with a low level of urban development creates disparity between urban population growth and rate of development and slow expressions of urban based industrialization in the background of mounting pressure on land in rural areas have resulted in the increased stress on urban amenities and services. So if not directly, at least indirectly population figure (as that of density) contribute to determining the well-being of the people. To set an example Delhi which was once a very beautiful city is slow turning into a big slum.

Social Characteristic

Social indicators are very relevant and important while studying the quality of urban life of the people. It is not meant to deny the usefulness of economic indicators such as income which also influence the well-being. Social indicators do play a very prominent role in determining the well-being of the people. As Knox pointed out that “there are many elements of people well-being as health, education, leisure and security”, which cannot be presented by economic indicator. These measures are also query for inherent
positivistic approach which has inculcated the brief that increased technological and industrial development automatically leads to be better life.

Social indicators can be loosely defined as aggregate or composite measure of well-being or of some element of it and are generally designed to facilitate concise and comprehensive judgment about levels of social welfare. In most of case they are aimed at improving information system for decision and to monitor the effect of policies.

A family may have a position would be disadvantages in comparison with a family in a low rent council house indeed they may be solely “housing poor”. The conclusion is that measure of income and expenditure are by no means acceptable surrogates. In other words, the possession of a color television set and washing machine is a poor substitute for inadequate educational opportunities and medical care.

Thus to measure aspects of social being the need for indicator arose. There is universal agreement on these nine basic components of social well-being: nutrition, shelter, health, education, leisure, social stability, physical environment and surplus stability, and surplus income.

In the developed countries indicators to show the spatial pattern of quality of urban life are based largely on component of leisure, security, social stability and physical environment because these countries have to some degree of already solved their problems like economic stability and decent living standards.
Housing conditions are very good indicators to determine the well-being of the people living in the developing countries. The spatial pattern of quality of urban life can be roughly demarcated by just observing the houses and its surrounding. There is striking contrast between the houses of rich and the poor in the developing countries.

The houses of the rich have all or most of all the amenities while the houses of the poor lacks in almost all the amenities. Thus statement does not mean that all the rich have very good living conditions pattern of quality of urban life or well-being can further be demarcated by finding out the average number of persons per household, average number of families per house and the density of population. Density and crowding do have an impact on human social behavior particularly inter-personal relations. It is commonly known fact that density conditions do affect a person. Overcrowding leads to disturbance as there will be noise. Thus people cannot fully concentrate on their work or study and neither can take rest. Overcrowding also leads to lack of privacy. All these unwanted conditions in the house do affect a person’s well-being. The density conditions including houses are important, because they help in to categorize a area into different crowding zones, by which one can observe and justify the pressure on the amenities and well-being.

Literacy is important aspect of social indicator. Percent literate population is very good indicator to determine the quality of urban life of people living in the developing countries. Among literacy female literacy rate is the significant indicator of development in a society. Education enhances
human well being by broadening the outlook and helping one to understand the various complexities of life, usually the literate population are the once, who get better employment and thus economically better off than the illiterate. Education does promote well-being because it provides a better job opportunity which in turn leads to change in way of life and higher living standard.

**Economic Characteristic**

Economic Indicators are very relevant to assess the quality of urban life, of which income is bold and helping indicators in Moradabad because of its industrial characteristic. The income of a person affects his socio-economic life e.g. cloths, house, convince, domestic appliances, human relations, educations. Political opinion, tastes, age and even life expectancy.

Income is one of the most important factors which determine the standard of living of people. In fact money makes man able to buy all his material needs. Generally an increase in the incomes promotes the well-being or living condition of the people. A man with a high income can use his money to buy necessities, comforts and luxuries. But a poor cannot satisfy even his basic needs. If additional income is provided to him, he will be able to satisfy some of his urgent needs and thus cause of enhancement in his well-being.

Income determines a man's way of living, his food, habits his dress, his company and soon. Only if one has enough financial resource can live in a good house with the necessary amenities and can enjoy all the facilities for a good living. At least if income is not the sole determinant of man's social well-being but it is a strong determinant which determines man's economic well-
being. Though income itself never used to truly reflect the quality of urban life of the people. It can be used in conjunction with other indicators to provide a fairly correct view of human well-being. Income is not the only factor to determine the quality of urban life, but working population is also important to determine the economic status of a society for higher living standard. It’s a place where I can involve in the community and make a difference.

Review of Related Literature

Brief descriptions of some of the scholars who have shown interest in this field are accounted below.

Laswell and Kaplan (1960)

Have recognized in human needs two important sets of values relating respectively to “welfare” and “defense” welfare value includes the well-being of the individual in terms of health, safety, wealth, skill enlightens (knowledge) etc. defense values includes the respect, rectitude and affection derived from relationships with other peoples.

Wilson (1969)

Based his study of interstate variations in the “quality of life” in the U.S.A. by basing his indicators on the domestic goal areas listed in the 1960. Reports of the president’s commission on National goals. These were

Status of the individual

(i) Equality

(ii) Democraticprocess
(iii) Education

(iv) Economic growth

(v) Technological change

(vi) Agriculture

(vii) Living condition

(viii) Health and welfare


Murdie (1969)

The basic components of his study are socio-economic as well as housing variables of two census years 1951 & 1961. The comparison of the evolved dimensions and changes in the spatial pattern in two successive censuses is made. He identified a number of processes at work in a decade regarding social geography of Taranto. He recognized distortion of concentric pattern of family status and observed zonal arrangement of socio-economic status.

Drewnowski (1970)

Refers to “welfare generation” in his framework. For measuring and planning the quality of life: there are similar suggestions in the literature on social indicators. The problem there is that the local level of health or education, for example, can be influenced by major exogenous variables beyond the control of the producers of education health care. Thus logical
condition of housing or family life may operate as constraints on the efficiency of education and health services, to their output as a purely technical matter risks overlooking the broader societal structure in which they operate.

Operationally quality of life has been defined in a Unesco Report (1977) as “the satisfaction of an inclusive set of human needs”. Quality of life an inclusive concept which covers all aspects of living including material satisfaction of vital need as well as more transcendental aspect of life such as personal development, self realization and a healthy ‘ecosystem’. This definition emphasis that quality of life includes objectives conditions and subjective components, where “Objective indicators” are generally defined as count of various types of phenomena, such as levels of income and education, residential densities and unemployment figure. They are most often regarded as quantitative ‘facts’ selected from census data and other accessible officials registers, but this may not always be the case.

“Subjective indicators” are generally defined as being based on direct report from individual about their own perception and feelings. To obtain a direct measure of the quality of life of the people concerned, a questionnaire survey is proposed.

Flax (1972)

Has investigated the quality of life in eighteen large metropolitan areas of the U.S.A. using indicators based on the fourteen ‘Quality categories’ held to be relevant to American life. These indicators are only broadly similar in scope to Wilson’s although some of the differences can be attributed to the
change in scale from the state to the metropolitan level. Flax reveals that there is no consideration implicit or explicit of important factors such as residential quality, recreational opportunity and social welfare. To a large extent, this must be due to the lack of cohesive conceptual framework on which to build the indicators.

**D.M. Smith (1973)**

Outlined a welfare approach which could provide a useful focus for human geography. At the beginning it was suggested that the concept of social well-being is sometimes thought as synonymous with the quality of life. "Quality of life" implies a rather personalized concept whereas the reference to aggregates of people defined by area of residence more appropriately addresses the welfare of some social group.

Smith analyzed the content of ten major works from the social indicators movement and ten text books from the field of social problems.

In an attempt to establish a degree of consensus as to which conditions an overall measure of well-being should reflect. From these, it provide possible to arrive at abroad consensus about well-being. In a happy society people will have incomes adequate for their basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and a reasonable standard of living, people will not like in poverty. The status and dignity of the individual will reflect and he will be socially economically mobile and will enjoy a good quality of physical environment.
Smith lists seven general criteria of "social well-being" in the United States.

1. Income, wealth and employment
   (i) Income and wealth
   (ii) Employment status
   (iii) Income supplement

2. The living environment

3. Health

4. Education

5. Social order and disorganization

6. Social belonging

7. Recreation and Leisure

The levels of living of person resident within a given spatial unit are constituted by overall composition of housing. Leisure, social security, health, education etc. aggregately exhibited in that area.

Harvey (1973)

Suggest that needs associated with different elements of well-being best to be determined in different ways. Thus it may be best to determine consumer need through statistical analysis and medical care needs through resolution of expert opinion.
Paul Knox (1974)

Knox has suggested that levels of living provide the best conceptual framework for the development of social indicator. The level of living of person’s resident within a given geographical area is constituted by the overall composition of housing, health, education, social status, employment, affluence, leisure, social security and social stability aggregately exhibited in that area together with those aspect of demographic structure, general physical environment which may determine the extent to which needs the desires relating to the foregoing constituent of level of living can be or are met.

Kuz, T.J. (1978)

Subjectivity involved in the “Quality of life” approach complicates the problem of measurement notwithstanding this fact the studies of quality of life with few exceptions employ objective variable which are the most accessible and available.

Bhardwaj and Wilkening (1980)

The recognition that the economic health of a nation is not synonymous with individual satisfaction and well-being had led to the development of social indicator to assess individual’s quality of life. The new emphasis is on the monitoring of change in goals, value, attitudes and satisfaction that affect individual life and nation. The overall thrust appears to be the development of a set of dependent variables.

Since none of the argument regarding relationship between subjective and objective criteria of the quality of life is supported by rigorous empirical research.

It should be pointed out that the subjective variables of quality of life may be important in the western world where a majority of population enjoys a fairly high standard of living but in the conditions of objective poverty of the developing countries they may not be so important. In a recent study of India it is pointed out that almost forty percent of people in rural areas live below minimum standard the polite of fifty percent people in urban area is same. A more pertinent fact is that bottom one percent of the urban masses lives in more wretched conditions then their counterpart in rural areas.

Land (1983)

Goes on to suggest that from the stand point of generating theory of social change it is not clear that satisfaction ideas are the most desirable subjective indicators as opposed to values aspiration or expectation nor it is clear that satisfaction indexes provides an ambiguous criterion for the formulation of public policy.

Sara Ponnose (1986)

The study of the social environment and human well-being in the city of Trivandrum has succeeded in finding out the spatial distribution of human well-being in one of the important cities of south India.
In this study it is assumed that the indicators chosen were reflective of human well-being. Much more work could be done by finding out by personal investigation which are the others factors which do influence human well-being and to what extent they individually contribute to well-being. For investigating the distributive patterns of quality of life or human well-being more accurately factorial analysis should be employed which is a standard method for social area studies.

Rashmi Soti (1987)

In her work “A cross section of the quality of urban life of Bijnor, Afzalagarh and Mandwar” gives various definitions of quality of life, historical, geographical setting and demographic pattern. It was found that there is no standard definition and there are no fixed criteria for measuring the quality of urban life. Indicators like population density, house density, recreation, education sanitation and many others were selected to measure the quality of urban life.

Kulkarni (1990)

In his study geographical pattern of social well-being (with special reference to Gujarat) has considered twenty four constituent of social well-being namely-

(i) General physical environment

(ii) Housing

(iii) Education

(iv) Social security
Kulkarni has selected 24 indicators showing the resource making qualities of population and the socio-economic conditions of society. The study contributes to the understanding of the spatial variation in the levels of social well-being in Gujarat. He has divided the state for purpose into inter taluka, inter-district and inter-regional units. On the basis of composite index value and the population size of the each talukas of seven micro regions, four significant levels of social well-being have been identified namely very high, high, moderate and low.

**Fakhruddin (1991)**

In his book on the “Quality of urban life” an attempt has been made to study the differences in quality of life in the various residential areas of the city of Lucknow.

Factorial analysis was undertaken to investigate the residential pattern and then again to determine the quality of life. In the analysis of residential pattern twenty eight variables and in the analysis of quality of life thirty one variables were used. These variables reduced into five underlying categories of material and housing conditions, territorial stress, amenities and infrastructure, health and survival and education and recreation. The spatial distribution of
these categories reveals that there is a considerable disparity over the city. space with respected to livability. These variations are observed to correspond with the socio-economic status of the population.

Saba Ahmad (1992)

Present the study of “Residential Structure and Quality of life in Aligarh City”. Despite its limitations has been quite a useful study. It has succeeded in finding out the spatial distribution of human well-being in the city. Areas where the conditions are very good, good, moderate, poor, very poor have been identified.

Atiqur Rehman (1996)

In his study “Household environmental problems in Aligarh City” used the different methodologies such as based on primary source of data, water sample were collected and tested and used as methodology. Spearman’s Rank coefficient method also applied to calculate the relationship existing between the various households. This study also provides a coherent assessment of household environmental problems faced by different income households.

Nigar A. Siddique (2000)

According to this study, it was found that there are considerable variations in residential quality based on thirty six variables. These variables clearly represent a comprehensive description of residential differentiation throughout the city of Bhagal pur. Using the factor analysis or component analysis five factors were extracted from rotated factor matrix which explains seventy two percent of the total variance accounted by the five factors in
aggregate. Remaining each of the four factor contribute approximately nine percent of the total variance in average.

These analyses give certain important finding. It suggest that on the basis of qualitative livability residential areas are differentiated as high, medium, low and very low.
References


6. Ibid. p.70.


