Chapter - 1

Introduction
CHAPTER – I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This is a study of the Quality of Life of the people of Mysore district. However, the content of the thesis is beyond describing the simple characteristics of the people: rather, the study has an ‘rural quality of life and work’ focus. The premise of the study is that the people of the district of Mysore have deliberated on the pros and cons of their life and work and, most importantly, they have borne a dream of life and work in their rural milieu, which the researcher could evaluate in some deeper sense using a questionnaire survey which could reveal their perceptions as to the quality of life and the overall impressions of life in rural Mysore and also evaluate different and important conditions of life and work in such aspects as the nature, value and knowledge of rural-urban environment, community cohesion, health, education, housing and basic infrastructures, employment, rural economy, politics, recreation and safety’. This thesis is a comprehensive report on the study conducted by the researcher on the theme and its sub-themes as a research scholar at the University of Mysore, attached to the Department of Studies and Research in Geography.

The present chapter has the purpose of building a brief background for the study and introduces the problem of study, the aim and objectives, the research questions that the researcher has set herself to answer. Besides, the chapter outlines the scope and limitations of the study and the structure of thesis, in its commissioned chapters.

1.2 Background for Study

Quality of life has no single uniform definition (O'Boyle, 1997). Cummins (1997) summarized 60 quality of life definitions. Hughes and Hwang (1996) have examined 87 studies on what constitutes quality of life and identified 44 definitions. A group of international researchers, who have done primary research on quality of life in the field of intellectual disabilities developed a consensus related to the conceptualization measurement and application of quality of life (The Special Interest
Research Group on Quality of Life, 2000). They underscored that the key characteristics of all definitions are: General feelings of well-being; feelings of positive social involvement; and opportunities to achieve personal potential.

Indeed, researchers have agreed that quality of life is multidimensional and includes both subjective and objective dimensions (Halpem, 1993; The Special Interest Research Group on Quality of Life, 2000; Testa and Simonson, 1996; Vinayakam and Sekar, 2013). Another international group of researchers (Schalock et al., 2002) has adopted Schalock's eight domains and specified sub-domains as follows (The Special Interest Research Group on Quality of Life, 2000: 28):

- **Emotional well-being**: safety, stable and predictable environments, positive feedback;
- **Interpersonal relations**: affiliations, affection, intimacy, friendships, interactions;
- **Material well-being**: ownership, possessions, employment;
- **Personal development**: education and habilitation, purposive activities, assistive technology;
- **Physical well-being**: health care, mobility, wellness, nutrition;
- **Self-determination**: choices, personal control, decisions, personal goals;
- **Social inclusion**: natural supports, integrated environments, participation; and
- **Rights**: privacy, ownership, due process, barrier-free environments.

It is often difficult to measure quality of life. Almost all measurement tools have multiple domains, with multiple items in each domain. A number of measurement methods have been used for assessing quality of life, for example, for persons with disabilities, including surveys and questionnaires (for example, Cummins, McCabe, Romeo, and Gullone, 1994; Ferrans and Powers, 1985), interviews (for example, Park, 1985; Lehman, 1988), vicarious interviews, and vicarious surveys (for example, Ouellette-Kuntz and McCreary, 1996). Most other researchers have put in efforts at involving the persons with disabilities, but they have depended on a vicarious response. In some tools, parents or siblings were the major vicarious respondents for the measurement (for example, Becker, Diamond, and Sainfort, 1993; Ouellette-Kuntz and McCreary, 1996).
In general, quality of life has been defined using a combination of both subjectivity and objectivity, which is however controversial (Halpem, 1993). This controversy is neither unexpected nor it deserves careful attention, for human beings are rarely objective. Those who argue for the objective conceptualization of quality of life feel that quality of life is the sum of the objectively measurable life conditions experienced by an individual. Their contention is that subjective satisfaction is nothing more than a response to those conditions (Stark and Goldsbury, 1990). There are some others who argue that a person's expressed satisfaction with life is the dispositive criterion as each individual or family differs in what they enjoy, desire from life, or find important (Edgerton, 1990; O'Boyle, 1997). Some researchers do accommodate both perspectives (for example, Felce, 1997; Schalock, Keith, Hoffman, and Karen, 1989; Stainback and Stainback, 1989). Schalock (2000), on the other, has suggested that some domains and indicators (for example, emotional well-being) are more amenable to personal appraisal, while others (for example, material well-being) are not: in other words, they are better suited to objective assessment.

As individuals are unique, the uniqueness of each individual is at the heart of how quality of life is measured, especially when they are highly diverse as well. At the individual level, a prominent measurement consideration is whether the person has a disability or not. Schalock (2000) has argued that quality of life for persons with disabilities encompasses the same indicators that are important to persons without disabilities. On the other hand, Hatton (1998) has asserted that the experiences of persons with disabilities are restricted because of the limits imposed by disability conditions; and the limited experiences do result in different indicators of quality of life. Hence, specific attention needs to be paid to the uniqueness of each individual, in conceptualizing and constructing a valid measurement for quality of life (Borthwick-Duffy, 1996).

Different aspects of quality of life thus assume varying degrees of importance when it comes to rural development processes. For some people of the villages, especially for the poorest and the less educated, their priority may be for guaranteeing an income to sustain their families, while neglecting quality of life concerns. In most places of the developing countries, people live with little or no concern for quality of life; yet it is largely for the reason of improving their lives, towards a certain level of quality of life, they work hard, day and night, suffering in unimaginable ways in the villages before they could actually make some quality out of their lives and work.
1.3 The Problem of Study

Given the background above, the present study is a simple and straightforward analysis of quality of life related characteristics of people of rural Mysore district. However, the present study focuses on how they perceive their achievements in terms of quality of life they have achieved in the village through their hard life and work. In essence, the study attempts at measuring and scaling quality of life, well-being in life and work and also evaluating their perceived understanding of nature, value and knowledge of the village life and work they have braved, through a multivariate analyses.

This thesis therefore has the purpose of discussing the revealed perceptions of nature, value and knowledge of rural quality of life and work of the people of Mysore district, Karnataka State. The method of analysis used in the study, besides other simple methods of Pearson Chi-square test, Likelihood ratio, and the frequency and percentage analysis, is that of the multivariate common factor analysis, a data reducing technique, much favoured in social science researches, to gain an understanding of the human experience in space and time. In this thesis, the focus is on the experience of the rural people of Mysore district in their life and work in the villages and in time and space. How they value their immediate rural / urban environment, community cohesion, health, education, housing and basic infrastructures, employment, rural economy, recreation, politics and safety, what value and knowledge of rural quality of life and work they exemplify – the hope, the subjective happiness, for example, in their day-to-day living and what are their revealed perceptions about their life and work.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the living and working of the people of Mysore district of Karnataka and evaluate their perceived understanding of the nature, value and knowledge of the present rural-urban environment and aspects such as community cohesion, health, educational, housing and basic infrastructures, employment, economy, politics recreation and safety of their villages.
The objectives of the study are:

- To examine the Quality of Life Scale aspects of rural Mysore district and understand what causes or gives rise to life quality, hope, and happiness;
- To evaluate their perceived understanding of the nature, value and knowledge of the village in its varied aspects – rural-urban environment, community cohesion, health, education, housing and basic infrastructures, employment, rural economy, politics, recreation and safety; and
- To assess their feelings relative to the quality of life and well-being in life and work, satisfaction with life, hope, and subjective happiness so as to make suggestions and recommendations for making their life more better in the future.

1.5 Research Questions

Besides the basic research questions that the present research addresses, the following are the specific research questions that directly emerge from the objectives above. They are:

1. Have there been discernibly higher levels of change in the living and working conditions of the people of Mysore district, and particularly in quality of life? If so, what were the opportunities for, and constraints to, their living and working in the village, infrastructural and even psychological?

2. What characterize the evaluation of the nature, value and knowledge of the village in its varied aspects relative to their life and work – ten aspects of the rural areas: rural-urban environment, community cohesion, health, education, housing and basic amenities, employment, economy, recreation, politics and safety, and the performances of the village infrastructures – and hope and subjective happiness?

3. What characterize the changes in the overall quality of life and impressions on the overall well-being in life of the rural people?

1.6 The Hypotheses

1. There have been significant differences in peoples’ perceptions of the villages and such differences are statistically significant but vary from individual to individual.

2. There have been significant differences in the perceived nature of rural life in its aspects, quality of life, hope and subjective happiness and that of the impressions on the overall well-being in life.
1.7 Mysore District, Karnataka, India: the Study Area

The district lies between 11° 30’ N and 12° 50’ N Latitudes and 75° 45’ E and 77° 45’ E Longitudes. It is bounded on the north by Hassan, Mandya and Bangalore districts; and on the south by Chamarajanagara district (from 1997) and Kannur district of Kerala State. On the east also, it is bounded by Chamarajanagara district and on the west by Kodagu district, besides Wynad district of Kerala State. Physiographically, the region in which the district is located may be classified as partly *maidan* (plains) and partly semi-*maidan* of the Mysore plateau.

Mysore district is described as an undulating tableland, fertile and well watered by the perennial rivers, whose waters are dammed by *anicuts* enriching their banks by means of canals. Here and there, granite rocks rise from the plains, which is otherwise un-intermittent and wooded. Mysore district is divided into two sub-divisions, which are Hunsur and Mysore and the district has 1,216 villages, 11 statutory towns, 235 grama panchayats and 226 wards. The District Commissioner is responsible for managing the district administration and the Assistant Commissioners are responsible for managing the sub-divisions of the district.

The climate of Mysore district is equable and agreeable. The district enjoys cool and equable temperatures. The district shares the wider climatic pattern of the State as a whole, although there are some distinctive features. The climate of the district may be described as essentially tropical monsoon type which is a product of the interplay of the two opposing air-masses of the southwest and northeast monsoons. Over the greater part of the district, summers are languorously warm and winters bracingly cool. The normal annual rainfall is around 760 mm, spread over a period of seven months, from the later half of April to October. Rainfall is gradually decreasing from west to east. The annual average rainfall ranges between 600 mm and 1,100 mm. The northeast monsoon commences in October and ceases by the end of December. The monsoon winds bring some rains to the eastern parts of the district. The duration of the monsoon is short and rains are also very low and they are confined to a small area of the district.
The district in general enjoys cool and equable temperatures. In the period from March to May, there is a continuous rise in temperature. April is the hottest month with the mean daily maximum temperature at 34.5° C and the daily minimum is at 21.1°C. On normal days, the day temperatures during summer may exceed 39°C. There is welcome relief from the heat when thunder showers occur during April and May. With the advance of the southwest monsoon about the beginning of June, the day temperatures drop appreciably and, throughout the southwest monsoon period, the weather is pleasant. After mid-November, both day and night temperatures decrease progressively. January is the coldest month with mean daily maximum at 11° C. On some days, during the period November to January, the minimum temperature may go below 11°C.

A total of 159,230 hectares is the net area irrigated in Mysore district. The main rivers of Kabini, Cauvery and Harangi supply water for agriculture in the district. Among them, the Cauvery flows through K.R. Nagar and T. Narasipura taluks, Kabini flows through H.D. Kote, Nanjanagud and T. Narasipura taluks and join the Cauvery. The minor irrigation systems such as the tanks, wells and bore wells have played a crucial role in the development of irrigation facilities to promote and enhance agricultural production in the district.

The total population was 2,281,653, which accounted for 5.07 per cent of the total population of the State. The rural population in 1991 was 1,465,034 while the urban population was 816,619, which accounted for 64.20 per cent and 36.0 per cent, respectively. In Census 2001, it increased to 2,641,027, which accounted for 5.0 per cent. The rural population of 2001 was of the order of 1,658,899 while the urban population was at 982,128, which accounted for 63.0 per cent and 37.18 per cent, respectively. According to 2011, the total population was 2,994,744, which accounted for more or less the same, at 5.00 per cent. The rural population was 1,839,926 and urban population was 1,154,818, accounting for 61.43 per cent and 38.56 per cent, respectively.

As per Census 2001, the decadal growth of population during 1991-2001 in Mysore district was 15.75 per cent. It was expected to be lower at 13.39 per cent during 2001-2011. Computations for rural and urban population show that the decadal
variation for rural population was 13.23 per cent during 1991-2001 and 10.91 per cent during 2001-11. The figures for urban population have shown 20.26 per cent for 1991-2001 and 17.58 per cent of variation for 2001-11. Mysore taluk reported the largest number of main workers (339,926), which accounted for 37.70 per cent, followed by Nanjangud taluk with 127,175 (34.50 per cent), H.D. Kote taluk with 103,171 (42 per cent), Hunsur taluk with 100,527 (39.60 per cent), Periyapatna taluk with 88,035 (39.30 per cent), K.R. Nagara taluk with 87,872 (36.7 per cent) and T. Narasipura taluk with the lowest number at 82,423, which accounted for 29.50 per cent, during 2009-10. Hunsur taluk has had the highest number of 77,588 cultivators, accounting for 56.80 per cent, followed by Periyapatna taluk with 64,719 (63.40 per cent), H.D. Kote taluk with 63,815 (51 per cent), K.R. Nagara taluk with 59,799 (53.20 per cent), Mysore taluk with 42,156 (11.40 per cent), Nanjangud taluk with 53,008 (33.9 per cent) and T. Narasipura taluk with 36,872 cultivators, which is the lowest among the taluks of Mysore in 2009-10, accounting for 34.10 per cent of the total workers.

1.8 Research Methodology

The present research has depended on both the primary sources of data and secondary sources of data. The primary sources are essentially the people of the villages, both men and women. A sample of 300 people has been chosen from 15 villages of the district of Mysore, 5 villages each to K.R. Nagara, Nanjangud and T. Narasipura taluks, and 20 each from each of the 15 villages. Thus, the sample is widely scattered and represent different parts of the district. The samples chosen have been interviewed using a custom-designed questionnaire, with a distinct number of questions in each of its sections.

The questionnaire has also been designed in a way that there have been different sections of scaled items, namely, quality of life scale indicators, the hope scale, the subjective happiness scale, the overall quality of life with 14 items for scaling, and overall impressions of quality of life with 5 items of scaling and a longer section of the questionnaire with 57 different items of scaling on ten different aspects of the rural areas: rural-urban environment, community cohesion, health, education, housing and basic infrastructures, employment, rural economy, politics, recreation and safety.
The scholar has conducted face-to-face interviews with the 300 people of varying ages 20-72 years (11.5 per cent of under-30 years, 37.8 per cent of 31-40 years, 42 per cent of 41-60 years and just 8.3 per cent of 60 plus years) and gender (75.7 per cent of men and 24.3 per cent of women). Specifically, the data for this thesis focus on the following, from the questionnaire indicators of quality of life scale (57 variables) – the variables are: (a) Rural-Urban environment (8 variables), (b) Community Cohesion (5 variables), (c) Healthcare aspects (access and affordability, quality of institutions and personnel – 7 variables), (d) Educational aspects (access, affordability, quality, experience, distance-time-cost – 7 variables), (e) Housing and Basic Infrastructures (quality, maintenance, affordability and liveability – 5 variables), (f) Employment aspects (support, challenges, hazards – 5 variables), (g) rural economy (satisfaction of needs, progress, happiness – 5 variables), (g) Politics (5 variables), (h) Recreational aspects (opportunities, use, access, affordability, time-cost – 5 variables) and (i) Safety (individual, women and children, community – 5 variables), the village infrastructure performances (20 items), satisfaction with life scale (5 variables), hope scale (12 variables), my life quality (7 variables), subjective happiness scale (4 variables), overall quality of life (14 variables), and impressions of quality of life (5 variables) in rural Mysore district. In all, the study has considered 124 variables in the analysis and interpretation, in order to speak authentically about the quality of life of the people of Mysore district, in all and varied dimensions.

The secondary sources of data have generally been census abstracts of various census years, documentary sources of the government agencies, research reports and international and national reports by different organizations and research institutes such as the UN, and national institutions of different kinds. Data as well as perspectives have been collected from the reports and documents for the purpose of writing up the thesis. In addition library research has been gone through meticulously using different University libraries and also other research institutions.

Among the statistical tools used in the study are (a) the simple frequency and percentage analysis of questionnaire survey data (one-way as well as two-way tables), (b) Pearson Chi-square test and Likelihood ratio and (c) the multivariate statistical analysis of factor using principal components approach. In order that the data are amenable to statistical analyses, the questionnaire data have been converted into different datasets using the MS EXCEL spreadsheet and the analyses themselves have been performed using the SPSS package.
For the purpose of description of sample and respondent related characteristics, a frequency and percentage analysis has been done for all variables extracted from the questionnaire and put into the dataset. First, a simple frequency of each of the fields with column percentages has been made and then two-way tables using certain select pairs of variables have been carried out, in order to measure variations.

Frequency analysis is particularly useful for describing discrete categories of data having multiple-choice or yes-no response formats. This analysis involves constructing a frequency distribution. The only technical requirement of the frequency analysis is that the categories of response be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. This means that the same observation cannot be counted as belonging to more than one response category. The frequency analysis must be exhaustive in the sense that all respondents must fit into a category. The tables so generated are numerous, only select tables are therefore included in the text while others are interpreted so as to show the variations therein.

Factor analysis is a statistical technique designed to analyze the interrelationships within a set of variables by reducing the complex data to an easily interpretable form (Davis, 2002). In multivariate analysis, the bi-variate techniques are extended so that more than two variables can be considered, the ‘m’ variable becoming the ‘m’ axes of the test space. Procedures of multivariate analysis are often concerned with the problem of reducing the original test space to the minimum number of dimensions needed to describe the relevant information contained in the original observations. Multivariate procedures differ in the types of original information they preserve. Some understanding of matrix algebra is essential to using and understanding the multivariate analysis.

It is a particular psychometric model that has been in wide use in social sciences. This helps in the study of the logical implications of systematic inter-correlations within sets of tests. However, the social sciences follow just one of the many approaches to the reduction of dimensionality in correlated systems of measurements and the rotation (varimax, a short form for maximizing variance, for example) of a reduced number of axes to more meaningful positions.
The Factor Analysis (FA) is also a classification procedure in that it may be usefully applied to multivariate situations to classifying the N individuals, on the basis of ‘m’ variables. One particular feature of the FA is that ‘p’ underlying factors in the multivariate sample space model is always less than the ‘m’ variables: p < m. The underlying factor dimensions are drawn from the use of inter-correlations system by generating ‘p’ number of scores each for the ‘N’ individuals. The scores may however be drawn from the varimax rotation, which stands for maximizing variance. If we can measure ‘m’ variables with respect to areal units, the scores may be assigned to these areal units for constructing one or more maps showing real areal differences (or regional variations) in respect of ‘p’ reduced dimensions.

Graphical representations and charts have been created to illustrate the questionnaire survey data analyzed. Maps used in the thesis have generally been prepared using the modern geographical information systems.

**1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The scope of the study is rather broad and relatively simple, for it is for an understanding of the quality of life of Mysore district in general and for revealing their perceptions as regards quality of life, hope, subjective happiness, and overall impressions of quality of life and in respect of ten different aspects of rural life and work. Essentially, therefore, this study allows us an insight into the rural peoples’ perceptions and evaluations of what life and work in rural Mysore district have been and whether or not they hold, here and now, a happy and accomplished sense of their achievements in the villages in the years of their living there. This insight is considered in the recommendations and suggestions made at the end of the thesis to make and enhance their happiness last and also improve upon.

The study has however had some limitations under which the researcher has had to work, namely: (a) as a single scholar study, one pertinent limitation has been that of ‘time and money’ that could be devoted to the study; (b) another limitation of the study has been the decision on ‘what essentially to focus on’ in the study given the constraint of the theme having been overworked in social and applied sciences including sociology, anthropology, economics, geography, and environmental and spatial planning; and (c) the last and a serious limitation being the exposure of researcher to the theme of quality of life itself, she being an academic staff, with limited time for extensive study on the theme and the allied or related themes.
1.10 The Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized in seven commissioned chapters and they are as shown below. A brief introduction is given to each of the chapters.

**Chapter I: Introduction:** This chapter introduces the problem of analysis, the objectives, and the scope and limitations of the study.

**Chapter II: A Review of Literature:** It is a chapter dealing with a review and appraisal of relevant literature in India and abroad. For conceptual clarity, and for disciplinary convenience, the review is given under various headings which could be useful for the study.

**Chapter III: Mysore District, Karnataka: A Profile:** This chapter deals with a description of Mysore district in its geographical, socio-economic and demographics details. There is particular focus on human development and indices related to human development analysis for which secondary and documentary data are available.

**Chapter IV: Research Methodology:** This chapter speaks of the methodology adopted in the study. Particular attention and focus is given to five areas of methodology, namely, (a) primary sources of data, including sample, sampling, and questionnaire interviews, (b) secondary sources of data (Census, documents, research reports and papers), (c) methods of statistical analysis (but mainly simple frequency and percentage analysis, Pearson Chi-square and Likelihood ratio and multivariate factor analysis), (d) graphical and other representations of data (maps using GIS, MS EXCEL for diagrams and charts) and (e) library research (for review as well as for assembling ideas for the thesis).

**Chapter V: Indicators of Quality of Life Scale in Rural Mysore:** This chapter discusses the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the people of rural Mysore district as gleaned from the questionnaire survey data. This chapter also uses the datasets which consist of data gathered from 300 rural-respondents with 100 each from K.R. Nagara, Nanjangud and T. Narasipura taluks of Mysore district. The data are related to those respondents from the 15 select villages, 5 each from the three taluks. There are also the datasets generated from the questionnaire survey which
reveal the perceptions of the rural people on the ten different aspects of rural life and work and performances of the village infrastructures, which could shed light on the quality of life scale in rural Mysore. Other datasets analyzed and interpreted relate to the hope scale, the subjective happiness scale, and the overall quality of life and impressions of quality of life. The datasets have been subjected to a simple frequency and percentage analysis and some of them to Pearson Chi-square test and the Likelihood ratio analysis and the results are discussed using descriptions, although there are occasional analysis of everyday life in the rural parts of Mysore district as understood by the scholar, from her visits to the rural areas and discussions with the rural folks. The data have been analysed using the simple frequency and percentage analysis and hence the characteristics are mainly spoken of in percentage terms and illustrated diagrammatically using MS EXCEL spreadsheet and with maps using GIS.

Chapter VI: Value and Knowledge of Quality of Life Dimensions in Mysore District, Karnataka: The chapter is entirely analytical and the analysis of data has been done using the multivariate factor analysis. The discussion principally centres around the life and work of rural people but in terms of ten pertinent aspects of their life and work in Mysore district of Karnataka. The data from the questionnaire survey from 300 respondents have been analysed using the multivariate factor analysis to extract several different dimensions and they are discussed threadbare. People have also been categorized using the rotated factor scores as to their perceived understanding of nature, value and knowledge of rural Mysore district and their life and work in it.

Chapter VII: Conclusion and Recommendations: This chapter summarises the thesis and then capsules the findings and conclusions of the study towards discussing the implications of the study for policy, geography and for geographical theory. It makes recommendations based on the findings and conclusions, particularly reported in Chapters V and VI. The recommendations and suggestions offered here are operational and practical. Suggestions for further research are also made.

Appendages: The thesis has the following appendages. Appendices are essentially the questionnaire custom-designed and pilot-tested for the study before use with the respondents and sample data analysis results. References are a list of references cited in the text of the thesis.
1.11 Conclusion

This chapter has both introduced the thesis which represents a study on the characteristics of the people of Mysore district and the problem of study and the related essences of study. The brief background built using a small number of recent studies provides for an understanding of the problem of the study, the objectives set-forth, the research questions to be answered and the hypotheses to be tested and also the need for a methodology briefly described as well. The study is about rural people and their characteristics, but more importantly their perceptions of quality of life and work in the villages. The chapter has given the scope of the study, its limitations and also the structure of the thesis.