



MEASURING QOL IN DOĞANBEY URBAN TRANSFORMATION AREA IN BURSA, TURKEY.

Miray Gür, Yavuz Taneli, Neslihan Dostoğlu

Abstract

This study aims to measure the quality of life (QoL), using the proposed conceptual model within the context of the interactions between human behaviour and the environment. It aims to research the effect of the control of residents on QoL, and the findings constitute the basis for a discussion on the effects of environmental policies on QoL. Doğanbey in Bursa, which is in close proximity to the Khans (Inns) District, is selected as the study area because it represents an urban transformation implemented according to administrative decisions. QoL measurements in the research reflect people's evaluations, their adaptation to post-transformation environment and the implementation process by means of questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The findings indicate that lack of resident control has an adverse effect on satisfaction and QoL, and that an urban transformation conducted without user participation will fail. In conclusion, the study aims to contribute to decision-making mechanisms within the framework of residents' influence to ensure increased QoL. The intention of the authors is to promote the usage of QoL scale developed for other housing or transformation areas by modifying the questions according to varying geographies and social groups.

Keywords: *Quality of Life, Resident Satisfaction, Urban transformation, Doğanbey, Resident Control, Participatory Design.*

INTRODUCTION

The quality of life (QoL) is a general and individual judgment formed by the interaction of many components. Many researchers consider the concept as a multi-dimensional and complex structure (DIENER and SUH, 1997; VAN KAMP et al., 2003). QoL, which is related to happiness, living standards and welfare, is often used to describe the sense of well-being (LARSEN and EID, 2008; DIENER et al., 2009).

In different disciplines, the terminology and measurements used to describe the concept of QoL varies. Most of the research defines or measures the concept through the view that objective realities, and the subjective perception of it, constitute QoL. Environmental factors constitute the objective realities, and the environmental responses of the individuals constitute the subjective perception (SZALAI, 1980; DISSART and DELLER, 2000; VEENHOVEN, 2000). In development of QoL, life satisfaction, personal characteristics, health, education, family, social participation, physical and social environment, housing, safety and economic factors are decisive (VEENHOVEN, 2000; RAHMAN et al., 2005; REVICKI et al., 2000). The environment is one of the main factors determining QoL (WHOQOL, 1997; RAHMAN et al., 2005). In studies on the environmental aspect of QoL, besides individual characteristics, the natural-built environment, housing environment, housing quality,

satisfaction of housing and the environment, human behaviour, environmental adaptation, the accessibility of public services and benchmarking standards of individuals are evaluated (VAN KAMP et al., 2003; MARANS, 2003; MURDIE et al., 1992). Rahman et al. (2005) refer to the importance of the individuals' preferences to their QoL. If the residents' preferences do not have an impact on their living environment, the problem of environmental adaptation may arise, and QoL may be adversely affected (PACIONE, 2003). The purpose of QoL research is to evaluate the consequences of policies and to develop a basis for policies towards social wellbeing (DIENER and SUH, 1997; PACIONE 2003). Exploring links between QoL components is useful for determining the effect of different interventions, and a scale should be developed to understand the connections (MARTIN, 2012).

The environmental qualities and the satisfaction of the housing areas have an impact on QoL. This study aims to measure QoL within the context of the interactions between human behaviour and the living environment. In line with this aim, a conceptual model is developed to measure QoL, and a case study is conducted in an urban transformation area in Turkey, where QoL has become a significant issue. The study examines the Doğanbey Urban Transformation in Turkey that was implemented without considering the expectations of the residents in the area. The transformation, which was implemented according to deci-