



Urban residents' attitudes and perceptions regarding quality of life: An examination of Hubballi–Dharwad city

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Abstract

The swift urbanisation has profoundly altered the social, economic, and environmental aspects of cities, becoming the evaluation of urban quality of life increasingly vital. This study analyses the attitudes and views of urban inhabitants regarding the quality of life in Hubballi–Dharwad metropolis. The research is founded on primary data gathered from 384 participants chosen from four metropolitan wards via a standardised questionnaire. It assesses contentment with housing, neighbourhood, nutrition, apparel, mental health services, living conditions, and personal aspects influencing well-being. Descriptive statistical methods, encompassing frequency and percentage analysis, were employed to analyse the replies.

The results reveal that participants were predominantly content with fundamental necessities like food and clothing, however their pleasure with housing and mental health services was relatively diminished. A significant number of respondents indicated discontent with their dwellings, residential locations, urban liveability, and general living conditions, emphasising issues pertaining to urban infrastructure and environmental quality. The research indicates that personal safety, physical health, mental health, occupation, and emotional well-being are seen as significant factors influencing quality of life.

The research suggests that urban quality of life is multifaceted and relies on both material conditions and factors such as psychological well-being, environmental quality, and social security. The results underscore the necessity for human-centric urban planning, improved housing conditions, superior environmental management, increased public services, and robust mental health support systems to foster sustainable and inclusive urban growth in accordance with Sustainable growth Goal 11.

Keywords: Quality of life, urbanisation, urban perception, housing, mental health, living environment, Hubballi–Dharwad, sustainable urban development

Introduction

Urbanisation has emerged as a hallmark of the twenty-first century, reshaping the social, economic, environmental, and cultural fabric of cities globally. The United Nations reports that over fifty percent of the global population presently lives in urban areas, with this percentage anticipated to rise considerably in the forthcoming decades. Urbanisation has facilitated economic growth, enhanced infrastructure, technological progress, and increased access to education and healthcare; however, it has also engendered intricate challenges including environmental degradation, traffic congestion, housing shortages, escalating living costs, social inequality, and mental health issues. These advancements have redirected urban study from solely quantifying economic advancement to comprehending the overarching notion of quality of life (QoL) experienced by urban inhabitants.

Quality of life is a multifaceted notion that includes an individual's general well-being, contentment, and capacity to lead a meaningful life. It encompasses more than material riches, incorporating physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships, environmental quality, safety, education, career prospects, housing conditions, access to public services, recreational facilities, and community engagement. The perception of quality of life differs among individuals and societies due to influences from personal values, expectations, socio-economic status, cultural background, and lived experiences. Consequently, evaluating quality of life necessitates both objective

measures, such as income, employment, and infrastructure, and subjective measures, including personal satisfaction, happiness, and perceived well-being.

The attitudes and views of urban inhabitants are essential for comprehending the impact of cities on human well-being. Residents' attitudes denote their judgements and assessments of diverse facets of urban life, whilst perceptions signify their interpretations and experiences of the surrounding environment. Favourable perceptions of public transit, healthcare services, green areas, safety, and work prospects frequently enhance life satisfaction. In contrast, unfavourable impressions regarding pollution, congestion, crime, insufficient public services, and social isolation can detrimentally impact the overall quality of life. Comprehending these attitudes and perceptions allows policymakers, urban planners, and local governments to discern the strengths and weaknesses of urban settings and formulate policies that more effectively address the needs of citizens.

In recent years, the notion of sustainable urban development has acquired significant prominence following the introduction of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Sustainable Development Goal 11, which seeks to render cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Attaining this objective necessitates enhancements in physical infrastructure as well as a thorough comprehension of citizens' opinions of urban services, governance, environmental quality, social cohesion, and possibilities for personal advancement. Assessing urban quality of life from people's perspectives

offers critical insights into the efficacy of urban development projects in improving human well-being. The quality of urban life has emerged as a key research domain due to substantial variations among cities in infrastructure, governance, environmental conditions, and socio-economic opportunities. Perceptions of quality of life can fluctuate among various demographic groups within the same city, influenced by factors such as age, gender, education, occupation, income, and residential location. Thus, analysing urban inhabitants' attitudes and views aids in identifying gaps in resource and service access, while elucidating the aspects that most significantly affect people's contentment with urban living.

This study aims to investigate urban residents' attitudes and beliefs regarding quality of life by analysing the factors that influence their experiences and contentment with urban living. The study examines various aspects of quality of life, encompassing housing, healthcare, education, transportation, environmental quality, public safety, employment, recreational activities, social interactions, and governance. This study examines the impact of socio-demographic variables on perceptions and assesses the existence of significant disparities among diverse groups of urban dwellers.

This study's findings aim to enhance the existing literature on urban quality of life by offering empirical information regarding residents' perceptions and priorities. The findings will aid policymakers, urban planners, municipal authorities, and development agencies in devising evidence-based policies to enhance urban living conditions and foster sustainable, inclusive, and human-centered urban growth. Ultimately, comprehending urban residents' perceptions of their quality of life is crucial for developing cities that are economically productive, socially equitable, environmentally sustainable, and conducive to the general well-being and pleasure of its inhabitants.

Review of Literature

The quality of life (QoL) has emerged as a significant focus in urban studies, as it encapsulates both the material circumstances of persons and their overall well-being, satisfaction, and assessment of living conditions. Initial study conducted by Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) ^[1] determined that quality of life must be assessed through both objective conditions and subjective assessments. Their research indicated that life happiness is contingent upon individuals' assessments of diverse facets of their lives, such as family, employment, housing, and community. This research established the groundwork for future investigations into subjective well-being and highlighted that economic metrics alone are insufficient to account for individuals' quality of life.

Expanding upon this basis, Cummins, Robert A. (1996) ^[2] established the Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale, which amalgamates objective and subjective aspects of well-being. The measure encompasses material well-being, health, productivity, emotional well-being, intimacy, safety, and community engagement. Cummins contended that quality of life is multifaceted and need to be evaluated through a harmonious integration of quantifiable living conditions and personal perceptions. Diener, Ed (2000) ^[3] underscored the significance of subjective well-being, positing that happiness, psychological health, and social interactions are essential determinants of overall quality of life. His findings

indicated that those with robust social support and pleasurable emotional experiences typically report greater life satisfaction, irrespective of financial levels.

Urban researchers have investigated the impact of the constructed environment on quality of life. Marans, Robert W. (2003) discovered that neighbourhood quality, environmental conditions, transportation infrastructure, safety, and access to public services substantially affect inhabitants' impressions of urban living. His research underscored the necessity of integrating objective environmental metrics with subjective assessments to get a holistic comprehension of urban quality of life. Similarly, Sirgy, M. Joseph (2002) ^[7] offered a community quality-of-life paradigm that highlighted housing, education, healthcare, job, recreation, and social ties as primary factors of inhabitants' overall contentment. His findings emphasised that enhancements in these areas substantially elevate the subjective quality of life.

International organisations have enhanced the conceptual comprehension of quality of life. The World Health Organization (2004) ^[10] characterised quality of life as individuals' assessment of their status in life, considering their cultural background, value systems, objectives, expectations, and worries. The WHOQOL framework delineates quality of life into four principal domains: physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships, and environmental quality. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2011) ^[6] launched the Better Life Index, which includes factors such as housing, income, employment, education, environment, civic involvement, safety, and work-life balance. The OECD highlighted that national economic development alone fails to effectively reflect individual well-being, necessitating additional social metrics for assessing quality of life.

The notion of quality of life became increasingly significant following the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, especially Sustainable Development Goal 11, which emphasises the development of inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable urban environments. The SDGs acknowledge that urban development must improve infrastructure and economic prospects while also promoting environmental sustainability, social inclusion, accessibility, and the well-being of inhabitants. Thus, comprehending urban inhabitants' attitudes and perspectives has become paramount for assessing the efficacy of urban development strategies.

Recent research has examined the correlation between urban planning and quality of life. Mouratidis, Kostas (2021) ^[5] indicated that walkability, green spaces, efficient public transportation, neighbourhood accessibility, and diversified land use substantially enhance physical and psychological well-being. The research determined that sustainable urban planning improves citizens' contentment by fostering healthier lives and enhancing social interactions. These findings substantiate the increasing acknowledgement that urban design directly impacts individuals' quality of life.

In the Indian context, studies indicate that growing urbanisation has created both benefits and challenges for urban inhabitants. Numerous studies indicate that access to affordable housing, healthcare, education, transit, sanitation, employment, environmental quality, and public safety profoundly influences urban quality of life. Nonetheless,

escalating population density, traffic congestion, pollution, insufficient infrastructure, and socio-economic disparities persistently diminish inhabitants' pleasure in numerous Indian cities. Furthermore, opinions of quality of life vary among socio-economic groups based on age, gender, education, occupation, income, and home location. Notwithstanding these findings, a deficiency of thorough studies investigating urban residents' attitudes and perceptions through both subjective and objective measures persists, especially in medium-sized cities.

Research Methodology

This study selected the cities of Hubli and Dharwad, which exhibit significant characteristics of urbanisation. The cities comprise 82 wards, from which ward no. 11 and 19 were chosen from Dharwad city, and ward no. 32 and 44 from Hubli city, owing to their increased urbanisation, a primary emphasis of the study. An eligible individual from each

household, including 400 respondents, has been selected; they must be over 30 years old, married, and possess an educational qualification.

The present study selected 100 participants from four wards. Out of 400 respondents, 384 submitted complete questionnaires, yielding valid responses. Sixteen respondents were removed for submitting incomplete questionnaires and failing to return them. The data was collected from all 384 members of the Hubli Dharwad Municipal Corporation. Data was acquired through questionnaires, schedules, discussions with key informants, and observational techniques. The questionnaire and interview schedule were created in both English and Kannada to elicit precise replies concerning the quality of life of residents in the Hubli-Dharwad region.

Findings

Table 1: Satisfaction with Different Dimensions of Quality of Life

Response Scale	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	A little dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	A little satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied	Total
Housing n (%)	7 (1.82)	94 (24.47)	17 (4.42)	80 (20.84)	55 (14.34)	4 (1.04)	127 (33.07)	384 (100)
Neighbourhood n (%)	4 (1.04)	7 (1.82)	20 (5.20)	93 (24.21)	17 (4.42)	61 (15.88)	182 (47.43)	384 (100)
Food n (%)	7 (1.83)	13 (3.38)	97 (25.26)	12 (3.12)	11 (2.86)	22 (5.72)	222 (57.83)	384 (100)
Clothing n (%)	4 (1.04)	3 (0.78)	55 (14.32)	12 (3.12)	35 (9.12)	44 (11.46)	231 (60.16)	384 (100)
Mental Health Services n (%)	3 (0.78)	5 (1.30)	41 (10.67)	262 (68.22)	13 (3.38)	7 (1.85)	53 (13.80)	384 (100)

Table 1 displays the satisfaction levels of respondents across various categories of quality of life, encompassing housing, neighbourhood, nutrition, apparel, and mental health services. The results demonstrate that participants expressed the greatest satisfaction with clothing (60.16%) and food (57.83%), indicating that these fundamental needs are predominantly met. Contentment with the neighbourhood (47.43%) was notably elevated, reflecting favourable impressions of the local community. Conversely, contentment with housing was quite low, with merely 33.07%

indicating high satisfaction, while over one-fourth (24.47%) expressed moderate dissatisfaction, highlighting apprehensions about housing circumstances. A significant observation is that 68.22% of respondents expressed neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction with mental health services, suggesting little awareness, insufficient access, or neutral attitudes towards these services. The findings indicate that respondents are predominantly content with fundamental material features like food and clothing; nonetheless, there is a pressing need to enhance living conditions and mental health services.

Table 2: Importance of Different Aspects of Quality of Life

Response Scale	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important	Total
Spending Time	4 (1.02)	2 (0.50)	7 (1.30)	305 (81.10)	66 (16.10)	384 (100)
Comfort in Aloneness	2 (0.52)	4 (1.04)	2 (0.52)	273 (71.10)	103 (26.82)	384 (100)
Housing	3 (0.78)	4 (1.04)	15 (3.90)	304 (79.18)	58 (15.10)	384 (100)
Food	2 (0.52)	4 (1.04)	7 (1.82)	324 (84.37)	47 (12.25)	384 (100)
Clothing	1 (0.26)	7 (1.82)	10 (2.60)	347 (90.38)	19 (4.94)	384 (100)
Mental Health Services	3 (0.78)	7 (1.82)	51 (13.28)	292 (76.04)	31 (8.07)	384 (100)
Personal Safety	2 (0.52)	3 (0.78)	4 (1.04)	351 (91.40)	24 (6.25)	384 (100)

Table 2 analyses the perceived significance of different factors influencing quality of life. The findings indicate that nearly all participants considered these characteristics to be of significant importance. Personal protection (91.40%) and clothing (90.38%) garnered the largest percentages of respondents categorising them as "very important," succeeded by food (84.37%), leisure activities (81.10%), and housing (79.18%). Additionally, over one-fourth

(26.82%) deemed comfort in solitude to be of paramount importance, whilst 76.04% of respondents regarded mental health services as highly significant. Only a small number of participants deemed any of these elements to be insignificant. The findings suggest that respondents attribute significant importance to both material needs and psychosocial well-being as fundamental elements of a high quality of life.

Table 3: Satisfaction with Living Environment and Quality of Life

Response Scale	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied / Not at all satisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know / Not applicable	Total
State of Home n (%)	86 (22.39)	–	17 (4.42)	55 (14.32)	211 (54.94)	15 (3.93)	–	384 (100)
Location of Home n (%)	6 (1.56)	–	132 (34.37)	18 (4.69)	211 (54.95)	17 (4.43)	–	384 (100)
Liveability of City n (%)	30 (7.81)	21 (5.46)	68 (17.70)	–	243 (63.28)	–	22 (5.75)	384 (100)
Living Environment n (%)	18 (4.68)	26 (6.77)	42 (10.94)	–	265 (69.01)	–	33 (8.60)	384 (100)

Table 3 illustrates respondents' contentment regarding many facets of their living environment. Over half of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with their home's condition (54.94%) and its location (54.95%), indicating substantial worries about housing quality and residential site. Likewise, discontent was significant about the city's liveability (63.28%) and the overall living environment (69.01%), suggesting that respondents see shortcomings in

municipal infrastructure, environmental quality, or public services. A mere fraction indicated elevated levels of pleasure about these features. The findings indicate that although respondents are content with specific aspects of their personal lives, they recognise significant deficiencies in their residential and urban settings, underscoring the necessity for enhancements in urban planning and environmental management.

Table 4: Importance of Personal Factors Determining Quality of Life

Response Scale	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important	Total
Occupation	13 (3.38)	17 (4.42)	71 (18.48)	266 (69.27)	17 (4.45)	384 (100)
Feelings	8 (2.08)	14 (3.65)	48 (12.50)	125 (32.55)	189 (49.22)	384 (100)
Physical Health	4 (1.04)	11 (2.86)	29 (7.55)	248 (64.58)	92 (23.97)	384 (100)
Having Enough Money	17 (4.42)	27 (7.04)	175 (45.57)	106 (27.60)	59 (15.37)	384 (100)
Taking Care of Oneself	9 (2.34)	14 (3.64)	95 (24.73)	219 (57.03)	47 (12.26)	384 (100)
Mental Health	4 (1.04)	5 (1.30)	15 (3.91)	259 (67.45)	101 (26.30)	384 (100)

Table 4 illustrates respondents' views on the significance of personal characteristics affecting quality of life. The findings reveal that sentiments (49.22%) garnered the highest percentage of respondents deeming it extremely essential, succeeded by mental health (26.30%) and physical health (23.97%). A significant majority regarded occupation (69.27%), physical health (64.58%), mental health (67.45%), and self-care (57.03%) as highly essential. While sufficient financial resources were deemed significant, the majority of respondents (45.57%) classified it as moderately important rather than critically vital, indicating that psychological and health-related aspects may be prioritised over mere financial assets. The data indicate that respondents consider emotional well-being, physical health, mental health, and meaningful occupation as essential factors influencing quality of life.

Discussion

This study analysed urban residents' attitudes and perceptions regarding quality of life in Hubballi–Dharwad by evaluating satisfaction across various life domains, the perceived significance of quality-of-life indicators, contentment with the living environment, and personal factors affecting well-being. The results underscore the multifaceted nature of quality of life and align with previous theoretical and empirical research highlighting that quality of life is contingent upon both objective living conditions and subjective perceptions.

The findings indicated that respondents reported the greatest satisfaction with clothing (60.16%), food (57.83%), and neighbourhood (47.43%), whereas satisfaction with housing (33.07%) and notably mental health services (13.80%) was relatively low. The findings corroborate the assertions of Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976)^[1], who contended that life happiness is shaped by individuals' assessments of various life domains rather than solely by economic

conditions. Cummins (1996)^[2] also asserted that quality of life must be evaluated across various dimensions, encompassing material well-being, health, safety, and community engagement. The considerable contentment with fundamental needs like food and clothes indicates that respondents saw these need as sufficiently met, however discontent with housing highlights ongoing urban issues including affordability, infrastructure, and residential quality.

The inadequate contentment with housing aligns with Sirgy's (2002)^[7] findings, which identified housing as a crucial driver of community quality of life. The quality of urban housing directly influences physical comfort, safety, and social welfare. Similarly, Marans (2003) indicated that neighbourhood characteristics, housing quality, and environmental factors significantly affect residents' impressions of urban living. Consequently, the current findings suggest that advancements in cheap housing and residential infrastructure are crucial for improving urban quality of life.

A significant conclusion of the study is that 68.22% of respondents maintained a neutral stance on mental health services, although acknowledging mental health as a crucial factor in quality of life. This may suggest restricted awareness, insufficient access to mental healthcare services, or hesitance to engage with these services due to societal stigma. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2004)^[10] has published analogous findings, recognising psychological well-being as one of the four principal dimensions of quality of life. Diener (2000)^[3] underscored that emotional well-being and healthy mental health substantially enhance total life happiness, independent of material prosperity. The findings underscore the increasing significance of including accessible mental healthcare within urban public health initiatives.

The respondents deemed nearly all aspects of quality of life to be of significant importance. Personal safety (91.40%), clothing (90.38%), food (84.37%), quality time (81.10%), and shelter (79.18%) received the highest ratings as "extremely important. These findings strongly correspond with the OECD Better Life Index (2011), which identifies housing, safety, income, employment, education, and work-life balance as fundamental aspects of human well-being. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11 (2015) also underscores the importance of developing cities that are inclusive, secure, resilient, and sustainable. The current findings demonstrate that urban inhabitants prioritise fundamental material necessities and social security when assessing their quality of life.

The study indicated significant unhappiness with the condition of the home (54.94%), the home's location (54.95%), the city's liveability (63.28%), and especially the overall living environment (69.01%). The findings align with Mouratidis (2021) ^[5], who indicated that urban environmental quality, accessibility, walkability, green areas, and transit significantly affect both physical and psychological well-being. Likewise, Marans (2003) determined that environmental quality and neighbourhood attributes are among the most significant indicators of resident satisfaction. The discontent identified in the current study may be ascribed to urban issues including traffic congestion, pollution, inadequate public infrastructure, ineffective waste management, and a lack of recreational amenities typically encountered in swiftly urbanising Indian cities.

The results of personal aspects indicate that participants considered emotions (49.22% highly important), mental health (26.30%), and physical health (23.97%) as essential determinants of quality of life. Furthermore, occupation, self-care, and physical health were deemed highly significant by the majority of participants. These data corroborate Diener's (2000) ^[3] theory of subjective well-being, which highlights happiness, emotional stability, and social interactions as primary determinants of life satisfaction. Similarly, the WHOQOL framework (WHO, 2004) delineates psychological health, physical health, and social interactions as fundamental characteristics of quality of life. Respondents deemed financial sufficiency vital, however subordinate to emotional and health-related aspects, indicating that urban inhabitants are more aware that well-being encompasses more than mere financial success.

Conclusion

This study investigated urban residents' attitudes and perceptions regarding quality of life in Hubballi-Dharwad by assessing satisfaction across various life domains, the significance attributed to quality-of-life indicators, perceptions of the living environment, and personal factors affecting well-being. The results indicate that quality of life is a multifaceted notion influenced by both objective living conditions and subjective experiences. Respondents indicated substantial satisfaction with fundamental necessities, including food, clothing, and neighbourhood conditions, although reported relatively diminished satisfaction for housing and mental health services. Moreover, significant discontent was noted over the condition and location of housing, the city's liveability, and

the general living environment, highlighting ongoing issues linked to rising urbanisation.

The study indicated that participants regarded personal safety, nutrition, housing, physical health, mental health, employment, and emotional well-being as significant factors influencing quality of life. Notably, psychological and health-related aspects were regarded as equally or more significant than financial resources, underscoring the increasing acknowledgement that well-being transcends economic affluence. These findings underscore the necessity of implementing a comprehensive approach to urban development that incorporates social, environmental, economic, and psychological factors.

The findings possess significant policy ramifications for urban planners, local officials, and legislators. Enhancing affordable housing, fortifying urban infrastructure, and improving environmental quality.

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