COPYRIGHT© INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN BANDAR TUN RAZAK AREA OF KUALA LUMPUR CITY, MALAYSIA

BY

ILYES BOUGOUFFA

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning

Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design
International Islamic University Malaysia

AUGUST 2016

ABSTRACT

In recent years, the world has been experiencing rapid urban growth. Many people around the world have chosen to move and settle in urban areas. It is well known that this urbanisation phenomenon has increased economic growth and development of cities. However, at the same time, several serious urban-associated problems have emerged. Taking all these problems into consideration, the quality of life (QOL) of people who inhabit urban areas become highly unclear since it is argued that places where people live affect their QOL. As a result, many public and corporate commercial agencies have been interested to measure the QOL of cities and nations and to rank them accordingly. According to these agencies, Malaysia occupies relatively advanced rankings which indicate that people in Malaysia enjoy good QOL. Nevertheless, these achievements mostly represent QOL at the national and city levels through objective indicators and ignoring individuals' perceptions, evaluations, and aspirations at small spatial scales such as neighbourhoods. Therefore, this research aims to explore residents' perceptions of QOL at the neighbourhood level through assessment of residents' satisfaction with seven life domains that contribute to the overall QOL. The chosen study area is the Bandar Tun Razak area which is considered one of six strategic zones in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In order to measure subjective QOL in that area, a stratified convenient sample of 331 survey questionnaires is distributed in the study area to ensure that different housing types are covered. The research applies three types of analysis: descriptive statistics, correlation matrix analysis, and structural equation modelling. As a result, it is found that respondents are unsatisfied with the economic capacity and safety conditions. Besides, they are slightly satisfied with the home condition, the functional environment, and social involvement and community participation while they are moderately satisfied with physical and emotional health and spiritual life. However, in regard to the overall QOL of the neighbourhood, respondents perceive it as moderately good. The findings of the research also reveal that the overall QOL in the study area is positively correlated to all life domains but is highly correlated to spiritual life. Moreover, the analysis presents that respondents' characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity and household income play an important role in the satisfaction level in some particular life domains. Eventually, the path analysis reveals that only economic capacity, social involvement and community participation, physical and emotional health, and spiritual life affect the overall QOL directly whereas home condition, functional environment, and safety condition do not influence the overall QOL significantly. At the end, several recommendations and policy implications are suggested that seek to improve QOL in Bandar Tun Razak area based on the research findings.

ملخص البحث

في السنوات الأخيرة واجه العالم نموا حضريا سريعا، فقد اختار الكثير من الناس الانتقال والاستقرار في المناصق الحضرية. ومن المعروف جيدا أن ظاهرة التحضر أسهمت في النمو الاقتصادي وتطور المدن، ولكن في نفس الوقت ظهرت هناك العديد من المشاكل الحضرية. وقد ثار الجدل حول العلاقة بين جودة الحياة والمكان الذي يسكنه الناس، فبات قياسها بالنسبة لمن يعيش في المناطق الحضرية امرا صعبا وغير واضح، ونتيجة لذلك أصبحت الكثير من الشركات والوكالات التجارية العامة تقوم بقياس جودة الحياة في المدن والدول وترتيبها وفقا لجودة الحياة فيها. فبحسب هذه الوكالات احتلت ماليزيا تصنيفات متقدمة نسبيا مما يشير إلى أن سكان ماليزيا يتمتعون بجودة حياة جيدة. وهذا بالطبع يعبر عن الوضع العام على مستوى الوطن والمدن ومن خلال مؤشرات موضوعية تميل لتجاهل إدراكات وتقييمات، وكذا تطلعات الأفراد في نطاقات مكانية صغيرة مثل الأحياء السكنية. يهدف هذا البحث إلى استكشاف إدراكات السكان حول جودة الحياة على مستوى الحي من خلال تقييم رضا السكان حول سبعة من المجالات الحياتية التي تساهم بدورها في تقييم جودة الحياة الإجمالية. وقد تم اختيار منطقة "بندر تن رزاق" التي تعد منطقة إستراتيجية من أصل ستة مناطق في مدينة كوالا لمبور بماليزيا كمنطقة للدراسة، ومن أجل قياس جودة الحياة الشخصية في هذه المنطقة تم توزيع عينة طبقية ملائمة التي شملت ٣٣١ استبيان في منطقة الدراسة لضمان تغطية مختلف أنواع المساكن. وقد تم استخدام ثلاثة أنواع من الأنماط التحليلية، وهي: الإحصاء الوصفي، وتحليل مصفوفة الارتباط، ونمذجة المعادلة الهيكلية. ونتيجة لذلك، فقد وجد أن المشاركين في الاستبيان غير راضين عن القدرة الاقتصادية وحالة الأمن، إلى جانب ذلك كان المستجوبون راضين جزئيا عن حالة المسكن، والبيئة الوظيفية، والمشاركة الاجتماعية والمجتمعية. في حين أنهم كانو راضين نسبيا عن الصحة الجسدية والعاطفية والحياة الروحية. ومع ذلك فإن المشاركين يرون أن جودة الحياة الإجمالية في الحي تبدو جيدة نسبيا. وقد كشفت نتائج البحث أيضا أن جودة الحياة الإجمالية في منطقة الدراسة ارتبطت بشكل إيجابي مع جميع مجالات الحياة غير أنها ارتبطت إلى حد كبير مع الحياة الروحية. وعلاوة على ذلك عرضت التحليلات أن بعض خصائص السكان كالجنس، والعمر، والعرق، ودخل الأسرة يؤدي دورا مهما في مستوى الرضى عن بعض المجالات الحياتية الخاصة. وأخيرا كشف تحليل المسار بأن القدرة الاقتصادية، والمشاركة الاجتماعية والمجتمعية، والصحة الجسدية والعاطفية، والحياة الروحية هي فقط ما يؤثر على جودة الحياة الإجمالية مباشرة. في حين أن حالة المنزل، والبيئة الوظيفية، وحالة الأمن لا تؤثر على جودة الحياة بشكل ملحوظ. في نهاية البحث، تم اقتراح عدة توصيات وسياسات مقتضبة تسعى إلى تحسين جودة الحياة في منطقة "بندر تن رزاق" بناء على نتائج البحث.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

……..
Mohammad Abdul Mohit
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

……..
Mansor Ibrahim
Examiner

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Urban and Regional Planning and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

……..
Norzailawati Bt Mohd Noor
Head, Department of Urban and
Regional Planning

This dissertation was submitted to the Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

……..
Alias Bin Abdullah
Dean, Kulliyyah of Architecture
and Environmental Design

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Ilyes Bougouffa

Signature ..... Date .....

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION OF FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH

A STUDY OF RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN BANDAR TUN RAZAK AREA OF KUALA LUMPUR CITY, MALAYSIA

I declare that the copyright holders of this dissertation are jointly owned by the student and IIUM.

Copyright © 2016 Ilyes Bougouffa and International Islamic University Malaysia. All rights reserved.

No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder except as provided below

1. Any material contained in or derived from this unpublished research may be used by others in their writing with due acknowledgement.

2. IIUM or its library will have the right to make and transmit copies (print or electronic) for institutional and academic purposes.

3. The IIUM library will have the right to make, store in a retrieved system and supply copies of this unpublished research if requested by other universities and research libraries.

By signing this form, I acknowledged that I have read and understand the IIUM Intellectual Property Right and Commercialization policy.

Affirmed by Ilyes Bougouffa

……..…….. ……..
Signature Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, all thanks and praise to the almighty Allah for his blessings, guidance, and also for giving me strength and health to accomplish this work.

I wish to express my indebtedness to International Islamic University Malaysia for granting me financial assistance through IIUM Postgraduate Rector Assistantship.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Mohammed Abdul Mohit for his guidance, support, encouragement, and advice, throughout this study.

My profound appreciation and love go to my parents, my siblings and my relatives for believing in my ability to accomplish this work. Thank you for your love, support, and patience.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge all my friends who supported me during this work, particularly Nadiah Johari Ramzan for her great work on the questionnaire, Sule Abass Iyanda for his help in conducting SEM analysis, Nur Shafiq Amani bin Aris Padilah for his assistance in the study area maps, and those who provided their time, effort, and support when the survey work was carried out.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ii
Abstract In Arabic iii
Approval Page iii
Declaration v
Copyright Page vi
Acknowledgements vii
List of Tables xi
List of Figures xiv

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 Background of the Study 1
1.2 Problem Statement 2
1.3 Research Questions 4
1.4 Research Objectives 4
1.5 Scope of the Study 5
1.6 Significance of the Study 6
1.7 Structure of the Study 6
1.8 Conclusion 8

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 9
2.1 Introduction 9
2.2 Quality of Life 9
2.3 QOL Study Disciplines 14
2.4 Quality of Life Determinants 16
2.5 Theoretical Perspective of Quality of Life 20
2.6 Measuring Quality of Life 24
2.7 Empirical Studies of Quality of Life 29
2.8 Reviewing Conceptual Models of Quality of Life 36
2.9 Quality of Life in Malaysia 43
2.10 Conceptual Framework of the Study 51
2.11 Conclusion 53

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY 54
3.1 Introduction 54
3.2 Research Design 54
3.3 Sampling Frame and Design 58
3.4 Data Collection 60
3.5 Data Analysis 67
3.6 Research Flow 68
3.6.1 The Introductory Stage 68
3.6.2 The Data Collection Stage 68
3.6.3 The Data Analysis Stage 68
3.6.4 The Findings and Recommendations Stage 69
3.7 Conclusion 71

CHAPTER FOUR: STUDY AREA 72
4.1 Introduction 72
4.2 Location and Background of the Study Area 72
4.3 Land Use of the Study Area 77
4.3.1 Residential 78
4.3.2 Institutional 79
4.3.3 Public Facilities 79
4.3.4 Open Space and Recreation 81
4.3.5 Commercial 81
4.4 Conclusion 83

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 84
5.1 Introduction 84
5.2 Reliability Test 84
5.3 Residents' Characteristics 85
5.3.1 Demographic Characteristics 86
5.3.2 Socio-economic Characteristics 88
5.3.3 Relationships between Respondents' Characteristics 96
5.3.3.1 Housing Types vs. Occupation 96
5.3.3.2 Housing Types vs. Income 97
5.3.3.3 Income vs. Occupation 98
5.3.3.4 Occupation vs. Education 99
5.3.3.5 Education vs. Income 100
5.4 Respondents Satisfactions with QOL Domains 101
5.4.1 Residential Satisfaction with Economic Capacity Domain 101
5.4.2 Residential satisfaction with Housing Condition Domain 103
5.4.3 Residential Satisfaction with Functional Environment Domain 107
5.4.4 Residential Satisfaction with Safety Condition Domain 111
5.4.5 Residential Satisfaction with Social Involvement and Community Participation Domain 113
5.4.6 Residential Satisfaction with Physical and Emotional Health Domain 116
5.4.7 Residential Satisfaction with Spiritual Life Domain 120
5.4.8 A Comparison between the Respondents' Overall Satisfactions with All Quality of Life Domains 124
5.4.9 Residents' Overall Assessment of Quality of Life in Bandar Tun Razak Area 126
5.5 Correlation Matrix Analysis 127
5.5.1 Correlation Matrix between Overall Residential Satisfactions of QOL Domains 127
5.5.2 Correlation Matrix between Overall Residential Satisfactions of QOL Domains and Respondents' Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics 132
5.6 Structural Equation Modelling 136
5.6.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis 136
5.6.2 Part by Part Analysis 143
5.6.2.1 Gender 144
5.6.2.2 Age 146
5.6.2.3 Ethnicity 148

5.6.2.4 Household Density 150
5.6.2.5 Household Average Income 152
5.6.3 Path Analysis..... 153
5.7 Suggestions to Improve Quality of Life in Bandar Tun Razak 157
5.8 Summary of the Findings 158
5.8.1 Summary of Residential Satisfaction Levels with QOL Domains and Overall QOL..... 159
5.8.2 Summary of Correlation Matrix Analysis..... 160
5.8.3 Summary of Structural Equation Modelling..... 161
5.9 Conclusion..... 162

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 164
6.1 Introduction..... 164
6.2 Salient Findings 165
6.2.1 Residential Satisfaction Levels with QOL Domains and Overall QOL..... 165
6.2.2 Correlation Matrix Analysis..... 166
6.2.3 Structural Equation Modelling..... 168
6.3 Recommendations..... 169
6.3.1 Recommendations to Improve Specific Issues: 169
6.3.2 General Recommendations to Improve the QOL 171
6.4 Policy Implications 172
6.5 Suggestions for Future Research 175
6.6 Conclusion..... 175

REFERENCES..... 177

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION) 184
APPENDIX B: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE (MALAY VERSION)..... 191

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Disciplines Related to QOL Studies	16
Table 2.2	QOL Domains in Four International Indices	18
Table 2.3	QOL Domains in Various Instruments of QOL	19
Table 2.4	QOL Domains in Different QOL Studies	20
Table 2.5	Veenhoven's Four Qualities of Life	24
Table 3.1	Dimensions and Variables of the Current Study	57
Table 3.2	Sample Sizes Required for Various Sampling Errors at 95% Confidence Level	60
Table 3.3	Ratio of Sampling Size Compared to Number of Housing Types	66
Table 4.1	Land Use of Bandar Tun Razak – Sungai Besi Zone	77
Table 4.2	Distribution of Housing Types in the Study Area	78
Table 4.3	Distribution of Public Facilities Types in the Study Area	79
Table 4.4	Distribution of Open Space and Recreational Facilities Types in the Study Area	81
Table 5.1	Reliability Statistics of QOL Domains	85
Table 5.2	Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	86
Table 5.3	Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents	88
Table 5.4	Cross Tabulation between Housing Type and Occupation	96
Table 5.5	Cross Tabulation between Housing Type and Average Income	97
Table 5.6	Cross Tabulation between Average Income and Occupation	98
Table 5.7	Cross Tabulation between Education Level and Occupation	99
Table 5.8	Cross Tabulation between Education Level and Average Income	100
Table 5.9	Residential Satisfaction with Economic Capacity Variables	102
Table 5.10	Residential Satisfaction with Housing Condition Variables	104
Table 5.11	Residential Satisfaction with Functional Environment Variables	108

Table 5.12	Residential Satisfaction with Safety Condition Variables	112
Table 5.13	Residential Satisfaction with Social Involvement and Community Participation Variables	114
Table 5.14	Distribution of Respondents with Long Standing Health Problem/illness	116
Table 5.15	Residential Satisfaction with Physical and Emotional Health Variables	118
Table 5.16	Residential Satisfaction with Spiritual Life Variables	121
Table 5.17	Comparison between Respondents' Overall Satisfactions of All QOL Domains	125
Table 5.18	Residential Overall Assessment of QOL in Bandar Tun Razak	126
Table 5.19	Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Overall Residential Satisfactions of QOL Domains	128
Table 5.20	Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Overall Residential Satisfactions of QOL Domains and Respondents' Characteristics	133
Table 5.21	Measurement of Goodness Fit Indices for the Initial Model of QOL	137
Table 5.22	Measurement of Goodness Fit Indices for Modified Model of QOL	140
Table 5.23	Latent and Observed Variables in the Modified Model	140
Table 5.24	Regression Weights in the Modified Model	142
Table 5.25	Grouping Differences Analysis between Male and Female	144
Table 5.26	Grouping Differences Analysis between Age Groups	146
Table 5.27	Grouping Differences Analysis between Malay and Non-Malay	148
Table 5.28	Grouping Differences Analysis between Household Size Groups	150
Table 5.29	Grouping Differences Analysis between Monthly Household Income Groups	152
Table 5.30	Regression Weights of Life Domains' Direct Linkages among Each Other and Overall QOL	155
Table 5.31	Respondents View about Suggestions to Improve QOL in Bandar Tun Razak	157
Table 5.32	Summary of Residential Satisfaction Levels Analysis	159

Table 5.33 Summary of Correlation Matrix Analysis 160

Table 5.34 Summary of Structural Equation Modelling Analysis 161

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Campbell's Model that Shows Relationships between Domain Satisfactions and Life Satisfaction	38
Figure 2.2	Marans' Model that Presents Relationships between Residential Domain Satisfactions and Quality of Life	39
Figure 2.3	McCrea's Modified QOUL Model	40
Figure 2.4	Cummins' Causal Chain Model of Well-being (Taking Goods and Services as an Example)	41
Figure 2.5	Felce's Model of QOL That Depicts the Relationship between Objective, Subjective, and Values Measures with Overall QOL	42
Figure 2.6	Sirgy & Cornwell Model That Relates Satisfaction with Neighbourhood Features and Life Satisfaction	43
Figure 2.7	Average Growth Rate of MWI from 2000 to 2012	46
Figure 2.8	Conceptual Framework of the Current Study	53
Figure 3.1	Flow Chart of Research Methodology	70
Figure 4.1	Location of Study Area	75
Figure 4.2	Satellite View of Bandar Tun Razak – Sungai Besi Zone	76
Figure 4.3	Land Uses Map of Bandar Tun Razak – Sungai Besi Zone	82
Figure 5.1	CFA of QOL in Bandar Tun Razak Area (Modified Model)	139
Figure 5.2	Path Analysis Model between Life domains and QOL in the Neighbourhood	154

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In recent years, the world has been experiencing a rapid urban growth. Many people around the world have chosen to move and settle in urban areas. According to World Urbanization Prospects report that was published by United Nations (2014b), 54% of the world's population live in urban areas and this urbanisation rate is expected to reach 66% by the year 2050. In Malaysia, urbanisation rate has grown from 50% in 1990 to reach 74% in 2014 with 1.0% as the average annual rate of urbanisation (UN, 2014b).

This urbanisation phenomenon has increased the economic growth and development of cities as more employment, higher education, specialised services, and modern technology are provided in urban areas. However, as cities become more crowded, many serious urban-associated issues appeared such as social inequality, insecurity, traffic congestion, environmental degradation, and inadequate housing (Psatha, Deffner, & Psycharis, 2011). Taking into consideration all these urban-associated problems, the quality of life (QOL) of people who inhabit urban areas become highly unclear. As QOL is a multidimensional concept, it has been argued that places where people live affect their QOL (Marans & Kweon, 2011). Hence, studying the important relationships between urban places and QOL has been crucial in order to obtain a clear picture of urban dwellers' QOL (Marans, 2012).

Studying people's QOL was first found in the Greek era, where great philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle wrote about "the good life" and "living well".

In the 1950s, a great attention was given to materialistic factors to evaluate QOL such as the work of Maslow's (1954) need hierarchy. Nevertheless, these factors were proven unsuitable for measuring and reflecting QOL (Galloway, Bell, Hamilton, & Scullion, 2006; Rapley, 2003; Veenhoven, 2015). Hence, in the 1960s and 1970s, broader aspects of post-materialistic values that contributed to the good life were the focal point of social indicators movement that emerged in Scandinavia and the US. Consequently, during the last 30 years, QOL was embedded in numerous disciplines (Mohit, 2013b), and was considered the basis of policies and practices in different governments and public sector agencies (Verdugo, Schalock, Keith, & Stancliffe, 2005). This was the result of the fact that higher QOL is able to drive development for societies and enhancing the competitiveness of cities (Psatha et al., 2011; Riecken, Shemwell, & Yavas, 2000).

The current research focuses on measuring QOL of the residents of Bandar Tun Razak Area in Kuala Lumpur city, Malaysia. In this chapter, the problem that is considered the base of this research will be discussed. Moreover, the research objectives and questions, as well as its scope, will be clarified. Eventually, the research's contribution to the knowledge and the organisation of study is going to be stated.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Lately, there has been an upsurge of interest by many public and corporate commercial agencies that seek to rank nations and cities around the world according to their QOL and well-being such as the Economist Intelligence Unit's Quality of Life Index (2005), Mercer's Quality of Living (2016), and Nation Ranking Quality of Life Index (2011). According to these indices, Malaysia occupied relatively advanced

rankings which indicate that people in Malaysia enjoy a good QOL. Moreover, the Malaysian Well-being Index (2013) which evaluate economic and social well-being progress in Malaysia, has recorded an improvement of 25.4 points during the period 2000-2012. Whilst the MURNInets (Malaysian Urban Rural National Indicators Network on Sustainable Development) which evaluates the level of sustainability of Malaysian cities presented a progress of 14 points for Kuala Lumpur city during the period 2012-2014. However, these achievements mostly represent QOL at the national level and do not show people's QOL at small spatial scales such as cities, communities, and neighbourhoods. Even though Mercer's Quality of Living index and MURNInets have measured QOL at the city level, yet, the M-QOLI evaluated QOL of international functionaries based on objective measurements and did not represent the well-being level of local residents (Lora & Powell, 2011). While MURNInets presented the average progress of a set of numerous dimensions and indicators rather than focusing on the evaluation of QOL separately. In addition, almost all the aforementioned indices (except EIU-QOLI) evaluate QOL based on objective indicators and tend to ignore individuals' perceptions, evaluations, and aspirations. And eventually, ranks of nations differ from an index to another as each index use a different set of indicators and in some cases, lack of transparency overwhelm the exact indicators that are being measured (Stimson & Marans, 2011).

It is well known among researchers that indicators which affect QOL vary according to subjective perceptions of people in various spatial entities which is effected by their own culture and tradition, social environment, and level of economic development (Costanza et al., 2008; Mohit, 2013b; Psatha et al., 2011). In Malaysia, only a few studies in recent years attempted to investigate the subjective perception of residents about their lives and are found mostly biassed to certain disciplines (Mohit,

2014). This has given an incomplete picture of what really influence residents' subjective perceptions of QOL. Therefore, an additional empirical study needs to be conducted at small spatial scale (e.g. neighbourhood) to explore residents' perceptions about different aspects and indicators that influence their overall QOL.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the problem statement regarding the concept of QOL at the neighbourhood level, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are the residents' satisfaction levels of different life domains and their overall assessment of QOL in Bandar Tun Razak?
2. To what extent satisfaction with particular life domain affects the satisfaction with another domain?
3. What are the domains and indicators that influence significantly the overall perceived QOL in Bandar Tun Razak?
4. What kind of policies and improvements should be adopted to enhance the QOL level in Bandar Tun Razak?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this study is to explore residents' perceptions of QOL in Bandar Tun Razak area in Kuala Lumpur city, Malaysia. Thus, the following objectives are derived from that aim:

1- To evaluate satisfaction levels of Bandar Tun Razak's residents with numerous life domains and their overall assessment of QOL in the neighbourhood.

2- To determine major relationships among several life domains.

3- To identify significant domains and indicators that contribute to the overall QOL of residents in Bandar Tun Razak area.
4- To propose recommendations that aim to enhance the QOL level in Bandar Tun Razak area.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As the aim of the study is to explore residents' perceptions on QOL in Bandar Tun Razak area in Kuala Lumpur city. Thus, the research was limited to the following perspectives:

The research is only limited to the investigation of respondents' subjective satisfactions with particular life domains (i.e. economic capacity, home condition, functional environment, safety condition, social involvement and community participation, physical and emotional health, and spiritual life) and how these domains influence their overall QOL. The subjective approach that was adopted in this study is seen by many researchers suitable at micro level studies such as neighbourhoods.

The researcher has carried out a questionnaire survey that includes two versions (i.e. English and Malay versions) in the study area during the period of November and December 2015. The time period of distributing questionnaires was relatively long as the majority of the respondents lack the communication skills in English. Besides, the chosen study area in which the questionnaires were distributed is Bandar Tun Razak area in Kuala Lumpur which is considered one of six strategic zones in Kuala Lumpur city. Last but not the least, as the population of the study area is considered relatively high, the study could not cover it entirely. And therefore, the total respondents are chosen based on sample calculation that involves different housing types.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There are many benefits of carrying out this study as it contributes to the existing knowledge in different ways as follows:

The study provides public officials with important information about neighbourhood characteristics that shows what individuals really value the most and what manifest problems are affecting the residents' well-being. Thus, it allows public officials to evaluate the efficiency of current policies and strategies and reveals where interventions and appropriately financed investments to enhance residents' QOL are highly needed.

The study reveals the current residents' satisfaction levels and encourages public participation in the decision-making process as their opinions and satisfactions can be used to implement suitable policies and strategies. Moreover, the findings of the study can be employed to improve the planning process in accordance with people's preferences and priorities as it is well known that planners are planning and designing for the good of people.

Eventually, this study offers a measurement instrument that can be utilised as the basis to develop related studies and weighting systems to assess QOL in other neighbourhoods of Kuala Lumpur City.

1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

This study which evaluates Bandar Tun Razak's residents' perception of QOL, is mainly divided into six chapters which are: introduction, literature review, methodology, study area, analysis and findings, and finally conclusion and recommendations. These chapters are illustrated in the following manner.

Chapter one which is the introduction of the study presents a short background on the topic. It also introduces the problem statement along with the main objectives and questions of the research. Furthermore, scope and significance of the study are also explained. And finally, the way this thesis is organised is presented.

Chapter two that covers the literature review of the topic provides a deep explanation of the term ‘quality of life’ with its different determinants and measurement methods. Additionally, this chapter presents the theoretical perspective of QOL and main empirical studies that attempted to measure the construct. Many conceptual models are also shown and QOL in the context of Malaysia is also explored. Last but not the least, the chapter clarifies the conceptual framework and main hypothesis of this research.

Chapter three that is methodology explains the methods utilised to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. Therefore, this chapter presents research design and sampling design. Besides that, it shows the main methods of data collection and data analysis. And finally, it depicts the research flow.

Chapter four which is the study area presents a brief review of the existing conditions in Bandar Tun Razak area. Moreover, it illustrates the location of the study area within national, regional and local context. While the different land uses in the study area are presented in the last part of this chapter.

Chapter five that is analysis and findings of the study. As the title indicates, this chapter mainly concerned with the different methods of data analysis. Hence, it illustrates the main utilised methods which are: Descriptive Statistics, Correlation Matrix Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

Chapter six which is conclusion and recommendations presents at the beginning a summary of the study findings. Then it shows recommendations that are proposed by the researcher. And eventually, it states suggestions for future research.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented an overview and background about the concept of QOL and its relationship to urban places. Then, the main problem that was found in related literature was stated. This problem was the foundation on which the questions and objectives of the research were constructed. The author also clarified the scope and limitation of the current study and its contribution to the existing knowledge. And finally, the structure of the thesis and how the research is organised was explained and illustrated.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of a literature review is to provide the necessary background of the topic and to examine previous related research works on the same topic. Therefore, this chapter provides an overview of the term quality of life (QOL) and relevant terminologies in order to widen the comprehension of the subject. Moreover, it discusses the quality of life from theoretical and empirical perspectives through analysing and explaining associated theories and different empirical studies done by other researchers. Besides, how the quality of life is measured and numerous conceptual models used to assess it will be also highlighted. Eventually, the author shows an overview about the quality of life in the context of Malaysia.

2.2 QUALITY OF LIFE

The term Quality of life (QOL) is a universal concept because everyone has a QOL (Felce, 1997). It is used globally in the media and by politicians to describe the general well-being of people and community (Psatha et al., 2011). It is usually understood by most people as ‘goodness of life’ and how to live with the environment successfully and happily (Brown & Brown, 2005). QOL is an elusive concept that can be assessed generally at society or community level or specifically at individual or group level (Felce & Perry, 1995). The concept of QOL embraces numerous notions such as happiness, satisfaction, well-being, and health status. These notions denote almost similar meaning and sometimes used interchangeably which makes the

distinction among them very difficult and require a deep understanding (Galloway et al., 2006; Marans, 2012; Meeberg, 1993). Nevertheless, Inoguchi and Fujii (2013) argue that QOL concept is wider than happiness because it involves aspects like enjoyment and achievement. It is also larger than satisfaction because it includes factors such as aspiration and recollection. It is also bigger than wellbeing as the QOL is neutral. And it is wider than health because it involves being in the context of one or numerous variables. In support of this statement, Meeberg (1993) distinguish between life satisfaction and QOL as life satisfaction is definitely subjective while QOL implies both subjective and objective aspects. In the same context, Veenhoven (2015) highlights that life satisfaction is a part of QOL, but not all QOL is about life satisfaction.

QOL is a manifold, vague, and complex construct that despite the many attempts conducted by researchers to define and measure it, yet there is no agreement on one specific definition or a precise approach of measurement of QOL (Costanza et al., 2008; Cummins, 1997; Galloway et al., 2006; Haas, 1999). It is argued that the absence of the ideas is not the reason (Cummins, 1997), rather it is the different subjective perception of people in various spatial entities which is effected by their own culture and tradition, social environment, and level of economic development (Costanza et al., 2008; Mohit, 2013b; Psatha et al., 2011). However, Psatha et al. (2011) posit that for a given place and a specific period, there can be a consensus of what determine QOL. Apart from that, some authors postulate that QOL term remains ambiguous because different researchers tend to define it and use it in the way that fits their research objectives and context, while other researchers avoid defining the term by concentrating on the approaches, measures, and dimensions of QOL term (Galloway et al., 2006; Haas, 1999; Meeberg, 1993). In contrast to the disagreement