

Definition of quality of life



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CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL STUDY

2. 1 Introduction

Chapter two discusses the theoretical aspect in quality of life. In addition, the description of the Orang Asli community will also be given to providing a better understanding of this community. This is because quality of life has become one of government main agenda in developing the countries. This chapter will explain relation with quality of life and Orang Asli community.

The reasons are quality of life always related with the studies at urban areas meanwhile studies about quality of life at rural area is rarely done. That is the reason on choosing a Orang Asli community as a subject of study because Orang Asli community are usually located at the rural area and remote area. Other than that, Orang Asli community always said to live in a backward and lagging behind compare to other races in Malaysia. Therefore, the understanding of quality of life and Orang Asli should be suppressed in chapter two.

2. 2 Definition

2. 2. 1 Definition of Quality Of Life

Quality of life is a subjective matter that difficult to be measured. So it is important to known the actual meaning of quality of life. The best ways of understanding is by separate the word of ' quality of life'. According to oxford dictionaries, ' quality' is standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind which is the degree of excellence of something meanwhile ' life' bring stand for the period between the birth and death of a

living thing , especially a human being. So quality of life actual meaning is degree of excellence of human being.

According Lim Lan Yuan, Belinda Yuen and Christine Low (1999) in a book entitle ‘ Quality Of Life in the Cities’, quality of life is a multifaceted concept. Meaning of multifaceted is something that is wide. In this case it is because quality of life covers not only a material aspect such as level of living but also aspect of life such as a good health and level of education. In other words, Lim Lan Yuan, Belinda Yuen and Christine Low (1999) try to tell us that the quality of life cannot stand by itself. Types of result that may come from the research is depends on what respondents have experienced in their life. These three writers agreed that quality of life for respondent is according to location they live and work. This is the reason why quality of life for every person is different from one and another.

Ramkrishna Mukherjee (1989) says that quality of life is concern about the living condition of the people. Ramkrishna (1989) use several approach to measure quality of life such as the standard and style of living. The standard of living for example is constructed from quantitative variation in the object of inquiry which is given by list of information items such as consumption of food, clothes, use of various kinds of durable goods like furniture and fitting, possession of item like radio, television and other housing amenities.

Mark Rapley (2003) believes that the quality of life has been constructing from being a social scientific index of the relative well being of the whole population to being a measurable aspect of individual subjective experience.

American sociologist James Q. Wilson (www.wordiq.com) mention the 'Broken Window Theory', which asserts that relatively minor problems left unattended send a subliminal message that disorder in general is being tolerated, and as a result, more serious crimes as well end up being committed (the analogy being that a broken window left unrepaired show an image of generalized collapse). This theory tries to show that the condition of the environment gives the direct message to people that that space or place is unsafe. These unsafe senses show that people are live in danger in that place and it directly show that their quality of life is in low level. One indicator that has been used to measure quality of life is level of happiness and when their felt that their life is in danger, they cannot reach the quality of life. This American sociologist tries to tell that physical environment can contribute to level of quality of life.

Mark Rapley (2003) refers to Noll (2000) says the great society is concerned not with how much but with how good. It means that it is not with the quantity of goods but with the quality of their lives. Rapley (2003) also added that quality of life research is same as the welfare measurement. He defines that welfare is the subjective well being and the most important is the measure of the satisfaction and happiness.

2. 2. 2 Definition of Orang Asli

Who is the Orang Asli? That is question that we must answers before we get to know this unique group. Orang Asli is a generic name given to the indigenous people living on Malay Peninsular. Other ethnic in Sabah and Sarawak is not taking into account of this Orang Asli group because these two states use the term " Sabah indigenous" and " Sarawak indigenous".

Eighteen ethnic group subgroups fall in this category, which can be classified into three groups. These three groups are the Negrito, the Senoi and the Malayu Asli. This group is determined based on their language, livelihood and administrative purpose.

The term Orang Asli is a Malay translation of the English word “aborigine” with ‘orang’ meaning “human” and ‘asli’ meaning “original” or “traditional”. Orang Asli refers to the indigenous peoples of Peninsular Malaysia that not Malay Muslims, Malaysia’s main ethnic group. There were about 2.93 million orang asli in Malaysia in year 2006 (Malaysia Bulletin of Statistics issued on June 2006). They are the minority group because they make up just 11.8% of the national population. Nabuto Toshiro (2009) refers to Mohd. Tap (1990), pointed that the Malaysia government began using the Orang Asli term in 1996. Before that, the Orang Asli was variously described as the Biduanda, Jakun, Sakai, aborigines and other term.

A. Baer (1999) in book entitled “Health, disease and survival: a biomedical and genetic analysis of the Orang Asli of Malaysia” tell early development activity that has been carry out by the government in developing the country is not considering the Orang Asli community. The development has taken Orang Asli formers and current land. This cause destruction to their natural resources and create a miserable life for Orang Asli community. There are attempt take by the government to fix this problem by give a small agricultures scheme. The main intention is to allow the Orang Asli community to do cash crop farming as the sources of economic and foods. Other than that, government also gives a minimal aids and land and expected that is enough to support their lives. This led Orang Asli community

to lagged behind compare to other community in Malaysia. That is reasons on Orang Asli ethnic become the poorest of the poor. This shows that Orang Asli quality of life is at a low level due to they are economically poor.

2. 2. 3 Definition of rural area

There are various definitions on rural area. According to Department of Statistic (2000), rural area is area that populated not more than 10, 000 people. This population amount must according to the census of population and housing. Other than that, Malaysia Urban and Regional Planning Department also described rural area as area that located far from the urban area. Types of land use at rural area also characterise by the agricultural and natural resources such as forest. Next, rural area should consist with a settlement that cover all types of village and small settlement that not more than 10, 000 people. Rural area can be categories into several factors which are:

I. Population size

II. Population density

III. Urbanization levels

IV. Level quality of life and public facilities (paved roads, electricity supply, water supply)

Types of settlements that exist in rural area consist of traditional village, FELDA and FELCRA, Orang Asli village and other areas that cover under Regional Development Authority.

2. 3 Conceptual and Philosophical issues of Quality of Life

Concept on quality of life nowadays simply defined as a standard of living that has been received by individual or a community group. This standard of living concludes a sense of happiness, lifestyle, satisfaction and wealth. People who received all these criteria can be said has achieved a good quality of life. The issue is whether standard of living only criteria that can be determine quality of life. Mark Rapley (2003) stated that quality of life is a driving force in service design, delivery and outcome evaluation across medicine and social care. The quality of life of ' patients'/ ' service user' is now usually advocates as a measure of the ' quality' and ' values of money' of service.

Mark Replay (2003) also adds that there are two conceptual ideas that use of the idea of quality of life which is an objectivity and subjectivity. Concept objectivity in quality of life can be defined as an attainment of various basic life needs such as a food and shelter which is considered common to all culture. Other than that, objectivity concept is representing external life condition such as economical factors. Subjectivity in quality of life is concern about the feeling that individual get in their life. It is more on appraisal of the thing that they get in their life.

Figure 2. 1 show the differences between the external condition (the material life arena) and the internal, personal element of people (the personal life arena). This figure tries to show that what exactly an objectives matter about and the subjective matter are about. Robert J. Rogerson (1999) described a material life arena can be viewed either as a geographical space within which place is people live. So the material life arena is the objective concept

in defines a quality of life. In other word, material life arena is a stimulus for life satisfaction.

Personal life arena included a subjective assessment of life, measure in term of satisfaction as well measure a characteristics of people. What are mean by characteristics of people was their preferences, priorities, aspiration and values system.

According to Robert J. Rogerson, type A is a research based on the accessing the material life arena and employing primary social indicators. Type B is more on the personal life arena which mean that they more on characteristic of people which representing about the feeling, behaviour and others. Type C researches are more on subjective well being research where quality of life is a direct measure of individual cognitive and effective reaction to his own life.

Material life area is the concern about the condition that can influence individual quality of life. This is because types of work, housing condition, place of living can make quality of life be better or maybe become worse. This is because the influences is come from outside and the individual are cannot control it by himself.

Meanwhile personal life arena is the factors that can be manipulated by the individual itself. This is because these personal life arenas are controlled by the individual. the evaluation of this types of concept are based on the individual feeling that influenced by the experience, behaviour and satisfaction from the individual itself.

Robert L. Schalock, Ivan Brown, Roy Brown, Robert A. Cummins, David Felce, Leena Matikka, Kenneth D. Keith, and Trevor Parmenter (2002) in article entitle “ Conceptualization, Measurement, and Application of Quality of Life for Persons With Intellectual Disabilities” described quality of life are concern about domain of well being, inter and intra personal variability, personal context, perception, values, choice and personal control. So the better understanding will be obtained if all of these criteria can be explained in detail.

I. Domain of well being

There be lots of aspects that must be determined by the invidual in perform their life. For example individual are allowed to determined the thing that most important domain in their life such as a emotional well being, interpersonal relationship, material well being, physical well being, self determination, social inclusion and right. So individual must able to recognise what is the important need to them. The well being is not determined on how many amount that individual can get but on how valuable that things can be in the individual life.

II. Inter and intra personal variability

Variability is the most domain of well being that taken by individual to experience in their life. Thus, it is consider a different individual, different community and different cultural because quality of life for each individual is different from one to another.

III. Personal context

People context are the understanding of people about their context of environment that are important to them in their life. This can be influenced

by the place that they live, work and play. This environment should be able to accommodate individual according to their feeling, interest, need and values. This will allowed them to adapt with the surrounding environment at the place that they live.

IV. Perception

Perception in quality of life is a individual statements about the individuals perceives at any moment in their life. The changes of views may be happen according to the changes of time and situation. However this is needed to see the reasons of the changes to create a improvements to receive a better quality of life.

V. Values, choice and personal control

This is relating to choice that has been made by individual. So in other word, it is individual ability to control over their interest in term of activities, intervention and environment. This is because every aspect in quality of life brings different values into individual's life.

2. 4 Important of Quality Of Life

Quality of life has been used as a tool to measure the well being condition of individual and community. Changes in size and population distribution will create unstable on living standard of a community. Using indicator that have been used in measure a quality of life, level of living condition of people can easily obtain. This will help responsible parties to developed strategies in improving the quality of life of people. It will enhance a people well being level. Quality of life matter actually should be a goal on every development that creates for people. This will give benefit for people and opportunity for people to enjoy their life.

There are three ways that can be use on showing how importance quality of life which is at national, community and individual level. On national purpose, quality of life can be use as a tool on measure a standard of living of population at the country. Result that obtained will show the efficient government that role country. The result can be used to measure on the current situation that happens in that country. If there is peace, it means that people are satisfied with their current quality of life. These leads on economy development by attract investors to come and invest in the country. It will create a job opportunities for local people to enhance their income.

In community life, quality of life has been used as a symbol of their community power. For a country that has lots of ethic, it is important to show their achievement to the other ethnic. Strong community will enable them to spoken for their community right and fulfil their requirement. Quality of life has used as a standard to measure satisfaction levels in its community. If they do not achieve their desired quality of life, so they will try hard until they achieve to become a strong community. Same scenario will happen to when achieving a personal quality of life. Level of satisfaction on individual will determine reaction on how individual will react to the community life.

2. 5 Differences between urban and rural quality of life

According Annette Spellerberg, Denis Huschka and Roland Habich (2006), in article entitle ‘ quality of life in rural area : Processes of divergence and convergence’, rural area has its own benefit from it geographical location. Economic indicator is not a major factor when measuring rural quality of life because they enjoy on lower standard of living. They also states that rural

community actually function as balancer to homogenisation and dislocation that has been caused by the international economic process. Other than that, urban area has been used as a driving force for rural area development but the reverse situation happens when the concentration development that happens in urban area has caused rural areas to continue to lag behind.

Spellberg (2006) also explains that a pressure of living in urban areas has pushed out urban families to the rural area. In suburban areas, processes of culture assimilation happen between the rural and urban. Impact may happen on the level of quality of life for people that migrate from urban areas to rural areas. This is because facilities and utilities that are provided in rural areas are not the same as the facilities that are provided in urban areas. Therefore, their needs and requirements may not be fulfilled when they are in rural areas. Other than that, reduction of quality of life is also caused by the lack of sense of place because they are not in their original places.

Indicators that have been used to measure rural quality of life consist of types of work, housing condition, income level, leisure and social relationship. An indicator of housing condition, for example, refers to the general satisfaction of residents with their housing condition and its surrounding areas. Findings gathered from the research that has been done by Spellberg (2006) show that people living in rural areas enjoy a high level of satisfaction with the standard of housing compared to the people living in urban areas.

A gap between rural and urban in the matter of subjective well-being was not clearly defined. Other satisfaction of life in terms of family, leisure and health

could much more important to personal happiness and general satisfaction rather than income and affluence.

In conclusion, there are differences between achievement quality of life in urban and rural areas. This difference can be seen in terms of measuring quality of life between these two areas. This is because the indicators used are different due to different geographical locations and the types of development that happen surrounding it. People in urban area are more satisfied with the material values rather than people in rural area that more on satisfaction on life and social relationship. For example, sense of neighbourhood's relation or social relation is stronger in rural area rather than people in urban area. This is because in rural, they lived as a one community and depend for each other.

If there is disagreement between them it will lead to uneasy environment and because of that they cannot meet their happiness in life. Different scenario occurs in urban areas due to the absence of time, the neighbourhood relations are not taken seriously by them. Therefore it is not surprising that the people in urban areas do not know their own neighbours.

2. 6 Measurement Quality Of Life

How to measure a quality of life? Early researches have been made is not only using a social indicator but also using an economic indicator. Both of these indicators will shows about social and economic level of a society.

According to the Malaysia Quality of Life report (2004) indicators that use to measure quality of life are income level, working life, health, education, environment, family life, social participation, culture and leisure. On income

indicator it will measure on gross income and standard of living. Other than that, income also uses to see whether the individual can sustain their income for their self and family. Next, the types of work also can be used to measure the level income of individual. All of this is cannot be obtain in rural areas. This have causes many people to travel several miles to find work that can provides a better living wage.

Working life indicator are use to measure the types of work and working condition environment of the community. At the rural area, high-income jobs are difficult to be obtained. Other than that, there are low rates of work variety and these make them to do same jobs all the time. A type of job that usually occurs in rural area is based on agricultural activities in a small scale. So they cannot obtain a high income level with kind of jobs.

Next is health indicator that uses to study about the physically and mentality of people at the study area. Good healthy will enable people to work and socialist more effectively. This indicator will enable to detect their access to the health services. Even though they government are creating more and better health facilities but the result is often denied access for those unable to travel the distance to get the needed services.

Family life indicator is used to measure how strongly the chain relationship between family member. Other than that, it will enable us to see types of social structure and how it will contribute on enhance a quality of life. Social participation will show about an involvement of an individual on their community. Lack of leadership and support from the community is one of problem that can be preventing that community to be a strong community.

Other than that, it is ways to see if they are willing to contribute in social, political, religious and community activities.

Other than that, the measurement on quality of life also must include the level of practise among community about culture and leisure. This is one of ways to identify their community identity. Other than that, the knowledge about their custom and tradition are also can be obtain. A culture aspect gives knowledge on social behaviour of those communities. It is an important part on to see whether the community's relationship is still practicing nowadays.

2. 6. 1 Ethic of measure quality of life

According to the R. L. Schalock (2002), the first thing before measure quality of life understands the degree of which people enjoy good quality in life. Measure quality of life should enable to enhance people quality of life by taking an action to improve the obstacle that currently decreased people quality of life. Other than that, the measurement result must be able to help and should never encourage achieving a low quality of life.

Measuring quality of life is usually carried out by identified what are the specific things that have to value by individual. After that, it must be matched with the individual's perception or their happiness. Usually this measurement is concern with the " subjective" and " Objectives" measurement. The most usually method that being use is by measuring their life experiences to know the positive values that happen to the individual across time and among their cultural. Other than that, this also can be done by describing their positive valued into something that can be measure.

Next, the method that can be used is the quantitative measurement. This done by creating a scale to described the level of their satisfaction between the “ best” and the “ worst”.

2. 7 Malaysia rural social policy and it characteristic

According to the Malaysia rural social policy journal (2008), Malaysia rural policy is cover a policy that helps farmer through providing a basic living needs to improve quality and productivity of the crops. Although Malaysia has a faced great process of urbanization as a tool on develop the country, agricultural sector has not be ignored but still practicing particularly in rural area. This is because rural area is places where the indigenous Malaysia practicing an agricultural activity. Through a ‘ new economic policy’ that has been implement after an ethnic conflict 1969 to reduce of poverty especially for indigenous Malaysia, government has come on several strategies which are :

1. Development of land, increase the cultivated land area and resettlement of landless farmers to grow cash crops.
2. To improve a firm land capital construction which are drainage project in Kelantan State plan and Ji Muda Kedah.
3. Provide a fertilize, high yield seeds, subsidies for high yield crops and a agricultural technique to improve agricultural crop yield, expanding oil palm and other economic crop planting area.
4. The implementation of the price subsidy system, reduce market risks, to protect the interests of production for farmers.
5. Provide loans for a farmer to enhance their agricultural production.

6. Create a farmer market in urban centre to allowed farmer to sell directly to consumer without involve the third parties.

With all these strategies, Malaysia has able to bring out rural people out of poverty while at the same time protect a basic living needs of the farmers.

Since 2001, government has launch a ' National Vision Policy' with an anti poverty program that focus on the indigenous ethnic minorities in remote areas. Other than that, government also provide housing, water supply and sanitation system, basic living conditions and medical social services for those targeted people.

Other than that, by think that only education that will help people to enhance their quality of life, government has come out with the ' Compulsory Education Law' for 6 to 15 year children. This is one ways that will encourage and forcing people especially in rural areas that has high percentages of not going to school. This policy is supported by done the development of new school building and school improvement in term of study condition and quality of teaching.

In conclusion, government actually play a huge role on enhancing a quality of life for the rural. Government has been behind of the scene for every development that happens. Government and private sectors must be cooperating to provide a development that can bring happiness and welfare for the Malaysia people.

2. 8 Application of quality of life in different country

Quality of life research has been conduct almost on every country that exists in the earth. This is one ways to measure a level of living standard in that

country. It will help to bring people from other country to become resident or just for travel. So the result of quality of life will be as a tool to know the actual level of quality of life in that country. There is differentness between urban and rural quality of life. So it is importance to well understand about urban and rural quality of life.

2. 8. 1 Quality of life in urban area

2. 8. 1. 1 Singapore

Singapore for example is one of the country has done quality of life research several times. As a F. T. Seik, Yuen and L. Chin (1999) mention, there are about three studies has been done on the measurement of quality of life in Singapore. This study has been done by Kau and Wang (1995), Foo (1998) and Kau (1998). First study by Kau and Wang (199) is about the life satisfaction from 329 respondents aged 15 year and above 1993. The indicator that has been used is more on about the social, health and economic condition. Second studies made by Foo (1998) are to measure overall life satisfaction as well as to measure an importance and satisfaction towards various aspects of life. Third studies made by Kau (1998) are measure satisfaction with life in the Singapore. It measure using a likert-scale with ' 1' is for very dissatisfaction level and ' 6' as a very satisfied level.

Conclusion and finding that can be found are people in Singapore are moderately satisfied with their overall quality of life. Education and income is two indicators that have impact on Singaporean overall life satisfaction. They score high in term of value healthy and family life but low level on the leisure and consumer goods.

2. 8. 1. 2 Hong Kong

This is the summary on studies of subjective that has been done by Wan, P. S., Law, K. W. K., & Wong, T. K. Y. (2008) entitle Subjective well-being.

Studies on the quality of life at Hong Kong are concern about the subjective indicator which is based on the respondent subjective perception and evaluation of their lives and experiences. This study is done by the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies in year 1988 under the project ‘Indicator of Hong Kong Social Development’. The project has been done for several years until they develop an index, the SDI 2000 which uses to measure the social development in Hong Kong.

The study is about subjective well being of the respondent. The findings of the study indicate that Hong Kong Chinese are more satisfied with their own personal lives rather than societal condition. The subjective well being is declines in 1995, although they still satisfied with their personal lives. Other than that, their confidence in the territory future is significantly lower. It also found that, there are considered a good health, peace of mind and money as the most important thing that could lead to their happiness.

Using same questionnaire set just like the first study, Wan, P. S., Law, K. W. K., & Wong, T. K. Y. (2008) launch another study that examined the mean self reported to develop a composite index to reflect changes in quality of life over the period from 1990 to 1997. It was found that the personal well being index was more robust to the changes and only get change with the global trend. Other than that, the societal well being index showed more obvious changes over time.

2. 8. 2 Quality of life in rural area

2. 8. 2. 1 New Zealand

New Zealand is a one of the country that has done a quality of life research in a rural area. Maori people are an aboriginal people that usually live in New Zealand rural area. This research has been done by the Social Policy Research Unit of the Family Centre (Lower Hutt) and the Population Studies Centre, University of Waikato. Study case of the study is on Wellington Tent Trust and the Palmerston North Maori Trust. The research is about understanding the wellbeing of Maori people because they (Royal Commission on Social Policy: 1988) believe that ‘ a good society is one that allows people to be heard, to have say in their future and choice in life’. For them, social well being includes that sense of belonging that affirms claims their dignity and identity and allows them to function in their everyday’s roles.

First of all it is important to know what Maori people understand on quality of life. According New Zealand Maori Case Study 1 (2007) report, that refers on Love, Maulaulau and Pratt (2005) study, they identify that Maori people understanding concept quality of life would emphasise spiritual, family, tribal and social spiritual connection on responsibility, community relationship, authority and use of ancestral land as a component of Maori wellbeing with other generally shared component such as health care, adequate housing and other resources.

Finding of the research shows that Maori community is more concern of human relationship with in detail is on the family relationship. This is

because the entire respondent that has been interview states that social activities that happen around them is not only for themselves but also for the young generations. Other than that, they need to be able with the family and close to their own environment which are places that they are close to family. If we look on detail, it supposes to show how the strong is family bond between them. Studies also sho