ITU A|Z
VOL:6 NO:1 77-93 2009-1

An assessment of quality of place (QoP) research for Istanbul

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Received: November 2008 Final Acceptance: May 2009

Abstract
Quality of Place (QoP) is a new concept, the measurability of which is discussed in the literature. It is assessed within the same context as similar concepts which include the word "place", such as sense of place, place identity, place attachment, and on place-based concepts such as life satisfaction, human well-being. It is compared with quality of life (QoL) that aims to identify the best places to live and discuss the differences between places. Although these concepts overlap, they are assessed in different terms in interdisciplinary studies. When the research, printed documents and implementations of the researchers are assessed, there are several determinants - the scale of place, the current time period, the type of place and its manner of usage, users - which influence the measurability of QoP. They are used to question the success of urban place in developed countries. At this point, this study aims to question QoP on the socio-economic development level. The problem is defined as to whether the development level will be the criteria in QoP at different scales. The research is developed in two stages. In the first stage, the position and role of QoP in the existing literature is assessed, and the determinants affecting its measurability are summarized. In the second stage, the place-based research in Turkey, a developing country, and its largest metropolitan city, Istanbul, are examined in chronological order. This research, participated in to a considerable extent by the writers, has been developed from the perspective of a planning discipline. A literature survey is used in the research. In the research, a common synthesis of the indicators, limitations used and references made to QoP is devised. As a conclusion, the meaning of QoP for Istanbul is limited to the house and its environment. Therefore, consideration has been given to QoP in terms of its development level, bringing gains to both the city and its citizens. Moreover, it will effectively improve the usage of the resources in the planning process and will be a leading source for public policies.

Keywords: *Quality of place; place; planning discipline; developing country; Istanbul*

1. Introduction

Quality of Place (QoP) is an important concept used in planning and design studies on different scales. However, its scope and measurability has not as yet been properly acknowledged.

Until recently, QoP was attributed as belonging to the terminology which considered the concept of "place". QoP is closely related to place attachment, sense of place and place identity concepts. It is also associated

with other concepts such as self identity, community attachment and quality of life. All of these concepts and quality of place do overlap, and are often used as synonyms; but every so often they are contrasted. The different concepts find their origins in various researches.

The basic topic of discussion for QoP is questioning its measurability (Clinton, 2001 in Van Kamp et al., 2003). The determinants on which the measurability of QoP is based have been subject to different theoretical research and implementations. Based on these criteria, indicators are discussed and publications are made, one of which is the Place Rated Almanac (Landis & Sawicki, 1988), and special methods, such as Place check, are developed.

The physical characteristics (size and type) of place, the users of place and time period of use are important determinants for measuring QoP. In addition, the other determinant is interdisciplinary differentiation. Recent research carried out in developed countries questions “the best places to live” (Designing Place, 2002; Gehl & Sqholt, 2002). The success of urban and rural places is compared with meeting the changing and developing life expectations of its users (Florida, 1999; 2001 in Special Report, 2002). This success is not assessed in physical dimensions, but in social, economic and cultural dimensions. However, no study is available that makes comparisons on the socio-economic development level for QoP.

This study aims to question the quality of place on a socio-economic development level. The problem defined here is whether this level will be a criterion in the quality of place on different scales. This research is based on a literature survey and carried out in the following stages:

The first stage is to discuss the conceptual framework and to assess the measurability of QoP. It emphasizes the indicators, data and limitations based on the latest studies for developed countries. The second stage is to analyze research carried out in Turkey, as a developing country, and on its largest metropolitan city, Istanbul. This paper focuses on the concepts developed within the scope of the planning discipline and defined within the conceptual framework of QoP. The last stage is to evaluate these research studies in meaning of quality of place in terms of the socio-economic development level and the contribution of QoP to urban life and the planning process.

2. Conceptual Framework for Quality of Place (QoP)

New terminology has been established in architecture or planning literature parallel to the developments of the quality concept. The studies related to the measurement of QoL have taken first place among such terminology. The quality studies which were associated with human health in the beginning came to be associated with the environment and place criteria (Clinton, 2001; Marans, 2003; Mazumdar, 2003; Van Kamp, 2003).

Until recently, QoP was related to the concept of “place” such as place attachment, sense of place, place identity (Figure 1) (Bonaiuto et al., 2003; Pretty et al., 2003)). (Hull et al., 1994) Among these concepts, "place attachment" characterizes the emotional bonds to a place such as the home where one lives and the school where one receives one’s education. The common idea for this concept is that place attachment is associated with “personal experiences, emotional bonds, personal involvement besides

historical, cultural, social, geographical and environmental elements" (Altman & Low, 1992; Bricker and Kerstetter, 2000 in Clinton, 2001). Giuliani and Fledman (1993), on the other hand, have brought clarifications with three principal differences by using spatial relations: (i) the content of the personal bond to a given place (affective, cognitive and/or symbolic), (ii) the polarity of the bond, and (iii) the specificity of the bond (Clinton, 2001).
A similar concept associated with the scale of place is "place identity". It is defined as an individual's connection to a geographical dimension with strong emotional ties resulting from a historical process of unique experiences and values (Proshansky, 1978; Williams et al., 1992; Hull et al., 1994; Pretty et al., 2003). Cuba and Hummon (1993) identify places, people and experiences as sources of place identity (Pretty et al., 2003).

Among these concepts, the literature that defines the distinctive characteristics of "sense of place" is considerably small (Mazumdar, 2003; Pretty et al., 2003). Russel and Ward (1982) define it as "the psychological or perceived unity of the geographical environment". Further Tuan (1974) describes it as "a center of meaning constructed by experience". Cantrill (1998) finds sense of place to be defined by numerous authors as: a place where "personal and collective meanings… intersect at a particular physical site". Lastly, in the definition of Punter (1991), the sense of place concept is defined with three principal elements: physical pattern and size of urban form, activities, behavioral texture and meaning (Punter & Carmona, 1997).

QoL is similar to place-based meanings, but with respect to life satisfaction and personal well-being. Although the life quality concept is based on health (Van Kamp et al., 2003), it is an issue studied by sociologists, psychologists, planners and architects, at homes, offices and in recreational areas (Brown, 2003). It is associated with personal health, financial well-being, social status and stress level. From the planner's point of view, the important elements of life quality are livability, character, connection, mobility and personal freedom, and diversity. Within these acknowledgements, QoL is evaluated as a criterion which assesses the components that threaten individual health (Blum, 1974), whose spatial, physical and social impacts and measurability with a variety of indicators are discussed (Mitchell et al., 2001) and which is sought after for having a good life (Cheung, 1997; Van Kemp et al., 2003). In other words, the principal objective of QoL studies is to reveal the differences between the livable places within the country's borders and to find "the best places to live" (Wish, 1986) (Mc Cann, 2004).

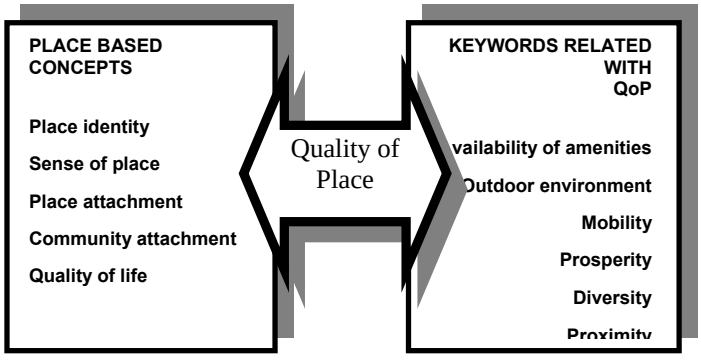

Figure.1. *Conceptual Framework of Quality of Place*

In Figure 1, the relation between the concepts defined by "place" and the key concepts of QoP has been developed. Accordingly, the concepts of livability, quality of place and sustainability overlap; they all refer to aspects of the person-environment relationship (Fig. 1). The environment is herein broadly defined as physical, built, social, economic and cultural. While livability and quality of place are objectively related to environment, quality of life is primarily related to the person with perspective to individuals (Van Kamp et al., 2003).

In a study comparing objectively determined measures of place quality with measures of individual satisfaction, Schneider (1975) found little correlation between a city's objective scores and its aggregate level of individual satisfaction. Campbell (1976) also found that a personal standard of living is the most important factor in individual satisfaction with quality of life (Wish, 1986).

More recently, Wish (1986) has found little correlation made between the behaviors in different places of persons and the indicators that influence quality of life. It underlines that places play relative roles in many people's lives, and quality of place is a far different concept than quality of life (Landin & Sawicki, 1988)

QoP has actually been established in the literature since 1990. It can also be seen as the result of efforts to find and design the best and most successful livable places. In addition to the physical dimensions and standards of places on different scales, it is the effort to seek a response to the social, economic and psychological expectations of its users. It is the natural and structural amenities in a special place that positively influence the life quality of an individual (Clinton, 1999; 2001).

3. Measuring of Quality of Place (QoP)

Determinants, indicators, limitations

The measurability of QoP is related with determinants in the existing literature. These are: scale of place, differences among interdisciplinary approach, the current time-period, the type of place, users of the place and purpose of use and the policy and strategies developed. Perhaps the most important among all is differences of interdisciplinary approach. The study areas of many professionals' disciplines (planning, architecture, engineering, health, public policies) are related with QoP. However, QoP is the subject that is primarily preferred by regional planners, geographers and economists (Clinton, 2001; Brown, 2003).

One of the determinants defined for QoP is the current time period (Maslow, 1970). In other words, QoP includes the decisions given by people on their own life qualities during good and bad time periods. The principal fundamentals focused on by people in a bad time period are as follows: availability of job, food, shelter and security. The principal fundamentals in a good time period are: access to amenities, recreational opportunities, pleasant communities and a pristine environment, and a satisfying personal and professional life (see Table 1) (Clinton, 2001).

Table 1. *Developing Perspectives for Quality of Place Indicators*

	Indicators Assessing Quality of Place within QoL and Other Relevant Conceptual Studies
1830..Health Indicators	Public health indicators and its connection with social issues
1935…. in USA….. 1941 ….in Britain ……	National income and production account, special economic indicators (such as Gross National Product)
Economic Indicators	
1970..Quality Indicators 1970..Maslow's	Housing size, welfare, crime, transportation and city services delivery Bad times period fundamentals; availability of job, food, shelter and security.
Psychological Logic	
1977….Inglehart's	Good times period fundamentals: Access to amenities, recreational opportunities, pleasant communities, a pristine environment, a satisfying personal and professional life.
Postmaterialism Thesis	
1978…Flax	Dimension of housing, welfare, crime, transportation, city services delivery
1980…Jacksonville	Housing, work place, daily transportation
1981….Champbell	Prosperity
1985….Cutter	Self image of well-being, personal happiness, stress and life satisfaction, place image (individual perception in place), personal evaluation of objective (expert opinion)
1988....Landis & Sawicki	Job and economic development, environmental protection (air, water, toxic wastes, open spaces), traffic and transportation, educational quality, over-development, recreation services, infrastructure quality, housing affordability, city appearance/aesthetics, downtown revitalization, crime, political leadership, housing quality, neighborhood problems
1989….Myers	Local conditions
1993….Lee	Sustainability, public demand
1996….Sawicki and Flynn	Spatial boundaries, administrative records, validity and reliability problems, crime rates
1999….Richard Florida Carnegie Mellon University	Structural amenities (stores, rest, movies, theaters, community centers and recreational facilities) natural amenities (natural botanic, wild appearance, forest, recreational place, etc.), stress reducer qualities (social and family relations, community safety, traffic jams)
2001….Clinton J. Andrews	The minimum set of QoP measures evident in the literature: environmental threats to human health, recreational amenities, aesthetics of landscape and streetscape. Additionally physical planning factors (availability, diversity of housing, transportation option), economic factors (employment opportunities, stability of property values), social factors (educational opportunities, crime rates, sense of community), political factors (trust in government, civic engagement) Different data started to be used in order to measure QOP. Validity, availability, timeliness, stability, reliability, understandability, responsiveness, policy relevance, representativeness
2002….Special Report	Study carried out in rural Minnesota with high-tech workers (same indicators are used)
2002….Martincigh, L.	Accessibility, safety, comfort, use, look (appearance), management, integrability, environment safeguards, psychological aspects, pedestrian mobility
2004…. Craglia M, Leontidou L, Nuvolati G, et al.	Traditional measures of the quality of life need to be supplemented with two new dimensions that reflect more recent postmodernist thinking about the composition of urban landscape versus the challenges of building appropriate indicators reflecting these new dimensions are considerable, even in urban environments so rich in information systems and data sources.
2007…. Trip	Relationships between the "creative class" and "quality of place"
2007….Mohan and Twigg	In respect of ecological indicators, increased levels of deprivation were associated with a raised probability of expressing neighborhood satisfaction, as was settlement size, which is consistent with earlier work on quality of life.
2008….. Yang	The relationship between physical form and quality of life using neighborhood satisfaction as an empirical definition of quality of life, the effects of block and neighborhood housing density, land use mix, the mix of housing structure types, and street network connectivity on residents' ratings of neighborhood satisfaction
2008….. Walton, Murray and Thomas	The surveys measured attitudes towards subjects such as noise, neighbors, accessibility, green areas, welfare services, recreational services, safety, maintenance, environmental health, transport services and characteristics of an ideal neighborhood

	Quality of Place Indicators in Sources Questioning “the Best Place to Live”
1980….Place Rated Almanac (PRA) –associated with QoL	In the first edition; 6 categories: cost Of living, job outlook, transportation, education, health care, crime, arts, recreation And climate In the second edition: 9 categories; climate, housing, health care, transportation, education, art and culture, recreation, crime and personal economic outlook
1990…“50 fabulous places to raise your family” Melissa Gionagnoli	A strong, local economy with growing job and business opportunities, good schools, diversified real estate market, low taxes, great recreation and culture, low crime, aggressive plan to preserve the environment
2000.....Placecheck Project UDAL and Robert Cowan	Natural features, landmark buildings, local style, scale and skylines and liveliness of street life and influence traffic parking and safety, local street network, routes people, car and public transport
2002….Designing Place (special guides) -Scotland	Distinct identity, safe and pleasant spaces, easier movement, sense of welcome, place adaptable, good use of resources
2003….CNN Money Magazine –USA	
2003….MORI Social Research Institute –Britain	

The character of place is another determinant evaluated in quality studies. Richard Florida (1999) is currently the only researcher studying QoP for high-tech workers, and focuses exclusively on urban settings. He finds that natural, recreational and lifestyle amenities are absolutely vital in attracting knowledgeable workers and in supporting leading-edge high technology firms and industries (Florida, 2000). He suggests five important factors to be an attraction among these amenities. First, talent is attracted by cultural amenities rather than recreation or climate. Second, highly educated and talented people are attracted to energetic and creative places. Third, the need to capture the ideas and knowledge of citizens about neighborhood, local and regional needs is important. Fourth, encouraging smart growth and sustainable development strategies in economic development is highly important to regional long-term viability. Last and most important, Florida finds diversity is highly correlated to talent in a given place. Results conclude that structural amenities, natural amenities and stress reducer qualities improve the quality of place for respondents (see Table 1).

The QoP research developed by Florida in urban-Minnesota, focused on a qualified and specific respondent community (high-tech workers), is carried out for rural-Minnesota (Special Report, 2002). The same respondent community has cited a rural-small town atmosphere as the cause of primary space preference. Interestingly, cultural amenities and historical heritage were least attractive to all educational groups; this finding does not support Florida’s urban-based quality of place findings.

Size of place is also an important determinant when discussing QoP. In general, the perceived size of place relates to the area where citizens conduct the majority of their daily business and activities (Special Report, 2002). The fact of prosperity is explained with three concepts: home, work and daily transportation paths in QoP studies. QoP is closely related to livability and sustainability concepts in economic development, environmental protection and social equality dimensions (Fig. 1) (Campbell, 1981; Lee, 1993). Public demand develops QoP. Depending on public demands, the definition of QoP is explained with two components: quality distribution and place type (Waits and Fulton, 2003).

The type of activity in the urban place is one of the important keys in QoP. These activities are: necessary, optional and social (Gehl, 1971; Gehl & Gemzoe, 2001). The activities performed by respondents in accordance with their principal aims in using urban open areas (going to school or to work, shopping, waiting for a bus, etc.) are included in necessary activities. These activities take place throughout the year, under nearly all conditions, and are more or less independent of the outdoor environment. The other two types of activities are directly related to QoP. The usage of such places, meeting recreational requirements and establishing social communication, can be provided by climatic, cultural and physical comfort in place.

The latest studies in quality of place have focused on new indicators. For example, Craglia et al. (2004) think that traditional measures of the quality of life need to be supplemented with two new dimensions that reflect more recent postmodernist thinking about the composition of the urban landscape versus the challenges of building appropriate indicators. Another study (Trip, 2007) points out the relationship between "creative class" and "quality of place". According to a study of Mohan and Twigg (2007), the important determinant is the increased levels of deprivation in assessing quality of place Also, in other study (Yang, 2008) the relationship between physical form and quality of life using neighborhood satisfaction as an empirical definition of quality of life the effects of block and neighborhood housing density, land use mix, the mix of housing structure types, and street network connectivity on residents' ratings of neighborhood satisfaction has been determined. In another study (Walton, Murray and Thomas, 2008) quality of place has been measured with attitudes towards subjects such as noise, neighbors, accessibility, green areas, welfare services, recreational services, safety, maintenance, environmental health, transport services, and characteristics of an ideal neighborhood.

QoP Indicators in Sources Questioning "The Best Place to Live"

Along with these are indicators and limitations that are classified by periodical publications (PRA, Local Design Guides and Money Magazine) and research (Giovagnoli, 1990). The main purpose of these periodicals is to question the success of the place and the definition of a livable place (see Table 1). The most important one among these is the Place Rated Almanac (PRA) published periodically in the USA since 1980. It is a useful guide for reliably comparing places and developing policies and programs to improve the local QoP (Landis and Sawicki, 1988). Landis and Sawicki (1988) regard the indicators in nine categories: climate, housing, health care, crime, transportation, education, arts and culture, recreation, and economic opportunities.

One of the most important movements of the 1990s is the books and guides written on "best places". Melissa Giovagnoli's book, "50 fabulous places to raise your family", uses objective data in the definition of livable places. According to her, the best place has: "a strong, local economy with growing job and business opportunities, good schools, a diversified real estate market, low taxes, great recreation and culture, low crime and an aggressive plan to preserve the environment". In a guiding study prepared in Scotland (Designing Places, 2002), the success criterion of place has been assessed. Above all, a place must hold a distinct identity. Other criteria are: safe and

pleasant spaces, easier movement, sense of welcome, a place adaptable, good use of resources (Designing Places, 2002). Money Magazine (CNN Money Magazine, 2003) which is still published in the USA is another source for questioning the best place people want to live in. The principal indicators used by this source: "nice weather, arts and culture, outdoor activities, low cost of living, slow pace, entertainment and dining, low taxes, low crime rate" are criticized in economic aspects.

In recent years, projects and methods have been proposed on issues of life quality, sustainability and healthy cities in order to measure QoP. The first defined method,,placecheck, related to the control of QoP, was developed by Robert Cowan (2000). Placecheck is a method of investigating how a place can be changed for the better. It assesses a place's qualities, shows what improvements are needed and focuses on people who are working together to achieve this success. It is based on a three-stage checklist of questions. The questions focus on: natural features, landmark buildings, local style and skylines, and on factors that contribute to or undermine the liveliness of street life and influence traffic, parking and safety. The strength of the method has been its simplicity, accessibility and comprehensiveness.
In the aftermath of all the above assessments, the minimum set of QoP measures is evident in the literature: environmental threats to human health, recreational amenities, aesthetic of landscape and streetscape. Additional popular measures include: physical planning factors (availability, diversity of housing, transportation option), economic factors (employment opportunities, stability of property values), social factors (educational opportunities, crime rates, sense of community), and political factors (trust in government, civic engagement) (Clinton, 2001). Different data (validity, availability, timeliness, stability, reliability, understandability, responsiveness, policy relevance, representativeness) are used in order to measure QoP.

4. The Role of Socio-Economic Development Level on QoP

The purpose of the second stage of the research is to evaluate the relationship between the QoP and the socio-economic development level. The most important case studies which were carried out in Greater Metropolitan Istanbul were selected and surveyed. Some criteria were taken into account for selecting the studies related with the first stage. The selected case studies were (i) developed in a planning discipline, (ii) aimed at evaluating the concepts (place identity, place sense, sustainability, community satisfaction, QoL, Quality of Urban Life QoUL) in which the conceptual framework of QoPis defined, (iii) focused on different scales in Istanbul, (iv) compared with the behavioral differences among different respondents, and lastly (v) continued in chronological order (Table 2).

Istanbul is the largest metropolitan city of Turkey. Since 1950, the rapidly changing demographic, socio-cultural structures have been the subject of research carried out on the whole city and its sub-regions. The research that evaluated the urbanization process affecting the physical speculation of the city until the 1980s has been supported with research focused on urban quality of life and spatial preferences after the 1990s.

The research of the first period is of the life quality standards of the community, called the new city-dweller. Their expectations, hopes and achievements from the residence they live in, the neighborhood they take part in, and naturally, from the city they have just been integrated into have been investigated (Suher et al., 1989, 1991). The expectations of urban life

are, respectively, a better job, better income, better education, better social environments, better health conditions, and better personal relations. In summary, the search for environmental quality in which the expectations on various issues from urban life tend for the better, and perfection are observed. The increase in the ownership of homes and the addition of a private vehicle raise the individual quality expenditure in urban life. Expectations of a more secure and healthy life define the search for quality in institutionalized and organized supplies.

The research of the second period focuses on urban perception and identity within the scope of the sustainability principle. It is compared with the image of the city and changing identity indicators (Suher et al., 1996; Türkoğlu, 1996 in Türkoğlu 2002). Istanbul has an identity and an urban image defined and perceived from past to present depending on the topographic structure, historical values and spatial fabric. In the transformation process of urban identity and urban image of Istanbul, migrations and population mobility, illegal building processes, *gecekondu*s, urbanization and the process of being urbanized, legal implementations, land use decisions on the metropolitan scale and globalization are indicated as important fundamentals (Suher et al., 1996). The research that follows the assessments of the population that use the city is taken into consideration. Age, gender, education, income, number of family members, occupation, length of time in the city, residence and ownership of a vehicle in the old and new settlement areas of the city are accepted as principle indicators. It reveals that the results achieved in respect to urban identity and images are directly related to availability in urban place, income level and the frequency of using the city. The quality expectations in urban life are still at the job, income and education levels; the existences of cultural and recreational areas are known, but still its contribution to urban life is underrated.

The third period studies are directly intended to measure the quality of urban life (Suher et al., 1999; Türksever and Atalık, 2001), to compare places and to assess the preferences of respondents in selection of place and residential satisfaction (Türkoğlu, 1997; Dökmeci and Berköz, 2000). The basic hypothesis in the study intended for the measurement of quality of urban life in the urbanization process is that the environmental quality search that expresses a certain level of perfection in urban life is related to the socio-economic development level (Suher et al., 1999). The researchers have worked with a defined set of respondents in the interrogation carried out by targeting the life around residences. Depending on the frequency of place usage and purpose of use, the mothers and children are selected. The respondent's identity (respondent's age, gender, education, birthplace, occupation, family size, length of time in Istanbul and district), his or her relations with the residence and close environment, the quality of urban life and social-technical infrastructure relations, and finally the respondent's assessment of the urban environment are questioned. It is observed that a respondent profile is developed between two researches. Residence in Istanbul, employment rate and income level are at high levels. It is also influential that the district encompassing selected places is the oldest and the most settled district of Istanbul. The standards of the residence and its close environment are developed; the usage of means to access urban life quality (credit card, mobile phone, etc.) is prevalent. The expectations from residence and close environment are not diversified in parallel with the

income level, but with the education level. Nonetheless, participation in the cultural activities offered by the city is associated with economic conditions and urban accessibility. The most important finding put forward from this research is that the vital threats precede quality in the urban place. The earthquake which caused a considerable level of devastation in Istanbul in 1999 has played an impact on this issue. Urban livability has been questioned before the quality of vital security. Actually, this has a negative impact on life quality. The first and foremost impact of the earthquake in Istanbul is the response to the question of the best place to live in the city. Security in the environmental quality criteria has taken the highest priority.

Another concept related to life quality is life satisfaction. Studies focusing particularly on developing countries are limited. In one of these studies, Türkoğlu (1997) has assessed the change in residential satisfaction of the respondent in residential settlement areas which hae been evaluated in four groups (central neighborhoods, newly planned neighborhoods, traditional squatter neighborhoods, new squatter neighborhoods) according to their legal status in Istanbul. The principal indicators of that study are: building type, building condition, size of house unit, building age, index of building utilities, average density in neighborhood, house ownership, number of children in the family, family income, respondent's gender, respondent's education, age, birthplace, occupation, length of time in Istanbul. According to results of the research, physical comfort, quality perceived from building conditions, house plan and residential size are indicators of a high level of satisfaction. Proximity to the center of the city, offices, shopping facilities and municipal services are other important reasons for satisfaction. The quality of the neighborhood scale is the most important factor. It is noted that the basic difference between developing and developed countries lies in the ownership of illegal residences. While the quality perception of the settlers in unplanned areas is related to accessibility, the accessibility to social and cultural requirements as well as physical quality and quality of the close environment has the highest priority for respondents in planned settlements. Another study that supports the findings of this research associates the diversification in urban residence selection preferences with the characteristics in population structure (different age and large size of family) (Dökmeci & Berköz, 2000). The historical and ancient settlement areas at the center and the residential-location preferences in the newly planned and unplanned residential areas are questioned. According to the results, it is observed that a considerable part of the selected sample (71%) wants to change their settlement. This does not change with the age factor. On the other hand, access to work and lifecycle is another important fundamental in spatial preference. Proximity to relatives, a clean environment, a social environment and amenities are the subsequent reasons. As a result household mobility is directly influential in the urban pattern. In a study conducted by Saglamer et al. (2006) the prospective residents' preferences in respect of their future housing and its environment needs in the area affected by the earthquake has been evaluated. The results of the study show that people prefer not only environmental protection and disaster mitigation, but also a high level of socio-cultural satisfaction in post-disaster (re-) construction. The paper suggests strategies for improved past-disaster (re-)construction.

Table 2.*Comparison of Empirical Studies: identified scales or factors of place quality perceived by residents on the Istanbul Metropolitan City Scale*

Emprical Studies	Contextual Relations by Quality	Spatial *Scale of Place*	Human / Community *Sample in Society*	Indicators	Findings
Suher et al., 1989, 1991	Urbanization and being urbanized life standards, urban life standards, community satisfaction *Environmental Quality*	.District and city scale .Planned and il-legal settlements	People in different socio-economic income levels. *New City Dweller*	Socio-economic indicators,*	Expectations are related to socio-economic level
Handan Türkoğlu 1997	Community (residential) satisfaction, urban perception, identity	Central planned, newly planned, traditional squatter, new squatter	People in different socio-economic income levels	Socio-economic indicators, Objectives variables about the house and its environment, The resident perception of residential environment	Higher satisfaction depends on building and close environmental quality, accessibility, social and physical environmental conditions
Suher et al. 1996	Place identity, place sense	Old and new settlements area in district scale	People in low income level	Socio-economic indicators, The resident perception of his /her residential environment	Urban identity and images are directly related to availability in urban place, income level and the frequency of using the city
Türkoğlu, 1996	Environmental perception, urban image, *Environmental Quality*	Central and peripheral districts	People in low and high income levels	Socio-economic indicators, The resident perception of his/her residential environment	Definition of urban image and its role with in city has been changed by urban development Historical and cultural space has been transformed into commerce and shopping areas.
Suher et al. 1999	*Quality of Urban Life, Environmental Quality*	Settlements affected in the 1999 Marmara Earthquake	People (focus on women and children) in different socio-economic income level	Socio-economic variable The resident perception of his/her residential environment	The existence of all urban, social and technical infrastructures regarded as defining the quality of urban life, the vital threats precede quality in the urban place.
Dökmeci and Berköz,-2000	Residential – location preferences, *Residential Satisfaction Quality of Urban Life*	Settlement ring In city scale	Households, taken from different districts	Socio-economic variable The resident perception of his/her residential environment	Access to work and lifecycle is another important fundamental in spatial preference. Proximity to relatives, a clean environment, a social environment and amenities are the subsequent reasons

Evcil Yurtsever and Atalık-2001	*Quality of Life,* people's satisfaction	Istanbul inhabitants from different districts	People in different socio-economic income level	Socio-economic indicators, people satisfaction the physical environment indicators,**** accessibility indicators	Health, climate, crowding, sporting, housing conditions, travel to work, environmental pollution are major determinants of the satisfaction level in Istanbul.
Türk and Ayataç-2003	Quality of Life Objective indicators, district scale	26 different districts within the Istanbul Metropolitan Area	The homogeneous district groups	Socio-economic variable Housing and close environment indicators**	The relative differences between the districts in terms of QoL in the metropolitan area were above the average.
Saglamer, Velioğlu, Türkoğlu and Dikbas (2006)	The prospective residents' perceptions and evaluations	People in temporary housing	People in different socio-economic income levels.	Socio-cultural indicators, The resident perception of his/her residential environment *****	People prefer not only Environmental protection and disaster mitigation, but also a high level of socio-cultural satisfaction in past-disaster re-construction.
Kellekçi and Berköz, 2006	User satisfaction in housing and *Environmental Quality*	Planned mass housing areas in Istanbul metropolitan area	People in different socio-economic income levels.	Housing and close environment indicators	The factors increasing level of satisfaction vary according to the demographic and socio-economic structural differences of the users.
Kellekçi and Berköz, 2007	User satisfaction in housing and *Environmental Quality*	Planned mass housing areas in Istanbul Metropolitan area	People in different socio-economic income levels.	Housing and close environment indicators The resident perception of his/her residential environment Accessibility indicators***	The overall satisfaction does not change depending on age, the level of education.
Berkoz, Turk and Kellekci, 2009	User satisfaction in housing and *Environmental Quality*	Planned mass housing areas in Istanbul Metropolitan area	People in different socio-economic income levels.	Housing and close environment indicators The resident perception of his/her residential environment Accessibility indicators	Housing and environmental quality satisfaction are determined as accessibility

NOTE

*Socio-economic indicators: *Gender, level of education, occupation, birthplace, family size, family type, number of children in the family, family income, house ownership, district of work, location of weekly shopping place, the most visited house location of friends and relatives, the most important public square, public park, weekend activities, activities in free times, attendance of musical performances, fairs and festivals, social security systems, commerce, sports **

**Housing and close environment indicators: *The age of the building, dwelling size, dwelling type, physical condition of the building, average density in the neighborhood and distance to the center environmental safety, economic value, environmental protection and disaster mitigation*

***Accessibility indicators: *Accessibility to function areas and public service areas*

****People satisfaction: *Shopping facilities, environmental pollution, educational provision, cost of living, noise levels, climate, job opportunities, travel to work, crowding, relation with neighbors, housing conditions, parks, green areas, health, leisure opportunities, sports, crime rate, traffic congestion*

*****Residents perception: *Factor groups related to accessibility to function areas, factor groups related to the features of residence environment, factor groups in various facilities in the residence environment, factor groups related to environmental safety, factor groups related to residence environment and economic value*

Another study gives a conceptual model of user satisfaction in housing and environmental quality (Kellekçi and Berköz, 2006). The results of the study show that the factors increasing level of satisfaction vary according to the demographic and socio-economic structural differences of the users. Also, another study by Berkoz and Kellekçi (2007) show that the overall satisfaction obtained from the residence and its environment does not change depending on age, level of education and size of the family, but verified that the level satisfaction increased together with the level of income. The recently research developed by Berköz, Turk and Kellekçi (2009) related with place quality has assessed satisfaction in housing and environmental quality in order to provide maximum levels of user satisfaction. It has specified the factors of housing and environmental quality satisfaction in mass housing areas in the Istanbul metropolitan area, and examined whether there are any differences among the factors influencing housing and environmental quality satisfaction for mass housing users on location choice (central districts and peripheral districts) at the metropolitan level. According to results of the study, the variables that affect housing and environmental quality satisfaction are determined as: accessibility to various function areas in the inhabited housing area, environmental features of the housing, satisfaction in the various facilities in the inhabited environment, environmental security, neighbor relationships, and the appearance of the housing environment. Additionally, there are differences between the factors influencing housing and environmental quality satisfaction for mass housing users on the location choice (central districts and peripheral districts) at the metropolitan level. The findings indicate that the factors of centrality, accessibility to open areas, accessibility to health institutions, the maintenance of the mass housing environment, satisfaction in recreational areas, satisfaction in the social structure and physical features of the settlement are significant variables in the location choices at the central and peripheral areas in the Istanbul metropolitan area. Housing users in Istanbul prefer central areas to peripheral ones. In other words, the effect of central areas over the peripheral areas is still predominant in the satisfaction of mass housing users

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

The first and foremost issue discussed in the research is the definition of quality of place. The differences between place-based concepts which QoP is related to in the literature are underlined. Not only the quality of the built environment, but also the responsiveness of the social, cultural and natural environment to quality expectations are the most important differences for QoP. The personal satisfaction and human well-being are the prioritized concepts in place quality. Therefore, the human-environment relation is an inevitable whole.

QoP is the last link of the chain of the quality studies for developed countries. It is the reduction of life quality to place and its valuation. In other words, it is the permanence, sustainability and livability of the place, apart

from the designing of place. Actually it is the measurement of the success of place. The planners and designers are held responsible for this process. Different techniques and methods are developed in the measurement of QoP. The results of the research carried out contribute to the shaping of policies and regulations. The diversification of the indicators used, on the other hand, is the result of a well-established data base. The periodicals have a positive impact on this permanence.

The sense of QoP for the foremost city of Turkey, Istanbul, is limited to the social and economic comfort expectations of its respondents. According to the results of the research, the places most frequently used in the city and the preferences are related to the length of time in the city as well as the education level and income status of the respondent. The sense of belonging to a place and ownership for this society are only related to sheltering needs. A comfort expectation is directed to build environment. No cultural and natural comfort expectations are available.

In urban place preferences, the impact of the education level, rather than the income level, is observed. The education level brings consciousness towards social and cultural values. This is a finding that supports the research carried out by Florida (1999). On the other hand, economic conditions in a city where accessibility is a chief problem are important limitations in using the city. In the assessment performed in Istanbul, the respondents have a quality expectation in residence and its usage by means of developed communication technologies. However, they are not aware of the quality on an urban scale.

While the social, economic and physical place is questioned in the assessments, it is noted that politic factors and environmental threats are not taken into consideration.

The suggestions that are developed depending on these conclusions are made from the aspect of developing countries and planning discipline. The questioning of place success must be more important for a developing society. The measurement of QoP is not only important for social relations, but also to save the historical and cultural values in the urban environment. The basic principle that underlies QoP is to use, adopt, save and improve a place; in short, to keep a place alive. Nevertheless, in developing countries, social livability is still questioned. The livability of a place may be a tool which accelerates the social life at the same time. The consideration attached to the development level in QoP contributes to the countries at the above-mentioned level in the city and among its citizens. The urban contributions are the gain of livable and preferred places. The place of quality has a reciprocal relation and return with the quality of education, because quality places develop with the preferences and use of societies with a high level of education and such places will be a plus for the social education process of these places.

The measurement of quality of place also has a positive impact on the planning process. It directs the planning process and improves public policies. It gathers the designed and lived environment at the same point of place. It provides natural and cultural gains as well as social and economic ones. It contributes to multi-dimensional thinking that redeems quality of place from the definition of urban open space. It enables the effective and balanced employment of resources.

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