

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Support points and critical points in the analysis of the quality of life of the population in the Jiu Valley (Romania)

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### Abstract

In the present social-economic conditions of our country, the problem of objective analysis and research of the population's everyday social life, of its wellbeing, of final consumption and possibilities of satisfying vital necessities, of the living standard and lifestyle, of the quality of life as a whole, becomes more and more present and significant. Considering the political and economic context and the integration of Romania in the European Union, the assurance of life quality is a vital objective in order to rapidly reach a living standard at acceptable level of civilization, defined in a European context. The current concept of quality of life is complex and multidimensional. This article highlights the strengths and critical elements in analysis of the quality of life of the population in the Jiu Valley (Hunedoara County, Romania).

**Keywords:** *Analysis of the model, Dimensions and social indicators, Quality of life.*

### Introduction

Quality of life (QoL) is an ill-defined term. The World Health Organization (WHO, 1948) has declared health to be "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease". Many other definitions of both "health" and "quality of life" have been attempted, often linking the two and, for QoL, frequently emphasizing components of happiness and satisfaction with life. In the absence of any universally accepted definition, some investigators argue that most people, in the western world at least, are familiar with the expression "quality of life" and have an intuitive understanding of what it comprises.[1]

What aspects of QoL should be included? It is generally agreed that the relevant aspects may vary from study to study, but can include general health, physical functioning, emotional functioning, cognitive functioning, role functioning, social well-being and functioning, sexual functioning and existential issues. [5]

In the absence of any agreed formal definition of QoL, most investigators [2] circumvent the issues by describing what they mean by QoL, and then letting the items (questions) in their questionnaire speak for themselves.

Some QoL instruments focus upon a single concept, such as emotional functioning. Other instruments regard these individual concepts as aspects or dimensions of QoL, and therefore include items relating to several concepts. Although there is disagreement about what components should be evaluated, most investigators agree that a number of the above dimensions should be included in QoL questionnaires, and that QoL is a multidimensional construct. [2]

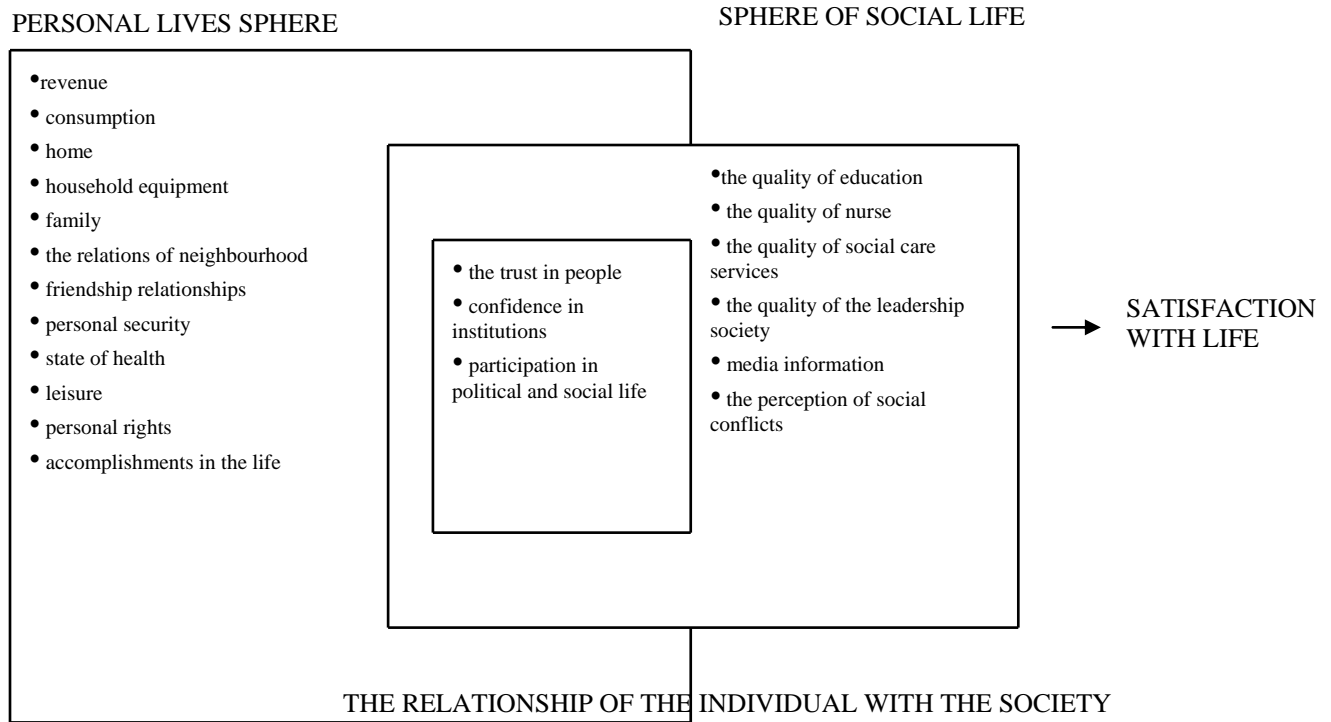
However, it is clear that QoL means different things to different people, and takes on different meanings according to the area of application.

A research made in Romania, the geographical area of the Jiu Valley, shows some elements of support, but also elements considered critical analysis of the quality of life of the population investigated. The research was conducted in 2009, on a sample of approximately 600 persons, men and women, aged 45 to 80 years old and from areas of activity, such as: mining, industry, education, health, services. The complexity of the investigation of subjects involved the use of several research methods that are focused-group, sociological inquiry based on questionnaires and unstructured observation.

## Result and Discussion

Analysis of model of quality of life suggested by the authors outline four major areas or domains: personal quality of life or the private sphere of the individual; the quality of the company, as it is

perceived by individuals; the relationship of individuals with society and, finally, the satisfaction\ dissatisfaction with life[6].



**Fig. 1: Model analysis of quality of life**

(Source: Adapted from Mărginean I., et al, 2004, p.2)

A method for the interpretation of data obtained by reporting some variables at a scale with five values is SEDA (the absolute evaluation of the data) [7]. The evaluation of the data suggests a division of absolute scale from 1-5 in intervals with different meanings. Each interval is associated with a qualitative interpretation of values that fall within the limits of its. Taking this interpretation and adjusting it to the research undertaken, we got the results shown in Table No. 1, according to which the personal sphere of life, a serious situation is represented by the values of health, family income, but also respect for the rights of individuals. In a situation considered normal, but in the area of critical points is the security on the streets and in the

normal situation to retrieve home values good relations with neighbors and those relating to achievements in life. Family life falls into the range of very good situation. As regards the scope of social life, the values observed are much smaller, the political life of the country, the leadership of the company, police and justice activities, relationships between people hovering in the range considered the serious situation. Medical care received, as well as the quality of the environment it is placed in a normal situation, but in the critical points. Satisfaction of the subjects to everyday life is in a normal situation, but almost on the border between the "critical points" and "attention problems!".

**Table 1: The interpretation of quality of life spheres using SEDA**

Variable	Serious situation	critical points	Normal situation	good	Very good situation	
	1,00	3,00	3,50	3,75	4,00	5,00
<i>Personal life</i>						
health .....		×2,83				
family income .....		×2,84				

home .....	×3,85
family life.....	×4,11
relations with neighbors.....	×3,91
home security.....	×3,68
safety on the street.....	×3,04
leisure.....	×3,57
all rights reserved.....	×2,37
accomplishments in life.....	×3,75
<i>Social life</i>	
nurse.....	×3,11
the work of the police and justice..	×2,78
politics in our country....	×2,05
the leadership society...×1,98	
relations between people.....	×2,84
environmental quality.....	×3,33
<i>Satisfaction with life</i>	
the satisfaction of everyday life .....	×3,46

(Source: Adapted from Zamfir C., 1984, p.85)

A sociological research undertaken by Băltătescu S. [4] made a diagnosis of the quality of life of the Romanians from 1997-1999, through the analysis of the 17 indicators of satisfaction and rating, representing the most relevant areas of life and the level of their contribution to the global

variable expressions of satisfaction. The author has grouped the 17 variables of quality of life in the four factors, name: resources, socio-economic environment, services and personal and domestic life, the idea that we took it in our research.

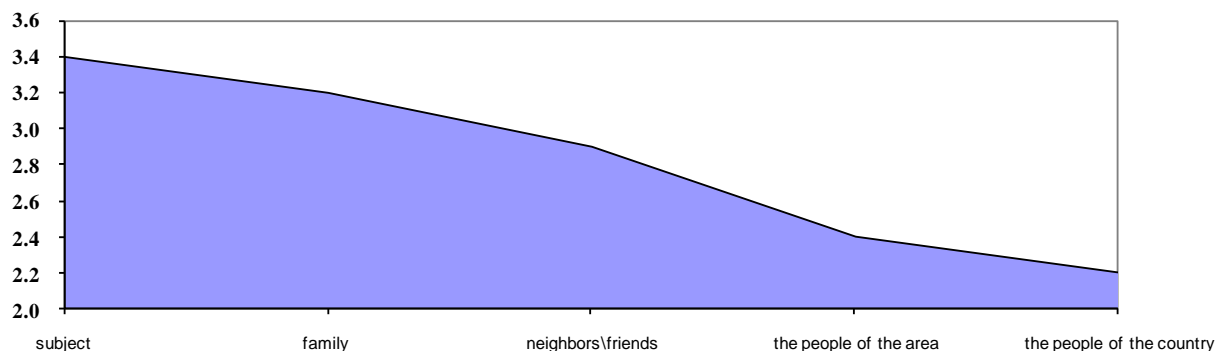
**Table 2: Grouping of 17 indicators of quality of life perceived in 4 factors and their weighted average**

Variable	Factor 1 resources	Factor 2 socio-economic environment	Factor 3 services	Factor 4 personal and domestic life	Weighted average
Health					2,83
family income					2,84
home security					3,68
safety on the street					3,04
all rights reserved					2,37
politics in our country					2,05
the leadership society					1,98
relations between people					2,84
environmental quality					3,33
nurse					3,11
the work of the police and justice					2,78
home					3,85
relations with neighbors					3,91
family life					4,11
accomplishments in life					3,75
leisure					3,57
the satisfaction of everyday life					3,46

(Source: Adapted from Băltătescu S., 2007, pp.9-10)

The quality of human life is linked to the subjective processes. [3] Hence the necessity of perception and expression of satisfaction and happiness. I highlighted the variation between the perception of the individual satisfaction of its own towards life and its effects on the perception of life satisfaction of members of other social groups-family, neighbours\friends, people in the

area and people in the country. Split the idea according to which if the perception of individual satisfaction is relatively high, as you evaluate the spheres of increasingly far removed from the individual level of perceptive towards life satisfaction decreases. This regularity can be synthesized in an analysis of the scores obtained in each of the five indicators, shown in fig. 2.



**Fig. 2. The perception of life satisfaction subjects and members of other social groups (weighted average)**

(Source: Adapted from Băltătescu S., 2000, p.7)

## Conclusion

From the perspective of the dimensions that you want to analyze, capture elements of support, but also critical items in the evolution of the quality of life of subjects investigated. In personal life, supporting elements for subjects are represented by family life, housing and neighborhood relations and family income, rights and health status are critical elements. In the sphere of social life, most of the indicators analysed are borderline or even in the critical zone, except only the quality of the

environment. Satisfaction with life expressing the result of experiencing the living conditions, accomplishments in life and the satisfaction of everyday life having high values. The perception of individual satisfaction and satisfaction of individuals of closely related spheres (family, neighbours, friends) are at levels relatively close, but, as we move away from the individual, touching spheres increasingly wider perception of each other's satisfaction decreases.

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