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QUALITY OF LIFE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: There is a widespread perception that sustainable development is an optimal way of development for the world globally. Sustainability requires a reorientation of global, national and local policies in a way to put the long-term quality of life as a priority. Around the world governments at all levels have been learning how to work with the idea of sustainable development and searching for ways to introduce it into practice. Over the last two decades, there has been an intensive discourse and research about measuring sustainable development. Many initiatives have been undertaken to introduce indicators for monitoring and measuring progress towards sustainability. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the meaning of a category of quality of life for sustainable development from global to a local perspective. It gives recommendations for policymaking and suggestions for future research. The paper reviews key findings, research gaps and also discusses policy implications in terms of the importance of quality of life for sustainable development.

Keywords: sustainable development, quality of life, monitoring.

1. Introduction

Sustainable development has been accepted by the international bodies i.e. UN, OECD, EU as an optimum direction for the whole world. Efforts towards sustainable development were fueled by the World Commission on Environmental Development and its fundamental outcome known as the Brundtland Report. It defined sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs' (United Nations, 1987).

The definition of sustainable development in the Brundtland Report is general, so it allows a wide range of different interpretations. The generality of this definition results in ambiguity. Sustainability is a function of the viewpoint, which could go from anthropocentric to ecocentric, putting an accent on humans or nature. This differential is described as weak or strong sustainability.

The concept of sustainable development is finding increasing acceptance in a variety of fields. There is a need for interdisciplinary and interrelated reconciliation of economic, social and environmental aspects in the policies at the global scale. The holistic approach towards this idea indicates the global world as a system where all of these three dimensions are strictly interrelated. Sustainable development opens a room for interdisciplinary communication. The comprehensive approach makes clear the linkages between sustainability and quality of life. It means that the main aim of sustainable development is to increase the quality of life in the long term horizon.

The Brundtland Report and the 'Rio' documents emphasized interdependencies and interrelations between economic, environmental and social development. Today the equal weight of these three dimensions is broadly accepted and characteristic for most academic sustainability concepts. Referring to the systems theory, it is assumed that if mismanaged the ecological, social or economic subsystems may lose their ability for long-term self-regulation. Apart from these interdependencies, there are often conflicting goals and trade-off problems between the three main dimensions. They have to be systematically balanced to refer to development as sustainable (Isaksson, Steimle, 2009).

Nevertheless, we live with a myth of economic growth. Analysis of global trends concentrates on measures as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, unemployment and, inflation rates. As Jackson (2009) states: "For the last five decades the pursuit of growth has been the single most important policy goal across the world. The global economy is almost five times the size it was half a century ago. If it continues to grow at the same rate the economy will be 80 times that size by the year 2100". Jackson emphasizes that a myth of growth is wrong arguing: "It has failed the two billion people who still live on less than $2 a day. It has failed the fragile ecological systems on which we depend for survival. It has failed, spectacularly, in its terms, to provide economic stability and secure people's livelihoods" (Jackson, 2009, p. 5). Given the ambiguity of subjective variables economists have shifted their attention to measuring the material level of living – especially individual incomes or countries' GDP. In theory, there is an expectation that as individual income increases or as a country's GDP per capita increases, the individual or average wellbeing or happiness should increase as well. In practice, this relation is not so obvious.

Interesting monitoring initiative was undertaken by Nicolas Sarkozy. In 2008 the French President established 'Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress'. The starting point was a need for policymakers to look beyond GDP as a standard economic measure to address both ecological constraints and human well-being. Chaired by Nobel Laureate, Joseph Stiglitz, the Commission assembled a group of eminent economists to address the inadequacy of GDP as a performance measure and to investigate new ways to monitor and assess global sustainability. A holistic revision of what growth and progress mean was entitled 'Mismeasuring our lives. Why GDP doesn't add up' by Joseph Sitglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean-Paul Fitoussi (2010).

In terms of various global problems: global scale poverty, international economic crisis, significant environmental problems there is an urgent need of change and implementation of sustainable development policy. The general guidelines are determined by a long-term instead of short-term thinking in a policy capable of addressing the enormous challenge of delivering lasting prosperity. It means transformation from an accent on economic growth to the quality of our lives.

Economic development leads to an increase in the overall standard of living long-term, while economic growth is generally linked to higher incomes and improvements in revenues. It often brings innovation and positive change in terms of affordability of higher quality goods and services. However, long-term concentration on economic growth can be unfavorable in terms of complex quality of life and sustainable development. Such policy can lead to urban sprawl, increase in negative load and pollution to the environment. It can also increase the cost of public services and affect residents lifestyles and drive consumption behaviors. Concentration on economic growth is a short-sighted policy. Long-term thinking policy means sustainable development and a shift to quality of life.

Quality of life considerations has strongly emerged in international literature relating to sustainable development. There is little consensus, however, on what exactly quality of life means and how it should be measured. Much of the literature on the broader subject of sustainability indicators is of relevance to the formulation and practical application of quality of life indicators.

2. Quality of life as a central category of sustainable development

There are many attempts to define what constitutes a quality of life. A Literature on the subject of sustainable development and quality of life includes different terms that are used interchangeably. These are level of living, well-being, standard of living, welfare, satisfaction or even happiness. The relationship and differences between them are quite puzzling. The analysis of these various notions has a long history in social sciences (compare Easterlin, 2001, pp. 465-466). The general division is that happiness, satisfaction, well-being are the terms with more subjective connotations and level of living, standard of living or welfare are more objective ones. Quality of life is more or less somewhere in the middle.

It is worth indicating that all the terms mentioned above are used by researchers from many different scientific disciplines, from economics, sociology, through medicine and psychology and many more. What is more, a broad interest in the direct and indirect subjects around the quality of life research shows a need for an interdisciplinary approach. In recent years we can observe a boost in interest in these more subjective notions both in the meaning and the ways of measurement.

Happiness has become the subject of many important scientific works. The wider acceptance of subjective measures of well-being has led to the development of the economics of happiness. 'The New Economics Foundation', a British think tank, works in the area of sustainability indicators which measures different aspects of quality of life in terms of the interrelations between economic development, different aspects of social life, democracy and the state of an environment.

It is not by chance and reason of economist's conspiracy that economic growth has been emphasized as an important aim of public policy. Economics, profits and boosting of GDP was the highest priority. The fact is that higher material well-being and higher incomes allow pursuing a lifestyle that brings more happiness and maximizes social welfare but under certain conditions. However, it should be expressed that pursuit for sustainability requires much more than economic growth and improvements in material well-being.

Conventional economics perceived 'quality of life' as too subjective and normative. For years economists and policymakers have put equals sign between economic growth and development subscribing wisdom that more income produces more quality of life. Higher income is positively related to improvements in quality of life, but this relationship is quite weak. The difference in recognition is related to global and personal perception. What is good personally doesn't have to be reflected in the quality of life of the others.

Many restrictions apply also to the issue of perception. At a low level of incomes, increase in income makes people happier. While at moderate and high levels this growth produces much smaller satisfaction and happiness. A difference is made by a frame of reference in terms of time-change and concerning the others. What is more, works in behavioral economics indicate that a situation when higher income makes more choices possible is not so positively clear-cut for our perception of the quality of life. Too many choices do not make people generally better-off (O'Donoghue, Rabin, 2001).

3. International research and global quality of life

Quality of life research increased in attention about the sixties. It was a time of the criticism of excessive consumption and misleading use of GDP as a measure of wealth or quality of life. GDP expresses flows of capital, resources, production and, services. Nevertheless, it does not include other important components: the housework value, wealth distribution, environmental costs, amortization and many more. Concerns about GDP refer to the lack of distinction between goods that have a positive impact on the quality of life and those that generate problems and in the long-term lead to a decline in quality of life.

Over the last decades, there has been an intensive discourse and research about measuring sustainable development. Many global, national and local initiatives have been undertaken to introduce indicators for monitoring and measuring progress towards sustainability.

Around the world governments at all levels have been learning how to work with the idea of sustainable development and looking for ways to introduce it into practice. Sustainability requires a reorientation of global, national and local policies in a way to put the long-term quality of life as a priority. Tools of strategic management, governance and, monitoring are a must in this aspect. A set of sustainable development measures is a useful instrument in the decision-making process. However, standardization of indicators is difficult because particular analyzed objects (persons, cities, countries) vary.

Quality of life is increasingly regarded as an integral part of sustainability programs. Indicator sets and monitoring systems have become a key way of thinking through the logic of sustainable development policy. There exist huge differences in geographical, economic and socio-cultural contexts that constrain the development of a universal global set of sustainability indicators. The general difficulty is that many quality of life indicators are qualitative in nature so they require a more individual approach.

The problematic feature of the category of quality of life is to include a large number of variables. Another problematic issue is a subjectivity of some of these variables. That makes the quality of life a sophisticated category to measure. What is more, if we want to make international, national or regional sets there is a problem of comparability of such measures. There is also a difficulty with the availability and comparability of statistical data.

Many international organizations undertook different initiatives in the field of sustainable development monitoring. Among the best known international monitoring programs are the Human Development Index (HDI) by The United Nations Development Program (1993) and World Development Indicators by the World Bank (2000). The latest global indicator framework was adopted in 2017 pertaining to the ‘2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’. The 2019 report reviews progress in the fourth year of implementation of the ‘2030 Agenda’ to track global progress of the adopted 17 goals.

Researchers study the quality of life on a global scale from many different perspectives. Morawetz et al. (1977) examined the effects of a community’s distribution of income and self-rated happiness. This survey provided us with the first empirical evidence of the effects of income distribution on different characteristics of the society, e.g. crime, social or political stability. In terms of the social dimension, important issues are inequality and redistributive policies. For years economic inequality was not so commonly tied to the quality of life. The breaking point was the publication of Thomas Piketty research. He demonstrated that the unequal distribution of income and financial assets among the population is of high significance for the perception of the quality of life. His work has proven that wealth concentration and its distribution brings persistent inequalities between the people and the nations. Piketty's research is also part of the scientific arguments about the imperfections of a statistical average that

should be changed by a statistical median (Piketty, 2014). Inequality weakens social solidarity among people and can be a source of conflicts and unrest (Wilkinson, 2005). It is important in terms of public social and economic long-term safety and prosperity. Inequality harms also natural conditions and the environment in general (Holland et al., 2009; Hics et al., 2016).

Many studies provided also a clear-cut influence of the two major economic variables i.e. unemployment and inflation. Unemployment has a large negative impact on the subjective well-being of individuals. Unemployment is significantly correlated with unhappiness. As the income level is kept constant, that influence is not due to lower revenue but to non-pecuniary stress. As Oswald states: "…most regression results imply that an enormous amount of extra income would be required to compensate people for having no work" (Oswald, 1997, p. 1821). A high positive correlation is also between unhappiness and inflation: "1 percentage point of inflation corresponds to a well-being cost of approximately 2 percent of the level of income per capita" (Di Tella et al., 1999, p. 11). Di Tella et al. identified that macroeconomic movements have strong effects on the happiness of nations. They studied the effect of higher inflation and unemployment rates on aggregate happiness. They examined the structure of happiness equations across countries and time uses data on the reported well-being levels of approximately one quarter of a million randomly sampled Europeans and Americans from the sixties to nineties. Their research provided evidence that aggregate economic forces matter to people and social well-being is a decreasing function of inflation and unemployment.

Granato et al. (1996) explored the relationships concerning life satisfaction and the stability of democracy. Inglehart et al. (2008) showed that in the analyzed period between 1981-2007, economic development, democratization and increasing social tolerance have increased the extent to which people perceive that they have free choice. Regression analyses suggested that the extent to which a society allows free choice has a major impact on happiness. Their findings supported Easterlin's statement that policy towards happiness should not just focus on economic growth, but also on noneconomic aspects of well-being. Economic growth makes a positive contribution to the quality of life, however, it is the weakest of the three main factors among democratization and social liberalization factors.

Frey and Stutzer (2000) studied the influence of institutions of direct democracy on reported happiness. Their cross-regional analysis provided evidence that institutional factors in the form of direct democracy (via initiatives and referenda) and of federal structure (local autonomy) exert a systematic and sizeable influence on self-reported individual well-being. Frey and Stutzer showed that individuals are happier, the better developed the institutions of direct democracy are in their area of residence. This also applies to a second institution, the degree of government decentralization. This positive effect is attributed to a policy that is closer to voters' preferences, as well as to the procedural utility of political participation. Their findings showed that democratic rights and economic freedom are positively related to happiness and that the existence of extended individual participation possibilities raises the subjective well-being of

people. They also found that unemployed are to a great extent less happy than employed persons and that a higher household income level only raises happiness to a small extent.

4. Local quality of life

Sustainable development is interpreted locally very differently. Its interpretations depend on specific local contexts and components of quality of life concerning the needs and expectations of its inhabitants. An important question in terms of local policy is: what brings sustainable development paradigm to the process of management?

- promotion quality of life of the area and the community,
- involvement of and consultation with residents and other local actors,
- development of local strategic documents with the local community,
- development and delivery of services that enhance the well-being and quality of life of the community.

In the communities where the quality of life is an important category of local policy monitoring of comprehensive progress is an obligatory task. Some monitoring policies are labeled ‘quality of life indicators' while others as ‘sustainability indicators'. A tool for multidimensional measuring of the quality of life in local settlements which includes a natural, built, economic, social and political environment is a monitoring system of local sustainable development. What sort of answers should produce monitoring of local sustainable development? The most general one is: does a city become a better or worse place for living and working?

One of the most recognized rankings is Mercer’s Annual Quality of Living Report. It provides a ranking of more than 460 cities throughout the world. The cities are ranked against New York as the base city. Mercer evaluates local living conditions according to 39 factors, grouped in 10 categories:

- economic: consumer goods, economic environment, housing,
- social: medical and health considerations, political and social environment, public services and transport, recreation, schools and education, socio-cultural environment,
- environmental: the natural environment.

International rankings are important in terms of general comparison. However, they are far incomplete for local policy. What purpose is served by improvement in international rankings if a city cannot meet its residents’ needs and expectations? That is why local planning needs to monitor the quality of life based on an in-depth survey of local actors' assessment. Among these local actors, residents are of the highest meaning.

The European Union undertook Rio de Janeiro challenge to develop Local Agenda 21 and supported it with a program 'European Common Indicators' (ECI) allowing comparisons between cities and towns in terms of their work towards sustainable development. Furthermore, the goal of the initiative was to support local governments in their work for sustainability and to deliver objective and comparable data about progress in sustainable development. In response to a growing proportion of urban citizens in the European Union, there is a need for an assessment of the quality of their life. The need for comparable information on European Agglomerations was expressed in the Commission's Communications 'Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union' and 'Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: a Framework for Action'. These documents finally led to the implementation of the so-called Urban Audit. Eurostat's Urban Audit is the system that intends to measure most aspects of quality of life in towns and cities in the European Union. Its first edition took place in 2003 and every three years it monitors the quality of life with more than 300 indicators. European Urban Audit evaluates local living conditions in the following categories:

- demography (population, nationality, household structure),
- social aspects (housing, health, crime),
- economic aspects (labor market, economic activity, income disparities/poverty),
- governance (civic involvement, local administration),
- training and training provision (education and training provision, educational qualifications),
- environment (climate/geography, air quality and noise, water, waste management, land use),
- travel and transport (travel patterns),
- information society (users and infrastructure, local e-government, ICT sector),
- culture and recreation (culture and recreation, tourism).

In contrast to the monitoring systems for international businesses, with the example of the Mercer's ranking, which is based exclusively on objective data, European Urban Audit includes also normative measures. Justification for such an approach is that many important aspects of people's lives are not reflected in objective measures. Among others, these are the esthetic values of the urban environment, the quality of the relations among neighbors or the general assessment of a city atmosphere. In terms of urban quality of life, these factors are also important. Unfortunately, qualitative data are often considered by policymakers as less reliable. In some sense, subjective measures may be misleading and limiting international comparability. An alternative solution is an in-depth survey to understand the relationship between objective and subjective indicators. Rather than seeing quantitative and qualitative methods as competing methodologies, they need to be regarded as complementary. If used in conjunction they can mount the findings and contribute to a better understanding of what are increasingly complex outcomes.

Since 2004 the EU has been monitoring the quality of urban life in the member states. Every three years reports are based on a survey on how citizens perceive the quality of life in their home cities. In the latest edition citizens from 79 cities and 4 greater cities were asked to assess general and particular aspects of urban life. The overall quality of urban life is checked by a statement 'I'm satisfied to live in (city name)' with possible answers 'agree' or 'disagree' (European Commission, 2016).

Hill and Wegener (2002) prepared a study for the international 'Cities of Tomorrow Network' identifying the quality of life indicator programs worldwide. According to their findings, local decision-makers who implemented quality of life monitoring system perceive it beneficial for their cities. For municipal employees, the programs lead to greater cost-consciousness and an increased focus on customers and results. For politicians and municipal administrations, quality of life programs provide incentives for long-term policy-making. The indicator sets allow also local politicians to base their political decisions on facts. Moreover, the indicators help municipal governments visibly demonstrate what they are doing and what they expect from other stakeholders. And for the public, these programs provide greater clarity and transparency. Long-term use of quality of life programs requires ongoing dialog and communication with all stakeholders throughout the process (Hill, Wegener, 2002). Concluding, quality of life monitoring makes sense only if the set of indicators is developed in a cooperative effort and is used in the political decision-making process. The local monitoring system needs to cover a wide range of community issues. It needs to enable an assessment of changes in historical trend, as well as enable to study actual state and make a prognosis.

In recent decades many cities have established systems of monitoring of the quality of urban life that take into account the interests and needs of its residents. Advanced work in this field was recognized in Seattle (USA) dating back to the nineties. The following editions of 'Indicators of sustainable community' reports provided a timely review of sustainability trends in the city. The monitoring system was based on 40 economic, social and environmental indicators that together paint a picture of Seattle's vision towards sustainability. It is worth noting that the system was a product of creative community dialogue and cooperation (Sustainable Seattle, 2004).

An interesting methodology was proposed by Lora et al. (2010) to combine objective and subjective information coherently. Focus on the most relevant dimensions of the quality of life in a city or neighborhood was based on two conceptual criteria, i.e. the market prices of land and housing (hedonic method) and individuals' life satisfaction. Real estate market prices providing with objective data reflect the market's recognition of the value of both the housing itself and the neighborhood where it's located. They reflect all of the characteristics of cities that impact on people's well-being. Nevertheless, the urban economics literature has assumed that city amenities affecting the quality of life are reflected not only in real estate prices but also in wages. The key assumption is that city borders also place limits on labor markets in the sense that the choice of residence affects access to job opportunities. Another aspect is that some of

the goods and services that people care about are not reflected in objective variables, e.g. housing prices. They contribute to the quality of life without having any impact on the real estate market. And here a complementary method is to ask people how satisfied they are with their life, their city or their neighborhood. A questionnaire method provides with subjective variables. A similar approach has been also used by Frey et al. (2004), Di Tella and MacCulloch (1999) or Gardner and Oswald (2001).

As is it was already mentioned economic inequality is a multidimensional barrier in terms of a policy of sustainable development. In large cities monitoring system reveals differences in quality of life in particular zones and can significantly help to equalize the disparities.

The sustainable development discourse places significant emphasis on the need to develop democratic mechanisms for decision making. What is more, the quality of life monitoring system should be integrated into the processes of urban governance. Establishing the list of indicators should give expression to the voice of the community. In this sense sustainability indicators are used as an informational tool for engaging citizens in working towards shared sustainability goals. It is worth indicating that social capital is a significant category in terms of sustainable development. There is strong evidence that social capital is tightly associated with increased well-being. Social capital is closely linked to existing ties in terms of closeness of social relationships, common support or mutual trust. At the community level, social capital is developed to assure adequate functioning of societal processes, while at the individual level, social capital is important in terms of personal quality of life.

5. Quality of life in the Polish cities

The established systems of monitoring of the local quality of life presented in the former paragraph were related to present the outcomes of the Polish cities. This paragraph is based on the available data and comparable rankings including these cities.

In the 2016 ‘Quality of life in European cities' report by the European Commission, four Polish cities were ranked. The ‘Polish list’ was opened by Gdansk on 18th place, followed by Bialystok on 19th place, Krakow on 26th, and Warsaw on 38th place in the total number of more than 80 examined cities. In the 2019 Mercer’s Annual Quality of Living Ranking Warsaw ranked 82 and Wroclaw ranked 100 out of 231 locations.

Monitoring systems are the most visible tools for demonstrating the importance of quality of life in local policy. Nevertheless, most Polish cities do not build their own, local standards. In general, monitoring seems to be an Achilles’ heel for the cities. Local authorities declare that they want to meet the needs of the residents. It can be interpreted as a will for improvements in quality of life. At the same time, they do not monitor the needs i.e. they do not conduct any research in this field.

People are considered to be the best judges of the overall quality of their life. Quality of life is strongly linked to the fulfillment of individual needs. With the help of representative surveys, it is possible to get indications of individuals' evaluation of their life satisfaction. It is always captured with multi-question research.

Monitoring of quality of life in the Polish cities is not a matter of a strategic task. One can say that 'it happens'. Single cases were reported, among others, in Gdansk or Katowice. However, they were not comprehensive in nature. The most advanced in the field of quality of life monitoring was Poznan. In 2001, the Poznan City Council initiated a program to survey quality of life indicators. In the period 2002-2013 seven editions of the research were carried out. The opinions of Poznan residents were read through direct interviews. They expressed their views and satisfaction with particular aspects of the city's services and the conditions determining the quality of life in Poznan.

Quality of life monitoring is underestimated in local policies of the Polish cities. The importance of quality of life remains more in terms of politicians' declarations than in practical activities. Without systematic identification of the needs of the inhabitants and evaluation of its implementation i.e. monitoring, there are no grounds for real improvements in quality of life in the cities.

Municipal monitoring organizes the policy and directs it towards the strategic goals. Therefore, it allows to act in a systematic and more effective way. What is the most important, it benefits the citizens – in terms of improving their quality of life.

6. Concluding remarks

There is a widespread perception that sustainable development is the optimal way of development for the world globally. Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. Nevertheless, a category of quality of life in terms of sustainability was not so distinct from the very beginning. Increasing emphasis on quality of life issues and subjective well-being is a part of social and cultural change. As Inglehart (1990) showed 'new' values have become increasingly widespread throughout advanced industrial societies and has led to the development of so-called post-material orientation. What is more, the complex approach to sustainability requires a reorientation of the economy towards enhancing the quality of life.

Wilson states that to save the Earth we need a shift from "wealth based on quantity to wealth based on quality… The central idea is to view the entire planet as an ecosystem…Given that stability in the economy and the environment are closely linked, they both require striving for the quality of life through self-understanding as opposed to the conventional accumulation of

material wealth, based on an assumption that the wealth can eventually be traded for quality of life" (Wilson, 2016, p. 193).

Problematic is a lack of consensus on conceptualization and definition of quality of life which implies that understanding and attitudes towards this category and its meaning for sustainable development may vary depending on the particular definition we have in mind. Ramifications of this fact are multidimensional, in theory, and research, as well as in practice. Quality of life is most commonly defined as consisting of two parts, the objective and, the subjective ones. The problem is that these two kinds of variables are not equally used in monitoring the quality of life. Objective measures are by far used more often. International monitoring systems are limited mostly to objective measures. A need in international comparability is surely needed. Rankings of quality of life without reference to qualitative, subjective measures are far incomplete.

Presented revision of interdisciplinary research shows that quality of life must address a number of interrelated issues. The objective aspects of this capacious category cannot be considered independently of subjective perceptions and normative values. The comprehensive approach makes clear the linkages between sustainability and quality of life.

Quality of life and its multidimensional character should get much more attention to sustainable development policies at all levels. The challenge is to work out an alternative solution based on an understanding of the relationship between objective and subjective indicators to interpret them in a complementary manner and to enrich the interpretation of both. Problems mentioned above are easier to overcome at the local level. Good life is a complex product of access to goods and services, sound lifestyle and relationships, good health, access to a clean environment and many more. Many factors of quality of life are non-market and non-income. That is why a clear distinction is needed concerning economic growth and economic development.

Despite many significant initiatives, the concept of sustainability, especially in terms of monitoring, has not fully taken root, both globally and locally. What is more, international systems and rankings have different intentions from the local one which should be more directed to the residents.

More work needs to be done on the implementation of quality of life theory into the practice of sustainable development. The information gained from the quality of life monitoring systems is an important argument in a debate about the present and future of sustainable development. The cities provide suggestions about inconvenience in every aspect of their daily lives and help to find the best solutions.

Results from the complex quality of life research should facilitate public decision-making in many ways. They show what attributes individuals value the most and which problems are the most urgent to amend. In this sense, the monitoring system can support public planning and investment decisions. Indicators can’t tell us everything, but they give feedback to direct to improvements.

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