

# Sociological Inquiry of Quality of Life and Happiness: A Qualitative Study

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the subjective meaning of happiness and Quality of Life (QOL) from sociological perspective. Interpretive perspective was followed to understand the subjective meaning of quality of life and happiness. The study was conducted in Lahore city. Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted by using interview guide that holds open statements. 12 participants were approached through purposive sampling technique. Thematic analysis was used to analyze subjective experiences about quality of life and happiness. It was found that subjective well-being and external living environment promote a good quality of life and happiness. Subjective well-being holds better socio-economic conditions for happy and unhappy life, while external living environment of social network and social relationship support a better quality of life. It was recommended that state must promote good living conditions for every walk of life and also enhance socio-economic status as well.

**Keywords:** Happiness, Quality of Life, Sociological Grounds, Subjective Well-being, Living Environment.

## Introduction

The concept of QOL is under study over the last four decades however “good life” concept has been discussed in the philosophical writings of Aristotle and the Plato. Plato has focused on the reasoning rather than on feelings. Aristotle held an opposite opinion for him life without feeling is useless. Plato’s writings are more concerned to the quality of life criteria however the work of Aristotle is on happiness, in the last few decades, these concepts were explained in economic domain with focus on money and assets that people own. After the years there was a shift in explaining and elaborating the concepts through subjective notions (Juozulynas *et al.*, 2006).

## Idea of Quality of Life

Inquiries regarding the QOL now generally talked about in different academic fields. In the field of Sociology, QOL is perceived to be the emotional comprehension of prosperity, considering subjective requirements and understandings. In the domain of economics, it is the life standard, though in medication it is among wellbeing and illness with the variables affecting a solid way of life. The wellbeing factor normally has need in personal satisfaction, however the term quality of life needs to be broadly defined (Kim, 2011).

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"Personal satisfaction is the discernment that an individual has of his situation in life with regards to the way of life and worth frameworks wherein, he lives and in which he is identified with his objectives, assumptions, qualities, and concerns, which incorporate actual wellbeing, emotional well-being, autonomy, social connections, individual convictions, and their relationship to the most striking highlights of the climate (WHOQOL Group, 1995). Conditions of life verify a top quality of life, though even a small alteration within the latter conjointly changes the understanding of QOL. It can be explained by various factors including accommodation, occupation, economic well-being, attitudes, social relationships, family, frustration and tensions, mental health, living environment and the ability to cope with environment (Juozulynas *et al.*, 2006)

QOL can be assessed on both of the levels; objective and subjective. In QOL research, a qualification is regularly made among emotional and target personal satisfaction. The specific worth of life is tied in with feeling better and being satisfied with things overall. The target personal satisfaction is tied in with satisfying social and social needs for material thriving. Economic wellbeing and actual security (Quality of Life Research Center, 2005)

So that society contains objective indicators that can be observed and analyzed for their occurrence and quantity, while subjective indicators exist in an individual's consciousness and only from the person's responses on topics important to them (Juniper *et al.*, 2005)

### ***Concept of Happiness***

Researchers are more and more curious about subjective wellness of humans that is measured through sense of happiness (it is also outlined as a large proportion of negative and also the positive feelings) and also with how much a person is satisfied with his life. The sensation of happiness doesn't depend on external factors, it is extremely subjective and, the standard of life depends on the correspondence between the life in past and therefore the principle of being human, which is deep in the organism (Ventegodt *et al.*, 2003)

Happiness deals with the things deep among the person that implies a special balance. Happiness is connected to consciousness, however not restricted to the body. It encompasses the complete existence of the individual associated is denoted by an exact intensity of an experience, that is additionally the case. Sometimes happiness is related to non-rational dimensions like love, bonding with the nature, but not with the other objective factors such as money and health. Classical philosophy and spiritual ideas have also explained the happiness (Bentham, 1997).

### ***Rationale of Study***

The main purpose of this study is to explore the existing status of happiness and Quality of Life (QOL) from sociological perspective. The concepts QOL and happiness got tremendous response from academia, happiness and QOL are the concepts that deal with well-being of humans from every aspect while living within the society. The quality of life is an interdisciplinary concept and gained much importance in sociology in late 20<sup>th</sup> century, as quality of life is the key issue in sociology of work, and sociology of family (Veenhoven, 2007). So, this study has provided the opportunity to gain knowledge about the relationship between quality of life and happiness on sociological grounds. It also provides basis for understanding the role of social environment for happiness and life satisfaction. A good environment is recognized by a rich level of socio-cultural and economic elements that influence quality of life and happiness. These elements play to promote QOL and happiness with life satisfaction that increase happier life (Cakiroglu, 2007). The study also indicates the factors that are creating hurdle to achieve a happiness and better quality of life. Previous studies regarding happiness and QOL don't provide the sufficient literature to properly analyze the quality of life and happiness sociologically and produce limited knowledge (Bartram, 2012). This study extended existing literature and tried to fulfill the gap in knowledge and recommended some suggestions to policy makers, academicians, scholars and for those who are associated with this phenomenon.

## ***Research Question***

Why the study of quality of life and happiness is more important in Pakistani context. How personal experiences describe these both terms. A very careful philosophical and empirical study is necessary to overhaul the issue of working individuals of different fields. How individuals share their perception and views about this phenomenon under study for future prospects. Wellbeing of human and happier life is an ultimate goal of civilized society, so this study contributes the explanation of living a happy life of Pakistani people who are more struggling to find out the best standard of a beautiful life.

## ***Research Objectives***

1. What is good social environment for happiness and how a good environment can be created?
2. How different aspects of socio-cultural and economy are influential on quality of life and happiness.
3. How these elements create hurdles in achieving better quality of life and happiness and happiness.
4. To make recommendations to enhance the QOL and happiness.

## ***Literature Review***

Kim (2011) explained that the terms happiness and QOL are often linked. It depicts that person's life is happy from all the dimensions. It includes the internal factors and also the factors that are present in the environment, the external factor. The "quality of life" was once compared with "quantity" of life. "Happiness" was contrasted with a "successful" life (getting rich).

Veenhoven (2001) said that the word "quality of life (QOL)" is frequently used to refer to the quality of one's living environment. The term is used by ecologists in campaigns for environmental deterioration. Building new airports, and highways, for example, is said to degrade. When it comes to social group qualities, sociologists use the term "QOL" in a very same way. Economic prosperity and social justice are two aspects of social science QOL-indices. External circumstances for a good life, on the other hand, are obviously linked with the wonderful life itself.

Mckenzie (2015) did a sociologically study and described that enormous growth in happiness research took place in recent times and found a lack of consistency between life satisfaction, happiness, contentment and wellbeing. Contentment is phenomena of positive neutrality with happiness define traditional relationship within self and society. Happiness and contentment are not good resulting in a very happy life but emotional experience can be diverged.

Uzun (2016) conducted a study on examining the association between activities to be performed in life for happiness and life satisfaction with mediating role of loneliness. Study concluded a positive relation between quality of life and life satisfaction, and negatively associated with loneliness and quality of life.

Another study was conducted by Lucas (2007) and posited that some life outcomes are important to make the people happy. External circumstances were found not more influential and kept very small impact on subjective happiness. Some personality traits and other aspects are more fruitful to make people happy.

Soto (2013) conducted a longitudinal study on assessing the relationship between happiness, big five personality traits with three subjective well-being as life satisfaction, positive affect and negative effect. Subjective well-being were found associated with big five personality traits including extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and emotionally stable. Prospective well-being.

According to Veenhoven (2001), the third meaning concentrates on the final connotation and describes the QOL in terms of its outcomes. The outcomes are labeled as "life products" and "life enjoyment." It is thought of as a sort of "product"; from a biological standpoint, that is a minimum of reproduction, life that does not persist has failed in its organic process goal; from a cognitive content standpoint, QOL is their contribution. Indeed, in this context, it is more appropriate to speak of the "utility" of life rather than the "quality of life." 'Enjoyment,' the primary emphasis is on own life experience. The good life is thus just a life that you really like. Unlike the preceding meanings of the word QOL which are all for benefits that

will be judged by an impartial observer, this latter meaning refers to a high quality that only the topic himself can assess. As a result, this variation is commonly referred to as "subjective "QOL."

Susniene (2014) explained that happiness is how much an individual assesses the overall nature of their present life decidedly by and large, i.e. the amount they like their life. Thus, the appraisal that life is "energizing " doesn't stamp it as " glad ". There might be such a large number of feelings throughout everyday living and different characteristics. The overall appraisal of one's living envelops every one of the standards that exist in the person's perception: how acceptable does it feel, how well does it meet assumptions, how alluring is it? Consider what it is, and so on the subject of assessment is life all in all, not a particular everyday issue likes working life. The enthusiasm forever, yet it doesn't make any difference. Life evaluations can refer to various occasions: what life resembled what it is currently, and how it is probably going to be later on. These evaluations don't really coordinate; one can be sure about the previous existence however negative about what's to come.

### **An Overall Model of Quality of Life**

Felce and Perry (2005) argued that QOL is explained from both dimensions the objective and the subjective. Changes in an objective aspect of life can change your happiness levels or personal values. Qualities can adjust fulfillment and, under certain goal conditions, achieve change. Similarly, an adjustment of the degree of fulfillment can prompt a reassessment of qualities and way of life. The after effect of outside impact. Such outer impacts can incorporate hereditary, social, and material legacy, age and development, advancement history, business attitude, peer impacts and benchmarks, and other social, financial, and political factors.

Table 1: *Conceptual framework of the study*

<b>Universal quality of Life model (Bagdoniene, 2000)</b>	<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Sphere</b>		
I. Global	1.Macro-environment 2. Human rights 3. Politics	Clean environment, democratic rights, etc.
II. External	1. Work 2. Family standard of living 3.Residence, housing	Inheritance, parent background knowledge provided to a child, influence for child's further education and dependence to social class; family income, nutrition, residence, type of dwelling, etc.
III. Interpersonal	1. Family 2.Close relationships 3.Interpersonal relationships	Structure and function of social relationships, relationships with parents, other family members, relatives, friends, society, etc.
IV. Personal	1. Physical 2. Psychological 3. Spiritual	Growth, personality development, activeness, self-respect, meaning of life, etc.

### ***Happiness as a Subject for Sociology***

Susniene (2014) depicted that new investigations by numerous social researchers with various scholastic foundations have effectively tackled the calculated and methodological issues of the idea of bliss as a sociology theme. Bliss is arbitrary and relies entirely upon the human psyche, paying little mind to outer conditions; we may not track down a typical factor that adds to further developing joy.

Di Tella and MacCulloch (2006) stated that actual wellbeing, stable business status, and important material principles, in numerous exact examinations in various nations, these investigations didn't just imply that satisfaction was resolved precisely by every individual's socio-segment positions or financial conditions, yet rather uncovered that we could explore normal joy associates. Outside the human brain, as sociologists for the most part did in their exploration, to find the social conditions that clarifies human conduct, insights, and passionate reactions.

Susniene (2014) explained that happiness represents the mental state of an individual, but this is not meant that other factors can be neglected. As all the other factors are also responsible for happiness. The anomie and the concept of alienation from Marx related essentially to the state of mind of an individual that can bring change in the conditions, happiness is different from the concept of alienation or anomie as these concepts deals with negative feelings and happiness denotes a positive inner state of the human being, not a negative.

## **Research Methodology**

Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 participants. As the problem was not much clear and variables were not well defined as indicated by (Bartram, 2012) posited that the research on quality of life and happiness contribute limited knowledge on this phenomenon. So, the hypotheses were not decided, and study followed an inductive approach in exploring the sociological grounds for quality of life and happiness. This study was conducted in Lahore city to explore the concept of quality of life and happiness, Lahore was considered as the most populace city of the province Punjab. Purposive sampling technique was used for selecting the research participants for collecting the subjective experiences about quality of life and happiness. In the wake of research participants, two Rich business men, 2 Bureaucrats, 2 Government officials of grade 17, 2 daily wages workers and 2 house wives and 2 people from religious background were approached. Thematic analysis was performed to get data analyzed and for important themes.

## ***Data Collection and Analysis***

With the respondents' permission, all research activities were recorded into tape recorder and made field notes. Audio recording was transcribed verbatim and all the information and data were written in the form of field notes, notes were clearly transcribed into English language with the help of an experienced qualitative researcher, who had the experience of collecting and analyzing qualitative data. Six stages of thematic analysis were used to reach the themes as suggested by (Braun and Clark, 2006; Kiger and Varpio, 2020). At first stage filed notes were written into clear and readable form to familiarize with the collected data, a cross check of the notes was done by researcher himself and a helper who assisted in the whole study. In second stage, Inductive (collected data) and deductive (available knowledge on topic) coding techniques were used, important text were highlighted and coded (see table below). In third stage, collating codes were converted into important themes (see table below). In fourth stage, themes were reviewed by three persons, a researcher himself, a helper and an experienced researcher who have the experience of doing thematic analysis. Themes were reviewed by the help of helper, comparing codes and extracts with themes looking for clear representation of collected text. Does data provide full support to the themes, or either each theme has commonality and coherence between data and themes. Some themes were discarded due to poor representation of relationship between codes and categories, after combining the codes again; a final theme was created that explain the connection between questions, data and coding categories. In next stage, researcher checked the complete description and narrative of the themes with research questions. At last stage, researcher interpreted the findings within data extracts that provides clear and logical description of codes and themes.

Table 2: *Coding and Themes*

Inductive and Deductive Coding	Themes
Clean environment, peaceful surroundings, favorable environment for living improves quality of life, etc.	Living environment
Inheritance, parent background knowledge provides to a child, influence for child's further education and dependence to social class; family income, nutrition, residence, type of dwelling, etc.	Family's life style and standard of living
Connecting through social networks, social relationships, reciprocity, social linkages	Social network and importance of social relationships in life
Societal norms, concept of good and bad, beneficial for humans, make people active and happy, Guiding principles	Positive contribution of Norms and Values
Growth, personality development, activeness, self-respect, meaning of life.	Physical and Spiritual wellbeing

## Themes and Discussions

### *Living Environment*

Living environment creates a beautiful interaction with men and it is perhaps most fabricated and important segment of quality of life. Urban residents enjoy more as compared to rural residents because of a colorful life welcome men keep enjoying to publicized happier moments with others.

Data showed that some of the respondents hold the opinion that the favorable environment for living improves quality of life and happiness. Some respondents of the study enjoy peaceful living environment that helps them to perform their routine tasks. As the peaceful environment don't create any stress and enable the person to live peacefully without any hurdles. However, few of the respondents also face unfavorable environment. Some people have to face different issue regarding the cleanliness of the area and lack of proper maintenance.

One respondent stated:

*Environment of my area is very overall favorable. My environment provides the opportunity to grow and flourish. There are not any restrictions, I feel free to move. However, the cleaning system not that much but it is satisfying Healthy environment is very important to gain happiness.*

Respondent has highlighted that importance of healthy environment as the healthy environment provides the opportunity to gain better quality of life. However other respondents have highlighted the issue regarding their environment and also the effect of environment on the routine life. As the respondents stated that;

*Overall environment is good as well as our neighbors are much cooperated. Only one issue is there, the residential area is not clean.*

*I have to face pollution, not having safe drinking water, sewerage problem and load shedding. These all factors are affecting me and all of the conditions are unfavorable for me. My environment is not helpful for me to boost my quality of life as my environmental conditions are unfavorable for me.*

*Environmental conditions are below average such as pollution, scarcity of trees, sewerage problem are main issues in my area. My environment doesn't help me to boost up quality of life. As it creates stress on me. There should be lack of pollution, seasonal plantation, water supply and good sewerage system, as it will help to enhance the quality of life.*

As it can be observed that unhealthy environment is hurdle for most of the people to live their life smoothly. Unfortunately, in our country people have to face such issues that are the basic necessities of life. People go through the problems of pollution, unhealthy drinking water, load shedding and cleanliness. Respondents held the opinion that these unhealthy conditions also affect their quality of life. As one respondent stated that "it creates stress for me".

Generally, people are only concerned with the material environment. Environment by which they are surrounded by in their routine life but one of the respondents who was widow, has also talked about the attitudes of people. According to her people attitude also affect her quality of life and happiness. As she stated that:

*I have good environment; house environment is supportive for me but if we talk about the surrounding area of my house there are maintenance problems such as cleanliness. My house environment helps me to boost up my quality of life but the social settings, as you know this is not at all favorable. I am a widow so people show sympathy towards me as a widow but their sympathy is just outwards to show off. People are not sympathetic in reality. For example, if I own some asset or something, I use to face statements from people that what will you do of this? What is the need of this thing? People suppose that widow should not own any asset or anything. As a status of widow there is no need of anything. If my children have something worth able people's attitude are very strange. They question how they got these valuable things. People use to put restrictions on me. They consider that I don't need anything as a widow. I just have to live my days of life.*

Brereton et al. (2008) also explored that natural and immediate environment also make influence on the quality of life and the state of being happy or unhappy. As the unsafe and deprived environment can't provide the better quality of life and ultimately people will also be unhappy. The studies provide the evidence regarding the quality of the living environment. Bad air pollution also creates stress and discomfort. Also, the place where people live affects the QOL, the people who keep their resident in public house also suffer from unhappiness.

Clean and healthy environment is required for all of the people to live happy and healthy life. As peaceful environment without any issues provide the opportunity to progress in life. QOL is an individual perception of well-being, following all other aspects to promote subjective satisfaction of life (Cummins, 2000), aspiration and achievement involves personal judgement for subjective well-being (SWB) (David et al., 2013; Campbell et al., 1976).

### ***Family's Life Style and Standard of Living***

Family life style and the house hold environment holds great significance in the life. The favorable and productive environment creates happiness and improvement in the life style. Data of the study indicated that people who experience favorable environment gain progress in life and the people are happy and satisfied. A good socio-economic stature is an ultimate tool of happiness and quality of life as

One of the respondents said that the family has been a lot supportive to him. But still, he is looking for more progress and achievements in his life. He stated that

*My family has helped me in my personality development not my friends and colleagues. My family always supported me; they prayed for me and provided me proper ground to get more progress in my life. According to my parent's capacity and their capabilities*

*they have provided me full access and supported me. I am not fully satisfy and happy with the status of my family. I am looking for opportunities in my life.*

Another respondent has indicated that family environment has been supportive to her throughout life. She stated that she is happy with her life style, as her family has provided all the facilities and the peaceful environment to her. She stated:

*My family provided me an ideal environment at home, quality schooling and higher education and fulfilled my all needs which helped me a lot in developing a strong personality in society. I am absolutely happy with my life style. I am living an ideal life which has peace, strong family relationship with good economy and have all facilities which everybody wants in his ideal life.*

Another respondent of the study showed her strong bonding with her family. She was quite satisfied with her family life style and standard of living. She had talked about the trust relationship with her parents. She said that her family provides her confidence to move in society freely. She stated that:

*I have very strong bonding and mutual understanding with my parents. They have provided me very favorable and independent environment. It helped me a lot to progress in my life. When I am with my friends and family, I feel happy. Loving people around me make me feel lively.*

Data of the study indicated that favorable family environment helps people to boost up their skills and spend happy life. Good and favorable household environment provides the opportunity to progress in life. The work of (Kahnmenn and Kruger, 2006) also a sound argument in the favor of better living conditions because of a good living standard and better socio-economic status moderately correlate with happiness and also found a correlation with income. Relative rank of income, urban locality and married life also conceive a good and prosperous life (Luttmer, 2005)

### ***Social Network and Importance of Social Relationships in Life***

Social networks hold great importance to achieve better quality of life and happiness. As man is social animal so he can't be happy and satisfied being alone. The data has indicated that people feel happy and relaxed when they are with their families. This is an argument that social network release daily stress and health related chronic issues, also reduce the risk of mortality and negatively associated with mental functioning (Achat, *et al.*, 1998) and positive impact of close relation and express of way of happiness (Burt, 1987).

*I have strong bonding with my parents. I enjoy company of my sisters and brother. My family has supported me to develop my personality. My family is my everything. My father is my source of strength. I spend my leisure time with my children. I got involve in their activities with them. I prefer to be with my mom and children.*

It can be observed that the respondent pays much attention towards being with family. The family has been provided her support, love affection and energy to live her challenging life. As this respondent is widow and she had talked about people attitude towards her (in previous theme). For her family is much important.

Another respondent has also described that family holds great importance in her life. She had talked about the trust relationship with her parents. She told that her family provides her confidence to move in society freely. She stated that:

*Social gatherings and bonding with family is important as strong bonding will be helpful to understand you. I am a social person; I have large network of social relationships and I like to fulfill the responsibilities attach to my relationship. My parents are very social I think I have gained this from my parents. Family members are most important. I enjoy*

*more with my family. We have to spend most of the time with our family members. I have very strong bonding and mutual understanding with my parents. They have provided me very favorable and independent environment. It helped me a lot to progress in my life. When I am with my friends and family, I feel happy. Loving people around me make me feel lively.*

Another respondent described about the importance of relationship with family and friends. She told that she feels happy and lively while being close to her family. She is more concerned towards her family and friends.

*In my leisure time I prefer to be with my family as it provides me energy and my family is my source of strength. When I am with my kids, I feel most lively. If my family and friends have some sort of problem in their life, I get worried. My family provided me an ideal environment at home, quality schooling and higher education and fulfilled my all needs which helped me a lot in developing a strong personality in society. I have strong bonding with my parents. I like to have a large network of social relationships.*

It can be observed in other respondent's argument that family has great significance in people's life. Family has provided favorable condition to progress in life and also supported him to deal with life's challenges. He feels happy while spending his time with family. As he stated:

*I have strong bonding with my parents and I enjoy this bonding with my parents. I enjoy the company of my family members. My family has helped me in my personality development. My family always supported me; they prayed for me and provided me proper ground to get more progress in my life. When I am near to Allah and when I spend time with my family I feel a lot happy. I want to spend my time with my family.*

Social relations create harmony and community process in society for building a peaceful and happy life. The demand of happiness and quality of life can be understood by accepting the importance of social networks and social relationships. Above said views and experienced shared by the study participants are coincided with the work of Dogan (2016), that social networking sites build upon communicative relationship through using social media and permitting psychological wellbeing, happiness and life satisfaction prologue better harmony among member of community. In continuation of this argument (Ahmad, 2010) wrote in a book that dominance of social network concealed on better relations to promote happiness in one's life. Happier life enhances better socio-economic conditions of people to make a cohesive relation and network by which all utilize leisure time by doing leisure activities for granting a happy life for others (Wei et al., 2016)

### ***Positive Contribution of Norms and Values***

Norms and values of society hold great importance in people's life. As a member of a society, people have to follow some norms and values. Sometimes, in modern societies people find these norms and values difficult to follow but most of these norms and values are beneficial for the people and society at large, social change in our society is also continuous process that is taking place and enhancing the importance of following societal norms and values. Norms are our behaviors that are acceptable in society, besides following these norms social order and existing structure of the society disrupts and social functions of society stops. So, value system defines what is important and worthwhile in our lives, our own judgment of what is important for oneself, or what is wrong and right, followed by societal norms impose some restriction on people to maintain societal order to avail a happy and quality life. Quality of life (QOL) as people perception of their position in society in the context of cultural value system (WHOQOL Group 1995), modulate by living condition of personal objective, and as well as level of satisfaction (Urzua and Caqueo-Urizar, 2012).

Study indicated that most of the people consider the norms and values favorable. One of the respondents held the opinion that the norms and values of society keep people active. Without the norms and values society and particularly the individual cannot spend meaningful life. One of the respondents stated that:

*In my opinion these norms are beneficial for us. These norms are here in our society to make us feel important. If an individual is left free without norms, values and rules then it will not be favorable at all. An individual can't feel his importance or worth without these norms. I think these norms keeps man active because if there are not any hurdles or rules and regulations then you will become lazy. You will not put the required energy to fulfill your tasks.*

Another participant holds the same opinion regarding norms and values of society. For him, norms and values are important and people should follow the norms and values. Too actively living in society people should follow the norms and values of society.

*I don't ever consider that the cultural norms are resistant against to achieve better quality of life and happiness. As a member of society, we should follow the societal norms, as it is famous saying "do as the romans do". Where we live, we should follow the norms and culture of that society to sustain otherwise you can't exist in the society.*

However, some respondents find it not easy to fulfill the norms. They don't consider it that much beneficial. They think some traditional norms and values affect the happiness. As one respondent stated:

*To some extent, it's not possible for me to meet every societal norm. Some traditional norms are much rigid and family system affects the quality of life and happiness. To some extent people should fellow societal norms.*

However, where respondents find it difficult to fulfill these norms at the same time they consider it as important element. One respondent has argued that it is difficult to fulfill the norms but it is beneficial to follow the norms and values. She stated that:

*Many times, I find it difficult to fulfill societal norms. Actually people like me face a lot difficulty to fulfill societal norms. I don't consider that the cultural norms are resistant against to achieve better quality of life and happiness because of my strong decision power. I have worked a lot on it that's why it doesn't bother me. Members of society should fellow societal norms even though it is difficult for me to fulfill the norms but still I thought that people should follow these norms.*

In connection to above findings (Urzua et al., 2012) did a project on the importance of social and cultural values with regard to achieving quality of life, and concluded that some values are individualistic like power, achievement, hedonism and self-direction, and some are collectivistic as tradition, conformity, and some are mixed as universalism and security, these values mediator and evaluators of quality of life. In continuation of this argument (Helliwell, 2014) stated that sustainable development use variety of different tools for life satisfaction and happiness. Evidence shows importance of norms with well-being benefits offer a powerful path of sustainability solution of social material problems. Another study conducted by (Nisbet et al., 2009) developed and defined a construct named "nature relatedness" constitute of variety of attitude and norms connecting to deal with interaction between human and physical environment.

### ***Physical and Spiritual Wellbeing***

Physical, psychological and spiritual wellbeing is important to focus while studying happiness and quality of life. Almost every respondent has focused on these aspects. The data indicated that health is the major aspect to live healthy life and also the connection of people with God or with their religion that boosts up their life. People feel happy and contaminated being close to God. Every respondent held the opinion that

every person should pay attention to remain healthy. Without being healthy person can't perform routine tasks actively, that makes people worried.

As one of the respondents has gone through unhealthy phase of her life, she had laid stress upon the importance of being healthy.

*Off course, health is very much important. I have neglected my health in few days back and I have to face many problems due to my bad health. Now if I get ill it takes me towards depression. Good health affects quality of life and happiness. I take care of my health care routine to get my tasks done and for avoiding depression.*

Deeg (1989) identified that person who is in good 'physical appearance' and who have a lot of 'energy' also enjoys the higher happiness. Happiness of a person also changes as there is shift in physical health to the good or the bad. Reversely, happiness has also been shown to predict later health status and longevity. The happy people also enjoy good 'mental health'. Among the happy people psychological problems reports are less frequent (though not entirely absent) and they score high on measures of positive mental health, such as psycho-social development and self-actualization

While talking about connection with God and the religion she stated that:

*Obviously, I feel happy. The strong base with religion and strong bonding with Allah makes you happy. I like the company of religious people. The strong ties with religion will help you to be happy. I like religious people and I enjoy the company of religious people.*

*I didn't spend meaningless life so I don't find it meaningless. My life is fully active and energize.*

Another respondent has also given the opinion that health is important to spend quality life.

*I give 100% importance to my health. Good health improves the quality of life and gives you more happiness. However, it also sometimes gives stress because you always stuck in your health and can't enjoy the life, as I am a lot choosy in my diet. I feel secure and happy while being close to God close ties with religion helps me to gain better life. I didn't feel my life meaningless; I believe in Islam and God; every mankind is born for a purpose.*

One of the respondents has provided his detailed opinion regarding the health. For him health is much important as he stated that to lose his weight is his dream of life.

*Health is very much important in every person's life. As there is proverb "health is wealth". If you are healthy, you can perform all the tasks and if you are not healthy or you are suffering from any disease then you can't perform your tasks and this will cause unhappiness for a person. Health is very much important to compete, to overcome life challenges and stress. Health affects quality of life and happiness. If we are healthy, we can enjoy healthy and happy life. I also have a dream to Lose my weight.*

Talking about the religion and God he stated that:

*The close ties with religion help me to gain better life. I feel secure and happy while being close to God. I didn't ever feel that life is meaningless. I think life is good, life is the name of hard working and we should set our goals and work for to achieve them.*

One female respondent of the study has discussed about the general attitude of people towards women health and also women's own attitude towards their health. She stated that:

*You know that in our culture after marriage nobody take cares of female. So that is all. Woman's attention get divert from herself to the children. We feel that we have done with our lives now everything is our children. However, I am conscious about my diet.*

While talking about the religion and God she stated that:

*At the death of my husband, first I thought why me why only me? I was very sad and hopeless. Then my friend supported me made me understand why Allah has selected me to this difficult time. By the time of 4 months and 10 days I got to know the reasons behind this and it helped me a lot to stable. I was close to Allah. I felt happy by praying.*

*I didn't consider my life meaningless. Allah has created for something. I have not achieved that much in my life as I wanted; but still, I'm happy with my hard working.*

Data indicated that people are more conscious about their health. People give importance to their health as well as they also feel happy and secure while being close to God.

Similarly, in the context of physical and spiritual wellbeing, Dolan et al. (2008) also identified that happiness of individual is affected by good physical health and also the psychological health. The better physical health and psychological health creates positive feelings in a person. In connection to above findings, (Akbari and Hossaini, 2018) also postulated that spiritual divinity makes sense of interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship with career and self-development, and mediating role between emotional emancipation and spiritual health leads to a better quality of life, directly responds to overall health of a person (Akbarizadeh *et al.*, 2012).

## **Conclusion**

The objective of this research was to explore the subjective meaning of quality of life and happiness from sociological perspective. The finding of the study has contributed new knowledge into existing literature for reaching richness of information on the basis of two sided picture of quality of life and happiness. One is subjective well-being and other side of the coin is external living conditions and environment. A good living environment can be created through establishing social networks and social relations. A personal satisfaction can be achieved through availing rich socio-economic statuses. Socio-demographic aspects do not have the same impact on happiness and quality of life as individual source control variables, which include material living situations and standard of life. Moreover, income, urban areas, married life were found important factors to enhance and restrict a very happy and quality of life. The study has also identified the elements that are the part of social environment such as the social network, social support and social relationships, as social environment is important for having better quality of life and happiness. Social networks and social relationship especially the family holds great influence in shaping the life and personality. This was also remarkably notable that family style and way of living are rich source of strength and life satisfaction. Study has also identified the factors that people have to face in order to achieve better quality of life and happiness. There are some different and little bits same factors involved and affect people's ability in achieving better quality of life, such as low socio-economic status. Data indicated that in the country like Pakistan people have to face various sort of problem especially poor living environment e.g. issue of cleanliness, noise pollution, air pollution and economic uncertainty. Bad and good attitude of people also put a pressure to create a good and healthy and friendly environment. This was also found that there is need of change in the attitude of people. Physical and good mental health conditions were also found progressive fabrics of quality of life and happiness. Study has examined that being healthy is much important to be happy and to increase the quality of life. Study highlighted health issues affects quality of life of people make them unhappy. Subjective well-being was associated with good sentiments of desires and achievement of happy life and satisfaction.

## **Recommendations**

- The social security system needs to be upgraded in order to combat poverty and encourage better living circumstances all around. For the benefit of citizens, public services like health care, education, transportation, social services, and the state pension system should be updated and enhanced.
- Government must improve socio-economic status of people to promote quality of life and happiness among people.
- More flexible work schedules or part-time employment should be recommended to improve leisure time that fosters social connections, as work-life balance plays a significant influence in happiness.
- Government must provide better quality of health facilities to promote happiness among citizen.
- Future research must be on assessing quality of life and happiness of aged people, and recommendations can be added to get reform in enhancing quality of life of older people.
- More studies should be conducted on relationship between leisure time and happiness in Pakistan.

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