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Quality of life as a component of community survivability – evidence from Zlatibor region (Serbia)

Quality of life is a multidimensional concept. The geographical dimension is crucial as it ties nearly all aspects of people's lives to a specific space. In this respect, the issue of satisfaction with services and conditions, which affects overall well-being in the community, is particularly highlighted. Therefore, numerous objective and subjective indicators are used. On the basis of subjective well-being theory, a model for evaluating the community's quality of life was formulated. It was supposed to answer the question of the influence of sociocultural, economic, demographic, and similar parameters (independent variables) on different domains of life quality (dependent variables). The questionnaire included 36 quality-of-life indicators (dependent variables). The research was conducted in the territory of the municipality of Čajetina (Zlatibor region), located in the zone of intensive tourist development. The first segment of the analysis included the importance assessment and the second – the degree of satisfaction. For this purpose, a five-point Likert scale was used. Then, their grouping was performed using exploratory factor analysis, whereby six factors were extracted. These were urban issues (F1), public services (F2), community welfare (F3), way of life (F4), political power (F5), and other social issues (F6). Finally, based on the assessment of importance and satisfaction, a quality of life index (QoL score 1–20) was generated. The results showed that the average value of the index at the group level (F1-F6) was 12.15, i.e., from 10.76 (urban development) to 13.16 (other social issues). In the segment of individual components, the value was uniform (11.97), i.e., 8.39 (urbanization issues), 9.62 (land use) to 14.58 (availability of commercial and catering facilities). Moderately high values were recorded for the availability of public services (health, education, and other institutions). The above results indicate that regardless of good/bad and favorable/unfavorable living conditions, quality of life is primarily a subjective category. Also, the importance of individual indicators that influence the general quality of life is highlighted. This instrument has proven to have scientific and practical applications. It provides the basis for similar research in other spatial units. At the

same time, it provides guidelines to the creators of public policies and strategies at the national, regional, and local levels.

Keywords: Quality of life, indicators, QOL index, local community, Zlatibor