

Assessing urban quality of life through activity modeling

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331 Assessing urban quality of life through activity modelling

The rapid urbanization and its consequences on human life highlight the concept of Urban Quality Of Life (UQOL) as a research priority for both policy and academia. The applications of UQOL studies are very broad and reflect the motivations behind regional migration, residential choices as well as urban growth patterns. During the last decades many researchers have been involved in the field of environmental behaviour science and their results are mainly oriented towards the influence of built environment on enhancing the quality of life.

Traditionally, modeling quality of life in urban settings contains objective and subjective attributes, which obtain through cross sectional surveys, observations and aggregated methods. However, with this method it is difficult to address the cause of satisfaction, while with activity modeling satisfaction is the result of the degree to which the environment satisfies a persons needs.

We know on one hand that UQOL is a context based and scale-dependent study, and on the other hand people judgments about the environment vary significantly. Therefore, the satisfaction regarding built environment can also be measured through behavioral indicators. Activity modeling of households and individuals is one of the methods that provide opportunity to study the link between characteristics of urban form and micro -level behaviors. At the residential level, daily activity schedules of households are influenced by characteristics of urban environment. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to provide an overview of this link and explore the relationship between the built environment and physical activity with more innovative and comprehensive spatial survey methods.

KEYWORDS: urban quality of life, activity modelling, survey