

Qualitative Profiling of Quality of Life using Geographic Information System: A Case of Coastal Population

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Abstract

A preliminary profiling analysis was presented for the qualitative assessment of the quality of life among a coastal population in Malaysia. This paper focuses on providing a profile of quality of life among coastal population of Setiu Wetlands, Terengganu. Four sub-criteria of economics and social were investigated using geographic information system. The spatial software provides the profiling maps based on the four sub-criteria. The maps suggest that the quality of life for this group of population, in general, is 'poor'. Future research may be undertaken to include more criteria so that the results would provide a comprehensive assessment to the quality of life of the community.

Key words: Economic criteria, Social criteria, GIS, Quality of life, Coastal population

1. Introduction

Quality of life (QOL) is becoming an integral part of social indicators of a country or a group of people. It is commonly associated with well-being of a group of people or people residing in a specific region of a country. Different countries use different definitions and domains to describe QOL. In Malaysia, the Economic Planning Unit [1] defines the QOL as a combination of personal attributes, economics and social criteria. Criteria that normally used to measure QOL could be multi-dimensional and typically categorized into different groups such as economics, social and physical. QOL has been investigated not only for a particular country [2] but also focus on relatively small community such city dwellers [3], youths [4], agropolitan participants [5], and coastal populations [6]; [7]. More than ninety percent of Peninsular Malaysia is surrounded by sea waters, thereby coastal populations are among the communities that interested to be probed especially from the perspective of QOL. People who lived in the coastal region are generally suffering from poor basic facilities. A research was conducted by Kadarpetta and Kostenzer [6] on the east coast of India and measured the health level of the coastal populations of India. The population in this coastal region has suffered from the disease and this problem is due to lack of information about the health and disease, deficiency of quality health care, pollution, cleanliness of surroundings and facilities. It is presumed that coastal