

Policy Brief

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Satisfaction from Socio-Ecological Determinants as a Motivation for Better Quality of Life in Kerman Community: Policy Brief

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Abstract

Introduction: In recent years, the concept of quality of life has been integrated with the approach of social ecology. The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between satisfaction with social ecological factors and the quality of life of the people of Kerman.**Methods:** This policy brief was derived from a cross-sectional descriptive-analytical study that was conducted in 2024. The statistical population studied in this study was 324 people who referred to comprehensive health centers. The data collection tools were standard questionnaires.**Results:** Quality of life and satisfaction with social ecological factors in Kerman city were at an average level. The quality of life in cities is directly influenced by socio-ecological factors such as access to parks and green spaces, state of transportation and traffic, access to shopping centers, access to basic infrastructure services, satisfaction with the quality of drinking water and sewage and surface water drainage, waste management, housing conditions, satisfaction with neighborhood security, employment status and monthly income, and the local climate. Preliminary assessments indicate that dissatisfaction with the environmental conditions, shortage of public spaces, and concerns over water scarcity are among the main challenges.**Conclusion:** Considering the role of social ecological factors on the quality of life, improving urban infrastructure, promoting people's access to urban services, and urban planning can improve the quality of life. This policy brief, based on field studies, proposes three policy pillars to enhance satisfaction and ultimately improve the quality of life: a) ecological resilience, b) equitable access to urban services, and c) community-based participation.**Keywords:** Quality of life, Social ecological factors, Community-based participation, Ecological resilience**Citation:** Padidar S, Iranpour A, Haji-Maghsoudi S, Padidar Y, Faraji M. Satisfaction from socio-ecological determinants as a motivation for better quality of life in Kerman community: policy brief. Journal of Kerman University of Medical Sciences 2026;33:4575. doi:10.34172/jkmu.4575**Received:** May 2, 2026, **Accepted:** May 30, 2026, **ePublished:** March 7, 2026

Introduction

Quality of life is determined by an individual's perception of their life situation in relation to their cultural factors, goals, beliefs, and values (1). According to the World Health Organization (WHO) report, alongside individual factors affecting quality of life, other factors such as social ecology—including access to ecological components and the living environment—are also significant, playing a major role in improving the quality of life of residents in a given area (2). In studies by Keller et al. (2019) (3) and Skip et al. (2023) (4) in the USA, Macke et al. (2018) in Brazil (5), and Lee et al. (2022) in South Korea (6), aiming

to assess the impact of social ecology on quality of life, a direct relationship between social ecological factors and quality of life has been reported. Most studies conducted in Iran have examined individuals' quality of life from the perspective of physical health. The impact of human ecology and social ecological factors on the quality of life has been investigated in limited studies in Malekan, East Azerbaijan (7); Dorcheh, Isfahan Province (8); and Isfahan (9). The results of these studies indicated that access to social ecological factors plays a significant role in quality of life.

Kerman city, one of the major metropolitan areas in Iran,



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has experienced rapid population growth over the past 50 years due to its location along transportation routes, its political centrality in Kerman Province, and the numerous industries around the city. As a result, the population of Kerman has increased approximately ninefold over the past five decades, leading to a significant population surge in the city. The most critical issue currently facing Kerman—and one that will intensify in the future if serious and specific programs are not implemented—is the adverse effects resulting from the city's rapid growth and development. Moreover, significant portions of Kerman have, for various reasons, deteriorated into worn-out and unhealthy urban fabrics, which can be considered informal settlements or marginal neighborhoods. The emergence of such areas can be attributed to economic challenges, poverty, and rural-to-urban migration (10).

All these factors have significantly impacted the social ecology of Kerman, leading to substantial changes over time. Given that the quality of life of residents in an area is influenced by numerous factors—with social ecology being one of them—the direct interplay between these two cannot be overlooked. Therefore, the present cross-sectional study aimed to determine the relationship between satisfaction with social ecological factors and the quality of life among the people of Kerman city across four domains: Psychological, physical, environmental, and social. The study was conducted on 324 individuals aged 18 years and above, using standardized questionnaires: the WHO Quality of Life (WHOQOL) questionnaire and the standardized Social Ecological Factors Satisfaction questionnaire, in 2024.

Key Findings

According to the findings, access to the parks and green spaces, the state of transportation and traffic, access to shopping centers, basic infrastructure and health services (mosques, government offices, healthcare centers, and hospitals), satisfaction with the quality of drinking water and sewage/surface water drainage, waste management status, housing conditions, neighborhood security, and the local climate as the socio-ecological factors can improve mental, physical, and social health in a direct and significant correlation between the total quality of life score and all its dimensions with the satisfaction score of socio-ecological factors. The quality of life and satisfaction with socio-ecological factors in Kerman city were at a moderate level.

The limitations of this study include self-reporting of individuals, the presence of the researcher during questionnaire completion, and the possibility that the respondents did not answer the questions accurately; the cross-sectional nature of the study, and the lack of generalizability of the results of this study to other cities due to cultural-religious differences.

Policy Recommendations

Ecological Resilience

This involves investing in the cultivation of low-water-

demand plant species. This recommendation will lead to a reduction of the urban heat island effect and increased soil permeability. However, its limitations include high initial costs, the need for technical expertise, and the long-time frame required to see the results.

Equitable Distribution of Socio-Ecological Services

This part includes prioritizing deprived neighborhoods in the establishment of local parks, improving lighting and security in public spaces, and developing public transportation lines. This will reduce urban inequality, have a quicker impact on public satisfaction, and strengthen social cohesion. Implementing this requires the allocation of municipal budgets and inter-sectoral coordination.

Participatory Governance

This part includes establishing neighborhood councils for the environment and quality of life, and designing a public reporting platform for reporting environmental issues such as air pollution, water scarcity in green spaces, and insecurity in parks. This can increase the sense of belonging, reduce monitoring costs, and lead to policies better tailored to local needs. However, it requires the empowerment of local communities. However, there is a risk of creating expectations that may not be addressed.

Formulation and Implementation of a Comprehensive Local Green Space Per Capita Plan

This plan should prioritize neighborhoods within Kerman city.

Establishing the Kerman Urban Resilience Fund

A fund with public and private sector participation to attract investment for green infrastructure projects.

Integration of Quality of Life and Socio-Ecological Satisfaction Indicators

These indicators should be integrated into the municipality's planning and budgeting system.

Conclusion

Enhancing the quality of life in Kerman requires an integrated approach to both the environment and society. By focusing on increasing satisfaction with socio-ecological factors, the city's social capital and resilience can be simultaneously strengthened. Immediate action in the socio-ecological domain will pave the way for sustainable transformation towards a healthier and more desirable Kerman for living.

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Competing Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval

The project was ethically approved by the Institute for Futures Studies in Health of Kerman University of Medical Sciences (Ethics ID: IR.KMU.REC.1403.012).

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