

**PERCEPTION OF QUALITY OF
LIFE THROUGH A GENDERED
LENS.
A CASE FROM THE CITY OF
BIRMINGHAM**

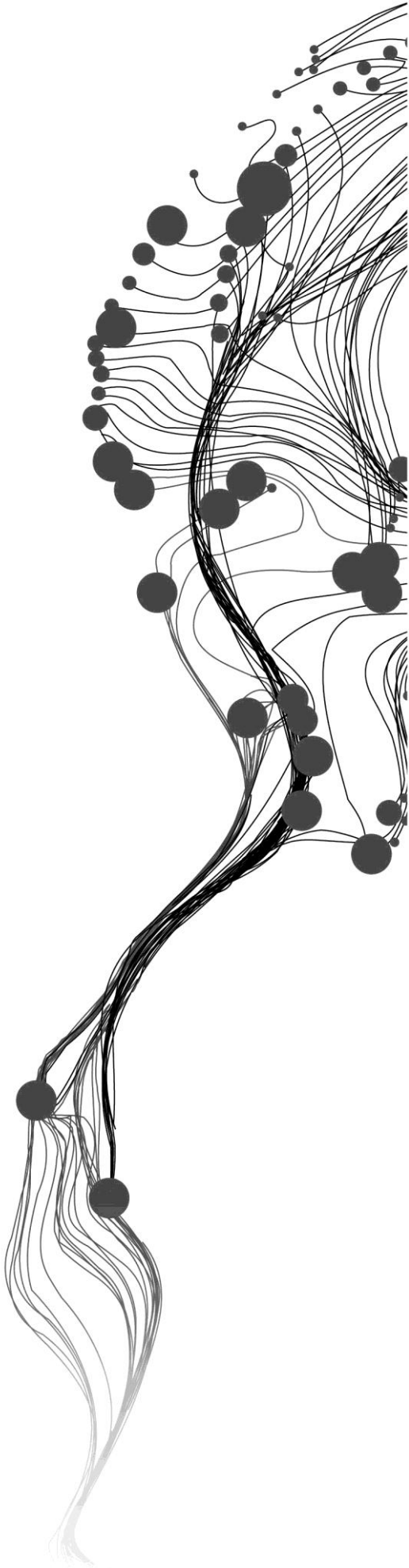
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February, 2013

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ABSTRACT

Quality of Life is an important concept, which has been subject of ongoing studies recently. Perception of QOL is considerably affected by gender, while in most of studies gender determinant of QOL is ignored which led to gendered blindness cities. From the other side, since QOL is related to people's perception of their life environment, objective condition of environment affect it, which is more considerable in deprived areas, where women due to so called feminization of poverty suffer more from poor objective condition of life. Regard to this fact, this study has investigated in QOL through a gendered lens in different deprived and non-deprived contexts either to recognize gendered QOL domains or to see how gendered perception varies in different contexts.

To define different contexts, index of multiple deprivation which shows pattern of deprivation throughout Birmingham has been used and then by application of open questionnaire and individual interview, people's perception toward their neighbourhood has been captured. Results show that due to feminized deprivation in education, skill and qualification and existing gendered differences in deprived neighbourhoods, while women and men mentioned to similar QOL domains as access to facilities, street condition, safety, green space and social interaction, their perception of details in some aspects as safety issue, access to facilities and street condition varied. Also aspects of children poverty, unemployment, historical value and housing condition have been reflected just by women or men. However considering location of one of the deprived neighbourhood, which is adjacent to non-deprived wards, more similarity in gendered perception has been identified.

By changing context and moving to non-deprived neighbourhood, due to more gendered inclusive ambience, women and men expressed considerable similarity in their perception of QOL. In fact, according to extracted QOL domains, context has considerable effect on gendered perception. As a noticeable example, it can be mentioned to perception of green space, which due to unsafe ambience in one deprived context, has been perceived negatively while in other contexts, it has been reflected as a positive aspect of QOL. Furthermore, considering personal characteristics of respondents, employment, education, ethnicity and religion by having different effects in studied contexts, play important role in gendered perception. To be added respondents have been asked to mention to areas where they have specific perception. Results show expressed gendered issues mostly are arisen from spatial context and specific areas, which led to gendered pattern of perception.

Regard to applicability of QOL findings in planning process, extracted results have been compared with survey opinion of 2008 to see the extent that it covers gendered QOL. Based on result due to general outlook and quantitative methods adopted in the survey opinion of 2008, some aspects of gendered QOL and their perception of details have not addressed, while they matter to respondents.

Key words: quality of life, gendered perception, feminization of poverty, index of multiple deprivation, the survey opinion of 2008

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ACRONYMS

QOL	Quality Of Life
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
UK	United Kingdom
SQOL	Subjective Quality Of Life
FSQOL	Female Subjective Quality Of Life
MSQOL	Male Subjective Quality Of Life
GIS	Geographic Information System

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Quality of life (QOL) which relates to the awareness of people about their life conditions, recently has gained much interest in urban studies (Tuan Seik, 2000). Relevant literatures show that concept of QOL has been investigated from different fields which implies to multidimensional nature of QOL (Li & Weng, 2007; Marans, 2003; Mercier, Peladeau, & Tempier, 1998; Mulvey, 2002; Türksever & Atalik, 2001).

To investigate in concept of QOL, objective and subjective approaches have been used, which are called objective and perceptual perspective (Royuela, Moreno, & Vayá, 2009; Tesfazghi, Martinez, & Verplanke, 2010; Tuan Seik, 2000). Objective approach reflects tangible condition of environment (Das, 2008), while subjective measures are referred to people's perception and individual appraisal of objective condition of their life (Das, 2008; Malkina-Pykh & Pykh, 2008; Royuela, et al., 2009; Shin, Rutkowski, & Park, 2003).

Considering two mentioned perspectives in QOL studies, there are different opinions and criticisms toward these approaches. According to Lee (2008), QOL study should be assessed in subjective approach and by asking people directly about their life conditions. In fact as objective QOL may not accurately reflects people's perception, many researchers such as (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003), Lee (2008), McCrea et al. (2006) applied subjective approach for measuring QOL. They believed that as subjective measures give more valuable information about people's perception, they are preferred over objective measures (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003; Rod. McCrea, et al., 2006).

Since subjective quality of life expresses individual perception of living condition, people's characteristics play important role in their perception (Marans, 2003). In fact different Studies show that age, gender, ethnicity, employment, education, income and many socio economic characteristics affect SQOL, which have to be addressed (Apparicio, Séguin, & Naud, 2008; Dunning, et al., 2006; Masthoff, Trompenaars, Heck, Hodiament, & Vries, 2006; Mulvey, 2002; Ric van Poll, 1997).

Among socio economic characteristics that influence SQOL, due to differences in gender roles and responsibilities and experience of city which is gendered issue, there is difference among gendered perception of QOL and consequently investigation of QOL from gendered perspective is important and has to be considered (Beall, 1996b; Greed, 2005; Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993; Women in Cities International, 2012).

But in spite of many researches about QOL, " Little is known about gender-based determinants of urban quality of life" (Dunning, et al., 2006, p. 394). As a result investigation in gendered perception of QOL,

help planners to recognize gender needs and priorities, which have to be addressed and integrated in planning policy (Greed, 2005).

From the other side, as SQOL is derived from individual perception of living environment, context also play important role in perception (Marans, 2003). In fact different contexts with different condition lead to different gendered perception. Take deprived context as an example. In deprived areas, people concern about deprivation condition such as low level of education, low income, lack of job and improper location of facilities. Considering these issue, different researches showed that while deprivation conditions influence people's perception, women compared to men suffer more from poverty aspects. In other term most of poverty burden is fallen on women, which is called feminization of poverty (Haynie & Gorman, 1999). Consequently, due to poor QOL for women in deprived areas, women's perceptions vary significantly from men in such contexts, which have to be investigated.

Speaking to contextual effect on gendered perception, application of index of multiple deprivation (IMD) provided in United Kingdom can be helpful to see how gendered perception vary in different contexts. This index has been provided in UK in 2012 includes different dimensions of employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, income, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment, which covers different dimensions of QOL (Birmingham City Council, 2010). Therefore, by using IMD, different contexts with different objective conditions can be investigated and studied from gendered lens.

Moreover, in 2008 the annual survey opinion has been conducted throughout the city of Birmingham. In this survey which is a non-gendered study, by application of quantitative method, people's perceptions and feeling about different aspects of their living environment such as satisfaction about local area, safety, community involvement and so on, have been investigated (Be Birmingham, 2008).

So considering the fact that gendered differences are bolded in deprived areas (Haynie & Gorman, 1999) from one side and importance of gender consideration in QOL studies from the other side, IMD is applied to select most and least deprived neighbourhoods in UK either to capture gendered SQOL or to examine the significance of change in gendered perception across different spatial contexts. Also final results are compared with non-gendered survey in order to see the extent that annual survey of 2008 reflects gendered concerns. In other term it can be seen which women's as well as men's needs and perception are missed in this study which has to be addressed and taken into account by planners and policy makers.

1.2. Research problem

Considering the fact that QOL study in objective approach does not necessarily reflect people's perception (Das, 2008), subjective approach toward people's perception has been given recent special attention. In fact, while many efforts for increasing urban QOL have been done, most of them are focused on objective condition of environment, while they cannot capture peoples' needs.

SQOL is referred to individual appraisal and feeling toward their life and consequently socio economic characteristics of people noticeably influence perception of QOL, which have to be considered (Malkina-Pykh & Pykh, 2008; Ric van Poll, 1997).

Among socio economic characteristics, due to gendered experience of city (Dunning, et al., 2006), consideration of gender effect on SQOL has high importance. In fact importance of gendered perspective in QOL studies is arisen from the fact that experience of city in gendered issues, while in most of planning, women's perception is ignored (Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993). Generally urban planning in different field rang from physical to social and economic planning has failed to meet women's need (Khosla, 2005). So investigation in perception of neighbourhood by gendered lens is valuable way to recognize women's different expectations, needs and priorities which have to be considered into planning policies (Greed, 2005).

However despite of this fact, most of QOL researches ignored effect of gender and as a result "little is known about gender determinant of QOL" (Dunning, et al., 2006, p. 394). In fact gender studies showed that due to different roles by women within house and society, their expectations, needs and as result perception differ from men, while it has been ignored in many cities and this has led to gendered biased and women exclusive cities (Beall, 1996b; Larsson, 2001; Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993; Women in Cities International, 2012).

Besides lack of consideration of women's issues in many cities, contextual effect is also missed in QOL studies. In fact most of researches are focused on capturing the most important domains of life, while contextual characteristics where QOL is studied, play important role in total perception of QOL (Campbell et al,1976 cited by Marans, 2003). It has to be noted that consideration of contextual effects get significant in poor areas with dominant complex problems and with high gendered differences. In fact many researches believed that poverty is a feminized issues and burden of poverty fall more on women than men (Beall, 1998; Dunning, et al., 2006; Haynie & Gorman, 1999).

So considering limited knowledge about gendered QOL domains, contextual and feminized effects on perception of QOL, this research has studied QOL from gendered lens in deprived and non-deprived neighbourhoods.

1.3. Research objectives and questions

Due to discussed problems, this research aims:

“To investigate the variation in perception of QOL between men and women within most and least deprived neighbourhoods in city of Birmingham”

Generally, due to application of QOL results in policy making (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003; Tesfazghi, et al., 2010; Türksever & Atalik, 2001), by studying both women’s and men’s perception, gendered key issues will be extracted, which further can be integrated into development plans to have more gendered inclusive cities. Therefore, to reach to the main aim of current research, following objectives are considered:

I. To compare perception of QOL for men and women

This objective aims to identify and compare the most important gendered QOL domains and to see the variation among them. Also it aims to see how extracted QOL domains by gendered lens differ from other study with non-gendered perspective.

1. Which QOL domains are important for men and women?
2. How socio economic characteristics affect gendered perception?
3. To what extent, gendered perception of QOL is covered by non-gendered SQOL study?

II. To understand spatial pattern of gendered perception

Beside extracting gendered QOL domains, the area of perception is studied in order to see the extent that gendered QOL stem from spatial and contextual aspects and also to see that whether there are specific realm and pattern for gendered perception or not.

1. Is there any spatial pattern for perception of women and men toward QOL domains?
2. How is variation among pattern of gendered perception within selected neighbourhoods?

III. To examine interplay among gendered perception across different neighbourhood

While women and men have different perception toward QOL, due to feminization of poverty and poorer objective conditions of life for women, considerable gendered differences in perception of QOL is expected within deprived areas. Therefore, to examine significance of gendered difference, gendered perception across different neighbourhoods is studied.

1. How contextual conditions of environment affect gendered perception within studied neighbourhoods?
2. How significant is the change in gendered perception while moving from deprived to non-deprived neighbourhoods?

1.4. Conceptual framework

As discussed earlier, there are two objective and subjective approaches to measure QOL, while the second approach is more democratic and closer to real needs of people (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003) and has been adopted in this research.

According to studies by Lee (1998), (Dunning, et al., 2006), (Mulvey, 2002), (Masthoff, et al., 2006), (Ri van Poll, 1997) and (Moser, 1993), factor of gender has significant effect on SQOL and consequently looking to SQOL through gendered lens signifies importance as it helps to recognize both women's and men's concerns and issues.

From the other side, as SQOL refers to individual perception and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction from their living environment (Marans, 2003; Royuela, et al., 2009) personal characteristic affect the way that men and women perceive their living area, positively or negatively (Carp & Carp, 1982; Kim & McKenry, 2002; Mulvey, 2002; Richmond, et al., 2000; Yoshida, 2011).

Moreover beside personal characteristic, context also play important role in SQOL. According to (Marans, 2003) context which refers to actual and objective condition of life, affect SQOL which has to be taken into account.

Considering scale of analysis, it has to be mentioned that most of QOL researches have been done in city or country level which hide detail about people's perception (Rahman, Mittelhammer, & Wandschneider, 2011; Tesfazghi, et al., 2010; Ülengin, et al., 2001). According to (Eby, Kitchen, & Williams, 2012) QOL studies can be approached not only from big scale but also from small geographical scale of neighbourhood. Moreover adoption of neighbourhood allows considering QOL either in public or individual life (Bonaiuto, et al., 2003).

Regard to these facts, this study has considered neighbourhood as social construction and contextual scale, for QOL study. It has to be mentioned that neighbourhood is an amorphous concept which different definitions rang from administrative boundary to social construction and individual perception refer to neighbourhood (Coulton, Korbin, Chan, & Su, 2001; B. Lee, Campbell, & Miller, 1991). In this research for easiness in finding local people and due to main aim of this research, (individual perception) three neighbourhoods based on social construction (Lee et al., 1991) have been chosen.

To sum up, as presented in figure 1, considering IMD that reflects deprivation conditions in different contexts, this study aims to investigate in female and male subjective QOL to see variation in gendered perception in different contexts. Also personal characteristic, which influence gendered perception, are examined and studied. Moreover, results of survey opinion of 2008 as a non-gendered SQOL in

Birmingham is compared with gendered perception of QOL in order to see the extent that this survey reflects women's and men's issues and concerns.

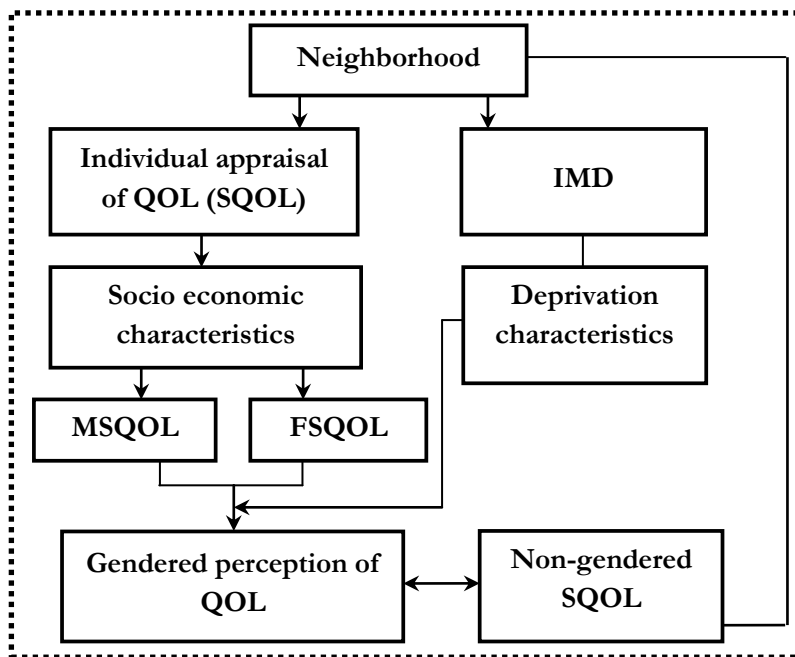


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

1.5. Research design

1.5.1. Case study justification

As current research aims to compare gendered perception within most and least deprived neighbourhoods, having data about deprivation is important. As mentioned before, UK has provided IMD for 2010 which is comprehensive index and covers different objective domain of life. Also in 2008, the annual survey opinion has been done which reflects SQOL. As a result, choosing UK as case study, facilitates process of research.

Beside availability of IMD and the survey opinion of 2008 in UK, research by (Greed, 2005) shows that in UK initial efforts for consideration of gendered issues in spatial planning have been done but still many planners have problems in integration of women's needs into spatial planning. Also (Greed, 2005) found out that small number of local authorities undertake gender integration in spatial planning which include West Midlands, Birmingham, Sandwell, Sheffield, Harlow, Cambridge, Plymouth. So due to initial steps for gender study in spatial planning in mentioned cities and provision of IMD and relevant contacts, city of Birmingham has been chosen as case study for current research.

1.5.2. Methodology

Regard to the main objective of current research, finding the best method, which can capture gendered perception is very important. Generally speaking, quantitative methods just can extract most important domains of life for women and men and they are incapable of capturing perception with details. In addition, they cannot provide researcher with spatial component of perception. As a result qualitative approach by adoption of two open questionnaires and individual interview methods, have been applied, which are discussed with details in section 3.

1.6. Operational plan

According to figure 2, current research is consist of 4 steps. In the first step, by studying relevant literatures about QOL and gendered issue, contextual and socio economic characteristics that affect gendered QOL are reviewed. Moreover, to get more insight about qualitative methods, this approach is investigated. Then regard to different documents about city of Birmingham and IMD, different wards and neighbourhoods are considered and two most and one least deprived neighbourhoods are selected. Then by application of open questionnaires and individual interview by local people, gendered perception toward different aspects of their neighbourhood and areas of their perception are asked and questioned. In the next steps, all interviews, questionnaires and areas of perception are transcribed, coded and geocoded. Then regard to extracted codes and geocoded, gendered QOL and their pattern of perception are investigated. Furthermore effect of respondents' personal characteristics, collected from interview and questionnaires, is addressed and considered. At the end by comparison among the non-gendered SQOL (survey opinion of 2008) and gendered QOL, the extent that this survey has reflected men's and women's perception, is analysed.

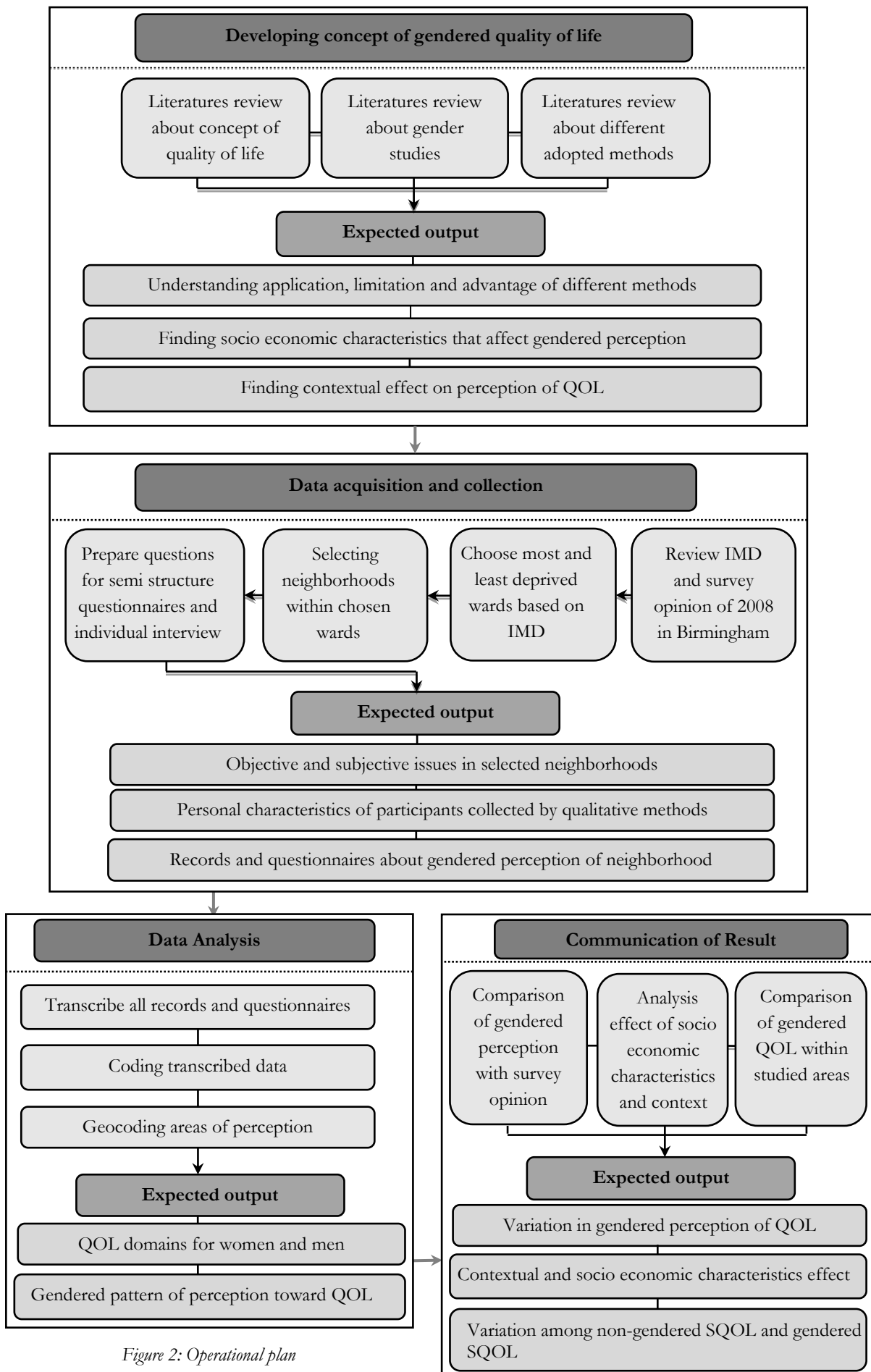


Figure 2: Operational plan

Following mentioned steps, objectives and questions are addressed as below:

Table 1: Research matrix

Objective	Questions	Needed data	Source of data	Method and technique of data collection and analysis
To compare perception of QOL for men and women	Which QOL domains are important for men and women?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gendered QOL domains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary data from women and men inhabitants within selected neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open questionnaires Individual interview Coding records and hand writings in ATLAS-TI software
	How socio economic affect gendered perception?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal characteristics of respondents Gendered QOL domains 		
	To what extent, gendered perception of QOL is covered by non-gendered SQOL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gendered QOL domains Reflected issues in survey opinion 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey opinion of 2008 Primary data from women and men inhabitants within selected neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open questionnaires Individual interview Coding records and hand writings in ATLAS-TI software Comparison among codes and key issues in the survey opinion
To understand spatial pattern of gendered perception	Is there any pattern for perception of women and men toward QOL domains?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific locations of gendered perception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary data from women and men inhabitants within selected neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open questionnaires Individual interview Geo locating all mentioned areas reflected in questionnaires and individual interviews in ATLAS-TI
	How is variation among pattern of gendered perception within selected neighbourhoods?			
To examine interplay among gender perception in different neighbourhood	How contextual conditions of environment affect gendered perception within studied neighbourhoods?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gendered QOL domains contextual characteristics of selected neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary data from women and men within selected neighbourhoods IMD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open questionnaires Individual interview Coding in ATLAS-TI Network analysis in ATLAS-TI
	How significant is the change in gendered perception while moving from deprived to non-deprived neighbourhoods?			

1.7. Structure of thesis

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter presents what the thesis is about. Problems statement, research objectives and questions, conceptual framework and research design are accounted in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature review. This chapter reviews existing literatures about QOL and gender studies. It includes concept of QOL, socio economic characteristic and QOL, definition of gender, gender perspective toward QOL, gendered QOL and poverty, QOL studies in UK and applied methods in QOL studies.

Chapter 3: Methodology and data collection. This chapter describes applied methodology, sampling strategy, data analysis and kind of data adopted to respond research questions.

Chapter 4: Case study introduction. City of Birmingham, selected wards and neighbourhoods, pattern of deprivation in selected neighbourhoods and wards (IMD) and reflected domains in survey opinion of 2008 are described here.

Chapter 5: Gendered QOL in Birmingham. This chapter presents results of open questionnaires and individual interviews which are coded, analysed and mapped in ATLAS-TI software.

Chapter 6: Discussion. Considering gendered perception of QOL from chapter 5, results are discussed and communicated here.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendation. In this chapter, based on findings and discussion of results for three studied neighbourhoods, general conclusion and recommendation are taken.

2. GENDERED PERCEPTION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

This chapter is started with concept of QOL and gender studies. Then QOL in Birmingham is discussed and at the end, applied methods in different QOL researches, are studied.

2.1. Concept of QOL

Concept of QOL from 1930s appeared as a common term in different fields of studies (Türksever & Atalik, 2001) and later, from 1960s, as an approach for evaluation of development policies, has gained more interests (Das, 2008). In fact by increase of knowledge about the fact that economic development will not necessarily lead to better QOL for societies (Das, 2008; Pacione, 2003) investigation of QOL has been subject of on-going researches.

QOL has been addressed from different fields and disciplines which refers to multidimensional nature of this concept (Apparicio, et al., 2008; Ibrahim & Chung, 2003; Shin, et al., 2003; Tesfazghi, et al., 2010; Türksever & Atalik, 2001). In fact due to multidisciplinary nature of QOL, it has been investigated more than before from different fields of geography, sociology, environment and economy (Li & Weng, 2007; Tuan Seik, 2000; Wish, 1986).

It has to be mentioned that importance of QOL originates from failure of most of development plan to improve condition of living environments, which is result of lack of understanding people's real needs and expectation by planners (Khosla, 2005). In fact as QOL results can be used and addressed by urban planners and policy makers in resource allocation and development plans (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003; Tesfazghi, et al., 2010; Türksever & Atalik, 2001; Ülengin, et al., 2001), it has been considered by planners and policy makers.

Considering application of QOL in policy making and planning, different studies tried to determine QOL components and indicators in different contexts, which help urban planners to intervene better (Ülengin, et al., 2001). According to (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003) this concept has high importance in politicians' point of view, as they seek for best ways to increase QOL for cities and people's satisfaction. So due to limited time and budget, people's priorities and needs, which are extracted from QOL studies, can be used as an input for policymaking and appropriate recommendations for improvement of societies.

To define QOL, it has to be noted that it is a broad concept that describes "how well communities support resident well-being and life satisfaction"(Mulvey, 2002, p. 656). In fact based on literatures, it can be found that there is no one single, strict, universally accepted definition for QOL (Apparicio, et al., 2008; Das, 2008; Rod McCrea, Marans, Stimson, & Western, 2011; Royuela, et al., 2009; Ülengin, et al., 2001).

As an example, it can be mentioned to concepts of liveability and quality of place, which are used to define QOL (Li & Weng, 2007). Also studies by (Rod McCrea, et al., 2011) shows that “happiness”, “life satisfaction” and “well-being” in several studies have been used to define concept of QOL.

Speaking to these studies, it can be seen that as QOL is a multidisciplinary concept, it has been defined and studied by application of either objective or subjective approaches, which are described as follow.

2.1.1. Subjective and objective approach in QOL study

Two dimensions of subjective as well as objective condition of life make concept of QOL (Das, 2008; Lee, 2008; Royuela et al., 2009). In fact, due to definitions of QOL, this concept is considered based on objective condition and people’s subjective evaluation and appraisal of their living environment.

In subjective approach, QOL is measured by investigation in people’s perception and satisfaction about their life (Tefazghi, et al., 2010). In other term SQOL considers level of people’s satisfaction or dissatisfaction with different aspects of life (Royuela, et al., 2009), while objective approach measures QOL based on tangible and measurable condition of environment (Das, 2008; Royuela, et al., 2009). In fact condition of living environment can be measured based on people’s perception or independent of them, which the second one is called objective QOL (Apparicio, et al., 2008). QOL in this approach is investigated by secondary data such as population density, income and level of education (Li & Weng, 2007).

As QOL in objective approach may not reflect people’s perception of their living environment (Das, 2008), SQOL recently has gained much interest. According to (Das, 2008), perception of QOL is an individual experience which can be determined by asking people and not just by using secondary data and measurement. Also (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003), Lee (2008), (Rod. McCrea, et al., 2006) and many researchers believe that subjective approach is more valuable for QOL investigation, as it is based on people’s perception.

Speaking to recent importance of SQOL, it can be seen that in many studies by using pre-defined attributes and domains in different dimensions of life, people’s satisfaction and evaluation toward their life, individual as well as public life, is investigated. Some examples of such domains have been summarized in table 2. Considering this table it can be seen that all these domains can be summarized in social, economic, environmental, physical and transportation categories (Das, 2008; Sirgy, 2011; Ülengin, et al., 2001).

Table 2: Applied domains in different SQOL studies

QOL dimensions	Urban QOL indicators
Physical	Shops and services, religious centres, school, health service, recreational service, housing condition, availability of park and green space,
Social	Friendly people, safety, social programme and activities, education, relation with neighbours, personal involvement in neighbourhood activities,
Economic	Working life, cost of living, satisfactory job, accommodation cost, job opportunity, price of educational service,
Environmental	Condition of park, neighbourhood neatness, noise pollution, availability of parks and green areas,
Transportation & communication	Condition of road, public transport, condition of traffic, street safety,

Source: Author elaboration based on different researches by (Das, 2008), (Marans, 2003), (Rod. McCrea, Shyy, & Stimson, 2006), (Sirgy, 2011), (Ülengin, et al., 2001), (Richmond, Filson, Paine, Pfeiffer, & Taylor, 2000), (Dunning, et al., 2006), (Bonaiuto, et al., 2003), (Tuan Seik, 2000), (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003)

Considering domains in table 2, by application of statistical analysis, most important SQOL domains have been identified.

Speaking to recent interest in SQOL and as it is referred to individual perception, experience and appraisal of their life (Das, 2008) personal characteristics as well as the context affect it. Below, personal characteristics effects on perception of QOL are discussed.

2.1.2. Socio economic characteristics and perception of QOL

As discussed earlier, SQOL refers to individual appraisal and perception toward living environment and as a result personal characteristic greatly affect it (Marans, 2003). In fact, variations in socio economic characteristic among individual, groups and places lead to difference in perception of QOL (Apparicio, et al., 2008; Massam, 2002).

Regard to this fact, different studies tried to show how socio economic factors affect SQOL. In study by (Dunning, et al., 2006), it has been discussed that perception of QOL is affected by many factors as gender, age, sexuality and so one, while the gender is the most effective one. Therefore, it can be concluded that beside contextual effect, personal and socio economic characteristics have to be addressed in QOL study.

Till now different studies about influence of Socio economic factors on perception of QOL have been done. According to relevant researches; gender, marital status, income and employment, religion, age and many other factors significantly influence QOL which have to be taken into account (Carp & Carp, 1982; Kim & McKenry, 2002; Mulvey, 2002; Richmond, et al., 2000; Yoshida, 2011).

In the study by (Carp & Carp, 1982) influence of age and gender on fifteen dimensions of life which were extracted from factor analysis, have been examined. Based on results, age and gender greatly affect satisfaction of life. In fact, younger women expressed more satisfaction with the residential environment condition than men did while for older group it was totally reversed. Also Lee (1998) examined effect of gender and marital status on QOL. By application of five separate scale to measure QOL and hierarchical regression analysis, it has been revealed that marriage positively affect QOL. Also regard to gender, men are better off than women.

In other Study by Richmond et al. (2000) he showed that income, education, gender, marital status and age are associated with perceived QOL. According to his study, income and age positively are associated with QOL. In addition, he showed that while different researches have different results about effect of education, but in his study educated people are better off than other in term of QOL. Moreover regard to gender, it has been found that women and children have lower QOL.

(Davis & Fine-Davis, 1981) in their study about satisfaction of housing and neighbourhood; have considered effect of age, gender and income. Based on this research, while gender has relative effect on level of satisfaction, younger people and low-income people significantly reflected low satisfaction about QOL of their neighbourhood.

Due to consideration of socio economic factors in many QOL studies, (Yoshida, 2011) tried to analyse effect of respondents' background on gendered perception and differences in southeast Asian countries. Regard to this study, education, urbanization, age, income, marital status, religion and ethnicity influence gendered perception of their life. In fact based on this study findings, education has enlightened people about gender gap and as result, educated people expressed more concern about gender gap in QOL. Also due to less life opportunities and services in non-urbanized areas, people in these areas showed significant difference in gendered perception about their living environment. With regard to income, as high income people are less dependent of women earning, in high income area women are better off than low income women. Moreover, as most of south Asian counties are Muslim, by considering effect of religion, it has been revealed that as Muslim women have limitations for going out in night, their perception in night significantly varied from men.

So according to discussed literatures, it can be seen that while socio economic factors influence perception of QOL, gender is the most important one that significantly affect SQOL. Due to this fact, this research aims to capture SQOL from gendered perspective to see how QOL differs for women and men.

2.2. Gender and QOL

2.2.1. Definition of gender

According to (Larsson, 2001, p. 5) the concept of gender “ was created to distinguish cultural and social perceptions of what is considered by society to be male and female from the biological differences linked to sex”. In fact concept of gender, which is a cultural term, is used to distinguish social roles, responsibilities, characteristics, experience, needs which are assigned to women and men (Greed, 2005). Based on these definitions of gender, it can be seen that gender studies consider women’s and men’s need, role, perception at the same time, which are derived from socio economic context. In fact focus on gender is important as women’s perception and needs in relation to the men, can be defined (Larsson, 2001).

2.2.2. Gender perspective toward perception of QOL

As discussed earlier, QOL assessment, beside objective variables, originates from socio economic factors which need to be considered (Masthoff, et al., 2006). Among socio economic factors, it can be seen that gender has considerable effect on perception of QOL (Carp & Carp, 1982; Kim & McKenry, 2002; Mulvey, 2002; Richmond, et al., 2000; Yoshida, 2011).

From the other side, studies showed that women play important productive and reproductive roles within household and society (Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993) and this refers to significance of women consideration in QOL studies. In fact women are about half or even more than half of population (Larsson, 2001) and they are responsible for different kinds of activities rang from reproductive responsibility such as taking care of child and elders to productive responsibility as head of household and their role in labour market (Larsson, 2001; Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993) and this highlights the importance of consideration of women’s need, interest and perceptions.

But despite the essential roles that women play, they are ignored in most of planning process and policy making, which has led to gendered-blindness and women exclusive cities that negatively affect women’s perception (Greed, 2005). As an example of women blindness in cities, it can be mentioned to access to urban facilities and services, which basically drove difficulties for women.

In fact, most of urban facilities are constructed in such a way that only men can benefit them. Take transportation system as an example. Most of transport system services are based on mobility rather than accessibility and traditional zoning of city. As many women in spite of men, work in informal areas (not only business centres) and also they have different activities such as take care of child and elders (which is not accord to zoning system), they suffer from this system of transportation (Beall, 1996b; Greed, 2005).

In other aspects of QOL, gender study mentioned to limited job opportunities, low-paid job for women and informal jobs for women which negatively affected women's QOL and well-being (Larsson, 2001; Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993).

Speaking to importance of gender consideration and on-going QOL studies, still little has been done to investigate how QOL domains differ by gender (Dunning, et al., 2006). Indeed, given to gendered experience of city and different gendered responsibilities, women and men have different perception and priorities which has to be taken into account in planning process such as resource allocation, transport planning, housing and basic urban services (Beall, 1996a; Greed, 2005). Consequently looking at QOL from perspective of both men and women, can extract gendered perception and needs.

2.3. Gendered QOL and poverty

As discussed earlier, SQOL which refers to personal perception toward different dimension of life (Tsfazghi, et al., 2010) is influenced by personal characteristics. However, effects of context and objective QOL on individual perception cannot be ignored. In fact objective characteristic of environment such as poverty influence people's judgment about their living environment, which has to be taken into account (Marans, 2003).

From the other side, many researchers showed that women's perception has been ignored in many cities, which led to women exclusive city. This problem is worsen in deprived context where most of deprivation burden fall on women (Beall, 1998; Haynie & Gorman, 1999).

In fact relevant literatures proved that poverty is a gendered experience and women compared to men, suffer significantly from it (Beall, 1998; Haynie & Gorman, 1999; Tacoli, 2012). According to (Tacoli, 2012) due to on-going debates from mid-1990 about whether poverty is feminized, researchers believed that most of urban poor are women. In other words, despite of high contribution of women to labour market and city growth, they suffer more from poverty issues such as unequal access to facility, job opportunity and living condition, which affect women's perception of their living environment (Chant, 2011, cited by Tacoli, 2012).

Consequently, due to poor objective QOL for women, consideration of gendered QOL within deprived and non-deprived areas can help planners to recognize contextual and objective aspects that influenced either women or men QOL domains.

2.4. QOL conditions in city of Birmingham

In city of Birmingham, studies about people's perception toward their neighbourhoods (SQOL) and objective condition of environment have been done, which are discussed as follow.

• **Objective condition of life in Birmingham: Index of multiple deprivation**

England has provided index of multiple deprivation in 2010. In this index, different domains of income, employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, barriers to housing and services, crime, living environment have been applied to measure deprivation for UK cities (Birmingham City Council, 2010).

Also as mentioned earlier, QOL domains can be summarized in physical, social, economic, transportation and environmental aspects (Das, 2008; Sirgy, 2011; Ülengin, et al., 2001). Considering these categories from one side and applied domains in IMD, presented in table 3, it can be seen that except aspect of transportation, IMD covers different dimensions of QOL and it can be considered as objective QOL.

Table 3: IMD and QOL dimensions

Urban QOL attributes	
Physical Aspect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to housing and services(geographic barrier)
Social Aspect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and disability • Education, skills and training • Crime
Economic Aspect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income • Employment • Barriers to housing and services(affordability)
Environmental Aspect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living environment

Source: Author elaboration based on IMD and literatures (Das, 2008; Sirgy, 2011; Ülengin, Ülengin, & Güvenç, 2001)

Considering contextual nature of QOL and regard to reflection of objective QOL by IMD, it can be concluded that people in different areas by dealing with different deprivation issues, perceive their living environment differently. As a result IMD is used in order to see how gendered perceptions, across different contexts vary.

• **Subjective QOL in Birmingham: The annual Survey Opinion of 2008**

The annual survey opinion of 2008 as SQOL study, by application of face-to-face questionnaires, has been done in city ward level of Birmingham. This survey which reflected non-gendered SQOL, included different topics of satisfaction with the local area, community cohesion, sense of belonging, trust, support mechanism, involvement, safety, crime and anti-social behaviour, public services, digital media and general perspective (Be Birmingham, 2008).

According to this survey (further discussed in chapter 4), there is variation in SQOL throughout city of Birmingham. Also as this survey reflects non-gendered SQOL, it can be seen that either the extent that it covers gendered perception or aspects which are missed and have to be considered in this survey.

2.5. Applied approaches and methods in QOL studies

The concept of QOL has been considered from 1960 s in different fields of study (Das, 2008). Regard to on-going QOL studies, it can be seen that two main quantitative and qualitative methods have been used, which are explained below.

2.5.1. Quantitative methods

Till now most of QOL studies adopted different quantitative methods to capture either objective or subjective aspects of QOL. As an example it can be referred to studies by (Yoshida, 2011), (Ric van Poll, 1997), (Ülengin, et al., 2001), (Richmond, et al., 2000), (Marans, 2003), (Teshfazghi, et al., 2010), (Rod. McCrea, et al., 2006), (Li & Weng, 2007), Lee (1998), (Tuan Seik, 2000), (Das, 2008), (Royuela, et al., 2009) and (Bonaiuto, et al., 2003).

Considering different aims and objectives in all these studies, almost all of them by using close questionnaire, ranking different aspects of QOL based on people's satisfaction, statistical analysis, secondary data and quantitative analysis in GIS, measured QOL in different contexts. Moreover, by application of statistical analysis relation among socio economic factors and QOL has been examined.

Considering applied quantitative methods in mentioned studies, they are limited in term of getting insight about extracted QOL aspects. Moreover, quantitative methods cannot link respondents to geographic context. Regard to these limitations, qualitative approach has gained recent interest.

2.5.2. Qualitative methods

Regard to limitation of quantitative methods to capture details about QOL domains, determinant and spatial context for extracted QOL domains, qualitative methods recently have been subject of QOL studies. Due to this fact, recently small groups of social scientists have used qualitative techniques to capture people's perception toward QOL dimensions (Eby, et al., 2012; Evans & Jones, 2011).

In qualitative methods, researchers can get insight about most important domain of life and people's perception. Moreover, they can see spatial pattern of people's perception. However it has to be born in mind that by investigation in people's perception with qualitative methods, "gendered experience of individuals across multiple axes of difference" (Kwan, 2002, p. 650) can be investigated and the result cannot be generalized to whole population. Regard to different qualitative methods, adopted in QOL studies, are discussed as below.

2.5.2.1. Qualitative GIS and geocoding

Refer to aforementioned limitation of quantitative methods and GIS, qualitative GIS, which capture detail about spatial context of people's perception, has been addressed by researchers. In fact due to limitation of GIS which is data driven and just deal with quantitative data, recently in some studies, attempts to overcome this limitation have been done (Evans & Jones, 2011; Kwan, 2002, 2008; Sui & Delyser, 2012).

Take study by (Kwan, 2002, p. 646) as an example of qualitative GIS. She applied GIS in qualitative way which is "congenial to feminist epistemologies and politics." Also in other study by (Kwan, 2008), by application of expressive power of GIS, experience of Muslim women after 11 September event has been investigated. These studies, by adopting qualitative methods, captured women's perception and feeling, while their perception is assigned to spatial context.

Also in study by (Evans & Jones, 2011), walking interview and qualitative GIS have been applied. In fact in this study regard to limitation of quantitative method to link respondents' concern to specific location, walking interview has been conducted. This study shows that qualitative method can capture people's understanding of place as well as areas where they reflected specific concern and perception.

2.5.2.2. Qualitative interview

Considering mentioned literatures above, besides capturing location of perception, they basically involved with narrative and qualitative information to get insight about respondents' feeling and perception. In fact as qualitative methods such as personal interview, walking interview and group discussion provide detailed information about people's concerns, they are considered by researchers in QOL studies.

Regard to this fact in study by (Eby, et al., 2012), by adoption of focus group discussion, as qualitative group interview methods, key issues and main QOL themes have been extracted. Extracted issues which reflect people's QOL concern, in other focus group meetings, have been discussed and argued by policy makers.

In other study by (Dunning, et al., 2006), mixed method approach has been used to determine QOL domains. In fact first by application of quantitative methods, most important domains of QOL are extracted and then by face to face interview as a qualitative method, in-depth and detailed information about extracted QOL domains has been achieved.

Considering application of qualitative methods in studies above, since they provide insight about QOL aspects, current research aims to apply qualitative approach to investigate in gendered perception of QOL. Also by application of this approach, not only rich and in-depth data about gendered perception can be provided but also the spatial pattern of their perception can be captured.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

This chapter, which includes 3 phases, discusses about data collection, adopted methodology and data analysis in order to answer research questions.

3.1. First phase: pre data collection

In this phase, relevant literatures and studies about QOL approaches and gendered perception have been reviewed, which made basis for research problem and objectives as well. Also regard to research objectives, questions which needed to be responded, have been provided.

Later considering adopted case study approach in current study and comprehensive data provided for UK, it has been chosen as study area. Due to initial steps for gender study in Birmingham and also relevant local contacts, this city has been selected as case study. Then based on IMD and priority neighbourhoods and their issues (further discussed with details in chapter 4), three neighbourhoods in Birmingham have been selected to respond research questions.

3.2. Second phase: data collection

In this step, regard to main research objective which is investigation in gendered, qualitative methodology, has been adopted. Among qualitative methods, regard to easiness for finding people from one side and convenience for respondents and their preference (Elwood & Martin, 2000), open questionnaire and individual interview methods have been applied.

It has to be noted that to see variation in gendered perception across three different contexts (explained in below), sampling strategy for selection of neighbourhood and respondents is discussed as follow.

3.2.1. Sampling method

3.2.1.1. Applied criteria in selection of neighbourhoods

In Birmingham regard to condition of different neighbourhoods located in different wards, a list of most deprived neighbourhoods has been provided by local government (refer to appendix 1)

Also as discussed earlier, IMD shows pattern of deprivation in different wards throughout the Birmingham. So to investigate in gendered perception of QOL across different contexts and to see effect of socio economic characteristic on perception of neighbourhood, Sparkbrook and Kingstanding have been chosen as the two most deprived wards in different spatial location (further discussed in section 4.3).

Then based on relevant local contacts and also mentioned priority neighbourhoods list, Balsall Heath in Sparkbrook and Kingstanding Central in Kingstanding ward have been selected as the deprived neighbourhoods. For selection of non-deprived neighbourhood, based on IMD and location of potential respondents, Sutton Coldfield neighbourhood located in north of Birmingham, has been chosen.

3.2.1.2. Sampling method for selection of respondents

As qualitative methods will not lead to generalization of a concept to population, for selection of respondents, purposive sampling has been applied (Bryman, 2012). Among purposive sampling methods, snowball sampling has been used in this research.

Regard to this method and considering easiness and convenience for finding people, local community centres (Elwood & Martin, 2000) from list of existing centre (Birmingham City Council, 2012b) within selected neighbourhoods have been chosen.

Then first, numbers of questionnaires have been distributed in community centres among local people in working age group (between 15-64¹). It has to be mentioned that to get enough spatial variation in gendered perception, respondents have been chosen as independent person. In other words, no more than one person per family has been selected. Then respondents distributed other questionnaires to people who concern about their neighbourhood issues.

It should be born in mind that it is hard to define sample size in qualitative research before theoretical saturation (Bryman, 2012). But according to (Bryman, 2012), for qualitative research minimum number of samples should be between twenty and thirty. In this research 16 and 24 people, 21 women and 19 men, in non-deprived and two deprived neighbourhoods respectively, have been questioned. Considering variation found in people's responses (which are discussed in chapter 5), it has been found that more information in deprived neighbourhoods is needed. So more contacts with qualitative individual interview have been conducted. These two qualitative methods, open questionnaire and individual interview, are described below.

3.2.2. Qualitative approach

Generally speaking, most of QOL studies used quantitative methods to identify the most important domains of life. As discussed in section 2.5.1., while these methods can discover QOL domains, they can neither capture details about people's answers nor relate their answers to spatial context. In other words, we cannot realize to 'why' and 'where' in quantitative methods and due to this fact qualitative method recently has been given special attention. According to (Larsson, 2001, p. 15) "if research is carried out

¹: Based on literatures in section 2.1.2, age also influence perception of QOL. So consideration of children and elders may reveal difference in perception of QOL which is result of age rather than gender. Consequently, to investigate in gendered QOL, this research focused on working age and excluded children and elders.

through qualitative methods, such as case studies and in-depth interviews, women's world, with its possibilities and constraints is more likely to become visible".

Since qualitative approach, does not limit interviewees to defined questions and also as interviewees "are prompted by meanings and connections to the surrounding environment" (Evans & Jones, 2011, p. 849), they could provide insight about perception of people toward life. Regard to these facts, this study applied qualitative approach.

3.2.2.1. Open questionnaire

Considering easiness for finding people from one side and respondent's convenience and time issue, questionnaire methodology, has been applied. Among two kind of open and close questionnaire (Bryman, 2012), first one is adopted which provide more in-depth and detailed information. In fact as this study aims to see how people feel toward their neighbourhood, providing close questionnaires which may not cover their perception and concern, will not cover research objectives and that's why open questionnaire method has been adopted.

As discussed in section 3.2.1.2, by selection of some community centres, questionnaires have been distributed on 24th of September 2012 among local people who referred to these centres and have been collected on 30th of October 2012.

In distributed questionnaire, with four open questions, respondents have been asked to describe their neighbourhood according to their feeling and experiences (refer to appendix 2). Two questions referred to main aspects that respondents like and dislike in their neighbourhood and their reasons. By asking these questions, it was aimed to see the most important aspects of QOL that influence gendered perception, positively or negatively.

In addition, in order to see the pattern of gendered perception, they were asked to name the street, district and area, where according to their perception, they like or dislike. At the end they were asked to express any suggestions which are missed in questionnaire. To be added, in order to geo locate the respondents and also to see effect of personal characteristic, personal questions which covered their ethnicity, their post code and the contact number or ID (for more questions if needed) were provided in questionnaires. Table 4 shows information about distribution of questionnaires.

Table 4: Information about distributed open questionnaires

Neighbourhood	Level of deprivation	No. of distributed questionnaire	No. of collected questionnaire	Combination of collected questionnaire	Time span in 2012 year	
					Distribution	Collection
Balsall Heath	Deprived	25	12	6 women/6 men	24 th of September	3 th of October
Kingstanding Central	Deprived	25	12	6 women/6 men	4 th of October	16 th of October
Sutton Coldfield	Non-deprived	26	16	9 women/7 men	18 th of October	30 th of October

3.2.2.2. Qualitative Individual interview

Qualitative interview with people is another way of getting in-depth data. This method is much less structured and there is greater interest in interviewee's opinions rather than researcher's concerns and is more flexible (Bryman, 2012). There are two unstructured and semi structured ways of qualitative interview that the second way is adopted in this study. In fact as in unstructured way respondents can talk about what they prefer, they may talk about aspects which are irrelevant to this research and that is the reason of using semi structure method.

As mentioned in section 3.2.2.1, in distributed questionnaires, contact information has been asked. Considering this information from one side and variation found in some aspects of gendered QOL, individual interview via Skype and telephone with some local people have been done. This helped to get more insight about gendered perception. Table 5 shows information about conducted individual interview.

Table 5: Information of phone and online conversation

No. call	Duration	Method	Sex	Neighbourhood
First conversation	15:40	Video call Skype	Male	Balsall Heath
Second conversation	10:03	Video call Skype	Male	Balsall Heath
Third conversation	10:01	Telephone calling	Male	Balsall Heath
Forth conversation	15:03	Telephone calling	Female	Balsall Heath
Fifth conversation	20:00	Telephone calling	Female	Balsall Heath
Sixth conversation	9:00	Telephone calling	Female	Kingstanding Central
Seventh conversation	17:03	Telephone calling	Female	Kingstanding Central
Eighth conversation	15:30	Telephone calling	Male	Kingstanding Central
Ninth conversation	10:00	Telephone calling	Male	Kingstanding Central

3.2.3. Collected data

In this study to approach research objectives, two kinds of data have been collected:

Primary data: Regard to aforementioned methods, by asking local people about their neighbourhood, primary data about people's perception toward different domains of QOL, have been obtained.

Secondary data: In order to compare result of primary data (gendered perception) with non-gendered SQOL and to investigate in contextual effects, secondary data have been provided as below:

- Boundary-Line data adopted from Contains Ordnance Survey data @Crown copyright and data base (2012), Research Report: Annual Opinion Survey 2008 (Be Birmingham, 2008), Priority neighbourhoods; Kingstanding Central (Be Birmingham, 2012b), Index of Multiple Deprivation (Birmingham City Council, 2010), Population information in Birmingham (Birmingham City Council, 2011), Balsall Heath Neighbourhood Development Plan (Birmingham City Council, 2012a).

3.3. Third phase: data analysis

In this phase, primary data collected by qualitative methods, have been transcribed, coded and analysed in order to extract gendered domains of QOL.

- **Gendered QOL domains**

After collecting qualitative data by mentioned methods, to extract important aspects of QOL for women and men, all records, conversations and handwritings were transcribed and coded. There are different softwares, which help researcher to code qualitative data. In this research, Atlas Ti has been used. It has to be mentioned that there is no rule for coding but for better interpretation of results, codes should be reflective. In other term, they have to be clear and greatly reflect what people expressed. So in order to compare perception of people with non-gendered SQOL, it has been tried to extract codes which mostly are similar to reflected problems of priority neighbourhoods and IMD domains.

- **Gendered pattern of perception**

According to distributed questionnaires and questions asked during interview (appendix 2), respondents mentioned to areas and locations, where they have specific perception. All these areas have been geocoded in Atlas Ti. Then considering all geocoded areas, gendered pattern of perception have been drawn (further explained in chapter 5).

- **Interplay among gendered perception across different contexts**

Regard to extracted codes, which shows gendered QOL and variation among them in different neighbourhoods, gendered perception across different context has been compared. Also by network analysis in Atlas Ti, relation between context and gendered QOL has been analysed.

4. CASE STUDY INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to investigate in gendered perception of QOL at neighbourhood level. But as IMD and survey opinion of 2008, as objective and subjective QOL have been done at ward level, conditions of life in different aspects are described for selected wards. Since chosen neighbourhoods are within these wards, general perceptible about QOL in selected neighbourhood are reflected based on ward conditions.

4.1. Description of city of Birmingham

City of Birmingham is located in the West Midlands of England. Based on survey of 2010, this city is consist of 1036878 people (Birmingham City Council, 2011). Birmingham includes 40 wards, with different socio economic and spatial characteristic. Figure 3 shows location of Birmingham in UK.



Figure 3: Location of Birmingham in UK Source: Author elaboration in Arcmap based on (Contains Ordnance Survey data@Crown copyright and data base (2012)

4.2. Objective condition of life in Birmingham: Index of multiple deprivation (IMD)

As discussed in chapter 2, based on dimensions of employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, income, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment (Birmingham City Council, 2010) which cover objective dimensions of QOL, IMD has been provided at wards and Super

output area² level. Considering applied domains in IMD, pattern of deprivation, as figure 4, can be shown throughout Birmingham.

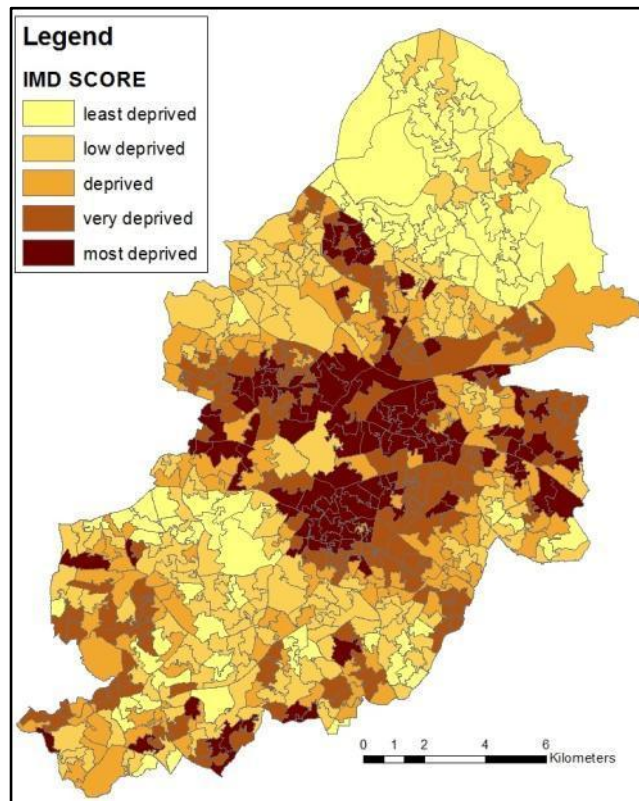


Figure 4: Pattern of deprivation in city of Birmingham Source: Author elaboration based on Contains Ordnance Survey data @Crown copyright and data base (2012), Birmingham City Council (2010)

4.3. Location of selected wards and neighbourhoods

As mentioned in chapter 3, two most deprived neighbourhoods of Balsall Heath and Kingstanding Central located in Sparkbrook and Kingstanding ward respectively and Sutton Coldfield as least deprived neighbourhood, which is extended across four wards of Sutton Four oaks, Sutton New Hall, Sutton Vesey and Sutton Trinity, have been chosen for this research. Figure 5 shows location of mentioned wards in city of Birmingham. It has to be mentioned that selected neighbourhoods are within these wards which are described with detail as follow.

²: Super output area: According to (Birmingham City Council, 2010)“The small areas used for the IMD are called super output areas (SOAs). There are a total of 32482 SOAs in England, each with a population of between 1,000 and 3,200. When created from Census output areas, SOAs fell wholly within wards but following the 2004 boundary changes this is no longer the case in Birmingham. They are small enough to identify problems within wards but large enough to avoid the dangers of breaching confidentiality.

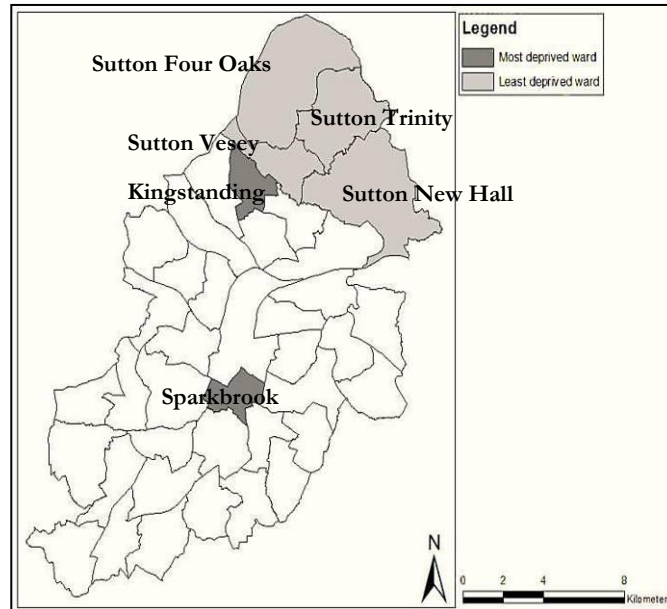


Figure 5: Location of selected wards in Birmingham Source: Author elaboration based on Contains Ordnance Survey data @Crown copyright and data base (2012)

4.4. Reflection of QOL in selected wards and neighbourhoods

- Objective QOL in Sparkbrook ward and Balsall Heath neighbourhood

Based on IMD, Sparkbrook is recognized as one of the most deprived ward in city of Birmingham. Regard to census 2011, this ward is consist of 32298 people (Birmingham City Council, 2011) and according to (Planning Balsall Forum, 2011) about half of population of Balsall Heath is from of South Asian with most being of Pakistan origin.

Regard to (Birmingham City Council, 2012a) Balsall Heath is considered as one of the most prior neighbourhoods, which based on IMD, presented in figure 6, suffer from high deprivation.

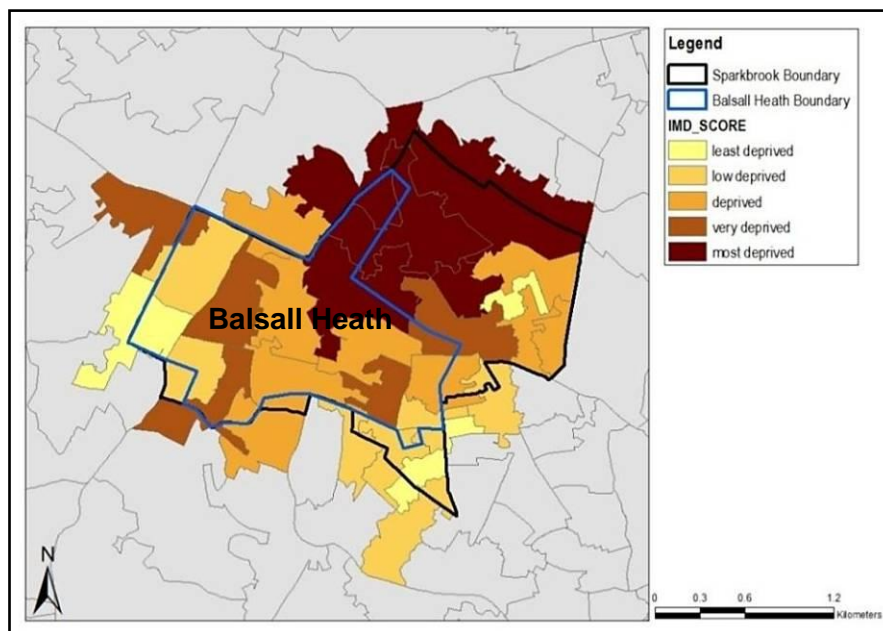


Figure 6: Pattern of deprivation in Sparkbrook ward Source: Author elaboration based on Contains Ordnance Survey data @Crown copyright and data base (2012), (Birmingham City Council, 2010) and (Birmingham City Council, 2012a)

Figure 7 reflects condition of deprivation in different dimensions separately. According to this figure, deprivation in education, training level and environmental condition is significantly high in this ward.

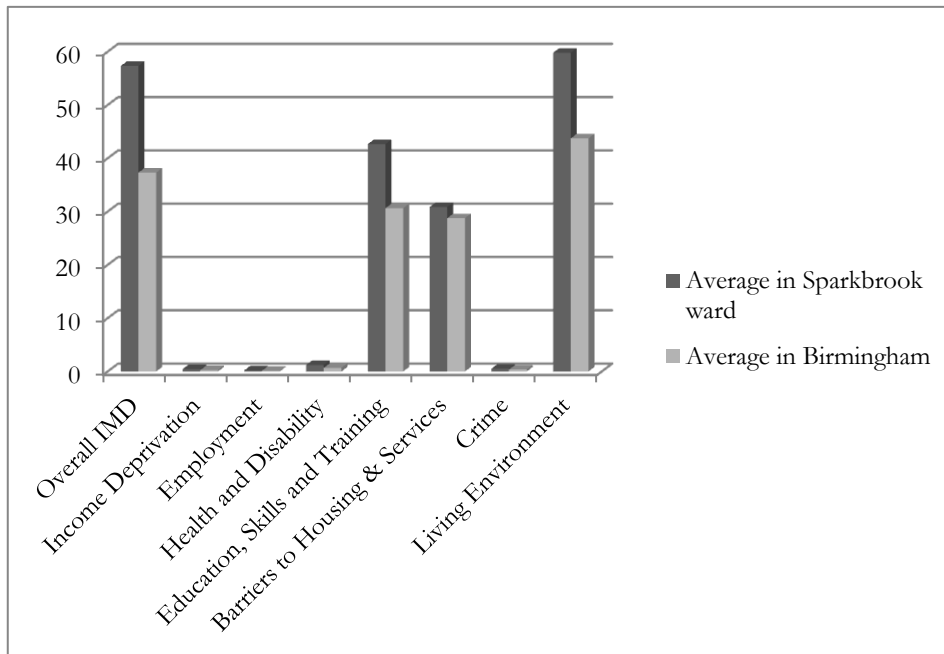


Figure 7: Comparison of IMD in Sparkbrook and Birmingham Source: Author elaboration based on (Birmingham City Council, 2010)

• Subjective QOL in Sparkbrook ward and Balsall Heath neighbourhood

In the survey opinion of 2008, people's opinion and feeling toward different aspects of life has been asked. The key issues examined in this survey include: local area, community cohesion, support mechanisms, involvement, crime, safety and anti-social behaviour, public services, digital media and wider perspectives (Be Birmingham, 2008). Regard to respondents, key issues identified for Sparkbrook ward are summarized in below:

- Low satisfaction with their living area
- Strong intention for leaving their living environment
- Unclean area
- High use of public transport and limited public transport service
- High community involvement
- Good reputation in city
- High sense of belonging to their living area
- High level of trust to people
- Feeling safe (Be Birmingham, 2008)

Moreover considering neighbourhood development plan provided by Birmingham city council for Balsall Heath, following issues have been recognized:

- Problems in finding decent and affordable housing
- Uneven road pavement
- Vehicle congestion
- Limited parking spaces (Birmingham City Council, 2012a)



Figure 8: Balsall Heath streets condition

• **Objective QOL in Kingstanding ward and Kingstanding Central neighbourhood**

As perception of neighbourhood is also influenced by socio economic factors, Kingstanding as one of the most deprived wards by having different background ethnicity (compared to Sparkbrook) has been chosen to see how socio economic characteristic affect perception of QOL. Based on census 2011, 24627 people live in this ward which the majority is white British people (Birmingham City Council, 2011).

Considering pattern of deprivation and location of Kingstanding Central in figure 9, it can be seen that it is located at the most deprived part of the ward, which implies to low objective QOL in this neighbourhood.

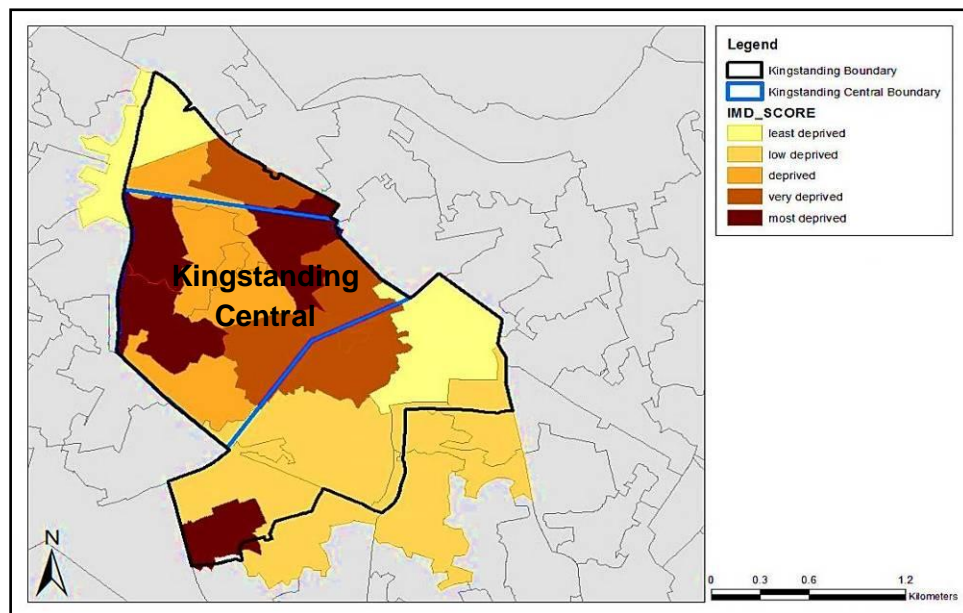


Figure 9: Pattern of deprivation in Kingstanding ward Source: Author elaboration based on Contains Ordnance Survey data @Crown copyright and data base (2012), (Birmingham City Council, 2010) and (Birmingham City Council, 2012a)

Based on the figure 10, which compared level of deprivation in Kingstanding with whole city, it can be seen that Kingstanding mostly suffer from deprivation in aspects of education, skill, training and living environment.

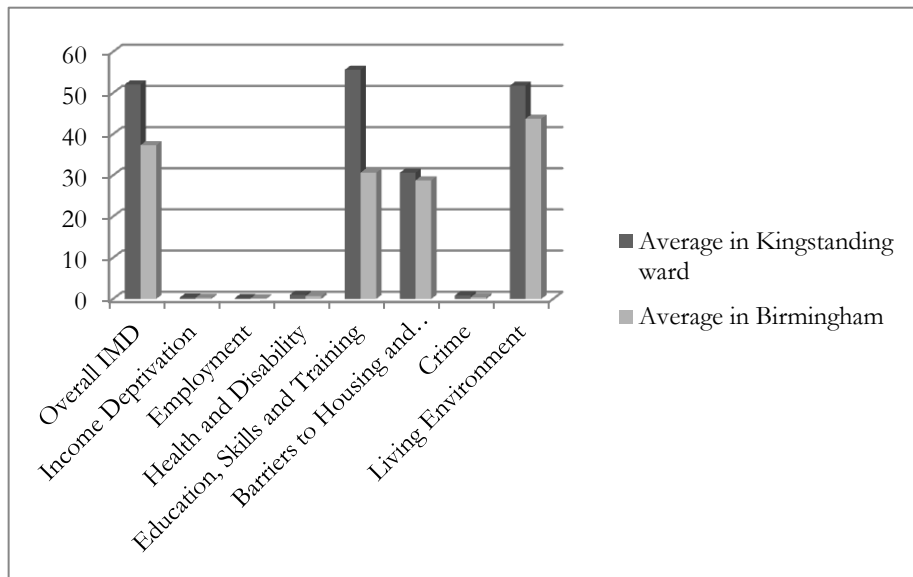


Figure 10: Comparison of IMD in Kingstanding and Birmingham Source: Author elaboration based on (Birmingham City Council, 2010)

• Subjective QOL in Kingstanding ward and Kingstanding Central neighbourhood

As mentioned before, in survey opinion of 2008, local people's opinion in different aspects have been investigated. Regard to results, following issues express most important problems in Kingstanding:

- Bad reputation in city
- Strong intention for leaving their living area
- Low level of community involvement and sense of place
- Being unwelcoming to ethnic minority
- Low level of trust
- Insecurity and anti-social behaviour
- Relatively clean street
- Limited public transportation facilities (Be Birmingham, 2008)

• Objective QOL in Sutton Coldfield³

Due to location of potential respondents who were distributed among four wards of Sutton Four oaks, Sutton New Hall, Sutton Vesey and Sutton Trinity from one side and as all these four wards are called

³: It has to be mentioned that as Balsall Heath and Kingstanding have been recognized as prior deprived neighbourhoods, relative boundary for them have been provided by (Be Birmingham, 2012a) but in Sutton Coldfield combination of all reflected wards, is called Sutton Coldfield and there is no boundary for this neighbourhood.

Sutton Coldfield by local people, combination of these wards, named Sutton Coldfield neighbourhood, have been chosen.

According to census 2011, 91986 people live in this neighbourhood. Based on IMD dimension, Sutton Four oaks, Sutton New Hall, Sutton Vesey and Sutton Trinity are the least deprived wards in city of Birmingham which refers to high objective QOL condition in Sutton Coldfield, while some pockets of deprivation can be seen as figure 11 (Birmingham City Council, 2012c).

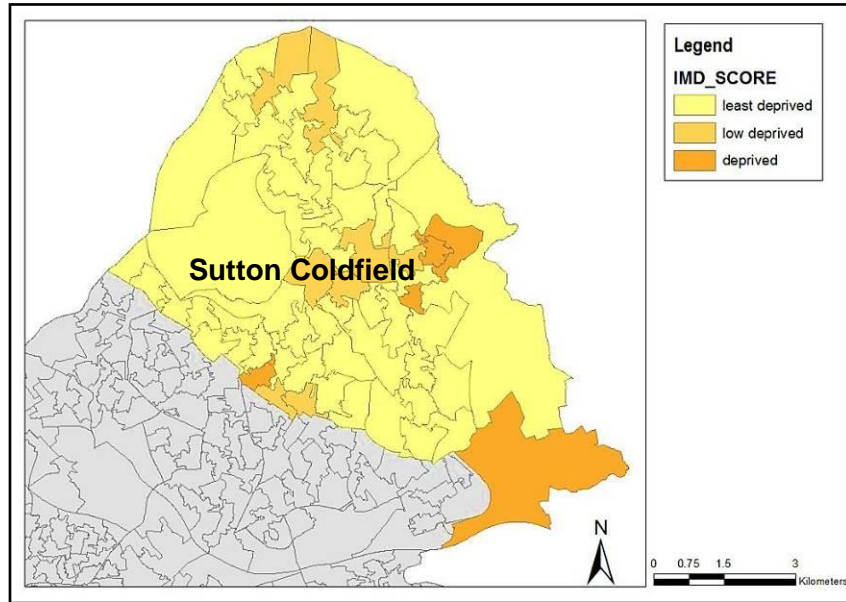


Figure 11: Pattern of deprivation in Sutton Coldfield Source: Author elaboration based on Contains Ordnance Survey data @Crown copyright and data base (2012),(Birmingham City Council, 2010) and (Birmingham City Council, 2012c)

According to different aspects of deprivation in figure 12, it can be seen that this neighbourhood benefits high from objective QOL in dimensions of education, household income and living environments.

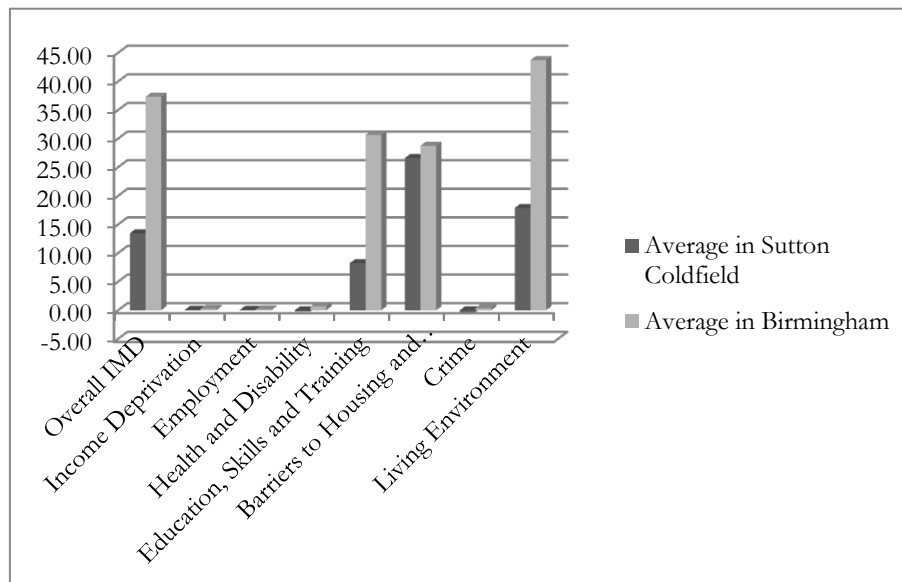


Figure 12: Comparison of IMD in Sutton Coldfield and Birmingham Source: Author elaboration based on (Birmingham City Council (2010)

Based on the figure above, while deprivation in aspect of barrier to housing and service is relatively close to city, in other aspects, level of deprivation for Sutton Coldfield is remarkably low which implies to high objective QOL dominate in Sutton Coldfield.

• **Subjective QOL in Sutton Coldfield neighbourhood**

Regard to local people's responses in the survey opinion of 2008, following issues represent existing condition of Sutton Coldfield:

- High level of satisfaction with local area
- Good reputation in city of Birmingham
- Low intention for leaving their area
- Relatively high community involvement
- High sense of place
- High level of trust
- Feeling safe
- Clean area
- High satisfaction from facilities
- Good transport service (Be Birmingham, 2008)

4.4.1. General conclusion

Perception of QOL refers to a concept, which is affected by both personal characteristics and condition of context, where people belong to. In fact, beside personal characteristics, objective conditions and contextual characteristics of living environment remarkably affect people's satisfaction and judgment of about their life.

Regard to this fact, as discussed for three selected neighbourhoods; while Sparkbrook and Kingstanding, based on IMD suffer from high deprivation in different aspects of life, good objective conditions of life dominate in Sutton coalfield. Consequently, people within these two deprived areas have expressed dissatisfaction and concerns toward many issues, while in Sutton Coldfield people mentioned to many positive aspects of their living environment in the survey opinion of 2008.

Considering quantitative methods adopted in IMD and the survey opinion of 2008 and general perspective applied in these two studies, in following chapters, perception of QOL with gendered lens has been investigated. Also by application of qualitative method, gendered perceptions of details have been studied.

5. RESULTS OF DIFFERENT NEIGHBOURHOODS

In this chapter based on obtained results of coding, first similarity in gendered QOL and then aspects that gendered group showed differences in perception of details or are perceived exclusively by women or men, are presented for each neighbourhood in separate sections. To be added, in both sections, aspects of QOL based on their positive and negative effects respectively and their importance to respondents are presented. At the end, regard to reflected areas of perception by respondents, gendered pattern of perception is presented.

5.1. Gendered perception of QOL in Balsall Heath neighbourhood

To get insight about gendered perception of their living environment and issues that people perceive in Balsall Heath, 12 respondents from local people, 6 women and 6 men who originally were from Pakistan, were questioned about aspects that they like as well as dislike. Figure 13 shows location of respondents.



Figure 13: Location of respondents in Balsall Heath Source: Author elaboration in Google earth based on postcodes in collected questionnaires

5.1.1. Similarity in gendered QOL domains in Balsall Heath

Considering responses and results of coding, similar gendered QOL domains are presented in figure 14.

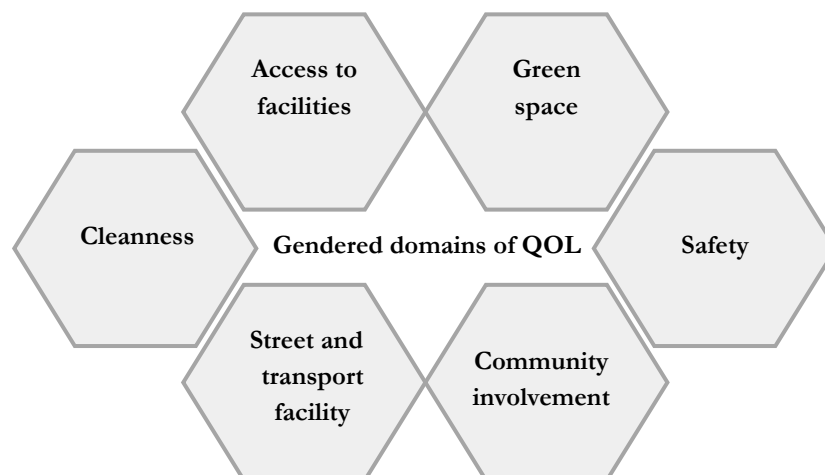


Figure 14: Similar gendered domains of QOL in Balsall Heath

Speaking to details of extracted domains of QOL in figure 14 and different dimensions of QOL (refer to table 2), gendered QOL domains in Balsall Heath are summarized with details in the table 6.

Table 6: Similar gendered domains of QOL in Balsall Heath categorized in different dimensions

QOL dimensions	Domains	Sub domains	
		Positive aspects	Negative aspects
Physical	Access to facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having access to daily facilities like groceries stores • Having social centres • Having sport centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of restaurant and food store • Limited equipped supermarkets
	Green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available park activities • Having beautiful park; Cannon Hill 	
Social	Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel safe • Friendly people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling unsafe • Limited social centres for youth
	Community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social communication with other people • Religious centres as place to contact with other • Park as a place for social communication 	
Transportation & communication	Street and transport facility		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bumpy road • Lack of taxi base • Limited parking space • Lack of petrol station • Limited bus stops and related facilities • Shady and dirty streets
Environmental	Cleanness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited recycle bins • Dirty street • Messy street due to lot of trees • Noisy street

Regard to table 6 it can be seen that in Balsall Heath, gender group have expressed similarity in different dimensions of QOL rang from physical to social and environmental domains. Also according to sub domains presented in table 6, existing and accessible facilities, park, community and social involvement positively influence gendered perception while limited equipped supermarkets, street condition, safety issue, limited transport facilities and cleanness issues have been reflected as negative domains of QOL.

However, it has to be kept in mind that table 6 shows similar QOL domains for women and men respondents, while gendered perception of details in some domains are varied. So domains with similar gendered perception have been discussed in below.

➤ **Access to facilities⁴**

According to perception of respondents', beside gendered difference in access to some sort of facilities (explained in section 5.1.2) basically most of respondents mentioned to different facilities exist in Balsall Heath, which meet their needs and demands. However, some of them believed that there should be also restaurant and food stores in their neighbourhood.

➤ **Green space; Cannon Hill Park**

From the responses, it has been found that Cannon Hill Park is remarkable green area, as it has been mentioned by most of respondents, not just as green space but also as a place with lots of activities involved.

"I like Cannon Hill Park. It is beautiful. It also has many activity centres within the park."(Female respondent A)

"Cannon Hill Park is a lovely place as it has the theatre and the natural centre."(Male respondent B)

➤ **Community involvement**

One aspatial domain of QOL, which has been expressed by most of respondents, is social interaction with people. Most of respondents believed that living with others who mostly are Muslims mean a lot to them and make them motivated about their neighbourhood activities.

"We have nice neighbourhood. People are friendly and helpful. In fact most of us are Muslim and consequently we have strong feeling of each other's. We don't fight with each other and care of each ones." (Male respondent H)

"We are Muslims. We are kind with each other's. We take care of each other's." (Female respondent I)

Moreover, some respondents believed that social interactions with neighbours who care about each other make them relatively feel safe and comfortable.

➤ **Cleanness**

Regard to responses, beside some pollution issues which are just expressed by men respondents (explained in section 5.1.2), basically most of women and men believed that too many trees in some areas, made streets look dirty and messy.

"Too many trees make much messy with leaves and can make frustrating as area look messy". (Female respondent E)

"In our area, too many trees make the roads look dark and in the winter very messy with leaves". (Male respondent D)





In fact, it can be seen that despite park and green space positively affected gendered perception, mess of trees make streets look dirty and messy, which need to be arranged.

⁴: In all neighborhoods, for ethical and privacy consideration, instead of respondents' names, ID codes based on alphabet letters have been assigned to respondents.

5.1.2. Differences in gendered perception of QOL domains in Balsall Heath

While women and men respondents shared similarity in some aspects of QOL (discussed in section 5.1.1) but in some similar domains they expressed different perception of details. In addition, there are some aspects which are reflected by men or women exclusively, which all are presented in table 7.

Table 7: Differences in gendered perception of QOL domains in Balsall Heath

Differences in perception of detail toward similar QOL domains			QOL domains expressed exclusively by women or men						
Physical aspect: Access to facility <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Women</th> <th>Men</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having library • Historical Moseley bath • Limited youth social centre • Lack of news agencies • Lack of gift shop • Limited equipped stores </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having Cricket league • Lack of petrol station • Limited male sport centres • Limited branches for sitting • Lack of internet cafe </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Women	Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having library • Historical Moseley bath • Limited youth social centre • Lack of news agencies • Lack of gift shop • Limited equipped stores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having Cricket league • Lack of petrol station • Limited male sport centres • Limited branches for sitting • Lack of internet cafe 	 <p>Moseley bath as great value</p>	Environmental aspect: pollution <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Men</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noisy area around cricket league • Limited recycle bin </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noisy area around cricket league • Limited recycle bin
Women	Men								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having library • Historical Moseley bath • Limited youth social centre • Lack of news agencies • Lack of gift shop • Limited equipped stores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having Cricket league • Lack of petrol station • Limited male sport centres • Limited branches for sitting • Lack of internet cafe 								
Men									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noisy area around cricket league • Limited recycle bin 									
Transportation aspect: Street condition and transport facilities <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Women</th> <th>Men</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shady street • Lack of privacy • Limited bus stops and related facility </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bumpy road • Limited parking space • Light exposure • Poor lighting • Lack of petrol station • Lack of taxi base </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Women	Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shady street • Lack of privacy • Limited bus stops and related facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bumpy road • Limited parking space • Light exposure • Poor lighting • Lack of petrol station • Lack of taxi base 	 <p>Bumpy road</p>	Physical aspect: Housing condition <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Men</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of double glaze in houses • Lack of financial support for house renting and repair • Old structure </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of double glaze in houses • Lack of financial support for house renting and repair • Old structure
Women	Men								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shady street • Lack of privacy • Limited bus stops and related facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bumpy road • Limited parking space • Light exposure • Poor lighting • Lack of petrol station • Lack of taxi base 								
Men									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of double glaze in houses • Lack of financial support for house renting and repair • Old structure 									
Social aspect: Safety <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Women</th> <th>Men</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling safe due to friendly people • Shady street and feeling unsafe • Lack of privacy • Kidnapping • Rubbery • New arrival </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel unsafe during driving due to poor lighting </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Women	Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling safe due to friendly people • Shady street and feeling unsafe • Lack of privacy • Kidnapping • Rubbery • New arrival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel unsafe during driving due to poor lighting 	 <p>Limited parking space</p>	Economic aspect: Job opportunity <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Women</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited job for women </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited job for women
Women	Men								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling safe due to friendly people • Shady street and feeling unsafe • Lack of privacy • Kidnapping • Rubbery • New arrival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel unsafe during driving due to poor lighting 								
Women									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited job for women 									
		 <p>Mosques as place to contact other</p>	Physical aspect: Historical value <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Women</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moseley bath as great historic value </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moseley bath as great historic value 				
Women									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moseley bath as great historic value 									

According to table 7, it can be seen that there are differences in gendered perception of details toward domains of access to some sorts of facilities, transportation, street condition and safety. Also street pollution, housing condition, job opportunity and historical value have been reflected exclusively by women or men. However it has to be noted that as respondents have been asked by semi structured questions, they reflected their main and prior concerns. While if they have been asked by predefined list of QOL domains, they might have concerns about other issue which they did not express in unstructured way. So it cannot be said that domains in right column of table 7, are exclusive male or female aspects of QOL. But as they have been mentioned by women or men only, it can be concluded that they reflect aspects which are extremely important for each gender group.

➤ **Physical domains: Access to facilities**

While both women and men have concern about existing facilities in Balsall Heath, their perceptions toward facilities differ. In fact beside access to shopping stores, which both gendered group mentioned to, most of women concerned about limited variation in shopping centres, existing library and limited youth social centres while men respondents mostly referred to cricket league, sport centres and basically driving services in their neighbourhood.

➤ **Physical domain: Library and bath**

As women respondents showed that they are more involved in social activities of their neighbourhood, they admired having historical bath due to its value as well as library as good place for social and academic activities.

➤ **Social domain: Safety**

While safety is gendered experience in Balsall Heath, but women referred to personal safety while men mentioned to safety in driving.

“Trees are more or less everywhere on our road Cannon Hill road and other road. It can make it a bit dark. Also in the winter, makes me feel a bit unsafe and very messy due to leaves.” (Female respondent A)

In Cannon hill road there are bunch of trees beside roads. It is nice but too many. So they made the road dark, shady, especially in night when I am driving, I cannot see well. “(Male respondents H)

Moreover according to responses, it has been found that perception of safety for women also stem from other issues include previous robbery, kidnapping and new arrivals. However, beside these issues, having friendly people around who care about each other is accounted as positive points for some women as it makes them to feel relatively safe.

➤ **Transport domain: Street condition**

While street condition and transportation is perceived by both gender group, their perception toward this domain is different. In fact, women respondents expressed concern about improper lighting due to mess of trees, lack of privacy in some area and limited bus facility, while men concerned driving issues and aspects which negatively affect their driving condition such as poor lighting, bumpy road and limited petrol station. Moreover as cricket league is an important male centre, it drew men's perception to areas around league and some of them referred to limited parking spaces, limited recycle bins and noise pollution around cricket league.

➤ **Economic domain: Job opportunity**

Job issue is an aspect of QOL which has been reflected by women respondents only. In fact, while some women respondents expressed concern regard difficulty in job finding, male did not. So regard to details of responses, it has been revealed that lack of qualification and skill among women are most important reason for difficulty in job finding.

"People here are not satisfied with job and financial issues. We don't have lot of job here. It is not only in this neighbourhood. Now in most part of UK job is a big issue. Also it depends on your education. For women here, as most of them do not have good qualification, they cannot find job easily."(Male respondents G)

"Here there are not job opportunities for women. There are some kinds of working job which demand men. Even for men it is not easy. I was searching for one my friend's son, but we could not find job."(Female respondents G)

➤ **Physical domain: Housing condition**

One aspect of QOL, reflected only by men, is about housing issues. In fact some men respondents expressed problems in housing domain such as lack of double glazing house, lack of financial support for renovation or renting house, old structure of houses and lack of facilities for disable people, but women did not mentioned to housing issues.

➤ **Environmental domain: Pollution**

While women and men both concerned about mess of trees which made some streets look dirty and dark, other pollution issues have been reflected by some men respondents only. In fact as cricket league is male centre, men have been more aware of issues as noise pollution, light exposure and limited recycle bins in streets around.

5.1.3. Variation among perception of female respondents in Balsall Heath

According to details of respondents beside variation in gendered perception, among women's respondents two opposite perceptions toward access to shopping stores in Balsall Heath have been found.

"I go shopping around 2 times a week and I walk as I'm not in hurry. If I need more things for special days such as gift I have to go to city centres, as we do not have gift shops as well as shopping centres are not so big and equipped. I mean they demand our daily needs but they do not have everything. They are not so close but it is fine for me as make me to walk which is good for my health."(Female respondents I)

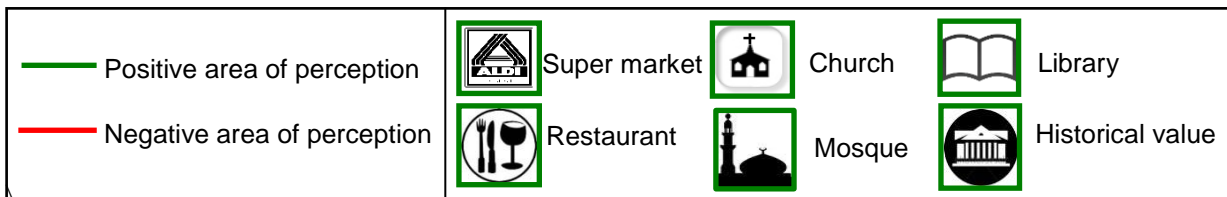
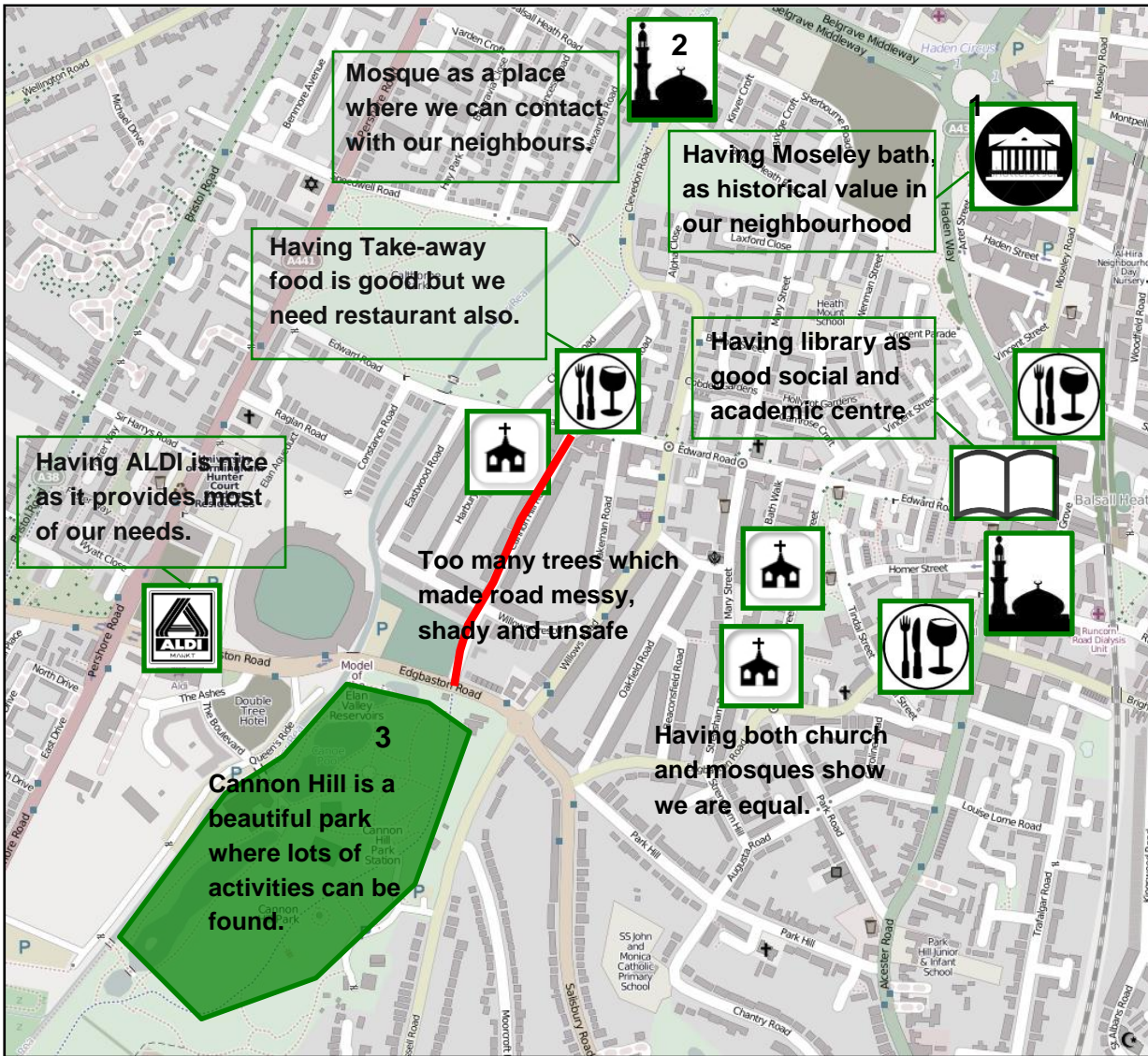
"First of all we do not have big shopping centres in my neighbourhood. We have some small stores, groceries, but they are not big and they do not have all needed goods."(Female respondents G)

According to results, it has been revealed this variation is arisen from employment status. In fact based on employed women, Balsall Heath suffers from limited equipped shopping centres which force women to go other parts of city to provide their needs. But women, who do not work, perceived their neighbourhood with good shopping centres as spending some time to go to city centre is part of their daily activities and does not have negative effect on their perception.

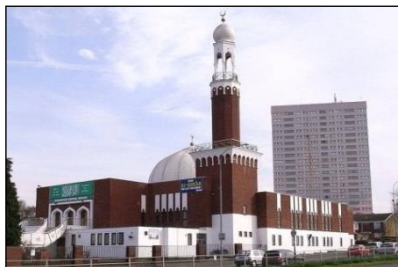
5.1.4. Gendered pattern of perception in Balsall Heath

Regard to discussed gendered QOL domains, respondents mentioned to areas where these domains are assigned to. According to reflected areas by respondents, their pattern of perception has been drawn as figure 15 and 16. In fact, since discussed QOL domains imply to specific areas, there are patterns for gendered perception.

Also while there are some overlap and similarity among female and male pattern of perception such as existing facilities, but men basically expressed concerns more about roads and cricket league issues while women mostly concerned about facilities and social centres.



No 1: Moseley bath

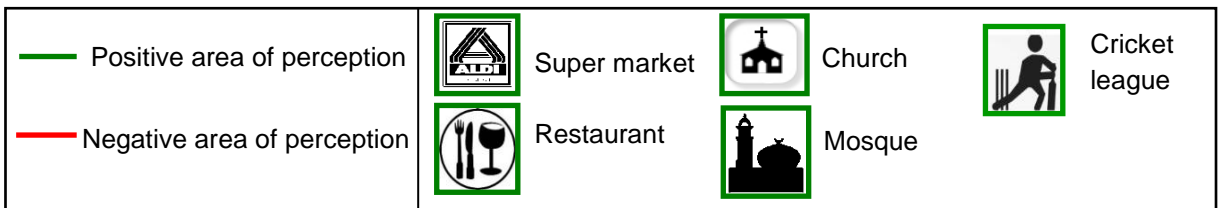
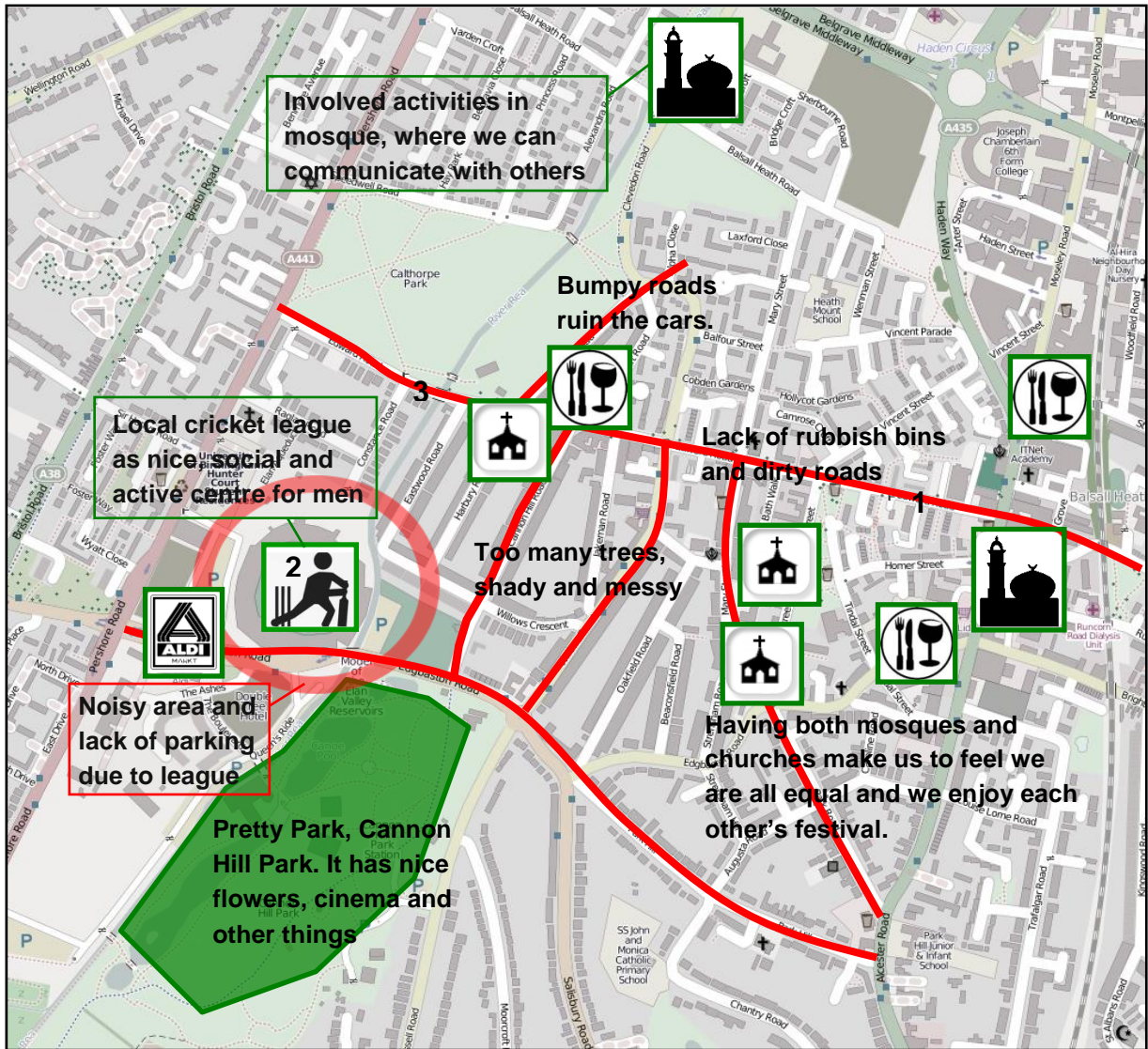


No 2: Central mosque



No 3: Cannon Hill Park

Figure 15: Female pattern of perception toward QOL domains in Balsall Heath neighborhood Source: Author elaboration based on information of collected questionnaire and individual interview and map layout from © OpenStreetMap contributors



No 1: Dirty Street



No 2: Cricket league



No 3: Bumpy road

Figure 16: Male pattern of perception toward QOL domains in Balsall Heath neighborhood Source: Author elaboration based on information of collected questionnaire and individual interview and map layout from © OpenStreetMap contributors

5.2. Gendered perception of QOL in Kingstanding Central neighbourhood

Kingstanding Central, as one of the most deprived neighbourhood with different population ethnicity (majority white), has been studied to see how socio economic characteristics in different deprived context affect gendered perception. 12 respondents, 6 women and 6 men, with location presented in figure 17, were questioned about aspects of their neighbourhood that affect their perception, negatively or positively.

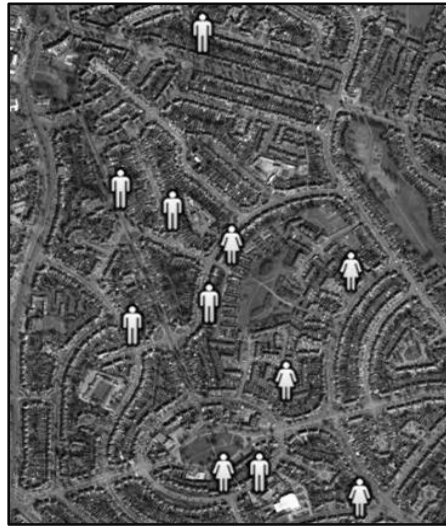


Figure 17: Location of some of respondents in Kingstanding Central. Source: Author elaboration in Google earth based on postcodes in collected questionnaires

5.2.1. Similarity in gendered QOL domains in Kingstanding Central

Reflected responses in Kingstanding revealed that beside differences in gendered perception toward aspects of children poverty and job finding (explained in section 5.2.2) women and men shared similarity in other domains of life with similar perception of detail as well. The figure 18 shows these domains.

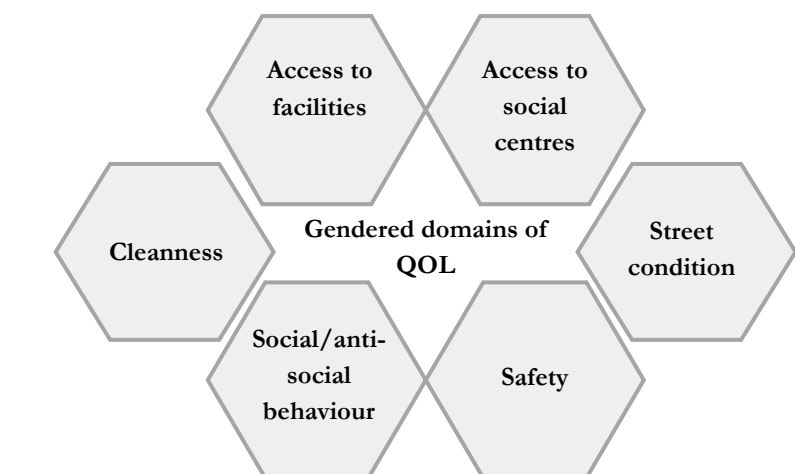


Figure 18: Similar gendered domains of QOL in Kingstanding Central

Considering the categories mentioned before in literatures by (Das, 2008), (Sirgy, 2011) and (Ülengin, et al., 2001), the table 8 presents different domains of QOL in specific dimensions.

Table 8: Similar gendered domains of QOL in Kingstanding Central categorized in different dimensions

QOL dimensions	Domains	Sub domains	
		Positive aspects	Negative aspects
Physical	Access to facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping centres • Health centres • Community café 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited police stations
	Access to social centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community centres • Charity • Churches • Club • Supportive facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited social centres for children
Transportation & communication	Street condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of shopping centres in streets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug use in street • Alcoholism in street • Limited police in street • Racism experience • Dirty streets • Noisy street
Social	Safety		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug use • Alcoholism use • Limited police • Existing Gangs around • Domestic abuse • High Crime • Racist behaviour • Bad behaviour by people • Lack of confidence in people • Low qualified parent
	Social/anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly people 	
Environmental	Cleanness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty street • Noisy street

Regard to table 8, QOL domains, based on positive and negative effects are discussed respectively.

➤ **Access to facilities and social centres**

Based on details of responses, women and men both showed similar perception in domain of access to facilities. In fact, they believed that they have all needed facilities such as café, shopping centres, health and community centres around which meet their demands and needs within Kingstanding Central.

➤ **Safety**

One important aspect of gendered perception in Kingstanding, is lack of safety. In fact, most of women and men respondents believed that their neighbourhood suffer from existing alcoholism, gang in some areas, drug use and children abuse, which made their area unsafe.

“The bad thing is drug! That causes lot of problems for community. It is big deal and makes lot of trouble. Lot of people here are involving in crime and drug.”(Male respondent D)

“Pimple hill, park is not safe because of gangs around.”(Female respondent A)

Regard to responses, it has been found that safety is a big issue in Kingstanding as it affect people’s perception toward existing local park and neighbourhoods shopping centres. Kingstanding have considerable neighbourhood Centrum, Conker Island, where many shopping stores, café, community centres exist, but safely issues make this area unsafe. Also due to insecurity in Kingstanding, some respondents believed that limited polices around to take care of these issues, make this situation worse.

“I have to call police twice even when police is here.” (Male respondent A)

“We need police to take care of use. No more danger outside” (Female respondent B)

➤ **Street condition**

Kingstanding streets condition has been mentioned by both women and men. Generally, respondents believed that although they have street which are covered with lot of shopping centres that are open in night, existing gangs around, drug sellers, alcoholism made streets unsafe.

“There are big gangs when you go out of shops.”(Male respondent F)

“Shopping centres are open till 10 clocks. When you are returning, the paths are not so friendly and comfortable.” (Female respondent A)

Furthermore, beside safety issues, existing asbestos and noise pollution are also reflected by some of respondents regard to streets conditions. So it can be seen that while gender group concern about street condition, they mainly regard safety and social issues dominate in streets rather than physical and objective aspects of streets, and this implies to significance of dominant social issues in Kingstanding.

➤ **Social/Anti-social characteristic**

The other negative aspect of QOL experienced by some women and men respondents is related to social/anti-social behaviour of local people in Kingstanding. According to respondent, this neighbourhood basically includes low qualified and uneducated families which has driven to side effects such as lack of self-confidence among people, unemployment and left over children.

Moreover, in term of anti-social behaviour, respondents who originally were from Asia and Africa, believed that their neighbourhood is racist against people with other originalities. Being stopped by police several times and bad behaviour of people against them are perceived as kind of racist behaviour that they have experienced in Kingstanding, while other respondents’ expressed satisfaction regard friendly people in their areas.

5.2.2. Differences in gendered perception of QOL domains in Kingstanding Central

Beside discussed similarity in gendered perception of QOL, there are some aspects of gendered differences, which are discussed as below.

➤ Job opportunity

One aspect of gendered differences found in Kingstanding, is related to limited job opportunities, which has been expressed just by women. In fact some women respondents indicated they suffer from limited job opportunities and unemployment in their neighbourhood, which has led to issues such as low qualified parent, lack of confidence, limited resources in family. In addition, it has been found that limited job opportunities, beside economic effects, have influenced the way that children are brought up.

➤ Children poverty

The other aspect mentioned just by female respondents, is related to children issues.

"Kids need some kind of activities. They needs some activities, no body engage them in activities. They have nothing constructive to them.... Kids need to be engaged in many activities.... It is because of resource. If they have some centres so they can bring up well."(Female respondent C)

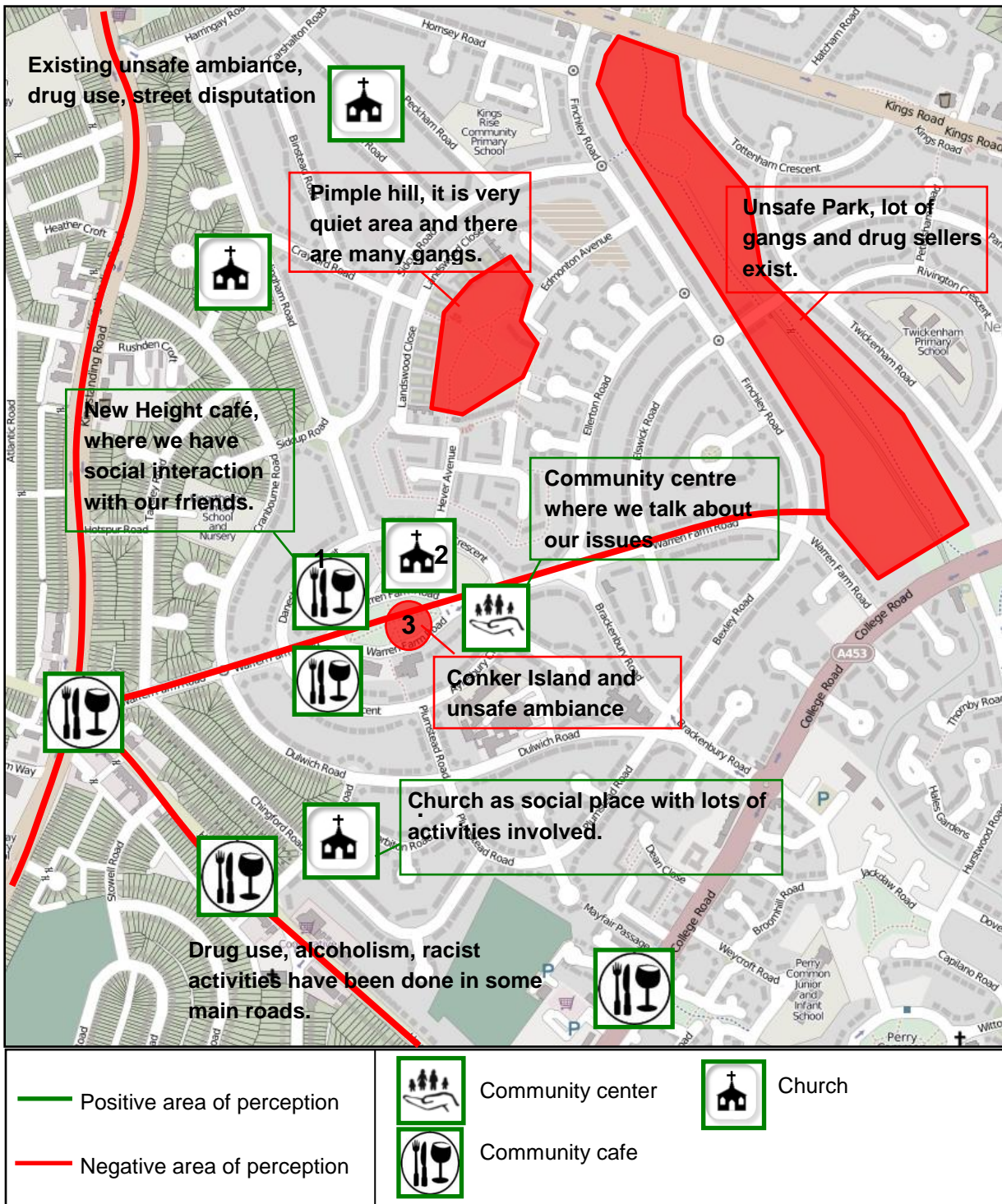
"We have massive impact as youth were anywhere as there were no activities for young people... Not every child has enough resource because of their parent."(Female respondent F)

Based on responses, it has been found that limited activities for children to be involved, bad behaviour shown by children and low qualified parents to bring children up have been mentioned as aspects of children issues.

5.2.3. Gendered pattern of perception in Kingstanding Central

Considering reflected perception of QOL toward domains and areas where these domains are assigned to, gendered pattern of perception has been drawn as figure 19.

Regard to figure 19, it has to be noted that in Kingstanding Central, gendered differences are related to job opportunity and children poverty, which are aspatial aspects of QOL. As a result, there is similar pattern of perception for both women and men.



No 1: New Height cafe



No 2: Christ The King church



No 3: View to Conker Island

Figure 19: Gendered pattern of perception toward QOL domains in Kingstanding Central neighborhood Source: Author elaboration based on information of collected questionnaire and individual interview and map layout from © OpenStreetMap contributors

5.3. Sub conclusion: variation in gendered perception across Balsall Heath and Kingstanding Central

Before moving to Sutton Coldfield as a non-deprived context, due to similar deprivation in Kingstanding and Balsall Heath, this section incorporates a sub conclusion about variation in gendered perception within these two deprived neighbourhoods.

Generally due to feminization of poverty, difference in gendered perception of QOL is expected in Balsall Heath and Kingstanding as two most deprived contexts. From the other side, these two neighbourhoods are located in different parts of city (according to figure 5) and based on contextual effect on perception of QOL (Marans, 2003) aspects of gendered differences seem to be different. So comparison in extent of gendered difference within these two neighbourhoods has been done to see either how feminized is poverty within these two areas or how their spatial location influenced gendered perception.

According to relevant literatures (Beall, 1996a, 1996b; Larsson, 2001; Moser, 1993) limited job opportunity, limited skill and qualification among women, are most dominant issues in deprived areas and this has been experienced by women respondents in both Balsall Heath and Kingstanding neighbourhood. In fact as discussed in section 5.1 and 5.2, limited skill and qualification are feminized issues within these two deprived neighbourhoods, which significantly disadvantaged most of women respondents. But from the other side by looking to reflected responses in Kingstanding, it has been revealed that while there are gendered differences in domains of job opportunity and children poverty, in other aspects women and men have similar perception of QOL and mainly they concerned safety issues. But by moving to Balsall Heath, there have been found more considerable gendered differences toward other aspects of QOL include access to facilities, safety, cleanness and street condition.

As a result while both of these neighbourhoods suffer from deprivation and poor QOL, but by moving to Kingstanding Central as a neighbourhood located beside least deprived northern wards, gendered differences has been decreased, which can be stem from two facts.

First, as respondents have not been asked to reflect on a pre-defined list of QOL domains; they reflected on their main prior issues. So as Kingstanding suffers from noticeable unsafe ambiance which influenced respondents' life negatively (such as use of park and shopping centres), they mentioned basically to safety and social issues and did not mentioned to other aspects which there might be gendered differences.

Second, Kingstanding is adjacent spatially to least deprived neighbourhoods in north of Birmingham. As a result, it can be said that, while women in Balsall Heath basically concerned about limited shopping stores and inaccessible transport system, Kingstanding benefits from facilities exist in least deprived wards such as shopping centres and transport system. So while these neighbourhoods, both are deprived, but deprivation is more feminized in Balsall Heath which has led to more significant gendered differences in perception of QOL.

5.4. Gendered perception of QOL in Sutton Coldfield neighbourhood

To investigate in significance of change in gendered perception across deprived and non-deprived contexts, Sutton Coldfield as one of the least deprived neighbourhood located in north of Birmingham has been selected. 16 respondents, 9 women and 7 men with distribution as presented in figure 20, have been questioned about their perception toward different aspects of their neighbourhood.



Figure 20: Location of some of respondents in Sutton Coldfield Source: Author elaboration in Google earth based on postcodes from collected questionnaires

5.4.1. Similarity in gendered QOL domains in Sutton Coldfield

Speaking to collected responses, it has been found that women and men respondents have concern toward different and diverse aspects of QOL, as presented in figure 21. Also regard to details of perception in table 9, it can be seen that despite of small difference in perception of existing pubs (explained in section 5.4.2), generally there is strong similarity in gendered perception of QOL in Sutton Coldfield neighbourhood.

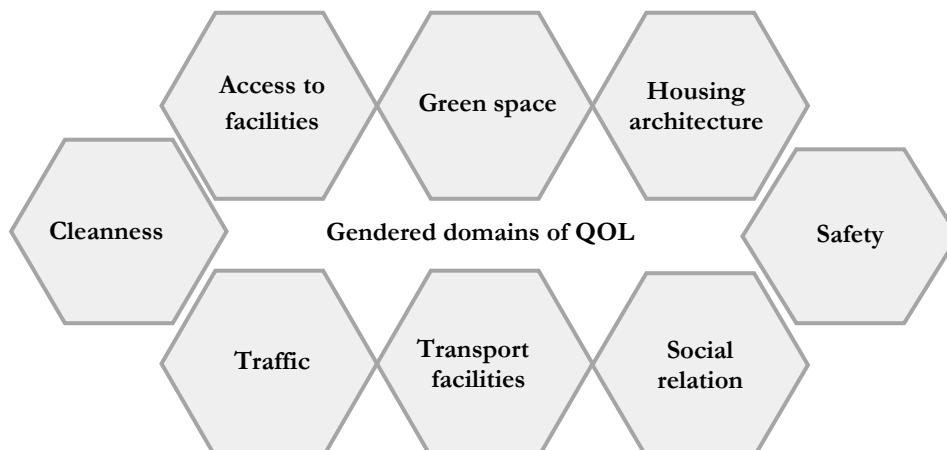


Figure 21: Similar gendered domains of QOL in Sutton Coldfield

Table 9: Similar gendered domains of QOL in Sutton Coldfield categorized in different dimensions

QOL dimensions	Domains	Sub domains	
		Positive aspects	Negative aspects
Physical	Access to facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having good shopping stores within walking distance • Church • Cinema • Hospital and emergency services • Schools • Restaurant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed library
	Green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutton park • Lots of trees 	
	Housing architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nice building architecture • Well-kept housing 	
Social	Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being close to family& friends • Nice and friendly people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relative feeling unsafe due to pubs • Lack of community sprit
	Social relation		
Transportation & communication	Transport facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to transport network • Access to train station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of parking spaces • High traffic volume
	Traffic		
Environmental	Cleanness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean environment • Calm streets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noisy street

Considering table 9 and included sub domains, it can be seen that while respondents in Sutton Coldfield, mentioned to different aspects of QOL, but they concern mostly about physical and spatial condition of their environment rather that socio economic issues. Reflected aspects in table 9, based on their positive and negative effects respectively are discussed.

➤ **Access to facilities: Diverse facilities within walking distance**

One important domain of QOL which has been mentioned mostly by all respondents is related to having access to all needed facilities within walking distance. In fact, although this neighbourhood is located in border of Birmingham and relatively is far from most of city centre services, but respondents showed satisfaction about existing facilities which are located within their walking distance.

“...Close proximity to local amenities, like dentist, doctors, shops, restaurant, take-away food, cinema, Sutton town center, small supermarket, church, gym, leisure center.” (Male respondent D)

“...Lots of services within every reach walking distance.” (Female respondent E)

Moreover, beside close proximity to facilities, most of respondents expressed satisfaction about divers facilities rang from daily shopping stores to school, hospital, cinema, restaurant and pubs.

“The facilities are accessible, varied and kept well.” (Female respondent C)

“Sutton has a range of pubs, restaurants, shops which are all local to where I live.” (Male respondent E)

➤ **Access to facilities: Hospital and emergency service**

Conspiring aspect of facility, respondents expressed specific perception toward existing hospital and emergency services. In fact most of them believed that existing hospital in their neighbourhood is valuable service as in emergency situation, it meet people’s demands and it is not needed to go to city centre of Birmingham for medical issues.

➤ **Transport facility**

The other aspects of QOL which positively influenced respondents’ perception is related to existing transport networks, which have provided easy connection to other parts of city. Generally, both women and men mentioned to good transport and communication links in their neighbourhood which let them to move around easily. In other term considering location of Sutton Coldfield, good transport links have not make them isolated and cut off from facilities in Birmingham.

“We are also within walking distance of train station.” (Female respondent H)

“The transport is quite good so you are not cut off from the facility.” (Male respondent A)

➤ **Social relations**

Living with friendly people and family for people who are living in far distance of city centre, is counted as a positive point in Sutton Coldfield. According to details of responses, it has been found that social communication with friends and family influenced positively gendered perception of their area.

“The people are respectable and this make me feel comfortable.” (Female respondent B)

“...People who are generally friendly and pleasant.” (Male respondent D)

➤ **Green space**

Green areas and park, which made good and environmentally pleasant living area, have been mentioned by some respondents as positive aspect of QOL in Sutton Coldfield.

“Sutton Park is close to my house which is good because living in an urban environment is good to have a place to go that allows you to forget you live in a city.” (Male respondent E)

“The best thing is that our neighborhood is being so close to Sutton Park, therefore feeling like you are near the country side.” (Female respondent A)

➤ **Housing architecture**

According to some of the respondents, existing style of housing in some areas which are nice and kept-well is a physical aspect that positively affects respondents' perception and make area nice and attractive.

➤ **Traffic and limited parking space**

Traffic jam and limited parking spaces are considered as negative aspects of Sutton Coldfield, which have driven to difficulties for local people.

"We live close to the good hope hospital and staff and visitors to the hospital park on our streets. This leads to difficulties when People park on both sides of the roads, the way becomes very narrow and constricted." (Female respondent H)

"I do not like traffic like emergency vehicles on the Birmingham road outside my house." (Men respondent D)

Regard to responses, it has been revealed that limited parking space due to existing hospital, narrow streets, car parking in both side of streets by hospital staffs, immediate neighbours and people who go for shopping led to limited space for local people to park their cars and made traffic jam in some streets.

➤ **Community sprit**

Regard to sub domains of social relations; some women and men have experienced lack of sense of community and sprit in their neighbourhood.

In fact based on detail of responses it has been found that due to lot of green spaces exist in Sutton Coldfield, many people from other areas just park their car and walk in Sutton Coldfield which has led to lack of sense of community. Also suggestion from respondents for having festival or events in order to promote community sprit refer to low motivation among local people toward Sutton Coldfield activities.

➤ **Closed library**

Sutton Coldfield library which has been closed since recent years, has been reflected as negative point in perception of some women and men. In fact they believed that there should be plan to re-open this library as one of the important facilities in Sutton Coldfield.

"The library has been shut for 3 or more years and has no sign if being reopen". (Men respondent D)

"The library, it has been closed for years due to hiding asbestos and clearly it is not a priority for Birmingham local authority to re-open it". (Female respondent H)

5.4.2. Differences in gendered perception of QOL domains in Sutton Coldfield

As discussed earlier, women and men respondents in Sutton Coldfield shared strong similarity in their perception toward different domains of QOL. However, regard to detail of responses, there is gendered difference in perception of existing pubs as discussed below.

➤ Access to facility: Pubs

While existing pubs are mentioned by some women and men, but their perception of details about pubs is different. In fact, some of women respondents dislike pubs because they attract different people till midnight who mostly are drunk and show anti-social behaviours which make women to feel unsafe while men have concerned about pubs due to lots of noise that they made.

“Club and pub in the town center with the late-night license which means they can be a lot of noise from people leaving these establishment in the early hours.” (Male respondents D)

“I dislike pubs because of alcohol problems resulting in anti-social behavior and violence.” (Female respondent E)

5.4.3. Variation within perception of similar gendered group in Sutton Coldfield

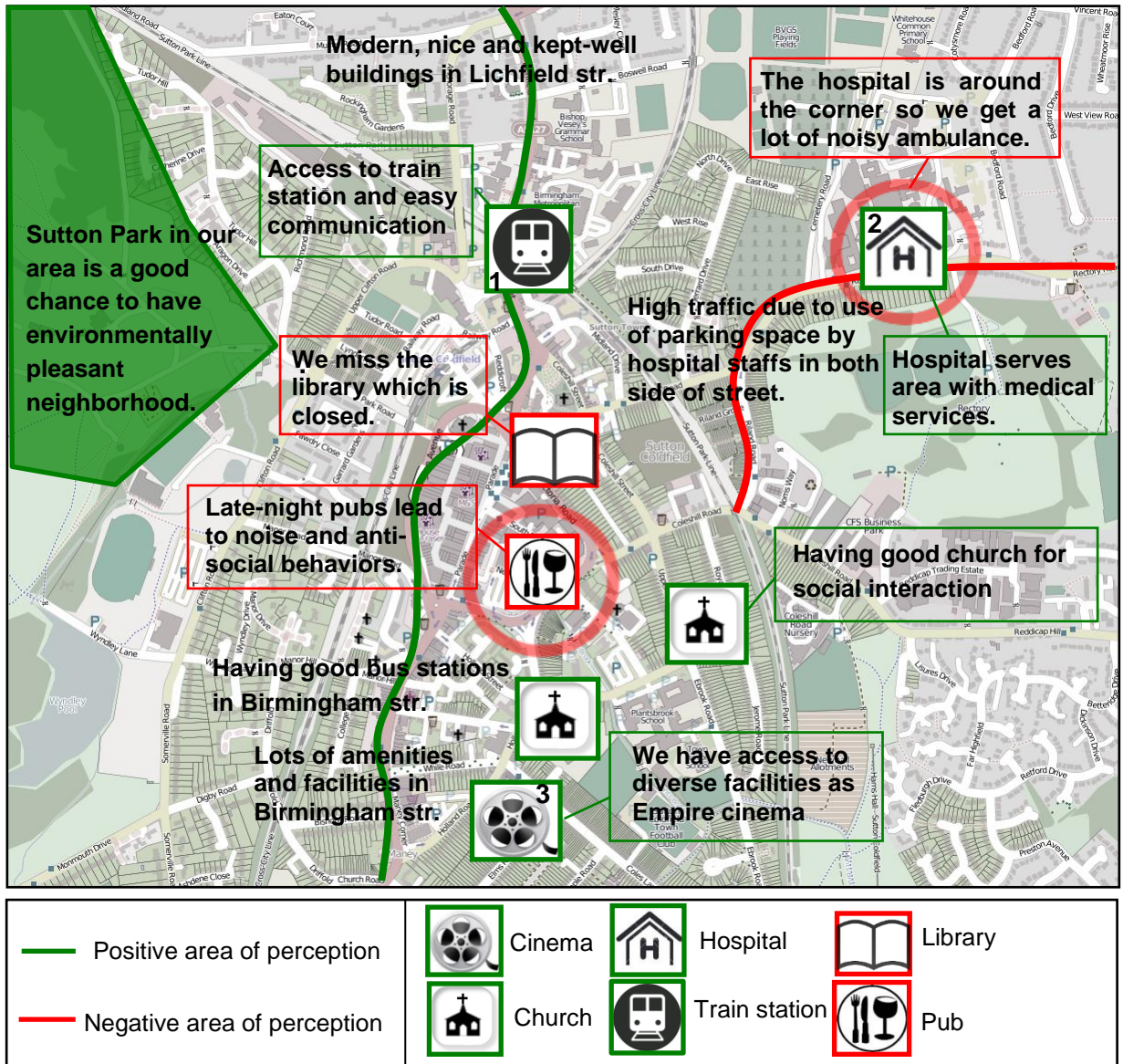
While respondents mentioned to aspect of calmness, but it is not gendered issue as among gendered groups, some women as well as men respondents believed that they have very quiet neighbourhood while some of them refereed to noisy area.

By investigating in responses, it has been revealed that experience of calmness is affected by location of respondents. In fact areas around town centre and hospital are too crowded and noisy while other areas mainly located in cul-de-sac are very calm and quite. This difference in location has led to variation in respondents' perception of calmness.

5.4.4. Gendered pattern of perception in Sutton Coldfield

According to areas expressed by respondents, it has been found that gendered aspects of QOL are assigned to similar areas for both women and men. As a result, there is similar gendered pattern of perception as presented in figure 22.

Considering discussed aspects as well as figure 22, it can be seen that basically respondents concern about physical and spatial dimension of QOL, which mostly are located in center of Sutton Coldfield.



No 1: Central train station building



No 2: Good Hope hospital



No 3: Empire cinema

Figure 22: Gendered pattern of perception toward QOL domains in Sutton Coldfield neighborhood Source: Author elaboration based on information of collected questionnaire and individual interview and map layout from © OpenStreetMap contributors

6. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, based on gendered perception of QOL, variation among them and main research objectives, results are communicated and discussed. To be added, the discussion in this chapter is based on network analysis done in Atlas Ti, which has been attached in appendix 3.

6.1. Gendered perception of QOL

As Balsall Heath is one of the most deprived neighbourhood, due to feminization of poverty and gendered exclusive ambiance (Beall, 1996b; Dunning, et al., 2006; Greed, 2005; Larsson, 2001; Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993; Women in Cities International, 2012), gendered differences in perception of some aspects of QOL has been found.

In fact considering responses in Balsall Heath, visualized in figure 23, it can be seen that women and men shared concerns toward domains of Cannon Hill park, access to daily facilities, safety, friendly people, too many trees, dirty area and so on, while their perception of details in some aspects as safety, access to facility and street condition vary. Also beside similar gendered domains, cricket league, limited parking space, bumpy road, lack of petrol station, lack of taxi base and lack of double glaze houses are aspect of QOL which reflected only by men and limited job opportunity, limited bus stop and lack of youth social centres expressed only by women respondents.



Figure 23: Visual presentation of gendered domains of QOL in Balsall Heath. Key words in extracted codes from transcription in Atlas Ti, scaled by software available at <http://www.wordle.net/>

By moving to Kingstanding as other deprived neighbourhood with different spatial location, it has been revealed that compared to Balsall Heath, women and men shared more similar concerns and perception toward domains of access to facilities, bad behaviour shown by some people, racist experience, limited police, friendly people and street condition in term of alcoholism, gang, drug use, reflected in figure 24. Moreover, considering figure 24, aspects of limited resources for children, lack of social activities for children and unemployment have been expressed by women only.

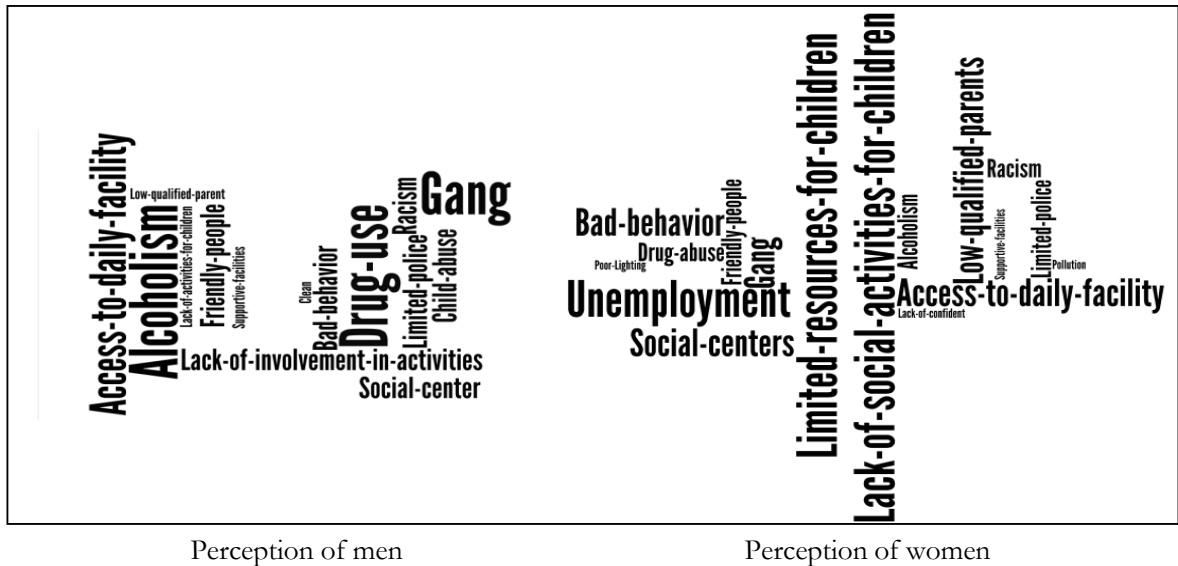


Figure 24: Visual presentation of gendered domains of QOL in Kingstanding Central. Key words in extracted codes from transcription in Atlas Ti, scaled by software available at <http://www.wordle.net/>

In other neighbourhood with non-deprived and high objective QOL context, beside small difference about pubs, there exists noticeable similarity in gendered perception of access to daily facilities, friendly people around, transport networks, good hospital, lack of parking space, traffic jam, lack of sense of community and other domains, as presented in figure 25. Regard to this figure and highlighted key words and their size, strong similarity among women and men toward their neighbourhood can be found either.

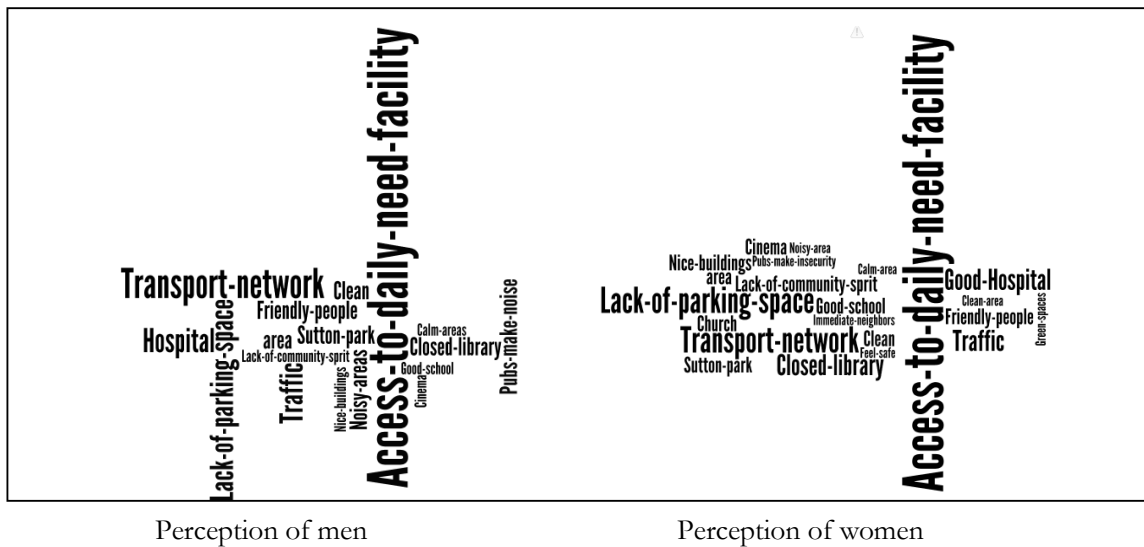


Figure 25: Visual presentation of gendered domains of QOL in Sutton Coldfield. Key words in extracted codes from transcription in Atlas Ti, scaled by software available at <http://www.wordle.net/>

So regard to reflected domains of QOL and variation found in gendered perception, it can be said that basically in deprived area, due to feminized aspects of deprivation as limited job opportunity, low-paid and informal jobs and low labour right, women have poor QOL (Beall, 1996a, 1996b, 1998; Haynie & Gorman, 1999; Larsson, 2001; Moser, 1993; Tacoli, 2012).

This issue has been seen in Balsall Heath and Kingstanding Central, where due to feminized deprivation of skill and qualification, women respondents showed concern toward job finding while in Sutton

Coldfield, based on high level of skill and education among women and men, no gendered difference has been revealed.

So considering the fact that in deprived areas families are dependent on women earning and income (T'acoli, 2012; Yoshida, 2011), limited job for women in Balsall Heath and Kingstanding will have impacts on their families. Since this issue originated from limited qualification among women, fostering women's education, skill and qualification such as women training services, has to be addressed by planning development plans and policies.

Speaking to other QOL aspects, discussed in section 5.3, in Balsall Heath compared to Kingstanding, more gendered differences have been found. As the most important domain which has led to either gendered difference or variation among women respondents, is access to facilities.

Regard to (Beall, 1996b), access to facilities and public transport are mostly planned according to men's job work and their daily pattern of travelling which is generally home to work and vice versa. This issue clearly disadvantaged women respondents in Balsall Heath. In fact, based on reflected results in Balsall Heath, women respondents, who did not work and have free time, did not concern toward shopping stores and bus station to access these store, while employed women concerned it.

So based on literatures by (Greed, 2005) and (Beall, 1996b) and details of responses, it has been concluded that different daily pattern of activities by employed women from one side (such as shopping besides working) and limited shopping stores and inappropriate transport system to access to shopping stores from the other side, disadvantaged employed women in Balsall Heath. Consequently, provision of more accessible shopping stores has to be addressed in development plans. In fact, by providing more equipped stores, people can provide all their needs within Balsall and it is not needed to travel to other areas and city centre which is counted big issue for employed women.

Moreover, regard to dissatisfaction about transport system in Balsall Heath, by investigation in women daily activities such as most used places and streets by women, their frequent time of travel and so on, the women pattern of activity can be recognized better. This can be used as an input in planning and policy making process to have gendered inclusive transport system.

Beside employment and education that led to gendered differences in deprived areas, other personal characteristics also affected gendered perception, while their effect based on context are varied. As the most critical one, it can be mentioned to ethnicity and religion, which led to two reverse perceptions.

Generally relevant literatures showed that ethnicity and religion influence gendered perception of their living environment (Dunning, et al., 2006; Yoshida, 2011). In Balsall Heath, ethnicity positively affected

gendered perception. In fact, as respondents were Muslim from Asian, they said that they look after for others and this has driven to high sense of community involvement and feel of safety.

So considering strong sense of community in Balsall Heath, existing social centres by motivating people to participate in their neighbourhood activities, make this sense of community stronger. This can be seen also in study by (Eby, et al., 2012) which people noted to importance of social and recreational service for contribution of their neighbourhood. Consequently, development plans for this neighbourhood should be framed based on fostering existing social centres and related attractive facilities for Muslim, to promote existing sense of community. By changing the context, ethnicity played different role in gendered perception. In fact, while white British people in Kingstanding believed that they have nice and friendly neighbours; respondents with other originality had experience of racist behaviour.

Moving to perception of QOL in Sutton Coldfield, no feminized deprivation in aspects of education, skill and employment have been reflected. Therefore, as this neighbourhood has more gendered inclusive ambience, women and men shared many similarities in perception of QOL.

So, based on discussion above, in different contexts same personal characteristics influence gendered perception differently and due to this fact, in QOL studies the context where social characteristics are belonged to, has to be considered.

By looking at effect of Balsall Heath context on gendered perception, presented in figure 26, it can be seen that perception of QOL is greatly affected by its contextual characteristics. Take safety as an example. While religion and ethnicity made some women feel safe, contextual condition of road such as shady streets and improper lighting led to unsafe ambience.

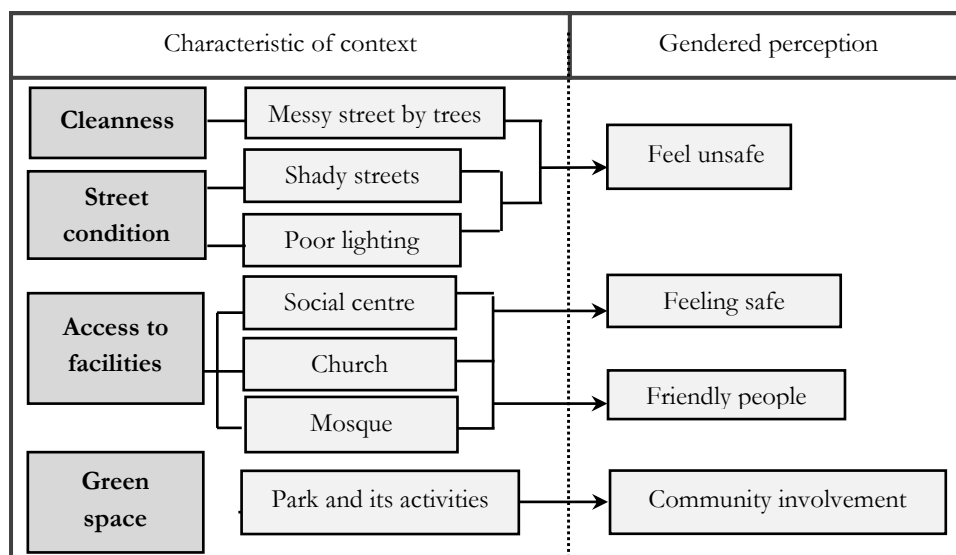


Figure 26: Relation between context and perception of QOL in Balsall Heath

According to figure 26, one interesting finding is about opposite effect of green space and park. Based on literatures, park and green space are accounted as positive elements of QOL (Das, 2008; Eby, et al., 2012; Tuan Seik, 2000; Ülengin, et al., 2001). But it has been found that while Cannon Hill park is reflected as great area where people can find lots of activities to be involved, mess of trees in some street made people to feel unsafe. So it can be concluded that green space merely may not improve QOL positively. Regard to this fact, to influence perception of respondents positively, provision of facilities in park such as sport instrument, branches and sufficient lighting; have to be considered by planners.

Moving to Kingstanding, it can be found that perception of respondents is different from Balsall Heath, which is arisen from contextual characteristics of Kingstanding, presented in figure 27.

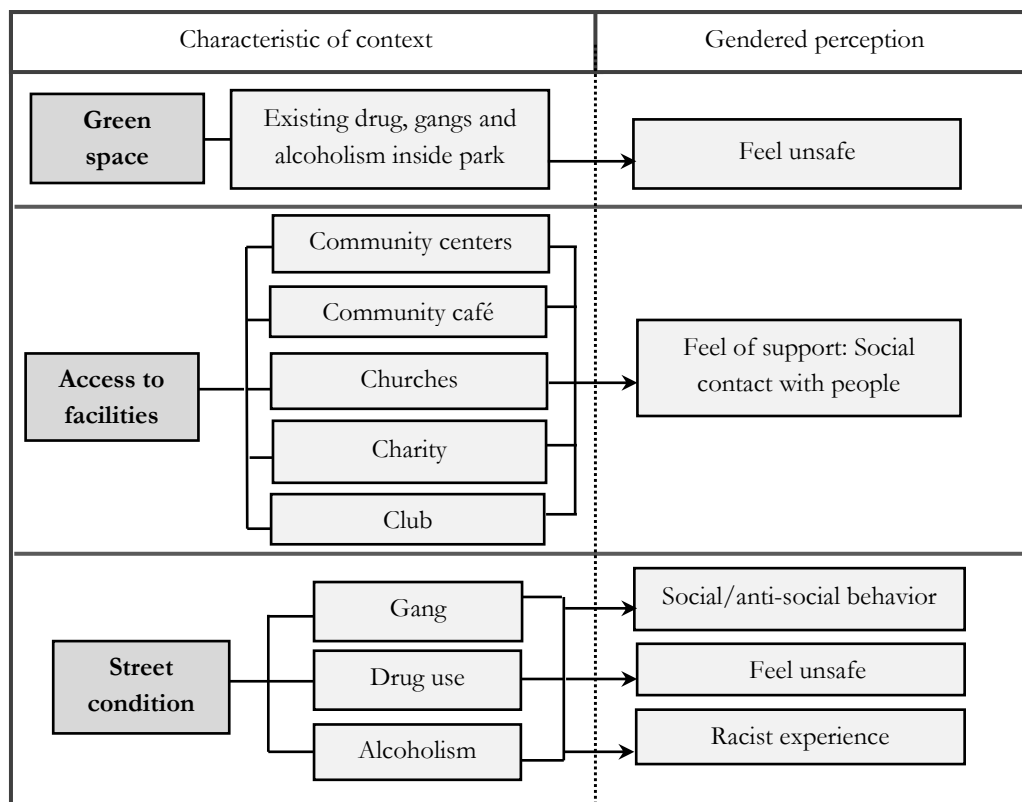


Figure 27: Relation between context and perception of QOL in Kingstanding Central

According to figure 27, due to safety issues that most of respondents suffer from, they expressed good perception toward social interaction with their friends and neighbour to overcome their problems. Moreover, in this context, despite of live shops and activities in street, people feel unsafe which is arisen from existing gang, drug seller in some street at Kingstanding.

To be added, one noticeable contextual fact is about perception of respondents toward green spaces. While in literatures, having green space and park are considered as positive aspects of QOL (Das, 2008; Eby, et al., 2012; Tuan Seik, 2000; Ülengin, et al., 2001), but people in Kingstanding had negative perception about their local park which might stem from its insecure ambiance and environment. Also

regard to Balsall Heath, it has been seen that some respondents concerned safety issue in some streets which are covered with mess of trees and no activities. Consequently provision of more activities in local parks of Kingstanding to involve people more, can leads to safer environment.

Changing context to Sutton Coldfield, as a non-deprived neighbourhood, it can be seen that perception of QOL is noticeably affected by context, presented in figure 28.

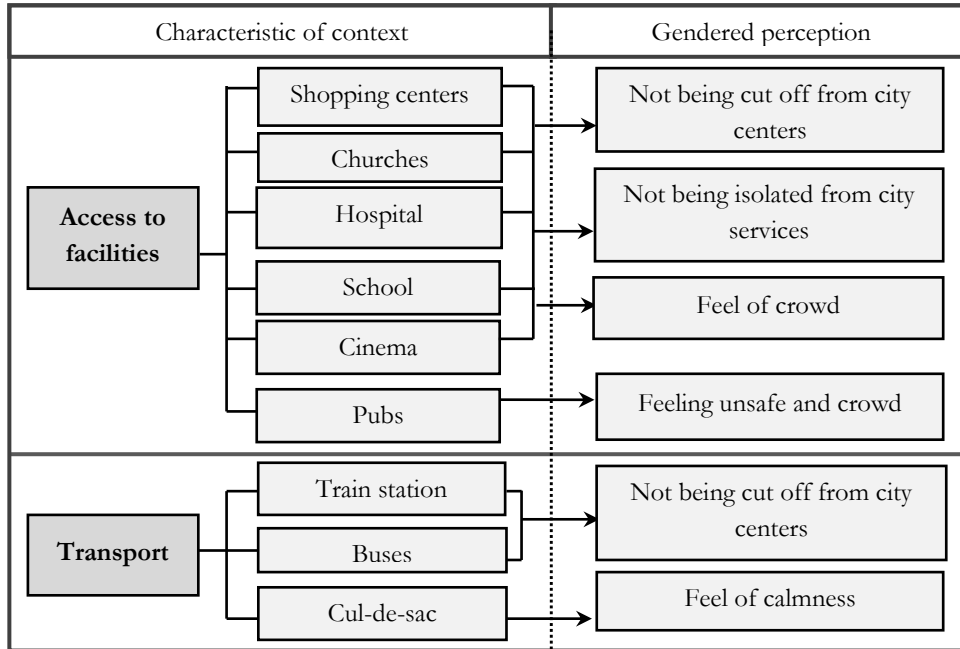


Figure 28: Relation between context and perception of QOL Sutton Coldfield

The most considerable point regard to figure 28 is access to facilities and transport network in context of Sutton Coldfield. In fact as this neighbourhood is relatively in far distance of city centre, having access to wide range facilities and transport link to communicate with different parts of city, are important for respondents.

All in all, due to gendered perception of city and lack of consideration of women into planning process, highlighting gendered aspects of QOL, which have to be integrated into planning, signifies high importance (Greed, 2005). Consequently, results of discussed gendered perception of QOL and the survey opinion of 2008 (a non-gendered study)are brought in table 10⁵ in order to see which domains are missed in this survey and have to be addressed by planning policies. Also, as this survey is a non-gendered study, doing this comparison, can reveal the extent that either women’s or men’s perceptions are ignored.

⁵ : Considering different adopted methods in survey opinion of 2008 and this research, quantitative and qualitative method respectively, some domains beside each other may be different in label but as they refer to same concept, they have been put beside each other.

Table 10: Comparison among QOL domains in survey opinion of 2008 and extracted gendered domains of QOL within Balsall Heath, Kingstanding and Sutton Coldfield neighborhoods

Category	Non-gendered SQOL domains (survey opinion of 2008)						Gendered SQOL domains									
	Balsall Heath		Kingstanding Central		Sutton Coldfield		Balsall Heath		Kingstanding Central		Sutton Coldfield					
	FSQOL	MSQOL	FSQOL	MSQOL	FSQOL	MSQOL	FSQOL	MSQOL	FSQOL	MSQOL	FSQOL	MSQOL				
House		Problems in finding affordable house				×		Housing condition					Housing architecture		Housing architecture	
Street condition		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited parking Uneven road pavement 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of parking space Bumpy road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gangs around Drug use Racism activities Alcoholism 								
		×					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shady and dark street 									
Social issue		High community involvement		Being unwelcoming to ethnic minority		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High sense of place high community involvement 	High community involvement	High community involvement								Lack of community spirit
Safety		Relative insecurity at night		Insecurity and anti-social behaviour		Feeling safe	Feel unsafe at night	Feel unsafe at night								Feeling safe
						×										Insecurity due to pubs
Cleanness		Unclean area				Clean area	Dirty street	Dirty street								Clean area
		×				×										Noisy area
						×		Noisy areas								Calm area

PERCEPTION OF QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH A GENDERED LENS

Access to facilities	High satisfaction from public service	High satisfaction from public services	High satisfaction from facilities	Having daily facilities	Having access to daily facilities	Having access to social centres	Having access to daily facilities	Access to all facilities
Transport	High use of public transport and limited public transport service	Hatched	Good transport service	Limited bus stops and related facility	Hatched	Hatched	Hatched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good transport link • Access to bus • Train station
	Limited parking space		×					Limited parking space
-	×	×	×	Limited parking space	Limited parking space	Limited parking space	Limited parking space	Limited parking space
	×	×	×	Lack of petrol station	Limited Job opportunity	Children poverty	Limited parking space	Limited parking space

• Similarity between key issues in the survey opinion of 2008 and gendered domain of QOL have been shown with similar colour for each neighbourhood. Also white boxes with notes and cross icons respectively refer to FSQOL or MSQOL which are reflected by respondents and are not considered in the survey opinion of 2008. To be added hatched boxes refer to aspects that women or men did not mention to.

By looking to table 10, it can be seen that economic dimension is not addressed in the non-gendered survey specifically, while based on IMD and women's perception, children poverty and job opportunities have been reflected as noticeable issues.

Moreover regard to Sutton Coldfield neighborhood, it can be seen that the non-gendered survey did not consider traffic, limited parking spaces, insecurity of pubs, calmness and housing architecture domains, while they have been perceived by respondents.

Regard to field of cleanness, the non-gendered survey just considered cleanness of streets based on public land neatness. But some male respondents in Balsall Heath and Sutton Coldfield expressed concern also about noise pollution, which is not considered in this survey.

Also considering cleanness domain, Kingstanding in that the non-gendered survey has relatively high rank in term of cleanness while some of respondents concerned about dirtiness in some streets. According to difference in time span of these two studies as well as scale of analysis, it can be said that, some areas in Kingstanding might get dirty after the non-gendered survey and that's why people in this study have concerned about dirtiness. Moreover, while this research captured perception of small group of people in level of neighbourhood, the non-gendered survey has been conducted in ward level, which perception of group of people toward cleanness of streets has been detailed out.

In domain of transportation and street condition, the non-gendered survey has general concern about use of public transportation and transport facilities such as limited petrol station and streets darkness are not addressed, while they have been expressed by men and women respondents in Balsall Heath.

Furthermore, based on safety issue, while the non-gendered survey covered respondents' perception of safety, it did not consider insecurity by pubs in Sutton Coldfield.

To be added, regard to the table above, it can be seen that there is high community involvement and sense of place in Sutton Coldfield while according to respondents; Sutton Coldfield suffers from lack of community spirit. This contradictory fact can be result of different applied geographic and time scale in the non-gendered survey and this study (ward and neighbourhood level respectively) which detailed out perception of some group of people.

To sum up, the non-gendered survey did not capture most of local people's perception and concerns in Sutton Coldfield. Also in deprived neighbourhoods, while most of QOL domains are considered, job opportunity and children issues are not addressed. So as QOL findings have to be informed to planners and policy makers, extracted gendered QOL domains have to be considered in development planning, in order to improve condition of QOL for both men and women.

6.2. Spatial pattern of gendered perception

Considering application of QOL results in resource allocation and development plans (Ibrahim & Chung, 2003; Tesfazghi, et al., 2010; Türksever & Atalik, 2001) and limitation in time and budget, planners have to be informed by either QOL domains or locations of QOL key issues. Regard to this fact, current research has investigated in gendered pattern of perception.

Based on extracted QOL in Balsall Heath, it has been found that gendered perception is greatly affected by its context. In fact according to respondents' concerns and areas of their perception, it can be seen that their perception toward different aspects of QOL are stem from specific locations and realms, which are drawn as gendered pattern of perception in figures 15 and 16. As a result, planners, by addressing reflected areas in these figures, can contribute to QOL in Balsall Heath.

Looking to figures 15 and 16, it can be seen that religious and social centres, take-away food, library, bath and Cannon Hill park positively influenced perception of women and men. So they have to be improved and fostered by development plans as positive elements of QOL in Balsall Heath. In addition, while there is similarity in gendered pattern of perception, women expressed more concern toward facilities while men had concerns more about streets, parking space and cricket league.

By moving to Kingstanding, as discussed in section 5.2, compared to Balsall Heath similarity in gendered perception get more significant. Also according to details of responses, gendered differences in Kingstanding are related to social and economic rather than spatial issues. Consequently, there is similar gendered pattern of perception, presented in figure 19.

Considering figure 19, respondents mainly concerned social issues. In other term, expressed physical and spatial aspects by respondents, are originated from social issues. Take street condition as an example. Some of the streets have been perceived and mentioned by respondents because of issues such as safety rather than physical characteristic of the streets.

Furthermore, according to figure 19 it can be seen that while Conker Island is counted as neighbourhood Centrum that involves lot of facilities as churches, community centres, cafe and shops, but it suffers strongly from unsafe environment. So provision of policy and guidelines to make this area safe, may motivates people to use this area and to be engaged in more activities in their neighbourhood.

Beside variation in gendered perception within these two neighbourhoods, by moving to Sutton Coldfield, not only women and men shared strong similarity in perception of QOL, but also areas where gendered QOL domains are assigned to, are similar. Also speaking to gendered pattern of perception in figure 22, it can be concluded that respondents mainly concerned about spatial and physical aspects, which mostly are located in centre of Sutton Coldfield.

6.3. Interplay among gender perception across different neighbourhoods

As experience of city is a gendered issue (Dunning, et al., 2006), there is variation among perception of women and men toward different aspects of living environment. Moreover as discussed in section 6.1 and 6.2, it has been seen that how personal characteristic and context affect people's perception. Here, considering identified gendered QOL domain in studied neighbourhoods, significance of change across different contexts is discussed.

Generally based on feminized aspects of poverty as job opportunity, access to facilities and education (Beall, 1998; Dunning, et al., 2006; Haynie & Gorman, 1999; Tacoli, 2012), it can be concluded that in deprived contexts perception of women and men, in some issues differ considerably, which has been seen in studied deprived neighbourhoods.

Speaking to found results, while in two most-deprived contexts of Balsall Heath and Kingstanding Central, gendered differences in aspects of transport facilities, street condition, safety, access to daily services, job opportunity and children poverty exist, in Sutton Coldfield as a least deprived neighbourhood, strong gendered similarities in perception of access to facilities, green space, transport networks, traffic, social relation and other domains have been identified.

In addition, as perception of QOL is affected by objective QOL (Marans, 2003), in Balsall Heath and Kingstanding due to poor objective QOL as crime, low level of education, unemployment and low-income family, respondents mainly mentioned to negative issues, while in Sutton Coldfield respondents basically reflected on positive aspects such as having all daily facilities, having access to transport links, having friendly people around, which stem from high objective QOL.

So speaking to results, it can be said that variation in gendered perception is arisen from existing differences either in gendered roles or in feminization of deprivation.

In fact, different roles and responsibilities which women play, lead to difference in perception of city (Larsson, 2001; Miranne, 2000; Moser, 1993). Take children poverty as an example. Regard to details of responses, it has been found that children in Kingstanding suffer from many issues and as women basically are in charge of children's tasks, they were more aware of their issues.

Street condition is another example. Balsall Heath neighbourhood suffers from bad street conditions such as uneven pavement and limited parking spaces. As men respondents mainly handled driving responsibilities, they expressed more concern toward these issues.

However, other aspects of gendered differences are stem from feminized skill, education and qualification domains, which led to difficulty in job finding for women in Balsall Heath and Kingstanding Central.

In Sutton Coldfield as northern least-deprived neighbourhood, variation in gendered perception significantly decreased. In fact, in this neighbourhood both women and men expressed similar perception of details toward QOL domains. So it can be concluded that significant similarity found among respondents in Sutton Coldfield, stem from gendered inclusive condition life for both women and men in different aspects as education, skill, qualification, access to facilities, job opportunities and so on.

However, it has to be noted that, based on discussion in section 5.3, while Kingstanding Central is a deprived neighbourhood with low QOL for women, but compared to Balsall Heath, more gendered similarities have been found. From the other side, regard to IMD in figures 7 and 10, both Kingstanding and Balsall Heath have similar condition in term of deprivation. So it can be concluded that location of Kingstanding which is spatially adjacent to Sutton Coldfield, also affected gendered perception.

In fact, as reflected in section 5.4, in Sutton Coldfield lots of facilities as cinema, hospital, accessible bus station, train station and equipped shopping stores are located mainly in centre of Sutton Coldfield. From the others side, in Kingstanding respondents expressed relative satisfaction about their facilities and services. Consequently, Kingstanding probably benefit from facilities, services and transport links in Sutton Coldfield, which are considered as main issues of women respondents in Balsall Heath and that can be counted as reasons of more gendered similarity in Kingstanding Central.

It has to be noted, by moving to least deprived neighbourhood, not only significance of change in gendered perception has been decreased but also kinds of issues that respondents concern about, are changed. In fact as respondents have been asked to reflect aspects that they like and dislike, they expressed their concerns in so called intuitive way (Tefszaghi, et al., 2010). Therefore, they reflected most important and prior issues that extremely matter to them. Consequently, in both deprived neighbourhoods, while physical aspects have been mentioned relatively, but respondent mainly expressed concerns toward dominant social and economic issue, which they suffer from while in Sutton Coldfield they basically concerned about spatial and physical aspects.

To sum up as living environment has to meet both women's and men's demands, on-going QOL studies have to adopt gendered lens in order to find both gender group needs and perception, which further have to be used as inputs in planning process or reshaping development policies to achieve gendered inclusive living environment (Greed, 2005; Ülengin, et al., 2001).

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research aimed to see what matters to local people in term of QOL from a gendered lens. Also considering feminization of poverty and poor QOL for women in deprived contexts (Beall, 1998; Dunning, et al., 2006; Haynie & Gorman, 1999; Tacoli, 2012) two deprived as well as one non-deprived neighbourhoods in the city of Birmingham, have been studied.

Overall, a qualitative analysis for three neighbourhoods revealed that while in deprived contexts many differences toward gendered perception of QOL have been found ; in non-deprived area respondents showed strong similarities in perception of their neighbourhood.

The key issues identified within the two deprived contexts cover different domains of QOL, which the most noticeable are unemployment and limited job opportunity, social communication, safety issues, access to facilities, street condition, transport facilities and children poverty. But in least deprived neighbourhood, QOL domains mainly cover physical and spatial aspects of access to facilities, housing architecture, traffic, cleanness and transport facilities.

Furthermore while QOL domains have been identified based on individual perception of their living area, objective condition of environment also influenced respondents' perception (Marans, 2003). In fact within the two most deprived neighbourhoods, where citizen suffer from high deprivation (according to IMD in figures 7 and 10), respondents basically have expressed concern about many aspects which negatively affect the quality of their neighbourhood, while in Sutton Coldfield as least deprived neighbourhood with high objective QOL, people mainly showed good perception toward their area.

So considering adoption of so called "generic approaches"(Greed, 2005, p. 243) in most of planning process from one side and expressed women's issues in aspect of limited job opportunity, children poverty, limited daily facilities, inaccessible transport system and safety issues, further QOL researches have to apply gendered perspective to see what matter either to women or men and to examine how socio economic and spatial context influence gendered perception, which can be used as inputs for planning development and better recommendation for cities and neighbourhoods.

Till now huge number of QOL studies have been done. While these studies have general rather than gendered perspective, they also applied quantitative methods, which just extract important QOL themes. But based on findings, gendered perception of details in some similar domains as safety, street condition and access to facility differ, which can be captured by use of qualitative methods. So in further researches, to get insight about QOL domains, qualitative methods have to be applied.

Moreover, results show that personal characteristics as ethnicity, employment, religion and education and different gendered roles, influenced gendered appraisal of their neighbourhood. So further researches are needed to apply more revised data collections methods, which address characteristics such as family composition, head of households, employment status and so on, which better can explain gendered variation.

To be added it has been revealed that while some personal characteristics that affect gendered perception are similar in different areas, but their effect are varied, which is arisen from studied context. Take ethnicity as an example. While in Balsall Heath, ethnicity influenced gendered perception positively, in Kingstanding it has led to racist behaviour.

Green space is the other domain which due to contextual conditions, has been perceived differently In Balsall Heath and Sutton Coldfield, people expressed good perception toward existing park, but in Kingstanding they had negative view toward local Park which might be originated from insecure ambience that dominates in context of Kingstanding. Moreover, having access to facilities in Sutton Coldfield compared to other neighbourhoods signifies high importance, which probably originates from location of Sutton context that is relatively far from centres. As a result, for better understating of gendered perception, further researches have to address context of study, where QOL theses are belonged to.

This research also investigated the location of perception to see whether gendered domains of QOL are assigned to specific locations. According to responses in three studied neighbourhoods, reflected domains of QOL are arisen from specific location that led to gendered pattern of perception.

Considering gendered pattern of perception (figures 15, 16, 19 and 22), they show women and men daily activities and areas of their main concerns. In fact as discussed before, women daily activities differ from men while transport systems do not suit to their activities and disadvantage women. Due to this fact, investigation in pattern of perception recently has been considered by feminism geographers. So further researches have to apply more collaborated methods and techniques to capture more detailed information about female and male patterns of perception, which help urban planners to prioritize areas of intervention.

The last consideration is about the connection between QOL results and policy implementations, which has been missed in almost most of QOL studies. In fact as QOL results are considered for making better policies and recommendations for societies (Ülengin, et al., 2001), they have to be informed to policy makers and planners to see the domain as well as areas that they have to intervene. Regard to this fact, this research findings have been compared with survey opinion of 2008 as a mean of evaluating this survey.

According to results, it has been found that while the survey opinion of 2008 as a non-gendered study covers some gendered aspects of life, but it did not consider economic and traffic dimensions specifically, while they have been expressed by respondents in studied neighbourhoods.

Moreover, considering applied quantitative methods in the survey opinion of 2008, only QOL domains have been identified while respondents' perceptions of details have not been covered.

Consequently for better use of QOL results into planning process, while QOL themes have to be captured by gendered lens, they have to be informed to urban planners and policy makers, in order to be integrated and considered into planning process to achieve living environment which meet both women's and men's need and expectations.

To sum up, till now many researches for recognition of QOL domains have been done, while in most of studies gendered perception has been ignored. So considering difference in gendered perception which originates from different gendered roles and gendered biased ambience in some aspects of living environment, further researches have to look QOL from gendered lens to recognized variation among women and men perception, reason of gendered differences and aspect and elements which influence their perception. Moreover, to get more insight about gendered issues, more revised methods that can better address gendered areas and realms of perception, personal and contextual characteristic have to be adopted.

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Annex

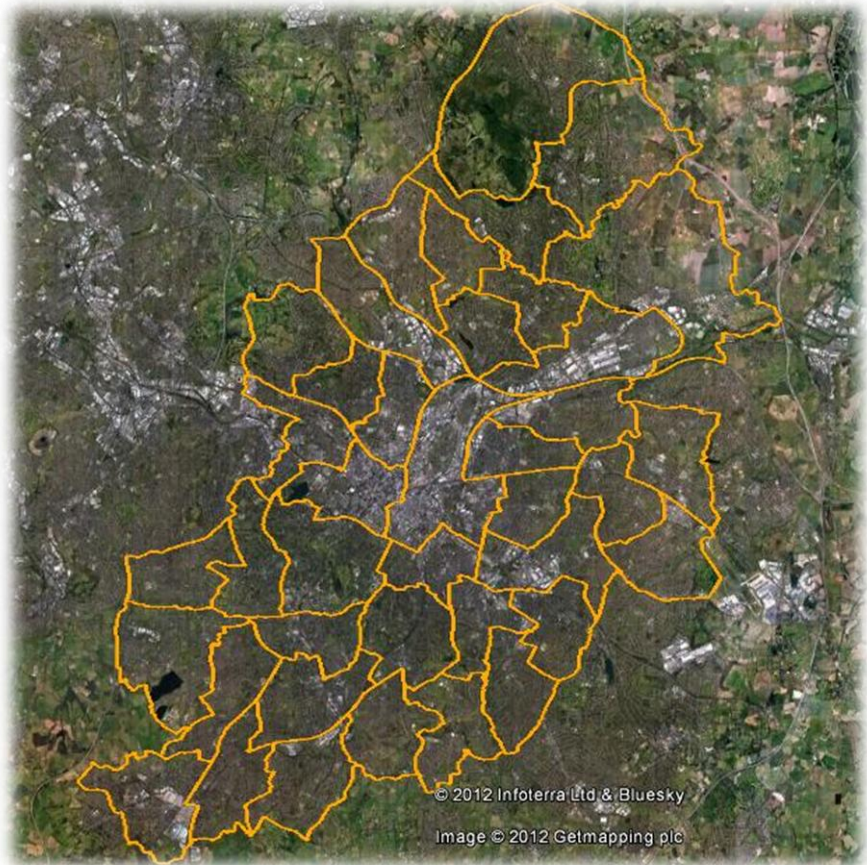
Appendix 1: List of priority neighbourhoods

“According to level of deprivation throughout Birmingham, most deprived super output areas are defined. Then they are grouped to make neighbourhoods of a population up to 15,000. These neighbourhoods then are subject to development plans and management”. The list below ranks these neighbourhoods from most prior based on their deprivation:

- Aston Pride
- Attwood Green
- Balsall Heath
- Birchfield
- Bordesley Green
- Firs & Bromford
- North Yardley
- Farm Park & Sparkbrook North
- Glebe Farm & Lea Village
- Handsworth
- Newtown, Hockley, St Georges
- Kings Norton Three Estates
- Kingstanding Central
- Lozells
- North Nechells, Bloomsbury & Duddeston
- Richmond & Bierton Road
- Saltley and Washwood Heath
- Small Heath
- Small Heath & Bordesley
- Soho Finger & Gib Heath
- Sparkhill North & Central
- Highgate, Digbeth, St Andrews
- Summerfield & Central Ladywood
- Ward End & Pelham
- Winson Green, Brookfields & West Summerfield(Be Birmingham, 2012a).

Appendix 2: Sample of distributed open questionnaires

Can you describe me your neighbourhood?



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.



FACULTY OF GEO- INFORMATION SCIENCE AND EARTH OBSERVATION

Can you help me?

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project.

What is it all about?

Hello. My name is Samaneh. I am doing a research with the support of University of Birmingham and I am studying at the University of Twente (in the Netherlands).

I am doing a research about *how women and men feel about their neighbourhood*. I am writing a thesis, which could help in better understanding the quality of life of men and women in your neighbourhood. Knowing your opinion and views is very important! This is a good chance for you to tell us what do you like most in your neighbourhood and its quality of life, and what you do not like most about it.

What would you have to do if you take part?

I appreciate that you can spend some minutes and answer a few questions. I will ask you some simple questions about your neighbourhood. I hope by your answers, I can understand better the main issues, potentials and situation in your neighbourhood.

Also as I am not a native speaker, if you can **write clearly**, it would be a great help for me. You may also –if you want- leave your email address or other contacts, so that I may contact you for further questions.

Do you want to take part?

We hope you will want to answer these questions, but this is your choice. It is OK to say no if this is what you want. If you do decide to take part and later change your mind for any reason, you can withdraw at any time without having to give a reason.

It's private and confidential

You can choose what you want to answer and we will not tell anyone what you have said to us. We will not mention your name. The results will not be used for any organization and they are valuable only for academic use.

Again I am thankful to you for helping and telling me about your neighbourhood so that I also can know it.

**Any questions?**

If you would like to know more about the project, or if you have any questions about it, please do contact me on this email address:

Samaneh Khaef

khaef29110@itc.nl

Alternatively you can contact my supervisor: Dr. Javier Martinez: jmartinez@itc.nl

Sex: male female

What is the name of your neighbourhood?

What is your postcode?

What is your ethnicity? (Please put a checkmark, one checkmark is acceptable)

White (British)

Asian

White (non-British)

Black

May I contact you if I have further questions on your answers?

Name:

E-mail:

Tel:

Skype ID:

Questions:

1. Can you tell me the good things in your neighbourhood that you most like? Consider different things like people, built environment, facilities in your neighbourhood and etc. and briefly tell me **why** do you like them?

2. Now can you talk about bad and uncomfortable things in your neighbourhood in different field like people, build environment, facility and etc.? And can you little a bit **explain** me **why** don't you like them?

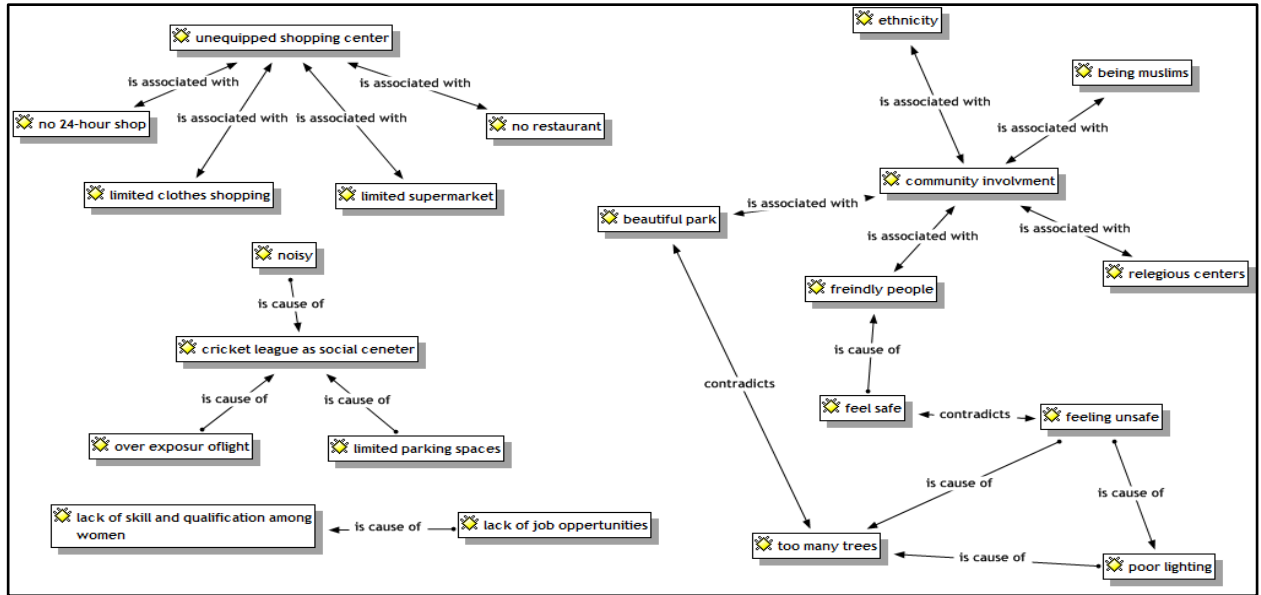
3. Considering **bad** and **good** things in your neighbourhood that you already mentioned, can you tell me **where** are they? I want to know about their locations. In what roads or parts of your neighbourhood do you have good and bad things?

For example, I like/ don't like in my neighbourhood and it is instreet/part of my neighbourhood, next to/ near the....

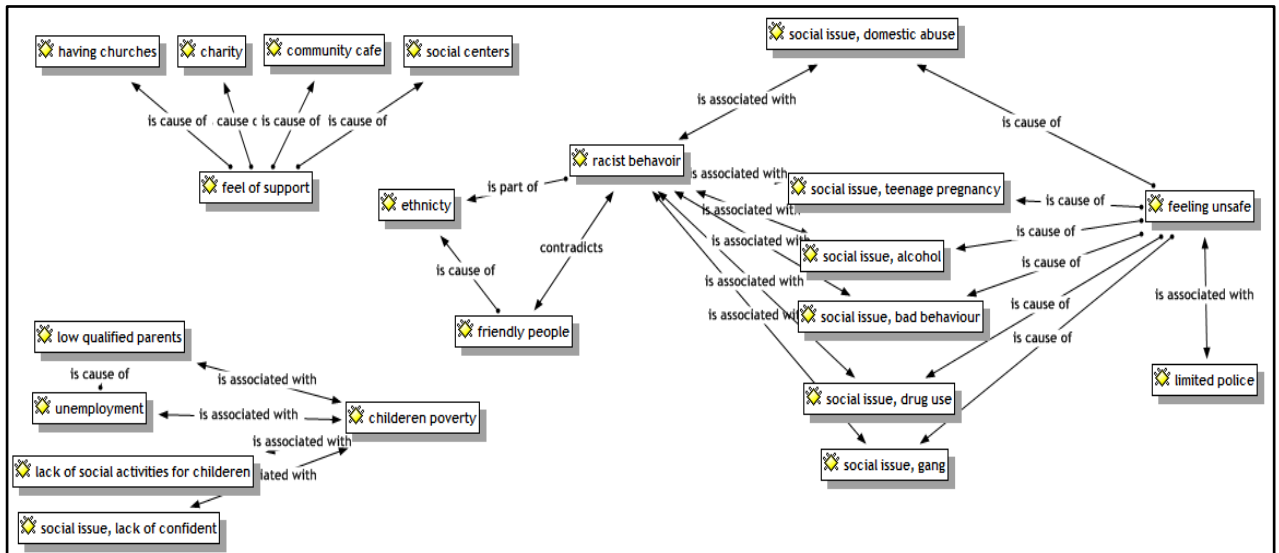
4. Do you have any **suggestion** about improving the quality of your neighbourhood that is important to you? Or is there anything we have missed and you feel it is important to discuss about your neighbourhood?

Appendix 3: Network analysis in Atlas Ti

Balsall Heath results



Kingstanding Central results



Sutton Coldfield results

