

The Development of a Quality of Life Research Centre in Universities in the Light of Global Models

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ABSTRACT This study aimed to explore the foundations and components of the development of the Quality of Life Research Centre (QLRC) in universities in the light of global models. The study adopts the analysis of the conceptual and organisational frameworks of QLRC and a survey to gain most important global models of QLRCs in universities. The researcher used the descriptive documentary approach and the method of the source-content analysis as they best match the objectives of the current study. The study population included QLRCs (think tanks) in universities in China, the USA, Canada, the UK and Australia. Findings revealed that it is difficult to formulate a specific definition of quality-of-life concept because this concept is linked to the cultural factors of each society, and that QLRCs are a new entrant to the development of scientific research in universities, and also that these centres enhance the knowledge of well-being for policymakers and the wider public as well as build and improve relationships between scholars and relevant stakeholders from various sectors in the society.

INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of happiness is as old as politics itself, and yet there are three factors that contribute to bringing happiness and quality of life (QoL) to the top of the public policy agenda. First, most countries recognise that economic growth alone is not sufficient to produce happiness. Second, psychology has demonstrated that happiness and well-being can be accurately measured and studied. Third, there are new and effective public policies to raise the quality of community life. The Global Report on Happiness and QoL Policies is based on the idea that the “pursuit of happiness” should no longer be left to individuals or the market alone. Rather, happiness and QoL should be of paramount concerns for all of society, including governments, companies, universities, schools, healthcare systems, and other sectors of society (Sachs 2019: 4-5).

The developed countries pay great importance to improve scientific research due to advanced technological revolutions and the rapid changes that the world is experiencing today. The scientific research system and its outcomes are one of the main drivers of these changes, so an international competition for scientific research is found between the countries worldwide to maintain their economic, political and cultural hegemony over the world. These countries mainly rely on research outcomes

of institutions to establish their internal and external public policies, and the QLRCs are the ones that conduct research studies and come up with the research outcomes. The importance of the QLRCs lies in the roles that they play in enlightening decision-makers, designing policies in vital areas of society, evaluating existing and intended policies, implementing those policies, fore sighting the future of societies, and adapting appropriate tools to accommodate the local environment and the existing social pattern. According to Al-Hussein (2012: 299), “These centres perform these roles based on an established values system that aims to achieve the principles of democracy and guarantee the implementation of human political, economic and social rights. In order for these centres to be able to fulfil their roles, they use scientific research to examine all stages of the policymaking process in various fields. Scientific research is used as an instrument to reform the content of policies in terms of quality, quantity and efficiency. It is also used as a standard approach by proposing what a particular policy should be. These two approaches used in QLRCs are complementary and represent theory and practice (Al-Hussein 2012: 299).

Developed countries, such as China, the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia and Denmark, have established QLRCs in universities, as they believe that the these centres are crucial in managing their

affairs through the application of a sound research methodology to address economic, social, health, cultural, educational, and political issues related to the QoL.

Given the crucial need to establish such centres, this study aims to conduct a study that aims to explore the efficacy of establishing such centres in Saudi universities, focusing on foundations and components of the development of the QLRC in universities in the light of global models, by answering the following questions:

- ♦ What is the conceptual and organisational framework of a QLRC?
- ♦ What are the most important global models for QLRCs in universities?
- ♦ What are the foundations and components of the development of a QLRC in universities in the light of global models?

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to identify the organisational and administrative structure of the centre, find a conceptual framework of the organisational structure that can be relied upon to build and develop QLRC centres, and reach the foundations and components of the development QLRC in the global model of universities.

Study Significance

The authors believe that findings of this study will contribute in developing strategic plans for an effective social partnership between the country's vital ministries (such as, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy and Planning, Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and all institutions in the public and private sectors.

The establishment of think tanks in universities will contribute to raising the quality of scientific research so that scientific research will be transformed from individual efforts to institutional work based on directing, integrating and coordinating research efforts within the same university on the one hand and between local universities on the other. These centres will also help with bridging the gap between knowledge and authority through contributing to decision-making process, guidance and support.

The existence and development of a QLRC in universities is important because of the pivotal

role in improving the QoL, especially in this hard time that all countries are experiencing COVID-19. Such QLRCs will reduce effects and scars it left, and to rebuild the systems in a better way so that the new systems are becoming safer, fairer and more sustainable than those that allowed this crisis to happen.

Terms Used in Current Study

Quality of Life (QoL): "Two main concepts can be directly linked to the concept of QoL, that is, **liveability**, which is the basic living standards for leading a satisfactory life, and **lifestyle**, which are the options provided for people to live pleasant and comfortable lives. Both aspects are important to improving QoL" (QoL Program 2020:10).

Quality of Life Research Center (QLRC): The term "Quality of Life Research Centre in a university" is defined procedurally as "an institute organisationally affiliated with a university, but financially is semi-independent, and its main role is to produce researches and studies in the QoL field of an interdisciplinary nature (liveability and lifestyle), and to provide visions for the reform and the development in a way that guides the decision-making and development policymaking processes in a country in order to further enhance the QoL and to improve the level of well-being of the local community and possibly of all over the world communities".

Development: It is a business strategy represented by all decisions, events and applications that work to develop systems and methods of work of administrative organisations, and to develop the capabilities of their workers in a way that ensures facing the changes that occur in the organisation's work environment, in a manner that qualifies the organisation to achieve the goals set for it continuously (Al-Hamiri 2012: 19).

Literature Review

Despite many research studies having investigated the QLRCs regionally and globally, particularly the conceptual and organisational framework preparation, the current study cannot consider all this literature. So, the author refers to some very relevant and recent studies to review here. More appropriately, in the present study, the author restricts reviews to the systematic comparison between these identified selective literatures, which

was critically reviewed. Based on reflections about what is being reviewed, and have been taken into account in presenting the literature and recommendations of this study. In light of reviewing local and international studies, the researchers find that there are studies that generally dealt with research activity obstacles and how to manage these obstacles by establishing research centres. They also dealt with the concept of research centres and their role, the types of research centres and studies, and the role of American research centres in the research process. Other issues that were investigated by these studies include decision-making, challenges of research centres in the Arab world, proposals for the advancement of research centres, the impact of the elements of success of research centres on the selection of project proposals that simulate reality, and evaluation of the role of research centres. The objectives of research centres include exploring how university administrative issues, organisational structure, programs and services, networking and coordination can develop partnership with the government sector, private sector, and international partnerships. These centres also highlight the role of research partnership in achieving the competitive advantage of universities, and the performance of research centres in light of the knowledge management approach, the role of research centres in addressing societal problems, the reality of scientific research and the challenges and obstacles it faces can be manifested by the role played by the QLRCs. Most of the previous studies unanimously agreed on the importance of establishing research centres in general and their role in making public policy and rationalising decisions.

The current study is similar to the previous studies in that it deals with research centres in universities. However, the current study seeks to present a proposed vision for the establishment of the Centre for Quality of Life Research at universities in light of global experiences. The literature that was included in the introduction and study problem asserted that happiness and quality of life should be the primary concern of society as a whole, including governments, businesses, universities, schools, health care systems and other sectors of society. Deanships of scientific research at universities should play roles and responsibilities in light of the requirements towards building, storing, transferring, and investing scientific pro-

duction for researchers among the faculty members and students in relation to quality of life research by adopting the proposed vision for the establishment for QLRCs at universities in the light of global experience.

The current study also differs from previous studies in the adopted approach, as it used the comparative approach along with descriptive and documentation approach. The current study has invested previous studies in the process of rooting and crystallising concepts and theoretical guidelines for the study. Based on various relevant studies, the result of studies conducted by Mohammed (2015), for instance, revealed that it is difficult to formulate a specific definition of the QoL, and that the definition of this concept is still unclear and ambiguous. Also, Gonzalez's study (2016) found that think tanks in the USA play knowledge-related roles that sought to strike a balance between the volume of intellectual production and the media visibility, and that think tanks in the USA are behind innovations designed for bridging the gap between knowledge producers and knowledge users. Further, think tanks are the new unit and entity with knowledge uptake with the aim of effectively improving strategies and various policymaking areas. Tang (2018) found that the university-affiliated think tanks explored channels and platforms for participating in developing of local economic development, and that these think tanks are the concentrated embodiment of superior resources owned by the universities. Carvalho et al. (2018) obtained a number of results, including that think tanks in Portugal, as centres of knowledge production and acting as a knowledge mediator, have articulated a network of actors interested in developing education policies in Portugal such as organisations, academia, business and government agencies. It also showed that think tanks act as a social and cognitive mediator, and have an effective and committed role in developing knowledge directed towards policy development and problem-solving decisions. Consequently, think tanks in Portugal became involved in national policymaking. The study by Köllner et al. (2018) showed that the contextual factors had a significant impact on the development of think tanks, as national think tanks are greatly influenced by the political context in which they exist. In addition to the political context, the study shows that there are other factors that possibly impact the

development of think tanks, of which is the interactive level. Results from Al-Sayed's study (2019) concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between the quality of university life scale and the psychological alienation scale and its dimensions without the absence of meaning among the participants of the study, and that the quality of university life has a mediating role between self-esteem and psychological alienation. The study recommends building a qualification program for expatriate students at the university to increase their self-esteem and reduce their sense of psychological alienation.

METHODOLOGY

This study has relied on rigorous descriptive approach through applying documentary analysis to collect the data for the study. Special efforts have been exerted to examine and highlight the most recent global models in the field. To achieve this, a descriptive analytic approach was utilised to examine some existing relevant literature on the topic, which was systemically analysed using an inductive process together with necessary information in the light of the questions of this study. The data collected in the current study was based on the problem of study, its objectives, questions, careful and accurate collection of available relevant records and documents, and determine the organisational framework of a QLRC, and analysis of global experiences in the application of quality of life research centres in universities, from vision, objectives, tasks and activities, with the aim of inferring the components and foundations that can be relied upon in the future to establish centres within universities that serve the well-being of human beings and society.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Theoretical Framework of the Study

The Conceptual and Organisational Framework of the QLRC

The Concept and Philosophy of Quality of Life (QoL)

The QoL concept has many definitions according to the theoretical approaches from which the concept has emerged. Therefore, researchers in

different scientific fields deal with this concept, each from their specialised point of view. At the global level, the WHO defines it as "an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns" (Nilsson et al. 2004: 298). It is clear that this definition focuses on the subjective aspects more than the objective ones. An international report indicated to the QoL as a comprehensive and multidimensional concept is defined as being enhanced and enforced the following aspects, that is, "enable residents to meet their basic needs, offer opportunities for the attainment of personal goals, hopes and aspirations, develop and maintain a vibrant local economy, protect and enhance the natural and built environment, promote a fair and equitable sharing of common resources, and support residents in their community life" (Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2007: 392).

In the interpretation of the QoL, there are four theoretical approaches, which are the philosophical approach, the social approach, and the medical approach. Concerning the philosophical one, the QoL is viewed from a philosophical perspective that the hoped-for happiness can only be obtained by a person if they liberate themself from the captivity of reality and soar into an ideal space that pushes the person to transcend this suffocating reality and unleash moments of creative imagination. The social approach is focused on objective indicators in life such as birth rates, death rates, and rate of disease victims, housing quality, educational levels of community members, and the level of income. These indicators differ from one society to another, and the QoL is linked to the nature of the individual's job, the income they earn from their job, their professional position and the impact they have on life. The medical approach aims to improve the QoL for individuals suffering from various physical, psychological or mental diseases through counselling and treatment programs. The development of the QoL is the expected goal of health service providers, and the assessment of people's need for QoL also includes assessing the needs of individuals and providing alternatives to these needs even if there is no specific disease or problem. The QoL is an indicator of health risks, which may be physical or psychological in the absence of current treatment or the need for ser-

vices (Muhammad and Mahfouz 2019: 295-296). The psychological approach views QoL as “the overall holistic structure that consists of different variables to satisfy the basic needs for those living in this life, so that this satisfaction can be measured by objective indicators and subjective indicators.” Whenever a person moves to a new stage of growth, new requirements are imposed on them and these in turn require the individual to meet the demands of this new stage to attain satisfaction. This makes it a must for the individual to cope with the demands of the new stage, and gratification results from “success in satisfying needs” and dissatisfaction results from “the failure in satisfying needs, in accordance with the QoL level available to them” (Rapheal et al. 1996: 66).

Therefore, this becomes a philosophy of human existence in terms of a sense of well-being and satisfaction that the individual feels in their current conditions. Hence, it reflects the extent to which the individual sees the areas of their life as good to live with a sense of contentment, happiness and active personality in different situations and areas of life in light of their goals, interests, expectations, ambitions, abilities and potentials.

Quality of Life and Research Centres, Their Types and Justifications for Their Existence

The “research centres” are defined as “institutes that were established with the aim of conducting intensive research focus on finding solutions and research proposals to problems in the technological, social, political and strategic fields” (<http://www.rand.org/history.html> 2020). They are also “research and educational centres, which differ from universities, and do not offer academic courses, rather, they are non-profit organisations whose main aim is to research the general policies of a State, and they focus their attention on economic and social development” (Winkelstein et al. 2008: 96). All the previous definitions share in common that “a research centre” is an organisation, institution or institute, dedicated to research in specific fields, with the aim to provide service for official parties (such as governmental parties) or non-official parties (society in general) and to offer proposals and solutions to specific problems, and this is what made these centres one of the main pillars of scientific research production and knowledge dissemination.

The term “Quality of Life Research Centre in a university” is used to express “an institute, which is organisationally affiliated with a university, but financially is semi-independent, and its main role is to produce researches and studies in the QoL field of an interdisciplinary nature (liveability and lifestyle), and to provide visions for the reform and the development in a way that guides the decision-making and development policymaking processes in a country in order to further enhance the QoL and to improve the level of well-being of the local community and possibly of all over the world communities.”

The existence of research and studies centres and their consultation requests are among the indicators and standards by which the progress of nations is evaluated. It is also one of the development and public policymaking indicators, so that these centres are called “think-tanks”, which had the major role in influencing decision-making centres internally and externally.

These centres are also characterised as institutions that carry out specialised studies and research in the QoL field in order to provide decision-based-knowledge. These centres may be affiliated with educational institutions, private companies, governmental agencies or non-governmental organisations, in addition to that they are independent institutions that are not biased towards governments and aimed at achieving their objectives. These institutions fill an important void between the academy on the one hand, and the world of politics on the other hand. These institutions may rely on a set of strategies to influence policymakers and guide public opinion, since they hold public conferences and seminars to discuss various issues of QoL by encouraging researchers to give lectures in universities and clubs, in addition to supporting their appearance in print and electronic media, and supporting them to publish their research and to create Internet websites (al-Qar’aan 2017: 16-17).

These centres are considered houses of expertise that aim to achieve the major goals of countries and their societies through the formulation of these countries’ public policies, including maintaining economic growth that supports development plans, and that includes the alignment between the labour market and graduates of both general and higher educational institutions. They also aim to improve societal conditions through

the elimination of unemployment, the improvement of standard of living, the achievement of national security in all its intellectual, social, psychological and informational dimensions, the enhancement of dialogue skills, and the safe openness to other cultures. This was confirmed by the Gonzalez's study (2016), which indicated that think tanks in the USA are behind innovations designed for bridging the gap between knowledge producers and knowledge users.

The researcher of this study will present the foundations and components of universities-affiliated QLRCs in the light of global models, as follows.

China: The Research Centre for QoL, Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, University of Hong Kong

The Research Centre for QoL at the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies in the Chinese University of Hong Kong was established in 2006, and it is the first centre specialised in QoL research in the Hong Kong and Chinese society. This centre is committed to positioning itself as the focal point for academic research and exchange in QoL studies in China and Asia. Due to the multidimensional nature of the QoL concept, interdisciplinary researches are highly valued at this centre (Source, translate.itsc.cuhk.edu.hk). This centre serves as a research and exchange platform that encourages intra-centre collaborations with universities, improving and building relationships between relevant scholars and parties from various sectors. This centre has the expectation that such interdisciplinary and sectorial connections would consolidate knowledge in wellbeing for policymakers and the wider public in order to further enhance QoL in the societies and improve the level of well-being in Hong Kong and, possibly, around the world. Upon its establishment, this centre has taken over the CUHK Hong Kong QoL Index from the College of Social Sciences and the Survey on Public Perception of the Economic Conditions. The College of Social Sciences compiled the Hong Kong QoL Index in 2003, aiming to create an objective analytic tool to assess the QoL in Hong Kong. The results of the Index are released annually, and the Survey on Public Perception of the Economic Conditions was first conducted in 2000 and after that it has been conducted quarterly. This centre aims to collect public opinion on the current economic condi-

tions in Hong Kong in order to further measure and monitor the change of QoL of Hong Kong youth. Also, this centre, sponsored by the MTR Corporation, developed the MTR-CUHK Youth QoL Index in 2013. Both the MTR Corporation and this centre believe that this Index could provide policymakers and the society with a useful reference to develop appropriate policies and programs for the advancement of youth and society at large. This Index also aims to enhance the public's understanding of issues and the contributing factors that affect QoL of youth in Hong Kong.

This centre provides a platform for intellectual exchanges that encourages inter- and intra-faculty and university collaborations, in addition to collaborations between relevant scholars and parties from different sectors. This centre expects that such inter-disciplinary connections will consolidate knowledge on well-being for the reference of policymakers and the public in order to further promote QoL in communities and to improve the level of well-being in Hong Kong and, possibly, across the world.

The Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, established in 1990, aimed to promote interdisciplinary research in social, economic and political development. Its efforts are dedicated towards promoting academic exchange by organising regular public lectures, seminars and international conferences. It also disseminated research findings to the public by publishing research studies and conference papers.

The Centre for QoL of Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies aims to achieve the following goals, that is, to advance the Chinese University of Hong Kong to become a centre of research and academic excellence in the studies related to Hong Kong, mainland China and the Asia-Pacific region, to enable Hong Kong to cope with the current changes in China and the Asia-Pacific region and make the best use of them, to act as a "research centre" for the Hong Kong government and the Chinese government, and for policymakers in the public and private sectors, to broaden the intellectual horizon of policymakers and develop alternative policies for society, to monitor and advocate QoL in the world in general and Hong Kong in particular through cross-disciplinary research, academic exchange activities, and cross-institutional collaboration, to incubate and strengthen research projects to push forward the frontiers of

knowledge in QoL, to produce knowledge on QoL that contributes to social service development and policy formulations, to provide policymakers and the public with empirical research and statistics on QoL in Hong Kong and to make cross-cultural comparison, and to promote public awareness of the issues of QoL and the QoL of people in Hong Kong (The Chinese University of Hong Kong 2020).

QLRC, Claremont Graduate University, California, USA

The QLRC at Claremont Graduate University in California, USA was founded in 1999. It is a non-profit organisation that conducts studies in positive psychology in terms of human strengths such as creativity, engagement, intrinsic motivation and responsibility. In the past, the study of behaviour focused on what went wrong in human life in the form of aggression, mental disease, failure and hopelessness. Although it is essential to study and address such pathologies, it is equally important to understand those aspects of human experience that make life worth living.

This centre conducts research on such issues, and provides a forum for researchers from the United States and abroad who wish to extend their studies in positive psychology. In the fall of 2007, Claremont Graduate University launched graduate programs in positive psychology through the School of Social Sciences, Policy and Evaluation, Division of Behavioural and Organisational Sciences and Department of Psychology. The PhD programs in Positive Organisational Psychology and Positive Developmental Psychology provide research training in positive psychology. MA programs in Evaluation with concentrations either in Positive Organisational Psychology or in Positive Developmental Psychology were also offered.

With the help of grants from the Fetzer, Ford, Hewlett, Spencer, and Templeton Foundations, this centre has conducted research jointly with Harvard University and Stanford University on the conditions that foster good work in the professions. Areas investigated included business, human genetics, the media, philanthropy, and higher education. Findings are used to enhance professional training in these areas (Claremont Graduate University 2020).

Canada: QoL Research Unit, University of Toronto

University of Toronto is one of the best and the world's most famous universities. It ranked first among universities in Canada. It is one of the Canadian state universities, and is distinguished for providing the highest levels of education and for its practical and good training of students, in addition to the good quality of research. The University of Toronto always comes in the list of the top 30 universities in the world due to its reputation, greater heritage, and good scientific quality.

The University of Toronto's QoL Research Unit, since 1991, has been developing conceptual models and instruments for research and evaluation. In partnership with the Department of Occupational Therapy and the Centre for Health Promotion at the University of Toronto, the unit carried out QoL studies that relate to communities, families, and individuals from a variety of population groups.

The QoL work began in 1991 at the Health Promotion Centre in response to a request by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Service to develop a model and instrumentation for assessing QoL among persons with special needs. The project was developed quickly, and in 1994, the QoL Research Unit was formed. To date, several projects have been undertaken and completed including studies of the QoL of seniors, adolescents, and adults in the general population. The Research Unit has also assisted other agencies and organisations in applying the instruments to different population groups, such as ex-psychiatric patients.

The quality of the environment from the viewpoint of QoL Research Unit is identified as follows, that is, the availability of basic needs (like food, shelter, safety and social contact), the availability of a set of opportunities within the individual's potential, and that environment provides for the control and choice (University of Toronto 2020).

United Kingdom: What Works Centre for Wellbeing

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing was established to build on the work initiated by the National Statistics Authority, as well as the findings from the Commission on Quality of Life and

Policy. Although this centre was founded with governmental support, and in particular from the Cabinet Office, it is managed as an independent social institution that aims to develop and share robust, accessible and useful evidence that governments, businesses, and communities can use to improve wellbeing across the UK. There are 17 funding partners providing in-kind resources and financial support, including a number of governmental departments in addition to the National Statistics Authority, and major funding bodies such as the Economic and Social Research Council and the Big Lottery Fund. The total funding received by this centre was totalled to be approximately GBP 600,000 a year for the period 2014-2017, with five full-time staff.

The What Works Centre for Quality of Life forms part of a network of seven other “What Works Centres” and two affiliates, of which each is dealing with a different policy issue or geographical region. All What Works centres aim to help to embed comprehensive, robust and independently evaluated evidence that contribute to all levels of the decision-making process by collating existing evidence on the effectiveness of current policy programs and practices, producing high-quality synthetic reports and systematic reviews in areas where such reports do not currently exist, sharing findings in an accessible way, and encouraging practitioners, commissioners, and policymakers to use these findings to inform their decisions (Source: <https://www.oecd.org/>).

In addition to policy themes, the centre conducts works in three cross-cutting areas of raising stakeholder awareness about how to integrate wellbeing into policy and organisational change, providing advice and ideas on how to measure and evaluate well-being, and convening actors across government and other sectors (Global Happiness Policy Report 2018: 215-213).

Australia: Australian Centre for Quality of Life, Deakin University

The Australian Centre for Quality of Life was established to study measures of QoL. The vision of the centre is to save the planet by sharing the QoL and to work for a global community in order to achieve QoL for all.

In 2001, the centre formed a partnership with the Australian Unit to develop the Australian Uni-

ty Well-being Index, which is a national survey that uses several indicators to measure personal QoL. The centre also is a home to the Australian Unity Wellbeing Study data. This study follows-up the samples of Australians who respond to the annual cross-sectoral surveys. It also supports the International Wellbeing Group (IWbG), which is an international collaborative network of researchers. The primary goal of the IWbG is to develop the Personal Wellbeing Index into a standardised cross-cultural scale of Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) (Source: 2020).

The Australian Centre for Quality of Life is committed to improving the understanding to the quality of life through theory development and empirical research. The centre made notable advances in understanding through the development and evaluation of the theory of subjective wellbeing, the discovery of subjective wellbeing set-points, and the demonstration of that the subjective wellbeing mainly comprises positive-activated mood. It is committed to open-access, as all reports and data resulting from the Australian Unit Project, currently including 35 national cross-sectional surveys, are freely available for download. It was planned that the longitudinal data be assembled into a single file and made it available at the end of 2020. Cross-sectional data from other surveys were also available.

The centre develops new research techniques and fosters collaboration with like-minded researchers. Current subjective wellbeing longitudinal research within the centre is examining novel techniques, such as micro-longitudinal research and smartphone applications. An emerging orientation within the centre concerns with the development of valid healthcare measures for children (Deakin University 2020).

This research was conducted to find a conceptual framework of QLRCs in the universities that can be relied upon to build and develop centres inside universities. A documentary review approach was utilised by relying on data sourced from various relevant literature, for both books and the global models, and the collected data were analysed critically. Given what are indicated by the analyses conducted in this study, it can be acknowledged that academia can play a prominent role to provide a tool for community development during QLRCs in universities, and it can be used to monitor key indicators that encompass the social,

health, environmental and economic dimensions of the quality of life in the community. It also can provide a fine-grained picture of how it could positively influence the current system. The paper sought to examine ways that academia could expand its role in societies.

In light of the global experiences in some of the countries investigated by the current study, a number of foundations and components for developing QLRCs in universities can be summarised as follows.

First, the university, as a key partner of the country's government, should have an accredited centre at the State level in the field of QoL, through developing skills, professional development, providing advisory services, supporting national public policies with scientific evidence, and through its contributions to the realisation of the government's vision, with the aim of achieving happiness for the internal community (the university family and students) and for the external community by grasping their needs through "a Centre for QoL Research" as one of the university's contributions to the country. Second, a university's opening of a "QLRC" will come to be one of the main national indicators of achieving the country's vision. A QLRC also is a new entrance to the development of scientific research in universities. The QLRC must be built on a university's current strengths. There must be cooperation between the QLRC and various institutions in the society. The QLRC must demonstrate considerable potential for attracting external support. The QLRC must provide useful services to the state and the university. The QLRC should act as a focal point for scientific research and exchange in studies of QoL in the country and in neighbouring countries. The QLRC should be built on the basis of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary scientific research due to the multidimensional nature of the concept of QoL. The QLRC should achieve the following goals.

1. To achieve the competitive advantage of universities
2. To promote the quality of scientific research in the field of QoL and its applicability in reality
3. To improve the research ability of researchers, and to achieve good services for the local community and overcome the challenges that it faces in achieving the QoL and well-being of the people in the country and the world.

4. To provide an attractive socio-technical/socio-economic system that motivates competent persons to innovate and increases the abilities and capabilities of knowledge production marketing so can convince citizens and decision-makers of its capabilities and positive role, and can attract their attention and support
5. To enhance trust between it on the one hand and decision-makers on the other hand, through a true partnership between it and decision-making departments like institutions concerned with the country's vision and the private and international research centres.
6. To include among its cadres members with strong scientific and administrative capabilities, and to continuously conduct training courses that develop its work.

The QLRC should be provided with financial funding and strong institutional support to succeed in achieving its goals provided that funding and support are sufficient to secure the financial and human requirements that it needs for all activities. The parties that finance the QLRC must view it as a centre of a mission that to provide them with ideas, consultations and experiences related to the field of QoL. There must be a strong relationship between the decision-making institutions concerned with the QoL in the country and the QLRC in universities for the revolving door process to be secured. The QLRC's vision should be the lead in QoL research and to contribute effectively to the well-being of the country and the world. The QLRC's mission should enhance the country's government's commitment to the QoL by conducting advanced research in the field of QoL, publishing its results at the national and global levels, monitoring and evaluating indicators of QoL in the country, and promoting the positive lifestyle virtues in society. The QLRC's main goal of contributing in supporting efforts and orientations of the government to achieve the country's vision and to implement its QoL programs is developed so that the QLRC works to find alternative solutions and effective methods based on scientific studies that to enhance the QoL, happiness and positivity.

The QLRC goals can be developed to advance the university to become a centre of research and academic excellence in the studies related to the country and neighbouring countries. Further, it can

enable the country to cope with the current changes at the regional and global levels and make the best use of them. It can act as a “research centre” for the country’s government and for policymakers in the public and private sectors. The centre can broaden the intellectual horizon of policymakers and develop alternative policies for society. Moreover, it can monitor and advocate QoL in the world in general and the country in particular through cross-disciplinary research, academic exchange activities, and cross-institutional collaboration. It has the potential to incubate and strengthen research projects to push forward the frontiers of knowledge in QoL. Also, it can promote evidence-based research on QoL and well-being, and promote interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research in the field of social, economic and political development. Another benefit of these centres is to provide policymakers and the public with empirical research and statistics on QoL in the country and make cross-cultural comparison, to build capacities by holding international and regional conferences on the QoL, well-being, happiness and positivity concepts, to promote academic exchange by organising regular public lectures, seminars and international conferences, and to disseminate research findings to the public by publishing researches and conference papers. Not only that, but it can provide professional consulting services to entities to improve the QoL in the country and to issue specialised research based on facts and analytical studies their results contribute to finding solutions to enhance the QoL of the country’s population. It is expected that these centres can provide the skills of QoL, happiness and positivity, establish cooperation with the authorities to find solutions to enhance the QoL of the country’s citizens, and design objective analytical tools to assess the QoL and influential societal conditions in the country, and to enhance public awareness of QoL issues and the lifestyle of people in the country.

Additionally, the target group of the QLRC is developed to include agencies, companies, and the local community. The expected outcomes of the QLRC are developed to include, for example, a partnership with the Research Centre for QoL of Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at University of Hong Kong in China, a partnership with the What Works Centre for Wellbeing in the UK, a partnership with the Happiness and Positiv-

ity Centre at the University of Pennsylvania in the USA, the participation in the National Survey of Quality of Life process and its analysis. Not only that, but it may include an initiative on conducting cross-context courses in quality-of-life for university students, an initiative on QoL in workplace environments, a project on enhancing the QoL for foreign residents in the country, a project on building the country’s Youth QoL Index, and a project about the university as a positive institution that promotes QoL among students, administrative staff and faculty members.

The QLRC’s influence on the target group can be reflected through the consolidation of the QoL concept as a basic rule of the country, and providing agencies with consultations to improve the QoL in the country. It adopts the university’s standards of excellence through achieving the goals of the country’s vision, the improving of the research ability of faculty members and researchers in the university, and the strengthening of the link between the university and the local and global community. The identification of the organisational and administrative structure of the centre can be done by setting specific criteria for appointing leaders for the QLRC, which can be done through conducting surveys to identify effective leadership profiles and advertise vacancies, meetings with persons with successful leadership features, and the development of a guide to selection criteria within the QLRC through which its future leadership will be selected. The development of the QLRC’s structure can target directors, heads of sub-committees, a group of administrative staff, an accountant, a data entry person, and a programmer. The QLRC’s units like Research Units, Capacity-Building and Advisory Services Unit, Board of Trustees, specialists from the colleges’ academic departments and from the support deanships at the university as representatives of the QoL, international institutions and specialists from Saudi Arabia and abroad. Provision of funding for the QLRC can be done through self-funds, which can be achieved through rationalising its expenditures, revenues from its works, diversifying its sources of funding, private sector participation, and allocating an independent budget for it. Increasing the financial resources for the QLRC can be achieved through participation of private sector institutions in its funding, and the establishment of international and scientific cooperation with

various institutions. Having a specific plan for the QLRC can be achieved through workshops to develop the centre's regulations, and surveys to identify the requirements of the country's QoL program. The development of a scientific research matrix for the QLRC, that is, the topics of the scientific research matrix are identified every three years, and are determined through discussions with the centre's partners, in addition to wide-ranging consultations with persons and organisations from all over the country. Finally, linking scientific research on the QoL with the country's program of the QoL can be done through motivating researchers to conduct researches to forecast the QoL needs, marketing scientific research, and conducting a comprehensive survey before carrying out scientific research.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study give insights to the policymakers as to significance of QLRCs in shaping the vision of a country. Results demonstrate that it is hard to give a clear definition of QLRCs as culture varies among countries. Results also found that QLRCs are crucial to achieve the countries vision. It is mandatory for these centres to be established to monitor the countries policies in different phases of life such as economy, education, telecommunication, and well-being. Communities need to be aware of the significance of these centres by giving them more orientations program to understand the objectives, plans, and activities of such centres.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study can provide a set of recommendations in this regard, the most important of which are the following:

1. It is necessary to learn about QLRCs in advanced international universities.
2. Making fundamental changes in the university colleges' educational programs and the support deanships and guiding them to research QoL in the world in general and the country.

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