Quality of Life and Economic Condition:
A Comparative County Analysis

RAPP 300: Seminar in Regional Issues I
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Introduction

A continuing dialog with NewCity Morehead-Rowan County
Research Question

What is the relationship between quality of life and economic condition?

ARC-BASED ECONOMIC RANKING OF COUNTIES

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boyle</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fleming</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>AR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rowan</td>
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<td>Bath</td>
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D = Distressed  AR = At-Risk  T = Transitional  C = Competitive
Quality of Life – our definition

A community’s ability to meet the basic needs of its citizens, while also providing opportunities for them to engage in the pursuit of happiness.
Quality of Life – our definition

Basic needs
- Food
- Housing
- Water, Sewer and Other Utilities
- Employment Opportunities
- Safety and Emergency Services

Opportunities
- Education
- Healthcare
- Transportation
- Social organizations

- Arts and Entertainment
- Parks and Recreation
- Cultural Activities
- More...
Research Hypothesis

There is a positive association between a community’s quality of life and its economic condition.
## Selecting QoL Indicators/Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>Fuel Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Home Ownership Rates&lt;br&gt;Percent of Income Spent of Rent&lt;br&gt;Total Rent Vacancy Rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Industrial Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Healthcare</td>
<td>Morbidity Rates&lt;br&gt;Number of Doctors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety &amp; Emergency Services</td>
<td>Crime Index&lt;br&gt;Drug-related Crime Rates&lt;br&gt;Number of Police Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Attainment Rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Mode of Transportation&lt;br&gt;Travel Time to Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>Non-Profit Assets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expectation: the use of ‘non-utility’ fuels will be higher in less economically successful counties.
Expectation: lower in less economically successful counties
Health - morbidity rates

Expectation: higher in less economically successful counties
Healthcare – active doctors

Expectation: fewer in less economically successful counties
Safety – crime index; drug arrests

Expectation: higher in less economically successful counties

![Crime Index Graph](image)

- Boyle
- Washington
- Fleming
- Rowan
- Bath

![Drug Arrest Rates Graph](image)

- Boyle
- Washington
- Fleming
- Rowan
- Bath

Expectation: higher in less economically successful counties
Safety - police employment

Expectation: lower in less economically successful counties

[Graph showing Police Employment from 1971 to 2000 for different counties.]
Education – attainment rates

Expectation: lower in less economically successful counties

![Graphs showing education attainment rates over time for different counties.](image-url)
Conclusions

Variability in measuring quality of life in different communities

Measures that supported our hypothesis:
- Fuel Type
- Police Employment
- Educational Attainment
Conclusions

Measures that did not support our hypothesis:

- Industrial Diversity
- Morbidity Rates
- Healthcare Professional Rates
- Home Ownership Rates
- Percent of Income Spent on Rent
- Total Vacancy Rates
- Crime and Drug Rates
- Mode of Transportation and Travel Time to Work
Characteristics of good leaders include:
- Positive attitude and long-term vision
- Willingness to collaborate
- Openness to new ideas and opportunities

Fostering quality of life requires a multifaceted approach
Additional measures could include:

- Access to water and sewer
- Public revenues and expenditures
- Transportation networks
- Volunteer rates

Assessing regional quality of life
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