Evaluating the Relationship between Access to Community Services and Facilities, Neighborhood Safety and Health, and Life Quality of Women Living in Tehran (With an Emphasis on Special Needs of Women in District 2 of Tehran)

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1. INTRODUCTION
Quality of life is the main constituent of social welfare which is influenced by urban factors. According to studies, there has been a decline in quality of life of Iranians in recent years. Also, research shows that Iranian women have lower quality of life compared to that of men. The aim of the present study is to explore the relationship between women’s access to community facilities, environmental health and neighborhood safety with an emphasis on special needs of women and their quality of life.

2. METHODOLOGY
This is a survey study. The sample population consists of 383 married women living in nine districts of the Tehran municipality who were selected through random sampling method. Data were collected using a questionnaire that consisted of three sections: first section contained demographic questions such as occupation, education, length of marriage, number of children, income, and residence. The second section contained questions about the women’ access to public utilities and municipal services such as socio-cultural venues, sports centers, service facilities, public transport network, health and neighborhood safety with an emphasis on women’s special needs. The 5-point Likert scale (never=1, very low=2, low=3, high=4, very high=5) was administrated in this study. The third section included WHOQOL-BREF inventory.

3. DISCUSSION
The findings show that there is a significant relationship between women’s quality of life and access to urban facilities and services (r=0.33, p=0.000), the local health (r=0.25, p=0.000) and neighborhood safety (r=0.19, p=0.000). Also, the results of variance analysis indicate that the quality of life of women living in nine districts of the Tehran municipality has a significance level of p=0.001 depending on their area of residence. That is, variation in the area of residence, difference in access to facilities and services as well as health and safety of women influence their quality of life.

In this study, to determine women’s quality of life based on its determinants (level of access to neighborhood facility, the level of health and safety), the multivariate regression analysis was used. The finding of multiple regressions showed that access to community facilities and neighborhood safety explained 39% of variance in women’s quality of life.

4. CONCLUSION
The findings of this research suggests that the quality of life of women living in nine districts of the Tehran municipality is influenced by access to public utilities and municipal services, health and level of neighborhood safety. The limited access of women to urban services shows that despite the significant presence of women in public and urban places, little attention has been paid to their special needs. Our findings direct attention toward the
gender-specific limitation of women’s access to public utilities and municipal services, health and level of neighborhood as indicators of women’s quality of life. Hence, given the significant presence of women in public and urban areas, a new approach to planning and urban design, which is geared to the adoption of "With women" and "For women" slogan with the aim of meeting their needs in term of safety, health, municipal services and communities facilities and improvement of living conditions, should be adopted.

**Key words:** Quality of life, Urban facilities and services, Environmental health, Neighborhood safety, Women’s needs.

**References**


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