ABSTRACT

Due to rural-urban migration as well as the natural population growth, the urbanization of Lahore has been very rapid over the last few decades. With an estimated population of over 8 million, Lahore is about to join the league of the mega cities of the world. Due to high population growth, a variety of stressors associated with rapid urbanization have emerged. These stressors e.g. air pollution due to automobile exhaust emissions, uncollected solid wastes, traffic congestion, and the rise in violence and crime are badly deteriorating the living conditions of the city. The present study was designed to assess the relationship between urban stress, living conditions, and health of the citizen's of Lahore. The study area included Faisal Town, Johar Town and the Township areas of Lahore. A structured questionnaire was developed to extract information from respondents. Three hundred individuals were interviewed in the study area. By applying principal component analysis, depression (i.e. sadness, helplessness), traffic congestion, commuting time to work, disease prevalence, unclean area, and the biggest worry (i.e. crowding, solid waste pollution, air pollution, dust, noise pollution, crime and violence) of respondents in the area were identified as important factors related to urban health. Simple percentage results showed that public amenities like deficits in the provision of electricity, flour, and housing are the most serious problems of the residents of Lahore.

Livelihood conditions such as rising inflation and unemployment contribute significantly to the overall urban stress. Environmental degradation is rapidly increasing. Solid waste pollution and air pollution are the main environmental problems which are degrading the study area. These deteriorated living conditions are posing serious threats to human health. Respiratory diseases, skin diseases, typhoid, and hepatitis are common. ANOVA results showed that residential areas of low income groups are more degraded than the residential areas of higher income groups. The results suggested that degraded physical environment may be impacting both mental and physical health of the residents.