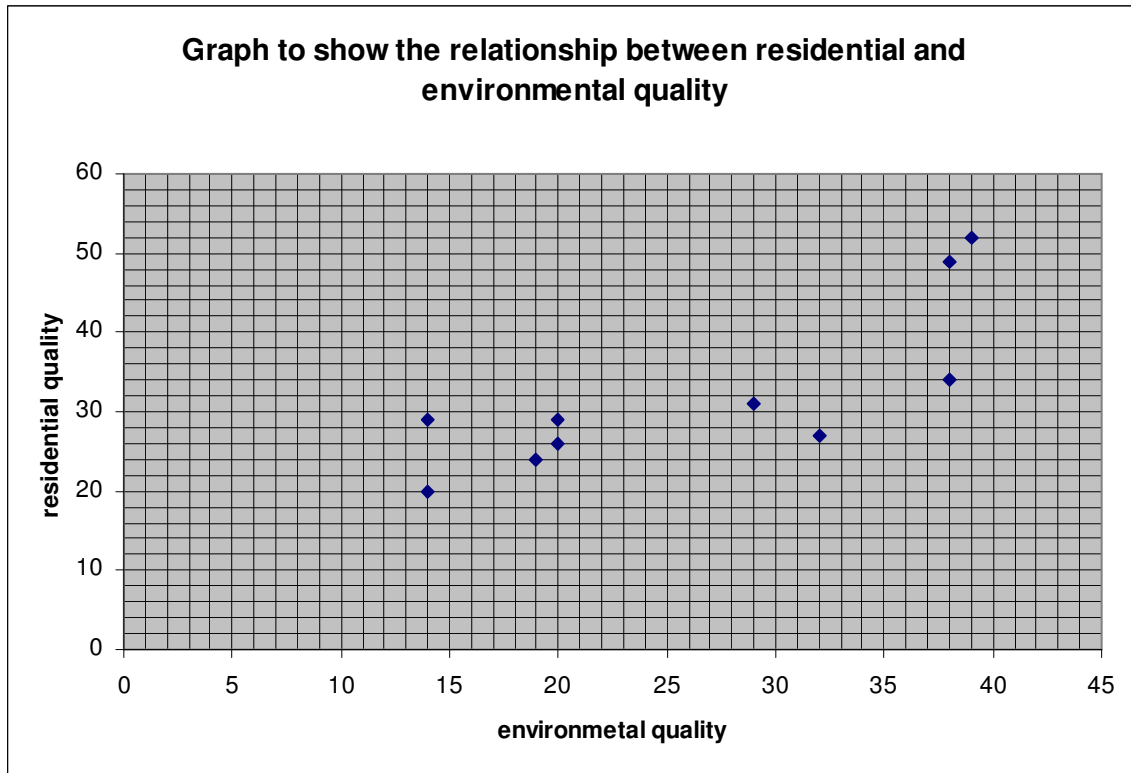


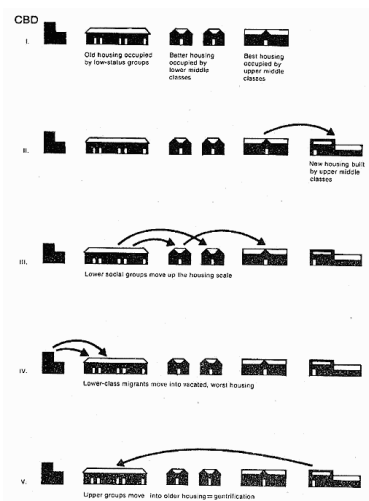
Conclusion

In the final section of my coursework I will attempt to answer the questions that I proposed at the beginning of the study, I will also present the relationship I have found in my results.

From my results I can see that there is a relationship between the residential quality across the transect line and environmental quality.



We can see from the above graph that there is a positive relationship between residential and environmental quality. As the residential quality gets worse so does the environmental, this can be explained as La Mina has been caught in The Spiral of Decline and is now a Sink Estate. The area of La Mina has attracted immigrants and people in a poor economic position, as they are able to afford the cheap life in the neighbourhood. When lower social economic groups improve their economic position they move into higher quality housing leaving the vacant worst housing for lower class citizens. The Filtering model illustrates exactly what has taken place in La Mina. With the help of The Forum, the Barcelona government hope that with increased gentrification, in years to come the upper class citizens will want to live in the newly developed area and will buy the older housing in La Mina.



Has the Universal Forum of Culture improved the quality of life in La Mina?

- Is the area closer to The Forum more gentrified?
- Does the Environmental Quality vary with distance from The Forum?
- Does the Residential Quality vary with distance from The Forum?
- Are there more government funded renewal schemes closer to The Forum?
- Does the new 'Rambla' encourage more community inclusion, as it is predicted to?

Is the area closer to The Forum more gentrified?

The areas closer to The Forum are more gentrified than those further away. The reason that the area directly next to The Forum has the most gentrification is that there has not been enough time passed since The Forum's creation for the multiplier effect to take hold fully. A minimum of ten years will be needed to see whether the multiplier effect will be able to gentrify La Mina.

Does the Environmental Quality vary with distance from The Forum?

Yes, as the distance increases from The Forum, the environmental quality decreases. However, it is evident that the Barcelona Government is attempting to improve the area of La Mina. New parks, benches, fun areas for children are all proposed but these things all take time to happen. It has only been 1 and half years since The Forum was created and like the gentrification process, the improvement of the environment will take time.

Does the Residential Quality vary with distance from The Forum?

The residential quality also decreases with distance from The Forum and it becomes very dire at sites 9 and 10 in La Mina. However, this is again due to the small amount of time that has passed since the proposed plans to regenerate La Mina. One plan has already started at Site 5 and there is a difference there, but it will again take time for such a large regeneration program to be completed.

Are there more government funded renewal schemes closer to The Forum?

All of the renewal plans seem to be taking place inside of La Mina and not just on the peripheries. There is the presence of Urban II in La Mina's renewal process. URBAN II is a Community Initiative financed by the European Regional Development Fund for the economic and social regeneration of troubled urban areas, such as La Mina.

The strategic objectives set for the URBAN II as an answer to the problems detected in La Mina are:

- To revalue the urban environment of the district of La Mina and to improve housing conditions in order to turn the district into a ‘place of residence’ and not into a shelter or a temporary abode to those who intend to leave the district looking for areas with better prospects.
- To improve the perception of the district and its residents, both in La Mina and in the rest of the Metropolitan Area, particularly in the other districts within Sant Adrià de Besòs.
- To recuperate underused plots, removing uncontrolled waste and encouraging its selective gathering and recycling, as well as setting the basis for civic behaviour on the part of the residents in urban and environmental terms.
- To structure, in a coherent way, the urban actions already existing in the district, by using a suitable tool of urban planning – the Special Reorganisation and Improvement Plan (Plan Especial de Reordenación y Mejora, PERM) – and generating different reference points (by means of public building), in social terms and in terms of ‘landscape’.
- To connect – in a urban and social sense - the district of La Mina with the rest of the Metropolitan Area and, particularly, with the rest of the municipality of Sant Adrià de Besòs.
- To consolidate the already-existing economic activity, both as a potential source of employment and due to its capability when it comes to social structuring.
- To improve the employability factors of the active, or potentially active, population in the district, by making insertion into the labour market easier, particularly for the less favoured collectives.
- To reduce the incidence of the currently existing marginalisation and exclusion dynamics, paying special attention to those collectives that are potentially more exposed.
- To fight delinquency in the district, both from the point of view of prevention and penal mediation and also of the coordination and the improvement of the State security forces’ answer.
- To promote civic behaviour in the district by forming a Community Work Network that includes neighbours associations and NGOs and involves the residents in the flux of social life and coexistence in the district of La Mina.

The government’s planned the regeneration scheme to be completed by 2010, however, for such intricate changed to take place, I believe a much longer period will be needed to fully renew the area of La Mina. The proposed plans are spread out throughout La Mina, but will take numerous years to come into effect.

Does the new Rambla encourage more community inclusion?

The new Rambla does encourage more community inclusion although it is not even completed. I can see from my results that more than 40 people were sitting, walking etc together in a period of only 5 minutes. Once the Rambla is finished it will provide a great place for the community to socialise together. As www.barrimina.org call it, the new Rambla will be ‘the heart of La Mina’.

Has the Universal Forum of Culture improved the quality of life in La Mina?

An article in the local newspaper La Vanguardia asked its readers whether The Forum had, or is improving the surrounding areas. 57.9% of the 1119 that replied voted YES. However the full benefits of The Forum cannot be expected to be felt for a much longer amount of time, but although the regeneration scheme in La Mina may not be fully completed there is much evidence to suggest that in years to come the quality of life for the inhabitants is going to improve significantly. The full success of the scheme is hard to see at the moment as most plans are either in preliminary stages or still being planned. I can see this happening, taking the Rambla as an example, as it has already begun to improve the areas social integration in the area. At the moment the quality of life in La Mina is not likely to have been so effected by The Forum as it takes time for the multiplier effect to take place. The new lifts, school, parking, play areas, benches and so on are all going to improve the quality of life for future generations in La Mina. The quality of life in La Mina will be improved; this is a direct result of The Forum, as without The Forum's input it is unlikely that the Barcelona government would have looked at regenerating the area, as now people are encouraged into the peripheral areas, a reversal of the Core – Periphery Theory. Whilst in La Mina I noticed a strong feeling of community. Although La Mina is infamous throughout Barcelona, once inside the community atmosphere was extraordinary. Many people spent hour after hour talking about and displaying their little birds. There was also an acceptance of all races and types of people in La Mina. If anything this racial acceptance is better than many 'gentrified' areas throughout the world. In conclusion, The Forum will improve the quality of life in La Mina, once enough time has passed for it to do so.

Strengths

- The investigation has been carried out in depth and each key question is composed of many factors, which my recorded results have helped me to answer.
- The analysis of data from numerous sources has showed a consistent trend with substantiating conclusions
- I have used a good variety of sampling and analysis methods.
- The investigation concentrates on an actual process that is currently taking place in Barcelona. This is when the government attempts to improve the quality of life in less developed areas.

Weaknesses and Limitations

- Most, if not all geographical sampling and analysing methods are subjective..
- Having only one transect line and 3 quadrats decreased the possibility of 100% fair sampling and reduced reliability.
- We had a limited time for fieldwork
- The data collection methods were limited
- The study can in no way go deep enough into the actual profundity of the renewal schemes; it only skims the surface looking at the superficial initiatives.

Ideas to further extend or improve the investigation

- Sample more zones, quadrats and sites. This would increase the reliability of the data
- Look at the regeneration schemes success rates (if published).
- Compare Barcelona's Forum with other City's Forums to see how and if they have helped to regenerate poor areas.
- Investigate in 5 or 6 years looking again at the same things to see whether the schemes have improved the quality of life in the area.
- Study other cultural events to see the impacts.

Bibliography

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