

Exploring the Components of Subjective Well-Being Among Individuals Living in Urban Stressful Environments

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore the psychological, social, and environmental components of subjective well-being among individuals residing in stressful urban environments in the United Kingdom. This qualitative study employed an exploratory design to capture participants' lived experiences of well-being in the context of urban stress. A purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit 28 adults living in metropolitan and mid-sized urban areas across the United Kingdom. Semi-structured interviews were conducted until theoretical saturation was reached, focusing on coping strategies, sources of support, and perceptions of well-being. Each interview lasted between 45 and 70 minutes, was audio-recorded with consent, and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis supported by NVivo 14 software. Reflexive memoing and iterative coding were employed to ensure rigor, and Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach guided the analytical process. Analysis revealed three overarching themes shaping subjective well-being: (1) psychological and emotional well-being, which included coping with stress, resilience, emotional regulation, and challenges such as anxiety and burnout; (2) social and relational well-being, encompassing family support, friendships, workplace relations, and community belonging, alongside the negative impact of social isolation; and (3) environmental and lifestyle well-being, which included access to green spaces, urban infrastructure, financial stability, safety, cultural participation, and technology use. Participants emphasized the protective role of resilience, social support, and access to restorative environments, while highlighting financial insecurity, social isolation, and digital overuse as key threats to well-being. Subjective well-being in urban stressful environments is a multidimensional construct shaped by individual coping strategies, social support systems, and environmental conditions. Strengthening resilience, enhancing community connectedness, and addressing structural urban challenges are essential for promoting healthier, more sustainable urban living.

Keywords: Subjective well-being; urban stress; coping strategies; social support; resilience; qualitative research; United Kingdom

1. Introduction

Stress and well-being have long been connected in scholarly literature. Stressful conditions in urban contexts can significantly erode mental and emotional health, and the way individuals perceive, interpret, and manage these conditions determines their subjective well-being (Sabir et al., 2025). Comparative analyses have shown that urban residents often experience higher stress levels than their rural counterparts, though social resources and access to coping strategies may partially offset these effects (Sabir et al., 2025). In this regard, subjective well-being cannot be reduced to the absence of illness but must be understood as a multidimensional construct that includes psychological, social, and environmental components.

The relationship between stress, coping, and well-being has been examined across diverse populations and contexts. For example, research among housewives has revealed that mental stress directly undermines healthy domestic environments, affecting not only women's personal well-being but also family functioning (Wasantha, 2024). Similarly, university students encounter substantial stressors that can undermine academic performance and mental health, underscoring the need for effective coping mechanisms (Vetrivel et al., 2024). Nurses and other health professionals also represent a group heavily burdened by workplace stress; the availability of social support and adaptive coping strategies significantly predicts their mental well-being (Uye et al., 2024). These findings suggest that across different groups—housewives, students, health workers—the interaction between stress and subjective well-being is shaped by access to resources, individual coping strategies, and the broader social context.

The role of psychological resilience, social support, and coping strategies is further emphasized in specific stress-related contexts. For example, postpartum women in urban areas face high risks of emotional distress such as postpartum blues, which can influence both maternal and infant well-being (Rosdianto, 2024). Similarly, academic stress among students has been linked to reduced psychological well-being, with calls for structured programs to enhance mental resilience (Kumar & Bansal, 2024). The interplay between daily experiences and well-being has also been highlighted among parents of children with autism, showing how persistent caregiving demands shape emotional states (Wang et al., 2023). In industrial workers, stress-management interventions grounded in transactional models have proven effective in enhancing coping skills and

supporting subjective well-being (Kaveh et al., 2023). Together, these studies highlight that the sources of stress may differ—whether academic, caregiving, workplace, or familial—but the underlying need for effective coping mechanisms remains a consistent determinant of subjective well-being.

Urban stressors are complex, encompassing environmental, occupational, and social dimensions. Empirical work has shown that organizational stress can undermine psychological well-being through both direct and indirect mechanisms (A. D. Balcan, 2023). Longitudinal studies further demonstrate that operational stress, particularly among groups such as military personnel, negatively impacts well-being unless moderated by strong social support networks (A.-D. Balcan, 2023). The moderating role of support is consistent with findings among transgender individuals, where support and coping strategies were found to mitigate the relationship between perceived stress and quality of life (Gerymski, 2019). These results suggest that subjective well-being is never experienced in isolation but always shaped by the relational and social context in which stress is processed.

The literature also highlights the relevance of social identity, mindset, and cultural context in shaping well-being outcomes. For example, research on chronic pain patients shows that stress mindsets and social identification significantly influence coping effectiveness and psychological well-being (Grünenwald et al., 2022). Similarly, among refugees, consumption-related coping strategies—such as managing limited resources through creative adaptation—have been found to affect subjective well-being (Zourrig & Hedhli, 2022). This emphasizes that coping is not only an individual strategy but is embedded in broader cultural and socio-economic frameworks.

The emergence of COVID-19 has further complicated the understanding of stress and well-being. For example, European dental students reported high levels of stress during remote training, with well-being influenced by perceived support and available coping strategies (Aleksėjūnienė et al., 2022). Similarly, care home staff during the pandemic reported increased stress and diminished well-being, with coping mechanisms serving as critical buffers (Zhao et al., 2021). These findings reinforce that in periods of crisis, subjective well-being is especially vulnerable but can be safeguarded through structured support and adaptive responses.

The role of religion, family, and intergenerational relationships has also been investigated in the context of

stress and well-being. Religious coping among mothers of children with autism, for instance, was identified as a significant factor in managing stress and preserving subjective well-being (Davis & Kiang, 2020). Among grandparents raising grandchildren, resilience supported by stress management and coping mechanisms was found to enhance life satisfaction and overall well-being (Mendoza et al., 2019). These relational dynamics highlight that subjective well-being is tied not only to individual attributes but also to the support structures available in familial and intergenerational contexts.

Cultural and gender contexts also play a significant role in shaping stress, coping, and well-being. For example, dual role conflicts and stress among nurses were linked to well-being outcomes, particularly moderated by social support (Widyasrini & Lestari, 2020). In Indonesia, coping strategies and social support among high school students were associated with their subjective well-being, underscoring the influence of developmental and cultural factors (Putri et al., 2020). Similarly, urban middle-aged men and women in Korea exhibited depressive symptoms strongly associated with their coping strategies and access to social support (Jeon & Park, 2015). These studies reinforce that well-being in urban stressful environments is not a universal phenomenon but is shaped by cultural values, gender roles, and social structures.

Stress experienced in demanding professional contexts further illustrates the complexity of well-being. Nurses working in neonatal intensive care units faced stress related to end-of-life care; their coping strategies and perceived support significantly influenced their psychological well-being (Kwon et al., 2018). In addition, social media has emerged as both a source of stress and a coping outlet, with evidence suggesting its dual role in shaping subjective well-being depending on patterns of use (Demirtepe-Saygılı, 2022). These findings are critical in urban contexts, where digital engagement is pervasive and can both alleviate and exacerbate stress.

Collectively, the reviewed literature reveals several key insights relevant to subjective well-being in urban stressful environments. First, stress is a universal phenomenon, but its manifestations and outcomes are highly context-dependent, varying across occupational, familial, and cultural groups. Second, coping strategies—whether individual (e.g., reframing, mindfulness), social (e.g., family, peers, community), or structural (e.g., institutional support, cultural engagement)—play a decisive role in shaping well-being outcomes. Third, social support consistently emerges as a

protective factor, moderating the relationship between stress and diminished well-being. Finally, urban settings amplify stress through environmental and social factors, but also provide opportunities for structured interventions and support systems that can enhance subjective well-being.

Despite the expanding body of research, gaps remain in understanding how individuals living in urban stressful environments conceptualize and experience their subjective well-being. Most existing studies focus on specific groups (such as students, healthcare workers, or caregivers) or crisis contexts (such as the COVID-19 pandemic). Less is known about the broader lived experiences of urban residents who navigate stress in daily life outside of these categories. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the components of subjective well-being among individuals residing in urban environments characterized by chronic stress.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study employed a qualitative research design with an exploratory orientation, as the purpose was to gain in-depth insights into the components of subjective well-being among individuals residing in urban stressful environments. A purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit participants who lived in densely populated urban areas in the United Kingdom and who were willing to share their personal experiences of coping with urban stress. The final sample consisted of 28 participants, selected based on criteria such as age (over 18 years), residence in a metropolitan area for at least five years, and the ability to articulate their lived experiences. Data collection continued until theoretical saturation was reached, meaning no new themes emerged from subsequent interviews.

2.2. Measures

Semi-structured, face-to-face and online interviews served as the primary data collection method. The interview guide included open-ended questions designed to elicit participants' perspectives on subjective well-being, sources of stress in their urban environments, and coping mechanisms. Follow-up probing questions were asked to clarify and expand on responses when necessary. Each interview lasted between 45 and 70 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent. To ensure rigor, field notes were taken to capture contextual observations and non-verbal cues. All interviews were transcribed verbatim.

2.3. Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and deeper meanings within the data. NVivo 14 software was employed to facilitate systematic coding, organization, and retrieval of data. The analysis process followed Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Codes were compared across participants to identify similarities and divergences. Reflexive memo writing was also used throughout the analysis to ensure transparency in the researchers' interpretive process.

3. Findings and Results

The study sample consisted of 28 participants living in urban areas across the United Kingdom. Of these, 15 were female and 13 were male, ranging in age from 22 to 61 years (mean age = 38.7 years). In terms of educational background, 10 participants held postgraduate degrees, 12 had undergraduate degrees, and 6 had completed secondary education. With regard to employment status, 17 participants were employed full-time, 5 were employed part-time, 3 were students, and 3 were unemployed. The majority of participants ($n = 20$) reported living in metropolitan areas such as London, Birmingham, and Manchester, while the remainder ($n = 8$) resided in medium-sized urban centers. In terms of marital status, 12 participants were single, 11 were married, and 5 were divorced or separated. These demographic characteristics ensured a diverse sample, allowing for a broad exploration of subjective well-being experiences in urban stressful environments.

Table 1

Themes, Subthemes, and Concepts of Subjective Well-Being in Urban Stressful Environments

Category (Theme)	Subcategory (Subtheme)	Concepts (Open Codes)
1. Psychological and Emotional Well-Being	Coping with Stress	Mindfulness practices; Relaxation techniques; Journaling emotions; Avoidance of stressful areas
	Emotional Regulation	Reframing negative thoughts; Breathing exercises; Suppressing anger; Self-soothing activities
	Sense of Purpose	Career aspirations; Volunteer work; Engaging in hobbies; Religious/spiritual orientation; Personal growth goals
	Resilience	Learning from hardships; Optimism; Persistence; Maintaining hope
	Self-Esteem and Confidence	Positive self-talk; Achieving small goals; Recognition from peers; Body image satisfaction
	Mental Health Challenges	Anxiety symptoms; Sleep disturbances; Feeling overwhelmed; Burnout; Seeking therapy
2. Social and Relational Well-Being	Family Support	Emotional closeness; Financial assistance; Advice from elders; Shared meals
	Friendships and Peer Networks	Companionship; Humor and laughter; Trust; Peer encouragement; Recreational outings
	Community Belonging	Participation in neighborhood events; Knowing neighbors; Cultural festivals; Sense of safety
	Social Isolation	Loneliness; Lack of trust; Fear of crime; Avoidance of social spaces
	Workplace Relationships	Supportive colleagues; Teamwork; Conflicts at work; Employer recognition
3. Environmental and Lifestyle Well-Being	Access to Green Spaces	Walking in parks; Gardening; Outdoor exercise; Fresh air
	Urban Infrastructure	Reliable transport; Overcrowding; Noise pollution; Cleanliness of streets; Affordable housing
	Health and Lifestyle Habits	Regular exercise; Balanced diet; Sleep routines; Limited alcohol use; Smoking reduction
	Financial Stability	Stable income; Managing expenses; Housing affordability; Coping with inflation
	Safety and Security	CCTV surveillance; Police presence; Lighting in streets; Safe public transport
	Cultural and Recreational Engagement	Art exhibitions; Music events; Sports clubs; Religious gatherings; Cafes and restaurants
	Technology and Digital Connectivity	Social media use; Online communities; Remote work flexibility; Digital stress from overuse

Theme 1: Psychological and Emotional Well-Being

Coping with Stress. Participants described a variety of ways to handle urban pressures, often emphasizing simple,

practical techniques. Some turned to mindfulness and relaxation practices, while others avoided particularly stressful environments such as crowded transport hubs. One participant shared: *"When the city gets too loud, I just put my headphones in and walk along the river. It's my escape."* These coping strategies were central in maintaining daily equilibrium in stressful urban contexts.

Emotional Regulation. Interviewees highlighted the role of regulating their emotions through both cognitive and behavioral strategies. Reframing negative experiences and practicing breathing exercises were common. For some, suppressing anger or self-soothing with music or food helped in moments of high tension. As one participant expressed: *"I try to pause and breathe before I react, because otherwise the city just eats me alive."*

Sense of Purpose. A strong sense of meaning contributed to participants' well-being, often derived from career goals, volunteering, hobbies, or spirituality. Engagement in activities that aligned with personal values fostered optimism despite urban stressors. For example, a respondent noted: *"Helping out at the community center gives me a reason to get up in the morning, even if the commute is exhausting."*

Resilience. Resilience was repeatedly identified as a protective psychological factor. Individuals stressed the importance of optimism, persistence, and maintaining hope despite adversity. One participant reflected: *"I've learned to bounce back. Every time the city knocks me down, I remind myself I've been through worse."* Such attitudes helped participants sustain well-being over time.

Self-Esteem and Confidence. Many participants emphasized how achievements, recognition from others, and positive self-talk nurtured confidence. Body image and personal accomplishments also influenced self-esteem. As one woman stated: *"When my manager praised my work, it boosted me for weeks. It made me feel like I mattered."*

Mental Health Challenges. Despite adaptive strategies, participants reported frequent struggles with anxiety, sleep disturbances, and feelings of burnout. Several acknowledged seeking professional therapy. One participant remarked: *"There are days I can't sleep because of the noise, the bills, and the constant pressure. That's when I know I need outside help."* These challenges highlight the fragile balance of subjective well-being in urban environments.

Theme 2: Social and Relational Well-Being

Family Support. Family emerged as a critical buffer against urban stress. Emotional closeness, financial assistance, and shared meals reinforced participants' sense

of stability. One participant shared: *"Having Sunday dinner with my parents resets me for the week. It feels like home, even when the city doesn't."*

Friendships and Peer Networks. Strong friendships provided companionship, laughter, and encouragement, while outings with peers served as an antidote to urban stress. A participant reflected: *"Going to the pub with my mates keeps me sane. We joke about everything—even our struggles—and it makes the pressure feel lighter."*

Community Belonging. For some, neighborhood events and cultural festivals fostered belonging. Knowing neighbors and feeling safe in their community contributed to well-being. As one respondent explained: *"When our block organizes a street party, it reminds me we're all in this together."*

Social Isolation. Conversely, several participants reported experiences of loneliness and mistrust, particularly in areas perceived as unsafe. One individual explained: *"Even surrounded by thousands, I feel invisible. People don't look you in the eye anymore."* This isolation undermined their subjective well-being.

Workplace Relationships. Interactions at work also played a significant role. Supportive colleagues and teamwork enhanced participants' sense of connection, while conflict or lack of recognition reduced it. One participant remarked: *"When my boss acknowledges my work, I feel motivated. When he doesn't, I feel like just another cog in the machine."*

Theme 3: Environmental and Lifestyle Well-Being

Access to Green Spaces. Participants consistently emphasized the restorative power of parks, gardens, and outdoor exercise. As one respondent described: *"Running in the park clears my head—it's the only time I forget I'm in a busy city."* Such experiences directly elevated subjective well-being.

Urban Infrastructure. Perceptions of the city's infrastructure shaped participants' well-being. While reliable transport and housing affordability offered security, overcrowding, noise pollution, and dirty streets created stress. A participant explained: *"The buses are always late, the streets are packed—it feels like the city is working against me."*

Health and Lifestyle Habits. Maintaining healthy routines—such as balanced diets, regular exercise, and sleep schedules—was described as a crucial foundation for well-being. Others admitted struggling with unhealthy habits like smoking or irregular sleep. As one participant said: *"If I don't go to the gym, I notice my mood spiraling fast."*

Financial Stability. Many participants connected subjective well-being to financial security. Stable incomes and managing expenses contributed to stability, while rising housing costs and inflation created constant strain. One individual noted: *"It's hard to feel happy when half your paycheck disappears on rent."*

Safety and Security. A sense of safety, ensured through lighting, police presence, and CCTV, was identified as essential. Participants living in less secure neighborhoods expressed heightened stress. As one respondent explained: *"I walk home clutching my keys like a weapon. That fear lingers even when I'm inside."*

Cultural and Recreational Engagement. Cultural activities, art exhibitions, music, and social venues were sources of joy and meaning. One participant stated: *"The art scene here keeps me alive—I feel inspired after every gallery visit."* These engagements provided both leisure and identity reinforcement.

Technology and Digital Connectivity. Finally, digital technology was a double-edged sword. For some, online communities and remote work flexibility improved well-being; for others, digital overuse created stress. One participant shared: *"Social media connects me to friends abroad, but sometimes it drains me more than it helps."*

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study explored the components of subjective well-being among individuals living in stressful urban environments in the United Kingdom. Through in-depth interviews with twenty-eight participants, several interconnected themes were identified, including psychological and emotional well-being, social and relational well-being, and environmental and lifestyle well-being. Each theme was composed of subthemes that revealed how individuals cope with urban stress, sustain life satisfaction, and construct meaning in challenging contexts. The findings not only align with prior scholarship on stress and coping but also extend the understanding of how subjective well-being is shaped within the unique fabric of urban living.

One of the central findings was the importance of coping strategies in managing stress. Participants reported mindfulness, reframing negative experiences, and engaging in leisure activities as key ways of maintaining balance. This resonates with research highlighting the central role of coping in protecting well-being in stressful contexts (Vetrivel et al., 2024). Students, for instance, are found to

employ various coping mechanisms to manage academic pressures, with outcomes strongly influencing their psychological health (Kumar & Bansal, 2024). Similarly, nurses and health workers rely on coping strategies and social support to maintain mental well-being under intense occupational stress (Uye et al., 2024). The present study thus underscores that coping is not peripheral but a core determinant of well-being in urban stressful environments.

Resilience and emotional regulation also emerged as important contributors to subjective well-being. Participants described resilience as the ability to "bounce back" after urban challenges, echoing findings among grandparent caregivers where stress, coping, and resilience predicted life satisfaction and quality of life (Mendoza et al., 2019). Emotional regulation, particularly through self-soothing and cognitive reframing, parallels the transactional model-based educational programs found effective in improving stress management among industrial workers (Kaveh et al., 2023). These consistent findings across diverse populations suggest that resilience and regulation skills may form a transferable toolkit applicable in both domestic and occupational urban settings.

The role of social support was evident in multiple dimensions of participants' accounts, ranging from family meals to supportive workplace environments. Social support has long been identified as a moderator between stress and well-being. Among military personnel, for example, strong social support networks were found to buffer the impact of operational stress on mental health (A.-D. Balcan, 2023). In the present study, family and friendships not only provided encouragement but also offered spaces for emotional expression, reaffirming the relational nature of well-being. Similarly, religious coping and spiritual connections identified in other contexts also serve as a source of resilience against stress (Davis & Kiang, 2020). Such findings align with the view that well-being in urban settings must be understood not only at the individual level but also through relational and community contexts.

The findings also confirmed that urban environments shape subjective well-being through physical and social infrastructures. Access to green spaces, safe public transportation, and recreational opportunities were cited by participants as critical for psychological balance. This echoes evidence showing that consumption-related coping and adaptation strategies among refugee communities are closely tied to their ability to navigate material constraints (Zourrig & Hedhli, 2022). Similarly, the availability of communal activities such as cultural events contributed to a

sense of belonging, consistent with research on social identity and well-being among chronic pain patients (Grünenwald et al., 2022). Urban environments thus serve both as sources of stress and as potential spaces for well-being when infrastructure and community support are accessible.

At the same time, the study revealed significant challenges such as social isolation, financial instability, and insecurity in public spaces. Participants described loneliness despite living in densely populated neighborhoods, a phenomenon that aligns with previous findings on depressive symptoms among urban middle-aged populations in Korea, where lack of social support intensified the psychological burden (Jeon & Park, 2015). Financial instability was another recurrent concern, reinforcing studies that connect academic or workplace stress with reduced psychological well-being (Kumar & Bansal, 2024; Sabir et al., 2025). These results demonstrate that while urban areas offer opportunities, they also reproduce vulnerabilities when basic socio-economic needs are not met.

Mental health challenges such as anxiety, burnout, and insomnia were reported by participants as consequences of cumulative stress. This echoes earlier findings that organizational and operational stress consistently undermine psychological health (A. D. Balcan, 2023). Similarly, research on care home staff during COVID-19 lockdowns showed that stressors related to workload and isolation reduced well-being unless mitigated by coping mechanisms (Zhao et al., 2021). Such findings suggest that urban stressful environments magnify stress through chronic exposure, but that targeted coping strategies and external support can help mitigate negative outcomes.

An interesting dimension of this study was the dual role of digital technology. Participants reported both positive aspects, such as online social networks and remote work flexibility, and negative aspects, including digital overuse and information overload. These findings align with research highlighting the complex role of social media in stress and coping (Demirtepe-Saygılı, 2022). For some, digital platforms enhanced social connections; for others, they generated new sources of stress. The coexistence of these contrasting roles emphasizes that digital environments are integral to subjective well-being in modern urban contexts and must be studied with nuance.

The findings also highlight the gendered and cultural aspects of stress and well-being. Women in particular described pressures from balancing multiple roles, echoing findings from Indonesian nurses, where dual role conflicts

influenced well-being (Widyasrini & Lestari, 2020). Similarly, adolescents' well-being in Indonesia was found to be influenced by coping strategies and social support, reinforcing the developmental importance of these processes (Putri et al., 2020). The present study contributes to this body of work by showing that cultural expectations and urban pressures intersect, influencing how men and women experience and construct their subjective well-being.

Religious and spiritual orientations also emerged in participants' accounts of purpose and resilience. This is consistent with evidence showing that mothers of children with autism employed religious coping to manage stress (Davis & Kiang, 2020). Likewise, housewives experiencing domestic stress have been shown to draw on personal and social resources to sustain healthier family environments (Wasantha, 2024). These findings suggest that spiritual and cultural practices may act as invisible yet significant supports for well-being, particularly in urban stressful environments where external conditions may not always be controllable.

The COVID-19 pandemic further illustrates the vulnerability of well-being in contexts of crisis. Participants in this study referred to experiences of heightened stress during lockdowns, a pattern consistent with research on European dental students adapting to remote training (Aleksiejūnienė et al., 2022) and care staff in older adult homes (Zhao et al., 2021). These global experiences confirm that subjective well-being is highly sensitive to disruptions, with coping and social support determining resilience outcomes.

Overall, the present findings align with a broad body of scholarship confirming that stress is an inevitable aspect of urban life, but subjective well-being is shaped by how stress is managed and by the social, cultural, and infrastructural resources available to individuals. Coping, resilience, social support, and structural supports consistently emerge as protective factors, while isolation, financial strain, and organizational stress function as risks. This duality underscores the need to conceptualize subjective well-being as both individually and collectively constructed.

This study is not without limitations. First, the sample was limited to twenty-eight participants from urban areas in the United Kingdom, which constrains the generalizability of findings to other cultural and geographical contexts. The purposive sampling strategy ensured depth of data but may have excluded perspectives from marginalized populations less accessible to researchers. Second, as with most qualitative studies, findings rely on participants' self-

reported experiences, which may be influenced by memory recall, social desirability bias, or situational context during the interview. Third, while thematic analysis provided rich insights, the interpretive nature of the approach means that the findings reflect both participants' lived experiences and the researchers' analytical lens. Finally, the cross-sectional design captured experiences at one point in time; longitudinal designs may be better suited to trace changes in subjective well-being over time.

Future research should expand on these findings in several ways. Comparative studies across different cultural, socio-economic, and geographic contexts could provide a broader understanding of how subjective well-being is constructed in urban stressful environments. Longitudinal designs would help explore how well-being evolves over time, particularly in response to changing urban conditions or crises such as pandemics. Mixed-method approaches that integrate qualitative narratives with quantitative measures of stress, coping, and well-being could offer more comprehensive insights. Additionally, future studies should explore marginalized groups such as immigrants, refugees, or individuals experiencing homelessness, as these populations may face unique stressors and resources that shape their subjective well-being.

The findings hold several implications for practice. Policymakers and urban planners should prioritize infrastructure that supports well-being, such as safe public spaces, accessible green areas, and affordable housing. Mental health services should be made more accessible within urban environments, with specific programs focusing on resilience-building, coping strategies, and social support enhancement. Workplaces should recognize the role of organizational stress and implement measures to foster supportive environments that protect employee well-being. Finally, community-based initiatives that foster social connections and belonging can help mitigate the sense of isolation reported by participants. By integrating individual, community, and structural interventions, it is possible to promote subjective well-being in urban stressful environments.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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