





Sociological Analysis of the Relationship Between Urban Quality of Life and Social Security and Social Belonging Among Women in the Urban Community of Arak

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between urban quality of life, social security perception, and social belonging among women in the city of Arak.

Methods and Materials: A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The study involved a sample of women residing in Arak, with data gathered through structured questionnaires. The analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling (Smart PLS) to examine the relationships between the key variables: urban quality of life, social security perception, and social belonging.

Findings: The findings revealed a direct and significant relationship between urban quality of life and social security perception, as well as between urban quality of life and social belonging among women in Arak. The model explained up to 22% of the variance in urban quality of life, with social security perception and social belonging being key predictors. Among the components of these variables, attachment to symbols, norms, values, and economic security were the most influential. Conversely, extreme individualism and public security had the least impact on the model.

Conclusion: The study concludes that urban quality of life for women in Arak is significantly influenced by their perception of social security and their sense of social belonging. These factors are interdependent and contribute to the broader social cohesion and well-being within the community. Enhancing these elements could lead to improved urban quality of life, particularly by fostering social connections and ensuring a secure and supportive environment for women. The findings underscore the importance of addressing these variables in urban planning and policy-making to promote sustainable and inclusive development.

Keywords: *Urban Quality of Life, Social Belonging, Social Security, Women Residents of Arak*

1. Introduction

A high quality of life in any country is an indicator of sustainable and comprehensive development within that society. Including women in development programs and striving to improve their living conditions is essential for achieving all-encompassing progress. Women constitute half of the population, and their health is the foundation of family and community well-being. Therefore, studying the quality of life and health of women in urban areas is of paramount importance. Urban quality of life is a complex and multidimensional concept influenced by factors such as time, place, and individual and social values. Consequently, it holds different meanings for different individuals and groups. Some interpret it as the livability of an area, others as a measure of attractiveness, and still others as general welfare, social well-being, happiness, satisfaction, a sense of security, social belonging, and similar aspects (Ahmadi & Jahangard, 2020; Saban et al., 2016). Women, who constitute half of the population, are indeed a significant portion of the active workforce. Therefore, it is necessary to create conditions where they can work comfortably and feel socially secure. The necessity of this is heightened by the fact that the lack of social security for women essentially threatens the values of their roles as mothers, wives, and sometimes heads of households. Ensuring their protection from any harm or abuse that could physically or mentally threaten women and their sanctity is crucial, as this will inevitably affect future generations. Hence, efforts must be made to identify and strengthen the factors that enhance women's sense of social security, enabling them to participate more actively in society. This topic is significant in optimizing the alignment of pathways and goals and can pave the way for the development and empowerment of women as half of the active population. Women's empowerment is one of the goals of human development, meaning increasing self-awareness, trustworthiness, and the expansion of security and freedom of choice by women themselves. Some scholars view empowerment as increasing participation under the shadow of enhanced social security and, consequently, social belonging (Ali et al., 2023; Allen et al., 2013). Meanwhile, participation is also used as a facilitator of women's empowerment. Development is an economic, social, and cultural process aimed at the sustainable and complete empowerment of all individuals based on freedom and participation. Therefore, achieving sustainable development is impossible without the participation of women, who constitute half of the society.

Their presence in all areas of life, including family, economy, and society, is essential. However, existing inequalities in society and unequal opportunities hinder the manifestation of women's creativity, despite their essential role in the family and society. Overcoming fundamental inequalities and increasing women's participation has always been a significant goal of development. According to previous studies and preliminary interviews, women identify the most significant obstacles in this regard, which will be precisely and scientifically addressed in this research (Clark & Clark, 2001; Hejazi & Farsinejad, 2011; Masoudi Farid et al., 2013).

The 21st century began with approximately half of the world's population living in cities, and urban transition has almost been completed. Urbanization is advancing at an unprecedented pace in the history of urbanization. Cities, wherever they may be—whether in developed or developing countries—are the stage for pronounced and increasing economic, social, and political contrasts. One of the most important factors in the personal and social development of women is the quality of their urban life. Ensuring that urban management pays detailed and comprehensive attention to the needs and abilities of all social groups, including women, can significantly enhance urban quality of life, social security, and social belonging. A review of the historical evolution of urban development studies shows that, over time, the focus has shifted from unidimensional economic and quantitative perspectives toward incorporating political, social, cultural, welfare, and value-based concepts. The recent emphasis on urban quality of life should be seen in this context, reflecting a change in focus from unidimensional and quantitative development to multidimensional and qualitative development. This shift has drawn much attention in recent years and has become a significant topic in many areas of the humanities. The widespread use of the concept of urban quality of life represents a reaction against unidimensional economic development at the professional level and purely physical-functional development on the urban scale, while simultaneously striving to meet each qualitative criterion in the realm of planning (Hosseini & Magheryan, 2007).

Urban growth in the 20th century sharply increased the share of the urban population, making urban living the dominant lifestyle. Although cities and urbanization are among the most important indicators of social and economic welfare and development, rapid urban growth can decrease per capita access to social and economic amenities, which may manifest in reduced levels of urban quality of life across

various urban domains. Thus, satisfaction with the quality of life in various urban areas is critical. Urban spaces provide the environment for citizens' lives and activities and play a significant role in shaping identity and providing tranquility to residents. Security can be considered a fundamental right and a prerequisite for survival, well-being, and health. According to Maslow's theory (1968), security is one of the essential and enduring needs for human excellence. Women, as half of the population, have the right to security. However, the security of this group is often neglected or ignored due to cultural reasons. Theoretical studies show that women's sense of insecurity is higher than that of men. Neglecting women in the design of urban spaces and the quality of urban life limits their full participation in society (Saghaei, 2018). Inadequate urban spaces destroy the sense of security and pave the way for various social problems and issues. Women need environments where, in addition to feeling calm, comfortable, and satisfied, they also experience a sufficient sense of security in their daily and nightly activities in urban areas. Issues such as deteriorating urban infrastructure, inadequate sidewalks, poor lighting in some neighborhoods at night, the presence of addicts and vagrants, runaway women, and the lack of functional urban furniture can negatively shape the environment and significantly affect the sense of security among residents, especially women. Improving such issues can effectively establish connections among citizens, create a suitable urban quality of life, and foster tranquility and comfort. Moreover, it can enhance the quality of urban environments and spaces, positively impacting citizens' minds and fostering a sense of belonging to the urban space and community (Mandeli, 2019; Masoudi Farid et al., 2013; Mohammadi Khah, 2016).

Security is a fundamental and universal need, and its importance lies in its inseparable connection to life and existence. Scholars consider security to be one of the essential human needs (Hezar Jaribi, 2013; Kameli & Azmati, 2020; Mohammadi Khah, 2016; Rezvanali, 2012). Today, security issues and threats can be viewed from various perspectives, and a significant portion of these issues affects women, who make up half of the population. With the expansion of societies, phenomena such as inflation, high living costs, poverty, expensive housing, and similar factors create social issues for women and contribute to their social deviance (Mandeli, 2019). This, in turn, leads to a sense of insecurity and a lack of women's participation in various social spheres. Today, social belonging is considered a suitable foundation for the productivity of human and physical capital and a path to success. Social belonging now

plays a much more critical role than physical and human capital in organizations and societies. Networks of collective and group relationships provide cohesion among people, organizations, and between people and organizations. A society lacking a sense of social belonging will have lower productivity in other areas of social, cultural, economic, and political capital. Therefore, social belonging is considered a fundamental principle for achieving development. In sum, social belonging encompasses the norms and networks of social bonds that bring individuals together in a cohesive and stable manner within groups. To better understand the factors that contribute to enhancing social belonging, experts have pointed to factors such as education, health, confidence and trust in political institutions, satisfaction with government, and political commitment (Putnam, 2007; Zakaei, 2001; Ziyari & Mosbahi, 2017).

The significance of social trust and belonging lies in their direct impact on social order. It can be said that the most crucial issue in social order is nothing other than social cohesion because, without cohesion and a sense of belonging, the continuity and sustainability of social order and security cannot be expected. Undoubtedly, various factors contribute to security and social security, and the absence of these factors slows or hinders the establishment of social security. The need for study and research on this issue arises from the fact that internal and potential threats in less developed countries often endanger the social security of these societies (Hezar Jaribi, 2013; Kameli & Azmati, 2020; Mohammadi Khah, 2016; Rezvanali, 2012). Therefore, identifying the factors and elements that ensure social security, safety, and social belonging based on social trust, with consideration of the quality of urban life for women in Arak, is a fundamental prerequisite for planning to enhance the social level.

The results of research by Mohammadi Khah (2016), Hezarjaribi (2013), Soltani (2010), and many others highlight social security and social belonging as some of the most critical factors in improving the urban quality of life for women in society (Mohammadi Khah, 2016).

What demonstrates the necessity of this study and is important in this research is that women's sense of social security and social belonging actually pertains to the value of their roles as mothers, wives, and sometimes heads of households. Protection from any harm or violation that threatens women and their sanctity physically or mentally will be passed on to future generations. Studies show that social security and social belonging among women can significantly enhance their urban quality of life and social

dynamism. This can be inferred from an examination of variables in previous studies. Although these three variables have not been studied together, an analysis of similar variables and research that includes at least two of them leads to the conclusion that social security and social belonging can be influenced by urban quality of life.

To achieve sustainable urban development, conditions must be created to enable the foundation of sustainable human development and improve social welfare. Arak is one of the cities that experienced rapid growth and significant changes after the Islamic Revolution. As a major industrial metropolis in the country, it has high levels of immigration and numerous social issues. Therefore, the author will examine this topic within the context of this city. Arak's central location in the country, its position on important transportation routes, its rich cultural heritage, and its industrial nature, as well as the growth of informal settlements and the emigration of elites, are all factors recently observed in the metropolis of Arak. These factors necessitate a thorough sociological examination of the city.

In Hezar Jaribi's (2013) study, the lack of social security was identified as one of the priority social issues facing women in Iran, and this issue was explained in connection with the lack of social belonging. The results of this field study indicated that most neighborhoods in central provinces and Tehran face a lack of amenities for residents' leisure activities (Hezar Jaribi, 2013). Despite the presence of parks, neighborhood houses, and health homes in some areas for residents' use, women are often unable to utilize these amenities effectively due to the unsafe environments and the routes leading to these locations. In the author's study, previous research and theoretical studies have been conducted, some of which were mentioned in this section. Based on the researcher's lived experience, it appears that women's sense of social security and social belonging can significantly impact their urban quality of life. Therefore, the main question of this study is: What is the relationship between the urban quality of life for women in Arak and their sense of social security and social belonging?

2. Methods and Materials

The research method used in this study is mixed, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The researcher employs both quantitative and qualitative methods in parallel. "The mixed-method approach is a type of research in which the researcher or research team combines the elements and characteristics of quantitative and qualitative approaches (such as perspectives, data collection, analyses, and quantitative and qualitative inference techniques) to achieve deeper and broader understanding and validation."

In this study, the author aims to identify the most important indicators of urban quality of life based on the lived experiences of 262,187 women residing and having lived experiences in the metropolis of Arak. The statistical sample for this study was calculated to be 418 individuals using Cochran's formula, but the researcher increased the sample size to 420 to account for non-responses or other issues that could affect the research process. In qualitative research, sampling continues until theoretical saturation is reached, and sampling is done purposefully.

The three main variables in this study are social belonging, social security, and the urban quality of life for women in Arak. Social belonging and social security will be measured using questionnaires. However, given the conceptual nature of the urban quality of life variable and its dependency on lived experiences, the researcher will attempt to develop a conceptual model of this variable using the grounded theory approach. This will be done through interviews and will result in the formation of a conceptual model after theoretical saturation, which will then be assessed using a questionnaire.

3. Findings and Results

The results of the qualitative data analysis are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Qualitative Data Analysis

Core Category	Dimensions	Questionnaire Items
Urban Quality of Life for Women in Arak	Physical Environment Quality	The city's green spaces are acceptable. - There are enough trees and plant diversity in Arak's urban space. - I have a good feeling when looking at the architecture of buildings in Arak's urban space. - There is sufficient use of authentic architecture in the city.
	Social Environment Quality	I am a member of many social groups. - Local media in Arak are dynamic and acceptable. - Urban social networks are diverse and trustworthy. - The urban space in Arak is based on human nature and is informative. - Waste collection and disposal in Arak are acceptable. - One can move around the city safely at any time. -

			The urban space is such that one always learns from the lived experience. - The religious and spiritual environment of the city is acceptable. - Citizen education and the necessities of urban life are always available. - I am satisfied with living in Arak. - I know Arak's local values. - I feel my presence in Arak is effective. - Many local customs and traditions in Arak are still practiced. - The local customs and traditions are satisfying to me.
	Urban Governance Quality		I believe that men and women have equal and fair rights in Arak. - I believe the city officials in Arak are competent. - Citizens' rights in Arak are fair. - People-centered institutions play a good role in the city's administration. - I have enough trust in the people of Arak.
	Economic Environment Quality		The food distribution process in Arak is good. - It is rare to find a specific type of food unavailable in Arak. - There are good job opportunities in Arak. - I would recommend others to invest in this city.
	Transport and Communication Quality		Traffic in Arak is controlled. - Access to public transportation in Arak is easy. - Access to shopping centers in the city is very easy. - Access to service centers in Arak is very suitable.
Social Security Perception of Women	Economic Security		I am employed and have job security. - I am willing to invest in Arak's urban area. - If I had capital, I would certainly invest in employment and economic prosperity in my city. - I do not have financial concerns.
	Political Security		I can easily criticize in urban management and public forums. - The social and cultural institutions of my city are highly receptive to criticism. - Channels for criticism exist within organizations and institutions in Arak. - The stability of laws and structures allows me to make necessary predictions for my future.
	Judicial Security		I believe I am secure in the urban environment. - I believe I can attain my rights through judicial channels. - I believe women enjoy fair rights.
	Public Security		I am not afraid to move around the city at any time and place.
Social Belonging of Women	Attachment to Symbols, Norms, and Values		When I see urban symbols in Arak, like Martyrs' Square, I feel good. - I feel that the urban symbols in Arak reflect the cultural and historical features of this city. - I love the ancient customs of Arak. - The values in Arak have undergone change.
	Social Trust		I believe people have enough trust in each other. - I believe hypocrisy is prevalent in people's lives. - I believe people have complete trust in the city's social and cultural institutions. - I have many friends whom I can trust without hesitation. - I trust my colleagues or neighbors in the workplace or neighborhood.
	Extreme Individualism		My needs always come first everywhere. - If I have work in a place and can use favoritism, I will certainly do it. - I think people have become very selfish.
	Socioeconomic Status		Education? - Occupation? - What is your average monthly expenditure? - Family income? - Father's occupation? - Father's education? - Mother's occupation? - Mother's education? - Place of residence?

In this study, to examine and analyze the factor structure of the urban quality of life for women in Arak, we used structural equation modeling software (Smart PLS). In Smart PLS, one of the indicators for confirming relationships and examining the significance of relationships is the path coefficients.

In the quantitative model of the study, all the t-values of the dimensions and components of the urban quality of life structure in Arak did not fall within the range of -1.96 to 1.96, which indicates significance. Therefore, it can be concluded that all the dimensions and components used to assess the urban quality of life structure for women in the model are appropriate and acceptable. We then proceed to examine the output of correlation coefficients.

The correlation between the latent variable of social belonging and the dimension of social belonging is 0.945, with social trust at 0.991, extreme individualism at 0.917, and socioeconomic status at 0.187. This result indicates that the correlation of the social trust component is higher than the other three indicators.

The measurement model for social security perception (a second-order construct) was reflective and could be measured by four components: economic, political, judicial,

and public security. In other words, the latent variable of social security perception manifests in these four components. The correlation between the latent variable of social belonging and economic security is 0.983, with political security at 0.902, judicial security at 0.851, and public security at 0.932. This result indicates a strong correlation between these components and social security.

Two components, social security perception and social belonging, were used to assess the urban quality of life for women. As shown in the figure, the correlation between urban quality of life for women in Arak and social security perception is 0.991, and with social belonging, it is 0.982. Therefore, it can be concluded that the correlation between the social security construct and the main component is higher.

Composite reliability, a criterion introduced by Werts et al. (1974), has an advantage over Cronbach's alpha in that it calculates the reliability of constructs not in absolute terms but concerning their intercorrelations. If the value obtained for each construct is above 0.70, it indicates suitable internal stability for the measurement models, while values below 0.60 indicate a lack of reliability. In the present study, to assess the reliability of the components and constructs of the

urban quality of life model for women in Arak, composite reliability was used, and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Composite Reliability (CR) Values of the Study Components and Constructs

Components and Constructs	Composite Reliability (CR)
Urban Quality of Life for Women	0.8863
Social Security Perception	0.8747
Social Belonging	0.7281

As shown in Table 2, the composite reliability values obtained for all study components and constructs are above 0.70. Therefore, it can be concluded that the measurement instruments used in this study are reliable and valid.

Statistics derived from the Pearson test indicate a significant and direct correlation between the urban quality of life variable and social security perception. The correlation coefficient of 0.064 confirms this relationship, and a confidence level of less than 0.05 confirms that this result can be generalized with over 95% probability. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the researcher's hypothesis is accepted. Given that a high quality of life in any country is an indicator of sustainable and comprehensive development in that society, and considering the role of women in development programs, efforts to improve their living conditions must not be overlooked for achieving all-encompassing progress. The value of the research results is primarily aimed at women themselves, enabling them to understand the role and importance of quality of life and become more aware of factors like social security that affect the quality of life, which could help them take necessary actions to improve the quality of life and

social security. Families, too, by understanding the role of social security and enhancing quality of life and happiness, will demonstrate greater support and cooperation.

Furthermore, Pearson's test statistics indicate the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the researcher's hypothesis. Since the correlation rate is positive (0.13), this number indicates that with the growth of urban quality of life, the sense of social belonging also increases. This finding is confirmed and generalizable with a confidence level of less than 0.05. One of the primary and essential needs of humans for a desirable life and achieving perfection and happiness is the enjoyment of urban quality of life in its various dimensions and types. In a society where individuals experience better urban social quality of life, the broadest interactions between individuals expand due to the sense of social belonging, which itself facilitates better access to various support resources. Support resources can help individuals cope with life's problems and difficulties, smoothing the path through critical stages. A society with lower social security and a sense of belonging imposes more stress and pressure on individuals, which can be a factor in reducing their physical and psychological efficiency.

Table 3

Regression Model for Examining the Impact of Social Security and Social Belonging on Urban Quality of Life

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Regression	812.321	2	98.237	7.652	0.002	0.220	0.048	0.042
Residual	412.627	418	1.276					
Total	1224.948	420						

Given the significance level below 0.05 and the R value of 0.22, it is shown that the combined effect of social security and social belonging can explain up to 22% of the urban quality of life for women in Arak. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the researcher's hypothesis is accepted.

For a more precise examination of this hypothesis, we use stepwise regression to analyze the relationship between the dimensions of social security and social belonging variables and urban quality of life:

Table 4

Stepwise Regression Analysis Results for Predicting Urban Quality of Life for Women Based on Social Security and Social Belonging Components

Criterion Variable	Model Summary	Step	Predictor Variable	B	Beta	t	P
Urban Quality of Life for Women in Arak	R = 0.70	4	Economic Security	0.47	0.36	8.5	0.001
	R ² = 0.50		Political Security	1.24	0.26	6.05	0.001
	F = 92		Judicial Security	0.72	0.24	5.65	0.001
	P < 0.05		Public Security	0.22	0.07	7.11	0.03
Urban Quality of Life for Women in Arak	R = 0.71	4	Attachment to Symbols, Norms, and Values	3.57	0.48	11.71	0.001
	R ² = 0.50		Social Trust	0.53	0.27	6.40	0.001
	F = 94.37		Extreme Individualism	1	0.14	3.84	0.001
	P < 0.001		Socioeconomic Status	0.58	0.19	2.55	0.01

By examining the stepwise regression analysis statistics, we find that the combined dimensions of each variable can explain up to 50% of the urban quality of life for women. In examining the relationship between urban quality of life and the dimensions of social security, we find that economic, political, judicial, and public security can predict and explain up to 0.36, 0.26, 0.24, and 0.07 of the urban quality of life for women, respectively, with economic security having the largest share among these dimensions. In examining the relationship between urban quality of life for women in Arak and social belonging, we find that the dimensions of this variable, including attachment to symbols, social trust, extreme individualism, and socioeconomic status, can predict and explain up to 0.48, 0.27, 0.14, and 0.19 of the urban quality of life for women in Arak, respectively. Among these dimensions, attachment to norms and symbols is the most influential.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In examining the first hypothesis, which explores the relationship between urban quality of life for women and their sense of social security in Arak, the results indicated a direct and significant relationship between urban quality of life and social security perception. Across all previous research, this finding supports the direct connection between social security perception and urban quality of life. Based on theoretical foundations and perspectives from various theories, this study suggests that the social security perception of women in the metropolis of Arak, as one of their fundamental inclinations rooted in their collective identity, is shaped through social interactions and is influenced by the social context and individual's status within the social environment. When conditions are favorable, an enhanced sense of social security can improve

the urban quality of life for women. For instance, if individuals perceive that they must exploit their social conditions for personal gain, individualism increases, leading to unhealthy competition and the loss of social attachments, resulting in social instability and anomie. In such cases, individuals pursue self-interest and personal goals. As mentioned, security encompasses multiple dimensions, including economic, political, judicial, and public security, which involve job security, willingness to invest, sufficient income, freedom of expression, the receptivity of political and administrative institutions to criticism, protection from harm and fair laws, and protection from harassment and worry. All these dimensions, as discussed through various theories, have the potential to enhance the urban quality of life for women based on their perception of social security, and they are mutually influential.

The second hypothesis examined the relationship between urban quality of life and social belonging among women in Arak. The results demonstrated a direct and significant relationship between urban quality of life and social belonging, with social belonging increasing alongside improvements in urban quality of life, and vice versa. Considering that one of the fundamental needs of humans for a desirable life and achieving perfection is enjoying urban quality of life in various dimensions, in a society where individuals experience better urban quality of life, the most extensive interactions among people occur due to social belonging. Undoubtedly, these two factors influence each other.

This finding has also been confirmed in numerous studies and articles, where a direct relationship between urban quality of life and social belonging has been identified. For example, in a study by Eyni and colleagues (2017), it was

found that the length of residence in a particular location increases individuals' social belonging to that area, thus leading to greater attachment to that place. Similarly, Nikkhah Serafraz and Valipour (2020) in their article titled "Investigating the Social Factors Affecting Citizens' Sense of Belonging in Bandar Abbas" reached the same conclusion, suggesting that factors such as the duration of residence in a residential area influence the sense of belonging of the participants and improve their urban quality of life. These authors believed that the mentioned variables could explain up to 37% of the citizens' sense of belonging, which in turn strengthens urban quality of life indicators (Nik Khah & Valipour, 2020).

The third hypothesis posited that there is a relationship between urban quality of life, social security perception, and social belonging among women in Arak. The statistical analysis of this hypothesis showed that the model could explain up to 22% of the urban quality of life for women in Arak. This means that social security perception and social belonging can predict up to 22% of the urban quality of life. Among these, attachment to symbols, norms, and values, as well as economic security, had the greatest impact on explaining the model. In contrast, extreme individualism, a component of social belonging, and public security, a component of social security perception, had the least impact. Similar results were found in other studies (Hezar Jaribi, 2013; Kameli & Azmati, 2020; Karing, 1987; Mohammadi Khah, 2016; Nik Khah & Valipour, 2020; Rezvanali, 2012; Ziyari & Mosbahi, 2017).

Giddens (1995) emphasized the dialectical relationship between agency and structure, suggesting that the mutual influence of these two can create or change the semantic system of society. Therefore, urban quality of life can be significantly influenced by many variables, including social security perception and social belonging, in any society. Durkheim also refers to personality within the social system and describes it as a system of inclinations formed through the mutual influence of organic needs and social expectations during the socialization process. He believes that the formation of social personality is not something foreign or external to the individual but rather an integral part of personality (Durkheim & Kardan, 2007). Although these two are not identical, from Durkheim's perspective, when they coincide, we are in a state of mechanical solidarity, where individual consciousness does not exist, and the generalized nature of tendencies in society can shape urban quality of life, social intimacy, and social belonging of women in any location.

5. Limitations and Suggestions

This study, while comprehensive, has certain limitations. The research was geographically confined to the city of Arak, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other urban contexts. Additionally, the cross-sectional design of the study restricts our ability to draw causal inferences between variables such as urban quality of life, social security perception, and social belonging. Furthermore, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias, as respondents could have provided socially desirable answers. Finally, the study did not account for potential cultural, economic, or political differences within various neighborhoods of Arak, which could influence the outcomes.

Future research could expand on this study by incorporating a longitudinal design to better capture the dynamics and causal relationships between urban quality of life, social security perception, and social belonging over time. Additionally, comparative studies across different cities, both within Iran and internationally, would provide more insight into the generalizability of the findings. Researchers should also consider exploring the impact of specific cultural, economic, and political contexts on these variables. Moreover, future studies could integrate qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, to gain a more nuanced understanding of the personal and social factors influencing these constructs.

The findings of this study have several practical implications for urban planning and policy-making. Enhancing urban quality of life for women requires a multifaceted approach that addresses both social security and social belonging. Urban planners should focus on creating safer, more inclusive, and culturally sensitive environments that foster a sense of security and belonging among all residents, particularly women. Policies aimed at improving job security, economic opportunities, and accessible public services can significantly contribute to women's quality of life in urban settings. Additionally, fostering community engagement and social networks can strengthen social ties and increase residents' attachment to their neighborhoods, ultimately enhancing overall urban well-being.

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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