

The Impact of Housing on Happiness: A Comprehensive Review

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ABSTRACT

This scientific paper aims to investigate and understand the complex relationship between housing and happiness by examining the different factors that influence subjective well-being through analyzing a wide range of studies. It investigates the multifaceted ways in which housing conditions contribute and deter to individual happiness. The research question guiding this paper is: How does housing, including housing conditions, housing stability, affordability, and neighborhood characteristics influence individual happiness? The analysis seeks to provide insights into the mechanisms through which housing can affect individuals' happiness. Furthermore, the paper explores the potential mechanisms through which housing affects broader social well-being, highlighting the importance of housing policies and interventions in promoting the public's overall happiness. The paper concludes with policy implications to enhance the happiness of individuals and communities through housing intervention.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Housing is a fundamental aspect of human life, providing individuals and families with shelter and security. It is also a place to live, rest, and engage in daily activities. Adequate housing that meets these basic needs is essential for individuals' well-being. The significance of housing in shaping individuals' subjective happiness has gained increasing attention from researchers, policymakers, and practitioners interested in understanding and improving the quality of life for individuals and communities.

Happiness, or subjective well-being, encompasses a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of their life satisfaction, positive emotions, and overall contentment. Happiness is influenced by a broad array of factors, including social relationships, personal characteristics, and environmental conditions making it a multidimensional construct. Housing is an essential environmental factor that plays a crucial role in shaping people's subjective well-being. Its affordability, the neighborhood characteristics, and the stability it provides are all factors that can impact an individual's happiness.

1.2. Methodology

The research question was addressed through an extensive literature review, drawing upon a wide range of disciplines including psychology, sociology, urban planning, and housing studies. The various sources stem from academic databases, focusing on peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and reports published within the past decade. The selection of the studied literature was based on criteria such as theoretical significance and relevance to the topic of housing and happiness. By synthesizing existing findings and empirical evidence, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how different dimensions of housing can impact subjective well-being.

1.3. Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized as follows: after the introduction, the subsequent sections will delve into the different aspects of housing and their relationship to happiness. Firstly, a conceptual framework will define happiness and subjective well-being by discussing theoretical perspectives and exploring the measurement of subjective well-being. After, the influence of housing conditions on happiness will be examined, considering factors such as the physical aspects of housing, comfort, quality, noise pollution, and privacy. Furthermore, the role of housing stability in happiness will be discussed, considering the effects of transience, homelessness, and forced displacement. The following section will explore the relationship between housing affordability and happiness, examining the impacts of financial stress, cost-burdened housing, and homeownership. Moreover, section 6 will focus on neighborhood characteristics and their influence on happiness, including aspects such as social cohesion, safety, and access to amenities. In the end, the paper will be concluded by summarizing the findings and discussing the implications for policy and practice.

By examining the multifaceted ways in which housing influences subjective well-being, this paper seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and inform evidence-based practices and policies aimed at improving housing conditions and promoting happiness. Understanding the complex relationship between housing and happiness is essential for creating happier, healthier, and more sustainable communities.

2. Housing and Subjective Well-Being

2.1. Definition of Happiness and Subjective Well-being

Before inquiring the relationship between housing and subjective well-being, it is crucial to define the concepts of happiness and subjective well-being. Happiness refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their life satisfaction, positive emotions, and a general sense of well-being. It encompasses both cognitive evaluations, such as life satisfaction, and affective experiences, including positive emotions like joy, contentment, and fulfillment (1). Subjective well-being, a broader construct, encompasses not only happiness but also other dimensions of individuals' subjective experiences, including a sense of purpose, engagement in activities, and fulfillment of psychological needs (2).

2.2. Theoretical Frameworks

Various theoretical frameworks have been proposed to understand the relationship between housing and subjective well-being. One prominent framework is Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which posits that housing fulfills individuals' basic physiological and safety needs, providing a foundation for higher-level needs related to belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. According to this perspective, housing that meets these fundamental needs contributes to subjective well-being.

Another theoretical framework is the person-environment fit theory, which emphasizes the alignment between an individual's characteristics and the qualities of their housing environment (3). A good fit between housing and individuals' needs, preferences, and values is believed to enhance subjective well-being. For instance, individuals who value privacy and autonomy may experience higher levels of well-being in housing that offers adequate personal space and freedom (4).

2.3. Measurement of Subjective Well-being

Measuring subjective well-being is essential for understanding the relationship between housing and happiness. Researchers employ various methods to assess subjective well-being, including self-report measures such as life satisfaction scales, subjective happiness scales, and measures of positive and negative affect (3). These measures capture

individuals' subjective evaluations of their well-being and provide insights into the impact of housing on their happiness and life satisfaction.

Subjective well-being measures are often complemented by objective indicators, such as income, education, and health, to provide a comprehensive understanding of individuals' overall well-being (3). Combining subjective and objective measures helps to capture both the psychological and material aspects of well-being, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between housing and subjective well-being (4).

Research consistently indicates that housing is a significant factor influencing subjective well-being. Housing conditions, affordability, neighborhood characteristics, and housing stability all play critical roles in shaping individuals' happiness and overall quality of life (5, 6). The following sections will explore these dimensions in detail, highlighting their impact on subjective well-being and exploring the mechanisms through which housing affects happiness.

3. Housing Conditions and Happiness

3.1. Physical Aspects of Housing

The physical aspects of housing, including its structure, maintenance, and amenities, have a significant impact on individuals' subjective well-being (5). A well-maintained and comfortable living environment can contribute to feelings of safety, security, and overall satisfaction with one's housing situation. On the other hand, inadequate housing conditions, such as poor ventilation, lack of natural light, dampness, or structural issues, can lead to discomfort, stress, and reduced happiness (5).

Research has shown that individuals living in poor housing conditions, such as overcrowded or dilapidated homes, tend to have lower levels of subjective well-being. For example, studies have found associations between inadequate housing conditions and increased levels of psychological distress, dissatisfaction with life, and overall lower happiness ratings (5, 6). On the contrary, individuals living in housing that meets their basic needs and provides a comfortable and well-maintained environment report higher levels of subjective well-being (5).

3.2. Comfort and Quality of Housing

The comfort and quality of housing significantly impact individuals' happiness and well-being. Factors such as adequate heating and cooling systems, natural light, sufficient space, functional layout, well-designed interior spaces, and high-quality construction materials contribute to individuals' comfort and satisfaction with their living environment (4). Comfortable housing promotes relaxation, restful sleep, and a sense of physical well-being, all of which contribute to higher levels of happiness.

Moreover, the quality of housing, including its design, aesthetics, and durability, can influence individuals' subjective well-being. Well-designed and aesthetically pleasing homes are associated with positive emotional responses, pride of ownership, and a sense of personal identity (6). High-quality housing that withstands the test of time contributes to individuals' satisfaction, as it reduces the need for frequent repairs and maintenance, creating a stable and pleasant living environment. On the other hand, living in poor-quality housing, characterized by noise, pollution, inadequate ventilation, or lack of privacy, can lead to discomfort, stress, and reduced happiness (7).

3.3. Noise Pollution and Happiness

Noise pollution, a prevalent issue in urban environments, can significantly impact individuals' happiness and well-being. Exposure to high levels of noise, such as traffic noise or neighborhood disturbances, can lead to annoyance, stress, sleep disturbances, and reduced overall life satisfaction. Studies have shown that individuals living in quieter residential areas report higher levels of subjective well-being compared to those living in noisier environments (4).

Reducing noise pollution and creating quieter living environments can contribute to improved subjective well-being. Strategies such as implementing noise-reducing measures, designing soundproofing features in buildings, and planning residential areas away from major sources of noise can help mitigate the negative impacts of noise on individuals' happiness and well-being (5).

3.4. Space and Privacy

The availability of sufficient space and privacy within the housing is another important factor influencing individuals' subjective well-being. Having adequate personal space allows individuals to engage in activities that are important to them, maintain a sense of autonomy, and enjoy privacy when needed. Insufficient space and lack of privacy can lead to feelings of constraint, discomfort, and a reduced sense of control over one's living environment (4).

Research suggests that individuals living in overcrowded conditions, where the living space is limited and shared with a larger number of individuals, tend to experience lower levels of subjective well-being. On the other hand, having enough space to accommodate one's needs, maintain personal belongings, and engage in activities can contribute to higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction (4, 5).

Furthermore, the availability of private spaces within the housing, such as bedrooms or dedicated areas for relaxation and solitude, is associated with increased well-being. Having areas where individuals can retreat, unwind, and have personal time contributes to their overall happiness and psychological well-being (5).

In conclusion, housing conditions play a crucial role in shaping individuals' happiness and subjective well-being. Factors such as the physical aspects of housing, comfort and quality, noise pollution, and space and privacy all contribute to individuals' satisfaction with their living environment. Providing housing that meets basic needs, is well-maintained, and comfortable, and offers privacy contributes to higher levels of subjective well-being (8). Policies and interventions aimed at improving housing conditions can have significant positive impacts on individuals' happiness and overall quality of life.

4. Housing Stability and Happiness

Having stable housing provides a sense of security and predictability that allows people to establish roots in their community such as a safe and familiar living environment, where they can relax, recharge, and engage in self-care activities. Stable housing is associated with improved health outcomes, including better access to healthcare services, reduced exposure to environmental hazards, and increased opportunities for healthy behaviors (8).

Children growing up in stable housing situations have better educational outcomes, as they benefit from the stability and continuity necessary for academic success. Stable housing allows children to attend the same school consistently, establish relationships with peers and teachers, and focus on their educational development (9, 10).

Similarly, housing stability enables individuals to maintain stable employment and pursue career advancement opportunities. The stability and security offered by stable housing can positively impact individuals' educational opportunities and occupational satisfaction, financial well-being, and overall happiness (11).

On the other hand, housing instability, such as frequent moves, the threat of eviction, or the lack of a permanent and reliable housing situation, can lead to stress, uncertainty, and negative impacts on individuals' subjective well-being and makes it challenging to establish a sense of belonging (12). Individuals experiencing housing instability may feel constantly on edge, unable to fully relax or feel secure in their living situation, which can contribute to reduced happiness and well-being (11).

5. Housing Affordability and Happiness

Housing affordability, or the ability to secure suitable housing without experiencing excessive financial burden, is a critical factor for housing stability and happiness.

5.1. Financial Stress and Happiness

High housing costs relative to income refer to situations where individuals or households spend a significant portion of their income on housing expenses, leaving limited financial resources for other needs. Cost burden can arise from high housing costs, including rent or mortgage payments, as well as related expenses such as utilities, maintenance, and property taxes (13).

Individuals who spend a significant portion of their income on housing expenses may face difficulties meeting other essential needs, such as healthcare, education, and leisure activities, or invest in personal development which can impact their overall life satisfaction and happiness (13). Research has consistently shown that individuals living in housing situations where they are financially burdened, tend to experience lower levels of subjective well-being (5). Financial stress can lead to increased anxiety, reduced feelings of security, and a diminished sense of control over one's financial situation (3). Financial strain associated with unaffordable housing can create tension within households, leading to conflicts and reduced overall family happiness. Children growing up in cost-burdened housing situations may also be affected, as their parents' financial stress can impact parenting quality and the overall family environment (9). On the other hand, individuals who can comfortably afford their housing expenses have greater financial stability, which positively contributes to their overall happiness and well-being, as you can see in the following chapter.

5.2. Homeownership and Happiness

Homeownership, often seen as a marker of housing stability and financial security, has been associated with higher levels of subjective well-being. Homeownership can contribute to individuals' happiness through various mechanisms: Firstly, homeownership provides a sense of control and stability over one's living environment, fostering a sense of belonging and attachment to the community. This sense of ownership and control can positively impact individuals' well-being and satisfaction with their housing situation.

Having control over one's housing situation, such as the ability to make choices about the layout, decor, and use of space, allows individuals to shape their living environment according to their preferences and needs (4). Secondly, homeownership is often associated with greater housing security compared to renting. Homeowners have more stable housing arrangements, as they are less vulnerable to eviction or rent increases (12).

However, it is important to note that homeownership may not universally guarantee happiness, as the affordability of homeownership and associated costs, such as property taxes and maintenance, can still create financial stress for some individuals (13). Furthermore, the relationship between homeownership and happiness can be influenced by various contextual factors, including housing market conditions and cultural norms (4).

6. Neighborhood Characteristics and Happiness

Neighborhood characteristics play a vital role in shaping individuals' subjective well-being and overall happiness. The environment in which people live, including the physical attributes, social interactions, and amenities available in their neighborhood, can significantly influence their quality of life (11). Neighborhoods that provide a supportive, safe, and vibrant community can enhance individuals' happiness, while neighborhoods with negative characteristics may contribute to lower levels of subjective well-being (14).

Understanding the impact of neighborhood characteristics on happiness is necessary for policymakers, urban planners, and community developers to create environments that foster positive well-being and promote a sense of

belonging and satisfaction among residents. In this section, I will explore various neighborhood characteristics and their influence on individuals' happiness.

6.1. Social Cohesion and Sense of Community

Social cohesion and a sense of community within a neighborhood are critical factors that influence individuals' happiness. Social cohesion refers to the extent of trust, cooperation, and social connectedness among community members. Neighborhoods with strong social cohesion often exhibit high levels of social interaction, mutual support, and a sense of belonging among residents (11).

Individuals living in neighborhoods with higher levels of social cohesion and a strong sense of community tend to report greater life satisfaction, happiness, and overall well-being. This can be attributed to the availability of social support networks, increased opportunities for social engagement, and a sense of security, belonging, purpose, and identity, that arises from positive social interactions (14).

6.2. Safety and Security

The safety and security of a neighborhood are also fundamental aspects that influence individuals' happiness because feeling safe is associated with a sense of well-being, reduced stress, and an overall higher quality of life. Neighborhoods characterized by low crime rates, well-maintained public spaces, and effective safety measures create greater happiness among residents (15). The perception of safety can positively impact individuals' mental health, allowing them to feel more at ease, less anxious, and free from fear of crime or violence (5). Additionally, a safe neighborhood environment promotes outdoor activities, social interactions, and a greater sense of freedom, which can contribute to individuals' overall happiness and well-being, as shown in Chapter 6.1.

6.3. Access to Amenities and Services

Furthermore, access to essential amenities such as parks, green spaces, recreational facilities, healthcare services, educational institutions, and shopping centers can enhance individuals' quality of life and overall well-being (15). For instance, the presence of parks and green spaces provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, physical exercise, relaxation, and connection with nature, which contributes to physical and mental health. Spending time in natural environments has been linked to enhanced mood, reduced symptoms of stress, depression, and anxiety, and increased feelings of vitality and connectedness (15). The availability of green spaces within a neighborhood also promotes social interactions, community engagement, and a sense of shared ownership and pride in the environment. Community gardens, for example, can foster social connections, cooperation, and a sense of accomplishment, all of which contribute to individuals' happiness and overall well-being. (11)

Access to quality healthcare services, educational institutions, and cultural facilities can also have positive effects on individuals' well-being. The availability of healthcare promotes physical health and contributes to a sense of security, while access to educational opportunities and cultural resources can enhance personal growth, social engagement, and overall life satisfaction (7).

6.4. Walkability and Proximity to Transportation

Walkability and proximity to transportation options promote mobility, reduce commuting stress, and expand individuals' opportunities for engagement and participation in various aspects of life:

Walkable neighborhoods, characterized by pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, well-connected sidewalks, and a mix of residential and commercial spaces, can promote physical activity, social interactions, and a sense of

community (14). Living in walkable neighborhoods allows individuals for example to engage in active transportation, such as walking or cycling, which has been linked to improved physical health and reduced stress. The convenience of having amenities, services, and social opportunities within walking distance contributes to a higher quality of life. Proximity to transportation options, including public transit, can also provide access to employment opportunities, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and social activities (15).

6.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, neighborhood characteristics have a significant impact on individuals' happiness and subjective well-being. Social cohesion, a sense of community, safety, and security, access to amenities and services, walkability, proximity to transportation, and the presence of green and natural spaces all contribute to individuals' satisfaction with their neighborhood and overall quality of life.

7. Housing Policies and Interventions for Enhancing Happiness

The findings presented in this paper have important implications for housing policies and practices aimed at enhancing individuals' happiness and well-being. Policymakers and practitioners should consider the following implications.

7.1. Quality housing standards

Quality housing encompasses various factors, such as adequate space, safety, sound infrastructure, proper ventilation, and access to basic amenities. Policymakers can establish and enforce housing standards and regulations to ensure that housing meets minimum quality requirements. By promoting quality housing standards, policymakers can protect individuals from living in substandard conditions, which can negatively impact physical and mental well-being (4). An example of a policy like that are the so-called DIN standards in Germany for construction and planning of buildings and execution as they define the general guidelines in construction. There are construction-relevant DIN standards for building materials, components, standard building dimensions, types of construction, qualities and quantities. In addition, these standards regulate testing and work procedures, building physics and structural properties, and form the basis for warranties (16).

The downside to these strict regulations is that new built homes in Germany have become increasingly expensive due to the numerous legal requirements: prices for residential buildings have skyrocketed by 41% between 2010 and 2021 whilst inflation was only 17%(17).

A second example of a policy like that is the Healthy Homes Initiative in New Zealand which focuses on improving housing conditions to enhance well-being (18). It includes measures to address issues such as dampness, ventilation, heating, and insulation in homes, ensuring healthier living environments and promoting happiness. Its efficiency depends on the implementation and enforcement of standards, as well as the availability of resources. Efficiency can be assessed by monitoring the impact of the initiative on the improvement of housing conditions and the resulting positive health outcomes. The policy can lead to improved health outcomes, reduced health risks, and increased overall well-being by addressing physical aspects of housing. The negatives are the effective implementation, enforcement, and availability of resources may be required, making it resource-intensive and potentially challenging to ensure compliance with standards.

7.2. Housing stability programs

Initiatives aimed at addressing housing instability, including homelessness, such as rental assistance programs, eviction prevention programs, and supportive housing programs, are crucial for promoting happiness and well-being

among individuals and families. Rental assistance programs provide financial support to individuals who struggle to afford their homes, helping them maintain stability and avoid homelessness. Eviction prevention programs offer legal assistance, mediation, and counseling to individuals facing eviction, aiming to prevent displacement and maintain housing stability (12).

Policies addressing housing stability include the Housing Choice Voucher Program in the United States, also known as Section 8, which provides such rental assistance to low-income individuals and families, helping them secure stable housing. This policy addresses housing instability and contributes to happiness by providing affordable and reliable housing options. The efficiency of this policy can be measured by analyzing the program's success in providing stable housing to low-income individuals and families. Evaluating housing stability outcomes, including eviction rates and long-term housing retention, can help determine its effectiveness.

7.3. Affordable housing initiatives

Policies and interventions that increase the availability of affordable housing options can alleviate the financial burden and improve individuals' happiness. This includes the development of affordable housing units, rent control policies, housing subsidies, and tax incentives for affordable housing developers (13). The Housing First approach, implemented in several countries including Finland and Canada, prioritizes providing stable and affordable housing to individuals experiencing homelessness. This policy recognizes the link between housing stability and happiness, emphasizing the importance of affordable housing as a foundation for well-being. This policy prioritizes providing stable and affordable housing to individuals experiencing homelessness. Its efficiency can be measured by assessing the reduction in homelessness rates and the successful transition of individuals into stable housing. Additionally, evaluating the long-term housing stability and well-being of individuals who have benefited from this approach can determine its effectiveness. Its effectiveness varies greatly between countries. Downsides include the availability of affordable housing units and long-term sustainability of support services may pose challenges, including funding constraints and resource limitations.

The so-called support for locals in Germany is a measure to enable young families in particular to buy a property: Municipalities sell building plots or apartments at a reduced price to applicants who have to qualify according to a points system in which the following criteria usually apply: the length of time the applicant has lived in the municipality, upper limits for income and assets, number of children or persons in need of care living in the household, social commitment in local associations. In return, the buyers must commit to living in the property themselves for a certain period of time, often 15 years, meaning not to rent it out or to sell it (19).

The disadvantages include that, especially in metropolitan areas, the prices of the residences still remain high, so that only middle to upper-middle class families are supported, but lower middle-class citizens still can not afford to purchase adequate housing. It is also important to note that the buyers, who purchase a property with this support, are often pushed to their very limits financially meaning the added financial stress can outweigh the positive effects on well-being from owning a home. In these cases, the initiative counteracts its original purpose of supplying affordable housing.

The First Homeowner Grant in Australia provides financial assistance to first-time homebuyers, aiming to make homeownership more attainable for young individuals and families (20). By supporting homeownership, this policy promotes stability, a sense of ownership, and potential long-term happiness. Evaluating the efficiency of this policy involves examining the increase in homeownership rates among first-time buyers and the impact on their long-term housing stability and well-being. Additionally, evaluating the affordability and accessibility of homeownership for target beneficiaries can provide insights into its efficiency. Upsides include assisting individuals and families in achieving homeownership can promote stability, a sense of ownership, and potential wealth accumulation, contributing to social and financial well-being.

Downsides mainly include affordability challenges in high-cost housing markets and the potential risk of over-emphasizing homeownership as a solution without considering rental options or diverse housing choices.

7.4. Neighborhood revitalization and community development

Policies and interventions that focus on neighborhood revitalization, community engagement, and the development of communal spaces and amenities can foster social cohesion and create a sense of community. That contributes to individuals' happiness by creating vibrant, inclusive, and supportive communities (14).

The 15-Minute City concept, implemented in Paris by Carlos Moreno, promotes the creation of neighborhoods where residents can access essential amenities, work, and leisure activities within a 15-minute walk or bike ride (21). This policy encourages community cohesion, promotes physical activity, and enhances overall happiness by improving neighborhood livability and reducing the need for long commutes. The efficiency of this policy depends on the implementation of infrastructure and services within proximity to residential areas. Evaluating factors such as increased accessibility, reduced commuting times, and improved community satisfaction can help assess its efficiency. Monitoring the impact on physical activity levels, social cohesion, and overall happiness can also provide insights into its effectiveness.

The Neighborhood Planning initiative in the United Kingdom empowers local communities to shape the development and design of their neighborhoods. By involving residents in decision-making processes, this policy promotes social cohesion, a sense of belonging, and happier communities. Assessing the efficiency of this policy involves evaluating the level of community engagement, the impact of residents' involvement on decision-making processes, and the resulting sense of community and well-being. To surveil community satisfaction, social cohesion, and the successful implementation of residents' preferences can help determine its effectiveness. Inspiring community engagement through policies like Neighbourhood Planning can empower residents, foster a sense of community ownership, and strengthen social ties and well-being. On the downside, ensuring equitable participation, balancing residents' preferences with broader development goals, and addressing potential conflicts between diverse community interests and regulatory requirements.

7.5. Sustainable and green housing practices

Policymakers can implement regulations and incentives that encourage energy-efficient building design, renewable energy use, water conservation, and waste management practices.

By promoting sustainable housing, policymakers contribute to environmental sustainability while also improving individuals' well-being. Energy-efficient and environmentally friendly housing can reduce utility costs, improve indoor air quality, and provide residents with a healthier and more comfortable living environment, positively impacting happiness, and overall quality of life (3). On December 15, 2021, the EU Commission presented its revision of the Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). Key points and new regulations of the EPBD are:

- new and higher energy requirements for new buildings ("zero-emission buildings"),
- renovation obligations for existing buildings,
- phasing out of fossil heating systems.

The EU Commission argues that tenants could benefit from lower heating costs.

However, total rent costs generally rise after energy-efficient renovations, as landlords pass on the investment costs (at least in part) to the rent and the heating cost savings cannot compensate for this. Here, discussions are currently underway on how the energy turnaround in housing construction can be made socially acceptable through subsidies. According to an estimate by the German housing industry, the annual subsidy requirement in Germany would amount to around 27 billion US-\$, assuming that the entire building stock is renovated in a rent-neutral manner (22).

Many owners of older houses fear that they will not be able to afford energy-efficient refurbishment and may even have to sell their property. The concrete implementation in the form of a new version of the Building Energy Act is currently the subject of very controversial discussions in German politics, particularly with regard to social compatibility (23).

In general upsides of sustainable and green housing practices are: Promoting energy efficiency, reduced environmental impact, and healthier living environments can lead to long-term cost savings, reduced carbon emissions, and improved indoor air quality. Downsides: Implementation costs, potential conflicts with other housing priorities, and the challenge of balancing upfront investments with long-term benefits and affordability.

8. Conclusion

The relationship between housing and happiness is complex and multifaceted, with various mechanisms through which housing conditions and experiences influence individuals' subjective well-being. This paper has explored the impact of housing on happiness through different dimensions and the mechanisms linking housing and happiness.

Research has consistently shown that adequate housing that meets basic needs, provides psychological comfort, offers a sense of control and autonomy, promotes social relationships and support, and ensures stability and security contributes to individuals' happiness and overall well-being. On the other hand, poor-quality housing, unaffordability, housing instability, and unfavorable neighborhood characteristics can lead to stress, dissatisfaction, and reduced happiness.

Policies to improve single aspects of successful housing must always consider the impact on other complexes and the resulting costs. For example, requirements to improve quality and environmental compatibility can have a negative impact on social concerns, as they lead to an increase in expense. Policies in this subject can therefore only be successful in the long term if all dimensions are well thought through on the basis of scientific evidence.

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