

## Article

# The Effects of Public Spaces on People's Experiences and Satisfaction in Taif City: A Cross-Sectional Study

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**Abstract:** Public places play a central role in shaping positive and negative human experiences. They have a profound impact on people's lives, affecting their sense of place, well-being, and overall quality of life. While public spaces have such an impact, little is known about their effects on the overall experiences of people in Saudi cities. Particularly, in Saudi Arabia, the form of public spaces has rapidly evolved and changed in recent years. Therefore, this study examined the impact of urban public spaces on people's experiences, aiming to assess satisfaction levels within the broader context of urban life in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, it investigated the correlation between the public spaces and individuals' perceptions and feelings toward the environment of Taif city. Taif is one of the key cities in Saudi Arabia targeted for significant improvements in quality of life as part of the 2030 vision. Therefore, it is important to study the effects on the residents there. The method used in the study involved quantitative data collected through a survey of 384 participants from Taif, which included questions measuring multiple aspects of the quality of urban public life, including the safety, walkability, social interaction, and functionality of public spaces. The results indicate that people in Taif would face a jeopardised level of satisfaction, as not all elements of the public spaces meet the desired standards. Therefore, their experiences would be impacted negatively if the noted concerns are not addressed. By identifying key urban design elements that impact people's experiences and overall well-being, this research provides a foundation for planners and policymakers to work towards achieving the Saudi vision of creating more liveable and enduring urban environments in Saudi Arabian cities.



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## 1. Introduction

Generally, a public area refers to the physical part of a public realm [1]. In the field of urban design, public places are key to the success of cities. They are commonly regarded as an essential public amenity that plays a crucial role in enhancing urban life [2]. Buchanan [1] defined urban design as a discipline fundamentally concerned with creating places, which are not just physical locations, but also encompass the events and activities that bring them to life. Cook [3] describes Urban design as the intentional handling of public spaces, including buildings, streetscapes, and landscapes, to create pleasing unity. In the domain of urban design, the investigation of the public environment and its relationship with people has long been a key focus. For example, Carr et al. [4] identified a public space as 'the common ground' on which individuals engage in ritual and functional activities that link society. Similarly, Kostof [5] defines a public space as a terminal and a venue designed for engagement, which are accessible to all individuals.

Furthermore, Cook [3] outlines four qualities of urban design attempts. One of them is the urban experience. The concept of 'urban experience' plays a crucial role in enhancing the variety of uses, surrounding environments, and interactions among individuals. Also, urban environments, particularly those that are well designed, contribute positively to people's well-being and happiness, as they directly influence people's daily activities and



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can enhance or worsen social outcomes [2,6,7]. Therefore, the design of public spaces is essential for urban life, as they provide spaces for socialisation and intercultural activities. Their form and design must emphasise the experiences and needs of their users.

Correspondingly, urban design involves shaping cities for people and enhancing existing conditions and the experiences of public spaces such as transportation networks and landscapes. Gibberd [8] emphasizes that town design includes road design, landscape, and city architecture that create an 'Urban Scene' that focuses not only on the function of the city but also on its appearance. Therefore, social, technical, and scientific issues must be examined so that the city's crucial aspects can be recognised. As UN-Habitat stated, public spaces are and should be considered multifunctional environments where individuals from various backgrounds can interact socially, conduct business, and engage in cultural activities [9]. However, researchers often examine public spaces and public life as separate entities, and isolated perceptions cannot provide any coherent explanation regarding the existence of a direct correlation between the two [10]. To close this gap, perspectives on how public space design and management affect people's experiences and social interactions are needed. Planners and policy-makers may build more effective and inclusive public places that improve community well-being and urban life by studying how people perceive, sense, and experience these areas [2].

Several theories on the relationship between urban environments and people's experiences highlight the connection between health, behaviour, and place attachment. In this context, urban design specialises in creating public spaces within urban settings. One such theory is the Behaviour settings theory, which describes the relationship between the physical characteristics of a built environment and the behaviour of individuals within it, and how people's behaviour can be impacted by the physical form [11]. For example, Whyte found that simple design aspects like bench position dramatically influenced social behaviour, with adjustable seats encouraging positive social interaction and fixed seats reducing it [12]. Barker also showed how a well-planned public park may be used for socialising and leisure, whereas a poorly designed park may be seen as a place where criminal activity is more likely to occur [11]. This proves Carmona's point that well-placed social amenities, when placed in suitable locations, significantly enhance social health and psychological well-being. This improvement can, in turn, affect the place itself, making it more or less valuable in terms of its structure and overall worth [13].

Another important theory is the sense of place, which seeks to understand the emotional and psychological attachment that individuals have to a particular physical location. It recognises that people develop unique relationships with their surrounding environments, which is shaped by various factors, such as personal experiences, cultural background, and social norms [14]. This theory argues that people assign meaning and value to particular places, which, in turn, influences their behaviour and decision-making processes. According to Tuan, the sense of place is shaped by the interplay between physical features and human experience. He suggests that the physical features of a place, such as its architecture, topography, and vegetation, along with the human experiences, such as memories, events, and cultural practices, create a sense of identity. This highlights the importance of considering the emotional and psychological impacts of built environments on users.

In conjunction, the quality of a public space is determined by various factors, including its design, functionality, accessibility, and aesthetic appeal, which all play a crucial role in shaping what is known as Place Identity. Proshansky defines place identity theory as the collection of ideas, experiences, feelings, and behaviours that individuals associate with their physical surroundings [15]. These associations are formed through personal history and the ability of different environments to meet people's needs and desires. Furthermore, expanding on this concept, Low and Altman [16] point out that the social connections symbolised by an area might be more equivalent to the bonding experience than the location itself. Thus, locations serve social and cultural relationships as well as social partnerships, and it is not the location itself that people are connected to.

The exploration of various theories in environmental psychology reveals the psychological and emotional measurements of the built setting. Emotional attachment and a sense of belonging are created in specific places (Place Attachment Theory) and add to self-identity, add to a sense of self (place identity theory), and shape human behaviour and social communications (as explained in Behaviour Settings theory). These theories offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between urban design and personal experience.

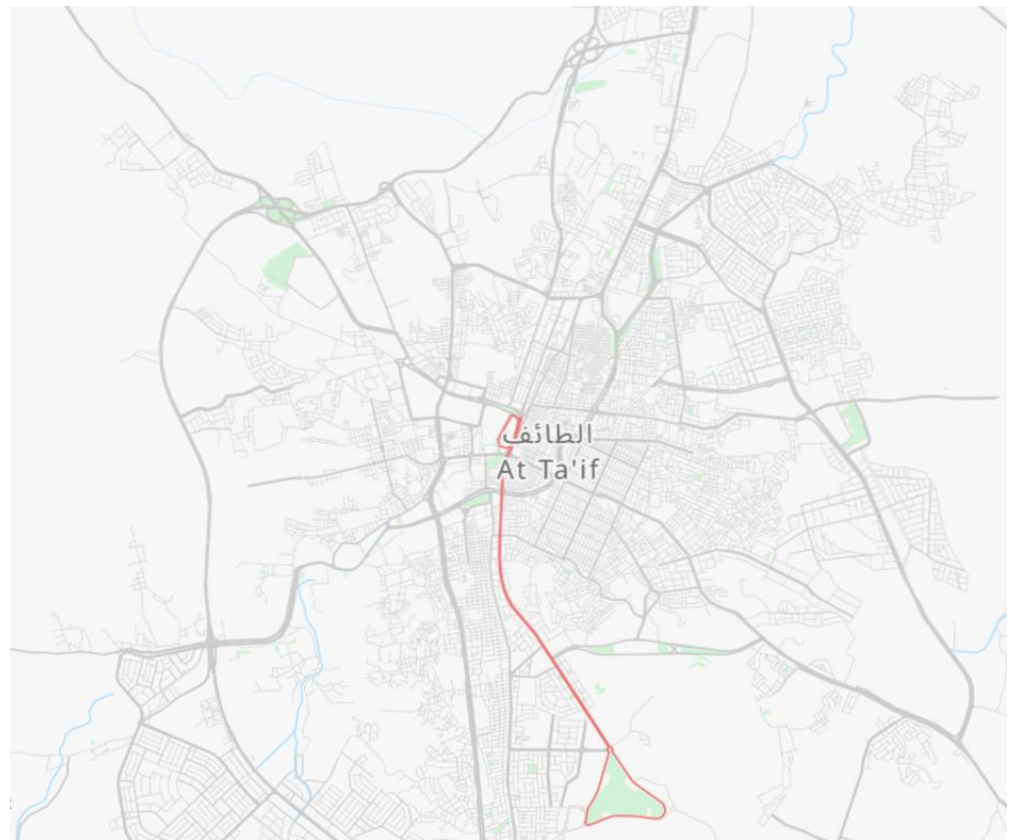
This exploration deepens our understanding of how urban design impacts daily lives and well-being. 'Well-being' refers to individuals' health status in public and urban places, which is influenced by their emotions and actions [17]. It plays a critical role in social health models by exploring how people experience societal living [18]. Being connected to a certain place is beneficial for the physical and emotional health of individuals [19]. So, understanding how people interact with public spaces can greatly enhance our approach to designing these environments. People's perceptions and emotions regarding an area significantly influence the reality of how that space is experienced. In light of these insights, urban design has emerged as a crucial discipline that directly influences the quality of life in urban environments, emphasizing the importance of understanding the connection between physical characteristics and people's experiences and emotions.

Building on this foundation, this research involved a cross-sectional study conducted in Taif in Saudi Arabia. Taif, as shown in Figure 1, is a city located in western Saudi Arabia, in the region known as the Hijaz. Often referred to as the 'Garden of the Hijaz' due to its varied topography, Taif is known for its hills, mild climate, and green and blue bodies, making it a popular destination for both visitors and residents. Figure 2 illustrates the green and blue bodies in Taif.

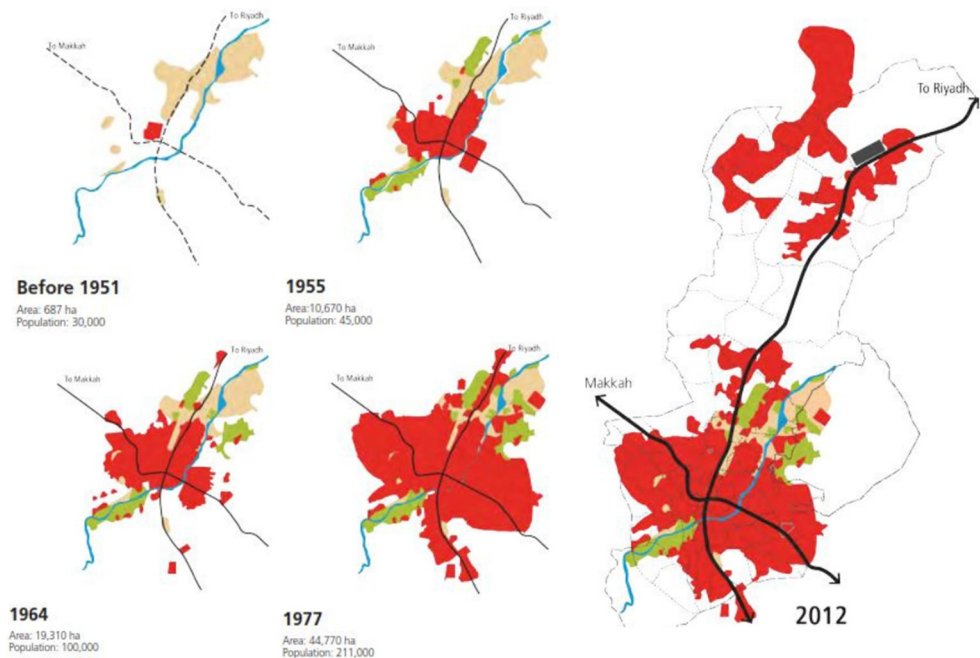


**Figure 1.** An aerial view of Taif city. (Source: Google Earth).

Over time, the city has grown in physical size, as shown in Figure 3, and population, largely due to its agricultural contributions. Urban planning and management have played a crucial role in developing the city's infrastructure, services, and resources to accommodate this growth. This expansion highlights the need to assess how well urban public areas can satisfy the needs of a growing population



**Figure 2.** Green and blue networks in Taif. (Source: OpenStreetMap).



**Figure 3.** Taif development over the years. (Source: [20]).

Currently, the municipality of Taif includes several hamlets within its limits, with a permanent population of over 709,000 residents and many more visiting for tourism purposes [21]. Taif has also been selected as one of the cities for The Future Saudi Cities Programme, a collaborative initiative between the Saudi Ministry of Urban and Rural

Affairs (MoMaR) and UN-Habitat aimed at improving urban layouts by 2030 [20]. Figure 4 below illustrate Taif's location and size in Saudi Arabia.



**Figure 4.** Taif location in Saudi Arabia. (Source: [20]).

This program emphasizes the city's potential for urban development and its influence on the well-being of its citizens. Taif's strategic location, population data, and available resources make it an important focus for research studies on urban public spaces and their impact on residents' quality of life. This study analyses the correlation between the physical characteristics of the built environment and individuals' experiences. The primary focus is to investigate the influence of urban design on these experiences. Moreover, the study seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of Taif's urban design and provides suggestions for improvement.

There are many aspects to focus on regarding the quality of urban design. Cook [3] highlights four main aspects of public spaces. First, public spaces should be visually appealing: for example, the form, texture, and arrangement of spaces. Second, they must have functional purposes, such as providing ease of movement for pedestrians and adaptability over time. Third, they must factor in a consideration of environmental conditions. Fourth and most important, they must create a place that strengthens people's experiences. As people assign meaning to cities, all three aspects should be ensured. Moreover, to enhance people's experiences, the design of the human scale should address aspects such as security, mobility, and comfort to create an environment where individuals can connect with the area. Designing spaces that embrace a human-scaled approach could result in more significant effects on the community beyond meeting practical requirements and offer new opportunities for communal engagement at an urban level [22].

Additionally, the relationship between people and their surroundings is best understood as a dynamic and mutually influential process. Individuals shape their environment while the places they occupy shape them [13]. Carmona exemplified that individuals are more likely to meet social and environmental demands when their basic needs are satisfied. This involves repairing damages caused by personal activities, if necessary. When these fundamental requirements are met, people are more likely to feel accomplished, content, and fulfilled in their daily lives. Consequently, they positively interact with the built environment throughout this cycle. At the individual level, public spaces that offer a genuine environment can foster positive interactions among people and help build social capital through various means [23]. Moreover, Węziak-Białowolska [24] summarised some studies related to urban design, satisfaction, and preferences. She wrote that many researchers have suggested that both urban quality of life and place satisfaction are positively associated with overall quality of life. In addition, people's willingness to live in certain places depends on these two qualities. Also, it is evident that planning the urban environment influences people's behaviour [25]. Therefore, it is crucial to consider people's experiences when planning public spaces. Additionally, they offer economic advantages. Gehl stated that to fulfil the needs of people, designers must prioritise life and space over buildings.

As there is a strong relationship between a city's design and people, designers, planners, and architects should consider the user's experience to approach a well-designed space from the cultural, social, and economic aspects of a user's perspective. Especially with the ongoing increase in population worldwide, Caves [26] highlights a study in 1999 by United Nations that anticipated a 2-billion-person growth in city populations by 2030 [27].

At present, culture in urban design seems to be a subject of growing importance in the context of the majority of urban projects in sustainable and good urban environments. Research has shown the importance of cultural aspects for urban planning by also referring to the importance of interdisciplinary approaches and community engagement [28–31]. The current urban design practices in Saudi Arabia have often been criticized for not adequately addressing cultural contexts, which has resulted in public spaces that may feel culturally alien to the local population. This cultural disconnect could be a contributing factor to the reported dissatisfaction with urban environments and the overall reduction in public happiness [18]. Given the urbanisation in Saudi Arabia, there has been a tremendous expansion. This growth in Saudi Arabian cities was initially based on Islamic principles and cultural values. However, the large shifts that have occurred in Saudi Arabia are evident in the society's lost 'sense of belonging' in the physical environment. The act of modernisation in Saudi Arabia was mainly political and aimed to recreate physical forms rather than generate any significant sociocultural changes apparent in the architecture [32]. Research shows that urban public spaces in cities are subject to decline because they are either neglected or abused. Additionally, a significant problem arises in providing an urban environment that is both positive and beneficial to the quality of life in modern cities [33,34]. Other studies showed that the rapid population growth in cities makes the maintenance of public spaces increasingly burdensome, which can lead to negative experiences and undesirable emotional outcomes [7,35].

In recent years, urban designers and planners in Saudi Arabia have been developing strategies for designing according to people's needs and for increasing well-being. This is intended to achieve a new vision by 2030 [36]. However, some large cities in Saudi Arabia have reported a notable deviation between the present conditions of the design of public areas and the desired quality and functionality. They fall short of expectations and international standards [37].

In the realm of urban design, there is a lack of knowledge regarding the ways in which urban design affects people's well-being and satisfaction levels, which impacts their day-to-day life and overall quality of life in Saudi Arabia. As the inhabitants of the country experience continuous expansion and undergo social transformation, it is necessary to understand the methods by which the constructed environment, especially in urban cities, influences people's satisfaction and health. The objective of this study was to determine what residents of Saudi Arabian cities feel about their lives and the settings in which they live. The goal is to support city planners as well as political leaders to ensure that, with the new vision of 2030, they create cities that are more desirable places for people to live in. This study focuses on two important questions. First, is there a need for the existing fabric of urban design to satisfy society? Second, has people's well-being been affected? This study explored the relationship between urban design and people's experiences.

## 2. Materials and Methods

In this research, a quantitative approach was adopted to explore the effects of urban public spaces on people's lives and satisfaction in Taif city. This approach enabled a more holistic and nuanced exploration of the research topic by enhancing the validity and depth of the findings [38]. Moreover, the data were collected through anonymous surveys administered to a representative sample of 384 Taif residents using Raosoft 2004 sample size calculator, with a 95% confidence level. The participants included both current residents and individuals who had visited Taif, which provided a diverse perspective on urban public spaces. The survey used Microsoft online forms to gather information on residents' perceptions, preferences, and satisfaction levels regarding various aspects of

urban planning. Ethical approval was granted by the Department of Architecture at the University of Strathclyde prior to the survey's circulation.

To validate the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted, and ten responses were obtained before administering the questionnaire to the participants and reviewing for potential issues with question comprehension or other concerns. Also, to ensure the respondents' anonymity, the survey was distributed through a range of digital communication methods. Participants who agreed to participate in the study were required to sign a consent form and were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality. The distribution targeted individuals from Taif or those who had visited the city previously. The participants were encouraged to share information with others to meet these criteria, resulting in 384 completed surveys.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS® Version 27 software, involving descriptive statistics and statistical tests to identify significant correlations between urban design features and residents' satisfaction. The questionnaire distinguishes between the elements of a city, namely public areas, and individual experiences that contribute to overall satisfaction. It aims to answer two fundamental questions: first, whether the features associated with urban design impact people's collective experiences in communal spaces in Taif. Second, it addresses whether facilities, surroundings, and social factors augment the quality of life for urban residents and satisfaction levels. It has multiple questions that measure many aspects that are important to public life, such as socialising [39], functionality, walkability and accessibility [23], facilities and safety [40,41], well-being [12], cultural aspects [42], and environmental and economic factors [43]. Ultimately, this survey measures quality of life, people's experiences, and satisfaction with the current public spaces in the city, as both urban quality of life and place satisfaction are positively associated with overall quality of life [24].

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Descriptive Statistics

##### 3.1.1. Demographic Factors

Three variables were included in the survey, namely age, sex, and residency status. All variables considered in this context are categorical in nature. Consequently, frequency tables were generated to accurately examine the descriptive statistics (Table 1). Out of the total sample size of 384 respondents, 50.5% of respondents identified as male, 38% fell within the age range of 18–24 years, and 64.1% were citizens of Taif.

**Table 1.** Demographic distribution of the sample.

		Percentages %
Sex	Female	49.5%
	Male	50.5%
Age Group	18–24	38.0%
	25–34	22.9%
	35–44	28.1%
	45–55	7.3%
	55+	3.6%
Visitor or Citizen of Taif City	Citizen	64.1%
	Visitor	35.9%

##### 3.1.2. Participants' Responses for All Survey Questions

The analysis of the participants' responses (Table 2) revealed diverse levels of satisfaction with the local facilities. While 30.2% reported being satisfied, 16.7% were dissatisfied, and 14.1% expressed extreme satisfaction. Similarly, answers regarding the presence of

nearby parks/gardens varied, with 29.7% of the respondents having a park/garden to which they could easily walk, while 40.1% reported not having such accessibility. Furthermore, the frequency of visiting public spaces ranged from occasional (29.7%) to sometimes (38.5%). Notably, most respondents (83.3%) felt safe walking during both the day and at night, highlighting a positive perception of safety in Taif. In addition, when participants were asked about the factors that made them feel unhappy regarding public spaces, several concerns emerged. The most common issues were the lack of greenery and natural elements (22.9%) and a lack of cleanliness and maintenance (15.6%). The findings suggest the importance of addressing these aspects to enhance the overall experience of public spaces.

**Table 2.** Participants' responses in frequencies and percentages.

		Percentage
What is your level of satisfaction with the facilities around you?	Very Unsatisfied	5.7%
	Unsatisfied	16.7%
	Neutral	33.3%
	Satisfied	30.2%
	Extremely Satisfied	14.1%
Do you have a park/Garden near your home that is easily walked by?	I don't know if there is a park/garden nearby	9.4%
	I have a park/garden nearby, but it's not easily walked to	20.8%
	No, I don't have a park/garden that is easily walked to	40.1%
	Yes, I have a park/garden that is easily walked to	29.7%
How often do you visit public spaces in your city?	Never	1.0%
	Rarely	16.1%
	Sometimes	38.5%
	Occasionally	29.7%
	Always	14.6%
How safe do you feel walking in your city during the day/Night?	I do not feel safe walking during the day neither at night	2.1%
	I feel safe walking during the day and night	83.3%
	I feel safe walking only during the day	14.1%
	I feel safe walking only during the night	0.5%
What is the most thing that made you feel unhappy regarding the public spaces?	Inadequate access to public transportation	6.8%
	Inadequate lighting at night	7.8%
	Lack of activity and facilities	6.3%
	Lack of cleanliness and maintenance	15.6%
	Lack of cultural and artistic activities and events	10.4%
	Lack of greenery and natural elements	22.9%
	Lack of pedestrian infrastructure	3.1%
	noise and crowd	8.3%
	People behave	0.5%
	safety concerns	1.6%
The structure of the streets	10.4%	
Do you think there are plenty of benches/seating facilities in public spaces?	Others	6.4%
	I've never noticed	19.3%
	No, I feel there should be more	55.7%
	Yes	25.0%



Table 2. Cont.

		Percentage
How much noise pollution do you experience in public spaces in your city?	Very Low	2.6%
	Low	7.3%
	Moderate	53.1%
	High	27.6%
	Very High	9.4%
Do you have accessible footpaths around you?	I don't use footpaths around me	10.4%
	I'm not sure	21.4%
	No	37.0%
	The footpaths around me are often obstructed or poorly maintained.	8.3%
	Yes	22.9%
Do you feel comfortable when you drive on a public road?	I don't drive	24.5%
	Uncomfortable	15.1%
	Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	35.4%
	Comfortable	25.0%
Do you agree that traffic calming measures must be installed in the city major streets. For example, speed bumps, roundabouts, or pedestrian crossings?	Strongly Disagree	2.1%
	Disagree	6.3%
	Neutral	19.8%
	Agree	31.8%
	Strongly Agree	40.1%
What is your primary mode of transportation to commute to work/school?	Bicycle	1.0%
	Bus	6.3%
	Car	89.1%
	Walking	3.6%
How much do you feel that the design and layout of public spaces in the city affect your experience?	Not at all	10.4%
	Slightly	8.3%
	Moderately	29.2%
	Quite a bit	15.1%
	Extremely	37.0%
To what extent do the presence of high scrapers in a public space contribute to your feeling of welcome and comfort in that space?	Not at all	19.8%
	Slightly	24.5%
	Moderately	34.4%
	Extremely	21.4%

Moreover, opinions regarding the availability of benches/seating facilities were divided, with 55.7% feeling that there should be more and 25% expressing satisfaction. Noise pollution in public spaces was reported as moderate by the majority (53.1%), whereas 27.6% perceived it as high. Accessibility of footpaths was also a concern, as 37% of the respondents reported not having accessible footpaths or facing obstructions and poor maintenance. Additionally, a significant proportion (40.1%) strongly agreed that traffic calming measures should be installed in major streets, indicating a desire for enhanced road safety. In terms of transportation, the primary mode of commuting was car (89.1%), followed by walking (3.6%). These data highlight the reliance on private vehicles and the need to

promote alternative transportation options for sustainable mobility. The design and layout of public spaces were perceived to have a significant impact on participants' experiences, with 37% considering them extremely influential. The presence of high skyscrapers in public spaces contributed moderately (34.4%) to the participants' experiences.

### 3.1.3. Crosstabulations

In order to identify different relationships among demographic variables, crosstabulations were used with sex, age group, and residency status; however, to determine whether these findings could be generalised to the examined population, statistical analysis was mandatory. Chi-squared tests were used to determine whether these relationships were statistically significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) or not ( $p > 0.05$ ).

#### **Summary of Differences in Responses According to Sex with Other Attributes**

The analysis indicates that females generally report higher satisfaction with facilities and are more likely to be extremely satisfied compared to males. While car usage is high among both sexes, females rely more on public transportation systems due to a significant percentage of them not driving. Additionally, more females advocate for the implementation of traffic-calming measures. Despite this reliance on cars, both sexes lack accessible footpaths to local facilities, with a significant percentage, especially men, depending on cars for transportation. The most significant factors causing unhappiness in public spaces differ between sexes: males are more concerned about the lack of greenery, whereas females are more affected by inadequate public transportation. Both sexes share similar concerns regarding the lack of cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces. Overall, females feel that the design and layout of public spaces have a greater impact on their experience compared to males. The detailed survey results can be found in Appendix A Table A1.

#### **Summary of Differences in Responses According to Age Group with Other Attributes**

The survey findings highlight significant differences in how younger (18–24) and older age groups (25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55+) perceive and interact with public spaces. Younger people (18–24) report higher levels of dissatisfaction with existing facilities despite frequent usage of public spaces. They feel safer walking during both day and night, which may contribute to their higher engagement with these areas. However, they are more affected by noise pollution and express a greater concern over factors such as the lack of greenery, noise, and crowding. Also, this group prioritizes the design and layout of public spaces, feeling that these aspects greatly impact their overall experience. Their strong agreement on the need for traffic calming measures suggests their desire for safer, more pedestrian-friendly environments.

In contrast, older individuals (especially those aged 55 and above) report higher satisfaction with public facilities but tend to visit public spaces less frequently. Their perception of safety decreases with age, indicating they feel less safe compared to younger counterparts. Additionally, they are less influenced by the design and layout of public spaces, which may suggest that other factors, such as accessibility, comfort, and safety, are more critical to their engagement. See Appendix A Table A2 for detailed survey results.

#### **Summary of Differences in Responses According to Residency Status with Other Attributes**

The analysis compares participants' responses to various survey questions about public spaces based on their residency status (Citizens and Visitors of Taif City). The survey reveals notable differences in perceptions and experiences regarding public spaces between citizens and visitors to Taif city. Citizens generally report higher satisfaction, better access to amenities, and a feeling of safety but express concerns about public transportation and street structure. Visitors, on the other hand, visit public spaces less often, reporting lower satisfaction, less access to amenities, and greater concerns about cleanliness and maintenance. The detailed survey results can be found in Appendix A Table A3.

### 3.2. Statistical Analysis

#### Chi-Square Tests

The chi-square test was used to decide whether there was a pointed relationship between two categorical variables. This test is appropriate for analysing categorical data, such as the survey responses categorized by sex, age, and residency status. The Chi-square test is considered appropriate due to its capability to display whether the observed frequency distribution varies significantly from the expected distribution under the null hypothesis of no association. In the given data and with the sample size in place, the Chi-square test is suitable to be used for analysing the data.

The results of each chi-square test are shown in Table 3. Sex and age groups had more statistically significant relationships ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) with the tested elements than the status of residency. With regards to sex, all tested survey elements had statistically significant relationships with sex, except for five elements (Table 3). Age was also found to have a statistically significant relationship with most of the tested elements except for two elements. Residency status scored the least statistically significant relationships, with 6 out of the 13 elements showing statistically significant relationships (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Chi-Square tests and  $p$  values of survey questions in relation to the examined demographic factors. The statistically significant relations ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) are coloured and bolded.

	Sex		Age Group		Visitor or Citizen of Taif City	
	Chi-Square	$p$ -Value	Chi-Square	$p$ -Value	Chi-Square	$p$ -Value
What is your level of satisfaction with the facilities around you?	19.205	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	39.985	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	2.516	0.642
Do you have a park/Garden near your home that is easily walked by?	11.745	<b>0.008</b>	34.372	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	42.196	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
How often do you visit public spaces in your city?	3.588	0.465	26.782	<b>0.044</b>	10.17	<b>0.038</b>
How safe do you feel walking in your city during the day/Night?	4.083	0.253	20.291	0.062	1.982	0.576
What is the most thing that made you feel unhappy regarding the public spaces?	43.614	<b>0.004</b>	278.71	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	65.567	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Do you think there are plenty of benches/seating facilities in public spaces?	3.027	0.22	15.412	0.052	6.162	<b>0.046</b>
How much noise pollution do you experience in public spaces in your city?	7.063	0.133	43.267	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	12.152	<b>0.016</b>
Do you have accessible footpaths around you?	20.084	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	39.56	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	4.446	0.349
Do you feel comfortable when you drive on a public road?	117.211	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	48.889	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	11.56	0.009
Do you agree that traffic calming measures must be installed in the city major streets. For example, speed bumps, roundabouts, or pedestrian crossings?	17.058	<b>0.002</b>	29.739	<b>0.019</b>	3.307	0.508
What is your primary mode of transportation to commute to work/school?	11.859	<b>0.008</b>	30.898	<b>0.002</b>	3.256	0.354
How much do you feel that the design and layout of public spaces in the city affect your experience?	16.011	<b>0.003</b>	43.836	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	2.779	0.595
To what extent do the presence of high scrapers in a public space contribute to your feeling of welcome and comfort in that space?	2.652	0.448	21.339	<b>0.046</b>	8.973	<b>0.03</b>

#### 4. Discussion

A comprehensive assessment was conducted to assess the public places of Taif, Saudi Arabia. It identified the variables that influence the experiences and levels of satisfaction among the residents. Moreover, it demonstrated the specific areas that need enhancement and additional progress for individuals of both sexes and all age groups, and whether they are visitors or residents. The findings of the survey, if addressed, could significantly enhance the overall quality and enjoyment of public spaces.

To start with, 29.7% had accessible parks or gardens nearby, whereas 40.1% did not have such accessibility. This significant disparity highlights the urgent need for enhanced urban planning and a more equitable distribution of recreational areas to cater to diverse community needs. This is in line with the findings of Cardinali et al. [44], who established a correlation between exposure to green areas and improved mental health outcomes as well as enhanced social cohesiveness. Hence, the increase in the accessibility of green infrastructure in Taif has the potential to result in enhanced general happiness and quality of life for its people.

Another significant aspect influencing satisfaction was a lack of green areas and natural elements (22.9%), as well as cleanliness and maintenance issues (15.6%). It is imperative to address these concerns to enhance the appeal and desirability of public spaces. A recent study examining the characteristics of public space use and users' perceptions found that the absence of greenery significantly impacts the perception of these spaces, particularly in terms of their potential to fulfil functions related to cultural and social activity [45]. The study emphasizes that natural settings and greenery in public spaces are crucial, aligning with the identified issues in Taif.

Additionally, around 30.2% of the participants expressed satisfaction with the facilities, whereas approximately 16.7% reported dissatisfaction. Respondents also displayed varying frequencies of visiting public spaces. Some visited 'occasionally', comprising 29.7% of the total, while 'sometimes' accounted for 38.5%. These findings indicate that although a good number of people are satisfied, they visit public spaces less often. Further work in making these surroundings desirable and functional might result in more frequent use and increased overall satisfaction for the user. Research suggests a correlation between the regular usage of public areas and increased levels of life satisfaction [46]. Physical elements like artificial water, landscape furniture, an appropriate pedestrian path, and vegetation are linked to enhancing the practical value of these areas which, in turn, increase the user satisfaction [47].

Regarding seating facilities, opinions were divided, with 55.7% of participants indicating a desire for more benches and 25% expressing satisfaction with the existing arrangements. Noise pollution was perceived moderately by the majority (53.1%) but deemed high by 27.6%. Focusing on improving seating amenities and managing noise levels can greatly contribute to enhancing user experiences in these areas. Moreover, a high level of safety perception was evident, as 83.3% of respondents reported feeling secure while walking during the day and night in Taif. This finding indicates that the general consensus is that Taif is a safe place, which plays a crucial role in encouraging public space utilisation. Some studies have shown that safety, inclusivity, and accessibility significantly impact the use and experiences of urban green spaces, and that factors such as perceived biodiversity, sound, naturalness, and safety enhance the restorative quality and well-being benefits of these spaces [48,49]. This aligns with the findings in Taif, where a positive perception of safety supports public space use. Therefore, enhancing both safety and natural features in public areas is not only consistent with existing research but also presents a direct pathway to improving user satisfaction and the overall quality of urban life in Taif. Additionally, approximately 37% of respondents reported encountering obstacles or inadequate maintenance concerning pedestrian footpaths, an alarming number considering accessibility issues faced by this group alone without addressing poor road maintenance concerns affecting both pedestrians and drivers alike, because installing traffic calming measures on major streets gained strong endorsement from 40.1% of participants, reflecting the community's

wish for enhanced road safety precautions. A study by RakaMandi [50] brings into focus how a good design and maintenance of pedestrian infrastructures, including footpaths, will go a long way in improving the mobility and safety of pedestrians. The results indicate that physical obstruction and poor maintenance of pedestrian routes can greatly reduce effective utilisation. Similarly, Aromal and Naseer [51] discuss the role of unobstructed sidewalks and traffic calming measures in encouraging walking as a healthy mode of transport. Their findings indicate that improving pedestrian facilities is essential for promoting walking and reducing reliance on private vehicles.

This is particularly relevant given that in the study, commuting primarily involved private vehicles (89.1%), followed by walking (3.6%). The extensive reliance on cars highlights the urgency of promoting alternative means of transportation to alleviate traffic congestion issues while emphasising sustainable mobility solutions. Furthermore, the design and layout of public spaces significantly impacted experiences according to 37%, or nearly two out of five respondents surveyed, an observation underscoring how mindful urban planning enhances functional and enjoyable environments within these shared spaces, noting that towering skyscrapers moderately influenced participants' perceptions (34.4%). Striking a balance between tall structures and preserving open green spaces is critical especially within high-density urban environments. It can mitigate environmental issues while improving community well-being.

Moreover, the findings reveal significant interactions between demographic variables (age, sex, and residency status) and perceptions of public space attributes. They demonstrate that each factor influencing public spaces interacts with others. For example, environmental elements like greenery affect residents' mental well-being and social interactions. Determining the appropriate balance of these elements requires careful judgment, adding the art dimension to urban design. This complex process necessitates professionals who are visually perceptive and possess interdisciplinary knowledge in planning, architecture, sociology, psychology, law, and developmental economics. Understanding these interactions is crucial for urban planners and policymakers aiming to enhance the quality of life and diversity of urban environments.

An important finding from the study is the interaction between age and satisfaction with public amenities. Respondents in the younger age group (18–24 years) express greater levels of dissatisfaction with facilities and a lack of accessible parks or gardens. Also, they seek environments that are not only safe but also well-designed, aesthetically pleasing, and conducive to reducing stressors like noise and overcrowding. The lack of satisfaction may arise from the expectations of younger people for modern amenities, leisure activities, and social environments that specifically accommodate their lifestyle preferences. The increased frequency with which they visit public spaces indicates a stronger need for stimulating and vibrant surroundings. Conversely, individuals aged 55 and above exhibit greater levels of satisfaction but use public spaces less often, perhaps because of difficulties with accessibility, concerns about safety, or a shortage of facilities suitable for their age group. Age-related factors significantly affect the perception of individuals and utilisation of urban environments.

To address the differing needs of various age groups in public spaces, several targeted improvements can be implemented. For younger individuals, enhancing the quality and accessibility of facilities and amenities is crucial to address their dissatisfaction. Reducing noise pollution in areas they frequent and incorporating youth-centric design elements can make public spaces more appealing. Since younger residents are more impacted by the design and layout, urban planners should focus on traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps and pedestrian crossings, which are strongly supported by this group. Additionally, increasing the presence of greenery in urban areas can mitigate the lack of natural elements, a significant concern for younger people.

For older age groups, increasing safety measures are essential, as they tend to feel less secure in public spaces. Addressing their concerns about cleanliness through regular maintenance and community initiatives can improve their overall satisfaction. Ensuring

that public spaces are accessible and installing comfort features like seating and rest areas can make these areas more accommodating for older adults. Furthermore, creating intergenerational initiatives can help foster community cohesion by bringing together individuals of different ages

As public space use is influenced by safety perception, most respondents felt safe going about in Taif during the day and night; however, this decreased with age. Older adults may experience heightened vulnerability due to physical limitations or fear of crime, which can discourage them from frequenting public spaces. This aligns with the research of Navarrete-Hernandez et al., which indicates that residents of high-crime areas spend less time in public places because they are afraid of being hurt [52]. Nevertheless, Navarrete-Hernandez et al. stated that improving public places has been shown to make people feel safer, which leads to more frequent use.

In an interesting point, Węziak-Białowolska [24] revealed that the influential factors affecting individual satisfaction vary from one urban area to another. Even though the results varied, she concluded that whenever a person feels safe in their living space, they are more likely to feel satisfied. While a lack of trustworthy people and efficiency in government works would decrease the level of satisfaction overall, their experience would be negatively influenced. In the questionnaire, 320 of the 384 participants stated that they felt safe in Taif, which explains the high percentage of satisfaction levels.

Sex differences also play a role in shaping experiences in public spaces. Females reported higher satisfaction with facilities and were more likely to feel that the design and layout of public spaces significantly impact their experience. However, many females do not drive and rely more on public transportation, underscoring the need for accessible and reliable transit options. Currently, the reliance on private vehicles is notably high, with 89.1% of respondents using cars as their primary mode of transportation. This dependence contributes to traffic congestion, environmental pollution, and reduced physical activity levels among residents [53]. Additionally, there is a clear community desire for traffic-calming measures, with 40.1% of respondents strongly endorsing their implementation. Enhancing footpath accessibility is also crucial, as both males and females report a lack of accessible footpaths. By improving footpath maintenance and accessibility, the community can reduce reliance on cars, promote healthier lifestyles, and provide environmental benefits by encouraging walking and cycling [54].

In addition, the survey measured the effects of public spaces in Taif city from both residents' and visitors' perspectives. The findings indicated that visitors had lower satisfaction levels than residents. To enhance visitor satisfaction and overall experience in public spaces, it is crucial to address these lower satisfaction levels by thoughtfully planning urban landscapes that promote peace and quiet, building layered landscapes, and adding archetypal elements, which will connect with human experiences and provide better feelings of happiness, as studies have shown that these natural features specifically, and green elements in general in urban areas, can enhance well-being and promote relaxation [55,56].

Moreover, the satisfaction levels reported by the citizens of Taif City indicate a stronger affinity for the tailored facilities than visitors' experiences. Notably, residents enjoy better access to parks, gardens, and public spaces, thus demonstrating active participation in community engagement. As visitors of Taif City visit public spaces less often than citizens, this indicates that there is a need for developing more parks and green spaces that are easily accessible to visitors and providing clear signage and information about existing parks. Additionally, improving transportation infrastructure by offering better public transportation options addresses citizens' concerns about inadequate access. Implementing traffic calming measures, such as installing speed bumps, roundabouts, and pedestrian crossings in areas identified by citizens, and educating drivers about road safety while enforcing traffic regulations will further enhance safety.

Another interesting cross-sectional study explored satisfaction levels and their relationship with other factors that affect quality of life and overall relation to people's experiences [57]. It found that the urban landscape affects socioeconomic factors for peo-

ple's experiences and satisfaction, as the landscape can have a favourable correlation regarding the existence of natural elements and overall subjective well-being. Moreover, favourable attitudes towards these elements were crucial for achieving a high level of satisfaction [58]. In this survey, the lack of greenery and natural elements was the top concern for the people of Taif. This negative factor would affect people's experiences and satisfaction in the long term.

Many factors need to be improved in Saudi cities, including Taif. The results indicate that the loss of greenery, walkable pathways, infrastructure, appropriate events, cultural activities, noise, and lighting are under the bar for many people. This relates to people's experiences and satisfaction with public spaces in urban areas.

## 5. Conclusions

Urban design may be founded on a growing body of knowledge of how and why people respond to the spatial and visual qualities of the built environment. The urban environment has a substantial impact as individuals experience various emotions and memories daily. Therefore, the process of planning and designing such an environment requires people who understand and possess knowledge of multiple disciplines, including planning, architecture, sociology, psychology, law, and developmental economics. Furthermore, in the long term, it is predicted that people of Taif would face a jeopardised level of satisfaction. As discussed previously, the quality of the facilities greatly affects the mental and physical well-being of people. Notably, not all the facilities meet the desired standards. Therefore, addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing the overall experience, as highlighted by a significant number of respondents who felt that their environment influenced their experiences.

This study addresses the identified gaps in satisfaction levels regarding public spaces in Taif city as well as the extent of interaction between individuals and urban public places. By exploring areas where dissatisfaction exists and examining the associations between positive and negative experiences with different elements of urban design, this study fills these knowledge gaps. The findings of this study indicate that the lack of greenery and natural elements (reported by 22.9% of participants) and the inadequacy of seating facilities are key factors contributing to lower satisfaction levels in Taif's public spaces. Also, it was found that a high percentage of respondents (83.3%) felt safe walking in Taif, which has a positive effect on public space usage. However, the heavy reliance on private vehicles (89.1%) indicates a need for improved pedestrian infrastructure to encourage walking and reduce traffic congestion. These findings align with those of prior research, highlighting the significance of well-designed public spaces in fostering social interactions, physical activity, and community cohesion.

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the quality of public spaces in Taif, Saudi Arabia, to identify the factors that affect residents' experiences and satisfaction levels. The research opted for quantitative data collection through surveys. The survey included questions that measured multiple aspects of urban life such as socialisation, accessibility, safety, cultural aspects, environmental and economic factors, well-being, and facilities. The findings provide valuable insights into the strengths and areas needing improvement in Taif's urban design and management, which are critical for enhancing residents' quality of life. For example, the dissatisfaction with current facilities (expressed by 16.7% of participants) and the call for more benches (by 55.7% of respondents) suggest specific areas where immediate action can be taken to improve user experience.

This study demonstrates that the urban design of public spaces in Taif significantly impacts residents' social interactions, mental and physical well-being, and satisfaction levels. It reveals that the residents' ability to access and utilise public spaces is affected by various factors, including safety and accessibility, cultural and social dynamics, and the availability of facilities and amenities. For example, addressing noise pollution, perceived as high by 27.6% of respondents, can significantly improve the public space experience, as supported by existing research on the impact of sound on well-being. Beyond this,

the research shows that the aesthetic design of public spaces is influential in creating a harmonious and pleasant environment that promotes socialisation and well-being. The study provides insights that can inform policies and strategies to enhance public spaces in Taif and offers a foundation for further research into the experience of public spaces in other Saudi Arabian cities.

Given the growing global emphasis on quality of life, this study can serve as a resource for policymakers and urban planners when implementing new designs aimed at creating high-quality public spaces. In particular, enhancing greenery, seating, and pedestrian pathways emerges as a priority based on the survey results. The findings are also relevant beyond Taif city and will appeal to researchers interested in public space design in different cultural and social contexts. This study fills the gap in measuring the factors that affect people's experiences and satisfaction in Taif city. However, in the Saudi Arabian context, further investigation is needed, as the quantitative method used in this study may have overlooked certain qualitative aspects and nuances that could provide a deeper understanding of the topic. In addition, the sample size of 384 participants from Taif, although representative, may still be relatively small compared to the city's population.

Despite this, the research will be valuable for further study. For instance, conducting longitudinal studies using regression analysis can track how changes in urban design over time affect user satisfaction and behaviour. This approach can provide insights into the long-term impacts of design interventions. Additionally, exploring user preferences for specific types of natural elements and the impact of public space usage on community cohesion could further inform urban planning strategies.

Finally, the significance of this research is highlighted by the fact that Taif is one of the major cities in the country and one of the cities selected for The Future Saudi Cities Programme. The findings of this study have the potential to shape the future design and management of public spaces in Saudi Arabia and improve residents' quality of life. Ultimately, this study's contribution to the discourse on public space design and management in Saudi Arabia and beyond positions it as a significant contribution to the field of urban planning and design.

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**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflicts of interest.

## Appendix A

**Table A1.** Difference in responses according to gender with other attributes.

		Gender	
		Female	Male
What is your level of satisfaction with the facilities around you?	Very Unsatisfied	0.5%	5.2%
	Unsatisfied	7.8%	8.9%
	Neutral	17.7%	15.6%
	Satisfied	14.6%	15.6%
	Extremely Satisfied	8.9%	5.2%
Do you have a park/Garden near your home that is easily walked by?	I don't know if there is a park/garden nearby	3.1%	6.3%
	I have a park/garden nearby, but it's not easily walked to	11.9%	8.9%
	No, I don't have a park/garden that is easily walked to	17.2%	22.9%
	Yes, I have a park/garden that is easily walked to	17.2%	12.5%



Table A1. Cont.

		Gender	
		Female	Male
How often do you visit public spaces in your city?	Never	0.5%	0.5%
	Rarely	6.3%	9.9%
	Sometimes	20.3%	18.2%
	Occasionally	15.1%	14.6%
	Always	7.3%	7.3%
How safe do you feel walking in your city during the day/Night?	I do not feel safe walking during the day neither at night	0.5%	1.6%
	I feel safe walking during the day and night	41.1%	42.2%
	I feel safe walking only during the day	7.3%	6.8%
	I feel safe walking only during the night	0.5%	0%
What is the most thing that made you feel unhappy regarding the public spaces?	Inadequate access to public transportation	5.2%	1.6%
	Inadequate lighting at night	4.2%	3.6%
	Lack of activity and facilities	3.6%	2.6%
	Lack of cleanliness and maintenance	7.3%	8.3%
	Lack of cultural and artistic activities and events	5.7%	4.7%
	Lack of greenery and natural elements	8.9%	14.2%
	Lack of pedestrian infrastructure	2.1%	1%
	noise and crowd	4.7%	3.6%
	People behave	0%	0.5%
	safety concerns	1%	0.5%
	The structure of the streets	4.2%	6.3%
Do you think there are plenty of benches/seating facilities in public spaces?	Others	2.6%	3.6%
	I've never noticed	9.9%	9.4%
	No, I feel there should be more	25.5%	30.2%
How much noise pollution do you experience in public spaces in your city?	Yes	14%	11%
	Very Low	1.6%	1%
	Low	4.7%	2.6%
	Moderate	27.1%	26%
	High	13%	14.6%
Do you have accessible footpaths around you?	Very High	3.1%	6.3%
	I don't use footpaths around me	4.2%	6.3%
	I'm not sure	10.4%	10.9%
	No	14.6%	22.4%
Do you feel comfortable when you drive on a public road?	The footpaths around me are often obstructed or poorly maintained.	4.7%	3.6%
	Yes	15.6%	7.3%
	I don't drive	22.9%	1.6%
	Uncomfortable	1.6%	13.5%
Do you agree that traffic calming measures must be installed in the city major streets. For example, speed bumps, roundabouts, or pedestrian crossings?	Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	16.1%	19.3%
	Comfortable	8.9%	16.1%
	Strongly Disagree	0%	2.1%
	Disagree	1.6%	4.7%
	Neutral	8.9%	10.9%
	Agree	17.7%	14.1%
	Strongly Agree	21.3%	18.7%

Table A1. Cont.

		Gender	
		Female	Male
What is your primary mode of transportation to commute to work/school?	Bicycle	0.5%	0.5%
	Bus	5.2%	1%
	Car	42.2%	46.9%
	Walking	1.6%	2.1%
How much do you feel that the design and layout of public spaces in the city affect your experience?	Not at all	4.7%	5.7%
	Slightly	2.6%	5.7%
	Moderately	13%	16%
	Quite a bit	6.3%	8.9%
	Extremely	23%	14.1%
To what extent do the presence of high scrapers in a public space contribute to your feeling of welcome and comfort in that space?	Not at all	9.8%	9.8%
	Slightly	11.5%	13%
	Moderately	18.8%	15.7%
	Extremely	9.4%	12%

Table A2. Difference in responses according to age group with other attributes.

		Age Group				
		18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55+
What is your level of satisfaction with the facilities around you?	Very Unsatisfied	2.1%	0.5%	2.1%	1%	0%
	Unsatisfied	4.7%	5.7%	5.2%	1%	0%
	Neutral	16.7%	6.3%	7.8%	1%	1.6%
	Satisfied	7.3%	8.3%	9.9%	3.1%	1.6%
	Extremely Satisfied	7.3%	2.1%	3.1%	1%	0.5%
Do you have a park/Garden near your home that is easily walked by?	I don't know if there is a park/garden nearby	2.1%	0.5%	4.7%	2.1%	0%
	I have a park/garden nearby, but it's not easily walked to	7.3%	5.2%	6.3%	1%	1%
	No, I don't have a park/garden that is easily walked to	16.2%	10.4%	9.8%	1.6%	2.1%
	Yes, I have a park/garden that is easily walked to	12.5%	6.8%	7.3%	2.6%	0.5%
How often do you visit public spaces in your city?	Never	0%	0.5%	0.5%	0%	0%
	Rarely	6.3%	5.2%	3%	1.6%	0%
	Sometimes	13.5%	7.3%	12%	4.2%	1.6%
	Occasionally	11.5%	6.3%	8.2%	1.6%	2.1%
	Always	6.8%	3.6%	4.2%	0%	0%
How safe do you feel walking in your city during the day/Night?	I do not feel safe walking during the day neither at night	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0%	0.5%
	I feel safe walking during the day and night	30.8%	18.8%	24.5%	6.8%	3.1%
	I feel safe walking only during the day	6.8%	3.6%	3.1%	0.5%	0%
	I feel safe walking only during the night	0.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Table A2. Cont.

		Age Group				
		18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55+
What is the most thing that made you feel unhappy regarding the public spaces?	Inadequate access to public transportation	2.6%	1.1%	1.6%	1.1%	0.5%
	Inadequate lighting at night	2.1%	2.6%	3.2%	0%	0%
	Lack of activity and facilities	3.2%	2.1%	0.5%	0.5%	0%
	Lack of cleanliness and maintenance	3.7%	2.1%	6.8%	2.6%	0.5%
	Lack of cultural and artistic activities and events	3.7%	3.2%	3.7%	0%	0%
	Lack of greenery and natural elements	8.4%	6.8%	6.3%	1.1%	0.5%
	Lack of pedestrian infrastructure	1.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0%	0%
	noise and crowd	5.3%	1.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0%
	People behave	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.5%
	safety concerns	0.5%	0.5%	0%	0.5%	0%
	The structure of the streets	5.8%	1.1%	2.6%	0%	1.1%
	Others	1.6%	1.1%	2.1%	1.1%	0.5%
Do you think there are plenty of benches/seating facilities in public spaces?	I've never noticed	10.9%	2.6%	4.2%	1%	0.5%
	No, I feel there should be more	17.7%	14%	17.2%	4.7%	2.1%
How much noise pollution do you experience in public spaces in your city?	Yes	9.4%	6.3%	6.8%	1.6%	1%
	Very Low	1.6%	0%	0.5%	0%	0.5%
	Low	2.1%	1.6%	2.1%	1%	0.5%
	Moderate	21.3%	13%	14.6%	2.1%	2.1%
	High	9.4%	7.3%	6.3%	4.2%	0.5%
Do you have accessible footpaths around you?	Very High	3.6%	1%	4.7%	0%	0%
	I don't use footpaths around me	4.2%	4.2%	1.6%	0.5%	0%
	I'm not sure	8.3%	3.6%	6.3%	2.6%	0.5%
	No	17.7%	5.2%	11.5%	1%	1.6%
	The footpaths around me are often obstructed or poorly maintained.	1.6%	3.1%	2%	1%	0.5%
Do you feel comfortable when you drive on a public road?	Yes	6.3%	6.8%	6.8%	2.1%	0.5%
	I don't drive	14.6%	4.7%	2.1%	2.6%	0.5%
	Uncomfortable	4.7%	2.6%	6.3%	0.5%	1%
	Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	12.5%	8.9%	10.4%	3.1%	0.5%
Do you agree that traffic calming measures must be installed in the city major streets. For example, speed bumps, roundabouts, or pedestrian crossings?	Comfortable	6.3%	6.8%	9.4%	1%	1.6%
	Strongly Disagree	0.5%	0%	1.6%	0%	0%
	Disagree	1%	2.6%	2.1%	0.5%	0%
	Neutral	7.3%	5.2%	6.3%	0.5%	0.5%
	Agree	10.4%	8.3%	8.3%	3.1%	1.6%
What is your primary mode of transportation to commute to work/school?	Strongly Agree	18.8%	6.8%	9.9%	3.1%	1.6%
	Bicycle	0.5%	0.5%	0%	0%	0%
	Bus	5.2%	0.5%	0%	0.5%	0%
	Car	30.8%	20.9%	27.7%	6.3%	3.6%
	Walking	1.6%	1%	0.5%	0.5%	0%

Table A2. Cont.

		Age Group				
		18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55+
How much do you feel that the design and layout of public spaces in the city affect your experience?	Not at all	2%	2%	5.2%	1%	0%
	Slightly	3.6%	2%	2.6%	0%	0%
	Moderately	11.5%	5.2%	7.8%	2%	2.6%
	Quite a bit	4.7%	2.6%	6.3%	1%	0.5%
	Extremely	16.1%	10.9%	6.3%	3%	0.5%
To what extent do the presence of high scrapers in a public space contribute to your feeling of welcome and comfort in that space?	Not at all	5.7%	5.2%	5.2%	2.6%	1%
	Slightly	8.3%	6.8%	7.3%	1.6%	0.5%
	Moderately	13%	7.3%	9.4%	2.6%	2.1%
	Extremely	10.9%	3.6%	6.3%	0.5%	0%

Table A3. Difference in responses according to residential status.

		Visitor or Citizen of Taif City	
		Citizen	Visitor
What is your level of satisfaction with the facilities around you?	Very Unsatisfied	3%	2.6%
	Unsatisfied	9.9%	6.8%
	Neutral	21.4%	12%
	Satisfied	19.8%	10.4%
	Extremely Satisfied	9.9%	4.2%
Do you have a park/Garden near your home that is easily walked by?	I don't know if there is a park/garden nearby	1.6%	7.8%
	I have a park/garden nearby, but it's not easily walked to	15.1%	5.7%
	No, I don't have a park/garden that is easily walked to	25.5%	14.6%
	Yes, I have a park/garden that is easily walked to	21.9%	7.8%
How often do you visit public spaces in your city?	Never	0%	1%
	Rarely	10.4%	5.7%
	Sometimes	24.5%	14.1%
	Occasionally	20.8%	8.9%
	Always	8.3%	6.3%
How safe do you feel walking in your city during the day/Night?	I do not feel safe walking during the day neither at night	1%	1%
	I feel safe walking during the day and night	53.1%	30.2%
	I feel safe walking only during the day	9.4%	4.7%
	I feel safe walking only during the night	0.5%	0%
What is the most thing that made you feel unhappy regarding the public spaces?	Inadequate access to public transportation	5.7%	1%
	Inadequate lighting at night	5.2%	2.6%
	Lack of activity and facilities	5.2%	1%
	Lack of cleanliness and maintenance	6.8%	8.9%
	Lack of cultural and artistic activities and events	7.3%	3.1%
	Lack of greenery and natural elements	12.5%	10.4%
	Lack of pedestrian infrastructure	1.6%	1.6%
	noise and crowd	5.7%	2.6%
People behave	0%	0.5%	

Table A3. Cont.

		Visitor or Citizen of Taif City	
		Citizen	Visitor
What is the most thing that made you feel unhappy regarding the public spaces?	safety concerns	1.6%	0%
	The structure of the streets	8.9%	1.6%
	Other	3.6%	2.6%
Do you think there are plenty of benches/seating facilities in public spaces?	I've never noticed	13%	6.3%
	No, I feel there should be more	32.8%	22.9%
	Yes	18.2%	6.8%
How much noise pollution do you experience in public spaces in your city?	Very Low	2.1%	0.5%
	Low	4.7%	2.6%
	Moderate	35.9%	17.2%
	High	17.7%	9.9%
	Very High	3.6%	5.7%
Do you have accessible footpaths around you?	I don't use footpaths around me	6.3%	4.2%
	I'm not sure	12%	9.4%
	No	23.9%	13%
	The footpaths around me are often obstructed or poorly maintained.	5.7%	2.6%
	Yes	16.2%	6.8%
Do you feel comfortable when you drive on a public road?	I don't drive	18.2%	6.3%
	Uncomfortable	7.8%	7.3%
	Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	23.9%	11.5%
	Comfortable	14.1%	11.5%
Do you agree that traffic calming measures must be installed in the city major streets. For example, speed bumps, roundabouts, or pedestrian crossings?	Strongly Disagree	1%	1%
	Disagree	4.2%	2.1%
	Neutral	12%	7.8%
	Agree	19.3%	12.5%
	Strongly Agree	27.6%	12.5%
What is your primary mode of transportation to commute to work/school?	Bicycle	0.5%	0.5%
	Bus	4.2%	2.1%
	Car	57.8%	31.3%
	Walking	1.6%	2%
How much do you feel that the design and layout of public spaces in the city affect your experience?	Not at all	6.3%	4.2%
	Slightly	4.7%	3.6%
	Moderately	20.3%	8.9%
	Quite a bit	9.4%	5.7%
	Extremely	23.4%	13.5%
To what extent do the presence of high scrapers in a public space contribute to your feeling of welcome and comfort in that space?	Not at all	11.5%	8.3%
	Slightly	18.8%	5.7%
	Moderately	21.4%	13%
	Extremely	12.5%	8.8%

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