

IC - (20913) - IMPACT OF AN ONLINE MICRO-RESTORATIVE EXPERIENCE ON MOOD, EMOTION, AND PERCEIVED RESTORATIVENESS: MATTERS OF PLACE PREFERENCE

Stephanie Wilkie¹; Tracey Platt¹

1 - University of Sunderland School of Psychology

Background and objectives

Attention restoration theory suggests preferences for nature are based on a need for cognitive restoration. Preference also represents place identity, which interacts with the type of environment to impact mood and perceived restorativeness (PR). In restoration research, mood effects have been mixed, perhaps because it is a state requiring some time to change. Instead, emotion may be a better construct to assess the impact of brief nature experiences. This study investigated whether mood, emotion, and PRP differed after a virtual 'micro-restorative' experience; and if place preference interacted with environment type to produce differential effects.

Process and methods (for empirical research)

An online convenience sample ($N = 337$) self-categorised as having a nature ($N=140$) or urban ($N=197$) place preference. They viewed one environmental stimuli (nature, urban greenspace, urban street) for 30 seconds (random assignment) followed by measures of mood, emotion, PR (counterbalanced), as well as trait cheerfulness/bad mood to control for confounding effects on mood and emotion.

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

Covariate effects were significant for mood and emotion. No significant environment or preference main or interaction effects existed for mood. Emotion and PR differed by environment type; nature/urban greenspace elicited higher positive/lower negative emotion and higher PR than urban streets. Significant interactions indicated larger positive emotion and PR effect sizes for the nature preference group. This suggests nature and urban greenspace can be equally beneficial; but place preference (as place identity) and environment type have an interactive effect, particularly for those with a nature preference. Commonly-reported mood effects did not occur but were evident for emotion.

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

Brief online micro-restorative experiences may be useful for eliciting specific emotions but not necessarily for improving mood. Place preference and trait dispositions should be included in restoration research, due to the pronounced differences in effect sizes and the significant covariate effects. Future studies should determine exact timeframes to consistently affect mood.

Palavras-chave : Restoration, Micro-restorative, Mood, Emotion