

IC - (21046) - EVERYDAY GREEN AND THE MENTAL HEALTH OF URBAN RESIDENTS – A META-ANALYTIC APPROACH

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Background and objectives

The aim of this meta-analysis is to provide a quantitative overview of the mental health effects of urban green elements that play a role in residents' daily life. This includes a variety of mental health measures (e.g., positive and negative mood, anxiety, stress and attention) and covers various forms of nature contact (e.g., in-situ, images and VR).

Process and methods (for empirical research)

A literature search was conducted across scientific databases (i.e., Scopus, MEDLINE, Web of Science, APA PsycInfo and PSYINDEX). Additionally, multiple mailing lists were used in search for grey literature. The screening process of the identified studies was performed by two independent reviewers, supported by the synthesis software Colandr. We included (quasi-)experimental laboratory or field studies with a pre-post-control design. Studies with a primary focus on blue space or rural settings were excluded. Study quality was assessed by two independent reviewers using a tailored version of the Quality Appraisal Checklist for Quantitative Intervention Studies by the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

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

Significant, positive effects ranging from small to medium differences in the pre-post-changes of "nature" vs. "control" conditions were found across the measures of mental health. Overall, the study quality was acceptable, however the descriptions of the sample and the represented population were often insufficient – e.g., it was not reflected to which degree valid conclusions for the general population can be drawn from student samples.

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

Our results once more stress the importance of accessible and attractive urban green. As fostering healthy urban living conditions is a socially, financially and politically most desirable goal, our results encourage the strategic investment of public resources towards greener cities. From a methodological perspective, primary studies should provide a sound rationale of their sampling process.

Palavras-chave : mental health, urban green, meta-analysis