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Impact on the Mental Health of Children Aged 8-13, Differentiating Between Children with or Without Green Space in Selected Areas of Pune City

Abdullahi Mohamed Ali

Clinical Instructor, St. Andrews College of Nursing, Pune

Abstract: ***This research explores the intricate relationship between green spaces and the mental well-being of children aged 8-13 in the context of global urbanization, with a focus on selected areas in Pune city. The study employs a comparative descriptive design to differentiate between children with and without access to green spaces. Findings indicate a significant difference in mental well-being based on the presence or absence of green spaces. Implications underscore the importance of urban planning integrating green spaces, promoting outdoor education, and raising community awareness. The study advocates for public health initiatives, safety measures, and a balanced approach to technology and outdoor play. The long-term impact on public health, support for green initiatives, and interdisciplinary collaboration are discussed, urging policymakers to consider green spaces in global urbanization plans.***

Keywords: green spaces, mental well-being, urban planning, public health initiatives, outdoor education

1. Introduction

Mental well-being is crucial for children's holistic development, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and social aspects. Green spaces have been linked to enhanced mental well-being and overall health in children, addressing concerns about reduced nature interaction due to technology and safety issues. The study focuses on children aged 8-13 in selected areas of Pune city, differentiating between those with and without access to green spaces. Previous research supports the positive correlation between neighborhood green space and mental health, emphasizing the need for outdoor nature play.

2. Need of the Study

Green spaces provide opportunities for risk-taking, discovery, creativity, and psychological restoration, contributing to positive emotional states. With increasing urbanization, access to green spaces is diminishing, impacting the well-being of urban residents, especially children. The study aims to address this challenge by examining the mental well-being of children in relation to green space availability.

3. Objectives of Study

1) Evaluate the mental well-being of children with access to green spaces.
2) Evaluate the mental well-being of children without access to green spaces.
3) Compare the mental well-being of children based on green space availability.
4) Examine the correlation between findings and selected demographic variables.

4. Research Methodology

A comparative descriptive study design is employed, focusing on children aged 8-13 in selected areas of Pune city. Non-probability purposive sampling selects 100 participants. Data collection tools include a self-structured questionnaire and a mental well-being scale. Ethical considerations ensure participant well-being and data confidentiality.

5. Results

Demographic analysis reveals varied characteristics in green space and non-green space areas. Item-wise questionnaire analysis highlights perceptions and experiences related to green spaces. The mental well-being assessment indicates a significant difference between children with and without access to green spaces.

6. Implications of the Study

The study has implications for urban planning, education, community awareness, public health initiatives, safety measures, and technology use. Recommendations include incorporating nature play in schools, supporting green initiatives, and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration.

7. Conclusion

The study concludes that access to green spaces significantly impacts the mental well-being of children. It emphasizes the importance of incorporating green spaces into urban planning for the benefit of current and future generations. The findings contribute valuable insights to stakeholders involved in community well-being and urban development.

No Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest, ensuring the study's objectivity and integrity. The research aims to contribute insights into the relationship between green space availability and children's mental well-being.

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