



Health & Research Journal

Vol 10, No 3 (2024)

Volume 10 Issue 3 July - September 2024



Volume 10 Issue 3 July - September 2024

EDITORIAL

THE ROLE OF TRAINING AND SKILLS FOR THE CLINICAL TEAM (FERTILITY MIDWIVES/NURSES) IN MEDICALLY ASSISTED REPRODUCTION UNITS (M.A.R.U.)

RESEARCH ARTICLES

COVID-19 FEAR AND COVID-19 ANXIETY AS PREDICTORS OF EXERCISE BENEFIT-BARRIER PERCEPTION IN TYPE 2 DIABETES PATIENTS PROCESS

THE EFFECTS OF THE DARK TETRAD OF PERSONALITY BY GENDER ON ANIMAL ABUSE: A MODERATION ANALYSIS

THE EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN SURVIVORS OF CRITICAL ILLNESS AFTER DISCHARGE FROM INTENSIVE CARE UNIT: A PROSPECTIVE COHORT STUDY

DANCERS IN THE DARK: AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE IDENTITY PERCEPTION OF FEMALE SEX WORKERS

SUITABILITY, USABILITY AND SAFETY OF FULLY IMMERSIVE VIRTUAL REALITY APPLICATIONS FOR MOTOR AND COGNITIVE REHABILITATION IN STROKE PATIENTS: PRELIMINARY DATA

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

THE CASE OF "NATURE-DEFICIT DISORDER" (NDD) AND ITS COMPLICATIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF A UNIVERSALLY RELIABLE AND VALID SELF-REPORTED TOOL

SPECIAL ARTICLE

A CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANXIETY DISORDERS EXPLAINED BY BIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RISK FACTORS

Published in cooperation with the Postgraduate Program "Intensive Care Units", the Hellenic Society
of Nursing Research and Education and the Helerga

The case of "Nature-Deficit Disorder" (NDD) and its complications in the absence of a Universally Reliable and Valid Self-Reported Tool

Georgios Pilafas, Maria Chanioti, Penelope Louka

doi: 10.12681/healthresj.34323

To cite this article:

Pilafas, G., Chanioti, M., & Louka, P. (2024). The case of "Nature-Deficit Disorder" (NDD) and its complications in the absence of a Universally Reliable and Valid Self-Reported Tool. *Health & Research Journal*, *10*(3), 206–208. https://doi.org/10.12681/healthresj.34323



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

THE CASE OF 'NATURE-DEFICIT DISORDER' (NDD) AND ITS COMPLICATIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF A UNIVERSALLY RELIABLE AND VALID SELF-REPORTED TOOL

Georgios Pilafas^{1,2}, Maria Chanioti³, Penelope Louka^{1,4,5}

- 1. Accredited Lecturer in Psychology, University of Derby (UK) at Mediterranean College, Athens, Greece
- 2. Program Leader of the 'BSc (Hons) Applied Psychology' Program, University of Derby (UK) at Mediterranean College, Athens,
- 3. Student, University of Derby (UK) at Mediterranean College, Athens, Greece
- 4. Associate Provost (Research), Mediterranean College, Athens, Greece
- 5. Head of the School of Psychology, Mediterranean College, Athens, Greece

Abstract

The present letter to the editors presents the debate over the condition of 'Nature-Deficit Disorder' (NDD) and it aims to communicate to the scientific community the need for the creation of valid and reliable tools that would serve in future studies as measures of the condition.

Keywords: Nature-deficit disorder, environmental psychology, nature and wellbeing, self-reported measures.

Corresponding Author: Georgios Pilafas, Email: giorgos.pilafas@gmail.com

Cite as: Pilafas, G., Chanioti, M., Louka, P. The Case of 'Nature-Deficit Disorder' (NDD) and its Complications in the Absence of a Universally Reliable and Valid Self-Reported Tool. (2024). Health and Research Journal, 10(3), 206-208. https://ejournals.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/HealthResJ

HEALTH AND RESEARCH JOURNAL EISSN:2459-3192

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To begin with, it is quite likely that in the common mind of researchers, clinicians and the public, nature and wellbeing are strongly correlated, as well as that there is an intriguing interplay between those two. Indeed, some literature supports quite the latter idea. For instance, according to Bratman and colleagues more than 50% of the current world's population lives in urban areas, while it is estimated that by the year 2050 this percentage will increase to 70%. The authors also argued that this increasing urbanization may benefit people by increasing the levels of 'quality of life', however it may in parallel contribute to any increase in the numbers of mental health problems by causing some of those. I

This consideration is not unknown. In fact, early works of Roger Ulrich that discussed about the connection between the 'outdoors' and 'health', especially in the setting of healthcare environments are still well-known even nowadays. Ulrich's work "Natural Versus Urban Scenes: Some Psychophysiological Effects", which was published more than 40 years ago, in 1981, presented the idea that nature has a significant impact on the level of anxiety for individuals, while it was also discussed that urban settings may had played a key role in lessen citizens' overall mental health ²

Years after the initial version of Ulrich's work, in 2008 Richard Louv published a book named "Last child in the woods". In that book, it was communicated for the first time the term NDD. This term reflected the impact that the urban areas have on children's health as they lack 'nature'. NDD served as a reminder to parents, guardians, and teachers regarding the value and the impact of outdoor play for young children. In addition, the author wrote about the absence of nature connectedness which -according to her work- has caused many problems in the development of young children including 'Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder' (ADHD), depression, anxiety and obesity.³

At this point, it is noteworthy that NDD has not been under the umbrella of any related –or clustered- condition/s in the latest versions of the 'Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders' (DSM)⁴ and the 'International Classification of Diseases' (ICD)⁵ systems published by the American Psychiatric Associa-

tion (APA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) respectively thus far.

Unfortunately, only in the last 15 years few authors turned some

attention to this issue. For instance, a few authors over the last decade argued that a connection to nature is guite likely to improve the level of mental health of people, 6,7 while in recent meta-analysis Pritchard and colleagues for instance, supported the idea that individuals who are closer to nature may show an increased level of eudaimonic wellbeing and self-growth.8 As far as the present point of this letter to the editors is concerned, it should be clearly communicated to the scientific community that modern research in Neuropsychology and Health Psychology has turned much attention in the contribution of food and environment in the development of neurological and neuropsychiatric conditions, while the issue of NDD has almost been neglected. Given the idea that children's interactions with environment are so complex, it is guite challenging to measure the extent of their connectedness, and various connectedness measures invariably capture different facets of connection. Hence, future studies in Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine may attempt to make NDD measurable in a quantitative fashion, in order to create new psychological scales that in the foreseeable future may serve in predictive models of wellbeing -including eudemonia, quality of life, resilience, satisfaction with life and biophilia- and not to longitudinal studies regarding the development of neurological and neuropsychiatric conditions. In conclusion, in the present letter to the editors it is not communicated that NDD should be a new 'mental illness' in the new diagnostic tools published by APA and ICD. Rather, NDD should have a valid and reliable self-reported tool that can be used in studies related to positive psychology, wellbeing, stress-related conditions, environmental psychology, public health and health psychology.

REFERENCES

Bratman GN, Hamilton JP, Hahn KS, Daily GC, Gross JJ. Nature experience reduces rumination and subgenual prefrontal cortex activation. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 2015;112(28):8567–72.

- Ulrich RS. Natural Versus Urban Scenes: Some Psychophysiological Effects. Environment and Behavior 1981;13(5):523– 56.
- Louv R. Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder. Updated and Expanded edition. Chapel Hill, N.C: Algonquin Books; 2008. 416 p.
- Association AP. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition: DSM-5. 5th edition. Washington, D.C: American Psychiatric Publishing; 2013. 991 p.
- World Health Organization. The ICD-10 classification of mental and behavioural disorders: diagnostic criteria for research [web]. World Health Organization; 1993 [cited 14 April 2023]. Available at: https://apps.who.int/iris/han-dle/10665/37108
- Nisbet EK, Zelenski JM. Underestimating Nearby Nature: Affective Forecasting Errors Obscure the Happy Path to Sustainability. Psychol Sci 2011;22(9):1101–6.
- Nisbet EK, Zelenski JM, Murphy SA. Happiness is in our Nature: Exploring Nature Relatedness as a Contributor to Subjective Well-Being. J Happiness Stud 2011;12(2):303–22.
- Pritchard A, Richardson M, Sheffield D, McEwan K. The Relationship Between Nature Connectedness and Eudaimonic Well-Being: A Meta-analysis. J Happiness Stud 2020;21(3):1145–67.