Abstract

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Gardens in Healthcare Facilities: Exploring the Impact of Landscape Design Elements on Stress Restoration, with Special Reference to Cairo

Applying landscapes in healthcare facilities is considered a natural way to reduce stress, tension, fatigue, pain, sadness, depression and anxiety. It increases positive mood and encourages human interactions with nature. Well-designed landscapes in healthcare facilities improve its users' health. It makes them get better physiologically and psychologically. Accordingly, the aim of the study is to explore the impact of different landscape design elements on stress restoration and buffering in healthcare facilities. Literature review on the relevant topic is presented focusing on the theory of supportive gardens. This theory is based mainly on theories and research in behavioral sciences, health related fields and literature on landscapes for healthcare facilities. Then, the study empirically examines a case study in Cairo to investigate and explore the experience of the different users (patients, relatives and caregivers, and staff) in the outdoor spaces of the Selected case study. The study adopts a qualitative approach that combines multiple data gathering techniques. This multiple-method technique is helpful in understanding people-place transactions in such types of spaces. The study involved visual analysis of the physical site, behavioral observation, and questionnaires with the different user categories. The data is analyzed to identify patterns of use, users’ preferences and the different attractive features and elements in the outdoor spaces of the Selected healthcare facility. In its conclusion, the study presents a set of recommendations that are expected to assist in the future development of the Selected case study. The conclusion also discusses the limitations of the study and implications for future research. In addition, the findings are expected to generally provide guidance for the design of outdoor spaces in healthcare facilities, taking into consideration the potential positive impact of landscape design elements on stress restoration and accordingly on the healing process of patients in healthcare facilities, especially in developing countries.