ICIS2022Penang

https://fim.uitm.edu.my/index.php/research/conference/342-icis-2022

5th International Conference on Information Science

Royale Chulan, Penang, Malaysia, 19-21 Sep 2022
Organised by Faculty of Information Management, UiTM, Malaysia

Library Therapeutic Landscape Support for Covid-19 Pandemic-Related Student Well-Being in Academic Libraries

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Abstract

In response to increasing the prevalence and severity of mental health illnesses among university students, schools and universities have increased their well-being initiatives and programmes. Multiple campus entities, such as academic libraries, increasingly contribute to the well-being of students. Well-being influences academic outcomes; hence, libraries implement well-being efforts to enhance learning and student education in general. Library Therapeutic Landscape (LTL) is the concept of transforming libraries into environments conducive to healing. Therapeutic environments contribute to the health of students. The study explains LTL for social wellbeing. It analyses the gap and trend and provides suggestions for developing effective wellness initiatives. Finally, the article outlines LTL social well-being initiatives that improve students' well-being.

Keywords: Library therapeutic landscape; social wellbeing; quality of life; students'

1.0 Introduction

The global Covid-19 pandemic has caused significant anxiety, despair, and societal unhappiness. Standard operating procedures have created social distance between workers and pupils (SOPs). Social wellbeing is essential for students' academic success and ability to participate in society. Since students must continue their studies, institutions must support their social well-being. Academic libraries can create activities and spaces that improve students' social wellness. Therapeutic landscapes increase students' social well-being by providing comfort, care, and tranquillity. Students with anxiety and depression must obtain help to prevent these illnesses from worsening during the epidemic. Therapeutic landscapes in libraries may influence students because they provide a safe environment to care for oneself. Libraries provide students with a safe, calm environment (Merga, 2020). Many venues will be off-limits to customers due to SOPs during the epidemic. Even though we are no longer in a pandemic, the outbreaks are not under control, according to the WHO. It is hard to predict what role libraries will play in post-pandemic therapeutics.

In this context, this paper investigates the influence of the academic library's therapeutic landscape on student social well-being. Specifically, this paper intends to address the following research questions:
1. What are the library's therapeutic landscape (LTL) items for the spiritual, social, and natural/built environment elements of academic library students' social well-being?
2. What is the relationship between LTL and student social well-being?

This study aims to examine the lack of therapeutic library environments for students' social well-being. The study also finds research gaps on the topic, which may be good for the health and happiness of library users.

1.1 Covid 19
In 2019, the world was afflicted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in many deaths and severely impacted the global population (Saladino, Algeri & Auriemma, 2020). This pandemic has caused loss of independence, misunderstanding about the illness, powerlessness, and isolation from loved ones. The pandemic also caused college students' concern (Cao et al., 2020). According to a New Jersey study on college students' mental health, the added burden of not understanding academic work causes worry (Kecojevic A, 2020). The pandemic has caused fear, depression, and low social welfare among students affecting their quality of life. Academic libraries in the UK have launched student welfare programmes in the past few years. Several of these activities, like reading fiction for fun, coincide with the traditional view of academic libraries as material collections (Porritt, 2019). Many academic libraries offer extra literacy classes, animal seminars, gym programmes, class exercises, Quran recitals, webinar sharing sessions on a variety of themes, as well as colouring books and jigsaw puzzles. Social wellbeing affects students' physical and mental health. Therefore, students' mental health must be appropriately controlled. Due to COVID-19, many students have financial worries and impaired adjustment to new settings and traditions, contributing to poor mental health and low social welfare. Andrew & Liz (2020) mentioned this epidemic creates student stress due to digitalisation and social isolation. Students will seek a location or activity to distract them from their anxiety and depression and recover from a mental breakdown. Some people calm their emotions by visiting peaceful places. Therapeutic landscapes improve children's emotional and social well-being.

1.2 Library as therapeutic landscape and as a place
Monteallah et al. (2015) state that the relationship between landscape and environment exists. The landscape is a component of the environment. It is a reality of daily existence. It focuses on the concept of spaces and locations. Monteallah's research also demonstrated the existence of a reciprocal interaction between the environment, which includes spaces and locations with landscape and human behaviour. The environment and geography afford numerous opportunities. In the 2015 study by Monteallah, a conceptual approach of combining nature with library settings to enhance learning and efficiency was utilised. The study and other literature pertaining to the library's landscape, library settings, therapeutic components, and quality have been incorporated.

In her model of the therapeutic landscape of public libraries, Husaini (2020) asserts: The library patron is attentive and considerate of the library's service, facilities, and collection. Therefore, it is possible that in the long-term deployment of library therapeutic landscape quality in Malaysia, the library therapeutic landscape environment, which includes the natural and built environment, library social environment, and library spiritual environment, may need to meet the quality measures and requirements continuously. This is necessary to gain users' confidence and trust in the continued use of public libraries as an alternative place or second home or a meeting community place, as well as humanise public libraries.

Husaini, Noordin, and Shuhidan (2015, 2016) claim that the social and spiritual surroundings improve library users' therapeutic satisfaction in terms of wellness and stress reduction, which helps support a healthy lifestyle and increase the quality of life. Today's libraries face a challenging environment. The responsibilities and goals of libraries are to act as a community centre to encourage the growth of both the community and society.

2.0 Literature Review
Many scholars working in various fields have investigated the many internal and external aspects that correlate to the therapeutic landscape of libraries and how it affects the students' social wellbeing. Some of these correlations include the following:

2.1 Traditional Library
According to Mersand, Shannon & Gascó, Mila & Udoh, Emmanuel & Gil-Garcia, J. Ramon. (2019), Analysing new public library practises and claims they demonstrate the potential of public libraries to foster smart and connected communities. With these technologies, governments and communities can work together and rethink public libraries as important parts of smart community efforts. As the world changes, libraries' functions are expanding. Public libraries serve as community centres and information hubs, enhancing local knowledge and fostering information interchange. If utilised appropriately, libraries can foster the growth of youngsters. Academic libraries provide students with academic resources, leisure spaces, reading and working areas, and self-improvement possibilities. Libraries inspire critical thought, creativity, and zeal. The library must supply traditional and electronic textbooks, reference materials, and periodicals to students.

Academic endeavours (such as master's and doctoral degrees) are supported and encouraged by librarians. Librarians assist students with their research and reference questions., Robert Kolosa (2021)

2.2 Libraries services and facilities
According to Graham Walton (2018), based on the LIS-SCONUL discussion list for UK university libraries that summarises university libraries' techniques for enhancing the well-being of students (Beaufils, 2017), the following services and concepts are required:
• Physical spaces: Quiet areas where students can obtain resources from the Counseling team. A health and wellness space where individuals can colour, play chess, and complete jigsaw puzzles. In a rest area or pods, students can take a nap. During challenging moments of the school year, students can utilise a 24-hour area or a chill-out zone (typically exam times). The Wellbeing Zone is a

specialised space including colouring books, comfortable chairs, soothing music, films, and literature. Those who wish to live a healthy lifestyle should have access to a gym. A green garden can be utilised for leisure or as a study break.
• Digital support: A programme called Study Happy that aims to improve students' well-being and is supported by online resources can be available throughout the year. This digital library can serve as a "digital treasure trove of inspiring books and films to launch a global empathy movement."
• Collection provision: a collection of Reading Well books in the library that students are referred to by the Guidance and Wellbeing staff. It may also involve the accumulation of books to read and unwind.
• Additional activities include animal visits for petting, Nintendo switch group gaming, gigantic Jenga and other huge games throughout the library, tea parties, and silent discos.

2.3 Therapeutic Landscape
Therapeutic landscapes, a theory established by Wilber Gesler (1992) and rooted in health geographical thinking, will be examined next. A therapeutic landscape framework comprises natural and constructed settings and social and spiritual environments. Jiang (2014) offered evidence that nature and landscape vistas positively impact humans, such as stress relief and rapid mood improvement. As a result, it promotes a sense of well-being among society's members. Brewster (2019) also suggests that the therapeutic landscape should be incorporated into the design of public libraries because it can benefit all users.

Gustina M., et al. (2020) evaluated the significance of public libraries as a component of social well-being in rural locations and their effectiveness in enhancing community well-being via information resources, services, and facilities. They discovered that involvement with library service mechanisms favours social wellbeing at the community level. Through ongoing phenomenological study, the researchers also uncovered how rural residents define social wellness for themselves and how they interpret the function of libraries in that environment.

The Norton and Dowdall (2017) framework contained eleven elements of wellness, which were further condensed into four Categories of Work in which museums and libraries engage actively. The ten elements of wellbeing—economic wellbeing, environmental concerns, physical security, health-related programmes, and social connection—were condensed into the four categories of work that museums and libraries actively engage in. The categories include economic growth, lifelong learning and cultural engagement, physical and mental health, placemaking, and the environment.

2.4 Library therapeutic landscape (LTL)
Husaini, Noordin, and Shamila devised a philosophy based on health geographical thinking and dubbed it library therapeutic landscapes in 2021, 2019 and 2015, respectively. Natural and or built environment landscapes and social and spiritual environment contexts comprise the therapeutic landscape framework. According to Jiang (2014), nature and landscape scenes positively affect individuals by relieving stress and rapidly boosting mood. As a result, it contributes to fostering a sense of well-being among members of society.

In addition to medical geography (Gesler, 2003), environmental psychology (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1992; Ulrich, 1984, 1999), ecological psychology (Vries, 2010); Moore and Cosco (2010), and horticultural therapy (Detweiler, et al., 2012; Soderback et al., 2004), there have been extensive studies linking therapeutic landscape and library facilities, service, and collection. For example, Kearns and Collins (2000) examine the connections between children's health camps, whereas Milligan et al. (2004) investigated the therapeutic effects of gardening on elderly individuals. Baer and Gesler (2004) analysed Holden Coulfield's therapeutic landscapes in The Catcher in the Rye. Andrews (2002) brought the notion to nursing, and Gesler et al. (2004) applied it to hospital design.

In library services, therapeutic landscape research is rare. However, numerous studies have examined librarians' and library customers' therapeutic landscapes. For example, Motealleh (2015) studied the impact of landscape in lowering stress and tension and boosting concentration, and Brewster (2014) explored the public library as a therapeutic landscape for bibliotherapy patients. Chen (2015) studied the library environment, where the theme landscape is a positive representation of the library; Hutchinson (2014) studied the development of a standard framework for bibliotherapy, including public library environment, therapeutic reading, and bibliotherapy programmes that can help their users.

No studies studied the quality and pleasure of the public library therapeutic landscape, especially in Malaysian Public Libraries (MPLs) or university libraries. Other professionals have studied humanism (Williams, 1999), children's summer camp (Thurner & Malinowski, 1999), healthcare context (Scarpaci, 1999), children's camp (Kearns & Collins, 2000), first nation culture (Wilson, 2003), community gardens & elderly (Milligian, Catrell, Bingley, 2004), and public libraries (Brewster, 2014). It is vital to determine if the therapeutic landscape of public libraries predicts library therapeutic satisfaction characteristics such as Library Natural & Built Environment, Library Social Environment, and Library Spiritual Environment.

2.5 Students' Social Wellbeing
Social wellbeing is the third component of the therapeutic philosophy. Generally, it refers to the quality of life in the society in which people reside. Good social well-being indicates that a person is typically accepted by society and lives a generally happy and comfortable life in his or her natural environment. Universities have increased the number of initiatives and programmes designed to improve the well-being of students. Multiple campus units, such as academic libraries, have stepped up to assist the well-being of students. The library's collections, services, and other areas all feature wellness efforts. As it has been established that well-being influences academic accomplishments, libraries' well-being efforts are aligned with their mission to enhance learning and the educational experience for all students. The built environment may influence a person's feeling of good social wellbeing, mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, and a sense of belonging or acceptability in society. By highlighting the therapeutic landscape of libraries, the exhibit illustrates how

a library may serve as a shelter and contribute to the social wellness of a community. In this work, three fundamental elements have been gathered and analysed.

2.6 Quality of life
QoL is life satisfaction, emotional well-being, and functional ability. WHO defines QoL as "individuals" impressions of their place in life in regard to their objectives, aspirations, standards, and worries. This definition supports the idea that QoL is a subjective, sociological, and environmental assessment. Physical, psychological, social, and environmental aspects are measured.

3.0 Methodology
Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to data gathering and analysis, the research will adopt a mixed method approach. As part of the qualitative technique for data collecting from librarians and academic librarians or employees primarily concerned with academic library programmes, interviews and focus groups will be utilised. The quantitative method will gather information from library users.

3.1 The Anticipated Outcome and Its Consequences
It is believed that the study will aid academic libraries in providing more beneficial services, programmes, and activities to the students. Academic libraries can reach out to their user communities by implementing and providing better services through these programmes and activities, which increase awareness and interest in leading a healthy lifestyle, promote access to high-quality health information, and ultimately improve student wellbeing and performance.

3.2 Significance Outcome
The reinterpretation and diversification of academic libraries' information and services in order to incorporate associated programmes and activities helps assure the libraries' sustained sustainability and health. This is a necessary step in achieving sustainability. In addition, this would boost the awareness and perception of academic libraries about the relevance and importance of their existence, hence increasing the recognition and perception of the libraries' existence.

For this investigation, the researchers opted for a mixed-methods strategy. To investigate the disparity between the landscape of therapeutic libraries and the social well-being of students. This investigation's study paradigm is positivism. The quantitative evaluation of the perceived therapeutic library environment may reveal how academic library users view the therapeutic library landscape. Thus, library management can utilise the findings as a guide to improve the critical quality attributes and the therapeutic landscape quality of the library in order to increase the social well-being of students in academic libraries.

4.0 Discussion
This study seeks to examine the therapeutic landscapes of libraries for the social well-being of students. The study will also forecast that this research may increase the well-being of library users. Three LTL variables are preserved in the proposed conceptual framework: spiritual environment, social environment, and natural/built environment (Husaini, Noordin, & Shamila, 2021). The reciprocal relationship between place and mental health has been explained through therapeutic landscape, socio-environment, and human restoration (Brewster, 2015; Husaini, H., Noordin, S.A., Shuhidan SM., 2015; Montealleh, P., 2015). According to Noordin S.A., H. Husaini, S.M. Shuhidan, and N.A., the roles of public libraries extend beyond service provision. According to Ashiq et al., 2022, in order to give the most possible support for modern library users who access resources remotely in this rapidly developing digital environment, libraries must establish infrastructure and boost accessibility. For their respective organisations, policymakers and library directors should prepare emergency and disaster management plans. The libraries should utilise social media and their respective websites. It is envisaged that academic libraries and librarians will be able to identify a strong library service that will have a favourable impact on library users thanks to the therapeutic landscape setting of the library. According to these research, the public library functions as a second home, a learning centre, a meeting place, a leisure centre, and a centre for human growth. Wellness as a related library service.

In this study, the researcher investigates the library's facilities and services, which are the therapeutic landscape setting that adds to the students' well-being, particularly in the context of academic libraries. The dissemination of mental health information, such as a libguide to wellness information, and the provision of specially created calming spaces are examples of library services that may be established to enhance student well-being. In addition to the library collection, events, and activities, the library as a provider of space and services should be able to contribute to the individual and society in a variety of ways. Libraries must adapt to the digital world during this epidemic. After the introduction of social media, students and library members will be able to utilise it, making it an integral part of library services.

As the final surviving arena for participation, the Internet can be used to help students. Despite the fact that everyone would require time to adjust to the pandemic, the new norms will become the norm. Different students have diverse experiences and feelings; therefore, not all treatment activities are beneficial. To preserve their health and well-being, a great number of individuals must embrace a variety of practises and environments. The therapeutic landscape is illustrated by libraries as a basic example of the place of therapy.
Prior studies reveal that library participants play an important role in assuring the quality of services given to library users. Also emphasised are well-being concerns. During this pandemic, it is crucial that libraries can adapt to the digital world. Engagement with the community is essential to ensure that programmes are utilised and students do not feel alone. It is essential to investigate the library's information resources, services, programmes, and activities for library users. This will assist in determining whether the therapeutic landscape setting offered by libraries is beneficial to students or whether there is a need for improvement in other areas. The usage of websites and social

media, for instance, is considered crucial since it can be used by both students and library employees. Online support for students is possible because this is the only available interaction route. Even if it takes some time for everyone to adapt to the epidemic state, the new norms will eventually become universal. However, because of the variety of experiences and feelings, not all therapeutic landscape activities are helpful for individuals who want them. Diverse environments and approaches will be necessary to support the health of diverse people. The care facility makes excellent use of the therapeutic landscape.

5.0 Conclusion

It is hoped that the study will make a contribution to the enhancement of the procedures and services of libraries. These kinds of services and procedures will foster trustworthiness through instilling principles in library users as well as in society as a whole. In particular, trustworthiness is a key factor to consider when trying to attract students to the library. Overall, libraries may contribute to the social health of their communities by providing individuals with the resources, such as books, information, spaces, and locations, necessary for them to study, analyse, and possibly change their feelings or behaviours. Because of the affordances it provides to relieve stress and indirectly build a healthy culture, the library therapeutic landscape is an element of the therapeutic landscape. The creation of a pleasant atmosphere and space could result in an atmosphere that is tranquil and restful. In light of this, libraries should do their jobs and help students fully adjust to the new standards. They should also work to improve the mental health and well-being of students.

Acknowledgements

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