

THE ROLE OF URBAN BACKYARD IN TIMES OF SOCIAL CONFINEMENT DUE TO THE PANDEMIC OF COVID-19

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Abstract: The objective of the present study was to investigate the importance of urban backyard for the mental health of individuals, in times of confinement and social detachment due to the pandemic of COVID-19. To this end, a psychosociodemographic questionnaire was applied to 150 people, residents in neighborhoods of the Railway suburb of Salvador, Bahia, regardless of whether or not a backyard in the residences. The main results pointed out that the most attributed feelings to this period were sadness (56%), followed by anxiety (54%). It was discovered that 70% of the participants have a backyard in the residence, of these, 26.6% think that people who have a backyard were better during the pandemic, and 29.5% pointed to the importance of the backyard in the well-being individual, while 13.3% ratified that if he had not had a backyard his own well-being he would be committed due to compulsory social isolation. Other studies will be needed in the area of mental health and environment in atypical contexts, such as in a pandemic, in order to propose public policies and other psychosocioeducation interventions more focused on sustainability and ecology in urban media.

Keywords: COVID-19, urban riches, mental health, social distancing.

INTRODUCTION

URBAN BACKYARD: CONCEPTS AND UTILITIES

The backyards signal a unique aspect of the way of life of their residents. A space attached to the residence that allows a range of domestic and recreational activities. Even today, in our increasingly vertical cities, with immense skyscrapers, the backyards are present not only in interior areas such as in the outskirts of some cities (Reis, 2015).

Freitas et al. (2012) bring a fairly reduced concept of the backyard term: the backyards

can be defined as a production area located near the house, where agricultural and forestry species are cultivated, and the creation of small domestic animals (Brito & Coelho 2000). The term is defined by Ferreira (2004, p.48) as “small farm” or “small land, often with garden or garden, behind the house”.

In addition to the activities carried out in the previous centuries to the twentieth century, such as medicinal herbal cultivation, creation of small animals such as chickens and pigs, transport shelter, water etc., in the twentieth century, remaining backyards served to save materials of Construction and sometimes separated the house from other attachments, with small rooms and bathrooms (Van Holthe, 2003, p.67).

In the chapter on “the social and cultural value of the backyards: customs, religious practices and superstitions,” Van Holthe (2003), quoting Mott (1997), discusses the different rituals and parties of the main familiar devotions in the nineteenth century in Bahia. For example, at the June festivals “the backyards had then ideal spaces for children to arm their bonfires, loosen their fireworks, their bombs, their roots” (Van Holthe, 2003, p. 69).

In Salvador, with greater African influence, it was common, in this period, the use of domestic backyards for the realization of the rituals of Candomblé (idem, p. 68). The author, still points out in his study, several believers and superstitions that the people had: for example, the habit that families had to put in the banana threads of hair and the navel of newborns so that they grow strong and healthy, common Until the 1980s.

It is worth mentioning that urban backyards have highlighted by contributing social, cultural, economically and environmentally. For example, Trotta et al. (2012), performed a study in Santarém (Pará) and found that families exchanged the products of their

backyards among themselves, maintaining a social network of exchanges and donations and thus allowing the conservation of diversity.

Therefore, an investigation with a substantive sample will allow for absolute indexes, the contribution of urban backyards to rescue the multiple role of these external areas of the residence, with this, to minimize the effects of social isolation, as determined by the main organs in Brazil and in the world.

As PASA et al. (2005, 197), “The backyard have also been recognized as a complementary production system to other forms of land use and stands out for the economic value it plays in the residence, constituting an available source of food and medicinal resources”. By all these factors mentioned above, define a physical space of the house as a backyard is not a very easy task, since etymologically, the word derives from “fifth” that in Portugal, was defined as the cottage or farm in which the owner must pay the equivalent of the fifth part of the income obtained with production.

According to a research conducted by Kings (2015), there are several uses attributed by the residents about their backyards, in the suburban area of Salvador, Bahia. For example, she discovered that approximately 62.57% of the residents said that its yards serve for the cultivation of native plants for medical, food and ornamental purposes.

While, approximately half of these (33.33%), they said they did not use their backyards for any type of cultivation. Of those who have used their yards, 56.25% cultivate species of medicinal use, such as Bolde (*Plectranthus Barbatus* Andrews), lemon grass (*CYMBOPOGON CITRATUS* (DC) STAPF.) And Melissa (*Melissa officinalis* L.). While, 62.5%, small vegetables cultivate for food purposes, such as tomato (*solanum lycopersicum*), the periqueiro (*Abelmospus esculentus* L. Moench), the mint (*Mentha* spp) and Mint-thick (*Coleus Amboinicus* Lour.), Other 37.5% Cultivate fruit trees such as coconut (*COCUS Nucifera* L),

Abacchariro (*Persea Pyrifolia*), Guavaira (*Psidium Guajava*), Bananeira (*Musa* SP) and Hose (*Mangifera Indica*) and 18.75% Cultivate plants for ornamental purposes such as Palmeira-Areca (*Dypsis Lutescens*), with me-nobody-can (*Dieffenbachia amaena*), Croton (*Codiaeum variegatum*) and heart-hurt (*Solenostemon Scutellarioide*), were the most quoted. It was also found, the simultaneous use of the types cited, that is, more than one type of culture in the yards, for example, 18.75% of the yards have gardens and medicinal herbs and another 18.75% were found the three types crop. (Reis, 2015, p. 8)

From there, it was assumed the need to discuss the viability of having a space like this in the residences, mainly due to the social distancing promoted by the pandemic of COVID-19, since it is believed that the use of the domestic yard can enable the improvement in quality of the mental health of people, due to the well-being provided by the conviviality with plants and domestic animals.

FEATURING THE MAIN MENTAL ILLNESSES

All problems involving the binomial health-disease are important, however, the weakening of the mental health of individuals around the world are one of the main causes of comorbidity in current societies, with subsequent limitations and increasing mortality. For example, depression “grew 18% in ten years”, it is believed that this will be “the most disabling disease of the planet”, according to the Pan American Health Organization and World Health Organization (PAHO / WHO, 2018). Brazil is the champion in cases of depression, as 11.5% of the population of Latin America suffer from this evil, and, from this total, 6% is diagnosed in Brazil (idem, 2018).

This disease has become a matter much discussed today, even so, the stigma that the same carries is still unscathed, that is, who

passes through this terrible chaga, sometimes, is criticized and mistreated through looks, gestures and when they are not Thanks to hear phrases like “do not believe in God”, “they do not have faith” and even say “it is freshness or rich disease”. It is difficult to overcome a disease when sometimes the family itself does not have the knowledge needed to help the relative or even those who have the problem does not accept the reality lived.

According to a study conducted by Apostle et al. (2011), with users of a Portuguese Health Center, came to the conclusion that 40.52, 43.48 and 45.06% of individuals present, respectively, some degree of depression, anxiety and stress. The authors of the study pointed out “serious or serious levels of anxiety in 20.87% of individuals, stress at 22.38% and depression by 12.24%”. According to these authors, women represent the group with higher levels of these comorbidities in Portugal.

THE PANDEMIC OF COVID-19

It is a fact that all societies in the world have suffered a major impact at the beginning of the year 2020, when the pandemic of COVID-19, which had its origin in China in December 2019, spread through all continents. Measures necessary for the prevention of the disease, and science as references are expressed expressly with a world order format, among them, social removal. Physical distancing and avoiding agglomerations promoted immediate impact on the most diverse human activities, including those associated with the schooling process, environments in which the face-to-face form was the only practice performed until then.

However, the pandemic brought serious consequences for societies, on all continents, not only by the number of deaths, but above all for fear of the unknown, the imminence

of death, social isolation, which has been affecting mental health and behavior of individuals throughout the planet.

On this issue, Faro et al. (2020), point out that the anxiety in search of the mental well-being of the population suffers greater impact on periods of serious social crisis. The pandemic today is considered as one of these crises, and as one of the largest targets of international public health of the last decades, since it has effectively achieved the entire planet, promoting psychological, social and economic disturbances in relations between people.

With the gradual return of commerce, entrepreneurs need to deal with the challenge of containing agglomerations in markets, shops, bars, restaurants, malls, nightclubs, among others. Rethinking the spaces so that customer access and consumption return, is the motto of the time, although, the act of “wagging” took a little from our human warmth. It is also a (re)beginning so that people can reflect on exaggerated consumerism, to want to be more and better, to the detriment of good interpersonal relationships (Sebrae, 2020).

For many families from the popular layer, generations live together, and often under the same roof. One aid to the other to survive before the difficulties faced in day to day, as lack of employment, schooling, the absence of parents, the lack of home. Solidarity is very common between them, and is seen as a way of surviving the demands of society (cross, 2014, p. 33).

According to Schmidt et al. (2020), the concern of most people and governments at this time is with physical health and combating the pathogen causing COVID-19, as well as, its impact on the local and global economy, neglecting its implications on the mental health of Individuals.

In this sense, the main objective of this

study was to investigate the importance of urban riches for people's mental health in times of confinement and social detachment due to the pandemic of COVID-19.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This investigation has been chosen by carrying out a quantitative research of statistical, non-experimental and descriptive survey. Data collection was carried out through two simultaneous questionnaires: the first, applied to a group of 150 people, from both genera, from the age of 18. In this group, it was sought to identify people who have yards in their residences, sociodemographic situation, as well as emotional state in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The second most specific questionnaire was answered only by those who respond to the first instrument said they have a backyard in their residences, totaling 105 individuals. Data collection was performed online, between the period from August 10 to October 10, 2021, via Google forms tool, sent in the main social networks and emails of residents of the rail suburban, through contacts of friends and family, from the technique of "snowball"¹. The anonymity of the participants were assured, due to no personal identification request, yet all received the TCLE annexed to the questionnaire, with information on the content of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

150 people participated, of these, 62% are female, while 38% are male. 26.6% said he has high school, 08% Elementary school, 33.3%, have a postgraduate degree, while 32% are distributed in several other groups (incomplete high school, higher education, incomplete elementary education, example).

Salary income varied between less than a

minimum wage (22.6%), a minimum wage (23.3%) to those who chose not to inform (54.1%).

Most participants have their own property (79.3%), while only 18.6% they said it was rented. On domestic backyards, 70% of respondents said they have this space annexes to their homes. In the meantime, 73.3% of the subjects said that their relatives have yard, while 79.3% have pointed out that they also have balconies.

ABOUT THE DISEASE

Several diseases arise all the time, thus, of the study participants, 46% said they have become ill in this period of the pandemic and 53.3% said that some familiar in the residence fell ill. However, when the disease is COVID-19, only 16% said they became ill, while 47.3% pointed out this comorbidity in a family member and 30.6% in a close friend.

As for home departures at the beginning of the pandemic, 34% said they left only once a week, while 30% leave on average two to three times a week, 24% said they have left more than three times a week and 11.3 % said they did not have left home in this quarantine period due to the pandemic of COVID-19. When asked the main reasons for leaving home, 76.6% answered that they went to the market, 69% said they need to go to the doctor, 45.3% went to the pharmacy, 35.3% went to school, 19.3% They left for leisure, 4% went to a gym, while 66% informed other reasons to go to the streets during quarantine.

When asked what they did during quarantine, 54% of the participants said they watched movies on TV, 57.3% said they participated in remote lessons, 42% went on to perform household chores, 14% made some kind of physical exercise like gymnastics or Dancing, 34% played online games, 30.6%

1. Snowball or Snowball is a sample technique that uses reference networks, for this, "there must be an initial intermediate, also called seed, which locates or points out some people with the profile required for the research to be carried out. The seed can even be one of the participants. Indicated people are then requested to indicate more people" (Bockorni & Gomes, 2021, p.108).

read a book, 26.6% started to take care of a pet and 15.3% cultivated some plant.

About the main feelings (Table 1), sadness, anxiety, fear and hate / anger were the ones who have most affected research participants. Corroborating with the findings, Perez et al. (2021, p.3256) concluded that:

Fear - as a sensation from the perception of threatening stimuli - has shown a variable of great relevance in previous sanitary crises and illustrates how the psychological consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic can fall from its own characteristics ...

Shigemura et al, (2020) also referred to fear as the main causative of stress and anxiety between the Japanese population in the period 2020 due to the risk of contagion by coronavirus.

Most of the mood, most of the time, during the confinement also proved a problem between the 40.6% of the participants, followed by anguish (33.3%), frustration (30%) and solitude (28, 6%).

The most positive feelings like joy (27.3%), happiness (24, 6%) and love (23.3%), although with smaller indices, were also cited by the members of the research. Which demonstrates how confusing the process lived with social isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

About having outdoor space as a backyard, for example, was important for most interviewees. In this sense, although the relationship with the place has not changed significantly to the 31.4% of the participants, many agreed that during social isolation, "people who have a backyard were much better than those who do not have them" In addition to being an important space for the well-being of the residents in this period. What corroborates with kings (2020, 112) when it stated that the yard is "the space where freedom expands independently of the physical size of the place," since with the compulsory restriction of freedom in this period of COVID-19 pandemic, The yard

became a "place that features our affective state and thus our action potential" (Reis, 2020, 112/113).

CONCLUSION

This article was dedicated to bringing a more differentiated look whose motto is the relation of the environment called yard and its importance for the mental health of individuals in the period of social isolation due to the pandemic of COVID-19, which has plagued humanity since The year 2020. A quantitative study was proposed, whose sample was concentrated in the neighborhoods of the Railway suburb of Salvador, for presenting a high index of residences with Thermis, according to the data presented by kings, in his study in the Masters in the Family Contemporary society at the Catholic University of Salvador in 2015.

It is concluded that the yard brings several benefits to the maintenance of the mental health of the residents, either to provide an outdoor space, which emanates greater freedom of locomotion, or for being a space of action, occupying the time of their residents with diverse activities that only one place like this can enable, for example, plant, take care of pets, talk to neighbors and make various household tasks.

Other studies will be needed in the area of mental health and environment in atypical contexts, such as in a pandemic, in order to propose public policies and other psychosocioeducation interventions more focused on sustainability and ecology in urban media.

This study did not intend to cover all the theme: *Backgrounds and Mental Health*, seeing that the existence of its breadth. However, this investigation may indicate psychosociobiental trails that can expand such knowledge, in future research.

FEELING	%
Sadness	56,0
Anxiety	54,0
Depression	14,0
Fear	52,0
Hate	49,3
Anguish	33,3
Loneliness	28,6
Courage	18,6
Despair	22,0
Frustration	30,0
Bad mood	40,6
Empathy	20,0
Lack of hope	20,0
Love	23,3
Trust	16,0
Joy	27,3
Happiness	24,6
Euphoria	10,6

Table 1: Feelings presented during the pandemic of Covid-19, per percentage.

Affirmative	%
TO PLANT	15,5
The person had no habit to use before the pandemic	18,0
The person has pet	18,0
The person felt good in the backyard	10,4
It was not changed the relationship with backyard	31,4
it would worse, if there was not the backyard	14,2
The person feels joy to live	18,0
The person used the plants he cultivated	12,3
People who have backyard have become better	26,6
It is important for well-being	29,5
If I did not, the well-being would be committed	13,3

Table 2: What they said about the relationship with the backyard during social isolation due to the pandemic of Covid-19. (in percentage).

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