

Health: The Design, Planning and Politics of How and Where We Live

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

The impact of public open spaces on human wellbeing in Saudi Arabia

- **Format:**

Written paper

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- **Abstract (300 words):**

Cities are getting bigger and bigger every day. All technologies and new media make life easier. Urban life is expanding and the development of countries across the world becomes noticeable. This results in making everything within reach at any time, and enables different aspects of life. However, as people become lazy, they also become less productive in terms of lifestyle. Citizens are surrounded by concrete boxes that isolate them from social interaction, and prevent interaction with outdoor spaces and nature (Addas, 2015). This paper sheds light on the impact of public open spaces on people's wellbeing in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The methodology includes case study sites that represent common spaces used to escape from the hustle of the city by both Saudi and migrant residents. In addition, these case study sites include the spaces within the urban context of the city, as well as the space around the city boundaries (desert). The methodology includes interviews with users of these spaces and site

observations. The findings identify benefits that users of public open spaces gain by experiencing these spaces. It focuses on how outdoor spaces can affect and improve users' health in different dimensions. The benefits that people gain from using outdoor spaces are varied, but this paper focuses on health values and how being in outdoor spaces can enhance physical and mental wellbeing.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Dr. Abdullah bin Nidal Addas holds a bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture from King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah (2006) and a master's degree in Landscape Studies from the University of Sheffield (2008). He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Sheffield in the field of **social and behavioral aspects in landscape design** (2014).

Dr. Addas is currently serving as an assistant professor and faculty member at the Faculty of Environmental Design, King Abdulaziz University. He teaches a number of theoretical and technical courses and studios in the field of computers applications in landscape architecture.

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