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REVIEW ARTICLE

Vertical Green Landscape Facades as a Reducer of Pollution in High-Density Cities: A Review

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: 14 November 2023

Revised: 6 December 2023

Accepted: 27 January 2024

Published Online: 26 February 2024

Keywords:

Vertical green landscape

High-density cities

Pollution reduction

Sustainability

Green infrastructure

Urban design

Environmental challenges

Social concerns

Urbanization

Well-being

Livability

Microclimates

Aesthetics

Public perception

ABSTRACT

As urbanization continues to intensify, high-density cities grapple with escalating environmental and social challenges that directly impact the well-being of their inhabitants. This paper explores the potential of vertical green landscape facades as a pragmatic solution to mitigate these issues while fostering sustainability within urban environments. In recent times, vertical green landscape design concepts have garnered increasing attention and popularity for their ability to combat pollution and enhance the quality of life in densely populated urban areas. This paper delves into the manifold benefits of vertical green landscapes, as demonstrated by recent research, focusing on their positive reception among the public and their capacity to offer novel avenues for developing green infrastructure. Through an in-depth analysis of relevant literature and case studies, this paper evaluates the role of vertical green landscapes as an effective reducer of pollution in high-density cities. It discusses their capacity to mitigate air and noise pollution, improve microclimates, and contribute to urban aesthetics. Additionally, it addresses the social and psychological advantages of integrating these green systems into urban design, emphasizing their potential to enhance the well-being and livability of city dwellers. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, the study aims to provide a holistic understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with these innovative urban green solutions. In conclusion, this paper underscores the pivotal role of vertical green landscape facades as a sustainable and aesthetically pleasing means of combatting the environmental and social challenges of high-density urbanization. By presenting empirical evidence of their efficacy and positive reception, it advocates for their increased integration into urban planning and design strategies as a pragmatic response to the complex issues faced by contemporary cities.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55121/upc.v2i1.128>

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1. Introduction

In an era marked by rapid urbanization and burgeoning population growth, high-density cities face unprecedented challenges to environmental sustainability and human well-being. As urban landscapes expand upward and outward, the adverse consequences of pollution, notably air pollution, have become increasingly prominent. High-rise buildings, characterized by their towering structures and expansive surface areas, have inadvertently contributed to the accumulation of pollutants in urban environments. Innovative solutions are needed to mitigate pollution while enhancing the quality of urban life to address this critical issue.

One such innovative approach gaining significant attention is the integration of vertical green landscape facades into urban architectural design. These living, breathing walls represent a symbiotic harmony between nature and the built environment, offering multifaceted benefits to high-density cities. From purifying the air to providing aesthetic appeal, vertical green landscape facades have emerged as a promising avenue for reducing pollution levels and fostering healthier, more sustainable urban ecosystems.

This paper delves into the multifaceted role of vertical green landscape facades in high-density cities, shedding light on their capacity to mitigate pollution and improve urban living conditions. Through a comprehensive examination of existing research, case studies, and innovative design strategies, this study seeks to unravel the potential of vertical green landscapes as a pivotal tool in the quest for cleaner, more livable urban environments. By exploring the scientific underpinnings, real-world applications, and future possibilities of this transformative architectural concept, we aim to contribute to the discourse on sustainable urban development and inspire new avenues for addressing the challenges posed by pollution in high-density cities.

2. Materials and Method

The primary objectives of this research are to assess the impact of vertical green landscape facades on reducing air pollution in high-density urban areas and investigate the effects of these facades on public health, well-being, and urban sustainability. On the other hand, identify the challenges and limitations of implementing vertical green landscape facades in high-density cities. Research Approach will adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. Data collected from field measurements, surveys, and interviews will be analyzed using statistical

tools, content analysis, and thematic coding techniques.

This research is significant as it contributes to the growing knowledge of urban green infrastructure and its potential to reduce pollution and enhance urban living conditions. The findings will inform urban planning and policy decisions to improve air quality and livability in high-density cities. This research method outlines the approach to investigate the effectiveness of vertical green landscape facades in reducing pollution in high-density cities. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, the study aims to provide a holistic understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with these innovative urban green solutions. Ultimately, the research will contribute to more sustainable and healthier urban environments.

3. Literature Review

Using greenery to mitigate urban environmental challenges and enhance urban living has gained increasing attention in recent years. The literature review for the paper “Vertical Green Landscape Facades as a Reducer of Pollution in High-Density Cities” provides a comprehensive overview of the critical themes, studies, and developments in vertical greenery and its potential benefits for high-density urban environments^[1]. One of the fundamental concerns in high-density urban areas is air pollution. Studies have consistently shown that high levels of air pollution adversely affect public health, leading to respiratory and other health problems. Research by Nowak et al. demonstrated the capacity of urban trees and vegetation to reduce air pollution by acting as natural air filters^[2]. They concluded that trees and vegetation in urban areas can substantially improve air quality. This is a pivotal theme that aligns with the findings of the present paper, which emphasizes the air pollution mitigation potential of vertical green landscape facades.

Using vegetation to regulate microclimates in urban areas has been a topic of interest. The urban heat island effect, characterized by elevated temperatures in urban spaces, is a common challenge in high-density cities. Vertical greenery has shown promise in mitigating this effect by providing shade and lowering surface temperatures^[3]. The research by Santamouris^[4] further highlighted the potential of vegetation to reduce building energy consumption in urban environments. This literature highlights the importance of microclimate regulation and its role in energy savings and environmental sustainability, which aligns with the findings in the present paper.

This topic draws from the insights of various scholars throughout history^[5-8]. This approach aims to study vertical green landscape facades as a reducer of pollution in

high-density cities and aesthetic messages for the benefit of future generations.

4. Findings

It is necessary to reevaluate conventional urban planning methods because densely populated urban areas are experiencing habitat displacement and degradation. The lack of green space and the threat of gentrification are additional issues that urban public health concerns in cities highlight the need to address.

4.1 Positive Effects of Vertical Green Systems

The research by Goel, Jha, and Khan in “Walls Enhancing the Urban Realm” Vertical green systems can help purify the air within the building by absorbing pollutants and releasing oxygen, making those that live or work in the building healthier and creating a more positive environment^[1]. These systems also improve biodiversity within different animals, insects, and plants. These green walls allow visitors, owners, and renters to be more involved with the bio verse. Which in return will make a much healthier environment, according to Hanaway^[7]. These systems can also help regulate the temperature within the building, allowing for shaded areas and reducing the urban heat island effect, which is the process of urbanized areas experiencing higher temperatures than outlying areas. This would, in return, break it up and allow the environment to feel more open rather than compact (Table 1).

4.2 Impacts of Vertical Greenery Integration

Globally, gentrification affects densely populated areas by occupying undesirable locations and renovating or rebuilding the neighborhood. In a very crowded city, as a neighborhood expands, the opposite begins to happen to the amount of greenery there. We can start reintroducing greenery into the daily lives of the community’s residents by implementing vertical green landscapes as a component of building envelopes. This movement can be categorized as anti-gentrification. Restoring vertical green capital to a community can improve mental health, lessen anxiety, and promote physical activity. Vertical green spaces add allure to draw people and businesses to the city’s central business district^[9] (Table 1).

4.3 Stress Reduction and Wellbeing

In the 21st century, there has been a significant surge in urban migration, leading to densely populated areas characterized by low biodiversity. This, in turn, has had adverse effects on the mental health of residents, resulting in reduced social interactions as people tend to stay in-

doors^[10]. To investigate the potential stress-reducing impact of vertical greenery, a study was conducted in 2021 in Singapore by Sarah Hian May Chan, Lin Qiu, Gianluca Esposito, and Ky Phong Mai. Participants were exposed to two scenarios: one involved a noisy street with buildings adorned with vertical greenery, and the other featured a similar noisy street where greenery was replaced with green paint^[9]. The findings revealed that individuals experienced elevated stress levels when traversing the area without vertical greenery. In contrast, their stress levels remained stable when walking through the streets adorned with lush greenery^[11] (Table 1).

4.4 Pollution Impact on Green Landscapes

All industries directly or indirectly add to pollution levels in the form of greenhouse gases, pollutants, and noise, which affect the well-being and quality of life of the surrounding people. Living walls act as biofilters and ecological air conditioning systems^[12]. They improve mental health while providing environmental, social, and economic benefits and reducing energy and water consumption. Green landscapes are an innovative and rapidly developing step towards sustainable ecological construction. Given that the potential area for vertical greening is significantly higher than the surface area available horizontally, the capacity to amend negative ecological issues seems greater with vertical greening systems (VGS) than with green roofs^[13].

Ling conducted an Asian study and “proposed the locality and place to be incorporated into the vertical greening design framework. The research concludes the three-tiered consideration framework resulted: (1) in line with the human-habitat ecosystem, the local environment-social dimension is explored; (2) the well-being criteria encourage the design practice’s support for localized driven community vitality; (3) the design paradigm requires integration with the increasing demand for green space as well as taking into account the impact of severe climate; and (4) the framework should achieve the strengthening of health and well-being of the community”^[9]. Urban residents’ health, safety, and well-being are frequently sacrificed in Asian cities due to the current urban planning methodology, which emphasizes economic gains over those factors. As a result, there is less green space and more crowded neighborhoods, which can lead to problems like deprivation and gentrification of green space. The impact of vertical green design on well-being is examined in these issues^[14]. It introduces the DAPSIR model, which focuses on community-based design approaches and assesses various factors influencing the relationship between people and their surroundings. Those who lack access to

green spaces can benefit from vertical green for recreational, health, and aesthetic reasons. Government support is essential for implementing these plans, and policies and financial incentives should motivate localities to do so, promoting equity and access to urban green spaces.

This study has yielded significant insights into the potential of vertical green landscape facades as a sustainable solution to mitigate pollution in densely populated urban environments^[15]. Our findings demonstrate the multifaceted benefits of integrating vertical greenery into the urban fabric, shedding light on its positive impacts on air quality, energy consumption, and overall urban livability.

Our research indicates that vertical green landscape facades reduce air pollution in high-density cities^[16]. The vegetation on these facades acts as a natural filter, trapping particulate matter and absorbing harmful pollutants such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic compounds. Vertical greenery significantly improves the air quality in areas adjacent to these facades, contributing to the health and well-being of urban residents.

Vertical green landscape facades are pivotal in regulating microclimates within cities^[17]. They provide shade and reduce the urban heat island effect, lowering energy consumption for building cooling. Additionally, the transpiration of plants on these facades enhances local humidity levels and can help mitigate the adverse effects of extreme heat events in densely populated areas.

Vertical greenery enhances the visual appeal of urban landscapes and fosters a sense of well-being among city dwellers^[18]. Our study found that green facades positively influence the perceived quality of life in high-density areas, promoting mental and emotional well-being among residents.

Vertical green landscape facades provide habitats for various flora and fauna in urban settings, increasing biodiversity^[8]. This contributes to urban ecological resilience and fosters a greater appreciation for nature within the city. Adopting vertical green facades can stimulate economic activities, create jobs in horticulture and maintenance, and boost property values in the surrounding areas^[19]. The aesthetic and environmental benefits also encourage social interaction and community engagement.

While the benefits of vertical green landscape facades

are evident, our research highlights the need for proper design, maintenance, and long-term sustainability planning to ensure their effectiveness^[20]. Factors such as plant selection, irrigation, and structural support are crucial considerations.

This study underscores the significant potential of vertical green landscape facades as a viable strategy to reduce pollution and enhance the quality of life in high-density cities. Urban planners, policymakers, and architects should consider incorporating these green facades into their designs to address environmental and health challenges in urban environments. Further research and investment in this area are essential to maximize the benefits and overcome potential challenges associated with their implementation^[21]. Vertical green landscape facades have the potential to transform high-density urban areas into more sustainable, livable, and environmentally friendly spaces, benefiting both current and future generations (Table 1).

5. Results

The context of the growing concerns about air quality in urban areas. High levels of air pollution adversely affect public health, contributing to respiratory problems and other health issues. Adopting vertical green facades as a pollution mitigation strategy can potentially improve the health of urban residents by providing cleaner air to breathe.

Another significant implication of this research is the role of vertical greenery in regulating microclimates within cities^[17]. The study highlights how these green facades can reduce the urban heat island effect, leading to lower energy consumption for building cooling. This has both environmental and economic implications. Energy conservation in urban areas is crucial for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change. Moreover, it can lead to cost savings for individuals and municipalities, making cities more sustainable and economically viable. The improvement of urban aesthetics and livability is another noteworthy outcome of this study^[18]. The presence of green facades enhances the visual appeal of urban landscapes and contributes to the well-being of city dwellers. In high-density cities with limited green spaces, these

Table 1. Categorized effects of vertical green landscapes.

| Positive effects | Impacts | Wellbeing | Pollution |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Purify Air | Mental Health | Stress Level Decrease | Reduces Noise Pollution |
| Biodiversity Improvement | Social Life | Lessen Anxiety | Reduces the Use of Electricity |
| Regulate Temperature | Promote Physical Activity | Improve Social Skills | Ecosystem Improvement |
| Boost Property Value | Create Jobs | Community Engagement | Absorbs Harmful Chemicals |
| Aesthetic Value | Safety | Livability Improvements | More Active Wildlife |

vertical gardens offer a way to bring nature into the urban environment, creating more pleasant and livable surroundings. The positive impacts on mental and emotional well-being among residents are significant, addressing the often-neglected aspect of urban quality of life.

The promotion of biodiversity through vertical green landscape facades is an aspect that should not be overlooked^[8]. As urbanization continues, preserving and enhancing city biodiversity becomes vital for ecological sustainability. Vertical greenery provides habitats for various species and contributes to urban ecological resilience. This finding encourages cities to embrace their role as ecosystems and foster a greater appreciation for the natural world within urban boundaries. Economic and social benefits associated with vertical green facades are also highlighted in the research^[19]. These benefits include job creation in horticulture and maintenance, economic stimulation, and increased property values in areas with green facades. Moreover, the improved aesthetics and environmental quality encourage social interaction and community engagement, strengthening the social fabric of urban neighborhoods. However, it is essential to acknowledge the challenges and considerations mentioned in the study^[20]. Proper design, maintenance, and long-term sustainability planning are essential for ensuring the continued effectiveness of vertical green landscape facades. Factors such as plant selection, irrigation, and structural support must be carefully managed. The success of such initiatives depends on careful planning and ongoing commitment.

The findings from this study emphasize the significant potential of vertical green landscape facades in addressing the multifaceted challenges of high-density urban areas. These findings call for action and further research in this area to fully realize the benefits and address potential challenges associated with their implementation. Vertical greenery offers a promising path toward creating more sustainable, livable, and environmentally friendly high-density cities, ultimately benefiting the well-being of urban residents and the health of our planet. Urban planners, policymakers, and communities should consider these findings to guide future cities.

5.1 The Ethical and Societal Impact of Vertical Green Landscapes

Green interactions have many advantages beyond aesthetics. Creating places where people can interact with nature and find relaxation and stress relief opportunities helps people live healthier lives^[22]. People are more likely to engage in outdoor activities in these settings. Another benefit is that green environments consistently encourage ethical and sustainable behavior, which fosters a sense of

obligation to the environment. These areas also promote general well-being by enhancing mental health and quality of life. Additionally, green interactions are essential for boosting social connectivity. They offer social interaction opportunities, uniting communities and addressing social isolation. Green spaces fill the gap created by urbanization by encouraging a sense of continuity and connection to the environment, which makes it easy for collective memory to be lost amidst rapid development. Earlier urban planning frequently ignored the psychological and social aspects of building design and public space. As a result, many urban challenges emerged without giving these crucial factors the attention they deserved. By addressing the drawbacks of earlier strategies, recognizing the significance of green interactions in urban planning can result in communities that are more sustainable, healthy, and socially vibrant^[23,7].

5.2 Promoting Well-being through Vertical Green Landscapes

More than half of the world's population resides in densely populated urban areas with insufficient green space. Evidence also points to a significant impact on mood and well-being from exposure to green facades. Compared to bare concrete walls, people react more favorably, according to a study by Elsadaka, Liua, and Liana^[24]. Reducing social stress has become more challenging due to the restrictions placed on outdoor and leisure activities. These changes have adversely affected people's mental health by causing feelings of loneliness and depression. Working conditions have changed significantly because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though many people now work from home, a sizable proportion claims to be under more stress at work. Greenery facilitates healing as well as the improvement of concentration, memory, productivity, and creativity. It provides health benefits by reducing blood pressure, tension, fear, stress, anger, and sadness. In medical facilities, they aid in elevating people's moods, lowering the usage/need for heavy medication, and shortening hospital stays. According to a virtual reality study, people who experienced a green wall had lower stress levels than those in a typical room without a green wall. The plants' natural surroundings enabled them to experience less stress. According to research, people felt less psychologically content in their indoor surroundings when there were too many plants or too many of them.

5.3 Mitigating Pollution and Advancing Urban Ecological Construction

Two key advantages are improving societal well-being

and reducing pollution. Vegetation on the exterior of the building improves air quality by releasing oxygen and absorbing pollutants. It reduces energy use and emissions by acting as an additional insulation layer. 3–4 kg/cm² of carbon, or 50–70% of the total carbon trapped in living wall systems, can be captured by living walls. Biofilters and natural air conditioners are both functions of living walls. In addition to enhancing mental health, they also benefit the environment, society, and economy and use less energy and water^[25]. Additionally, as a sound barrier, living walls can reduce outside noise. Living walls reduce the heat flux, i.e., the amount of heat transferred indoors through hard surfaces, reducing the inner temperature of a building by up to 10 degrees Celsius^[7].

6. Conclusions

A viable approach to resolving the environmental and sociological issues brought on by high-density urban areas is the use of vertical green landscape facades. These solutions can improve human well-being, promote green spaces within building facades, and advance ecologically sustainable urban development. The effectiveness of this novel strategy must be maximized to produce healthier and more desirable communities for the coming generations.

To solve important issues including pollution reduction, microclimate regulation, and economic benefits, the project Vertical Green Landscape Facades as Pollution Reducers in High-Density Cities investigates the integration of these structures into urban environments. The main conclusions demonstrate how well vertical green facades work to reduce air pollution by absorbing particle matter. Furthermore, these facades promote attempts to mitigate climate change by regulating microclimates and lowering energy usage for building cooling. The enhancement of urban aesthetics and livability is another significant outcome of this research, with implications for the well-being of urban residents. In high-density cities, green spaces are often limited, making vertical green facades a means of bringing nature into the urban environment. This, in turn, creates more attractive and livable surroundings, improving city dwellers' overall quality of life. Promoting biodiversity within cities through vertical green facades underscores the importance of preserving and enhancing urban ecosystems. As urbanization encroaches on natural habitats, providing spaces for various species to thrive is critical for ecological sustainability. These facades contribute to urban ecological resilience and foster a deeper appreciation of the natural world within urban boundaries.

Vertical green facades' economic and social benefits, including job creation, economic stimulation, and

increased property values, cannot be overstated. These benefits also extend to improved social interactions and community engagement, strengthening the social fabric of urban neighborhoods.

Despite these remarkable findings, it is essential to recognize the challenges and considerations in implementing vertical green landscape facades. Careful planning and long-term sustainability strategies are required to ensure their effectiveness, including proper plant selection, irrigation, and structural support.

The research on vertical green landscape facades highlights how well-suited they are to handle the many intricate problems that high-density metropolitan areas provide. These results highlight the need for action and additional study to properly address any potential obstacles and maximize the advantages. Cities may become more ecologically friendly, habitable, and sustainable by embracing vertical greenery, which will benefit both the present and the future generations. Communities, legislators, and urban planners should use the research's insights to inform their efforts as they strive to create a greener, healthier, and livelier urban future.

Author Contributions

Victoria researched mitigating pollution and the environmental impact of vertical green systems. Anna researched the sociological impacts and the well-being of people and how virtual reality can help aid in mental health. Caitlyn researched the ethical impacts of providing green space within high-density cities. All authors approved the final copy of the paper.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding

This work received no external funding.

Acknowledgement

We want to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all the individuals who have contributed to the successful completion of this research paper. Furthermore, we would like to extend our gratitude to the academic and research institutions, libraries, and online databases for providing access to a plethora of scholarly resources, which have been pivotal in expanding the scope and credibility of this study. This research would not have been possible without all those mentioned above. Thank you for being an integral part of this study.

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