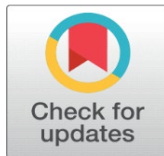


ECOLOGICAL EXISTENTIALISM IN JON FOSSE'S NARRATIVES: MEMORY, RESILIENCE, AND INTERCONNECTED WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates issues of uncertainty, connectedness, and the human relationship with the environment and memory by examining the intersection of Deborah Bird Rose's ecological existentialism and Jon Fosse's *I Am the Wind* and *Aliss at the Fire*. Rose's paradigm, which highlights the dualities of the Anthropocene—uncertainty and interconnectedness—resonates with Fosse's paintings, distinguished by their existential profundity and eerie depictions of human emotion. Two characters' metaphorical voyage across the broad sea in *I Am the Wind* raises existential questions about relationships, identity, and humanity's precarious bond with the natural world. In a similar vein, *Aliss at the Fire* explores memory and loss over generations, with nature serving as both a participant and a witness to human tragedy. Echoing Rose's idea of "shimmer," which recognises the transition between the past, present, and future, the fjord and fire represent cyclical loss and regeneration. This essay argues that Fosse's depiction of nature as a dynamic force that is both nourishing and destructive offers significant insights into psychological resilience and well-being by applying ecological existentialism to his stories. The pieces emphasise how natural settings and ancestry influence human life, calling for a reconsideration of isolationist viewpoints in favour of interconnection.

Keywords: Jon Fosse, Ecological Existentialism, Deborah Bird Rose, Resilience, Interconnectedness

1. INTRODUCTION

Significant human influence on Earth's ecosystems during the Anthropocene era has given rise to a number of difficult issues that go beyond environmental deterioration, such as existential and psychological crises. Frameworks that combine ecological knowledge with human well-being are desperately needed, as evidenced by the rising incidence of mental health conditions, including anxiety, sadness, and a sense of estrangement from nature. By highlighting the dualities of uncertainty and connection present in human-nature relationships, Deborah Bird Rose's ecological existentialism provides an engaging theoretical framework for comprehending these difficulties [Rose \(2021\)](#). In order to examine how Jon Fosse's minimalist tales reflect and enhance our comprehension of these topics, this study applies

Rose's ecological existentialism to his works, particularly *I Am the Wind* (1997) and *Aliss at the Fire* (2007). The literary works of Jon Fosse are well known for their philosophical profundity, spare language, and deep exploration of human relationships and emotions. His paintings frequently place human experiences in the context of natural environments, employing fire and the sea as metaphors for the ephemerality, loss, and rebirth of life. In line with Rose's idea of "shimmer," which characterises the dynamic interaction between living things and their surroundings, these natural components are not only background elements but rather active actors in the story [Cooke \(2020\)](#). The article makes the case that Fosse's stories provide insightful perspectives on psychological health and resilience when seen via the ecological existentialist lens. These pieces question isolationist viewpoints and provide fresh approaches to mental health treatments that support Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) by emphasising the interdependence of people and the natural world. By offering novel strategies for building resilience via ecological awareness, the multidisciplinary approach used here unites literature, psychology, and ecology and advances behavioural sciences.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. ECOLOGICAL EXISTENTIALISM: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Deborah Bird Rose, ecological existentialism is a significant development in existential philosophy that updates conventional existentialist frameworks while tackling the urgent issues of the Anthropocene. Ecological existentialism is based on the tenets of human freedom, choice, and the pursuit of meaning in an absurd or uncaring universe, which were established by philosophers like Jean-Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger in the 20th century [Sartre \(2007\)](#), [Heidegger \(2010\)](#). But by adding ecological consciousness and highlighting the interdependence of people and their surroundings, it departs greatly. In a world increasingly influenced by ecological issues, this enlarged framework reorients existentialist philosophy to face the interwoven realities of human and non-human life.

2.2. TRADITIONAL EXISTENTIALISM

In reaction to the apparent absurdity and alienation of contemporary life, traditional existentialism arose. Existence comes before essence, according to Sartre, who holds that people must construct their own meaning by their decisions and deeds rather than being born with predestined goals [Sartre \(2007\)](#). Heidegger also highlighted the situatedness of human life within temporal and geographical settings in his idea of being-in-the-world [Heidegger \(2010\)](#). Although these theories offered insightful perspectives on human liberty and accountability, they frequently ignored the larger ecological factors that influence human existence in favour of focussing on personal seclusion and subjective experiences. In its approach to nature, classical existentialism's anthropocentric perspective is very clear. Many people saw nature as a passive background to human life, either as a place to get resources or as a setting for existential conflicts. Ecological theorists have subsequently criticised this dualistic viewpoint for separating people from their surroundings and for promoting subject-object divisions [Rose \(2021\)](#). A Change in Viewpoint: Deborah Bird These anthropocentric themes are updated by Rose's ecological existentialism, which incorporates ecological consciousness into existential philosophy. According to [Rose \(2021\)](#), ecological existentialism is characterised by two fundamental themes: uncertainty and connectedness. The isolationist inclinations of conventional existentialism are challenged by these themes, which capture the reality of living in the Anthropocene—a time when humans have had a major influence on Earth's ecosystems.

Ecological systems are dynamic and unpredictable, which leads to uncertainty. Deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change are examples of human activities that have disrupted planetary processes during the Anthropocene, resulting in a state of extreme uncertainty [Voelkner \(2021\)](#). Rose views this uncertainty as a chance for development and adaptability rather than just a cause of worry. Instead than pursuing control or certainty, it encourages people to accept the flexibility and openness of life. This viewpoint is consistent with the focus on facing absurdity seen in conventional existentialism. Rose, however, places doubt within ecological contexts, whereas Camus and Sartre defined absurdity as a conflict between human demands for meaning and an uncaring cosmos [Camus \(1991\)](#). All living things and their surroundings are interdependent. Anthropocentrism, which elevates or separates humans from nature, is contested by this subject. Rather, it places a strong emphasis on relationality, which holds that interactions between people, non-human animals, and natural systems shape existence [Cooke \(2020\)](#). Rose views connectedness as an ontological truth as well as an ethical requirement. It demands that all living things acknowledge their kinship and make

a commitment to protecting their common habitats. Indigenous Australian beliefs that stress the reciprocal links between people and their surroundings are the foundation for Rose's idea of "kinship" (Van Dooren & Chrulew, 2022). Kinship encompasses more than just family relationships; it also includes plants, animals, landscapes, and even the changing of the seasons. This relational perspective offers a more comprehensive understanding of life and stands in stark contrast to Western ideas of independence and autonomy.

Rose's idea of "shimmer" is a significant breakthrough in her ecological existentialism. The fluid, relational aspect of life—the interaction of light and shadow, presence and absence—that defines life in all its dynamic complexity is encapsulated in shimmer [Cooke \(2020\)](#). It explains how continuous interactions that cut across time and space entangle living things with their surroundings. Shimmer draws attention to the temporal and spatial entanglements of reality, challenging static or reductionist perspectives. For instance, extinction, a major topic in ecological research, is a continuous process with intertwined relationships between species rather than just a final destination [Van Dooren and Chrulew \(2022\)](#). Shimmer encourages us to acknowledge these entanglements and to face them responsibly and with humility. Practically speaking, shimmer promotes a change in perspective from perceiving life as separate or static to perceiving it as dynamic and interrelated. In contrast to abstract universals, it emphasises embeddedness within particular locales, which is consistent with Indigenous ideologies [Cooke \(2020\)](#). In a time of ecological problems, shimmer provides a paradigm for reconsidering ethics, justice, and accountability by emphasising relationality.

By incorporating ecological consciousness into its fundamental ideas, Deborah Bird Rose's ecological existentialism signifies a revolutionary turn in existential philosophy. It opposes anthropocentric theories that isolate people from their surroundings by highlighting unpredictability and connectedness as characteristics of life in the Anthropocene. This framework is further enhanced by the idea of shimmer, which emphasises the dynamic interaction between living things and their environment. Environmental humanities, ethics, and policy-making are all significantly impacted by ecological existentialism. It challenges us to reconsider our interactions with environment as kin—connected members of common ecosystems—rather than as masters.

2.3. PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE AND ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

Resilience, defined as the capacity to adapt and recover from adversity, is a dynamic and multifaceted construct central to psychology and behavioural sciences. It includes the capability to develop and flourish in the wake of adversity as well as the ability to endure it [Masten \(2014\)](#). The importance of ecological consciousness and a connection to nature in promoting resilience and general well-being has been brought to light by recent developments in resilience research [Capaldi et al. \(2015\)](#). In order to better understand human well-being, this enlarged analysis integrates ideas from ecological existentialism and examines the complex interaction between resilience, ecological consciousness, and nature-based solutions.

According to [Kte'pi \(2024\)](#), resilience is no longer seen as a static quality but rather as a dynamic process that changes and is impacted by a number of internal and external variables. Early research on resilience mostly examined the coping strategies and long-term effects of children who faced adversity [Werner and Smith \(1982\)](#). These pioneering investigations demonstrated that resilience is not an innate skill but rather the result of adaptive mechanisms. By highlighting the interdependent effect of psychological traits in the setting of stress, contemporary research expands on this knowledge [Sarkar and Fletcher \(2013\)](#). According to resilience theory, how people handle adversity is more important than the hardship itself. A key element of resilience is the capacity to control emotions, address issues, create objectives, and hold onto hope [Luthar et al. \(2014\)](#). According to [Kte'pi \(2024\)](#), resilience is no longer seen as a static quality but rather as a dynamic process that changes and is impacted by a number of internal and external variables. Early research on resilience mostly examined the coping strategies and long-term effects of children who faced adversity [Werner and Smith \(1982\)](#). These pioneering investigations demonstrated that resilience is not an innate skill but rather the result of adaptive mechanisms. By highlighting the interdependent effect of psychological traits in the setting of stress, contemporary research expands on this knowledge [Sarkar and Fletcher \(2013\)](#). According to resilience theory, how people handle adversity is more important than the hardship itself. A key element of resilience is the capacity to control emotions, address issues, create objectives, and hold onto hope [Luthar et al. \(2014\)](#).

Ecological Awareness in Resilience: The understanding of how humans are interdependent with nature, or ecological awareness, has become a key component of resilience. Natural settings can dramatically lower stress levels and enhance mental health results, according to studies [Berman et al. \(2008\)](#). Ecotherapy and other nature-based

remedies take advantage of this link by integrating natural components into therapeutic procedures. Through pursuits like gardening, hiking, or mindfulness training in natural environments, ecotherapy highlights the therapeutic value of nature. Because they increase attentional capacity and decrease mental tiredness, these techniques improve cognitive performance and encourage emotional control [Berman et al. \(2008\)](#). Additionally, by assisting people in reinterpreting hardship in a more comprehensive ecological framework, nature-based therapies have been demonstrated to promote post-traumatic development [Tedeschi and Calhoun \(1995\)](#).

Literature as a Tool for Building Resilience: Literature is a potent tool for building resilience because it evokes empathy and introspection. Ecologically themed stories can offer insights into adaptation mechanisms and foster an emotional bond between people and environment. For instance, themes of progress through hardship are frequently highlighted in literary works that examine the interactions between humans and environment. By placing human experiences inside natural surroundings, Jon Fosse's minimalist storytelling serve as an excellent example of this strategy. Natural elements such as the sea (*I Am the Wind*) and fire (*Aliss at the Fire*) are used in his works as metaphors for the interconnection and uncertainty of existence. These stories inspire readers to consider their own relationship with nature in addition to evoking strong feelings.

Useful Applications: Ecological existentialism-based nature-based therapies provide useful ways to improve resilience. People can cultivate acceptance and adaptation by engaging in mindfulness exercises that are influenced by natural metaphors, such as monitoring the ebb and flow of water or the seasonal cycles. A sense of continuity and belonging can be promoted through therapeutic storytelling that incorporates ecological themes. Furthermore, community-based initiatives that include environmental stewardship may foster ecological awareness and strengthen social support systems. Projects like conservation efforts or community gardening, for example, offer chances for group interaction with nature while promoting mental health.

Implications for Practice and Policy: Fostering resilience on an individual and community level is greatly impacted by the incorporation of ecological awareness into mental health programs. To combat the increased prevalence of anxiety and depression, policymakers have to think about integrating nature-based therapies into public health initiatives. Implementing initiatives that highlight ecological connectedness through outdoor recreation or mindfulness exercises can also be advantageous for businesses and educational institutions. Furthermore, while creating resilience treatments, culturally relevant methods are crucial. According to [Kte'pi \(2024\)](#), cross-cultural study demonstrates how many groups encounter resilience in their distinct ecological situations. Indigenous tribes, for instance, frequently have a collective perspective on resilience that prioritises group healing above personal coping strategies.

Resilience is a dynamic process that is influenced by both external and internal factors. Because ecological awareness highlights how intertwined humans are with environment, it is essential for building resilience. Incorporating ecological existentialism into psychological frameworks highlights literature's capacity to promote empathy and introspection while providing insightful information on the relational components of well-being. These ideas serve as the foundation for nature-based therapies that offer useful ways to improve mental health outcomes and advance sustainable development objectives. Adopting multidisciplinary techniques that connect literature, ecology, and psychology can help create novel remedies to today's resilience-related problems.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1. UNCERTAINTY AND CONNECTIVITY IN I AM THE WIND

I Am the Wind centres on two characters who set out on a sea journey, a metaphor for life's uncertainties and the human condition. The sea, vast and unpredictable, symbolizes the existential unknown. The characters' dialogue is sparse and repetitive, reflecting their struggle to articulate identity and connection.

The play opens with the characters preparing to leave, their conversation marked by pauses and unfinished thoughts:

"We're drifting... drifting further out." [Fosse \(1997\)](#)

This line encapsulates the tension between freedom and vulnerability. The sea is both a space of liberation and a force that threatens to engulf them. Their journey is not just physical but existential, confronting the limits of self and the inevitability of death.

Rose's concept of "shimmer" is evident in the characters' relationship with the sea. The sea is not merely a setting but an active presence that shapes their experience. The characters' identities are fluid, shaped by their interactions with each other and the environment. This relationality challenges traditional existentialism's focus on isolated individualism. The play's minimalist style invites the audience to engage with the unsaid and the unknown, mirroring the uncertainty of existence. The characters' silence and repetition create a rhythm that evokes the ebb and flow of the sea, reinforcing the theme of interconnectedness. The sea journey also symbolizes the psychological process of confronting the unknown aspects of the self and the other. The characters' dialogue reveals their attempts to understand each other and themselves, highlighting the human need for connection amid existential uncertainty.

3.2. GENERATIONAL GRIEF AND ECOLOGICAL MEMORY IN *ALISS AT THE FIRE*

Aliss at the Fire explores the transmission of grief and trauma across generations within a family linked to a fjord. The narrative shifts between past and present, illustrating how memories are embedded in ecological contexts. The fjord, a natural formation shaped by water and ice, symbolizes the persistence of memory and the cyclical nature of life and death. Fire, another elemental force, represents both destruction and renewal. These natural elements are intertwined with human emotions, suggesting that grief is not solely psychological but ecological. A poignant passage describes a character's encounter with the fjord:

"His clothes are wet... his hair is wet... there is something like a yellow sunbeam of despair." Fosse (2007)

The imagery connects human suffering with environmental phenomena, emphasizing their interdependence. The "yellow sunbeam of despair" evokes a shimmering moment where light and darkness coexist, reflecting Rose's notion of relational existence. The play also addresses the role of memory and storytelling in healing. The act of remembering is portrayed as a communal and ecological process, where the past is not fixed but alive within the present environment. This perspective aligns with psychological theories that emphasize narrative and social support in resilience Neimeyer (2001). The intergenerational transmission of trauma in *Aliss at the Fire* highlights how ecological contexts shape psychological experiences. The natural environment acts as a repository of memory and emotion, suggesting that healing requires engagement with both human and non-human worlds.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS: FOSTERING RESILIENCE THROUGH ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

The literary works of Jon Fosse, especially *I Am the Wind* and *Aliss at the Fire*, offer significant insights into how writing may promote psychological resilience and embrace ecological existentialism. These stories provide a counterweight to dominant cultural narratives of control and isolation by highlighting the interdependence of human existence with nature. Fosse's stories inspire readers to accept relationality and uncertainty, two essential elements of resilience in the face of hardship, by depicting human existence as relational and interwoven with ecological systems. In a time of ecological problems and growing mental health issues, this strategy has important ramifications for mental health therapies.

According to Deborah Bird Rose, ecological existentialism stresses the interdependence of people and their surroundings and focusses on themes of connectedness and uncertainty Rose (2021). By employing natural phenomena like the sea, fire, and fjords as metaphors for life's unpredictable nature and interconnectedness, Fosse's paintings are consistent with these ideas. In addition to encouraging a sense of connection with nature, these stories challenge readers' existential fears. The emotional power of Fosse's ideas is enhanced by his austere technique. The water, for instance, is both a freeing place and a force that emphasises human vulnerability in *I Am the Wind*. The protagonists' maritime voyage serves as a metaphor for life's uncertainties and invites readers to consider their own experiences crossing uncharted territory. In a similar vein, *Aliss at the Fire* examines sorrow across generations by showing a family plagued with fjord-related fatalities. These natural factors actively participate in forming human emotions and interactions rather than just serving as background. Readers are urged to embrace an ecological viewpoint that prioritises relationality above solitude by interacting with these stories. By encouraging a sense of continuity and belonging, which are critical for overcoming adversity, this change in viewpoint might improve psychological resilience.

Natural Metaphor-Based Mindfulness Techniques: Using natural metaphors in mindfulness exercises is one way that ecological existentialism is put into practice. People can handle stress and anxiety by practicing mindfulness, which entails developing present-moment awareness and acceptance [Kabat-Zinn \(1990\)](#). Mindfulness exercises that are based on ecological themes help strengthen people's resilience and strengthen their bond with the natural world. One example of a metaphor for emotional control is the sea's ebb and flow, which appears frequently in Fosse's *I Am the Wind*. Emotions are fleeting sensations that may be seen without passing judgement, just like waves rise and fall. This metaphor promotes adaptation in the face of difficulties by encouraging people to welcome ambiguity rather than fight it. In a similar vein, *Aliss at the Fire*'s depiction of the cyclical cycle of fire and water might serve as an inspiration for mindfulness exercises that prioritise transition and regeneration. Water is a sign of continuity and flow, whereas fire is a symbol of destruction that also creates opportunity for fresh development. These natural cycles provide a foundation for comprehending resilience as a dynamic process by reflecting human experiences of loss and recovery. Mindfulness exercises in nature have been shown to be effective in lowering anxiety and sadness. Spending time in natural environments, for instance, has been found to improve attentional ability, decrease rumination, and foster happy feelings [Berman et al. \(2008\)](#). Practitioners might develop therapies that emotionally connect and promote ecological awareness by incorporating ecological metaphors into mindfulness exercises.

4.2. THERAPEUTIC STORYTELLING: BRIDGING ECOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Therapeutic storytelling is another avenue through which ecological existentialism can be applied to mental health interventions. Stories have long been used as tools for healing, providing individuals with frameworks for making sense of their experiences [Neimeyer \(2001\)](#). When these stories incorporate ecological themes, they can foster a sense of connection with nature while addressing existential anxieties. Fosse's narratives offer rich material for therapeutic storytelling. For example, *I Am the Wind* explores themes of companionship and vulnerability through its depiction of two characters navigating an open sea. This story can be used in therapy to help individuals explore their relationships with uncertainty and interdependence. Similarly, *Aliss at the Fire* addresses generational grief within an ecological context, making it a valuable resource for individuals coping with loss. Therapeutic storytelling that integrates ecological themes can also counter feelings of alienation—a common experience in modern urbanized societies. By reconnecting individuals with natural cycles and rhythms, these stories foster a sense of belonging that is essential for psychological well-being.

Addressing Eco-Anxiety Through Relational Frameworks: Eco-anxiety—the chronic fear of environmental doom—is an emerging mental health issue that underscores the need for interventions grounded in ecological awareness [Clayton et al. \(2017\)](#). As individuals grapple with feelings of helplessness and despair in response to climate change and biodiversity loss, relational frameworks like ecological existentialism offer pathways for coping. Fosse's works provide valuable insights into addressing eco-anxiety by emphasizing relationality over isolation. For example, his portrayal of interconnectedness between humans and natural elements encourages readers to view themselves as part of larger ecological systems rather than isolated entities. This perspective can alleviate feelings of helplessness by fostering a sense of agency within collective efforts to address environmental challenges. Moreover, therapeutic interventions inspired by Fosse's narratives can help individuals process eco-anxiety through storytelling and mindfulness practices. For instance, reflecting on the cyclical nature of fire in *Aliss at the Fire* can help individuals reframe destruction as a precursor to renewal—a perspective that is particularly relevant in the context of climate adaptation.

Aligning with Sustainable Development Goals: The insights derived from Fosse's narratives align closely with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), which emphasizes mental health as integral to sustainable development (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP \(2015\)](#)). By integrating ecological awareness into mental health interventions, practitioners can address both psychological and environmental dimensions of well-being. For example, community-based programs that incorporate storytelling workshops or nature-based mindfulness practices can simultaneously promote mental health and environmental stewardship. These programs not only enhance individual resilience but also foster collective engagement with sustainability goals. Additionally, educational initiatives that draw on Fosse's works can raise awareness about the psychological benefits of connecting with nature. By incorporating these narratives into curricula or public campaigns, educators can inspire individuals to adopt more sustainable lifestyles while enhancing their well-being.

Expanding Behavioural Sciences: Integrating ecological existentialism into behavioural sciences represents a paradigm shift toward holistic approaches to well-being. Traditional psychological frameworks often focus on individual

traits or behaviours in isolation from broader environmental contexts [Masten and Obradović \(2006\)](#). In contrast, ecological existentialism emphasizes relationality—the idea that well-being arises from interactions between individuals and their environments.

This holistic perspective has practical implications for therapy and research. For instance:

- **Therapeutic Applications:** Therapists can incorporate ecological metaphors into cognitive-behavioural techniques or narrative therapy sessions to help clients explore their relationships with uncertainty and interdependence.
- **Research Directions:** Future studies could examine how exposure to literature like Fosse’s influences psychological outcomes such as resilience or eco-anxiety reduction.
- **Policy Implications:** Policymakers could support initiatives that integrate ecological awareness into public health strategies or educational programs.

By bridging psychology with ecology through frameworks like ecological existentialism, behavioural sciences can contribute more effectively to addressing contemporary challenges related to mental health and sustainability. Jon Fosse’s narratives demonstrate how literature can embody ecological existentialism while offering pathways to psychological resilience. By portraying human existence as interconnected with nature rather than isolated from it, these works encourage readers to embrace uncertainty and relationality, qualities essential for navigating life’s challenges. The practical implications of this approach are far-reaching. Mindfulness practices grounded in natural metaphors provide tools for emotional regulation and adaptability; therapeutic storytelling fosters connection and continuity; addressing eco-anxiety through relational frameworks offers hope amid environmental crises. Together, these interventions align with global efforts toward sustainable development by addressing both psychological well-being and environmental stewardship.

4.3. CONTRIBUTIONS TO BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This study contributes significantly to behavioural sciences and sustainable development by bridging literature, psychology, and ecology through the lens of ecological existentialism. By proposing ecological existentialism as a valuable framework for understanding resilience as a dynamic and relational process, it underscores the interconnectedness of human health and ecological health. Literature, with its unique capacity to evoke empathy, reflection, and emotional resonance, emerges as a powerful tool for fostering ecological awareness and psychological well-being. This interdisciplinary approach not only enriches behavioural sciences but also supports sustainable development by highlighting the symbiotic relationship between mental health and environmental stewardship.

Bridging Literature, Psychology, and Ecology in Behavioural Sciences: Behavioural sciences have traditionally focused on individual traits or behaviours in isolation from broader environmental contexts. However, integrating ecological existentialism into these disciplines offers a paradigm shift toward holistic approaches to understanding human behaviour and well-being. Deborah Bird Rose’s ecological existentialism emphasizes uncertainty and connectivity as defining features of existence in the Anthropocene—a period marked by significant human impact on ecosystems [Rose \(2021\)](#). These principles challenge anthropocentric frameworks that separate humans from their environments, advocating instead for relational models that recognize the interdependence of all living beings. The integration of literature into behavioural sciences provides a unique avenue for exploring these relational dynamics. Literature has long served as a medium for examining existential questions about identity, mortality, and meaning. When infused with ecological themes, it can deepen readers’ understanding of their interconnectedness with nature while fostering resilience. For example, Jon Fosse’s minimalist narratives (*I Am the Wind* and *Aliss at the Fire*) use natural elements like the sea and fire as metaphors for life’s uncertainties and relationality. These narratives encourage readers to confront existential anxieties while cultivating a sense of belonging within larger ecological systems.

Literature as a Tool for Fostering Ecological Awareness: One of the most profound contributions of this study is its emphasis on literature’s capacity to foster ecological awareness. Literature evokes empathy by allowing readers to inhabit the perspectives of others—human or non-human—and reflect on their shared experiences within ecological contexts [Cooke \(2020\)](#). This empathetic engagement can inspire individuals to adopt more sustainable behaviours by recognizing their kinship with other forms of life. For instance, Fosse’s *I Am the Wind* portrays two characters navigating an open sea—a metaphor for life’s uncertainties. The sea serves as both a liberating space and a force that underscores

human vulnerability, inviting readers to reflect on their own relationships with nature. Similarly, *Aliss at the Fire* explores generational grief within an ecological framework, using fire and water as symbols of destruction and renewal. These narratives not only resonate emotionally but also challenge readers to reconsider their roles within interconnected ecosystems. By fostering ecological awareness through literature, this interdisciplinary approach contributes to behavioural sciences by providing tools for addressing contemporary challenges such as eco-anxiety—a chronic fear of environmental doom exacerbated by climate change [Clayton et al. \(2017\)](#). Therapeutic storytelling that incorporates ecological themes can help individuals process eco-anxiety while promoting resilience.

Resilience as a Relational Process: Resilience is traditionally defined as the capacity to adapt and recover from adversity [Masten and Obradović \(2006\)](#). However, ecological existentialism reframes resilience as a relational process shaped by interactions between individuals and their environments. This perspective aligns with recent research in behavioural sciences that emphasizes the importance of social support systems and community engagement in fostering resilience [Capaldi et al. \(2015\)](#). Ecological existentialism adds an important dimension to this understanding by highlighting the role of nature in resilience-building. Exposure to natural environments has been shown to reduce stress levels, enhance cognitive functioning, and promote positive emotions [Berman et al. \(2008\)](#). Nature-based interventions such as ecotherapy leverage these benefits by incorporating natural elements into therapeutic practices.

For example:

- 1) Mindfulness Practices:** Exercises grounded in natural metaphors—such as observing the ebb and flow of water—can help individuals develop emotional regulation and adaptability.
- 2) Therapeutic Storytelling:** Narratives that integrate ecological themes can foster a sense of belonging and continuity, countering feelings of alienation.

Supporting Sustainable Development Goals: The insights derived from this study align closely with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), which emphasizes mental health as integral to sustainable development (United Nations Development Programme) [UNDP \(2015\)](#). By integrating ecological awareness into mental health interventions, practitioners can address both psychological well-being and environmental stewardship.

For example:

- 1) Community-Based Programs:** Initiatives that incorporate storytelling workshops or nature-based mindfulness practices can simultaneously promote mental health and sustainability goals.
- 2) Educational Campaigns:** Incorporating narratives like Fosse's into curricula can raise awareness about the psychological benefits of connecting with nature while inspiring individuals to adopt more sustainable lifestyles.

Recognizing the interconnectedness of human health and ecological health is essential for developing policies that address global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and rising rates of anxiety and depression.

5. CONCLUSION

The themes of ambiguity, interconnectedness, and resiliency in Jon Fosse's *I Am the Wind* and *Aliss at the Fire* offer deep insights into ecological existentialism. This study highlights the ability of literature to promote psychological well-being in a time of ecological crises by applying Deborah Bird Rose's theory to these stories. By highlighting the interdependence of environmental and human health, the incorporation of ecological consciousness into mental health therapies is consistent with international objectives for sustainable development. To tackle today's issues, future studies should keep investigating multidisciplinary strategies that integrate literary analysis, psychology, and ecology.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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