

Phoenix Area Social Survey

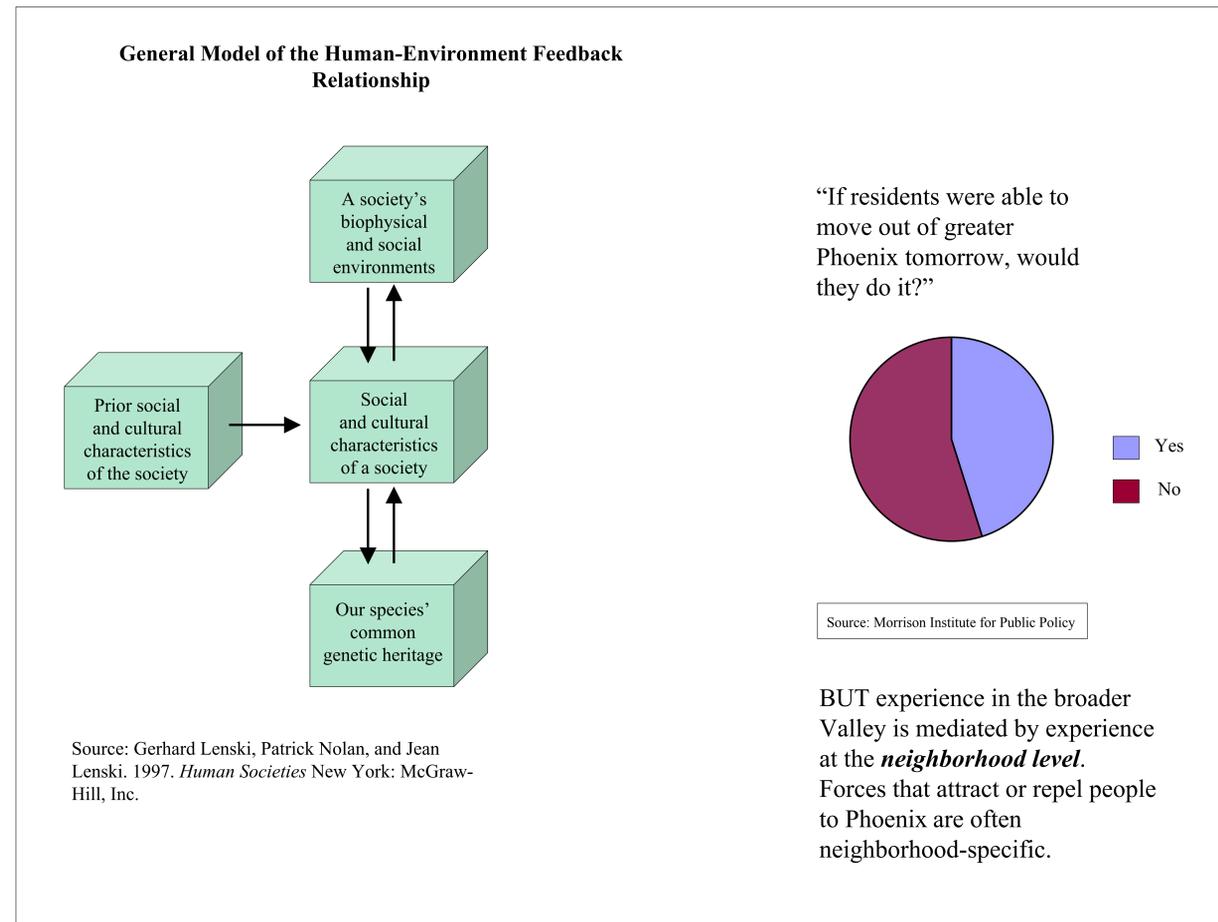
Amy Nelson, Sharon Harlan, Edward Hackett, David Pijawka, Edward Sadalla, Robert Bolin, Timothy Hogan, Tom Rex, Elizabeth Burns, Andrew Kirby

Abstract

Our main objective in the Phoenix Area Social Survey (PASS) is to examine the reciprocal relationships, or the interplay, between the social and natural environments in an urban ecosystem. In order to understand this complex process, social scientists affiliated with the Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) project propose to conduct a spatially-explicit, longitudinal social survey of residents in the Phoenix-Mesa MSA. The survey will measure the social ties of individuals to their communities, values and sentiments regarding communities, behaviors that affect the natural environment, and satisfaction with the quality of life in the area. The community that people experience most intimately is the neighborhood. Our central research questions ask how neighborhood social ties, values, and behaviors are connected with one another in ways that reflect willingness to act socially and politically with respect to the environment, and how changing environmental conditions, in turn, affect the quality of human life.

Research Questions

1. How do the social organization of neighborhoods and residents' beliefs about their social and environmental conditions affect their degree of social integration into the community, measuring integration as attachments to neighborhoods and the larger community?
2. How does social integration (neighborhood attachment, etc.) affect individuals' community values and sentiments, especially regarding their sense of responsibility for neighborhood and the sense of efficacy regarding social action?
3. How do social integration and community values/sentiments affect the individual decisions people make that have implications for the environment, such as residential moves to the periphery, commuting behavior, and participation in recycling programs?
4. How do social integration and community values/sentiments affect people's level of collective action, such as membership in neighborhood organizations and political associations, aimed at alleviating environmental and other issues?
5. How do individual and collective behaviors affect environmental outcomes, such as the relocation or clean-up of toxic waste sites?
6. How do environmental outcomes change the communities in which people live, and how satisfied are people with the outcomes of those changes, as manifested in their feelings about the quality of urban life?
7. How do residents' social interactions, values, and behaviors, as well as the relationships between people and the ecosystem, change over time?



Sampling Design and Methods

1. Select a strategic sample of Valley neighborhoods, capturing the full variety of types, range of ages, various distances from the city center; geographically distributed and coordinated with the 200-site sample.
2. Conduct face-to-face interviews.

Some Types of Valley Neighborhoods



Canal Park est. 1950s to 1960s



East Rio est. 1980s



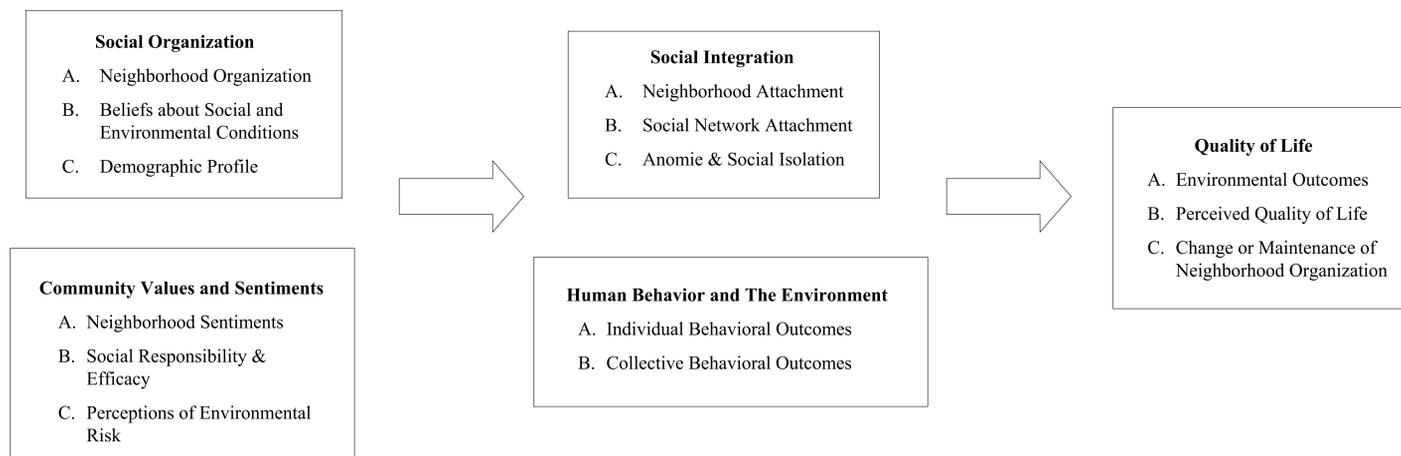
Riverside est. 1900s to 1950s



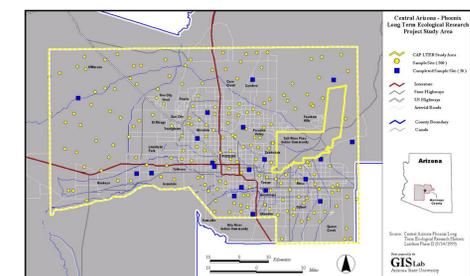
Jen Tilly Terrace est. 1940s to present

Individual-Level Behaviors Impact the Environment

This Process is Mediated by People's Experiences and Evaluations of Their Neighborhoods



CAP-LTER 200-Site Survey Points



CAP LTER
Central Arizona-Phoenix
Long-Term Ecological Research