

The relevance of actual behavioral control to predict households' coping with local air and noise pollution

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Socially disadvantaged groups, like low income households or migrants, are often exposed to poorer environmental qualities (Bunge & Katzschner, 2009, Kruize, 2007). This phenomenon is framed with the concept of environmental justice. In the following distributional environmental justice is analyzed from a coping perspective. The analysis is based on the assumption that differences in the capacity to cope with a local environmental stressor are a major predictor for unjust distribution of environmental quality. The core question to be addressed is therefore: Which factors predict whether and how exposed groups cope with their local environmental quality?

To follow this question first of all the theoretical model MOVE (Model on Households' Vulnerability towards their local Environment) has been developed. As this model is to predict behavior of identifiable groups, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen & Gilbert Cote, 2008) is the core element of MOVE.

Because of the assumed influence of the coping capacity, it is the Actual Behavioral Control as one element of the Theory of Planned Behavior that is to have a high explanatory value. To enrich the Actual Behavioral Control basic ideas of the Conservation of Resource Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which is a stress theory, are integrated into MOVE. The Conservation of Resource Theory classifies resources into object resources, conditions, personal characteristics and energy. These resource types broaden the perspectives on the disadvantage of households with factors like language skills, property rights or knowledge of the legal system.

To test this model empirically a telephone survey has been carried out in winter

2010/2011 that reached about 300 households. The quota survey aimed at reaching households in polluted or less polluted neighborhoods equally. Therefore the Ruhr Area as a densely populated agglomeration with high social and environmental gradients was selected as research area. With regard to socially disadvantaged groups the survey aimed at reaching Turkish migrants in polluted and less polluted neighborhoods. Regarding environmental quality there is a focus on noise (L_{den}) and air pollution (PM_{10} ; NO_2). Concerning the coping behavior institutional coping has been focused on in this survey. Institutional coping includes different kinds of involvement and initiation of political procedures with a desired impact on the local environment.

The poster shows both the theoretical model MOVE as well as first results of regression and path analysis that are being carried out at present. It will be put for discussion if the empirical results support the theoretical model.

References

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