



ORIGINAL PAPER

Social Engagement-Environment Changes-Health Equity Linkages: A Literature Review of Human Determinants and Resilient Policies

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Abstract:

The present article assesses the main topics on the environmental changes (ECs), environment transition (ET), human capital (HC) and health equity (HE) aiming to analyze the conceptual framework for the resilient policies (RP) and governance. The research focuses also on the historical background and the policy mechanisms using the literature review to address the patterns, actions and social challenges related to decision-making processes concerning the environmental and public health policy (PHP) sectors. The conclusions point to the role of the social context and norms, as well as the human determinants (HD) related to climate change (CC).

Keywords: *resilience policies; environment changes; health equity; human determinants, social determinants.*

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Introduction

The current research focuses on the environment changes (ECs) - health equity (HE) linkages. Therefore, it also reveals a complex overview of the topic of environment transition (ET), environmental sustainability (ES), human and social determinants and social environment (SE). As a concept, the EC-HE linkages were centred as a descriptor in areas such as social and health research (Mouy, Barr, 2006; Brooks, Douglas, Aggarwal, Prabhakaran, Holden, Mack, 2017; Marmot, 2018: 195-197; Haverkamp, 2022: 597-604; Amaro, Garcia, Arnaudova, Jolles, 2021; Anderko, 2010: 486-489; Cima, 2022: 38-49), but also behavioural and human mobility studies (Martin, S.F., Herzberg, Singh, 2022).

In recent years, for a development approach to resilient policies and social risk management (SRM), the patterns of the community - society - governance relationship were explored (Olimid, Georgescu, Gherge, 2022: 38-51).

Therefore, the investigation of the ECs-HE linkages is complex and varied, ranging from communication topics (Allison, Dickson, Fisher, Thrush, 2021) to ECs and human factors (Arora, Giuliani, Curtin, 2020). While studies of the 2000s found their focus roots in empirical research (Tong, 2000: 618-625; Easterling, Polsky, 2004), the contemporary interpretations and studies centre upon exploring how the “behavioural responses” and the “environmental features” show new changes for the research of human-ECs linkages influencing the population-community-society relationship (Gunn, Hartley, Algar, Niemelä, Keith, 2022).

Our research focuses on three main domains: (1) the functional analysis of the resilience theories and ECs-HE relationship (focus on resources and capabilities); (2) the human and behavioural determinants (focus on information, facilities and data in the area of ECs-HE linkages); (3) the social insights and ET (focus on human mobility, self-governance and social responses).

Methodology

To conduct the study, the research methodology focuses on (1) the synthesis of previous research to provide multi and interdisciplinary approaches; (2) the theoretical analysis that contributes to the formulation of the research design focusing on themes and levels of observation, reflection and perception; (3) the comparative analysis of the concepts of ECs, HE and HT giving the research an analytic and integrative character through two common approaches: (a) the construction of the analysis plan oriented on ECs and HE linkages; (b) the representativeness of the social and human determinants.

Thus, the study uses the literature review aiming to communicate the complexity of the features of ECs and HE and focusing also on the behavioural areas (human, society, change etc.) and the social responses. Moreover, in the need for considering the role of the human factors, we can identify a first connection between the resilience policies and the human capital. In this research framework, the behavioural response is aligned with the “context dependency” and the “role of individual differences” within the ECs (Gunn, Hartley, Algar, Niemelä, Keith, 2022). Therefore, the research focuses on more than 30 articles and studies mapping the thematic of ECs, ET, HE and human capital.

The thematic analysis of the articles was assessed for the research of the relevance to the field of ECs and HE linkages. Moreover, the research extracted three thematic areas namely: (a) ECs, HE, citizen participation and human mobility (10 papers: 2010 (2 articles); 2015 (2 articles); 2017 (1 article); 2020 (1 article); 2021 (1

article); 2022 (3 articles); (b) relevance to the environmental sustainability and resilient policies: 2008 (1 article); 2013 (2 articles); 2018 (1 article); 2020 (1 article); 2021 (1 article) (6 papers); (c) HE and social determinants: 2011 (1 article); 2013 (1 article); 2017 (1 article); 2018 (1 article); 2019 (1 article); 2020 (2 articles); 2022 (1 article) (8 papers).

Functional analysis of the resilience theories and ECs-HE linkages: focus on resources, social engagement, health planning and capabilities

A complex way to conceptualize the ECs-HE linkages is through the representation of “social determinants of health” (Anderko, 2010: 486-489) and health planning, drawing from the multi-level approach that emphasizes three patterns: (a) structural needs; (b) policy engagement; (c) systemic changes (Anderko, 2010: 486-489).

Furthermore, the functional approach of the environmental patterns is related to the increasing research thematic and focus pointing to the need for the reconceptualization of “human rights” and “health environment” (HEn) as a complex system of paradigms adapting the legal approaches to the interdependence between the ECs and HEn and the environmental impact (Brooks, Douglas, Aggarwal, Prabhakaran, Holden, Mack, 2017; Moran, 2010).

Other studies focus on two facets of HE, namely: (1) the acknowledgement of the social characteristics, the characteristics of social groups and the community context and resources (Farrer, Marinetti, Cavaco, Costongs, 2015: 392-437); (2) sustainable policies and programs relevant for the European Union governance aimed to provide: (a) coordination for the humanitarian aid and civil protection (Olimid, A.P., Olimid, D.A., 2022); (b) “security healthcare” addressing the disadvantaged groups and communitarian interventions (Pottie, 2015: 36-38) and resilience policies; (c) other developments refer to the starting point for the social implication within the area of “human and organizational development” (Olimid, D.A., Olimid, A.P., 2022) providing the functional approach to social engagement and innovation (Olimid, D.A., Olimid, A.P., 2022).

By conceptualizing the framework for citizen participation, Walker *et al.* tend to concentrate the community engagement and ownership by identifying relevant sectoral areas for HE policies (Walker, White, Rodriguez, *et al.*, 2022), here including environmental policy, health policy, legal framework, HE policies, “youth behavioural health policy” (Walker, White, Rodriguez, *et al.*, 2022). The research also introduces new linkages between HE and the policy areas at the community level, namely: housing, economic priorities, behavioural encounters, COVID-19 context, food security, stability and accessibility, educational patterns, community health planning, policies and development (Walker, White, Rodriguez, *et al.*, 2022: 1-12), medical care approach and HE (Marmot, 2018: 195-197).

Therefore, Suarez-Balcazar, Francisco and Rubén Chávez, N. (2020) explore a new approach to HE and “community-based participatory research” (CBPR) that focuses on the development of “community practices” (Suarez-Balcazar, Francisco, Rubén Chávez, 2020) and linkages between the social determinants, cultural approaches, environmental context and HE strategies (Amaro, Garcia, Arnaudova, Jolles, 2021).

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Table 1. ECs-HE linkages: determining objectives and searching terms focused on resources, social engagement, health planning and capabilities

Year	Author and year of publication	Selected terms	Objectives	Outcomes
2010	Anderko, 2010: 486-489	“social determinants of health” (SDH) (Anderko, 2010: 486-489)	A multi-level analysis of policy patterns	Conceptualization of structural/ systemic changes and developments here including SDH
2010	Moran, 2010	Human determinants “Social-ecological systems” (SES) (Moran, 2010)	Research of the “global environmental changes” (GEC) (Moran, 2010)	Categorize the information on GEC and SES
2015	Pottie, 2015: 36-38	“humanitarian emergency”, Health equity (HE) (Pottie, 2015: 36-38)	A research approach to community strategies and programmes and “equity approach” (Pottie, 2015: 36-38)	Conceptualization of HE outcomes and responses
2015	Farrer, Marinetti, Cavaco, Costongs, 2015: 392-437	Health equity (HE) “social determinants of health” (SDH) (Farrer, Marinetti, Cavaco, Costongs, 2015: 392-437)	Review of HE and SDH literature	Categorize the biomedical approach and policy processes related to HE
2017	Brooks, Douglas, Aggarwal, Prabhakaran, Holden, Mack, 2017	Environmental changes (ECs) Health environment (HEn) Health equity (HE) Community and social engagement	Functional analysis of the HEn patterns and human determinants	Reconceptualization of “human rights”; Reconceptualization of “health environment” (HEn)
2020	Suarez-Balcazar, Francisco, Rubén Chávez, 2020	“Community-based participatory research” (CBPR) (Suarez-Balcazar, Francisco, Rubén Chávez, 2020)	A multi-level analysis of HE focusing “diverse populations” (Suarez-Balcazar, Francisco, Rubén Chávez, 2020)	Analysis of CBPR and practices
2021	Amaro, Garcia, Arnaudova, Jolles, 2021	Healthcare system Health equity (HE) “societal systems” (Amaro, Garcia, Arnaudova, Jolles, 2021)	A multi-level analysis of HE focusing on social and cultural environment determinants	Quality analysis of various criteria: social systems, institutional processes and practices
2022	Walker, White, Rodriguez, <i>et al.</i> , 2022	Health equity (HE) Public health (PH) Multi-level policy Health priorities and needs	Review of HE and community engagement literature	Summarizing policies and processes related to HE and PH

Source: Authors’ own compilation based on Anderko, 2010: 486-489; Moran, 2010; Pottie, 2015: 36-38; Farrer, Marinetti, Cavaco, Costongs, 2015: 392-437; Brooks, Douglas, Aggarwal, Prabhakaran, Holden, Mack, 2017; Suarez-Balcazar, Francisco, Rubén Chávez, 2020; Amaro, Garcia, Arnaudova, Jolles, 2021; Walker, White, Rodriguez, *et al.*, 2022

Human and behavioural determinants: focus on information, ethical practices, facilities and data in the area of ECs-HE linkages

Ramirez *et al.* address the human and behavioural determinants considering “the health status” and “the health advancement” as the behavioural approach is explored

following the CBPR, the environmental factors, HE and the “social community” (Ramirez, Chalela, Sabado-Liwag, Choi, 2021). Throughout the process of conceptualizing human behaviour (HB) and “social environment” (SE), Stone *et al.* explore a variety of topics focusing on the multidimensional impact of SE, here including: “social work” standards and practices, human-environment linkages and “social capital” (Stone, Berzin, Taylor, Austin, 2008; Bell, 2013; Oakes, Banerjee, Warner, 2020). Other central requirements for the analysis of HB and the ECs-HE linkages frame “community engagement” (CE) and “shared health governance” (Pratt, Vries, 2018: 454-463). Regardless of this specific frame, the ethical standards are set as a function of both SE and CE (Pratt, Vries, 2018: 454-463). Concerning the research topics, the authors emphasize another approach to CE selected to classify policies and practices within the “equity-oriented global health” (Pratt, Vries, 2018: 454-463).

Other analyses address data and information with regards to environmental sustainability (ES) and HE due to the cross-disciplinary view focused on: (a) HE, CE and citizen participation; (b) housing and ES; (c) human and organizational determinants (Kay, Livingstone, 2020: 298-308). Furthermore, Buse (2013: 1095-1100) reflects the specific values of the “intersectoral action” (ISA) that are addressed for the PHP sector. Drawing from the research of the social and health determinants, ISA is presented using a two dimensions analysis: (1) the degree to which the governance system and the PHP and practices are capable of “collaborative relationships” (Buse, 2013: 1095-1100) and (2) the direct dependence and engagement between the capacity of social and health determinants and the need for the implementation and adaptation of initiatives (Buse, 2013: 1095-1100).

Table 2. ECs-HE linkages: determining objectives and searching terms focusing on information, ethical practices, facilities and data

Year	Author and year of publication	Selected terms	Objectives	Outcomes
2008	Stone, Berzin, Taylor, Austin, 2008	“social environment” (SE), HB, “environment interaction” and “curriculum development” (Stone, Berzin, Taylor, Austin, 2008)	Functional analysis of the HB and SE	Reconceptualization of the linkages between human behaviour-environment focusing on the social work theory and practice
2013	Bell, 2013	Human rights (HR) CC and HR linkages	HR research and CC	Categorize the linkages between CC and HR
2013	Buse, 2013: 1095-1100	Health equity (HE) “intersectoral action” (ISA) (Buse, 2013: 1095-1100)	A multi-level analysis of public health practices determinants	Categorize “collaborative relationships” (Buse, 2013: 1095-1100)
2018	Pratt, Vries, 2018: 454-463	“community engagement” (CE), “shared health governance” (SHG) (Pratt, Vries, 2018: 454-463)	Review of SD in health literature	Categorize the health policies and HD

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2020	Kay, Livingstone, 2020: 298-308	“environmental sustainability” (ES) Health equity (HE), “local environment” (LE) “ecosystem health”, environment equity (EE) (Kay, Livingstone, 2020: 298-308)	Analysis of ES and LE	Summarizing approaches to LE and action
2021	Ramirez, Chalela, Sabado-Liwag, Choi, 2021	“health behaviours” and “behavioural determinants” (BD) (Ramirez, Chalela, Sabado-Liwag, Choi, 2021)	A plural-sectoral analysis of BD	Conceptualization of the patterns of the environment

Source: Authors’ own compilation based on Stone, Berzin, Taylor, Austin, 2008; Bell, 2013; Buse, 2013: 1095-1100; Pratt, Vries, 2018: 454-463; Kay, Livingstone, 2020: 298-308; Ramirez, Chalela, Sabado-Liwag, Choi, 2021

Social protection and ET: focus on human mobility, ecological resilience, population patterns and social responses

Another starting approach to studying social and human determinants is the conceptualization of “adaptive social protection” (ASP) and “transformative social protection” (Tenzing, 2020). In this view, the study of Tenzing on social protection (SP) and CC are aimed to assess the role of “adaptation” and economic policies adding a “transformative” advance (Tenzing, 2020). To analyze the SP and ASP assessment, Tenzing reveals a research matrix approach, recommending: (1) outlines for SP functions and responses; (2) addressing the social and policy functions, CC and adaptation; (3) selecting capabilities for “absorptive capacity”, “adaptive capacity” and “transformative capacity” (Tenzing, 2020). As a consequence, the research consists of a framework to explore the areas of community resilience, self-governance and the social responses focusing on the “climate-responsive” framework and SRM.

Other studies provide an overall analysis of human mobility and migration revealing information about the relationship between ECs and migration (Wiegel, Boas, Warner, 2019). The study develops the research of the causal link between the “causal-vulnerable areas” and the migration approach providing new definitions and strategies aimed to acknowledge the role of ECs and population patterns, namely: (i) migration and adaptation; (ii) “environmental migration”; (iii) local patterns and ECs (Wiegel, Boas, Warner, 2019).

Accordingly, other studies measure the citizen engagement and “natural environment” (NE) intending to address the linkages between trade, environment and CC (Jaspers, Falkner, 2013). or to frame biodiversity and anticipate scenarios for ECs (Kass, Shaw, Tew, Macdonald, 2011). The authors consider key variables (“drivers”) and potential effects for NE adopting the necessity for analyzing the drivers of ECs, the directions for strategies and actions (Kass, Shaw, Tew, Macdonald, 2011: 1518-1526). Another approach to the human patterns-NE relationship is addressed by Kopnina to explore an analytical perspective of the “ecosystems” and “habitats” (Kopnina, 2022). To achieve this objective, Kopnina concentrates on highlighting the dimensions of “hypersociality” and “sustainability” (Kopnina, 2022). The two concepts offer new perspectives on the debate on the NE-human nexus (Kopnina, 2022).

A complementary perspective is enabled also for the conceptualization of the CC and the social responses placing “resistance” and “participation” as major drivers for understanding the “social change” of the “rural community” (Molnar, 2010: 1-16).

In the past years, the perspective of pluralizing the debate on ECs developed a new dimension around “environmental humanities” (Robin, 2018). In line with the new analytical developments, Robin (2018) proposes the approach to the nexus between CC and biodiversity outlining the context of “life norms” and “leadership roles” (Robin, 2018). Drawing on this understanding of “environmental humanities” (Robin, 2018), we also consider the context of the “environmental management” proposed by Zimmerer opening up the approach to the risk-resilience linkage (Zimmerer, 2017).

Table 3. ECs-HE linkages: determining objectives and searching terms focused on human mobility, self-governance, population patterns and responses

Year	Author and year of publication	Selected terms	Objectives	Outcomes
2011	Kass, Shaw, Tew, Macdonald, 2011: 1518-1526	Biodiversity, “natural resource management”, social choice and “natural environment” (NE), “ecological resilience” (ER) (Kass, Shaw, Tew, Macdonald, 2011: 1518-1526)	Review of NE and ER focusing development scenarios and planning	Categorize the “global drivers of change” (Kass, Shaw, Tew, Macdonald, 2011: 1518-1526)
2013	Jaspers, Falkner, 2013	CC and climate policies	Review of case studies related to environment-trade aspects	Summarizing environmental measures
2017	Zimmerer, 2017	“human-environment geography” (HEG) (Zimmerer, 2017)	A multi-level analysis of HEG patterns, conditions and interactions	Analysis of concepts related to HEG
2018	Robin, 2018	“environmental humanities” (EH)	A multi-level analysis of human intervention	Conceptualization of EH and ECs
2019	Wiegel, Boas, Warner, 2019	“environmental change”, “environmental migration” (EM) and “human migration” (HM) (Wiegel, Boas, Warner, 2019)	Research of the ECs-human migration-social norms linkages	Conceptualization of EM and HM
2020	Tenzing, 2020	“adaptive social protection” (ASP), “transformative social protection” (TSP), “absorptive capacity”, “adaptive capacity” and “transformative capacity” (Tenzing, 2020)	A multi-level analysis of ASP and SP-CC linkages	Conceptualization of ASP, TSP, social policies and measures (Tenzing, 2020)
2020	Oakes, Banerjee, Warner, 2020	“human mobility” and ECs, “environmental drivers” (ED)	An empirical study of the social and demographic patterns and ES	Quality analysis of the ECs-HM nexus
2022	Kopnina, 2022	“ecosystems”, “modified environment”	A multi-level analysis of human-environment linkages	Categorize the information on human-environment interactions

Source: Authors’ own compilation based on Kass, Shaw, Tew, Macdonald, 2011: 1518-1526; Jaspers, Falkner, 2013; Zimmerer, 2017; Robin, 2018; Wiegel, Boas, Warner, 2019; Tenzing, 2020; Oakes, Banerjee, Warner, 2020; Kopnina, 2022

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Conclusions

The present article argues that the SE-ECs-HE - linkages focus particular insights into the research of human mobility and determinants. In particular, the resilience theories open a broader perspective of “climate-responsive” planning, the drivers of citizen participation and community engagement. This approach to the analytical base of the research agenda on ECs, HE and human determinants provides also the framework for understanding how the governance system and the PHP ground the base for mobility, participation and social engagement.

Authors' Contributions:

The authors contributed equally to this work.

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