

***UNDERSTANDING THE BEHAVIOR
OF URBAN DWELLERS IN URBAN
FORESTS – CASE STUDY OF
BANJA LUKA***

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INTRODUCTION

- Fast growing urban areas are putting pressure on the green spaces which need to serve increasing number of users each day.
- Industrialization and urbanization of the societies has contributed to the shift of natural resource management from economic to more environmental and socio-cultural values (Kennedy and Ward Thomas, 1995; Kennedy et al., 1998).
- Taken into account above mentioned, it is necessary to know who, why and how use the urban forests in order to meet needs of the society.



LITERATURE AND RESEARCH QUESTION

- Main research question of my proposal is ***“What role do urban forests play in everyday life of people in Banja Luka”***.
- In order to understand role of urban forests, several questions need to be addressed: Who, how and why use the urban forests and what are the activities performed.
- Answering these question require overview of the literature related to the outdoor recreation, urban forestry, human behavior, human motivation, etc.



DEFINITION – AN ONGOING PROCESS

- Regional differences (North America and Europe)
- Sectoral differences (forestry, environment, sociology, etc)

Urban forests "collectively describes all trees and woods in an urban area: in parks, private gardens, streets, around factories, offices, hospitals and schools, on wasteland and in existing woodlands" (NUFU, 1999, p. 4).



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Theoretical framework for this study will combine several theories related to the motivation and environmental behavior of the people using urban forests.
- Environmental behavior, values and attitudes have been intensively studied and several theoretical and measurement approaches have been developed



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Some of the approaches try to answer a question “When does one engage into the specific type of behavior?” – Maslows need Hierarchy and Banduras Theory of Self Efficacy
- Broad range of theoretical and methodological approaches which are dealing with relationships between attitudes and behavior - New Ecological Paradigm (Dunlap, et al. 1992), and General Responsible Environmental Behavior (GREB).



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

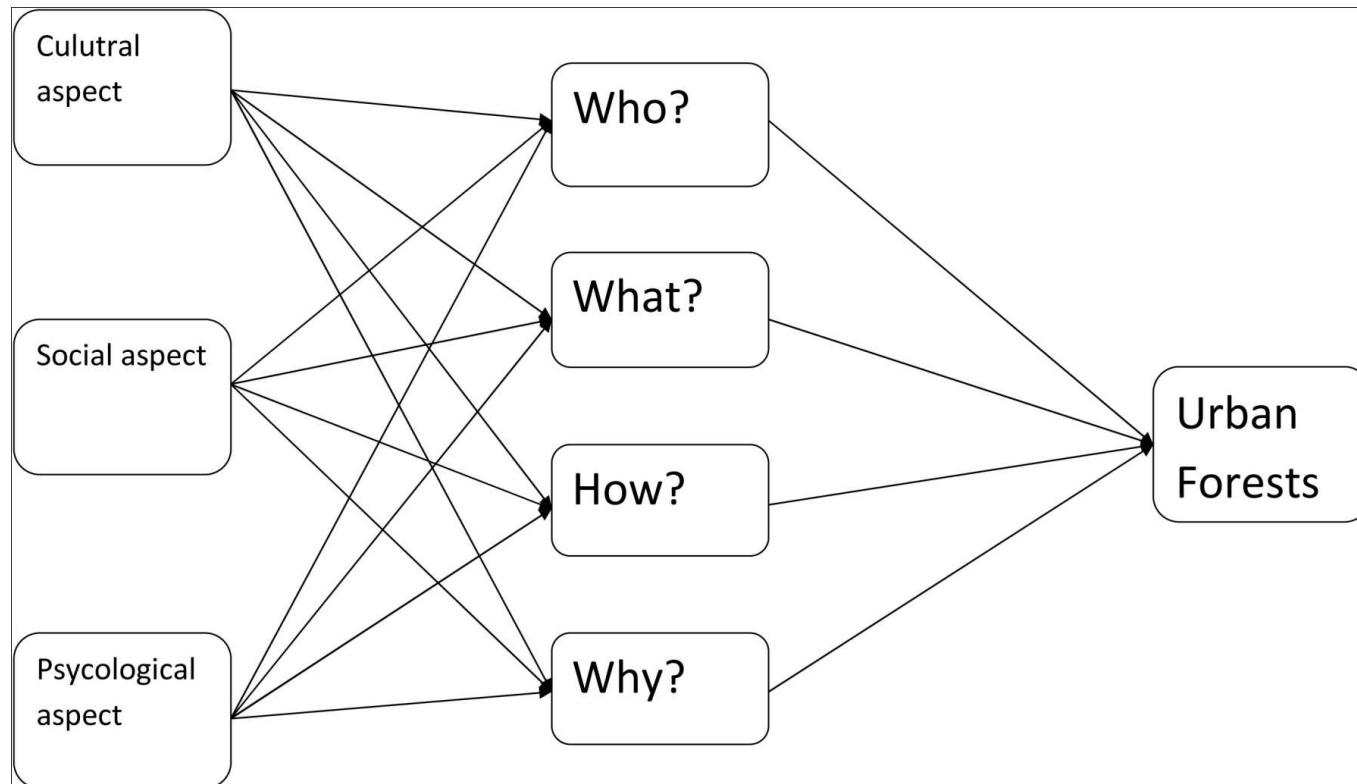
- There are other models and theoretical approaches considered while working on this proposal:
 - **Transactional model of human/landscape relationships** (Zube and Sell 1986)
 - **Placemaking** is the way all humans transform the place in which they find themselves into the place in which they live (Schneekloth, L. H. and Shibley, R. G. 1995)

These theoretical approaches all address parts of my question. Through a thorough literature review I will explore and expand understanding of literature on human behavior of urban forests and recreation.



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Main research questions (who, what, how and why) will be addressed from cultural, social and psychological aspects. For each of the question all aspects can be studied.



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- From the cultural aspect symbolic meaning, values, experiences, and ethnographic will be taken into account.
- Social aspect will study groups in context (observed groups, interaction, socio-demographic variables, etc.).
- Psychological aspect consists of individuals motives for using the urban forests such as rest, pleasantness, health, well being, etc.



METHODOLOGY

- Survey
 - Questionnaire in development stage
 - Probability sample on the city area
 - 5 % confidence interval
- Case study
 - Multiple case study which will consist of three urban forests
- Participant observation
- Picture questionnaires



ETHICAL ISSUES

- Form signed by participant will include:
 - Participant participation is voluntary and they can withdraw at any time
 - Purpose of the study and its impact on the participants
 - Procedure of the research and what can participant expect during their participation
 - Right to ask questions, right to a results and privacy protection
 - Benefits of the study for the individual
 - Signatures for both researcher and participants agreeing on these provisions



OUTCOMES AND SIGNIFICANCE

- Positive aspects of urban green areas on sociability will be underlined and thus measures for increasing of sociability in green areas can be defined and implemented.
- Understanding the different aspect of visitor's structure, behavioral patterns and reasons for using the urban forests will provide data on required management actions for better satisfaction of the needs and expectations that urban dwellers in Banja Luka have related to the urban forests.
- Contribution of this study will reflect on the existing literature in field of Sociology, Urban Forestry, Outdoor Recreation and Environmental Psychology.



- Thank you for your attention

