

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical and Conceptual Models of Social Work

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The Complexity of Social Work Theory and Practice: This section informs the reader that the chapter will explore the conceptual basis of social work, and the models, perspectives, and approaches that unite the practice of social work and make social work practice unique.
- Human Behavior and the Social Environment: This section takes a closer look at why the two concepts joined under the HBSE banner - human behavior and the social environment - are fundamental to professional social work.
- Multidimensional View: The Biopsychosocial Model of HBSE: Students are introduced to the biopsychosocial model of HBSE.
- Biological Domain: This section more closely examines the biological domain of human existence.
- Psychological Domain: This section more closely examines the psychological domain of human existence.
- Social Domain: This section of the chapter takes a closer look at the social domain of human existence.
- Expanding Our Perspective: The Spiritual and Physical Domains: A case for why social workers must also attend to clients' spiritual lives and their physical environments is provided in this section.
- Systems Theory and Social Work Practice: This section discusses systems theory in relation to professional social work practice.
- The Ecosystems Perspective: This section discusses the ecosystems perspective in relation to both systems theory and professional social work practice. Concepts such as "goodness of fit" and "adaptation" are presented as part of the discussion.
- The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice: The strengths-based approach to the practice of social work and its relation to the ecosystems perspective is explored in this section of the chapter.

CSWE COMPETENCIES FOUND IN THIS CHAPTER

Diversity in
Practice

Human Rights
& Justice

Human
Behavior

Practice
Contexts

CHAPTER OUTLINE

The Complexity of Social Work Theory and Practice

Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Multidimensional View: The Biopsychosocial Model of HBSE

Biological Domain

Psychological Domain

Social Domain

Expanding Our Perspective: The Spiritual and Physical Domains

Systems Theory and Social Work Practice

The Ecosystems Perspective

The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice

Summary

SUGGESTED IN CLASS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" and how does it relate to social work?
2. What are Erikson's eight stages of human psychological development and how do they relate to social work?
3. What is systems theory and how do social workers make use of it?
4. What is the "strengths perspective" and how do social workers apply this perspective in their work?
5. In the United States today, do you think most citizens see the cause of poverty originating primarily in the individual person or the current environment?

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

1. Describe what is meant by the term “social environment” in professional social work and identify what constitutes your social environment. Be prepared to share your list with the class.
2. Let’s assume you are a high school social worker assisting school administrators in developing afterschool programming for students. Identify and be prepared to discuss ways in which you might use Erikson’s eight stages of human psychological development in this task.
3. Using Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, identify and be prepared to discuss in class the various institutions in your home town or city that help people meet each level of need.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (3rd Ed.) (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1987).

Dennis Saleebey, *The Strengths Based Approach in Social Work Practice* 4th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2006).

Erik H Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York, NY: Norton, 1993).

George L. Engle, “The clinical application of the biopsychosocial model,” *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 137 (1980).

Janean E. Dilworth-Bart and Colleen F. Moore, “Mercy Mercy Me: Social Injustice and the Prevention of Environmental Pollutant Exposures Among Ethnic Minority and Poor Children,” *Child Development*, 77 vol. 2 (March/April 2006).

John S. Darcy and John F. Travers, *Human Development Across the Lifespan* (6th Ed) (Boston, MA: McGraw Hill, 2006).

Jose B. Ashford, Craig Winston LeCroy and Kathy L. Lortie, *Human Behavior and the Social Environment: A Multidimensional Perspective* (Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, 2001).

Katherine van Wormer, *Introduction to social welfare and social work: The U.S. in global perspective*. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Learning, Inc., 2006).

Urie Bronfenbrenner, “Toward an experimental ecology of human development,” *American Psychologist*, 32 (1977).

William Cairn, *Theories of Development: Concepts and Applications* (4th Ed) (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000).

Social Work- related Journals:

Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal

Children & Schools

Clinical Social Work Journal

Families & Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services

Health & Social Work
Journal of Community Practice
Journal of Policy Practice
Social Service Review
Social Work
Social Work Abstracts
Social Work Research
Social Work with Groups

Social Work-related Websites:

Council in Social Work Education www.cswe.org
U.S. House of Representatives www.house.gov
Library of Congress Government page www.loc.thomas.gov
National Association of Social Workers: www.naswdc.org
U.S. Senate www.senate.gov
Social Work History Website <http://www.idbsu.edu/socwork/dhuff/XX.htm>
Web Resources for Social Workers <http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/wwwrsw/>
White House www.whitehouse.gov

Get Students Connected with MySocialWorkLab

LEARNING EXPERIENCES USING MySocialWorkLab

Activity	Competence	Assessment Outcomes
In-Class Activities		
“Attending to Change and Relevant Services” video	Practice Context	Practice Context
“Social and Economic Justice: Understanding Forms of Oppression and Discrimination” Video	Human Rights Justice	Multiple Choice (1 question)
Homework Activities		
“The Ecological Model using the Friere Method” video	Human Behavior	Multiple Choice (9 questions)
“Developing an Action Plan that Changes the Internal and External” video	Human Behavior	Multiple Choice (9 questions)
“Engaging the Client to Share Their Experiences of Alienation, Marginalization and/or Oppression” video	Diversity in Practice	Multiple Choice (1 question)

In-Class Activities

1. Video: Attending to Changes and Relevant Services
With a partner or two, discuss why it is important for a social worker to observe interactions between family members. What can one learn from observing family interactions? After discussing this with your partner, come together as a class to discuss
2. Video: Social and Economic Justice: Understanding Forms of Oppression and Discrimination
In this video, it is shown that a social worker assesses the interaction among biological, psychological, and social domains in a person’s life. With a partner or two, discuss the importance of assessing all aspects of a client’s situation, looking at all relevant systems. Share your ideas with the class.

Homework Activities

1. Video: The Ecological Model using the Friere Method
Why is it important to get clients to examine and think about cultural norms? Why is it often difficult for people to recognize these norms? How do these norms affect all of us? Write a 1-2 page response to answer these questions.
2. Video: Developing an Action Plan that Changes the Internal and External
What are some things a social worker could do to empower a client? What are some of the ways that this social worker helped empower the group in this video? Write down your response and be prepared to share your answers in class.

3. Video: Engaging the Client to Share Their Experiences of Alienation, Marginalization and/or Oppression
Write down the importance of open-ended questions, and what may result from asking a client open-ended questions. After, write down three examples of a client's situation or statement, and write three examples of open-ended questions in response to them. Be prepared to share these thoughts in your next class

ASSESSMENT AVAILABLE IN MySocialWorkLab

Using the MySocialWorkLab is a great way for students to develop their overall understanding of the content of this chapter, as well as understanding the theoretical application in practice settings.

Practice Test

After reading the chapter, students are then recommended to take the *Practice Test*. The *Practice Test* measures student comprehension of the material learned in this chapter.

Chapter Exam

After class discussion and/or assignment chosen by the instructor, students should then complete the *Chapter Exam* on MySocialWorkLab. This *Chapter Exam* will be graded and will automatically feed into the MySocialWorkLab instructor gradebook upon completion.

To view the Practice and Chapter Exam test questions, visit www.mysocialworklab.com.

ASSESSMENT FOR IN-CLASS USE

The following test questions were developed for in-class use. These questions are not the same as the test questions found on MySocialWorkLab.

Pick the best possible answer from each of the four options provided with each questions.

Difficulty: 1 = Easy; 2 = Moderate; 3 = Challenging

Multiple Choice Questions

1. A model of how the biological, psychological, and social components of human functioning exist in relation to one another is referred to as:
 - a) The biopsychosocial model
 - b) The strengths perspective
 - c) The social learning model
 - d) The psychodynamic model.

Answer: a

Difficulty: 1

Competence: Human Behavior

2. _____ are systems of data, suggestions, and inferences presented as a description or an analogy:
 - a) Theories
 - b) Models
 - c) Concepts
 - d) Computers

Answer: b

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Research Based Practice

3. Social work “perspectives” are:
 - a) Quarterly newsletters in the social work profession
 - b) the viewpoints or lenses through which social work practice is conceptualized
 - c) Client assessment tools in the social work profession
 - d) Important concepts in the social work profession

Answer: b

Difficulty: 1

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

4. Social work _____ refer to the methods that social workers employ in their work:
- a) Case management
 - b) Values
 - c) Educational Requirements
 - d) Practice approaches

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

5. _____ refers to any action displayed by a human being in response to its internal physiology, psychology, and/or its external environment:
- a) Human behavior
 - b) Human intent
 - c) Human response
 - d) Human reaction

Answer: a

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Human Behavior

6. The _____ refers to all the external conditions and influences that surround and affect human beings:
- a) Society
 - b) Culture
 - c) Civilization
 - d) Social environment

Answer: d

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Human Behavior

7. Social workers maintain that all human beings exist:
- a) In a vacuum
 - b) At odds with their environment
 - c) In a reciprocal relationship with their environments
 - d) In a dependent relationship to their environments

Answer: c

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Human Behavior

8. The _____ model of human behavior and the social environment views each of the domains of human existence—biological, psychological, social, spiritual, and physical—as interconnected with each other:
- a) holistic
 - b) Biopsychosocial
 - c) Systems
 - d) Generalist

Answer: b

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Human Behavior

9. The _____ is made up of everything intrinsic to the human body:
- a) Biological domain
 - b) Physical domain
 - c) Psychological domain
 - d) Genetic domain

Answer: a

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Human Behavior

10. A list of influential psychoanalytic theorists in professional social work would include:
- a) Sigmund Freud
 - b) Albert Einstein
 - c) Thomas Edison
 - d) Edmund Erikson

Answer: a

Difficulty: 1

Competence: Professional Identity

11. Erikson's theory of development focuses on the ways in which individuals' personalities:
- a) Remain constant in changing environments
 - b) Evolve throughout the lifespan
 - c) Progress in relation to parental demands
 - d) Become distorted in response to societal demands

Answer: b

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

12. Erikson's proposed eight stages of human psychological development include:

- a) Self-esteem vs. inferiority
- b) Identity vs. inferiority
- c) Trust vs. guilt
- d) Intimacy vs. isolation

Answer: d

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

13. _____ is a framework to analyze and/or describe a group of entities (e.g., objects or beings) that work in concert and produce some result:

- a) The Strengths Perspective
- b) Social learning theory
- c) Systems theory
- d) Biopsychosocial theory

Answer: c

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

14. The strengths-based approach to social work practice is predicated on several key ideas, including:

- a) respecting client strengths
- b) respecting the strengths of the social worker
- c) assessing the strengths of the social worker
- d) diagnosing the client's problem

Answer: a

Difficulty: 1

Competence: Ethical Practice

15. _____ proposed a stage-based theory of cognitive development focused on the way human thinking and intelligence develops and changes throughout the lifespan:

- a) Erik Erikson
- b) Jean Piaget
- c) Sigmund Freud
- d) Edmund Erikson

Answer: b

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

16. A fundamental theory used in professional social work is:

- a) Feminist theory
- b) Chaos theory
- c) Social exchange theory
- d) Social systems theory

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Professional Identity

17. Empowerment is:

- a) A one-dimensional construct
- b) A central goal of the strengths perspective
- c) A prerequisite for client dependency
- d) A destructive factor in human behavior

Answer: b

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Human Rights Justice

18. Sensori-Motor intelligence is a period of _____.

- a) cognitive development
- b) behavioral development
- c) Physical development
- d) Spiritual development

Answer: a

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

19. Maslow developed a paradigm of human needs that he called the:

- a) Biopsychosocial model
- b) Hierarchy of needs
- c) Human growth model
- d) Strengths perspective

Answer: b

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

20. The multidimensional way of conceptualizing individuals and environments as an interrelated whole is referred to in social work practice as:
- a) Case management
 - b) Empowerment
 - c) Strengths perspective
 - d) person-in-environment

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Human Behavior

21. Social work, like many of the social sciences, is historically rooted in _____ notions of humanity, morality, and ethics:
- a) Business
 - b) Judeo-Christian
 - c) Historical
 - d) Agricultural

Answer: b

Difficulty: 1

Competence: Ethical Practice

22. The _____ holds that individuals can only be fully understood when viewed in the context of their environment:
- a) Case work perspective
 - b) Ecosystems perspective
 - c) Strengths perspective
 - d) Holistic perspective

Answer: b

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Human Behavior

23. A visual representation of a person (or family, community) in his or her environment is known as:
- a) A psychoeducational model
 - b) A family tree
 - c) A hierarchy of need
 - d) An ecomap

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

24. _____ is a multidimensional concept that refers to one's perceived and actual ability to manage a stressor.
- a) Systems
 - b) Empowerment
 - c) Anger management
 - d) Coping

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Human Behavior

25. Oppressed groups such as individuals in poverty, people of color, members of the GLBTQ population, and the elderly occupy _____ in our society.
- a) dominant niches
 - b) exclusive niches
 - c) marginalized niches
 - d) holistic niches

Answer: c

Difficulty: 1

Competence: Diversity in Practice

Essay Questions

1. Describe several reasons why people study for and enter the social work profession.

Difficulty: 1

Competence: Professional Identity

2. Identify and discuss some ways in which respecting "the dignity and worth" of each person is important to effective social work.

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Diversity in Practice

3. A core value in professional social work is the importance of human relationships. Describe some reasons why social workers feel human relationships are central to their work.

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Ethical Practice

4. Describe some of the similarities and differences among the fields of psychiatry, psychology, sociology, and social work.

Difficulty: 3

Competence: Professional Identity

5. Identify and discuss the reasons why a focus on the person and their environment is emphasized in social work intervention.

Difficulty: 2

Competence: Human Behavior