

THE PROBLEM...

- Much work has gone into understanding factors contributing to human behavior, but each theory primarily focuses on behavioral drivers at a single ecological level.
- Is this how the world really works?
- Explanatory theories are connected to ecological levels in the text because it helps us understand where the theory "focuses attention" in terms of behavior.
- At the same time, it is generally understood that contributing factors at one level interact with those at other levels, even though most theory does not account for that.

THE PROBLEM...

WHAT TO DO...?

BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

- Child development and behavior is an outcome of the interaction of the individual and several ecological levels:
 - *The Microsystem*
 - *The Mesosystem*
 - *The Exosystem*
 - *The Macrosystem*
 - *The Chronosystem*

BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY: Microsystem

- Relationships and structures most immediate to a child, such as:
 - Family
 - School
 - Neighborhood
 - Childcare environment (e.g., daycare, primary school).

BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY: Mesosystem

- Relationships and structures that connect components of a child's microsystem ("connective tissue"). These include
 - connections between a child's teacher and parents,
 - between an organization like the YMCA, parents, and the neighborhood,
 - between faith organizations, families and neighborhoods, etc.

**ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY:
Exosystem**

- The social system surrounding the first two systems. A child may not interact directly with this system, but his/her development is directly affected because the exosystem includes
 - workplaces,
 - social services
 - health services that have an impact on the child's well-being.

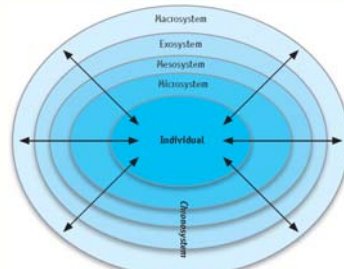
**ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY:
Macrosystem**

- Underlying context integrated with other system levels. Includes
 - cultural values,
 - customs and laws,
 - which could have multiple effects on the other levels (e.g., culturally-based gender and parent roles).

**ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY:
Chronosystem**

- The chronosystem - factor of time added to the other system levels
- Multiple systems, operating over time.

FIGURE 7-1 Bio-Ecological Systems Theory



Adapted from Sanitrock, J.W., MacKenzie-Rivers, A., Leung, K., Malcolmson, T. (2003). Ecological analysis of development. Lifespan Development Chapter 2: The Science of Life-Span Development 41 OLC, Pg 41, 42. Retrieved from www.mcgrawhill.ca/college/sanitrock/lifespan.

**FLAY'S THEORY OF TRIADIC INFLUENCE (TTI) – BASIC DIMENSIONS:
Levels of causation**

- Factors contributing to health risk behavior that are:
 - immediate (e.g., intentions, skills, etc.);
 - more distant (e.g., family relationships, social capital, community laws or policies); and
 - underlying (e.g., structural poverty, gender roles, cultural goals and values).

**FLAY'S THEORY OF TRIADIC INFLUENCE (TTI) – BASIC DIMENSIONS:
Streams of influence**

- Contributing factors to behavior operate across these causal levels via streams of influence:
 1. Intrapersonal influences (within an individual);
 2. Interpersonal (between individuals, social); and
 3. Cultural-environmental influences.

FLAY'S THEORY OF TRIADIC INFLUENCE (TTI) – PROCESS

- Factors at one level exert an effect on behavior by acting on factors at other levels, ultimately creating a stream of influence that is the combination of those factors – a chain or “cascade of influences.”
- To develop a health promotion or preventive intervention, a first step is to try and identify the factors, across levels, that form the chain of influence.

FLAY'S THEORY OF TRIADIC INFLUENCE (TTI) – PROCESS

- Depending upon resources, time and goals, the intervention can address immediate/proximal influences or try to go “back up the chain” and address social or more underlying causes.
- See Figure 7-4 for more information.

CDC/WHO RISK FACTOR DOMAINS FOR INTERPERSONAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- *Individual*: Personal factors increasing likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence (e.g., biological factors, age, education, income, substance use, or history of abuse);
- *Relationship*: Relationships that may increase the risk of violence as a victim or perpetrator (peers, partners, family);

CDC/WHO RISK FACTOR DOMAINS FOR INTERPERSONAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- *Community*: Settings (e.g., schools, workplaces, neighborhoods) that create risks for becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence; and
- *Societal*: Broad societal factors that help create a climate encouraging or inhibiting violence (e.g., social and cultural norms, policies, socio-economic inequities).

CDC MODEL: DOMAINS CONNECTING MACROECONOMIC FACTORS AND YOUTH VIOLENCE

- *Macroeconomic factors*, either short or long term;
- *Community-level factors* (including neighborhood conditions, schools, services, etc.);
- *Situational factors*, which refers to the more immediate context or situation that individuals face (family violence, youth gangs, drug market volatility, lack of employment possibilities, etc.); and
- *Individual factors* (e.g., perceptions, attitudes, behaviors such as gun-carrying).

UNICEF ADOLESCENT WELL-BEING FRAMEWORK

1. Health status, knowledge and skills
2. Subjective well-being (a person's perception of how they are doing and future prospects)
3. Supportive environment for identity and equity (related to gender identity, ethnic identity, etc.)
4. Protective environment (legal protections, enforcement to prevent abuse and exploitation)

UNICEF ADOLESCENT WELL-BEING FRAMEWORK

5. Educational opportunity and performance
6. Access to supportive services and relationships (includes services and social support relationships)
7. Socio-economic opportunity (actual opportunities and the perception of opportunities)
8. Participation (in community, society).

FIGURE 7-5 UNICEF Adolescent Well-Being Framework



Reproduced from M. Edberg, C. Norton, UNICEF Latin America-Caribbean Region, working document, 2013.

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS TO THINK ABOUT...

- *Complexity*: With so many interacting levels, factors and processes, it can be difficult to pin down the causal chain leading to (health) behavior – which can be somewhat confusing in terms of application.
- *Rationale*: Related to the first issue, it is not always clear what the rationale is for positioning some factors at one ecological level, and others at different levels.