



Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks



Theory

- An abstraction that purports to account for or explain phenomena
 - ✓ **Classical theory**—an abstract generalization that systematically **explains relationships** among phenomena
 - ✓ **Descriptive theory**—a theory that thoroughly **describes a phenomenon**, based on rich observations of it
 - ✓ **Grand theory**—a theory that attempts to **explain large aspects of human experiences**
 - ✓ **Middle-range theory**—a theory that focuses on a **specific aspect of human experience** (e.g., stress)




Models

- Deal with abstractions, assembled in a coherent scheme
- Represent a more loosely structured attempt to explain phenomena than theories
- Can serve as springboards for generating hypotheses




Framework

- The overall conceptual underpinnings of a study
 - ✓ **Theoretical framework** (based on theory)
 - ✓ **Conceptual framework** (based on a conceptual model)



Commonalities—Theories and Conceptual Models

- Use concepts as building blocks
- Require conceptual definitions of key concepts
- Can be represented in a schematic model
- Are created by humans
- Are developed inductively



Commonalities —Theories and Conceptual Models (cont.)

- Cannot be proven—they are supported to greater or lesser degrees.
- Can be used to generate hypotheses
- Can serve as a stimulus to research



Conceptual Models of Nursing

- Formal explanations of what nursing practice is
- Four concepts central to models of nursing:
 - ✓ Human beings
 - ✓ Environment
 - ✓ Health
 - ✓ Nursing



Conceptual Models of Nursing (cont.)

- Conceptual models of nursing that have been used in nursing research include:
 - ✓ **Roy's Adaptation Model**
 - ✓ **Middle-range theories** focus on more specific phenomena.
 - Beck's Theory of Postpartum Depression (2012)
 - Mishel's Uncertainty in Illness Theory (Mishel, 1990)
 - Pender's Health Promotion Model (2006)



Other Models Used by Nurse Researchers

- **Shared theories**

- ✓ Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory
- ✓ Prochaska's Transtheoretical Model
- ✓ Becker's Health Belief Model (HBM)
- ✓ Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)
- ✓ Lazarus and Folkman's Theory of Stress and Coping



Examples of Key Constructs From Shared Theories

- **Self-efficacy** (Social Cognitive Theory)
- **Stages of change** (Transtheoretical Model)
- **Behavioral intentions** (Theory of Planned Behavior)



Theories in Qualitative Research

- **Substantive theory**—conceptualizations of the target phenomena
- Theory embedded in a research tradition
 - ✓ **Grounded theory** (e.g., **symbolic interactionism**)
 - ✓ **Ethnography** (cultural theories: ideational and materialistic)
 - ✓ **Phenomenology** (the phenomenological philosophy of human experience)



The Use of Theories or Models in Quantitative Research

- Testing a theory through deducing hypothesis to be tested
- Testing a theory-based intervention
- Using a theory/model as an organizing or interpretive structure
- Fitting a problem into theory, after the fact (not recommended)



End of Presentation