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Instructor's Manual and Test Bank

for

Contemporary Human Behavior Theory

A Critical Perspective for Social Work Practice

Fourth Edition

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PREFACE

This Instructor's Manual and Test Bank is designed to assist in your use of **Contemporary Human Behavior Theory: A Critical Perspective for Social Work Practice, 4th edition**, in your classes.

Each chapter of this manual opens with a brief outline of the **Content and Theories** covered in each book chapter and is followed by a list of Important Concepts introduced in the chapter. Then, the manual provides a series of **Objective Test Questions** (both multiple choice and true/false) and **Essay Questions** for Chapters 1-13. Chapter 14 contains **Matching Test Questions** in which concepts in each chapter are paired with their corresponding theories. In addition, there are suggested **Class Activities and Exercises** for Chapters 2 - 13 that can be assigned during class time or completed as an individual or group homework assignment. Finally, at the end of the manual we have included an enlarged version of the flowcharts found in each book chapter for your use as projected overheads.

The test items were prepared for this manual to help you eliminate one of the more frustrating tasks involved in adopting a textbook - the preparation of exam questions. We have deliberately included a variety of questions so that you can choose those that best meet your teaching needs. Most of the questions here are designed to be moderately difficult and should be appropriate for upper level undergraduates and beginning level graduate students. However, please feel free to alter the questions or responses to fit the needs of your students. For example, you can add "all of the above" and "none of the above" to a multiple choice question that does not already contain these options. Likewise, you can delete "all of the above," "none of the above" and any other unnecessary options from an existing question.

Although we have included a separate section on class activities and exercises, these can also be used as essay questions. Likewise, some of the essay questions may be used for a class activity or exercise. Please feel free to assign the material in this manual in a way that best fits your classroom needs.

CHAPTER ONE THE NATURE OF THEORIES



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Content in this chapter includes:

- A. The nature of theories
- B. Why study theories of human behavior?
- C. Theories: what are they?
- D. What is a meta-theory and what is its application for social work?
- E. Ideology, scientific theory and social work practice
- F. Determinism and reductionism: A problem of social construction
- G. Theories: Application to practice
- H. Critical analysis of theory: The missing dimension

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Axiology: the philosophical study of value or worth

Constructionism: the position that uniqueness of human behavior and experience can best be described by detailed observation and description rather than experimentation and measurement.

Context: the settings and social groups in which human behavior takes place.

Critical theory: a theory base used to analyze the social, ideological and economic structures of society and their impact on individual problems; it is based on the idea that most individual problems are social problems, caused by inequitable social structures.

Critical thinking: a method of analysis that involves the use of specific standards in evaluating evidence and requires a fair and thorough critique of alternative views.

Determinism: the position that one phenomenon is caused (determined) solely by another phenomenon, such as biology, or culture, or economy.

Deterministic explanation: an explanation or prediction that is accurate 100% of the time.

Empirical structures: those that we experience through our senses, in our environment.

Epistemology: a philosophic position about the content and basis of knowledge and standards for knowing; assumptions about how knowledge is generated.

Heuristic value: the ability of a theory to generate new lines of inquiry and knowledge.

Ideology: a set of prescriptions, or “thou-shalt” and “thou-shalt-not” statements.

Macro level theories: usually highly abstract and general theories that attempt to explain the structure and functioning of large entities such as societies, cultures, and communities.

Meso (or mid-level) theories: less abstract, more testable theories that explain smaller structures and often focus on interaction between people, groups, and organizations.

Meta-Theory: a set of ideas about how areas of interest in a particular field should be thought about and researched

Micro level theories: more concrete, specific and usually testable theories, used to explain individuals, small groups, and families.

Ontology: a philosophic position or belief about the basic nature of humans and human interaction; assumptions about the nature of human nature.



Pathologize: a way of viewing and describing client problems that results in a focus on deficit, illness and problems; this is often associated with a medical model of practice that focuses on illness and pathology rather than on strengths and resilience.

Popular definition of the helping situation: one that develops from existing ideologies of society and, often, an inadequate knowledge of scientific theory.

Positivism: the position that all human behavior can be understood and explained by a scientific sequence of observation, formation of hypotheses, and experimentation.

Probabilistic explanation: an explanation or prediction that is accurate less than 100% of the time.

Professional definition of the helping situation: one that emerges from the application of scientific theory, but under the influence of existing ideologies.

Reductionism: the claim that a complex phenomenon can be reduced to its component parts and explained only by one specific discipline such as sociology, psychology, or economics.

Religion: an expression of spirituality through formalized and organized patterns of beliefs, morals, rituals, traditions, and mutual support shared by a community and developed over time.

Social construction: the idea that there is no "objective" knowledge or reality separate from predefined group definitions that are socially created, transmitted and reinforced by social sanctions.

Spirituality: a process of human life and development focusing on the search for a sense of meaning, purpose, morality, and well-being that involves relationships between oneself, other people, the universe, and the ground of reality, however understood. It orients people around their most significant priorities and engages a sense of transcendence, such as experiences that are profound, sacred, or transpersonal.

Strengths perspective: a perspective used in social work that emphasizes the human capacity for resilience, courage, strength in the face of adversity, ingenuity in accessing and creating resources, and the right of individuals to form their own aspirations and definitions of their situations.

Theoretical structures: those that we "construct in our mind's eye to model the empirical system."

Theories: relatively abstract and general statements that attempt to explain some aspect of the empirical world.

Test Questions



Objective Questions:

1. Human behavior theory in social work most typically has stressed:
 - a. theories of self actualization
 - b. the political economy
 - c. a systems or ecological orientation
 - d. individual life span development
 - e. all of the above
 - f. c and d only
2. The term “context” refers to:
 - a. the person-in-environment
 - b. the settings and social groups in which human behavior takes place
 - c. the interrelationships between people and their families
 - d. the process of growth and development
3. Theories are important because they:
 - a. help us organize information
 - b. help us understand the contextual nature of human behavior
 - c. focus our attention on intrapsychic, interpersonal and transpersonal dynamics
 - d. shape the way in which we view clients
 - e. all of the above
 - f. a and d only
4. Macro level theories are usually:
 - a. highly specific
 - b. too vague to be of use in social work
 - c. able to explain smaller components of social reality
 - d. a and c only
 - e. none of the above
5. According to Dubin, theories are used for which of these two distinct goals?
 - a. construction and prediction
 - b. explanation and prediction
 - c. abstraction and explanation
 - d. abstraction and construction
6. Meta-theories:
 - a. are best used as overarching theories for social work practice
 - b. are especially useful for evidence-based practice
 - c. are rooted in the debate about the philosophy of science, ontology, and epistemology *
 - d. are empirically constructed
7. Theories arise from:
 - a. cognitive processes of individuals
 - b. experiential processes of individuals
 - c. social processes
 - d. all of the above
 - e. a and b only



8. Theories of human behavior are:
- a. scientifically objective
 - b. a set of prescriptions
 - c. free of material interests
 - d. often associated with political positions
 - e. none of the above
9. Critical analysis refers to:
- a. the use of specific standards in evaluating evidence
 - b. analysis based on critical thinking
 - c. a critique of alternative views
 - d. all of the above
10. The illness model is based on the idea that the person has experienced a recent trauma or crisis.
- True False
11. The helping situation is influenced by ideology.
- True False
12. Because social welfare organizations are organized in ways to facilitate “people management,” they are relatively free of ideology.
- True False
13. The popular definition of the helping situation emerges from scientific theory.
- True False
14. Reductionism refers to the position that one phenomenon is caused solely by another phenomenon.
- True False
15. The strengths perspective in social work is based on the assumption that people or groups seeking help have special “expertise.”
- True False
16. If a theory provides good suggestions for questions to explore in understanding clients, but there is not much empirical research support for the concepts in the theory, it would be considered to be high in heuristic value but low in verification.
- True False
17. The establishment of knowledge through the use of scientific theory is derived primarily from Western European thought.
- True False
18. Epistemology refers to assumptions about the nature of human nature.
- True False



Essay Questions:

1. The 2015 Council on Social Work Education Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards are based on competencies that are necessary for professional social work practice, as shown in table 1.2. Discuss why diversity and difference and a focus on human rights and social justice, in particular, are particularly relevant to the study of human behavior theory.
2. Describe the basic assumptions of critical theory and discuss its relevance to social work practice.
3. Describe the basic assumptions of the strengths perspective and discuss its relevance to social work practice.
4. Why is it important to understand the philosophical underpinnings of a theory? Discuss fully, using examples.
5. Compare and contrast the differences between positivism and constructionism. Why is this important in social work?

CHAPTER TWO SYSTEMS THEORY



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This chapter discusses five interrelated theories:

- A. Structural functionalism
- B. The ecological perspective
- C. General systems theory (also called dynamic systems theory)
- D. Deep Ecology
- E. Ecofeminism

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Adaptation: the process by which a system copes with external demands by securing the necessary resources from the environment; theoretically, systems and their environments mutually adapt to one another.

Boundary: distinguishes a system from its environment.

Deep ecology: an extension of systems theory that emphasizes the inseparability of humans and the planetary ecology, the importance of diversity within human societies and natural ecosystems, and responsibility for humans to promote the welfare of all beings and the earth as a whole.

Dynamic systems theory: proposes that human systems are characterized by development, creativity and transformation and that humans also have the capacity for symbolic activity.

Ecofeminism: an extension of systems theory that critiques the patriarchal oppressions of women and nature while promoting justice for all people and all beings in the planetary ecology.

Ecological self: a deep ecological awareness that the human individual self is fully interrelated and identified with the total planetary and cosmic ecosystem, giving rise to a sense of compassion for all beings and the earth itself as a living being.

Ecosystems theory: (also known as *the life model*) an early formulation by social work educators that proposed an evolutionary, adaptive view of people and focused on *transactions* between people and their environments.

Entropy: the tendency of a closed social system to become increasingly disorganized and stagnant.

Equifinality: the idea that systems can achieve similar end states or outcomes by using different paths or by beginning from different points.

Feedback: information that a suprasystem gives to the system about the system's output.

Focal System: the system that you are focusing on at any given point in time; it is your primary system of attention or focus.

Functionalism: relates the parts of society to the whole and relates one part to another.

Homeokinesis: a process of constant flow and change, including interaction of morphostasis for continuity and morphogenesis for transformation, that results in ongoing dynamic system development.

Interdependence: because systems are interrelated, systems are dependent upon one another and, thus, a change in one system will lead to a change in other systems.

Interrelatedness: the idea that systems are related to one another because each system is a system unto itself contains smaller systems within it, and at the same time is part of a larger system.



Morphogenesis: the self-transforming (form changing) property of dynamic systems.

Morphostasis: the self-maintaining property of dynamic systems.

Negative entropy: (also called neg-entropy) the exchanges of energy and resources between systems that promote growth and transformation.

Organicism: an analogy that compares social systems to biological organisms.

Self preservation: the tendency of systems to maintain and sustain themselves.

Social system: a system that is composed of persons or groups who interact and influence each other's behavior.

Structural functionalism: an elaboration of functionalism that examines both the structure and function of social systems.

Subsystem: a system that is part of the focal system and is smaller than and internal to the focal.

Suprasystem: a system that is external to the focal system; this is often referred to as the environment.

Synergy: transactions within or between human systems that lead to enhanced creativity and fulfillment.

System: a set of interrelated and interdependent objects.

Systems Functions: Dynamic systems must perform the four functions of goal direction, input, throughput and output.

The ecological perspective: a broader ecological systems perspective derived from anthropology and sociology that now includes the concepts of coercive and exploitative power.

Transperspectival approach: an approach to understanding that engenders creative dialogue and interaction among people of all vantage points.

Test Questions



Objective Questions:

1. The term holon refers to:
 - a. the interrelatedness and interdependence of systems components
 - b. the relationship between and among the focal, sub and supra systems
 - c. the necessity of having clearly defined boundaries between systems
 - d. all of the above
 - e. only a and b
2. Germain and Gitterman's Ecosystems theory is derived from:
 - a. ecological theory in the social sciences
 - b. the feminist response to deep ecology
 - c. developmental psychology
 - d. general systems theory
 - e. a and d.
 - f. a, c, and d
3. Dynamic systems theory stresses:
 - a. the importance of stability for systems maintenance
 - b. the importance of change for systemic growth
 - c. the importance of both stability and change
 - d. none of the above
4. Dynamic systems theory supports:
 - a. a behavioral approach to helping
 - b. a transprofessional approach to helping
 - c. a psychodynamic approach to helping
 - d. a cognitive approach to helping
5. Structural functionalism:
 - a. is primarily applicable to individuals and families
 - b. has been widely used in social work
 - c. is a major paradigm in sociological thought
 - d. is best known for its promotion of social justice
6. A value commitment most strongly associated with Deep Ecology Theory is:
 - a. conflict is usually necessary and desirable
 - b. deviance and conflict should be eliminated whenever possible
 - c. compassion should be extended to all beings
 - d. human beings should exploit nature for their own benefit
7. Ecofeminism shares the following values and beliefs with deep ecology:
 - a. patriarchal oppression of women is the basis of oppression of nature
 - b. justice should be applied to all people and all beings
 - c. human-centered thinking contributes to imbalance in human-nature relations
 - d. all of the above



e. only b and c

8. The concept of synergy means that every system is both a whole and a part.

True False

9. The functionalist concept of homeostasis implies that a society has a tendency to experience creative development through revolutionary conflict.

True False

10. In dynamic systems theory, morphogenesis and morphostasis interact in the process of homeokinesis.

True False

11. According to dynamic systems theory, in order to grow, living systems must have semipermeable boundaries.

True False

12. Change that is gradual is termed synergistic.

True False

13. According to structural functionalism, survival of a system depends on functions that promote fundamental social change.

True False

14. Deep ecology developed, in part, as an effort to address spiritual and moral aspects of relations between humans and nature.

True False

15. Deep ecology and ecofeminism both promote social activism against environmental racism.

True False



Essay Questions:

1. Compare and contrast the basic assumptions of structural functionalism, the ecological perspective, dynamic systems theory and deep ecology.
2. Some systems based theories have been criticized for their conservative nature and acceptance of the status quo. Discuss fully, giving examples.
3. Some authors have proposed that systems theory be used as an overarching, unifying theory for social work practice, while others have contested this view. Discuss the basic tenets underlying both of these positions.
4. Discuss the philosophical assumptions that underlie systemically based theories and analyze their consistency with the social work values of client self-determination, acceptance of human diversity, and the commitment to social justice.
5. Discuss the strengths and limitations of systemically based theories as they apply to the broad range of social work populations, practice settings and potential interventions with clients. Use specific examples to illustrate your answer.
6. Discuss how social work practice guided by deep ecology and ecofeminism would be different from the more conventional social work based on the life model or structural functionalism. Give examples of types of social problems that might be addressed.

Class Activities and Exercises

1. Examine the flow charts for possible applications of systems based theories. Construct a case scenario that would illustrate one such application.

Review the table on possible settings for application of a systems based theory to practice. Choose one setting

Chapter 1

Objective Questions:

1. f
2. b
3. e
4. e
5. b
6. d
7. d
8. d
9. d
10. False
11. True



12. False
13. False
14. False
15. True
16. True
17. True
18. False

Chapter 2

Objective Questions:

1. e
2. f
3. c
4. b
5. c
6. c
7. e
8. False
9. False
10. True
11. True
12. False
13. False
14. True
- True