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Social Cognitive Theory

Peter Winch

Health Behavior Change at the Individual, Household and Community Levels

224.689
Behavior change models

- There are hundreds of models in the literature.
- Last class we took two models as examples that are particularly common in public health: HBM and TRA/TPB.
- Many other models in the Theory At A Glance manual, and in the literature.
Models of health behavior:
HBM, TRA/TPB and others

**Strengths**
- Make explicit thinking about behavioral factors
- Give you a checklist of factors to consider
- Can organize qualitative or quantitative research
- Provide input on intervention content
- May reassure those who are nervous about behavior change

**Weaknesses**
- Suggest a linear process with limited human agency
- Larger social and environmental factors not captured
- Largely etic, don’t take into account local terms and concepts
Significance of Health Belief Model

- Indicated that we could analyze systematically why people do or do not accept public health interventions
- Promoted the idea of planning of educational interventions
- Indicated how we might intervene
  - if perceived susceptibility low, explain to people why they are susceptible
- Lessons from flossing survey:
  - Knowledge and self-efficacy high, but low perceived susceptibility + no cues/ reminders
  - What would you recommend?
Social Cognitive Theory
Appearance of different theories

HBM

TRA/TPB

SLT/SCT

Eohippus

Oligohippus

Merychippus

Pliohippus

Modern horse
Social Cognitive Theory

- Earliest version was Social Learning Theory
- Developed by Albert Bandura
Social Cognitive Theory

- Difficult to fully appreciate SCT
- The triangle that is always shown to summarize SCT is not analogous to the models for HBM and TRA/TPB, refers to broader processes
- The key difference is agency: People’s capacity to make choices and impose those choices on the world
Social Cognitive Theory

- In some ways it is the “anti-model”
- Despite all of the boxes and arrows, people can think and act “out of the box”, are capable of thinking and acting the way they choose to, despite the situation being very unfavorable toward the action
Social Cognitive Theory

Behavior

Personal Factors
(Cognitive, affective, & Biological events)

Environmental Factors

“Reciprocal Determinism”

Includes both social & physical environment
Women garments workers of research site coming to home in afternoon for lunch break

Behavior

Personal Factors
(Cognitive, affective, & Biological events)

Environmental Factors
Behavior

Personal Factors
(Cognitive, affective, & Biological events)

Environmental Factors
Behavior

- Personal Factors
  (Cognitive, affective, & Biological events)
- Environmental Factors
Need to be changed only new drum pic.

Behavior

- Personal Factors
  - (Cognitive, affective, & Biological events)
- Environmental Factors
Behavior

Environmental Factors

Personal Factors
(Cognitive, affective, & Biological events)
সাবান দিয়ে দুঃহাত ধুলে
সুস্থ থাকব সবাই মিলে

প্রকাশনায়: আইসিডিডিআর,বি, মহাখালী, ঢাকা

“Agency” a key theme

- Agency – “The means or mode of acting; instrumentality”
  - That is, “the power to act”... “Acts done intentionally”

- Collective agency also a theme
  - That our power to act is strongly mediated by our shared beliefs
  - As well working collectively on the basis of shared beliefs is a powerful force for change
Agency in HBM and SCT

Limited agency
- HBM: If perceived susceptibility is low, behavior seen as difficult, person very unlikely to practice the behavior

More agency
- SCT: Despite low perceived susceptibility, low feasibility, based on observation of others and the environment, person may make decision to practice the behavior
Self-efficacy

- A cornerstone of Social Cognitive Theory
- Belief/conviction (may or may not be true) that one has the power to act in a certain manner to achieve specific goals/outcomes
- Distinct from self-esteem, one’s feelings of self-worth
- A person with low self-efficacy in relation to behavior X may have high or low self-esteem
Measurement of self-efficacy

- Measured through a series of statements:
  - “I feel confident I can refuse a cigarette when my peers offer one to me”
  - “I feel confident that I can ask my partner whether she agrees to us using a condom”

- Examples of response categories:
  - Strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree
  - Not at all confident, a little confident, confident, very confident
Factors increasing self-efficacy

- Experience carrying out the behavior, "mastery experience" e.g. previous refusal of cigarettes offered by peers
- Modeling of behavior by others / vicarious experience
- Encouragement/mentoring by others to carry out the behavior
- Experience with overcoming constraints to practicing the behavior
Self-efficacy

- Popular concept, has been incorporated into many different models and frameworks
- Bandura and others feel self-efficacy doesn’t make as much sense when it isn’t “at home” in Social Cognitive Theory
Explain this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lasagna</th>
<th>Italian cuisine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>Social cognitive theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCT especially applicable where self-control is needed

- Self control required in refusal to:
  - Smoke cigarette when offered by peer
  - Have sexual intercourse/have sexual intercourse without a condom
  - Have multiple sexual partners
  - Have large family
  - Eat everything on the dinner plate
  - Eat snacks when offered
# Overview: Individual-level models of health behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HBM</th>
<th>TRA/TPB</th>
<th>SLT/SCT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive/Ease of understanding</td>
<td>★ ★ ★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heuristic device</td>
<td>★ ★ ★</td>
<td>★ ★</td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it a theoretical perspective?</td>
<td>Not quite</td>
<td>Not quite</td>
<td>Many would say yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease focus</td>
<td>★ ★ ★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popularity of the model/theory</td>
<td>★ ★ ★</td>
<td>★ ★</td>
<td>★ ★ ★ ★ Self-Eff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- HBM: Health Belief Model
- TRA/TPB: Theory of Reasoned Action/Theory of Planned Behavior
- SLT/SCT: Social Learning Theory/Self-efficacy Theory
PubMed hits for terms in title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Hits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Belief Model</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Reasoned Action</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Planned Behavior</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Learning Theory</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Cognitive Theory</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>2191</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conceptual Representations of the Self

Independent view of self

Interdependent view of self

### Table 1
**Summary of Key Differences Between an Independent and an Interdependent Construal of Self**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature compared</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Interdependent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td>Separate from social context</td>
<td>Connected with social context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>Bounded, unitary, stable</td>
<td>Flexible, variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Important features</strong></td>
<td>Internal, private (abilities, thoughts, feelings)</td>
<td>External, public (statuses, roles, relationships)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tasks</strong></td>
<td>Be unique</td>
<td>Belong, fit-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Express self</td>
<td>Occupy one’s proper place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Realize internal attributes</td>
<td>Engage in appropriate action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote own goals</td>
<td>Promote others’ goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be direct; “say what’s on your mind”</td>
<td>Be indirect; “read other’s mind”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of others</strong></td>
<td><em>Self-evaluation</em>: others important for</td>
<td><em>Self-definition</em>: relationships with others in specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>social comparison, reflected</td>
<td>contexts define the self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>appraisal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basis of self-esteem</strong></td>
<td>Ability to express self, validate</td>
<td>Ability to adjust, restrain self, maintain harmony with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>internal attributes</td>
<td>social context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>