

Theoretical consideration and conceptual framework

Introduction

Quality research work needs conceptual integration. For one to achieve this, there must be a defensible theoretical basis for carrying out the research. The researcher needs to understand the chosen theory

Theory definition

- A theory is an abstract **generalization** that **systematically** explains relationships among phenomena
- It is **an abstract** (theoretical) system of concepts and their **preposition** that help one to understand a given phenomenon
- Theory represents at least two concepts logically and systematically organize in a manner that the theory may explain the relationships
- This term of theory is refer to as descriptive theory by some authors
- Descriptive theory thoroughly describes a phenomenon. Plays an important role in qualitative research

Levels of theory

Theories differ in their level of abstraction . The most common labels used in nursing for levels or scope of theory are **grand, middle range and micro or situational theory**

- **Micro theory or situational specific theory**

Seek to explain behavior at the level of individual or family environment eg aggression, frustration .

Such theories are highly specific and narrow in scope

They are rarely associated with research

Middle range theories

- Seek to explain the interactions of micro level organizations example social institution
- These theories tend to involve fewer concepts
- Are more specific to certain phenomena and are increasingly important in nursing research

Grand theories or macro theories

- seeks to explain large segments of the human behavior
- In nursing, there are several grand theories that offer explanations of whole of nursing and address the nature, goal and mission of nursing practice example is Parse's theory of human becoming

Concept definition

Concepts are categories of perception or behavior that have common characteristics. They are building blocks of a theory

They are groups of phenomena that have something uniting them or abstractions which are derived from observations

Types of concepts

- Concrete concepts are tangible and can be measured example bones
- Abstract concepts are not tangible and cannot be measured unless they are quantified or operationalized example aggression

Construct

- Constructs are the same as abstract concepts except that in construct; the researcher invents the words to use them.
- They are intangible and so cannot be measured
- To measure construct, the researcher needs to operationalized it that is defining it in behavioral context

Models

Models are presentations, through symbols of variables in the environment

It is the symbolic representation of concepts

Conceptual framework

- Is an assemble of interrelated concepts(abstraction) relevant to a common theme
- It deals with the information related to the topic
- It is not definition of terms
- It is the same as conceptual model that is formal explanation of what the concept is as conceived by the model developer.
- It can lead to theory development

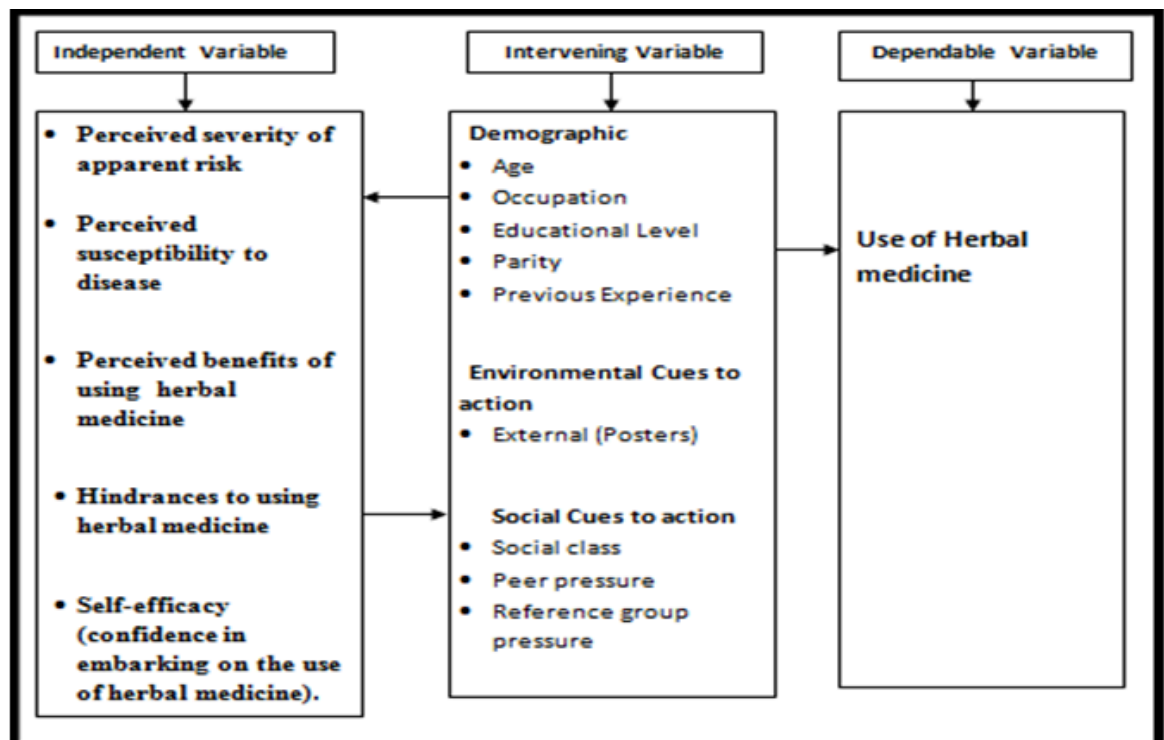


Figure i: Conceptual model for the study: an adaptation of health belief model

Theoretical framework s

- Are theoretical explanation of a phenomena
- It deals with related theories associated with the given topic ie the theory must be linked to the topic
- They are not selected by chance by the researcher but on the grounds that they are related and deemed relevant to the study

-