

# Conceptual mapping and theory building essays example

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



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## **Introduction**

Conceptual mapping is a graphical representation of concepts or ideas and the relationship between them. The concepts are represented as vertices of a graph while the relationship between them is represented by edges which may be directional or unidirectional depending on the relationship between the concepts. Conceptual mapping can be thought of as theory-building process because it explores the relationship between various concepts such as causes and effects. In this essay, the works of various authors are analyzed in view of conceptual mapping as a theory-building process.

Artinian, B. M. (1982). Conceptual Mapping: Development of the Strategy.

West Journal of

## **Nursing Research 4(4), 379-393.**

According to Artinian (1982), relating the variables to the research question is the key to performing credible scientific research whose findings can be extended and applied in relevant situations. Conceptual mapping can be used as a way to relate the independent and dependent variables to themselves and to the research problem. Effective conceptualization enables

the interpretation of research findings by answering fundamental questions such as how or why an intervention under study should work or why no apparent patterns were found in qualitative studies when logic indicates such patterns should exist. From the work of Artinian, conceptual mapping is a theory-making process because it can be applied to link causes and consequences of variables to observed phenomenon. This knowledge is the basis of making theoretical statements. For instance, social isolation or social interaction of epileptic people can be explained theoretically by evaluating factors such as inability to do various jobs and repulsion due to seizures which make a person seem abnormal. A person who accepts the abnormality theory relates only to close family members and is socially isolated while a person who refuses to accept the abnormality theory interacts with people normally and is accommodated in social circles.

Revell, S. M. H. (2012). Concept maps and nursing theory: a pedagogical approach. *Nurseeducator*, 37(3), 131-135.

Grand nursing theories are abstract and it is a challenge for students to relate them to nursing practice. This reduces the quality of nursing education when nursing students cannot link clinical experience to theoretical knowledge. In this article, Revell (2012) demonstrates the effective use of concept maps to teach nursing theory. This approach is effective because it enables students to understand nursing theories and how to apply them in the clinical setting. For instance students can use concept maps to differentiate processes from outcomes or to demonstrate how nursing goals are met from various processes. From this article, concept mapping is not used as a tool to make theories but as a tool to understand theories by

relating the various parts that are brought together to make the theory.

Novak, J. D., & Cañas, A. J. (2006). *The theory underlying concept maps and how to construct*

*and use them*. Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, 1.

Frey, M. A., & Sieloff, C. L. (1995). *Advancing King's Systems Framework and Theory of*

*Nursing*. Thousand Oaks, Ca: SAGE Publications, Inc.

This article demonstrates the derivation of a family health theory from King's conceptual framework. The focus of the developed theory is families coping with chronic lung disease. The article identifies family health as a goal for nursing care and identifies perception, time, stress and stressors as the key concepts in the theory. The developed theory uses evidence and a concept map to relate development of chronic lung diseases to disruption of family patterns. Concept maps were used to guide data collection by identifying the relationship between the identified concepts and variables used. The developed middle range nursing theory was tested and proved from data. This demonstrates that concept maps can be successfully applied in various aspects of theory-building including identifying the research problem, relating the variables to the problem, data collection and the tools used, data interpretation and organizing thoughts. Using concept maps enables the development of nursing theories from existing conceptual frameworks. This is useful since the developed theories can be used to improve patient outcomes. For instance, the theory developed in this article can be used by nurses to provide quality care at the family level for patients suffering from chronic lung diseases by addressing the identified stressors.

## References

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