A Life Course Framework for Improving the Lives of Disadvantaged Populations

Arnold Chandler | Forward Change
1. Understanding How Structural Changes Have Produced Intergenerational Cycles of Disadvantage

2. A Life Course Framework for Improving the Lives of Disadvantaged Populations: Interrupting the Cycle
A Vicious Cycle of Intergenerational Disadvantage

Increasing Joblessness & Declining Earnings

Human Capital, Socioemotional Skills, & Social Capital Deficits

Mass Incarceration and the War on Drugs

Growth of Disadvantaged Families

This cycle is now an intergenerational phenomenon as education attainment shapes the employment prospects of the next generation.

Gender-specific effects on educational attainment
• Poor neighborhoods are *over-policing* through aggressive drug enforcement and order-maintenance policing and *under-protection* from violence due to reduced “police legitimacy” and police effectiveness with regard to violent crime.

• **Mass incarceration** is also concentrated (Clear, 2007)

• The rise of concentrated poverty and jobless ghettos since the early 1970s due to economic decline, disinvestment and racial & economic segregation (Wilson, 1996)

• Concentration of factors associated with poverty like crime, violence, poor school quality, drugs, disinvestment (Massey, 2007)

• Concentration of single parent and poor families

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**Oakland, CA**

**Increasing Joblessness & Declining Earnings**

**Human Capital, Socioemotional Skills, & Social Capital Deficits**

**Growth of Disadvantaged Families**

**Mass Incarceration and the War on Drugs**

**Mass Criminalization** (War on Drugs and Incarceration)

**Declining Employment & Earnings**

**Human Capital, Socioemotional Skills, & Social Capital Deficits**

**Growth of Disadvantaged Families**

**Mass Incarceration and the War on Drugs**

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There are 19 million formerly incarcerated individuals residing in US neighborhoods.
A Life Course Framework for Improving the Lives of Disadvantaged Populations:

Interrupting the Cycle
Overview of Framework Components

Ecological and Contextual Factors

Environmental and experiential factors that interactively shape both human development and life course outcomes:
- Families
- Neighborhoods
- Schools
- Public Systems

Dimensions of Human Development

What we start with (i.e., genetics) and what develops over people’s lives:
- Physical Health
- Cognitive development
- Mental Health
- Socioemotional Skills

Life Course Outcomes

The institutional/competency milestones (“credentials”) that are tied to specific age spans:
- School readiness
- High School Graduation
- Incarceration
- Stable Full-Time Employment
- Homelessness
Physical Health: genetic predisposition; motor-visual-auditory dev, morbidity, physical frailty, brain development, biological embedding of social adversity and toxic substance exposures: chronic adversity, allostatic load/toxic stress, environmental toxin exposure (e.g. air pollution, lead poisoning, etc.), epigenetics, basal cortisol levels, addition

Cognitive Development: fluid and crystallized intelligence, information processing, language, numeracy, literacy, executive functions (e.g. memory, attention, reasoning, problem solving), mathematical reasoning, scientific thinking, verbal and written communication skills

Mental Health and Sense of Well-Being: secure attachment, trauma, happiness/contentment, hope, self-esteem/mastery, stigma stress, mood disorders, schizophrenia, PTSD, psychosis, addiction

Identity Development: Self-concept, Self-Awareness, Mindset, self-efficacy, racial/ethnic identity, gender identity, sexual identity, cultural orientation/attachment; Sense of Belonging

Beliefs, Content and Cultural Knowledge: personal beliefs, Declarative, procedural and evaluative content and cultural knowledge.

Meaning-Making/Spiritual Development: Global and Situational Meaning (e.g. "The Meaning-Making Model") including beliefs, goals, subjective sense of meaning; sense of “life’s purpose”; spiritual development and practice and/or religious affiliation and practice

Moral Development: conscience and moral agency, moral judgment, moral reasoning, altruism, empathy, moral action/behavior (Prosocial behavior), moral emotion, moral character (i.e. virtue, ethics)

Personality: Openness, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Neuroticism

Socioemotional Development: Emotion and behavior regulation; autonomy; determination; motivation; self-monitoring/meta-cognition
Dimensions of Human Development

- Physical Health
- Cognitive Dev.
- Mental Health
- Socioemotional
- Identity
- Etc.

Protective Factor

Risk Factor

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Peers, Mentors and Networks

Family

ON TRACK

OFF TRACK

0-5 6-11 12-18 19-25 26-35

Physical Health  Cognitive Dev.  Mental Health  Socioemotional  Identity  Etc.

Schools and Childcare

Place

Society, Culture & History

Institutions and Public Systems

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Key Takeaways

- Earlier life outcomes affect later ones. They form “trajectories”.

- Equifinality: There are several pathways to off-track outcomes, few pathways to on-track.

- There is a need for interventions across the life course, not just early ones. Early intervention is necessary, but not sufficient.

- There are “sensitive” developmental periods for intervention.

- “Causal Density”: Everything is related to everything else which makes “siloed” approaches ineffectual. We must bridge across issues and generations.

- We need to build recovery pathways to getting back on-track as well as preventing young people getting off-track.
On-Track Life Course Outcomes

- **0-5**: Pre-K Enrollment: age 3-5 (2012)
- **26-35**: Employed: Males ages 25-54 (2010)
- **Age 35**: Middle-Class Earnings (300% FPL) (2018)

**Percentage**

- White
- African American
- Latino
- Asian
- American Indian/Alaska Native

**Yearly Data**

- **2010**: Employed: Males ages 25-54
- **2012**: Pre-K Enrollment: age 3-5
- **2014**: College Enrollment: age 18-24
- **2015**: College Completion Male: age 18-24

**Data Presentation**

- Various data points across different categories and age groups, indicating trends and outcomes.

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**Note:** The data includes various percentages across different demographics and age groups, illustrating life course outcomes and employment rates.
Father’s Life Course (or Mother’s)

Roughly 65% of black and Latino fathers have their first child before age 25. By age 30, roughly 85% of these fathers have had their first child. These fathers have 2 or fewer kids on average around 5 years apart. Thus, by age 35, a majority of the next generation has been born. [Martinez et al, 2012]

While these are later life course interventions, they have early life course implications for the next generation.
Ecological and Contextual Factors
Ecological and Contextual Factors can be

Exposure to Risk and Protection Matters According to:

1. **Timing:** when it happens
2. **Intensity:** how bad it is
3. **Duration:** how long it happens
4. **Sequencing:** protective states are better earlier
5. **Compoundedness:** what it happens with
FAMILY (and kinship networks inc. “fictive kin”)

- Race/Ethnicity
- Genetics
- Parental age at child’s birth
- Birth order
- Documentation Status
- Incarcerated Parent
- Parental death
- Parental behavioral health problem
- Language spoken at home
- Additional supportive persons (e.g. grandparents, aunts/uncles, fictive kin)

Family Resources
- Pre-natal and neo-natal care
- Quality of early caregiving
- Food security
- Health insurance

Parental Attention, Expectations, Skills
- Parental attention
- Parental Expectations
- Parenting skills, practices (e.g. harsh parenting) and beliefs

Parental Social Support, Abuse/Neglect
- Child maltreatment: neglect/abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), domestic violence
- Foster Care Placement
- Parental Social Support (e.g. social networks, extended family)
SCHOOLS AND CHILDCARE

• **School System**: discipline practices (e.g. exclusionary discipline), school funding, peer effects, teacher quality, teacher expectations, labelling processes (e.g. tracking/ability groupings, behavior problem labels), teacher-student racial/ethnic matching, developmental relationships, institutional practices (i.e. administration), classroom management, school climate, instructional practices, curricula content (e.g. ethnic/racial history) and approach (e.g. problem-based), textbook quality, school racial and class segregation, class size,

• **Childcare**: kin care, center-based child care, other care
PEERS, MENTORS and NETWORKS

- **Social and Emotional Support**: e.g. relationship with a caring adult outside the family; close friends
- **Mentors**: formal and informal
- **Negative peer socialization**
- **Social Capital**: (bridging and bonding)
PLACE
(Neighborhoods, Places of Routine Activities and Metros)

- **Concentrated Disadvantage** and **Concentrated Affluence**
- **Violence and Crime** (victimization and secondary exposure)
- **Racial Segregation**/Social Isolation
- **Street culture and underground economy**
- **Residential instability**/"Coercive Mobility"
- **Employment opportunities**/Labor Markets
- **Housing quality**/Neighborhood Deterioration (e.g. uncollected garbage, abandonment)
- **Neighborhood institutional infrastructure** (e.g. CBOs, Nonprofit service providers, organizers)
- **Social capital and community involvement**
- **Neighborhood collective efficacy**
- **Toxic substance** exposure
- **Policing**: place-focused law enforcement practices and tactics (e.g. aggressive street drug enforcement, racial profiling, stop-and-frisk)
- **Religious Institutions**
- **Day care/After School Programs**
- **Shopping (e.g. supermarkets)**
- **Metro-level income and racial segregation, income inequality and intergenerational mobility**
INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC SYSTEMS

- **Neighborhood and Community Institutions**: afterschool programs, community centers, civic & community organizations, workplaces, etc.

- **Juvenile Justice** Systems: Referral, Detention, Community Supervision

- **Criminal Justice** System: Policing practices/effectiveness, Incarceration (state sentencing policies and practices), Prosecutorial policies and practices, Community Supervision policies and practices, Re-entry programs and services

- **Social, Health and Human Service Systems**: 
**SOCIETY, CULTURE & HISTORY**

- **Racism and Implicit Bias**
- **Market-based racial and gender discrimination:**
  - labor market
  - housing
  - retail
  - financial
- **Legal and law-enforcement discrimination**
- **Educational Discrimination**
- **Legacy of all past forms of discrimination**

**Macro-Trends**

- Demographic change (e.g. immigration)
- Rise and Decline in Violence and crime
- Rise in Mass Incarceration
- Rise in Income inequality
- Rise in Income segregation (e.g. concentrated poverty & concentrated affluence)
- Decline in Male Employment and Earnings
- Deindustrialization

- **Political Economy Shifts**
  - Rise of Neo-liberalism

- **Gender norms: patriarchal forms of masculinity and gender relation**
Life Course Systems Framework

Environmental Factors

Society, Culture, History

Public Systems

Place, Peers, Schools

Family

Developmental Characteristics

Timing Matters

Duration Matters

Life Course Outcomes

Timing Matters

Duration Matters

Life Course Systems Framework
1. **Changing conditions** (and removing barriers) confronting BMOC through *policy and systems change*
   - Focused on State & Local with some Federal Policy change
   - Tie savings from punishment reform to “reinvestment”

2. Help children become more **resilient** to bad conditions through *applying programs, services and practices* that we know work for males of color

3. **Both are indispensable!**
Contact

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www.forwardchangeconsulting.com
Citations


Citations

Bruce Western & Becky Pettit (2010) “Incarceration & social inequality”, Daedalus, Summer 2010

