

Social Learning Theory

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Learning Goals

- › Explain how observational learning influences behavior
- › Describe the four elements necessary for observational learning to occur
- › Explain the three types of reinforcement according to social learning theory

Social Learning Theory

- › **Declaration of Behaviorism:** The goal of psychology should be to predict and control overt behavior (Watson, 1913)
- › **Law of effect:** Responses followed by positive outcomes are repeated while those followed by negative outcomes are not
- › **Operant Conditioning:** People learn to behave in ways that result in reinforcement

Social Learning Theory

- › **Observational Learning:** People learn by observing others' behavior and the outcomes of their behavior
- › **Socialization:** Process by which society teaches children to behave like the ideal adults of the society
 - One of the most powerful socialization forces is observational learning
 - Children learn to behave like others in their culture because observed behaviors will likely be reinforced

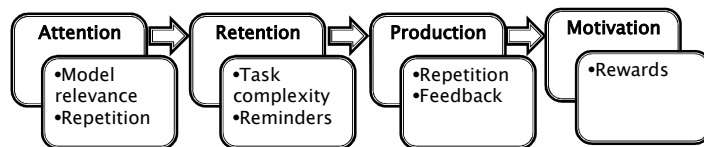
Social Learning vs. Behaviorism

- | <u>Behaviorism</u> | <u>Social Learning</u> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Learning occurs via reinforcement▶ Learned behaviors must be demonstrated▶ Behaviors must be personally reinforced to be learned | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Learning is affected by social influences▶ Learning can also include acquired knowledge▶ People can learn through the reinforcement of others |

Observational Learning

- ▶ Four elements must be met to learn a behavior through observational learning:
 1. Pay attention to the model
 2. Retain information about the behavior
 3. Produce the behavior
 4. Be motivated to repeat the behavior

Observational Learning Process



Observational Learning

- ▶ Observing a model can lead to behavior change by:
 - Teaching new behaviors
 - Refining already-learned behaviors
 - Encouraging previously forbidden behaviors
 - Drawing attention to particular tools
 - Increasing emotional arousal

Observational Learning

- ▶ Domains of research in observational learning
 - Aggression
 - Gender development
 - Peer relationships
 - Prosocial behavior
 - Influences of television and other media

Social Learning

- ▶ Types of reinforcement
 - **Direct:** Environment reinforces you
 - **Vicarious:** You observe the environment reinforcing another person
 - **Self:** You reinforce yourself

Observational Learning

- ▶ Observational learning is most common among novices
- ▶ People tend to learn more effectively from models who are:
 - Strong
 - Nurturing
 - Similar
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Personal characteristics

Social Learning in Education

- ▶ *When you follow in the path of your father, you learn to walk like him.*
- ▶ Educators and parents must model appropriate behaviors and avoid modeling inappropriate behaviors
- ▶ Consequences for inappropriate behaviors are important not only for the misbehaving student
- ▶ Describing the consequences of behavior can effectively increase appropriate behaviors and decrease inappropriate ones