

Albert Bandura: Social / Observational Learning

Children See...Children Do
Observational Learning Theory:
Albert Bandura

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Objectives:

✦ Students will be able to:

- ✦ Acquire Knowledge of the process of observational learning.
- ✦ Understanding about the four steps of observational learning process.
- ✦ Understand the factors influencing modeling.
- ✦ Apply the implication about Bandura's Observational Learning Theory.

Basic Premise

- ✧ We learn behavior through observation
- ✧ Vicarious reinforcement: Learn through observing consequences of behaviors of others
- ✧ **Observational Learning**
 - ◆ Learning by observing others.
- ✧ **Modeling**
 - ◆ The process of observing and **imitating** a specific behavior.
- ✧ **Vicarious Reinforcement**
 - ◆ You first engage in a behavior because you saw someone else get rewarded
 - ◆ Directly tied to Operant Conditioning

Symbolic Models

- Symbolic:
 - Oral, written instructions
 - Films, television, audiovisual displays
 - Actual instructor not always needed



Exemplary Models

- Exemplary:
 - Live model
 - National heroes, villains, neighbors, family members
 - Reference to a model's behavior and characteristics



Modeling

- ✦ Observe behavior of others and repeat the behavior
- ✦ Bobo doll studies (1963)
- ✦ Disinhibition: Weakening of inhibition through exposure to a model

Modeling

- ✦ **Follow the Leader:** The behavior of others increases the chances that we will do the same thing
 - ◆ Clapping, looking out the window, copying the styles and verbal expressions of our peers



Factors Influencing Modeling: Impact Tendency to Imitate

- ✦ Characteristics of the models: similarity, age, sex, status, prestige, simple vs. complex behavior
- ✦ Characteristics of observers: Low self-confidence, low self-esteem, reinforcement for imitation

Observational Learning

- ✦ Watch someone else perform a behavior, then be able to perform the behavior yourself
 - ◆ Learning a game, dance move, sport



Albert Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment

- ✦ Children were exposed to adults displaying aggression toward a bobo doll, and were then observed in a room filled with toys

- ✦ What happened?

- ✦ [Bobo Clip](#)



The beating of Bobo...



The Observational Learning Process: 4 Steps

✧ Attentional processes

✧ Retention processes

✧ Production processes

✧ Incentive and motivational processes

Step 1: Attentional Processes

Developing cognitive processes to pay attention to a model- more developed processes allow for better attention

Must observe the model accurately enough to imitate behavior

Step 2: Retention Processes

✦ To later imitate behavior, must remember aspects of the behavior

✦ Retain information in 2 ways:

- ✦ Imaginal internal representation: Visual image
Ex: Forming a mental picture
- ✦ Verbal system: Verbal description of behavior
Ex: Silently rehearsing steps in behavior

Step 3: Production Processes

- ✦ Taking imaginal and verbal representations and translating into overt behavior- practice behaviors
- ✦ Receive feedback on accuracy of behavior- how well have you imitated the modeled behavior?
- ✦ Important in mastering difficult skills
 - ◆ Ex: Driving a car

Step 4: Incentive and Motivational Processes

- ✦ With incentives, observation more quickly becomes action, pay more attention, retain more information
- ✦ Incentive to learn influenced by anticipated reinforcements

Aspects of the Self: Self-reinforcement and Self-efficacy

- ✧ Self-reinforcement: Rewards or punishments given to oneself for reaching, exceeding or falling short of personal expectations
 - ◆ Ex: Pride, shame, guilt
- ✧ Self-efficacy: Belief in ability to cope with life
 - ◆ Meeting standards: Enhances self-efficacy
 - ◆ Failure to meet standards: Reduces self-efficacy

Self-Efficacy

✧ High self-efficacy

- ✧ Believe can deal effectively with life events
- ✧ Confident in abilities
- ✧ Expect to overcome obstacles effectively

✧ Low self-efficacy

- ✧ Feel unable to exercise control over life
- ✧ Low confidence, believe all efforts are futile

Sources of Information in Determining Self-efficacy

✦ Performance attainment

- ✦ Most influential
- ✦ Role of feedback
- ✦ More we achieve, more we believe we can achieve
- ✦ Leads to feelings of competency and control

Sources of Information in Determining Self-efficacy

✧ Vicarious experience

- ✧ Seeing others perform successfully
- ✧ If they can, I can too

✧ Verbal persuasion

- ✧ Verbal reminders of abilities

✧ Physiological and emotional arousal

- ✧ Related to perceived ability to cope
- ✧ Calm, composed feelings: Higher self-efficacy
- ✧ Nervous, agitated feelings: Lower self-efficacy

Developmental Stages of Modeling and Self-efficacy

✧ Childhood

- ✧ Infancy: Direct modeling immediately following observation, develop self-efficacy with control over environment
- ✧ By age 2: Developed attentional, retention and production processes to model behavior some time after observation, not immediately

Developmental Stages of Modeling and Self-efficacy

✦ Adolescence

- ✦ Involves coping with new demands
- ✦ Success depends on level of self-efficacy established during childhood

Developmental Stages of Modeling and Self-efficacy

✧ Adulthood: 2 Periods

◆ Young adulthood:

- Adjustments: Career, marriage, parenthood
- High self-efficacy to adjust successfully

◆ Middle adulthood:

- Adjustment: Reevaluate career, family life
- Need to find opportunities to continue to enhance self-efficacy

Developmental Stages of Modeling and Self-efficacy

✧ Old age:

- ✧ Decline in mental/physical function, retirement
- ✧ Requires reappraisal of abilities
- ✧ Belief in ability to perform a task is key throughout the lifespan

Application of Social Learning Theory: Behavior Modification

✧ Fears and phobias

- ◆ Guided participation: Observe and imitate
- ◆ Covert modeling: Imaginal

✧ Anxiety

- ◆ Fear of medical treatment
- ◆ Test anxiety

Assessment of Bandura's Theory: Self-efficacy

- ✦ Age and gender differences
- ✦ Physical appearance
- ✦ Academic performance
- ✦ Career choice and job performance
- ✦ Physical health
- ✦ Mental health
- ✦ Coping with stress

Assessment of Bandura's Theory: Television and Aggressive Behaviors

- ✦ Relationship between watching violence and imitating violence

Assessment of Bandura's Theory

✦ Strengths:

- ✦ Focus on observable behavior- research support
- ✦ Practical application to real-world problems
- ✦ Large-scale changes

Check your progress

- ✦ What is Observational Learning Theory?
- ✦ How does a child learn based from Bandura's theory?
- ✦ What are the four components of observational learning?
- ✦ How is Bandura's theory applicable in present classroom system?