

PSYC 337 LEARNING

Session 8 – Observational Learning – Part Two

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Session Overview

- This session continues the discussion on observational learning.
- The focus here is on the effects of observational learning on the learner
- It also looks at the application of observational learning in our everyday situation and contemporary views on observational learning
- Finally, it concludes with examining reinforcement and punishment from observational learning perspective

Session Objectives

At the end of the session, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of Observational Learning on the Learner
- Explain Reinforcement and Punishment in Observational Learning
- Discuss application of Observational Learning in Everyday Situations

Session Outline

- The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:
 - Topic One: Effects of Observational Learning on the Learner
 - Topic Two: Reinforcement and Punishment in Observational Learning
 - Topic Three: Application of Observational Learning in Everyday Situations

Reading List

- Relevant text/chapters and reading materials are available on Sakai



Topic One

EFFECTS OF OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING ON THE LEARNER



Effects of Observational Learning on the Learner

Acquisition

- Observational learning helps a learner acquire new responses by observing the model.

Inhibition

- Through observational learning, a response that otherwise may be made is changed when the observer sees a model being punished.

Disinhibition

- In some cases observational learning may lead to a reduction in fear in the observer.
 - This is especially so if a model's behaviour goes unpunished in a feared activity.

Effects of Observational Learning on the Learner

Facilitation

- Sometimes observing others serves to remind the learner of certain behaviours they already know and urges them on to exhibit the said behaviour.
 - A model elicits from an observer a response that has already been learned

Creativity

- Sometimes an observer will observe several models perform and then adapting a combination of characteristics or styles

Topic Two

REINFORCEMENT AND PUNISHMENT IN OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING



Reinforcement and Punishment in Observational Learning

Vicarious Reinforcement

- The vicarious experience.
- Bandura used the term "vicarious reinforcement" to mean:
 - When someone observes another person being rewarded for a behaviour, it will result in reinforcement in the observer as well.
- E.g If Kofi saw his friend promoted after obtaining a degree at an educational institute, he will most likely be reinforced to follow his friend's foot steps.

Reinforcement and Punishment in Observational Learning

Vicarious Punishment

- Vicarious punishment occurs when an observer fails to reproduce a model's behaviour as a result of the fact that the model was punished.
 - E.g., From the Bobo doll experiment, the children who saw their model being punished became inhibited.

Reinforcement and Punishment in Observational Learning

Intrinsic Reinforcement and Punishment

- These are related to an individual's internalized standards of behaviour, against which he/she measures his/her performance.
- If you exceed your own standards by reproducing a model's behaviour, you feel self-esteem, which is a powerful form of reinforcement.
- This will encourage you in your learning.
- On the other hand, if you fall short of those standards, you feel self-reproach, which is a form of punishment.

Topic Three

APPLICATION OF OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING IN EVERYDAY SITUATIONS



Observational Learning in Parenting

- Children learn to speak, eat, play and learn about gender roles through observational learning.
 - For instance, children see and experience the roles of men and women in society, resulting in gender-typed activities
- Observational learning explains the cycle of abuse seen in child abuser or domestic violence.
 - For example, children who live with abusive parents grow up to accept abuse as a normal way of life and they in turn grow up to be abusers.
- In effect, child abusers learned from their parents and they inadvertently teach their children to be abusers.

Observational Learning at the Workplace

- Some form of job training such as seen in apprenticeship rely on observational learning.
 - E.g., the seamstresses, tailors and the carpenters.
- Others such as medical doctors or surgeons, nurses among others supplement their training with on-the-job training that relies on observational learning.

Observational Learning and the Media

- Do children learn to be violent from watching violent TV programmes?
- Studies by psychologists confirm that children are great imitators of what they see.
- The American Psychological Association (APA) has observed after years of research that:
- *There is absolutely no doubt that higher levels of violence on television are correlated with increased acceptance of aggressive attitudes and increased aggressive behaviour (APA Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993)*

Observational Learning and the Media

- This explains why movie producers are tasked to adopt warning labels for violent shows.
 - Examples: PG, 18, 13, etc
- Those labels allow parents to control the television watching behaviour of their children.
- This is to prevent the observational learning of undesired behaviours.