

Sample essay on review and application of learning theory

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Operant Conditioning

For most of the time, the process of learning comes from the individual's experience. People could change their behavior or improve themselves when they learn through various types of method (Walberg, 1984). Operant conditioning is one of the types of a learning process. It refers to the concept that inducing reinforcements could tend to continue a behavior while inducing punishment will stop it. It is a process in which the behavior is altered or modified by using positive reinforcements and punishments (Flora, 2004). For my example of the operant conditioning learning process, I will refer to the time of my early school age where my teacher punished those who are noisy and rewards those who have good grades.

Positive reinforcements or rewards are the conditions that favor the individual for the occurrence of the behavior (Flora, 2004). In my case, the positive reinforcement is the rewards that I achieved during the quizzes that I have good grades. The reward I achieved is the mark "Excellent" in my paper or my hand. I was always happy when my mother and father congratulated me for having the reward mark. I also got rewards when my teacher asks the class, and I volunteer to answer her questions. This reward system changes my behavior from being not attentive to class to being attentive. It also created an unconscious behavior for me always to be attentive to what my teacher is going to ask during my early school years. My teacher used positive and negative reinforcement approach in teaching us in class. The negative reinforcement or the punishment she used was for the class to be attentive and not to create noise. When my teacher caught one of my classmates being noisy or talking to his or her seatmate loudly,

she would be forced to stand in the corner. Punishment method tends to stop the occurrence of a certain behavior (Flora, 2004). In my case, I don't want to be humiliated in the class, so I always do not create noise when my teacher is in front of the class.

Schedule of reinforcement is a concept that was developed using the Skinner box experiment. Dr. Skinner is a psychologist who is one of the developers of the operant conditioning behavioral theory. Schedule of reinforcement refers to a time condition where the individual organism's behavior change is at optimum (Flora & Flora, 1999). However, most of the psychologists refer to this phenomenon that is only observable in animals and not in humans. In my case, schedule of reinforcement is not applicable.

Thorndike's Law of Effect refers to the idea that a controllable behavior tends to be repeated after the experience of satisfaction. Dr. Thorndike is also a psychologist who is one of the developers of the operant conditioning behavioral theory. It is a way to control the behavior using punishments and rewards in operant conditioning (Flora & Flora, 1999). It could also be observed in my life history during the early school days. After the punishment and the rewards which were implemented in our class, I am always attentive in class. It has resulted to change in my behavior in a positive way.

When I progress to higher education, the rewards and punishment system was absent. It also resulted to the removal of my acquired or learned behavior of being attentive in class. In psychology, it could be recognized as extinction or the removal of the condition that alters the behavior. Extinction

could also results to the removal of my learned behavior (Debeer et al, 2013).

References:

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