

# Social learning theory



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Social Learning Theory is known to originate from the famous Albert Bandura. The latter believed that all behaviorisms, on its own, could not stand out to explain all that people have to observe. He always believed that known and perceived behavior and also the environment that people live in definitely affected each other. He referred to this phenomenon as any reciprocal determination. He always extended his renowned theory by always braiding in any person's personality with all behavior and also the environment that they live in (Social Learning Theory, 1977). After Banduras acknowledgement of all mental images, he went on to base on behaviorism philosophy that clearly turned over to cognitivism. The commencement of that cognitivism has always led to their expanded research on every language learning, acquisition, and also self-regulation (Social Learning Theory, 1977).

Bandura greatly researched on the effects of aggression and also modeling through his celebrated Bobo experiments. He observed several changes in any child's behavior clearly after taking his time in watching many adult that eventually showed aggression and went on to trigger him to this theory of social learning. Bandura went on to research with many other objects, and also even using humans, and eventually receiving that aggression. He also decided to experiment with and also without rewards and even punishments (Social Learning Theory, 1977). Bandura came to a conclusion on several points and issues:

1. Attention needed to task all affects of learning.
2. Information that is learned must always be retained.

3. One must always be at a position to reproduce or even imitate the many behaviors learned.

4. Motivation that emanates either from one's past, promised, or even vicarious reinforcement that drives imitation and also punishment never and do not work as well as those reinforcements.

Social Learning Theory is known to also include other many aspects of people's behavior. He believed that people could control their own behavior by embracing self regulation. The latter requires a person to clearly self-observe, and also make several judgments about their environment and also themselves, and embracing self-response. This would be considered as a personal reward or even punishment system that could be based off one's behavior or their performance. These known theories clearly led to another celebrated concept in human psychology, the self concept also referred to as self-esteem. Here, once more, a reward system may be considered healthier than any punishment system. Those people who possess poor self concepts at all levels may eventually turn out to be overly avoidant, aggressive, or even compliant.

Bandura suggested that the core issue in this theory is the necessity for one to know him or herself, set very appropriate standards for oneself, and also use rewards in the event of learning instead of embracing punishments. The embracing of rewards will greatly make one to approach life from a positive perspective. For example, in the case of children, they will be well placed to learn more if the reward system is applied. This is where when one performs well in a certain task, he or she is rewarded. The reward will be taken

positively even with the other children as they will try to embrace the successful child. In a case where punishment is employed, children will fear to try out new challenges as they will be scared that it would eventually lead them into trouble. It would negate learning as no new innovations and ideas will be developed. Children will only dwell on those areas that they deem applicable and extremely functional in their case. Moving out of their comfort zone will never be something applied as they will always live in fear. Fear is the beginning and root cause of all evil and so it is necessary that they shun it (Self-efficacy: The exercise of control, 1997).

As Bandura put it all learning should have a basis. Setting one's bar too high or dwelling on failures is very unhealthy behavior. Information that one acquires needs to be retained. One needs to continue practicing on a given field in order to realize results. The first acquisition of information should never be considered as final as one must keep on practicing. Imitation is also called for in his theory. Imitation needs to be backed with positive behavior. In the case of a child's development, all the things that he or she observes may either affect him or her positively or negatively. Good and appropriate behavior should always be applied whenever one is close to a child. Their learning process is primarily through imitation. They can only retain information if they repeat what they are taught and imitate their teachers. All teachers are, therefore, asked to be extremely careful with what they utter and give their students. The main goal for learning is to acquire and retain the information that one gains. This can only be come out as a true dream if there are objectives set towards achieving that (Self-efficacy: The exercise of control, 1997).

Societies as a whole need to have learning sessions that will involve every member of it in learning their own cultures that are always deemed necessary, in the positive growth and development of those people. People should never assume that one will eventually fit into a system. Another case is where one migrates into a region that has completely a different culture and setting. This may be from one country to another. A challenge may be posed as he or she will be forced to adopt the new cultures. This is where learning takes centre stage. Imitating what other people in that area do and practice will be essential to their positive living with others in the society. For one to be considered as a member of the new community, he or she will have to sacrifice in order to achieve that dream. Learning the new language, the cultural beliefs, dances, and even being part of the preparation of traditional meals.

Motivation is always necessary for positive growth and learning. Let us take an example of a company manager and his or her employees. He or she needs to understand all the basics and lifestyles of the employees. He or she needs to study the people who work in the company. As a manager, one has the role of ensuring the success in all the activities that the company participates in. It is necessary that the desired goals and roles be inculcated into the system. There is also a need that the manager understands his or her employees. The stakeholders in the company need to be considered (Social Foundations of Thought and Action, 1986). In case the manager comes up with a new idea, depending on the progress of the company, he or she needs to use the best ways to get that idea into the system. Motivation will be essential in this quest as once an employee 'feels at home', in a

company; he or she will work to their best. They will be out to achieve the best results for the company. Since they tend to stick to what their managers ask of them, imitation will also work miracles in this case. The manager, therefore, has to involve all the stake holders in a bid to ensure that everything works out to their expectation. The best and most hardworking employees need to be rewarded in line with their contribution to the success of the company. They should never be looked down upon as they act like the engine of the organization. Embracing punishment may work in some cases (Social Foundations of Thought and Action, 1986). However, research has proven that punishment only leads to resentments and also brushing of shoulders in a bid to achieve results. Some employees may consider a certain punishment as being too harsh in their case. They may never want to put in their all after being punished. They will only base their work on a short term basis. Their full potential will never be tapped. This theory is, therefore, extremely critical and necessary in the development of an organization and its employees. All managers should understand the basics in all learning levels and embrace the social learning theory in their practice (Social Foundations of Thought and Action, 1986).

Julian B. Rotter also developed his own theory in line with Social Learning. During the former's day, the very prominent theories and studies came from Freud. This Rotter always disagreed with the postulation that all humans were deemed naive and also victims of their own unconscious impulses that were out to satisfy their own urges (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Rotter decided to detour from that instinct-based or even drive-based behaviorism and also chose the embracing of motivating factor of all the famous

empirical law of effect. He came up with this theory that argued that all people are motivated in a bid to always seek the necessary reinforcement and also positive stimulation (Bandura & Walters, 1963). They also avoid any unpleasant stimulation. The main driving force in this Rotter's theory is that he considers personality as a great representation of an interaction that exists between a person and his or her environment. Thus, in a bid to clearly understand people's behavior, one's history of education and also experience are always coupled with the known stimuli acting on the given person from their own environment (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

Rotter based his argument on the environmental front. He considered the environment that one lives in as the main determinant of behavior. He postulated that if one's environment is changed or altered with, he or she will change their behavior and adopt the new system (Bandura & Walters, 1963). This argument holds water. It is evident in most migrations that people are involved in. In their quest to adapt to the new environment, one will have to change his or her behavior. In order to be considered as one of the new culture, he or she will also have to practice what the new setting call for. Culture shocks are very common in every institution. People are forced to practice things that they never thought they would (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

Rotter also argued that most people will always be drawn towards their main goals, will go out to seek maximum and positive reinforcement, and also will ensure that they avoid punishment. Here, he is almost in terms with Bandura's theory. The issue of people tending to fight towards achieving their own goals is necessary for positive development of their lives. People

are always positive that they will achieve their goals (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Success is always in their mind. They fight at all levels to ensure that they never succumb to failure. They work even harder than before if they are positively motivated. Motivation sparkles hard work and also innovation. Avoiding punishment is a common thing among all members of a given society. No person will feel happy if he or she is subjected to any form of punishment. It will always act contrary to the desires of people. Motivation therefore, stems out as the basis of all developments (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

Rotter always believed that by examining the four main aspects of his celebrated social learning theory, one's behavior could turn out as predictable. First, he greatly emphasized that there was need to base on behavior potential (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Here, he considered the likeliness of any person to display a given behavior in any situation. He then brought out the issue of expectancy. He was out to elucidate on the likelihood of the proposed behavior and mannerism to lead to one to any desired outcome. He linked this second value to reinforcement value whereby he wanted to understand the desirability of any outcome of a given behavior. The final consideration was the predictive formula. He used it to combine all the three mentioned aspects in order to create a given value that would eventually express one's behavior potential (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

$$BP = f(E \ \& \ RV)$$



With the above formula, one can understand how all the above mentioned factors are interrelated and how they apply towards the social learning theory (Bandura & Walters, 1963).