

# Self efficacy, sociology and psychology essay sample



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The cognitive perspective of personality is based on the idea that people are who they are, not only because of the way they think but also because of the way they attend to, perceive, analyze, interpret, encode, and retrieve information. People tend to have habitual thinking patterns, which are characterized as their personality. However in specific areas, the cognitive theory broadens to consider the social dimension or how interaction with others affect the mind and thought processes.

This is referred to as social cognitive learning or the social learning theory. Social learning and social cognitive theories expand on behaviorist conditioning principles such as social rewards, punishments and modeling. This implies that we have drives that are learned by experience. While social learning expands on behavioral principles, it also fills in gaps that behaviorism does not address; motivation, emotion and cognitive.

Observational learning occurs when individuals observe and imitate another person's behavior. Bandura cite four components of observational learning; attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivation. Individuals cannot learn much by observation unless they perceive and attend to the significant features of the modeled behavior.

The concept of self-efficacy applies to my cousin Wendy. This is particularly about marriage. Successes build a robust belief in one's personal self-efficacy. Failures undermine it especially if failures occur before a sense of efficacy is firmly established. Wendy got married at an early age. She had had easy successes and so she expected her marriage to be successful from the start. She was discouraged and feels like a failure. A resilient sense of

efficacy requires experience in overcoming obstacles through perseverant effort. Wendy had not had this experience before.

Bad experience is also another factor that makes Wendy have low self-efficacy. Her mother also had a failed marriage and so her attitude towards marriage is negative and she thinks she can never have a good marriage. The impact of modeling on perceived self efficacy is strongly influenced by perceived similarity of the models. Modeling influences do more than provide a social standard against which to judge one's own capabilities. Wendy views her mother as her model and they also have the same characteristics. Since the person she looks up to failed in marriage, she also believes she cannot succeed in the same.

People seek proficient models that possess the competencies to which they aspire. Social persuasion is a third way of strengthening people's beliefs that they have what it takes to succeed. Wendy's mother told her repeatedly before marriage that she would not make it also as she was young and they had the same values. People who are persuaded verbally that they possess the capabilities to master given activities are likely to mobilize greater effort and sustain it than if they harbor self-doubts and dwell on personal deficiencies when problems arise.

Wendy had already been convinced that she would not make it in marriage and so when marital problems arose, she did not make any effort to solve them but instead gave up. Psychological response is the fourth way of strengthening self-efficacy. Our own responses and emotional reactions to situations also play an important role in self-efficacy. Wendy reacted

negatively to her mother's failed marriage by keeping to her herself and keeping her emotions vented inside. These eventually came out during her marriage.

Wendy needs to challenge her assumptions about her capability, ability and competence in marriage. She needs to toughen her mentality to fight her fear of marriage and look at her actual potential. She is a lovable person. Wendy needs to understand that difficulties in human pursuits serve as a useful purpose in teaching that success usually requires sustained efforts. After she is convinced that she has what it takes to succeed, she will learn to persevere in the face of adversity and quickly rebound from set backs like her failed marriage.

Wendy needs to learn things outside the present knowledge skills and experiences on successful marriages. She needs to look beyond what her mother told her. Lastly, Wendy needs persuasive boosts in perceived low self-efficacy. This will lead her to try hard enough to succeed and develop marital skills. It is not the sheer intensity of emotional and physical reactions that is important but rather how they are perceived and interpreted. By learning how to minimize stress and mood when facing difficult or challenging tasks, people can improve their sense of self-efficacy.