

Soc 220: social learning theory



What is Social Learning Theory? Juveniles learn to engage in delinquency from others
What is Frequency, amount, and relative probability of reinforcement? Frequency, amount of reinforcement received or expected, and relative probability of reinforcement all indicate whether delinquent behavior is more likely to occur when

(1) frequently reinforced and infrequently punished

(2) results or is expected to result in large amounts of reinforcement and little punishment

(3) More likely to be reinforced than alternate behaviors
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Now
What is differential reinforcement of delinquency? Different behaviors have different probabilities of being reinforced
What is positive and negative reinforcement? Positive Reinforcement--- Behavior results in something good
~ positive consequence

Negative Reinforcement--- A behavior results in the removal of something bad
~ A punisher is removed or avoided
What is positive and negative punishment? Positive--- Involves the presentation of something bad

Negative--- Removal of something good
What is self-reinforcement?

Individuals usually adopt or internalize standards for their behavior from others and evaluate their own behavior using these standards, praising themselves when they meet these standards and criticizing themselves when they do not

What is intrinsically reinforcing? Some individuals experience a range of delinquent acts as intrinsically reinforcing (or reinforcing in and of itself, independent of the reactions of others)

" nonsocial reinforcers" What is intermittent and continuous reinforcement?

Intermittent--- The reinforcement for an act is not done every single time it is

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committed but may be at times random or on average every 3rd or fourth act results in significant reinforcement

Continuous--- Every act is reinforced What is discriminative stimuli?

Individuals may be reinforced in some situations than in others ~ distinguish between situations in which delinquency is likely to be reinforced and those in which it is likely to be punished What is denial of responsibility?

Delinquents claim that delinquency is excusable when the person is not responsible for his or her own behavior (was drunk) What is denial of injury?

Delinquents claim that delinquency is excusable when no one is harmed by it What is denial of the victim? Delinquents claim that delinquency is

justifiable when the victim deserves it. This justification is closely related to the code of the street, which claims that violence is justified when others

treat you in a disrespectful manner. What is condemnation of the

condemners? Delinquents claim that delinquency is justifiable or excusable

when those who condemn them also engage in questionable behavior What is

appeal to higher loyalties? Delinquents claim that delinquency is justifiable

when it serves some higher purpose Describe the essential arguments of

social learning theory in a few sentences.-Juvenciles learn to engage in

delinquency from others; they reinforce juveniles for delinquency, teach

them beliefs that are favorable to delinquency, and expose them to

delinquent models. Next to prior delinquency, what is probably the best

predictor of subsequent delinquency? The strongest predictor of subsequent

delinquency are having delinquent friends Individuals who associate with

delinquent others, like delinquent friends, are much more likely to engage in

delinquency. We stated that this fact strongly supports social learning theory

but does not prove that the theory is correct. Why do we make this

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statement? Associating with delinquent others may increase delinquency for reasons related to strain or other theories. Ex: Juveniles who associate with delinquent peers may be more likely to engage in delinquency because they are higher in strain; delinquent peers are more likely to abuse one another and get into conflicts with outsiders

What are the three major mechanisms by which individuals learn to be delinquent from others? 1. Differentially reinforce their delinquent behavior

2. Teach them beliefs favorable to delinquency

3. Provide delinquent models for them to imitate Define and then give examples involving the frequency, amount, and relative probability of reinforcement and punishment. Frequency- How often something is reinforced

Amount- The amount of reinforcement received/expected

Relative Probability of Reinforcement- Likelihood to be reinforced than alternative behaviors

Ex: Reinforced every time for killing a man, get \$50000, and gain more likely to be praised for killing than working 8-5 job.

[Differential reinforcement ~ different behaviors have different probabilities of being reinforced]

Define and then give examples of positive and negative reinforcement. Do the same for positive and negative punishment. Positive Reinforcement--- The behavior results in something good

Negative Reinforcement--- A behavior results in the removal of something bad

Ex: Stop Fighting with siblings: Positive--- Receive cookies. Negative--- Parents stop yelling at you.

Positive Punishment--- Presentation of something bad

Negative Punishment--- Removal of something good

Ex: Hit your girlfriend: Positive--- Sent to jail. Negative--- No longer can find work because of felony charge.

List the three major sources of reinforcement and punishment. Which source of reinforcement is most important according to social learning theory?---

Social reinforcements/punishments

---Self-reinforcement/punishment

---Intrinsically reinforcing/punishing

Social learning theory emphasizes other people's role in reinforcing and punishing our behaviors

Define and give an example of intermittent reinforcement. Do the same for discriminative stimuli. Intermittent reinforcement--- Not being reinforced for every act committed but rather randomly or some average; it's not fixed.

Ex: Robbing a store before being praised: 3, 5, 10, 2, 1. Your praises are guaranteed with each job but they might form some average or might not.

Discriminative--- Being reinforced in some situations but not reinforced in others or even punished.

Ex: Drinking alcohol with peers might be reinforced but with parents it may be frowned upon.

What are the three major types of "beliefs favorable to delinquency?" Give two examples of each type (e. g., list two "general values conducive to delinquency").

1. Generally Approve of Minor Delinquency

Ex: Sex b/t two consenting adolescents

Ex: Alcohol / Drug Use

2. Conditionally Approve of Delinquency, Including Some Serious Delinquency [Wrong but excusable/justifiable under certain conditions]

Ex: Fighting for ones' respect or status

Ex: [1] Denial of responsibility, [2] Denial of injury, [3] Denial of victim, [4] Condemnation of the condemners, [5] Appeal to higher loyalties

3. General Values Conducive to Delinquency [Attraction to "excitement," disdain for hard work and a desire for quick, easy success, and a high value on being "macho"]

Ex: Shoplifting gives me a thrill b/c I'm screwing the big corporations

Ex: Yeah, I can whoop that punk's ass; I always fight to win

List and give an example of each of the five justifications or excuses for delinquency developed by Syes and Matza.

- [1] Denial of responsibility, Ex: I was drunk

- [2] Denial of injury, Ex: Insurance will cover it

- [3] Denial of victim, Ex: She was asking for it

- [4] Condemnation of the condemners, Ex: All cops are crooked

- [5] Appeal to higher loyalties, Ex: I did it to help my friends

Where do "beliefs favorable to delinquency" come from? Juveniles learn beliefs favorable to delinquency from others, including family members, friends, community

residents, and the media.

Juveniles often come to adopt such beliefs after engaging in delinquency

What factors influence whether we imitate the delinquent behavior of others?

-Imitation will result in reinforcement
-Imitate a model when we " like or respect the model, see the model receive reinforcement, see the model give off signs of pleasure, or are in an

environment where imitating the model's performance is reinforced

Give an example of how a parent might unintentionally or inadvertently reinforce delinquent or aggressive behavior. Give an example of how a parent might

inadvertently model delinquent or aggressive behavior. Ex: Punish aggression in their children by spanking or beating them

Ex: parents who smoke or drink may warn their children about the dangers of drug use

Describe the evidence in favor of social learning theory (evidence dealing with the effects of associating with delinquent others, reinforcements, beliefs, and imitation on delinquency).

-Data from a wide range of studies demonstrate the importance of imitation.
-A large number of experimental studies have exposed individuals to aggressive models and then observed the impact of such exposure on the subjects' behavior

-Survey studies examined effect of imitation on delinquency

-Field studies reveal importance of imitation