

Environmental factors

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Skinner's Concept of Environmental Factors Skinner's Concept of Environmental Factors Q1. B. F Skinner developed the operant conditioning theory, which was based on the assumptions that it was possible to understand individual behaviors by studying the causes of an action and its resulting consequences (Rochelle, 1995). Skinner's concept of operant conditioning involved changing of behavior by the use of reinforcement provided after the desired response. He proposed three types of responses or operant, which could follow behavior namely: neutral operant, reinforcers and punishers. Skinner described the neutral operant as environmental responses that neither increased nor decreased the possibility of the behavior being repeated. An example is to ignore the behavior of Bob completely so that it is neither encouraged nor discouraged. Reinforcers, which may be positive or negative, are environmental responses that increase the probability of the desired behavior being repeated. Positive reinforcement may include rewarding Bob every time he engages in the desirable behaviors in order to promote it. Negative reinforcement may also be used such as forcing Bob to give the parents or teacher money whenever he engages in the undesirable behavior. This would strengthen desired behavior by stopping or eliminating an unpleasant experience. On the other hand, punishers are environmental responses that weaken the behavior and decrease the probability of the behavior being repeated. Punishment may involve deducting Bob's pocket money or reducing time spent with peers whenever he engages in the undesirable behavior.

Q2.

Modern principles of learning are based on behavior modification strategies developed based on the theory of operant conditioning. One may choose to <https://assignbuster.com/environmental-factors-essay-samples/>

reinforce desired behavior, ignore it or punish the undesired behavior. The most commonly used technique is the reinforcement of desired behavior. There are two main types of reinforcements, namely primary and secondary reinforcement. Primary reinforcement involves the use of rewards to strengthen the desired behavior itself. Secondary reinforcement on the other hand is rewards that strengthen a behavior by providing conditions that promotes primary reinforcement (Rochelle, 1995). An example of behavior modification therapy is the use of token economy and behavior shaping. Token economy reinforces target behavior using secondary reinforcers such as tokens, which are latter exchanged for primary reinforcers such as rewards. Children are given fake money, buttons or stickers as a reward for good behavior. Apart from token economy, behavior shaping is also used to promote desired behavior. This is achieved by providing affirmation, encouragement, compliments and approval for when the desired behavior is practiced by children. Behavior modification strategies are used in educational psychology to shape skill performance. It is also used in clinical psychology is handling and managing psychiatric patients (Rochelle, 1995).

Reference

Rochelle, M. (1995). B. F. Skinner: A Reappraisal. Britain : Psychology press.