

# Positive and negative reinforcements

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Positive and Negative Reinforcement Positive Reinforcement Positive and Negative Reinforcement What are Positive Reinforcement and Negative Reinforcements? Positive and negative reinforcement are used in most of the three theories. Negative reinforcement is used in behaviorism, where it involves the removal of an unpleasant stimulus when a desired behavior occurs. Positive Reinforcement is a technique used to increase desired behavior and is used in operant conditioning.

Positive reinforcement is offering of desirable effects or consequences for a behavior with the intention of increasing desired behavior. Positive and Negative reinforcement are used or used in the theories of learning whether it is innate or learned behavior (King 2010). Positive Reinforcement and Skinners experiment Skinner experimented using positive reinforcement, with a rat and came to the conclusion that with a stimulus or positive reinforcement a rat can learn to receive food by pressing a bar. With Skinners experiments with the rat he discovered law of effect.

Skinner's approach to operant conditioning involved the " Law of Effect" stating that behavior followed by positive outcomes is strengthened and that behaviors followed by negative outcomes are weakened. This means that positive outcomes for behaviors are strengthening to an individual and negative outcomes weaken the behavior of the individual, therefore receiving a positive reinforcement or reward will increase the likelihood of the behavior occurring (King, 2010). Shaping Shaping is one of the first steps of operant conditioning, which is rewarding approximations of a desired behavior.

An example the book gives is a rat can be shaped or trained to press a bar to eat. It is not likely for the rat to receive food when being placed in the "Skinner box". The experimenter began to give the rat food pellets when the rat is close to the bar. The rat begins to gain the reward and continues to press the bar, which is Positive reinforcement. Later the experimenter only rewards the rat with a pellet when rat is 2 inches from the bar. After rewarding for being within 2 inches the rat will have to touch the bar for reward, leading to the rat, pressing he bar and receiving food. When the rat presses bar that's where reinforcement comes in, which is the process by which a rewarding stimulus or event following a particular behavior increases the probability that the behavior will happen again, the rat now sees that if it presses the bar it receives food, therefore the rat continues to press the bar to receive food. The behavior continues to happen due to the stimulus of food, which is reinforcement (King, 2010). Positive and Negative Reinforcement There is positive and negative reinforcement within operant conditioning.

Positive reinforcement is getting a positive result from the stimulus; in turn a negative reinforcement is a behavior of doing something due to a negative stimulus. There are two types of reinforcement primary and secondary reinforcement. Primary reinforcement is innate which is not learned or conditioned Secondary reinforcement (King, 2010). Generalization, Discrimination, and Extinction The next 3 key concept of classical conditioning is generalization, discrimination, and extinction. First is generalization which is performing a positive reinforced behavior in a different situation.

An example of generalization is having three classes and deciding to study for one of the classes every night. Eventually an individual will begin to study every night in all three of their classes. The second discrimination is responding appropriately to stimuli that signal that a behavior will or will not be reinforced. The book gives an example of a restaurant that gives student discounts if the student shows their student identification card and how if someone who is not a student shows their identification card might get a puzzled look.

The last is extinction, which is a decrease in the frequency of a behavior when the behavior is no longer reinforced. Extinction is without the same stimuli and the reinforcement ceases to exist (King, 2010). Schedules of Positive and Negative Reinforcement The patterns that determine when a behavior will be reinforced positively or negatively are schedules of reinforcement, which can be negative and positive reinforcement. The four different types of schedules are; variable interval, fixed interval, variable ratio, and fixed ratio. Variable-interval is a timetable where behavior is reinforced after a certain amount of time has went by.

A fixed interval applies to procrastination which is when the first behavior is reinforced after a fixed amount of time has passed. An example of fixed interval is a kindergartener that does not get a bad check mark all week receives candy at the end of the week. A fixed ratio reinforces a behavior after a set number of behaviors. Fixed ratio can be applied to the lottery, because you never know when you will win. The last is variable ratio that is when behaviors are rewarded an average number of times but on an

unpredictable basis (King, 2010). Punishment is a consequence that decreases the likelihood that a behavior will occur.

Operant Conditioning consists of two types of punishment positive and negative. Positive punishment is presentation of an unpleasant stimulus following a given behavior in order to decrease the frequency of that behavior. Yelling at your child until they clean their room would be an example of positive punishment, because if they clean their room the yelling will stop. Negative punishment is the opposite the removal of a positive stimulus following a given behavior in order to decrease the frequency of that behavior. Negative reinforcement can be telling your child if you don't clean your room I will be taking your phone away.

You will be removing the cell phone if they don't clean their room, therefore it is more likely for that child to clean their room. Both positive and negative reinforcement are used in punishment (King, 2010). Positive, Negative Reinforcement, and Timing Whether positive reinforcement or negative reinforcement timing is an important aspect in reinforcement and punishment. Immediate reinforcement is better than delayed reinforcement because delayed reinforcement means that an individual has to wait for their reward (reinforcement) and for young children that can be hard to comprehend.

Immediate punishment is more effective with young children because if you delay their punishment the child is more likely to act that behavior again. The last type is immediate with delayed reinforcement and punishment. The book Experience Psychology gives an example of the three; " an individual putting off going to the dentist to avoid a punisher, such as pain, but waiting  
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could contribute to greater pain later. Applied behavior analysis is applying operant conditioning to change human behavior. This analysis looks for rewards that are creating bad behavior and enhances rewards to gain good behavior. King, 2010). " Three Theories Together Behaviorism, operant conditioning, and classical conditioning are different theories on how individuals learn and use positive or negative reinforcement. Behaviorism focuses on observable behavior solely, uses negative reinforcement and that is what makes it different from the other theories. Classical conditioning has two stimuli; (King, 2010) an example of classical conditioning is a child smelling a beautiful flower and is stung by a bee within the flower.

Classical conditioning uses negative reinforcement, because it teaches the child that that flower caused the pain and they are more likely not to touch the flower again. The child associates the pain with the flower and is now fearful of the flower. Each theory has good and bad points, but my thought is behavior is learned with rewards, therefore human behavior is better with some sort of reward such as positive or negative (reinforcement) (King, 2010). Conclusion Positive and Negative Reinforcement Positive and negative reinforcement are used in behaviorism, classical conditioning, and operant conditioning.

Many believe one works better than the other, but it depends on the situation whether negative or positive reinforcement will be used. I believe that Positive reinforcement is the best, because getting a reward makes an individual more likely to increase the desired behavior. Negative reinforcement to me can be stressful to an individual, because if they don't do what they are supposed to do something could be taken from them (King,

2010). References King, L. (2010) Experience psychology: McGraw-Hill, Avenue of Americas. New York, NY 10020. (p. 167-177).