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Paper introduction to psychology

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Q1: Between positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, positive punishment and negative punishment, which approach do you think can yield best results and why? Support your answer with arguments.

Ans)

Positive reinforcement

Is a process that strengthens the likelihood of a particular response by adding a stimulus after the behavior is performed.

Negative reinforcement

Also strengthens the likelihood of a particular response, but by removing an undesirable consequence.

Positive punishment

Involves adding an aversive consequence after an undesired behavior is emitted to decrease future responses.

Negative punishment

Includes taking away a certain reinforcing item after the undesired behavior happens in order to decrease future responses.

Positive and negative reinforcement are more effective;

Negative reinforcement occurs when an aversive stimulus (a 'bad consequence') is removed after a good behavior is exhibited. The difference is subtle, but very important.) ... Our research found that **negative reinforcement** is actually far **more effective** for sparking initial habit change

Example:

Spanking a child when he throws a tantrum is an **example of positive** punishment. Something is added to **the** mix (spanking) to discourage a bad behavior (throwing a tantrum). On **the** other hand, removing restrictions from a child when she follows **the** rules is an **example of negative reinforcement**

Q2: "Personality evolves as a result of conflict between id, ego and superego." Explain this statement.

Ans) Personality:

The combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character.

ID:

According to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality, **the id** is **the** personality component made up of unconscious psychic energy that works to satisfy basic urges, needs, and desires. **The id** operates based on **the** pleasure principle, which demands immediate gratification of needs.

Ego:

the "I" or self of any person; a person as thinking, feeling, and willing, and distinguishing itself from the selves of others and from objects of its thought. ... egotism; conceit; self-importance: Her **ego** becomes more unbearable each day.

Superego:

In psychoanalysis, the **superego** is the part of a person's mind that helps keep the id in check, guiding the person to follow learned rules rather than impulses. ... They represent three parts of the human psyche, or mind. The **superego** is where morals and conscience come from, according to Freud.

How it works:

The **id**, **ego** and **superego** work together **to** create human behavior. The **id** creates the demands, the **ego** adds the needs of reality, and the **superego** adds morality **to** the action which is taken.

Q3: List three key findings of Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiments? Do you agree / disagree with these findings? Explain.

Ans)

Aim

Bandura (1961) conducted a **controlled experiment** study to investigate if social behaviors (i.e., aggression) can be acquired by observation and imitation.

Sample

Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1961) tested 36 boys and 36 girls from the Stanford University Nursery School aged between 3 to 6 years old.

The researchers pre-tested the children for how aggressive they were by observing the children in the nursery and judged their aggressive behavior on four 5-point rating scales. It was then possible to match the children in each group so that they had similar levels of aggression in their everyday behavior. The experiment is, therefore, an example of a matched pairs design.

To test the inter-rater reliability of the observers, 51 of the children were rated by two observers independently and their ratings compared. These ratings showed a very high reliability correlation ($r = 0.89$), which suggested that the observers had a good agreement about the behavior of the children.

Method

A lab experiment was used, in which the independent variable (the type of model) was manipulated in three conditions:

- Aggressive model is shown to 24 children
- Non-aggressive model is shown to 24 children
- No model shown (control condition) - 24 children

Stage 1: Modeling

In the experimental conditions children were individually shown into a room containing toys and played with some potato prints and pictures in a corner for 10 minutes while either:

1. 24 children (12 boys and 12 girls) watched a male or female model behaving aggressively towards a toy called a 'Bobo doll'. The adults attacked the Bobo doll in a distinctive manner - they used a hammer in some cases, and in others threw the doll in the air and shouted "Pow, Boom."
2. Another 24 children (12 boys and 12 girls) were exposed to a non-aggressive model who played in a quiet and subdued manner for 10 minutes (playing with a tinker toy set and ignoring the bobo-doll).
3. The final 24 children (12 boys and 12 girls) were used as a control group and not exposed to any model at all.

Stage 2: Aggression Arousal

All the children (including the control group) were subjected to 'mild aggression arousal.' Each child was (separately) taken to a room with relatively attractive toys.

As soon as the child started to play with the toys, the experimenter told the child that these were the experimenter's very best toys and she had decided to reserve them for the other children.

Stage 3: Test for Delayed Imitation

- The next room contained some aggressive toys and some non-aggressive toys. The non-aggressive toys included a tea set, crayons, three bears and plastic farm animals. The aggressive toys included a mallet and peg board, dart guns, and a 3 foot Bobo doll.
- The child was in the room for 20 minutes, and their behavior was observed and rated through a one-way mirror. Observations were made at 5-second intervals, therefore, giving 240 response units for each child.
- Other behaviors that didn't imitate that of the model were also recorded e.g., punching the Bobo doll on the nose

Q4 (a): You are in a public area and hear a familiar notification chime and instinctively reach for your smartphone, only to realize it's coming from someone else's phone. Identify the conditioned stimulus and conditioned response in this situation.

Ans) If you've ever been in a public area and heard a familiar notification chime, this **classical conditioning example** will certainly ring true for you. You hear that tone and instinctively reach for your smartphone, only to realize it's coming from someone else's phone. The chime or tone is a neutral stimulus.

Q4)b) Give an example where you can establish that variable interval reinforcement is better than fixed interval reinforcement.?

Ans) Since the reward (pain relief) only occurs on a **fixed interval**, there is no point in exhibiting the behavior when it will not be rewarded. With a **variable interval reinforcement** schedule, the person or animal gets the **reinforcement** based on varying amounts of time, which are unpredictable.

Example:

A weekly paycheck is a good **example** of **affixed-interval** schedule. The employee receives **reinforcement** every seven days, which may result in a higher response rate as payday approaches. Dental exams also take place on a **fixed-interval** schedule

Q5: Discuss a situation from your real life experiences where you may have used one or more defense mechanisms to reduce cognitive dissonance / anxiety / deal with a difficult emotion. Explain which mechanism did you use and why?

Ans)

Repression

Is the **psychological** attempt to direct one's own desires and impulses toward pleasurable instincts by excluding them from one's consciousness and holding or subduing them in the unconscious

Cote (2005) stated that continual **repression** brings about stress on individuals making use of it ²⁷. Stress brought about by such protracted **repression** of emotion can cause an increase in heart rate, anxiety, low level of commitment and other effects which can be detrimental to the productivity of an employee.

Examples of Repression

A child suffers abuse by a parent, represses the memories, and becomes completely unaware of them as a young adult. Freudian slips, or Para praxis, by definition can be thought of as examples of **repression**