Social Learning Theory

Individuals learn mainly through observing and mimicking a model's behavior. Originated from the behaviorist, Burrhus Frederic Skinner. He claimed behavior is a direct result of reinforcement. He emphasized the importance of operant conditioning, "a form of learning in which voluntary response come to be controlled by their consequences."  

Research suggests positive stimuli increases the probability of modeling a similar behavior. Negative stimuli decreases the likelihood of performing modeled behavior.  

Research supports observational learning begins as early as infancy.  

Albert Bandura is the modern day founder, branching off of Skinner's theory. He emphasized the cognitive processes of learning from a model.  

Social Cognitive Theory

The theory is applicable to modern treatment methods and therapies. 

Research shows people with anxiety disorders benefit from social cognitive based therapies. 

Research explains habits, such as smoking, can be broken through interactions with individuals with similar tendencies.  

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References