

social learning theory

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- Includes cognitive processes e.g. watching + paying attention
- **vicarious reinforcement** = influences behaviour indirectly. learning through observations of consequences of other people
- We don't imitate everyone, we must identify with them. Identification + modelling more likely to occur if the model is similar. Can often be influential + powerful (celebs)
- 4 mediational processes in learning:
 - ↳ **attention** = extent in noticing behav.
 - ↳ **retention** = how well behaviours remembered
 - ↳ **motor reproduction** = ability to perform behaviour.
 - ↳ **motivation** = will to repeat / perform behaviour, often determined whether behav. was punished or rewarded.

bobo doll study - Bandura

- Bandura: 1961. 36 girls + 36 boys aged 3-6.
- Group 1 → model was hitting bobo doll and shouting abuse at it
- Group 2 → model was only shouting verbal abuse
- Group 3 → not exposed to any model
- Children were taken to a room containing bobo doll + toys. Group 1 showed more aggression than other 2. Boys more aggressive than girls. Verbal abuse among genders.
- Bandura and Walter (1963): children were exposed to aggressive model + consequences.
- Group 1 → aggressive model was praised for their behaviour.
- Group 2 → aggressive model was punished for their behaviour.
- Group 3 → watched aggressive model with no consequence (control group)
- Group 1 was most aggressive, then group 3, then group 2.
- **this experiment showed that behaviour is more likely to be imitated/reproduced when it receives positive reinforcement.**

evaluation

- **Strength** = supporting research. Heussman et al. (1984) studied children's behaviour after they had watched violent TV programs. Found that PPTs (mainly males) were more aggressive.
- **Strength** = cultural differences in eating disorders. Anorexia is more common in the west. EDs don't have a biological explanation. People imitate 'thin' celebs, especially if they believe they're rewarded for their thinness.
- **Strength** = Akers (1986): probability of someone engaging in criminal behav. ↑ when exposed to similar models. This increases our understanding of criminal behav.
- **Weakness** = unethical. Teaches aggression to young children, which could encourage violence in the future.
- **Weakness** = not aggression. Children are merely playing with the doll (intended use is to be hit). Critics say experimental design is flawed.
- **Weakness** = demand characteristics. Children may be behaving in a way that's expected, real life situations may be different.
- underestimates the influence of biological factors. Consistent finding → more boys were aggressive than girls, which could be explained by difference in testosterone levels (more present in boys + linked to aggressive behav. (w))
- **Strength** = less deterministic than behaviourism. Bandura emphasises reciprocal determinism (influenced by environment + our own behav. We have some free will.