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| Attentional processes are crucial because mere exposure to a model doesn’t ensure that observers will pay attention (Bandura, 1972). | Bandura highlighted the retention process in imitation, where individuals symbolically store a model’s behaviour in their minds. |
| If the vicarious reinforcement is unimportant to the observer, they will not imitate the behaviour. | It is important, therefore, that a memory of the behaviour is formed to be performed later by the observer. |
| The individual needs to pay attention to the behaviour and its consequences and form a mental representation of the behaviour. | This is the ability to perform the behaviour that the model has just demonstrated. We see much behaviour daily that we would like to be able to imitate, but this is not always possible. |
| For a behaviour to be imitated, it has to grab our attention. We observe many behaviours on a daily basis, and many of these are not noteworthy. Attention is, therefore, extremely important in whether a behaviour influences others to imitate it. | Motor reproduction processes use internal symbolic images of observed behaviours to guide actions (Bandura, 1972). |
| The will to perform the behaviour. The observer will consider the rewards and punishments that follow a behaviour. | Lastly, motivational and reinforcement processes refer to the perceived favourable or unfavourable consequences of mimicking the model’s actions that are likely to increase or decrease the likelihood of imitation. |
| For successful imitation, observers must save these behaviours in symbolic forms, actively organizing them into easily recalled templates (Bandura, 1972). | Our physical ability limits us, so even if we wish to reproduce the behaviour, we sometimes cannot. |
| The behaviour may be noticed, but it is not always remembered, which obviously prevents imitation. | The model must capture the observer’s interest, and the observer must deem the model’s behaviour worth imitating. This decides if the behaviour will be modelled. |
| This influences our decisions whether to try and imitate it or not. Imagine the scenario of a 90-year-old lady who struggles to walk while watching Dancing on Ice. She may appreciate that the skill is desirable, but she will not attempt to imitate it because she physically cannot do it. | If the perceived rewards outweigh the perceived costs (if any), the observer will more likely imitate the behaviour. |
| Much of social learning is not immediate, so this process is especially vital in those cases. Even if the behaviour is reproduced shortly after seeing it, there needs to be a memory to refer to. |  |