

Concept of learning

- Learning is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, behaviors, or attitudes through experience, study, or teaching. It is a fundamental aspect of human development and the basis for personal growth and adaptability.
- Learning occurs throughout life, from early childhood to adulthood, and involves various cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes.
- It is a dynamic and continuous journey that shapes and enriches our cognitive abilities and behavioral patterns. Learning covers various forms, including formal education in schools, self-directed exploration, and practical hands-on experiences.
- Learning is defined as “Any relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of practice and experience”. - S.P. Robbins. This definition has three important elements..

- a. Learning is a change in behavior—better or worse.
- b. It is a change that takes place through practice or experience, but changes due to growth or maturation are not learning.
- c. This change in behavior must be relatively permanent, and it must last a fairly long time.

Conclusion:

Learning is the acquisition of knowledge, attitude, skills and habit. It involve new ways of doing things. It is the modification of behavior through experience and training.

Principles of Learning (law of learning)

1. **Principles of readiness (eagerness):** this principle state that for effective learning, either in the classroom or workplace, individual should be motivated sufficiently. If people are not properly motivated to learn, they can't pay attention on critical component of learning content. Eg. excel
2. **Principles of exercise:** this principle state that those things that are most often repeated are the one that are best remembered. (Practice makes a man perfect)
3. **Principles of effect:** it indicate that learning is strengthened when it is accompanied by a satisfying feeling. It gives positive effect.
4. **Principles of primacy:** this principle creates a strong impression. Primacy, the state of being first, often creates a strong impression may be very difficult to change. Things learned first create a strong impression in the mind that is difficult to erase. Eg. First day of class
5. **Principles of recency:** this principle state that things most recently learned are best remembered. Conversely, the further a learned is removed time-wise.
6. **Principle of transferability:** it state that knowledge or skill what we learn must be transferable in our day to day job activities. If learning cannot be used in practice, such learning should be useless for the individual as well as for the organization.

7. **Principle of Multi-sensation:** it state that learning occurs more clearly when information is received through more than one sense organ. Ex. Learning through listening sound and reading a book together will be more effective in comparison to reading only. In comparison watching after reading text becomes more effective.
8. **Principle of discrimination:** when management discriminate between learning employees and idle employees, it impact in their learning pattern. Management provide additional reward and incentive to employees who are dedicated to better performance and discourage to idle employees. In such situation idle employees are forced to involve in learning for their existence in the organization
9. **Principle of positive reinforcement:** it is a reward for a desired behavior. In other words, it results form the application of a positive consequence following a desirable behavior. (encourage)
10. **Principle of negative reinforcement:** it is another means of increasing the desirable behavior. In this condition, rather than receiving a reward following a desirable behavior, the person is given the opportunity to avoid an unpleasant consequence. (avoidance)
11. **Principle of participation:** it state that to have effective learning, there should be active participation of both learner and instructor. Both should be participated in creating natural environment of learning, should be involved in discussion and should be involved in practicing the learned skills in job.

Factors influencing Learning

Some of the important factors which may affect the learning process are as follows:

1. Intellectual factors: refers to the individual mental level. Learners with low intelligence often face serious difficulty in learning.
2. Learning factors: Factors due to lack of ability to adopt, what has been taught, faulty methods of work or study, and narrowness of practical background may affect the learning process. Regular practice is necessary.
3. Physical factors: Under this group are included such factors as health, physical development, nutrition, visual and physical defects etc. It can be said that, health of the learners will likely affect his/her ability to learn.
4. Mental (cognitive) factors: Attitude falls under mental factors. Attitude play a stimulating effect upon the rate of learning. Like favorable mental attitude facilitates learning.
5. Emotional and social factors: Personal factors, such as emotions and social factors, such as cooperation and rivalry, are directly related to a complex psychology of motivation. Teachers' or subjects like or dislike also effect learning process.

6. Teacher's Personality: his/her personality influences learning environment and success/failure of the learner. It involves physical appearance, mental abilities, emotional behavior, and attitude towards learners.
7. Environmental factor: Physical conditions needed for learning are under environmental factor. One of the factors that affect the efficiency of learning is the condition in which learning takes place. This includes the classrooms, textbooks, equipment, school supplies, and other instructional materials.
8. Motivational and interest factors: learners can't take place unless the learner is interested or motivated. "Purposeless learning is no learning". The learner must have some motive or desire to learn new things.
9. Reward factors: it includes praise, success/failure, blame etc.
10. Time factors: morning and evening hours are the best time for learning or study. There is a decline in mental capacity of us during the day period.

Learning Theories

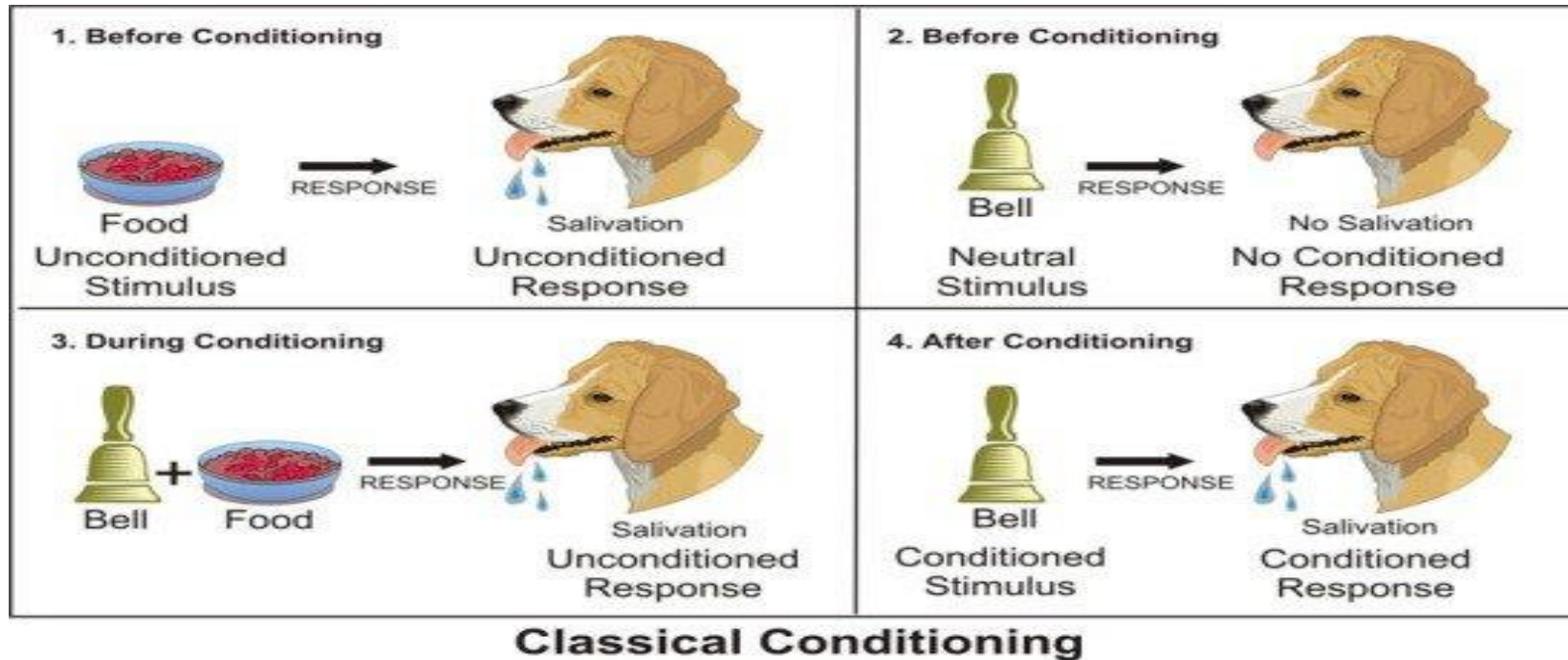
There are four theories of learning: Classical Conditioning, Operant Conditioning, Cognitive Theory and Social Learning Theory.

A. Classical theory (conditioning):

- Classical conditioning was discovered by Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov as he studied the digestive system of dogs in the early 1900s.
- Conditioning theory has introduced a simple cause and effect relationship between stimulus (motivation) and response. This theory states that learning a conditioned response involves association between conditioned stimulus and unconditioned stimulus.

Pavlov experiment with dog

- Pavlov establishment this theory through findings of the experiment with dog. He presented piece of meat to dog. He noticed salivation in dog and is increased noticeably. He later rang the bell without meat but the dog did not salivate. This means ringing bell did not stimulate for salivation.
- He then, linked ringing bell and serving meat of piece repeatedly. Dog repeatedly heard the bell just getting meat. Dog learn that when bell rings he will get the meat. Thus, whenever dog hears ringing bell, starts salivating.
- Later Pavlov stopped providing meat, but dog salivation on ringing bell. Pavlov described this phenomenon i.e. dog responded with ringing bell.
- In conclusion this learning is conditional response involves association between conditioned stimulus (bell), unconditional stimulus (food) and unconditioned response (salivation)
- It is the process of learning to associate a particular thing in our environment with a prediction of what will happen next.



Contribution of classical conditioning

- It is simple explanation of relation between stimulus and response.
- It also makes the reflective or involuntary after the stimulus-response relationship has been established.
- In many situation, this theory explain the human behavior.

Limitation of classical conditioning

- It does not provide significant part of total human learning.
- It explain the passive approach
- The behavior environment in organization is complex.

B. Operant (conditioning) theory:

- Here, we learn that a particular behavior is usually followed by a reward or punishment. What Pavlov did for classical conditioning, the Harvard psychologist B.F. Skinner did for operant conditioning.
- Operant conditioning argues that one's behavior will depend on different situations. People will repeatedly behave in a specific way from where they will get benefits.
- On the other hand, they will try to avoid a behavior from where they will get nothing. Skinner argued that creating pleasing consequences (incentives) to specific forms of behavior would increase the frequency of that behavior.
- In one famous experiment displaying operant learning, the psychologist B.F. Skinner trained rats to press a lever to get food. In this experiment, a hungry rat placed in a box containing a lever attached to some hidden food.
- So he come to the conclusion that human behavior is a function of its consequences. People learn to behave to get something they want or to avoid something they don't want.

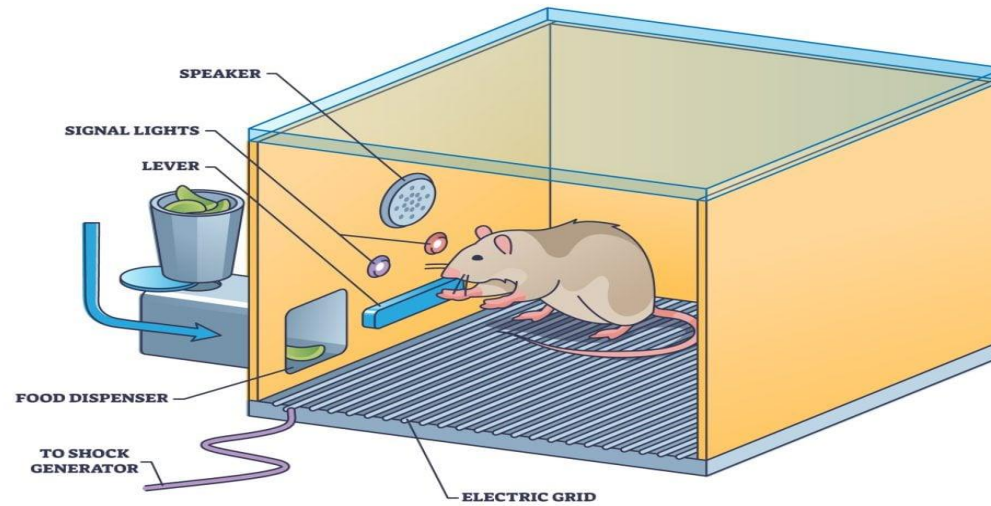
Contribution of operant conditioning:

- It explain a wide range of circumstances than classical conditioning.
- It is more practical than classical conditioning because it has both reward and punishment criteria.
- This theory is more scientific and practical to be applied to people in organization.

Limitation of operant conditioning:

- This theory also ignores the learning dimensions of human being.
- External environment cannot be fully controlled by applying reward and punishment criteria.

SKINNER BOX



Operant Conditioning

Specific consequences are associated with a voluntary behavior

Rewards introduced to
increase a behavior



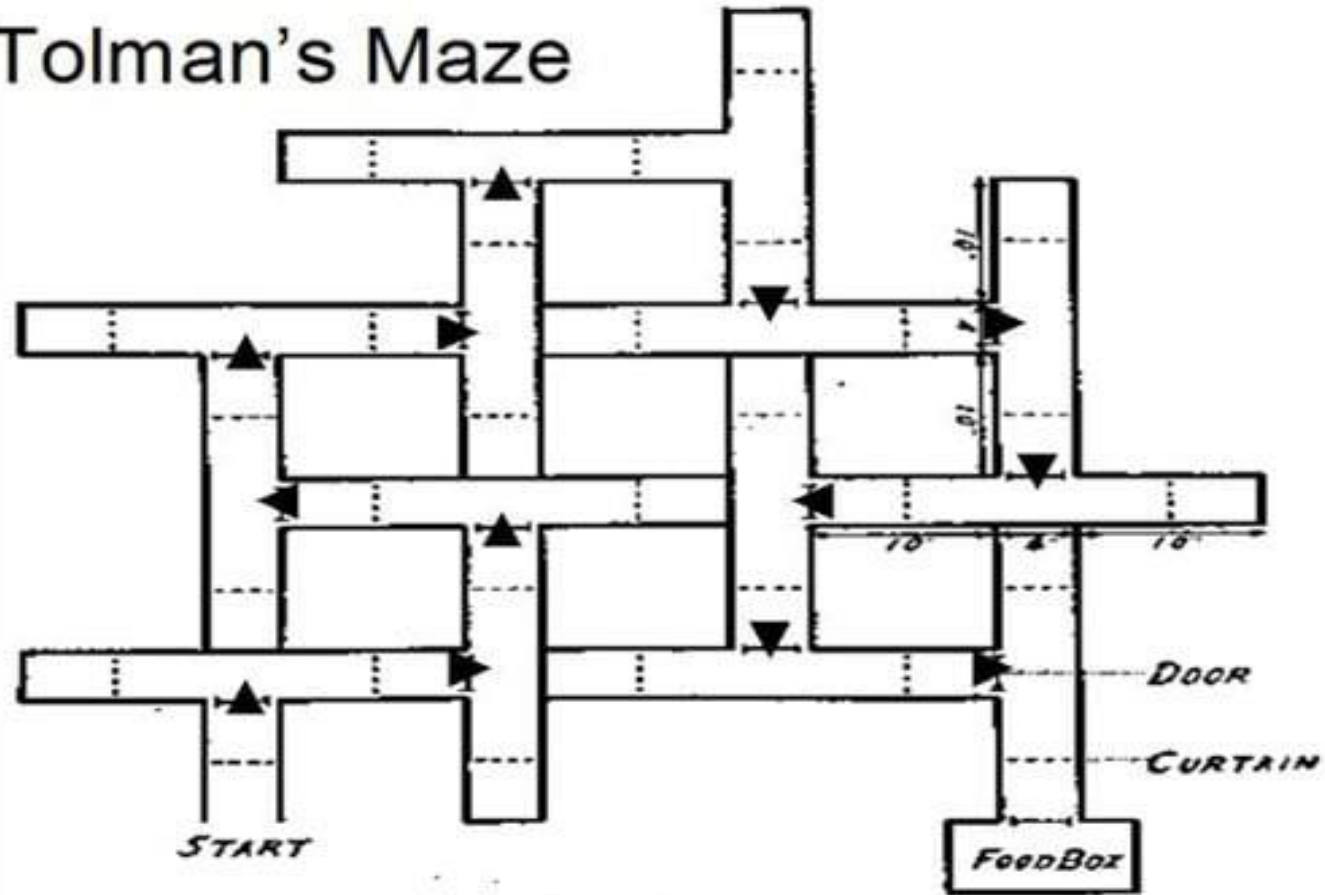
Punishment introduced to
decrease a behavior



C. Cognitive Learning Theory (stimulus-stimulus theory-developed by Edward C. Tolman-An American psychologist)

- Cognition refers to an individual's thoughts, knowledge of interpretations, understandings, or ideas about himself, and his environment.
- This is a process of learning through active and constructive thought processes, such as a practice or using our memory.
- Here, learning is considered as the outcome of deliberate thinking about the problem.
- This process of learning was entirely inside your mind and didn't involve any physical motions or behaviors. It was all cognitive, meaning an internal thought process.
- Tolman using rats in his laboratory, he showed that they learned to run through a complicated maze towards their goals of food. It was observed that rats developed expectations at every choice point in the maze.
- Cognitive learning theory implies that the different processes concerning learning can be explained by analyzing the mental processes first.

Tolman's Maze



Plan of maze

Contribution of cognitive theory:

- It has more practical applications than classical and operant conditioning in case of human learning process
- This approach is more systematic and comprehensively based on advanced science research as compared to other theories.
- It utilizes both intuition and known facts to achieve the goal

Limitation of cognitive theory:

- It basically focuses in cognitive (psychological) aspects only. It tries to give less emphasis to physical and external environmental factors.
- Cognitive processes can not be directly observed. It means it is very difficult to apply in day to day situations in an organization.
- To measure cognitive learning we need advanced techniques and tools.

D. Social Learning Theory: (observation learning)

- Albert Bandura's social learning theory (SLT) suggests that we learn social behavior by observing and imitating the behavior of others.
- One can learn things by observing models, parents, teachers, peers, motivational pictures, TV artists, bosses, and others.
- For example, a child may learn how to play with Lego blocks by watching a sibling or friend do it.
- Many patterns of behavior are learned by watching the behaviors of others and observing its consequences for them. In this theory, it is said that the influence of models is the central issue.
- Bandura proposed that this type of learning involved four different stages – attention, retention, reproduction and motivation..
 - a. Attention process: learners need to attend to the behavior. They need to actually see the behavior that they want to reproduce.
 - b. Retention process: A model's influence depends on how well the individuals remember the models' actions after the model is no longer readily available. This can be increased through *rehearsal*.

- c. Reproduction process: After a person has seen a new behavior by observing the model, the watching must be converted to doing. It involves recall the model's behaviors and performing own actions and matching them with those of the model.
- d. Reinforcement process: Individuals are motivated to exhibit the modeled behavior if positive incentives or rewards are provided. Behavior that is positively reinforced is given more attention, learned better and performed more often.

Contribution of social learning theories:

- Everyone of us use this theory naturally every day, consciously or unconsciously.
- Above tendency help to reduce organizations cost, time and formal involvement in organization.
- As compared to other learning theories this theory has higher retention (memory) rate.

Limitation of social learning theories:

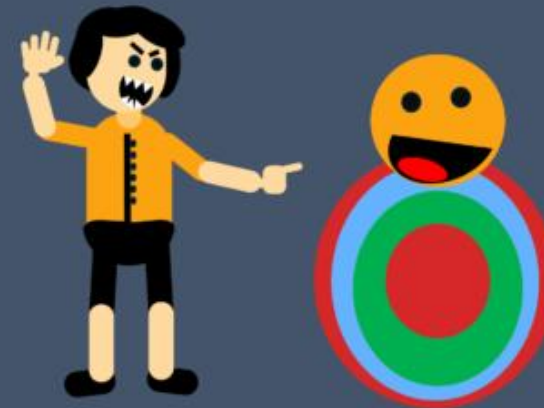
- This is less systematic and scientific than other learning theories.
- This theory is less authentic than above three theories due to changing nature of social context.
- Conflicts may occur between learned and desired behaviors as the situation changes fast.

The Bobo Doll Experiment

Children
observed adults
mistreating a doll



And they mimicked
adults by mistreating
the doll too



Behavior Modification (Fred Luthans and Kreitner)

- Behavior modification is the process of changing patterns of human behavior over the long term using various motivational techniques, mainly consequences (negative reinforcement) and rewards (positive reinforcement).
- Organizational Behavior Modification argues for intervention to encourage desired performance behavior and discourage undesired behavior.
- Organizational Behavior Modification can also be used to motivate the employees and improve the organization's effectiveness.

Definitions:

S.P Robbins, “OB Modification is the application of reinforcement concepts to individuals in the work settings.”

Behavior modification focus in:

- Improving employee productivity
- Reducing absenteeism and lateness
- Reducing accident rates
- Improving employee discipline
- Developing training and development program
- Improving industrial relation.

Steps in applying the OB modification process

1. Identification of Critical Behavior:

- In the very first step of OB Modification, managers must identify the set of desirable and undesirable behavior.
- Critical behavior that have significant impact on the employees performance must be given due attention because it gets repeated time again and again.
- Attendance or absenteeism, constructive criticism or complaints, performing and not performing any task, and promptness or tardiness (late) are some of the behaviors that impact employees' performance.
- Due to their close proximity to job behaviors, both the employee and his superior must be included in the discussion to identify the critical behaviors.

2. Measurement of Behaviors:

- This step involves collection and analysis of performance data before, during and after the OB Modification Program.
- The data collected before the beginning of change processes are called base line data. This data helps to evaluate the success or failure of OB Modification Program used.

3. Functional Analysis of Behaviors:

- At this step, all employees' behavioral analysis is done. The behavior shown by employees during their workplace is examined minutely.
- By doing so, whether their behavior is acceptable or not is determined. If the behavior is below given standard, what kind of behavior need modification is fixed at this stage?
- Employee's following behaviors are critically analyzed for the purpose of behavior modification purpose:
 - Coming late at work, Carelessness, Sleeping, laziness, Smoking, drinking alcohol, gambling, Illness, absenteeism and family problem etc.
- This stage includes the division of behavior into three different functional elements, which are known as Antecedent (A) – Behavior (B) — and Consequence (C) or A-B-C.
- A= what happens before the behavior?
- B= what the person says or does?
- C= what happens after the behavior?
- The main objective of behavior modification is to change behavior (B) by managing its antecedents (A) and consequences (C).

4. Development of Intervention Strategy

- Intervention refers interference in existing behavior of employees.
- Intervention strategy is the main activity in behavioral modification as it prepares plans to initiate some changes which strengthen the desired behavior and weaken the undesired behavior.
- Intervention strategy changes performance-reward linkage to make high level performance more rewarding.

5. Implementation and Evaluation of Performance Improvement

- At this stage, the first function of managers is to implement the prepared intervention strategy, and second function is to evaluate the success and failure of the program.
- Performance of employees before implementation of modification program and after modification program is compared.
- In the feedback stage, success or failure of behavioral modification program is evaluated.
- Managers need to evaluate whether goals of program are attained or not, if yes, at what extent they are attained. This step prepares feedback for the upcoming programs.

Questions

- Define learning. 2
- Discuss the principles of learning in organization settings. 5
- What do you mean by behavior modification? Explain its steps. 10