

ATTITUDE (Part 5)

Aishah Amirah bt Zainal Abidin, Ruzaini bt Ibrahim, Siti Aisyah bt Akiah

Instrumental Conditioning

Instrumental conditioning is learning through reward. In life, we are normally rewarded for displaying certain attitudes and we are sometimes punished for expressing other attitudes. Through instrumental conditioning, attitudes which are rewarded are strengthened and attitudes that are punished are weakened. The positive and negative feedback we get from expressing our attitudes will shape the attitudes that we have. The positive feedbacks would probably be praises, approvals or gratifications and the negative feedbacks would probably be criticisms, disapprovals or disagreements. Consequently, parents can shape their children's attitude by rewarding or punishing their children for displaying certain attitudes. For example, parents might reward their children for good behaviour such as completing their homework or helping out with the house-hold chores so that the children will repeat these attitudes. However, these parents might also punish their children for lying or skipping school in order to stop their children from displaying these negative attitudes. Therefore, it could be said that attitudes which get positive response would be repeated and attitudes which get negative response would be lessened. We normally shape our attitudes based on the views of our parents and peers. Therefore, we may acquire similar attitudes to our parents and friends since we desire their support and approval.

Modeling

Modeling or observational learning is another way in which children learn attitudes. Many psychologists believe that, children learn attitudes by observing the attitudes of people around them. The children may learn their attitudes by observing the responses of the attitudes of others. In addition to that, they may also imitate the attitudes which they find rewarding and avoid the attitudes which they find unrewarding. As for children, their important role models are their parents, friends, teachers, television characters and other models that they encounter in their daily lives. These people are important models which can shape children's attitude. Therefore, the important role models, especially parents should watch how they behave since they may indirectly reproduce their own attitudes in their children through modeling.

