

Module 2 Unit 2

This is a **REQUIRED READING**.

Social Learning Theory (Bandura). Retrieved from <http://www.learning-theories.com/social-learning-theory-bandura.html>. [2 p.]

Social Learning Theory (Bandura)

Summary: Bandura's Social Learning Theory posits that people learn from one another, via observation, imitation, and modeling. The theory has often been called a bridge between behaviorist and cognitive learning theories because it encompasses attention, memory, and motivation.

Originator: Albert Bandura

Key Terms: Modeling, reciprocal determinism

Social Learning Theory (Bandura)

People learn through observing others' behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviors. "Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action." (Bandura). Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences.

Necessary conditions for effective modeling:

1. Attention — various factors increase or decrease the amount of attention paid. Includes distinctiveness, affective valence, prevalence, complexity, functional value. One's characteristics (e.g. sensory capacities, arousal level, perceptual set, past reinforcement) affect attention.
2. Retention — remembering what you paid attention to. Includes symbolic coding, mental images, cognitive organization, symbolic rehearsal, motor rehearsal
3. Reproduction — reproducing the image. Including physical capabilities, and self-observation of reproduction.
4. Motivation — having a good reason to imitate. Includes motives such as \hat{A} past (i.e. traditional behaviorism), promised (imagined incentives) and vicarious (seeing and recalling the reinforced model)

Bandura believed in "reciprocal determinism", that is, the world and a person's behavior cause each other, while behaviorism essentially states that one's environment causes one's behavior, Bandura, who was studying adolescent aggression, found this too simplistic, and so in addition he suggested that behavior causes environment as well. Later, Bandura soon considered personality as an interaction between three components: the environment, behavior, and one's psychological processes (one's ability to entertain images in minds and language).

Social learning theory has sometimes been called a bridge between behaviorist and cognitive learning theories because it encompasses attention, memory, and motivation. The theory is related to Vygotsky's [Social Development Theory](#) and Lave's [Situated Learning](#) which also emphasize the importance of social learning.

For more information, see:

- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W.H. Freeman.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social Foundations of Thought and Action*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1973). *Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. New York: General Learning Press.
- Bandura, A. (1969). *Principles of Behavior Modification*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Bandura, A. & Walters, R. (1963). *Social Learning and Personality Development*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.