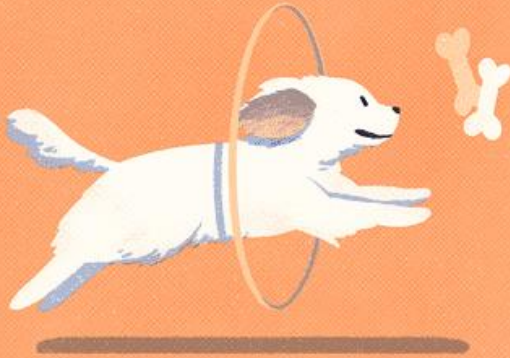


WHAT IS BEHAVIORISM?

The theory that psychology can be objectively studied through observable action.

Operant Conditioning

Subject learns behavior by associating it with consequences.



Classical Conditioning

Subject learns to associate two unrelated stimuli with each other.



BEHAVIORAL PSYCHOLOGY/BEHAVIORISM: A SCHOOL NURSE AND SCHOOL TEACHER COLLABORATION

GOALS

1. Encourage the collaborative and positive teaching processes of school nurses and school teachers.
2. Emphasize Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism concepts that promote learning.
3. State the psychological process of behavioral learning.
4. State the specific contributions of Behavioral Psychologists.
5. State the difference between operant conditioning and classical conditioning.
6. State the process/ways students learn.
7. Compare the independent teaching role of nursing with public schools, colleges, and universities.
8. Explain entropy and its control on job performance.

KEYWORDS FOR APPLICATION

1. School Nurse/Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SCPHN)
2. National Association of School Nurses (NASN)
3. Collaborative Teaching
4. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
5. Professional Nurse
6. Behavioral Psychology
7. Behaviorism
8. Operant Conditioning
9. Classical Conditioning
10. Remembering
11. Learning
12. Entropy

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AND COMPARISON OF EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

School nurses are also known as Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SCPHN) by the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). This association recommends all school nurses have at least a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) as a pre-requisite to working with school classroom teachers, school-aged children, young people, and their families to improve health and well-being outcomes. This collaborative effort reduces inequalities and health vulnerabilities. The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) has more than 17,000 members and 50 affiliates assisting with this healthcare effort.

Historically, the role as a nurse/school nurse *teacher* is accepted and known as an “independent nursing role.” Because of the academically recognized independent school nurse teaching function and nationally recommended minimum of a BSN to be a school nurse, no teaching certificate is usually required in the primary or secondary schools. However, school classroom teachers (non-nurses) with at

least a Bachelor's Degree in elementary and secondary schools (in most states) are required to have teaching certificates. College and university educators (including nursing educators) are generally required to have, at least, a Master's Degree in their educational field. Due to their extensive academic education and proven ability, college and university educators do not usually need teaching certificates.

How responsible is the role of a school nurse--or (for that matter) any teacher in the school classroom? MORE THAN IS USUALLY KNOWN! All teaching efforts and decisions related to teaching processes resonate with a growing and influential child. *Every classroom activity/process* provides the means and methods that directly relate to Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism and the learning process. For the school child, Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism teaching methods increase learning success and the basic desire to continue with a lifetime of learning.

Each profession (school nurse and school teacher) has a place in the educational process. Both school nurses and school teachers study each student's classroom situation and behavior to mutually determine effective methods of Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism that will most likely promote optimal learning. Both professions (school nurse and school teacher) strengthen the possible positive teaching/learning outcomes. They determine the known Behavioral Psychological/Humanistic learning process of learning that will most likely support and help students learn and retain educational concepts.

Collaborative teaching efforts between a school nurse and school teacher are not about the agreement or expertise related to classroom educational CONTENT—that is the responsibility of the school classroom teacher. The collaboration is about the best teaching PROCESS(ES) that will most effectively teach the educational content to an individual student or group of students according to recognized student learning abilities or learning challenges.

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESS OF STUDENT LEARNING

The process of learning outcomes is somewhat permanent. The extent of learning is evidenced in a student's resulting behavior *by both the school classroom teacher and the school nurse*.

Learning occurs in three ongoing ways:

1. Encoding: Learning through memories/remembering—even classroom memories. Learning and knowledge result in a meaningful way. Students learn math and grammar concepts, as an example, and transfer that information into a classroom experience by personally sharing their understanding with other classmates.
2. Storing: There is a physiological change in the brain to hold on to information.
3. Retrieving: There is an attempt to understand the relationship between what is stored and what is seen and experienced in the real world. There is an ability to apply what is learned to a real-life situation. Practicing that application of understanding in front of other students offers evidence of the ability to retrieve to the point of application.

BEHAVIORISM: THE BEHAVIORAL PSYCHOLOGIST'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONCEPT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Definition of Behaviorism: Behaviorism is the general term for Behavioral Psychology. This learning theory is based on the idea that all learned behaviors are acquired through environmental conditioning. The idea is that a student's response to environmental classroom stimuli shapes their current and future actions. Therefore, learning occurs through reactions to school activities, involvement, and teacher stimuli.

There are two major types of behavioral learning—called Behaviorism. The two types of Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism are OPERANT CONDITIONING AND CLASSICAL CONDITIONING.

The school nurse's healthcare and teaching knowledge related to Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism occurs due to extensive personal academic education. Nurses with a BSN working as school nurses know the educational concepts and differences between operant and classical conditioning. As an outcome, the school nurse can motivate school teachers and personally perform healthcare teaching and activities on behalf of students at all educational levels. The result is improving and maintaining physical and mental health, preventing disease, and avoiding unhealthy behaviors.

Due to the school nurse's academic background and the school classroom teacher's mutual understanding of Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism, there is a shared determination of educational optimum learning experiences for students. The two professions work in tandem to identify the most acceptable Behavioral Psychology/Behaviorism educational processes (Operant Conditioning or Classical Conditioning) that are most likely to result in positive student classroom behaviors that promote learning.

OPERANT CONDITIONING Edward L. Thorndike's (late 1800's) and B.F. Skinner (1900's)

Students learn from experiencing consequences to their behavior. The learning process is a *Law of Effect* that enforces behavior in two ways:

Any behavior with pleasant consequences is likely to be repeated by the student. (If a school nurse or school teacher encourages or provides enjoyable learning experiences, the student will more likely be *willing* to participate in the next similar learning experience.)

Any behavior followed by unpleasant consequences is likely to be stopped by the student. (If a nurse or school teacher provides unpleasant learning experiences, the student will more likely be *unwilling* to participate in the next similar learning experience.)

There are three types of the school nurse or school classroom teacher responses/reinforcements to students:

Neutral (no change in student response)

Reinforcers (likelihood of change results in positive or negative behavior)

Punishers (decrease in the probability that behavior is repeated)

Students will change their behavior based on teacher reinforcement. Because positive reinforcement is given after a desired response, the student's mind retrains itself to repeat the desired behavior(s) now and in the future. When there is compliance to positive reinforcement, acceptable learning has occurred.

YALE UNIVERSITY: Two types of positive reinforcement:

Giving praise and reward regarding the process (not necessarily the end product) has proven to be the *most positive reinforcement* to improve learning—(a recent study from Yale University).

Positive Reinforcement Process Examples:

Process Reward: "It is wonderful that you remembered how to get the right answer!"

Terminal Reward: "You got that answer right!"

CLASSICAL CONDITIONING Ivan Pavlov (1800) (Pavlovian Conditioning)

Students learn from experiencing behavioral pairing of two unlearned/unconditioned stimuli *over time* until the association between the two stimuli is known/recognized. Then, when there is an intentional ceasing/unpairing of one stimulus, there remains retention, recognition, and the same response to the remaining stimulus. Therefore, the retention of the *one* stimulus will have the same learned effect as the original *two* stimuli. When there is compliance to one stimulus, acceptable learning has occurred.

Examples: If a nurse or school teacher claps their hands three times (or uses an audible clicker) and says "quiet," the class becomes quiet. There was a pairing between the three claps (or loud clicker) and the stated word of "quiet." The class becomes conditioned after a few times to the pairing of two stimuli. Then, the term "quiet" is not used, and the three claps (or loud clicker) occur. The classroom becomes quiet due to only one stimulus—the three claps (or audible clicker).

If a student is humiliated in class in front of peers by a school nurse or school teacher about not conforming to the expected performance in math, the student will learn to dislike/hate math. There is a pairing that occurs between math and humiliation. Even though the teacher does not humiliate the student in the future, the dislike for math will remain due to the past pairing of humiliation and math.

Suppose students have an overall positive experience by praising successful learning by the school nurse or school teacher. In that case, the students will want to come to class—because there is a pairing of teacher praise and an overall positive experience in learning. The teacher can eventually not praise, and students' overall positive experience in learning occurs.

If an excellent report card means pairing special family praise and a special treat several times, a student is more likely, in the future, to try to have an excellent report card to receive a special treat. After this pairing a few times, the student will pursue excellence in a report card without expecting praise or treat.

A school teacher once paired turning off the lights with a loud teacher request for students to stop talking in class. After requesting the class to remain quiet and then turning off the lights simultaneously a few times, the class became quiet. All it took in the future was for the teacher to turn off the lights without requesting the class to be quiet, and the class became quiet.

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE REMEMBERING PROCESS

Remembering occurs at its best when it is either the first or last thing remembered.

- Recency Effect: When learned, information is recent and would decrease in time.
- Distinctiveness: When learned, information stands out as important rather than mundane.
- Frequency: When learned, information is rehearsed or practiced repeatedly until perfect.
- Association: When learned, information is remembered through a relationship with something else.
- Reconstruction: When learned, information is applied to current events.
- Long-Term Memory: When something is remembered due to relevance or personal importance.

When teaching, the intended positive response is retaining what is learned. Remembering information for permanency is important. How will a school nurse and a school teacher help ensure that the student remembers the content being taught? The lesson plans should reflect the intended remembering process by the name of the remembering process. The more *recognized and intentional process* of remembering incorporated into the learning process, the more likely the student will be taught to remember learning concepts. The outcome will be students that learn and remember what is taught.

USE OF STUDENT SENSES AND LIFE EXPERIENCES IN SUPPORTING POSITIVE HUMANISTIC LEARNING

In general, all students' learning improves by using all the senses--seeing, hearing, writing, and talking. Intellectual older student growth and self-confidence occurs through verbal class presentations of what they have learned.

Therefore, the school teacher and school nurse encourage the older student to share learned concepts. Sharing intellectual concepts increases retention and the ability to understand concepts. Requiring students to use all the senses to affirm learned concepts promotes increased understanding of the concepts and the ability to enhance and apply learned concepts in the future.

Physical room configurations (like desks) are usually no longer attached to the floor, and desks are meant to move for advanced student group discussions and problem-solving. Black/whiteboards allow students to apply their learning to personal life situations as visual presentations. The more advanced students love to share their ability to apply learned concepts and apply the content to their own lives. Pride comes when advanced students act as the “teacher of the hour” for an intellectual idea or topic. Students often try hard to present the concept and application correctly, as peer acceptance is wonderful and provides a sense of pride! When advanced students have an opportunity for an authentic positive, and rewarding sharing experience with their peers, they often enter the classroom learning situation wanting to know when they can present evidence of their learning.

(One of the most memorable teaching experiences I had as a paraprofessional educator was when students were asked to apply subtraction and addition to personal real-life situations. Because we have students from rural areas, they related to the buying, selling, and manipulating of their farm animals in interesting ways. The students were unique in their personal, realistic stories and approaches, and the other students were attentive to the personal stories and use of mathematic principles. The students returned again and again to the classroom, asking for another creative opportunity to apply their real-life experiences to the mathematical lessons they had learned.)

The basic rule is for the school nurse and the school teacher to always reward outstanding and successful learning. Always curtail humanely and not reward teacher attention for incorrect responses or student misinformation—instead, reward attention to accurate responses and positive student behaviors! Positive and supportive teacher behaviors are imitated in the life of students and as they become adults!

STRAYING FROM PROVEN BEHAVIORAL PSYCHOLOGY (BEHAVIORISM)

Teaching excellence has to do with behavioral psychology—the study of the human mind, especially related to specific teaching behavior. The current behavior of teachers either promotes learning or interferes with the intended teaching efforts. Collaborative efforts by a school teacher with a school nurse in determining the most useful behavioral teaching processes provide valuable joint consideration of the most appropriate teaching behavioral processes unique to a teaching situation. Students exhibit natural responses to a teacher’s efforts to support and reward. Positive teaching through known Behavior Psychological/Humanistic teaching processes are more productive concerning student learning than a teacher’s berating, criticizing, demeaning, and threatening. Observing teacher behaviors of kindness and support encourage students to imitate a teacher’s positive behaviors in their lives. Allowing interaction with other students, sharing ideas, and group confirmation of the positive and correct application of learned principles is rewarding to students’ egos. Group student efforts to set up actual life examples of situations wherein the learned principles can be used and applied (or being applied) is exciting to students. Praise by the teacher for positive and accurate individual and group thinking encourages students to continue their positive behaviors in their lives and become leaders among their peers.

Unfortunately, some teachers (school nurses and school teachers) ultimately move into random, unsuccessful teaching behaviors that cause student frustration and minimal learning. Such movement toward ineffective teaching is a universal natural happening of all things called entropy. Be watchful of teacher degradation of the learning process. The more the student does not respond to expected learning, the more frustrated the teacher, causing an increase in negative teaching behaviors.

Because teachers desire to succeed in teaching by witnessing successful learning by students, the teacher's overt student expectations can, unfortunately, set aside the basic proven "psychology of learning." Threats of performance, blaming, criticizing, demeaning, threatening, expecting unreasonable performance, and added unnecessary demeaning comments are sometimes heard from a frustrated teacher. If the teacher's negative and self-serving behavior is not controlled, the course content is more attuned to the teacher's need to control and support personal ego needs. Negative teacher behavior minimizes the spirit of a student's behavioral learning success.

What is that song?—doesn't it go something like: You got to accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on to the affirmative---don't mess with Mr. In-Between—Oh Yah---Don't mess with Mr. In-Between!

REFERENCES

Methods in Behavioral Research (Amazon)
Introduction to Psychology: Gateway (Amazon)
Psychology of Human Behavior (Audible)
Psychology: A Behavioral Overview (eBay)

SUGGESTED READING FROM AUTHOR'S WEBSITE—leadershippoweronline.com

School Nurse: An Exceptional and Worthy Challenge
Job Description Development and Application (Includes Benjamin Bloom's Three Domains of Evaluation—Cognitive, Psychomotor, and Affective)
Understanding the Role of Organizational Standards
The Advancing Science of Nursing Practice (Includes the meaning of the word "Professional Nurse.")
Entropy: A Factor for Change

AUTHOR:

Carolyn R. Taylor, Ed.D. M.N. R.N.
Leadershippoweronline.com