

Positive Reinforcement: an Approach to Enhancing Accountability and Drive among Students

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ABSTRACT

The Positive reinforcement plays a prominent role in several educational institutions and individual classrooms around the world. Providing commendation and incentives to students who exhibit good behaviors and fulfill academic responsibilities within the classroom setting enables educators to direct their attention towards desired behaviors while minimizing emphasis on undesirable conduct that may arise. This study aims to explain the perspectives, positive reinforcement is believed to foster a heightened feeling of accountability among students, hence motivating them to exert more effort in order to accomplish tasks. This paper attributed to the anticipation of obtaining commendation or a tangible incentive as a result of their efforts. There are other viewpoints positing that the use of positive reinforcement, such as praise and awards, may result in a decline in intrinsic motivation, an increased disparity between educators and learners, and a reduction in performance levels. Critics contend that an abundance of praise and the provision of rewards for exhibiting good actions just elicit short-term conformity, rather than cultivating a lasting feeling of accountability and drive among pupils. The discourse pertaining to positive reinforcement remains a subject of contention within the field of education.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Reinforcement was created by Burrhus Frederic Skinner, an American psychologist. B.F. Skinner is widely recognized as the progenitor of Operant Conditioning and was recognized by the American Psychological Association as the preeminent psychologist of the 20th century. The user's text is already academic. In 1938, B.F. Skinner expanded upon the research conducted by Edward Thorndike, a renowned psychologist who investigated animal learning via the use of a puzzle box. Thorndike's findings led to the formulation of the "Law of Effect," which posits that behavior is influenced by its consequences. Building upon this foundation, Skinner introduced his theory of "Operant Conditioning." The user's text is already academic and does not require any rewriting. Skinner proposed the concept of "reinforcement" as a novel addition to the Law of Effect. The individual proposed that behavior that receives reinforcement is more likely to be repeated, hence becoming stronger. Conversely, conduct that does not get reinforcement is more likely to diminish or become weaker via extinction. The user's text is already academic and does not require any rewriting. The reinforcement theory of motivation, upon which this was founded, neglected to consider the interior condition of people, such as their inner emotions and motivations. Instead, it primarily examines the impact of external stimuli on behavior. The user's text is incomplete and does not contain enough information to be rewritten academically. The primary premise behind his theory was that learning takes place via the application of rewards and punishments to behavior. Both forms of reward serve to enhance behavior, hence increasing the likelihood of its recurrence. Skinner's research was disseminated almost a century ago at a period when behaviorist ideas were prevalent. However, throughout time, educational psychologists have refuted the behaviorist paradigm and the majority of ideas associated with it. On the other hand, literature does give evidence that some conceptions drawn from these beliefs have proven to be enduring throughout time.

One of the terms included in this study is "Reinforcement," which serves as the foundation for the applications explored in this scoping evaluation. Learning may be seen as a transformative process that results in enduring modifications, since it involves the introduction of change by an instructor. This change is facilitated by many pedagogical strategies, such as the cultivation of certain competencies, the alteration of attitudes, or the comprehension of underlying scientific principles within an educational setting (Sequeira, 2012). In the context of higher education, it is expected that students who want to actively engage in the learning process anticipate being regarded as adult learners with certain entitlements about the learning environment, such as the ability to ask questions and seek clarification of any uncertainties (Michael & Modell, 2003). According to Mitra (2008) and Pond & Rehan (1997), students anticipate assuming control and responsibility for the learning session. In addition, students express a desire for their teacher to possess qualities such as cooperation and humor. They want instructors who are able to provide clear instruction and use pertinent examples, hence facilitating comprehension of the

course content. This need is becoming more prevalent in contemporary educational settings (Becker et al., 1990).

The study was undertaken with the objective of fulfilling the professional development requirement. The researcher's present academic practice was significantly influenced by the field of interest. As educators at the university level, we have engaged in ongoing discussions to explore strategies for enhancing the quality of our daily instructional practices. Through these conversations, we have recognized the significant need for extensive research in the area of inclusive pedagogy. In our present paper within the realm of higher education, the term 'inclusive education' is frequently employed, seemingly interchangeable with education tailored for children with disabilities. Nonetheless, we have endeavored to examine the impediments to learning within our higher education environment and have discovered that numerous mature students perceive themselves to encounter barriers in their learning process. Numerous studies in the field of higher education have examined the topic of inclusion and equality in teaching and learning. As a consequence, policymakers and researchers have engaged in discussions about the significance of expanding access to tertiary education, as shown by Miller et al. (2010). Hence, it has been consistently believed that the mere use of various educational techniques may not be enough in effectively fostering inclusive teaching and learning. Ensuring inclusive education in the design of curriculum and evaluation is of utmost importance. This may be achieved by ensuring that our teaching and learning processes not only boost teaching effectiveness, but also serve as a means to reduce obstacles to education and include all students. The primary focus of the study was to examine the elements that contribute to the establishment of a systematic approach aimed at enhancing the efficacy of teaching and learning. The objective of this research is to examine the teaching and learning process in order to ascertain its level of effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

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The use of positive reinforcement has been shown to be a very effective system for managing behavior.

The efficacy of positive reinforcement in reducing disruptive behaviors and promoting student compliance in educational settings has been supported by empirical evidence (Bouxsein, Roane, & Harper, 2011). A conventional positive reinforcement approach involves educators praising good behaviors shown by pupils, while allocating limited attention to improper or undesirable

actions (Babyak, Luze, & Kamps, 2000). Praise, also known as positive reinforcement, is derived from the operant learning theory, which focuses on the influence of consequences on subsequent actions (Tauber, 1991). In the classroom, there are both internal and extrinsic motivators. Students has the capacity to use both internal and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to the phenomenon when students actively seek out activities and projects that are intellectually stimulating and provide a feeling of personal fulfillment. The concept of mastery refers to a high level of proficiency or expertise in a particular subject or Extrinsic motivation refers to the phenomenon when pupils engage in activities with the intention of obtaining rewards for their behavior. According to Docan (2006), the achievement goal theory posits that student behavior is influenced by both accomplishment and motivation. This theory provides a framework for understanding why students choose to participate in certain academic tasks. When pupils are aware that there is a reward awaiting them upon completion of their assignment, they are more inclined to exhibit a higher likelihood of task completion. The provision of positive reinforcement serves as a catalyst for enhancing their motivation and facilitating optimal performance.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) techniques are widely used at several educational institutions around the nation. This is a singular method used by educators to provide positive reinforcement strategies with kids. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) procedures were first established with the intention of catering to individuals with exceptional needs. These procedures prioritize a proactive approach to behavior monitoring, as opposed to a reactive one. Numerous educational institutions have achieved favorable outcomes via the adoption of a comprehensive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework, which is firmly grounded in fundamental and well recognized concepts pertaining to behavior, social learning, and organizational dynamics (Bradshaw, Reinke, Brown, Bevans, & Leaf, 2008). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) facilitates the cultivation of enhanced social conduct among pupils. Educators are instructing students on the behavioral expectations and providing incentives for displaying good conduct (Warren et al., 2006). According to Scott (2009), the implementation of PBIS requires the establishment of school-wide norms and explicit expectations to ensure its effectiveness. This is crucial in ensuring that both students and instructors are aware of the behavioral standards that are expected of them.

Token economy, an alternative kind of positive reinforcement, has been a topic of educational debate for an extended period of time. The intervention of token economy has been extensively studied in educational settings, as shown by the study conducted by Klimas and McLaughlin (2007). The concept of a token economy is the practice of providing students with rewards as a means of reinforcing positive conduct or exemplary academic performance. The implementation of a rewards system and token economy has been shown to positively impact both student involvement and learning outcomes. According to Nelson (K.G), these particular kinds of positive reinforcement have the

capacity to significantly facilitate the process of learning. When appropriately implemented, the use of a token economy system may have a beneficial impact within the educational setting, serving as an effective means of positive reinforcement.

METHODOLOGY

The use of instructional strategies in the classroom setting

The use of instructional strategies in the classroom setting has been a topic of great interest and importance in the field of education. The application of these strategies plays a crucial role in enhancing the learning experience and academic achievement of the efficacy of positive reinforcement tactics is maximized when they are adopted and enforced on a school-wide level. However, they may also provide positive outcomes within individual classrooms, provided that the expectations are clearly defined and consistently upheld. Educational institutions have the capacity to adopt Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) protocols that are consistently adhered to by all staff members within the school. In order to achieve success, it is essential that both students and adults get comprehensive training and possess a thorough understanding of all applied processes. In the absence of a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system within a school, instructors have the option to implement a rewards system inside their individual classrooms. This system entails acknowledging and incentivizing exceptional conduct shown by students, both on an individual basis and collectively as a class. One such approach is implementing a classroom container whereby students deposit a ticket or another physical item as a means of acknowledging and reinforcing excellent classroom conduct. Once the jar reaches maximum capacity, the class is entitled to partake in a prize, such as indulging in an ice cream party or being granted more free time. This approach effectively facilitates the active participation of all students inside the classroom, while also fostering their comprehension of the need to exert consistent effort and exhibit exemplary conduct in order to get a reward.

An additional method for incorporating positive reinforcement within the educational setting is providing vocal commendation to pupils who exhibit desirable behaviors and demonstrate diligent efforts in task completion. This approach is particularly effective when used to younger pupils due to their heightened inclination to seek validation from their instructor and their want to please. Offering praise to individual students or a collective group for their exceptional performance may have a significant impact, fostering a desire among other students to emulate such actions in order to get the teacher's validation. It is essential to bear in mind that positive reinforcement encompasses not just material incentives, but also less formal mechanisms such as verbal commendation or unanticipated privileges. Occasionally, the most effective manifestations of positive reinforcement are those that are unexpected by pupils. This phenomenon motivates diligent students to persist in their efforts, while also potentially inspiring others to exert more effort due to the possibility, but not certainty, of receiving external incentives.

The efficacy of positive reinforcement is questionable because its impact on students is mostly negative.

While positive reinforcement systems are often used in several educational institutions nationwide, there exists a perspective that questions their efficacy and suggests a potential adverse impact on pupils. There is a prevalent argument that an abundance of praise might result in a strained dynamic between educators and learners. There is a belief held by some individuals that the provision of praise and prizes may result in a decline in students' intrinsic motivation. This decline manifests in students engaging in activities and exhibiting proper behaviors only for the purpose of obtaining praise or awards, rather than for their own personal growth or satisfaction. According to Kohn (1994), positive reinforcement has the potential to induce short-term compliance and accomplishment, but it may also undermine the development of performance and self-regulatory values that are crucial for students to attain long-term success.

There is a prevailing argument among academics and educational professionals that the use of positive reinforcement is associated with a decline in intrinsic desire to exhibit proper behavior. According to Ormrod's (2015) findings, students demonstrate motivation via both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, which influence their performance and behavior within the educational setting. It is widely argued that the use of positive reinforcement, which involves the provision of rewards for good actions, may result in a heightened level of extrinsic motivation among individuals. This phenomenon is characterized by a strong focus on external rewards, while simultaneously diminishing internal drive. Numerous studies have shown that individuals who are provided with an incentive for doing a job or engaging in a behavior exhibit lower levels of performance compared to those who undertake the action without any expectation of a reward (Kohn, 1994). The children develop a reliance on external validation, rather than relying on the intrinsic satisfaction derived from job completion.

Appreciation may be seen as a potentially hazardous element within an educational setting, particularly when used in an erroneous manner. The provision of positive incentives by instructors for completing simple activities may have a detrimental impact on a student's academic advancement. Students may develop a perception of their own inadequacy or a reduced motivation to engage in more challenging tasks due to a fear of losing the positive reinforcement they have received. As students progress, they may gradually become more settled and experience a decline in their inherent urge to push themselves beyond their comfort zones. Educators have the ability to address this issue by emphasizing and encouraging good effort within the educational setting. By providing students with positive feedback on their hard work and effort, it might serve as a motivating factor for them to persist in their academic endeavors. The act of only awarding a positive mark to a student's work results in the loss of both the desired impact and the inherent incentive, as noted by Dweck (1999). By providing positive reinforcement via the act of complementing their effort, the students are motivated to exert more effort in

order to attain the ultimate reward, which is often referred to as a token economy. According to Novack (2001), students tend to get used to extrinsic incentive or token economy, and when this kind of motivation is eliminated, student performance reverts back to its original level.

Certain individuals argue that the act of praising students may result in a reduction of the student's perceived status while simultaneously elevating the prestige of the instructor. This phenomenon might potentially lead to a disconnection within the student-teacher relationship. When a pupil receives praise, they are reminded to adhere to the teacher's expectations (Tauber, 1991). This phenomenon may lead to a disconnection between the student and the instructor, perhaps resulting in the student being desensitized to praise and developing a negative response towards it. Students may develop the perception that the significance of a certain job or conduct diminishes when they do not get commendation for it. Individuals develop a reliance on such commendation, seeing a work or beneficial conduct as lacking value if it does not get acknowledgment and praise from the instructor.

Numerous advice and tactics exist for effective classroom management that extend beyond the exclusive reliance on positive reinforcement. It is widely believed that schools that effectively strike a balance between positive reinforcement for desirable behaviors and punishments for undesirable behaviors are more likely to achieve success. According to Ormrod (2015), instructors may get benefits from disregarding some less invasive behaviors, since doing so can effectively reduce disruptions to instructional time. Numerous educational practitioners prioritize the establishment of unambiguous expectations at the start of the academic year, wherein pupils are anticipated to adhere to prescribed regulations. Additionally, they strive to strike a harmonious equilibrium between incentives and penalties. Kohn (1994) asserts that the provision of an interesting curriculum, a secure and nurturing environment for exploration and creativity, and a considerable level of autonomy in determining what, how, and why they study may foster a sense of enthusiasm and lifelong learning in children.

RESEARCH RESULT

The Significance of Positive Reinforcement in Behavioral Psychology

Positive reinforcement is providing a youngster with a pleasurable stimulus as a means of encouraging their behavior when they provide an appropriate answer. According to O'Connor and McCartney (2007), this kind of feedback serves to reinforce students' conduct, fostering a sense of encouragement and interest in their current work, while also motivating them to sustain their behavior. Positive reinforcement also indirectly influences pupils' self-perception. Children who get sufficient positive reinforcement acquire a sense of confidence in their intellectual capabilities. Nevertheless, it is crucial to bear in mind that the provision of positive feedback may potentially have adverse consequences on students' acquisition of knowledge and skills. This phenomenon occurs when the use of a particular entity lacks a clearly

defined objective, is too frequent, or is not commensurate with the merits or qualifications of the entity in question.

Negative reinforcement that is detrimental to the learner

is a concept in psychology that involves the removal or avoidance of an unpleasant stimulus in order to increase the likelihood of a desired

While positive reinforcement, when used effectively, may provide favorable results on students' academic achievements, negative reinforcement is often employed in the classroom, leading to mostly adverse consequences (Dobbs & Arnold, 2009). The frequent use of negative remarks engenders a sense of inadequacy in pupils, leading to diminished self-perception and reduced levels of intrinsic motivation. The concern around poor self-perception is particularly noteworthy due to empirical evidence indicating that self-perception has a greater impact on students' academic achievement than their actual abilities, as shown by the research conducted by Hamre and Pianta (2001).

CONCLUSION

Positive reinforcement is a behavior support method that elicits controversy due to its inherent advantages and disadvantages, which are characteristic of many educational themes. In general, the use of positive reinforcement strategies has the potential to foster a safe and happy learning environment, hence instilling a sense of worth among students. This phenomenon facilitates the reduction of attention towards undesirable activities, typically resulting in their eventual cessation. Moreover, it enables pupils to develop a feeling of self-control and assume responsibility for their activities. There exists a body of research that provides support for the use of positive reinforcement as an instructional strategy in educational settings. Conversely, there is also a body of research that elucidates the reasons why positive reinforcement may not be an efficacious practice within classroom environments. The available evidence indicates that the use of positive reinforcement strategies, such as token economy and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, has been shown to be beneficial for children, leading to improvements in their academic performance within the school setting. Nevertheless, there exists a body of research that posits an alternative perspective, contending that positive reinforcement may not be the most optimal system for pupils. The attainment of success in student performance relies heavily on the establishment of consistency, hence necessitating the identification and implementation of appropriate methods for positive reinforcement. It is important to provide students with both challenging tasks and clear expectations to ensure their success. As educators, it is imperative that we possess the ability to effectively manage the implementation of positive reinforcement within our instructional settings, while concurrently integrating other empirically validated pedagogical approaches. This will aid in ensuring the success of all children and minimizing the occurrence of undesirable behaviors.

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