Behaviorism versus Cognitivism

Date

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Through the resources that were provided for this week, I was able to contrast and compare behaviorism and Cognitivism. Behaviorism through the theory of Skinner suggests that humans act the way they do due to the surroundings around us. He suggested that it was not what that took place in our heads that mattered but instead what we did. Cognitive psychology, on the other hand, suggested that the reason we value things is due to how we think about them. By focusing on what we think about, an individual can change their actions and what we do. It is for this reason that many therapy institutions provide cognitive therapy as the first mode of intervention.

Bothe learning theories apply in real life situations. An example of behaviorism is when employees offer bonuses to employees who perform well in the workplace. Employees are often motivated to be more productive to get these bonuses. The example given above applies reinforcement as a reward for high performance. An example of Cognitivism is when an individual avoids committing a crime. Such an individual first thinks of the consequences of committing the crime and the consequences that could befall him or her make him or her avoid undertaking the action.

 Both Cognitivism and behaviorism have numerous implications for learning. Cognitivism plays a major role in learning since it develops the intellectual capacity of individuals by enabling people to reason before they act. Bright people in the society are said to have higher Cognitivism. As a result, Cognitivism is associated with intellectual capabilities and enhancing it within the society. Behaviorism, on the other hand, is mainly concerned with reinforcement of certain traits that are desirable. The reinforcement could either be positive or negative. For example, being punished for arriving late at school is a form of negative reinforcement. Behaviorism is meant to affect the manner in which we act whereas Cognitivism involves a thoughtful process before deciding our actions.

Based on the two resources that were provided during this week, behaviorism and Cognitivism have been seen to have numerous advantage sand disadvantages. Among the strengths of behaviorism, is that it can be used to promote good behaviors among people and animals (Skinner, 2011). If one has a pet that often defecates in the house, they could use behaviorism to bring to an end the bad behavior. It can also be used among people to promote good behaviors through positive reinforcement. A disadvantage of the theory is that it does not take into consideration the fact that humans can reason before acting in a particular r behavior. Behaviorism could be used to greater effect for people who have learning disabilities.

On the other hand, Cognitivism allows individuals to have the choice when taking certain actions. For this reason, people should be held accountable for their actions since it is something that they first think through and know the consequences of the actions. Cognitivism can be used for people of older ages to more effect than children (Anderson, 2010). For example, a child may not know the consequences of defecating on the house floor. However, an adult may know the consequences and may not act as a child would. People of higher intellectual capacities are also going to find Cognitivism easier to apply while people with a mental disability may apply behaviorism.

**References**

Anderson, J. R. (2010). *Cognitive psychology and its implications*. New York: Worth.

Skinner, B. F. (2011). *About behaviorism*. New York: Vintage Books.