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Behaviour Modification and its application in the Probation field.

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**INTRODUCTION**

**BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION**

Behaviour modification, often known as behavioural counseling, is a type of psychotherapy based on the classical and operant conditioning learning theories. It uses these learning principles to help people make good behavioral adjustments and minimize or eliminate negative behavior. Behaviour modification uses empirically validated behavior modification approaches to improve and/or minimize maladaptive/unwanted behavior. It mostly relates to approaches for enhancing adaptive behavior via reinforcement and lowering maladaptive behavior via extinction or punishment.

The term "behavioral modification" is thought to have been coined by the year 1911 by Thorndike. He discussed the Law of Effect, which states that responses are proportional to their magnitude, followed by a happy condition of circumstances were bolstered, whereas replies were bolstered. Because of the dissatisfying condition of affairs, they were reduced or eliminated. Theories of learning Pavlov's classical conditioning and Skinner's operant conditioning have gotten even better. It led to the development of a counseling technique based on behavior modification.

Our behavior/responses are conditioned, according to classical conditioning theory. There is a link between the stimuli that produces the response and our behavior response. Conditioning occurs when this association is strengthened by reward, and the behavior is taught. The basic conditioning procedure is as follows. The law of effect underpins operant conditioning. This conditioning comprises of behavior that is followed by satisfying consequences for the organism, resulting in the behavior being repeated. It will be discouraged to engage in behavior that has negative repercussions. When a youngster has a temper tantrum, for example, parents usually give in to his demands. As a result, the child learns that his needs will be met if he throws tantrums. The child is reinforced by the parent's attention and giving in to his demand, and as a result, the youngster will repeat the same behavior in the future.

Learning is an essential component of life. From our day-to-day experiences, we learn and unlearn a lot. We can unlearn things because we can learn them. The concept behind behavioral counseling is that distinct parts of behavior may be learned and unlearned. We have a tendency to pick up and maintain certain habits that is approved, reinforced, and rewarded; and behavior that is not approved, reinforced, and rewarded. Those who are deemed unpleasant tend to vanish. As a result, the behavioral approach is advantageous.

To achieve the intended result, the principles of reward, reinforcement, and punishment are used.

Alterations in behavior- This technique, on the other hand, was mechanical in character. It is considered that human behavior is solely influenced by external stimuli.

Humans are not so mechanical that they can be controlled by the S – R (stimulus-response) mechanism. What about a person's thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and beliefs? As a result, bodily responses are related with not only the mechanical acquisition of physical responses, but also the child's perception of the circumstance.

The cognitive behavioral method (Ellis, 1962; Beck, 1976; Meichenbaum, 1977) was born as a result of this. Thoughts, ideas, and beliefs, according to this theory, are a significant aspect of taught behavior. The behavioral perspective neglected the individual's subjective sensations. The person was thought to be apathetic.

Humans who do not have their own free will. The cognitive behavioral approach, on the other hand, saw thoughts, ideas, and beliefs as significant components of human behavior.

**Body of Assignment**

**Behaviour modification and its application in the Probation field**.

Behavior modification is a strategy for replacing unpleasant activities and behaviors with more desirable ones over time, resulting in better results and consequences in your life. Behavior modification is based on the operant conditioning ideas of behaviorist B.F. Skinner.

Praise and approbation, modeling, positive programming, shaping, token economy, self-monitoring, and shaping are some examples of behavior modification techniques that can be used to improve behavior.

The tactics used to try to reduce or improve a specific type of behavior or reaction are referred to as behavior modification. This may appear to be a pretty technical term, but we all use it on a regular basis. This is how parents teach their children the difference between good and wrong. It is used by therapists to encourage their patients to adopt healthy habits. It is used by animal trainers to teach a pet and its owner to obey each other. We use it in our daily life as we try to rehabilitate offenders as well. They learn what we like and don't like from our reactions to them.

We use the term "behavior" all the time, yet we may not fully understand what it means. We use phrases like hardworking, kind, social, honest, ungrateful, independent, selfish, and remorseful and so on to describe people's actions. Simply put, behavior refers to anything a person says or does. Behaviour modifiers usually describe the behavior in great detail. This aids in concentrating on the specific area of behavior that needs to be altered. Behaviour must also be classified as either a behavioural deficit or an excess. A behavioural deficit refers to something lacking, such as offender's ability to mix and interact with his inmates; a child's failure to learn how to properly use a potty; officer's inability to control his anger when dealing with a sexual offender; or a director's inability to conduct himself in a staff meeting.

However, it's important to remember that determining if someone is acting inappropriately or excessively should always consider the situation's context, culture, and ethics. Although other behaviors, such as self-injurious behavior, are always improper regardless of the situation. Thus Behaviour modification is a type of psychotherapy that is based on learning theory and tries to solve a client's problems by using techniques to reinforce desired behaviors and eradicate undesirable ones. The behavior modification strategy involves using learning and reinforcement principles to build and encourage desirable behaviors while also removing and reducing unwanted behaviors.

To put it another way, behavior modification posits that behaviors may be acquired/learned and then unlearned. As a result, if the child has learnt any negative behavior, it can be unlearned and replaced with new good behavior. As a result, the relationship between observable stimuli and response is critical, and reward and punishment can be employed to govern and regulate this relationship

In the field of probation, offenders are assisted in creating new, desirable behaviors while eliminating old, ineffective ones using behavior modification ideas and practices. The primary principles of behavior modification are reinforcement and punishment. Punishment weakens a behavior, whereas reinforcement strengthens it. Both might have a positive or bad impact.

Positive reinforcement refers to behavior that is rewarded with the removal of a pleasant stimulus, whereas negative reinforcement refers to behavior that is rewarded with the removal of a bad stimulus.

The way in which corrections professionals respond to violation behavior says a lot about how they view their role as agents of change. Rather than adopting a punitive stance when violations occur, when public safety is not in jeopardy, they might instead view the process of responding to noncompliance as an opportunity to help supervisees understand, and change, problematic

and risk-producing behavior patterns.

Justice system professionals often view noncompliance (violation behavior) as an indication that supervisees are unable to be successful in the community. While in some instances this may be true, in other instances violations may stem from a lack of clarity around the terms and conditions of supervision, an individual’s inability to comply (e.g., restitution well beyond one’s means; challenges obtaining employment in a stalled economy), or the imposition of so many conditions that compliance is untenable. Seemingly even more common, the antisocial thinking and/or poor problem solving skills that led to supervisees’ initial conflicts with the law continue to lead them to repeat their past problem behaviors. While it is critically important for justice-involved individuals to understand clearly what is expected of them while they are on supervision, it is even more important that they recognize and understand the factors that contribute to their rule-breaking and illegal behavior, and gain the skills that will help them make better choices when they encounter circumstances that put them at risk in the future

As the juvenile justice system enters a new era, it is faced with major challenges. Each year it is estimated that police arrest nearly 1million youths under the age 18 on criminal charges. Nearly 1,000 children under 17 appear before judges in the Court Juvenile Justice System every year. The court refers many of these to the probation and children department because they offer several alternatives to detention. Aftercare services, hostels confinement, rehabilitation centers, safe house and intensive supervision are among their abundant services. With the collaboration of children department, community and prison services, the department works to afford every youth in its supervision structured programming and services. All services are performed with an emphasis on public safety while also attending to the needs of minors.

“To serve the welfare of children and their families within a sound framework of public safety. The Department is committed to providing the guidance, structure and services needed by every child under its supervision. In partnership with the community, the Probation Department directs delinquent children toward reforming their behavior and making responsible decisions according to the principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice.”

Alongside this mission of promoting and enhancing the administration of justice, community safety and public protection through the provision of social inquiry reports, supervision, rehabilitation and reintegration of non-custodial offenders, victim support and social crime prevention the probation department has a prescribed set of objectives that it operates under that assists them in being able to effectively respond to the increasingly complex need of delinquent children. One is to assist the court in developing interventions that serves the needs of the minor and facilitates the restoration of the victim and the community.

Second is to instill in all children a sense of responsibility for their actions and a belief in their own innate value and potential through a combination of individualized attention and community networking.

Prior to the Juvenile Justice System Act of 2018 the department always encouraged community involvement. But, a more sophisticated approach has been implemented to create equilibrium between the offender, the victim, and most importantly the community affected by the crime committed.

Probation believe no child is beyond the realms of rehabilitation as our motto is offender do change. They are confident that any child can benefit from rehabilitation and treatment. With these realizations in mind, and an increase in juvenile offenders, the probation department has moved away from locking youth up and taken a kinder, gentler approach in dealing with troubled youth. Innovative alternatives to detention are becoming more prevalent worldwide, especially within the confines of juvenile probation.

Several program improvements and changes in legislation can be in part credited for these changes. However, the most important factor responsible for effecting change in the mission of the department is the Juvenile Justice System Act of 2018. This reform has put in a call to ” strike a balance between the juvenile justice system’s long standing orientation toward rehabilitation and the more recent trend toward a more punitive system that holds juveniles accountable for their actions”.

When an undesired behavior results in the addition of a negative stimulus, positive punishment is applied, whereas negative punishment is applied when a pleasant stimulus is removed. A rat used to receiving food when pressing the lever, for example, no longer receives food when pressing the lever. The rat has been subjected to a form of negative punishment. Positive punishment, on the other hand, is rarely utilized because more harsh punishment might lead to affective/emotional disorders if used incorrectly. A reaction/behavior provides a stimulus (positive reinforcer) in positive reinforcement, whereas a response removes the occurrence of a negative stimulus in negative reinforcement. Food, money, and recognition are examples of positive rein forcers, whereas negative reinforcement leads to the learning of avoidance and escape responses. Negative reinforcement occurs when, for example, we ignore the youngster when he throws a tantrum.

As a result, both positive and negative reinforcement tend to improve or strengthen behavior. Negative punishment, on the other hand, reduces or weakens the unwanted behavior. When a youngster misbehaves and is given time out (removal of a pleasurable stimulus, such as being with friends), the child's bad behavior decreases.

The principles of operant conditioning, which are used to change behavior, also require a reinforcement schedule to achieve the desired results. Negative behaviors are discouraged, whereas target behaviors are encouraged as soon as they occur. To reinforce new behaviors, reward and punishment mechanisms are often used. These methods, in effect, attempt to reroute a person's desires toward the desired result.

Furthermore, what happens before and after a behavior, or habit, is framed by what happens before and after the behavior is carried out. The extinction principle is also used, which operates by removing or modifying what happens after a behavior occurs.

In effect, the incentive or reward that encourages a person to engage in a particular behavior is removed. When this happens repeatedly, the desire to engage in a certain behavior tends to wane. Due to a lack of motivation, the behavior eventually becomes extinct. Simply put, behavior modification is based on the idea that events occur before a specific behavior, and events occur after that behavior as well. The appropriate behavior is learned by observing and changing the pre-event behavior and the post-event behavior so that the appropriate behavior increases and the inappropriate behavior decreases.

The use of rewards to help affect this increase in appropriate behavior is called positive reinforcement- i.e.–strokes, gifts, more privileges, etc. The use of punishment is called negative reinforcement. i.e.–spankings, withdrawal of privileges, etc.

To stop an inappropriate behavior, first the behavior must be observed. Then, a pattern can be recognized and a system of rewards can then be constructed. Using positive reinforcement, a choice is presented and if a desired action occurs, a reward is presented. If undesirable behavior takes place no reward would be given. This is an example of negative reinforcement.

Clients are encouraged to change their behaviors and habits, which typically improves their quality of life. Although interventions are designed to help with beneficial changes, it has been discovered that adapting to those changes is difficult. Therefore behavior modification in the well implemented using positive reinforcement and rule reinforcement. Behavioral changes can be successfully overcome over time, despite the difficulty

The goal of behavior modification isn't to figure out why or how a certain behavior developed. Instead, it focuses solely on modifying behavior, and it employs a variety of techniques to do it. This includes the following:

Pairing a favorable stimulus with a behavior is known as **positive reinforcement**. Probation supervisors give certificate to the highly obedient and changed client and this motivates his behavior positively. Positive reinforcement is frequently utilized in dog training. Positive reinforcement occurs when a click is combined with a positive behavior and then rewarded with a treat.

Negative reinforcement is the inverse of positive reinforcement, and it involves associating a behavior with the elimination of a negative stimulus.

**Punishment** is used to weaken habits by associating them with an unpleasant stimulus. A good example of a punishment is receiving a detention for improper behavior**.** When a probationer arrives at the probation office while inebriated, the greatest penalty is to revoke his order and place him in a cell for a few days.

**Flooding** entails repeatedly and intensely exposing people to fear-inducing objects or situations. Flooding would be forcing someone who is afraid of snakes to hold one for 10 minutes. We encourage group counseling in the probation department, and those offenders who are afraid of speaking in front of a group are urged to do so as they relate their experiences, such as in the alcoholic anonymous group.

**To treat phobias, systematic desensitization is utilized,** which entails educating a client to remain calm while focusing on their concerns. Someone who has a strong phobia of bridges, for example, would begin by looking at a photo of a bridge, then imagine themselves standing on a bridge, and finally walk across an actual bridge. We have clients in the probation department who have a fear of water, so we urge them to bathe in basins rather than showers.

**Aversion therapy** involves associating an unpleasant stimulus with an undesirable behavior in order to eradicate it. Some people bite their fingernails, and there's a clear substance you can paint on your nails to make them taste bad if you want to stop doing so. It can be painted on your nails to assist you quit biting your nails. In the probation department, we have clients who are chain smokers, whether it's bhang or cigarettes, and we urge them to try alternative methods such as chewing mint ball gums or drinking ginger or lemon tea to quench their craving for nicotine.

**Extinction** is defined as the elimination of all potential sources of reinforcement for a behavior. This is a powerful technique that works well with children, especially young ones**.** We emphasize constructive social grouping and role modeling in the probation department, especially for juvenile offenders whose negative behavior is mostly linked to unfavorable peers.

In order to successfully undertake a behavioral modification program in the course of our daily activities, it is critical to consider the importance of time, persistence, active participation, and integrity.

It aids in the classification of offenders by applying the instrument for rehabilitation, risk assessment, and needs assessment. As a result, a probation officer is in a better position to determine which modification approaches or theories best apply to an individual offender when developing a treatment plan based on the risk and needs of the offender. It also assists in identifying the offender as high, medium, or low risk, allowing for the identification of relapse risks based on the circumstances of the offense.

With the guidance of a probation officer, aftercare focuses on reintegration back into society. This probation officer examines the family and community while assessing their approach to care. Following the establishment of a program adapted to the individual's needs, strict monitoring is performed, with incentives and sanctions offered to the successful candidate. When a juvenile has completed his time based on the course he did, he can be given tools through the empowerment community or work with the youth department to receive funding to establish a company, such as a carwash, or develop his abilities through youth department trainings.

Nearly five years after this reform the juvenile justice system has recognized the benefits both the system and the child receive when cases are referred for probation instead of detention. Children are indeed responsive to intervention, supervision, mentoring, and other forms of growth and development offered by probation.

**Conclusion**

Behavior Modification is defined as the use of rewards or punishments to reduce or eliminate problematic behavior, or to teach an individual new responses to environmental stimuli.

Behavior modification is a strategy for replacing unpleasant activities and behaviors with more desirable ones over time, resulting in better results and consequences in your life. Behavior modification is based on the operant conditioning ideas of behaviorist B.F. Skinner.

Behaviour modification programs employ operant conditioning, which combines reinforcement and punishment, to rehabilitate offenders using behavioral principles. Behaviour modification programs employ operant conditioning, which combines reinforcement and punishment, to rehabilitate offenders using behavioral principles.

Behavior modification and recidivism reduction are the goals of corrections and probation – to ensure that the offender or client is able to assimilate to the society properly and will not re-offend. With the amount of caseload given to correction and probation officers, though, it can be tricky to ensure that you’ll get positive results all the time with the number of clients handled

The goal of a behavior modification program is to change and adjust behavior that is inappropriate or undesirable. Two main tools used in behavior modification are positive and negative reinforcement.

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