

1 My experiment is based on operant conditioning. Operant conditioning is an acquisition of
2 voluntary complex and goal direct behaviors (Leonard Lecture). In an operant conditioning there are two
3 types of reinforcement which increase or strengthens a prior response (Leonard Lecture). This
4 reinforcement can be positive which adds something good, or it can be negative which removes
5 something bad (Leonard Lecture). Also, an operant conditioning can have two types of punishment
6 which decreases a prior response. This contains a positive punishment which adds something bad or it
7 can have a negative punishment which removes something good. Although classical conditioning, an
8 object that causes a response originally caused by another object (Leonard Lecture), can also work for
9 this experience as well.

10 Receiving a text message can either make a person happy, upset, or confused depending on it
11 being negative or positive. My theory, an organized set of principles that describes, predicts, and
12 explains a phenomenon (Leonard Lecture), is that whenever something positive is received, the receiver
13 is happier rather than a person who receives something bad since they will become upset. This relates
14 to operant conditioning in two ways because if one receives a positive text message they have a positive
15 reinforcement which makes the person happy. If one receives a negative text message they have a
16 positive punishment since they will now be upset or angry which is adding something bad. In my
17 experiment my hypothesis, a specific testable prediction (Leonard Lecture), is that a person who
18 receives a positive text message will be happy, and if a person receives a negative text message they will
19 become upset or angry.

20 The way to figure if this is true is by gathering a group of people and then splitting the group in
21 half. One group will receive the same positive text message and the other group will receive the same
22 negative text message. Their face expression will either be happy or upset and that's how to tell the
23 difference between the two text messages being sent out. The independent variable, what is being
24 controlled in the study (Leonard Lecture), is the text message being sent out to each group and the

1 dependent variable, what is being measured (Leonard Lecture), is the face expression shown after
2 receiving the message. A confound or extraneous variable, extra variables that could affect relationship
3 between independent and dependent variables (Leonard Lecture), can be that they might not show any
4 face expression at all in which I cannot tell if they are either happy or upset.

5 The story I read was Knock Wood. In this story Skinner is being examined, he is considered by
6 most to be the father of radical behaviorism (Hock, 2013, pp. 1). Skinner is the inventor of the *Skinner*
7 *box*, is the author of over a dozen books and more than 70 scientific articles (Hock, 2013, pp. 1). The
8 Skinner box consists of a cage or box that is empty except for a dish or tray into which food is dispensed
9 (Hock, 2013, pp. 2). Skinner believe that all behavior, internal or external, could be explained by the
10 environmental consequences it produces (Hock, 2013, pp. 1). Reinforces are consequences in which
11 there is satisfaction of solving a problem or receiving money which makes the behavior more likely to
12 repeat in the future in similar situations (Hock, 2013, pp. 1). Superstition with humans may last a life
13 time in accidental reinforcements (Hock, 2013, pp. 3). One of Skinners studies showed that greater
14 levels of superstition behaviors develop under conditions of negative reinforcement than under positive
15 reinforcement (Hock, 2013, pp. 4). Superstitions are everywhere, they can cause severe useful
16 functions, and such behaviors can produce the feeling of strength of control when a person is facing a
17 difficult situation (Hock, 2013, pp. 4-5).

18 This article relates to my study because they both use operational functions. When the article
19 talks about certain behaviors reflect on the environment it makes sense why people react a certain way
20 after receiving something negative. For example when one receives a negative text message it makes
21 them not want to look at a following message since the previous message had made them upset. Also
22 being superstitions ties in since the person would believe that negative text messages would be sent to
23 them after they have received one. This works for receiving a positive text message as well because a

1 person might become superstitious if they are wearing a special item or believe they are having a lucky
2 day.

3 This study could be changed to be a correlation study, observing relationship between only two
4 variables (Leonard Lecture), by observing the age. Younger people may react different to a negative text
5 than what older people might, in this case the reaction may change. Also gender can be observed,
6 female tend to be more dramatic than men, that does not mean men aren't dramatic, but using gender
7 can affect the way they view the text message.

8 References

9 Hock, R. R. (2013). Knock Wood!. In *Forty studies that changed psychology* (pp. 78-85). Pearson
10 Education: United States of America.

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