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## What is a social contract theory

Jupiterimages/Brand X Pictures/Getty Images By: Casey Reader Updated September 26, 2017 Social exchange theory is a model of human behavior that has been developed to explain the processes by which people make relationships and maintain them. According to social exchange theory, people evaluate their relationships by analyzing the benefits they feel they might receive through them. They then make decisions about the relationships in their lives by comparing alternatives. Social exchange theory has been fruitfully applied to the workplace to explain employee interactions. Social exchange theory posits that people make choices about their relationships based on rational decision-making. They evaluate their decisions by ordering their priorities. The priority sets of different employees will make a great difference in the kind of workplace relationships they have. If you have a group of employees who are prioritizing factors such as group achievement and teamwork, it is much more likely that your business will be successful and achieve positive results. One way of reinforcing positive relationships in the workplace is by providing incentives that reward employees for skills such as teamwork. According to the understanding of social exchange theory, people will be more likely to seek out relationships if they feel there will be rewards for doing so. The investment that a person puts into his relationships will be directly proportional to what he feels they can get out of them for himself. Social exchange theory also posits the importance of maintaining a friendly atmosphere in a workplace. If people feel that an environment will be hostile to them in any way, it gives them much less of an incentive to be engaging and seek out relationships. The motivation that people have for seeking out relationships is directly proportional to the extent to which they feel they will be positively received, so they can receive various benefits. According to the understanding that is introduced by social exchange theory, people are fundamentally social animals. People orient themselves to the world through the relationships they have, and depend on social interaction. The extent to which employees will be satisfied in a workplace and wish to continue working at a company will be predicated to a large extent on the kinds of relationships they form. Fostering positive relationships is crucial to employee retention. Organizations need employee behavior to conform to workplace performance standards. Managers use training to improve employee's skills, increase the frequency of preferred behaviors and decrease undesirable behaviors. Social learning theory suggests that an effective strategy to achieve these objectives includes providing opportunities to observe the organization rewarding desired workplace behaviors and punishing inappropriate behaviors. Early learning theorists, such as B.F. Skinner - an influential psychological researcher, professor at Harvard University and recipient of the first American Psychological Association's Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contributions to Psychology - writing in the 1930's through the 1950's, believed that people learn only through behavior-based reward and punishment. Skinner's behavior based learning theory required workplace managers to establish individualized reward schedules to modify behavior. Called behaviorism, Skinner's learning theory contrasted with another popular learning theory called cognitive learning theory. Cognitive theorists believed that learning was a passive activity occurring through observation. Albert Bandura, a Stanford professor, proposed a theory that combined attributes of behaviorism and cognitive learning theories. Bandura's theory stated that individuals can learn by observing the rewards and punishment received by others in addition to their own experiences. Bandura's observation learning theory was renamed social learning theory in 1977 and later called social cognitive learning, beginning in 1986. Social learning theorists believe that employees can learn appropriate workplace social behaviors by observing the organization's response to the behavior of other employees. Workers do not need to perform the correct behavior in order to learn it, because they are able to practice the behavior in their imagination. For example, an employee can imagine getting a bonus for a creative idea after observing another employee rewarded for doing so. People imitate the behavior of those they admire or respect. This principle underlies celebrity-based advertising, which assumes individuals want to copy the behavior of popular and successful people. Workplace managers should note that employees learn acceptable social behaviors by observing the treatment of other employees under various circumstances. Managers must be consistent in their expectations of employee's social behavior and not give favorite staff or higher-ranking staff special treatment. Social learning theory supports the concept that managers should provide role models of appropriate behavior. Managers can create social learning opportunities through individual rewards or praise given in public settings, such as staff meetings. Conversely, inappropriate social behavior, such as harassment, should be punished uniformly across the workplace to build the correct social context to modify behavior. Applying principles of social learning theory to workplace training encourages instructors to include anecdotal stories and demonstration videos or play-acting exercises to reinforce concepts of appropriate and inappropriate workplace behavior. Social learning theory supports the concept that classroom training effectiveness improves when students admire the instructor. Trainers can take advantage of this predisposition by having guest lectures from successful employees. You won't get far examining complex social systems before you run into Karl Marx, the father of conflict theory. Marx held that conflict is inherent in society; that change — not stability — is the norm; and that conflict generates meaningful change, especially when it comes to challenging oppression. In Practice Conflict theory provides an explanation for how power imbalances impact people and communities. Social workers can use this theory to identify and confront both the sources and the symptoms of inequality. — Social Learning Theory Social learning theory was developed by Albert Bandura in the 1960s. He performed a series of experiments collectively called "The Bobo doll experiment." Essentially, he had a group of young children watch someone beat a blow-up doll with a hammer. The children went on to exhibit similarly aggressive behavior toward their own dolls. Children who had observed less aggressive behavior displayed less aggressive behavior. The main takeaway from his experiments is that people learn behavior by observation and emulate the behaviors they are exposed to. This impact is further reinforced by observing punishments and rewards in connection with certain behaviors. In Practice Social workers use this theory as a jumping-off point for evaluating the behavioral models a client may be emulating and to combat negative inputs with healthier ones. — Systems Theory Systems theory was born when scientists started moving away from a reductionist approach to knowledge. Reductionism claims that the whole is best understood in relation to its parts. Reductionists believed that they could understand a complex system by isolating and examining individual elements. By contrast, systems theorists believe that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. They examine how individual parts relate to one another within complex systems. In social work, that means taking a hard look at: how individuals relate to each other, and how they are influenced and shaped by systems and society. In Practice Systems theory helps social workers take a holistic look at all the factors — personal, relational, and environmental — that might contribute to a client's negative behaviors and hardships. Examining systems as a whole also helps social workers identify societal pain points and advocate for systemic changes that will improve life for individuals and communities. — Transpersonal Theory Transpersonal theory focuses on the transcendent and spiritual aspects of the human experience. The fathers of this theory are Karl Jung and Abraham Maslow, both early pioneers of humanistic-existential psychology. They were reacting in part to the Freudian assumption that any kind of religious or spiritual experience is regressive. Unlike other theories, transpersonal theory recognizes the important therapeutic role that spirituality, religion, and transcendent consciousness can play in the healing process. In Practice Social workers use this theory to help clients develop a more complex and thorough understanding of what it means to be human, to question core beliefs, and to remove self-imposed obstacles to well-being. — Psycho-social Development Theory This theory posits that human development is greatly influenced by how people react to their environments. Theorist Erik Erikson identified eight stages of development between infancy and adulthood. He believed that we move through these stages in response to psychological and social crises, and that reaching the final stage is necessary for healthy maturation. In Practice This theory can be a useful tool for analyzing behavior in light of past traumas and existing environmental crises. Erikson's model provides a foundation for understanding what developmental issues typically stand out at each stage of growth and helps identify problems that may result in developmental stagnation. — Family Life Cycle Theory It's also important to understand that the family itself has stages of development. Family Life Cycle Theory provides a rough outline for the major stages: Independence Coupling or marriage Parenting Launching adult children Senior years In Practice Family dynamics have a massive impact on individual mental health, longevity, and relationships. Client crises may be rooted in disruption of this cycle through events like death, divorce, incarceration, or abuse. Social workers use the family life cycle theory to help clients manage trauma and successfully navigate transitions between life stages. — Empowerment Theory Like many of these other theories, empowerment theory acknowledges how relationships, systems, and societies can harm, oppress, and otherwise influence individuals. An empowerment approach responds to those influences by emphasizing a person or marginalized group's strength and ability to overcome environmental barriers. In Practice Empowerment is at the heart of social work. Empowerment theory equips social workers with strategies to guide people out of feelings of helplessness and into a sense of self-control and self-determination. Empowerment theory is a theoretical basis for challenging the systems of oppression that prevent people from getting their needs met. what is a social contract theory example. what is a social contract theory essay. what is a synonym for social contract theory. what is the definition of social contract theory





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