a device developed by Salancik and Conway (1975). Chaiken and Baldwin framed the questions in such a way that respondents were apt to conclude they had positive attitudes toward the environment or negative attitudes toward environment. For example, participants in the pro-environment condition were asked whether they frequently litter (most said no), whereas those in the anti-environment condition were asked whether they occasionally litter (most said yes).

After completing the questionnaires, the respondents rated their attitudes toward the environment. Self-perception theory predicts that people with weak or poorly defined attitudes toward the environment will use their prior behavior to infer their attitudes. Figure 5.6 shows that this prediction was confirmed. Whereas people with firmly held attitudes toward the environment were unaffected by which questionnaire version they received, people with weakly held attitudes expressed more positive attitudes toward the environment when their prior behavior suggested they had a positive attitude than when their prior behavior suggested they had a negative attitude (see also Albarracín & Wyer, 2000; Zanna, Olson, & Fazio, 1980).

**Self-Perception of Motivation: The Overjustification Effect.** Many parents give their children stickers, candy, or other rewards for playing the piano, doing their homework, or cleaning up their room. Although these rewards are given with the best of intentions, self-perception theory tells us that they may have a hidden cost. When the children ask themselves why they are engaging in the activity, they might conclude it is because of the external rewards they receive rather than any intrinsic interest. In more formal terms, receiving a reward can lead people to discount the extent to which the behavior is performed for intrinsic reasons.

The negative effects of external rewards were first demonstrated by Lepper, Greene, and Nisbett (1973). In this study, nursery school children were allowed to play with felt-tip markers. Three experimental conditions were created. Children in the expected-reward condition were told they would receive a reward (in the form of a special certificate) if they drew with the markers. Children in the unexpected-reward condition also received a reward for playing with the markers, but they were not told ahead of time that they would receive it. Finally, children in a control condition neither expected nor received an award for playing with the markers.