

Short Answer Questions – II

Q. 1. What are the properties/features of attitude?

Ans. The properties/features of attitude are described below:

- i. **Valence:** Valence of an attitude tells us whether an attitude is positive or negative towards the attitude object. For example, an attitude towards a nuclear research is expressed on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (Very Bad), 2 (Bad), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Good) and 5 (Very Good). A rating of 4 or 5 indicates a positive attitude towards nuclear research while a rating of 1 or 2 indicates a negative attitude and a rating of 3 indicates a neutral attitude.
- ii. **Extremeness:** The extremeness of an attitude indicates how positive or negative an attitude is. A rating of 1 or 5 indicate extreme attitudes.
- iii. **Simplicity or Complexity (Multiplexity):** An attitude system is said to be 'simple' if it contains one or a few attitudes and complex if it is made of many attitudes. For example, an attitude towards a person is a simple attitude while an attitude towards health and well-being is a complex attitude consisting of attitude towards physical and mental health, views about happiness and well-being etc.
- iv. **Centrality:** A central attitude would influence the other attitudes in an attitude system. For example, in an attitude towards world peace, a negative attitude towards high military expenditure is present as the central attitude and influences all other attitudes in the multiple attitude system.

Q. 2. Explain how attitudes are formed.

OR

Explain the conditions which lead to the learning of attitudes.

[CBSE Delhi 2016]

Ans. The process of attitude formation takes place in the following ways

- i. **Learning attitudes by association:** A positive attitude towards the subject is learned through positive association between a teacher and a student in school. In other words, students often develop a liking for a particular subject because of the teacher.
- ii. **Learning attitudes by being rewarded or punished:** If an individual is praised for showing a particular attitude, chances are high that s/he will develop the attitude further. For example, if a teenager does yogasanas regularly and gets the honour of being Miss Good Health in her school, she may develop a positive attitude toward yoga and health in general. Similarly, if a child constantly falls ill because he/she eats junk food instead of proper meal, then the child is likely to develop a negative attitude towards junk food, and also a positive attitude towards eating healthy food.

- iii. **Learning attitudes through modeling (observing others):** We learn attitudes through association and through reward and punishment. For example, children form a respectful attitude towards elders by observing that their parents show respect for elders and are appreciated for it.
- iv. **Learning attitudes through group or cultural norms:** Learning attitudes through group or cultural norms is through association, reward or punishment and modeling. For example, offering money, sweets, fruit and flowers in a place of worship is a normative behavior in some religions. When individuals see that such behaviour is shown by others and is socially approved, they develop a positive attitude towards such behaviour.
- v. **Learning through exposure to information:** With the huge amount of information that is being provided through media, both positive and negative attitudes are being formed. By reading the biographies of self-actualised person, an individual may develop a positive attitude towards hard work.

Q. 3. How Fritz Heider proposed the process of attitude change?

Ans. The concept of balance proposed by Fritz Heider is described in the form of P-O-X triangle. Attitude changes if there is a state of imbalance between P-O attitude and O-X attitude and P-X attitude.

For example, in the study of attitude towards dowry(X), a person (P) has a positive attitude towards dowry (P-X positive). P is planning to get his son married to the daughter of some person (O) who has a negative attitude towards dowry (O-X negative). Here P-X is positive, O-P is positive but O-X is negative. That is, there are 2 positives and 1 negative in the triangle. This is a situation of imbalance. Imbalance on POX triangle is found when

- i. All three sides of the POX triangle are negative or
- ii. Two sides are positive and one side negative.

Balance is found when

- i. All three sides are positive or
- ii. Two sides are negative and one side is positive.

Q. 4. Discuss the cognitive dissonance component in attitude change process.

[CBSE Delhi 2014; (AI) 2014]

Ans. The concept of cognitive dissonance was proposed by Leon Festinger. If an individual finds that two cognitions in an attitude are dissonant, then one of them will be changed in the direction of consonance. For example, consider the case of the following two ideas or cognitions:

Cognition 1: Pan masala causes mouth cancer which is fatal.

Cognition 2: I eat pan masala.

Here the two ideas are dissonant in the attitude towards pan masala. Therefore, one of these ideas will have to be changed so that consonance can be attained. Thus, to remove or reduce the dissonance, change Cognition 2. Thus Cognition 2 will become:

I will stop eating pan masala.

Both balance and cognitive dissonance are examples of cognitive consistency. Cognitive consistency means that two components, aspects or elements of the attitude or attitude system must be in the same direction.

Q. 5. Discuss two-step theory of attitude change.

Ans. The 2-step concept of attitude change was proposed by an Indian psychologist, S. M. Mohsin.

Step 1: The target changes his attitude by identifying with the source.

Step 2: The source shows an attitude change towards the attitude object. The target also shows an attitude change. This is a kind of imitation or observational learning

For example,

Step 1: Preeti reads in newspaper that a particular soft drink she enjoys is harmful. But she imitates the sports person with whom she identifies.

Step 2: The sports person having positive feelings towards his fans may change his habit of consuming the soft drink by substituting it with a health drink. Now, Preeti will also change her attitude and stop consuming the harmful soft drink.

Q. 6. State the factors that influence attitude change.

[CBSE (AI) 2011, 2013]

Ans. The factors that influence attitude change are as follows:

- i. **Characteristics of the existing attitude:** All four properties of attitudes namely, valence (positivity or negativity), extremeness, simplicity or complexity (multiplexity) and centrality determine attitude change. Positive attitudes are easier to change than negative attitudes. Extreme attitudes and central attitudes are more difficult to change than the less extreme and peripheral (less significant) attitudes. Simple attitudes are easier to change than multiple attitudes. Attitude change may be congruent if it changes in the same direction as the existing attitude. For example, a positive attitude may become more positive or a negative attitude may become more negative. An attitude change may be incongruent if it changes in a direction opposite to the existing attitude. For example, a positive attitude may become less positive or negative or a negative attitude may become less negative or positive.
- ii. **Source characteristics:** Attitudes are more likely to change when the message comes from a highly credible source than from a low credible source. For example, adults who are planning to buy a laptop are more convinced by a computer engineer advertising the laptop while when the buyers are themselves school children they are more convinced by a school child advertising the laptop.
- iii. **Message characteristics:** The message for attitude change contains a rational appeal or an emotional appeal makes a difference. For example, an advertisement for cooking food

in a pressure cooker may point out that this saves cooking gas (rational appeal) or preserves nutrition (emotional appeal). The motives activated by the message also determine attitude change. For example drinking milk makes a person healthy, good-looking, more energetic and more successful in one's job. The mode of spreading the message plays a significant role. Face-to-face transmission of the message is usually more effective than indirect transmission. As for instance, through letters and pamphlets or even through mass media.

- iv. **Target characteristics:** People with strong prejudices, people with low self-esteem and low intelligence change their attitudes easily. People with more open and flexible personalities change more easily. Advertisers benefit most from such people.

Q. 7. Examine four ways through which people bring consistency in their attitudes.

Or

Write a note on the Attitude-Behaviour Relationship.

Ans. There is consistency between Attitudes and Behaviour when

- i. The attitude is strong, and occupies a central place in the attitude system.
- ii. The person is aware of his attitude, there is no external pressure for the person to behave in a particular way. For example, there is no group pressure to follow the norm.
- iii. The person's behaviour is not being watched or evaluated by others.
- iv. The person thinks that the behaviour would have a positive consequence.

Q. 8. Discuss the sources of prejudice.

Or

How are prejudices formed?

Ans. The sources of prejudice are:

- i. **Learning:** Prejudices are learned through association, reward and punishment, observing others, group or cultural norms and exposure to information. Family, reference groups, personal experiences and media play a role in the learning of prejudices. Prejudiced persons show low adjusting capacity, anxiety and feelings of hostility against outgroup.
- ii. **A strong social identity and ingroup bias:** Prejudiced individuals who have a strong social identity and have a very positive attitude towards their own group boost this attitude by holding negative attitudes towards other groups.
- iii. **Scapegoating:** The majority group places the blame on a majority outgroup for its social, economic and political problems. Scapegoating is a group-based way of expressing frustration and it often results in negative attitudes or prejudices against the weaker group.
- iv. **Kernel of truth concept:** People continue to hold stereotypes because they think that after all, there must be some truth or 'kernel of truth' in what everyone says about the other group.

- v. **Self-fulfilling prophecy:** The target group may behave in ways that justify the prejudice, i.e., conform the negative expectations which may thus strengthen the existing prejudice.

Q. 9. State the strategies for overcoming prejudice.

[CBSE Delhi 2014; (AI) 2012, 2016]

Or

How can prejudice be handled?

Ans. The strategies for handling prejudice would be effective if they aim at:

- i. Minimizing opportunities for learning prejudices.
- ii. Changing such attitudes.
- iii. De-emphasising a narrow social identity based on ingroup.
- iv. Discouraging the tendency towards self-fulfilling prophecy among the victims of prejudice.

These goals can be accomplished through:

- a. Education and information dissemination, for correcting stereotypes related to specific target groups and tackling the problem of strong ingroup bias.
- b. Increasing intergroup contact allows for direct communication, removal of mistrust between the groups and discovery of positive qualities in the outgroup. This strategy is successful if
 - The two groups meet in a cooperative rather than competitive context
 - Close interactions between the groups help them to know each other better
 - The two groups are not different in power or status.
- c. Highlighting individual identity rather than group identity

Q. 10. Discuss the concept of impression formation with the help of examples.

[CBSE Delhi 2011; (AI) 2011, 2016]

Ans. When we meet people, we make inferences about their personal qualities. This is impression formation. For example, if a person is good looking we form impressions that the person would be sincere and hard-working.

The person who forms the impression is called the perceiver. The individual about whom the impression is formed is called the target. Impression formation consists of the following sub-processes:

- i. **Selection:** Information is collected about target person.
- ii. **Organisation:** Information is combined in a systematic way.
- iii. **Inference:** A conclusion is drawn about the kind of person the target is.

Q. 11. Explain the factors that influence impression formation.

Ans. Impression formation is influenced by:

- i. Nature of information available to the perceiver.
- ii. Social schemas in the perceiver (including stereotypes).
- iii. Personality characteristics of the perceiver.
- iv. Situational factors

Q. 12. Why do individuals show better performance in the presence of others?

Ans. Social facilitation is the process in which individuals show better performance in the presence of others. This is because:

- i. The individual experiences arousal in the presence of others which makes him react in a more intense manner.
- ii. The person feels that he would be evaluated. The idea of **evaluation apprehension** makes him to perform well and avoid mistakes.
- iii. The **nature of task** affects performance in the presence of others. In case of a simple or familiar task, the person is more sure of performing well than in case of a complex or new task, the person may be afraid of making mistakes.
- iv. If others are performing the same task, there is a situation of **co-action** where there is social comparison and competition and hence performance is better.
- v. If individuals are working together in a large group, a phenomenon of **social loafing** occurs based on the **diffusion of responsibility** in which there is a reduction of individual effort when working on a collective task.