



1. Define attitude. Discuss the components of an attitude.

Ans: Attitudes are state of the mind, set of views or thoughts or ideas regarding some topic which have an evaluative feature (positive, negative or neutral). These are relatively stable predispositions. .

Various components of an attitude are as follows:

(i) The thought component is referred to as the cognitive aspect of attitude.

(ii) The emotional component is known as the affective aspect.

(iii) The tendency to act is called the behavioural (conative) aspect.

These three aspects have been referred to as the A-B-C (affective-behavioural-cognitive) components of attitude. Attitudes are themselves not a tendency to behave or act in certain ways. They are part of cognition, along with an emotional component which cannot be observed from outside.

2. Are attitudes learnt? Explain how?

Ans: By enlarge attitudes are learnt. They are formed on the basis of learning.

Formation of Attitudes: The term 'attitude formation' refers to the movement we make from having no attitude toward an object to having a positive or negative attitude. There are some factors which contribute to the formation of attitudes:

1. Learning: The attitudes are acquired through learning. Many of our views are acquired in situations in which we interact with others or merely observe their behaviour.

Classical Conditioning/Learning by Association:

- A basic form of learning in which one stimulus, initially neutral, acquires the capacity to evoke reactions through repeated pairing with another stimulus.
- Player often develop a strong liking for the bat by which they made good runs. Many students start liking a subject if they like the teacher.

Instrumental Conditioning/Learning Attitude by Reward and Punishment:

- A basic form of learning in which responses that lead to positive outcomes or that permit avoidance of negative outcomes are strengthened.
- It applies to the situations when people learn attitudes which are systematically rewarded by significant others, such as parents, teachers or friends.

Observational Learning: A basic form of learning in which individuals acquire new forms of behaviour or through observing others.

- Children are keen observers and learn a whole lot of things from their parents and other family members.
- They learn many attitudes about other ethnic groups, neighbours and idealize simply by observing the behaviours of adults.

2. Learning through Exposure to Information:

- Many attitudes are learnt in a social context without physical presence of others. Print media, electronic media, biographies of self-actualized people facilitate attitude formations.

3. Learning Attitudes through Group or Cultural Norms:

- Norms are unwritten rules of behaviour. Gradually these norms may become part of our social cognition, in the form of attitudes, e.g., offering money, sweets, fruits and flowers in a place of worship is a normative behaviour in various religions. People imitate such behaviour shown by others as socially approved and develop positive attitude towards it.

3. What are the factors that influence the formation of an attitude?

Ans: The following factors provide the context for the learning of attitude through various processes:

- (i) Family and School Environment: parents and other family-members play a significant role in attitude formation. Learning of attitudes within the family and school usually takes place by association, through rewards and punishment and through modelling.
- (ii) Reference Groups: Attitudes towards political, religious and social groups, occupations, national and other issues are often developed through reference groups. Reference groups indicate to an individual the norms regarding acceptable behaviour and ways of thinking. Various institutions, religion, culture and communities are form of reference groups.
- (iii) Personal Experiences: Many attitudes are formed, not in the family environment or through reference groups, but through direct personal experiences which bring about a drastic change in our attitude towards people and our own life.
- (iv) Media Related Influences: Technological advances have made audio-visual media and internet as very powerful sources for attitude formation. School textbooks also influence attitude formation. The media can be used to create consumerist attitude. The media can exert both good and bad influences on attitudes.

4. Is behaviour always a reflection of one's attitude? Explain with a relevant example.

Ans: An individual's attitude may not always be exhibited through behaviour. Likewise one's actual behaviour may be contrary to one's attitude towards a particular topic. Psychologists have found that there would be consistency between attitude and behaviour when:

- (i) The attitude is strong and occupies a central place in the attitude system.
- (ii) The person is aware of his/her attitudes.
- (iii) Person's behaviour is not being watched or evaluated by others.
- (iv) Person thinks that the behaviour would have a positive consequences.

Richard La Piere, an American social psychologist, conducted the following study. He asked a Chinese couple to travel across the United States, and stay in different hotels. Only once during these occasions they were refused service by one of the hotels. La Piere sent out questionnaires to managers of hotels and tourist homes in the same areas where the Chinese couple had travelled asking them if they would give accommodation to Chinese guest. A very large percentage said that they would not do so. This response showed a negative attitude towards the Chinese, which was inconsistent with the positive behaviour that was actually shown towards the travelling Chinese couple. Attitudes may not always predict actual pattern of one's behaviour.

