

Social Psychology

Attitude, Nature, Components, Formation of att:
Q. What are the Components of attitude. Explain their chs. or. Define attitude & discuss the chs. of the components of attitude. or. "Attitudes differ in their effects on social action acc. to their primary chs." Discuss.

Ans. Attitude is commonly ~~meant~~^{meant} as the mental set or mental readiness of a person. This readiness may be positive or negative.

Attitude is mental set & mental readiness of a person. This mental set may be positive or negative. Attitude has three aspects: Cognitive, Affective & Conative. K.C. & Ball have also defined attitude in its three aspects as belief component (Cognitive aspect), feeling component (Affective aspect) & action tendency component (Conative aspect).

In other words it might be ~~eg~~ either favourable or unfavourable. (It has three aspects namely the Cognitive aspect, the Affective aspect & the Conative aspect. So Kretch, Cutchfield & Ballachey have said An attitude can be defined an enduring system of three components centering about a single object! The beliefs about the object — the Cognitive Component! the effect connected with the object — the feeling Component! & the disposition to take action with respect to the object — the action tendency Component."

From the preceding discussions it follows that (There are three components of an attitude & they are The Cognitive Component, feeling Component, & the action tendency Component). (The Cognitive Component

① belief about an object for e.g. we are out of various parties we may have belief in one party and in another party

means the beliefs of the individual about an object' for e.g. there are various political parties in our Country. Now our belief may be in favour of one party & against another party. Similarly we may have

appropriate belief about a temple & an inappropriate belief about a mosque. So this aspect of attitude is concerned with the ^{This Component of att. is concerned with the} cognitive process of the mind.

The second Component namely (the feeling Component of an attitude ^{means} refers to the emotions about the object). ^{for} eg - (We may have good feeling for one object & bad feeling for another object). We may like one political party & we may dislike another political party. Thus this Component of attitude is concerned with the affective mental process.

② emotions about the object

The third Component namely (the action tendency Component of an attitude refers to the behaviors of the indiv. associated with his attitude.) For e.g. if we have positive attitude toward a person we ~~must~~ ^{do} help him & if we have neg. attitude we ~~must~~ ^{do} not help him. A Brahmin avoids meeting with Harijans because the Brahmin has unfavourable attitude toward the Harijan. But the same Brahmin ~~to~~ meets with pleasure the other members of the high caste community as he has favourable attitude toward them. (Thus this Component is concerned with the conative mental process)

③ the behavior of the individual

There are certain chs. of all the three Components of an attitude. They are called the primary chs. of the Components. They are as follows:—

1) Valence ^{degree} - (Is an essential ch. of the components of an attitude.) (Valence means the degree of favourability and unfavourability.) It is a fact that Attitude may be either favourable or unfavourable. But there must be quantitative difference even in the favourable or unfavourable attitude.

unfav. - very high.
e.g. - very low
highly fav. or
highly unfav.
In Cognitive Component, it refers to high, very high or low favourable attitude.
Similarly an attitude may be very high, highly unfavourable, or highly unfavourable. Thus the Cognitive Component may vary from very high to very low. Similarly in respect of feeling Component the Valence is an essential because emotions may be very high or very low. (A mother's love for her children)

Similarly is decidedly stronger than a Women's
feeling of hate (may love for ornament.) Similarly there must
also vary in degree be degree of hate connected with feeling
Component. (In respect of action tendency

In action tendency comp. Valence is again an imp. ch. because a person's action must ~~be~~ differ in quantity in various situations. e.g. - if the attitude is highly positive the action must ~~be~~ greater than the action in case of low positive attitude. A ^{husband's} mother's action tendency for her son must be greater than for her servant.)

This is another class of complex of attitude. Here the know. may be ~~very~~ very simple or very complex in relation to all the three components. Belief, Feeling & Action.

2) Multiplicity — This is again an imp. ch. of all the three components of an attitude.

It means Variety of parts of which a component is made. Multiplicity refers to the number & variety of the elements or parts making up a component. (In respect of Cognitive Component the belief may be very simple or very complex)

e.g. of the attitude of a scientist towards science may be v. complex or multiplex because he has the knowledge of physical sc. social sc. & so on. But his attitude towards

religion may be simple because he has not enough knowledge ^{about} to differentiate between various religions. Similarly in respect of feeling component, (the ch. of multiplexity can be easily observed. For e.g. the feeling component may be very complex or v. simple. A woman's passion for her lover is decidedly more multiplex than her affection for her dog. (This ch. can also be observed in respect of that action tendency component. Because a person's action tendency may be simple or complex for e.g. - The action tendency of a person belonging to B. J. P. must be greater than an ordinary citizen at the time of voting.)

There is a Consistency — The available evidence suggests that there is a general trend among the components of attitude in their valence & in their multiplexity. [In this connection Campbell (1947) found that there is generally

e.g. Action of a soldier at the time of war is more complex than an ordinary citizen.

Consistency among the components of an attitude in their valence & multiplexity. (1947) found that there is generally

Consistency in the Valence & multiplexity of all the three Components of an attitude.

Similarly Adorno & others (1950) studied the Valence of the Cognitive Component, the action tendency Component toward ~~Component~~ ~~of attitudes~~ of attitudes toward the Jew and found that there was a high consistency between the valence of beliefs and the valence of action tendency about the Jew. However Consistency of multiplexity of all three lacks empirical evidences. Katz & Stotland (1959), however reported the Consistency of multiplexity of all the three Components of an attitude.

4) Interconnectedness — Studies have shown that few attitudes of an indiv. exist in the state of complete isolation. (Most of the attitudes are found interconnected which we call clusters of attitudes.) For e.g. Attitude toward private enterprise or inflation may be connected with the person's attitudes toward various other fields. Similarly our attitude toward Roman Catholic Church may be connected with our attitudes about political systems, science, poetry, art, & family relationships. Ferguson (1939) found the ch. of interconnectedness in attitudes.

Consonance — (Is also an imp. ch. of the attitude clusters). It means that there may be close agreement.

There is complete harmony between
Components of an attitude cluster.
But these ^{a attitude} clusters may vary in degree,

with the components of attitude. Attitude
clusters may vary with respect to degree
of consonance among the attitudes that
make them up. [There may be a high degree
of internal harmony in some attitude
clusters and there may be less harmony
in other attitude clusters] In this connection
Campbell, Converse, Miller & Stokes
(1960) made a very extensive study
and found that consonance ch. is ob-
served in most of attitude clusters.

Thus it may be concluded
that the three components of an
attitude are characterized by Valence
multiplexity, consistency, interconnec-
tedness & consonance.