

# Persuasion and cognitive dissonance

Psychology



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## Persuasion and Cognitive Dissonance

Persuasion refers to a deep conviction or belief especially political or religion ones that have a major impact on society. Persuasion is said to have occurred when the behaviour or thoughts of an individual influences the behaviour of another. One of the cognitive responses that underlie persuasion is attitude. Attitude is a psychological process that influences the persuasion. This is because people's emotions, believes, behavioural tendencies are determined by people's general evaluations which in turn determines their influence their actions.

According to Burson (512), persuasion research aims at changing the attitudes of an individual so as to influence behaviour. When a person receives a communication and is faced with the decision of accepting or rejecting the persuasion, he may be expected to attempt to relate the new information to his existing attitudes, knowledge, feelings. The Cognitive response theory is a learning theory of psychology that describes human behaviour by understanding the thought processes. The assumption is that humans are logical beings that make the choices that make the most sense to them. According to Richard (53) came up with The Elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of persuasion, a dual process which argues that persuasion can occur when thinking is high or low, though the outcomes and process of persuasion are different in each situation.

According to Festinger (207), cognitive dissonance refers to the feeling of discomfort and excessive mental stress cause by having two or more conflicting or contradicting beliefs experienced at the same time. Self-affirmation is a psychological theory with the premise that people are motivated to maintain the integrity of the self with an aim of protecting the

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image of its self-integrity and morality. Self-affirmation is appropriate when one seeks to gain satisfaction, need for self-worth and self-integrity.

However, self-affirmations might be inappropriate when one tries to justify an action that is wrong such as smoking, which is a health hazard or driving a car that is not environmentally healthy.

#### Works cited

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