

# Attitude persuasion



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Introduction: The word attitude is an expression of favor or disfavor toward a person, place, thing, or event. Prominent psychologist Gordon Allport (1935) once described attitude “ the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary psychology”. The words attitude and persuasion are often found together, as in the phrase persuasion and attitude change. Persuasion is an attempt to change people's attitudes. For example, advertisers try to persuade potential customers to buy a product. To do this, they try to create a positive attitude toward the product.

Social psychologists have emphasized that an attitude is preparation for behavior. Otherwise, nobody would care about attitudes. An advertiser would not try to make you feel more “ positive” or “ liking” toward a product unless this was assumed to affect your likelihood of buying the product. Attitude as an inward feeling expressed by outward behavior. People always project on the outside what they feel on the inside. But some people try to mask their attitude. You have developed attitudes about such issues, and these attitudes influence your beliefs as well as your behavior.

Attitudes are an important topic of study within the field of social psychology. What exactly is an attitude? How does it develop? Studies show that how psychologists define this concept, how attitudes influence our behavior and things we can do to change attitudes. Definitions i. A settled way of thinking or feeling typically reflected in a person's behavior. A position of the body proper to or implying an action or mental state: “ the boy was standing in an attitude of despair”. ii.

Attitude is “ a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or

symbols” (Hogg & Vaughan 2005, p. 150) iii. “ A psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 1) Explanation An attitude is a cognition (form of thought) that is formed through experience and influences our behavior. The fact that attitudes are formed through experience means that we can, potentially, change them. When a persuader gives a message to an audience member, that message becomes part of the listener’s experience, and it can affect his or her attitudes. The fact that attitudes influence our behavior means that we can use persuasion as a means to achieve our goals-- when the behavior, or actions, or others can help attain those goals. Attitudes have two basic components: beliefs and values. Beliefs are, roughly, statements of facts. Beliefs are potentially verifiable. We say a belief is true or correct when it seems to reflect the world and false or incorrect when it seems contradicted by the world.

Values are judgments of worth, like good or bad, useful or useless, expensive or cheap, efficient or inefficient. Together, these cognitions (thoughts), beliefs and values, form attitudes. (M. Clubertson, 1968) Attitudes are learned from experience and also influence our behavior. A person’s attitude is a composite of all the relevant belief/value pairs, with the more important ones influencing the attitude more. You can change a person’s attitude by changing either the belief or the value (but not both), or by creating new belief/value pairs (or by changing the relative importance of belief/value pairs).

Persuasion is, quite simply, the use of messages to influence an audience. The messages that make up persuasive discourse are instrumental, or

means to ends or goals of the persuader. Companies use persuasion in the form of advertising to convince consumers to buy their products or services. Students use persuasion to convince their parents to increase their allowance, or let them go to see a particular movie, or to let them use the car. Parents can use persuasion to get their children to study or to clean up their rooms.

People use persuasion to get their friends to go to see a certain movie, or a band, or to hang out at the mall. Persuasion can convince another person to go out on a date. It can convince a teacher to accept a paper after the due date. Of course, people can also use threats to get what they want, but that is not persuasion. In persuasion, we try to convince the audience that they should want to do what we want them to do--not that they should do it “ or else. ” One of the most powerful influences on attitude change is the motivation of people.

Cognitive dissonance Cognitive dissonance is a phenomenon in which a person experiences psychological distress due to conflicting thoughts or beliefs. In order to reduce this tension, people may change their attitudes to reflect their other beliefs or actual behaviors. What all the definitions of attitude have in common is evaluation. An attitude is not just a neutral stance; it is a value judgment, favorable or unfavorable, or likely to affect persuasion: characteristics of the communicator, the communication, and the situation.

People can be inoculated against attempts at persuasion and propaganda by exposing them to weak attacks and teaching them how to respond. (D. Crano, 2005) Cognitive dissonance theory emerged in the 1950s and had a

large impact on social psychology. It is based on the assumption that people seek consistency between their behavior and their attitudes. If forced to do something that contradicts their value judgments or opinions, people feel dissonance and are motivated to change either attitudes or behavior, to bring them into consonance (agreement) with one another.

That makes the theory especially interesting and useful. A central question for Dissonance researcher has been the motivational bases for dissonance and the causes of the aversive state of dissonance arousal. In Aronson's(1992)self conceptanalysis, dissonance arises from the inconsistent cognitions that threaten consistency, stability, predictability, competence and moral goodness of self concept. In Steele's(1988) self affirmation Theory, dissonance arises from general self integrity.

Stone and cooper(Peety and Wegener 1998) Proposed that dissonance arise when people fail to behave in a manner consistent with some valued self-standard. the specific motivation behind the dissonance supposedly depend on the type of self standard involved. Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) Festinger's version of balance theory, called cognitive dissonance theory, suggests that when people have in mind two or more inconsistent thoughts or beliefs, they experience a state of dissonance.

This ' negative drive state' is unpleasant, so they are motivated to try to reduce it by altering one or more of the cognitions in order to re-establish a state of consonance. Cognitive dissonance is a term used in modern psychology to describe the feeling of discomfort when simultaneously holding two or more conflicting cognitions: ideas, beliefs, values or emotional reactions. In a state of dissonance, people may

sometimes feel "disequilibrium": frustration, hunger, dread, guilt, anger, embarrassment, anxiety, etc. Cognitive dissonance is one of the most influential and extensively studied theories in social psychology.

The theory of cognitive dissonance in social psychology proposes that people have a motivational drive to reduce dissonance by altering existing cognitions, adding new ones to create a consistent belief system, or alternatively by reducing the importance of any one of the dissonant elements. It is the distressing mental state that people feel when they "find themselves doing things that don't fit with what they know, or having opinions that do not fit with other opinions they hold." A key assumption is that people want their expectations to meet reality, creating a sense of equilibrium.

Likewise, another assumption is that a person will avoid situations or information sources that give rise to feelings of uneasiness, or dissonance. Bogardus Social Distance scale For Bogardus "an attitude is a tendency to act toward or against something in the environment which becomes thereby a positive or negative value." Conducted a monumental study on "social distance" still used the world over to examine cultural and ethnic attitudes. The Bogardus Social Distance scale measures attitudes about how close or distant people feel towards other people.

Early in twentieth century E. S. Bogardus invented Bogardus Social Distance Scale is a technique for scaling attitude to measure social-psychology distance between various ethnic and racial groups Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1925) is where attitudes are inferred from the actions of the participant. The participant indicates the degree of intimacy which would

be acceptable towards an individual or group, e. g. , ' Would you live next door to one? ' Each question has a value assigned it, and the sum of these will indicate the strength of attitude

Conclusion Hence we conclude that an attitude can be a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, event, activities, ideas, or just about anything in your environment, but there is debate about precise definitions. Persuasion is a powerful force in daily life and has a major influence on society as a whole. For example Politics, legal decisions, mass media, news and advertising are all influenced by the power of persuasion, and influence us in turn. What all the definitions of attitude have in common is evaluation.

An attitude is not just a neutral stance; it is a value judgment, favorable or unfavorable, for or likely to affect persuasion: characteristics of the communicator, the communication, and the situation. People can be inoculated against attempts at persuasion and propaganda by exposing them to weak attacks and teaching them how to respond. REFERENCES Crano, W. (2005). Attitude and Persuasion. California: Claremont Graduate University. Clubertson, H. (1968). Attitudes. Journal of Cooperative Extension, 79. Murchinson, C. (1985). Handbook of Social Psychology. Clark University Press .