

SIGNIFICANCE OF ATTITUDE IN SHAPING ADOLESCENT'S BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract:

The expression of favouritism or disfavour towards a person, place, thing, or event is referred to as an attitude. As defined by attitude: 1) A person's or thing's behaviour, disposition, feeling, position, etc.; a tendency or orientation, particularly of the mind. 2) A threatening attitude and a relaxed attitude are examples of body positions or postures that are appropriate for or expressive of an action, emotion, etc. It is how we think about the people, places, things, and events that happen in our lives. Everyone has attitudes, regardless of status, intelligence, or circumstance. The adolescent years are a time of great change and the beginning of changing attitudes. A person's attitude has a big impact on how they come across. Their attitude may change during this temporary stage due to peer pressure, the media, their surroundings, their family environment, etc. The majority of adults look for the ideal role model to determine their attitude towards life. Their attitude is influenced by a variety of factors, including their family, marriage, friends, career, socioeconomic activities, etc. Certain attitudes lead to obvious conclusions. Adolescents are the foundation of our country, and their attitudes are important factors for their future.

Key words: Attitude, personality, adolescent, role model, importance of life

INTRODUCTION:

As a person grows in cognition, feelings, and action propensities towards the various objects in his world, these traits are organized into enduring systems known as attitudes. Questioning, personal experience, and positive or negative reinforcement all have a direct impact on attitudes (Fossey, 1993; Sdorow, 1990, cited by Eby et al., 1998). Through social learning, observation, and learning by association, attitudes can be indirectly influenced (Fossey, 1993; Sdorow, 1990, cited by Eby et al., 1998). The interconnectedness of the three attitude components is highlighted by the definition of attitudes as systems. These elements naturally become dependent on one another when they are included in a system. An individual's feelings and propensities for action towards an object influence his cognitions about that object. Additionally, if his cognitions about the object change, his feelings and propensities to act in certain ways towards it will also likely change. The amount of knowledge about the attitude object that an individual has access to is not always a factor in the superior predictive power of attitudes formed through direct experience. Anything that an individual has can be the subject of an attitude. An individual therefore has a wide range of attitudes towards the things in the physical world that are all around him. The quantity of any one person's attitudes, however, is limited. Only the things that are part of his psychological world can he have attitudes towards.

THE COMPONENTS OF ATTITUDES:

The individual's beliefs about the object make up the cognitive part of an attitude. The evaluative beliefs that involve ascribing favourable or unfavourable, desirable or undesirable, "good" or "bad" qualities to the objects are the cognitions that the attitude system relies on the most. The emotions associated with the object are referred to as the feeling component of an attitude. The object is either deemed to be pleasing or unappealing, liked or despised. This emotional weighting is what gives attitudes their tenaciously rousing, energising quality. An individual will be inclined to assist, reward, or support an object if they have a favourable attitude towards it. He will be inclined to harm, punish, or destroy the object if he has a bad attitude.

FORMATION OF ATTITUDES

Direct experiences and hearing (classical and instrumental conditioning and modelling) play a role in forming attitudes. A person develops attitudes both passively through learning processes and actively through direct experience, where the person actively contributes to the formation of his or her attitudes. While attitudes are considered to be learned rather than innate, they do represent relatively stable characteristics. Researchers no longer debate whether attitudes influence behaviour; rather, they focus on the conditions in which attitudes influence behaviour. Current thinking favours a relationship between attitudes and behaviour. The developmental milestones for adolescents were described for better understanding.

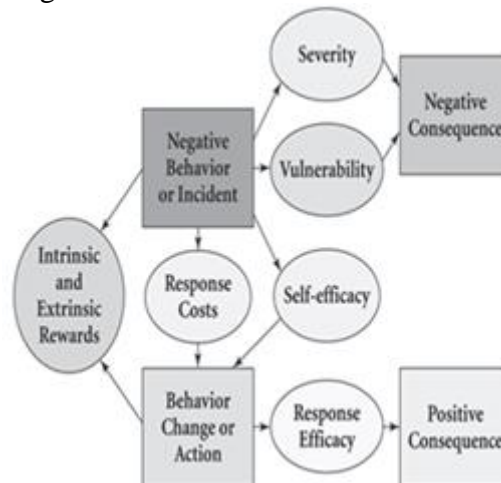


Fig. 1.1 Formation of Attitudes

They claim that during the first few years of adolescence (ages 11 to 14), concerns about appearance grow, independence from family becomes more important, rebellious or defiant behaviour is displayed, the importance of friends and peer groups grows, and the ego takes control of one's perspective on all issues. They become less self-absorbed and begin to make their own decisions, experiment with their self-image, seek out new experiences, develop morals and values, form enduring relationships, and become sexually aware during middle adolescence (15–16 years). They begin to develop idealistic worldviews in late adolescence (17–18 years old), become involved in activities outside of their homes and schools, stabilise their relationships, and begin to treat adults equally. Independence is also expected at this point. There are definite gender differences in the timing effects. Girls who mature early do not share the benefits of boys who mature early (Brooks-Gunn, 1991). Many lack the poise of late-maturing girls and are self-conscious about their bodies.

SOCIAL LEARNING (ACQUIRING ATTITUDE FROM OTHERS):

A significant component of socialisation is learning attitudes. Even though attitudes are internal, individual processes, they also connect each person to a social world of other people, activities, and issues, including those who actively contribute to the formation or modification of attitudes (Eby et al., 1998, citing Zimbardo, 1985). As a result, attitudes play a role in the framework that helps us make sense of our social environment. A newborn baby develops into an accountable and capable member of human society through social learning. Without attitudes, adult human social life is essentially unimaginable. Parents and later teachers are two sources from which kids pick up their attitudes. It's a little more difficult to say how children pick up attitudes—whether from the media, friends, or acquaintances. However, at least three key processes—classical conditioning, instrumental conditioning, and modeling—have been noted by psychologists as having an impact in this regard. The process of acquiring knowledge and attitudes from significant others, such as parents, teachers, peers, and media figures, is highlighted by the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977).

CLASSICAL CONDITIONING:

Imagine an adult learning about "wobble" for the first time. Since the adult doesn't know what "wobble" is, she asks her mother for clarification. Mother answers with a frown or an upset expression. A mother's The child will become aware of negative feelings, and she will start to associate those feelings with wobbling. This disdain for wobble may persist as the child gets older. This is especially likely if other instances of similar parental responses have strengthened the association. As a result, through classical conditioning, parental attitudes have the ability to influence adult attitudes.

INSTRUMENTAL CONDITIONING:

It refers to the process of learning where responses that produce favourable outcomes or eliminate unfavourable ones are strengthened or acquired. A religious father may commend his son for professing religion and may chastise his son for holding opposing opinions. Children want to be held to the "right" viewpoints, and parents can decide what those viewpoints are, at least before their children reach adolescence. Parents can influence their children's attitudes on a variety of issues by rewarding and punishing them.

MODELLING:

Parents are not the only ones who help children develop passive attitudes; schools, places of worship, and other institutions also play a significant role in this process. Additionally, mass media exert significant influence on attitudes. According to Hernandez et al. (2000), attitudes are frequently described in terms of mood, thought processes, behavioural tendencies, and evaluation. According to Eby et al. (1998), attitudes are relatively stable mental positions held towards concepts, things, or people. According to Noe (2002), attitudes are a combination of beliefs and feelings that predispose a person to act in a particular way. According to Antonak (1988), attitude is an emotion-charged idea that predisposes a class of actions in a specific class of social situations.

FORMING ATTITUDES BY DIRECT EXPERIENCES:

In addition, people develop attitudes as a result of their personal experiences. They actively extrapolate or make generalisations from their experiences. By altering how available information is processed, direct experience may have an impact on how attitudes are formed. Hewstone (2003) makes an attempt to explain how direct contact between groups affects attitudes and lessens or eradicates prejudice. Pettigrew suggests the following four key potential mechanisms: 1) Gaining knowledge of the opposing group, the "out group" 2) Changes in attitudes brought about by behaviour, such as developing more optimistic attitudes after cooperating in a learning task 3) "In-group" re-evaluation; and 4) creating emotional ties. The most effective way to lessen prejudice appears to be to create affective ties, such as through the development of close friendships.

According to the American Association of University Women (1991), a lot of adolescent girls believe that their body image and physical appearance play a significant role in their sense of self. Low self-esteem and bad health habits can result from feeling dissatisfied with one's body. According to scientists, these unfavourable emotions may be linked to a higher prevalence of depressive symptoms and lower self-esteem in girls. They may also influence behaviours that are harmful to one's health, such as poor eating patterns, dieting, depression and anxiety, and eating disorders. Teenagers are worried about how their bodies look (Elkind, 1984). According to some researchers, adolescents' opinions of their physical appearance are the most crucial component of their self-esteem (Simmons and Blyth 1987). Young people are more likely than anyone else to be unsatisfied with their appearance at this time of rapid body changes. Numerous studies suggest that during adolescence, girls place a higher value on appearance than boys do. Girls are much more likely than boys to think they are overweight when, in reality, their weight is appropriate for their height. Boys tend to view their bodies more positively than girls do. Girls tend to be self-conscious about their appearance, thinking they are heavier than they actually are and desiring to lose weight. Boys, on the other hand, are generally happy with how they look and would only like to be a little bit

more muscular. In the middle of adolescence, girls are less likely to overestimate their weight, but they are still unhappy with their bodies.

One significant aspect of the self is self-assessment or self-esteem. James contends that one's assessment of their achievement of a set of goals is a factor in determining their level of self-esteem. Both Harter (1990) and Rosenberg (1989) supported two opposing theoretical perspectives on self-esteem in their respective studies. The first comes from William James (1802), who defined self-esteem as the relationship between a person's importance of success in a particular domain and their perception of their success in that domain. The second theoretical perspective is that of Cooley (1907), who thought that a person's perceptions of how important others saw them were the source of their self-esteem. There has been a lot of research done on the connections between self-esteem and other factors. Low life satisfaction, loneliness, anxiety, resentment, irritability, and depression have all been linked to low self-esteem. According to Blyth and Traeger (1988), perceived parental intimacy and high self-esteem are correlated. Additionally, academic success in high school, an internal locus of control, higher family income, and a favourable perception of one's own attractiveness have all been linked to high levels of self-esteem. People who had high self-esteem as children are likely to still have it as teenagers. Numerous studies have shown that self-esteem stabilises or even rises during middle and late adolescence and into early adulthood. The final significant task of this stage of development is getting ready for marriage and family life. Each of these growing pains forces adolescents to deal with the bigger things. The self-changes from childhood onward as the child continues to develop up until adolescence and then assumes its proper form after adolescence. Such changes are caused by a number of sociological, psychological, emotional, and physical factors. Depending on his or her environment, upbringing, love and affection received from parents and siblings, and the climate at the school level, he or she may have negative or positive traits.

CONCLUSION:

Why do we even have attitudes at all? Why are they useful? One important response is that attitudes facilitate decision-making by minimising information overload. Attitudes facilitate simple human social interaction, which can be challenging and information-rich. Another way to describe attitudes as heuristics—cognitive techniques for quickly and easily processing information—is to say that they help reduce information overload. According to Silverman et al., the proportion of positive adjectives used to describe oneself was comparable between male and female college students. When sex differences in self-esteem do manifest, Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) came to the conclusion that they are not more likely to favour one sex over the other. College students were asked to indicate the grades they anticipated receiving in a number of courses as part of a study by Crandall (1969). Then, their actual and predicted grades were compared. He discovered that males tended to overestimate their expected grades, whereas females tended to underestimate them. Explicit attitudes are consciously held convictions that influence behaviour and decision-making. Unconscious attitudes, called implicit attitudes, can still have an impact on behaviour and decision-making. Cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components can all be found in attitudes, up to a maximum of three.

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