



PATNA UNIVERSITY
M.A (PSYCHOLOGY) SEMESTER-1
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY (CC2)
TOPIC: ATTITUDE AND ITS COMPONENTS

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- An Attitude is a tendency to respond positively (favourable) or negatively (unfavourable) to certain people, situations, issues, ideas, specific individuals, entire social groups and objects. It is relatively lasting cluster of feelings, beliefs and behavioural tendencies directed towards specific ideas, objects or groups.
 - Attitude is important component of social behavior and thought. According to Allport, it is the most central concept of Social Psychology. Attitudes are involved in practically every other area of the discipline, including social perception, interpersonal attraction, prejudice, and discrimination, compliance, and so on. The main cause why the concept of attitude is so central to Psychology is because the aim of Psychology is to study behaviour, and attitudes are supposed to influence behaviour.
 - Attitudes are sometimes called as Conditioned Emotional Responses (C.E.R). They are learned process and not innate tendencies. They can be learned classically or operationally.
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- An attitude is a readiness to respond in such a way that behavior is given a certain direction. According to Allport attitudes are three types :
- 1. Social Attitudes
- 2. Attitudes towards specific persons.
- 3. Attitudes towards specific groups.
- Attitudes indicate the direction and intensity of response of the person to stimuli. They reveal the drives which lead to some form of behavior. It is a clear fact that every individual has a vast form of attitudes: e.g., Attitudes towards health, children, food, clothes, God, pets, etc.
- Attitudes are a result of beliefs. Beliefs about the object, feelings towards the object, behavioral intentions regarding the object and actual behavior thus shown are all steps towards attitude formation.



CHARACTERISTICS OF ATTITUDE:

- It is relatively permanent.
- Attitude has a purpose
- Limited to socially significant events or objects
- Each attitude is made up of thoughts and ideas, a cluster of feelings, likes and dislikes, and behavioural intentions
- It is acquired through experience
- Attitudes are either positive or negative
- Attitudes can be changed
- Attitudes are learned
- It forms the basis of social cognition.
- Attitudes are hypothetical construct
- Attitudes cannot be directly observed
- Attitudes involve individuals as well as groups
- Attitudes have motivational-affective properties



COMPONENTS OF ATTITUDE

- **Cognitive (thinking) component** – beliefs and factual information about the object of an attitude;
- **Affective (feeling) component** – Positive or negative emotions and feelings associated with the object of an attitude. It refers to whatever emotions are triggered by a particular attitude.
- **Behavioural (connative) (acting) component** – a state of readiness to take action. It refers to action tendencies and behavioural component.
- **Evaluative Component** -- The evaluative component refers to the fact that an attitude is said to be either positive or negative. This component has both a direction (positive or negative) and an intensity (ranging from very weak to very strong). The evaluation component distinguishes an attitude from other types of cognitive elements.

