

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY DIPLOMA ECDE SHORT NOTES

TOPIC: ATTITUDE

Notes on Attitudes: Meaning, Nature, Components and Types of Attitudes

Meaning and Nature:

Attitudes are fundamental determinants of our perceptions of, and actions toward all aspects of our social environment. Attitudes involve a complex organisation of evaluative beliefs, feelings and tendencies toward certain actions.

How much we like or dislike something determines our behaviour towards that thing. We tend to approach, seek out or be associated with things we like; we avoid, shun or reject things we do not like.

Attitude will have three components:

- 1. Cognitive:** It involves the knowledge or information about a person or object, etc., and his belief about it.
- 2. Affective:** Refers to feeling aspect, i.e. how he feels about it
- 3. Conative:** Refers to action tendency, i.e. how he behaves with it

Types of Attitudes:

Attitudes are of three types:

a. Positive:

A favourable attitude—liking people, objects, situation, etc.

b. Negative:

An unfavourable attitude—does not like people/ objects, etc.

c. Neutral:

Neither favourable nor unfavourable.

8 Factors Responsible for Development of Attitudes

The factors which lead to development of attitudes are:

- a. Family
- b. Peers

- c. Conditioning
- d. Social adjustment functions
- e. Direct instruction
- f. Modelling
- g. Satisfaction of wants and
- h. Prejudices!

a. Family:

Family is the most powerful source for formation of attitudes. The parents, siblings provide information about various things.

Attitudes developed by an individual, whether positive or negative are the result of family influence, are very powerful and difficult to undo.

b. Peers:

As the individual develops, he comes in contact with outer world and peers in first place. Peers include same age friends, neighbours, classmates, etc. The child tries to internalise the attitudes of these people.

c. Conditioning:

When we are conditioned or adjusted to a certain set up of people, situation, etc., we will be influenced by that. Hence, our associations lead to develop attitudes. Many times the kind of reinforcement we get from environment also leads to develop attitudes.

On the other hand, negative reinforcement like punishment, teasing, criticizing, troubling may lead to develop negative attitude.

Examples: when a patient's life is saved by a particular hospital at critical moments, he will develop a favourable attitude about that hospital (classical conditioning). Similarly, in instrumental conditioning, reward consequences of any behaviour will shape our attitude. For example, if you express an attitude to a