

Chapter 4: Attitudes

Attitudes

- Evaluations of various aspects of the social world
 - Explicit Attitudes – attitudes we consciously endorse and can easily report
 - Implicit Attitudes – attitudes that are involuntary, uncontrollable, and at times unconscious

Why Study Attitudes?

- Evaluation is basic building block of social thought
- Attitudes affect behavior

Functions of Attitudes

- Knowledge
- Identity/Self-Expression
- Self-Esteem
- Ego Defensive
- Impression Motivation

Components of Attitudes

- Affective
- Behavioral
- Cognitive

Attitude Formation

- Classical Conditioning – form of learning in which one stimulus, initially neutral, acquires the capacity to evoke reactions through repeated pairing with another stimulus

- o Took a neutral stimulus and paired it with images of positive/negative influences
- Operant Conditioning – form of learning in which responses that lead to positive outcomes or that permit avoidance of negative outcomes are strengthened
 - o A behavior being reinforced or punished
- Observational Learning
 - o If a person plays with a dog, the dog is seen as a positive thing
- Heredity
 - o Attitudes are shaped by genes, some linked by genetics
 - Religious beliefs, political beliefs

Strength of Attitudes

- Strong Attitudes
 - o Stable
 - o More resistant to persuasion attempts
 - More committed to view, more certain it is correct
 - o Predict behavior better
 - o Embeddedness – more connected to things inside the brain

Attitude-Behavior Consistency

- Factors Increasing Consistency:
 - o Lapiere 1934 – Chinese couple went to many establishments (180 restaurants, 60 hotels, refused 1), the establishments were surveyed saying they would not serve a Chinese couple.
 - Attitude and Behavior were different

- Strength of Attitude
 - Knowledge Amount
 - Direct Experience
 - Personal Relevance
 - Owning a dog, stronger attitude toward dogs
 - Accessibility of Attitude
 - Drinking age example, attitude pertaining to group of people will have a high accessibility of attitude
- Low Self-Monitoring
 - Not likely to adjust their behavior depending on situation
 - HIGH SELF-MONITORING: wants to fit in, will not have their attitude gage their behavior
- Time Pressure
 - Do not have a lot of time to make a decision
 - No time = act upon attitude
- No Situational Constraints
 - Free to display behavior upon attitude
 - Peer pressure

Theory of Planned Behavior – theory suggesting that in addition to an attitude toward a given behavior and the subjective norms about it, individuals also consider their ability to perform the behavior

Attitude + Subjective Norms + Perceived Control → Behavioral Intention → Behavior

Pluralistic Ignorance