
UNIT 2 INTENTION, ATTITUDES AND INTEREST: DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces deals with attitudes, intention and social interest. It gives a definition, description and characteristic features of attitude and differentiates the same from those of intention and social interest. The unit also describes the various factors which influence the attitudes, intention and social interest. The

unit provides theories of attitudes, intention and social interest. There are many social processes involved in the development the development and management of attitudes, intention and interest and these are given in detail in this unit. The unit also presents the behavioural changes that occur as a result of attitudes, intentions and interest.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Elucidate the concepts of attitude, intention and social interest;
- Define attitude, intention and interest;
- Describe the theoretical frameworks of attitude, intention and interest;
- Explain the social processes in development and management of attitude, intention and interest;
- Describe how individual attitude, intentions and interests lead to a change in social behaviour; and
- Identify the specific factors which influence attitudes, intentions and interests.

2.2 DEFINITION OF ATTITUDES, INTENTION AND INTEREST

The term attitude refers to certain regularities of an individual's feeling, thoughts, and predispositions to act toward some aspect of one's environment. Feelings are often referred to as the affective component, thoughts as the cognitive component, and predispositions to act as the behavioural component. One may hold attitudes toward concrete objects, such as Coca-Cola, or toward abstract entities, such as democratic government. Attitudes may pertain to remote, impersonal entities, such as foreign aid, or they may be extremely personal, such as feeling that one's nose is too big.

The three components may be illustrated by an individual's attitude toward Common Wealth Games (CWG):

- 1) The affective component of the attitude is his vigorous emotional feeling against Common Wealth Games. This component is inferred from the fact that his blood pressure rises when he reads of large appropriations for this purpose, or when he encounters someone who stoutly defends Common Wealth Games, or it is inferred from the individual's angry behaviour whenever he talks about it.
- 2) The cognitive component of his attitude consists of impoverishment of Indian economy due to huge money being spent on these games rather than uplifting the poor, that the money is mainly siphoned off in the form of graft to officials of the Indian and foreign government, and that his country will receive nothing in return.
- 3) The behavioural component consists of action tendencies. These are inferred from what the individual plans to do, or says will do or what the individual actually does. The person with such an attitude will write to the government and the party in power how very wrong this kind of organising games in

which huge money is spent. The person asks the voters to vote against the government as well as when the bill for CWG comes in the parliament. Another behaviour could be the person denounces CWG in conversations with friends and associates, and he reads articles written by persons who are against CWG.

An attitude is usually thought of as a hypothetical construct, not directly open to observation but inferred from verbal expressions or overt behaviours. A hypothetical construct is “an entity or process that is inferred as actually existing....” Attitude belongs to that category of measurements where, from a limited set of observations one can make inferences about attitude which in turn gives rise to predictions about behaviour that has not been measured. For example, from a set of statements that a person makes about a particular community, we may infer that the person has a strong negative attitude toward them. From this measure of attitude and from hypotheses about the effect of attitudes on the ability to make cognitive discriminations, it would be possible to predict that if a list of people’s name is given to the person, he would be able to discriminate that name from the names not belonging to that particular community.

Attitudes are considered to be functional, in that they may be emotionally satisfying to the concerned individual. For example, an individual with considerable hostility may find an outlet for expressing the hostility in prejudiced attitudes toward people of certain community or group. The person may find support from other like minded persons and thus is enabled to express hostility with social approval.

Attitudes may also be used to justify particular behaviours. For example, one may have prejudice towards a certain minority group. Let us say the person is a businessman who needs cheap labour for some work. He would have employed persons from this community and also pay low wages and would explain such a low wage in terms of the members belonging to a minority group and that they do not deserve more than the same. Some attitudes, however, are functional only in the limited sense that the individual may gain some satisfaction in holding attitudes similar to those of his neighbors and friends.

<p>Self Assessment Questions</p> <p>1) Define attitude</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>2) What are the characteristic features of attitude?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
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Perhaps the father of modern consistency theory is Heider, who published an important paper on the topic in 1946 and in 1958 published a book-length monograph devoted to his "balance theory." In just the last decade, widespread interest in the principle of consistency has been evident. Many behavioural scientists are now assiduously devoting themselves to developing systematic theories based upon the principle, and many active research programs are in progress.

2.3.2 Heider's Balance Theory of Attitude Organisation

Heider (1946, 1958)'s theory of balance states that a positive or negative affect toward another person tends to be in a state of balance if the individual's affect toward an attitude object is similar to that of the other person. A state of balance is achieved when the three signs of the relations are all positive or when two are negative. Balance and imbalance are related to cognitive structure, affect, person perception, influence, and attitude-change processes.

This theory of Heider was elaborated upon by Cartwright and Harary in 1956. . A formalisation and elaboration of Heider's theory in terms of the mathematical theory of linear graphs was propounded by them and their elaboration takes into account more than three elements.

Also an extension to Heider's theory was put forward by Rosenberg and Abelson (1960). This provided for positively and negatively signed elements as well as positively and negatively signed relation, which took into account more than three elements. This theory is very similar to Cartwright and Harary's system, but is expressed in terms of matrix theory.

2.3.3 Newcomb's Theory of Symmetry

Newcomb put forward this theory in interpersonal communication. He stated that a person's attitude toward an object may be positive or negative. These relations may also vary in intensity. Symmetry between two persons exists when signs of attraction are alike and signs of attitude are alike, and intensities are equal. Dissimilar but complementary relations of two persons toward an object may also be symmetrical. A variety of group processes are treated in terms of the theory.

2.3.4 Osgood and Tannenbaum's Theory of Congruity

Cognitive elements have positive, negative, or zero valence of varying intensity. Elements relevant to each other may also be positively or negatively related. Congruity exists when signs are all zero, or two are negative, and intensities are equal. Cognitive structures and attitude change are treated in terms of the theory.

2.3.5 Festinger Theory of Cognitive Dissonance

Two cognitive elements are said to be in dissonance with respect to each other if the obverse of one element follows from the other. The existence of dissonance gives rise to pressures to reduce it. Processes of dissonance reduction are related to cognitive or behavioural changes.

2.3.6 McGuire's Two-Process Theory of Consistency

McGuire put forward cognitive preservation and cognitive growth motives and pointed out that cognitive preservation motives are of 4 categories, viz., need for

consistency, attribution, categorising, and objectification. He also divided the cognitive growth motives into need for autonomy, stimulation, teleology, and utilitarian. Similarly he also subdivided the affective preservation motives into need for tension, expression, ego defence, and need for reinforcement. And divided the affective growth motives into need for assertion, affiliation, identification and modeling. When these needs are fulfilled there is consistency. For example, wishful thinking should be consistent with the desirability. Similarly logical thinking should be consistent with the beliefs one has and should be in line with the rules of formal logic.

2.3.7 Katz and Statland's Theory of Attitude Change

This is based upon four motivational bases for attitude. These are: (i) the adjustive function, (ii) the ego-defensive function, (iii) the value-expressive function, and (iv) the knowledge function. Only the value-expressive function and the knowledge function make direct use of a consistency principle.

2.3.8 Kelman Three Process Theory of Attitude Change

This theory was put forward in 1961. According to this theory, compliance occurs as a result of reward or punishment by the influence agent. Identification occurs through formation of a satisfying relation to the influence agent. The internalisation occurs when the change is congruent with one's values. Only internalisation makes use of the consistency principle.

2.3.9 Rosenberg's Theory of Affective Cognitive Consistency

Rosenberg's theory is not as broad as some of those listed above and is also not very extensive. It however contributes to a better understanding of the nature of affective-cognitive components and the relation between them. Rosenberg has concerned himself primarily with conceptualising what happens within the individual when attitudes change. He is particularly interested in the relation between affective and cognitive components of an attitude. In general, past treatments have recognised both of these components, but have been unconcerned with specifying in any precise way how they are organised with respect to each other. Rosenberg attempts to remedy this deficiency. In addition, he extends the cognitive component of an attitude to include not only cognitions about the attitude object, but also beliefs about the relations between that object and other important values of the person.

The affective component is defined by Rosenberg as the positive or negative feeling that the individual has toward the attitude object. Thus, a person may have a negative feeling toward Republican congress the Bharatiya Janata Party. That person also has certain beliefs about them that relate to other positively or negatively valued conditions. The person might believe that this party members obstruct progress, that they hamper the economy, that they have outmoded views of development, etc. Rosenberg's principal hypothesis is that the nature and strength of the feeling toward and attitude object are correlated with the cognitions associated with the attitude object. Strong and stable positive affect toward a given object should be associated with beliefs that it leads to the attainment of a number of important values, while strong negative affect should be associated with beliefs that relate the attitude object either to less important values.

Rosenberg in 1953 has developed a procedure for determining the cognitive components of attitudes. He uses a set of thirty-five value statements, such as “all human beings having equal rights.” “People being well-educated,” “making one’s own decisions,” and “attaining economic security.” The subject first categorises each item in terms of its value importance, that is, how satisfying it is to him. To do this, he considers each value statements separately and rates its value importance by placing it in a category ranging from “gives me maximum satisfaction” (+ 10) through “gives me neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction” (0) to “gives me maximum dissatisfaction” (-10). For example, if he values education highly, he might give a rating of +8 to “people being well-educated.”

Second, the subject rates these value statements with respect to how well a particular attitude contributes to their realisation. Suppose, for example, that the attitude concerns CWG about which mention was made in the beginning of this unit,. Taking the first value statement, “people being well-educated or poverty being reduced”, the person would rate money being spent on CWG on a scale from +5 to -5. Positive ratings would imply that money spent on CWG contributes to the attainment of the value “people being well-educated or poverty beign eradicated, ,” and negative rating would imply that money spent on CWG will interfere with people getting educated or poverty being reduced etc.

From ratings of value importance and perceived instrumentality, a cognitive index for the attitude object Budget spent on CWG could be obtained. This index represents that subject’s pattern of beliefs about the extent to which money spent on CWG results in the attainment of or interference with the individual’s values. Weighted according to their importance, it is a quantitative measure of the extent to which a person’s attitude is consistent with his values.

“The index is obtained by algebraically summing the importance-instrumentality products for each of the values. Thus, if “people being well-educated” is ranked 9 in importance, and money spent on CWG receives an instrumental rating of 4, the product of these is 9×4 , or, 36. Similar products are obtained for each of the other thirty-four value statements as they pertain to Money spent on CWG and are summed to obtain a cognitive index for the attitude object.

Structure is consistent with the affect of an attitude, as measured by an attitude scale. That is, if a subject has strong positive affect toward an attitude object, he is likely to have a high cognitive index for that attitude, believing it to be instrumental in attaining the individual’s positive values and in blocking negative values. The association between the affective component of an attitude and the cognitive index has been found to be greatest for the person’s most salient values. A person’s attitudes, then, re anchored in the important values in highly consistent manner.

Of particular importance are the implication of Rosenberg’s theory and methodology for understanding attitude change. A basic proposition in his theory is that when the affective and cognitive components of an attitude are mutually consistent the attitude is in a stable state. When the affective and cognitive components are mutually inconsistent (to a degree that exceeds the individual’s present tolerance for such inconsistency) the attitude is in an unstable state and will undergo spontaneous reorganising activity until such activity results in either (1) the attainment of affective-cognitive consistency or (2) the placing of an “irreconcilable” inconsistency beyond the range of active awareness.

From this proposition it follows that if certain external forces bring about a change in either the affective or cognitive components of a previously stable attitude, pressures will arise to change the remaining component. While most attitude studies have stressed change in cognitive components as a cause of shifts in affective components, Rosenberg has concentrated on demonstrating that a change in affect will produce cognitive changes.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Discuss consistency as an organising principle.
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2) Describe the Balance theory of Heider.
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3) Put forward the theories of Newcomb and Osgood.
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4) How is Festinger theory different from Rosenberg's theory.
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2.4 FESTINGER'S THEORY OF COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

Festinger introduces his theory by noting that the attitudes of an individual are normally consistent with each other, that he behaves in accordance with his attitudes, and that his various actions are consistent with each other. For example,

if a person believes in democracy, he does not believe in communism. If he believes a college education is a good thing, he tries to send his children to college. Of particular interest is the question of what happens when inconsistencies occur.

The term dissonance is introduced to represent an inconsistency between two or more cognitive elements. Two cognitive elements are in a dissonant relation if, considering these two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other.

For example, if a person knew that the most he could afford to pay for a new motor bike was Rs. 35000/- and that he had just been persuaded to sign a contract to purchase one costing Rs. 50000/-, there would be a dissonant relation between these two cognitive elements. On the other hand, two cognitive elements are consonant with one another if one follows from the other. Thus, knowledge that the person is getting wet is consonant with the knowledge that it is raining.

Relations between cognitive elements may be either relevant or irrelevant. Dissonance and consonance may only exist between relevant elements. Many cognitive elements have nothing to do with each other. A person may know that the cost of a coca cola is Rs. 8/- and may also know that petrol is required for a car to run. These elements are irrelevant to each other. The magnitude of dissonance is a function of the proportion of all relevant cognitive elements that is dissonant. These elements are generally weighted according to their importance. Thus, the magnitude of dissonance may be expressed in terms of the following ratio:

Dissonance = $\frac{\text{The number of dissonant elements}}{\text{the total number of consonant elements}} \times 100$

From this above ratio it is clear that the more nearly equal the relative proportions of consonant and dissonant elements, the greater the dissonance is. If there are only a few dissonant elements and many consonant elements, dissonance is relatively low. The number of dissonant elements can never exceed the number of consonant elements, for this would lead to a change, removing the dissonance. Hence the maximum value that dissonance can reach is 1, which is approached when the proportions of dissonant and consonant elements are equal.

Dissonance when high can be reduced by the following methods:

1) *Change of a behavioural cognitive element*

When knowledge of one's own behaviours is dissonant with a belief, it is often simplest to change one's behaviour. For instance if a person smokes but thinks it is bad for his health, he may stop smoking. Or if he realises that "skipping the classes to go to a matinee show" instead of studying is inconsistent with knowledge that he intends to apply for medical school, he may stop going to matinee shows.

2) *Change of an environmental cognitive element*

Sometimes the behaviour of a person is dissonant with some environmental factor that can be changed. For example, the person who smokes, may reduce the dissonance between his knowledge that smoking causes cancer and the use of

cigarettes by changing to a filter-tip brand. Perhaps, the easiest aspect of the environment to change is the social or interpersonal environment. Thus a smoker bothered by dissonance may seek support from other persons who also smoke and who can present arguments and reassurance against the view that lung cancer is caused by smoking. He may, for example, point to the fact that many doctors smoke.

3) *Addition of new cognitive elements*

Sometimes it is difficult to change any of the cognitive elements that are involved in dissonance. Under these circumstances it is often possible to add new elements to outweigh the dissonant ones. A person who has purchased a bike that he cannot afford, may convince self that there is likelihood of increase in the pay packet, can readily borrow the additional money, or that has probably overestimated the expenses and underestimated the income.

2.5 FORMATION OF ATTITUDES AND FACTORS IN ATTITUDE CHANGE

2.5.1 Factors in Formation of Attitudes

Attitudes are formed by many factors as given below:

- 1) **Direct Instruction:** This involves being told by parents, schools, community organisations, religious doctrine, friends, as to what attitudes to hold etc.
- 2) **Operant Conditioning:** This is a simple form of learning, based on the “Law of Effect” For instance behaviours including verbal behaviours and even thoughts tend to be repeated if they are reinforced. Conversely, behaviours tend to be stopped when they are punished. Thus, if one expresses, or acts out an attitude toward some group, and this is reinforced by one’s peers, the attitude is strengthened and is likely to be expressed again. The reinforcement can be as subtle as a smile or as obvious as a raise in salary. Operant conditioning is especially involved with the behavioural component of attitudes.
- 3) **Classical conditioning:** This is another simple form of learning. In this a natural response (salivating) to a natural stimuli (Food) is paired or associated with a neutral stimuli(bell) and repeated many times. The organism starts associating the neutral stimuli(bell) with the natural stimuli (Food) and gives the natural response(salivating) to the neutral stimuli. That is the neutral stimulus (bell) has acquired the ability to elicit the natural response (salivating) (which normally occurs only to the natural stimulus). At this point the stimulus is no longer neutral and so is referred to as a conditioned stimulus (CS) and the response has now become a learned response and so is referred to as a conditioned response (CR). In Pavlov’s research the UCS was meat powder which led to an UCR of salivation. The Neutral Stimulus was a bell. At first the bell elicited no response from the dog, but eventually the bell alone caused the dog to salivate. In our real life daily situations, advertisers create positive attitudes towards their products by presenting attractive models in their ads. In this case the model is the UCS and our reaction to him, or her, is an automatic positive response. The product is the original NS which through pairing comes to elicit a positive conditioned

response. In a similar fashion, pleasant or unpleasant experiences with members of a particular group could lead to positive or negative attitudes toward that group. Classical conditioning is especially involved with the emotional, or affective, component of attitudes.

- 4) **Social (Observational) Learning:** This is based on modeling. We observe others showing a certain attitude towards certain group or persons belonging to a community etc. As we observe others getting also admired for their attitude we too follow them and develop those attitudes. Thus attitudes are formed through modeling.
- 5) **Cognitive Dissonance:** This comes about when related cognitions, feelings or behaviours are inconsistent or contradictory. Cognitive dissonance creates an unpleasant state of tension that motivates people to reduce their dissonance by changing their cognitions, feeling, or behaviours. For example, a person who starts out with a negative attitude toward taking drugs, will experience cognitive dissonance if the drug makes them feel pleasant and great and they find themselves enjoying the drug experience. The dissonance they experience is thus likely to motivate them to either change their attitude toward drug taking or stop taking drugs. This process can be conscious, but often occurs without conscious awareness.
- 6) **Unconscious Motivation:** Some attitudes are held because they serve some unconscious function for an individual. For example, a person who is threatened by his contracting HIV as he visits prostitutes may employ the defense mechanism of reaction formation and become a crusader against HIV. Or, someone who feels inferior may feel somewhat better by putting down a group other than their own. Because it is unconscious, the person will not be aware of the unconscious motivation at the time it is operative, but may become aware of it at some later point in time.
- 7) **Rational Analysis** involves the careful weighing of evidence for, and against, a particular attitude. For example, a person may carefully listen to the election campaigns and read opinions of political experts in order to decide which candidate to vote for in an election.

Thus attitudes are formed by a large number of factors. Now let us see how these attitudes could be changed.

2.5.2 Factors Causing Attitudinal Change

- 1) **Consistency:** An inconsistent attitudinal system, which is unstable is easily changeable than consistent attitudinal system, which is restively stable.
- 2) **Interconnectedness:** Interconnected attitude are resistant to incongruent change.
- 3) **Consonance of attitude cluster:** Dissonant attitude cluster is more susceptible to incongruent change than consonance attitudes are less prone to incongruent change.
- 4) **Strength and No. of Want Satisfaction:** Functionally Significant attitudes are less prone to incongruent change.
- 5) **Structure of attitude:** Less structural attitude system are easier to change than structural attitudes.

3) What factors contribute attitude formation?

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2.5.3 Characteristics of the Source of Communication and Attitude Change

There are many factors that are related to the source of communication to change. These include the credibility of the source, attractiveness of the source, familiarity, liking, power of the source, etc. Let us deal with each of these in some detail.

- 1) **Credibility of the source:** In the short run, credibility of the source bring immediate attitude change, but in the long run, frequency of message is more effective in attitude change (Sleeper effect)
- 2) **Attractiveness of the source:** Congruent change is directly proportional to the degree of attractiveness of the source.
- 3) **Familiarity:** More familiarity tends to attractiveness and affective in attitude change.
- 4) **Liking:** Liking and familiarity have invested U relationship.
- 5) **Power of the source:** Power of source is more affective in public commitment than private commitment.

2.5.4 Medium of Communication

- 1) **Mass Media:** Media such as radio, newspaper etc. are more prone to bring attitude change as compared to the television.
- 2) **Specialised channels:** Are more susceptible to bring attitude change.
- 3) **Face to face communication:** Most effect in personal influence

2.5.5 Form and Content of Communication

- 1) **Instrumental Value of Message:** will be more effective in attitude change.
- 2) **Amount of change advocated:** Foot in the door technique, larges the change advocated, the greater the change produced.
- 3) **Arguments:** Two-sided arguments are more effective for incongruent change, while one-sided arguments are effective for congruent change.
- 4) **Style of Communication:** Clear and skillful presentation, dynamic and persuasive style are more effective in attitude change.
- 5) **Conclusions:** Explicit conclusions are more prone to bring attitude change than implicit conclusions.
- 6) **Order of presentation:** Fear-fact sequence presentation of message is more effect in attitude change.
- 7) **Intensity of Fear:** Moderate amount of fear, bring effective attitudinal change.

2.5.6 Situational Factors

- 1) **Discussion:** Group discussion is more effective for incongruent change, while solitary listening is more effective for congruent change.
- 2) **Commitment:** Public commitment has great influence than private commitment.
- 3) **Decision:** Group decisions are more likely to bring attitude change rather self-decision.

2.5.7 Brainwashing

This is a technique used for changing the attitude of prisoner of war. The elements of brainwashing include the following:

- 1) Rigid environment,
- 2) Loss of identity,
- 3) Extreme emotional arousal
- 4) Guilt
- 5) Confession,
- 6) Reinforcement and religious conversion.

2.5.8 Group Affiliation

- 1) **Value of Membership:** (a) highly valued group norms are resistance to change (b) low valuation member change in the direction of speech, while high valuation member tend to change in opposite direction.
- 2) **Status of member:** High ranker live up to all group norms, while low or unsure ranker conform and over conform the group norms.
- 3) **Legitimacy of norm:** Is effective till these are improper intrusion into personal freedom.
- 4) **Circums lances of enforcement:** Intergroup contact enables to modify attitudes
- 5) **Role playing:** Member of group, if the role player rather observer, tend to become more congruent changes.

<p>Self Assessment Questions</p> <p>1) State the various characteristics of source of communication that are important for attitude change</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

2) Discuss medium of communication and form and content of communication in regard to change of attitude.

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3) What situational factors contribute to change of attitude?

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4) Describe brain washing and group affiliation in terms of attitude change

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2.6 INTENTION

Very often, when a person says that he or she is going to do something, this refers to the person's intention.

We also sometimes speak of an action as intentional, and we may also ask with what intention the thing was done. In each case we employ a concept of 'intention' Now let us see what this intention is.

'Intention always concerns the future'. But an action can be intentional without being concerned with the future in any way.

There are various senses of 'intention'. To have the concept intention the activity should be associated with the word intention.

Where we are tempted to speak of 'different senses' of a word which is clearly not equivocal. The distinction between an expression of intention and a prediction is generally appealed to as something intuitively clear.

'I am going to be sick' is usually a prediction; 'I am going to take a walk' usually an expression of intention.

The distinction intended is intuitively clear, in the following sense: if I say 'I am going to fail in this exam.' And someone says 'Surely you aren't as bad at the

subject as that', I may make my meaning clear by explaining that I was expressing an intention.

Prediction is a statement about the future . This suggests that an expression of intention is not. It is perhaps the description—or expression—of a present state of mind, a state which has the properties that characterise it as an intention.

An intention is a disposition in the process of realisation. It is the active desire to achieve some future goal through some specific behaviour in a particular circumstance. For example, we perceive a man bent over fingering the laces on his shoe as if intending to tie them, a woman reaching for a car door as if intending to open it, or a student enrolled in college as if intending to get a degree. Perceived intentions organise our perspective; they give yet another kind of meaning to our understanding of the social world in terms of purposes, goals, aims, plans, designs, missions, and ends. Intentions are the active, conscious, future aims we perceive another to have.

2.6.1 Characteristics of Intentions

Intentions have three important characteristics:

- 1) The intended goal may involve imaginary elements

For example “I intend to stop Arjun from cheating in class” does not imply that Arjun is really cheating. That description of reality entailed by an intention may be wrong.

- 2) One cannot substitute into the description apparently synonymous words or phrases.

For example, from “The correspondent intends to interview the Lt. Governor of Delhi” and “the governor is the smartest politician in the state,” we cannot infer that “John intends to interview the smartest politician in the state.” Rather, he may regard the governor as a mediocre politician who got his position through luck and shrewd friends.

In this we simply cannot know for sure what he intends, for his intention may involve totally imaginary elements unknown to us, or he may be trying to deceive us about his intentions through manipulating his field of expression.

- 3) To understand the other’s intention necessitates that we adopt a congruent description of it.

To say that the correspondent intends to interview the smartest politician in the State of Delhi, as a description, may seem absolutely consistent with the facts (his going to the governor’s office with an appointment for an interview, having discussed with us his desire to write an article on the governor, and taking along a tape recorder; and our belief that the governor is Delhi’s smartest politician).

Yet, the correspondent may not agree that this is his intention, for he may deny that he is interviewing the smartest politician. To

- 4) Clearly intentions can really be known only to the person holding them.

It is only by asking the person himself that we get a true picture of his intentions especially if the person tells the truth to us. And here our faith in

the correspondent's word, his credibility, is the crucial element in accepting these intentions.

- 5) Intentions are characteristically active. They are goals now in the process of realisation, dispositions now being transformed to manifestations. This means, then, that there are inactive goals, or dispositions not in the process of transformation.

2.6.2 Theories of Intention

The theory of Planned behaviour:

The theory of planned behaviour is a theory about the link between attitudes and intentions. It has a component perceived behavioural control. It covers volitional behaviours for predicting behavioural intention and actual behaviour. It was proposed by Icek Ajzen as an extension of the theory of reasoned action. It is one of the most predictive persuasion theories. It has been applied to studies of the relations among beliefs, attitudes, behavioural intentions and behaviours in various fields such as advertising, public relations, advertising campaigns and healthcare.

The theory of Reasoned Action

According to the Theory of Reasoned Action, if people evaluated the suggested behaviour as positive (attitude), and if they think their significant others wanted them to perform the behaviour (subjective norm), this results in a higher intention (motivation) and they are more likely to do so. A high correlation of attitudes and subjective norms to behavioural intention, and subsequently to behaviour has been confirmed in many studies.

A counter argument against the high relationship between behavioural intention and actual behaviour has also been proposed as results of some studies do not show that behavioural intention always leads to actual behaviour because of circumstantial limitations.

Self Efficacy Theory (SET)

Self efficacy was proposed by Bandura in 1977, which came from Social Cognitive theory. According to Bandura, expectations such as motivation, performance, and feelings of frustration associated with repeated failures determine affect and behavioural reactions. Expectations were taken up in two different types, viz., self efficacy and outcome expectancy.

Self efficacy means the ability and confidence to perform a behaviour. Previous investigations have shown that peoples' behaviour is strongly influenced by their confidence in their ability to perform that behaviour. As the Self Efficacy Theory contributes to explaining various relationships between beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behaviour, the SET has been widely applied to health-related fields such as physical activity and mental health in preadolescents, and exercise.

2.6.3 Behavioural Beliefs and Attitude Toward Behaviour

Behavioural belief: This concept is based on the subjective probability that the behaviour will produce a given outcome.

Attitude toward behaviour: An individual's positive or negative evaluation of self-performance of the particular behaviour. The concept is the degree to which performance of the behaviour is positively or negatively valued. It is determined by the total set of accessible behavioural beliefs linking the behaviour to various outcomes and other attributes.

Normative belief: an individual's perception about the particular behaviour, which is influenced by the judgment of significant others (example, parents, spouse, friends, teachers).

Subjective norm: an individual's perception of social normative pressures, or relevant others' beliefs that he or she should or should not perform such behaviour.

Control beliefs and perceived behavioural control

Perceived behavioural control: an individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing the particular behaviour. It is assumed that perceived behavioural control is determined by the total set of accessible control beliefs.

Control beliefs: an individual's beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behaviour. The concept of perceived behavioural control is conceptually related to self-efficacy.

Behavioural intention and behaviour

Behavioural intention: an indication of an individual's readiness to perform a given behaviour. It is assumed to be immediate antecedent of behaviour. It is based on attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control, with each predictor weighted for its importance in relation to the behaviour and population of interest.

Behaviour: an individual's observable response in a given situation with respect to a given target. Ajzen said a behaviour is a function of compatible intentions and perceptions of behavioural control in that perceived behavioural control is expected to moderate the effect of intention on behaviour, such that a favorable intention produces the behaviour only when perceived behavioural control is strong.

The knowledge of the role of perceived behavioural control came from Bandura's concept of self-efficacy. In previous studies, the construction and the number of item inventory of perceived behavioural control have depended on each particular health topic. For example, for smoking topics, it is usually measured by items such as "I don't think I am addicted because I can really just not smoke and not crave for it," and "It would be really easy for me to quit."

2.6.4 Strengths and Weaknesses of Theories of Intention

Strengths

At first, theory of planned behaviour can cover people's volitional behaviour which cannot be explained by Theory of Reasoned Action.

An individual's behavioural intention cannot be the exclusive determinant of behaviour where an individual's control over the behaviour is incomplete.

By adding "perceived behavioural control," theory of planned behaviour can explain relationship between behavioural intention and actual behaviour.

Weaknesses

Theory of planned behaviour is based on cognitive processing and level of behaviour change. Compared to affective processing models, theory of planned behaviour overlooks emotion variables such as threat, fear, mood and negative or positive feeling and assessed them in a limited fashion.

In particular in the health related behaviour situation, given that most individuals' health behaviours are influenced by their personal emotion and affect-laden nature, this is a decisive drawback for predicting health-related behaviours.

Poor predictability for health-related behaviour in previous health research may be attributed to the exclusion of this variab

2.6.5 Application of Theory

These theories help to predict health-related behavioural intention. The theory of planned behaviour model is also a very powerful and predictive model for explaining human behaviour.

That is why the health and nutrition fields have been using this model often in their research studies.

In one study, utilising the theory of planned behaviour, the researchers determine obesity factors in overweight.

Chinese Americans (Liou, 2007). Intention to prevent becoming overweight was the key construct in the research process. It is important that nutrition educators provide the proper public policies in order to provide good tasting, low-cost, healthful food.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Define intention with suitable examples

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2) What are the characteristics of intention?

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3) Put forward the theories of intention
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4) What are behavioural beliefs and attitude? Explain.
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5) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of theories of intention
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6) In what areas could we apply theories of intention?
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2.7 SOCIAL INFLUENCE

The concept of social influence has been assessed by social norm and normative belief in both the theory of reasoned action and theory of planned behaviour. Individuals’ elaborative thoughts on subjective norms are perceptions on whether they are expected by their friends, family and the society to perform the recommended behaviour.

For instance, Social influence is measured by evaluation of various social groups. Taking the example of smoking issue:

- 1) subjective norms from peer group include thoughts such as, “Most of my friends smoke,” or “I feel ashamed of smoking in front of a group of friends who don’t smoke”;

- 2) subjective norms from family include thoughts such as, “All my family smoke, and it seems natural to start smoking,” or “My parents were really mad at me when I started smoking”; and
- 3) subjective norms from society or culture include thoughts such as, “Everyone is against smoking,” and “We just assume everyone is a nonsmoker.”

Human behaviour is guided by three kinds of consideration.

- i) behavioural beliefs ii) normative beliefs iii) control beliefs.

In their respective aggregates, “behavioural beliefs” produce a favorable or unfavorable “attitude toward the behaviour”; “normative beliefs” result in “subjective norm”; and “control beliefs” gives rise to “perceived behavioural control.”

In combination, “attitude toward the behaviour,” “subjective norm,” and “perceived behavioural control” lead to the formation of a “behavioural intention”.

In particular, “perceived behavioural control” is presumed to not only affect actual behaviour directly, but also affect it indirectly through behavioural intention.

As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude toward behaviour and subjective norm, and the greater the perceived behavioural control, the stronger the person’s intention to perform the behaviour in question should be. Finally, given a sufficient degree of actual control over the behaviour, people are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises.

Social Interest

One of Adler’s key concepts is that of social interest. “Social interest” in German is “Gemeinschaftsgefühl,” which translates as “community feeling,” as opposed to one’s private interests or concerns. One’s “style of life” is the set of construals and personal narratives one has devised in order to cope with being-in-the-world. If one has social interest then one evidences or enacts a “useful” style of life. If one does not have social interest then one is self-absorbed and is concerned only with one’s self. Such a style of life is “useless.”

Adler identifies the source of basic mistakes as an “inferiority complex,” which is behaving “as if” one was of lesser stature (emotional, physical, intellectual) than others, and then creating a style of life based on this belief. The inferiority complex is more than just a cognition or an attitude. It is a form of self-centeredness and is self-defeating. If one solely pursues self-originated objectives then one tends to self-isolate and to avoid risk.

People have a self-concept, which is one’s belief about who one is. People also have a self-ideal, which is a belief about how one should be. One experiences dissonance between these two ideations.

The greater the tension between them, the greater one’s feelings of inferiority, because one is acting primarily to preserve one’s concept of self.

Feelings of inferiority in turn lead to self-aggrandizement and the pursuit of a useless style of life. They result in the promotion of self-interest over social interest.

Social interest is more important than individual interest; put slightly differently, the best expression of individual interest is to veer towards social interest.

Only after recognising one's basic mistakes and taking prophylactic action to mitigate against them can one then segue to a useful style of life.

Undeveloped or underdeveloped social interest is evidenced by poor performance of basic life tasks. Reorienting oneself to pursue one's social interest in turn reorganises one's style of life and enables one to avoid committing further basic mistakes. In this way the goal of Adlerian therapy is to eradicate one's "inferiority complex" and to awaken one's undeveloped or underdeveloped social interest.

"Social interest" presents the following issues:

- 1) Social interest is an attitude or outlook towards furthering the welfare of others.
- 2) Evaluating one's style of life in terms of its "usefulness" is a form of utilitarianism.
- 3) Unless an individual is a person of influence it is unlikely her actions will result in an overall augmentation of social welfare or that they will implement or achieve any socially-desirable objective at all.
- 4) If one pursues social interest then one has a motive for doing so.
- 5) Social interest is a utopian ideal. It depends on a Marxist concept of society evolving to a utopian state of fraternity and brotherhood.
- 6) One's style of life comprises the set of one's "choices" and what one chooses in turn depends on one's style of life.
- 7) Adler believed community involvement, helping, and kindness are crucial to both individual and social health. He spoke of empathy, the ability to see from the other's viewpoint, to contribute through work and volunteerism, to cooperate in solving community problems, what role theory calls "taking the role of the other," etc.

2.8 LET US SUM UP

An attitude is learned mental readiness to react in a certain way toward an object of reference, that is a constellation of cognitive, affective and connective components, which are consistently related to each other but differ in their Valance (favorable or unfavorable) and multiplicity and exert directive influence on both social perceptions and behaviours through organisation and interpretation of diverse set of information, expression of central values and beliefs and enhancement of self-esteem. When we perceive another, we blend our perception of their manifestations, determinable, and dispositions—their field of expression—with perceived intentions. We impute to another some motive which organises our perception of their behaviour. Now, insofar as I use the term, an intention is a disposition in the process of realisation; it is the active desire to achieve some future goal through some specific behaviour in a particular circumstance. For example, we perceive a man bent over fingering the laces on his shoe as if intending to tie them, a women reaching for a car door as if intending to open it, or a student enrolled in college as if intending to get a degree. Perceived intentions organise our perspective; they give yet another kind of meaning to our

understanding of the social world in terms of purposes, goals, aims, plans, designs, missions, and ends. Intentions are the active, conscious, future aims we perceive another to have.

These intentions are projected towards us through another's field of expression. He presents a complex of phenomena bearing on our perspective and forcing recognition of specific, underlying, latent intentions. Thus, we see a field of expression that is a woman opening a refrigerator door as a woman intending to get some food. We may be wrong, of course. She may intend to check the inside temperature. Moreover, she may know we are watching and be deceiving us about her real intentions (say, to distract us from the game of chess we are playing against her). She may be framing a field of expression that conveys an intended intention, as does the actor on stage. Of course. But the percipient's perspective includes the other's field of expression only as a situation within the percipient's dynamic psychological field. Within this field, the perception becomes part of the percipient's cognitive balance and structure of beliefs and is related to his personality. Thus, the other's intentions are interpreted as a total historical and psychological act: as a gestalt whose elements are our past experience with him and similar others; our cultural meanings, values, and norms; our beliefs and personality; and our own intentions, including our super ordinate goal of self-esteem. Thus, the other may project his intentions, but their meaning for us involves their confrontation with our own experience and nature. This two-way process is basic to perception and I will later elaborate on it.

2.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define attitude and discuss the various characteristic features of attitude.
- 2) What are the methods that we can use to change the attitude?
- 3) How are attitudes formed?
- 4) Discuss the theories of attitude formation and attitude change?
- 5) What are intentions? Describe intention with suitable examples.
- 6) What is social influence? How do these affect our behaviours ?

2.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

Donn Byrne, Robert A. Baron (2004), *Social Psychology*, Pearson Education, Inc, Tenth Edition. London

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Rokeach, Milton. 1968, *Beliefs, Attitudes and Values*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.