

Attitudes and Behaviour-I

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Attitude

- ▶ Attitude is a persistent tendency to feel and behave in a particular way toward some object.
- ▶ Attitudes are evaluative statements either favourable or unfavourable concerning objects, people or events.
- ▶ Attitudes are learned predispositions towards aspects of our environment
- ▶ Attitudes are learned
- ▶ Attitudes represent cluster of beliefs, assessed feelings and behavioural intentions toward a person, object or event.

The three components of attitudes

Beliefs– Established perception about the attitude object– These beliefs develop from past experience and learning

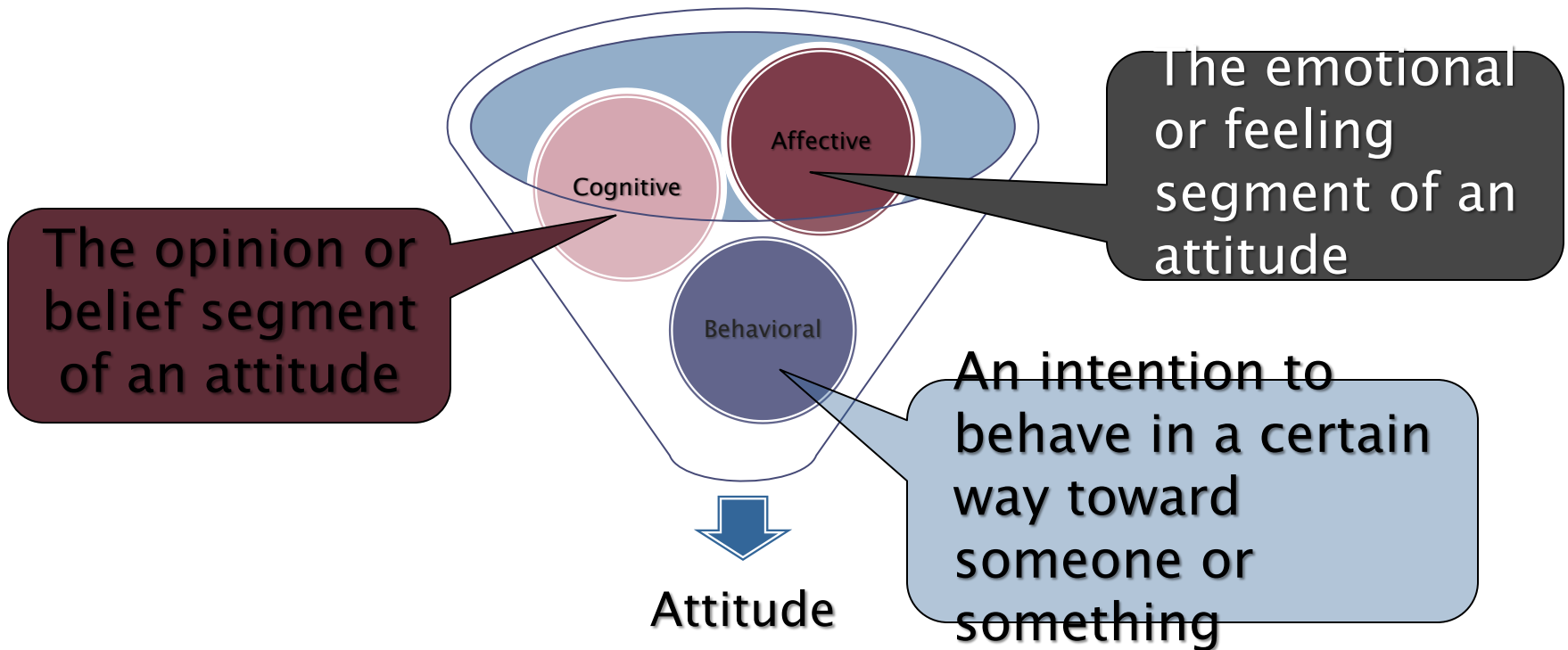
Feelings– Positive or negative evaluation about the attitude object

Behavioural intentions– Motivations to engage in a particular behaviour with respect to the attitude object

Attitudes: Components

Evaluative statements or judgments concerning objects, people, or events

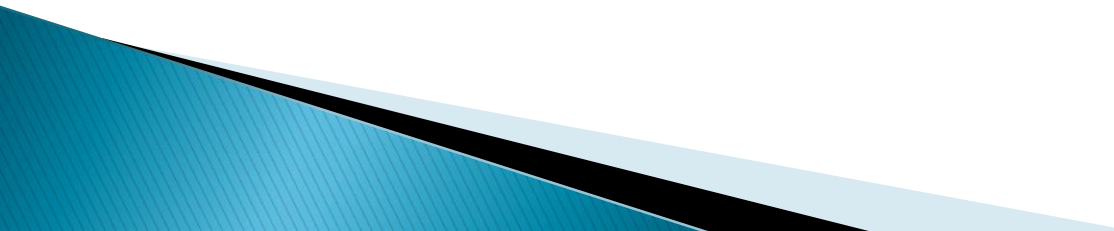
Three components of an attitude:



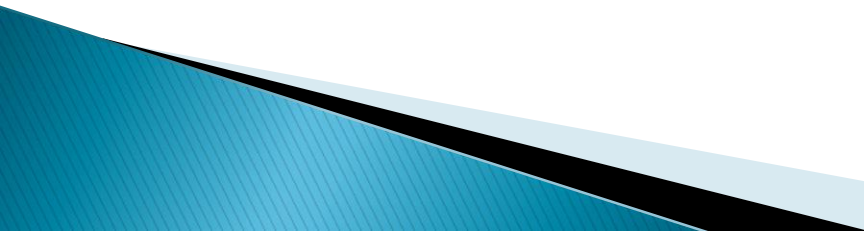
Formation of Attitude

- ▶ **Direct experience with the object**–Attitudes can develop from the personally rewarding or punishing experience with an object
- ▶ **Classical conditioning**–People develop associations between various objects and the emotional reactions that accompany them
- ▶ **Operant conditioning**– Attitudes that are reinforced , either verbally or nonverbally , tend to be maintained.
- ▶ **Vicarious learning**– Where person learns something by the observation of others helps in attitude development where individual has no direct experience with the object of attitude.

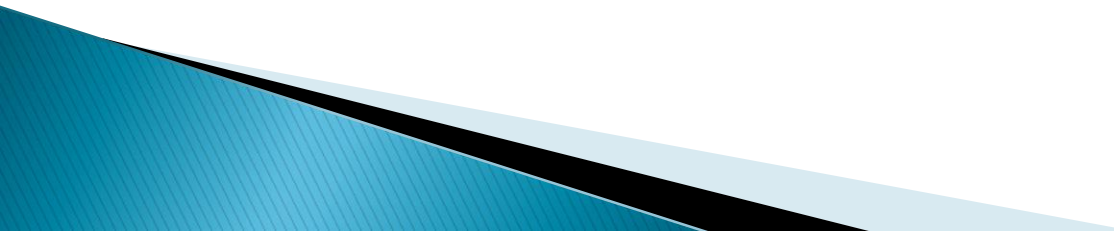
Formation of Attitude Contd...

- ▶ **Family and peer groups**– A person may learn attitude through the imitation of family members and peers.
 - ▶ **Neighbourhood**–The neighbourhood has a certain structure in terms of having cultural facilities, religious groupings and possibly ethnic differences. The neighbours tolerate , condone or deny certain attitudes.
 - ▶ **Economic status and occupations**
 - ▶ **Mass communication**
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Functions of attitudes

- ▶ **Utility**– An attitude may develop because either the attitude or the attitude object is instrumental in helping one to obtain rewards or avoid punishments
 - ▶ **Ego defense function**–People often form certain attitudes to defend their own self images
 - ▶ **Value expressive functions**–Our attitude represent our value systems.
 - ▶ **Knowledge Functions**–Attitude is often substituted for knowledge. In the absence of knowledge attitude is used to organize and make sense of the perceived object or person.
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Do attitudes predict behavior always?

- Not really!!! People's expressed attitudes often don't predict their behaviors.
 - E.g., Student attitudes toward cheating, doesn't mean students won't cheat.
 - Self-described racial attitudes don't predict behaviors in actual situations.
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The discrepancy between attitudes and actions are referred to as moral hypocrisy.

- **Moral hypocrisy** – We want to “appear” moral, even if we don’t act that way.

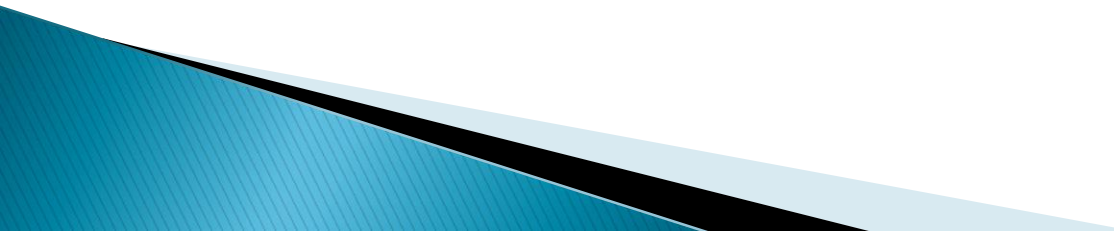


Bottom Line!!!

- People often do things they know they shouldn't.
- Smokers know smoking is harmful, but resist quitting.



When do attitudes predict behavior?

- When social influences on our attitudes are minimized.
 - The stronger an attitude is the more likely it will predict behavior.
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OB and attitude

- OB focuses attention on a very limited number of work related attitudes.
 - Job satisfaction
 - Job Involvement
 - Organizational commitment
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