

Lesson:-32 **Attitude**

Welcome students to today's lesson that is attitude . In today's session we will look into the basic nature of attitude, the components of attitudes, formation of attitude, functions of attitude, ways of changing attitude and different important types of attitudes in the organization context.

Now, what do we understand by the term attitude?

The attitude is the evaluative statements or judgments concerning objects, people, or events. More precisely attitudes can be defined as a persistent tendency to feel and behave in a particular way toward some object which may include events or individuals as well.

Attitude can be characterized in three ways:

First, they tend to persist unless something is done to change them.

Second, attitudes can fall anywhere along a continuum from very favorable to very unfavorable.

Third, attitudes are directed toward some object about which a person has feelings(sometimes called “affect”) and beliefs.

Components of Attitudes

The three basic components of attitude are cognitive, cognitive and affective part.

- *Cognitive Component of Attitude* refers to opinion or belief part of attitude. When you form your opinion or judgment on the basis of available information and decide whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion on that, it the cognitive part of attitude we are talking about.
- *Conative Component of Attitude* refers to the emotional aspect of attitude. This is perhaps the most often referred part of attitude and decides mostly the desirable or undesirable aspect attitude.
- *Affective Component of Attitude* refers to the behavioral part of attitude. If we have a positive attitude for a particular object, it is likely to be translated into a particular type of behavior, such as buying or procuring that object.

Formation of Attitude

How attitudes are formed? How do you develop your attitude? Essentially attitudes are the outward manifestation of your inner values and beliefs. These develop over time. As you grow you watch the significant people around you behaving in a particular way; you are being told to cherish certain things over others and you learn from your teachers and peers and come to value certain things over others, thus forming your value system. These in turn give rise to development of your attitudes.

- ***Attitudes help predict work behavior.*** The following example might help to illustrate it. After introducing a particular policy, it is found from an attitude survey, that the workers are not too happy about it. During the subsequent week it is found that the attendance of the employees drops sharply from the previous standard. Here management may conclude that a negative attitude toward new work rules led to increased absenteeism.
- ***Attitudes help people to adapt to their work environment.*** An understanding of attitudes is also important because attitudes help the employees to get adjusted to their work. If the management can successfully develop a positive attitude among the employees, they will be better adjusted to their work.

Functions of Attitude

According to Katz, attitudes serve four important functions from the viewpoint of organizational behaviour. These are as follows.

- ❖ **The Adjustment Function.** Attitudes often help people to adjust to their work environment. Well-treated employees tend to develop a positive attitude towards their job, management and the organization in general while berated and ill treated organizational members develop a negative attitude. In other words, attitudes help employees adjust to their environment and form a basis for future behaviour.
- ❖ **Ego-Defensive Function.** Attitudes help people to retain their dignity and self-image. When a young faculty member who is full of fresh ideas and enthusiasm, joins the organization, the older members might feel somewhat threatened by him. But they tend to disapprove his creative ideas as ‘crazy’ and ‘impractical’ and dismiss him altogether.
- ❖ **The Value-Expressive Function.** Attitudes provide individuals with a basis for expressing their values. For example, a manager who values hard and sincere work will be more vocal against an employee who is having a very casual approach towards work.

- ❖ **The Knowledge Function.** Attitudes provide standards and frames of reference that allow people to understand and perceive the world around him. If one has a strong negative attitude towards the management, whatever the management does, even employee welfare programmes can be perceived as something 'bad' and as actually against them.

Changing Attitudes

Employees' attitudes can be changed and sometimes it is in the best interests of managements to try to do so. For example, if employees believe that their employer does not look after their welfare, the management should try to change their attitude and help develop a more positive attitude in them. However, the process of changing the attitude is not always easy. There are some barriers which have to be overcome if one strives to change somebody's attitude. There are two major categories of barriers that come in the way of changing attitudes:

1. *Prior commitment* when people feel a commitment towards a particular course of action that have already been agreed upon and thus it becomes difficult for them to change or accept the new ways of functioning.
2. *Insufficient information* also acts as a major barrier to change attitudes. Sometimes people simply see any reason to change their attitude due to unavailability of adequate information.

Some of the possible ways of changing attitudes are described below.

- ❖ **Providing New Information.** Sometimes a dramatic change in attitude is possible only by providing relevant and adequate information to the person concerned. Scanty and incomplete information can be a major reason for brewing negative feeling and attitudes.
- ❖ **Use of Fear.** Attitudes can be changed through the use of fear. People might resort to change their work habit for the fear of unpleasant consequences. However, the degree of the arousal of fear will have to be taken into consideration as well.
- ❖ **Resolving Discrepancies.** Whenever people face a dilemma or conflicting situation they feel confused in choosing a particular course of action. Like in the case where one is to choose from between two alternative courses of action, it is often become difficult for him to decide which is right for him. Even when he chooses one over the other, he might still feel confused. If some one helps him in pointing out the positive points in favour of the chosen course of action, he person might resolve the his dilemma.
- ❖ **Influence of friends and peers.** A very effective way of changing one's attitude is through his friends and colleagues. Their opinion and recommendation for something often proves to be more important. If for example, they are all praise

for a particular policy introduced in the work place, chances are high that an individual will slowly accept that even when he had initial reservations for that.

- ❖ Co-opting. If you want to change the attitude of some body who belongs to a different group, it is often becomes very effective if you can include him in your own group. Like in the case of the union leader who are all the time vehemently against any management decision, can be the person who takes active initiative in implementing a new policy when he had participated in that decision making process himself.

Important Attitudes Related to Organizations

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are some of the important attitudes which are important from the point of view of organization. We will describe these now.

Job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational loyalty are some of the important attitudes related to work organizational set up. These are described in details bellow.

Job Satisfaction

In a generalized way, job satisfaction has been defined as *a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976).*

his positive feeling results from the perception of one's job as fulfilling or allowing the fulfilment of one's important job values, provided these values are compatible with one's needs (Locke, 1976). Given that values refer to what one desires or seeks to attain (Locke, 1976), job satisfaction can be considered as reflecting a person's value judgment regarding work-related rewards.

Locke and Henne (1986) defined job satisfaction as the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the achievement of one's job values in the work situation. According to Mottaz (1987), satisfaction with one's job reflects a person's affective response resulting from an evaluation of the total job situation. In sum, the job satisfaction construct can be considered to be a function of work-related rewards and values.

Based on the review of literature, the following framework can be proposed for the understanding of job satisfaction.



Work rewards reflect the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits that workers receive from their jobs (Kalleberg, 1977). Two important groups of work rewards that have been identified that includes task, and organizational rewards.

Task rewards refer to those intrinsic rewards directly associated with doing the job (Katz & Van Maanan, 1977; Mottaz, 1988). They include such factors as interesting and challenging work, self-direction, and responsibility, variety and opportunities to use one's skills and abilities.

Organizational rewards, on the other hand, refer to the extrinsic rewards provided by the organization for the purpose of facilitating or motivating task performance and maintaining membership (Katz & Van Maanan, 1977; Mottaz, 1988). They represent tangible rewards that are visible to others and include such factors like pay, promotions, fringe benefits, security, and comfortable working conditions.

The relative importance of the various rewards for determining job satisfaction depends on the individual's work values. **Work values** refer to what the workers wants, desires, or seeks to attain from work (Locke, 1969). According to Loscocco (1989), every working person has a certain order of priorities with regard to what he or she seeks from work. It is generally assumed that individuals value economic (extrinsic) as well as intrinsic job reward. Some workers may strongly emphasize both types of rewards, some may place little value on either, and others may emphasize one type and deemphasize the other. Nevertheless, both forms of rewards contribute to job satisfaction (O'Reilly & Caldwell, 1980). **A job that entails high pay, high security, greater promotional opportunities, interesting work, and fair and friendly supervision, all of which is judged as a way to achieve work and non-work goals, should lead to positive feelings of well-being.** Therefore, the greater the perceived congruence between work rewards and work values, the higher the job satisfaction.

Angle & Perry (1983) investigated the effects of two forms of satisfaction: **extrinsic and intrinsic** on organizational commitment.

The study, which was carried out among 1099 bus operators discovered that extrinsic satisfaction had a stronger effect on organizational commitment than intrinsic satisfaction. Angle & Perry (1983) explained that extrinsic rewards are more likely to be under the control of the organization. According to the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), employees are prone to reciprocate in situations where the organization had the choice whether to grant or withhold rewards. Following this rationale, it would seem likely that extrinsic rewards, the award of which is at the discretion of the employer, constitute a dominant factor in influencing organizational commitment. Since most of the studies on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment have been carried out in the United States, little information is available about the generalizability of these findings to other countries, in particular, Malaysia. Thus, the first hypothesis of this research is that job satisfaction will have a positive effect on organizational commitment.

Loyalty seems like a quality that's becoming increasingly harder to find, whether it's employee loyalty to a company or consumer loyalty to a product.

Case: When Prakash Mathur joined the Beacher Corporation, he started out as an assembler on line. Mathur remained in this position for five years. During this time there were two major strikes. The first lasted five weeks; the second went on for eighteen weeks. As a member of the union, Mathur was out of work during both of these periods, and in each case the strike fund ran out of money before a labor agreement was reached.

Last year Mathur was asked if he would like to apply for a supervisory job. The position paid Rs.8,000 more than he was making and the chance for promotion up the line made it an attractive offer. Mathur accepted.

During the orientation period, Mathur found himself getting angry at the management representative. This guy seemed to believe that the union was too powerful and management personnel had to hold the line against any further loss of authority. Mathur did not say anything, but he felt the speaker was very ill informed and biased. Two developments have occurred over the last six months, however that have led Mathur to change his attitude toward union-management relations at the company.

One was a run-in he had with a shop floor worker who accused Mathur of deliberately harassing one of the workers. Mathur could not believe his ears “harassing a worker? Get serious. All I did was tell him to get back to work,” he explained to the shop floor worker. Nevertheless a grievance was filled and withdrawn only after Mathur apologized to the individual whom he allegedly harassed. The other incident was a result of disciplinary action. One of the workers in his unit came in late for the third day in a row and, as required by the labor contract, Mathur sent him home without pay. The union protested, claiming that the worker had really been late only twice. When Mathur went to the personnel office to get the worker’s time-in sheets, the one for the first day of tardiness was missing. The clerks in that office, who were union members, claimed that they did not know where it was.

In both of these cases, Mathur felt the union went out of its way to embarrass him. Earlier this week the manager from the orientation session called Mathur. “I’ve been thinking about bringing line supervisors into the orientation meetings to discuss the union’s attitude toward management. Having been on the other side, would you be interested in giving them your opinion of what they should be prepared for and how they should respond?”. Mathur said he would be delighted. “I think it’s important to get these guys ready to take on the union and I’d like to do my share,” he explained.

-- what was Mathur’s attitude toward the union when he first became a supervisor? What barriers were there that initially prevented him from changing his attitude regarding the union?

Points to remember

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Components of attitudes

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Functions of attitude

- The Adjustment Function**
 - Ego-Defensive Function**
 - The Value-Expressive Function**
 - The Knowledge Function**
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Barriers that come in the way of changing attitudes

- Prior commitment* when people feel a commitment towards a particular course of action that have already been agreed upon and thus it becomes difficult for them to change or accept the new ways of functioning
 - 1. *Insufficient information* also acts as a major barrier to change attitudes. Sometimes people simply see any reason to change their attitude due to unavailability of adequate information.
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Important attitudes related to organization

- Job Satisfaction**
 - organizational commitment**
 - organizational loyalty**
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