

Different Definitions of Attitudes

Early definitions of attitudes

1. **COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION**
An attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related (Allport, 1935).
2. **SET**
[An attitude] denotes the general set of the organism as a whole toward an object or a situation which calls for adjustment (Lundberg, 1929).
3. **READINESS TO ACT**
[Attitudes connote] a condition of readiness for a certain type of activity (Warren, 1934).
4. **PERMANENCE**
[Attitudes represent] a more or less permanently enduring state of readiness of mental organization which predisposes an individual to react in a characteristic way (Cantril, 1934).
5. **AFFECT**
Attitude is the affect for or against a psychological object (Thurstone, 1931).
6. **EVALUATIVE NATURE**
An attitude is a tendency to act toward or against something in the environment, which becomes thereby a positive or negative value (Bogardus, 1931).
7. **LEARNED NATURE**
An attitude, roughly, is a residuum of experience, by which further activity is conditioned and controlled ... We may think of attitudes as **acquired tendencies** to act in specific ways toward objects (Krueger & Reckless, 1931).

More recent definitions of attitudes

8. **PREDISPOSITION**
An attitude is a predisposition to experience, to be motivated by, and to act toward, a class of objects in a predictable manner (Smith, Bruner, & White, 1956).
9. **UNI-COMPONENT**
Attitudes are likes and dislikes (Bem, 1970).
10. **FUNCTIONAL DEFINITION**
Attitudes are summary judgments of an object or event which aid individuals in structuring their complex social environments (Fazio, 1986).
11. **RECENT DEFINITION**
Attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).