

# **ATTITUDE (Part 1)**

**Aishah Amirah bt Zainal Abidin, Ruzaini bt Ibrahim, Siti Aisyah bt Akiah**

## **Introduction**

Attitude has always been a subject of interest to many researchers as well as psychologist. It is considered as exciting and mysterious to some researcher. It can function as a shield to someone or it can even function as a weapon to someone. Having a certain attitude in life is crucial to people so as to help them live in harmony and towards better understanding of things around them. Attitudes play a major part in determining a person's personality. This is because attitude affect they way people perceive and act towards people, objects or events that they encounter. Besides that, attitudes can also have an effect on one's social interactions. That is why it is important to know what attitude is, how it is developed and its impact on people. Therefore, this paper will discuss about attitude and it will be divided into six sections which are Definition of Attitude, Components of Attitude, Attitude Formation, Attitude Functions, Attitude Change, and Persuasion. It is hoped that through this paper, readers would develop a better understanding about attitude.

## **Definition of Attitude**

Many psychologists have given different definitions for attitudes. According to Schneider (1988), 'Attitudes are evaluative reactions to persons, objects, and events. This includes your beliefs and positive and negative feelings about the attitude object.' (179). He also added that attitude can guide our experiences and decide the effects of experience on our behaviours.

Besides that, Baron and Byrne also gave a similar definition of attitude which is, 'Attitudes can be defined as lasting, general evaluations of people (including oneself), objects, or issues. Attitude is lasting because it persists across time. A momentary feeling does not count as an attitude.' (1987). According to him attitudes are lasting since it remains across time. This is similar to a statement made by Vaughan & Hogg (1995), 'Attitudes are relatively permanent- persist across times and situations. A momentary feeling in one place is

not an attitude.’ Therefore, if you encountered a brief feeling about something, it does not count as an attitude.

Moreover, Vaughan & Hogg (1995) defined attitude as, ‘A relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings and behavioural tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols or A general feeling or evaluation (positive/ negative) about some person, object or issue.’ From this definition we could see that, attitudes are only relevant to socially significant objects.

In brief, it could be said that, attitude is a positive or negative evaluations or feelings that people have towards other people, objects, issues or events. Attitudes include the general way people feel towards socially significant objects and most attitudes are lasting.

For example, if you were once bitten by a cat and you dislike the feeling at that moment, that emotional response is regarded as just a feeling. However, if your experience of getting bitten by a cat made you hate all cats, then your hatred for cats is considered an attitude that you have towards cats.