

Definition of Attitude Measurement

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Introduction

In psychology and social sciences, **attitude is a fundamental concept** that explains how individuals think, feel, and behave toward people, objects, ideas, or situations. Attitudes significantly influence human behavior, decision-making, interpersonal relationships, learning, and social interactions. Since attitudes are **internal mental states and cannot be observed directly**, psychologists have developed scientific methods and techniques to assess and quantify them. This scientific and systematic process is known as **attitude measurement**.

Meaning of Attitude

An **attitude** is a **learned and relatively enduring predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner toward a given object, person, group, institution, or idea**. Attitudes consist of three main components:

1. **Cognitive Component** – beliefs, ideas, and knowledge
2. **Affective Component** – feelings and emotions
3. **Behavioral Component** – action tendencies

Definition of Attitude Measurement

Attitude measurement refers to the systematic, objective, and scientific process of assessing, quantifying, and interpreting individuals' attitudes using standardized tools, scales, and procedures. It involves transforming subjective opinions, feelings, beliefs, and evaluations into numerical or categorical data so that they can be analyzed, compared, and interpreted scientifically.

In simple terms, attitude measurement is the **process of measuring how positively or negatively a person feels, thinks, or is inclined to behave toward a particular object or issue**.

Standard Definitions of Attitude Measurement

1. Thurstone (1928):

Attitude measurement is the process of assigning numerical values to opinions, beliefs, and judgments in order to determine the degree of favor or disfavor toward a psychological object.

2. Edwards (1957):

Attitude measurement refers to the systematic use of psychological techniques to assess individuals' evaluations of objects, persons, and concepts.

3. Kerlinger (1973):

Attitude measurement is the quantification of attitudes through standardized procedures for research and applied purposes.

Nature and Characteristics of Attitude Measurement

- 1. Scientific and Systematic Process** – follows structured steps and standardized methods.
- 2. Indirect Measurement** – attitudes are inferred from responses, not directly observed.
- 3. Quantitative Expression** – results are expressed numerically.
- 4. Objective Approach** – minimizes personal bias.
- 5. Reliable and Valid** – ensures consistency and accuracy.
- 6. Comparative** – allows comparison among individuals and groups.
- 7. Predictive Value** – helps predict behavior.

Purpose and Objectives of Attitude Measurement

- 1. To understand individual differences in attitudes**
- 2. To predict behavior and reactions**
- 3. To study social problems and issues**
- 4. To evaluate effectiveness of educational and training programs**
- 5. To assist in counseling and clinical diagnosis**
- 6. To support research in psychology and social sciences**

Importance of Attitude Measurement

- Helps in **educational planning and curriculum development**
- Assists in **personality assessment and counseling**
- Useful in **organizational settings** for job satisfaction and leadership studies
- Important in **market research and consumer behavior analysis**
- Essential in **social and political surveys**
- Helps in **policy formulation and social development programs**

Conclusion

Attitude measurement is a **vital psychological process** that enables the scientific understanding of human beliefs, emotions, and behavioral tendencies. Since attitudes are **invisible and subjective**, their accurate assessment requires **carefully designed standardized tools and scientific procedures**. Reliable and valid attitude measurement contributes significantly to **psychological research, education, counseling, organizational development, social planning, and policy making**.