



ATTITUDES AND ATTITUDE CHANGE

What ARE attitudes?



- Evaluations of people, objects, events, places, ideas
(e.g. Ajzen, 2001; Eagly and Chaiken, 1998)

Three elements of an attitude:



1. **Affective** component – emotional reactions towards attitude object
2. **Cognitive** component – thoughts and beliefs about the attitude object
3. **Behavioural** component – actions/observable behaviours toward the attitude object

Where do attitudes come from?



- Tesser (1993) – genetic origin of some attitudes

Martin et al (1986) - Identical twins share more attitudes than fraternal twins even when raised in separate homes

- Olsen et al (2002) – **Predisposition** - not specific genes but relationships with characteristics that are directly related to genes (e.g. temperament)

Cognitively based attitudes



- **Based mainly on relevant facts**

e.g. number of calories; knowledge that intervention will escalate or hasten the end of the dispute

- Classifying the pluses and minuses

- How well, cheaply, quickly something will work

- **Not** how it makes us feel



Affectively based attitudes



- **Based on emotions and values**

e.g. We should always act to ease the suffering of innocent people
Chocolate cake tastes good and makes me feel happy

- We can feel good about something despite holding some negative beliefs about it -

'Guilty pleasure' – Cognitive Dissonance

- Politics, sex, religion

e.g. Redlawsk (2002); Wattenberg (1987):

People often have strong feelings about politicians but usually know very little about them



Affectively based attitudes



- Variety of sources including:
- **Values, basic moral beliefs** – reaction rather than examination

Expresses and validates own value system (e.g. Maio and Olsen, 1995)

- **Sensory reaction** – the taste, the scent, the sound, the look, the feel of something



Conditioning Attitudes



- **Classical conditioning**

e.g. childhood – friendship playing with friends in garden with rose bushes
Sight/smell of roses now makes you feel carefree, reassurance, happiness.....

- **Operant conditioning**

Behaviours - usually increase/decrease according to responses they elicit

Attitudes can also be also shaped by responses from others

e.g. parents' responses to different playmates – child learns to view
certain people with disapproval (racist, classist, sexist etc.)

- **Attitudes** – positive or negative affect through either type of conditioning
(e.g. Cacioppo et al, 192)

Behaviourally Based Attitudes



- **Self-perception theory** (Bem, 1972)
- We know how we feel once we see how we behave
- Ambiguity or weakness of initial attitude
- Behaviour used when there is no other plausible explanation for the attitude

e.g. disapproving of 'unhealthy' calorie-laden desserts because trying to lose weight

If no other explanation, must dislike them because usually don't eat them

Explicit and Implicit Attitudes



- Explicit attitudes
 - consciously endorsed
 - easily reported
- Implicit attitudes
 - involuntary, uncontrollable
 - sometimes unconscious

e.g. Genuine beliefs regarding equality of all people - Behaviours that support this

But – negative ideas without full awareness (Devine, 1989a)
- influences behaviour around certain groups of people

Implicit Association Test



- e.g. Greenwald, McGhee and Schwartz (1998)
- Argued to access implicit attitudes through rapid response to stimuli
- Computer-based test
 - categorize words or pictures - positive/negative associations
- Example tests <http://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit>

Measuring Attitudes



- **Explicit measures of attitude**
 - Measures that directly ask the participants to think about and report an attitude
- **Implicit measures of attitude**
 - Measures that assess spontaneous evaluative associations with an object, without relying on a verbal report

Measuring Attitudes – EXPLICIT measures of attitude include:



○ **Likert scales** (Likert, 1932)

e.g.

For each statement, indicate the number that best represents your personal opinion by using the following scale:

If you strongly disagree with the statement, indicate 1

If you disagree with the statement, indicate 2

If you neither disagree nor agree with the statement, indicate 3

If you agree with the statement, indicate 4

If you strongly agree with the statement, indicate 5

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 1. | The death penalty should be reintroduced by law | |
| 2. | I would support a referendum for the reintroduction of the death penalty | |
| 3. | The death penalty should never be used | |

Explicit measures cont'd



○ **Semantic differential scales** (Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum, 1957)

e.g.

Death Penalty
Bad I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I Good
Negative I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I Positive
Dislike I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I Like

- ✦ Bipolar adjective scales – general evaluative terms (e.g. favourable-unfavourable)
- ✦ Typically 5, 7 or 9 categories – middle category = neutral point
- ✦ Response that best represents their opinion
- ✦ Correlations among items should be positive (to the extent that they measure the same attitude)

Both Likert and SD Scales – if the correlations are sufficiently high they can be combined to form a single attitude score

Concerns regarding explicit measures of attitude



- Lack of awareness of attitude towards an object (Fazio et al, 1995; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995)
- Differences in the way in which items are presented (Haddock and Carrick, 1999; Schwartz, 1999)
- Motivation to give socially desirable responses (Paulhus and John, 1998)
- Guided by social appropriateness

Measuring Attitudes: IMPLICIT measures of attitude: include



- **Evaluative Priming** (Fazio, 1995)
- Fazio – Attitude: an association in memory between an attitude object and a summary evaluation – variations in strength
- Association influences accessibility
 - e.g.
 - Hate cauliflower - immediate and strong reaction
 - Real dislike of broccoli – reaction less automatic
 - **Negative attitude towards cauliflower more accessible – association in memory between cauliflower and dislike is stronger**

Implicit measures cont'd



- **Implicit Association Test** (Greenwald, McGhee and Schwartz, 1998)

's' key responses

1. White faces
2. Positive adjectives
3. White face OR
Positive adjective
4. Negative adjectives
5. White faces OR
negative adjective

'k' Key responses

1. Black faces
2. Negative adjectives
3. Black faces OR
Negative adjective
4. Positive adjectives
5. Black faces OR
Positive adjective

Critique of IAT



- Increasingly popular – do not require direct questioning
- Less likely to be influenced by socially desirable responding

BUT

- Low correlations might mean that they assess different constructs
(e.g. Karpinski and Hilton, 2001)
- Use of un-personalized versions of IAT (e.g. 'pleasant'/'unpleasant') are more open to influence of cultural norms than personalised versions (e.g. 'I like'/'I don't like')
(Olson and Fazio, 2004)

Reliability and Validity of Attitude Measures



Reliability

- Internal consistency – do items assess the same psychological construct?
- Test-retest reliability – similar scores across repeated measures
- Explicit measures - generally high reliability
e.g.
 - High internal consistency (Huskinson and Haddock, 2004)
 - High test-retest reliability (Lord, 2004)
- Implicit measures - reasonably high internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Cunningham, Preacher and Banaji, 2001)

How do Attitudes change?



- Social influence
 - what other people say or do
 - or what you imagine they say or do
- **Personal** attitudes are **social** phenomena
- **Perseverance effect:** tendency to maintain our beliefs even in the face of contradictory information



Changing Attitudes by Changing Behaviour



- **Cognitive Dissonance Theory** (Festinger, 1954)
- Negative beliefs about behaviour but still engage in that behaviour
- **Cognitive dissonance** – cannot find external justification for behaviour
- Attempt to find internal justification by bringing attitude and behaviour closer together
- **Counterattitudinal advocacy** – public statements counter to private opinions
- Likelihood of change in private opinion
- Most likely to work at an individual level. Less likely on a mass scale



Yale Attitude Change approach (Hovland, Janis and Kelley, 1953)



Who: the source of the communication

- Credible speakers (Hovland and Weiss, 1951; Jain and Posavac, 2000)
- Attractive speakers (e.g. Eagly and Chaiken, 1975)

What: the nature of the communication

- Does not appear designed to influence (e.g. Petty and Cacioppo, 1986)
- Two-sided communications more effective - if sure can refute the arguments (e.g. Lumsdaine and Janis, 1953)

- Primacy/Recency effects

If no delay – go first; if there is a delay – go last

(e.g. Miller and Campbell, 1959)



To Whom: The nature of the audience

More easily persuaded:

- Distracted audience (Festinger and Maccoby, 1964;
Albarracin and Wyer, 2001)
- Those low in intelligence (Rhodes and Wood, 1992)
- Those with moderate self-esteem (Rhodes and Wood, 1992)
- Between ages 18-25 – more impressionable
(e.g. Krosnick and Alwin, 1989)



BREAK



10 minutes

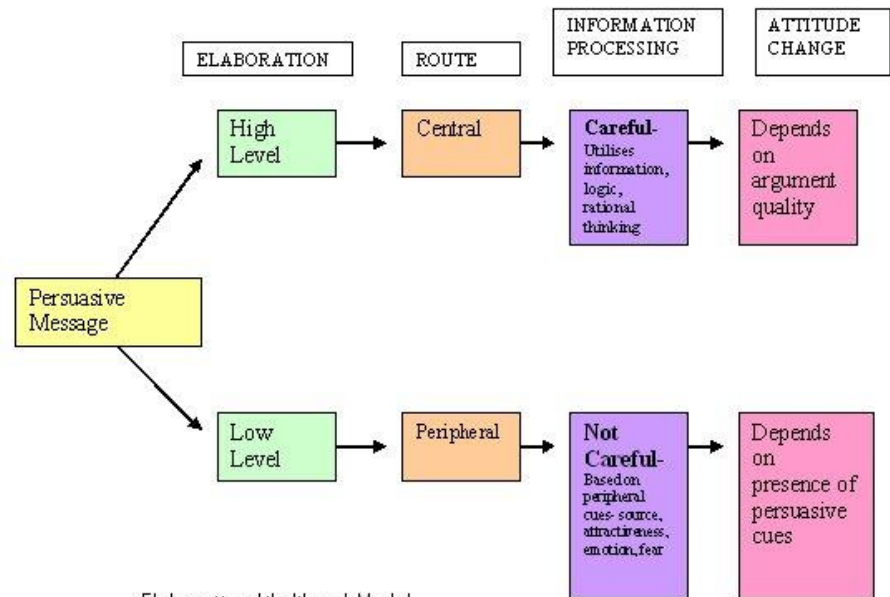
The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986)

- **Central route to persuasion**

Have both the motivation and the ability to pay attention to the arguments in the communication

- **Peripheral route**

Do not pay attention to the arguments but are instead swayed by surface characteristics



Elaboration Likelihood Model

Petty & Cacioppo 1986
Source: Vaughn & Hogg.

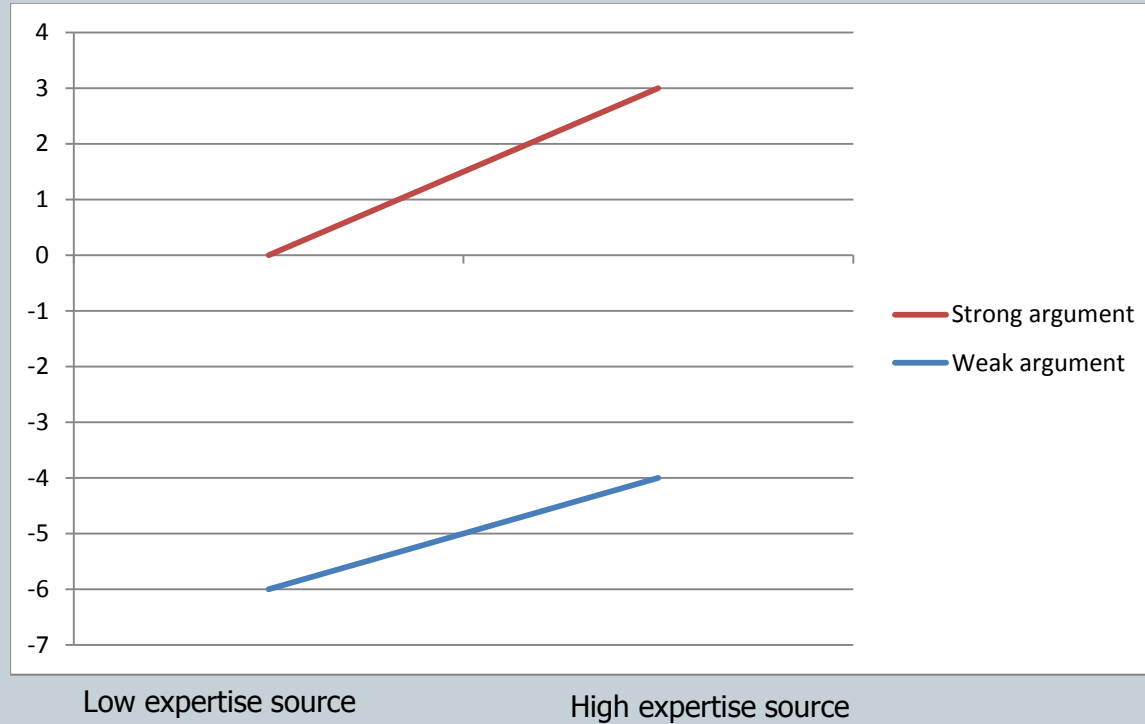
Motivation to pay attention to arguments



Petty, Cacioppo and Goldman (1981)

High personal relevance

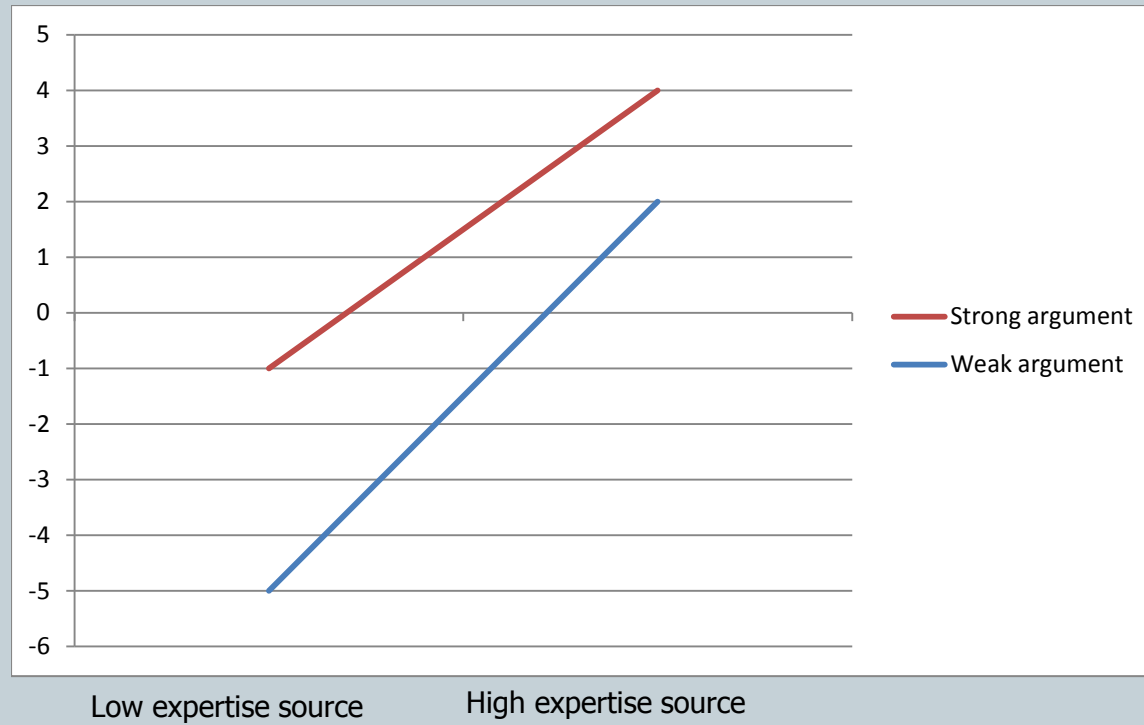
Agreement





Low personal relevance

Agreement





- Ability to pay attention

When ability is low - more likely to use peripheral cues

- Long-lasting attitude change

Attitudes that have changed due to recognition and acceptance of 'sound logic' – more resistant to counterpersuasion

Emotion and Attitude Change

Getting our attention

- Fear-arousing communications



- Fear followed by reassurance – changed attitudes via central route
(e.g. Leventhal, Watts and Pagano, 1967)
- Both messages needed in order to work (e.g. Hoog, Stroebe and de Witt, 2005)
- Extreme fear – defence, denial, irrationality (Liberman and Chaiken, 1992)

Emotions as a heuristic



- Heuristic-systematic model of persuasion (Chaiken, 1987)
- Heuristics = mental shortcuts e.g. 'experts are always right'
'length equals strength' (long messages more persuasive than short ones)
- Emotions/moods as heuristics – 'how do I feel about it?'
(Schwartz and Clore, 1988)
- Good mood – more likely to accept/agree (or buy)



But – where does the good mood come from? Somewhere/something else?

Emotion and different types of attitudes

- Fight fire with fire:

Cognitively-based attitude – needs rational argument to change

Affectively-based attitude – needs emotional appeal

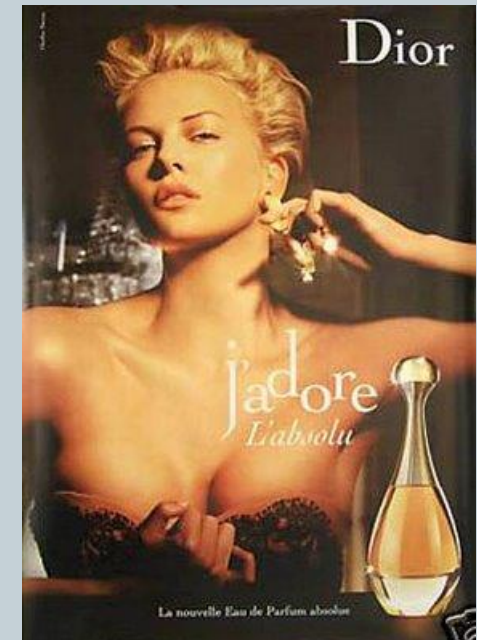
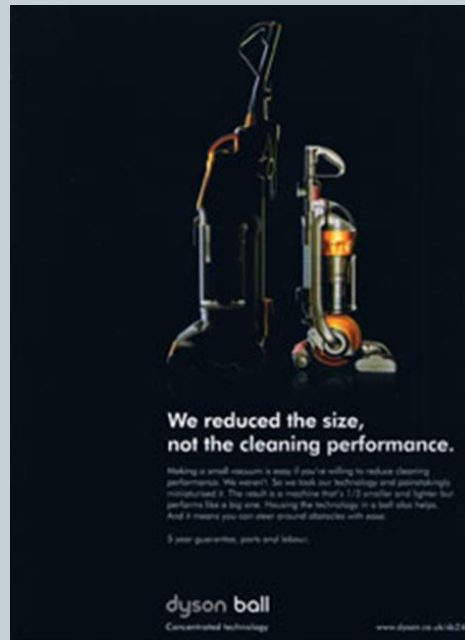
(Shavitt, 1989)

Effectiveness of
approaches

‘Utilitarian products’

‘Social identity products’

Reacted to advertisement
that matched cognitive or
affectively-based of
attitude



Resisting persuasive messages



- Is resistance futile? No.
- **Attitude inoculation** (McGuire, 1964; Bernard, Maio and Olson, 2003)

Considering the pros and cons beforehand – more immune to arguments

- **Alertness to product placement**

Products incorporated into TV shows (adverts more likely to be ignored)

e.g. Reece's Pieces (E.T.)

BMW Z3 (James Bond) \$240 million dollars advance sales (York, 2001)

Entertainment – resistance to persuasion is low

Forewarned is forearmed (e.g. Sagarin et al, 2002)



- **Resisting peer pressure**

Peer pressure linked to values and emotions – fear of rejection, desire for independence

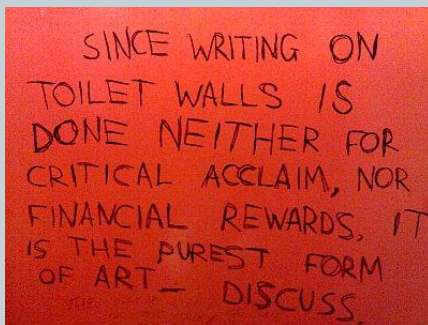
Forearm with type of argument they are likely to hear from peers

Children – practice - role playing potential responses

- **Reactance Theory**

Messages that are too strong may 'boomerang' – cause increased interest

(Brehm, 1966)



e.g.

'Do not write on these walls under any circumstances'

'Please do not write on these walls'

(Pennebaker and Sanders, 1976)

When will attitudes predict behaviour?



- Complex relationship between attitudes and behaviour
- e.g. LaPierre (1934)
 - 251 establishments only one **refused** service to a Chinese couple
 - When later contacted, only one said they would **provide** service to Chinese people

Attitudes poor predictors of behaviour

Attitudes predict behaviour under certain conditions

(DeBono and Snyder, 1995)

Key factor – spontaneous or planned behaviour?

(Fazio, 1990)

When will attitudes predict behaviour?



- Predicting spontaneous behaviours

Attitude accessibility

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Low accessibility | - attitude comes more slowly to mind |
| High accessibility | - attitude comes more rapidly to mind |
| | - underpins spontaneous behaviours |

- Predicting deliberative behaviours

Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980, 2005)

Theory of Planned Behaviour

(Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980, 2005)



Attitude toward the behaviour:

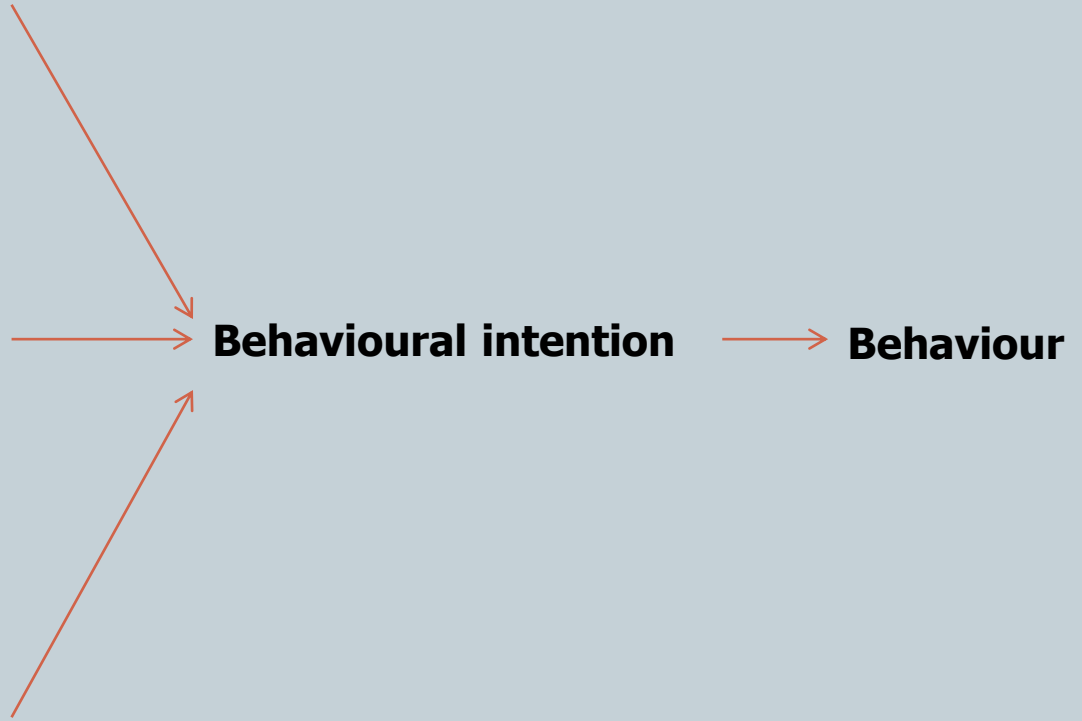
People's specific attitude toward the behaviour, not their general attitude

Subjective norms: People's beliefs about how other people they care about will view the behaviour in question

Perceived behavioural control:
The ease with which people believe they can perform the behaviour

Behavioural intention

Behaviour



Specific Attitudes



- Only specific attitudes towards a behaviour are expected to predict it

e.g. Davidson and Jaccard (1979) – Use of birth control pills

Attitude Measure	Attitude Behaviour Correlation
Attitude toward birth control	.08
Attitude toward birth control pills	.32
Attitude towards using birth control pills	.53
Attitude toward using birth control pills during the next two years	.57



LaPierre study?

Used term 'members of the Chinese race'

But - a more specific question? e.g. 'an educated, well-dressed, well-to-do Chinese couple'

- attitudinal responses and behaviours might have correlated more strongly

Subjective Norms



How our beliefs about the views of others regarding a particular behaviour can alter our decisions regarding engaging in that behaviour



So the influence of people whose opinions we value impacts upon behaviour



Perceived Behavioural Control



If we think it will be difficult to perform a behaviour – will not form a strong intention to do so

If think it will be easy – more likely to form a strong intention to do so

Examples?

Difficult?

- Remembering to use a condom

- Beginning a weight-loss diet

Easy?

- Buy the newspaper on the way home

- Finish that psychology report

Advertising



- “Advertisements don’t affect me”
- Affected by advertising more than we expect to be
- Split cable market tests - target group see advert
 - monitor purchases
- Lodish et al (1995) - findings of over 300 tests
 - 60% adverts for new products lead to sales
 - difference in sales between those who saw advertisement and those who did not – 21%
 - increased sales substantially within first 6 months



How Advertising Works



- Links to cognitively-based and affectively-based attitudes



Affectively-based:
elicits positive mood



- If relevant to you, you will listen to, and be convinced by the arguments



Cognitively-based: we want to know if they will work and which will work best for us

EL Model: the more elaboration, the more likely you will be persuaded by the message



- Cognitively-based attitudes – topics that are not personally relevant?
- Peripheral route?

Attitude change is unlikely to be long-lasting
(Chaiken, 1987; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986)

- **Make** it relevant.....

e.g. fear, shame, desirability.....

*"Let the tide take her out...
I WON'T!"*

WHAT A THANNING thing to say about a pretty girl out to make the most of her holiday! Attracted by her good looks, men dated her once but never took her out a second time. And for a very good reason! So, the vacation that could have been so gay and exciting, became a dull and dreary flop. And she, herself, was the last to suspect why.

How's Your Breath Today?
Unfortunately, you can be guilty of halitosis (unpleasant breath) without realizing it. Rather than guess about this condition or run a foolish risk, why not get into the habit of using Listerine Antiseptic? Rub it into the mouth with it night and morning, and between times before every date when you want to be at your best. It's efficient! It's refreshing! It's delightful!

To Be Extra-Careful
Listerine Antiseptic is the extra-careful precaution because it freshens and sweetens the breath... not for mere seconds or minutes... but for hours, usually. So, don't trust makeshifts effective only momentarily... trust Listerine Antiseptic. It's part of your passport to popularity.

"Though sometimes systemic, most cases of infection are due to the bacterial contamination of tiny food particles. Listerine Antiseptic quickly kills such oral fermentation, and conceals the odors."
— CHAS. LARSEN

LARGEST PHARMACEUTICAL CO., St. Louis, Mo.

IGNORE ANY DATE...
LISTERINE ANTISEPTIC
...it's breath-taking!



- Around 10-30% of adverts contain **humour** (Krishnan and Chakravarti, 2003)
- Funny advertisements:
 - Attract attention (Weinberger et al, 1995)
 - Engage the audience (Spotts et al, 1997)
 - Enhance responses to adverts (Scott, Klein and Bryant, 1990)
- Humour works best under low involvement conditions (Zhang and Zinkhan, 2006)



Humour:



- works best as a peripheral cue
- can generate mixed feelings

(Gelb and Zinkhan, 1986; Nelson, 1987)

- Cultural variations regarding what is deemed funny (Francis, 1994)
- Too humorous - can distract from what is being advertised
(Belch and Belch, 1984)
- To ameliorate this - brand/product needs to be clearly visible and integrated into the story
(Cline and Kellaris, 2007)

Summary



- What ARE attitudes?
- Where do attitudes come from?
- Cognitively based attitudes
- Affectively based attitudes
- Conditioning Attitudes
- Behaviourally Based Attitudes (Self-perception theory)
- Explicit and Implicit Attitudes
- How do Attitudes change?
- Changing Attitudes by Changing Behaviour

- The Elaboration Likelihood Model
- Emotion and Attitude Change
- Emotions as a heuristic
- Emotion and different types of attitudes
- Resisting persuasive messages
- When will attitudes predict behaviour?
- Theory of Planned Behaviour
- Advertising

Reading



Books

Gross, R. (2010). *Psychology: the science of mind and behaviour* (6th ed). London: Hodder Education. (Chapter 24)

Hogg, M. A., & Vaughan, G. M. (2008). *Social Psychology*. Harlow, Essex: Pearson Prentice Hall. (Chapter 5)

Kassin, S., Fein, S., & Markus, H. R. (2011). *Social psychology* (8th Edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (Chapter 6)

Journal articles

Bohner, G., Dickel, N. (2011). Attitude and Attitude Change. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 62: 391-417

Petty, R. E., Wegener, D. T. and Fabrigar, L.R. (1997). Attitudes and Attitude Change. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 48:609-47

Plus your own literature search on this topic