

A STUDY OF THE METHODS AND FACTORS
FACILITATING CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR PATTERNS AS REPRESENTED
BY ATTITUDES

by

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INTRODUCTION

An attitude is a very complex expression of individual behavior. From very early in life until death new attitudes are formed or old attitudes modified. According to sociology an attitude has been defined as a tendency to act. It is an entire psychological complex including "an individual's experience of a certain object or class of objects, a feeling which accompanies this experience and a disposition or tendency to act in a certain way in dealing with this object or class of objects."¹

In general it appears that many of the specific attitudes of students closely reflect the prevailing attitudes in the home and community. When a child is born he knows nothing about the world around him.

Everything that he will ever know and be able to do he must learn. But no child is born into an unexplained world or into a society that does not have its own approved ways of meeting human needs and dealings with social problems.² So each child's task is to digest the culture presented him and to learn to act according to the customs of his society. So this means a child has five or six years of learning the attitudes and behavior patterns of his own family and neighborhood before he enters school. Therefore each child is an individual and will differ in attitudes and behavior.

Statement of the problem. But once in school we sometimes, as teachers, find a student with an attitude that deviates markedly from the

¹Florian Znaniecki, Cultural Sciences: Their Origin, and Development.

²Daniel A. Prescott, Factors that Influence Learning.

attitudes the school holds; one that can hamper or even prohibit his educational growth, or perhaps the growth of one of his peers. One of the best examples of this type of behavior is the drop-out or potential drop-out. This student is frustrated with school and sees no importance of education. He has a negative attitude toward education. Once an attitude has been discovered which seems necessary to change or modify, before attempting to do so, a knowledge of the methods and factors of such a procedure must be known. It is not meant to be implied that upon the arrival of students at school that each one's attitudes must be modified to fit exactly those held by the school. Students not only can but should have attitudes differing from the school and from each other, to a certain extent, in order to take care of individual differences. The school has the responsibility of presenting the materials and learning experiences in such a way as to promote learning in children even though their attitudes may vary somewhat.

According to Irwin Lehman the degree and extent attitudes can be modified depends upon the nature of experience, the type of contact, the personality of the individual, and the subject's perception of the outcome.³

Hypotheses. The following hypotheses were set up for the objectives of this study:

1. By the use of certain methods and procedures, it is possible to change or modify an individual's attitude.
2. Attitude change generalizes to related objects. The degree of generalization is a function of the similarity of the objects.

³Irvine Jack Lehman, "Learning: Attitudes and Values", Review of Educational Research, 1958.

3. Some attitudes are held by some individuals as a method of ego-defense.

Definition of Terms. An understanding of the following terms will be necessary for evaluating this report:

Ethnic group - Any group of people from a distinguishable culture or any group of people of the same race.

Attitudes - Any action or feeling which is a result of human behavioral patterns. Attitudes and behavior patterns will be used interchangeably.

Ethnocentric - An individual who feels that his race or group is superior. He has extreme attitude and is very prejudiced.

Procedure. This report was a normative survey carried out by the library research method. It reported and described what is known about affecting attitude change. There were many reports and investigations of the methods and factors of attitude change in educational journals. These made up the core of my study. The research began with the Review of Educational Research Journal at the Kansas State University Library. It was limited to the last fifteen years and did not try to investigate what attitudes could and should be changed.

THE NATURE OF EXPERIENCE

In attempting to change attitudes the nature of experience is very important. Some types of new experiences seem only to confirm or reinforce the preconceptions of the person with extreme initial attitudes. It seems that sending an extreme ethnocentric to another culture for the purpose of enlarging his view of the world is quite likely to do more harm than good. He may well return believing more strongly than

ever before in the superiority of the in-group. However, persons who establish close personal ties with members of a different culture are significantly more likely than others to engage in internationally oriented activities following such an experience. A study of this factor was conducted by Howard Smith, who found that a person's general attitudes will be, after a heterogeneous experience such as living in another country, determined more by what his attitudes are like before he leaves home than by what happens to him while he is away.⁴ Smith used four experimental groups and three control groups, some of which stayed in the United States and some of which went abroad for one summer.

The study seems to indicate that heterogeneous intercultural experiences such as these do not have significant impact on general social attitudes, over a short period of time at least, but specific attitudes do change. It also seems that a knowledge of a person's pre-existing attitudes appear to be a better predictor of his response to a heterogeneous intercultural experience than information about the experience itself.

THE TYPE OF CONTACT

Personal contacts do not always improve racial or ethnic attitudes. Sometimes negative feelings develop when different people live side by side. This is closely related to the type of experience.

One might ask what factors decide the effect of personal contact. First, the contacts should be reassuring, sociable, warm, friendly, and

⁴Howard Persifer Smith, "Do Intercultural Experiences Affect Attitudes," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 51:469, November, 1955.

enjoyable. There should be a close association between liking a member of a different ethnic group and a liking of that ethnic group in general. Meetings that are disturbing, unfriendly, and generally unpleasant tend to lead to hostile attitudes. This hostility can spread from one person to his ethnic group.

Results of Study. H.E.O. James conducted a study on the type of contact in a British school.⁵ Two African teachers were given a white thirteen-year-old class for a period of two weeks. The study indicated that the ratings of attitudes toward Africans showed a significant improvement during the time between interviews with students before and after the experiment. There was a large decrease in items indicative of fear, dislike, and distrust of Africans. There was also an increase in items showing Africans to be nicer, more civilized and more like white people than the children had expected. No opposite study was done because of the undesirable results.

It is probable that if personal contact with members of a different ethnic group is to have a positive effect on attitudes toward that group two aspects must be present. First, the people must be regarded as a person and as a member of a different ethnic group. Second, neither aspect must overshadow the other. Attitudes for the group as a whole would probably not change much if one aspect did overshadow the other.

There are a few facts one should keep in mind when trying to develop new attitudes or modify old ones.⁶

⁵H.E.O. James, "Personal Contacts in School and Change in Intergroup Attitudes," International Social Science Bulletin, 7:66, January, 1955.

⁶Ibid., p. 69.

1. Attitudes have formidable numbers of self-defense; facts can easily be disposed of.

2. Something more than new facts, arguments, and points-of-view are needed. The forces behind the old attitudes must be weakened and other forces marshalled behind the new.

3. There must be redeployment of motivational forces in respect of attitudes concerned.

4. This redistribution can be mediated by newly developed attitudes toward a person and the forces which disposed it.

5. The matrix of new personal attitudes and the changes in ethnic attitude is the interaction that is the essence of personal contact.

There are several reasons why personal contact works. First, because in personal contact there is a response to oneself, what happens is affected by one's own actions, words, and looks. Second, there is immediate and urgent interplay among participants. This interaction is dynamic in that it is concerned with issues that matter to them, and explanatory in that the responses enable them to find out what they want to know. Third, because of these features, because it answers questions that matter to them, personal contact is not only an effective maker and undoer of attitudes, but sometimes seem the only valid basis for ethnic attitudes. And fourth, in personal contact people feel they penetrate into a person's innermost nature and get to really know them as people.

In the second reason above why personal contact works, it was stated that it answers questions people want to know about the people they are in contact with. Questions are linked by powerful emotions and motives. People need reassurance against their fears of security, of friendliness,

and sociability. If they can not get these they want to know what to expect at least. If a person's contact answers all these questions in a positive manner, it is clear that they are well-intentioned and have a good nature. A person wants to know how another person differs from them in physical appearance, speech, dress, and way of doing things, and if they are fundamentally different from themselves. All these questions can be answered by the personal contact technique.

Using Personal Contact. Personal contacts, especially in the searching form with a school class, is well adapted to all these purposes and affecting considerable changes in attitude. For getting to know a person and through him a people, for building up an attitude to a person that can serve as both model and driving force for an attitude toward his people, there is nothing that can equal it. It is small wonder then that this is one of the most important methods of changing attitudes.

There are a few facts one should keep in mind when employing the personal contact technique.⁷

1. Women are less disturbing to younger students. They make better contacts than men.
2. Interaction works best in small group experiences, quickly reached for most people.
3. Attitudes for a person and not a group are not quickly reached for most people.
4. Personal contact can eliminate gross misconceptions about a different ethnic group.

⁷Ibid., p. 70.

5. The social relations and climate should be such as to allow good relations. Where different roles are culturally prescribed for members of different ethnic groups, attitudes are likely to be stronger and more sharply defined. In such cases personal contact, however good, may be insufficient to change attitudes.

6. It is probable that contacts are more effective in changing attitudes when previous contacts have been slight and few than when they have been many and close.

7. It is not expected that a younger student who has exceptional fears and avoids strangers will be appreciably changed by even favorable experiences with members of a different ethnic group.

PERSONALITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Most theorists feel the role of attitudes is one of the most important problems in any study of human behavior.

There are usually two main types of emphasis in a study of attitudes. The first approach stresses the influence of group values, standards, or norms in shaping individual behavior but without making provision for personal factors which may militate against conformity to social pressures.

In contrast, personality-oriented approaches have tended to stress individual traits, motives, or patterns of response usually discovered by paper and pencil tests or through the use of materials such as pictures or inkblot. Neither of these two approaches provide a framework by which both sets of factors may be investigated and evaluated.

Theory of Adaptation Level. A third approach to the problem of the organization of the individual as it relates to his interpersonal relations in specific situations is found in the theory of adaptation-level (AL) which provides a framework for both situational and personal factors simultaneously.⁸ The A.L. approach has shown that attitudes expressed in alone situations, uninfluenced by social pressures, may be altered in a systematic fashion when group influences are brought to bear on the individual. According to this theory, adjustive behavior is determined by three sources of variance which have been identified in perception and judgment and have been found to be important in the expression of personality patterns. These are stimuli immediately confronting an individual, background stimuli, and residual effects of stimuli from past experience.

Background stimuli are responses to specific stimulations during or soon after other stimuli have acted. Beliefs, attitudes, traits, and cultural determinants, which individuals bring into any concrete situation, may be regarded as residuals in affecting specific responses.

Results of the Study. A study was done on this factor by Harry Helson.⁹ Both alone and simulated group conditions were tested to investigate the influences of opinions of other people (background) and some already established characteristics in the individual (residuals) on the expressed attitudes toward statements (stimuli) dealing with war

⁸Harry Helson and Others, "Attitudes as Adjustments to Stimulus, Background, and Residual Factors," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 52:314, May, 1956.

⁹Ibid., p. 315.

and peace. The results of this test did prove that interaction of stimulus, background, and residual factors have been shown to modify the expression of attitudes. It seemed that when individuals are exposed to the opinions of others with regard to statements concerning war and peace, it is found that their own expressed attitudes shift more or less markedly toward or away from the group. Both the frequency and amount of shift from alone opinion toward background judgments correlate with degree of submissiveness measured by the All post A.S. Reaction study.

Before starting the study Helson stated the following hypotheses:¹⁰

A. A proposition accompanied by strong expressions of agreement (or disagreement) on the part of other individuals will tend to shift an individual's response toward greater agreement (or disagreement) as compared with the response made to the proposition in the alone situation; and

B. Submissive individuals will be more affected by the expressed opinions of other members of a group than will ascendant individuals while average individuals are expected to be influenced by group opinion less than submissive and more than ascendant individuals. Where anti-conformity residuals are very strong, responses in the group situation may be inconsistent with responses made in the alone situation.

C. When the background opinion is neutral, it is hypothesized that there should be no difference between ascendant, average, and submissive individuals in the attitudes expressed in the group situation as compared with those expressed in the alone situation. In other words,

¹⁰ibid., p. 314.

there should be no significant change from alone opinion when background opinions are neutral with respect to the stimulus.

Using these hypotheses as guides Helson found that:

The expression of attitudes depends upon both situational and personal factors which must be evaluated simultaneously in order to predict individual behavior. Group influences, while effective in modifying individual behavior, do not have uniform results, as shown by the significant interactions found among stimulus, background, and residual factors. Consistent with adaptation-level theory, the expression of attitudes is an adjustment of the individual representing the pooled effect of these three sources of variance.¹¹

THE SUBJECT'S PERCEPTION OF THE OUTCOME

The importance of the individual's system of goals in life has been suggested by many theorists as of crucial significance in determining the affect associated with specific aspects of a person's experience. The two main sources of affect are simple attitudes and attitude structure. The latter concerns the intensity of affect of a person's values, and the expected satisfaction of these values. It also concerns the perceived importance of the attitude object (situation, event) in leading to or blocking the attainment of the values.

An investigation of the importance of these two sources of effect of an attitude was done by Earl R. Carlson.¹² He felt that attitude change should result from changes in either the expected satisfaction from goals, or in the instrumental relationship perceived between the attitude object and the goal. His study was designed to test the hypothesis that changes

¹¹*ibid.*, p. 321.

¹²Earl R. Carlson, "Attitude Change Through Modification of Attitude Structures," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 52:257, March, 1956.

in attitude (affect) result from altering perceptions of the attitude object (situation or event) as leading to the attainment of valued goals. It sought further to test whether attitude change generalizes to related objects, and whether the degree of generalization is a function of the similarity of the objects. He found that his main hypothesis was true, but the extent of generalization of attitude change did not vary with the similarity of the attitude issues.

Self-insight. Katz and Sarnoff did a study to determine the effect of procedures to increase self-insight on the modification of emotional attitudes.¹³ They assumed that attitudes can be held as ways of structuring the individual's world and thus give meaning and cognitive clarity to a mass of impressions and information, as instrumental means toward achieving goals external to the individual. An example is the case of the worker who favors the political party he perceives as committed to his welfare, and as defenses for protecting the ego of the individual. An attempt was made to deal with prejudiced attitudes towards Negroes which are ego-defensive in nature. The prediction that self-insight would produce more lasting change was borne out. They also found that low and medium ego-defenders changed more than high ego-defenders as a result of the self-insight procedures. There was no significant change among the three groups of ego-defenders under the logical structure influence, with all three groups showing some change. "It may be said that once the defenses of some of the high ego-defenders are breached, they change their

¹³Daniel Katz and Irving Sarnoff, "The Measurement of Ego Defense as Related to Attitude Change," Journal of Personality, 25:465, June, 1957.

social attitudes greatly."¹⁴ However, under both procedures, some of the devices used to measure all ego-defenders did not show any significant differences in the predicted direction.

Role Playing. Frances M. Culbertson has done one of the few studies on role playing and its ability to change emotionally loaded attitudes.¹⁵

It is generally agreed that attitudes toward minority groups are difficult to change. Weltfish noted that:

It seems probable from evidence to date that many individuals must go through what amounts to a therapeutic experience rather than the more typical conception of an educational procedure before ego-anchored prejudices can be yielded up for new sources of satisfaction.¹⁶

Lewin's concept of social habit also contains the factor of resistance to changes. He observed:

To overcome this inner resistance, an additional force seems to be required, a force sufficient to break the habit, to unfreeze the custom.¹⁷

Culbertson's experiment attempted to explore the reversal of roles in role playing such as an influence on one kind of social habit, specifically the attitude of white people toward the Negro.

There are three common dynamic elements that differentiate role playing through role reversal from other learning situations. They are role reversal, the taking of attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that differ from

¹⁴Ibid., p. 473.

¹⁵Frances M. Culbertson, "Modification of an Emotionally Held Attitude Through Role Playing," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 54-55:230, 1957.

¹⁶Gene Weltfish, "Racial and Religious Prejudices in Everyday Living," Journal of Sociological Issues, 1: Number 1:51, 1945.

¹⁷K. Lewin, Group Decision and Social Change.

one's own; projection of needs and feelings; development of self-insight. It seems that the closer a person is to a role, as a participant rather than an observer, the more likely are his attitudes to be changed.

Culbertson used ninety-five students, seventy-five of whom were in experimental groups and twenty as a control group. The students were given questionnaires before and after a role-playing experience. The questionnaires dealt mainly on:

A. Whether a participant position in a role-playing session is more likely to result in a change in attitude than an observer position.

B. A measure of attitude toward "allowing Negroes to move into White neighborhoods", the specific attitude associated with the role session.

C. The Likert scale measuring the generalized attitude toward the Negroes.

After the questionnaire sessions were over and the results studied, it was found that the experimental group shifted their attitude toward Negro integration in housing as well as their general attitude toward the Negro in the direction of the role experience. Role players shifted to a greater degree than observers in a favorable direction.

Three Methods of Changing Attitudes. Mark Silber did a study on the three most important methods of changing attitudes.¹⁸ The three were the pyramid method, the formal lecture method, and the small interaction group. On a test of 163 prisoners of an Ohio penitentiary using five experimental

¹⁸Mark Bischoff Silber, "A Comparative Study of Three Methods of Effecting Attitude Change," Dissertation Abstracts. Number 6593, 1962.

conditions, seven dependent variables were selected from the Social Value Information Test and the Moral Scale of Values. Sibling's finding showed that five out of the seven dependent variables contributed significantly to change. The five variables were:¹⁹

- A. Objective information
- B. General morality
- C. Religious morality
- D. Puritanical morality
- E. Exploitive morality

As should be expected, the small interaction group method was found to be far superior to the two other methods. The pyramid method was second in effectiveness with the formal lecture method obtaining almost no measurable change.

The following personality-background profile was found which differentiated those individuals who were amenable to attitude change.²⁰

- A. Fullford-Zimmerman Temperament Survey
 - 1. High restraint
 - 2. Low thoughtfulness
 - 3. High ascendance
 - 4. High emotional stability
 - 5. Low friendliness
 - 6. Low personal relations
 - 7. High masculinity

¹⁹ibid.

²⁰ibid.

- 8. Low general activity
- B. Gordon Personal Profile
 - 1. High responsibility
 - 2. High emotional-stability
- C. Background Data
 - 1. Youthful inmates
 - 2. Few disciplinary actions
 - 3. High religious self-concepts
 - 4. Low alcoholic self-concept
 - 5. More than one time in prison

The following table, Table I, was developed from the methods of changing attitudes cited thus far. It attempts to show the probable effectiveness of the various methods of changing attitudes of varying strengths. The strengths of attitudes held by individuals were divided into three levels: weak attitudes, moderate attitudes, and extreme attitudes.

TABLE I
 DEGREE OF PROBABLE EFFECTIVENESS
 OF VARIOUS METHODS OF CHANGING ATTITUDES
 OF VARYING STRENGTHS

METHOD	VERY EFFECTIVE	MODERATELY EFFECTIVE	LITTLE EFFECT	NO EFFECT
Nature of Experience	Weak Attitudes	Moderate Attitudes	Extreme Attitudes	Extreme Attitudes
Type of Contact	Moderate Attitudes	Weak Attitudes	Extreme Attitudes	
Personality of Individual	Weak Attitudes	Moderate Attitudes	Extreme Attitudes	
Group's Approval	Weak and Moderate Attitudes	Extreme Attitudes		
Subjects' Perception of Outcome	Weak Attitudes	Moderate Attitudes		Extreme Attitudes
Formal Lecture			Weak Attitudes	Moderate and Strong Attitudes
Pyramid		Weak Attitudes	Moderate Attitudes	Extreme Attitudes
Small Discussion Group	Weak and Moderate Attitudes	Extreme Attitudes		

THREE THEORIES OF MOTIVATIONAL CHANGE

Any change in attitudes implies a motivation to change. There are three common theories of motivational change according to Sarnoff and Katz.²¹ The first emphasizes principles of organization, and the trend is toward more inclusive and more stable organization. The individual tries to reconcile conflicting impressions, seeks to know what the world is like and to make sense of it. An attitude is a stable organization of cognitive and affective processes around some object or referent. The object points to some thing, some relationship, or some aspect of the environmental field, and is thus directly related to the cues which bring forth the expression of the attitude. The cognitive object is imbedded in a system of values. Since they are generalized preferences, values give sign loadings to cognitive objects and their associated attitudes.

The second theory of attitude change is the learning theory based upon reward and punishment principles. Individuals assume attitudes as part of their adjustment to the world, and group norms become important since the individual seeks group acceptance. These principles are involved when attitudes are adopted as a consequence of externally applied rewards and punishments.

The third theory gives attention to the internal dynamics in which the individual's need to preserve his self-image and self-integrity becomes more important than external reward and punishment. This type of

²¹Irving Sarnoff and Daniel Katz, "The Motivational Basis of Attitude Change," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 49:115, January, 1954.

action is commonly called ego-defense. In his social relationships every individual attempts to gratify his basic physiological and acquired needs. Some individuals, because of the strength, maturity, and integration of their egos, are able to perceive and tolerate the existence of their inner drives, including those which may be socially taboo. Such a person can, in terms of a realistic assessment of the social situation, decide which impulses to express and which ones to suppress. It is possible for him to approach others in a straight forward manner; to react to them in terms of how they, as unique individuals, actually fulfill or frustrate his needs:²² At the other end of the scale of ego strength there are persons who are obliged to use devious means of gratifying their impulses. In an attempt to resolve inner conflict, they minimize or obliterate certain aspects of their emotional life. This deflection of impulse from conscious awareness does not destroy it. On the contrary, it continues to press for overt expression and requires the individual to expend considerable energy in keeping it below the threshold of consciousness. This expression is achieved by means of symptom formation, a device which serves a dual function. It permits expression of the unconscious impulse, and it prevents the individual from becoming aware of the existence of the unconscious impulse. Attitudes may thus function as ego defenses, and may be viewed as symptoms. By projecting his hostile impulses, for example, an individual can gain gratification of his impulses while maintaining the fiction that these impulses originated in others rather than in himself.

²²ibid., p. 122.

In attempting to change attitudes by the first theory we must remember that the assumption is that the individual acquired beliefs either out of intellectual curiosity, reality-testing, or a desire for cognitive structure in terms of having to know what his world is really like. The belief or attitude may be inappropriate because the individual comes into contact with only a limited aspect of reality. The Gestalt psychology assumes that men respond to fact and reason. The theory would be that when new facts are presented they result in cognitive reorganization rather than exclusion or blocking. Since people already possess definite standards for perceiving Negroes for example, it is important, if we are to change their perceptions, to be sure that the dominant frame of reference at the time the materials are introduced is not the product of these old standards. Essentially, this calls for a new frame without any reference to the old standards. Once the new frame is operative, material bearing upon the old cognitive object can be introduced without the old standards operating as a censor.

Under the second theory attitudes are changed through the application of social rewards and punishments. One of the major reasons for attitude change is the desire to gain the social approval of others. For example, the individual who accepts the values of the group has increased his chances of being liked by his fellows, of moving up in the group structure or of sharing in the returns from group effort. It would first be necessary to find out what the individual's relation to the group is and what types of satisfaction he derives from the group membership. If we know these facts, then we are in a better position to predict changes in attitude as a result of a changed perception of group norms. Similarity

we could predict those individuals who would tend to maintain their attitudinal position independent to the group. The assumption here is at the simple level that the more the rewards and the greater the sanctions the group has, the more effective will a changed perception of the group position be. "In the persuasion pattern the attempt is made to achieve cognitive restructuring through making the individual see new possibilities in achieving his goals."²³

The great bulk of the efforts to change attitudes is through persuasion and argumentation, in which an appeal is made to existing value structures. Some value system, other than that to which the target object is ordinarily connected, is invoked, and the necessity of meeting its requirements is stressed. In inducing change the emphasis is placed upon the perceptual side of the process, getting people to look at the old object in a new frame of reference. The theory implicit in these persuasive techniques is that the individual will restructure his psychological field to maximize the attainment of his goals and values.²⁴ Personality theorists have suggested that theory is correct within limitations, namely, that when ego needs are threatened, the individual will respond to persuasive efforts by blocking and resistance. The resistance may result in more strongly reinforced attitudes than was true before the attempted persuasion. The prediction is that the change attempts will have differential effects depending upon the personal needs of the subject.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

Under the third theory of attitude change two techniques widely employed in psychotherapy which have possible application to group situations are permissive catharsis and direct interpretation.²⁵ The basic objective is to help the individual attain insight and to restructure his attitudes accordingly.

A. Permissive catharsis. The free ventilation of thought and feeling in an acceptance interpersonal atmosphere is an integral part of virtually all schools of psychotherapy. It is generally assumed that this type of expression helps the patient to change in the following ways:

1. It offers him relief from the tension of burdensome affects such as guilt and hostility. The very act of expressing feelings is supposed to drain off energy which would necessitate the formation of various somatic and psychic symptoms.

2. It permits him to verbalize and, hence, objectify his inner conflicts. Such objectification leads to clearer self-perception.

This clarification in turn makes it possible for him to utilize his intellect more effectively in choosing among alternative means of resolving his conflicts.

B. Direct interpretation. This technique uses a combination of logic and suggestion; patients are confronted with psychological explanations of their behavior. These explanations are supposed to give them immediate insight into the internal factors (motivations) which determine their overt behavior. The patient is then to bring the weight of his own common sense to bear upon the insight and to change his behavior in the light of this new knowledge.

²⁵ibid., p. 123.

SUMMARY

It has been shown that attitudes are complex and procedures for changing them are complex, requiring a great amount of understanding. The use of these procedures is almost limitless, but each school must decide for itself just what type of individuals it wishes to turn out. If a school wishes to help an individual to the fullest development in every area these techniques should and must be used. This will call for extra time and effort for many members of the faculty and staff. It is true that teachers have just about all the work they can do now, but if our education is for everyone we must put forth this effort.

Having accepted the studies previously cited as valid, the first hypothesis of this study was accepted with the reservation that although attitudes can be changed by the use of certain procedures, it is realized that there will be some individuals whose attitude it will be impossible to change.

The second hypothesis was not accepted as a result of the study cited, but there is a lot of disagreement on this question. The third hypothesis was accepted as valid.

The most common effective factors are nature of experience, type of contact, personality of the individual, and the subject's perception of the outcome. The following is a summary of the most important points of these factors.

A. Nature of experience. The most useful experience for changing attitudes is one that establishes a close personal tie between members of different cultures. It has been found that persons who are extremely

ethnocentric will not develop these close ties when put in this type of situation. The person with relative conservative attitudes before the experience will be the one whose attitudes will change. It seems that specific attitudes change more than general attitudes using this method.

B. The type of contact. This factor is closely related to the nature of experience. For successful change in attitudes the contacts should be warm, friendly, sociable, and enjoyable. Also two aspects must be present for this successful change. First, the people must be regarded as a person and as a member of a different ethnic group. Second, neither aspect must overshadow the other. The main reasons why this method works is because there is a response to oneself and there is immediate and urgent interplay among participants. This interplay answers questions people want to know about the people they are in contact with.

C. The personality of the individual. The adaption-level approach has shown that attitudes expressed in alone situations, uninfluenced by social pressures, may be altered in a systematic fashion when group influences are brought to bear on the individual. Three sources of variance have been identified in perception and judgment and have been found to be important in the expression of personality patterns. These are stimuli immediately confronting an individual, background stimuli, and residual effects of stimuli from past experience. The expression of attitudes depends upon both situational and personal factors which must be evaluated simultaneously in order to predict individual behavior. The expression of attitudes is also an adjustment of the individual representing the pooled effect of these three sources of variance.

D. The subject's perception of the outcome. The affect associated with specific aspects of a person's experience is simple attitudes and attitude structure. The latter concerns the intensity of effect of a person's values, and the expected satisfaction of these values. Attitude change should result from changes in either the expected satisfaction from goals, or in the instrumental relationship perceived between the attitude object and the goal.

Attitude can be held as ways of structuring the individual's world and thus giving meaning and cognitive clarity to a mass of impressions and information, as instrumental means toward achieving goals external to the individual, and as defenses for protecting the ego of the individual. Measures taken to increase one's self-insight will increase more lasting attitude change. Low and medium ego-defenders show more attitude change than high ego-defenders as a result of the self-insight procedure. All groups show no significant change under the logical structure influence.

It is generally agreed that attitudes toward minority groups are difficult to change. For extreme emotional attitudes a method of role reversal, out of the school setting, is very effective. This technique contains three distinct advantages over other learning experiences. They are role reversal, the taking of attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that differ from one's own; projection of needs and feelings; and development of self-insight. The closer a person is to a role, the more likely are his attitudes to be changed.

E. Three methods of changing attitudes. The three methods are pyramid method, the formal lecture method, and the small interaction group.

The small interaction group method was found to be far superior to the two other methods. The formal lecture method was the least effective, showing almost no measurable change in attitude. The individuals who were amenable to attitude change had the following characteristics: high restraint, low thoughtfulness, high ascendance, high emotional stability, low friendliness, high masculinity, high responsibility, and high emotional stability.

There are three common theories of motivational change. The first emphasizes principles of organization. This theory assumes the men respond to fact and reason. The second theory of attitude change is the learning theory based upon reward and punishment principles. One of the major reasons for attitude change is the desire to gain social approval of others. The third theory gives attention to the internal dynamics in which the individual's need to preserve his self-image and self-integrity becomes more important than external reward and punishment. The basic objective is to help the individual attain insight and to restructure his attitudes accordingly.

It must be noted that this study has not been a study of methods and factors for changing a specific attitude, but rather, a study of the general guiding principles that may be modified to fit a variety of attitude problems. Also, it should be noted that procedures for changing attitudes should use not only the school, but all the facilities available in the community and possibly the state. These facilities are, for example, the churches, the welfare department, and the professional guidance clinic.

APPLICATION

Perhaps the best way to demonstrate how the methods of attitude change might be used is to apply them to a specific problem. This will be a very crude attempt and will by necessity be very over-simplified.

The seriousness of the problem of integrating the Negro into the public school system is evident in our present day society. Forcing an ethnic group upon an ethnocentric culture will not result in acceptance or positive attitude change. This fact was pointed out under the Nature of Experience study. A far more effective procedure would be to initiate a program at least a year in advance of actually placing the Negro in the school. Perhaps a good starting point would be to identify the ring leaders of the students. The leaders should be tested as to their level of ego-defense. Once this is determined, psychiatrist could begin applying programs of permissive catharsis and direct interpretation for the high ego-defenders, and reversal role playing for the medium and low ego-defenders. Combined with these programs should be small interaction group sessions under competent supervision from the psychiatrist or the school. With some degree of success in this area, it is hoped that the new attitudes will carry over to the other students as a result of the social rewards and punishments theory. As the students learn new values as a result of the procedures the theory of attitude change through organization of new cognitive objects. It is realized that the degree of attitude change at this point will not be too great, but it will be a start.

Mass invasion of the Negroes would not be wise. Perhaps a pilot program consisting of especially chosen Negroes into specially grouped

classes of students with moderate attitudes toward Negroes. This is done to produce classes that provide as friendly an atmosphere as possible. Contacts in this class should be warm, friendly, and sociable. They should provide chances for Negroes to be seen as individuals and as members of a different race. These contacts should provide chances for both groups to answer questions about the other group. Opportunities for close personal ties to develop should be provided and encouraged. Joint participation in athletics provides a wonderful chance for this factor.

The integration of Negroes into the school should proceed gradually at this stage. It will also be necessary to develop a plan of action for the parents. It should be developed along the same line as for the students.

The degree of success of a plan such as this would depend upon how well it was planned and carried out, as well as the strength of attitudes of the students and the community. But one thing is sure, it couldn't be worse than the present situation. With no specific plan the entire educational system of communities, counties, and states have been interrupted and in some cases halted altogether.

This has been just one example of what could be done with harmful attitudes. If we are to produce citizens that are well adjusted internally as well as externally, who have an understanding of their selves as well as their environment, we must use these methods and techniques.

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A STUDY OF THE METHODS AND FACTORS
FACILITATING CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR PATTERNS AS REPRESENTED
BY ATTITUDES

by

LARRY DWYER

B. S., Kansas State University, 1963

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirement for the degree

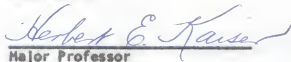
MASTER OF SCIENCE

School of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1964

Approved by


Major Professor

In school we sometimes, as teachers, find a student with an attitude that deviates markedly from the attitudes the school holds. One that can hamper or even prohibit his educational growth, or perhaps the growth of one of his peers. One of the best examples of this type of behavior is the drop-out or potential drop-out. This student is frustrated with school and sees no importance of education. Once an attitude has been discovered which seems necessary to change or modify, before attempting to do so, a knowledge of the methods and factors of such a procedure must be known. It is not meant to be implied that upon the arrival of students at school that each one's attitudes must be modified to fit exactly those held by the school. Students not only can but should have attitudes differing from the school and from each other, to a certain extent, in order to take care of individual differences. The school has the responsibility of presenting the materials and learning experiences in such a way as to promote learning in children even though their attitudes may vary somewhat.

The following hypotheses were set up for the objectives of the study:

1. By the use of certain methods and procedures, it is possible to change or modify an individual's attitude.
2. Attitude change generalizes to related objects. The degree of generalization is a function of the similarity of the objects.
3. Some attitudes are held by some individuals as a method of ego-defense.

This report was a normative survey carried out by the library research method. It reported and described what is known about affecting attitude change. There were many reports and investigations of the

methods and factors of attitude change in educational journals. These made up the core of this study. The research began with the Review of Educational Research Journal at the Kansas State University Library. It was limited to the last fifteen years and did not try to investigate what attitudes could and should be changed.

Having accepted the studies previously cited as valid, the first hypothesis of this study was accepted with the reservation that although attitudes can be changed by the use of certain procedures, it is realized that there will be some individuals whose attitude it will be impossible to change. The second hypothesis was not accepted as a result of the study cited, but there is a lot of disagreement on this question. The third hypothesis was accepted as valid.

The most common effective factors are nature of experience, type of contact, personality of the individual, and the subject's perception of the outcome.

There are three common theories of motivational change. The first emphasizes principles of organization. This theory assumes that men respond to fact and reason. The second theory of attitude change is the learning theory based upon reward and punishment principles. One of the major reasons for attitude change is the desire to gain the social approval of others. The third theory gives attention to the internal dynamics in which the individual's need to preserve his self-image and self-integrity becomes more important than external reward and punishment. The basic objective is to help the individual attain insight and to restructure his attitudes accordingly.