Attitude towards Woman among Rural and Urban Males of Different Age Groups

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Abstract

Attitude refers to beliefs and feelings about a person or event and the resulting support or opposition to those. Taken together, favorable or unfavorable reactions – whether exhibited in beliefs, feelings, or inclinations to act – define a person's attitude towards something. The objective of present study was to understand the attitudes of men towards women. Under this broad theme the study focused on different age groups of men (adolescents, adult and old age) to assess men's attitude towards women in general. The study revolves around two important areas, i.e., rural and urban male and their attitude towards women. The sample size of present research was 60 males. The sample consists of 30 each from rural and urban males of different age groups (adolescents: 15-25, adult: 26-35, old: 36-45). Results indicated there is significant difference between rural and urban males of different age groups on attitude towards women.

Keywords: Attitude towards women, Male, Rural, Urban.

Introduction

Attitude is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's like or dislike for an item. Attitudes are positive, negative or neutral views of an "attitude object" i.e. a person, behavior or event. People can also be "ambivalent" towards a target, meaning that they simultaneously possess a positive and a negative bias towards the attitude in question.

An attitude can be defined as a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, event, activities, ideas, or just about anything in your environment [1]. In the opinion of Bain (1927), an attitude is "the relatively stable overt behavior of a person which affects his status."

"The totality of those states that lead to or point toward some particular activity of the organism. The attitude is, therefore, the dynamic element in human behavior, the motive for activity." For Lumley (1928) an attitude is "a susceptibility to certain kinds of stimuli and readiness to respond repeatedly in a given way-which are possible toward our world and the parts of it which impinge upon us." Attitudes are judgments. They develop on the ABC model (affect, behavior, and cognition). The affective response is an emotional response that expresses an individual's degree of preference for an entity. The behavioral intention is a verbal indication or typical behavioral tendency of an individual. The cognitive response is a cognitive evaluation of the entity that constitutes an individual's beliefs about the object. Most attitudes are the result of either direct experience or observational learning from the environment.

Unlike personality, attitudes are expected to change as a function of experience. The hereditary variables may affect attitudes - but believes that they may do so indirectly.

India's attitude toward women in their society hinders women's ability to succeed to their full potential in the business realm. Attitude is enduring response dispositions with affective, behavioral and cognitive components. They are evaluations of objects, issues, or persons and based on affective, behavioral and cognitive information [2]. Attitude can be defined as a positive or negative evaluation of an object. "Objects" include people, things, events and issues. When people use such words as like, dislike, love, hate, good, and bad, they are usually
describing their attitudes. Social psychologists also use specialized terms to describe certain classes of attitudes. For example, an attitude toward self is called self-esteem, negative attitudes toward groups are referred to as prejudice [3].

However India, which has over 55% of its population under the age of 30, does need its youth to take it forward. But what appalls (and worries) is the attitude of the young educated males, even the ones staying in urban India, towards women. Conventional wisdom would suggest that education (that enables us to think rationally) and growing up in a urban environment (that provides us with more exposure) should make our thinking more global and progressive, especially in our treatment of women.

Men define women by their bodies and their function. Women are human species whose members are able to conceive, carry a foetus, give birth and lactate. Women are valued for providing sex to men and for their ability to keep the house, preserve the family, and nurture the children. But, this is only one side of the woman. Besides body, a woman also has a mind and a soul, which many men choose to ignore. Women are simply not valued as equal human beings deserving the same dignity, rights, and treatment as men.

Our attitudes often lie dormant when we act automatically, without pausing to consider them. Our attitudes guide our behavior if they come to our mind. Attitudes that don’t come readily to our mind are passed over when opportunities to act on them arise [4].

Although the attitudes we espouse are most potent when brought to mind other attitudes were not so proud of operate mostly without our awareness. Unconscious attitudes can also influence spontaneous behavior. Like other preconceptions, attitudes influences how we perceive and interpret events and, therefore, how we react [5]. Finally, we sometimes acquire attitudes in a manner that makes them potent, sometimes not. An extensive series of experiments by Fazio and Zanna [6] show that when attitudes arise from experience, they are far more likely to endure and to guide actions. Compared to attitudes formed passively, those forged in the fire of experience are more thoughtful, more certain, more stable, more resistant to attack, and better remembered [7-9].

Zaman [1] in her study elaborately discussed how the discriminatory attitude towards women is formed and institutionalized, and how that in turn affects women’s rights at different aspects of their life in Bangladesh. She observed that a woman experiences neglect and various forms of discrimination and violence from the very moment of birth. These practices are tacitly condoned and are legitimized through laws and customs in the name of cultural and religious practices that blatantly and systematically discriminate against women.

Brenner and Beutell [10] studied the relationship between the birth order of American male and female managers and their attitudes toward women managers. Findings revealed that first born males had the most negative attitudes and first born females have the most positive attitudes.

Cordano et al., [11] examined attitude toward women managers in Chile and USA and found that no cultural differences in the acceptance of women as managers and only sex showed significant differences in acceptance of women managers.

The relationship between leadership style and gender. Results revealed that, although women’s leadership styles are not at all likely to be less effective, they are generally assessed as less effective than that of a man’s leadership style.

Aycan [12] examined the factors that influence women’s career advancement in Turkey and showed that self-confidence and determination to achieve their career objectives are key success factors for women managers in Turkey. Similarly, support from family and organizations comes next and cultural norms toward gender roles to be found as the most significant barrier for attitudes toward women managers.

Method

Hypothesis

- There will be significant difference in attitude towards women among rural and urban males of different age groups.
- There will no significant difference in attitude towards women among urban and rural males.

Design

It is field study in which variable under study is not directly manipulated rather variation among variables is made by same short of selection procedure. The independent variable will be attitude towards women and dependent variable age, urban and rural areas. The study adopts 2X3 factorial designs with 2 areas i.e. rural and urban area and 3 age groups i.e. Adolescent (15-25), Adult (26-35) and Old (36-45).
Sample
Sample size of present research was sixty (60) males. The sample of 30 urban males of different age groups (15-25, 26-35, 36-45) and a sample of 30 rural males of different age groups (15-25, 26-35, 36-45).

Tools
Attitude towards women scale (Spence, Helmrich & Stapp, 1978) short version.

Result and Discussion
Table 1: Mean, S.D. & ‘t’ of rural adolescent, adult and old male on attitude towards women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent (15-25)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30.10</td>
<td>8.69</td>
<td>2.20**</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult (26-35)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.50</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent (15-25)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30.10</td>
<td>8.69</td>
<td>3.32*</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old (36-45)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42.50</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult (26-35)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.50</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>Non Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old (36-45)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42.50</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows comparison made between rural adolescent and rural adult in which significant difference was found. The ‘t’ value obtained (2.20) is found greater than table value at 0.05 (2.10) level which proved the hypothesis that “There will significant difference in attitude towards women among rural males in different age groups”. This is because among adolescent attitudes are forming with growing age while adults tend to verify the attitudes they hold with their experiences.

The above table shows comparison made between rural adolescent and rural old in which significant difference is found. The ‘t’ value obtained (3.32) which is found greater than table value at both 0.05 (2.10) and 0.01 (2.88) level which proved the hypothesis that “There will significant difference in attitude towards women among rural males in different age groups.” This is because among adolescent attitudes are forming with growing age while the old aged people are orthodox and have prejudices based on their experiences of life which is so strong that they are difficult to change.

The above table shows comparison made between rural adult and rural old which is not significant. The results are not according to hypothesis that “There is significant difference in attitude towards women among rural males in different age groups.” This is because the adult do not get exposure of outer world and thus have attitudes similar to old aged people.

Table 2: Mean, S.D. & ‘t’ of urban adolescent, adult and old male on attitude towards women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent (15-25)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.60</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>0.476</td>
<td>Non Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult (26-35)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48.70</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent (15-25)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.60</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>3.55*</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old (36-45)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.70</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult (26-35)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48.70</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>4.81*</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old (36-45)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.70</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows comparison made between urban adolescent and urban adult in which significant difference is not found. The results are not according to hypothesis that “There will significant differences in attitude towards women among urban males in different age groups.” The individual are exposed to real situations and various roles of women in the society. As the result they have common attitudes. One of the most important attitudes towards women in general was that they should be respected. All women were viewed same as mothers thus it was believed that they should be revered in the same way as done to mothers. Women were also imaged of being helpless, weak, honest and kindhearted – other reasons why they should be respected. The image of motherhood viewed in all women was a strong belief mentioned repeatedly by respondents and had influenced their attitude towards violence against women. Respondents also had a mixed feeling about women. Respondents believed that all female should be respected in general and had an objective view about female in many cases, an attitude very much supporting the interest of female. On other hand, they held an attitude leading to a tendency to control the action of females and exert authority on them [13].

The above table shows comparison made between urban adolescent and urban old in which significant difference is found. The ‘t’ value obtained 3.55 which is found greater than the table value at both 0.05 (2.10) and 0.01 (2.88) level which proved the hypothesis. There will significant difference in attitude towards women among urban males in different age groups. Whereas in case of old people the attitude found are very strong and difficult to change.

The above table no. 2 also shows comparison...
made between urban adult and urban old in which significant difference is found. The ‘t’ value obtained 4.81 which is found greater than the table value at both 0.05 (2.10) and 0.01 (2.88) level which proved the hypothesis that “There will significant difference in attitude towards women among urban males in different age groups.” This is because among adolescent attitudes are forming with growing age while the old aged people are orthodox and have prejudices based on their experiences of life which is so strong that they are difficult to change.

Table 3: Mean, S.D. & ‘t’ of rural and urban adolescent, adult and old male on attitude towards women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Adolescent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30.10</td>
<td>8.69</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Adolescent</td>
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<td>47.60</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Adult</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.50</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Adult</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48.70</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Old</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42.50</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>Non Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Old</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.70</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows comparison made between rural adolescent and urban adolescent in which significant difference is found. The ‘t’ value obtained 5.22 which is highly significant at both 0.05 (2.10) and 0.01 (2.88) level which proved the hypothesis that “There will significant difference in attitude towards women among urban and rural males.” This is so because rural adolescent do not get exposure and thus have attitudes as they are taught by adults and old aged people. Whereas on other hand the urban adolescent have attitude based on their experiences which are formed when they see women in different roles at schools and in media. Hossain and Imam [14] observed that although people had specific attitudes or views regarding women’s position in society many male were not sure whether female were subordinate to them or not in Bangladesh. Man who subordinates women was not aware of the manner, mechanism, or means of the woman’s subordination. They thought such situations of women as normal, prescribed, and perpetual. Men’s awareness was obscured with prevailing norms and mode of justifications.

The above table shows comparison made between rural adult and urban adult in which significant difference is found. The ‘t’ value obtained 3.45 which is highly significant at both 0.05 (2.10) and 0.01 (2.88) level which proved the hypothesis that “There will significant difference in attitude towards women among urban and rural males.” When all the parts (i.e., attitude in general, women’s right and deprivation) of scale related to attitude of male towards women were taken together 47% of the respondents had less favorable attitude towards women as against 46% having more favorable attitude towards them. When all parts (i.e., psychological and physical violence and violence related to deprivation and action) of scale related to violence against women were taken together the majority of the respondents (51%) had an attitude less favorable towards violence against women. Only in the cases of deprivation and physical violence those with less favorable attitude towards female were slightly more in number than those with more favorable attitude. Besides, 30% and 38% of the respondents in the cases of discrimination and physical violence respectively had attitudes neither more nor less towards the interest of women [13].

The above table 3 also shows comparison made between rural old and urban old in which significant difference is not found. This is so because the old age people of both rural and urban areas are orthodox and have prejudices based on the strong attitudes they hold experience during life time.

Conclusion

Laws can act only as catalyst for social change, but the attitudinal change must occur from within. In the absence of proper societal acceptance, the laws can remain only in papers. Otherwise, women will not come forward due to societal attitude which results in psychological and emotional problems. They can survive in the society as human beings with their rights only when the people get rid of their superstitious beliefs and develop positive view towards them. To change the pitiable plight of women, women must be considered equal to men. Unless and until everybody in the society realizes their duties, responsibilities and rights, women cannot get liberty through any revolution. The self-esteem of the girl child needs to be increased at early age itself. The girls must be taught to value themselves, and boys should be taught to value girls and women at the primary school level. Further, there is a need to change attitude of women towards themselves. They should not consider themselves inferior to male members of society. Women have to liberate themselves from the clutches of the outdated old customs prevailing in the society. The change is to come at first from within and not from outside.
The Indian society needs to be educated, encouraged, enticed, and, if necessary, compelled to value its women by saying that the woman is important. She is necessary. Value her.

References