CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Attitudes play significant role in man’s life. They are the components of mental life, the basic element of human existence. The Indian traditional philosophy and the western thinking are very close in analyzing components of attitude. While the Gita advocates the three paths of salvation in terms of jnana, bhakti and karma the Western viewpoint is centered round knowing feeling and activity analysis.” Throughout the classical tradition from Plato to Aristotle on theorists have repeatedly proposed the same three components of attitude under their Latinized names of cognitive, affective and conative”. Within the framework of Social Psychology attitude theorists have used two approaches to divide attitudes into their components. One approach is the cognitive-affective-conative approach (Knowing, feeling, acting approach) which is based upon the traditional philosophical analysis and the other is known as means end analysis. In the second approach the attitude toward an object is considered as a composite of perceived instrumentality of that object to person’s goals weighted by his evaluation of these goals.

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In order to study the structure of attitudes the attitude theorists have used socio-political system as the psychological object. Several investigations have been reported in this direction. Some of the important findings have been reported in the later section of this chapter. The difficulty to investigate the social and political attitudes with the help of a number of social and political variables included in the form of items in a socio-political attitude measure lies in separating the two from the various dimensions obtained. The various underlying factors may be the underlying components of socio-political attitudes but it is difficult to say that any of the factor is purely social (or political) attitude.

Attempts have also been made to study the structure of political attitudes by constructing different types of measures. The present investigation is such an attempt to study the structure of political attitudes. The study is undertaken with a view to investigate both aspects of the organization of political attitudes using different techniques.

The first concern of the study is to work out the theoretical basis of the problem and then to develop attitudinal measure to find the factorial structure of political attitudes using factor analysis and study the various correlates of the underlying factors. The next task will be the study of the cognitive-affective-conative structure of political attitudes using Semantic differential technique.
1.1 Definition of Attitude

Allport after reviewing a number of earlier definitions reported a comprehensive definition: "An Attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness to respond, organized through experience exerting a directive and/or dynamic influence on behaviour. It serves as an abstraction in a theory describing overt behaviour in social environments. The central aspect in this definition is "Readiness to respond" considering attitudes as theoretical constructs only indirectly related to overt responses. Thus an attitude is preparation for behaviour. It is a predisposition to respond in a particular way to an attitude object. Attitudes are organized in the sense that a single attitude is made of components having a characteristic structure and they exert a motivating or dynamic force to guide the behaviour and are the result of past experiences.

Campbell reports that attitudes represent "Consistency in response to social objects."


Triandis used many of the central ideas used by attitude theorists in his definition: "An attitude is an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations." The definition suggests that attitudes have three components: (a) a cognitive component (the idea, an outcome of human thinking), (b) an affective component (the emotional aspect of positive or negative polarity) and (c) a behavioural component (a predisposition to action).

Kerlinger reported a definition from a number of sources: "An attitude is an organized predisposition to think, feel, perceive and behave toward a referent. It is an enduring structure of beliefs that predisposes the individual to behave selectively toward attitude referents. A referent is a category, class or set of phenomena: physical objects, events, behaviours, even constructs". This definition also reveals that attitudes have three components: cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling) and conative (behaving).

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Another comprehensive definition is given by Fishbein and Ajzen. "An attitude is a learned disposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object". They suggest that the term "attitude" be used only for affective component. They label the cognitive dimension as beliefs and the behavioural dimension as "behavioural intentions".

Thus there are many definitions of the term "attitude", which suggest that (a) attitudes are inferred from behavioural responses, (b)they imply readiness to respond, and (c) they are represented by consistencies in the responses of individuals to social stimuli and (d) the structure of attitudes consists of three components: cognitive, affective and behavioral.

1.2 Meaning of Political Attitudes

An attitude has been considered as a component of mental life and a predisposition to respond to some attitudinal object. The attitudinal object may be social or political or some other factor. The term political attitudes may, therefore, be taken in the context of political factors and it can be defined as a preparation for political behaviour of a person. It is the past experiences and actions of individuals related to politics which helps them to develop political attitudes which exert a motivating force to guide their political behaviour.

As has already been mentioned that the term structure of political attitudes has two notions; one concerned with dimensions of political attitudes in terms of various factors associated with political system and the other concerned with the basic structural components—cognitive, affective, conative.

1.3 Studies Related To The Structure Of Political attitudes

A number of studies have been reported on political attitudes and their structure. Comrey and Newmeyer used factor analysis to study the structure of political and social attitudes. Thirty political and social attitude variables were included in a 120 item scale. Five of the nine factors derived after rotation were found to be of greater importance. These were (1) Welfare State Attitudes (2) Punitive attitudes (3) Nationalism (4) Religious attitudes and (5) Racial Tolerance Attitudes. The dimensions correspond to radical-conservative type of attitudes.

Robinson, Rusk and Head (1968) have studied political attitudes by developing measures of political attitudes.

Eysenck and Coulter (1973) have investigated the structure and dimensionality of the socio-political attitudes. An analysis of the data on a sample of 300 men and women gave three factors—liberal vs. Conservative, Freedom of sex expression and Equalitarianism.

Cole (1972) found a relationship between the scores of Machiavellian scale (political attitudes) and political behaviour. Students were found to have little radicalism. They believed that their governmental system should be changed but hoped to change it by working within the system.

Suziedelis and Lorr investigated the structure and dimensionality of the domain of socio-political attitudes.

Stanley and Vagg (1975) studied attitude and personality characteristics of Australian Protestant Fundamentalists. Using Eysenck's 40 item Attitude scale they found factors like moral radicalism, Political radicalism and socio-ethnic radicalism.

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A more comprehensive investigation has been reported by Gold, Christie and Friedman (1976). The study is focused upon political attitudes and the process of radicalization by developing a multidimensional attitude scale based on New Left ideology (New Left Scale). They have attempted a social psychological interpretation of student dissent at Columbia University. The items of the attitude scale were categorized into four categories: world view, goals, tactics and lifestyle with a student group dimension: radical-conservative. Using factor analysis they obtained five factors:

1. Traditional Moralism,
2. Machiavellian Tactics,
3. Machiavellian Cynicism,
4. New Left Philosophy and
5. Revolutionary Tactics.

Reddy reported a study of values and attitudes of Indian Youth. It deals with the developmental trends in attitudes and values. The study, however, doesn't directly deal with the political aspect and is concerned with how do they (school going youth) develop attitudes and values?


Prasad (1982) reported a study on Socio-Political attitudes. The study is a comparison of certain social groups towards various socio-Political issues.

Fehling and Triandis using factor analysis found that when measures of the cognitive, affective and behavioural components of interpersonal attitudes are placed in the same analysis, the dimensions that are extracted are independent and correspond to three kinds of components.

The studies conducted by Rosenberg and Fishbein suggest that the Cognitive, Affective and Conative components of attitudes are highly related.

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17. Triandis, H.C., op. at. p.61


Osgood used semantic differential in a study the main purpose of which was to determine the meaning of political concepts to three groups of subjects. He used names of political leaders as "person" concepts and issues like federal spending, socialism, United Nations etc.

Osgood believed that the semantic differential could be used as a generalized attitude measuring technique.

Campbell et al in a study of political attitudes found a high correlation between the cognitive and conative component of political attitudes.

It is clear from these studies that most of them deal with socio-political attitudes revealing the factors like Nationalism, Equalitarianism, Political radicalism, Traditional Morality, Machiavellian Tactics etc. Some studies also report the relationship between the cognitive, affective and conative components of attitudes. None of the studies have dealt with a problem exclusively on Political attitudes in a comprehensive manner. So, the need was felt to attempt a study of the structure of political attitudes.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

"A Study of the Structure of Political Attitudes of School Teachers using Semantic Differential Analysis and Attitude Scaling Methods".

Various terms included in the statement of the problem are explained as follows:

Structure of Political Attitudes

The term political attitude has already been defined. The structure of political attitudes has two aspects. One aspect deals with the cognitive - conative - affective structure of political attitudes and the other is concerned with the multidimensional structure involving a number of different political factors or constructs. The specification of the different constructs has therefore, to be made. In the present investigation the factors which constitute political attitude are

(1) Political World View
(2) Political Goals
(3) Political Life style and
(4) Political Tactics.

These constitute the theoretical constructs of the political attitudes.
School Teachers

The term school teachers has been used for teachers who teach in Government and Recognized Private schools of Ferozepur District.

Semantic Differential Analysis is a technique used to work out the semantic spaces of school teachers and thereby studying the cognitive-conative-affective structure of political attitudes.

1.5 Operational Statement of the problem:-

The operational statement of the problem is given as follows:--

"Construction, Standardization and Factor Analysis of political attitude scale based on the factors: Political World View, Political Goals, Political Life style, Political Tactics, to study the underlying structure of political attitudes and its correlates and construction of three semantic differential scales: Evaluation, Activity and Potency to measure political attitudes of school teachers for the concepts: Political Goals in India, Political Tactics in India, Political functioning in India, Political Leadership in India, Political Issues in India, Electoral Politics in India, Political Cynicism in India, Political Authoritarianism in India, Political Transparency in India, Politics of Backwardness in
India, Politics of Fundamentalism in India, Politics of Religion in India to investigate the cognitive – conative – affective structure of political attitudes.

1.6 Theoretical Basis of the Problem

The classification followed by Gold, Christie and Friedman is the theoretical basis for the development of the attitudinal measure. The constructs used by them are: World View, Goals, Tactics and Life Style. In the present investigation the theoretical constructs: Political World View, Political Goals, Political Tactics and Political Life Style will be used to develop the attitudinal measures. For developing the semantic differential scales the concepts used are: Political Goals in India, Political Tactics in India, Political Functioning in India, Political Leadership in India, Political Issues in India, Electoral Politics in India, Political Cynicism in India, Political Authoritarianism in India, Political Transparency in India, Political Backwardness in India, Politics of fundamentalism in India and Politics of religion in India. These factors were emerged out of the discussions with the teaching community.

1.7 Scope of Study

(1) The present study deals with the attitudinal dimensions based on the ideology of school teachers.
(2) It is confined to the school teachers from Government and Recognized Private schools of Ferozepur District as regards the factorial structure and the other norms of the attitude scale are conceded.

(3) The present study is confined to study the relationships of attitudinal measures with the independent variables.

(4) The present study is also limited to deal with the Cognitive-Conative-Affective structure of attitudes by analyzing the semantic spaces of teachers.

1.8 Objectives of the study.

The following are the objectives of the investigation:

(1) To develop a multidimensional attitude scale based on factors Political Goals, Political World View, Political Tactics and Political Life Style.

(2) To classify the identified politically active and politically non-active secondary school teachers and finding the probability of misclassification.

(3) To determine the internal consistency along the attitude scale.

(4) To investigate the factorial structure on the basis of the data from secondary school teachers.

(5) To determine reliabilities and relationships of the factor scales.
To investigate the various correlates of the factor scales.

To study the cognitive – affective – conative structure using semantic differential analysis.

1.9 Statistical Techniques:

The following statistical techniques have been used in the analysis and treatment of the data.

1. Discrete discriminant analysis – nearest neighbour procedure, a variant of the Full Multinomial Model is used to deal with the problem of classification of politically active and politically non active teachers.

2. Item – Total correlational technique to find the internal consistency along the attitude scale.

3. Factor analysis – Principal Components factor analysis with Varimax Rotation is used to investigate the factorial structure of political attitudes.

4. Analysis of Variance techniques – A 2 * 2 * 2 * 2 (Area * Sex * Type * Subject) technique is performed on the scores on the attitude factor scales obtained after factor analysis.

5. Semantic Differential Analysis Technique.
1.10 Review Of Chapters :-

Chapter II deals with the development of the attitude scale and the Semantic Differential scale. It also describes the sampling procedure employed in the administration of the scales and the problem of classification of politically active and politically non active secondary school teachers.

In Chapter III the factorial structure and the interpretation of the factors derived are given. It also deals with the reliabilities and relationship of the factor scales.

Chapter IV is devoted to the study of the correlates of the attitude factor scales.

In Chapter V a semantic differential treatment of the cognitive -affective - conative structure of political attitudes has been reported.

An interpretation of results and educational implications are given in the chapter VI.