

PMIR-SEMESTER-II [e-Content]

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UNIT-II [PART-2]

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

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In this unit, the discussion on individual behaviour will continue. We will examine one of the factors in detail that influence individual behaviour.

## **PERSONALITY**

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

The concept of personality is often discussed in our daily routine and while coming across different people, one may associate different individuals with varied personalities. For example, one particular individual may be having a pleasing personality while another may be having an arrogant personality. Similarly, one individual may be having an aggressive personality while another individual submissive personality. Sometimes, we refer to disagreements among people which possibly arise due to personality conflicts. Personality of an individual can be found out from his behavioral traits or temperament. In this unit, we will study about determinants, structure, behaviour, assessment and development of personality.

### **3.1 OBJECTIVES**

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Define personality
- List the determinants of personality
- Examine the development of personality
- Explain the theories of personality

### **3.2 PERSONALITY: DEFINITION, DETERMINANTS, BEHAVIOUR AND DEVELOPMENT**

Personality of an individual plays an extremely important role in assessing the behaviour of a person at an organization. In case an individual who is holding a senior position in an organization has a wrong type of personality, it may lead to a very bad impact on the relationship between superior and his subordinates and ultimately it may lead to protests and unrest at the workplace. Sometimes the personality difficulties are the root cause of labour strikes.

Personality has been defined by Salvatore Maddi as follows:

*'Personality is a stable set of characteristics and tendencies that determine those commonalities and differences in the psychological behaviour (thoughts, feeling and actions) of people that have continuity in time and that may not be easily understood as the sole result of the social and biological pressures of the moment.'*

Understanding the '*commonalities and differences*' is another important aspect. This helps in assessing the different aspects that an individual has similar to others and what are those points which actually make him different from the others and set him apart as an individual. Each and every person

- like all other people
- like some other people
- like no other person

Organizationally, a manager must understand that all subordinates are not alike and that each subordinate is unique and may or may not respond to the same stimuli, such as pay raise or reprimands.

### **Determinants and Structure of Personality**

Let us now study about the determinants and structure of personality. Type A and Type B personality and behavior. One dimension of personality that is getting attention both from organizational as well as researchers is the *Type A* and *Type B* behaviour profiles.

**The Type A** behaviour individuals are most of the times restless and impatient in their expressions. They generally aim at perfectionism and want to achieve results as quickly as possible in lesser amount of time. The other types of the individuals' are those with Type B behaviour. These are generally more relaxed and patient in their expression. They do not feel the pressure of timelines. These individuals are more philosophical in nature and are however less competitive.

Some of the characteristics of the individuals with Type A personality are as follows:

- They are generally restless so they eat rapidly and keep walking or are generally on the move.
- They have the tendency to perform several tasks at one given time.
- They are generally impatient in their expressions; do not like to waste their time in waiting for others.
- They are also impatient about other individuals who are not really impatient.
- They have habit of starting with newer tasks before completing the previous ones.
- They normally schedule greater number of activities in lesser time though they are initially themselves not really sure that whether everything will be done or not.
- At times, they are involved in nervous gestures such as banging on the table and using clenched fists, etc.
- They generally do not have time to relax or enjoy life.

Thus, the Type A personality individuals are generally obsessive in nature. The managers who possess the traits of this personality pay attention to details, are hard-driving in nature and also keep their team members pushed towards achieving performance.

Individuals with Type B personality are generally the opposite of the Type A individuals. These type of individuals are more relaxed and sociable in nature. They have a balanced outlook in life.

Type A managers have difficulties in creating cordial interpersonal relationships and create a lot of stress for themselves and the people they deal with. They specially feel pressurized if they have to complete a task within a given deadline. Type B persons on the other hand, do put in extra effort in order to meet a deadline but do not feel pressurized.

Those persons who are classified as Type A have a strong desire and personality tendency to control all aspects of the situation, and if they are unable to control a situation, they react with anger and frustration. Because of their obsession with

perfection, they are more apt to fear of failure and even if their work is good, they tend to underestimate the quality of their work. In case of negative outcomes, they blame themselves more than the external factors.

A comprehensive identification of Type A personality is given by Karen A. Mathews as follows:

The Type A pattern can be observed in any person who is aggressively involved in a chronic, incessant struggle to achieve more and more in less and less time, and if required to do so, against the opposing efforts of other things or other persons. The overt manifestations of this struggle include explosive, accelerated speech, a heightened pace of living, impatience with slowness, concentrating on more than one activity at a time, self-preoccupation, dissatisfaction with life, evaluation of the worthiness of one's activities in terms of numbers, a tendency to challenge and compete with others even in non-competitive situations, and a free floating hostility. The major facets of 'core' elements of the behaviour pattern are extremes of aggression, easily aroused hostility, a sense of time urgency and competitive achievement surviving.

Research has indicated that such patterns of behaviour as exhibited by Type A personality profile, lead to health problems, specially heart related illness. In contrast, Type B persons may be hard working but feel no pressing conflict with people or time and hence are not prone to stress and coronary problems.

### **Assessment of Personality**

While we know what personality is, we are interested to know how a given personality is formed. What determines an individual's personality? Personality can be compared to a jigsaw puzzle in which we are interested in finding out the sources of all the pieces in the puzzle as well as their interrelationships.

There are two broad categories of factors that influence the formation and development of personality.

- a) heredity factors
- b) environmental factors.

It is debatable as to which of these factors have a greater influence on the structure of personality. Some behaviour scientists argue that personality characteristics are derived from heredity factors and the right type of environment only brings them out. Others feel that the effect of environment is quite strong.

According to Maier, 'knowledge, skill and language are obviously acquired and represent important modifications of behaviour. Learned modifications in behaviour are not passed on to children, they must be acquired by them through their own personal experience.'

Thus, a probable consensus can be reached that it is both hereditary and environmental factors together affect the personality development of an individual. There may be some environmental constraints or limitations at times which may not allow an individual to completely realize his potential. However, the complete potential of an individual comprising both physical as well as psychological aspects may be determined by the hereditary aspects that is the complex set of genes.

### **Personality traits and individual behaviour**

There are an enormous number of human traits. It has been estimated that there may be as many as 5,000 adjectives that could be used to describe personality traits. As has been discussed before, personality is a set of relatively stable characteristics or dimensions of people that account for consistency in their behaviour in various situations. There are a few very important dimensions of personality which can be related to both interpersonal and organizational behaviour. These may be described as follows:

**Authoritarianism:** When an individual blindly accepts the authority, it is referred as authoritarianism. The individuals believing in this concept have a high respect for authority and follow all the directions extended by the authority extremely obediently. They adhere to conventional values, are generally conservative, endorse strong parental control in keeping the family close and together, are concerned with toughness and power, are closed minded and generally less educated.

Such people generally prove to be very good followers. This is because of their strong belief in the hierarchical order. They prove to be very good assets for a

company when they work under the directions of a defined supervisor and they are extremely productive under an authoritarian organizational set up.

*'Dogmatism'* can also be closely related with *'Authoritarianism'*. Dogmatism refers to expression of rigidity in one's beliefs. A highly dogmatic person is closed minded, and believes in blind obedience to authority and intolerance towards others. They are generally known as fanatics such as religious fanatics or political fanatics like hard core communists or right wing Nazis.

***Bureaucratic personality:*** A bureaucratic individual also respects organizational rules and regulations but he differs from an authoritarian person in the manner that he may not blindly accept the directions of an authority. He also has respect for the authority; however this respect is not total and blind in case of a bureaucratic individual. Such individuals definitely value rules, policies, processes, regulations and subordination, formal and informal relationships in an organization. They are generally not innovative, do not take risks and are at ease in following established directives. Bureaucratic managers are better supervisors in types of work that are routine, repetitive and procedurized.

***Machiavellianism:*** A sixteenth century author named Niccolò Machiavelli worked in the field of personality and identified personality profiles of the noblemen of the day. The term called Machiavellianism has also been associated with the name of this author. This type of personality wishes to exercise a control over others simply by manipulating others. They do this primarily with the objective of achieving some personal goals. The individuals having this type of personality have high self-confidence and high self-esteem. They always take calculated steps and do not hesitate while using others for their own advantage and selfish interest.

Their sole objective is to meet their own objectives and goals. They believe that ends justify means and do not feel guilty in using unethical means to serve their own interests. They are skilled in influencing others, and they approach the situations thoughtfully and logically. They would not hesitate to lie if necessary, and they are not easily swayed by a sense of friendship, trust or loyalty. They are especially successful in exploiting structured situations and vulnerable people.

**Problem solving style:** These individuals indulge in different ways and means and they have their own style of making decisions. These facets are also reflected through their personality traits. For example, some of the people with this type of personality are well planned, thorough in their approach, pay attention to details etc. However, some others are impulsive and they just go ahead with something which is extremely obvious.

### **Introvert and Extrovert Personalities**

Introvert personalities are generally shy in nature and they prefer to be alone. They do not freely communicate with others and may feel hesitant while communicating with others. The extrovert personalities are however different from the introverts and they are most of the times outspoken and outgoing in their behaviour. They are at times aggressive also and are capable of interacting effectively with people. According to L.W. Morris, the introvert is behaviorally described as *'quiet, introspective, intellectual, well-ordered, emotionally unexpressive and value oriented, prefers small groups of intimate friends and plans well ahead.'* On the other hand, an extrovert is best described as, 'sociable, lively, impulsive, seeking novelty and change, carefree and emotionally expressive.'

From an organizational point of view, it can be assumed that most managers would be extroverts since a manager's role involves working with and through other people. One the other hand, an extreme introvert works best when alone in a quiet office without external interruption or influences.

### **Self-esteem**

Self-esteem may be defined as the level of respect that one may have for himself. It may be defined as the measure of one's own confidence level. It is also indicative of the respect that one has for his capabilities and motivation standards. Self-esteem has been placed as a higher level motivational need of an individual as per the Maslow's model of hierarchical needs. Self-esteem can be correlated with traits like independence, creativity and assertiveness. The individuals with high self-esteem levels are generally very friendly in their behaviour. They are also affectionate and relate easily with people. They are good at interpersonal skills and are capable of appreciating other people for their positive qualities and strengths.



Low self-esteem people are the people who are generally critical of others. They exhibit a depressing behaviour and most of the times indulge in blaming others for their own failures.

At the level of an organization, the people with high-esteem generally prove to be better performers than the ones with low self-esteem. The poor performance faced by the people with low self-esteem further reinforces their behavioural traits.

According to Abraham K. Korman, *'People of high self-perceived competence and self-image should be more likely to achieve on task performance than those who have low self-image concerning the task or job at hand, since such differential task achievement would be consistent with their self-cognitions. This assumes that task performance is seen as valued.'*

### 3.3 SUMMARY

1. The concept of personality is often discussed in our daily routine and while coming across different people, one may associate different individuals with different personalities. For example, one particular individual may be having a pleasing personality while another one may be having an arrogant personality.
2. There are two broad categories of factors that influence the formation and development of personality. These are heredity factors and environmental factors.
3. Personality is a set of relatively stable characteristics or dimensions of people that account for consistency in their behaviour in various situations.
4. Introvert personalities are generally shy in nature and they prefer to be alone. They do not freely communicate with others and may feel hesitant while communicating with others. The extrovert personalities are however different from the introverts and they are most of the times outspoken and outgoing in their behaviour.
5. Since personality variables reflect consistent and enduring patterns of behaviour, these patterns can be classified into certain categories, so that the behaviour can be predictable once we identify the pattern of behavior as belonging to a given category.

6. There are four major personality theories: psychoanalytical theory, trait theory, self-concept theory and social learning theory.
7. Trait theory visualizes personality as a reflection of certain traits of the individual. Even though there are many traits that are common to most people, there are many other traits that are unique to a person and are not shared by other individuals.

### 3.4 KEY WORDS

1. **Dogmatism:** It refers to the expression of rigidity in one's beliefs.
2. **Introvert:** It refers to someone who is shy, quiet, and prefers to spend time alone rather than often being with other people.
3. **Super Ego:** It refers to the part of a person's mind that acts as a self critical conscience, reflecting social standards learned from parents and teachers.

\*\*\*\*\*GOOD-LUCK\*\*\*\*\*