

Personality

PERSONALITY

Personality is a very complex and multidimensional construct of a human being. No common definition of personality has so far been arrived at. Every individual defines personality in different way which includes trait factors and physical appearance. *Personality is a dynamic organization within an individual of those psychological systems that determines his unique adjustment with the environment. It is a sum total of ways in which an individual reacts and interacts with others.* As far as physical aspect is concerned it relates to individual charm, attitude while dealing with others and smiling face can also be included into personality. Uma Sekaran states that one can examine personality in terms of a set of relatively stable characteristics and tendencies that determine our thoughts, feelings and behaviour and which have some continuity or consistency over time. Maddi (1980) defines personality thus: *Personality is a stable set of characteristics and tendencies that determine those commonalities and differences in the psychological behaviour (thoughts, feelings, 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.* The above definitions indicate the commonality of characteristics and human tendencies amongst people who display consistency in their behaviour over time. Maddis definition suggests that people do change due to biological and social pressures. Thus by understanding certain dimensions of personality one can predict human behaviour to a great extent.

Determinants of Personality

Personality is determined by heredity, environment (culture) and situation under which an individual works. This is shown in diagrammatic form in Figure 4.1. Let us study these concepts.

Heredity

Heredity is transmitted through genes, which determine hormone balance, which later determine physique and subsequently the personality. Heredity refers to acquiring from parents certain biological, physical and psychological commonalities, which are further reflected in physical stature, facial attractiveness, sex, temperament, muscle composition and even reflect. They often decide energy level. These factors have a deciding influence

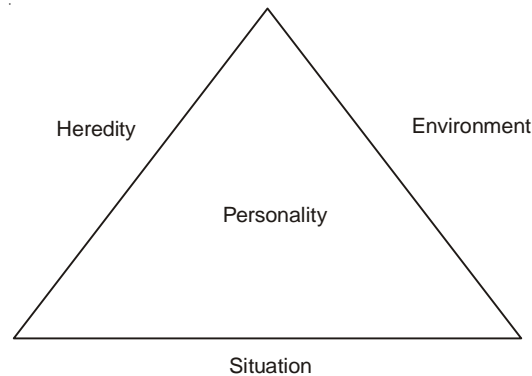


Fig. 4.1. Determinants of personality

on how a person in an organization would display his reactions in a particular situation. Nature of health and psychological make up that an individual enjoys can be traced from the traits his parents possessed. Parents prominently pass on shyness, fear and distress to the next generation. In good organizations and particularly in defence services a detailed screening is carried out of the candidates based on the background of the parents as it relates to physique, psychological make up, disability and transferable disease as it has far reaching impact on the general health of the organization.

Environment

Every individual is born and brought up in a particular environment. Environment leaves an imprint on the personality of an individual. It is commonly seen that a doctor's son preferring his father's profession and a child of a soldier entering into Defence Services. More advanced the socio-economic conditions of the society more would the children be forward thinking. Environment should be viewed from the point of view of norms, ethics and value that are observed and the attitude displayed by the social group. These factors actually formulate the culture of the society from which the organizations draw their human resource requirements. The cultural background is important to evaluate personality. In childhood, parents, uncles, aunts and even neighbour's behaviour is copied by a child. It is therefore necessary to display an ideal behaviour on the part of all the adults who come in direct contact with the children. Family moulds character of children through role models re-enforcements, rewards and punishments. Other influences like first born and later born child will have different personality traits. First-born child would generally be commanding. Female child would be more responsive and pass on sobering effect on younger brothers/sisters. It is therefore important to study early conditions under which the child has been brought up, norms followed in the family and the existence of cultural value system in the society. All these factors have a marked influence on the personality of an individual.

Situation

Individual has to interact with number of problems in a given situation, which does not remain constant. It is subject to change and hence fluid in nature. There is therefore a need to recognise the *person-situation* interaction. It can be social learning activity of personality. Thus personality is situational, the uniqueness of each situation and any

measure of personality must be examined. Personalities therefore mean how people affect others, how they understand and view themselves, pattern of personality traits and person-situation interaction. For example individual modifies his behaviour based on situation. When an individual goes to temple he would be sober, generally put on plain clothes and bow. When the same individual goes for interview he would be armed with knowledge of the organization while in the club he would be merry making having a drink in his hand and meet friends and generally be in gay mood.

Personality Traits

Personality traits are the characteristics of an individual when exhibited in large number of situations. More predominant the traits in an individual are, more consistence the individual is and more frequent occurrences in diverse situations. There are thousands of traits that have been identified. Cattell¹ isolated 171 traits but concluded that they were superficial and lacking in descriptive power. What he sought was a reduced set of traits that would identify underlying pattern. The result was the identification of 16 personality factors, which he called the source, or primary traits. These and their opposites are given below :-

1	Reserved	vs	Outgoing
2	Less intelligent	vs	More intelligent
3	Affected by feelings	vs.	Emotionally stable
4	Submissive	vs.	Dominant
5	Serious	vs.	Happy go lucky
6	Timid	vs.	Venturesome
7	Expedient	vs.	Conscientious
8	Tough minded	vs.	Sensitive
9	Trusting	vs.	Suspicious
10	Practical	vs.	Imaginative
11	Forthright	vs.	Shrewd
12	Self assured	vs.	Apprehensive
13	Conservative	vs.	Experimenting
14	Group dependent	vs.	Self-sufficient
15	Uncontrolled	vs.	Controlled
16	Relaxed	vs.	Tense

THE MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR (MBTI)

This is one of the most commonly used Personality test consisting of 100 questions. On the basis of the answers the individuals are classified into following categories

- (a) **Visionary:** A person who has been classified visionary based the MBTI results has an organised mind, has a great drive for new ideas and purpose. An individual is skeptical, critical and stubborn. He displays traits like working independently and has a high determination to achieve the desired goals, which are often challenging.
- (b) **Organizer:** A person having great organizational ability would be practical, realistic and believes in what he sees. Organizers are generally successful businesspersons,

persons involved in basic engineering jobs, and persons who are involved in assembling resources to run the organizations.

- (c) **Conceptualisers:** Persons who take quick decisions, they are ingenious and good at many things. They are resourceful, problem solver and have a tendency to neglect work, which is of a routine nature.

Locus of Control

Major personality attributes which affects organizational behaviour is *locus of control*, that is the degree to which people believe that they are masters of their own fate. It is the concept, which determines whether an individuals control events or the events control the individuals and that they become only the pawns of situation. People have both internal locus of control and external locus of control, only the degree varies.

- (a) **Internal Locus of Control.** Persons having internal locus of control believe that they can manipulate events to their advantage and therefore they are capable of deciding their fate For example, a manager having dominant internal locus of control would be able to effectively control resources, decide events, which benefits him. He manipulates communications, resources, events, programmes in such away that enhances his position and he creates an aura around him that he is an indispensable person. Individual feels that he is decider of his own future and that no external events (power) can interfere with it.
- (b) **External Locus of Control.** Person having dominant external locus of control believe that what happen to them is controlled by outside forces such as luck or chance. These types of people lack initiative, decision-making and do not even take calculated risk. They wait and see events take place and things happen.

PERSONALITY ORIENTATION

1. Achievement Orientation

Achievement orientation of an individual also indicates the personality of an individual. Every person possesses need to achieve (nAch) phenomenon in his personality. It could be high degree nAch or low degree. A person who possesses high nAch displays very dominant personality. He is generally very ambitious, hard working and fixes his goal at a very high level and strives to achieve the same. He is achievement oriented and undertakes a task which is neither easy, because easy task is generally attained by a common person nor a very challenging or tough task because there would be chances of failure of achieving the same. He therefore prefers to undertake task of intermediate nature so that its achievement would satisfy him to a large extent and he would feel that he is above than the normal individual. People having high nAch are found to be good organizers, efficient managers. Sports persons are generally high achievers as they strive to achieve that extra point or mark than his competitors. High nAch generally do well as sale persons as it calls for hard work and achieving higher targets of sales every time.

2. Authoritarianism

Close to the personality trait that a person possesses who is achievement oriented is a person who believes in having a reasonably high authority in the organization Theory of

authoritarianism is related with status and power. The theory states that there should be status and power difference between various people in the organization. While there would be some people who will have more power and authority hence more authoritative yet there would be people with low power and authority hence minimum degree of being authoritative. One would therefore find in an organization, people with low authority and high authority. Person who possesses high authoritarian is intellectually rigid, they display varied behaviour patterns. They are submissive with those who are superior (senior) to them and behave in an exploitative manner to those who are subordinates or below them. They resist change and display insensitivity while dealing with people. They are task oriented.

3. Theory of Machivellianism

Niccolo Machivelli introduced theory of Machivellianism. The theory refers to degree to which an individual is pragmatic and maintains emotional distance with co-workers while accomplishing any task. A person who practices this theory believes in “end justifies means.” In any organization people can be classified as having high Machivellianism or low Machivellianism tendencies. A person having High Machivellianism (H Mach) generally displays variety of personality traits like manipulation, win more, persuade others to do a work while they do not get persuaded by others. They generally flourish in face-to-face situation where there are minimum rules and have enough space for maneuver. They have high bargaining skills and believe in giving substantial rewards to their subordinates on accomplishment of tasks. They are highly productive. Machivelli believed in one doctrine, that a work must be finished whatever be the means.

4. Self-Esteem

Self-esteem refers to individuals’ degree of liking or disliking himself. People’s self-esteem has to do with their self-perceived competence and self-image. Most recent studies indicate that self-esteem plays an important moderating role in areas such as emotional and behavioural responses and stress of organizational members. As was recently noted, “Both research and every day experience confirm that employees with high self-esteem feel unique, competent, secure, empowered and connected to the people around them (Luthans)². People having high degree of self-esteem take more risk in job selection and take up unconventional assignments while those possessing low self-esteem display dependency, seek approval from others for the decision they make, respect others and seek confirmation in beliefs. Managers with low self-esteem do not take unpopular stand, which may lead to displeasing others.

5. Self-Monitoring

Self-monitoring is related to self-efficacy. It is situation specific. A person must always examine efficiency and attribute it to his behaviour with subordinates and improve upon it. This quality displays high degree of adaptability and high sensitivity of an individual. A person possessing self monitoring trait is likely to behave differently in different situation.

6. Risk Taking

Risk taking trait is commonly seen in various entrepreneurs. They display rapid decision-making ability.

Types of Personality

Type A: People having Type A personality are always moving, walking and eating rapidly. They feel impatient with the speed the events take place. They always strive to do two or three things at any one time and cannot cope with leisure. They are generally obsessed with work involved with numbers.

Type B: People possessing Type B personality never suffer from sense of urgency and take things as they come coolly. They do not discuss achievement and leave it to the superiors to identify it. People having B type of personality play for fun and relaxation rather than to show off. These people have the tendency to relax without guilt.

Studies indicating personality traits of Indian Managers

Individual's behaviour is influenced by various factors studied earlier. Behaviour has an impact on how an individual acts and interacts with superiors and subordinates in the work environment. Various studies have been conducted in this field.

Dwivedi Study

R.S. Dwivedi has carried out study of 52 managers in public and private sector organizations. Findings indicate that managers give high importance to the following traits:

- Cooperation.
- Intelligence.
- Energy.
- Sociability.

Low importance was assigned to the following personality traits:

- Aggressive.
- Confronting.
- Independent.

Flexibility, preserving and self-monitoring has been accorded moderate importance. The co-relation co-efficient between managers of public sector and private sector accounted for as high as 90. Saiyadain and Monappa carried out studies to identify personality traits of middle level managers from public sector and private sector organization (N = 172). The respondents represented major functional areas of respective organizations. Results, first an Authoritarian and Machiavellianism traits indicated an equal distribution. Secondly, above two third of the managers scored higher than average on competence need for achievement (NAch) traits.

SUMMARY

It is difficult to identify one's personality because individual behaviour is complex and construct multidimensional. Personality of a human being can be determined by identifying stable characteristics of an individual. Personality can be influenced by environmental factors and situation under which an individual is working. Heredity has an influence on individual's physical appearance, facial attractiveness, sex, temperament and reflects. These factors have a deciding influence on individual behaviour in the organization. Individual behaviour is shaped as per the environment he is brought up. Cultural background, socio-

economic conditions, parents profession are some of the factors responsible for individual personality. Every individual possesses various personality traits. Locus of control could be internal or external. People who feel, they can decide their own fate are internal and those who believe that luck, opportunity and other external factors are responsible for their future are externals. Every individual behaviour display personality traits, Locus of control, authoritarianism, self-esteem and self-monitoring aptitude. Individuals can possess A Type or B Type personality. Indian managers believe more on competence and achievement orientation traits as most important.

TEXT QUESTIONS

- Q. 1 Define personality?
- Q. 2 What are major personality determinants?
- Q. 3 What are various personality traits that are generally found in each individual?
- Q. 4 Discuss Locus of control
- Q. 5 What are various factors that shape individuals personality?
- Q. 6 How an employee likely to behave who has external Locus of control, Low Mach Low Self-esteem score?
- Q. 7 Write short notes on the following
 - (a) Type A and B personality.
 - (b) Authoritarianism.
 - (c) MBTI model.

REFERENCES

1. Cattell R.B. *“Personality Pinned Down”*, Psychology Today, July 1973.
2. Luthans Fred, *“Organizational Behaviour”*, International Edition 1995, Mc Graw Hills.

Case

HAZARDS OF HILLS

INTRODUCTION

This case is based on an actual incident which took place in an Army Unit deployed in field area. A part of a Battery (about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an Artillery Regiment) was deployed in a snow bound high altitude area of Kashmir. This was the first time, an artillery unit was deployed in an area with roads and tracks still under development. Preparation of this area for such a deployment needed a lot of digging for guns, pits for ammunition storage, living place of the personnel, slit trenches and weapon pits for local defence against any possible enemy/terrorists' attack on the position, place for storage of rations, cook-house and communication trenches, etc.

The total strength of the party deployed there was

- (a) Officer – 1 (second Lieutenant with about one year service)
- (b) Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) - 1
- (c) Jawans - 40

The Battery Commander (BC) remained with the Regiment Headquarters at Srinagar (with the remaining part of the Battery) as per the orders of the commanding Officer. There was a vehicle with the part of the Battery which was deployed at high altitude to assist in the daily administration of the troops like collection of ration, stores for preparation of defences, water, ferrying of personnel from one place to another. The vehicle could go only upto a limited number of places due to bad road conditions and steep gradients. Only one driver was kept for this vehicle to reduce administrative problems due to more number of personnel. The vehicle completed about 35 to 40 kms. of running daily in its routine commitments.

The party had just been inducted about two weeks back. The defences were being prepared which involved lot of effort in digging of hardened ground due to the cold winter months of November. The defence stores were to be collected, once the digging was complete, from another Engineering Unit located about 5 kms. to the rear. The roads were treacherous; with a number of stones and slides falling down occasionally during a drizzle due to precipitation in atmosphere, there were steep gradients, narrow roads with sheer falls on one side due to the road having been cut into the side of hills. The digging was complete by end November. In the month of December, snow fall at that location was expected any time, as it had already started snowing in the higher reaches and tops of mountains. The digging had been completed in a record time of two weeks. The party under the stewardship of the young officer had done a commendable job.

In the first week of December, the only driver of the vehicle reported pain in the chest and problem in breathing. He was evacuated by helicopter the next day with instructions to inform the unit to sent another driver for the vehicle. It took about three days for any one to reach this area, with staying of two nights enroute in order to acclimatize by stages. The detachment was to be without any driver for about three days. Another driver was detailed to proceed to this area, after having been medically examined and found fit. A day after the dispatch of the driver, the young officer with this party arrived in the unit and reported that the vehicle had fallen from a hill-side road and was completely damaged. The officer was in a complete state of disarray and shock. What actually had happened, goes something like this.

After the first driver of the vehicle was evacuated, the weather started turning bad and it seemed that it was going to snow that day. The officer realized that in case of snow fall all the efforts put in by the troops would go waste, if the dug-ins were not covered. Realizing this, he borrowed a driver of an ambulance from a local medical unit to direct his vehicle for collection of defence stores. After the stores had been collected and dumped at the site of defences, the vehicle was being driven back to the party's location. Before it could reach this location, it had to negotiate a dusty and steep track. At a steep climb the vehicle stalled and got switched off. All the men got down, prevented the vehicle from reversing by putting stones behind the wheels and started checking what had gone wrong.

After the check on the engine had been carried out, the bonnet cover slipped off the hands of the driver while closing it and fell to closing position with a bang. Because of the jerk thus created, the stones placed behind the vehicle slipped off. It was later discovered that there was glassy smooth layer of ice under the thin layer of dirt which could not hold the stones firmly and they slipped off, with the result, that the vehicle moved backwards and toppled thrice and stopped upside down because of the obstruction created by a big

boulder. As there was no one in the vehicle, there were no injuries to personnel. On close inspection by the officer, it was found that the vehicle body, cabin, bonnet, steering wheel and two of the four wheels were badly damaged. The officer, being quite young and inexperienced, could not ascertain the real condition of the engine and chassis. He thought those too were damaged, whereas, because of some providential chance, the chassis and engine remained intact.

The BC was given the responsibility of getting the vehicle back to the unit. He was given a vehicle fitter and recovery vehicle with a driver. The BC took two more Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and proceeded to the location to retrieve the vehicle. It took two days to reach with a few hours of the last leg of the journey in complete darkness in that snow bound area with treacherous slippery roads. On reaching the location, the Commanding Officer of the local unit, who happened to be the Station Commander of that sector, expressed his happiness on their taking such a great risk. With the assistance of all ranks of that unit, who came in willingly, it took two days to get the vehicle out of the boulder strewn area on to a track. It was a minor military operation in 'itself' in that hostile terrain, and inclement weather of high altitude. The troops and officer had a very good rapport with those of the local unit and there was not much of a problem in getting the men of that unit to assist.

While coming back, the hazards of night journey were very obvious. There was a thick layer of snow on the road with slope towards the khuds as layers after layers kept on accumulating, freezing before the water could roll down the complete slope. There were steep falls on one side. Both these phenomena, peculiar to hilly terrain, were not very discernible because of the darkness. The headlights of the vehicles exposed very little. There were frozen nalas where the vehicle would skid, aligning itself in the direction of the frozen nala, which tended to prove quite dangerous at times. At such places, the few troops and officer available would get down, push the vehicle to keep it aligned to the road and in turn slip down themselves on the frozen snow, most of the times face-down, in an attempt to push the vehicle. Though the situation was quite grave, it sometimes bordered on being humorous with everyone laughing spontaneously. At one place, the BC, pushing the vehicle to keep its tail and aligned to the direction of road, fell down, slipped a few feet down in the frozen nala and landed up head down in a frozen khud about five feet deep. But for the direction of landing, the slip and fall could have proved quite dangerous. There was complete silence. The vehicle was gently stopped on the snow itself, secured with pegs along the wheels and rescue operation commenced for the ditch. There were several humorous remarks by the BC and the tension was relieved at once, with troops working on the vehicle with renewed vigour and strength once again.

At another place, the recovery vehicle with the damaged vehicle behind it at suspension toe slipped, but because of the dexterity of the driver, it was saved from going down a nala by putting it on the left. The BC himself was in the recovery vehicle to give encouragement and moral support to the diver, sharing all the risks which his troops were facing. He did all that the troops did, while directing, controlling and executing. The party with vehicle, reached the unit location on the evening of the second day starting from the high altitude area. The problem of recovery of the vehicle being resolved. The question of enquiry into the cause of accident arose. An enquiry into such an accident would have caused embarrassment to all those in authority in the unit and also the officers and jawans of the

sub-unit/battery. Meanwhile, the inspection of the vehicle was carried out to assess the extent of damage. It was found that the engine and chassis were intact and the rest of the items of the body or fitment were damaged, either lightly or severely. To avoid embarrassment to the unit and loss to the exchequer, as well as in view of the administrative difficulties, the BC decided to have the vehicle put on road with the units' efforts and at the earliest. Meanwhile, the cabin-hood of the vehicle had been purchased for about Rs. 650 and was paid for by the BC, from his own pocket, thus setting an example to others. The JCO and jawans were also keen to pay for other damages. The offer was appreciated but declined.

The Officer-in-charge of the local Army Workshop happened to be an officer with commendable helping attitude, positive bent of mind and with an understanding of peculiarities and problems of the area where such accidents were quite frequent and possible. When approached to assist, he listened to the whole incident very sympathetically and promised to assist in whatever way he could. This officer was a contemporary of the unit in a previous station and had excellent relations and interaction with the unit. Some items were offered by the workshop officer and replaced accordingly. The vehicle was made road-worthy again within a fortnight and put on road for duty. All the enquiries were dispensed with and there was no loss of face by face by anyone at any level. It is pertinent to mention that it had snowed in that location as soon as the recovery party came out of the hills.

QUESTION

1. What are the qualities of a good leader? In this case, how were they applied?
2. Which factors contributed to motivate the troops to go ahead for such a difficult task as recovering a damaged vehicle from such a difficult and treacherous terrain and getting it repaired in such a short time?
3. Which incidents indicate the importance of good interpersonal relationship with juniors, peers and superiors and what is the importance of good interpersonal relationships?

This case has been adopted from "Case Method in Management Education – Text and Illustrations edited by Upinder Dhar & Santosh Dhar, Excel Books, A-45 Naraina, Phase-I, New Delhi, 2002.

EXERCISE TO DETERMINE PERSONALITY

Type A - Type B Self – Test

To determine your Type A or Type B profile, circle the number on the continuums (the verbal descriptions represent end points) that best represents your behaviour for each dimension.

Am causal about appointments	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Am never late
Am not competitive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Am very competitive
Never feel rushed, even under	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Always feel rushed pressure
Take things one at a time	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Try to do many things At once; think about what I am going to do next
Do things slowly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Do things fast (eating, walking, etc.)
Express feelings	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	“Sit” on feelings.
Express many interests	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Have few interests outside work.
Total your score: _____ Multiply it by 3: _____. The interpretation of your score is as follows:		

Number of points	Type of personality
Less than 90	
90 to 99	B
100 to 105	B+
106 to 119	A-
120 or more	A+

Source: Adapted from R.W. Bortner, “A Short Rating Scale as a Potential Measure of Pattern A Behaviour”, *Journal of Chronic Diseases*, Vol. 22, 1966, pp. 87-91.

LOCUS OF CONTROL – QUESTIONNAIRE

Want to test your locus of control? Just answer the 16 questions given below as frankly as possible using the following response scale.

1 = Disagree very much
2 = Disagree moderately
3 = Disagree slightly

4 = Agree slightly
5 = Agree moderately
6 = Agree very much

1	_____	A job is what you make of it.
2	_____	On most jobs, people can pretty much accomplish whatever they set out to accomplish.
3	_____	If you know what you want out of a job, you can find a job that gives it to you satisfaction.
4	_____	If employees are unhappy with a decision made by their boss, they should do something about it.

5	_____	Getting the job you want is mostly a matter of luck.
6	_____	Making money is primarily a matter of good fortune.
7	_____	In order to get a capable of doing their jobs well if they make the effort.
8	_____	In order to get a really good job you need to have family members or friends in high places.
9	_____	Promotions are usually a matter of good fortune.
10	_____	When it comes a landing a really good job, who you know is more important than what you know.
11	_____	Promotions are given to employees who perform well on the job.
12	_____	To make a lot of money you have to know the right people.
13	_____	It takes a lot of luck to be an outstanding employee on most jobs.
14	_____	People who perform their jobs well generally get rewarded for it.
15	_____	Most employees have more influence on their supervisors than they think they do.
16	_____	The main difference between people who make a lot of money and people who make a little money is luck.

SCORING AND INTERPRETATION

You have just completed the Work Locus of Control Scale developed by Spector (1988). To find your score, subtract your responses to questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 11, 14 and 15 from seven. For example, if you gave a response of 3 to question 1, give yourself a 4 (7 minus 3). Then add up your resulting scores to all 16 items. Your total should be somewhere between 16 and 96. The lower your score the more internal you are – you see what happens to you to be a result of your own actions and initiative. The higher your score, the more external you are – you see what happens to you to be a result of luck, chance, or connections. The average score of 1165 people in a variety of occupations was 38. Thus, these people tended to see themselves as somewhat more internal than external.