

INTRODUCTION

Organisation is a social system since it is basically an association of human beings. The major problem of modern organisations is how to maximise the contribution of people toward the organisational goals. Since human behaviour influences the contribution of people towards organisational goals, the managers must understand the way human beings behave. The study of human behaviour provides rich insights about people at work in all kinds of organisations and suggests how they may be motivated to work together more productively. It represents behavioural approach to management as it is concerned with a systematic analysis and understanding of human behaviour in organisation.

Individual behaviour means some concrete action by a person. For instance, how a teacher behaves in the class, reflects his behaviour. The behaviour of an individual is influenced by various factors. Some of the factors lie within himself, e.g., his instincts, personality, traits, internal feelings, etc., while some lie outside him comprising the external environment of which he is a part, e.g., other people's behaviour, weather conditions, working conditions, etc. That directly influence his behaviour. The environment acts as a stimulus and the person responds to it. The process of human behaviour may thus be regarded as a 'stimulus = response' (S - R) process. For example, the teacher is affected by student's behaviour and in turn affects their behaviour. This happens through interaction between them, and is subject to the environment in which they interact. Thus, individual behaviour is not a self-induced phenomenon, but is affected largely by environment, e.g., group, family and the society within which one functions.

According to Kurt Lewin, human behaviour (B) is a function of both person (P) and environment (E).

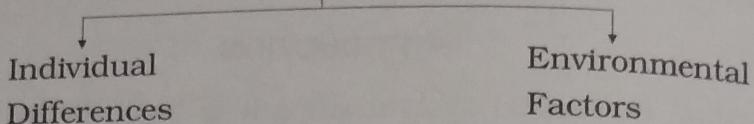
$$B = f(P \times E)$$

Thus, individual behaviour is determined by personal characteristics and the environment. For instance, the performance of a teacher in a classroom is affected by both the personal and environmental

characteristics. Personal or individual characteristics of a teacher include experience, age, background, etc., and environmental factors are physical facilities, students, etc.

The personal characteristics of an individual and his environment variables influence each other. They determine the behaviour collectively. The behaviour of two individuals may be totally different. This is because of individual differences or changes in the situational setting. Thus, to understand the complexity of individual behaviour, both the factors, i.e., individual differences and environmental factors must be taken into account.

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR



1. Individual Differences

Each person in the world is individually different. The idea of individual differences comes originally from psychology. From the day of birth, each person is unique and experiences after birth tend to make him even more different. The law of individual differences states that management can motivate employees by treating them individually. There can be no standard technique of dealing with all individuals. Thus, it can be said that:

- (a) Every individual may behave differently to the same stimulus under the given environment.
 - (b) A person may respond differently to a given stimulus under different environment.

This is because of individual differences among individuals. People differ in age, gender, attitudes, background, education, perception, intelligence value, physical features, etc. There may be many possible combinations of these characteristics. That is why all people do not act same when they are placed in the similar situations. For instance, in case of a riot, a teacher will try to cool down the mob, a policeman will try to control the mob, the leaders will try to excite the mob, etc. Therefore, it is essential to recognise individual differences while dealing with any problem related to human relations.

2. Environmental Factors

Behaviour of an individual is influenced by environmental variables to a great extent. These variables are possibility of rewards, relations with fellow workers, quality of working conditions, tools and machines, nature of supervision, etc. These environmental factors sometimes affect the individual behaviour. In such cases managers must try to modify the variables and make them more conducive for the individuals.

DETERMINANTS OF INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR

Behaviour is the result of interaction between individual characteristics and the characteristics of the environment in which the individual is

working. Each and every person is different from one other because everyone is having a unique combination of characteristics. Some of the characteristics are inherited from birth while others are learned over time. These personal and environmental characteristics serve as the foundation of human behaviour. The list of such factors are as follows :

Foundations of Individual Behaviour

<i>The Person</i>		<i>The Environment</i>	
I. Personal Biographical Factors : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender 2. Age 3. Education 4. Ability 5. Marital status II. Psychological Factors : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personality 2. Perception 3. Attitudes 4. Values 5. Learning 		III. General Environmental Factors : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic conditions 2. Political situations 3. Cultural values 	
		IV. Organisational Factors : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical Facilities 2. Organisational structure and design 3. Leadership styles 4. Reward system 	

I. Personal Biographical Factors

1. *Gender* : There are no consistent male-female differences in problem solving ability, motivation, learning ability, sociability or analytical skills. It is found in psychological studies that women are more willing to conform the authority and men are more aggressive and more willing for success. But these differences are minor. Thus, it can be said that there is no significant difference between men and women in job productivity.

2. *Age* : Age has an important impact on performance, turnover, absenteeism and satisfaction. The performance of an employee tends to decline, with an increase in age. The possibility of moving from one job to another and from one place to another declines with an increase in age. People are less likely to quit the jobs in older age. The absenteeism rate among the aged is likely to be higher mainly due to poor health. With an advancement in age the productivity of a person also declines.

3. *Education* : Education has its effect on individual behaviour largely depends on the level and type of education. When an individual has higher education, the possibility of his positive attitude increases. He will search for more satisfying job and higher income level. Education can be divided into two :

(a) *General* : General includes areas like arts, humanities and social sciences. These expose individual to a broad range of subjects designed to enhance an overall understanding of concepts and issues.

(b) *Specific* : It covers disciplines such as engineering, medicine, computer science, etc. These programmes tend to be relatively narrow and focused.

4. Ability : Everyone has strengths and weaknesses in terms of abilities that makes him or her relatively superior or inferior to others in performing certain tasks or activities. The manager has to use these knowledge to increase the likelihood that an employee will perform his or her job well.

Abilities can be subdivided as :

(a) *Intellectual Abilities* : Intellectual abilities are the abilities which are related to the knowledge of an individual. These abilities are needed for the following activities :

- (i) for thinking,
- (ii) reasoning and problems solving,
- (iii) for speedy and accurate calculations,
- (iv) for identifying logical sequence etc.

(b) *Physical Abilities* : This ability is related to physical capacities of the individual. These abilities are required for less skilled and more standardized jobs. This ability is suitable for the jobs which need the following physical capabilities :

- (i) Stamina,
- (ii) Manual Dexterity,
- (iii) Leg strength,
- (iv) Concentration etc.

5. *Marital status* : Marital status can be divided into two—married and unmarried. Married employees are more consistent in their jobs as compared to unmarried employees. The chances of job switch, absenteeism are lower in married employees. Flexibility of working hours is more in unmarried employees.

II. Psychological Factors

1. *Personality* : Personality is not only the external look of a person, it includes the growth and development of a person's whole psychological system. Personality of an individual is both inherited and developed. It is relatively stable. According to Robbins and Judge, "Personality is the sum total of ways in which an individual reacts to and interacts with others. It is most often described in terms of measurable traits that a person exhibits."

2. *Perception* : According to McShane and Glinow, "Perception is the process of receiving information about and making sense of world around us. It entails which information to notice, how to categorize this information, and how to interpret it within the framework of our existing knowledge." It is found in the studies that every person perceives the world differently. It can be explained with the help of an example that we purchase what we feel the best and it does not matter whether it is best. That means we see the world as we want to see. The facts seen by one person may be different from the views of another person. It is important for a manager to understand the perception of employees. Because a manager's response may be misinterpreted by a subordinate who perceives the situation quite differently.

3. *Attitudes* : Attitudes mean beliefs, feelings and action tendencies of an individual or group of individuals towards objects, ideas and people.

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Quite often persons and object or ideas become associated in the minds of individuals and as a result of attitudes become multidimensional and complex.

4. *Values* : Values are stable, evaluative beliefs that guide our preferences for outcomes or courses of action in a variety of situations. They represent what we want, they state what we ought to do—socially desirable ways to achieve our needs. They influence our choice of goals and the means for achieving those goals.

5. *Learning* : According to E.R. Hilgard, "Learning is any relatively permanent change in behaviour that occurs as a result of experience." That means learning is a change in behaviour of a person. That change is relatively permanent. Temporary changes do not represent learning. Learning occurs after having some experiences. Learning can be bad and good both. Learning bad habits is an example of it.

III. General Environmental Factors

1. *Economic conditions* : Economic factors affect the individual behaviour a lot. Economic factors include wage rates, chances of promotion, technological change, etc. Wage rates have a considerable effect on the individual behaviour. If the employee is getting reasonable wages, he will get more job satisfaction. All other factors have also major effect on an individual's level of job satisfaction.

2. *Political situations* : Stable political situations enhances the efficiency of an individual behaviour whereas unstable political environment reduces the chances of attracting investment and in result it reduces the employment opportunities.

3. *Cultural values* : Cultural values are made up of beliefs, values, preferences and behaviour of a society. Culture varies from country to country and these variations result in different behaviours across countries.

IV. Organisational Factors

1. *Physical Facilities* : Individual behaviour is influenced by the physical facilities. Physical facilities include lighting, water, air, space, etc. If there is proper lighting in the organisation, there will be positive impact on individual's behaviour.

2. *Organisational Structure and Design* : The behaviour and performance of an individual is influenced by different groups and departments in the organisation. This is also affected by the reporting relationships and lines of communication established among different positions in the organisation.

3. *Leadership Style* : Individual members are directed, assisted, advised and guided by the leaders. Therefore, leaders have also an impact on individual's behaviour.

4. *Reward Systems* : Rewards enhances the performance of an individual. Rewards include financial as well as non-financial rewards.