

Chapter 3: Perception and Attribution in Organizational Behavior

Perception and attribution play a vital role in how individuals interpret and react to their work environment. They influence decision-making, conflict resolution, and interpersonal relationships in organizations.

1. Perception

Perception is the process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their environment.

- Factors Influencing Perception:

- a) Perceiver: Attitudes, motives, interests, experience
- b) Target: Characteristics of the person or object being observed
- c) Situation: Context in which perception occurs

- Perceptual Process:

- 1. Selection
- 2. Organization
- 3. Interpretation

2. Perceptual Errors and Biases

- Stereotyping: Judging someone based on group membership
- Halo Effect: Basing overall impression on one trait

- Selective Perception: Seeing what one wants to see
- Contrast Effect: Evaluation based on comparison with others
- Projection: Attributing one's own traits to others

3. Attribution Theory

Attribution is the process of explaining the causes of behavior and events.

- Internal Attribution: Behavior due to personal traits or efforts
- External Attribution: Behavior due to situational factors
- Attribution Process (Kelley's Model):
 - a) Consensus - Do others behave similarly?
 - b) Consistency - Does the person behave this way over time?
 - c) Distinctiveness - Does the person behave differently in different situations?
- Fundamental Attribution Error:

Overemphasis on internal causes and underestimation of external factors.
- Self-Serving Bias:

Attributing success to internal factors and failure to external ones.

4. Implications for Managers

- Be aware of perceptual biases in performance evaluations
- Avoid stereotyping in recruitment and team assignments

- Train employees in cultural sensitivity and fairness
- Use structured assessments to reduce bias

5. Improving Perception and Attribution

- Encourage feedback and open communication
- Promote empathy and active listening
- Conduct diversity and bias-awareness training
- Support inclusive decision-making

Multiple-Choice Questions:

1. The process by which individuals give meaning to their environment is called:

- a) Attribution
- b) Interpretation
- c) Perception
- d) Motivation

2. Judging someone based on a group stereotype is an example of:

- a) Selective perception
- b) Stereotyping
- c) Projection
- d) Contrast effect

3. According to attribution theory, if a person consistently arrives late but no one else does, this shows:

- a) High consensus
- b) Low distinctiveness
- c) Low consensus
- d) High consistency

4. Attributing one's success to effort and failure to external causes is known as:

- a) Self-fulfilling prophecy
- b) Halo effect
- c) Self-serving bias
- d) Fundamental attribution error

5. The tendency to underestimate situational factors in explaining others' behavior is:

- a) Selective perception
- b) Projection
- c) Fundamental attribution error
- d) Contrast effect