1.5 ATTITUDES

Attitudes are understood as the beliefs, feelings and action tendencies of an individual or group of individuals towards objects, ideas and people. This simple meaning has important implications for managers.

- Attitudes are learned. How attitudes are learned will be explained in the next section in this chapter.

- Attitudes refer to feelings and beliefs of an individual or groups of people.

- These feelings and beliefs define one's predispositions towards given aspects of the world.

- Attitudes endure, unless something happens. For example if X is transferred to day shift, his attitude may become positive.

- Attitudes can fall anywhere along a continuum for very favourable to very unfavourable. Such expressions as "This B-school is good", "This leader is corrupt and incompetent" are heard from people.

- Attitudes are organized and are core to an individual.

- All people, irrespective of their status or intelligence, hold attitudes.

A few definitions on the concept of attitude are as follows:

"An attitude is mental state of readiness, learned and organised through experience, exerting a specific influence on person's response to people, object and situations with which it is related."

"Attitudes are learned predispositions towards aspects of our environment. They may be positively or negatively directed towards certain people, service or institutions."

"By attitudes we mean the beliefs, feelings, and action tendencies of an individual or group of individuals towards objects, ideas, and people. Quite often persons and objects or ideas become associated in the minds of individuals and as a result of attitudes become multidimensional and complex."

Are prejudices attitudes? The answer is in the affirmative. An attitude may involve a prejudice, in which we prejudge an issue without giving unbiased considerations to all the evidence. If we are prejudiced against a person, who is accused of a crime, we may regard him as guilty regardless of the evidence. We can also be prejudiced in favour of something.

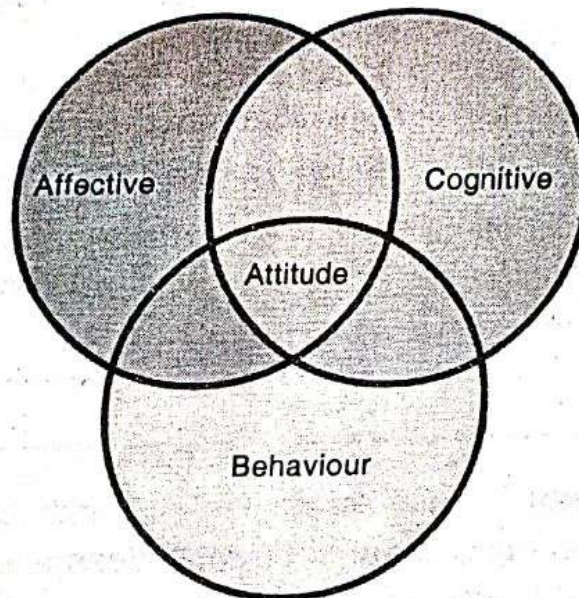In general, attitudes comprise three elements. They are: (See Fig 1.37)

Fig. 1.37: Three Components of Attitudes

- An *affective* componentv — the feelings, sentiments, moods and ernotions about some idea, person, event or object;

- A *cognitive* element — the beliefs, opinion, knowledge, or information held by the individual; and

- A *behavioural* component — the predispositions to get on a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of something.

These three components do not exist or function separately. An attitude represents the interplay of a person's affective, cognitive and behavioural tendencies with regard to a person, group, an event or an issue. For example, suppose that an individual holds a strong, negative attitude about the use of nuclear power. During an employment interview with the representative of a large firm, he discovers that the company is a major supplier of nuclear power generation equipment. He might feel a sudden intense dislike for the company's interviewer (the affective component). He might form a negative opinion of the interviewer based on beliefs and opinions about the types of person who would work for such a company (the cognitive component). An important element of cognition is the evaluative beliefs held by a person. He might be tempted to make an unkind remark to the interviewer or suddenly terminate the interview (the behavioural component).

1.8 PERSONALITY THEORIES AND METHODS OF MEASUREMENT

Generally, personality refers to the set of traits and behaviours that characterise an individual. A more comprehensive meaning of personality is that it refers to the relatively stable pattern of behaviour and consistent internal state and explains a person's behavioural tendencies.

The following elements should form the meaning of personality:

1. Personality has both internal and external elements. The external traits are the observable behaviours that we notice in an individual's personality, for example, sociability. The internal states represent the thoughts, values and genetic characteristics that we infer from the observable behaviours.

2. An individual's personality is relatively stable. If it changes at all, it is only after a very long time or as the result of traumatic events.

3. An individual's personality is both inherited as well as shaped by the environment. Our personality is partly inherited genetically from our parents.

However, these genetic personality characteristics are altered some-what by life experiences.

4. Each individual is unique in behaviour. There are striking differences among individuals.

All these elements can be noticed in Azim Premji, as seen in the opening case.

Thus, personality refers to the sum total of internal and external traits of an individual, which are relatively stable and which make the individual different from others.

Myers-briggs Indicator

During the 1920s, the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung proposed a personality theory that, as stated earlier, identifies the way people prefer to perceive their environment. Twenty years later, the mother and daughter team of Katherine Briggs and Isable Briggs-Myers developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a personality test that measures each of the traits of Jung's model.

Mainly used in the employee hiring process, MBTI measures how people prefer to focus their attention (extroversion versus introversion), collect information (sensing versus intuition), process and evaluate information (thinking versus feeling), and orient themselves to the other world (judging versus perceiving). Extroversion and introversion have been discussed in the earlier section. The other dimensions are examined below.

Sensitivity/intuition Some people like collecting information. Sensing types use an organized structure to acquire factual and, preferably, quantitative details. In contrast, intuitive people collect information non-systematically. They rely more on subjective evidence, as well as on their intuition, and even inspiration. Sensors are capable of synthesizing large volumes of data and draw quick conclusions. Needless it is to say, the work of management demands a combination of intuitive and sensing abilities. (Read Exhibit 1.11 for more details).

EXHIBIT 1-11 RIGHT-SIDE EINSTEIN

Intuition, the ability to understand something immediately without the need for conscious reasoning, has become the most soughtafter skill in firms across the world. Call it gut-feel, hunch, intuition or right-side reasoning, intuition is what the world's best CEOs have.

CEOs are required to make decisions involving crores of rupees quickly, in a matter of hours and days, not in weeks or months. This is necessary because of the changes taking place around with speed.

Intuition is no mumbo-jumbo, or even an inspired ability to make decisions. What goes by the name of gut feeling is nothing but the product of years and years of accumulated learning, experience, and wisdom. And while a hunch may develop in a matter of minutes, the brain-using both the left and right sides — has done some super-fast analysis, drawing upon previous experiences and knowledge that may be resident in the subconscious.

Therefore, when a CEO like the late Dhirubhai Ambani of Reliance bets on global capacities, or (late) Parvinder Singh bets the company on going global, he is typically displaying a deep understanding of industry behaviour.

Only now, intuition is being turned into a science for the benefit of managers down the line because business complexity isn't restricted to strategy alone; it has moved to everyday tactics too. The result: outfits such as Intuita are doing brisk business. Intuita for example, opened shops in India barely nine months ago, but has already trained 100 executives from a range of companies including Ranbaxy, Siemens, Reliance, Bechtel, O&M, Birla Soft, GE Capital and Aptech, among others. Says Malvai of Intuita: 'The very purpose of intuitive workshops is to make people realize that they have an intuition and that they should trust their intuition through insight-opening' tools, and create breakthroughs in their work and life.'

Rajeev Chaba, VP(Markefing), General Motors India, although no student of Malvai, couldn't agree more. In April 1998, when special-event car editions in India were few and far between, Opel Astra launched 300 cars cashing in on the World Cup Soccer mania. This was Chaba's brainchild and admittedly 'purely instinctive'. Chaba faced stiff opposition from researchers and traditionalists who held that such an idea would never kick off in cricket-crazy India. But the GM man stuck to his guns and proved his cynics wrong. GM planned to sell 300 cars in two-to-three months, but all the cars were sold out in less than a month.

The recently-appointed Marketing Director of Bacardi Martini India, Jeff MacDonalds, too, claims to have relied on intuition to launch a leading fruit-based liquor in the U.K. last year. MacDonald was until recently incharge of the popular Bacardi Breezer brand, which had a basket of five fast moving flavours. However, Jeff intuitively decided to launch a sixth, cranberry flavour January last, despite the odds highlighted by research. Today, it is the top-selling flavour in the UK and already worth 100 million pounds.

Anshuman Magazine, Managing Director (South Asia), CB Richards Ellis, has a similar story to tell. Magazine relied on his gut feeling while zeroing in on 24-year-old Gaurav Kumar to head his firm's consultancy business a few years ago. The chosen candidate (prior to Kumar) defected to competition and Magazine had a tough time making a choice as the position fell vacant. Many came for the interview, but the MD persisted with Kumar. The choice was right. The consultancy business grew by 30 per cent subsequent to the hiring of Kumar.

Of course, for every intuitive decision that works, there are probably a thousand others that don't. Take Kumund Goel of Jaldi.com. He admits that the decision to launch Jaldi — an online shopping portal — was made in a hurry (hence the portal's name, which is in Hindi), because Goel felt the model would work. But three years since; he's proved terribly wrong. After bumping Rs 5 crore in investments, Jaldi.com folded up December last.

(*Source:* BusinessToday, 3 February, 2002)

Thinking/Feeling Thinking types rely on the rational cause-effect logic and scientific method to make decisions. They weigh the evidence objectively and unemotionally. Feeling types, instead, consider how their choices affect others. They weigh the options against their personal values more than on rational logic.

A good manager uses both mind (thinking) and heart (feeling). It is too wellknown that how one feels about a decision can determine the success of its implementation just as much as the logic of that decision. The realities of organisational life often evoke emotions that play a dominant role in a manager's behaviour. Fear of failure, fear of the laws, excitement about a product, compassion for an employee, anger at another person, and the like, are but examples of emotional forces that appear in the day-to-day life of a firm.

Judging/Percieving Some people prefer order and structure in their relationship with their outer world. These judging types enjoy the control of decision-making and want to resolve problems quickly. In contrast, perceiving types are more flexible. They like to adapt spontaneously to events as they unfold and want to keep their options open. To be effective as a manager, one needs to operate at times in perceiving mode and at times in a judging mode. The tensions that develop between 'Perceivers' and 'Judges' can be sources of conflict in organisations.

Besides employee-hiring, MBTI is used in team building too. As members of a team learn to understand and even appreciate differences among them, they are better able to build on complementary strengths and ways of dealing with problems. Intuitive types have the ability to make creative leaps on thinking, but often need the more sensing types to make sure all that facts are being considered. Similarly, perceivers will tend to engage in the endless exploration of alternatives and really need to be balanced by judging types, who are more inclined to move quickly to decisions. An effective team learns to build on these differences.

Other Personality Traits

There are many different personality traits, but some of the more important ones for organisational behaviour are authoritarianism, locus of control, Machiavellianism, introversion-extroversion, achievement orientation, self-esteem, risk-taking, self-monitoring and type A and type B Personalities. (See Fig. 1.56).
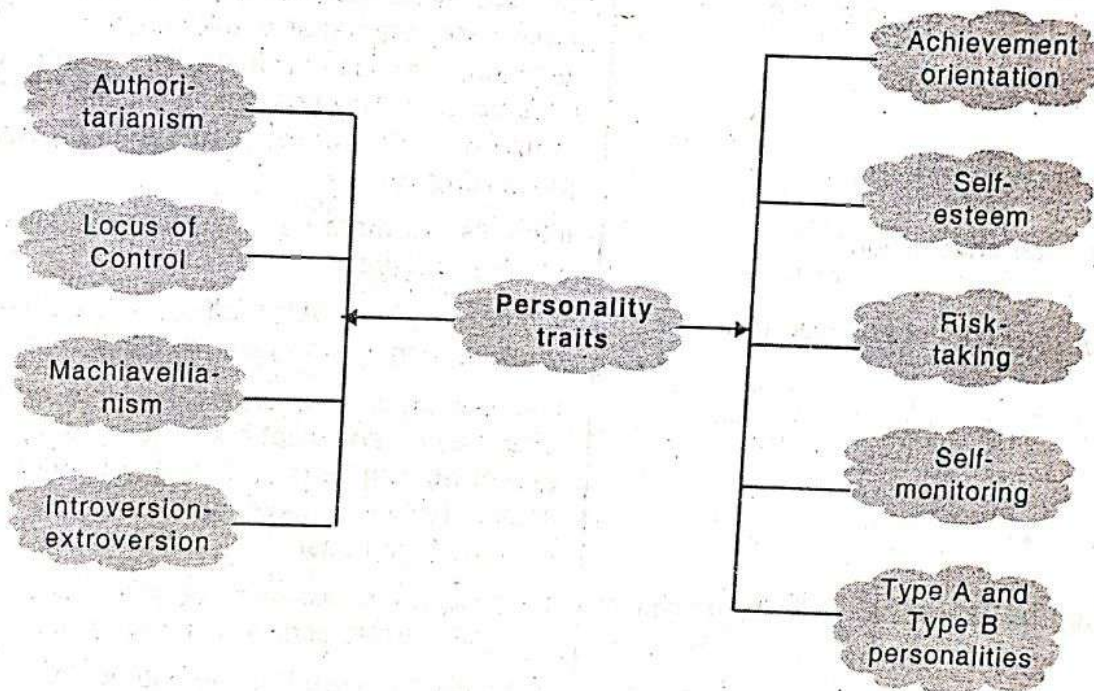

Fig. 1.56: Personality Traits

Authoritarianism Authoritarianism is a concept developed by the psychologist Adorno during World War II to measure susceptibility to autocratic, fascist, or anti-democratic appeals. Since that time, the concept has been extended to the authoritarian personality, a generic term used to describe an individual who has a strong belief in the legitimacy of established mechanisms of formal authority, views obedience to authority as necessary, exhibits a negative philosophy of people, adheres to conventional and traditional value systems, is intellectually rigid, and opposes the use of subjective feelings. Authoritarians also tend to be rigid in their positions, place high moral value on their beliefs, and are strongly oriented towards conformity to rules

and regulations. They naturally prefer stable and structured work environments which are governed by clean rules and procedures. Similarly, authoritarians are likely to prefer autocratic or directive leadership and would exhibit high respect for individuals in positions of authority.

Locus of Control Locus of control refers to an individual's belief that events are either with in one's control (internal locus of control) or are determined by forces beyond one's control (external locus of control). These personality traits are manifested in different behaviours which are significant to managers.

It has been proved that externals (those who believe that events are determined by external forces) are less satisfied with their jobs, have higher absenteeism rates, are more alienated from work settings, and are less involved on their jobs than internals (those who believe that events are within one's control). Internals typically have more control over their own behaviour, are more active in seeking information to make decisions, and are more active socially than externals.

Table 1.16 reveals the difference between internals and externals more clearly, and Table 1.17 shows the relationships between locus of control and job performance.

TABLE 1.16 : SOME WAYS IN WHICH INTERNALS DIFFER FROM EXTERNALS

Characteristics of Immaturity	Characteristics of Maturity
(i) Information processing:	Internals make more attempts to acquire information, are better at information retention, are less satisfied with the amount of information they possess, are better at utilizing information, and devising and processing rules.
(ii) Job satisfaction	Internals are more satisfied, less alienated, and less rootless.
(iii) Self-control and risk behaviour:	Internals exhibit greater self-control, are more cautious, engaged in less risky behaviour.
(iv) Expectations and results:	Internals are a stronger relationship between what they do and what happens to them, expect working hard leads to good performance, feel more control over how to spend time, perform better.
(v) Preference for skill versus chance:	Internals prefer skill-achievement outcomes, externals prefer chance achievements.
(vi) Use of rewards:	Internals are more likely to use personally persuasive rewards and power bases and less likely to use coercion.
(vii) Response to others:	Internals are more independent, more reliant on own judgement, and less susceptible to influence of others, they resist subtle influence attempts and are more likely to accept information on merit rather than prestige of source.
(viii) Leader behaviour:	Internals prefer participative leadership, externals prefer directive.

TABLE 1.17: LOCUS OF CONTROL AND PERFORMANCE

Conditions	Performance
Information processing	
• The work requires complex information processing	• Internals perform better and complex learning
• The work is quite simple and easy to learn	• Internals perform no better than externals
Initiative	
• The work requires initiative and independent action	• Internals perform better
• The work requires compliance and conformity	• Externals perform better
Motivation	
• The work requires high motivation and provides valued rewards in return for greater effort, incentive pay for greater productivity	• Internals perform better
• The work does not require great effort and contingent internals rewards are lacking, hourly pay rates determined by collective bargaining	• Externals perform at least as well as internals

(*Source:* Don Hellrigel, *et al. Organisational Behaviour*, South Western, 2001, p.45)

Machiavellianism Machiavellianism, a term derived from the writings of Nicolo Machiavelli, refers to individual's propensity to manipulate people. Machiavellians would be prone to participate in organisational politics. They are also adept at interpersonal game-playing, power tactics, and identifying influence systems in organisations.

Do the Machiavellians make good employees? The answer depends on the type of job and whether one considers ethical considerations in evaluating performance. In jobs that require bargaining skills (such as labour negotiation) or where there are substantial rewards for winning (commissioned sales), Machiavllians perform better.

Introversion and Extroversion These are the most common descriptions of personality traits. These terms are normally associated with an individual's sociability and interpersonal orientation. Extroverts are gregarious and sociable individuals while introverts are shy, quiet, and retiring.

It is generally established that introverts and extroverts have significantly different career orientations and require different organisational environments to maximize performance. Extroverts are more suitable for positions that require considerable interaction with others, whereas introverts are more inclined to excel at tasks that require thought and analytical skills. Not surprisingly, managerial positions are dominated by extroverts; thus suggesting that this managerial trait is a significant factor in managerial success.

Achievement Orientation Achievement orientation is yet another personality trait which varies among people and which can be used to predict certain behaviours.

Employees with a high need to achieve, continually strive to do things better. They want to overcome obstacles, but they want to feel that their success or failure is due to their own actions (read internals). This means that they like tasks of moderate difficulty. An easy task shall not evoke challenges and is, therefore, not liked by high achievers. Similarly, a task with high risk is not liked by these people as the failure rates are more. Given the high achievers propensity for tasks where the outcome can be directly attributed to his or her efforts, the high achiever looks for challenges having approximately a 50-50 chance of success.

On the job, high achievers will perform better where there is moderate difficulty, rapid performance feedback, and direct relationship between effort and reward. This means that the high achievers tend to do better in sales, sports, or in management.

Self-Esteem Self-esteem refers to the feeling of like or dislike of oneself. This trait, naturally, varies from person to person. Self-esteem is directly related to the desire for success. People with high self-esteem believe that they have abilities to undertake challenging jobs. They tend to choose unconventional jobs than those with lower self-esteem.

People with low self-esteem are more susceptible to external influence than are those with high esteems. Low esteems are dependent on the receipt of positive evaluations from others. As a result, they are more likely to seek approval from others and more prone to conform to the beliefs and behaviours of those they respect than are high esteems. In managerial positions, low esteems will tend to be concerned with pleasing others and therefore, less likely to take unpopular stands than are high esteems.

Self-esteem is also related to job satisfaction. High esteems are more satisfied with their jobs than the low esteems.

Risk-taking People differ in their willingness to take chances. Their propensity to assume or avoid risk has been shown to have an impact on how long it takes managers to make a decision and how much information they require before making their choice. For instance, 79 managers worked on simulated personnel exercises that required them to make hiring decisions. High risk-taking managers made more rapid decisions and used less information in making their choices than did low risk-taking managers. Interestingly, the decision accuracy was the same for both the groups.

While it is generally correct to conclude that managers in organisations are risk aversive, there are still individual differences on this dimension. As a result, it makes sense to recognize these differences and even to consider aligning risk-taking propensity with specific job demands. For instance, a high risk-taking propensity may lead to more effective performance for a stock trader in a brokerage firm. This type of job demands rapid decision-making. On the other hand, this personality characteristic might prove a major obstacle to accountants performing auditing activities. This type of job might be better filled by someone with a low risk-taking propensity.

Self-Monitoring Another personality trait that has recently received increased attention is called self-monitoring. It refers to an individual's ability to adjust his or her behaviour to external factors.

Individuals high in self-monitoring can show considerable adaptability in adjusting their behaviour to external, situational factors. They are highly sensitive to external cues and can behave differently in different situations. High self-monitors are capable of presenting striking contradictions between their public, personal, and private selves. Low self-monitors cannot deviate their behaviour. They tend to display their true dispositions and attitude in every situation, hence there is high behavioural consistency between who they are and what they do.

The high self-monitors tend to pay closer attention to the behaviour of others and are more capable of conforming than are low self-monitors. We might also hypothesize that high self-monitors will be more successful in managerial positions where individuals are required to play multiple, and even contradicting roles. The high self-monitor is capable of putting on different 'faces' for different audiences.

Type A personality Finally, there is the Type A personality and Type B personality.

Type A personality typifies a person who is always in a hurry, is extremely competitive, and is often hostile and irritable. Opposite is the Type B personality who is relaxed, incompetent, and easy going. Table 1.18 contracts the two types of behaviours.

TABLE 1.18: TYPE A AND TYPE B BEHAVIOURS	
Type A	**Type B**
1. Are always moving, walking, and eating rapidly;	1. Never suffer from a sense of time urgency with its accompanying impatience;
2. Feel impatient with the rate at which most events take place;	2. Feel no need to display or discuss either their achievements or accomplishments unless such exposure is demanded by the situation;
3. Strive to think or do two or more exhibit their superiority at any cost;	3. Play for fun and relaxation, rather than things at once;
4. Cannot cope with leisure;	4. Can relax without guilt.
5. Are obsessed with numbers, measuring their success in terms of how much of anything they acquire.	

How do the two perform in organisations? Type As are no doubt highly competitive and hardworking. But it is the Type Bs who climb to the top of the organisation.

Type As will make most successful salespeople and senior executives are usually type Bs. Why this paradox? The answer lies in the tendency of Type As to trade off quality of effort for quantity. Executive positions usually go to those who are wise rather than to those who are merely hasty, to those who are tactful rather than to those who are hostile, and to those who are creative rather than to those who are merely agile in competitive strife.

Understanding personalities is important because personality affects behaviour, as well as perception and attitudes. Personality types also affect human relations and retaliation. People with similar personality types tend to get along well at work, while opposites do not, though there are exceptions.

Personality profiles are used to categorize people as a means of predicting job performance. Some personality characteristics are more productive than others. Conscientiousness is a good indicator of performance, though it is not the only dimension. Many organisations administer personality tests to ensure a proper match between the worker and the job.

The concept of personality is not to be understood in an organisational context only. The need for understanding human characteristics, in general, is more significant than comprehending personality in the context of organisations. Despite serious attempts, experts have not been able to comprehend the real nature of personality. Of all the problems that have confronted human beings since the beginning of recorded history, perhaps the most significant has been the riddle of their own nature. Attempts to answer 'What is man'? are countless and a great many avenues have been explored, with an enormous variety of concepts being employed along the way. Astrology, philosophy, and the life sciences are but a few of the many directions that the quest to understand human nature has taken. At this point in history, some of these avenues have proved to be dead ends, while others are just beginning to flourish. And today, the problem is more pressing than ever, since most of the world's ills, for example, over-population, war pollution, prejudice are brought about by the behaviour of people. So it may not be overstating the case to say that the quality of human life in the future, indeed our own survival, may well depend upon an increased understanding of human nature.

1.4 PERCEPTION: MEANING AND DEFINITION

In simple terms, perception is understood as the act of seeing what is there to be seen. But what is seen is influenced by the individual, the object, and the situation. Any definition of perception should contain these three elements. Let us consider some popular definitions:

1. The study of perception is concerned with identifying the processes through which we interpret and organize sensory information to produce our conscious experience of objects and object relationship.

2. Perception is the process of receiving information about and making sense of the world around us. It involves deciding which information to notice, how to categorize this information, and how to interpret it within the framework of our existing knowledge.

3. Perception includes all those processes by which an individual receives information about the environment-seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. The study of these perceptual processes shows that their functioning is affected by three classes of variables:the objects or events being perceived, the environment in which perception occurs, and the individual doing the perceiving.

The last definition contains all the three elements of perception.

Situational factors
- Physical setting
- Social setting
- Organisational setting

Perceiver's characteristics
- Needs
- Experiences
- Values
- Attitudes
- Personality

Individual's perception

Characteristics of the perceived
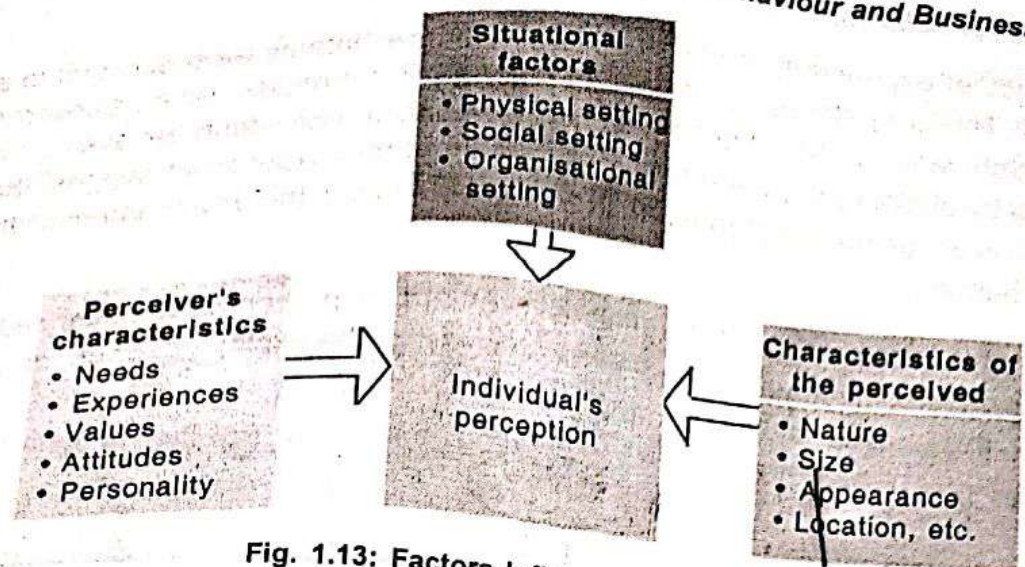- Nature
- Size
- Appearance
- Location, etc.

Fig. 1.13: Factors Influencing Perception

Perceptual Process

Perception is a process of receiving and interpreting stimuli. As shown in Fig. 1.14, the process involves a series of steps and the steps are explained in the paragraphs that follow.

Stimuli

External and Internal stimuli

Organising

Organism receives stimuli through five sensory organs, viz., tasting, smelling, seeing, hearing and touching

Selective Attention

External Factors	Internal Factors
Nature	Learning
Loaction	Needs
Size	Age
Contrast	Interest
Movement	
Ambivalence	
Repetition	Paranoid
Novelty & familiarity	perception

Ambiguous figures
Figure ground
Grouping
Constancy

Interpreting

Perceptual set
Attribution
Stereotyping
Halo effect
Defence
Projection

Response

Covert	Overt
Attitudes	Behaviour
Motivation	
Feeling	

Fig. 1.14: Perceptual Process

Shows that the perceptual process begins when stimuli are received through sensory organs. Most stimuli are screened out; the rest are organized and interpreted based on various information-processing activities. The outcomes of the process are covert and overt behaviours.

Receiving Stimuli

Living as we are in the world of objects, we are constantly bombarded with various stimuli. These stimuli enter our organism through the sensory organs – vision, hearing, smell, touch, taste, and kinaesthesis. Stimuli are received by us through these organs. Sensory organs perceive not only physical objects, they also perceive events or objects that have been repressed. We may not be enable to report the existence of certain stimuli, but our behaviour reveals that we are often subject to their influence. Similarly, stimuli need not be external to us. They may be internal also. Examples of external stimuli include light waves, sound waves, mechanical energy or pressure, and chemical energy from objects that one can smell and taste. Internal stimuli include energy generated by muscles, food passing through the digestive system, and glands secreting behaviour – influencing hormones. External or internal, human beings continue to receive stimuli. When deprived of sensory stimulation, people suffer from disorientation, confusion, and emotional disturbance, and are vulnerable to persuasion and pressure. Under these circumstances, people tend to engage in warding off depression by dwelling on past experiences.

Though stimuli may be external or internal to the organism, we focus on external stimuli in this chapter.

Selecting Stimuli

Not all the stimuli received by the human organism are accepted by it. Some stimuli are noticed and others are screened out. A girl may always need a transistor to be tuned on while she is reading or writing. She happily concentrates on her lessons even as the electronic device beside her blares film songs. A nurse working in a post-operative care might ignore the smell of recently disinfected instruments or the sounds of co-workers talking nearby. Yet a small flashing red light on the nurse station console is immediately noticed because it signals that a patient's vital signs are failing. The process of filtering information received by our senses is called *selecting stimuli* or *selective attention*. Several factors influence selective attention. Some of them are external and others are internal to the body.

External Factors Influencing Selection: The external factors influencing selection are nature, location, colour, size, contrast, repetition, motion, and novelty and familiarity.

Nature: By nature we mean whether the object is visual or auditory and whether it involves pictures, people, or animals. It is well known that pictures attract attention more readily than words, that a picture with human beings attracts attention more than a picture of inanimate objects alone, and that a rhyming auditory passage attracts attention more readily than the same passage presented as a narrative.

Location: The best location of a visual stimulus for attracting attention is directly in the front of the eyes and in the centre of a page. When this location is not possible

in a newspaper or a magazine, a position in the upper portion of a page is more favourable than one in the lower portion, and the left hand side receives more attention than the right hand side.

Colour: Colour is used to attract attention and portray realism. In a mass of black and white, a modicum of colour catches the eye. When colour is still a novelty, as with newspapers till recently, the addition of a cue, a single colour to an advertisement will enhance its attention-getting value.

Colour can be used to emphasize the attractive features of a product or to create a suitable atmosphere. High technology products such as cameras are usually produced in black or methylic finishes although some have been marketed with a less serious, more sporty image, in bright primary colours. Some products, such as cars, come in a variety of colours, but others such as toothpaste, are in a limited range of colours. It would be incongruous to use black toothpaste.

In the work environment, colour can be used to enhance lighting effects, for creating pleasant surroundings, and for putting across and reinforcing safety messages.

Colour has a psychological impact on an individual. It is well known that some colours act as a stimulant and others act as a depressant. A dark blue ceiling may appear to be refreshing to begin with, but after sometime the apparent coldness may become an irritant. Table1.7 brings out the effects of different of colours.

TABLE 1.7: THE EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT COLOURS			
Colour	Psychological Effect	Temperature Effect	Distance Effect
Violet	Aggressive and tiring	Cold	Very close
Blue	Restful	Cold	Further away
Brown	Exciting	Neutral	Claustrophobic
Green	Very restful	Cold/neutral	Further away
Yellow	Exciting	Very warm	Close
Orange	Exciting	Very warm	Very close
Red	Very stimulating	Warm	Close

(*Source:* Eugene McKenna, *op.cit.,* p.142)

Size: Generally, objects of larger size attract more attention than do smaller ones. The maintenance engineering staff may pay more attention to a big machine than to a small one, even though the smaller one costs as much and is as important to the operation.

A 6 foot 4 inch, 260 pound supervisor may receive more attention from his subordinates than a 5 foot 10 inch, 160 pound supervisor. In advertising, a full page spread attracts more attention than a few lines in the classified section.

Contrast: The contrast principle states that external stimuli which stand out against the background, or which are not what people are expecting, will receive their attention. Fig.1.15 illustrates this perceptual principle. The black circle on the right appears larger than the one on the left because of the background circles. In fact both black circles are of the same size. In a similar manner, plant safety signs which have

black lettering on a yellow background or white lettering on a red background are attention-drawers. Training managers utilize this factor in organising training programmes in places far away from workplaces to create contrast atmosphere.
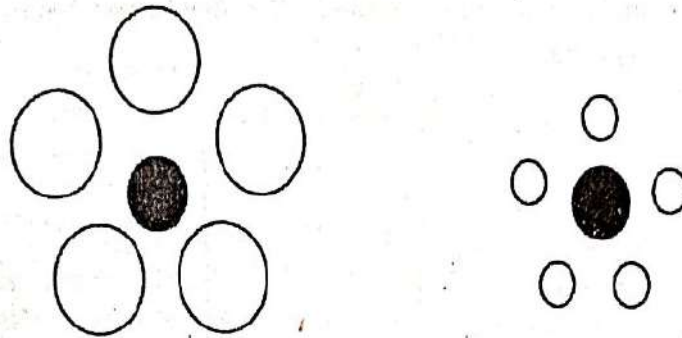

Fig. 1.15: The Contrast Principle of Perception

Movement: The principle of motion states that a moving object receives more attention than an object that is stationary. In a work environment the attention of a workman will be focused more on a conveyor belt than on paintings on walls or illumination. Advertisers capitalize on this principle by creating signs which incorporate moving parts.

Repetition: The repetition principle states that a repeated external stimulus is more attention-drawing than a non-repetitive one. The same advertisement of a product flashed daily on television is based on the principle of repetition. This principle also explains why supervisors have to give directions to workers over and over again for even simple tasks.

Novelty and Familiarity: The novelty and familiarity principle states that either a novel or a familiar external situation can serve as an attention getter. New objects in familiar settings or familiar objects in new settings will draw the attention of the perceiver. Job rotation is an example of this principle. Changing workers' jobs from time to time will tend to increase the attention they give to the task. Anything novel attracts attention fast, for example, humour, animation, and unusual graphics in an advertisement stand out and are noticed.

Internal Factors Influencing Selection: Internal factors influencing selection of stimuli include learning, psychological needs, age differences, interests, ambivalence, and paranoid perception. These factors relate to oneself.

Learning: Learning, a cognitive factor, has considerable influence on perception. It creates expectancy in people. People tend to perceive what they want to perceive. A number of illustrations have been used by psychologists to demonstrate the impact of learning on perception. Some are shown below:

One tends to read the sentence, because of prior learning, in the triangle as 'Bird in the hand'. It takes a few seconds for the reader to realize that there is an extra 'the' in the sentence. This illustration shows that learning creates expectancy in an individual and expectancy makes him see what he wants to see. Another illustration is typical.

The individual is likely to read the last word as 'Mac-Hinery' instead of 'machinery' He or she is caught in what is known as 'verbal response set' is some value in conceiving the two as distinct. Once they have been satisfied, most needs no longer influence perception. But if the person has a special interest, his perception is likely to be selective at any time.

Bird
in the
the hand

1.15:(a)

M-A-C-T-A-V-I-S-H
M-A-C-D-O-N-A-L-D
M-A-C-B-E-T-H
M-A-C-H-I-N-E-R-Y
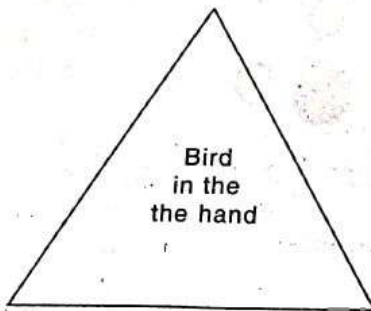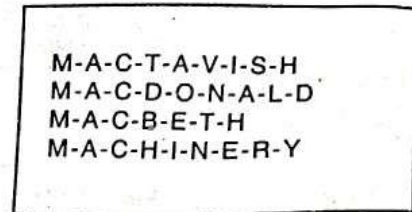
1.15:(b)

Fig. 1.16: The Contrast Principle of Perception

Fig. 1.17: Attractive or Ugly Woman?

Fig. 1.16 is another typical example of learning influencing perception. If one were to see an attractive, elegantly dressed woman, the perception concurs with the majority of the first-time viewers. However, one may agree with a sizable minority and see an ugly old woman.

In organisations, managers' and employees' past experiences and learning strongly influence their perceptions. For example, executives are influenced by their functional backgrounds while making decisions. They might perceive their own areas of expertise as being the most important to consider while solving problems. It is also likely that the decision-makers can 'rise above' their own experiences and limitations and solve problems effectively in areas other than those with which they are most familiar.

Psychological Needs: Needs play a significant role in perceptual selectivity. Unreal things often look real because of deprived needs. A thirsty person in a desert, for instance, gets the illusion of water when seeing sand from a distance. In one experiment, people who were kept hungry for sometime were shown pictures and were asked to describe what they saw in them. Most of them reported more food items in such perceptions.

Maslow wrote (1970) thus: 'For our chronically and extremely hungry man, Utopia can be defined simply as a place where there is plenty of food. He tends to think that if only he is guaranteed for the rest of his life, he will never want anything more. Life itself tends to be defined in terms of eating. Anything else will be defined as unimportant. Freedom, love, community feeling, respect, philosophy, may all be waived aside as fripperies that are useless, since they fail to fill the stomach'.

It may be noted that frequently all of a person's psychic energies are expended in trying to satisfy the basic psychological needs for love, esteem, and adequacy. He may unconsciously interact only with those sectors of another's personality through which he can gratify these needs. Under such conditions he can scarcely perceive the other as a whole person; only when his basic psychological needs are satisfied can he appreciate the full worth of the other.

Age Difference: Older, senior executives complain about the inability of the new, young ones to take tough decisions concerning terminating people or paying attention to details and paperwork. The young managers, in turn, complain about the 'old guards' resisting change and using paper and rules as ends in themselves. Different perceptions of old and young executives are due to their age differences. The generation gaps witnessed in recent years definitely contribute to different perceptions.

Interest: Perception is unconsciously influenced by the interests of the perceiver. An architect will notice many details of buildings though he or she passes by only once. Someone else may is some value in conceiving the two as distinct. Once they have been satisfied, most needs no longer influence perception. But if the person has a special interest, his perception is likely to be selective at anytime.

Ambivalence: Another factor of perceptual selection is ambivalence or mixed feelings about a situation. A young man may be ambivalent about his fiancee's virtues and shortcomings. She may be an attractive, charming, and poised woman with whom he likes to be seen, but she may also be insecure and have a poor self-concept. When she tries to compensate for these feelings by taking control of the relationship, he resents it and is anxious about the wisdom of his choice. But because of his physical attraction to her and because he wants to remain a success in his circle by having a beautiful financee, he represses the awareness of her negative qualities and selectively perceives only those that are favourable. Only after several years of marriage, when the selective perception of courtship has given way before the all-inclusive awareness of daily, intimate, and prolonged contact, does he become sharply aware of what he repressed.

Paranoid Perception: When a person's perception is so selective that he can find little common ground for communication with others, he is likely to be paranoid. It is the characteristic of the emotionally disturbed person that his perceptual field differs from that of reality and personalized interpretation. His self-concept is poor and he is very insecure, as a result of which he behaves in an inflexible manner.

Perceptual Organisation

Perceptual organisation is the process by which people group stimuli into recognizable patterns. Selection gives way to organisation, and the stimuli selected for attention now appear as a whole. For example, most people have a mental picture

of an object made of wood and having four legs, a seat, a back, and armrests: an image of a chair. When people actually see an object having these characteristics, they are able to organize the incoming information into a meaningful whole and recognize the object to be a chair.

There is so much to learn about how the human mind assembles, organizes, and categorizes information. However, certain factors in perceptual organisation, such as ambiguous figures, figure background, grouping, and constancy are helpful in understanding perceptual organisation.

Ambiguous Figures: Perceptual organisation becomes a difficult task when there are confusing and disorganized stimuli in the external environment. When we first glance at the lines in Fig.1.18, we tend to conclude that they epitomize disorganisation. Then we suddenly begin to realize that it is a drawing and could represent either a duck or a rabbit, and then it fluctuates between the two images. Similarly, in Fig.1.19, we see either kneeling woman or a man's face, or perhaps both. With ambiguous figures, there appears to be a whole image.
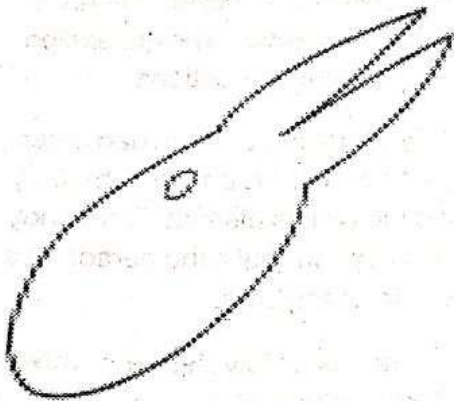
Fig. 1.18: An Ambiguous Figure — a duck or a rabbit

Fig. 1.19: An Ambiguous Figure — a kneeling woman or a man's face

Figure Background: Figure-ground is considered to be the most basic form of perceptual organisation. The figure background principle states that the relationship of a target to its background influences perception. In other words, according to the principle, perceived objects standout as separable from their general background. For example, in a noisy and crowded restaurant, one is able to hold a meaningful conversation with a colleague. This is possible because the person is capable of distinguishing the sight and sound of the colleague (figure) from the sight and sound of the other people and objects present (background). Although the individual perceives the entire scene, yet he or she responds selectively to the most relevant stimuli.

Managers face similar experiences in organisations. People pay more attention to some stimuli than others and run the danger of overlooking relevant clues.

A quick look at Fig.1.20 and then looking away from the illustration is an experience by itself. Most people focus on the individual figures enclosed with lines and few see any meaning. However, if one were to focus on the space between the figtures, the word WEST appears. Place a piece of paper along the bottom of the figure, the word becomes even more apparent. Fig.1.21 is another illustrator of figure-

background principle. At first the figure looks like a white vase. However, if white is taken as the background, we see two grey profiles.
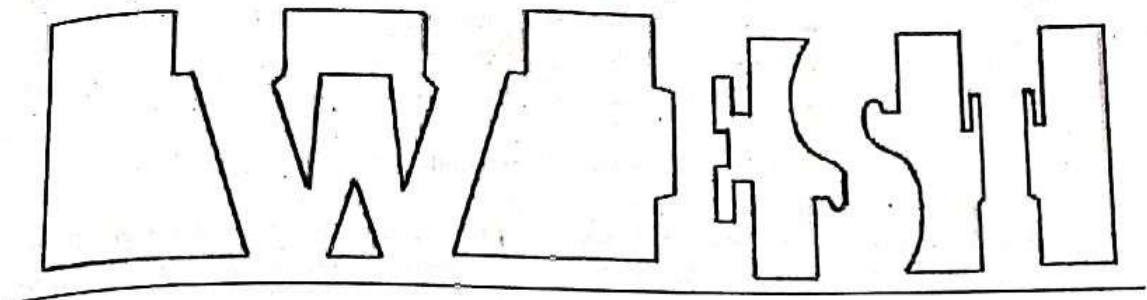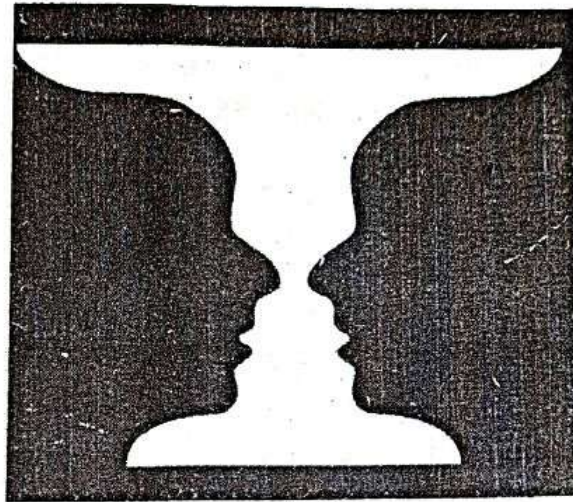

Fig. 1.20: A Figure Ground Experiment

Fig. 1.21: Figure Background Demonstration

What we see depends on what we see as the figure and what we see as the background. We attend selectively to stimuli by focusing on features that capture our attention. A major purpose of studying OB is to caution the reader about important stimuli. Key theories and concepts (such as motivation and leadership) call attention to variables that affect organisational performance. The trained manager knows what to look for as the dominant figure against a complex background of organisational forces. *Perceptual Grouping:* The principles of grouping first defined by Gestalt psychologists include similarity, proximity, closure, continuity, and area.

The principle of *similarity* is exemplified when objects of similar shape, size, or colour tend to be grouped together. In an organisation, for example, all employees who wear white collars may be perceived as a common group, when, in reality, each worker is a unique individual. A company might require visitors to its plants to wear yellow hard hats and employees to wear white hard hats. Employees can then easily identify people who are unfamiliar with everyday safety precautions and routines when they are in work areas. Although the principle of similarity is useful in helping people make sense of their world, a negative aspect of this principle is found in the perceptual stereotyping.

Fig. 1.22 illustrates the similarity principle. The signs in the figure are perceived as seven rows rather than the five columns, even though the distances between the rows and columns are equal.
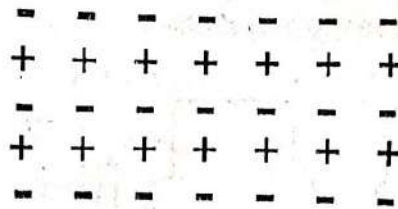
Fig. 1.22: Principle of Similarity

The principle of *proximity* underlines the tendency to perceive stimuli which are near one another as belonging together. For example, several employees in an organisation may be identified as a single group because of physical proximity. Similarly, several workers working on a machine are perceived to be one group and the group as a whole is held responsible for any failure in the machine. Fig.1.23 demonstrates the proximity principle. The eight circles in the figure are seen as pairs of two, three, or four, depending on their nearness to one another.
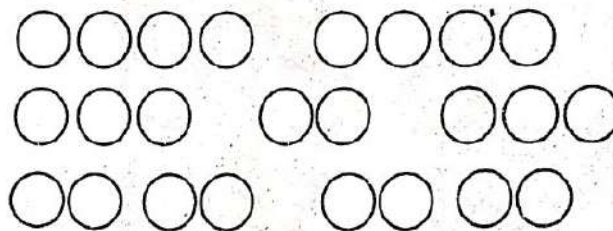
Fig. 1.23: Principle of Proximity

The principle of *closure* states that a person has a tendency to perceive a whole when none exits. The person's perceptual process will close the gaps which are unfilled from sensory inputs. The closure principle demonstrates the perceiver's ability to perceive a whole object eventhough only part of the object is evident. In an organisation, a manager facing a complex decision may be able to develop a fairly accurate understanding of the issues eventhough some details may be lacking. Based on experience and imagination, the manager can fill in the missing pieces needed to make a decision. Fig.1.24 illustrates the perceptual closure concept.
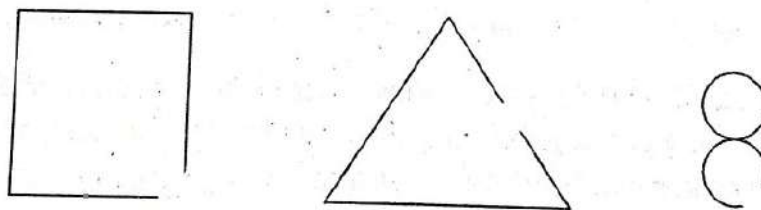

Fig. 1.24: The Principle of Closure

Continuity is the tendency to perceive objects as continuing patterns. The figure, we see curved and straight-lines as crossing each other and having dots in common, but it requires some effort on our part to perceive a straight-line becoming a curved line at one of these intersecting points or junctions. Continuity is an useful organizing principle, but it may also have negative aspects. For example, the tendency to perceive continuous patterns may result in an inability to perceive uniqueness and detect change. In business forecasting, a common continuity error is to assume that the future will simply reflect current events and trends.
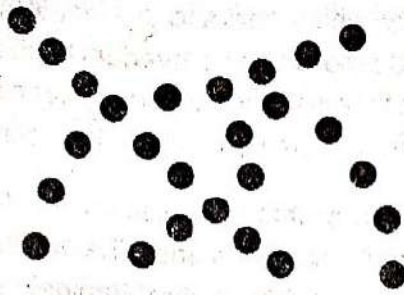
Fig. 1.25: An Example of Perceptual Continuity

The principle of continuity is closely related to the principle of closure, but there is a difference. Closure supplies missing stimuli, whereas the continuity principle says that a person will tend to perceive continuous lines or patterns.

Area: Where one part of an area depicting an ambiguous figure is smaller in size than the remainder, it is more likely that the smaller area will be seen as a figure and the rest of the total area as background. Glancing at, it is usual to see the small areas of white as the figure of a white cross and the large area of black as the background. By contrast, in Fig.1.26(B) a black cross set in a white background is more likely to be seen.

Perceptual Constancy: A more subtle part of perceptual organisation is *constancy*, our ability to perceive certain characteristics of an object as remaining constant, despite variations in the stimuli that provide us with conflicting information. Such constancy amidst changing stimuli is indispensable if we are to adjust to our world. There are several aspects of constancy.

One of these, *shape constancy,* is exemplified whenever an object appears to maintain its shape despite marked changes in the retinal image. For example, we see the top of a glass bottle as 'circular' whether we view it from the side or from the top. Shape constancy works to our advantage by keeping our world of perception orderly. Imagine the confusion you would experience in a crowded car park if your car was seen as a different object according to the different retinal images produced from different viewing positions – front, side, and back.
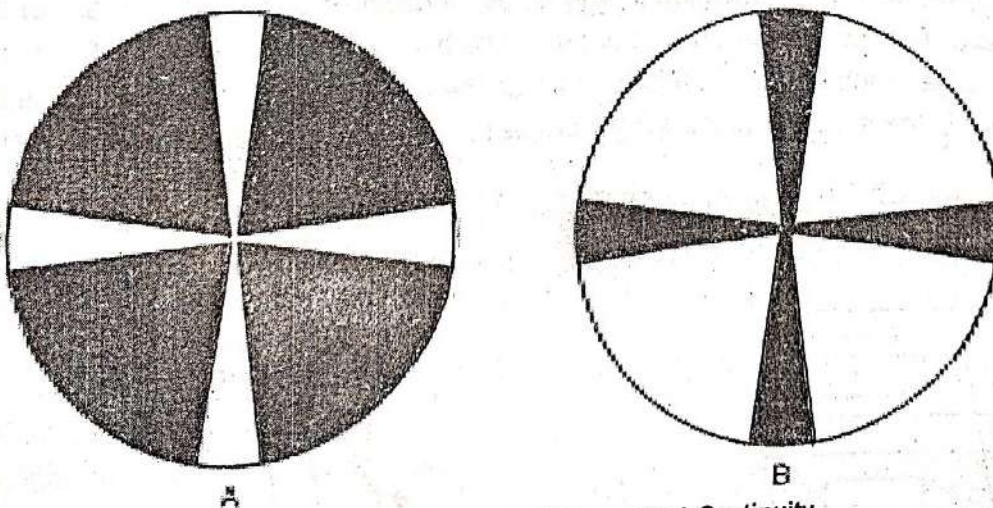
A   B

Fig. 1.26: An Example of Perceptual Continuity

tes

Another is *size constancy,* which refers to the fact that as an object is moved farther away we tend to see it as more or less invariant in size. For example, football players on the opposite side of the field do not look appreciably smaller than those closer to us on the field eventhough their images on the retina are much smaller.

Then there is *colour constancy* which implies that familiar objects are perceived to be of the same colour under varied conditions. The owner of a blue car sees it as blue whether looking at it in bright sunlight, in dim illumination, or under yellow street light.

Constancy gives a person a sense of stability in a changing world. If constancy were not at work the world would be very chaotic and disorganized for the individual. An organisational example would be the worker who must select a piece of material or a tool of the correct size from a wide variety of materials and tools at varying distances from a work station. Without perceptual constancy, the sizes and colour of objects would change as the worker moved about and would make the job almost impossible.

Where Contancy Does Not Hold Good: Under certain conditions constancy does not hold good, and what we see appears to be quite different from what we know to be true. These manifestations are called *illusions.* Three such illusions are illustrated in Figures 1.27, 1.28 and 1.29.
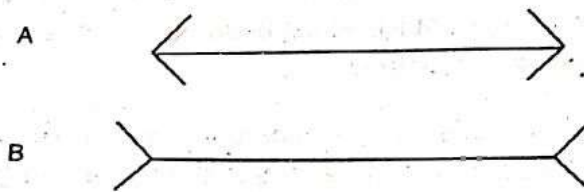

Fig. 1.27

An illusion can be understood as a reliable perceptual error, it is stable and not due to a hasty or careless exploration or processing of stimuli on our part. Though the lines A and B in Fig.1.26 are of the same length, we see A as the shorter one. In Fig.1.27, we see two rectangles, A and B, as different eventhough they are of the same size. The moon illustration is another typical example of an illusion. The moon seems to be much larger when it appears on the horizon than when it is high in the sky. But it is the same distance away from us in both cases and the image projected
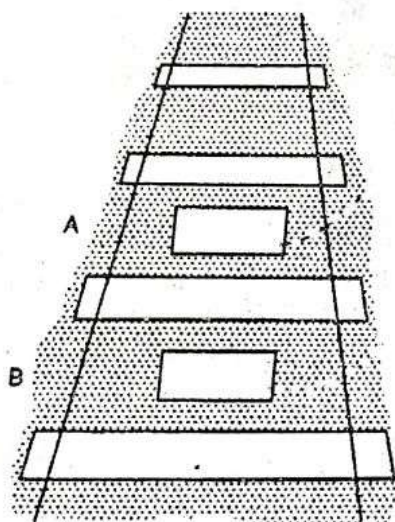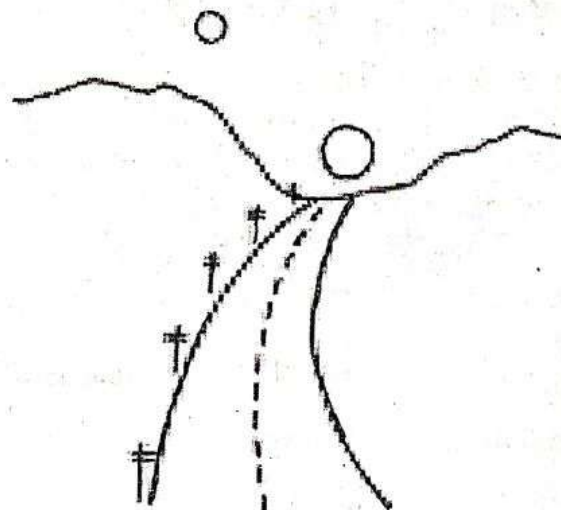

Fig. 1.28

Fig. 1.29

on to the retina is also the same in both cases. However, we see them as different sizes.

Another instance of illusion is one train that is stationary and the other in motion. It should be the experience of everybo — you are on board a train that is stationary and you look through window at a moving train. You get an illusion that the train you are sitting in is moving though in reality, it is the other train that is moving. This is called the illusion of induced movement. Illusions can also arise for the presentation of stimuli in rapid succession. An example of this phenomenon is the apparent backward movement of wagon wheels in an old Telugu film.

The Process of Interpreting

After the data have been received and organized, the perceiver interprets or assigns meaning to the information. In fact, perception is said to have taken place only after the data have been interpreted. Several, factors contribute towards the interpretation of data. More important amongst them are perceptual set, attribution, stereotyping, halo effect, perceptual context, perceptual defence, implicit personality theory and projection.

Perceptual Set: Previously-held beliefs about objects influence an individual's perceptions of similar objects. This is called perceptual set. For example, a manager may have developed general beliefs and attitudes that workers are lazy and shirkers, and that they want to gain whatever is possible from the organisation without giving of their best to it. His or her subsequent perceptions will be influenced by this set when he or she meets a group of workers. The manager tends to interpret the behaviour of the workers according to his mental set.

Attribution: Attribution refers to the process by which the individual assigns causes to the behaviour he or she conceives. People are interested not only in observing behaviour in organisations, for example, but in determining its causes. Their evaluation of and reactions to others' behaviour may be heavily influenced by their perception that the others are responsible for their behaviour. When plant productivity increases, the manager responsible will be evaluated less favourably if the increase is attributed to new machine installed at the order of the head office than if it is attributed to his or her handling of the employees. A nurse who drops a tray of medicine will be excused if the incident is perceived as caused by a slippery floor, chastised if it is viewed to be caused by her clumsiness, and perhaps fired if it is viewed as a deliberate act. Attribution is discussed in detail in the next section.

Stereotyping. It is the tendency to assign attributes to someone solely on the basis of a category of people to which that person belongs. The process of stereotyping helps individuals assign meaning to a mass of data.

Some examples of common stereotypes are women, doctors, professors, artists, software engineers, executives, workers, and the like. At a broader level, there are Americans, Indians, Britishers, and Africans.

Stereotypes of women continue to hamper their advancement in many organisations across the globe.

EXHIBIT 1-8 STEREOTYPES OF WOMEN AT WORK

In My Fair Lady, Professor Henry Higgins asks: 'Why can't a woman be more like a man?' Are most organisations still asking this question, or does it only seem that way? Consider the following.

The authors of a recent report concluded that women have a big problem when it comes to overseas assignments. They can't get them. Although women comprise almost half the global workforce, they account for less than 12 per cent of the expatriate population. Why is this happening (or failing to happen, as the case may be)? The study on which the report was based showed that many male managers still believe that women aren't interested in overseas jobs or won't be effective in them. These managers typically cite dual career issues, a presumed heightened risk of sexual harassment, and gender prejudices in many countries, as reasons why their female employees are often not seriously considered for international assignments. In contrast, a recent survey of female expatriates and their supervisors revealed that women, on average, are just as interested in foreign assignments and every bit as effective once there. Indeed, some of the traits considered crucial for success overseas – such as knowing when to keep your mouth shut, being a strong team player, and soliciting a variety of opinions and perspectives when solving problems – are more often associated with women's management styles than with men's.

For organisations struggling to balance gender issues, changes in work cultures, and increased global competition, few issues are more important than fully utilizing the talents of all the organisation's employees. Women have played an increasingly bigger role in the workplace in many countries for more than a generation. In the United States, for example, women between the ages of 25 and 35 have more education than their male counterparts. Women are currently starting new businesses at twice the rate of men. Women are also joining the workforce in record numbers, and the participation rate for women between the ages of 25 and 54 is now over 75 per cent. Although the male participation rate for the same age group is slightly over 90 per cent, the labour force participation rates for women and men are converging. Women seem destined to play an even bigger role in organisational life than they have in the past.

As a result, here's an interesting challenge for organisations. Are women managers essentially like their male counterparts? If so, then gender differences are a marginal concern. However, a major debate is going on in scientific circles around the world with regard to gender differences in thought, emotions, and information processing styles. Some evidence from this type of research is beginning to suggest that women are, on an average, superior to men in many organisational roles. Examples cited include roles where the manager needs to interact closely with customers or clients and roles where the manager needs to facilitate discussion and smooth conflicts. As an example of the latter, one study indicated that female project team leaders were more effective, on an average, than males in leading cross-functional teams designed to foster high rates of innovation.

For many years, conventional wisdom seemed to be that, in order to be successful, the female managers needed to become more like the typical male manager. However, now the question seems to be: Will tomorrow's business women succeed by becoming more like men or less like them? The jury is still out, but the evidence indicates that gender differences are real, and importantly for many organisational roles in the years ahead, women will have a competitive advantage.

(*Source:* Don Hellriegel, et al., op. cit., p.82)

Stereotype is not prejudice. A prejudice is a stereotype that refers to change when presented with information indicating that the stereotype is inaccurate. Stereotypes can be helpful; prejudice is never helpful.

Though stereotyping is understood as wrong or bad, this is not the case always. It is a useful process that greatly increases one's efficiency in making sense out of his or her environment. Nonetheless, stereotyping can lead to inaccuracies and negative consequences. To the extent that stereotypes create social injustice, result in poor decision-making, stifle innovation, or cause underutilization of human resources, they contribute to ineffectiveness and inefficiency.

Stereotyping is a four-step process. It begins by categorizing people into groups according to various criteria such as age, sex, race, and occupation. Next, we infer that all people within a particular category possess the same traits. Then we form expectations of others and interpret their behaviour according to our stereotypes. Finally, stereotypes are maintained by (i) overestimating the frequency of stereotypic behaviours exhibited by others, (ii) incorrectly explaining expected and unexpected behaviours, and (iii) differentiating minority individuals from oneself.

Halo Effect: The halo effect refers to the tendency of perceiving people in terms of good and bad, and ascribing all good qualities to one who is liked and all bad qualities to another who is disliked. A typical example of the halo effect is a professor awarding more marks to a well-liked student. It is not so much a conscious bias on the professor's part, as that the professor likes the student, he wants him to do well in the examination, and his perception about the student's examination are influenced by what he wants to see. A common phenomenon in communication is the tendency for a receiver to evaluate information on the basis of its source. Information emanating from a VIP tends to be overrated and the same coming from an ordinary individual is likely to be discounted.

Halo effect need not always mean overrating positive characteristics. An individual may be downrated based on the negative evaluation of his or her behaviour. This process is called *rusty halo or horns effect.*

In organisations, the halo effect often occurs when superiors rate subordinates in a formal appraisal. In this context, a manager evaluating one of his employees on certain dimensions may assume that someone who is good in one dimension must
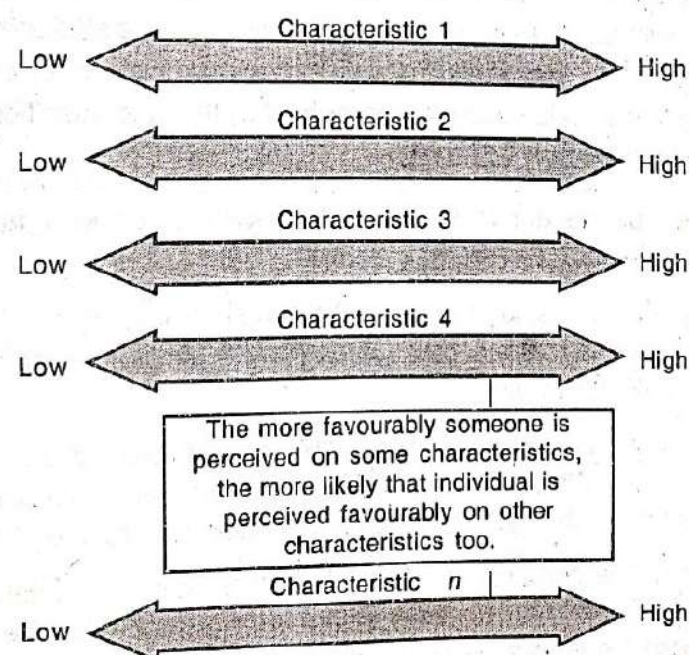

Fig. 1.30: The Halo Effect: A Demonstration

(*Source:* Greenberg and Baron, Behaviour in Organisations)

also be good at other things and rate the person highly on other aspects (See Fig.1.30). Put another way, the halo effect may be responsible for finding high correlations between the ratings given to people on various dimensions. When this occurs, the resulting evaluations lack accuracy and the quality of the resulting evaluations is compromised.

Perceptual Context: The context in which an object is placed influences perception. Fig.1.31 illustrates contextual influence on perception. The visual stimuli by themselves are meaningless. Only when the doodles are placed in a verbal context do they take on meaning and value for the perceiver.
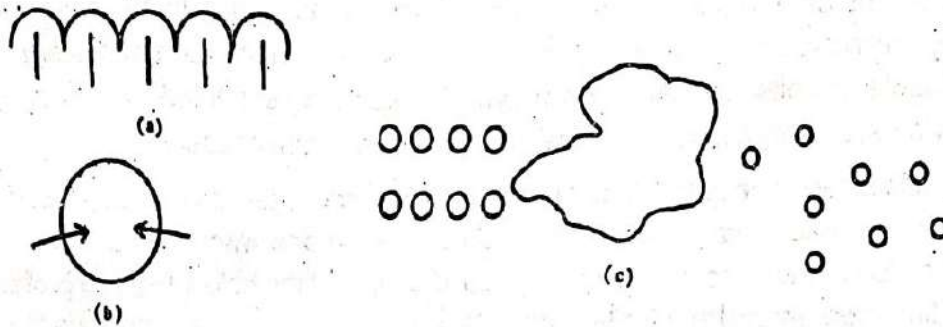

Fig. 1.31: Game of Dodles

(a) The start of a 'rat race' (b) Two mice in a beer can (c) A column of ants marching through spilled whiskey

The organisational culture and structure provide the primary context in which workers and managers do their perceiving. Thus, a verbal order, a memo, a new policy, a suggestion, a raised eyebrow, or a pat on the back takes on special meaning and value when placed in the context of a work situation.

Perceptual Defence: According to the principle of perceptual defence, an individual is likely to put up a defence when confronted with conflicting, unacceptable, or threatening stimuli. The defence mechanisms put up by the perceiver may assume any of the four forms: outright denial, modification of the data received, change in perception but refusal to change, and change in perception itself. The four defence mechanisms have been culled from a study involving college students. The students were presented with the word 'intelligent' as a characteristic of a factory worker. This was conflicting to the notion about a worker held by the students. The defences put up by the students were:

(a) Some students denied that the factory workers could be intelligent-denial *mechanism.*

(b) Some students said that the worker was intelligent but lacked initiative to rise above his group (associating intelligence with some other trait-*modification mechanism).*

(c) A few students felt that the word intelligent conflicted with their understanding of a worker. What they believed about the worker was that he was not too intelligent — change in perception but *refusal to change mechanism.*

(d) Many of the students felt that the worker was really intelligent. But this change in perception was very subtle. For example, 'He cracks jokes' because 'He is witty' — *change in perception mechanism.*

Whatever the form of mechanism, perceptual defence is likely to play a useful role in understanding union management and supervisor-subordinate relationships.

Implicit Personality Theory: In judging and making inferences about others, an individual's perceptions are influenced by his belief that certain human traits are associated with one another. For example,. the trait *honesty* is associated with *hardworking,* All industrious people are perceived to be honest.

Projection: Under certain conditions, people tend to see in another person traits that they themselves possess. That is, they project their own feelings, tendencies, or motives into their judgement of others. This may be particularly true regarding undesirable traits which the perceiver possesses but fails to recognize in himself. For example, an individual who is himself not very energetic may see others as lazy or may explain their lack of achievement as resulting from their unwillingness to work hard. One who is dishonest may be suspicious of others and may perceive dishonest intentions in others where they do not exist. People who are afraid may interpret others' behaviour as fearful or anxious.

The Process of Checking

After data have been received and interpreted, the perceiver tends to check whether his interpretations are right or wrong. One way of checking is for the person himself or herself to indulge in introspection. He or she will put a series of questions to himself or herself and the answers will confirm whether his or her perception about an individual or object is correct or otherwise. Another way is to check the veracity about the interpretation with others.

The Process of Reacting

The last phase in perception is the reaction. The perceiver will indulge in some action in relation to his or her perception. The action depends on whether the perception is favourable or unfavourable: it is positive when the perception is favourable and negative when the perception is unfavourable. A worker responds favourably to the motivational intentions of a manager provided his or her understanding about his or her boss is favourable. The response is negative when his perception of the manager's behaviour is unfavourable.

Attribution theory, a relatively new addition to the field of OB, has implications for perception, motivation, and leadership. We shall focus on the impact of attribution theory on perception.

Fritz Heider and H. H. Kelly are well known contributors to the attribution theory. This theory suggests that we observe behaviour and then attribute causes to it; that is, we attempt to explain why people behave as they do. The process of attribution is based on perceptions of reality and these perceptions may vary widely among individuals.

The theory posits that the behaviour of others can be examined on the basis of its *distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus.* Distinctiveness is the degree to which a person behaves similarly in different situations. Consistency is the degree to which a person engages in the same behaviour at different times. Consensus is the

degree to which other people are engaging in the same behaviour. As a result of various combinations of consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness, we form impressions of our attributions to the causes of behaviour. We may believe that behaviour is caused informally (by forces within a person, for example, ability) or externally (by forces in the person's environment, for example, task) (See Fig. 1.32).
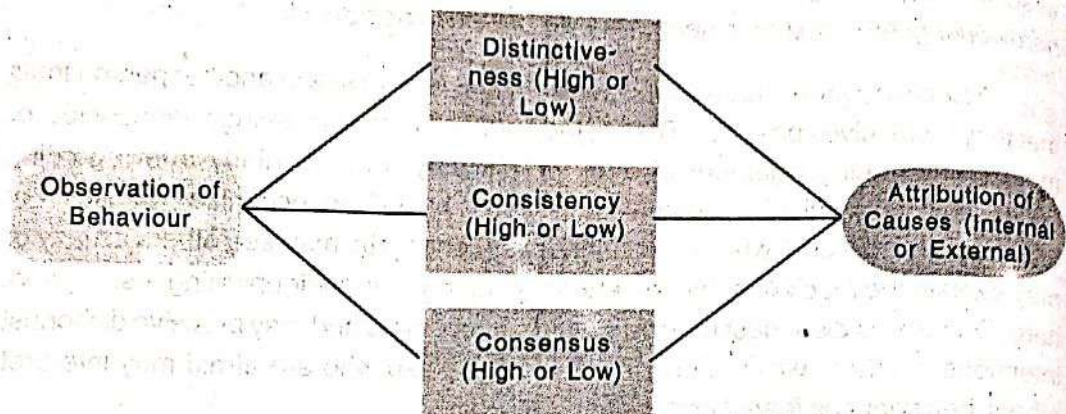

Fig. 1.32: The Attribution Process

Under conditions of high consistency, high distinctiveness, and high consensus, the perceiver will tend to attribute the behaviour of the perceived person to external causes. When distinctiveness and consensus are low, the perceiver will tend to attribute the behaviour to internal causes (See Fig. 1.33). Of course, other combinations of high and low consistency, distinctiveness and consensus are possible. Some combinations, however, may not provide the perceiver with a clear choice between internal and external causes.
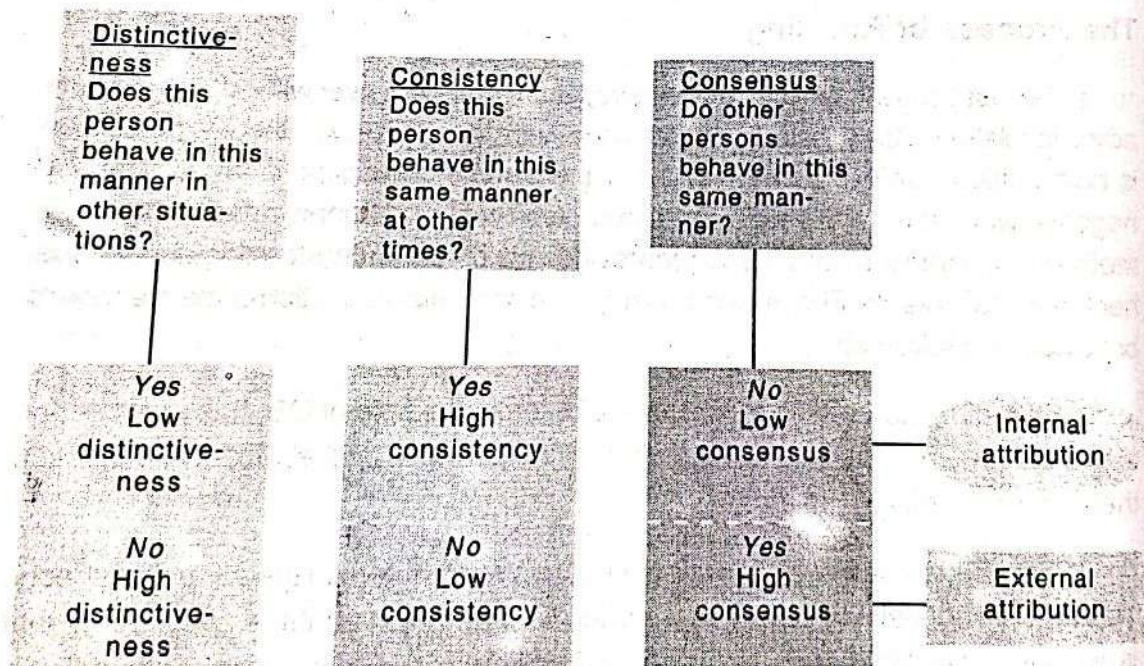

Fig. 1.33: Rules of Attribution

The following example will help clarify the attribution rules. Divya has done poorly in a test in her third semester MBA course and has expressed concern to her professor. Her professor, in trying to understand the possible reasons for her behaviour (doing poorly in the test), tries to determine its degree of distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus. If Divya tends to do poorly in tests in other courses (low distinctiveness),

has performed poorly on earlier tests in her management class (high consistency), and if no other students in her class did poorly in the test (low consensus), the professor tends to make an internal attribution regarding Divya's behaviour. That is, the explanation for the poor performance is to be found within Divya (lack of motivation, poor study habits, etc). On the other hand, if Divya does well in tests in other courses (high distinctiveness), has performed well in earlier tests in this professor's course (low consistency), and if other students in the course have also done poorly in this test (high consensus), the professor might make an external attribution about her behaviour. That is, the explanation for the poor result may be due to external factors (the professor administered a poor test, scored wrongly, etc). Thus, the attributions made regarding the cause of an event have important implications for dealing with the problem.

Attribution theory has important implications for managers. If the manager attributes poor performance to internal factors, he or she can adopt certain strategies to improve those factors. On the other hand, if the manager attributes poor performance to external factors, he or she can take relevant steps to improve performance.

One can make attribution to oneself. If one attributes a pay raise to hardwork, he or she continues to work hard. Instead, if poor performance is attributed to external factors (such as boss's friendliness), he or she may put more effort into cementing that friendship.

Perception is the starting point of human behaviour. Through the perception process an individual selects, organises, and interprets information and this forms the basis for his or her behaviour. Perception often plays spoilsport with our behaviour. For instance, how we perceive others affects how we treat them. If we stereotype people in negative ways, we may not take any interest in them. If we see things only from our frame of reference, we may be in constant conflict with others. If we see and hear only what we expect, we may turn people off. Selective exposure can cause people to get angry with us for not listening to them. People generally do not like to bear making projective statements about others. Fig. 1.34 illustrates the biases affecting perception.
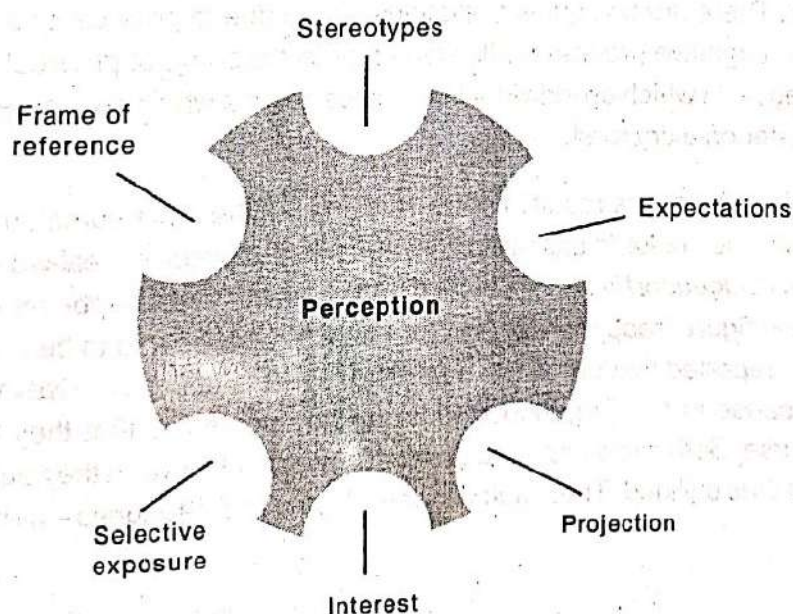

Fig. 1.34: Biases Affecting Perception
(**Source:** Robert N. Lussier, *Human Relations in Organisations*, P. 58)

The attribution theory explained earlier is itself an instance of perceptual failure. An important by-product of the theory is the identification of systematic errors or biases that distort attributions. One such error is called the *fundamental attribution error*. This error refers to a tendency to underestimate the importance of external factors and overestimate the importance of internal factors when making attributions about the behaviour of others. An example might be that of a shopfloor supervisor who attributes a high injury rate to employee carelessness (a cause internal to the employee), instead of considering the possibility of the equipment being old and in poor condition (a cause external to the employee).

Self-fulfilling Prophecy: Self-fulfilling prophecy can be traced back to Greek mythology. According to mythology, Pygmalion was a sculptor who hated women yet fell in love with an ivory statue he carved of a beautiful woman. He became so infatuated with the statue that he prayed to the goddess Aphrodite to bring her to life. The goddess heard his prayer, granted his wish, and the statue came to life. The essence of self-fulfilling prophecy or Pygmalion effect as it is often called, is that people's expectations or beliefs determine their behaviour and performance, thus, serving to make their expectations come true.

Another dimension of self-fulfilling prophecy is that it occurs when our expectations about another person cause that person to act in a way that is consistent with those expectations. In other words, our perceptions can influence reality. If a supervisor believes a new employee will not be able to perform the job, this expectation influences the supervisor's behaviour towards the employee and without realizing it, may cause the new hire to perform the job poorly. Consequently, the supervisor's perception, even if originally incorrect, is confirmed. It is for this reason that employees are more likely to be victims of negative self-fulfilling prophecy than benefactors of positive self-fulfilling prophecy. To block negative self-fulfilling prophecy, firms need to fight negative stereotypes and avoid first impressions.

Illusions: Perception often provides false interpretation of sensory information. Such cases are known as illusions, a term used by psychologists to refer to incorrect perceptions. There are two types of illusions: those due to physical processes and those due to cognitive processes. Illusions due to distortion of physical conditions include *mirages,* in which an individual perceives objects which are non-existent, for example, water on a dry road.

Cognitive processes result in many illusions but the more common are *shape illusions* which often result in unsettling consequences. Consider a real-world example involving the *Poggendorf illusion (See* Fig.1.35). In this, a line disappears at an angle behind a solid figure, reappearing the other side at what seems to be the incorrect position. It is reported that in 1965 two aeroplanes were about to arrive in New York city and because of the Poggendorf illusion, they perceived that they were on a collision course. Both pilots changed their path to correct for what they perceived as an error and thus collided. The result was four deaths and 49 injuries – all because of an illusion.
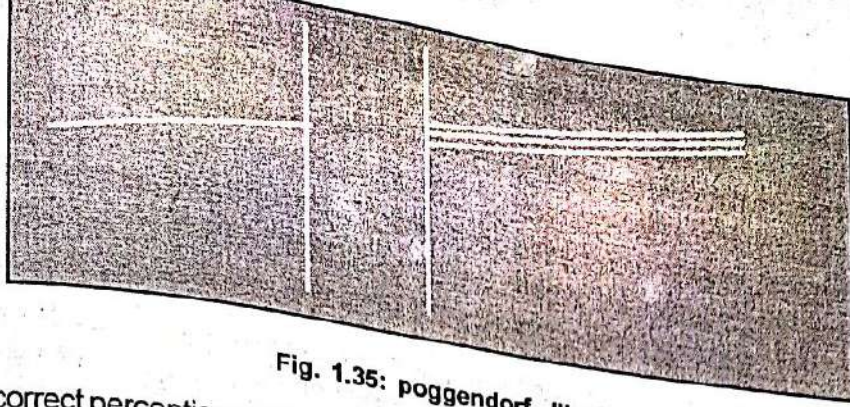
Fig. 1.35: poggendorf Illusion

Incorrect perceptions of the world around them may lead to problems to personnel. Budding managers who flame out do so because they fail to read situations properly and act accordingly. They develop poor working relationships, are too authoritarian, or have conflicts with upper management. As a result, their careers come to a screeching halt. This could have been avoided had they been able to correctly perceive what they should be doing and had the emotional maturity and ability to make the necessary changes.

In the discussion on perception till now, we quoted several organisational contexts demonstrating its relevance. In this section an attempt is made to focus further on the importance of perception.

Perception is a complex cognitive process which, in sum, is a unique interpretation of a situation, not an exact recording of it. It may reveal a picture of the world which is different from reality. Recognition of difference between the perceptual world and the real world is vital to the study of OB. A specific example would be the universal assumption made by managers that subordinates always want promotions when, in fact, many subordinates really feel psychologically forced to accept a promotion. Managers seldom attempt to find out, and sometimes subordinates themselves do not know, whether the promotion should be offered. In other words, the perceptual world of the manager is quite different from the perceptual world of the subordinates, and both may be far-removed from reality. What should be done from the manager's standpoint? The best answer is to understand the perceptual process. The application of what is understood logically follows.

The above being a general statement, specific applications of perception in organisations are analysed in paragraphs that follow.

In an interview for the selection of a candidate, the interviewers' judgement about the suitability or otherwise of a candidate depends on how his behaviour is perceived by them. A rejected applicant might feel that he or she was wronged by the interviewers though he or she deserved selection. But the fact is that interviewers generally form an early impression that becomes quickly entrenched. If the inadequacies of the candidate are exposed early, they weigh against him or her in the final selection.

Another perceptual issue related to hiring new employees is the problem of unrealistic expectations. Every applicant acquires, during the selection process, a set of expectations about the organisation and about the specific job the applicant is hoping to be offered. It is not unusual for these expectations to be excessively inflated as a result of receiving almost uniformly positive information. There is evidence that

now demonstrates that these inaccurate perceptions lead to premature resignations, and that realistic expectations can lead to lower turnover rates.

So what are realistic job expectations? They include both favourable and unfavourable information about the job. If the candidate has been provided with both favourable and unfavourable information about the job, he or she will be better equipped to cope with it and to face boldly the frustrating elements of the job. The result is fewer unexpected resignations by new employees.

Performance appraisal is another area where perception has significant relevance. Assessment of an employee's performance depends on the perception of the person who evaluates. While evaluation can be objective as in a salesman's job where performance is quantifiable, many jobs are evaluated in subjective terms. Subjective measures are easier to implement; they provide managers with greater discretion regarding jobs that do not really lend themselves to objective measures. Subjective measures are, by definition, judgemental. To the extent that the evaluation depends on subjective measures for assessing an employee's performance, perception of who is a 'good' or 'bad' employee greatly influences the outcome of the appraisal.

An individual's future in an organisation is usually not dependent on performance alone. In many organisations, the level of an employee's effort is given great importance. Assessment of an individual's effort is a subjective judgement, susceptible to perceptual distortions and bias. If it is true, as some claim, that 'more workers are fired for poor attitudes and lack of discipline than for lack of ability', then approval of an employee's effort may be a primary influence on his or her future in the organisation.

Another important judgement that managers make about employees is whether or not they are loyal to the organisation. An employee, specially at the managerial level, who disparages the firm or looks for greener pastures outside may be labelled as disloyal, cutting of all future advancement opportunities. The issue is not whether organisations are right in demanding an employee's loyalty, but the fact is that many employers do, and the assessment of loyalty or commitment is highly judgemental. What is perceived as loyalty by one decision-maker may be seen as disloyalty by another, and caring and concerned by yet others. When evaluating a person's attitude, as in loyalty assessment, we must recognize that we are again involved with a person's perception.

Many managerial practices depend on the Theory X or Theory Y assumptions about employees. Theory X assumes that man is (among other things) inherently lazy and irresponsible, creates the unconscious rationale for directing and controlling authoritarian management. Theory Y assumptions, include the responsibility orientation of man and his potential for creativity and contributions, resulting in quite different practices. Both sets of assumptions incorporate many of the perceptual processes that influence managerial behaviour.

Attempts made by individuals to project favourable impressions about themselves in the eyes of their superiors are related to the cognitive process. Popularly called *impression management*, the process refers to the calculated efforts made to get others to think of them in a certain way, preferably in the best possible way. Impression management might involve direct attempts to make oneself look better (such as

improving one's appearance, claiming associations with highly regarded people), as well as attempts to make others feel better about themselves (such as by flattering them and showing approval for whatever they say).

Impression management has its impact on the success of getting a job and also on his or her on career. It also has an influence on his or her relationships with others. Superiors feel better disposed towards those subordinates who manage to project better image.

Attempting to look good to others may take its toll on the accuracy of the information communicated. The individual trying to impress management never tells the full story, particularly its negative side.

Impression management is not practised only by individuals. Organisations also seek to create impressions. Called the *corporate image*, organisations gain considerably by the exercise. A good corporate image means better employees, expanded markets, and more responsive investors.

The Pygmalion effect has important lessons for managers. They need to harness the Pygmalion effect by building a framework (See Fig. 1.36) that reinforces positive performance expectations throughout the organisation.
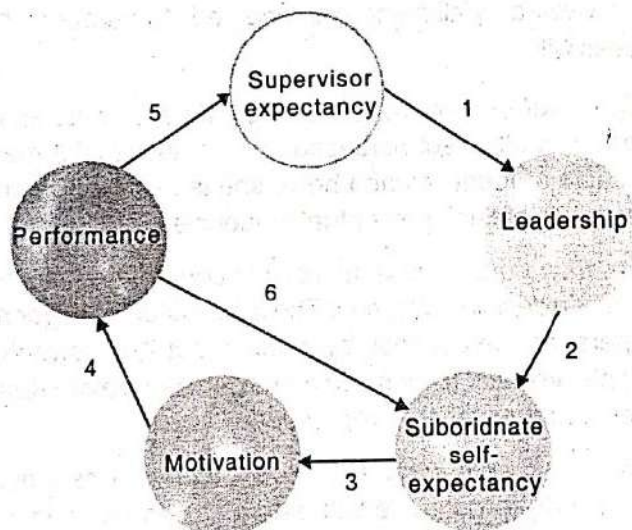

Fig. 1.36: A Model of the Self-fulfilling Prophecy

(*Source:* Robert Kreitner and Anglo Kinicki, *Organisational Behaviour, P. 170*)

Fig.1.36 illustrates how supervisory expectations affect employee performance. As indicated, high supervisory expectancy produces better leadership (arrow 1), which subsequently leads employees to develop higher self-expectations (arrow 2). Higher expectations motivate workers to exert themselves more (arrow 3), finally boosting performance (arrow 4), and supervisory expectancies (arrow 5). Successful performance also improves an employee's self-expectancy for achievement (arrow 6).

Specifically, managers need to do the following:

1. Recognize that everyone has the potential to increase his or her performance.

2. Instill confidence in oneself.

3. Set high performance goals.

4. Positively reinforce employees for a job well done.

5. Provide constructive feedback when necessary.

6. Help employees advance through the organisation.

7. Introduce new employees as if they have outstanding potential.

8. Become aware of ones personal prejudices and non-verbal messages that may discourage others.

9. Encourage employees to visualize the successful execution of tasks.

10. Help employees master skills and tasks.

Finally, attributional biases tend to lead to inappropriate managerial actions including promotions, transfers, layoffs, and so forth. This can dampen motivation and performance. Attributional training programmes assume relevance here. Base attributional processes need to be explained and managers need to be taught how to detect and avoid such biases.

Successful managers understand the importance of perception as an influencing factor on behaviour and they act accordingly. They are aware of perceptual distortions and also know that perceptual differences are likely to exist in any situation. As a result, they try to make decisions and take action with a true understanding of the work situation as it is viewed by all persons concerned. A manager who is skilled in the perception process will:

1. *Have a high level of self-awareness:* Individual needs, experience, and expectations can all affect perceptions. The successful manager knows this and is able to identify when he or she is inappropriately distorting a situation because of such perceptual tendencies.

2. *Seek information from various sources to confirm or disconfirm personal impressions of a decision situation:* The successful manager minimizes the biases of personal perceptions by seeking out the viewpoints of others. These insights are used to gain additional perspective on situations and the problems or opportunities they represent.

3. *Be empathetic – that is, be able to see a situation as it is perceived by other people:* Different people will define the same situation somewhat differently. The successful manager rises above personal impressions to understand problems as seen by other people.

4. *Influence perceptions of other people when they are drawing incorrect or incomplete impressions of events in the work setting:* People act in terms of their perceptions. The successful manager is able to influence the perceptions of others so that work events and situations are interpreted as accurately as possible and to the advantage of all concerned.

5. *Avoid common perceptual distortions that bias our views of people and situations:* These distortions include the use of stereotypes and halo effects, as well as selective perception and projection. Successful managers are self-disciplined and sufficiently self-aware so that the adverse impacts of these distortions are minimized.

6. *Avoid inappropriate attributions:* Everyone has a tendency to try and explain why events happened the way they did or why people behaved as they did.

The successful manager is careful to establish the real reasons why things happen and avoid quick or inappropriate attributions of casualty.

7. *Diversity management programmes:* As firms globalize themselves, diversity management assumes greater relevance. The challenge for corporate executives is to leverage the benefits of this diversity while minimizing the perceptual and behavioural problems that tend to accompany heterogeneity.

    OB experts have designed diversity management programmes. Typically, these training programmes serve two purposes. First, they communicate the value of diversity. Second, these programmes help participants become aware of their personal biases and give them more accurate information about people with different backgrounds, thus avoiding perceptual distortions.

8. *Know yourself:* Apply the Johari window to know the real self. A powerful way to minimize perceptual biases is to know and become more aware of one's values, beliefs, and prejudice.

3.1 NATURE OF MOTIVATION

It was motivation which made John Roebling, Washington and Mrs. Washington accomplish a near impossible task – constructing Brooklyn Bridge.

This chapter focuses on theoretical foundations for motivation. The next chapter describes application of principles of motivation to organizational settings.

Every organization must –

- Attract competent people and retain them with it.

- Allow people to perform tasks for which they were hired, and

- Stimulate people to go beyond routine performance and overreach themselves in their work.

Thus, if the organization were to be effective it must address the motivational challenges involved in arousing people's desires to be productive members of the organization.

A basic principle is that the performance of an individual depends on his or her ability backed by motivation. Stated algebraically, the principle is:

$$\text{Performance} = f(\text{ability} \times \text{motivation})$$

Ability refers to skill and competence of the person to complete a given task. However, ability alone is not enough. The person's desire to accomplish the task is also necessary. Organizations become successful when employees have abilities and desire to accomplish given tasks.

Motivation in simple terms may be understood as the set of forces that cause people to behave in certain ways. The framework given in Fig. 3.1 helps us understand the nature of motivation better.
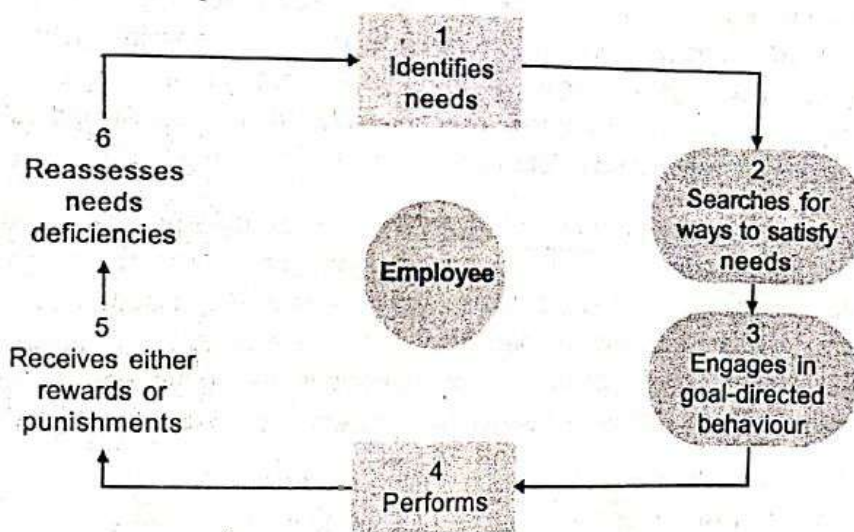

Fig. 3.1: Framework of Motivation

The framework (Fig 3.1) comprises six steps. Motivation process, as shown in the Fig. 3.1, begins with the individual's needs (step 1). Needs are felt deprivations which the individual experiences at a given time and act as energizers. These needs may be psychological (e.g., the need for recognition), physiological (e.g., the need for water, air, or food), or social (e.g., the need for friendship). These deprivations force the individual to search for ways to reduce or eliminate them (step 2).

Motivation is goal directed (step 3). A goal is a specific result that the individual wants to achieve. An employee's goals are often driving forces and accomplishing those goals can significantly reduce needs. For example, some employees have strong drives for advancement and expectations that working long hours on visible

projects will lead to promotions, and greater influence. Such needs and expectations often create uncomfortable tension within these individuals. Believing that certain specific behaviours can overcome this tension, these employees act to reduce it. Employees striving to advance may seek to work on major problems facing the organization in order to gain visibility and influence with senior managers (step 4). Promotions and raises are two of the ways that organization seek to maintain desirable behaviours. They are signals (feedback) to employees that their needs for advancement and recognition and their behaviours are appropriate (step 5). Once the employees have received either rewards or punishments, they reassess their needs (step 6).

Some definitions on motivation are worth citing in this context.

1. *"Motivation is the result of processes, internal or external to the individual, that arouse enthusiasm and persistence to pursue a certain course of action."*

2. *"... how behaviour gets started, is energised, is sustained, is directed, is stopped and what kind of subjective reaction is present in the organization while all this is going on"*

3.4 THEORIES ON MOTIVATION

There is no shortage of models, strategies and tactics for motivating employees. As a result, firms constantly experiment with new motivational programmes and practices. For discussion purposes, it is useful to classify motivational models into two general categories: early and contemporary. (See also Fig. 3.2)
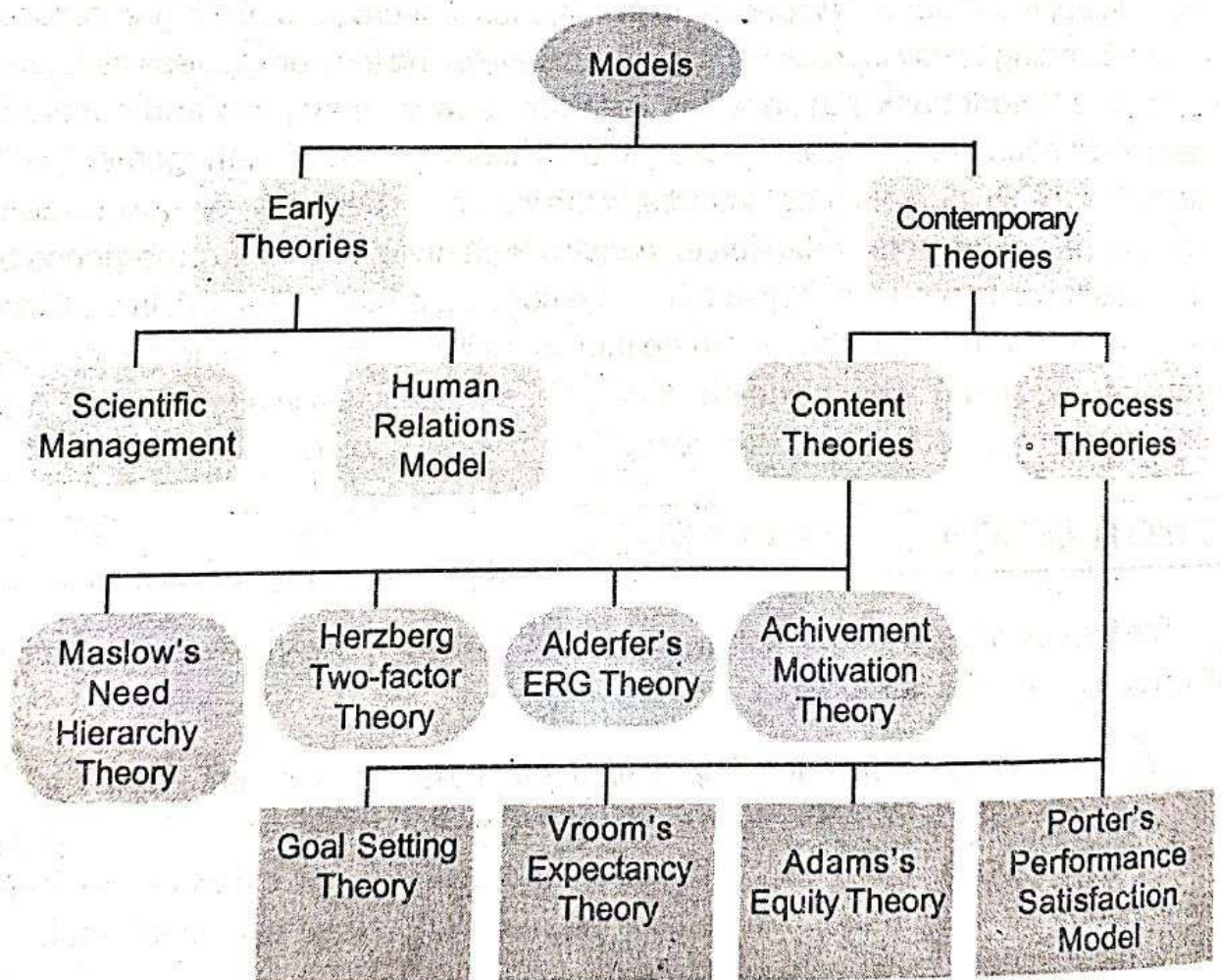

Fig. 3.2: Motivational models

Early Theories

Scientific Management Scientific Management is the name given to a philosophy and set of methods and techniques that stressed the scientific study and organization of work at the operations level for the purpose of increasing efficiency. Several luminaries contributed their ideas to the philosophy of Scientific Management but the movement is more associated with F.W. Taylor who is remembered as the "Father of Scientific Management."

Scientific Management had contributed several techniques which are relevant even today. The techniques are :

(i) Scientific method of doing work.

(ii) Planning the task.

(iii) Scientific selection, training and remuneration of workers.

(iv) Standardization.

(v) Specialization and division of work.

(vi) Time and motion studies.

(vii) Mental revolution.

Coupled with Taylor's logical and rational approach to management was simple theory of human behaviour. People are primarily motivated by economic rewards and will take direction if offered an opportunity to improve their economic positions. Put simply, Taylor's theory stated that:

(i) Physical work could be scientifically studied to determine the optimal method of performing a job.

(ii) Workers could thereafter be made more efficient by being given prescriptions for how they were to do their jobs.

(iii) Workers would be willing to adhere to these prescriptions if paid on a differential piece work basis.

Scientific approach to motivation has been criticised severally. In particular, behavioural scientists have argued that Taylor and his colleagues dehumanised workers by treating them as mere factors of production, who could be manipulated completely through economic incentives.

The most fundamental problem with Taylor's approach from a motivational viewpoint is concerned with his rather simplistic assumption about human behaviour. Taylor believed that workers would be motivated more by the need for money (this assumption is called the 'rabble hypothesis'). He thought that the primary interest of the worker is economic gain in the form of higher wages. Contrary to this rabble hypothesis, worker seeks satisfaction of a variety of needs in the workplace need for security, social fulfilment and a challenging jobs, including pay.

Taylor's over simplified and routine jobs, instead of benefiting the workers, created boredom and dissatisfaction in them. The workers lost their abilities to think, willingness to take initiative and preparedness to use skills effectively.

Taylor's contribution is being appreciated now than when he was alive. For example, Peter Drucker believes that Taylor's work has had the same degree of impact upon the world as the work of Karl Marx or Sigmund Freud. The basic tenets of Scientific Management – science, not rule of thumb; harmony, not discord; co-operation, not individualization; maximum output, not restricted output; and the development of each person to his greatest efficiency and prosperity were relevant during Taylor's days, are relevant today and will continue to be so in days to come.

Human Relations Model: It became clear that the assumption that workers were primarily motivated by money, proved to be inadequate. Elton Mayo and other human relations researchers found that the social contacts which the workers had at workplaces were also important and that the boredom and repetitiveness of tasks were themselves factors in reducing motivation. Mayo and others also believed that managers could motivate employees by acknowledging their social needs and by making them feel useful and important.

As a result, employees were given some freedom to make their own decisions on their jobs. Greater attention was paid to the organization's informal work groups. More information was provided to employees about the manager's intentions and about the operations of the organization.

The Scientific Management model workers had been expected to accept management's authority in return for high wages made possible by the efficient system designed by management and implemented by the workers. In the Human Relations Model, workers were expected to accept management's authority because supervisors treated them with consideration and were attentive to their needs.

The problem with the Human Relations Model is its undue reliance on social contacts at work situation for motivating employees. Social contacts, though desirable by themselves will not always help motivate workers.

Notwithstanding what the early theories contain, there is no gainsaying the fact that for motivating employees it is necessary to ensure the feeling in them that the employees are gaining something from their actions. It is not enough that accomplishment of a task is important for the welfare of the organization. To energise an employee, managers must make the accomplishment of work tasks contribute to the welfare of the employee as well. This is the realm of content theories of motivation. **Content theories of motivation** outline what workers want and need and therefore what tools managers can use to motivate their subordinates.

Additionally, motivating employees means that their actions must be properly *directed*. This implies that the employees have learnt what needs to be done and how and when to do it. Directing behaviour is the realm of **process theories of motivation**. These theories describe how managers can use knowledge of subordinates' needs and desires to direct subordinate behaviour appropriately.

3.2.1 Needs Theories

Maslow's need hierarchy theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory, Alderfer's ERG theory, McClelland's achievement theory and Murray's manifest needs theories are classified as content theories. These theories use individual needs to help in the

understanding of job satisfaction and work behaviours. Needs reflect either physiological or psychological deficiencies. Hunger, for example, is a physiological need, desire for emotional support is a psychological need. Needs are an additional aspect of individual attributes which complement his/her demographic, contemporary and psychological characteristics.

Although content theories disagree somewhat concerning the exact nature of the needs, they do agree that

| Individual needs | Activate | Tensions | That / Influence | Job satisfaction and Work behaviour |
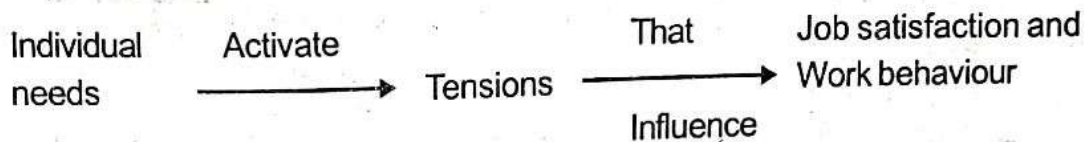
Stated more clearly, content theorists suggest that the manager's job is to create work environment that responds positively to individual needs. Such things as poor performance, undesirable behaviours and decreased satisfactions can be partially explained in terms of dissatisfied needs. Also, the motivational value and rewards can be analysed in terms of "activated" needs to which a given reward either does or does not respond.

Maslow's need Hierarchy Theory: The need hierarchy model of motivation propounded by Abraham Harold Maslow is undoubtedly the simplest and most widely discussed theory of motivation. The essence of the theory may be summarized thus:

(a) People are wanting beings whose needs can influence their behaviour. Only unsatisfied needs can influence behaviour, satisfied need do not act as motivators.

(b) Since needs are many, they are arranged in an order of importance, or hierarchy (hence the nomenclature need-hierarchy theory of motivation), from the basic to the complex.

(c) The person advances to the next level of hierarchy, or from the basic to the complex, only when the lower level need is at least minimally satisfied.

(d) Further up the hierarchy the person is able to go, the more individuality, humanness and psychological health he will display.

The Needs: Maslow's need hierarchy divides human needs into five levels as shown in Fig. 3.3. Each level represents a group of needs – not one need for each level.

The most basic level of needs comprises the primary or physiological ones. So long as they are unsatisfied, they monopolise a person's consciousness and have virtually exclusive power to motivate behaviour. However, when they are satisfied, they cease to be motivators.
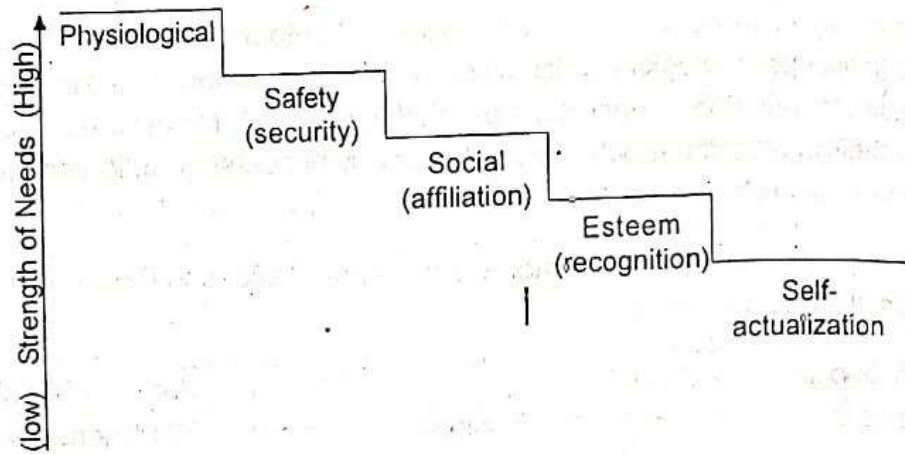
Fig. 3.3: Maslow's hierarchy of needs — Dominance of physiological needs

(Figures 3.3 to 3.7 are based on *Management and Organizational Behaviour* by Paul Hersey and others).
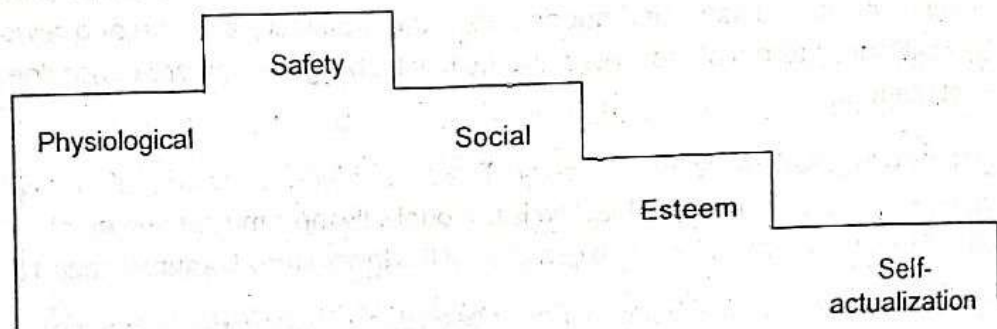

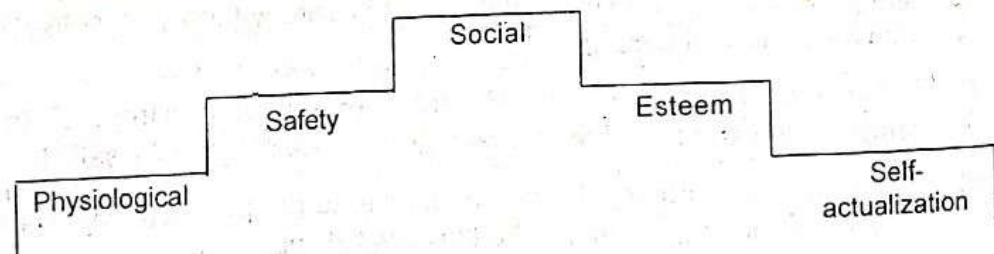**Fig. 3.4: Safety needs dominant in the need structure**

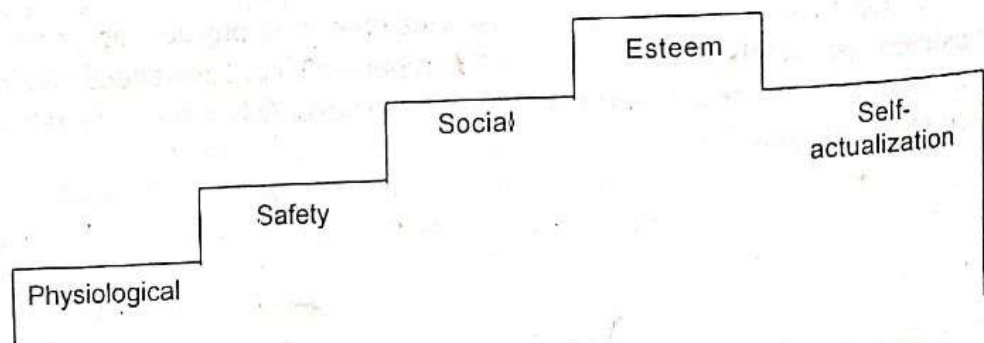**Fig. 3.5: Social needs dominant in the need structure**

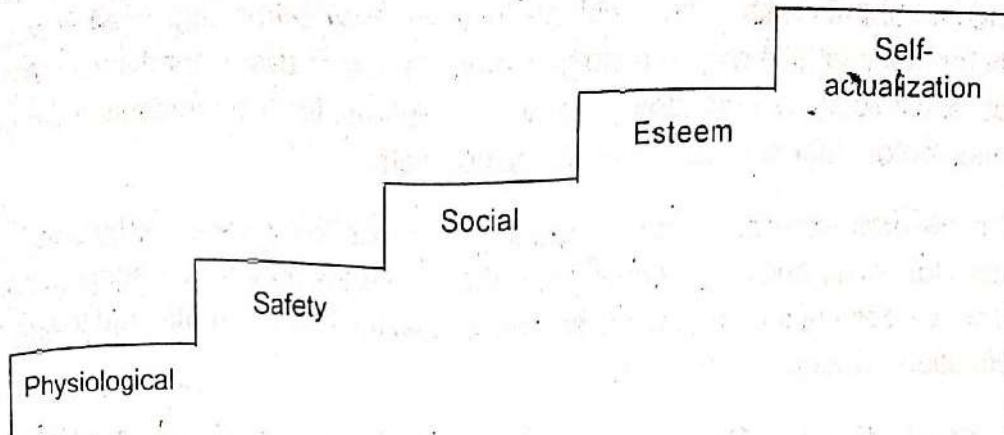**Fig. 3.6: Esteem needs dominant in the need structure**

Fig. 3.7: self-actualization needs dominant in the need structure

The satisfaction of primary needs does not produce contentment, instead, it unleashes a new series of discontents. The secondary needs now begin to acquire the power to motivate. People do not stop wanting; after physiological needs are fulfilled, they begin to want, in succession, safety, love, esteem and self-realisation. Maslow also suggested that people can travel down as well as up the hierarchy. Loss of existing satisfaction of primary needs, for example, can reactivate the level and increase its relative importance. A detailed description of each level needs as follows.

Physiological Needs: The most basic, powerful and obvious of all human needs is the need for physical survival. (See Fig. 3.3). Included in this group are the needs for food, drink, oxygen, sleep, sex, protection from extreme temperature and sensory stimulation. These physiological drives are directly concerned with the biological maintenance of the organism and motivated by higher order needs. Put another way, the person who fails to satisfy this basic level of needs just won't be around long enough to attempt satisfaction of higher need levels.

Admittedly, the social-physical environment in our country provides for the satisfaction of primary needs for most persons. However, if one of these needs remains unsatisfied, the individual rapidly becomes dominated by that need, so that all other need quickly become non-existent or decidedly secondary. The chronically hungry person will never strive to compose music, or build a brave new world. Such a person is much too preoccupied with getting something to eat. Maslow adds :

For our chronically and extremely hungry man, Utopia can be defined simply as a place where there is plenty of food. He tends to think that, if only he is guaranteed food for the rest of his life, he will be perfectly happy and will never want anything more. Life itself tends to be defined in terms of eating. Anything else will be defined as unimportant. Freedom, love, community feeling, respect, philosophy, may all be waved aside as fripperies that are useless, since they fail to fill the stomach. Such a man may fairly be said to live by bread alone.

Physiological needs are crucial to the understanding of human behaviour. The devastating effects on behaviour produced by a lack of food or water have been chronicled in numerous experiments and autobiographies. One terrifying example of the behavioural effects brought about by prolonged food deprivation occurred when a Peruvian airliner crashed deep in the jungles of South America in 1970. Trapped with a dwindling supply of food, the survivors, including a catholic priest, resorted to eating

the victims of the crash. This incident illustrates how deeply ingrained social and moral taboos can give way to biological drives under stressful conditions. Without doubt, physiological needs dominate human desires, forcing themselves on one's attention before higher order goals can be pursued.

In the organizational context, physiological needs are represented by employees concern for salary and basic working conditions. It is the duty of managers to ensure that these needs of the employees are met so that they can be motivated to strive for gratification of higher order needs.

Safety Needs: Once physiological needs are met, another set of motives, called safety or security needs, become motivators. (See Fig. 3.4) The primary motivating force here is to ensure a reasonable degree of continuity, order structure and predictability in one's environment. Maslow suggested that the safety needs are most readily observed in infants and young children because of their relative helplessness and dependence on adults.

Safety needs exert influence beyond childhood. The preference for secured income, the acquisition of insurance and owning one's own house may be regarded as motivated in part by safety seeking. At least in part, religious and philosophic belief systems may also be interpreted in this fashion. Religions and philosophies help a person organise his world and the people in it into a coherent and meaningful whole, thus, making the person feel "safe." Other expressions of the need for safety occur when individuals are confronted with real emergencies, e.g., war, crime, waves, floods, earthquakes, riots, social disorganizations and similar other conditions.

Security needs in the organizational context correlate to such factors as job security, salary increases, safe working conditions, unionization and lobbying for protective legislation. Managerial practices to satisfy the safety needs of employees include pension scheme, group insurance, provident fund, gratuity, safe working conditions, grievance procedure, system of seniority to govern lay-off and others. Arbitrary or unpredictable actions, actions which create feeling of uncertainty (particularly regarding continued employment), favouritism, or discrimination on the part of superiors hardly create feeling of security in an employee's mind.

Social Needs: Also called belonging and love needs, these constitute the third level in the hierarchy of needs. (See Fig. 3.5). These needs arise when physiological and safety needs are satisfied. An individual motivated on this level longs for affectionate relationship with others, namely, for a place in his or her family and or reference groups. Group membership becomes a dominant goal for the individual. Accordingly, the person will feel keenly the pangs of loneliness, social ostracism, friendliness and rejection, especially when induced by the absence of friends, relatives, a spouse or children.

Unlike Freud who equated love with sex, Maslow believed that love involves a healthy, loving relationship between two people, which includes mutual respect, admiration and trust. Maslow also stressed that love needs involve both giving and receiving love. Being loved and accepted is instrumental to healthy feelings of worth. Not being loved leads to feelings of futility, emptiness and hostility.

In the organizational context, social needs represent the need for a compatible work group, peer acceptance, professional friendship and friendly supervision. Managers do well to encourage informal groups. Besides, supervision needs to be effective and friendly behaviour with subordinates pays.

Unfortunately, many managers view friendly relations of employees with their peers as a threat to the organization and act accordingly. Managers have often gone to considerable lengths to control and direct employees' relationships in ways that are opposed to the natural groupings of human beings. Therefore, when a manager assumes that informal groups always threaten the organization, and actively strives to break up existing groups, the individuals affected may become resistant, antagonistic and uncooperative. These resistant actions are often consequences or symptoms, not causes, for the manager may have thwarted the satisfaction of social needs and perhaps even safety needs.

Self-Esteem Needs: Next in Maslow's hierarchy are esteem or egoistic needs. (See Fig. 3.6). Maslow classified these needs into two subsidiary sets : self-respect and esteem from others. The former includes such things as desire for competence, confidence, personal strength, adequacy, achievement, independence and freedom. An individual needs to know that he is worthwhile and capable of mastering tasks and challenges in life. Esteem from others includes prestige, recognition, acceptance, attention, status, reputation and appreciation. In this case individuals need to be appreciated for what they can do, i.e., they must experience feelings of worth because their competence is recognised and valued by others.

Satisfaction of the self-esteem needs generates feelings and attitudes of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and of being useful and necessary in the world. In contrast, the thwarting of these needs leads to feelings and attitudes of inferiority, ineptness, weakness and helplessness. These negative self-perceptions, may, in turn give rise to basic discouragement, sense of futility and hopelessness in dealing with life's demands and a low evaluation of self *vis-à-vis* others. Maslow emphasised that the most healthy self-esteem is based on earned respect from others rather than on fame, status, or adulation. Esteem is the result of effort – it is earned. Hence, there is a real psychological danger of basing one's esteem needs on the opinions of others rather than on real ability, achievement and adequacy. Once a person relies exclusively upon the opinions of others for his own self-esteem, he places himself in psychological jeopardy. To be solid, self-esteem must be founded on one's actual worth rather than on external factors beyond one's control.

In the workplace self-esteem needs correspond to job title, merit pay increase, peer/supervisory recognition, challenging work, responsibility, and publicity in company publications. Managerial practices to fulfil these needs include challenging work assignments, performance feedback, performance recognition, personal encouragement and involving employees in goal getting and decision-making.

Self-Actualisation Needs: Finally, if all the earlier four level needs are satisfied, the need for self-actualisation comes to the fore (See Fig. 3.7). Maslow characterised self-actualisation as the desire to become everything that one is capable of becoming. The person who has achieved this highest-level presses towards the full use and exploitation of his talents, capacities and potentialities. In other words, to self-actualize

is to become the total kind of person that one wants to become to reach the peak of one's potential.

The need for self-actualisation is distinctive, in that it is never fully satisfied. It appears to remain important and insatiable. The more apparent satisfaction of it a person obtains, the more important the need for more seems to become.

Though the impulse to realise one's potential is natural and necessary, only a few, usually the gifted, ever do so. Maslow himself estimated that less than one per cent of the population fulfils the need for self-actualisation. Maslow advances three reasons for this. *First*, people are invariably blind to their own potentialities. *Second*, the social environment often stifles development towards self-fulfilment. Women, for example, were stereotyped for long, to be housewives. This prevented them from reaching self-fulfillment. A *final* obstacle is the strong negative influence exercised by the safety needs. The growth process demands a constant willingness to take risks, to make mistakes, and to break old habits. This requires courage. It logically follows that anything that increases the individual's fear and anxiety also increases his tendency to regress towards safety and security.

In an organization, self-actualisation needs correlate to desire for excelling oneself in one's job, advancing an important idea, successfully managing a unit and the like. By being aware of the self-actualisation needs of subordinates, managers can use a variety of approaches to enable subordinates to achieve personal as well as organizational goals.

Maslow's theory represents a significant departure from economic theories of motivation. As a result the theory has an important impact in two ways. First, the theory presents an entire array of non-economic worker needs. If an employee does not respond to economic incentives, managers have alternative sources of employee motivation to consider. Second, Maslow's hierarchy provides an important explanation for the changing motivation of workers overtime. When a new employee first starts on the job, needs lower on the hierarchy – physiological or safety needs – are likely to command the most attention. Later, as these needs are fulfilled, the employee's attention will turn to the fulfilment of higher-order needs, such as gaining the acceptance and respect of co-workers.

Fig. 3.8 illustrates one's ascension up the hierarchy of needs. The individual is able to go further up only when his previous needs are satisfied. If unsatisfied, the needs will hold his concentration till they are satisfied. Thus, there is satisfaction – progression dimension in Maslow's model.
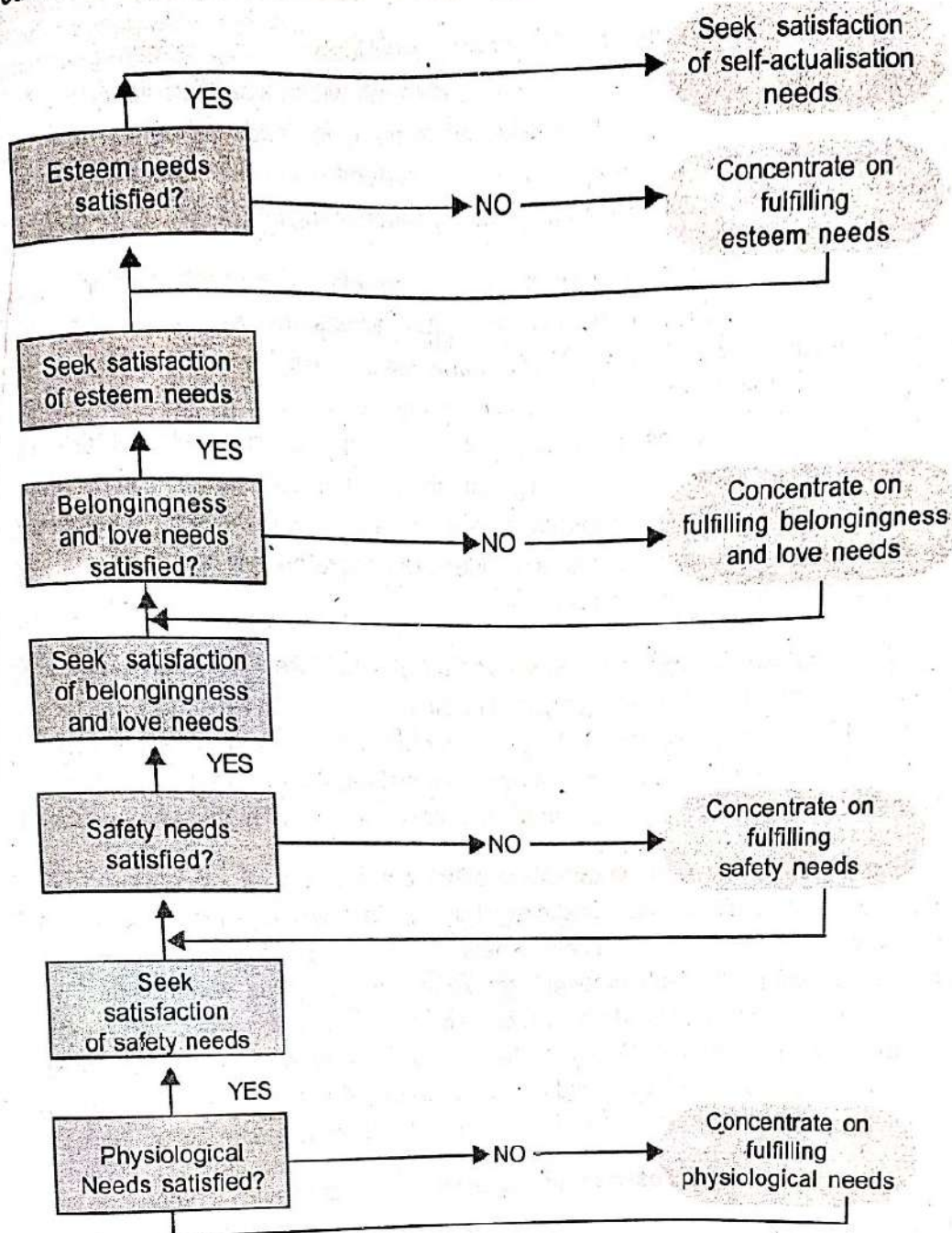
Fig. 3.8: Flow diagram of Needs satisfaction

(*Source:* T. Herbert, *Dimensions of Organizational Behaviour*, p.23)

What is the role of a typical manager? The task is to lift the employees from lower level needs to the higher level ones. Employees must be motivated to aspire for self-actualisation needs.

Evaluation of the Model: Maslow's theory represents a significant departure from economic theories of motivation. As a result the theory has an important impact in two ways. *First,* the theory presents an entire array of non-economic worker needs. If an employee does not respond to economic incentives, managers have alternative sources of employee motivation to consider.

Second, Maslow's hierarchy provides an important explanation for the changing motivations of workers overtime. When a new employee first starts on the job, needs lower on the hierarchy – physiological or safety needs – are likely to command the most attention. Later, as these needs are fulfilled, the employee's attention will turn to the fulfilment of higher-order needs, such as gaining the acceptance and respect of co-workers.

Third, it is said that the theory offers some useful ideas for helping managers think about motivating their employees. As a result of their widespread familiarity with the model, the managers are more likely to identify employee needs, recognise that they may be different across employees, offer satisfaction for the particular needs and realise that giving more of the same reward may have a diminishing impact on motivation.

The *fourth* merit of the theory is that it accounts for both interpersonal and intrapersonal variations in human behaviour. It suggests answers to questions that have puzzled supervisors. Why do some employees seem highly motivated by money while others are not ? Why do some workers get engrossed in their work, while others loaf around ? The answer may be that they occupy varying levels on Maslow's needs hierarchy. This has an important implication for the manager. The implication is that the desired behaviour is most likely to occur if it results in the satisfaction of an employee's prepotent need. Rewards or incentives, therefore will be effective when they are linked to the prepotent level.

Fifth, the need hierarchy model is dynamic in that it presents motivation as a constantly changing force, expressing itself through the constant striving for fulfilment of new and higher levels of needs. Man is never satisfied. Instead of resting on his laurels when one goal is reached or a need is satisfied, the individual will typically redirect his efforts and capacities towards the attainment of still higher level needs.

Sixth, Maslow's approach to human behaviour marks a total departure from earlier approaches. Called humanistic psychology, Maslow's approach is based on existential philosophy. One of the basic tenets of *existential philosophy* is that a man is a healthy, good and creative being, capable of carving out his own destiny. The philosophy prompted Maslow to conceptualise self-actualisation needs. One may not subscribe to existential philosophy, but Maslow deserves to be complimented because of his departure from Freud who was obsessed with sex and skinner who sought to extend observations derived from animal research to human behaviour.

Finally, the theory deserves appreciation for its simplicity, commonness, humanness and intuitiveness.

The need hierarchy theory has been criticised by many and the number of critics exceeds the number who support the theory.

First, it is said that Maslow's theory is not a theory of work motivation. In fact, Maslow, himself did not intend that his need hierarchy be directly applied to work motivation. He did not delve into the motivating aspects of humans in organizations until about 20 years after he originally proposed his theory. Despite this lack of intent on Maslow's part, others, such as Douglas McGregor, in his widely read book "The Human Side of Enterprise", popularized Maslow's theory in management literature.

Second, the hierarchy of needs simply does not exist. At all levels needs are present at given time. An individual motivated by self-actualisation needs, for example, cannot afford to forget his food.

Third, assuming hierarchy does exist among needs, it may not be the same in all countries. Maslow's hierarchy applies to American and British managers. Japanese managers, however, would seem to have hierarchy that places social and security

needs higher, because they are less well satisfied than self-actualisation. Northern European managers would seem to have a hierarchy that reverses Maslow's positioning of safety and love. These and other variations imply that Maslow's hierarchy may be better reflection of the culture of its birth than a guide to motivation in other cultures.

Table 3.1 brings out different ordering of needs in six different countries.

TABLE 3.1: ORDERING OF NEEDS ACROSS COUNTRIES	
Country	Need Priority
United States and Japan	Self-actualisation, esteem, safety, physiological and social
France	Self-actualisation, esteem, physiological, safety and social
Germany	Self-actualisation, physiological, esteem, social and safety
India	Physiological, self-actualisation, esteem, social and safety
Malawi	Physiological, self-actualisation, esteem, safety and social
China	Self-actualisation, safety, physiological and social

(*Source:* Manab Thakur, *et al., International Managment,* Tata McGraw-Hill, 1997, p.177)

Because of the differing need priorities organizations, particularly MNCs, need to adopt different personnel policies and practices to meet local needs. This was what Honda did in the U.S when it set up its plant.

Fourth, not only are there differences across countries in needs hierarchy, there are variations within countries and among individuals. Within a country, culturally disadvantaged employees may feel stronger deprivation of lower level needs, whereas culturally advantaged employees seek satisfaction of higher level needs.

Maslow himself pointed out that individuals differ in the relative intensity of their various needs. For example, some individuals remain strongly influenced by feeling of insecurity despite objective conditions that satisfy the needs of most similarly situated persons.

Fifth, Maslow's assumption about psychological health is not acceptable to many. His existential philosophy is also questioned by the critics. Contrary to Maslow's belief, many individuals may stay content with lower level needs – physiological or safety needs. They may not move farther in the hierarchy of needs in search of satisfaction.

Sixth, it has also been pointed that managers will not have time to leisurely diagnose of where every employee is on Maslow's hierarchy. Further more, they may not be free to supply rewards tailor-made to each of them. Given these constraints in addition to the presence of cultural and individual differences in patterns of need satisfaction, how can manager make any practical use of Maslow's theory?

In spite of its serious limitations, the need hierarchy theory is important because of its contribution in terms of making management reward diverse needs of humans at work. Their names of hierarchy are not important. But some of them, particularly

higher level needs like esteem and actualisation needs, are important to the content of work motivation.

Motivation-Hygiene Theory: Another very popular theory of motivation is that proposed by psychologist Frederick Herzberg. (This model, which is variously termed the two-factor theory, the dual factor theory, and the motivation-hygiene theory, has been widely accepted by managers concerned with the problem of human behaviour at work.)

There are two distinct aspects of the motivation-hygiene theory. The first and more basic part of model represents a formally stated theory of work behaviour. It is this two-factor model of motivation which is considered in this chapter. The second aspect of Herzberg's work has focused upon the behavioural consequences of job enrichment and job satisfaction programmes. The second aspect will be considered in the next chapter.

Herzberg and his associates Mausner, Peterson and Capwell began their initial work on factors affecting work motivation in the mid-50s. Their first effort entailed a thorough review of existing research to the date on the subject. Based on this review, Herzberg carried out his now famous survey of 200 accountants and engineers. Herzberg used the critical incident method of obtaining data for analysis.

Hygiene: Job dissatisfaction	Motivators: Job satisfaction
	Achievement
	Recognition of achievement
	Work itself
	Responsibility
	Advancement
	Growth
Company policy and administration	
Supervision	
Interpersonal relations	
Working conditions	
Salary*	
Status	
Security	

Fig. 3.9: Herzberg's Hygienes and Motivators

* Because of its ubiquitous nature, salary commonly shows up as a motivator as well as hygiene. Although primarily a hygiene factor, it also often takes on some of the properties of a motivator, with dynamics similar to those of recognition for achievement.

The respondents were essentially asked two questions: (1) When did you feel particularly good about your job; and (2) When did you feel exceptionally bad about your job?

Responses obtained from this critical incident method were interesting. It was revealed that factors which made respondents feel good were totally different from those which made them feel bad. As seen in Fig. 3.9, certain characteristics tend to be consistently related to job-satisfaction (factors on the right-side of the figure), and others to job-dissatisfaction (factors on the left-side of the figure).

Intrinsic factors, such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth seem to be related to job-satisfaction. These factors are variously known as motivators, satisfiers and job content factors. When questioned when they felt good about their work, respondents tended to attribute these characteristics to themselves. On the other hand, when they were dissatisfied, they tended to extrinsic factors, such as company policy and administration, supervision, work conditions, salary, status, security and interpersonal relations. These factors are also known as dissatisfiers, hygiene factors, maintenance factors or job content factors. Herzberg chose the term hygiene and maintenance to describe these factors as they help prevent occurrence of undesirable consequences.

According to Herzberg, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not opposite poles of one dimension, they are two separate dimensions. Satisfaction is affected by motivators and dissatisfaction by hygiene factors. This is the key idea of Herzberg and it has important implications for managers.

To achieve motivation, managers should cope with both satisfiers and dissatisfiers. Improve hygiene factors – dissatisfaction is removed from the minds of employees. A favourable frame of mind is not created for motivation. Provide satisfiers, motivation will then take place. Managers should be realistic not to expect motivation by only improving the "hygiene" work environment.

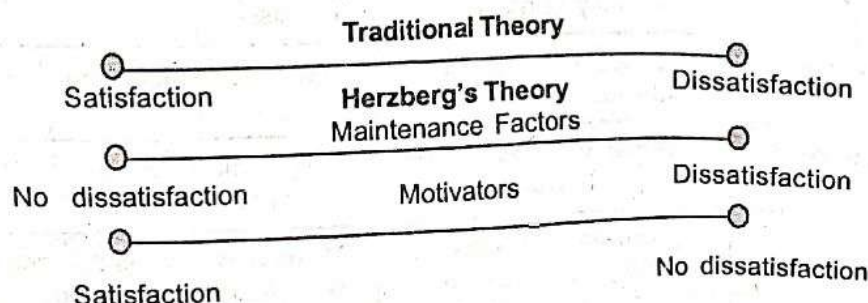This is the crux of the two-factor theory of motivation. Fig. 3.10 diagrams the essence of the Herzberg's model.

Traditional Theory

Satisfaction ———————————————— Dissatisfaction

Herzberg's Theory
Maintenance Factors

No dissatisfaction ———————————————— Dissatisfaction

Motivators

Satisfaction ———————————————— No dissatisfaction

Fig. 3.10: Essence of the Two-factor Theory

Need Hierarchy and Two-factor Theories Compared and Contrasted: There are similarities and dissimilarities between Maslow's need hierarchy and Herzberg's hygiene-motivation theories of motivation. Both of them have become very popular and have been widely accepted by academics and managers. The most striking similarity between the two theories is that they assume that specific needs energise

behaviour. Further more, there appears to be a great deal of agreement as to the totality of human needs. Fig. 3.11 shows how the needs in both the models might be related. It is reasonable to argue that Herzberg's motivators satisfy the higher order needs of Maslow's i.e., self-esteem and self-actualisation.
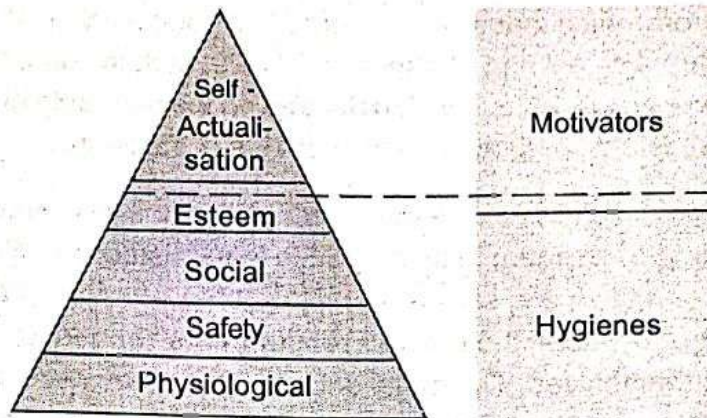

Fig. 3.11: A Comparison of Maslow's need Hierarchy and Herzberg's Two-factor Theory

The hygiene factors are the equivalent of the physiological, security and social needs of the need hierarchy model.

The differences between the two models are presented in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MASLOW'S AND HERZBERG'S MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES

Issue	Maslow	Herzberg
Type of theory	Descriptive	Prescriptive
The satisfaction performance relationship	Unsatisfied needs energise behaviour, this behaviour causes performance	Needs cause performance
Effect of need satisfaction	A satisfied need is not a motivator (except self – actualisation)	A satisfied (hygiene) need is not a motivator, other satisfied needs are motivators
Need order	Hierarchy of needs	No hierarchy
Effect of pay	Pay is a motivator if it satisfies needs	Pay is not a motivator
Effect of needs	All needs are motivators at various times	Only some needs are motivators
View of motivation	Macro view – deals with all aspects of existence	Micro view – deals primarily with work-related motivation
Worker level	Relevant for all workers	Probably more relevant to white-collar and professional workers

Evaluation of the Two-Factor Theory: Like the need hierarchy theory, the hygiene-motivation theory has been the subject of appreciation and criticism. The criticisms of the theory are the following :

(a) The procedure that Herzberg adopted is limited by its methodology. When things are going well people claim credit for themselves. Contrarily, they blame failure on the extrinsic environment.

(b) The reliability of Herzberg's methodology is questioned. Since raters have to make interpretations, it is possible that they may contaminate the findings by interpreting one response in one manner while treating another similar response differently.

(c) The theory, to the degree that it is valid, provides an explanation of job-satisfaction. It is not really a theory of motivation.

(d) No overall measure of satisfaction was utilised. In other words, a person may dislike part of his job, yet think the job is acceptable.

(e) The theory is inconsistent with previous research. The motivation hygiene theory ignores situational variables.

(f) Herzberg assumes that there is a relationship between satisfaction and productivity. But the research methodology he used looked only at satisfaction, not at productivity. To make such research relevant, one must assume a high relationship between satisfaction and productivity.

(g) The two factors are not actually distinct. Both motivators and hygiene contribute to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

(h) Thanks to Herzberg's theory, there has been a tremendous emphasis on motivators. The importance of hygiene factors has been ignored.

A study conducted by Sarveswara Rao G.V. (1972) revealed certain facts which are worth quoting here. The findings are: (1) the two-factor theory is an over generalisation of facts and it is methodologically bound; (2) satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two distinct feelings; (3) both motivators and hygiene factors contribute to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction, although the relative influence of the two factors vary according to occupational levels, and (4) motivators have more potential influence on both satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

There are certain merits of the theory. One of the most significant contribution of Herzberg's work was the tremendous impact it had on stimulating thought, research and experimentation on the topic of motivation at work. Before 1959, little research had been carried out in the area of work motivation and the research that did exist was largely fragmentary. Maslow's work on the need hierarchy theory and others were largely concerned with laboratory based findings, or clinical observations and neither had seriously addressed the problems of the work place at that time. Herzberg filled this void by specially calling attention to the need for increased understanding of the role of motivation in organization.

Second, Herzberg's theory offers specific action recommendation for managers to improve motivational levels. Herzberg cleared many misconceptions concerning motivation. For example, he argued that money should not be viewed as the most potent force on the job. He advanced a strong case for "content" factors which have a considerable bearing on behaviour. According to Herzberg, it is these content factors and not money that are primarily related to work motivation.

Third, the job design technique of job enrichment is the contribution of Herzbeg.