

Perception and Attribution Process



**Discipline Courses-I**

**Semester-I**

**Paper : Organization Behaviour**

**Unit-I**

**Lesson: Perception and Attribution Process**

**Lesson Developer: Nomita Sharma**

**College/Department: SSCBS- BBS, University of Delhi**

## Table of Contents:

### Lesson: Perception and Attribution Process

- 1: Learning Outcomes
- 2: Introduction
- 3: Myer Briggs Type Indicator
  - 3.1: Important Aspects of MBTI
  - 3.2: Criticism for MBTI
- 4: Perception
  - 4.1: Process of Perception
  - 4.2: Perception Vs. Reality
  - 4.3: Factors Affecting Perception
  - 4.4: Perception and Senses
  - 4.5: Social Perception
- 5: Attribution
  - 5.1: Attribution Theory
  - 5.2: Process of Attribution
  - 5.3: Dimensions of Attribution

Summary  
Exercises  
Glossary  
References

### 1. Learning Outcomes:

After you have read this lesson, you should be able to:

- understand the use of Myer Briggs Type Indicator questionnaire to analyze perception of an individual,
- identify the psychological type of an individual,
- differentiate between perception and reality,
- comprehend the factors affecting perception,
- appreciate the perception of a groups in social environment,
- understand the concept and process of attribution,

- appreciate the dimensions of attribution.

## 2. Introduction:

People have varying personalities. They interpret and behave in similar situations differently. The preferences, choices and decisions that people make, differ considerably. Such differences among people inspire us to study their personality types so that we can identify ourselves and others; understand our and others behaviour; and predict the manner in which people respond to situations. Individuals tend to perceive things in a different manner. Due to which they attribute their success or failure to different factors. Difference in perception and attribution also affects their judgmental quality. Perception is all about becoming aware about surrounding environment. This helps in judging different situations in a right manner. The concepts like MBTI, perception, process of perception and attribution theory are discussed in this lesson to help us understand the behaviour of people.

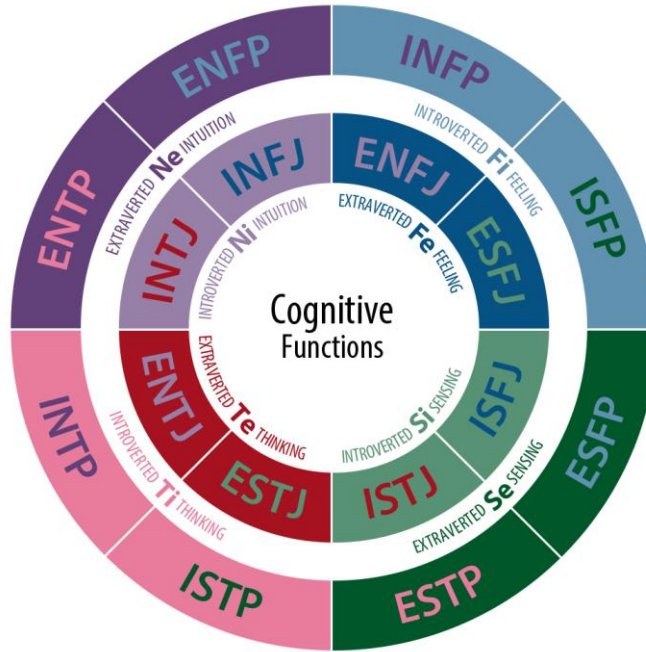
## 3. Myer Briggs Type Indicator

The MyersBriggsType Indicator (MBTI) represents a questionnaire that analyses psychological choices with respect to perception of people about the world in making decisions. Carl Jung gave four principles i.e. - intuition, feeling, thinking and sensation. Thinking and feeling represented the rational side of a person in his theory; and sensation and intuition represented the irrational side. According to him, individuals were described either as extroverts or introverts. Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers, studied the work of Jung extensively. Their research resulted in MBTI tool. This resulted in application of psychology. It was created during the time when world witnessed World War II. The main motive of MBTI was to use women workforce as industrial workforce. The theory draws its analogy with left and right hand in human body. It reflects that human beings are wired to think in a certain way. This is also true for perceiving and making decisions.

MBTI presents the differences in individual psychology. These differences are arranged into four opposite pairs. **E**xtraversion (E) - (I) **I**ntroversion, **S**ensing (S) - (N) **I**ntuition, **T**hinking (T) - (F) **F**eeling, and **J**udging (J) - (P) **P**erception. A person may be an extrovert, may be usually found to make preferences based on intuition, his gut feeling and after perceiving the event or object in a certain manner. His personality type may be expressed as EIFP. Similarly, another person may be an introvert, may be usually found to make preferences based on intuition and thinking, after judging the event or object in a certain manner. His personality type would be expressed as IITJ. The various combinations that emerge from these four pairs represent sixteen different types of psychological types shown in the figure below.

# Perception and Attribution Process

Figure 1: Sixteen Combinations for Personality Types



Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e6/CognitiveFunctions.png>

<b>Value Addition 1: Video</b>
<b>MBTI</b>
<p>Click on the link below to see a short snippet on the introduction of MBTI that is designed to identify the psychology differences among individuals. This introductory video will help you identify yourself and others as a combination of four dimensions listed below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extroversion (E) - (I) Introversion,</li> <li>2. Sensing (S) - (N) Intuition,</li> <li>3. Thinking (T) - (F) Feeling, and</li> <li>4. Judging (J) - (P) Perception.</li> </ol> <p>The introduction to the type of personality one falls into helps identify the stimulus for that person. It is therefore important to understand oneself and others with respect to personality types.</p> <p>Source: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHSZ3_VMgJU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHSZ3_VMgJU</a></p>

Let us describe these four pairs of an individual's personality.

## Extraversion/Introversion (E/I)

Extraversion represents a condition where a person is more open to meet and talk to others, while introversion represents a condition where a person keeps only to himself and shy away in meeting and talking to others. They represent two types of attitudes that are analyzed by MBTI. These can be analyzed with respect to behavior, action and things. Extroverts are action oriented. If they are inactive, their motivation decreases with inaction.

Extroverts need more action and introverts prefer a quiet time alone and away from active life to rebuild their energy. Extroverts use their energy on other people and objects while

## Perception and Attribution Process

introverts use it on their ideas and concepts. Following points differentiate extraverts and introverts:

- Action drives extraverts while introverts are driven by thought.
- Extraverts want more of knowledge, while introverts want more detail of knowledge.
- Extraverts want to interact more, while introverts want more meaningful interaction.
- Extraverts want to spend more time with people, while introverts want to spend more time with themselves.

By transacting with the outside environment, extraverts are able to process and make sense of new information. Introverted types prefer quiet reflection and privacy. Processing of information occurs for introverts when they explore ideas and concepts internally.

### **Value Addition 2: Video**

#### **Introvert**

Click on the link below to watch a video 'A Glimpse into the Challenges of an Introvert'. The video demonstrates the psychological reactions of introvert people when they are exposed to different people and situations.

Discuss your views on the video with your peers and identify whether you are an introvert or an extrovert.

Source: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfZatw7B5\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfZatw7B5_I)

#### **Sensing/Intuition (S/N)**

Sensing and intuition are functions that analyze perception. It explains meaning of information. Individuals who prefer sensing are more likely to trust information that is more tangible and concrete. They believe in having more details and facts. They look for meaning within the lines. Individuals, who prefer intuition, tend to trust theoretical information. They associate it with other information. They are more interested in future prospects. They tend to search for the meaning in the conceptual theory.

Sensing types prefer environment that provides them an opportunity to learn. They also want things to be detailed and in a systematic way. Sensing types focus on present, and are able to move to the abstract only after they have established some concrete experience. Intuitive types prefer a learning atmosphere that focuses on meaning and associations.

#### **Thinking/Feeling (T/F)**

Thinking and feeling are the functions that help in judging others. They are used to make logical decisions. Those who prefer thinking tend to decide things in a reasonable manner. Thinkers find it difficult to interact with illogical people and are direct in giving feedback to others. They value truth and consider it more important. Those who prefer feeling tend to use more of empathizing with the situation. They tend to see the inside and outside of the situation. Thinking types focus on deductive reasoning and give more importance to objectivity. Feeling types, on the other hand, put more emphasis on personalized causes.

#### **Judging/Perception (J/P)**

Myers and Briggs showed that individuals with preference for judging show the world their choice of judging function. Thus TJ (Thinking-Judging) types are logical and FJ (Feeling-Judging) types as empathetic. But individuals who prefer perception show the world their choice as perceiving function (sensing or intuition). Introverts are active in those cases where it is of any importance to their life.



## Perception and Attribution Process

Judging types want information that is more organized and systematic and they are motivated to reach end goals. Perceiving types will progress in an environment that is flexible enough to provide space for learning. This can give them more space for creativity and innovation.

Figure 2: Click on the link below to view the 16 Personality types

Source: <http://sodzee.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/alltypes.jpg>

<b>Value Addition 3: Video</b>
<b>Discover Your Personality Type</b>
Click on the link below to watch a video that will help you discover your personality based on four facets of personality. It will help you identify what activities energize you, how you take in information about the world around you, on what basis do you make decisions, and how you prefer to organize your life. It helps you identify your personality type out of the 16 combinations of personality types given by Myer Brigg.
Source: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQoOqQiVzwQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQoOqQiVzwQ</a>

None of the above types can be labeled as good or bad; best or worst. It is just that individuals prefer one combination to other in a natural manner. Just as Left-handers are different from Right handers, in the similar manner, one type of personality is different from the other type. It can only be said that these different types might find it difficult to adapt to the other types. MBTI only gives a specific meaning to their type. However, it might differ in reality. For example, a person who prefers perception over judgment is not necessarily more perceptive or less judgmental; it only reflects one's preference over another attribute. Similarly, a person with high score of extraversion over introversion cannot be exactly referred to as more extraverted; rather they just prefer to have a preference of one to the other.

The psychological type of a person is more than the sum of the four individual preferences. They do not represent an exact nature or personality of a person.

### 3.1 Important Aspects of MBTI

Individuals can judge their own and other peoples' personality types to some extent by using MBTI. Such information may be used by individuals in avoiding and resolving conflicts. Team members can identify the gaps in team, and work towards a better team performance. It also helps in developing emotional intelligence among people. It encourages the team members to identify strengths and weaknesses of the teams and understand each other's behaviors. Knowing one's personality type leads to personal development.

<b>Value Addition 4: Video</b>
<b>Application of MBTI</b>
Click on the link below to watch a video that describes how to be more productive and happier based on identification of one's personality type. This video will help you identify the most effective learning style for you based on your personality type.
Source: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72OW1F8ouvA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72OW1F8ouvA</a>

Figure 3: Click on the link below to see descriptive roles suitable for different personality types

Source: [http://www.bubblews.com/assets/images/news/2106970883\\_1372373821.jpg](http://www.bubblews.com/assets/images/news/2106970883_1372373821.jpg)

# Perception and Attribution Process

## 3.2 Criticism

MBTI has been criticized for many reasons. One of the reasons is unclear answer to 'Types' that people possess. Statistical ability of MBTI has been often questioned. The accuracy of the MBTI is dependent on true replies provided by the respondents. That may not be the case always, as respondents may not give accurate answers. MBTI seems to be quite vague and general to fit all types of personalities. MBTI questionnaire limits itself to only sixteen personality types but there may be more combinations to which individual's personality can apply. Moreover, MBTI questionnaire provides only an indication of the Type of one's personality and gives only reflection and not an exact representation of a personality type.

## 4. Perception

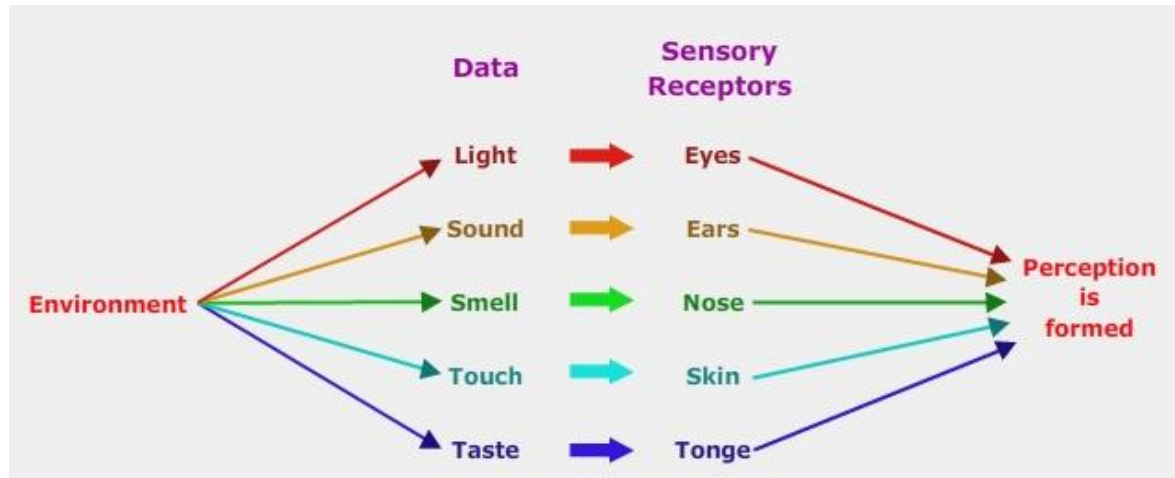
<b>Value Addition 5: Activity</b>
<b>Perception</b>
Count the number of T's you see in the short passage presented while quickly going through the text.
'TEENA TAUNTED THAT TONY IS SO TALL AND THERE IS TOTAL CONFUSION IN HIS TINY HUT.HIS TINY TOTS CREATE LOT OF DISTURBANCE.'
Hint: You might have missed some T's as most people miss some. This is just an exercise to make you a little more aware of the fact that what you perceive is not always the complete reality.

Perception means the way individuals analyze environment, objects and other individuals and give it a meaning. It includes a signal in the nervous system that provides stimulation to our senses. For example, when a manager hears a group of employees talking loudly, he might perceive them to be fighting. An employee wearing informal clothes at work may be perceived as someone who is not serious at work. Perception gets its shape from factors like learning environment, experience, memory and expectation. Perceptual issues include sensory qualities such as sound, smell or color that exist in objective reality rather than the mind of the perceiver. Individuals observe the world around them through perception. They do not see reality, but what they perceive becomes reality to them. Individual's brain is wired in a systematic way where different areas process different kinds of sensory information. For instance, kind of taste is strongly affected by its odor. The selection of music is strongly influenced by kind of music we hear and perceive.

The figure below describes the meaning of perception. Data in the form of senses like light, sound, smell, touch and taste is received by the sensory receptors from the environment. This data is then processed in the human brain and perception is formed.

Figure 4: Perception

## Perception and Attribution Process



### 4.1 Process of Perception

Perception is described as the process of making mental representations of our observation, what we see, hear, taste; using the information that is present in the external environment. Through light, sound or any physical process or thing, an object stimulates the sensory organs of the human beings. These organs, i.e. the sensory receptors, then transfer the signals to brain where they are processed. The result from brain leads to perception of individual.

An example would be an individual looking at a book. The book itself is the stimulus. When light from the book enters a person's eye and stimulates the person's retina, the image of the book is reconstructed by the brain of the person. Another example would be a ringing telephone. The ringing of the telephone is the stimulus. The sound stimulates person's auditory receptors, and the brain's interprets this sound.

#### Process of perception goes through the following steps:

First, perceiver encounters an unknown target (it could be an object, smell, sound), he wants to get more information and learn about.

Second, depending on the factors like curiosity/interest/past experience/expectation/knowledge and many more factors, the perceiver collects more information about the target. Slowly and steadily, he gets known cues and hints that help him in knowing or perceiving the target.

In the third stage, the hints become selective. Perceiver tries to find more cues that confirm the information about the target. At this stage perceiver tends to ignore other information that leads to any diversion from initial perceptions.

Finally, his perception becomes more selective and gets an exact picture of the target.

The figure below shows there is some stimulus in the internal or external environment that makes a person receive information through the sensory receptors, i.e. eyes, ears, nose, skin and tongue. The received stimulus is filtered (selective attention) because of previous knowledge or experience; concept of self or others; time, place and source of stimulus, and personal needs and emotional state. The filtered information is then organized, interpreted



## Perception and Attribution Process

and finally a perception gets formed. Perception leads to either a behavioral, cognitive or affective response. That is, there may be a change in the behavior, a change in the knowledge and understanding of an individual, or a change in attitudes and beliefs of a person. It must be remembered that when existing cognition is strengthened and not questioned by the information received or processed, perception may not cause a change, but it may reinforce the existing behavior, attitude and beliefs. In such a case, similar behavior is displayed; same attitudes and beliefs are held, although with greater conviction.

Figure5: Perception Process



### Elements/ Components of Perception

Three main components in the process of perception are:

1. The Perceiver- The person who gets to see/taste/hear the target is the first element in the perception process. There are important factors that shape his perception to enable him to come to a final understanding of the object are his experience, motivational and emotional state. However, it is possible that in different states, the perceiver is bound to react to or perceive the same object in different ways.
2. The Target- This is a person, object, smell or sound that is being perceived or judged. Lack of information about these things may lead to some confusion. The perceiver may require additional information to arrive at the exact meaning of the target.
3. Situation is the third component in the process of perception. On the basis of situation, people perceive things in connection with the surroundings/time/environment and form a perceptual shape in their mind about target. For example, when we see employees coming late for work, they might be perceived as latecomers or when we see employees overstaying after work hours, they might be perceived as doing extra work.

It needs to be remembered however that different people tend to perceive in a different manner depending on a number of variables. These may be their interest, experience, expectation, knowledge, family, age, gender, occupation, region, society or culture, surroundings, etc. For example, an employee singing in the morning while entering office premises might be perceived as in a good mood or a manager talking in loud voice to employees might be perceived as a strict manager. An employee carrying out work very fast or in a hurried manner might be perceived as someone who is in a hurry to finish work. Often employees working in multinational companies wear informal clothes in foreign countries as part of culture, same employees might be perceived as not so serious employees in other countries.

### **Value Addition 6: Video**

#### **Selective Attention Test**

Click on the link below to watch a video that demonstrates selective attention and test your perceiving ability.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo>

### **4.2 Perception Vs. Reality**

Just 'Seeing' a target often limits the result of perception and the perception falls short of reality. To have more clarity, a person needs to spend more time with the target or collect more information about it so that perception is equal to reality. When we see two female employees arguing in canteen, we might perceive them as if they are fighting, but it might be just the way of talking. Thus 'just seeing' leads to a more ambiguous perception, but when we find more information about the group and see the picture in totality, we reach closer to reality. 'Seeing in totality' means seeing the bigger picture and giving importance to or considering the other factors or surroundings nearby the target that are either related with the target or define it. Perception is formed by the brain on processing the stimulus received by sensory receptors. The perception thus formed, may be different from the actual sensory inputs. For example, what we see may not be the reality always. Similarly, what we hear may not be the reality. Consider the news telecasted or news printed in the newspapers. Different channels or newspapers may have presented the same thing differently. They are only representations of some people. When we see or hear them, and relate it to previous knowledge or experience, we give it a meaning. Individual perceptions may differ accordingly. For each of them it represents their reality, which may be different from the actual reality. Only after considering the bigger picture, must one reach at conclusion in order to perceive as closely as possible to reality.

### **4.3 Factors Affecting Perception**

As we saw in the above figure, previous knowledge or experience; concept of self or others; time, place and source of stimulus, and personal needs and emotional state of an individual effect the selection and processing of stimulus received by the individual. These are referred to as factors affecting perception. The factors affecting perception may be broadly classified as internal factors and external factors. The internal factors relate to the individual himself/herself and include the needs, desires, past knowledge and experience, and his personality. External factors are the factors outside the individual, and include intensity and frequency of stimulus received, the size and source from which it emerged. Let us describe few factors that affect perception to understand their role in formation of perception.

#### **Different Angles of the Same Object.**

Individuals tend to perceive same object from different sensory inputs. When we see an employee sitting in backward position in a moving vehicle, it seems that he is going in opposite direction. When we see an overweight manager from a far off place, he/she seems relatively thin, but in reality he/she might be very fat. Another example is that color white when seen through red light appears to be red in color. We also often see thieves getting clicked from different angles as it provides a different view point of face. Even for architectural drawings, different views from top, front, side are made to have better understanding of the design of building.

## Perception and Attribution Process

### **Value Addition 7: Project**

#### **Perception**

Walk along the university campus, and observe closely some students passing by, college buildings, administration office, teachers, roads, posters and other vehicles, for that matter. Then return to your room and write all that you have observed about that your visit. Then,

Visit again and then compare the two observations. Notice walls, its windows, going from general to specific detail as you proceed. Then analyze an object, and give it a meaning.

One by one analyze all that you have noted and compare your initial and final perceptions.

You will notice that your perception will be more clear with each cycle of comparison and you will reach a final stage ultimately. Take a look at your answer.

Next, ask your friend to do the same exercise and then compare your answer with his answer.

#### **Clubbing**

The principle of clubbing means that people tend to perceive objects, people or things along with the other things in an organized manner. For example, when we see group of people walking fast in the same direction, we perceive them to be as one group. Or even that they might be going in one direction or one destination. This is because human mind tends to see things in totality or in whole view. If we see a person playing football game, wearing formal dress of a team, we perceive him to be a player of the team. Sometimes, even the police arrest people on streets just because they were there during the scene of crime.

As per this principle, people perceive things which are similar to each other as part of the same object. This allows people to distinguish between adjacent and overlapping objects based on their similarity.

#### **Contrast Effect**

An individual's perception is also affected by qualities of an object. If one object is extreme on some dimension, then neighboring objects are perceived as further away from that extreme. For better comparing, the objects need to be similar to each other. For example, a tall person cannot be compared with tall tree similarly fat person cannot be compared with big box.

#### **Experience**

With experience, people learn to perceive better and analyze different factors affecting of perceiving. For example, if someone has experienced a bad behavior at a place, next time when he goes there again, he will perceive a similar thing. That's the reason why people perceive foreign country or college or community in a certain way. Because they know from other people or they have experienced themselves. Experience helps individuals in perceiving objects, thing or a place in a better way as they now have more information that they can use to arrive at final judgment.

#### **Motivation/ Interest/Expectation**

This explains why some people tend to perceive in a certain way while others perceive in a different way. The answer lies in the level of motivation of individuals. If one is motivated



## Perception and Attribution Process

towards sports, then he is bound to perceive all things towards sports in positive manner. It shows how perception can take up shape with the help of drives and expectations or even interest. It occurs in all the different senses. This may be related with sound, or taste or an observation. Often we have noticed that people pay more attention when their name is announced in crowd. This is because they are sensitive towards their things. Similarly when people are hungry tend to perceive all things in a similar context.

Another example when we spell out a word 'knight', the person who has not slept for many days will consider this word as 'night' as he is looking forward to sleep, while the one who is warrior or who has to go for war, will consider the word as fighter. So depending on expectation, motivation and interest, people perceive same things in a different manner. This can be for long period or for short period. Similarly, when any device is shown to a doctor and engineer, a doctor will perceive it as a device that can be used for treating other people and an engineer will perceive that device as a tool that can be used in operational and repair function. These situations can be developed through motivation resulting in perception that people perceive as per their choice people. In one experiment, one group was told in advance that they will be getting a very difficult task in practical exam, so during practical exam even though the exam was very easy, they still perceived it to be very difficult. This can also be explained in a social context. If someone has a reputation of being funny, he will be perceived as a funny person. Moreover, people with authoritative personality tend to identify such trait in other people easily; this is because this matches with their own personality.

Perception occurs quickly so there may not a formal start of a process, it is also not a structured process or systematic process, it is more of random process where individuals gives more importance to a thing or object depending on their interest or expectation.

However there may not be a completely "unbiased, unfiltered" perception, but there is relation between perception and other factors like interest, expectation and motivation.

### **Value Addition 8: Video**

#### **Perception and Persuasion**

Click on the link below to watch a video that describes the importance of perception in our communication and therefore emphasizes persuasion.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqgKVAbz2Is>

## **4.4 Perception and Senses**

### **Sound**

Perception of sound is done by perceiving and detecting vibrations. There is a frequency range that can be heard by human beings. The range is normally between 20 Hz and 20,000 Hz. Our ear perceives the signal, which is often superimposed with other signals as they arrive in ears. Hearing does not involve separation of interest and meaning of message. But Listening involves this separation of meaning and interest in message. Sound is received from multiple sources and our ear is open by default all time. So we get to hear many things, but we listen those that are of our use and need.

### **Speech**

Perception of speech is the process by which the sounds of sentences and words are heard and understood. In this way, we try to understand how human beings recognize sound



## Perception and Attribution Process

of words and language and use this information for interpretation. There may be variation in sound of a word depending on words around it and the dialect of the speech, physical features, style, accent and also the mood of the speaker. Listeners understand words by perceiving in different conditions.

The process of perceiving speech starts when we hear a word; we try to interpret the sound, and intonation pattern of words. After listening the first signal, sounds are further interpreted to extract other cues and information. This information is used for further processing of information. It may not be in one direction.

### **Touch**

In case of touch, perception is done by recognizing objects through touch. It involves sensing patterns on the skin surface, hand position and conformation. Individuals can clearly analyze objects by touch. This includes moving the fingers on the object or even holding an object in the hand. But this perception is dependent on the forces experienced during touch. Further, it can be defined as individual's sensibility about the world around him. For example, if somebody touches with great force then it is perceived as hurt. If somebody touches slowly, it might be perceived as general touch.

### **Taste**

It is the ability to perceive the flavor of food and anything that can be consumed. Individuals get tastes through sensory organs called taste buds that are in the upper part of the tongue. There are basically five main tastes: sweetness, sourness, bitterness, umami and saltiness. Several different types of tastes can be formed by mixing the other tastes. The contribution of tastes contribute is only partial in nature. Other factors include smell that is noticed by nose;

### **Miscellaneous senses**

Other senses includes things like sensations felt in the neck, movement of hand and legs, moving neck, waving hands through hair, bending while sitting, walking carelessly, and other body languages, body pain or even Goosebumps on body. All these things tend to give different meaning of perception for different individuals.

## **4.4 Social Perception**

It is the part of perception that allows individuals to understand other individuals and groups in their social environment. Thoughts and actions of self and others play a significant role in perceiving self and others. Generally, while thoughts about self affect the perception about self, actions of others lead to forming perceptions about others. The process of perception remains the same; stimulus being the action, behavior, or attitude and beliefs of others that gets selective attention, which is organized and interpreted, a judgment is formed and a response is elicited. Social perceptions about self and others may be flawed. There may be an error or untimely judgment in comprehending oneself or others. Social perceptions once formed tend to persist for a long time. It is therefore advised to form perceptions only after a careful processing of information over some time from multiple sources in order to regard it authentic and reliable.

<b>Value Addition 9: Case Study</b>
<b>Misperception</b>
Sally had to go for interview in large multinational company for the post of HR executive.

## Perception and Attribution Process

Being a large multinational company, she perceived to get big salary offer and positive work culture in the company. She went through a series of interviews that were very professionally conducted. She finally got selected for the post. But when she got the offer letter from the company, she was not satisfied with the salary package and the work profile offered. Nevertheless, she joined the company. Later, she found things very different to what she had perceived. Her observation and informal chat with other colleagues gave her an insight that the work culture was not healthy. It did not recognize and reward the meritorious workers. There was lot of politics prevalent in the organization and personal biases were the way of making choices in policy matters. She was highly disappointed and finally resigned from the job.

Questions:

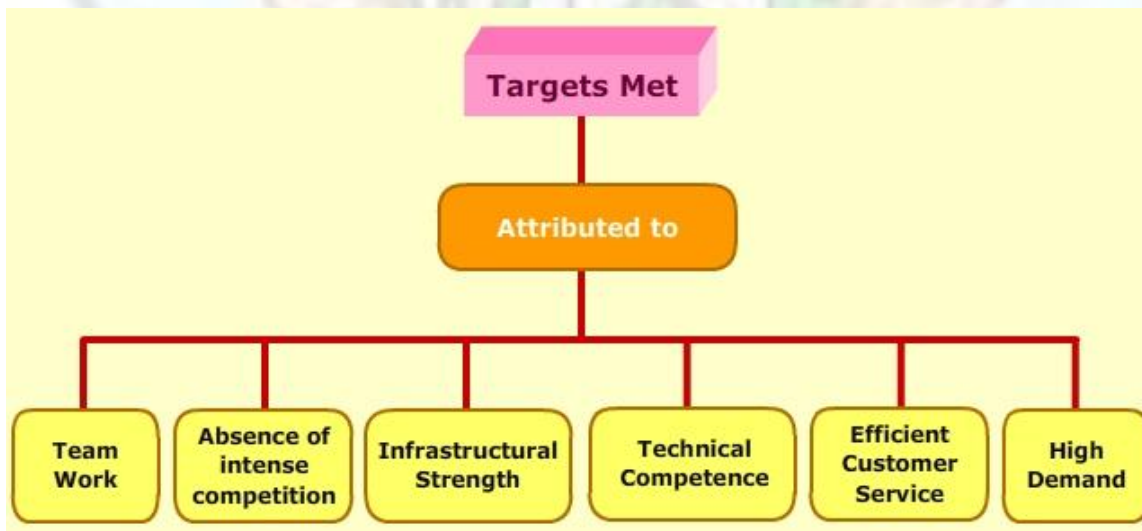
- What was the initial and final perception of Sally about the company?
- What were the factors that lead to forming initial and final perception?
- Did she make any perceptual error? If yes, how could she have avoided it?

## 5. Attribution

Have you ever asked yourself questions like: "How did I successfully get this job?" or "Why did Rohan flunk math?"

Attribution theory helps in understanding reasons behind certain happenings in our life. When we observe an action (e.g., someone scolded you), then we ask "why" it happened (Did I do something wrong or the other person has a behavioural problem?). We then judge about the other person's intention or the reasons (e.g., was the other person trying to dominate me). Doing this simplifies the understanding as attribution allows us to analyze our present and past behavior (now I know why the other person gets irritated every time and why other people dislike him/her). Correct attributions allow us to know future behavior (if you've correctly analyzed a person as rude, then you can predict that the person will behave rudely in future too). If our attributions are near to reality, then they allow us to make right responses.

Figure 6: An Example of Attribution



### Value Addition 10: Activity

**Attribution**

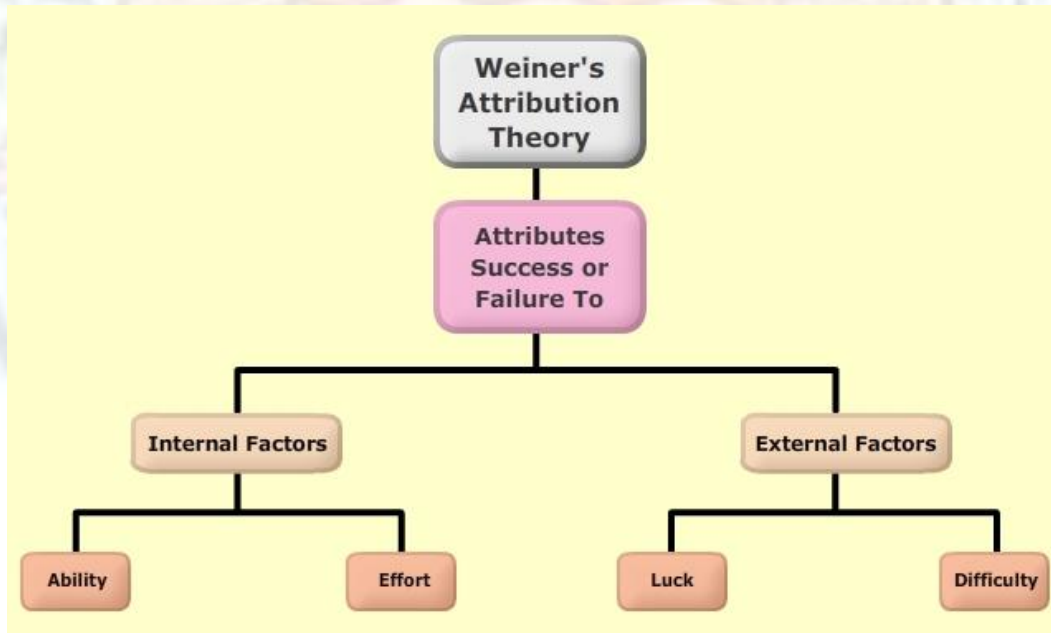
Click on the link below to watch a video that explains the meaning of attribution.

Source: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcSldMZI\\_co](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcSldMZI_co)

**5.1 Attribution Theory**

As a branch of study of social psychology, the theory of attribution helps us understand the reasons for our behaviour and that of others. Heider proposed the psychological theory of attribution, which was taken further by Weiner and Jones. The theory points out to the psychological process of an individual trying to relate various events in order to understand why something happened. According to the attribution theory, the behavior or action of self or others may be internally or externally attributed. When it is attributed internally, the behavior is seen as a result of internal characteristics of self or others, for example, one's attitude, personality, skill, ability, effort or character. However, when it is externally attributed, the behavior is seen as a result of external characteristics of situation in which self or other is, for example, favorable or unfavorable luck, ease or difficulty in the situation etc. While ability or latent is more or less constant/stable and uncontrollable; effort is controllable and can be made to vary. Similarly, while the level of ease or difficulty in a situation may be stable and controllable, luck may be instable and uncontrollable. These are demonstrated in the figure below.

Figure7: Attribution Theory



**Dimensions of Attribution:**

Three important features of attribution theory are as follows:

1. Internal or external factor
2. Stability or instability
3. Controllable or uncontrollable



## Perception and Attribution Process

The first dimension of attribution is whether a factor that is internal or external. The locus explains the reason that lies within internal factors or external factors. For instance, factors like mood and ability are controlled by the individuals; but destiny, luck or bias are controlled by the external factors. Stability explains the continuity of the change over a period of time, whereas instability explains the erratic response. Controllability refers to the factors that we can control to change results, for example, factors like skill and competence that can be upgraded, whereas luck and mood are classified as uncontrollable. These dimensions affect the attribution process of an individual.

### 5.2 Process of Attribution

The attribution process presents the output of attributions in case of individual's motivation, and behavior. An individual tries to attribute the incidents to the causes that are perceived by them. These results tend to affect psychological consequences of individual and affect one's behaviors.

Thus, attribution process starts when a person tends to attribute the cause to either external or environmental factors or to internal or personal factors. External factors can be specific information, social norms or situational features. Internal factors can be prior knowledge, personal bias and individual differences. The perceived causes can be effort, destiny, mindset, health, ability etc. Let us take an example. Ram is an intelligent student, and usually tops in his exams. In the last exam, he failed to get good marks in Mathematics. Will he still continue studying the subject and enjoy doing it? Now, Ram may attribute this failure to many reasons. He may attribute it to less effort, or poor luck. However, if he gets to know that most of the students in class also failed in the paper, he might attribute his failure to the difficulty level in paper rather than lack of effort. This is attribution process.

#### Value Addition 11: Activity

##### Attribution Theory

Click on the link below to watch a video. How have the characters in the video used attribution theory? Discuss your opinion with your peers.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAp5pmQggDk>

#### Value Addition 12: Did You Know?

##### Attribution Theory

After studying attribution theories, Pintrich and Schunk came up with a model of attribution process. The model depicts the process of attribution by showing how environmental and personal factors lead to attributions and their effect on perception and behavior.

Click on the link below to see the figure.

Source: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/epltt/motivation/contribution.htm>

### Summary:

- The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) represents a questionnaire that analyses psychological choices with respect to perception of people about the world in making decisions.
- MBTI presents the differences in individual psychology in four opposite pairs: **E**xtroversion (E) - (I) **I**ntroversion, **S**ensing (S) - (N) **I**ntuition, **T**hinking (T) - (F) **F**eeding, and **J**udging (J) - (P) **P**erception.



## Perception and Attribution Process

- Extraversion represents a condition where a person is more open to meet and talk to others, while introversion represents condition where a person keeps only to himself and shy away in meeting and talking to others.
- Sensing and intuition are functions that analyze perception. It explains meaning of information.
- Thinking and feeling are the functions that help in judging others. They are used to make logical decisions.
- Judging types want information that is more organized and systematic; and perceiving types will progress in an environment that is flexible enough to provide space for learning.
- Perception means the way individuals analyze environment, objects and other individuals and give it a meaning.
- Process of perception includes three components: Perceiver, Target and Situation.
- Attribution theory helps in understanding reasons behind certain happenings in our life.
- Three important features of attribution theory are Internal or external, Stability or instability, Controllable or uncontrollable.
- The attribution process presents the output of attributions in case of individual's motivation, and behavior.

### Glossary:

- **Behaviour:** It depicts wide range of our actions and habits through which we interact with world.
- **Competency:** It is an ability to do a job properly.
- **Creativity:** A process by which something new is made.
- **Deductive reasoning:** It is top-down approach or deriving logical reasoning from statements.
- **Environment:** It is biotic and abiotic surroundings of an organism.
- **Information:** It is the processed data.
- **Personality:** A sum total of ways in which we react and interact with outside world.
- **Sensation:** A condition that results from stimulation.
- **Skill:** It is learned ability to carry out some task.

### Exercise:

#### Objective type questions:

1. Which of the following describe people with 'Extraversion' attribute?
  - a. They have fewer friends.
  - b. They are talkative.
  - c. They tend to enjoy a wide circle of acquaintances.
  - d. They are argumentative.
2. Which of the following describe people with 'Intuition' attribute?
  - a. They make friends easily.
  - b. They are more abstract than concrete. They focus their attention on the big picture.
  - c. They are hardworking.
  - d. They are difficult people to work with.
3. Which of the following describe individuals with 'Thinking' attribute?
  - a. They prefer logic.
  - b. They are friendly by nature.
  - c. They misperceive their intentions.
  - d. Their behaviour is not professional.

## Perception and Attribution Process

4. Which of the following describe people with 'Judgment' attribute?
  - a. They do not enjoy a sense of control.
  - b. They can not predict outcomes.
  - c. They do not enjoy work.
  - d. They plan their activities and make decisions early.
5. Which of the following is the result of the process of perception?
  - a. Awareness about the people and environmental surroundings.
  - b. Knowledge about human relation practices
  - c. Ways and techniques of managing people
  - d. Concepts of managerial behavior.
6. Identify the three components of perception from the options given below.
  - a. Management, people, machines.
  - b. Target, Perceiver and Situation.
  - c. Goals, mission, objectives.
  - d. Target, Perceiver, object.
7. Identify the important feature of attribution theory from the options given below.
  - a. Internal or external factor.
  - b. Stability or instability.
  - c. Controllable or uncontrollable
  - d. All of the above.

### Short Questions:

1. Define perception.
2. What are three most component of perception?
3. How perception differs with target, perceiver, and situation?
4. Define Attribution theory?
5. Define the psychological types in MBTI?

### Long Questions:

1. Explain the process of perception?
2. How can process of perception explain attribution theory?
3. Explain factors affecting attribution theory?
4. Describe with examples the process of attribution theory?
5. Explain the relevance of MBTI in globalized economy?

(Answers to Objective type questions:

1. c      2. b      3. a      4. d      5. a      6. b      7. d)

### References:

#### 1. Work Cited:

- Miller R. Antoinette, Psychology Department Clayton State, University, Morrow, GA, [http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/files/mini\\_perception.pdf](http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/files/mini_perception.pdf),
- Pintrich, P. R., & Schunk, D. H. (1996). Attributional processes. Motivation in Education: Theory, Research, and Applications. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, p. 103-152
- [www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/perception](http://www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/perception)
- [www.perceptionkayaks.com/](http://www.perceptionkayaks.com/)
- [www.business.mnsu.edu/mfox/.../Attribution%20Process.ppt](http://www.business.mnsu.edu/mfox/.../Attribution%20Process.ppt)
- [www.usu.edu/psy3510/personatt3.html](http://www.usu.edu/psy3510/personatt3.html)
- [www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/](http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/)
- [www.personalitypathways.com/type\\_inventory.html](http://www.personalitypathways.com/type_inventory.html)
- <http://www.coe.uga.edu/epltt/motivation/contribution.htm>

#### 2. Web links:

## Perception and Attribution Process

- Visit the link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WF1sqE8lb0o> to watch a snippet on MBTI that tells that the 16 distinctive types of personalities result from the interaction of the 4 pairs of preferences.
- Visit the link [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHd\\_L7dg3U4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHd_L7dg3U4) to take a selective attention test.
- Visit the link [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iCDL\\_Yp4Cc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iCDL_Yp4Cc) to know more about reality and perception.
- Visit the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thlFiEg9u7E> to know more on perception in the workplace, especially in interview process.
- Visit the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3TJ6Biq0iE> to know about the attribution theory
- Visit the link [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KB7kt\\_9td7c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KB7kt_9td7c) to know about the attribution concept.
- Visit the link <http://www.slideshare.net/flukepleboi/the-perception-process-4122131> to see the perception process.
- Visit the link <http://www.slideshare.net/kottikkal/factors-affecting-perception-asha> to know more on factors affecting perception and how to improve perception.
- Visit the link [http://www.utwente.nl/cw/theorieenoverzicht/theory%20clusters/interpersonal%20communication%20and%20relations/attribution\\_theory.doc/](http://www.utwente.nl/cw/theorieenoverzicht/theory%20clusters/interpersonal%20communication%20and%20relations/attribution_theory.doc/) to read about attribution theory.

