

Course Name: Organizational Behaviour: Individual Dynamics in Organization

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Week – 05

Lecture – 05

Lecture 25: Assessing personality: caveats and concerns

Hello students. Welcome back to the course on Organizational Behaviour, Individual Dynamics in Organization.

Today we move to the last lecture of module 5, where we look into assessing personality, caveats and concerns. So, we have looked into personality in detail, we have also looked into some of the tests which we generally carry out to understand or measure or assess the personality. What are the problems associated with that? What are the concerns associated with that? Let us understand in this lecture.

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So let us start with today's theme. "There is an increased acceptance of personality assessment in forensic settings". Initially if we look into and that is the broad theme of today's lecture, we had seen that people are not very keen in understanding and assessing personality because what is the need to assess something if you are not making use of that. So basic tenet being assessment of something is only useful if that particular element or particular factor is employed somewhere or is useful somewhere. So, on that note we will understand what you mean by assessing personality.

Personality is clearly an important concept no doubt about it for understanding, predicting and changing behaviour in organisational setting. Let us understand this word by word. Understanding what you are, how much you perform or what is your predisposition in things what does not concern you or how you are with respect to your surroundings, how you are able to control your emotions all these aspects come under understanding.

Predicting, how you are able to understand the changing environment and what you can do about changing or adapting to that changing environment that comes under predicting and changing behaviour is with the proper understanding and prediction that you have

with you at your disposition what you are going to do about in terms of changing the behaviour in organisational setting.

This is what personality is relevant for or important for. One concern is that most tests are self-report scales which allow the applicants or employees to fake their answers. We had a great detailed study on this particular topic why we go for self-report we try to dissect the relevance of self-report studies we also try to understand what are the weaknesses associated with self-report please refer back to lecture 1, 2 of personality module 5.

So, when we looked into all those aspects finally, we also concluded that self-report test or self-report assessment has their own benefits they are the go-to instruments because of some reasons.

A second issue pertaining to personality assessment is that it is a relatively weak predictor of a person's performance we try to understand there are some critical elements or critical traits in the previous lecture that ultimately becomes important in the organisation. But having said that we should not undermine the relevance of the context.

Let's take this as an example and understand it with greater detail. You are an open personality person, you are open to experience, you are always trying to learn, always meticulous in your dealings and always try to expand your horizon in terms of your understanding of the particular work you are doing or the entire organisation as such. But that said you find that the organisation is not that supportive, find that the co-workers are not that supportive they are always skeptical about you, they are always doubtful about your actions or your inactions, they are always concerned about your next step. So, all these aspects categorically establish one thing that is the context.

So whatever your personality is, whatever your personality you assess and you find out and that would be let's assume for the fact as a hypothetical case let that personality be correct also but still the context may redefine what you are based on the required situations or scenarios emerging or evolving in the organisation. I repeat we cannot undermine the context even if we have ascertain the personality. So, this makes essentially personality as a weak predictor of performance. Let's look into another example here. You are a person who is very driven, who is very open, who is very hard working but there is something let's say you are having let's say some physiological issues which is not making you to do or focus on things or you are entwined with some other issues or there are some other problems that running in back of your mind which is not allowing you to fully concentrate on the matter in hand.

So all these aspects certainly takes a hit on your performance and hence we can say that personality is a weak predictor of performance. So, when we actually state that we have to understand whatever be the personality traits, whatever be the personality, whatever be

the assessed personality of that particular individual he or she might not perform in the prescribed manner because of certain extraneous variables sometimes it could be the context, sometimes it could be some other extraneous factors which are beyond the comprehension of an organisation. So always the underlying factor is though personality is important personality could be a relatively weak predictor of person's performance.

Now let's understand this assessment scenario as the urge to assess personality over different centuries line by line. The first is nineteenth century precursors to personality assessment in the nineteenth century specifically there were several notable attempts based on scientific thinking of the day if you recollect the initial lectures of this course you would understand how even OBM was influenced OB and OBM, Organisational Behaviour Management was influenced by the scientific thinking of day.

The scientific temperament started building during that time and how it had influenced different disciplines and not to forget that personality assessment was also under the realm of the scientific thinking of the day to develop formal methods for studying personality and character. So, two separate and quite different historic trends emerged and one such intellectual movement was phrenology. If you look into phrenology is the view that there was a means of deriving information about the character of individuals by examining their head size and shape.

Now this is quite amusing when we look into this in t-twenty-four but remember nineteenth century precursor nineteenth century people started analyzing understanding personality and one of the first documented aspect was phrenology that you know it looks funny, it looks amusing but even the head size and shape could actually tell the personality of an individual so this was the initial thought.

Now the second thought or second school of approach came in during the nineteenth century itself which was by Francis Galton we will discuss in detail about Galton in the coming slides involved careful scientific observation and mental testing Galton's ideas were highly influential to later personality assessment development.

So initial thought was more heuristic they tried to understand personality with respect to the head size and shape but the second approach especially by Francis Galton was more scientific based on scientific observation and mental testing and it had a serious impact on the personality assessment developments that came in later part of the nineteenth century.

Now in contrast to the pseudo-scientific phrenology which I have already mentioned in the early nineteenth century there were major contributions to the development of a science of personality assessment towards end of the century. So this is where more than

just the spirit of science the development of scientific temperament came into picture and if you look into Francis Galton's work his work was phenomenal in having a scientific temperament he was a relative and contemporary of Charles Darwin if you know because there were few such individuals who were actually related and very highly intellectually capable like Galton, Darwin, Shakespeare etc. conducted a number of experiments on mental processes and postulated procedures for measuring psychological attributes.

Galton thought that human character this is the starting point of personality human character could be studied by observation and experimentation and suggested strategies for making personality-based observations that could be standardized and compared by the use of normative procedures.

So if you look into the scientific approach this is the beginning of science in personality assessment rather than making absurd pseudo-scientific statements or conclusions or observations Galton was more of the view or his attempt was more inclined or channelized to make something standardized irrespective of the cultural context you are, irrespective of any other context for that matter you are, you are actually giving those tests it could give the reliable results, the consistency and the internal consistency matter to him because of the scientific temperament, because of the normative procedures he followed. So, Galton proposed that questionnaires could be developed for measuring mental traits although he did not develop a specific questionnaire for this purpose. So, this is where we have to understand how earlier early twentieth century developments has taken place and what is the background for those early twentieth century developments and we have to understand and appreciate the role of Francis Galton for that matter.

So, when we look into early twentieth century developments in personality assessment specifically, we see that Benjamin 2005 pointed out that psychological assessment was the beginning of clinical psychology. So, if we are to ascertain the field of clinical psychology or the relevance of clinical psychology as such, we have to appreciate the importance of psychological assessment or the contribution of psychological assessment cannot be missed.

The first formal use of a questionnaire to study personal qualities involve the use of structured rating scale for studying the human character. Again, we have not come to personality as such but we are looking into the human character. Other earlier efforts to evaluate personality can be found in the work of Carl Jung which we will discuss in the future lectures.

When we look into the scale the questionnaire was converted to scale standardized the Woodworth personal data sheet PDS included 116 items related to physical problems,

social behavior, mental health symptoms that were thought to address the person's psychological adjustments. So basically, when we look into the factors which have emerged as the items in the particular scale, they ought to measure the physical problems, the behavior in general in social and the mental health symptoms were also gauged with respect to the questionnaire.

The scoring on the scale was the total number of problem items that the individual acknowledged were an indication of adjustment problems. So, we are actually looking into the human character in greater detail how the human character has evolved with respect to the adjustment and the problems associated with the adjustments. Many of the actual item contents devised by Woodworth found their way into inventories in use today. So, all these personality inventories has certain precursors or has certain reminiscence in the early twentieth century developments in personality assessment.

A plethora of clinical personality assessment procedures were explored and developed during the latter half of the twentieth century ranging from structured interviews to behavioral assessment instruments to projective tests.

So if you see the gradation the improvement was from structured interview to behavior assessment and finally to projective test. So psychological we have elaborated on the difference between self-report test and there we have also looked into projective test and different types of projective test. Now this is where we currently stand in terms of the development of personality, personality assessments, personality tests etc.

Psychological tests have become a respected and engaging task for the clinical practitioners of today with diverse applications and these diverse applications range from recruitment selection towards understanding the work force training to have a better say in the organization, decision making to have an important role in the organization, career progression. So, all these aspects are intertwined or interconnected or related with personality and this is ascertained by personality test and this is the development of the personality test we are acknowledging and we are appreciating.

There is an increased acceptance of personality assessment even in forensic settings. So, this is the theme of our lecture today as evidence in code so moreover psychological assessment is widely accepted in industrial applications. So, this is what makes the personality assessment very critical. Now initially we had just a curiosity to understand the personality of an individual which led to certain heuristics or certain rules of thumb how the head shape and structure or how the structure in general defines the personality of an individual. Later standardized tests were generated but that was more to understand the person all together.

But later part or presently in the current context personality tests have gone beyond that. People are using it for forensic settings for evidence in code moreover psychological assessment has great industrial applications as I have already mentioned not only with respect to the manpower planning but also with respect to what individuals want to do in an organization. So, it is not just to understand how much forecast how much people or how many people you want in your organization it has gone beyond that.

The understanding is to understand the real need or the need for motivation or the need for development within the organization that also can be deciphered that also can be understood from the personality assessment. So, this is what makes the personality and personality assessment all the more relevant.

Just like to conclude this module of personality we have discussed personality in detail. We have understood different types of theories that were associated with personality. We have also tried to understand and acknowledge and appreciate the evolving research literature in personality. We have also looked into some of the critical personality tests, personality assessment what were the evolution or what were the ways or the track we tend to track the emergence or the evolution of personality assessment how it moved from a mere heuristic approach to more scientific and more of you know reliable and valid measures which are even used in forensic settings and as evidences of code. But that said personality tests are not the full and final verdict you should take because as I mentioned in some of the lectures there is one important thing which we should not forget and that is the context.

What your personality is you might behave accordingly. What your personality is you might tend to respond in situations accordingly. What your personality is you might take decisions accordingly, but the context is important. You might perform in a different way. You might act in a different way. You might take a decision in different way. It all depends on what scenario you are. You are in a pressure from your boss you might take a different decision. You might you know look into social desirability by a co-worker. You might do a different act altogether. You might be trying to get appreciation and acknowledgement from your subordinate. You might perform in a different way. So, your performance, your act, your decision everything cannot be totally related to personality. There is the importance of context. There is the existence of context which can have, which can modify, which can change your personality to a certain extent or which can at least have an effect on the behaviour you take out because of your personality in the particular context or in the particular organisation.

Thank you for listening to me patiently. We will come out with a different module and different lecture in the next class.

Till then take care. Bye bye.