

2.1. PERCEPTION

Perception is our sensory experience of the world around us and involves both the recognition of environmental stimuli and actions in response to these stimuli. Through the perceptual process, we gain information about properties and elements of the environment that are critical to our survival. Perception not only creates our experience of the world around us; it also allows us to act within our environment. Perception includes the five senses; touch, sight, taste, smell and hearing. It also includes, a set of senses involving the ability to detect changes in body positions and movements. It also involves the cognitive processes required to process information, such as recognizing the face of a friend or detecting a familiar scent.

Some of the definitions of perception are by management experts are:

“If everyone perceived everything the same way, things would be a lot simpler”

-Moorhead & Griffin

“Perception can be defined as a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environments.”

“Perception includes all those processes by which an individual receives information about his 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 individuals doing the perceiving.”

In the simple sense, perception is understood as the act of seeing what is there to be seen. But the perceiver, the object, and the environment influence what is seen.

2.2 ATTITUDE

Attitudes are a way of responding either favorable or unfavorably to objects, persons, concepts etc. It reflects how one feels about something. Attitudes are related to behaviour. It is an one-dimensional variable, i.e., positive or negative. They are hypothetical constructs. It is something inside a person. It may be observed but the attitude itself cannot.

Attitudes in a person could be observed in three ways:

(1) Direct experience with the person or situation.

(2) Association with other similar persons or situations.

(3) Learning from others their association with the person or situation. 'Direct experience' is the concrete experience stage of learning. One is not born with attitudes but acquires them through life experiences.

In organizations, attitudes are important because they affect the job behaviour. These job related attitudes either positive or negative evaluations that employees hold about aspects of their work environment. There are three primary attitudes:

(1) **Job satisfaction** : Job satisfaction refers to an individual's general attitude towards his or her job, which is either positive or negative, i.e., satisfied or dissatisfied.

(2) **Job involvement** : Job involvement measures the degree to which a person identifies with his job, actively participates in it and considers his performance important to his self worth.

(3) **Organizational commitment**: Organizational commitment is an orientation in terms of loyalty, identify the involvement in the organization. These attitudes are measured so that behaviours like productivity, absenteeism and turnover can be predicted

Managers need to be interested only in understanding the attitudes of the people, but also in changing them. Since attitudes are learned they can be changed. Persuasive communications are used to change attitudes. But attitudes are slow to change. Because they are based on deep-seated beliefs and values.

2.3 VALUES

An individual's values form the basis of one's character. While some of the values may change over time, once these are formed, they usually remain deep inside the person and are rather immune to change. Values are the basic convictions of an individual that a specific mode of conduct or the end state is better than the opposite (Rokeach, 1973). Rokeach also identified two types of values the instrumental values and the terminal values. Once it is internalized it becomes consciously or unconsciously, a standard or criterion for guiding action, for developing and maintaining attitudes towards relevant objects and situation, for justifying one's own and other's actions and attitudes for morally judging oneself and other and for comparing oneself with others. Value, therefore, is a standard or yardstick to guide actions, attitudes, evaluations and justifications of the self and others.

Values are tinged with moral flavors, involving the individual's judgment of what is right, good or desirable. Thus values:

- Provide standards of competence and morality
- Are fewer in number than attitudes
- Transcend specific objects, situations or persons
- Are relatively permanent and resistant to change, and
- Are most central to the core of a person