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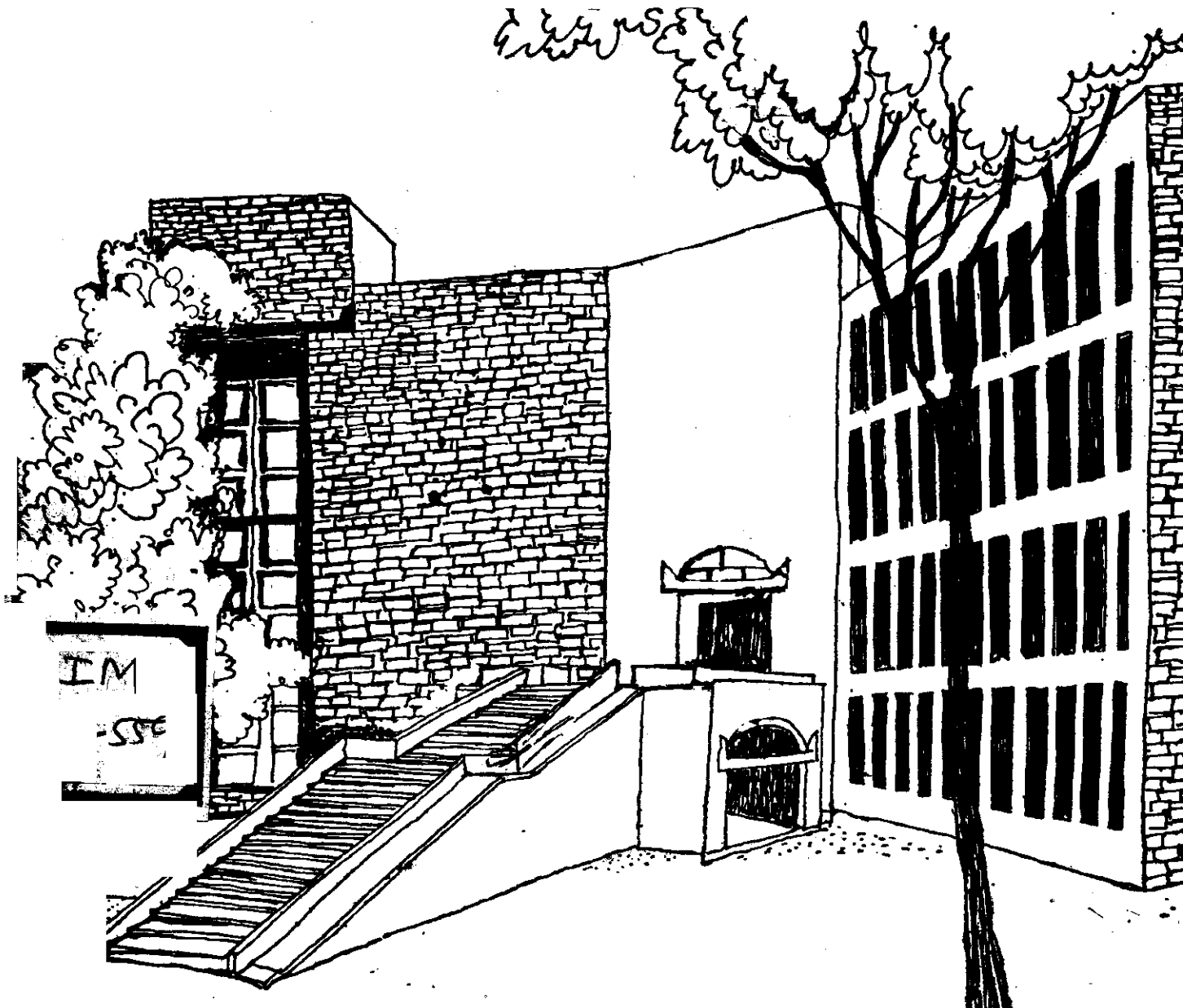
APPROACH AND AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOUR
OF MANAGERS

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The behaviour of an employee is motivated by
several factors. In order to understand behavioural
o rientation of employees, it may be useful to know
which motive dominates their behaviour.

Murray (1938) had originally suggested a long
list of human motives or needs. Murray's work inspired
consequent studies, and different p ersons came out
with different lists of significant motives. McClelland
and his associates (1953) suggested three motives as
important ones (achievement, affiliation, and power),
and also suggested elaborate methods of measuring them.
McClelland subsequently demonstrated the importance of
of achievement motive for entrepreneurship and marketing
(McClelland, 1961; McClelland and Winter, 1971), and of
power motivation, among other things, for management
(McClelland, 1975; McClelland and Burnham, 1976). He
has attempted to develop a leadership motive.pattern, in
which power motive plays an important role (McClelland
and Boyatzis, 1982). Litwin and Stringer (1968) used

the three motives (achievement, affiliation and power) in their study of organisational climate, and found these useful for the study of organisational behaviour.

While McClelland's study of achievement and affiliation motives showed these to be neat variables, he found power motive a complex one. As he admitted during his study of power motive (1975) it contained both an urge to control others and an urge to make impact. He called them personalized power and socialized power. Thus McClelland seems to suggest three different elements in the power motive: the need to control others (personalised power), the need to make an impact on others, and the need to use power for doing something for other persons and groups, like organisations (socialised power). It seems necessary to make clear distinctions amongst these three. Management literature gives importance to the concept of "control", i.e. Keeping track of developments according to a pre-agreed plan. This also seems to be one important need or motive. The so called socialized dimension of power (reflected in the use of power for the benefit of other persons and groups) seems to be a separate need or motive, that is reflected in the concern to do something for others. Pareek (1967, 1968) suggested this need to be important for social development, and called it extension motive.

One more motive or need, so farneglected, but quite relevant for organisational behaviour, is that of dependency. So far dependency was regarded as a negative force. However, Levinson pointed out the importance of dependency in the development of managers, and this need is reflected in the mentoring process to which more attention is being paid currently.

Thus we have six main needs or motives, relevant for understanding the dynamics of behaviour of persons working in organisations. These are briefly defined below:

1. Achievement motive is characterised by a concern for excellence, competition with standards of excellence set by others or by self, setting challenging goals for oneself, awareness of the hurdles in the way of achieving one's goals, and persistence in trying out alternative paths to one's goal.

2. Affiliation motive is characterized by a concern for establishing and maintaining personal close relationships, value for friendship, a tendency to express emotions.

3. Influence motive is characterized by concern for making impact on others, a desire to make people do what one thinks is right, an urge to change matters and (develop) people.

4. Control motive is characterized by a concern for orderliness, a desire to keep informed, an urge to monitor and take corrective action when needed.

5. Extension motive is characterized by a concern for others, interest in superordinate goal, being relevant and useful to larger groups, including the society.

6.   Dependency motive is characterized by a concern
for self development with others' help, checking
with significant others (more knowledgeable,
higher status, experts, close associates) ideas,
proposed action etc. for approval, expectations
of such an "approval" relationship.

The above motives may be used in explaining the

behaviour of an employee. However, one more aspect deserves

attention. Each of these motives may have two dimensions:

approach and avoidance. Atkinson (1953) first suggested

the concept of avoidance behaviour in the achievement

motive. It was further elaborated by several authors,

and "fear of failure" emerged as an important concept,

as one component of the achievement motive, distinct from

"hope of success". A lot of research has been done on

fear of failure, which (as an avoidance behaviour) has

been found to be dysfunctional, although being a part

of the achievement motive. For example, Varga (1977),

analyzing data collected from Indonesia, Iran, Pakista ,

and Poland showed that hope of success vs. fear of failure

(approach vs. avoidance) was the main intervening

variable to explain who benefited from achievement

motivation training programmes in terms of increase in

the entrepreneurial activity. Persons high in

achievement motivation, but with high component of fear

of failure, failed to start new business, contrasted with

those who had high component of hope of success. This

concept (approach vs. avoidance) can be dopted for

other components also.

We have used the above six motives for the study
and understanding of behaviour of persons in organisations.
Search of the lists of motives suggested by Murray
and others in later years, did not yield any other
important motives. We also accepted the approach-avoidance
dimensions of each motive as significant is understanding
the functionality of each motive.

Table 1 briefly suggests the approach and
avoidance dimensions of each motive, based respectively
on hope of or fear of something. The behaviour of an
employee can thus be analysed not only in terms of
the various motives, but also from the angle of positive
aspect (approach) or negative aspect (avoidance),
reflected by hope or fear. It is assumed that in
organisations all the 6 motives have their legitimate
place, and contribute to the effectiveness of an employee.

Table 1

Approach and Avoidance Dimensions of Six Motives

Motives	Approach (Hope of)	Avoidance (fear of)
Achievement	Success	Failure
Affiliation	Inclusion	Exclusion
Extension	Relevance	Irrelevance
Influence	Impacting	Impotence
Control	Order	Chaos
Dependency	Growth	Loneliness

An emplo yee's effectiveness from the point of
view of motivation can be defined in two ways. We may
see to what extent he has a particular motivation.
As already mentioned all the 6 motives are relevant for
an employee. If he is deficient in any one, his
effectiveness may be less to same extent. Secondly, an
employee's effectiveness will also depend on the extent
of avoidance behaviour of a particular motivation.
The motive, howsover strong it may be, may be made
ineffective by high avoidance behaviour. His high score
on the motive may indicate his potential for his
effectiveness, but a larger share of avoidance items
in the total score may reduce his actual effectiveness.
The behaviour aspects of motivation can be measured
on this approach.

The Instrument

Motivational Analysis of Organization (Behaviour)

was developed to study employee behaviour in an organization.
MAO(B) contains 60 items, 5 for each dimension (approach
and avoidance) of the 6 motives.

Scoring

The total score an dimension of each (approach and
avoidance) of the 6 motives can range from 5 to 20, giving
separate scores on approach and avoidance dimensions.
Operating effectiveness (OE) of each of the 6 motive-
specific aspects of behaviour, defined by the net score of

app roach dimensions in behaviour, can be obtained by the
formula (P-5/P+V-10)x100, where P and V stand for total
scores on approach and avoidance dimensions, respectively,
of that motive-specific behaviour. Table 2 can be used to
read OEQ (Operating Effectiveness Quotient) for each
motive-related behaviour.

Table 2

Operating Effectiveness Quotient

Avoidance Scores (V)	Approach Scores (P)															
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	2
5	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	10(
6	0	50	67	75	80	83	85	87	89	90	91	92	92	93	93	9
7	0	33	50	60	67	71	75	78	80	82	83	85	86	87	87	8
8	0	25	40	50	57	62	67	70	73	75	77	78	80	81	82	8
9	0	20	33	43	50	55	60	64	67	69	71	73	75	76	78	7
10	0	17	28	37	44	50	54	58	61	64	67	69	70	72	74	7
11	0	14	25	33	40	45	50	54	59	60	62	65	67	68	70	7
12	0	12	22	30	36	42	46	50	53	56	59	61	63	65	67	6
13	0	11	20	27	33	38	43	47	50	53	55	58	60	62	64	6
14	0	10	18	25	31	36	40	44	47	50	53	55	57	59	61	6
15	0	9	17	23	28	33	37	41	44	47	50	52	54	56	58	6
16	0	8	15	21	27	31	35	39	42	45	48	50	52	54	56	5
17	0	8	14	20	25	29	33	37	40	43	45	48	50	52	54	5
18	0	7	13	19	23	28	32	35	38	41	43	46	48	50	52	5
19	0	7	12	18	22	26	30	33	36	39	42	44	46	48	50	5
20	0	6	12	17	21	25	29	32	35	37	40	42	44	46	48	5

approach dimensions in behaviour, can be obtained by

the formula $(P-5/P+V- 10)x100$, where P and V stand for

total scores on approach and avoidance dimensions,

respectively. of that motive-specific behaviour.   Table 2

can be used to read OEQ (Operating Effectiveness Quotient)

for each motive-related behaviour.

Reliability

The test-retest reliability coefficients for the

6 dimensions of role behaviour (based on a sample of

5 2 monts apart) are as follows:

MAO(B)Variable	Reliability Coefficient	Level of Significance
Achievement	.61	.001
Affiliation	.61	.001
Control	.68	.001
Dependency	.45	.001
Extension	.53	.001
Influence	.58	.001

All the coefficients are very high, significant

at .001 level.   The instrument is thus a highly

reliable one.

Internal Structure

The score of about 500 employees in a large bank

on MAC(B) were factor analysed, rotated by varimax

method.   Only those factors with given value of 1 or

above were taken, extracting in all 5 factors.

The 5 factors showed that MAO(B) has 1 factor of personal responsibility, 1 factor reflecting fear of responsibility, 2 positive factors related to people (one of personal growth with the help of others, and the other having human concern), and 1 factor of integration and centralisation of tasks. It is interesting to note that achievement, influence and control contributed to personal responsibility factor, whereas dependency and affiliation emerged as independent factors. Extension motivation was distributed into the various factors. Three motives, came out in the behavioural aspects of employees, and these can be called achievement motive, task motive, and affiliation or human relationship motive.

Validity

The relationship of effective role behaviour (as reflected in Operating Effectiveness Quotient) with some personality variables was found out in a study of 500 employees, sample from employees of a large multi-locational company in India. The levels of significanceof the correlations appear in Table 3.

As can be seen from the table, all dimensions of effective role behaviour are positively correlated with role efficacy (see Pareck, 1980 for the concept and instrument of role efficacy). It can be said that persons having higher role efficacy use more effective

role behaviour on all dimensions. The same is true

of locus of control (see Pareek 1982 for the concept).

Locus of control had two main dimensions (internality

and externality). Two types of external locus of

control were found out (using the scale by Levenson,

1972, 1973): externality (others) and externality (chance).

The correlation values were significant in the expected

direction for all dimensions of role behaviour effectiveness.

However, the correlation between control dimension and

internality was not found to be significant. It can

be concluded that on the whole, persons having higher

externality show less effective role behaviour; and

those having higher internality show higher effective

role behaviour (except perhaps on control dimension).

As can be seen in the table effective role behaviour

and significantly negativecorrelation with 8 different

types of role stresses, and the total role stress score

(for the concept and instrument of role stress see

Pareek, 1983). For the total role stress 4 (out of 6)

correlations were significant at .0001 level; for

'extension' dimension the correlation was significant

at .004 and for affiliation at .002 levels. The

correlation values of both these dimension (which are

of interpersonal nature) with two role stresses (role isolation and role erosion) were not significant. The correlation value of role ambiguity, and of role stagnation was not significantly respectively with extension and affiliation dimensions respectively. In summary it can be stated that persons with more effective role behaviour in general experience less role stress. This is particularly true of work-oriented role behaviour.

The table shows values of correlation between effective role behaviour and strategies of coping with stress (avoidance and approach strategies). Effectiveness (OEQ) of all the dimensions of role behaviour had significant negative correlation with avoidance strategy, and significant positive correlation with approach stretegy (except affiliation dimension, the value not being significant). Regarding the avoidance stretegy the correlation values were significant at .001 level for achievement and influence; at .004 level for control at .014 level for extension at .036 and .044 levels for affiliation and dependency. Regarding the approach strategies the values were significant at .002 and .004 levels for influence, achievement, and control respectively; at .014 and .018 for dependency and extension. It can be concluded that persons showing effective role behaviour generally use approach

strategy in coping with role stress.

Table   3

Level of Significance of Correlation between
Role Effectiveness Dimensions and Some Other
Variables
(-indicates negative correlation)

| Other Variables | Role Effectiveness Dimensions | | | | | |
	Achieve-ment	Influence	Control	Extension	Affilia-tion	Depend-ency
1.Role Efficacy	001·	001	001	001	001	001
2.Internality	001	003	-	045	001	001
3.Externality (others)	-001	-00 1	-005	-080	-002	-001
4.Externality (chance)	-001	-001	-001	-001	-003	-022
5.Externality (Total)	-001	-001	-001	-004	-001	-001
6.Role Stress	-001	-001	-001	-004	-002	-001
7.Coping strategy (Avoidance)	-001	-001	-004	-014	-036	-044
8.Coping strategy (Approach)	002	001	004	018	-	014

Norms

The mean values, based on a sample of about 500 employees from 4 banks (Sen, 1982), on the approach and avoidance dimensions, and OEQ are given in the table 4 below. These can be tentatively used as cut off points for interpretation of the scores. Norms need to be developed for different groups, however.

Table 4

Mean values for a sample of 500 Bank
Employees

Dimensions	Approach	Avoidance	OEQ
Achievement	16	10	68
Influence	14	10	65
Extension	15	13	56
Control	15	12	63
Affiliation	15	11	64
Dependency	15	11	65

The mean values for different levels of employees, and different age groupsfor OEQ are given in the following table 5.

Table 5

Mean Values for Age and Level Groups

Dimensions	Levels				Age groups					
	Top	Sen-ior	Jun-ior	Cle-rks	<25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50
Achievement	73	70	67	65	64	66	68	65	71	68
Influence	70	67	65	61	62	64	63	63	67	68
Extension	58	58	56	54	52	55	57	56	56	57
Control	68	65	62	60	59	61	61	62	64	65
Affiliation	67	64	62	66	61	65	64	66	64	64
Dependency	66	67	64	64	64	63	64	64	67	67

Use of the Instrument

MAO(B) can be used for self-analysis, individual
counselling, training, and organisation development.
The individuals can examine their scores, and can
prepare a plan to reduce the avoidance dimension of a
motive (if they feel concerned about low OEQ on a
particular motive), by examining the related items in
the instrument, and taking steps to reduce that behaviour.

It has been found useful in counselling, MAO(B) can
be filled for the counselee both by the counselor and the
counselee, and then the former can help the latter in
planning improvement of behaviour.

In a training program the participants can look at their profiles, can request feedback from other participants, and can discuss in trials ways of increasing effectiveness through reducing avoidance behaviour on the relevant motives.

This instrument has been used in several OD programmes. The typical use was to work on group profiles; to search organisational factors explaining the profiles; to develop strategies of organisational changes to change the profile; and todevelop individual strategies to increase operating effectiveness for the various motives.

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