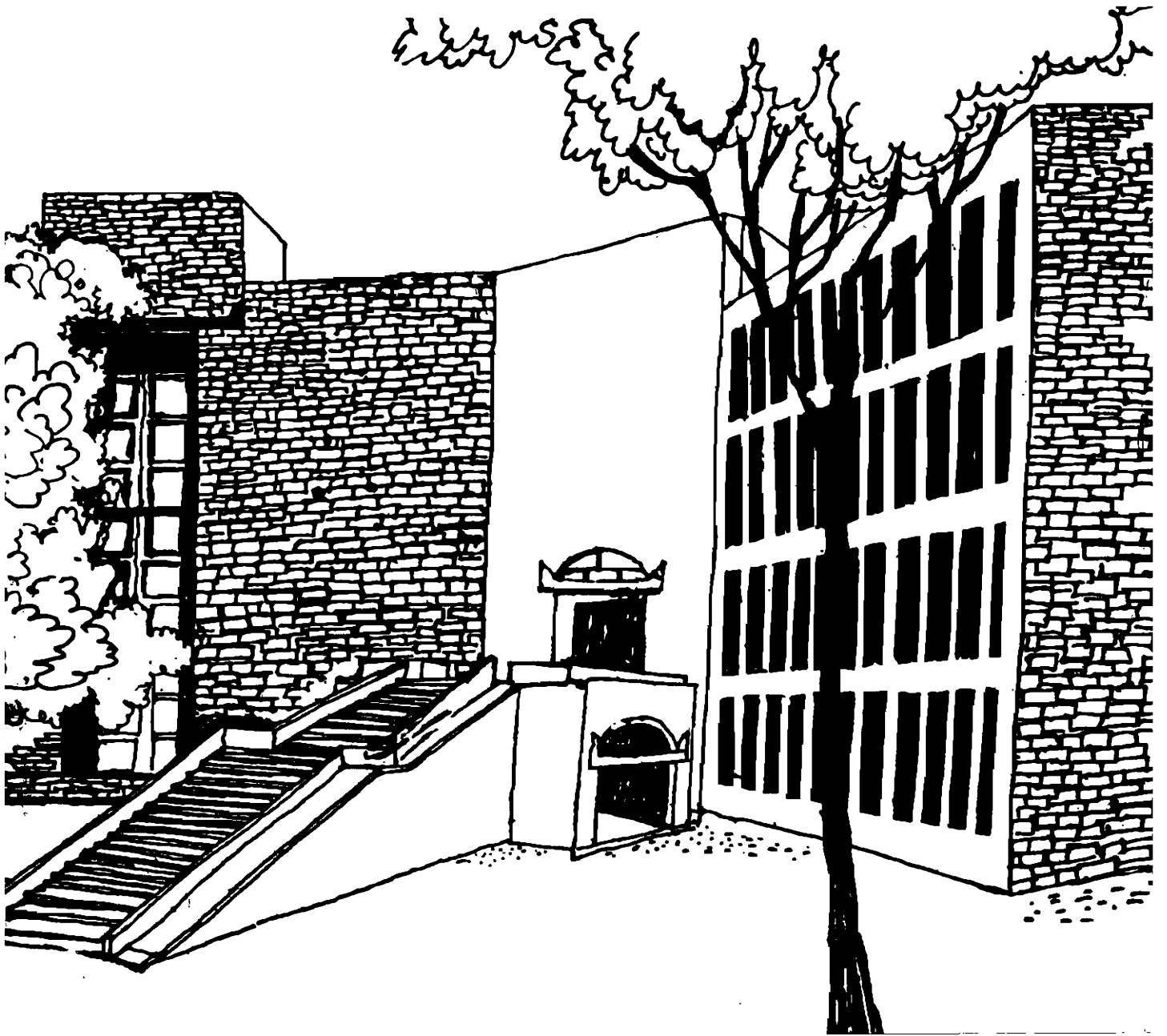




Working Paper



**A STUDY OF LEARNED HELPLESSNESS AND
PERCEIVED ROLE EFFICACY AMONG
EXECUTIVES IN PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY**

By

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**SAYEED ZAFAR
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INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT , AHMEDABAD**

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SAYEED ZAFAR; SHWETA OZA & D.M. PESTONJEE

Abstract

Learned Helplessness is a cognitive state of being which believes that whatever it does is not going to alter the outcome of an event. In the other words, it comes to believe in response-outcome-non-contingency. Role Efficacy can be seen as the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness, in short role efficacy is the potential effectiveness of a role. A total of 40 executives of pharmaceutical industry were used as sample. After using appropriate statistical tools it was found that moderate level of learned helplessness were prevailing among them and dominant LH factors include LH1, LH4 and LH6. While on role efficacy moderate effectiveness were observed Centrality, Proactivity, Superordination and Influence needs special attention to improve the effectiveness of the executives. Some significant correlation were also observed among various factors of Learned Helplessness and Perceived Role Efficacy.

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CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

MEANING AND CONCEPT OF LEARNED HELPLESSNESS:

The term 'Learned Helplessness' also known as LH is of recent origin in the literature of Psychology. LH means, uncontrollability of all those environmental conditions where an individual feels that the situations existing in the environment may not be altered, eliminated or changed. According to Pestonjee and Reddy (1988), "learned helplessness is a cognitive state of being (an individual or an animal) which believes that whatever it does is not going to alter the outcome of an event". In other words, it comes to believe in response-outcome non-contingency. The concept of LH can be better understood from the statements of the people that they often do not like many things prevailing in the society, their neighbourhood, organizations and on their jobs. And they are unable to alter or eliminate all those undesirable things. Undoubtedly these statements explicitly reveal their feelings of uneasiness with existing environmental conditions. They express their inability to do anything to change them for the betterment. Now, it is obvious from such statements that LH is the outcome of the feeling of uneasiness with the existing environmental conditions and the inability to change them for the better. Therefore, LH has been viewed as the cognitive state of beings (animals/humans) who believe that whatever they do will not alter the outcome of an event.

This concept of LH was accidentally discovered by Overmier and Seligman (1967) when they were conducting an experiment on mongrel dogs to determine the relationship of fear conditioning to instrumental learning by inducing inescapable shock upon subsequent escape and avoidance conditioning. In his series of experiments dogs were subjected to inescapable electric shock with variation in duration, degree and frequency. Initially the dogs struggled very hard to escape shock. After repeated failure to escape, the dogs passively endured the shocks by discontinuing their efforts to escape. At this time they made escape possible. But, in spite of escape being possible, the dogs made no attempt to escape. Whereas, the other group of dogs who did not receive any shock earlier did escape well. On the basis of this finding they stated that the dogs learned that shocks were independent of their behaviour and this learning was transferred to new

situation inhibiting escape response in that altered situation. Overmier and Seligman (1967) termed this state of dogs as a Learned Helplessness (LH).

The subsequent research on LH was carried out by Seligman and Maier (1967); in which they probed that the LH effect was caused by the uncontrollability of the original shock. According to them the phenomenon of LH results from experience with uncontrollability. They define uncontrollability as the response - outcome independence, means subject has no control over the outcome of the event. To support their argument the LH results from the experience of uncontrollable outcome. Maier and Seligman used 'triadic design' in which three groups of eight mongrel dogs were used as a subject. The escape group was trained in a hammock to turn off the shock by pressing a panel with the nose. The yoked group received shocks identical in numbers, duration and pattern similar to that of the escape group. The yoked group differed from the escape group only in terms of the instrumental control in which the subjects received over-shock while pressing the panel. This pressing of the panel did not affect the programmed shocks given to the yoked group. The third group named as the naive group received no shock in the hammock. After 24 hours of the hammock treatments, all the three groups received escape avoidance training in a shuttle box. The escape and naive group performed well in the shuttle box, they jumped the barriers readily to avoid shocks. In contrast the yoked group was found significantly slower to respond than the other two groups. On the basis of their findings they stated that it is not shock itself but inability to control the shock produced and the failure to respond, this they termed as learned helplessness (LH). The occurrence of the LH phenomenon was also observed and reported by Thomas and Butler (1969), on cats; Padilla and Padilla (1970), on cats and fish and Braud et al (1969), on rats using more or less the same triadic design. This supported the findings of Overmier and Seligman (1967) and Seligman and Maier (1967).

Inspired by the research finding and conceptual development of the phenomenon of LH based on animal studies, the later researchers planned to conduct research/ experiments on human subjects and tried to probe further regarding the concept and causal factors of LH. Perhaps the first study conducted on human subject; was carried out in two phases

by Thorton and Jacobs (1970, 1971). In animal studies to develop LH phenomenon mere traumatic shock were used. But it was not possible in human subjects due to ethical considerations.

Thus, Thorton and Jacobs used typical stress set instructions, which involved subjective setting of the stress level, according to subject perception of having unpleasant but not painful. The shock used were of such level that the subject could perceive it as unpleasant but not painful. They conducted a series of experiments and observed the LH phenomenon in humans as perceived by Seligman et al in animals.

A number of studies have been done after Thorton and Jacobs (1971), but according to Seligman, Hiroto's study (1974) is the representative. This study was conducted on college students and finds the same results as observed by Seligman et al on mongrel dogs. Hiroto used the same design as used by Seligman and others. He divided the subjects into three groups. The first group of subjects called the escape group received a loud noise, which they learned to turn off by pressing a button. The subjects in the inescapable group received the same noise, but the noise were independent of their responding. A third group received no noise. All the three group then taken to a hand shuttle box, in order to escape noise, the subjects had to move his hand from one side to other. Both the no noise and escape groups learned readily in the shuttle box with their hands. Like other species, however, the human inescapable group failed to escape and avoid; rather most sat passively and took the aversive noise, means a phenomenon like LH was noticed in the subjects. Apart from this study, other investigators - like Fosco and Geer (1971), Tacinscas (1971), Glass and Singer (1972), Roth (1973), Krantz, Glass and Snyder (1974), Roth and Bootzin (1974), Hiroto and Seligman (1975), Rodin (1975), Miller and Seligman (1975), Roth and Kubal (1975) - used humans as subject and supported and findings of the phenomenon of LH as observed by Seligman, Overmier and Maier (1967, 1967) on mongrel dogs.

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS MODELS:

ELEMENTARY MODEL OF LH

The term LH was first used by Seligman and Overmier (1967) to describe the impaired performance of dogs in an instrumental training situation produced by prior exposure to uncontrollable aversive stimuli. According to Susan Roth, "LH refers to an interference in learning occurring due to experience with noncontingent rewards, and to underlying processes hypothesized to be responsible for this interference: the learning of response-reinforcement independence and its generalization." Response-reinforcement independence means our responses do not produce desired outcomes. When an organism is repeatedly exposed to outcomes that are independent of his responses, it develops a feeling that the outcomes are uncontrollable or independent of his responses. This learning can result in the development of an expectation that outcomes would be independent of responses in future also; which in turn leads to deficits in performance (Maier et al, 1969; Seligman et al, 1971). The basis of performance deficits is of three types, which are as follows:

MOTIVATIONAL DEFICITS

When a person believes that outcomes are not dependent on his responses, it leads to reduced motivation/ incentive for making efforts. The belief those outcomes are independent to response, the person generalizes it to other new situations also. Let us take an example of a Sr. manger of TCCB of BHEL, who had sent a proposal for some changes in the design of the transformer to the R&D department. By making this change the quality of the transformer can be improved a lot. But all suggestions have been turned down by the DGM (Research & Development or R&D) without giving any cause. Even after sometime when the above DGM of R&D got transferred to some other place, and the new DGM who is quite responsive to bringing in some technological changes, for good performance of their products, the above Sr. manager did not send any proposal for change. This is because he believes that submitting such a proposal is futile. A number of researchers have observed the motivational deficits in human and animals because of LH (Behrend and Bitterman, 1963; Lefcourt, 1966; Ratter, 1966; Frumkin and

Brookshire, 1969; Powel and Creer, 1969; Pyne, Anderson and Murcurio, 1970; Padilla and Padilla, 1970; Ketter and Giacalone, 1970; Padilla, 1973; Maier, Albim and Teasta, 1973; Enberg, Hansen, Welker and Thomas, 1973; Gamzu, Williams and Schwartz, 1973; Bainbridge, 1973; Hiroto, 1974; Welker, 1974; Hiroto and Seligman, 1975; Hiroto and Seligman, 1975; Hiroto, Seligman and Klien et al, 1975; Miller and Seligman, 1975; Seligman and Beagley, 1975; Seligman, Rosselini and Kozak, 1975; Rossiline and Seligman, 1975).

COGNITIVE DEFICITS

LH can also produce cognitive deficits, as the organism does not think that responses and outcomes are contingently related. Inference with future learning occurs, and there is difficulty in forming new cognitive of response producing outcomes. Let us take the example of the above Sr. manager again who has acquired a cognitive set that submitting any proposal leads only to non sanction. It will be more difficult for him to accept the fact that some of these proposals can be accepted or sanctioned. This type of cognitive deficits were also observed in animals and men by a number of researchers in different experiments (Rescorla, 1967; Thomas, Freeman, Svincki, Burr and Lyons, 1970; Mellgren and Ost, 1971; Mackintosh, 1973; Hiroto and Seligman, 1974; Miller and Seligman; Maier and Teasta, 1975; Klien et al, 1975).

EMOTIONAL DEFICITS

Expectancy of response-outcome independence leads to emotional disturbance in the form of anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc. The above stated Sr. manager might become indifferent towards other areas of his life and can show withdrawal symptoms and may even remain absent from duty frequently. Emotional deficits are also reported by several researchers among LH persons and or animals (Sines, Cleeland and Adkins, 1963; Elliot, 1969; Moot, Cabella and Crabtree, 1970; Jay Weiss, 1970; Corah and Bofa, 1970; Seligman and Grooves, 1970; Honkanson, Degood, Forest and Brittain, 1971; Desiderato and Newman, 1971; Averill and Rosenn, 1972; Payne, 1972. But Seligman's model of LH fails to explain how generaliability takes place from one situation to another situation (Hiroto and Seligman, 1975). Moreover, helplessness did not always generalize beyond

the setting in which actual response-outcome independence was experienced (Peterson, 1982; Alloy et al, 1984). This model also did not account for the impact of individual differences like gender (Dweck and Repucci, 1973; Baucom, Danker and Brown, 1979). Benson and Kennelly, 1976; and Burglass and Jones, 1978 explained that the expectancy of response-outcome independence as well as aversive outcome are necessary to induce LH.

ATTRIBUTION MODEL OF LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

To resolve the inadequacies in Seligman's model Abramson et al., 1978 produced a reformulated model of LH based on attribution theory. Attribution theories suggested that people make causal explanation for observed events and behaviour (Heider, 1958; Wong and Weiner, 1981). These causal attributions have a powerful effect on feelings, plans and well beings. This theory provides a framework by which attribution made by persons can be classified along many dimensions (Passer et al., 1979). The basic dimensions are Internal-External, Stable-Unstable (Weiner, 1971) and Global-Specific (Seligman et al.)

INTERNAL-EXTERNAL (I-E)

The I-E dimension makes a distinction between causes. Internal causes are based within the person whose behaviour the theory seeks to explain and are believed to be applicable to that person only. While External causes are not the part of the person whose behaviour is being explained. They are expected to affect all persons who attempt to behave similarly. This dimension represents "self-other" continuum and gives rise to two different types of helplessness.

1. Personal Helplessness (PH)

PH refers to believes that there are responses which can produce the desired outcomes. But the person does not have them in his repertoire. Like the lack of ability, poor skills and lack of efforts etc.

2. Universal Helplessness (UH)

UH refers to believes that relevant others also do not have the requisite responses in their responses. It is important to note that the reference person for universal helplessness are relevant others and not just any body. This includes luck, task difficulty and work overload, etc.

An additional effect associated with the I-E dimension is loss of self-esteem. Internal attribution make the person feel that he, unlike others, has been unable to control the desired outcomes, and is ashamed, feels guilty and loss of self-esteem. On the other hand, external attribution make the person feel that all are helpless like him, and prevent such loss of self-esteem.

STABLE-UNSTABLE (S-U)

This dimension of attribution model distinguishes factors, which are long lived and recurrent from those which are short lived and intermittent. Attribution of failure to stable factors would produce helplessness effect, which persist for a longer period of time; while unstable causal attribution would produce helplessness that dissipates with time. These unstable causes may not be present in future situations. Seligman and his associates proposed that chronicity of helplessness occur when stable attributions are made (like, lack of ability, task difficulty, and lack of power). This is because such factors are likely to be present in future. Therefore, these factors will prevent response from having the desired effect. If the attribution is unstable (like, recession, poor health and or insufficient effort), cause is not expected to occur in future or is unlikely to be chronic.

GLOBAL-SPECIFIC (G-S)

Global factors are those which exist in most situations and influence outcome widely. In contrast, specific factors are unique of the original situation and do not generalize across situations. Global attributions of uncontrollability imply that helplessness would occur across situations. The generality of helplessness may thus be explained by G-S dimension of attributions.

Global causes like lack of aptitude, poor health and recession affect a wide variety of situations including that in which the causes were stated. Whereas, specific causes like insufficient effort and difficult task may affect only one or few more specific situations. Hence, attribution to global causes affect the behaviour of the person in many other situations (Alloy 1982) and the person may generalize the situation where this cause is relevant. In contrast to specific causes, helplessness is likely to occur in dissimilar situations.

All the three dimensions of causal attributions described above are continuous rather than dichotomous. These three dimensions of attributions can be grouped together in different combinations, which will result in eight types of causal attributions. These are:

- 1) Internal - Global - Stable
- 2) Internal - Global - Unstable
- 3) Internal - Specific - Stable
- 4) Internal - Specific - Unstable
- 5) External - Global - Stable
- 6) External - Global - Unstable
- 7) External - Specific - Stable
- 8) External - Specific - Unstable

Each of these dimensions has a different implication for the future expectation of people, and their performance on subsequent tasks.

Taking the effects of these three dimensions together, it is observed that executives who makes internal-global-stable attributions, like lack of aptitude for managerial work will show highest personal helplessness in large number of organizational situations. Similarly, executives who make, external-stable-global attribution such as fate or destiny will express highest universal helplessness across a large number of organizational situations.

The second major attributional model of LH was presented by Miller and Norman (1979). This model supports all the predictions of reformulated LH model (Abramson et. Al., 1978). Besides, it provides new insight into the process by which causal attribution and LH emerge. According to this model two types of information which affect LH are outcome cues and situational cues. Outcome cues refers to the feedback received by the person from his previous experience, about the extent to which outcome depended on his effort and the extent of previous success. Situational cues refer to the significant stimuli or information received from the context of particular experience, such as instructions about the uncontrollable stimuli (Glass and Singer, 1973; Hiroto, 1974; Klein et al., 1976), amount of exposure to uncontrollability (Roth and Kubal, 1976) and other stimuli such as other's performance (Weiner, 1974). Individual differences that significantly affect LH are gender (Dweck and Repucci, 1973), previously held expectations about performance (Hiroto, 1974) and depressive mood (Hammen and Krantz, 1976).

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATION OF LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

Snyder and Higgins (1988) have tried to explain LH by recourse to excuse making. "Excuse making is the process of shifting causal attributions for negative personal outcome from sources that are more central to the person's sense of self to sources that are relatively less central, thereby, resulting in perceived benefits to the person's image and sense of control."

Sedek and Kofta (1990) has put forth an informational explanation of LH by defining uncontrollability in information processing terms. When a person is in the uncontrollable situation, he receives consistent informational feedback as he engages in hypothesis testing activity during problem solving. Gradually some of the hypotheses are disapproved and he is able to construct an adequate cognitive schema for the future. But on the other hand, a person facing uncontrollable situations receive meaningless informational feedback and he is unable to construct an appropriate cognitive schema for behaviour. The high disorderliness thus produced does not get reduced inspite of

cognitive exertion by the person. This inability to have any cognitive gain leads to a state of cognitive exhaustion in which little hypothesis testing is done. This state is the immediate antecedent of LH symptoms.

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS IN ORGANIZATIONS

A very few studies of LH in naturalistic settings have been found in the review of literature. Balakrishnan (1990) found LH to be positively correlated with chance locus of control and negatively correlated with internal locus of control, job involvement and job satisfaction. In this study, attributional theory did not get adequate support. Education level was inversely related with LH. People in financial organization were found to have higher personal helplessness as compared to those in manufacturing and consulting organizations.

Chawla (1994) found no relationship between the LH and the demographic variables among executives. Lata and Dhar (1989) found that age has significant correlation with LH, more in old ages and less in young ages. Sayeed (1995) found moderate level of LH among the top executives and a little high level of LH in lower level executives of public sector undertakings.

MEANING AND CONCEPT OF ROLE EFFICACY:

The performance of a person working in an organization depends on his own potential effectiveness, technical competence, managerial experience, etc., as well as the design of the role that he performs in the organization. It is the integration of the two (the person and the role) that ensures a person's effectiveness in the organization. Unless a person has the requisite knowledge, technical competence and the skills required for the role, he can not be effective. Equally important is how the role that he occupies in the organization is designed. If the role does not allow the person to use his competence, and if he constantly feels frustrated in the role, his effectiveness is likely to be low.

The integration of a person and the role comes about when the role is able to fulfil the needs of the individual, and when the individual in turn is able to contribute to the evolution of the role. The more we move from **role taking** (responding to the expectations of the other persons) to **role making** (taking initiative in designing the role more creatively in a way such that the expectations of the others as well as of the role occupant are integrated), the more the role is likely to be effective. Effectiveness of a person-in-a-role-in-an-organization will depend on his own potential effectiveness, the potential effectiveness of the role, and the organizational climate. The potential effectiveness can be called efficacy.

Personal efficacy would mean potential effectiveness of a person in personal and interpersonal situations. Role efficacy would mean the potential effectiveness of an individual occupying a particular role in organization.

ROLE EFFICACY

Role efficacy can be seen as the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness. In short, role efficacy is the potential effectiveness of a role.

Pareek (1980) has divided the role efficacy into several aspects. The more these aspects are present in a role, the higher the efficacy of that role is likely to be. These aspects can

be classified into three groups or dimensions, namely; **role making, role centering and role linking.**

ROLE MAKING

Four aspects of Role efficacy constitute this dimension of role making.

1. Self-Role Integration

Every person has his strengths, experience, technical training, special skills and some unique contribution that he may be able to make. The more the role a person occupies provides an opportunity for the use of such special strengths, the higher the efficacy is likely to be. This is called self-role integration. The self or the person and the role get integrated through the possibility of a person's use of his special strengths in the role. In one organization a person was promoted to a responsible position. This was seen as a coveted reward and it made the person very happy. However, he soon discovered that in the new position, he was not able to use his special skills of training, counseling and organizational diagnosis. In spite of his working very well in the new role, his efficacy was not as high as it was in the previous one. Later when the role was redesigned to enable him to use his rare skills, his efficacy went up. All of us want that our special strengths are used in the role so that it may be possible for us to demonstrate how effective we can be. As such, integration contributes to high role efficacy. On the other hand, if there is a distance between the self and the role, role efficacy is likely to be low.

2. Proactivity

A person, who occupies a role, responds to the various expectations that people in the organization have from that role. While this certainly gives him satisfaction, it also satisfies others in the organization. However, if he is also expected to take initiative in starting some activity, the efficacy will be higher. Reactive behaviour (responding to the expectations of others) helps a person in being effective to some extent, but proactivity (taking initiative rather than only responding to others expectations) contributes much more to efficacy. If a person feels that he would like to take initiative but has no opportunity to do so in the role that he occupies in the organization, the efficacy will be low.

3. Creativity

It is not only initiative which is important for efficacy. An opportunity to try new and unconventional ways of solving problems or an opportunity to be creative is equally important. In one state government department people performing clerical roles met as a part of reorganization experiment to discuss how each individual could experiment with a system of cutting delays in processing papers. The results were amazing. Not only did the satisfaction of the people in that department go up, but delays were considerably reduced and some innovative systems emerged. Certainly, these were further discussed and modified, but the opportunity people got in being creative and in trying out innovative ideas increased their role efficacy and their performance markedly improved. If a person perceives that he has to perform only routine tasks, it is detrimental towards a high role efficacy. If he feels that the role does not allow any time or opportunity to be creative, the efficacy is bound to be low.

4. Confrontation

In general, if people in an organization avoid problems, or shift the problems to others, their role efficacy will be low. The tendency to confront problems and find relevant solutions contributes to efficacy. When people facing interpersonal problems sit down, and talk about these problems, and search out solutions, their efficacy is likely to be higher when compared with situations in which they either deny such problems or refer them to their higher officers.

ROLE CENTERING

Three aspects of Role efficacy constitute this dimension of role centering.

1. Centrality

If a person occupying a particular role in an organization feels that the role he occupies is central in the organization, his role efficacy is likely to be high. Every employee would like to feel that his role is important to the organization. If persons occupying various roles feel that their roles are peripheral i.e. not very important to the organization, their potential effectiveness will be low. This is true for all persons and not only for those at the lowest level

2. Influence

A related concept is that of influence or power. The more influence a person is able to exercise in the role, the higher the role efficacy is likely to be. One factor, which may make roles in the public-sector or civil-service more efficacious is the opportunity to influence a larger section of the society. On the other hand, if a person feels that he has no power in the role he occupies in the organization, the efficacy is likely to be low.

3. Personal Growth

One factor, which contributes effectively to role efficacy, is the perception that the role provides the individual with an opportunity to grow and develop. There are several examples of people leaving one role and becoming very effective in another primarily because they had more opportunity to grow in the latter. A head of a training institute accepted the position, taking a big financial cut in his salary because he felt that he had nothing more to learn in the previous position, and in the new position he had opportunities to grow further. If a person feels that he is stagnating in a role without any opportunity to grow he is likely to have a low role efficacy. Institutions, which are able to plan growth of such people in the roles, will have higher efficacy and obtain a great deal of contribution from them.

ROLE LINKING

Three aspects of Role efficacy constitute this dimension of role linking.

1. Inter-role Linkage

Linkages of one's role with other roles in the organization increase efficacy. If there is a joint effort in understanding problems, finding solutions, etc., the efficacy of the various roles involved is likely to be high. Of course, the presumption is that people know how to work effectively. Similarly, if a person is a member of a task group set up for a specific purpose, his efficacy, other factors being common, is likely to be high. The feeling of isolation of a role (that person works without any linkage with other roles) reduces role efficacy.

2. Helping Relationship

In addition to inter-role linkage, the opportunity for people to receive and give help also increases role efficacy. If persons performing a particular role feel that they can get help from some source in the organization whenever the need arises, they are likely to have higher role efficacy. On the other hand, if there is a feeling that no help is forthcoming when asked for, or that the respondents are hostile, role efficacy will be low. A helping relationship is of two kinds - feeling free to ask for help and expecting that help would be available when it is needed, as well as the willingness to give help and respond to the needs of others.

3. Superordination

A role may have linkages with systems, groups and entities beyond the organization. When a person performing a particular role feels that what he does, is likely to be of value to a larger group, his efficacy is likely to be high. The roles, which give opportunities to the role occupants to work for superordinate goals, have the highest role efficacy. Superordinate goals are goals that serve large groups, and those that cannot be achieved without some collaborative effort. One major motivation for people at the top, to move to the public sector undertaking is to have an opportunity to work for larger goals that are likely to help a larger section of the society. Many people have voluntarily accepted cuts in their salary to move from private sector to the public sector at the top level, mainly because the new role would give them an opportunity to serve a larger interest. Roles in which people feel that what they are doing is helpful to the organization in which they work, result in role efficacy. But if a person feels that he does not get an opportunity to be of help to a larger group or society, the role efficacy is likely to be low.

CHAPTER - II

**RESEARCH
METHODOLOGY**

The aim of a scientific endeavor like the present one is to ascertain facts and analyze them in an objective manner, to work out a neat design, systematically analyze the data and present the data in the light of whatever parallel findings are available. (McGuigan, 1969; McNemar, 1962; Edward, 1956; and Siegal and Castella, 1989)

Subscribing to these requirements of scientific study, the present research is directed to explore the effect that learned helplessness has on the role efficacy of the executives in the pharmaceutical industry. It also proposes to determine the relationship of learned helplessness with several demographic variables.

SAMPLE:

The size of the sample plays a significant role in the statistical analysis of the data and in the generalizability of results. It has been proposed that the sample for stable results are directly proportional to the number of variables involved.

The middle level executives of Ahmedabad based pharmaceutical industry were the sample and 40 samples were collected keeping in mind the purposive random sampling method.

All the respondents had masters degree and most of them had professional qualifications. They were in the age group of 24 years to 50 years with a mean age of 31 years.

TOOLS USED:

The study was performed through questionnaire method. Two psychometric scales viz. "A psychometric measure of learned helplessness" developed by Pestonjee and Reddy (1988) and "Role Efficacy Scale" developed by Pareek were used as a tool to measure the same.

The LH scale is based on the attributional model of learned helplessness, developed by Abramson et al (1978,80). The LH scale has three attributions viz. **Internal - External,**

Stable - Unstable, Global - Specific which when combined together give eight different attributions of Learned Helplessness. These are as follows.

1. **External - Specific - Stable Attribution (LH1)**
2. **Internal - Specific - Unstable Attribution (LH2)**
3. **Internal - Global - Stable Attribution (LH3)**
4. **External - Specific - Unstable Attribution (LH4)**
5. **Internal - Global - Unstable Attribution (LH5)**
6. **External - Global - Stable Attribution (LH6)**
7. **Internal - Specific - Stable Attribution (LH7)**
8. **External - Global - Unstable Attribution (LH8)**

This scale has 24 statements. The statements are non-uniformly distributed into eight groups (factors) of attributions discussed above. A six point rating scale is used ranging from "**strongly agree**" to "**strongly disagree**". The respondents strongly agreeing with the statement will get a rating of one and strongly disagreeing will get six. The ratings have reverse meaning, **higher the score lower the learned helplessness**. The scale has reliability and validity within acceptable norms.

The RE scale is a structured instrument consisting of 20 triads of statements. A respondent marks one statement in each triad which describes his role most accurately. These three alternatives are pre-weighted. There are two statements for each of the ten dimensions to be measured and the same scoring pattern is followed (+2, +1, or -1). These dimensions are:

1. **Centrality (RE1)**
2. **Integration (RE2)**
3. **Proactivity (RE3)**
4. **Creativity (RE4)**
5. **Inter-role Linkage (RE5)**

6. **Helping Relationship (RE6)**
7. **Super Ordination (RE7)**
8. **Influence (RE8)**
9. **Growth (RE9)**
10. **Confrontation (RE10)**

The total score arrived at by each individual is then added to 20 (total number of triads) and divided by 60 (total number of alternatives, each triad having three alternatives), the whole is multiplied by 100 to give the role efficacy index for the individual. Thus the formula to calculate the role efficacy index may be given as

$$\frac{(\text{TOTAL SCORE}) * 20 * 100}{60}$$

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:

The data was analyzed with the help of SPSS and MS-EXCEL software packages on a personal computer. The mean, standard deviation and correlation were calculated.

CHAPTER - III

RESULTS

&

DISCUSSION

The present research was an exploratory research which was mainly directed to explore the Learned Helplessness (LH), Role Efficacy (RE) in the middle management executives of the pharmaceutical industry.

The data obtained was statistically analyzed for all the eight dimensions of LH and ten dimensions of RE for the whole group and then, was correlated for the dimensions of each of them. The results are discussed herein and also tabulated in the following tables.

Discussions:

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION:

- Table 1 shows the mean and std. deviation for the various factors of LH and also for the total LH. The mean value is the highest for LH1 (External Specific Stable Attribute) and the least for LH3 (Internal Global Stable) indicating the attribution of LH to this factor the most and the previous factor the least.
- Table 2 shows the mean and std. deviation for the various aspects of RE and also for the total RE. The mean value is the highest for RE6 (Helping Relationship) indicating that this is the factor which is highly responsible for increasing the RE of a person in this industry. Whereas the mean value is the least for RE7 (Super Ordination).

INTER CORRELATION BETWEEN ROLE EFFICACY AND LEARNED HELPLESSNESS:

- Table 3 lists out the inter-correlation between the Role Efficacy and Learned Helplessness Variables. Even before the discussion and interpretations of the results on inter-correlation of RE and LH are undertaken, it must be understood that the seemingly positive correlation of RE variables with the variables of LH, would actually be indicative of a positive relationship owing to the system of marking the LH scale. Hence appropriate adjustments in discussing the results have been made to have a clear line of thinking, while the tables continue to reflect the actual results obtained.

- LH3 (Internal-Global-Stable), LH6 (External Global Specific) and LH8 (External Global Unstable) do not have a significant correlation with any of the RE variables or with the total RE. This indicates that the lack of control over the events happening in general around us (LH6) as well as the amount of effort expended and results obtained (LH8) do not affect the role efficacy of a person significantly. Any external factor which is equally applicable to the relevant others also, although it may be temporary or permanent in nature does not affect the RE significantly. Also, one's ability or lack of it to control the outcomes that are likely to happen to him/her (LH3) does not significantly affect RE.
- However LH1 (External Specific Stable) and LH5 (Internal Global Unstable) are found to have significant correlation with most of the RE variables. LH1 is found to be significantly correlated to RE2, RE3, RE5, RE6, RE8, RE10 and RET ($p < 0.01$) and RE4, RE9 ($p > 0.05$). This is the factor, which is diametrically opposite to that of LH7 (Internal Specific Stable), and this correlation indicates that there is an overall tendency to attribute the negative impact on one's efficacy to the external dimensions and not to the internal ones. The inter-correlation is highly significant for RE2 (Integration) followed by RE10(Confrontation) and RE3 (Proactivity) respectively. This indicates that on account of the helplessness attributed because of LH1, the aspects of integration, confrontation and proactivity are most affected in a negative way and the overall role efficacy decreases. **THIS FACTOR HAS THE HIGHEST CORRELATION WITH RET**, indicating that the environmental aspects in which the industry is functioning is the highly responsible for the lower role efficacy. These environmental aspects could be anything from government rules to customer relations to customer expectations. And this is very evitable on account of the fact that more than 80% of the sample was from the Marketing Division of the industry.
- Another striking result is the high significance of LH5 with RE3, RE6, RE10 & RT ($p > 0.01$) and RE2, RE4 ($p > 0.05$). Usually, it is found that LH is very rarely attributed to internal factors; but here the Internal Global Unstable factor is attributed with LH and is found to be significantly correlating to Proactivity, Helping

Relationship and Confrontation indicating that it is because of this that these three aspects of RE are hampered, resulting into reduced RE. This is one result that is very striking and thought provoking taking into account the sample under observation. The sample being predominantly from the marketing area of the industry, this result makes us think about the prevalent culture and support system in the industry. Also, on account of this factor, integration, creativity and growth aspects of a RE are affected. The result is without doubt reduced RE.

- The next most striking result is the significant correlation of LH4 (External Specific Unstable) with RE2, RE5, RE10 and RET ($p>0.01$) and RE3 and RE6 ($p>0.05$). This result indicates the negative impact that the undesirable elements in the culture of the organization have on the RE. However, since these elements are unstable in nature and one is hopeful of them being changed, for increasing the RE, steps should be taken to check this factor.
- LH2 (Internal Specific Unstable) and LH7 (Internal Specific Stable) are the two factors which are found to be sparsely significantly correlated to RE. LH2 is significantly correlated to RE7 ($p>0.05$) and LH7 is found to be significantly correlated to RE2 ($p>0.01$) and RE8 ($p>0.05$).
- It is found that of all the LH factors LH1, LH4 and LH5 have significant correlation with RET. And amongst them, LH1 is found to have the highest correlation followed by LH5 and LH4. This indicates that the role efficacy of the executives in this industry is highly guided by these three factors and if the role efficacy is to be improved or extended, then steps should be taken to reduce the feeling of LH occurring because of these factors.

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME WITH LEARNED HELPLESSNESS:

- The Learned Helplessness may lead to some performance deficits in the organizations. The management can control this by using some intervention strategies.
- The management should follow up LH measurement programme for its executives when some changes take place in the organization. The new comers in the organizations should be properly guided and given assignment where they are likely to succeed. The management should make aware to their executives that their failure on job may be due to some specific internal and external factors, which might develop a feeling of helplessness, so specific causes be spelt out on some important occasions.
- There is a need for bringing about changes in executive's perceptions of uncontrollability of outcomes. They should be given encouragement, verbal feedback and social persuasion by the management. The executives may be provided with pre-treatment strategies that may reduce the susceptibility of Learned Helplessness.
- The management should also try and see that the executives do not blame themselves for the failure of the task and be trained to handle failures effectively, without which it will affect the overall functioning of the organization.

LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

- This research was carried out on a section of the executives of the industry; the future research in this area could be on all the sections of the industry and realte this concept at all the levels of the organisation.
- Since this research has a predominantly high sample from the marketing section, it is possible that certain results are lopsided. This is one avenue which needs to be substantiated further.
- Since this research was carried on in the month of March, which is the year ending for all organizations, it is the authors feeling that the results may differ if conducted at a later date when the atmosphere in the industry is relaxed as compared to the tensed one as of now.

Table 1 - Mean and Standard Deviation on Learned Helplessness Variables.

LH Factor	Mean	Std. Dev.
LH1	28.41	4.76
LH2	16.41	4.62
LH3	9.05	1.82
LH4	12.92	3.46
LH5	12.16	2.42
LH6	6.24	1.88
LH7	9.68	1.63
LH8	9.59	1.86
LHT	101.71	21.40

Table 2 - Mean and Standard Deviation on Role Efficacy Variables.

RE Factor	Mean	Std. Dev
Centrality	2.70	1.27
Integration	3.24	1.14
Proactivity	2.95	1.00
Creativity	3.35	1.18
Interrole Linkage	3.35	0.86
Helping Relationship	3.46	1.32
Super Ordination	2.27	1.41
Influence	2.95	1.27
Growth	3.16	1.14
Confrontation	3.41	1.40
RE Total	30.03	8.53

Table 3 - Correlation between LH Factors and RE Factors

	LH1	LH2	LH3	LH4	LH5	LI 6	LH7	LH8	LH Total
RE1	0.140	-0.173	-0.269	0.229	0.098	-0.097	0.247	-0.335	0.000
RE2	0.616 *	0.044	0.260	0.442 *	0.388 **	-0.171	0.401 *	0.048	0.491 *
RE3	0.601 *	0.125	0.078	0.353 **	0.440 *	-0.097	0.193	-0.087	0.441 *
RE4	0.383 **	0.136	0.184	0.122	0.387 **	0.236	-0.097	0.243	0.369 **
RE5	0.434 *	0.187	0.165	0.441 *	0.280	0.297	0.183	-0.048	0.467 *
RE6	0.410 *	0.295	0.173	0.324 **	0.444 *	0.166	-0.147	0.111	0.461 *
RE7	0.207	0.307 **	0.156	0.182	0.331	-0.015	-0.075	-0.137	0.281
RE8	0.515 *	-0.001	0.037	0.246	0.256	-0.216	0.380 **	0.049	0.324 **
RE9	0.304 **	0.103	-0.098	0.341 **	0.342 **	0.188	-0.075	-0.164	0.277
RE10	0.615 *	0.291	0.251	0.402 *	0.544 *	0.046	0.107	0.150	0.602 *
RE Total	0.715 *	0.232	0.162	0.517 *	0.585 *	0.045	0.209	-0.024	0.631 *

* -> Significant at 0.01

** -> Significant at 0.05

n = 40

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APPENDIX

1. NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION :
2. YOUR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION :
3. AGE :
4. SEX :
5. DESIGNATION :
6. EXPERIENCE IN THE PRESENT POST :
7. TOTAL EXPERIENCE :
8. PROMOTIONAL AVENUES :
9. INCOME :
10. MARITAL STATUS :
11. NUMBER OF DEPENDENT :
12. FAMILY STRUCTURE :

DEAR RESPONDENT : Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements by putting appropriate number against the bracket (), showing your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement given below

STRONGLY AGREE	- 1
AGREE	- 2
SLIGHTLY AGREE	- 3
SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	- 4
DISAGREE	- 5
STRONGLY DISAGREE	- 6

Your explicit responses will be very useful for this research work. Please do not conceal the facts, the responses would be treated in strict confidence and for research purpose only.

THANKS

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS SCALE

01. No matter what I do, some people do not like me. ()
02. If I have more/less friends, it is mainly because I wanted to have more/less friends. ()
03. There is a direct relation between how hard I work and what result I get. ()
04. Honesty, hardwork and truthfulness are not our way of life, and there is hardly anything one man can do to change this. ()
05. There are many undesirable elements in the culture of my organization, but I feel helpless to correct them. ()
06. I do not struggle hard to overcome my faults because I know that I will not be able to correct them. ()
07. I know many things are bad in my organization but I am unable to do anything to correct them. ()
08. I do not like my present job but I can not quit it because I can not be able to get a better job. ()
09. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad luck any way. ()
10. I do not like many aspects of my job, but what can I do about it. ()
11. When i fail to do as well as I am expected to in my organization, it is usually due to lack of effort on my part. ()
12. If I succeed on a task, it is usually because I am lucky or am helped by other people. ()
13. If I were to fail in a task, it would probably be because I lacked skill in that area. ()
14. If I am not successful in my organization it is because of lack of expertise to do well on my job. ()

15. Even if it urgent, there is no use trying to do something in this organization, if it is against rules. ()
16. If I were not successful in my organization, it is because my Boss did not help me. ()
17. If I really try hard, I can become an expert of computer science in no time. ()
18. It seems to me that getting along with people is a skill. ()
19. There is no use in working very hard in this organization, because whatever rewards I get are in no way related to my performance. ()
20. If I were not successful in my organization, it is because the culture of my organization does not facilitate me to succeed. ()
21. My life is mainly shaped by my efforts. ()
22. Many time I feel that I have little influence over things that are happening to me. ()
23. Whether or not I get in to an accident depends mostly on how careful I am while walking or driving on road. ()
24. When I can not understand something, it is usually because it is too hard to understand for me as well as for others. ()

ROLE EFFICACY SCALE

Name:

Role:

Organisation:

Date:

In each of the following sets of three statements, tick the one (a,b or c) that most accurately describes your own experience in your organisational role. Choose only one statement in each set.

1. —a. My role is very important in this organisation; I feel central here.
—b. I am doing useful and fairly important work.
—c. Very little importance is given to my role in this organisation; I feel peripheral here.
2. —a. My training and expertise are not fully utilised in my present role.
—b. My training and knowledge are not used in my present role.
—c. I am able to use my knowledge and training very well here.
3. —a. I have little freedom in my role; I am only an errand boy.
—b. I operate according to the directions given to me.
—c. I can take initiative and act on my own in my role.
4. —a. I am doing usual, routine work in my role.
—b. In my role I am able to use my creativity and do something new.
—c. I have no time for creative work in my role.
5. —a. No one in the organisation responds to my ideas and suggestions.
—b. I work in close collaboration with some other colleagues.
—c. I am alone and have almost no one to consult in my role.
6. —a. When I need some help, none is available.
—b. Whenever I have a problem, others help me.
—c. I get very hostile responses when I ask for help.
7. —a. I regret that I do not have the opportunity to contribute to society in my role.
—b. What I am doing in my role is likely to help other organisations or society.
—c. I have the opportunity to have some effect on the larger society in my role.
8. —a. I contribute to some decisions.
—b. I have no power here.
—c. My advice is accepted by my seniors.
9. —a. Some of what I do contributes to my learning.
—b. I am slowly forgetting all that I learnt (my professional knowledge).
—c. I have tremendous opportunities for professional growth in my role.
10. —a. I dislike being bothered with problems.

- b. When a subordinate brings a problem to me, I help find a solution.
 - c. I refer the problem to my boss or to some other person.
11. —a. I feel quite central in the organisation.
- b. I think I am doing fairly important work.
 - c. I feel I am peripheral in this organisation.
12. —a. I do not enjoy my role.
- b. I enjoy my role very much.
 - c. I enjoy some parts of my role and not others.
13. —a. I have little freedom in my role.
- b. I have a great deal of freedom in my life.
 - c. I have enough freedom in my role.
14. —a. I do a good job according to a pre-decided schedule.
- b. I am able to be innovative in my role.
 - c. I have no opportunity to be innovative or to do something creative.
15. —a. Others in the organisation see my role significant to their work.
- b. I am a member of a task force or a committee.
 - c. I do not work on any committees.
16. —a. Hostility rather than cooperation is evident here.
- b. I experience enough mutual help here.
 - c. People operate more in isolation here.
17. —a. I am able to contribute to the company in my role.
- b. I am able to serve the larger parts of society in my role.
 - c. I wish I could do some useful work in my role.
18. —a. I am able to influence relevant decisions.
- b. I am sometimes consulted on important matters.
 - c. I cannot make any independent decisions.
19. —a. I learn a great deal in my role.
- b. I learn a few new things in my role.
 - c. I am involved in routine or unrelated activities and have learnt nothing.
20. —a. When people bring problems to me, I tend to ask them to work it out themselves.
- b. I dislike being bothered with interpersonal conflict.
 - c. I enjoy solving problems related to my work.

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