CHAPTER – 2
LOCUS OF CONTROL AND JOB INVOLVEMENT – THEORITICAL REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This concept, Locus of Control was developed by Julian Rotter in the 1960s. He named this concept as Locus of Control of Reinforcement. Rotter actually bridged the gap between Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology. He believed that behavior was greatly guided by the use of reinforcements. Individuals’ belief about the controllability of what happens to them is a core element of their understanding of how they live in the world (Shapiro, Schwartz & Astin, 1996). In initial investigation of these beliefs, clinical psychology researchers observed that some clients changed their behavior more than others after new experiences. The proposed variable to account for their differences is known as Locus of Control, was the expectancy or belief about the reinforcements that follows a behavior (Rotter, Seeman, & Liverant, 1962). Those individuals with internal Locus of Control believe that reinforcements are a result of personal effort, whereas individuals with an external Locus of Control believe that reinforcement occur as a result of forces outside their personal control.

Rotter's (1966) concept of internal-external Locus of Control has its foundation in social learning theory. Rotter (1966) distinguished between beliefs in internal versus external control of reinforcement. Rotter, reinforcements following an action will be understood by individuals with a belief in external control as a direct consequence of luck, chance, or fate, whereas individuals with a belief in internal control will perceive these same reinforcements as being dependent on their own ability or behavior. This initial conception of Locus of Control concerned learning processes such that people with
a belief in internal control are more likely to change their behavior following a positive or negative reinforcement than are people with a belief in external control. For behavior change to occur, however, the reinforcement must be of value to the person.

Individuals with an internal Locus of Control experience reinforcements of value as more meaningful or influential to them because they believe that they have control over reinforcements; to increase or decrease the reinforcement, they change their behavior. On the other hand, individuals with an external Locus of Control are less likely to change their behavior because they do not believe that changing their behavior would have an effect on the reinforcements. Instead, they believe that what happens to them is primarily due to luck, chance, fate, or powerful others.

Rotter (1966) hypothesized that there are individual differences in the Locus of Control variable, which Locus of Control is important in comprehending learning processes, and that Locus of Control influences behavior in many situations. The question of why there was an interest in Locus of Control has been given in the early writings by Rotter et al. (1962), who pointed out that "the stimulus for studying such a variable has come from analysis of patients in psychotherapy and from an attempt to explain certain discrepancies in learning studies of performance and extinction" Rotter and his colleagues were interested in predicting how reinforcements alter behavior.

Rotter (1975) cautioned practitioners to avoid falsely assuming that characteristics of individuals with an internal Locus of Control are all positive and qualities of individuals with an external Locus of Control are all negative. This caution notwithstanding, research and practice in the area has been biased by the popular
assumption that a belief in internal control is more desirable than a belief in external control (Evans, Shapiro, & Lewis, 1993; Furby, 1979).

**2.2 Definition:**

Locus of Control refers to an individual's generalized expectations concerning where control over subsequent events resides. In other words, who or what is responsible for what happens. It is analogous to, but distinct from, attributions. According to Weiner the "attribution theory assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do, i.e., attribute causes to behavior." There is a three stage process which underlies an attribution. Step one: the person must perceive or possibly observe the behavior. Step two he must try and figure out if the behavior was intentional, and step three is to determine if the person was forced to perform that behavior. The latter occur after the fact, that is, there are explanations for events that have already happened. Expectancy, which concerns future events, is a critical aspect of Locus of Control. Locus of Control is grounded in expectancy-value theory, which describes human behavior as determined by the perceived likelihood of an event or outcome occurring contingent upon the behavior in question, and the value placed on that event or outcome. More specifically, expectancy-value theory states that if (a) someone values a particular outcome and (b) that person believes that taking a particular action will produce that outcome, then (c) they are more likely to take that particular action.
Some of the popular definitions are presented below:

2.2.1 **According to JB Rotter:**

The extent, to which a person believes that he can control what happens to him, is referred to as a belief in internal control of reinforcement. A belief that one is controlled by luck, fate or powerful others, is referred to as a belief in external control of reinforcement.

2.2.2 **According to Philip Zimbardo:**

A Locus of Control orientation is a belief about whether the outcomes of our actions are contingent on what we do (internal control orientation) or on events outside our personal control (external control orientation)”

2.2.3 **According to Weiner:**

Those who attribute their successes to internal causes have a greater degree of achievement motivation than those who attribute their successes to external causes. Those who attribute their failure to external causes, rather than to internal causes have stronger self esteem and achievement motivation than those who attribute failure to internal causes.

2.2.4 **According to Stone and Jackson:**

A person with internal Locus of Control believes that he has control over reinforcing events in his or her life. A person with internal Locus of Control attributes change to herself and to her action. He believes and acts as though he controls his own future and sees himself as an effective agent in determining the occurrence reinforcing events. A person with external Locus of Control attributes change to an external source. He believes, reports or act as through forces beyond his control (such as fate, change,
powerful others, social constraints or instructions) are important factors in determining the occurrences of reinforcing events.

2.3 Importance of Internal Locus of Control

In general, it seems to be psychologically healthy to perceive that one has control over those things which one is capable of influencing. In simple terms, a more internal Locus of Control is generally seen as desirable. Having an internal Locus of Control can also be referred to as "self-agency", "personal control", "self-determination", etc. Research has found the following trends:

- Males tend to be more internal than females
- As people get older they tend to become more internal
- People higher up in organizational structures tend to be more internal (Mamlin, Harris, & Case, 2001)

However, it’s important to warn a person who thinks that internal is good and external is bad (two legs good, four legs bad?). There are important subtleties and complexities to be considered. For example:

- Internals can be psychologically unhealthy and unstable. An internal orientation usually needs to be matched by competence, self-efficacy and opportunity so that the person is able to successfully experience the sense of personal control and responsibility. Internal people who lack competence, efficiency and opportunity can become neurotic (fearful), anxious (worried) and depressed(sad).
- Externals can lead easy-going, relaxed, happy lives.
Despite these cautions, psychological research has found that people with a more internal Locus of Control seem to be better off, e.g., they tend to be more achievement oriented and to get better paid jobs. However, thought regarding causality is needed here too. Do environmental circumstances (such as privilege and disadvantage) cause Locus of Control beliefs or do the beliefs cause the situation?

Sometimes Locus of Control is seen as a stable, underlying personality construct, but this may be misleading, since the theory and research indicates that that Locus of Control is largely learned. There is evidence that, at least to some extent, Locus of Control is a response to circumstances.

### 2.4 Development of Internal Locus of Control

Internality is not an innate characteristic, people acquire it. Therefore it can also be developed. Some evidence is available about the development of internality form a variety of sources: work with children, Clinical work with mental patients, experiments in producing change in people. The understanding of the process of the development of internality also helps to search for interventions that can be used in increasing internality of people. The following main groups of such interventions are suggested. Special training programs can be planned an internality lab has been designed as an integrated programmed to develop internality. A variety of programs attempt to increase an individual’s self awareness. In process or encounter groups (like T-groups) the individual is helped to confront himself, understand his basic stance in life, and experiment with new behaviour. Transaction analysis can be used to help a person understand his existential life position and his life script, so that he can take new decisions in life. In
transaction analysis language internality is the OK position and externality is the not OK position.

2.5 Benefits of an Internal Locus of Control

In general, people with an internal Locus of Control have the following benefits:

1. Engage in activities that will improve their situation.

2. Emphasize striving for achievement.

3. Work hard to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities.

4. Are inquisitive, and try to figure out why things turned out the way they did.

5. Take note of information that they can use to create positive outcomes in the future.

6. Have a more participative management style.

2.6 Managing the Drawbacks of a Strong Internal Locus of Control

People with an internal Locus of Control are generally more successful, for very good reasons. However there can be times when having an external Locus of Control can be an advantage, particularly in situations where people need to be considerate and more easy-going. People with a strong internal Locus of Control tend to be very achievement-oriented, and this can leave people around them feeling "trampled" or "bruised." And with a very strong internal Locus of Control, there is also a tendency to want to control everything, and this can lead to difficulties in taking direction.
If a person has a strong internal Locus of Control, he must give more attention to the feelings of people around him - otherwise he will see arrogant, and people may not want to work with him.

2.7 Opposition between Internal and External explanation

Empirical research findings have implied the following differences between internals and externals:

1. Internals are more likely to work for achievements, to tolerate delays in rewards and to plan for long-term goals, whereas externals are more likely to lower their goals.

2. After failing a task, internals re-evaluate future performances and lower their expectations of success, whereas externals may raise their expectations. These differences relate to differences in achievement motivation (as noted above, Rotter (1966) believed that internals tend to be higher in achievement motivation than externals). However, empirical findings have been ambiguous here. There is some evidence that sex-based differences may complicate these findings, with females being more responsive to failures, males to successes.

3. Going back to Bialer's (1961), considerable data suggest that internal Locus of Control is associated with increased ability to delay gratification. However, at least one study has found this effect does not apply to all samples. Walls and Miller (cited in Lefcourt, 1976) found an association between internal locus and delay of gratification in second and third grade children, but not in adults who were vocational rehabilitation clients.
4. Internals are better able to resist coercion. This relates to higher outer-directedness of externals, another factor which Rotter (1966) believed distinguished the two orientations.

5. Internals are better at tolerating ambiguous situations. There is also a lot of evidence in clinical research that internality correlates negatively with anxiety, and that internals may be less prone to depression than externals, as well as being less prone to learned helplessness. However, this does not mean that the emotional life of the internal is always more positive than that of the external, as internals are known to be more guilt-prone than externals.

Some of the other important differences are summarized below-

Externals are less willing to take risks, to work on self-improvement and to better themselves through remedial work than internals. Internals derive greater benefits from social supports. Internals make better mental health recovery in the long-term adjustment to physical disability. Internals are more likely to prefer games based on skill, while externals prefer games based on chance or luck. Internal believe on success or failure depends on their ability, where as externals believe on the external sources. Internal are highly motivated in their working environment, but externals are less motivated. An external needs tight supervision from their superiors where as internals not needed. Internals are highly paid since they are highly performing people. Externals are not high achiever so they are low paid. Internals exhibit less anxiety external exhibit high anxiety. Internals likely to act independently externals always depends on other. Internals are risk lovers where as
externals are not risk takers. Internals shoulders the responsibility but externals always avoid responsibility. Internals are self controlled people externals are low in self control. Internals are highly satisfied in their work but externals are less satisfied. Internals prefer intrinsic reward, externals prefer extrinsic reward. Externals are complaint makers but internals are not like that. Internals are highly stress people where as externals are low stress people.

2.8 Unidimensional to Multidimensional

Rotter's original (1966) Locus of Control formulation classified generalized beliefs concerning who or what influences things along a bipolar dimension from internal to external control: "Internal control" is the term used to describe the belief that control of future outcomes resides primarily in oneself while "external control" refers to the expectancy that control is outside of oneself, either in the hands of powerful other people or due to fate/chance. Hannah Levenson (1973) offered an alternative model. Whereas Rotter's conceptualization viewed Locus of Control as unidimensional (internal to external), Levenson's model asserts that there are three independent dimensions: Internality, Chance, and Powerful Others (ICP). According to Levenson's model, one can endorse each of these dimensions of Locus of Control independently and at the same time. For example, A person might simultaneously believe that both oneself and powerful others influence outcomes, but that chance does not.

Thus, Locus of Control is conceptualized as referring to a unidimensional continuum, ranging from external to internal:
External Locus of Control

Individual believes that his/her behaviour is guided by fate, luck, or other external circumstances

Internal Locus of Control

Individual believes that his/her behaviour is guided by his/her personal decisions and efforts.

2.9 Internality-Externality dimension

Weiner's suggested that, more-or-less orthogonal to the internality-externality dimension, should also consider differences between those who attribute to stable causes, and those who attribute to unstable causes. This meant that attributions could be to ability (an internal stable cause), effort (an internal unstable cause), task difficulty (an external stable cause) or luck (an external, unstable cause). Such at least were how the early Weiner saw these four causes, although he has been challenged as to whether people do see luck, for example, as an external cause, whether ability is always perceived as stable and whether effort is always seen as changing. Indeed, in more recent publications (e.g. Weiner, 1980) Weiner uses different terms for these four causes - such as "objective task characteristics" in place of task difficulty and "chance" in place of luck. It has also been notable how psychologists since Weiner have distinguished between stable effort and unstable effort - knowing that, in some circumstances, effort could be seen as a stable
cause, especially given the presence of certain words such as "industrious" in the English language.

2.10 Job Involvement

Psychology plays a very significant role in present social system, be it an individual life, a family, a group or an organization. Success of any of the above depends upon the overall psychology of an individual who forms the different group or as above. For example private sector is by and large more successful than government sector. The reason is the behavior of the employee differs significantly in two types of organization. Behavior refers to overt behaviour and covert behaviour. The covert behaviour of an employee refers to psychological phenomenon as Job Involvement, motivation, and other related attitudes such as absenteeism, tardiness, etc. The success of banks is concerned to a large extent, with Job Involvement of the employees.

The concept of Job Involvement has received much empirical and theoretical attention. Many different terms have been used to describe Job Involvement such as central life interest to work, role involvement, ego involvement, job satisfaction finally, Job Involvement. In recent years the concept of Job Involvement has steadily gained importance because of its pivotal role is providing a link between performance or employees and the quality of working life.

Job Involvement, which is a form of work commitment, is predominantly discussed within the American organizational behaviour and psychology literature, and is often viewed as an important part of a work life concept. Job Involvement refers to the extent, to which workers identify with, and are absorbed in their present jobs.
The Job Involvement literature may be grouped into social and psychological approaches. The psychological approach to Job Involvement experienced a more ordered growth over the past thirty-five years than other work commitment constructs. This could be due to the lack of variety of available Job Involvement measures and the fact that it has been researched primarily by using empirical techniques, thereby contributing to its longevity within the organizational behaviour studies. Although Job Involvement has a long history of being researched (35 years), it is the least researched of the work commitment concepts. However, recent organizational restructuring is renewing interest in Job Involvement as it is viewed as implying commitment.

Job Involvement is seen in the social psychological literature as a value-laden concept. Thus, when examining a value laden, stable concept, it would seem logical, in the analysis process, to examine it in relation to another value laden, stable concept, such as country of origin. In addition, it could also be related to Husted’s overarching Value Survey Module (VSM), which is a popular cultural values measure and has provided many international cross-cultural studies with a theoretical framework.

The two main approaches in studying Job Involvement were individual characteristics and situational variables. Studies employing an individual characteristic's approach assume that workers possess certain characteristics are predisposed to becoming more involved in their jobs. Studies that take a situational variables approach, treat Job Involvement as a response to the work environment situation.

The term Job Involvement has been used frequently in both experimental and field studies. The bulk of the experimental work has been concerned with its effects on perception, retention, motor responses, problem solving, level of aspiration, and the like.
The concern of field studies has been with the relationship of Job Involvement to quality and quantity of performance, absenteeism, grievances, and so on.

2.11 Definition:-

**Dubin** (1956, 1968) conceptualized Job Involvement as the degree to which the total job situation is a "central life interest," i.e., the degree to which it is perceived to be a major source for the satisfaction of important needs. This definition is almost identical to that of Lawler and Hall (1970) who defined it as the degree to which a person perceives his total work situation to be an important part of his life and to be central to him and his identity because of the opportunity it affords him to satisfy his important needs. Along the same lines, Lodahl and Kejner (1965) defined Job Involvement as the degree of importance of one’s work in ones total self image, and Guion (1958) proposed that it is characterized by the employee's perception of the job as being of extreme importance.

2.12 Job Involvement – The Construct

Job Involvement is neither new nor under researched, judging by the variety of studies and settings yet, much disagreement exists about what Job Involvement actually is, this point is highlighted by the variety of definition that is discussed in this chapter. Saleh and Hosek (1976) reviewed the literature on Job Involvement and grouped that various conceptualization into four distinct categories works as central life interest, active participation in job, performance as central to self esteem, performance constituent with self concept. Each of this approach to Job Involvement is discussed briefly below.
2.13 Conceptualization of Job Involvement

2.13.1 Work as central life interest:

This view of Job Involvement is shared by several researchers (i.e. Lawler & Hall 1970). Here Job Involvement is conceptualized as the degree to which a person perceives the total work situation to be important and to be central to his/her identity because of the opportunity afforded to satisfy important needs.

2.13.2 Active participation in the job:

Here Job Involvement suggests the opportunities to make job decisions, the feeling that one is make an important contribution to company success and self determination (Basel 1965). Active participation in the job is thought to facilitate the fulfillment of such needs as prestige, self-respect, autonomy and self regard (Allport 1943). Within this perspective, Vroom (1962) proposed that Job Involvement could be measured by asking an organization member to indicate the level of psychological involvement in his/her job, especially how much say or influence that member has on what goes on his/her behavior.

2.13.3 Performance as central to self-esteem:

Here Job Involvement is viewed as the degree to which an organization member perceives that performance on the job is central to his/her sense of worth. Hockman (1968) suggests that his type of Job Involvement operates in such programs as management by objectives by gaining employee commitment to self-established goals. Commitment results in goals that are important to the employee self-esteem, thus resulting in the desired high level of Job Involvement.
2.13.4 Performance as consistent with self-concept:

This fourth approach to conceptualizing Job Involvement refers to the degree to which the organization member perceives that his/her performance is consistent with characteristics that are central to self concept (Vroom 1962). In measuring this form of Job Involvement, researcher have tended to ask the person whether the ability required by the job are consistent with the amount of ability that the individuals possesses (cf Aronson and Carlsmith 1962).

2.14 Approaches to measure Job Involvement

A number of different tools have been used to measure the central life interest type of involvement. Dubin (1956), for instance, devised a 40-item questionnaire for sampling a person's total life experiences in which the respondent must choose between a job oriented, a non job oriented, or an indifferent response. This type of involvement was also measured by asking an employee how much total time he devotes to his work and his perception of the importance of his job in his life (Davis, 1966). Finally, a number of items in Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) Job Involvement scale seem to measure the central life interest type of involvement (e.g., the most important things that happen to me involve my work; I live, eat, and breathe my job).

A second interpretation of Job Involvement was proposed by Allport (1943) who conceptualized it as the degree to which an employee is participating in his job and meeting such needs as prestige, self-respect, autonomy, and self-regard. A similar interpretation was given by Gurin, Veroff, and Feld (1960) in which they indicated that personal involvement in the job depends on the extent to which an individual seeks some
self expression and actualization in his work. The same type of Job Involvement was suggested by Wickert (1951) and Bass (1965). that the opportunity to make job decisions, the feeling that one is making an important contribution to company success, the chance to set one's own work pace, and self determination lead to the strengthening of Job Involvement.

Wickert suggested that the participation type of involvement could be measured by asking the employee the degree to which he feels that he is actively participating in his job. Vroom (1959, 1962) indicated that it also could be measured by asking the employee how much he participates "psychologically" in his job.

French and Kahn (1962) conceived Job Involvement as the degree to which the employee perceived that his job performance is central to his self-concept, i.e., the degree to which it affects his self-esteem. Siegel (1969) used a similar definition stating that Job Involvement is the importance of work to a person's self-esteem or sense of worth.

Iverson and Reuder (1956) also reported numerous studies which used Job Involvement in terms of the relationship of performance to valued characteristics. Hackman (1968) suggested that this type of involvement operates in zero defect and management by objectives programs by getting the employee to commit himself to goals he sets for himself. Such commitment makes the goal or goals important to the employee's self-esteem and therefore he becomes involved in achieving such goals.

Different approaches are used to measure the self-esteem type of involvement. In one approach, based on the Zeigarnik effect, the employee is asked how often he thinks about an unfinished problem after working hours (Vroom, 1962; Slater, 1959). The
assumption behind this measurement is that an unfinished problem is central to the self-concept if it persists in thought.

Another approach cited in Vroom (1964) and Iverson and Reuder (1956) are to ask the individual whether a task requires the use of an ability or personality characteristics that he values. Lodahl and Kejner's Job Involvement scale also contains some items which measure this type of involvement (e.g., I feel depressed whenever I fail at something connected with my job; sometimes I lay awake at night thinking ahead to the next day's work).

A fourth conceptualization of Job Involvement is mentioned by Vroom (1962, 1964); it refers to the degree to which the employee perceives that his job performance is consistent with characteristics that are central to his self-concept. It should be noted that while Vroom considered the consistency of performance with the existing self-conception, French and Kahn emphasized the consistency with the valued self-conception. Self-consistency type of involvement was used in numerous studies, particularly those dealing with consistency theory (e.g., Aronson and Carlsmith, 1962; Kaufmann, 1962). It was generally measured by asking whether the level of performance was consistent with the self-concept. More specifically, the person might be asked whether the abilities required by his job performance are consistent with the amount of ability that he possesses (Vroom, 1964).

2.15 High Vs Low Involvement

Job Involvement is a specific belief about one’s present job and refers to the degree to which one’s job can satisfy one’s needs (Kanungo, 1982). Individuals with high Job Involvement identify more with their jobs and regard their job as highly important for
their lives. Compared to individuals with low Job Involvement, for highly job-involved individuals their job is more closely linked to their self-esteem (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965; Thoits, 1991). Job Involvement has been found to be positively related to effort, various facets of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and low turnover intention (Brown, 1996). However, Job Involvement may also have negative side effects. For example, individuals with high Job Involvement were found to react more negatively to job stressors (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1995).

At the conceptual level, Job Involvement has to be differentiated from psychological detachment. Job Involvement refers to the relevance the job has for one’s life. It is a relatively stable belief that links one’s job to one’s self-esteem. In contrast, psychological detachment refers to specific behaviours and cognitive activities in a given off-job situation, for example when being at home. With respect to the empirical relationship, it is assumed that Job Involvement is negatively related to psychological detachment from work during off-job time. As Job Involvement refers to an individual’s identification with his or her job, high Job Involvement implies that one puts great emphasis on one’s job and the job plays a core role in one’s life—or as Janssen (2003) put it, “workers with greater Job Involvement have psychologically more at stake” (p. 351). This great importance of the job implies a substantial concern for job-related issues. This concern may not only be felt when at the workplace but also at home. As a consequence one will even think about one’s job when at home. Therefore, it is less likely that individuals with high Job Involvement psychologically detach from their jobs during evening hours as compared to individuals with low Job Involvement.
2.16 Conclusion

It seems clear that Locus of Control and Job Involvement play a major role in any organization. External tend to be more satisfied with directive approaches to supervision but internals will be more appropriative towards participative role. Despite the wide application Rotter I-E scale, a multiple of other application has been developed, some which are specifically addressing the shortcoming of I-E scale. Job Involvement has been defined as an individual's psychological identification or commitment to his/her job (Kanungo 1982). As such, individuals who display high involvement in their jobs consider their work to be a very important part of their lives. Job Involvement has been established in prior research as a personal trait of an organization member rather than a consequence of management's efforts (Dubinsky and Hartley 1986; Ingram, Lee, and Lucas 1991). So Job Involvement is potentially very important to organizational success (Rabinowitz, Hall, and Goodale 1977; Rabinowitz and Hall 1981).