CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION
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OVERVIEW: The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the subject of the research on Individual Personality factors as Predictor of Accountability Behavior: A Counseling based model to modify non-accountability behaviour of employees.

INTRODUCTION:

"I am responsible. Although I may not be able to prevent the worst from happening, I am responsible for my attitude toward the inevitable misfortunes that darken life. Bad things do happen; how I respond to them defines my character and the quality of my life. I can choose to sit in perpetual sadness, immobilized by the gravity of my loss, or I can choose to rise from the pain and treasure the most precious gift I have – life itself."

Walter Anderson

‘While pointing a finger to blame someone or something else, remember that there are three fingers pointing right back at oneself.’— Old saying in many cultures, taught to children in schools and by people around; may appear forgotten with time while, observing behaviours of adult in Organisations. Lessons taught to us in childhood might not sound relevant at that point in time, but the same might be an important issue for Organisations or society at large. It’s easy to point the finger at others, but
far too often one fails to recognize that one may be partially (or even wholly) responsible for the circumstances. This can be a bitter pill to swallow, but as an individual one is almost always accountable in some way or other for one's situation in life and the results (or lack thereof) that one achieves.

Individual accountability has become a key issue in today's Organisations.

"Employers today are looking to their leaders to think more strategically. No longer is it acceptable to focus on the day to day issues. The team is accountable for the day to day decisions."

Catherine Pulsifer -- Good-bye Manager, Hello Coach!

Why is accountability important?

The truth is that accountability is unavoidable. In the workplace everyone is accountable to someone. In a traditional Organisation employees are individually accountable to their superiors. In a high performance Organisation team members are individually accountable to each other and mutually accountable to their stake holders. Several employees attempt to avoid accountability sensing that it may be used against them as blame or punishment. But rather than negative fall outs, research indicates that holding employees accountable for their results has positive effects like:

- Greater accuracy of work
- Better response to role obligations
• More vigilant problem solving
• Better decision making
• More cooperation with co-workers and employees
• Higher team satisfaction
• Higher overall performance
• Highly motivated employees
• Role clarity
• High level of satisfaction

When there is no accountability, non performers thrive, communication breaks down, territorialism increases and individual fall victim to blaming each other for not achieving goals/results. (Wharton, 2001)

To achieve effectiveness and efficiency at work, Organisations are devoting more time in creating empowered work teams in an effort to boost productivity, enhance quality and bolster employee morale. More and more Organisations are closer to full empowerment; however, they seem to face an obstacle that is becoming a challenging issue in self-direction. Surely, one can hand over management responsibilities and empower teams with the authority to act, but aren’t managers supposed to be accountable? How can one hold a whole team accountable when something goes wrong? This may lead to a situation of pointing fingers at one another. Creating an environment where accountability is clear and fully accepted is a complex task in itself. (Brook M, 2003).
Most leaders in Organisations across the world have jumped blindly on the "empowerment" bandwagon, working hard to give their employees the power to direct their own workflow. Theoretically and ideally this sounds great. The philosophy is based on an assumption that as, human beings each one of us would want to be self-directing and acting of our will. At the same time, one also needs to understand that those being empowered are also highly personally accountable. When in fact, empowerment without accountability may lead to chaos! Empowerment and accountability must go hand in hand. When we are funding one without insisting on the other, resources get wasted and dysfunction ailing may occur. (Brook M, 2003)

Issues like employee engagement and happiness come from the level of personal accountability people exhibit in their own lives. Therefore it has become especially important to spend time and energy explaining and teaching employees how to succeed in spite of their circumstances. In this direction, it may be helpful to “bullet-proof” the employees to face the worst of the external and / or internal circumstances in their Organisational life instead of creating “comfort zones”. Personally accountable employees are immune to the random “shocks” that come their way. (Brook M, 2003)

The key lesson is that accountability means taking responsibility for one’s actions, including mistakes. When mistakes are made, the focus should be on learning from the experience. (Miller J, 2000)
Leaders or employees who take individual accountability for the situation and focus on what they can do about it manage much better on performance and overall work than those who blame others, procrastinate solutions, and play victim to their circumstances. (Brook, 2003)

A major outbreak of food born illness (listeriosis) in Canada was particularly tragic as it led to 12 confirmed deaths and made many others seriously ill. The outbreak was linked to the Toronto based Maple Leaf Foods Company which was headed by Michael McCain.

With such a tragic crisis, nobody wants to be held responsible, least of all the leader of an Organisation with so much to lose personally and financially. Given the reality of personal accountability in Organisational life, Mr. McCain and Maple Leaf Foods case teaches important lesson on individual accountability.

As mentioned in (Miller J, 2000), McCain as the head of the Organisation, publicly took full personal responsibility for the situation and has been incredibly transparent and forthright about the tragedy. McCain provided very clear and concise details about his Organisations operations, where the outbreak originated from, and what is being done to control the deadly outbreak as quickly as possible.

In light of the tragic circumstances for which Maple Leaf Foods Company was responsible, McCain made the following statement at a press
conference: "Certainly knowing that there is a desire to assign blame, I want to reiterate that the buck stops right here... our best efforts failed, not the regulators or the Canadian food safety system... I emphasize: this is our accountability and it's ours to fix, which we are taking on fully."

Such candid words or personal responsibility for such a tragic event are almost hard to believe in the culture of our times.

McCain could have blamed others for the situation - the Canadian food safety system for not having strict enough safety guidelines, his distributors for not handling the food products properly, his managers and employees for not following internal food safety procedures, or even the suppliers of the cleaning products his Organisation uses to disinfect work surfaces - in an effort to save face and not appear responsible for such a tragic nightmare come to life.

He did not. By choosing to take full responsibility and resisting the urge to blame others, McCain stands as a great example of the importance of personal accountability in times of Organisational crisis. Because of his candor, honesty, and willingness to accept personal accountability for the events that took place, many expected Maple Leaf Foods to weather this storm and regain their customer's trust.
The belief McCain has is, ‘As employees every one of us has the ability to assume leadership and make a difference in the Organisation in which we work. It all starts with individual accountability.’

John Miller in his landmark book – Question By Question notes that, ‘We are all resistant to change to some degree or another. How we react to change, however, is an indication of our own level of personal accountability. Those with a high degree of personal accountability react and adapt to change far better than those with a low degree of personal accountability by asking themselves how they can best adapt to the ever changing world around them.’

Looking at the case of Maple Leaf Foods Company, what differentiates Mr. McCain from others? What is it that makes him personally more accountable in situation of crises? What is it that doesn’t allow him to pass the buck and saying that the buck stops hear. Is it possible to identify individuals or employees who are individually more accountable than others? Are there Personality factors that motivate or encourage individual accountability behaviours? With these questions as backdrop the present thesis aims to

1. Design an instrument to measure individual accountability behaviour.
2. To study the relationship between personality traits that enhances or minimizes accountability behaviour.
3. Understand the role of counseling technique in modifying non-accountable behaviour.
4. To suggest mechanisms to modify individual accountability in Organisations.

**Individual Accountability:**

The construct of accountability has attracted keen interest in the field of psychology and related disciplines. For example, research has examined the role of accountability in social perception, attitudes, judgment accuracy, Organisational behavior, negotiations, and educational curricula. One reason for this remarkable degree of empirical attention is the potential of accountability to serve as a rule for enforcing vital societal norms (Semin & Manstead, 1983).

Brooks (1995), in a popular press book, provides the following definition of traditional accountability within Western Organisations: ‘Accountability is a mechanism to ensure that individuals can be called to account for their actions, and that sanctions are incurred if the account is unsatisfactory’. Brooks emphasizes the following words in his definition: mechanism as a procedural activity; individuals because the activity focuses on individuals while also noting the collective aspect of the term as reasonable and essential; sanctions being seen as essential to performance. Unsatisfactory, as an element of accountability, brings in the personal element of holding
offenders to account. He explains that 'the purpose of sanctions is not to act as a threat to you but as a guarantee to me. Brooks also mentions that since values evolve over time, there is a vagueness and constant flux and impreciseness within the mechanism of accountability in Organisations. This flux makes it difficult to say precisely what an unsatisfactory account is, other than within the understanding of the person holding someone to account.

An account, according to Webster’s Dictionary, is a verbal or written description of a particular transaction or event; a narrative; an explanatory statement of conduct, as to a superior; a statement of reasons, causes, etc., explaining an event; a reason, basis, consideration. This makes accountability into a coercive mode practiced after-the-event. As noted by Shotter (1984), our ways of accounting for things have a coercive quality to them; only if we make sense of things in certain approved ways can we be accounted by others in our society as competent, responsible members of it. Scott and Lyman (1968), discuss that, the quoted dictionary account, clearly place accountability as an evaluative process after something has gone wrong.

As Lerner and Tetlock (1999) have asserted, accountability is a variable that bridges the individual and the institutional or social structural level of analysis. Stated alternatively, a social structure or social situation can
influence individual behavior through accountability pressures (Wheeler J.K and Cox, 1992).

Cummings and Anton defined accountability as 'a calling to give accounts (excuses or justification) to another (or others) for deviation between the event for which one is responsible and Organisational expectations or norms.' Lawrence and Maitlis (2005), after researching the writings, of Garfinkel (1967), Fairclough (1992), Miils (1940), Antaki (1994), and others, agree with Woodilla (1988) that 'accounts are constructed through practices of talking and writing'. In their study of accounts as a segment of sense making, they mention, 'Perhaps the most defining characteristic of accounts is that they provide an explanation of an event that has disrupted the flow of everyday life'. Goffman's (1974) work on accounts focuses on the frames of accounts. Frames, according to Goffman, can be understood as a particular form of accounts - an account of the context in which some action occurs, which provides the foundation for making an action sensible and meaningful (noted in Lawrence & Maitlis, 2005). This suggests that an account (frame) can be a motivation /justification for action, making it part of how people make sense of everyday life. As noted by Aram (1990) regarding the American perspective of accountability and individual performance, accountability is individualized; cooperation and collaboration
have not been essential to its achievement. Thus, accountability has been localized in the individual.

As noted by Aram (1990), historically, cooperation and collaboration have played only a supporting role in the value structure of many cultures. Individual struggles against nature and the life-threatening frontier (fight or flight) are dominant images. Human relationships are primarily utilitarian. People join together for instrumental reasons, such as their common defense. An unwritten motto in the United States is ‘live and let live’ (Aram, 1990).

After-the-fault or end accountability, as currently practiced, includes account-demanding, account-giving and account-selection activities. **Account-demanding** is the act of a person in authority calling someone to account to explain something that has been said or done. The person being called to account participates by **Account-giving**, the giving of excuses and justifications to a superior in response to the account demand-if an opportunity to do so occurs.

After account-giving **Account-selection** by the person in authority includes acknowledgement/acceptance/non-acceptance of the given account. (Unfortunately, the person demanding the account may already have assumed a stance that is not adjustable, making it unlikely that authentic account-selection will occur.) The account authority (demander) selects
what will be initiated as punishment for the accountable act or behavior. Because these accountings are usually held when it is too late for adjustment or redemption of the alleged misdemeanor, the event may be experienced as a 'beating of the soul,' as even unfair, cruel and abusive. If not directly abusive, the accounting may include a judgmental "gaze" -a look that suggests a lack of feeling and presence on the part of the demander. Relationships, if they existed in the first place, dissolve through the receiver's assumption of what 'the gaze' means. Levels of mistrust become part of a continuing, unspoken phenomenon in future exchanges.

Within daily work practices there is a tolerance for some degree of ineffectiveness. When there is finally a failure, however, the demander sets in motion after-the-fault accountability 'without,' according to Aram, 'anyone being particularly caring' (1990,). Within this scenario, tolerance of ineffectiveness allows misunderstandings to go unexplained and little mistakes to go unaddressed until the resulting big mistake occurs. Then there are assumptions that specific 'bodies of reason' (Gergen, 1991,) exist that justify the traditional process of calling people on the carpet. This call to account is an effort to punish for doing something seen as 'wrong.'

Unfortunately, calling someone to account in Western culture is all too often done in demeaning ways, both publicly and privately. Public, abusive accountability is particularly damaging because of the significance of the
humiliation and exploitation experienced by the target. Credibility, relationships, availability of resources and, as noted above, levels of trust diminish. Even when calling to account is not meant to be demeaning, the results are often so because of the sense of it being unsafe to give information to the person in authority. This may occur even though the information might clarify, justify, excuse or explain a misunderstanding. ‘I’m being punished; this is unfair’ is a likely internal response. The current prominent leadership orientation, generally observed, maintains traditional accountability as appropriate. This leadership orientation includes:

- Treating the workers as children
- Limiting opportunities to perform and be involved in Organisational outcomes and performance
- Putting specific frames with rigid boundaries around roles and responsibilities.
- Seeing accountability as a method of control, reward and punishment
- Planting and nourishing the seeds of conflict and divisiveness
- Using the ‘preferred few’ to get things done
- Seeing employee choices as necessarily orchestrated by those in authority
- Limiting the opportunity for others to choose responsibility
- Seeing activities going beyond the leader’s desire for ‘order’ as disobedience, and Malpractice.
As a result of these leadership outlooks and practices, it is routine for Organisational members to point the finger of blame elsewhere. Scott (2002) defines this as the accountability shuffle, activities attempting to push accountability upward, downward or sidewise (p. 3). The shuffler has 'given them what they want,' that is, aligned his or her actions around what is perceived as acceptable, but things went wrong anyway. Thus, in his or her mind, blame must be shuffled to someone else in order to remain credible. Often, the shuffler spends time recruiting others into a mass of employees who blame and shame 'those others.' Shuffling is also an attempt to maintain the status quo in terms of what is expected and safe. Scott's accountability shuffle may also occur when there are strong peer group standards that allow little forgiveness when doing things differently. Giving the excuse of 'they madé me do it' is a shuffle of accountability to avoid chastisement from peers-and to cull sympathy for being forced by ‘those above’ to step out of line.

As noted, under this long accepted scenario, accountability occurs after the fault and is based in the assumption of one-person being fully responsible and accountable for particular actions and/or outcomes. Much effort is expended in locating this one person. If a group is identified as responsible for the fault, the group turns inward to locate the one at fault. Some one person must pay. In writing about ‘the logical and appreciative dimensions
of accountability,' Cummings and Anton (1999) defined accountability as 'a calling to give accounts (excuses or justifications) to another (or others) for deviation between the event for which one is responsible and Organisational expectations or norms'. Even in discussing the appreciative dimensions of accountability, the focus remains on one person causing the problem. Holding one person to account suggests that this one person is fully responsible for the action.

Gergen (1991) suggests, 'As the self as a serious reality is laid to rest and the self is constructed and reconstructed in multiple contexts, one enters finally the stage of the relational self. One's sense of individual autonomy gives way to a reality of immersed interdependence, in which it is relationship that constructs the self. This is not to suggest that the collective person does not make decisions and choices that bring occurrences about - sometimes positively, sometimes catastrophically. Yet, as McNamee and Gergen (1999) state, 'One cannot constitute meaning alone nor engage in a rational choice among competing goods without having absorbed the intelligibilities of a community'.

It is in the conscious 'heedfulness' (Langer, 1997) of others that we can envision the mutuality or interdependence of relational responsibility (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). People together design actions through
relational processes of conversation. Although appearing to act singularly, diverse thoughts and actions are coordinated in ways that produce outcomes that cannot possibly be created or claimed alone. Even the traditional practice of individual accountability is co-constructed. It is in Shotter’s (1984) ‘joint action’ that the emerging flow of interaction produces accountability. ‘Joint action produces the conversational resources that enable people to account for their actions’ states Lannamann (1999). As noted by Johann Roux, PhD, a professor, therapist, and consultant from Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, millions and millions of relational interactions create the same amount of possible interpretations. Then in turn, those interpretations drive people’s actions in relationship and in the co-creation of accountability inside their relational interactions’ (personal communication).

**Toward Individual Accountability Behaviour:**

Redding (2004) on the need to hold oneself accountable, states, ‘It seems that holding ourselves accountable appears to be a key step to helping others do the same’. He suggests that it is ‘shifting from holding someone accountable to helping people hold themselves accountable, which includes holding ourselves accountable’. He notes that holding people accountable includes each of us responding to what we are told to do, finding problems and mistakes, following up with interrogations, punishing non-performance
and rewarding performance. This places accountability firmly in a command and control orientation. In a more encouraging stance, Redding goes on to say that holding ourselves accountable is responding to what we see needs to be done; it is to inform people about what is going on and where we are struggling; it is to offer tangible help to resolve issues and achieve objectives and to ask for help as well; and it is to appreciate each other's skills and contributions. Although suggesting the relational aspects of accountability, he focuses on the individualized, internal aspects of accountability.

Therefore, Organisations and individuals may not neglect the importance of individual accountability and the present thesis attempts to focus on accountability as an individualized and internal aspect of an individual behaviour.

As noted by Boyatzis, Stubbs and Taylor (2002), 'beyond knowledge and competencies, the additional ingredient necessary to outstanding performance appears to be the desire to use one's talent'. In this research, 'the desire to use one's talent' expands when individuals are clear about themselves and being accountable to themselves and not bothered about the punitive outcomes of accountability as traditionally defined. Knowledge,
competency and the willingness to use personal strengths in the Organisational context are positively driven.

For Organisations, changing from a culture of blame to one of honest, trusting and problem solving usually boils down to the way in which individuals'/employees are self aware and the way in which they feel accountable for actions initiated by them. This in turn will facilitate the ability to handle their interpersonal relations. Personally accountable people tend to have behavioural pattern like:

- Earn the trust of co-workers, subordinates and leaders. This means preaching what you practice all the time.
- Have the ability to own up one’s mistakes publicly and accept the natural consequences for them.
- When mistakes or problems occur, focusing on the future. To correct the problem and prevent it from happening again, steer the discussion to what needs to be done next and away from what was done.
- Intent is not the same as performance. Understanding one’s commitment by regularly checking in on progress.
- Being open and transparent. Ability to talk about accountability and expectations. Be aware of potential consequences or implications of one’s actions etc.
- Ability to be empathetic
As mentioned in the case of McCain, the focus of present research is on the individual behaviour and understanding why some individuals are able to have a personal choice to rise above circumstances and demonstrate the ownership necessary to achieve desired results by being accountable to oneself without being more concerned about the external audiences and be responsible for their actions even when the outcomes might not be positive.

Thus the concept of Individual accountability is an important issue in today’s Organisations. In-depth study of the subject is of a great relevance to examine Organisational performance.

With this as background, the researcher ventured into studying Individual Accountability behaviour and Personality profile by conducting surveys of employees.

What is personality?
In general the term “personality” is used to identify the most obvious characteristic of a person, or to refer to that person's social skills. Psychologists are mainly interested in personality to (1) explain why people with similar heredity, experience, and motivation may react differently in the same situation; and (2) explain why people with different heredity, past experiences, and/or motivation may nevertheless react similarly in the same situation.
Personality refers to cognitive and behavioural patterns that show stability over time and across situations (e.g. Cattel, 1970). Therefore it is reasonable to expect that personality traits influence values and attitudes (Olver and Mooradian, 2003).

Personality will be considered here as the dynamic Organisation within an individual of those systems that determine his or her characteristic behavior and thought. First, the definition emphasizes that personality is organized (the key word is "Organisation"). Second, adjustment is also involved. Here the key word is "dynamic," which means active or changing. Third, notice how the uniqueness of each of us is preserved. Specifically, the definition mentions our "individual characteristic behavior and thought." Fourth, stability is implied. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, by referring to "systems," this definition emphasizes that there may be multiple causes of our behavior.

**Elements of Personality:**

Elements of Personality organizes our thinking about personality. It allows us to suggest that personality – as mentioned by many researchers in the field has a number of different components, which impact our overall behavior. We review each of them briefly. When psychologists talk about personality, they are talking about those aspects of each individual that are enduring, constant, stable parts of us. If the person is aggressive today, the
odds are high he/she will be aggressive tomorrow. If an individual is shy now, he/she will very likely still be shy tomorrow morning as well. The stable characteristics, are what psychologists study using a variety of techniques under the heading of personality.

A second aspect of personality, or any trait identified with personality, is that it must occur repeatedly or consistently. The response should occur in a wide variety of circumstances. An aggressive person will tend to be so in many different situations —essentially everywhere the opportunity arises.

A third important aspect of human personality is that each theory of personality is based on the assumption that each individual is unique. Each has a certain amount of aggression, malice, humor, virtue, happiness, poise, and so forth. However, the unique combination that defines you is identifiable.

Despite the weakness of the powers of prediction gained from a knowledge of individual’s heredity, his/her past experiences, and current environment, there is still enough that is unique about your response capabilities as to warrant the study of personality.

After decades of research, the field is approaching consensus on a general taxonomy of personality traits, the “Big Five” personality dimensions. These dimensions do not represent a particular theoretical perspective but were derived from analyses of the natural-language terms people use to
describe themselves and others. Rather than replacing all previous systems, the Big Five taxonomy serves an integrative function because it can represent the various and diverse systems of personality description in a common framework.

Cattell's (1945) pioneering work, and the availability of a relatively short list of variables, stimulated other researchers to examine the dimensional structure of trait ratings. Several investigators were involved in the discovery and clarification of the Big Five dimensions. First, Fiske (1949) constructed much simplified descriptions from 22 of Cattell's variables; the factor structures derived from self-ratings, ratings by peers, and ratings by psychological staff members were highly similar and resembled what would be later known as the Big Five. To clarify these factors, Tupes and Christal (1961) reanalyzed correlation matrices from eight different samples, ranging from airmen with no more than high-school education to first-year graduate students, and included ratings by peers, supervisors, teachers, or experienced clinicians in settings as diverse as military training courses and sorority houses. In all the analyses, Tupes and Christal found “five relatively strong and recurrent factors and nothing more of any consequence” (1961).
These factors eventually became known as the “Big Five” (Goldberg, 1981) -- a title chosen not to reflect their intrinsic greatness but to emphasize that each of these factors is extremely broad.

**Are the Big Five universal?:** The first two non-English taxonomy projects involved Dutch and German, languages closely related to English. The Dutch project has been carried out by Hofstee, De Raad, and their colleagues at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands (De Raad, Mulder, Kloosterman, & Hofstee, 1988; Hofstee et al., 1997; see also De Raad et al., 1998, for reviews). The conclusions from the Dutch projects are generally consistent with those from the American English research: Only five factors were replicable across different selections of trait adjectives and across different subject samples. Those five factors were similar to the English Big Five, although the fifth factor in Dutch emphasizes unconventionality and rebelliousness rather than intellect and imagination as found in English.

**The big five or five factor model**

The Big Five Factors are (1) Neuroticism (e.g. degree of emotional stability) (2) Extroversion (e.g. assertive, sociable, sense of energy, excitement), (3) Openness (e.g. artistic, imaginative), (4) Agreeableness (e.g. good-natured, cooperative), and (5) Conscientiousness (e.g. dependable, responsible, achievement oriented). Various research reviews on personality literature have concluded that personality measures, when
classified according to the Big Five taxonomy, are systematically related to a variety of job performance criteria (Goldberg, 1993).

**Employee Counseling**: As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the third objective of the study was to understand the role of counseling technique in modifying non-accountable behaviour.

Over the years psychologists have provided many definitions for counseling. Some of them are: As per Rogers (1998) counseling is "The process by which the structure of the self is relaxed in the safety of the clients relationship with the therapist and previously desired experiences are perceived and then integrated into an altered self". Smith (1955) defines "Counseling is a process in which the counselor assists the counseling to make interpretations of facts relating to a choice plan or adjustments which he needs to make". Pepisky and Pepisky (1954) defined "Counseling as that interaction which occurs between two individuals called counselor and client, takes place in a professional setting and is initiated and maintained to facilitate changes in the behaviour of a client". According to Stefflre (1970) "Counseling is a learning-teaching process". Gustad (1953) stated that "Counseling is a learning oriented process carried in a simple one to one social environment in which the counselor, professionally competent in relevant psychological skills and knowledge seeks to assist the client by methods appropriate to the latter's needs and within the context of the total personnel programme, to learn how to put such understanding into effect in relation to more clearly perceived, realistically defined goals to the end that the client may become a happier and more productive member of society".
**Significance of the study:**

Individual accountability behaviour plays a key role in enhancing Organisational performance. Hence, study of Individual accountability has numerous practical justifications. To mention a few, focusing on individual accountability develops an important skill that will help Organisational team members to identify the appropriate action to take, avoid blaming others, eliminate victim thinking, and stop procrastinating. The key theme of understanding individual accountability is to make employees self aware and take actions to improve situations. An employee is not partially responsible of anything he or she does as part of their job. They represent an organisation in which they work, therefore non-accountable behaviour of employees are responsible in creating non-accountable culture in the organisation. Organisational culture lacking accountability is made up of employees who waste valuable time and effort avoiding responsibility, uttering excuses, and “passing the buck.” A lack of individual accountability is a common cause of low employee morale which leads to reduced productivity, poor Organisational performance, and increased employee turnover. Organisations that are not supportive enough to harness employees personal accountability, make top performing team members confused, frustrated and lead them to seek employment in Organisations where accountability is a core cultural value. There is a direct relationship between personal
accountability and Organisational performance. Quite simply – employees with a high degree of personal accountability perform at a higher level than those who lack individual accountability. Organisational cultures that embrace and promote employee accountability outperform those that lack individual accountability.

This limited review based accountability writings largely demonstrates the mechanistic form of management at work, justifying the stance of the knowing leader as the one who must know and who is there to hold the members accountable for doing what is expected. Most of the literature available on individual accountability talks about making one responsible after the event has occurred. Discussing accountability in connection with self enhancement and power. What needs to be done by Organisational leaders to support and enhance accountability, by role clarity, providing open communication systems, empowered decision making. Although a major and significant part in individual accountability behaviour research is to find out what makes an individual accountable to one’s own actions and reactions? Simply arriving at a theory and defining what individual accountability is does not take us very far unless issues related with are empirically studied and a measure developed to assess the relevant features of any equation.
Turning to a new form of Individual accountability behaviour, that is part of individuals’ values, beliefs and supported by personality traits is the focus of this study.

Accountability or non accountability behaviours are normally exhibited by people in Organisations, family as well as society at large. Are there personality factors that influence accountability behaviour of an individual? What are the commonalities between personality characteristics and accountability behaviour?

Results on personality test are being used by Organisations in employee recruitment, selection, counseling successfully over a period of time. As noted in some research articles published in ISHN, That Conscientiousness component of The Big Five, is most aligned with acquiring a self-accountability perspective. There is also a possibility that Neuroticism to be related with accountability, as some degree of ongoing anxiety contributes to the self-motivation needed to keep a person doing the right thing to prove one’s action when an external accountability system is evaluating. This does not include extreme neuroticism, but a level somewhere between “completely calm, relaxed, and unemotional” and “nervous, emotional, insecure, and distressed” about safety issues.
Thus what personality types are more apt to work toward this paradigm shift? From the Big Five, it’s obvious that Conscientiousness is most aligned with acquiring a self-accountability perspective with regard to industrial safety. To understand an individual’s behaviour of accountability, one needs to look at, have knowledge and understand individual’s personality characteristics. The research proposes a scale/ an instrument to measure Individual Accountability Behaviour (IAB). For the purpose of this study, Individual Accountability behaviour refers to the implicit or explicit expectation of the individual that he/she may have to justify his/her beliefs and feelings of responsibility, for actions initiated by them with respect to the appropriate execution of assigned task in a particular Organisational role.

Turning to a new form of Individual accountability behaviour that, is part of individuals’ values, beliefs and supported by personality traits is the focus of this study. The endeavour for the present research is to understand the role of Personality factors with respect to Individual accountability behaviour and develop a scientific instrument that helps in measuring Individual Accountability Behaviour.
To our knowledge, there is no such scientific tool available that can help measure Individual Accountability Behaviour. With this as background, an attempt is made to design a scale to measure Individual Accountability Behaviour. The present research aims to achieve following objectives:

1. Construct a scale to measure individual accountability behaviour.
2. To study the relationship between personality traits that enhances or minimizes accountability behaviour.
3. Understand the role of counseling technique in modifying non-accountable behaviour.
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