SUMMARY

As complexity in the work environment increases, there is a drain on psychological resources contributing to strain, psychological exhaustion and impaired performance. So how can organizations survive and succeed? Competent personnel are a prerequisite for a flourishing organization. Along with the investment in capital it is essential for organization to invest equally well in its workforce. In order to survive and compete effectively in the market, the biggest resource an organization requires apart from technology, infrastructure is its manpower. Among the workforce, a crucial role is played by a manager in an organization as he is the one in position who defines the aims and roles of the subordinates. Organizations at this point of time need skilled managers who can efficiently determine how to successfully motivate employees to accomplish desired results quickly and simply. For this, it is essential that the managers need to have a positive approach in organizations so that they can give best possible performance in complex and stressful circumstances as well as they might not have problems while reporting things in public. His position demands him to be confident enough to face people and tackle situations. Researchers (Roberts, 2006) have pointed out that focus on ‘strengths’ help individuals to grow. Managers need to be hopeful, more efficacious, more resilient and optimistic so that they are able to navigate successfully from the competitive environment. The term Psychological Capital is the combination of four positive constructs, namely, hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism which helps in describing what an individual is or what he can become. Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, (2007) defined Psychological Capital as “an individual’s positive psychological state of development characterized by: (1) having confidence (efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive
attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success”. Various theories have been propounded to explain concept of Psychological Capital like: Multidimensional Construct by Law, Wong & Mobley, (1998), Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions by Fredrickson, (1998), Conservation of Resources Theory by Hobfoll, (2002). Review of literature suggests that individuals with higher Psychological Capital show higher job performance (Hobfoll, 2002; Stajkovic, 2006; Luthans, Avolio, Walumbwa, & Li, 2005; Luthans, Avey, Clapp-Smith & Li, 2008) more job satisfaction (Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007); innovation (Abbas & Raja, 2011; Sweetman, Luthans, Avey, & Luthans, 2011); higher organizational commitment (Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007; Luthans, Norman, Avolio, & Avey, 2008; Larson & Luthans, 2006; Çetin, 2011; Etebarian, Tavakoli & Abzari, 2012); more work engagement (Sweetman & Luthans, 2010; Singh & Mansi, 2009), more psychological well being (Avey, Luthans, Smith, & Palmer, 2010) good quality of work life (Mortazavi et al., 2012). Psychological Capital is negatively related to undesirable employee attitudes such as cynicism or turnover intentions (Avey, Luthans, & Youssef, 2010) and deviance (Norman, Avey, Nimnicht, & Pigeon, 2010); stress (Avey, Luthans, & Jensen, 2009). People with diminished positive responses engage in less cognitive elaboration of positive mood states and show lower self-esteem and pessimism (Parrott, 1993; Wood, Heimpel, & Michela, 2003; Feldman et al., 2008; Martin & Tesser, 1996) and high levels of negative emotions such as depression and Social Anxiety (Clark & Watson, 1991; Feldman et al., 2008; Brown, Chorpita, & Barlow, 1998; Kashdan, 2002, 2004, 2007). Social Anxiety is unrecognized but pervasive factor in organizational set up. It hampers efficiency at work by hindering the
maintenance of social, personal and work relationships. Social Anxiety is defined as “a persistent fear of one or more situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people or to possible scrutiny by others and fears that he or she may do something or act in a way that will be humiliating or embarrassing” (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Some models have been propounded to explain the concept of Social Anxiety such as Self-presentation Model (Leary, 1995), Model of Social Anxiety (Clark & Wells, 1995) and Social Anxiety Model (Rappe & Heimberg, 1997). In the workplace, Social Anxiety may be linked with hidden costs and it is therefore imperative for employers to be familiar with this problem (Sanderson et al., 2007). Social Anxiety makes it difficult for the employees to adjust in workplace. Excessive Social Anxiety creates poor concentration and fatigue (Haslam et al, 2005); reduces work productivity (Kessler & Frank, 1997; Acarturk et al., 2009); absenteeism from work (Wittchen & Beloch, 1996; Lecruiber et al, 2000); avoidance of certain situations leading to decrease in productivity of team work (Linden & Muschalla, 2007) and poor morale, increased turnover and reduced productivity (Haslam et al, 2005). A wide variety of factors (external as well as internal) may provoke Social Anxiety. External factors present in the workplace like social hierarchies (Thomas & Hynes, 2007), conflicts with colleagues or superiors in terms of mobbing or bossing (Bilgel, Aytac, & Bayram, 2006; Yildirim & Yildirim, 2007) play a critical role in Social Anxiety. Internal factors such as shyness, loneliness, self belief, lack of confidence, hesitation to speak in front of others, avoidance behavior, etc contribute to Social Anxiety. Another important factor that affect Social Anxiety has been reported by various researches (Alfano, Joiner, & Perry, 1994; Ishiyama, 1984; Turner, Beidel, & Larkin, 1986; Johnson et al, 1995; Coles et al, 2001) is attribution. The process of attribution makes life more meaningful as it helps us in better understanding of dynamics of the interpersonal
relationships. The purpose for making attribution is to achieve cognitive control over one’s environment by explaining and understanding the causes behind behavior and environmental occurrences. By making attribution there is order and predictability to our lives which help us to cope in different situations. Causal explanation which they make for behaviors and certain events is known as attribution process (Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1972; Weiner, 1985; Martinko, Douglas, & Harvey, 2006). By means of attributions, individuals try to manage control over their lives and improve their ability to forecast future events (Kelley, 1971). It helps people to understand the world around them and become accustomed to their environment, particularly when reacting to events considered as novel, important, unexpected, and negative (Weiner, 1990; Martinko, Harvey, & Douglas, 2007). According to Alloy et al. (1988), attributional style is defined as “the tendency or bias to make particular kinds of causal inferences, rather than others, across different situations and over time”. Attributional style refers to “the extent to which individuals show characteristic attributional tendencies” (Peterson et al., 1982). Attributional styles are generally classified in two categories:

*Functional attributional style:* When an individual attributes his success to internal, stable and global causes and his failure to external, unstable and specific causes, his attributional style is functional. People with functional attributional style are emotionally strong, maintain balance in interpersonal relationships and have high self esteem, motivation and show increased performance (Leary, 1995). They feel that they have proper control over their actions which keep them motivated.

*Dysfunctional attributional style:* When an individual attributes his failure to internal, stable and global terms and his success to external, unstable and specific causes, his attributional style is dysfunctional. People with dysfunctional attributional style suffer from affective, cognitive, self-
esteem and motivational deficits when they face negative events (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978). They blame themselves and feel the events are beyond their control and believe that failure will happen again.

Employees with low Psychological Capital (hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism) and high Social Anxiety are likely to suspect their potential and accordingly set lower goals and show poor performance at their workplace. As a result, when they confront failure, they tend to make dysfunctional attributions to internal, global, stable and uncontrollable factors (e.g. lack of ability). Reattribution training facilitates to restructure individual’s explanations regarding the causes of negative events or outcomes in their lives. Thus, for the present research, RAT was designed to enhance Psychological Capital among managers and reduce their level of Social Anxiety.

The main objectives of the present study were

1. To study the effect of attributional styles on Psychological Capital (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience and Optimism) of managers.

2. To study the effect of attributional styles on Social Anxiety of managers.

3. To study the relationship between Psychological Capital and Social Anxiety.

4. To study the effect of Reattribution Training (RAT) on occupational attributional style of managers.

5. To study the effect of RAT on Psychological Capital of managers.
6. To study the effect of RAT on Social Anxiety of managers.

**The following hypotheses were proposed**

1. Managers with functional attributional style would show higher level of Psychological Capital as compared to their counterparts.

2. Managers with functional attributional style would show lower level of Social Anxiety as compared to their counterparts.

3. Social Anxiety among managers would be negatively related to their Psychological Capital (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience and Optimism).

4. RAT would enhance functional attributional style among managers.

5. RAT would enhance Psychological Capital (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience and Optimism) among managers.

6. RAT would reduce Social Anxiety among managers.

**Method**

**Sample:** A total of 682 managers (males and females) were selected from various national and multinational companies in and around Punjab (Patiala, Ludhiana, Nabha, Ambala, Sangrur, Rajpura, Malerkotla, Chandigarh, Mohali, Gurgaon) after due consent of the HR general managers and participants. Three scales were administered on all the participants. Out of 682 participants, 200 participants who scored low
on Psychological Capital, high on Social Anxiety and showed dysfunctional attributional style were screened in with the help of Psychological Capital questionnaire, social interaction anxiety scale and organizational attributional style questionnaire. These 200 participants were further divided into 2 groups with 100 each in one group to form experimental and control group.

**Research Design:**

Pre-Post Experimental-Control group design was used.

**Tools used in the study:**

**The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) (Luthans et al., 2007)** was used in this study to measure Psychological Capital of employees. This scale comprises 24 items which includes 6 items for each of the four components of hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism. These were measured on a six-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The resulting score represents an individual's level of positive PsyCap (Luthans, Avolio & Avey, 2007).

**Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) (Mattick & Clarke, 1998)** was used to measure Social Anxiety in social settings. The SIAS measures feelings of anxiety in social interactions, with the main concerns relating to “being inarticulate, boring, sounding stupid, not knowing what to say or how to respond within social interaction, and of being ignored” (Mattick & Clarke, 1998). The SIAS comprised of 20 items, which are rated on a five point likert scale, 0 (not at all) to 4 (extremely).

**Organizational Attributional Style Questionnaire (OASQ) (Kent & Martinko, 1995)** was used to measure attributional style of employees. This scale is used to measure the extent to which an individual attributes negative workplace events to external, stable, intentional,
controllable, and global causes. Participants were provided with a work scenario and asked to rate the event on each of the five causal dimensions on a 5 point Likert scale. Each participant was presented with 7 negative work scenarios.

**Procedure:**

The objective of the present study was to enhance Psychological Capital and reduce Social Anxiety among managers by changing their dysfunctional attributional style into functional attributional style with the help of reattribution training (RAT). The study was accomplished in two phases: screening phase and intervention phase. The screening phase included filling up of the questionnaires. Prior consent was taken from the HR managers of the concerned organizations. Appropriate conditions were made to carry out the study, so that employees could fill the questionnaires without any interruption. First of all rapport was built with the participants. With the standardized instructions all the three scales namely, Psychological Capital Questionnaire, Social Interaction Anxiety scale and Organizational Attributional Style questionnaire, were administered to the participants. After the scoring of the scales, the participants scoring low on Psychological Capital, high on Social Anxiety and having dysfunctional attributional style (N=200) were taken for the further study. The 200 participants were selected for the intervention purpose. Further, these 200 participants were randomly assigned to two groups, i.e., Experimental group (N=100) and Control group (N=100). Experimental group was provided with 4 sessions of reattribution training specifically designed to increase Psychological Capital and reduce Social Anxiety by enhancing functional attributional style at the same time the participants in Control group were not given any kind of intervention.
The main findings of the present research work are as follows

- Managers with functional attributional style showed significantly higher Psychological Capital as compared managers having dysfunctional attributional style.
- Managers with functional attributional style showed significantly lower Social Anxiety as compared to managers with dysfunctional attributional style.
- There is a significant negative relationship between Social Anxiety and Psychological Capital of managers.
- Reattribution training enhanced functional attributional style of the managers in the experimental group.
- Reattribution training enhanced Psychological Capital (hope, efficacy, resilience, optimism) of managers in the experimental group.
- Reattribution training reduced Social Anxiety (hope, efficacy, resilience, optimism) of managers in the experimental group.
- There is a significant difference between the post scores of individuals in experimental and control group. It indicates that reattribution training helped significantly in enhancing functional attributional style and Psychological Capital of managers and reduced the level of Social Anxiety among them.

The findings have been discussed within the framework of Reformulated Learned Helplessness theory by Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, (1978); Weiner’s theory of Achievement Motivation (1979), Bandura’s theory of Self Efficacy (1997). Several other previous researches that have been conducted in the area also support the findings of the present research work. Individuals with functional attributional style not only struggle harder, but strive to enhance their
performance after receiving negative feedback. On the other hand, individuals with dysfunctional attributional style create self fulfilling prophecies of failure and learned helplessness that obstruct achievement and devastate their future performance. The findings of the present study have significant implications in the organizational set up and problems of employees. Employees with dysfunctional attributional style hold themselves responsible for their failures to meet deadlines and doubt their potentials to deal with adverse situations. Changing attributional style can break their vicious circle of self defeating attributions and help them to adopt self helping attributions. These findings can work as guidelines for Human resource management and counselors to change the maladaptive cognitions of the employees so that they deal with situations in a more efficient manner.