

Personality Patterns of Employees of Call Centres

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Call centres are specialist technology intensive offices that are established by organization in order to deliver services to customers over telephone, replacing or complementing face to face interaction with public. The aim of the present investigation was to study the personality pattern of a group of employees of Call Centres of Kolkata City. A group of 75 employees, 35 male and 35 female were selected as sample in this investigation. A General Information Schedule and 16 PF Questionnaire were administered to them. It has been revealed from the findings that the male call centre employees of Kolkata possess the trait of being discreet, non-disclosing, shrewd, polished and diplomatic. Beside these traits female employees are found to be sensitive, aesthetic, sentimental, tender-minded and refined. Both the group has high concrete thinking and low abstract thinking. Not only this the male and the female employees have differed in the traits of emotional stability, dominance, liveliness, openness to change, privateness, apprehension and socially bold and diplomacy. On the other hand, the female employees are found to be more dominant, lively and self-reliant.

Human resource development may be defined as the development of human capabilities, abilities, knowledge and know-how to meet people's ever-growing needs for goods and services to improve their standard of living and quality of life. It is an organized learning activity arranged within an organization in order to improve performance or personal growth for the purpose of improving the job, the individual and one's organization. Call centres are specialist technology intensive offices that are established by organization in order to deliver services to customers over the telephone, replacing or complementing face to face interaction with public. Although the concept of tele-working has emerged as a new arena in the global business for quite sometime, the field of call centres is very fresh and recent.

Personality pattern of the employees in any organization takes an important role for the development of the organization (Davidson & Dalby, 1993). Another study reveals that there is a relationship between personality type and nature of job. (Hojat, 1999). A study examines team working in a call centre and how this is shaped for the employees by technical control, the dynamics of emotional labour and gender politics. Management's efforts to disguise control are resisted by employees who transform workplace discourses into an oppositional politics, shattering the illusion of unity promoted by the pundits of team organizations (Mulholland, 2002). There is also a close relationship between organizational commitment and occupational stress. Those with few opportunities to meet colleagues scored higher on emotional exhaustion and

lower on personal accomplishment scales. High commitment score was related positively to perceived organizational support and to religiosity (Henderson, 1996). A study found that the call centre agents were more stressed, less satisfied and reported poorer mental and physical health than the general working population. In addition they perceived themselves as less empowered than other workers in a traditional office environment. The empowerment dimensions of meaning, impact and particularly self-determination, seem to directly influence job satisfaction, but not health (Holdsworth & Cartwright, 2003). Considering the above the present investigation has been designed to study the personality pattern of a group of employees of call centre of Kolkata City.

Hypotheses:

1. High score of factors A, C, F, H and N of 16PF is predominant among the male employees of call centres of Kolkata city.
2. Low score of factors B, I and Q4 of 16PF is predominant among the male employees of call centres of Kolkata city.
3. High score of factors A, C, F, H and N of 16PF is predominant among the female employees of call centres of Kolkata city.
4. Low score of factors B, I and Q4 of 16PF is predominant among the female employees of call centres of Kolkata city.
5. Factors of 16PF are differentially associated with gender difference of the employees of call centres of Kolkata city.

Method

Sample:

A group of 70 employees (35 male and 35 female) were selected from different call centres of Kolkata city. They were adults (at least 21 years) with minimum educational qualification of graduation, with adequate training in their respective jobs and with job experience of minimum six months.

Tool:

16PF Questionnaire: The sixteen personality factor questionnaire originally developed by Cattell (1958), is a factor-analytically derived questionnaire for personality assessment. Actually the 16PF questionnaire is based on a 16 factor model, viz., warmth, reasoning, emotional stability, dominance, liveliness, rule-consciousness, social boldness, sensitivity, vigilance, abstractedness, privateness, apprehension, openness to change, self-reliance and tension.

Results and Discussion

Table – 1: Mean, SD and t-values between Male (n=35) and Female (n=35) employees of Call Centres on 16 Personality Factors

Sl. No.	Fac tors	Male		Female		t-values
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1.	A	6.51	1.84	6.51	2.06	0.00
2.	B	3.77	1.70	4.40	1.73	1.54
3.	C	6.62	2.23	3.88	1.45	6.19**
4.	E	4.51	1.99	6.14	1.95	4.31**
5.	F	5.00	2.05	7.08	1.43	4.95**
6.	G	5.22	1.47	5.34	1.25	0.36
7.	H	6.00	2.27	4.08	1.98	3.79**
8.	I	5.08	1.57	4.28	2.00	1.93**
9.	L	6.54	1.49	5.77	1.91	1.88
10.	M	7.00	2.54	6.91	1.93	0.16
11.	N	8.69	1.55	6.22	1.07	7.76**
12.	O	7.05	1.66	4.60	2.48	4.90**
13.	Q	16.17	1.93	4.88	1.40	3.20**
14.	Q	23.90	1.80	6.14	1.50	6.36**
15.	Q	34.94	1.76	5.77	1.10	2.36
16.	Q	44.91	1.80	4.22	1.30	1.84

**p < 0.01

Table -1 presents the personality profile of the male employees of call centre of Kolkata city. Analysis of data reveals that the score of

6.51 on factor A indicates that the male employees in this sector are moderately good natured, easy going, ready to cooperate and attentive to people. Low score of 3.77 in factor B means that their abstract intelligence is low while concrete thinking level is better. They are slow to learn and grasp new concepts and have a little taste or capacity for higher forms of knowledge and they tend to be bookish. The score of 6.62 of factor C indicates that they are calm and realistic about life. They have a desired level of ego strength in them. On factor E the score is 4.51. To some extent they are submissive and soft hearted. The workers in this field are neither glum nor silent and they are neither very enthusiastic. They are neither always anxious, depressed or melancholic and nor are they cheerful, talkative, frank always. Their score on factor F is 5. The score of 5.22 on factor G indicates that they are moderately responsible, determined, consistent energetic and well organized. The score on factor H is 6. They are in general social, participative and are spontaneous in their action. They also tend to consume much time talking. The score of 5.08 on Factor I indicates that they are tender-minded, imaginative and sensitive and they generally tend to avoid occupations which are tough and crude. Their level of suspicion is from moderate to high as indicated by a score of 6.54 on factor L. They are often involved in their own ego and are interested in their own internal mental life. The mean score of factor M is 7 which indicates that they tend to be unconventional, egocentric, sensitive and imaginative to a large extent. They are highly sophisticated in their behaviour. The score of 8.69 on factor N proves that they are polished and shrewd. The mean score of factor O is 7.05 which means they tend to worry, feel insecure, are self-blaming and also guilt prone by nature. Besides this, that they are open to change, liberal and also critical at the same time is obvious from the mean score 6.17 on factor Q1. That they are more ready to face any change in life generally and are more

tolerant of inconveniences caused in their issues. The mean score of factor Q2 indicates that they prefer to work and make decisions with other people. 4 as a score of factor Q3 proves that they have moderate levels of self-sentiment, they are not that cautious about maintaining social rules and hence they are not so considerate and careful. The average score of factor Q4 is 4.91 which means that they tend to be grossly relaxed and composed. Thus, the basic characteristics of the male call centre employees include : warm, outgoing nature, adventurous, unsuspecting, unconcerned, sophisticated, insecure and experimenting traits. They are not high in their abstract intelligence level and self sufficiency.

Thus, the Hypothesis-1 which postulates, "High score of factors A,C,F, H and N of 16 PF is predominant among the male employees of call centre of Kolkata city" –is accepted for the factor N and rejected for the factors A,C, F and H. Similarly, the Hypothesis-2 which postulates, " Low score of factors B,I and Q4 of 16 PF is predominant among the male employees of call centre of Kolkata city"—is accepted for factor B and rejected for the factors I and Q4.

Table -1 also reveals the personality profile of the female employees call centre of Kolkata city. A score of 6.51 on factor A reveals that the female employees in this field are on an average moderately warm, outgoing, easy going and good natured. Attending people and working in professions related to people is appreciated by them and is also reflected in their personality as a trait. They are good at maintaining personal relation. A score of 4.4 on factor B indicates that their concrete thinking ability is low. They are generally bookish by nature and do not have much urge for higher forms of knowledge. The level of their abstract thinking is low. A score of 3.88 on factor C says that female call centre employees are not mature enough emotionally, lack the tolerance for frustration. They are easily

fatigued and worrying kind. They can have problems related to sleep or some other psychosomatic problems. The score of 7.08 in factor F means they are cheerful, talkative, frank and experience. The mean score 5.34 of factor G indicates neither do they value internal standards nor do they regard moral values very high. The mean score of factor H is 4.08 which says that they are moderately shy and withdrawn by nature. They are cautious about what is going on around them. The score of 4.28 on factor I indicates that they are realistic and practical. They are also by nature independent minded and responsible by nature. On factor L the mean score is 5.77 which means that they are more interested in their own ego maintenance and have an option of their own in every regard. 6.91 as a score on factor M points out that they are not conventional by nature at least. On the contrary at times they are unconcerned and egocentric. On factor N their score is 6.22 which means they are quite sophisticated and polished. They are enough socially aware, diplomatic and calculating. The score of factor O is 4.6 says that they are secured, self assured and free of any guilt in themselves. 4.88 as a score on factor Q1 brings out the conservatism trait in them. They prefer going along with traditions rather than being open to change of any form very gladly. The score 6.22 of factor Q2 indicates that they are quite resourceful and generally tend to prefer their own decisions. The mean score of factor Q3 is 5.77 which points out the socially precise and compulsive personality trait of the females in this sector. The mean score of Q4 is 4.22 which indicates they are restless and impatient and frustrated also.

In a nutshell it can be said that the female call centre employees have exhibited the traits of being warm, outgoing, dominant, enthusiastic, sophisticated and self sufficient. On the other side they are affected by feelings easily.

Thus the Hypothesis-3 which postulates, "High score of factors A,C,F, H and N of 16 PF is predominant in the female employees of call centres of Kolkata city"—is accepted for the factor F and rejected for factors A,C,H and N.

Similarly, the Hypothesis-4 which postulates, " Low score of factors B,I and Q4 of 16PF is predominant among the female employees of call centre of Kolkata city"—is accepted in this investigation.

When comparison was made between the male and female employees of call centres of Kolkata city, significant difference was observed in some factors. The high mean score of 6.62 on Factor C in case of males and that of 3.38 in case of females brings out the fact that the male employees in this sector are more emotionally stable , motivated can face reality and cool headed than the female employees. On another, i.e., factor E the females are found to be more accommodating, expressive and soft hearted (M=6.14) than compared to the male employees (M=4.51). The mean score of 5 in case of the male workers and 7.08 in case of the female workers on factor F points out the fact that the females are more cheerful, interacting, talkative, expressive than compared to the males. The males are found to be more bold, venturesome and able to handle stress that the females pointed out the mean score of 6 and 4.08 of males and females respectively on factor H. Although the respective high score of 8.69 and 6.22 of males and females on factor N points out that both the groups are quite sophisticated, diplomatic and polished, but the male groups are more shrewd than compared to the females. Males in this profession are found to be more moody and apprehensive (M=7.05) than compared to their profession as reflected from the scores of factor O. On factor Q1, the males have a mean score of 6.17 and the females have a mean score of 4.88 and thus it can be said that the male professionals are more experimenting, tolerant of inconvenience and open to change, than the females. On

factor Q2 the males have scored a mean of 3.9 and that of females is 6.14 which brings out the relegation that the females are more self sufficient, resourceful and prefer their own decisions. The computed t-values of independent, and equal sample of factors C,E,F, H,N,O,Q1 and Q2 are 6.10,4.31, 4.95, 2.79, 7.76,4.90, 3.20,and 6.36 respectively. Thus the Hypothesis-V which postulates that , "Factors of 16PF are differentially associated with gender differences of the employees of call centre of Kolkata city"- is accepted for the factors C, E, F, H, N, O, Q1, and Q2 and rejected for the factors A, B, G, I, L, M, Q2 and Q3.

It has been revealed from the findings of the present investigation that the male call centre employees of Kolkata possess the traits of being discreet, non-disclosing, shrewd, polished and diplomatic. Moreover, the data obtained also reveals that they have lower scholastic mental capacity having lower general mental capacity. Their concrete thinking is high but they are generally unable to handle abstract problems.

The data obtained from female employees of call centres of Kolkata also points out the fact the female employees too possess the traits of being discreet, non-disclosing, shrewd, polished and diplomatic. It is also found that their concrete thinking is high whereas abstract thinking is low. They are also found to be sensitive, aesthetic, sentimental, tender-minded and refined.

The personality profile of the male and female call centre employees as revealed from the obtained data points out the fact that there is significant difference in personality with respect to the gender. The male and the female employees have differed in the traits of emotional stability, dominance, liveliness, openness to change, privateness, apprehension and socially bold and diplomacy. On the other hand, the female employees are found to be more dominant, lively and self-reliant.

Conclusion

The study reveals that the basic personality profile of the call centre employees include being polished, diplomatic, having low abstract thinking but high concrete thinking. Since the call centre job entails interacting with clients, a good behaviour with them is must in order to have a good customer base. They have to be believing in the philosophy-customer is always right. The obvious expectation from the call agent would be diplomatic, polished and wordly shrewd attitude. The call centre job does not need in general any particular area of specialization. The employees can come from any subject background and they just need to be +2 qualified. In a profession where the eligibility criteria is so low it is obvious that the abstract thinking requirement in this job will not be that high. The job is repetitive, monotonous and thus requires high concrete ability.

It is the endeavour of the Human Resource Development to look into the human aspects of any work in any organization. Human beings are not to be considered as machines at work and they should be considered as human resources and not just a source of labour for getting the work done. Considering the humans as a resource, giving proper attention and value to them will only guarantee an organization better economic rewards and prosperity in the future.

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