



**Research Article**

## **INTERPERSONAL STYLES & OPERATING EFFECTIVENESS AMONG UNIVERSITY TEACHERS-AN EMPIRICAL STUDY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Interpersonal styles play a very significant role in the overall development of not only the individual managers, but also the teams, and inter team in their dyadic relations between supervisors and subordinates an organization. Eric Berne has described the impact on the various ego stages of an individual in terms of transactional analysis stating the parent, adult & child ego states and also described how they are important in developing the transactional profile of individuals in an organization. Building on the concept of these 3 ego states Dr. Uday Pareek (1988), has developed 12 ego states under an instrument called SPIRO-M, which is divided into six functional (i.e. positive) ego states called (ok styles) and six dysfunctional (Negative) ego states called (not ok styles). Since, very few of the researchers have taken Pareek's functional and dysfunctional concept into their study for performance or effectiveness, an attempt is made in this study to find the style profile of teachers and the impact of performance, gender and seniority on the profile of influencing styles. Since, the SPIRO-M inventory is devised for industrial managers, no modifications are made in the questionnaire as it is suitable for teachers as managers in the university system. The questionnaire administered to a total of 102 teachers belonging to assistant professor and associate professors and responses were collected, using a google form. Student's "t" distribution statistics was used for test of significance at  $p < .05$  level of significance. The findings of the study showed that performance, gender and seniority all impacted on the style profile of teachers. While Innovative style came out as the dominant style among male, efficient and senior teachers, confronting style dominated the female and junior and low score teachers.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Interpersonal styles play a very significant role in the overall development of not only the individual managers, but also the teams, and inter team in their dyadic relations between supervisors and subordinates in the organization. Eric Berne<sup>1</sup> has described the impact on the various ego stages of an individual in terms of transactional analysis stating the parent, adult & child ego states and also described how they are important in developing the transactional profile of individuals in an organization<sup>2</sup>. The origin of transactional analysis<sup>3</sup> can be traced back to Freud's concept of psycho-analysis which identified human psyche as composed of the id, ego, and super-ego (describing the activities and interactions of the mental life of a person).

Eric Borne revolutionised the concept of Id-ego-superego by a new concept of parent-adult-child which emerges from ego state of Freud and none of them belong to Id or superego.

This post Freudian concept worked well in psychotherapy that served as a panacea to many forms of mental illness. Borne explains them as follows, *Parent* ("extero-psyche"): a state in which people behave, feel, and think in response to an unconscious mimicking of how their parents (or other parental figures) acted, or how they interpreted their parent's actions. For example, a person may shout at someone out of frustration because they learned from an influential figure in childhood the lesson that this seemed to be a way of relating that worked.

*Adult* ("neo-psyche"): a state of the ego which is most like an artificially intelligent system processing information and making predictions about major emotions that could affect its operation. Learning to strengthen the Adult is a goal of TA. While a person is in the Adult ego state, he/she is directed towards an objective appraisal of reality.

*Child* ("archaeo-psyche"): a state in which people behave, feel, and think similarly to how they did in childhood. For example, a person who receives a poor evaluation at work may respond by looking at the floor and crying or pouting, as when scolded as a child. Conversely, a person who receives a good

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evaluation may respond with a broad smile and a joyful gesture of thanks. The Child is the source of emotions, creation, recreation, spontaneity, and intimacy.

Building on the concept of these 3 ego states Dr. Uday Pareek (1988), has developed 12 ego states under an instrument called SPIRO-M, which is divided into six functional (+ ve) ego states called (ok styles) and six dysfunctional (-ve) ego states called (not ok styles) (see Table-1).

between *influencing* behaviour and team role behaviour, as well as personality traits, developing the idea that there is a significant social dimension to team roles<sup>7</sup>. *Tony Manning*, (2012) found support for the idea that *influencing* behaviour varied in different contexts. Statistically significant relationships were identified between the frequency of use of *influence* strategies and styles and 33 contextual variables<sup>8</sup>.

Table-1 Pareek's classification		Parent		Adult		Child	
		Nurturing	Regulating	Rational	Creative	Confronting	Adaptive
Functional Ego States	Ok Styles	Supporting Parent	Normative Parent	Problem Solving Adult	Innovative Child	Confronting Child	Resilient Child
Dysfunctional Ego States	Not Ok Styles	Rescuing Parent	Prescriptive Parent	Task Obsessive Adult	Bohemian Child	Aggressive Child	Sulking Child

One of the main functions of a manager in an organisation is to influence others in achieving work objectives. The manager in influencing position not only solve problems and help others, but also make an impact on others ability to solve their problems and develop them in the process. Keeping this in view, the teachers in the university system are no way lesser managers than the managers in Industries. Thus, in this study, teachers or professors as the basic units of university management system are taken up to explore their managerial style as enshrined in the Style Profile of Interpersonal Orientation of Managers (SPIRO-M) instrument, specifically while dealing with the students.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to identify the influencing styles (style profile) of university teachers (professors) while dealing with the students. Using the SPIRO-M instrument the study purports to determine the level/ strength of functional (i.e. ok styles) and dysfunctional ego states (i.e. not ok styles), forming part of their influencing style while helping the students, developing their personality, learning & problem-solving abilities and enhancing their potential for achieving success in life. It also tries to establish the impact of gender, seniority and performance of the teachers on their style profile, their dominant and back up styles and the operating effectiveness. It would also suggest the best of strategies that would help enhance their operating effectiveness.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**People behaviour and organisational effectiveness:** - People are the driver of excellence/ effectiveness in any organization (Koene, 1986; Lim, 1995). Managers are the greatest catalyst in bringing employee behaviour to a level of efficiency that is directly linked to personal effectiveness through their influencing style, which in turn has a direct bearing on organizational effectiveness.

**Interpersonal relations and effectiveness:** - *Concept of interpersonal relations as a part of organisational effectiveness is very popular and used to understand influence styles, the Ego States and the Existential Positions*<sup>4</sup>. It has been found to be an integral part of the job world over and their importance in formal organizations is well established. *Influencing* behaviours apply to all situations and highlight the role of expectancies in work place assessments of *influencing* behaviours *Tony Manning, Graham Pogson and Zoe Morrison in 2009*<sup>5</sup>. *Malcolm Leary in 1976 found a clear picture of importance of the power and influencing process as a feature of organisational life*<sup>6</sup>. *Tony Manning, Graham Pogson and Zoë Morrison's (2008) findings established a link*

*Manning, T. and Robertson, B. (2003), showed that negotiation is best seen as an aspect of influencing and that, although both are associated with conflict-handling, they go beyond this.*<sup>9</sup> *Muriel James and Dorothy Jongeward (1978) had gone to the extent of describing winners in life as individuals who respond authentically to others, which essentially is interpersonal style. Muriel James (1975) observed that three ego states had subdivisions which could be described as the critic, the coach, the shadow, the analyst, the pacifier and the inventor. She contended that all these subdivisions had functional/ dysfunctional dimensions. This perspective of personality can help enhance effectiveness of people working in organizations with which organizations are so primarily concerned with (Kalra Satish and Gupta Rajen, 1999). Using the three ego states (Parent, Adult & Child), Pareek (1988) developed a framework of functional and dysfunctional ego states/ influence styles and also developed an instrument popularly known as SPIRO-M to assess the functional and dysfunctional influence styles of managers.*

**Style profile of interpersonal relations orientation:** - Emerging out of the concept of interpersonal relations, influencing styles as part of transactional analysis has occupied a place of prominence in recent years. However, studies on style profile of managers are of very rare occurrence. To cite a few, *Srivastava, R.C. et al. (2004) in their study on "issues in education and society" have found a profound difference in the SPIRO-M's 12 managerial style profiles among teachers, student, non-academics and parents*<sup>10</sup>. *Joshi Neha, and Ashish Sinha in their study on "A Comparative Study on Interpersonal Styles of Managers of Private and Public sector Banks of Uttarakhand", have found that there is a significant difference in the interpersonal style orientation of the managers of public sector and private sector banks.*<sup>11</sup> *Sinha, Ashish, in his work on "Interpersonal Style Orientation of Supervisors in Engineering Organizations in India", found that Supervisors in public sector had a high supportive style but at the same time a high rescuing style as well. Further, innovativeness is one attribute which is usually associated with people working in private sector and not with public sector. One fundamental assumption his study makes is that everybody displays functional and dysfunctional styles, only the intensity varies from person to person. Another fundamental assumption of his study states is that functional styles contribute towards the overall effectiveness of people working in organizations. Both these assumptions were found to be positive and passed through the test of significance. His study suggested a re-examination of deployment of supervisors in organizations in public or private sectors*<sup>12</sup>.

**METHODOLOGY**

For the purpose of the study 102 teachers designated assistant professors and associate professors teaching in Delhi University were administered the SPIRO-M questionnaire through google form and the data collected were analysed in a spread sheet. Calculation of statistical parameters were made using the socscistatistics<sup>13</sup>.

Distribution of respondents is given below (see Table -1)

**Table 2** Distribution of Respondents

Performance	Gender	Seniority	Total Respondents
Moderate/Low (OEQ score <50)	32 Female	24 Junior	14
High (OEQ score > 50)	70 Male	78 Senior	88
			102

**Psychometric test used**

The SPIRO-M frame work is based on the use of transaction between three ego states (parent, adult & child), divided into (two parent egos, one adult ego, and three child egos) on two dimensions (Ok and Not Ok). These interactions produce 12 inter personal styles i.e. six OK styles (supporting parent, normative parent, problem solving adult, innovative child, confronting child & resilient child) and six Not Ok styles (Rescuing parent, prescriptive parent, Task obsessive adult, bohemian child, aggressive child & sulking child). A typical result of any study on this instrument gives a manager’s

1. strength of each of the six ok styles (i.e. supporting parent, normative parent, problem solving adult, innovative child, confronting child & resilient child), adopted.
2. Strength of each of the six not ok styles (i.e. Rescuing parent, prescriptive parent, Task obsessive adult, bohemian child, aggressive child & sulking child) adopted
3. Dominant style/s adopted
4. Back up style/s adopted.
5. Under developed ego states and
6. Operative effectiveness quotient (OEQ) based on how the functional styles (i.e. Ok styles) and dysfunctional styles (i.e. Not Ok Styles) are juxtaposed among themselves

**Assumptions of OEQ Scheme:** - There are two assumptions of the OEQ scheme used while determining the operational effectiveness,

1. With the increase in ok score the operating effectiveness increases, while increase in not ok score decreases the operating effectiveness.
2. To increase the operating effectiveness managers, have to increase their ok score or alternatively, decrease the not ok score.
3. Anyone having ok score higher than not ok score will get an OEQ>50, while those having not ok score greater than ok score will get an OEQ<50. Those having ok score= not ok score will have an OEQ=50.
4. Thus, managers have to either increase the ok score or decrease the not ok scores to increase their OEQ score.(see Figure-1)

**Statistical tools Used**

1. Mean ( $\mu$ ) & standard deviation ( $\sigma$ )
2. “t” test for 2 independent Means
3. Test of significance- With Two Tailed test at  $p < 0.05$  level.

**Findings**

Findings of our study is in two parts. In the first part, the style profile of the respondents as a whole is presented in terms of ok styles, not ok styles, underdeveloped ego states, their dominant and back up styles and operating effectiveness. In the second part, the impact of performance, gender and seniority on the style profile, operating effectiveness, their dominant and back up styles adopted while dealing with students in their job.

**Part one: - Overall findings**

The overall finding of the 102 teachers studied, indicated that a pattern of ok styles started with highest score for innovative style (98%) & confronting style(98%), followed by problem-solving style(97%), resilient style(91%),supportive style(90%) and normative style(82%) in that order. (see Table-3). It can be observed that the dominant style adopted by teachers is innovativeness and the back up style adopted is confronting style.

The mean OEQ score is 50.063, which means “operating effectiveness of teachers as a class is moderate”. This is so because the mean of ok score is 10.45 (which is moderately high in a 15-point scale) adopted by SPIRO-M framework. According to this frame work, operating efficiency will be very high only if the score of ok style is very high and score of not ok style is very low.

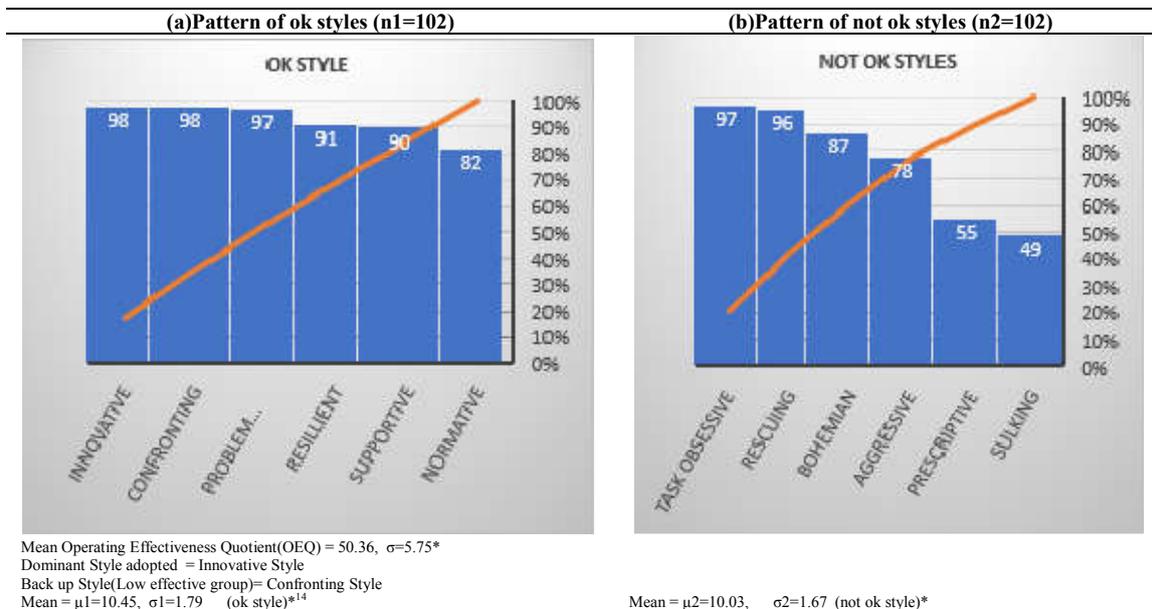
**Figure 1** Operating effectiveness quotient

not ok scores	ok scores													
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
3	0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
4	0	50	67	75	80	83	85	87	89	90	91	92	92	
5	0	33	50	60	67	71	75	78	80	82	83	85	86	
6	0	25	40	50	57	62	67	70	73	75	77	78	80	
7	0	20	33	43	50	55	60	64	70	67	69	71	75	
8	0	17	28	37	44	50	54	58	61	64	67	69	70	
9	0	14	25	33	40	45	50	54	57	60	62	65	67	
10	0	12	22	30	36	42	46	50	53	56	59	61	63	
11	0	11	20	27	33	38	43	47	50	53	55	58	60	
12	0	10	18	25	31	36	40	44	47	50	53	55	57	
13	0	9	17	23	28	33	37	41	44	47	50	52	54	
14	0	8	15	21	27	31	35	39	42	45	48	50	52	
15	0	8	14	20	25	29	33	37	40	43	45	48	50	

Here, score of not ok style is also 10.03 (moderately high in 15-point scale). Thus, all advantages accrued by a 10-point ok style is nullified equally by 10-point score in no ok style and reducing the operating efficiency to a moderate level (i.e. 50.36 points in a 100-point scale of OEQ (see Figure-1). Thus, it can be suggested that teachers must try to reduce the not ok styles prominent in their behaviour, such as task obsessiveness, aggressiveness, rescuing and bohemian styles to increase their operating efficiency. A higher dose of these not ok styles reduces the effectiveness.

reducing their not ok styles such as task obsessiveness, aggressiveness, bohemian, prescriptive and sulking styles (see table-3(b) part).

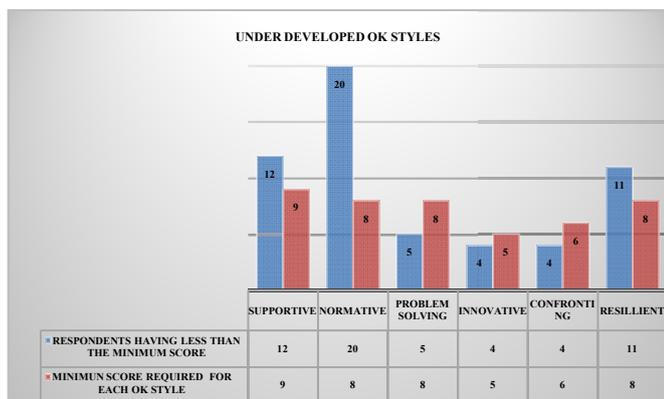
**Table 3** pattern of ok and not ok style of all respondents



**Under developed ok styles:** - It may be recalled that while increasing the operating effectiveness, the score of ok styles be increased. This can be done first by identifying the under developed ok styles and then attaining higher levels through training or consciously practising habits that can enhance the behaviour which is under developed. It is equally important to reduce the not ok style simultaneously, else it will eat out the benefits of enhanced ok style. Number of respondents having under developed ok styles vary from 4% to 20% ( see table-4).

**Impact of performance, gender and seniority on operating effectiveness**

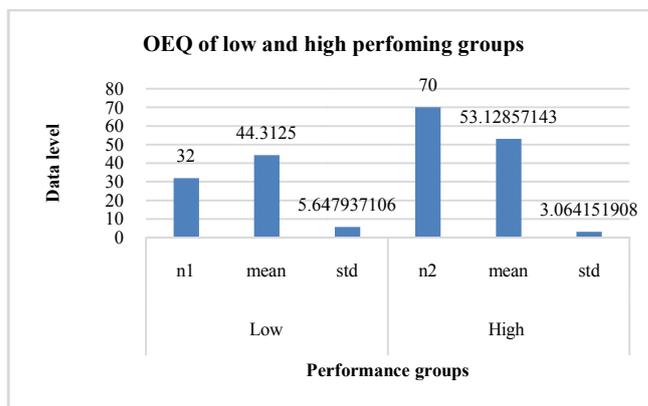
**Distribution & Statistics of Performance or Effectiveness** – on the basis of the effectiveness score the respondents were divided into two groups, low performing group (OEQ < 50) and high performing group (OEQ > 50). Low performing group gave a mean score of OEQ (i.e. 44.31, n1=32) and High performing group gave a mean score of OEQ (i.e. 53.12, n2=70) (see Table-5).



**Table 4** Under developed\*\* ok styles

\*\*According to SPIRO-M instrument, a respondent having a score less 9 in supportive style, less than 8 in normative style, less than 8 in problem-solving style, less than 5 in innovative style, less than 6 in confronting style and less than 9 in resilient style are called under developed ok styles.

This group of respondents must be advised to enhance the ok styles i.e. Supportive, normative, problem solving, innovative, confronting and resilient styles by scoring more than the minimum score prescribed for each style (see Table-3), while



**Table 5** Distribution of Operating Effectiveness -

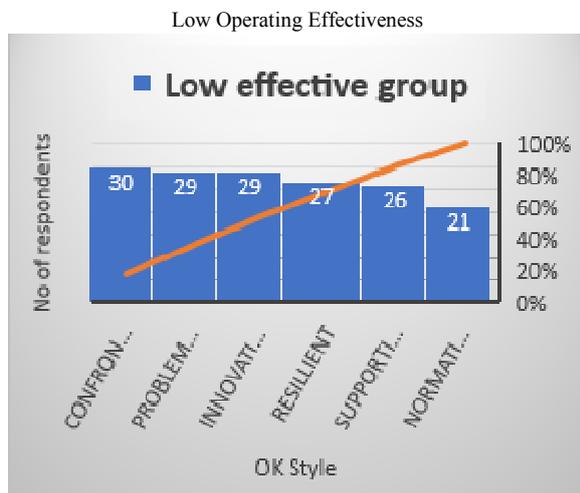
**Interpretation**-Both the groups a mean OEQ score of 44.31 & 53.12 respectively. A “t” test conducted on these groups gave a t= and was found to be significant at p < .05 level. However, effectiveness is more consistent in High performers group than the Low performer group as the standard deviation in High performer group is less than that in low performer group.

**Spectrum of ok styles in low & high performing groups:** - Both the high and low performing groups have a different style profile. While in low profile group, confronting style is the dominant influencing style followed by a problem solving influencing style as back up style, in high performing group innovative influencing style is the dominant style followed by problem solving style as back up influencing style (see Table-6).

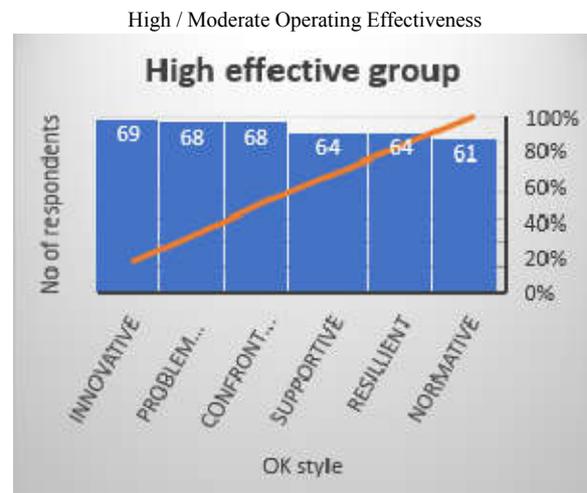
**Interpretation:** - From the profile sheet given below it can be inferred that innovative style is a better influencing style for achieving higher effectiveness. Innovative managers/professors permit the subordinates/students to develop new ideas, allow them to take risk and take up responsibility on behalf of the subordinate for failure. While interpreting the score in style scale and OEQ it can be observed that the low performing group is having a score of 10.22 in not ok style (i.e. -ve style) which is greater than the score of ok style (i.e. +ve style) bringing down the operating effectiveness to 44.31. On same logic, a higher score of 10.75 in ok style (i.e. +ve style) in high performing group has stood up the operating effectiveness to 53.12 due to a lesser score of 9.94 in not ok style (i.e. -ve style) (see table-6).

**Under developed ok styles:** - Since ok styles are the index of higher performance it is always advisable to enhance the ok scores to increase one's effectiveness. This requires identification of the underdeveloped ok styles of each group for upward revision or correction. If we study table-7 below, we can find that respondents in low performing group fall a prey to normative style(11%), supportive style (6%) & resilient style (5%) which need to be improved. In high performing group also the same styles re to be improved. Non the less it is important to say that in both groups not ok styles (-ve styles) are almost equal to ok styles (+ve styles) which has nullified the benefits of ok style and brought down the effectiveness to a moderate 50% level. Hence, not ok styles in all direction and of all variation should be reduced.

**Distribution & Spectrum of ok Styles In Female & Male Groups:** -on the basis of the effectiveness score the respondents were divided into two gender groups, female group (n1=32) and male group (n2=70). Female group gave a mean score of 10.30 in ok style & female group gave a 10.51 on ok style (see table-8). Similarly, both groups scored 50.58 and 50.28 respectively in OEQ (see Table-9). There is not much of difference in both the groups except for the profile of ok styles.

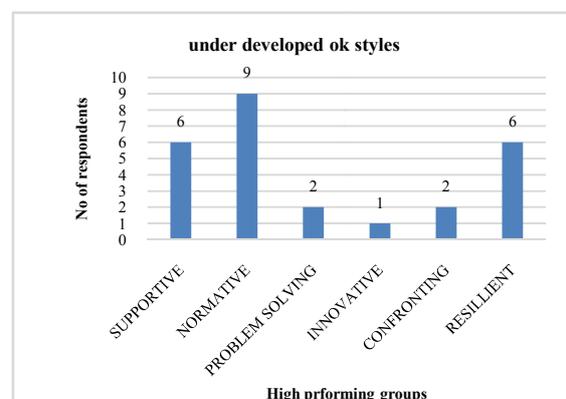
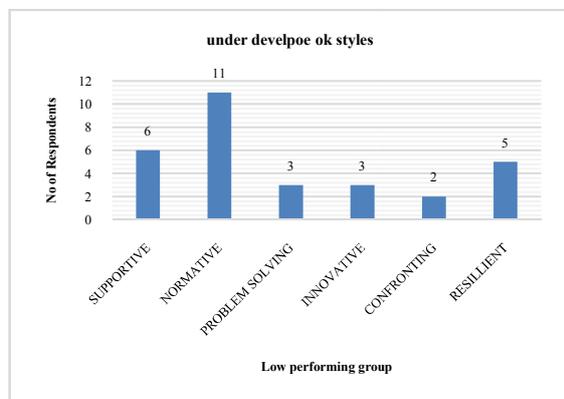


Dominant Style= Confronting Style  
 Back up Style=problem solving Style  
 N1= 32  
 $\mu_1=9.82, \sigma_1=2.21$  (ok style)\*<sup>15</sup>  
 $\mu_2=10.22, \sigma_2=1.75$  (not ok style)\*  
 Mean Operating Effectiveness Quotient(OEQ) 44.31,  $\sigma=5.64.0^*$



Dominant Style= Innovative Style  
 Back up Style=Problem solving Style  
 N2=70  
 $\mu_1=10.75, \sigma_1=1.50$  (ok style)\*  
 $\mu_2=9.94, \sigma_2=1.63$  (not ok style)\*  
 Mean Operating Effectiveness Quotient(OEQ) (OEQ)=53.12,  $\sigma=3.06^*$

**Table 6** Difference Between Style Profile Of Low & High Effective Groups



**Table 7** Under developed ok styles in low & high performing groups

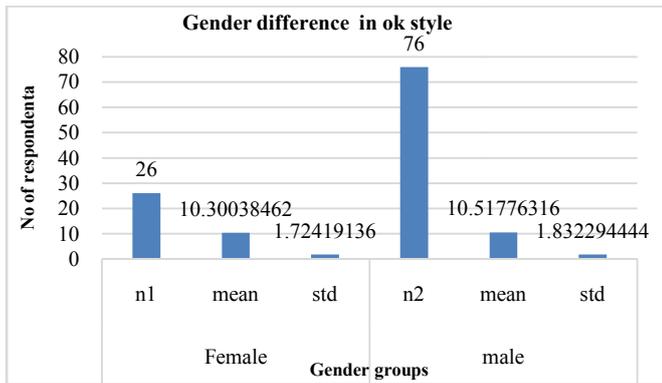
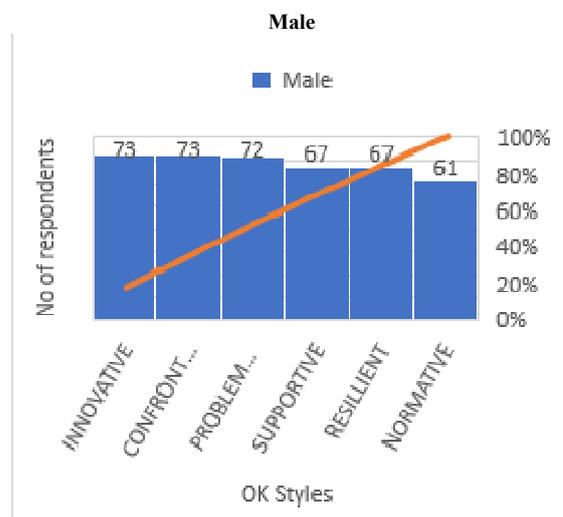
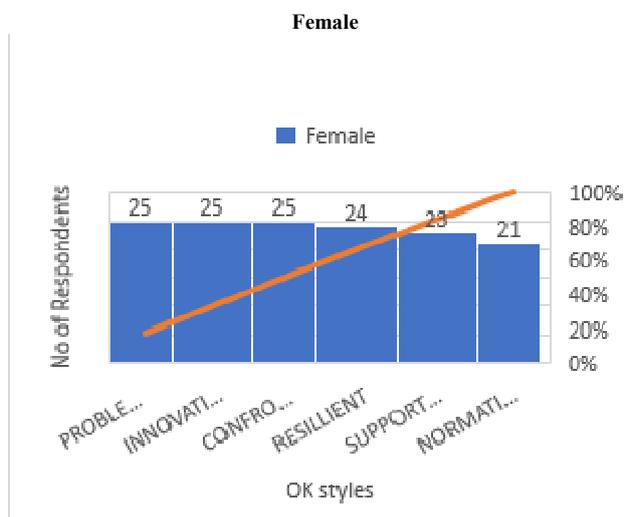


Table 8 Distribution & Statistics of Respondents in Different Gender Groups

**Interpretation:** - The style profile of female group showed problem solving as the dominant influencing style with innovativeness as back up influencing style, while that of the male group showed innovativeness as dominant influencing style with confronting as back up influencing style. Thus, teacher were found to be more of problem solver type while male teachers were found to be innovative.

**Under developed okstyles male & female group:-** The underdeveloped ok styles that need attention in both the groups are, normativenormative parent (5% female, 15% male), supportive parent (3% female, 9% male) and resilient child (2% female, 9% male). Thus all these 3 styles need be improved to enhance the operative effectiveness of the groups (see Table-10 below).

**Distribution & statistics of Ok Styles in Junior & Senior Groups:** -on the basis of the seniority the respondents were divided into two groups, Junior group (n1=14) and senior group (n2=88). Junior group gave a mean score of 10.39 in ok style & senior group gave a 10.47 on ok style (see table-11). Similarly, both groups scored 49.28 and 50.53 respectively in OEQ (see Table-12). There is not much of difference in both the groups except for a slightly (1.25 i.e. 2% Approx.) higher OEQ score in senior group than the junior group (see Table-12).



Dominant Style(FEMALE)= Problem Solving Style  
 Back up Back up Style(FEMALE)=Innovative Style  
 N1=26  
 $\mu_1=10.30, \sigma_1=1.72$  (ok style)\*  
 $\mu_2=9.62, \sigma_2=1.17$  (not ok style)\*  
 Mean Operating Effectiveness Quotient(OEQ) =50.58,  $\sigma=7.45^*$

Dominant Style(MALE)= Innovative Style  
 Back up Style(MALE)=Confronting Style  
 N2= 76  
 $\mu_1=10.51, \sigma_1=1.83$  (ok style)\*  
 $\mu_2=10.16, \sigma_2=1.78$  (not ok Style)\*  
 Mean Operating Effectiveness Quotient(OEQ) =50.28,  $\sigma=5.10^*$

Table 9 Spectrum of OK Styles in Different Gender Groups

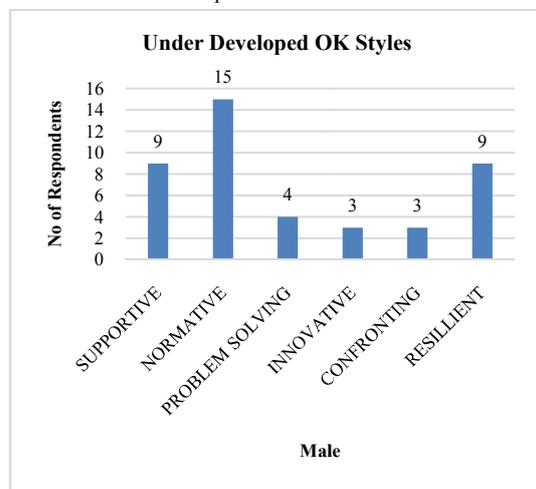
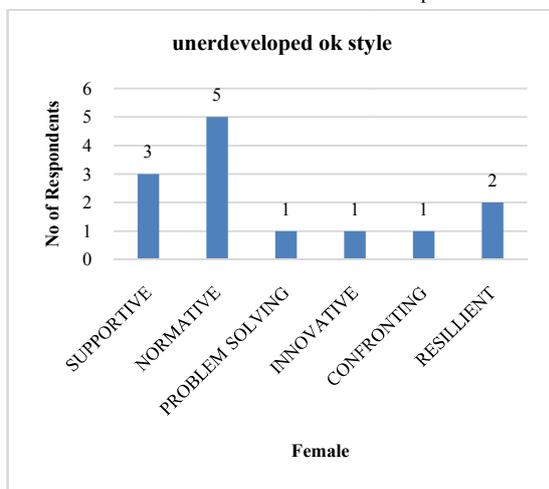


Table 10 Under developed okstyles male & female group

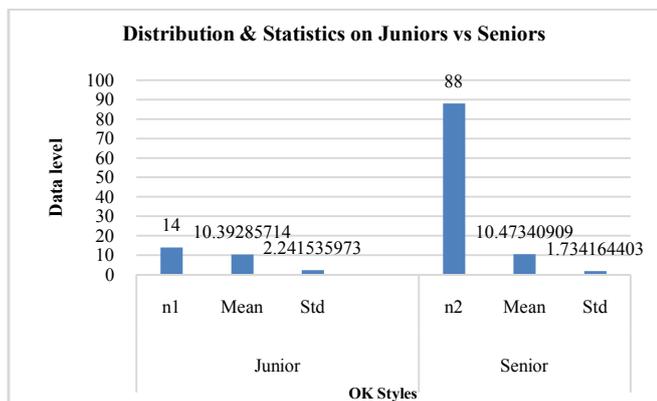


Table 11 Distribution and Statistics on Junior Vs Senior

**Difference in Style profile between Juniors vs seniors:** -The style profile of junior and senior groups was placed in the same echelon as that in female and male groups. Like the female & male groups, the junior group identified problem solving as dominant influencing style and innovativeness as back up influencing style, while senior groups identified innovativeness as dominant style and confrontation as back up style.

normative style(16%), resilient style (10%) and supportive styles(8%) are under developed and need attention (see Table-14, below).

**CONCLUSION**

The results of the study showed that, teachers in the university system (both assistant professors) in general adopt an Innovative style as the dominant managerial influencing style while dealing with students and adopt a confronting and problem-solving style alternatively as a backup influencing style while helping the students, developing their personality, learning & problem-solving abilities and enhancing their potential for achieving success in life. The comparative study Impact of performance, gender and seniority showed that

1. There is a significant difference in the profile of influencing styles between high performing group and low performing groups While innovative style and problem-solving styles are the dominant and backup style respectively in high performing group, confronting



Table 12 Difference in Style profile between Juniors vs seniors

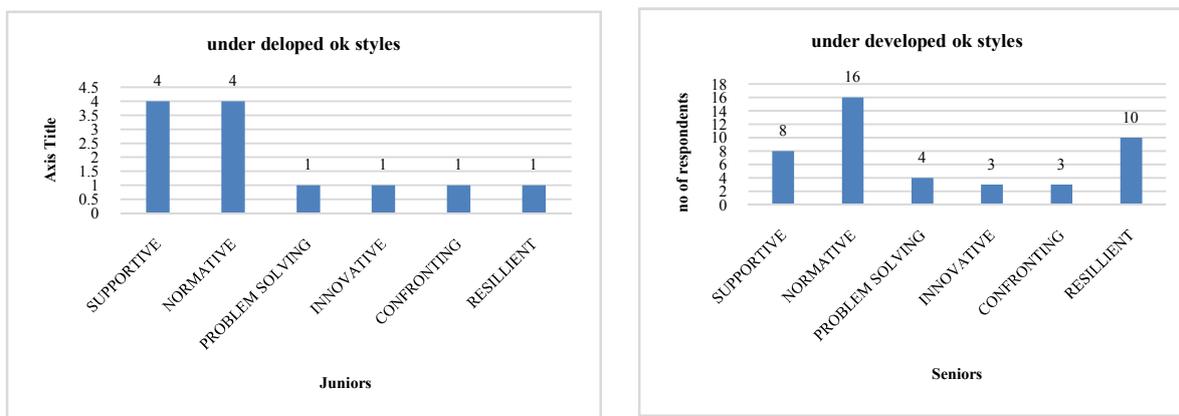


Table13 underdeveloped ok styles Junio vs senior

**Under developed ok styles:-**If we observe Table-13 we can find that majority of juniors are unerdeveloped in supportive style(4%) and normative syles (4%). In case of seniors

and problem-solving style are the dominant and backup style in low performing group. This indicates that

performance has an impact on the style profile of teachers as managers in educational system.

2. There is a significant difference in the profile of influencing styles between female teachers and male teachers. While problem-solving and innovative styles are the dominant and backup styles respectively in female teachers, innovative and confronting style are the dominant and backup style in male teachers. This indicates that gender has an impact on the style profile of teachers as managers in educational system.
3. There is a significant difference in the profile of influencing styles between Junior teachers (Assistant professors) and Senior teachers (Associate professors). While problem-solving and innovative styles are the dominant and backup styles respectively in junior teachers, innovative and confronting style are the dominant and backup style in senior teachers. This indicates that seniority has an impact on the style profile of teachers as managers in educational system.
4. The operating effectiveness of all sections/groups of the teachers in our study have varied from 44% to 53% on average and ranges between minimum and maximum from 20% (Min.) to 63% (Max) in absolute terms. This ascribes a moderate level of operating effectiveness to the whole group of respondents. This is so because, the not ok styles which are considered to be counterproductive to effectiveness have exhibited an all-time high of 10 points (2/3 rd strength in a 15-point scale). This has dragged down all the advantages accrued to the ok styles which are called the productive/functional styles.
5. Thus, it is advised that all teachers irrespective of their class/category must try to reduce their not ok styles such as Rescuing style, prescriptive style, Task obsessive style, bohemian style, aggressive style & sulking styles to enhance their operative effectiveness.
6. It is also suggested in the same logic that all teachers must improvise on their ok styles (functional/productive styles) from an average score of 10 points (which they presently exhibit) to a higher level approaching the topmost score of i.e. 15-points to reach the peak of their performance.

### Limitations

This study was conducted under some limitations imposing on us the hardship of resource crunch, time lag, slow feedback from respondent for reasons best known to them. Some responses have been rejected for incompleteness. Though 102 is a good response in a city-based study, caution needs to be exercised in generalising findings when applied to large population. Secondly, this study is conducted specially for assessing the teachers in higher education which is different from an industrial environment by nature, indicating a possibility of differential applicability in business environment.

Despite the fact that the sample size used was sufficient for the purposes of this study, it must be noted that the sample size could be increased and more factors such as non-academic, administrative and rank and file worker, could have been brought into our study. Lastly, there are many aspects of TA (Transaction analysis) e.g. game playing, script analysis, personality trait have been left untouched in this study and accordingly, supposed to be construed as the topics of research

in future. Regardless of the limitations mentioned in this study, the obtained findings are still relevant to researchers, academicians, career counsellors, corporate trainers, executives and institutions of higher learning.

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