

Mapping Personality to Enhance Personal Effectiveness

**Ekta Sharma*

Abstract

The curiosity to know what makes people effective and competent in their personal behaviour is as old as mankind. Many psychologists, sociologists, and spiritual leaders are in the quest of the answer to : what is the good life ? Personal effectiveness is considered a way to good life as it is a catalyst in developing oneself. It has been observed that personal effectiveness improves the life satisfaction index and also the productivity of an individual. If a counselor or mentor studies the personality of his/her subject, he/she would be able to pave the way to personal effectiveness of the subject. The current research intended to find out the personality traits that influenced the personal effectiveness levels of the respondents. The sample of the study was 112 subjects between the age group of 22 - 50 years. The study showed a significant relationship between personal effectiveness and personality factors.

Keywords : personality, self disclosure, perceptiveness, openness to feedback, personal effectiveness, counseling

JEL Classification : I23, I29, J24

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The curiosity to know what makes people effective and competent in their personal behaviour is as old as mankind. Many psychologists, sociologists and spiritual leaders are in quest of the answer to, “What is the good life?” Reflection about self and seeking feedback from others have been accepted universally for self- development and well-being. Self-awareness can improve our judgment and help us identify opportunities for professional development and personal growth (Maheshwari & Kumar, 2008). Hence, personal effectiveness is considered a way to good life as it is a catalyst in developing oneself. Now the question is: Is every individual equally effective? Does everybody have similar level of Self Disclosure, Openness to Feedback and Perceptiveness? The answer is candid “No”. We meet different people from different walks of life and notice the differences in the Personal Effectiveness of different people.

There has been lot of research conducted to understand the different levels of personal effectiveness of the individuals, proving that personal effectiveness varies from person to person. so, the next question that pops up is: what could be the factors that influence personal effectiveness? whether an individual is self-aware or not, whether he/she is open to feedback or not, all such aspects depend upon what are his personal dispositions. Personal dispositions are reflected in the personality of an individual. Hence, the personality must have influence on the Personal effectiveness and if we intend to mentor an individual for self- development, we must be able to understand his personality. The current research intends to find out the personality traits that influence the personal effectiveness levels.

**Assistant Professor, Amrut Mody School of Management, Ahmedabad University, Ahmedabad - 380 009, Gujarat.
E-mail: ektas55@gmail.com*

Literature Review

(1) Personality Effectiveness- Meaning : Personal effectiveness is the ability to make a positive and energetic impact onto others by conveying ideas and information clearly and persuasively. It involves planning and prioritizing available means by using interpersonal skills to help build effective working relationships with others and reduce personal stress. It encourages individuals to develop self-knowledge and apply this to their behavior, both towards “self” and towards “others,” thereby facilitating self-improvement.

Hence, it is evident that one precondition for personal effectiveness is better self- awareness. But only understanding one's self does not make person effective. A model of self- awareness, developed by Luft and Ingham (Luft, 1973) is known as Johari Window. In this model, there are two main dimensions for understanding the self: those aspects of a person's behaviour and style that are known to him (self) and those aspects of his behaviour that are known to those with whom he interacts (others). Openness is critical for personal effectiveness. It has two aspects - self-disclosure (sharing with others what they do not seem to know about one- self) and use of feedback (being open to what others say on aspects which one may not be aware of). In addition, perceptiveness or sensitivity to others' feelings and to non-verbal cues is also important (Pareek & Khanna, 2011). Accordingly, personal effectiveness can be studied under following variables: Self Disclosure, openness to feedback and perceptiveness.

Theoretical models of self- and other-perception (Funder, 1999; Kenny, 2004) provide conceptual framework for evaluating the accuracy of self-perception vis-a vis other's perception towards an individual's behavior. Many researchers have researched to understand the pros and cons of self as well as other's perception (Funder, 1999 ; Funder & Colvin, 1997 ; Hofstee, 1994; John & Robins, 1993; Kolar, Funder, & Colvin, 1996; Lucas & Baird, 2004 ; Paulhus & Vazire, 2007; Wilson & Dunn, 2004).

(2) Self-Disclosure & Personality : Self-disclosure is a process of revealing information about one-self to another individual. Disclosure reciprocity is an important aspect of self-disclosure. (Burger, 2000). This occurs when one person discloses information on a particular intimacy level; the other person will also disclose information on that same level. Jourard (1971) declared that “No man can come to know himself except as an outcome of disclosing himself to another person”. There is another form of self-disclosure, in which not only information but feelings are expressed and disclosed, that is called emotional self-disclosure. Emotional self-disclosure is “any intentional and voluntary verbal utterance that conveys information about the emotional state of the individual” (Papini & Farmer, 1990). Individuals are more expressive in their self-disclosure of positive emotions than negative emotions because it is seemingly more appropriate to self-disclose positive emotions (Howell & Conway, 1990). Research shows that self- disclosure reduced stress and anxiety (Burger, 2000).

Self-disclosure differs in different personality types. Few researchers studied relationship of self-disclosure with personality characteristics (Colvin & Longueuil, 2001 ; Skoe, 1980). Extroverts did end up having slightly higher self-disclosure scores than introverts (Schmit, 2012). There have been studies conducted on extraversion, introversion and emotion. Larsen and Kasimatis (1990) studied the happiness levels of extroverts and introverts. The results showed that extraverts reported higher levels of positive mood (happiness) than introverts. Diener (1984) proposed that extraverts are happier because they spend more time in social settings. Social interaction in social settings has previously been linked with well-being, which is an indicator of happiness (Diener, 1984; Sannikova, 1982).

Johnson (1980) investigated whether objective self-report measures of personality are better regarded as sources of factual information about the self (i.e., as self-disclosures), or as ways to instruct others about how one is to be regarded (i.e., as self-presentations).

(3) Openness to Feedback & Personality : Feedback is an important resource, which helps individuals to

achieve the performance and motivational outcomes valued by the stakeholders (Ashford & Cummings, 1985), as it provides information about how others perceive and evaluate an individual's behaviour. It can serve as a reward and thus stimulates performance or it can serve as a cue useful in regulating behavior appropriately (Payne & Hauty, 1955). Many studies have been conducted to understand the concept of “feedback” (e.g., Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979; Larson, 1984). Different researchers have different viewpoints about the motive for feedback seeking behaviour. Swann, Pelham, and Krull (1989) considered self-enhancement and self-verification as motives. According to these researchers, whether people search for favorable or unfavorable feedback depends on their self enhancement and self-verification desires. Anseel, Lieveens and Levy (2007) mentioned about self-assessment and self-improvement motives in addition to self-verification and self-enhancement motives.

Few researchers examined the influence of the personality traits on feedback-seeking behavior (Krasman, 2010; Liu, 2011). Krasman (2010) indicates that a person's feedback-seeking behavior is partially attributable to his or her personality makeup.

As extrovert people are social and garrulous, if they have good performance, they may not be shy to exhibit their achievements to others. When they do not accomplish supervisors' desire, they may use some social skills and actively inquire supervisors' opinions to mitigate the effect on their work impression. Thus, extraversion subordinates present better feedback seeking behavior than introversion subordinates; extraversion subordinates exhibit worse feedback seeking behavior than introversion subordinates. (Liu, 2011).

(4) Perceptiveness : The ability to take verbal & nonverbal cues from others indicates Perceptiveness. Ambady and Rosenthal (1998) explained certain personality traits are related to stylistic differences in nonverbal communication. Three personality traits that show strong relations to nonverbal communication are: Extraversion, Self-monitoring and Type A personality. Extraverted people are more expressive non-verbally and are more skilled encoders of Non-verbal Behavior. Espisito et al. (2011) stated that nonverbal behaviour influences our perception of others, especially during the earliest stages of interaction. Several nonverbal cues, both measurable and machine detectable, appear to be significantly correlated with quantitative assessments of personality traits and social attractiveness.

Hypotheses

The extraversion/introversion global factor was defined by the convergence of the five primary scales that represent basic human motivations for moving toward versus away from social interaction. The five scales are: Warmth, Liveliness, Privateness, Social Boldness, and Self-reliance (Cattell and Mead, 2008). So, to derive the extraversion from 16PF, it is required to add the responses of all the five scores as mentioned by Cattell and Mead (2008). Liu (2011) found that extraversion subordinates present better feedback seeking behavior than introversion subordinates and are more expressive non-verbally and are more skilled encoders of non-verbal behavior (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1998). Extroverts did end up having slightly higher self-disclosure scores than introverts. (Schmit, 2012). From this we can draw three hypotheses:

- (1) H1 :** Extraversion personality is not positively related to feedback seeking behavior.
- (2) H2 :** Extraversion is not positively related to perceptiveness.
- (3) H3 :** Extraversion is not positively related to self-disclosure.

Research Methodology

(1) Sample : The sample of the research is 112 subjects, in the age group of 22 years to 50 years. It is mix of

people with work experience of 0 years to 25 years. The sample includes males, females, students and professionals. The data has been collected in approximately six months from August 2014-February 2015. The instruments were administered online over this sample. Personal Effectiveness Scale (PES) was mailed to them where as Cattell's 16 PF was filled by them on the online link sent to them. The data has been analyzed through SPSS. The data is analyzed based on descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

(2) Instruments : Personal Effectiveness Scale by Udai Pareek (2001). It contains 20 items across three dimensions as Self-disclosure, Openness to feedback and Perceptiveness. Each statement has to be rated on a five point scale ranging from 0 to 4, where 0 = *not at all true*, 1 = *occasionally true*, 2 = *somewhat true*, 3 = *fairly true*, 4 = *mostly true*.

☞ **Cattell's 16 PF:** The 16PF Questionnaire (Cattell & Mead, 2008) is a comprehensive and widely used measure of normal, adult personality which was developed from factor-analytic research into the basic structural elements of personality. The questionnaire is based on Cattell's multi-level personality theory, and measures 16 primary factors, 5 global or second-stratum factors (the original big five), and 2 third-stratum factors.

The test - retest reliabilities (measuring temporal consistency or stability) are documented in the *16PF Fifth Edition Technical Manual* (Conn & Rieke, 1994). For the 16PF primary scales, test - retest reliabilities average 0.80 over a two-week interval (ranging from 0.69 to 0.87), and 0.70 over a two-month interval (ranging from 0.56 to 0.79). The sixteen personality factors are:

(i) Dominance: Dominance is how assertive you are when dealing with people. Low scorers are deferential, cooperative, avoids conflict, submissive, humble, obedient, easily led, docile, and accommodating. High scorers are dominant, forceful, assertive, aggressive, competitive, stubborn and bossy.

(ii) Warmth : Warmth is how nice to people you are. Low scorers are impersonal, distant, cool, reserved, detached, formal, and aloof. High scorers are outgoing, attentive to others, kindly, easy-going, participating, and like people

(iii) Reasoning : Reasoning is how good at abstract thinking you are. Low scorers prefer common sense, high scorers prefer abstract thinking.

(iv) Emotional Stability : Emotional stability is how in control of your emotions you are. Low scorers are reactive emotionally, changeable, affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset. High scorers are emotionally stable, adaptive, mature, and face reality calmly.

(v) Liveliness: Liveliness is how much energy you display. High scorers are serious, restrained, prudent, taciturn, introspective and silent. Low scorers are lively, animated, spontaneous, enthusiastic, happy-go-lucky, cheerful, expressive, and impulsive.

(vi) Rule- Consciousness: Rule-consciousness is how much you abide by authority. Low scorers are nonconforming, self-indulgent, and disregard rules. High scorers are rule-conscious, dutiful, conscientious, conforming, moralistic, staid, and rule bound.

(vii) Social Boldness: Social boldness is how socially confident you are. Low scorers are shy, threat-sensitive, timid, hesitant and intimidated. High scorers are socially bold, venturesome, thick-skinned and uninhibited.

(viii) Sensitivity : Sensitivity is how much you can be affected. Low scorers are utilitarian, objective, unsentimental, tough minded, self-reliant, no-nonsense and rough. High scorers are sensitive, aesthetic, sentimental, tender-minded, intuitive, and refined.

(ix) Vigilance: Low scorers are trusting, unsuspecting, accepting, unconditional and easy. High scorers are vigilant, suspicious, skeptical, distrustful, and oppositional.

(x) Abstractedness : Abstractedness is how imaginative you are. Low scorers are grounded, practical, prosaic, solution oriented, steady and conventional. High scorers are abstract, imaginative, absent minded, impractical, and absorbed in ideas.

(xi) Privateness: Privateness is how honest you are about who you are. Low scorers are forthright, genuine, artless, open, guileless, naive, unpretentious, and involved. High scorers are private, discreet, non - disclosing, shrewd, polished, worldly, astute, and diplomatic.

(xii) Apprehension : Apprehension is how troubled you are. Low scorers are self-assured, unworried, complacent, secure, free of guilt, confident and self- satisfied. High scorers are apprehensive, self-doubting, worried, guilt prone, insecure, worrying, and self- blaming.

(xiii) Openness to Change: Openness to change is how not stuck in your ways you are. Low scorers are traditional, attached to familiar, conservative and respect traditional ideas. High scorers are open to change, experimental, liberal, analytical, critical, free-thinking, and flexible.

(xiv) Self-Reliance : Self-reliance is how contained your needs are. Low scorers are group-oriented and affiliative. High scorers are self-reliant, solitary, resourceful, individualistic, and self-sufficient.

(xv) Perfectionism : Perfectionism is how high your standards are for yourself. Low scorers tolerate disorder, are unexacting, flexible, undisciplined, lax, self-conflict, impulsive, careless of social rules, and uncontrolled. High scorers are perfectionist, organized, compulsive, self-disciplined, socially precise, exacting will power, control, and self-sentimental.

(xvi) Tension : Tension is how driven you are, crossed with impatience. Low scorers are relaxed, placid, tranquil, torpid, patient, composed low drive. High scorers are tense, high energy, impatient, driven, and frustrated, over wrought, and time driven.

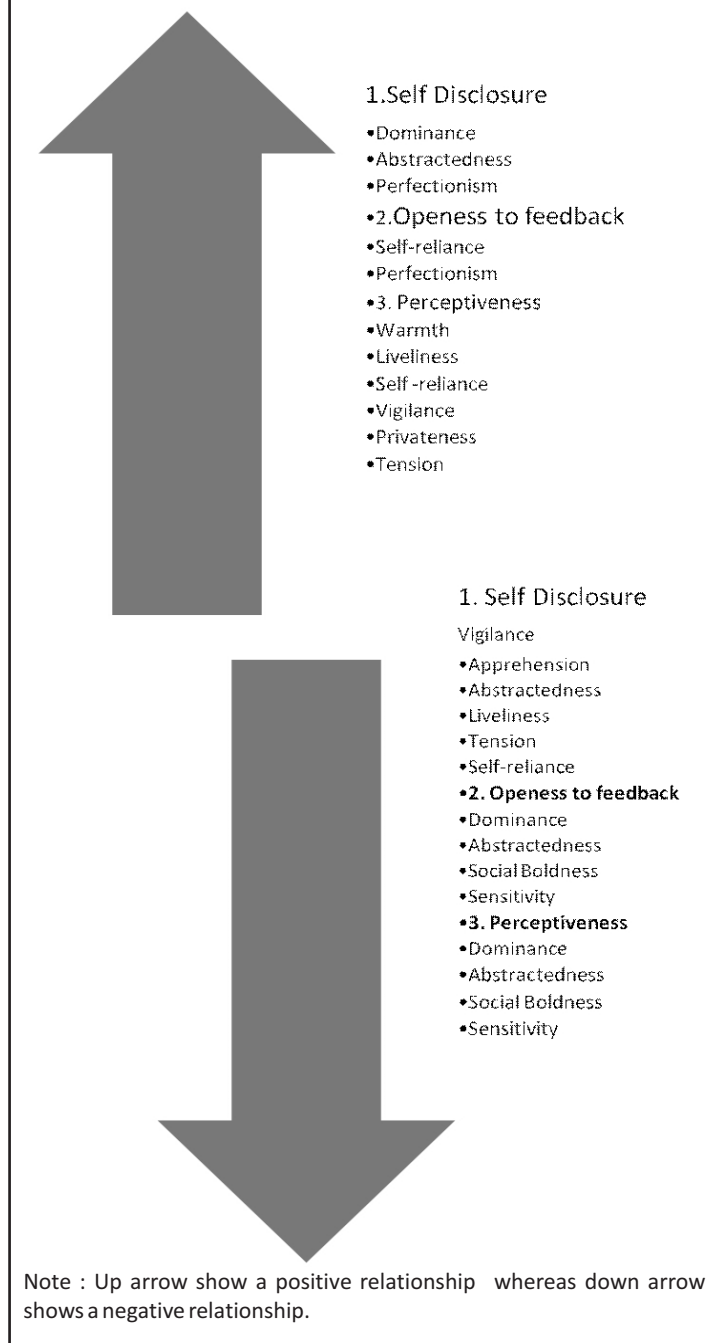
(3) Hypotheses Testing

(i) *Extraversion personality is not positively related to feedback seeking behavior.* The Table 3 shows that the sub factors of extraversion are positively correlated to feedback seeking behaviour (0.11). Hence, the hypothesis H1 is rejected. Although Table 1 shows that social boldness is negatively related to feedback seeking behaviour, but the summation of all extraversion sub factors is positively correlated with feedback seeking behaviour.

(ii) *Extraversion is not positively related to perceptiveness.* The summation of sub factors of extraversion is positively correlated to perceptiveness (0.5). Hence, the hypothesis H2 is rejected (Table 3).

(iii) *Extraversion is not positively related to Self-disclosure.* The aggregate of the extraversion sub factors is

Figure 1. Relationship Between Personal Effectiveness and Personality Traits



negatively correlated to Self-disclosure (-0.4). Hence, the hypothesis H3 is accepted (Table 3).

Findings

The research shows that the personality and Personal effectiveness are related. The sample rates highest for warmth(2.97) followed by reasoning (2.9). This implies that they are warm which reflects they are outgoing,

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Warmth	112	1.9	3.5	2.971	.4218
Reasoning	112	2.0	3.3	2.907	.3210
Emotional Stability	112	2.0	3.2	2.650	.3811
Dominance	112	2.1	3.0	2.621	.2524
Liveliness	112	1.7	3.2	2.471	.4483
Rule-Consciousness	112	2.1	3.2	2.579	.3226
Social Boldness	112	.2	3.6	2.286	.7152
Sensitivity	112	.8	3.3	2.571	.6943
Vigilance	112	1.1	3.0	1.686	.4875
Abstractedness	112	1.1	3.0	2.114	.5487
Privateness	112	1.0	2.9	1.836	.6153
Apprehension	112	1	3	1.66	.415
Openness to Change	112	2.0	3.5	2.679	.4003
Self-Reliance	112	1.4	3.0	2.136	.4550
Perfectionism	112	2.2	3.5	2.657	.4031
Tension	112	1.1	2.8	1.586	.5134
Self Disclosure	112	6	12	9.50	1.964
	112	10	20	15.07	2.802
Perceptiveness	112	9	17	11.50	2.568
Valid N (listwise)	112				

Table 2. Correlation Coefficients of 16 PF Factors with Personal Effectiveness Variables

16 PF factors	Self Disclosure	Openness to Feedback	Perceptiveness
Warmth	.096	.179	.406*
Reasoning	.074	-.025	.083
Emotional Stability	.159	-.044	.401
Dominance	.604*	-.237*	-.272*
Liveliness	-.295*	-.010	.188*
Rule- Consciousness	.176	.034	-.291
Social Boldness	-.139	-.467*	-.255*
Sensitivity	-.011	-.329*	-.299*
Vigilance	-.467*	.476*	.507*
Abstractedness	.207*	-.798*	-.455*
Privateness	-.295*	.366*	.376*
Apprehensions	-.663*	-.072	-.014
Openness to change	-.050	-.166	.221
Self-Reliance	-.246*	.360*	.682*
Perfectionism	.355*	.392*	.014
Tension	-.372*	.146	.426*

Note : '*' denotes significant correlation

Table 3. Correlation Between Personal Effectiveness Variables & Extraversion Variables (Warmth, Liveliness, Privateness, Social Boldness, & Self-Reliance)

Personal Effectiveness variables	Correlation Coefficient
Perceptiveness	0.537545
Openness to feedback	0.110232
Self-Disclosure	-0.42372

attentive to others, easy-going, participating and like people (Table 1 and Table 2). High score on reasoning implies the sample is good at abstract thinking. The data shows that the score is lowest for tension (1.58) which implies they are relaxed, placid, tranquil, torpid, patient and composed. They are also low on Vigilance (1.68), Privateness (1.836), Apprehension (1.66). This implies that they trust and are unsuspecting, accepting, unconditional and easy. Low on privateness implies the subjects are forthright, genuine, artless, open, guileless, naive, unpretentious and involved. The subjects are self-assured, unworried, complacent, secure, free of guilt, confident and self-satisfied, as they are low on “apprehension”.

The mean scores of personal effectiveness variables are: Self-disclosure (9.5), Openness to feedback (15.07), and Perceptiveness (11.50). This data is evident of the fact that although the subjects are high on openness to feedback followed by Perceptiveness, they are low on self-disclosure which implies that they do not share information about themselves.

There is a significant correlation between personality variables and personal effectiveness variables (see Figure 1 and Table 2). Warmth is positively correlated to Perceptiveness (.406), which indicates that the people who exhibit warmth are being able to understand the verbal & nonverbal cue of others. This seems to be apt as people with warmth would be those who would be completely involved and engaged in the interaction and with the full focus on the discussion; it would be easier for them to comprehend the communication cues.

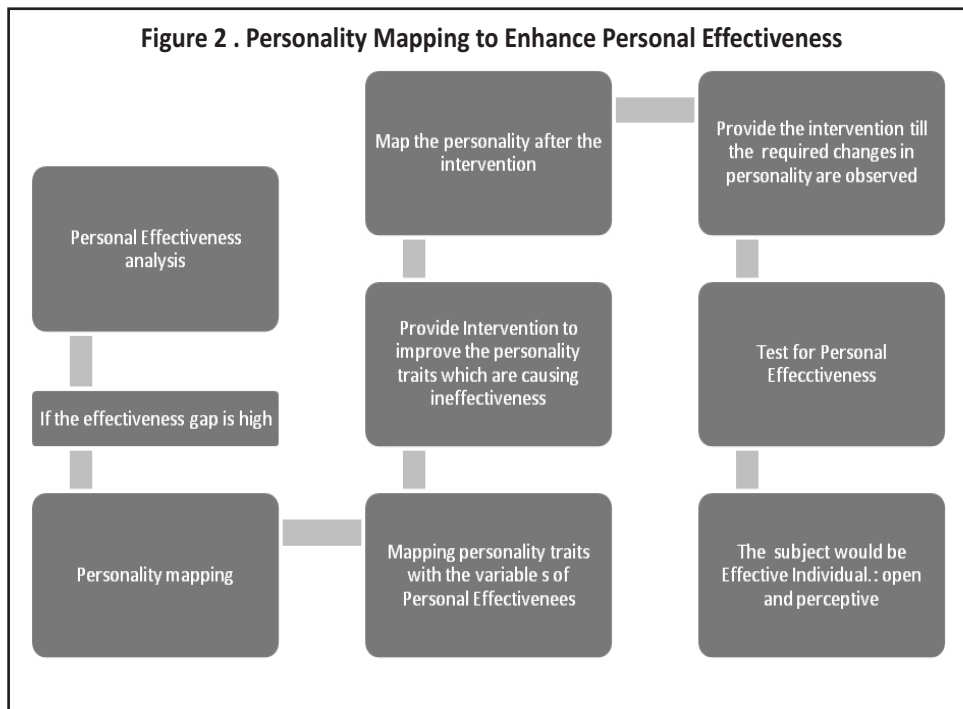
Dominance is significantly related to personal effectiveness variables. The study shows that people who are dominant are high on self disclosure. Dominating people are assertive and aggressive and hence self-disclosure comes naturally to them. But people high on dominance are low on openness to feedback and Perceptiveness. The traits like assertiveness and aggressiveness could be the reason for this inverse relationship. As such people would neither like to seek feedback from others nor would he be patient to understand the verbal & non-verbal cues.

Since people high on Liveliness are serious, restrained, prudent, taciturn, introspective and silent, the study shows that such people are low on self-disclosure but they might be high on self-awareness as they are introspective. On the contrary people high on Liveliness are also high on Perceptiveness, which means that prudent, taciturn & introspective people are very careful when communicating and hence comprehend the verbal & non-verbal cues of the others.

High scores on social boldness implies socially bold, venturesome, thick-skinned and uninhibited person. Such people are low on Perceptiveness and openness to feedback, which could be understood by their traits of being uninhibited and thick-skinned, one who does not bother about the others' reaction and lives on their own terms.

High scorers on the parameter of sensitiveness are sensitive, aesthetic, sentimental, tender-minded, intuitive and refined. Such People tend to draw boundaries around them and does not tolerate any intrusion by others beyond certain limit. Although they are self-aware but they are low on Perceptiveness and openness to feedback, which could be because of their tender-mindedness and being sentimental that they do not welcome feedback by others and are not good at understanding communication cues.

Highly vigilant people are suspicious, skeptical, distrustful, and oppositional because of which they are not willing to disclose about themselves but are high on feedback-seeking and perceptiveness. High scorers on the variable “abstractedness” are abstract, imaginative, absent minded, impractical and absorbed in ideas.



Abstractedness is significantly related to personal effectiveness variables. They are high on self-disclosure but low on Perceptiveness and Openness to feedback. People high on Privateness would not be high on self-disclosure but would be high on feedback seeking and perceptiveness, as they intend to know what other's think. Since people high on Apprehensiveness are apprehensive, self-doubting, worried, guilt prone, insecure, and worrying and self-blaming, they do not intend to disclose about themselves to others.

Those who are highly self-reliant are solitary, resourceful, individualistic and self-sufficient and hence they are low on self-disclosure but high on seeking feedback and perceptiveness. Perfectionist are organized, compulsive, self-disciplined, socially precise, exacting will power, control and self-sentimental and hence have significant and positive relation with self-disclosure and also openness to feedback, which can be attributed to their passion to be perfect. Those who score high on tension are low on self-disclosure but high on Perceptiveness, which could be because of they are cautious.

Discussion

The research shows that 16PF factors are related to the personal effectiveness of individual. This can be taken up as the investigative way for counseling and clinical way to handle the deviant personality. Personal effectiveness is considered of utmost importance not only for personal life but also for professional life. It has been observed that the personal effectiveness improves the Life satisfaction index and also the productivity of an individual. If the counselor or mentor studies the personality of their subject, they would be able to pave the way to personal effectiveness of the subject. Since the relationship between personality and Personal Effectiveness exists and if the counselor maps the personality with the need of the improvement of Personal effectiveness, he/she would be able to know the root cause of the lack of personal effectiveness of the subject and hence would be able to provide meaningful intervention to develop those aspects of personality which would facilitate the improvement of personal effectiveness. On basis of the research and the literature review, a model of personal effectiveness is proposed (Figure 2).

Implications and Conclusion

Personal effectiveness is instrumental for well-being and self-development of the individual and hence every individual strive to be effective. But the truth is that not everybody is equally effective. It is equally apt that just preaching the individual about the personal effectiveness is not enough. It requires attitudinal change and hence understanding personality is important. Personality mapping would help the individual to identify the gaps in the personality traits thereby paving a path to improvement, to bridge the gap. This could lead to enhanced effectiveness and hence better productivity.

Personality mapping would help the organizations to identify the gaps in the expected personality traits of the workforce thereby helping them in assessment of training needs of the employee. The training in the spheres of personality would lead to enhanced effectiveness and hence better productivity.

Limitations of the Study and the Way Forward

The limitation of the study is that the sample size is restricted and the data has been collected from people from diverse backgrounds. The study can be further extended to understand the magnitude of impact that the personality mapping have on the organizational performance. This can be done through control group experiment. The quantification of impact would enhance the utility of personality mapping.

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