

# A STUDY OF PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS AMONG MANAGEMENT STUDENTS-THE FUTURE MANAGERS

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## ABSTRACT

*The present study deals with assessing the level of personal effectiveness among 262 management students studying in UBS, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India. A standardized questionnaire i.e. Personal Effectiveness Scale by Udai Pareek (2010) was used for the study. It was hypothesized that there exists a significant difference in the level of personal effectiveness on the basis of gender and age of the students. Moreover, eight categories of effectiveness type were assessed ranging from effective to ineffective. The results revealed that there exists no significant difference in personal effectiveness among male and female students. A significant difference in personal effectiveness was observed based on age. Furthermore, the results revealed that 10.3% students were effective, 8.8% Insensitive, 6.5% Egocentric, 3.8% Dogmatic, 22.9% Secretive, 27.1% Task-obsessed, 6.5% Lonely Empathic and 14.1% Ineffective.*

## KEYWORDS

*Personal Effectiveness, Effectiveness Type, Gender and Age*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In a University, students get a diverse range of opportunities for gaining knowledge, skills and experience. The classroom organization, environment, teaching methodologies, curriculum, evaluation and reviewing methods of performance and progress, all are very different from a school or a college. Moreover, the students in higher education come from very diverse educational backgrounds, different knowledge base, skill-sets and even with different work experiences and exposures. Therefore, the aim of the university is to provide its students with the best possible faculty and exposure to enhance their capabilities. An MBA course seeks to develop students into managers and leaders equipped with effective skills, specialized knowledge and experience to handle the challenges of the dynamic business world. Therefore, this training helps them in putting intentions into action i.e., learning skills and applying them in the real situations. The management students are the future/prospective leaders and managers in the corporate world;

therefore, to be a successful leader, being personally effective is one of the most important prerequisites.

### **1.1. PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Personal effectiveness means “a measure of your efficiency, meaning, your ability to create maximum value in the minimum time and effort; and to make good progress in the face of difficulties” - Corporate Coach Group. Personal effectiveness refers to “making use of all the personal resources at your disposal i.e., talents, skills, energy and time to enable you to achieve both work and life goals” - Chrysalis Development (2013). Moreover, personal effectiveness could be better understood by its three main components i.e., Self-disclosure- which means sharing of ideas, feeling, emotions, experiences with others; Openness to feedback- which means giving, receiving and accepting feedback from others; and Perceptiveness- which means being more aware about the behaviour, feelings and emotions of other people. Therefore, personal effectiveness means the ability, competence, skills, knowledge and resources etc. to maximize and actualize ones full potential and accomplish goals and objectives.

Personal effectiveness coincides with the philosophy of continuous improvement i.e., to continuously work upon enhancing the existing skills and abilities. Moreover, personal effectiveness involves goal setting, personal improvement and initiative, positive self-talk, time management, stress management, self-awareness and assessment, taking responsibility of ones work and achieving excellence and success. Therefore, highly effective people have a better sense of direction, communicate better, are more open to feedback, are perceptive and self-aware, have positive relationships with others, have the ability to solve problems and cope with stress, manage their time and energy better, and thereby perform better dealing with difficulties and hardships as compared to people who are not effective.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In a study, Covey (1989) suggests that with age, one becomes more aware of one’s inner self, thereby increasing one’s personal effectiveness. Pathak and Srivastava (2010) in a study on management students found a positive relationship between locus of control and personal effectiveness. Chabungbam (2010) in his research paper assessed personal effectiveness and team effectiveness among 53 members of an organizational business unit. The results showed that three different teams had a high score on openness to feedback and perceptiveness whereas a low

score on self-disclosure and the effectiveness type was secretive. Moreover, the study suggests that to enhance and improve personal effectiveness of the managers, the organization needs to focus on self-disclosure dimension. In a study, Cornes et al. (2010) evaluated employees of social care provider organizations after a two-day leadership training program on improving staff retention rates and develop personal effectiveness, mental toughness and emotional loyalty. The employees found the training program insightful, positive and helpful; they gained more confidence and belief in HRM practices and policies and learned to improve retention rates. Hoffman et al. (2011) in a study measured personal effectiveness and leadership effectiveness among USA and UK managers. The results showed that only mild differences in organizational level were observed between gender and no significant differences in personal effectiveness were found. Moreover, a high correlation between effectiveness and personal effectiveness adaptability was observed. Jain et al. (2013) analyzed personal effectiveness among public health management personnel and found that on the three dimensions of personal effectiveness, 46% scored high on self-disclosure, 82% scored high on openness to feedback, and 61% scored high on perceptiveness. Moreover, results show the participants were categorized as secretive (31%), effective (26%), insensitive (13%), task-obsessed (12%), and ineffective (11%). Sharma (2016) in a study on adolescents found gender differences in personal effectiveness i.e., males reported higher score on self-disclosure and perceptiveness as compared to females, whereas, females reported higher score on openness to feedback as compared to males. Moreover, based on effectiveness type, males were categorized as effective and females as secretive.

The literature shows that not much work has been done in respect to personal effectiveness. However, organizations are focusing upon the personal effectiveness of its employees by providing them with training, workshops and courses. Therefore, the need for such a study arises, as personal effectiveness is very important for channelizing one's abilities, skills, time, energy and resources in the right direction.

## **2.1. Objectives of the Study**

- 1. To study the level of Personal Effectiveness among students.*
- 2. To study the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of gender.*
- 3. To study the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of age.*

## 2.2. Hypotheses of the Study

1. *'There exists a significant difference in the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of gender'.*
2. *'There exists a significant difference in the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of age'.*

## 3. RESEARCH MEHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Research Design

The present research is descriptive and utilizes survey technique.

### 3.2. Sample and Procedure

The data was collected from all the students of MBA course in UBS, Panjab University, Chandigarh using census technique. Therefore, in all 262 students i.e., 165 males and 97 females with an average age of 23 years were included in the study. The questionnaire was scored and grand totals were obtained for personal effectiveness and its components for further analysis.

### 3.3. Instrument

**1. Personal Effectiveness Scale:** Personal Effectiveness Scale (Students) developed by Udai Pareek (2010) was used to measure Personal effectiveness of the students. It is a 15-item self-administered scale with 5 statements each for self-disclosure, feedback and perceptiveness answered on a five-point scale ranging from 0= not at all or seldom to 4=always or most often. Effectiveness Type of the students is also measured based the combination of the three totals of Self-Disclosure, Openness to Feedback and Perceptiveness. The reliability of the scale was found to be 0.90 for a group of 24 health managers.

## 4. RESULTS

Mean, SD, t-values and Analysis of Variance were computed for the analysis.

**Table 1: Mean and SD for Personal Effectiveness**

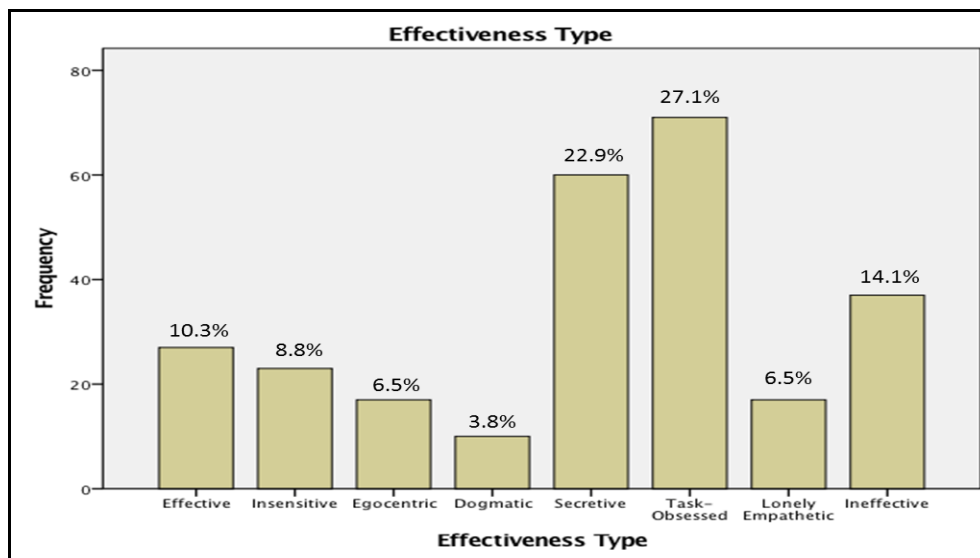
S. No.	Variables	N	MEAN	SD
1	Personal Effectiveness	262	34.07	5.796
(1)	Self-Disclosure	262	9.95	2.950
(2)	Openness to Feedback	262	13.13	3.279
(3)	Perceptiveness	262	10.99	2.908

The results in Table 1 show the mean score of Personal Effectiveness (34.07), which implies that the students have a moderate level of personal effectiveness. Mean score of Self-Disclosure (9.95) and Perceptiveness (10.99) also implies that the students have moderate levels of self-disclosure and perceptiveness. Lastly, Openness to Feedback (13.13) implies a high level of openness to feedback among the students.

Furthermore, for assessing the Effectiveness Type, the total scores obtained for three components of Personal Effectiveness i.e., Self-Disclosure, Openness To Feedback and Perceptiveness were marked as High or Low (High = score above 11 and Low = score of 11 and below). Therefore, based on this combination of the three totals, 8 Effectiveness Type categories of a person are described below.

**Table 2: Percentages for Effectiveness Types**

S No.	Category	Self-Disclosure	Openness To Feedback	Perceptiveness	Total	Percentage (N=262)
1	Effective	High	High	High	27	10.3 %
2	Insensitive	High	High	Low	23	8.8 %
3	Egocentric	High	Low	Low	17	6.5 %
4	Dogmatic	High	Low	High	10	3.8 %
5	Secretive	Low	High	High	60	22.9 %
6	Task-obsessed	Low	High	Low	71	27.1 %
7	Lonely Empathetic	Low	Low	High	17	6.5 %
8	Ineffective	Low	Low	Low	37	14.1 %
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>262</b>	<b>100 %</b>



**Figure 1: Effectiveness Type**

Therefore, Table 1 and Figure 1 show the categorization of the students based on effectiveness type. Out of 262 students, 10.3% students were effective, 8.8% Insensitive, 6.5% Egocentric, 3.8% Dogmatic, 22.9% Secretive, 27.1% Task-obsessed, 6.5% Lonely Empathetic and 14.1% Ineffective.

### Hypotheses Testing

**H1.** *‘There exists a significant difference in the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of gender’.*

**Table 3: Means, SDs and t-value of Personal Effectiveness Scores for Male and Female Students**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig.
Personal Effectiveness	Males	165	33.59	5.899	1.736	.084
	Females	97	34.88	5.553		

The results in Table 3 shows that t-value of personal effectiveness for male and female students is not significant ( $t=1.736$ ,  $p=.084$ ), which implies that there exists no significant difference in the level of personal effectiveness among male and female students. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

**H2.** *‘There exists a significant difference in the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of age’.*

**Table 4: Means, SDs and F-value of Personal Effectiveness Scores on the basis of age**

Variable	Age	N	Mean	SD	F-value	Sig.
Personal Effectiveness	20-22 Years	90	35.29	5.202	3.563*	.030
	23-25 Years	155	33.29	5.913		
	26-28 Years	17	34.71	6.808		

\* Significant at 0.05 level

The results in Table 4 show analysis of variance of Personal Effectiveness for different age groups i.e., [Group 1: 20-22 Years; Group 2: 23-25 Years; Group 3: 26-28 Years]. A significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in personal effectiveness for the three groups [ $F(2, 259) = 3.563$ ,  $p = .030$ ] was obtained. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test suggested that the mean score for Group 1 ( $M=35.29$ ,  $SD=5.202$ ) was significantly different from Group 2 ( $M=33.29$ ,  $SD=5.913$ ). But Group 1 and Group 2 did not differ significantly from group 3. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was retained.

## 5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study aimed at measuring the level of Personal Effectiveness among students of UBS, Panjab University, Chandigarh. Personal Effectiveness Scale by Udai Pareek (2010) was used and a total of 262 students with a mean age of 23 years were included in the study. The total scores obtained were further statistically analyzed i.e., means, standard deviations, t-values and analysis of variance were computed. The findings reveal that the level of Personal Effectiveness was moderate among the students. Moreover, for the components of personal effectiveness, moderate level of Self-Disclosure and Perceptiveness and a high level of Openness to Feedback was observed among the students. The findings of Jain et al (2011) study also show a high level of openness to feedback. Moreover, Chabungbam (2010) found high level of openness to feedback and perceptiveness but low level of self-disclosure among the members.

Furthermore, 10.3% students were high on self-disclosure, openness to feedback and perceptiveness and categorized as Effective, which implies that these students were highly personally effective. 8.8% students were high on self-disclosure and openness to feedback but low on perceptiveness and categorized as Insensitive. 6.5% students were high on self-disclosure but low on openness to feedback and perceptiveness and categorized as Egocentric. 3.8% students were high on self-disclosure and perceptiveness but low on openness to feedback and categorized as Dogmatic. 22.9% students were low on self-disclosure but high on openness to feedback and perceptiveness and categorized as Secretive. 27.1% students were low on self-disclosure and perceptiveness but high on openness to feedback and categorized as Task-obsessed. 6.5% students were low on self-disclosure and openness to feedback but high on perceptiveness and categorized as Lonely Empathetic. 14.1% students were low on self-disclosure, openness to feedback and perceptiveness and categorized as Ineffective. Therefore, to be personally effective, students need to work upon improving on different components of personal effectiveness. The students low on self-disclosure categorized as secretive, task-obsessed, lonely empathetic and ineffective type need to work upon improving self-disclosure. The students low on openness to feedback categorized as egocentric, dogmatic, lonely empathetic and ineffective type need to work upon improving openness to feedback. The students low on perceptiveness categorized as insensitive, egocentric task-obsessed and ineffective type needs to work upon improving perceptiveness. Thus, the students could learn to express their ideas, feelings, emotions, experiences and opinions etc. in classroom and otherwise. Dealing with negative feedback in a positive and constructive way, improving listening and communicating



skills, improving mutual trust and understanding with others, being more aware of the emotions, gestures and behaviour of oneself and others could help them become personally effective.

Hypothesis 1 i.e., ‘There exists a significant difference in the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of gender’ was rejected. T-value (1.736) for personal effectiveness among male and female students was not significant. Therefore, the level of personal effectiveness was similar among males and females. Similar results by observed by Hoffman et al (2011) i.e., no gender differences in personal effectiveness. Hypothesis 2 i.e., ‘There exists a significant difference in the level of Personal Effectiveness on the basis of age’ was retained. Analysis of variance (3.563) for Personal Effectiveness for three different age groups showed a significant difference at 0.05 level of confidence. The level of personal effectiveness among students aged 20-22 years was significantly different from students aged 23-25 years and 26-28 years. But, students aged 23-25 years and 26-28 years were not different significantly. Moreover, the mean scores show that the students in the age group of 20-22 years and 26-28 years have higher level of Personal Effectiveness as compared to students aged 23-25 years. Moreover, Covey’s (1989) study suggests that personal effectiveness and self-awareness increases with age as one becomes more aware of one’s inner self.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

To conclude, the management students have a moderate level of personal effectiveness, self-disclosure and perceptiveness and a high level of openness to feedback. The results revealed that there exists no significant difference in personal effectiveness among male and female students. Whereas, a significant difference exists in personal effectiveness based on age. The reasons for such results could be that the students at university level get diverse opportunities for learning and development. Moreover, males and females are becoming more confident and self-reliant and as they get more and more opportunities to actualize their skills, talents and abilities. Furthermore, employers seek employees who have high level of personal effectiveness, shares their feelings and emotions, are more open to feedback and are insightful about one’s own and others behaviour and actions. Therefore, developing and enhancing personal effectiveness leads to better performance, goal accomplishment and success both at individual and organizational level.



## **7. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present research study deals with only one department of Panjab University, Chandigarh and only one variable i.e., personal effectiveness. Therefore, it can be recommended that comparative study could be conducted among students of different streams, courses or Universities. The factors affecting personal effectiveness and their relationships could also be analyzed for future research. Moreover, various other variables related to personal effectiveness could also be studied.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

To enhance and improve the level of personal effectiveness among the prospective managers and leaders, the University and faculty members should help them in the following ways:

1. Classroom organization and teaching methodologies should be framed in such a way which encourages an open and constructive communication, helps students in becoming more assertive and confident as learners, enables them to generate and extend their ideas, promotes flexible thinking and learning skills and applying them i.e., putting intentions into action.
2. Creating a climate where students can learn from their mistakes. This could be achieved through reviewing progress and performance of the students at regular intervals and providing them with constructive feedback and positive reinforcement.
3. Organizing training programs and workshops on goal setting, time management, stress management, interpersonal skills could help the students in organizing, prioritizing, scheduling, interacting and communicating and therefore, actualizing their abilities, skills and talents, maximizing their full potential and accomplishing personal and future organizational goals.

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