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TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS: A TOOL TO ANALYSE DIFFERENT EGO STATES OF COMMUNICATION AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract:

The present study has been intended to investigate ego state among school teachers. Each generation have different ego state which represents a system of thoughts, behaviour and feelings through which we can communicate with each other. The sample of the study was collected from 3 different schools- AFAC English Medium School and Junior college, AECS School no.4 and Rayan International School of Mumbai city of Maharashtra state. Google form in the form of questionnaires based on Parent, Child and Adult ego state was used as a psychological tool for the study. During analysis of the results it has been observed that adult ego state is considered to be the most approachable and recommended with age group 35 years and above. Also it is observed that employees sometimes behave as a critical parent and adaptive child ego state. The result suggested that teachers with appropriate Transactional skills have better understanding of behaviour pattern, conflict management, decision making and also helps to improve overall communication skills. This will give a path to make conscious behaviour modification.

Keywords: Transactional Analysis, Ego states (Parent, Child and Adult ego), Communication, behaviour.

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Introduction:

Transactional analysis is one of the most promising findings in psychology from many years ago. It is a theory of personality and systemic psychotherapy for personal change and growth. Transactional analysis theory was proposed by Dr. Eric Berne, a psychiatrist and was largely influenced by Sigmund Freud. Dr. Berne gave Transactional analysis theory in the 1950s, which is identified from the transactional model of communication which helps to understand methods of maintaining and improving healthy interpersonal relations in an organization.

The core concept of transactional analysis is based on three ego states: parent ego, adult ego and child ego to identify the individual's personality. Though these ego states have nothing to do with the chronological age of an individual, these ego states help to predict the individual behaviour in a particular situation. Berne stated that ego state cannot be observed directly; it depends on the involvement of the individual in a particular act and behaviour accordingly. So everyone's behaviour in every situation is different.

Teachers play an integral role in an education system. An effective teacher should need to balance factors like, managing tasks, creative, adaptive, nurturing, discipline and regulating. Each faculty with differences in age has a different ego state, personality and working style. Teaching profession requires a continuous phase of

interactions, so teachers need to present as a motivating force for well-functioning institutes and play role models in students' lives. Many studies have evidence that transactional analysis in education plays the role of restoration and prevention.

In an education system, when the teacher knows where to transact in communication during interaction in the staffroom and classroom, it helps to gain prosperity and gives a way to achieve objectives. In an organization, different age groups of people are working, with different cultural and socioeconomic background, with the help of transactional analysis teachers working style and personality can be reinforced when required.

Many researches has proven that good communication helps to gain cordial environments at the workplace helps to improve individual attitude, towards job satisfaction, commitment, involvement in tasks given, to understand and improvement among individuals, so transactional analysis gives a platform to provide better understanding of colleagues and students. So positive interpersonal relationships at work place, helps to eliminate inappropriate behavior, grievances, mental drain and clear description of communication and finding new direction. Transactional analysis is designed in such a way to provide growth and satisfaction, hence it is considered as fundamental therapy and helping individuals to reach their full potential in all aspects of life.

Theoretical Framework:

Transactional analysis approach is used for understanding and analysing one's behaviour. This theory was originally proposed by Eric Berne in the 1950s. Many researches have proven that it is a very simple and easy method to understand and apply to the scenarios which we encounter every day, either in personal and professional life. It is a theory of personality factor, self-awareness, to enhance communication patterns, a tool for psychological counselling, system of psychotherapy, for development of organization and much more.

Ego state and behaviour:

The fundamentals of transactional analysis are: Ego states and Transaction types.

PAC models of ego states were given by Eric Berne in 1957. Transactional analysis is conceptualized in terms of five functional ego states: Critical Parent (CP), Nurturing Parent (NP), Adult (A), Free/natural Child (FC), and Adaptive Child (AC). It should be noted that there is a difference between Ego states as concepts and biological parent, adult or child. This is the reason Ego states are written by using the first letter in capital. Each person has all three ego states from birth to end of life. N. Bargavi (2021), examined that individuals of any age may present different ego states in different scenarios. Also some people may bear more parent ego, some may exhibit more adult ego and some may present more child ego. A balanced individual knows how to manage to transact from one ego state to another as per the situation needs.

Parent ego state is a collection of norms, rules, codes, assessments, prejudices which is observed or taken from significant persons. Parents help to decide how one should behave, live, what's good and what's bad, how to react in different situations. So the function of parents is value based. Parent ego state can either be nurturing and critical. *Nurturing parent* represents, caring, positive feeling, nurtures which promotes growth. *Critical parents* exhibit more judgmental and have evaluating attitudes, for example: The critical parent may criticize for mistakes done in home work and try to control by vital advice and guidance while a nurturing parent is the one who gently



helps to find correct answers. If a nurturing parent becomes warm, supportive then we see the positive part of nurturing the parent but if the nurturing parent becomes discouraging, it leads to personal development, authoritative and overprotective, which shows the negative part of a critical parent and more of controlling.

In an *adult ego state*, one can interact with others without playing games and do proper communication. Adults process the information taken from surroundings and act accordingly. Adult ego consists of decision making, providing information, and having logical aptitude. Adults try to behave more maturely and try to limit their negative effects and make use of positive ones. Adult ego state plays a very crucial role in individual life for survival. It deals with outside worlds which mediates between parent and child (Stewart and Joines, 2007)

The *child ego state* is also part of personality, which we preserved from actual childhood. It may contain all impulses and have spontaneous feelings. Every human being has a recorded memory of childhood and experiences. Therefore sometimes a person feels and acts as per the child's ego state.

Types of transactions:

There are three kinds of transactions: Complementary (parallel), Crossed and Ulterior. When one person initiates the communication it's a stimulus and the other reply is a response. In individual life transactions come when we note which ego states are responsible for our interactions, on the basis of that it should be understood why things go great and why they fail.

- a) **Complementary (parallel):** In complementary transactions there is a complete transit between sender and receiver ego state. If the transaction is from adult to child, then the response must be from child to adult. So here the stimulus and response pattern from one ego state to another is parallel.
- b) **Crossed:** In this type of transaction, the other person reacts from an unexpected ego state which disrupts the communication. Stimulus and response lines are not parallel, rather cross each other.
- c) **Ulterior:** In this type of transaction, two ego states have been observed in a single person, but one covert the other. One part is generally verbal and the other unspoken that is psychological transaction. These types of transactions are manipulative, increase risk of conflict and hamper communication.

Rationale of the Study:

Educational transactional analysis helps us to understand school teachers' behaviour and communication patterns. Teachers play an important role in the education system and hold the main bridge between students and the institute. Transactional analysis provides a platform to teachers to understand what is happening at the social level and in the classroom.

In Classroom, students are from different socioeconomic backgrounds and represent diversified culture. With awareness of transactional analysis skills, teachers are able to read and understand psychological aspects of students. This will help to administer productive lessons to inculcate good values and provide strong bonds with long term relationships.

Disagreement and conflict is a part of professional work. Having proper understanding of one's own ego state, teachers can switch from one ego state to another as per the circumstances. A teacher having positive thinking and complementary transactions with others helps us to improve interpersonal relationships by removing

communication barriers. As a result teachers feel comfortable in interaction with colleagues and superiors. This will also help to develop a congenial work environment. Rational working environment provides teachers ample opportunity for growth and self-satisfaction.

A comprehensive understanding of various ego states during communication necessarily help to bridge the gap during transactions- for self-improvisation, and resolving conflicts. The necessity of the present study is to gain insight about what is happening at the social level, in the classroom, staffroom and to understand behaviour patterns.

Review of literature:

Organization development and Age factor:

In an organization, people of different age groups work together. Kennedy (1996) and O'Bannon(2001) in their study analysed that each generation has different work expectations, work style, demands, values. Here if we compare two generations, that is the millennial generation (born between 1981 to 1996) and generation Z (born between 1997 to 2012) at a common workplace, a lot of difference in working style, attitude, values has been noticed. The study was conducted by Smola and Sutton (2002) on work values and found that due to work experience, learning from new opportunities and maturity there is change in work values among the employees. Since teaching is a field of strong communication, if communication is not proper then work of the organization may get hampered. From Pew research centre, Sharmad Hasan (2019) and Hart (2006) stated that, more than 50% of the employees at the workplace are from the millennial generation that is generation Y, so they are the important factor at the workplace.

Dr.Poonam Khurana (2018), conducted a research comparative study on transactional style on teachers of higher education, interpreted that with regards to difference in age, there is significant variations in transactional. In preceding studies, it is found that teachers of age group above 45 years are more adaptive as compared to age of 25 to 35 years.

Brown (1976), George and Jones(1999) examined in their studies that instead of giving importance to work of different generations, understanding the need of an hour and focusing on work values of an employee. Twenge (2010) revealed that individual differences in an organization play an important role rather than generation differences. Study by Derkhshan et al.(2020) shows that teachers' positivity and professional identity plays an important role in anticipating teacher success. It has also been noted that sincerity and effectiveness of teachers depends on the interpersonal communication style.

Personality factor and Working style:

Communication at the workplace is an integral part. Coombs (2020) examined that teachers play an important role in the education system. Stewart and Joine(2009) observed during their study on teachers education, found that there are various approaches which provide information regarding teachers' work in education. When people know about themselves and understand other behaviour helps to develop effective communication and a cordial working environment. G.Barrow (2015) in his studies analysed that transactional analysis plays a vital role in the field of education, specifically in classroom, staffroom and beyond it. The main focus of analysing ego state

is to reduce conflict at the workplace. Personality factor and working style enables individuals' better understanding of interpersonal behaviour and communication. Costa and Mac Rae (1992), Sava (2008) stated that all attributes of personality can be described in five factors-openness, consciousness, extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability. Daniel Ciucur (2012) analysed that there is a relation between ego state and personality factor. Preceding study revealed that People with Adaptive child ego states present a high level of consciousness and low level of emotional stability. People with Natural child ego state have a high level of extraversion and show less agreeableness. People with Critical Ego state are less agreeable. Stanbury (1992) also examined that ego state has positive and negative parts with certain personality factors.

All these studies steered to analyse behaviour and personality in everyday, personal life and at the workplace, which make people self-aware about their ego state. so communication will be easier.

Aim of the Study:

The main focus of the study is to analyse the ego states of school teachers at different age groups during communication.

Objectives of the Study:

- 1) To provide a better understanding of how school teachers communicate in an organization by utilising different ego states of various age groups.
- 2) To make awareness of both social and psychological messages which exist in communication transactions among school teachers.

Research Question:

RQ: What is the percentage of different ego states mostly used by school teachers of different age groups during communication?

Research Methodology:

Research Design: The study used descriptive research design.

Sample of research: Total number of samples included is 34. Sample included in research are school teachers - both male and female, age group included from 25 years and above. Samples are collected from 3 different schools- AFAC English Medium School and Junior college, AECS School no.4 and Rayan International School. Participants are from diverse socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Participants were different in his/her behaviour, interest, approach, attitude, temperament and appreciation. All participants voluntarily participated, including both genders - male and female.

Tool used:

The questionnaire had 20 items prepared from different aspects of people's behaviour, professionally and personally in an organization, also included demographic questions like age, gender, experience.

Ego state Scale-5 point Likert scale which was originally developed by Ozpolat, Kaygusuz and Duyan (2015) is used.

An online questionnaire through Google form is devised. Score criteria used are Strongly agree(5), Agree(4), Neutral(3), Disagree(2), Strongly disagree(1).



Ego style	Nurturing Parent	Critical Parent	Adult	Free Child	Adaptive Child
Question no.	2	3	5	15	1
	10	8	6	17	4
	11	9	7	18	19
		13	12		20
		14	16		

Table 1 - Distribution of questionnaire as per ego state

Data analysis and Interpretation:

The present study is based on the five ego states. These are the findings from the study. Understanding interpersonal behavioural style in an organisation helps to enhance a healthy working environment. With the help of transactional analysis, individuals know each other in an organisation, which enhances self-growth and self-awareness. Age group are given respective group numbers-

Age group I: 25-30 years

Age group II: 31-35 years

Age group III: above 35 years

Answering of research questions

RQ What is the percentage of different ego states mostly used by school teachers at different age groups during interaction?

Sub questions

RQ 1.1 For Nurturing parent - What are the percentage of school teachers

- for courage to stand for what is right?
- that people have an attitude of improvisation ?
- that people have helping behaviour towards someone new to the organization?

Score	Criteria	Nurturing Parent		
		25-30 years	31-35 years	Above 35 years
5	Strongly agree	39.58	50.00	40.00
4	Agree	43.75	37.50	43.33
3	Neutral	8.33	0.00	10.00
2	Disagree	6.25	12.50	6.67
1	Strongly disagree	2.08	0.00	0.00

Table 2 -represents percentage of Nurturing Parent ego state



From Table 2, it has been observed that middle age teachers that are 31-35 years strongly agree with 50% that people having courage to stand up for right, there is always hope for improvisation and need to help someone new to organization. Age group 25-35years and Above 35 years, strongly agree with 40%. Rest of the data shows below 13% from all age groups, so these teachers mostly disagree with the given statement. 8.33% teachers are neutral from group I.

RQ 1.2. Critical parent - What are the percentage of school teachers-

- Believes that absolute honesty can take advantage?
- Getting bored due to monotonous work
- That people want to lead rather than to follow someone?
- Who has bureaucratic and firm behaviour?

Score	Criteria	Critical Parent		
		25-30 years	31-35 years	Above 35 years
5	Strongly agree	18.75	10.00	6.00
4	Agree	31.25	42.50	32.00
3	Neutral	22.50	25.00	22.00
2	Disagree	13.75	12.50	32.00
1	Strongly disagree	13.75	10.00	8.00

Table 3 - represents percentage of Critical Parent ego state

From Table 3, it has been interpreted that 42.50% of group II agree that others take benefit from honest people, getting bored due to monotonous work, people who don't want to follow someone, but want to lead, and also bureaucratic and firm behaviour. Group I and Group III teachers agree with 31.25% and 32% respectively for the same, but 32% also disagree from group III. It has also been observed that less percentage of teachers strongly agree from all three groups (Group I-18.75%, Group II- 10% and Group III-6%), Almost 22% to 25% don't want to comment from all the age groups. Overall less than 14% from all the three groups disagree and strongly disagree.

RQ 1.3. Adult - What are the percentage of teachers-

- have an attitude to clarify misunderstandings?
- need to change decisions as per the situation demands ?
- work done is based on experience with modification?
- keeps themselves calm and considers all circumstances while making decisions?



Score	Criteria	Adult		
		25-30 years	31-35 years	Above 35 years
5	Strongly agree	50.00	42.50	34.00
4	Agree	32.50	32.50	54.00
3	Neutral	10.00	7.50	4.00
2	Disagree	6.25	17.50	8.00
1	Strongly disagree	1.25	0.00	0.00

Table 4 - represents percentage of Adult ego state

From Table 4 it was experienced that, Group III people agree with 54% while group I and Group II agree with 32%, here we can see the variations in percentage of strongly agree and agree with respect to all age groups. Teachers of Group I strongly agree with 50%, group II agree with 42.50% and group III with 34%, this shows they agree with the question for better communication. Only 17.50% of Group II disagrees with the above questions. Disagree and strongly disagree percentages are less than 10%, so can be negligible.

RQ 1.4. Free Child-

What is the percentage of teachers?

- that feel that they are creative?
- have openness in behaviour?
- Feels need to clarify their doubts?

Score	Criteria	Free Child		
		25-30 years	31-35 years	Above 35 years
5	Strongly agree	41.67	29.17	20
4	Agree	16.67	33.33	43.33
3	Neutral	6.25	4.17	3.33
2	Disagree	27.08	25.00	26.67
1	Strongly disagree	8.33	8.33	6.67

Table 5 - represents percentage of Free Child ego state

From Table 5, it has been observed that group III teachers agree with 43.33%, which may be due to experience, but 20% only strongly agree for the same. Nearly one fourth of teachers disagree with 26.67% and 6.67 strongly disagree respectively for the above items, which is a point of concern. Group I teachers strongly agree with



41.67%. Only 16.67% agree and 27.08% disagree, Group I, Group II and Group III show almost equal percentage of disagree that is 25% to 27%, same with Strongly disagree criteria, which shows percentage falls between 6% to 8%. Group shows 29.17% teachers strongly agree and 33.33% agree for the same. It has also been analysed that if we add the percentage of Group II and Group III for strongly agree and agree scores, we get 62.50% and 63.33% respectively.

RQ1. 5. Adaptive Child - What is the percentage of teachers

- being polite with colleagues?
- uncomfortable with unexpected situations?
- agree with management ideas and following dress code culture?

Score	Criteria	Adaptive Child		
		25-30 years	31-35 years	Above 35 years
5	Strongly agree	20.31	25.00	25.00
4	Agree	37.50	53.13	47.50
3	Neutral	12.50	3.13	12.50
2	Disagree	25.00	15.63	12.50
1	Strongly disagree	4.69	3.13	2.50

Table 6 - represents percentage of Adaptive Child ego state

From Table 6, it has been interpreted that group II agrees with 53.13%, followed by group III agrees by 47.50% and group I agrees with 37.50%. With the condition that teachers should be polite with colleagues, uncomfortable with unexpected situations and always agree with management and follow dress culture. Percentage of strongly agreed scores is little less as compared to agree, for group I 20.31%, for group II and III 25% is observed. 12.50% teachers don't want to comment from group I and group III. One fourth teachers from the group I disagree with 25%. From group I and group III also teachers disagree with 15.63% and 12.50 % respectively.

Discussion:

In an organisation, every kind of person is there and has a different ego state, their ego states can be changed as per situations. During analysis it has been observed that, with respect to age factor, people become experienced and mature. We can consider related examples from the last two years. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many teachers lost their jobs due to technology constraints. The age group generally falls 40 years and above. As compared to this many new young age group teachers are recruited since present youth is technology friendly. As veterans teachers are experienced and follow one specific ego state. In India there is importance given to social cohesion, socio-cultural values and interpersonal relationships. Since there is a difference in personality, working style, beliefs, ethics, behaviour, perception that gives a path to determine different ego states as per understanding of life positions with different age groups. Experience plays an important role at work, it has been

observed that 35 years and above represents a higher score with respect to the adult ego state, which is the state of problem solving, logical reasoning and decision making. In the era of globalisation and competition, the adult ego state is considered to be the most approachable and recommended. This is so because it has a function of collecting and processing information, which is very much acknowledged.

During analysing it has been observed that employees sometimes behave as a critical parent and adaptive child ego state. If we go to managerial or leadership positions for making wise and fruitful decisions for long term benefit, critical parenting is considered. Since people come from different socio-economic diversified backgrounds, it is obvious that attitudes and behaviour may vary, because every individual has its own personality and follows ego state. So to guide employees to achieve a common goal, people need to consider what efforts they are making for self-development and to feel the need and objectives of an organisation. Sometimes adaptive child ego state is considered when in an institute new things have to be learned and need to implement it. Teachers should always be adaptive in nature if possible, since they have to face challenges related to work in everyday life. So it is better if we take the challenge in a positive way not to criticise it. Consider an example of the new normal we have adapted from the last one year in the education field.

In the education field, for a teacher it is necessary that there should be proper and approachable communication in the classroom and staffroom. So while communicating with students and colleagues, teachers should be aware of which ego state is applicable. Though every time it is not possible to behave as per the situation demands due to multitasking work, from the previous experience we can switch the ego state as per the different situation and accordingly that the communication and behaviour should be there.

Learning is a continuous process and it embraces and invites continuous stimuli from students, colleagues and surrounding environment. When one understands the right application of different ego states, the teaching learning process among students and communication with colleagues will be more effective and work will be enjoyable. Transactional analysis plays a vital role to make this effectiveness and enjoyment into success and also helps in contributing to creating a favourable collegial environment in an organisation.

Implications of the Study:

Transactional analysis is a flexible concept and creative tool which helps to give an understanding of how people communicate among them and what are all their behaviour and attitude in social context helps in understanding performances, support organisational goals and help to solve conflict among people. Also helps to investigate differences in interpersonal relationships varying in age groups and act as a bridge to minimise conflict, by providing trust on others by self-disclosure, self-trust and awareness. Provide clear vision to HR of an organisation, how interaction among people takes place with varying age groups and provides a path for improvement if required. Helps school teachers to make creative solutions, sharing thoughts easily, showing concern, gives a map to communicate with each kind of student and anticipates better understanding of everyday classroom challenges and how to deal with it.

Suggestions for Future Research:

The study in the research was restricted to 34 samples from Mumbai city, wherein the communication pattern

with respect to different age groups is investigated as per the ego state. Therefore the scope of the study is restricted within the Mumbai city, specifically offering schools affiliated to SSC (State Board), CBSE (Central board of Secondary Education), ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education). Further research can be conducted with more parameters from different parts of the country and also different variables can be considered like age, gender, socio-economic factor, seniority, work experience, teaching subjects, personality factor, working style, educational qualification, genders etc. In future for more sustainable research, a large sample volume with different sets of questionnaires for various dimensions will be considered.

Conclusion:

Transactional analysis mainly aims for improving communication and interpersonal relations between individuals and helps to manifest mutual behaviour and attitude by understanding each other's motives. Identification of transactional style and ego states among teachers help them to understand the state of mind about particular behaviour and further helps to reinforce that which ego state is suitable for communication.

Transaction analysis provides data on transactions which refer to communication exchanges between people and deals with the overall experience of the individual, where age factor also plays a very important role. Every individual for each group had different experience and maturity and also had different personality and working styles. In Schools different age groups of teachers are working. Transactional analysis assists teachers in many forms, with adequate transactional skills helps to understand interpersonal behaviour and help teachers to know where there is a need to switch off behaviour as per the circumstances. These initiatives are not to improve communication but also necessary to hold self in personal and professional events of life. This will have a positive impact on life satisfaction and facilitate positive work experience. So understanding transactional analysis can give hope to individuals to rewrite a new script by learning from the past and without hanging on to inappropriate behaviour.

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