

Transactional Analysis: Measuring 'Ego States' - A Tool for Employee's Behaviour Management

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Transactional Analysis is one of the most accessible theories of modern psychology. Transactional Analysis was founded by Eric Berne, and the famous 'parent adult child' theory is still being developed today. Transactional Analysis has wide applications in clinical, therapeutic, organizational and personal development, encompassing communications, management, personality, relationships and behaviour. Whether you're in business, a parent, a social worker or interested in personal development, Eric Berne's Transactional Analysis theories, and those of his followers, will enrich your dealings with people, and your understanding of yourself.

The core concept of Transactional Analysis (TA) is to understand the interpersonal behaviour of the people. Many attempts were made to evaluate the different ego statuses of the people. The study was conducted among a select group of 100 bank professionals. The study identifies the different ego statuses of the respondents and thereby determines the 'dominant ego'.

Introduction

Transactional Analysis is a theory developed by Dr. Eric Berne in the 1950s. Originally trained in psychoanalysis, Berne wanted a theory which could be understood and available to everyone and began to develop what came to be called Transactional Analysis (TA). Transactional Analysis is a social psychology and a method to improve communication. The theory outlines how we have developed and treat ourselves, how we relate and communicate with others, and offers suggestions and interventions which will enable us to change and grow. Transactional Analysis is underpinned by the philosophy that - "People can change" and "We all have a right to be in the world and be accepted".

Transactional Analysis (TA) is a method of explaining what happens when I do something to you and you do something back (Hannabuss, 1998). The concept was introduced by Berne (1964), an eminent psychologist. His book 'The Games People Play' discusses the interpersonal behaviour of people, what he call as 'psychological games' (Davies, 1994). The core proposition of TA is to understand "People's thinking and feelings".

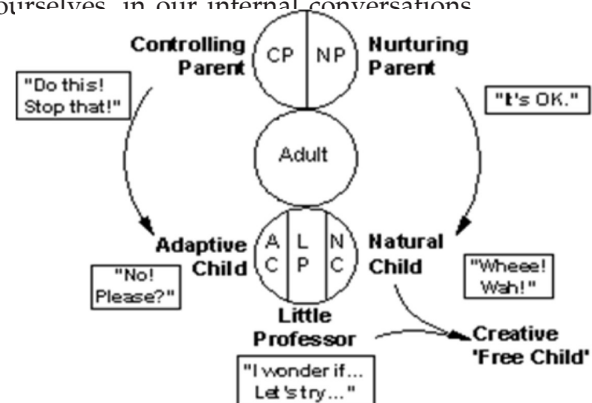
In other words, it is a technique to help people better understand interpersonal behaviour. According to Eric Berne, "Transactional Analysis is to establish the most open and authentic communication possible between the affective and intellectual components

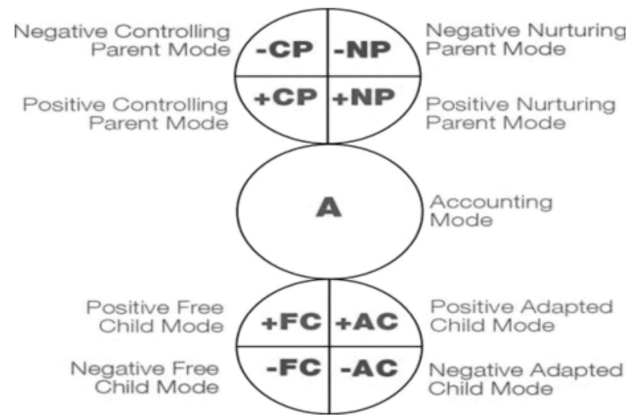
of the personality. When this happens, the person is able to use both his emotions and intellect, not just one at the expense of the other". Over the past four decades, Eric Berne's theory has evolved to include applications to psychotherapy, counselling, education and organizational development.

Transactional Analysis (or TA as it is often called) is a model of people and relationships. It is based on two notions: first that we have three parts or 'ego-states' to our 'personality. The other assumption is that these converse with one another in 'transactions' (hence the name). TA is a very common model used in therapy and there is a great deal written about it.

Parent, Adult and Child

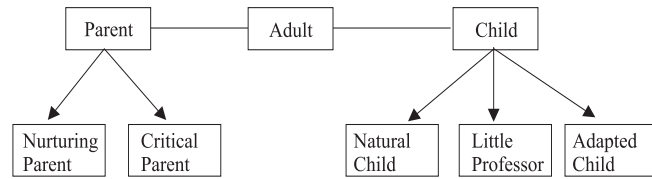
We each have internal models of parents, children and also adults, and we play these roles with one another in our relationships. We even do it with ourselves in our internal conversations





and Child is classified into Natural Child, Little Professor and Adapted Child (Figure 1)

An ego state is a specific way of thinking, feeling



and behaving and each ego state has its origin in specific regions of the brain. People can behave from their different ego states such as 'Parent, Child and Adult' at any given time our actions come from one of these three ego states. The major characteristics of different ego states are presented in Table 1.

Assessment of Ego States

According to TA, every person has three ego states: Parent, Adult and Child (PAC). The Parent is again classified into Nurturing Parent and Critical Parent

Table 1: Major Characteristics of Ego States.

| Parent Ego | Adult Ego | Child Ego |
|--|--|---|
| Behaves like his/her parents or someone similar. | Key to healthy personality. | Think, feel, see, hear and react or someone similar, as a three or five or eight year old child. |
| Judgmental, value-laden, moralizing, dogmatic or over-protective. | Logical, rational and never take decisions emotionally thinking to solve problems. | The ego state is fully experienced state and not just roles. |
| The ego is expressed by giving advice, showing displeasure, admonitions and saying things like "do" and "don't". | Fact-based criticism of effectiveness of behaviour. | |
| Critical Parent (CP) Like a judge. Stipulated by norms, rules and regulations. Attacks people's personalities, scolds, punish. | | Natural Child (NC) Hateful or loving, impulsive, spontaneous or playful. |
| Nurturing Parent (NP) The major characteristics are supportive, sympathetic, protective and nurturing. Provides self-recognition and enables the process of giving the recognition and affection to others. | | Little Professor (LP) Thoughtful, creative or imaginative. |
| environment Behave precautiously. | | Adapted Child (AC) Modifies their behaviour under powerful influence. Person adapts to the rules of social to get recognition. compliantly or |

Source: Characteristics of ego states are conceptualized from various literatures in the field.

Communications (transactions)

When two people communicate, each exchange is a transaction. Many of our problems come from transactions which are unsuccessful. Parents naturally speak to Children, as this is their role as a parent. They can talk with other Parents and Adults, although the subject still may be about the children.

The Nurturing Parent naturally talks to the Natural Child and the Controlling Parent to the Adaptive Child. In fact these parts of our personality are evoked by the opposite. Thus if I act as an Adaptive Child, I will most likely evoke the Controlling Parent in the other person.

We also play many games between these positions, and there are rituals from greetings to whole conversations (such as the weather) where we take different positions for different events. These are often 'pre-recorded' as scripts we just play out. They give us a sense of control and identity and reassure us that all is still well in the world. Other games can be negative and destructive and we play them more out of sense of habit and addiction than constructive pleasure.

Conflict

Complementary transactions occur when both people are at the same level. Thus Parent talking to Parent, etc. Here, both are often thinking in the same way and communication is easy. Problems usually occur in Crossed transactions, where the other person is at a different level.

The parent is either nurturing or controlling, and often speaks to the child, who is either adaptive or 'natural' in their response. When both people talk as a Parent to the other's Child, their wires get crossed and conflict results.

The ideal line of communication is the mature and rational Adult-Adult relationship.

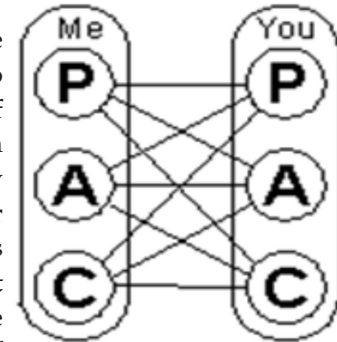
Research Process

Objective of Study

The objective of this paper is to analyse the ego states of bank professionals in Jammu city and to find out their dominant ego states.

Scope of Study

The scope of the study is limited to bank professionals of different branches in Jammu City. The study was carried out over bank professionals irrespective of the fact that whether he / she are the employee of Private or Public sector banks.



Literature Review

Neath (1995) identifies that attempts to evaluate transactional analysis are rare in the management literature

Pareek (1984) has empirically established six ego status to obtain different possible styles such as prescriptive, bohemian, task obsessive, supportive, normative, problem solving, etc. He combined different ego states with different positions in life. The 'inner self' that emerges from its internalized core values affects the activities of the organization. He administered the instrument to 107 companies in the UK computer supply and software industry. The study results explored different business dominant ego-states and its implication in customer orientation, innovativeness, financial performance, etc.

Bennett (1996) highlighted that understanding the proposition of transactional analysis (ego states) of a person in an organization helps to determine the nature of relationship / interpersonal relationship with others/customers/clients.

Goodwin and Ray (2005), Kirman et al. (2005) and Fauth and Hayes (2006) emphasized on the fact that good database on different ego states of people / professionals is very important in determining organizational policies.

Different researchers used different tools to measure the ego states of people.

Bennett (1999) extensively validated the tools used by Pareek (1984) to predict the companies' ego states.

Kathryn and Williams (1980) assessed the strength of ego states from the response of persons. Fifteen TA experts assigned ego-state ratings to the 300

items of the Adjective Check List (ACL) with high inter-judge agreement being found. Using the judges' mean raft rigs, a system was developed for obtaining ego-state scores for any selected set of ACL adjectives.

Dusay (1977) developed an 'egogram', a tool in conceptualizing a typical offender personality. The egogram is a chart that divides a person's total energy into six ego states: (1) Critical parent, (2) Nurturing parent, (3) Adult, (4) Adaptive child, (5) Natural child, and (6) Little professor.

(Stevens, 1983) stressed on improving TA practitioner's abilities by illustrating and diagnosing an individual according to ego-state functioning.

Research Methodology

The study was conducted among 100 bank professionals. Ego states of the professional were identified through a validated questionnaire (with 35 items). The questionnaire has two parts. The first part consists of different questions related to six ego states such as Critical Parent (CP), Nurturing Parent (NP), Adult, Natural Child (NC), Little Professor (LP), and Adapted Child (AC). Each question is rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The respondents

~~were asked to mark their opinion on this scale.~~
The score of these rating scales ranges from four to zero (see Exhibit 1).

| Exhibit 1: Scale used to measure Ego States. | |
|---|--------------|
| Rating Scale | Score |
| Very Frequently | 4 |
| Frequently | 3 |
| Sometimes | 2 |
| Rarely | 1 |
| Almost Never | 0 |

First, the opinion of the respondents on each question needs to be converted into score. Then the scores are to be written in the proper boxes in the ego states score chart. The numbers in each column are to be added and the totals to be put in the spaces provided. The total for the first column is the score for CP; second for NP, and so on. For example, if someone answered the question '1' with 'Sometimes' then a '2' should be put in the box indicated for the question. After that the score of 35 questions of each column will be added to know the ego states of that person. The highest score

represents the dominant ego state. The dominant ego state of the group as a whole can be found out by counting the dominant ego state of each person.

Results and Discussions

Table 2 shows the profile of respondents. Majority (78%) of the respondents are in the age group of 21-30. Among the total respondents 67% are male and 33% are female. 50% of the total respondents are postgraduates.

| Age (in years) | Number of Respondents | % of the respondents |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 21-30 | 78 | 78 |
| 31-40 | 11 | 11 |
| 41-50 | 11 | 11 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 67 | 67 |
| Female | 33 | 33 |
| Educational Qualification | | |
| Undergraduate | 18 | 18 |
| Graduate | 32 | 32 |
| Post Graduate | 50 | 50 |

Different ego states of the respondents such as Critical Parent (CP), Nurturing Parent (NP), Adult (A), Natural Child (NC), Little Professor (LP), and Adapted Child (AC) are given separately in Table 3.

Table 3: Table representing the Ego States of the respondents.

| Number of Respondents /Ego States | CP | NP | A | NC | LP | AC |
|--|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | 11 | 17 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 16 |
| 2 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 14 | 10 | 11 |
| 3 | 18 | 18 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 20 |
| 4 | 6 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 3 | 11 |
| 5 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 |
| 6 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 |
| 7 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 17 |
| 8 | 12 | 9 | 15 | 5 | 8 | 14 |
| 9 | 15 | 14 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 14 |
| 10 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 12 |

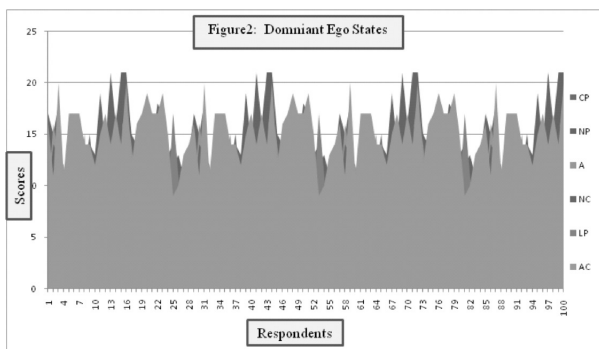
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 11 | 12 | 19 | 14 | 13 | 11 | 15 | 49 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 17 |
| 12 | 11 | 14 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 17 | 50 | 12 | 18 | 11 | 9 | 8 | 17 |
| 13 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 | 51 | 14 | 17 | 14 | 10 | 9 | 19 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 11 | 4 | 17 | 52 | 13 | 13 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 15 |
| 15 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 | 53 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 16 | 17 | 9 |
| 16 | 15 | 21 | 18 | 15 | 11 | 20 | 54 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| 17 | 11 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 6 | 12 | 55 | 9 | 11 | 8 | 10 | 6 | 13 |
| 18 | 14 | 14 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 16 | 56 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 14 |
| 19 | 11 | 15 | 11 | 15 | 12 | 17 | 57 | 11 | 17 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 16 |
| 20 | 6 | 12 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 58 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 14 | 10 | 11 |
| 21 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 17 | 59 | 18 | 18 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 20 |
| 22 | 12 | 18 | 11 | 9 | 8 | 17 | 60 | 6 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 3 | 11 |
| 23 | 14 | 17 | 14 | 10 | 9 | 19 | 61 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 |
| 24 | 13 | 13 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 15 | 62 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 |
| 25 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 16 | 17 | 9 | 63 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 17 |
| 26 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 64 | 12 | 9 | 15 | 5 | 8 | 14 |
| 27 | 9 | 11 | 8 | 10 | 6 | 13 | 65 | 15 | 14 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 14 |
| 28 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 14 | 66 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 12 |
| 29 | 11 | 17 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 16 | 67 | 12 | 19 | 14 | 13 | 11 | 15 |
| 30 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 14 | 10 | 11 | 68 | 11 | 14 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 17 |
| 31 | 18 | 18 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 20 | 69 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 |
| 32 | 6 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 3 | 11 | 70 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 11 | 4 | 17 |
| 33 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 | 71 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 |
| 34 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 | 72 | 15 | 21 | 18 | 15 | 11 | 20 |
| 35 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 17 | 73 | 11 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 6 | 12 |
| 36 | 12 | 9 | 15 | 5 | 8 | 14 | 74 | 14 | 14 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 16 |
| 37 | 15 | 14 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 14 | 75 | 11 | 15 | 11 | 15 | 12 | 17 |
| 38 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 76 | 6 | 12 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 19 |
| 39 | 12 | 19 | 14 | 13 | 11 | 15 | 77 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 17 |
| 40 | 11 | 14 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 17 | 78 | 12 | 18 | 11 | 9 | 8 | 17 |
| 41 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 | 79 | 14 | 17 | 14 | 10 | 9 | 19 |
| 42 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 11 | 4 | 17 | 80 | 13 | 13 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 15 |
| 43 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 | 81 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 16 | 17 | 9 |
| 44 | 15 | 21 | 18 | 15 | 11 | 20 | 82 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| 45 | 11 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 6 | 12 | 83 | 9 | 11 | 8 | 10 | 6 | 13 |
| 46 | 14 | 14 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 16 | 84 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 14 |
| 47 | 11 | 15 | 11 | 15 | 12 | 17 | 85 | 11 | 17 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 16 |
| 48 | 6 | 12 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 86 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 14 | 10 | 11 |
| | | | | | | | 87 | 18 | 18 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 20 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 88 | 6 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 3 | 11 |
| 89 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 |
| 90 | 11 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 17 |
| 91 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 17 |
| 92 | 12 | 9 | 15 | 5 | 8 | 14 |
| 93 | 15 | 14 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 14 |
| 94 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 11 | 12 |
| 95 | 12 | 19 | 14 | 13 | 11 | 15 |
| 96 | 11 | 14 | 11 | 9 | 10 | 17 |
| 97 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 |
| 98 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 11 | 4 | 17 |
| 99 | 16 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 11 | 14 |
| 100 | 15 | 21 | 18 | 15 | 11 | 20 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|
| Total Score of each Ego | | | | | | |
| Stage | 1248 | 1489 | 1161 | 1096 | 890 | 1518 |
| Total respondents in each Ego | | | | | | |
| Stage | 4 | 33 | 12 | 0 | 3 | 48 |

An employee poses all six ego states with variations of its intensity (the highest number that highlights in the table represents the ego states of individuals separately). However, it is important to summarize the dominant ego states of the group. The area-wise graphical representation (Figure 2) shows the intensity of each ego state among the respondents. It shows that the character of Adapted Child (AC) dominates.

The overall position of each ego state can be understood by counting the dominant ego state of the respondents. Categorization of this is given in Table 4. It is inferred that 48% of total respondents have their dominant ego state as Adapted Child.



The implication is that those professionals have an ego state that modifies their behaviour under the powerful influence.

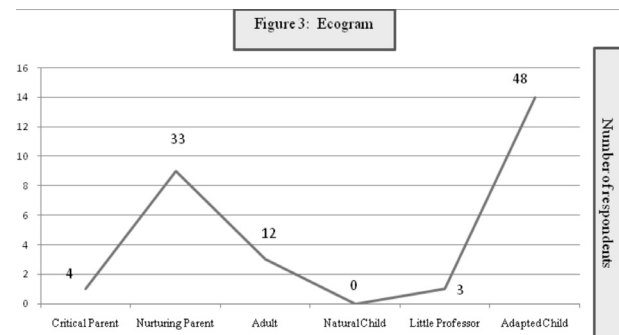
Table 4: Overall Summary of Dominant Ego States.

| Dominant Ego states | Number of Respondents | % of the respondents |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Critical Parent | 4 | 4.0 |
| Nurturing Parent | 33 | 33.0 |
| Adult | 12 | 12.0 |
| Natural Child | 0 | 0.0 |
| Little Professor | 3 | 3.0 |
| Adapted Child | 48 | 48.0 |
| 100 | | 100.0 |

They behave compliantly or precariously and adapt to the rules of social environment to get recognition. The dominant ego state of 33% respondents is Nurturing Parent. They are supportive, loving and nurturing. Adult ego states dominate with 12% of the total respondents who are all the more rational and analyse information objectively. This is followed by respondents with dominant ego states as Critical Parent (4%) are like a judge and always want to conform to the norms of the society and follow rules and regulations. Only 3% of the total respondents have their dominant ego state as Little Professor. Their ego states are characterized by thoughtfulness, creative, manipulative and intuitive. Finally, none of the respondents is with dominant ego state as Natural Child who possesses the characters of impulsive, spontaneous or playful, etc. This is also represented with 'Egogram' in Figure 3.

Findings

The study concludes that the dominant ego state among the bank professionals is Adapted Child (AC). They are the people who mostly abide by



companies' rules and regulations and work under the powerful influence of others. However, they lack social interactions.

Conclusions

In order to get success in any industry, it became necessary to accept the fact that ultimately our (bank's) profits are the result of customer retention and creation. If banks do not take care of their customers properly, then sooner or later will lose them.

As the majority of bank professionals (48%) have "Adapted child" as most dominant ego states and employees under this ego state modifies their behaviour under the powerful influence. They get adapted to the rules of social environment to get recognition and behave compliantly or pre-cautiously; so the banks must train their employees to interact properly with customers.

It is the responsibility of top and middle management to take care of internal customers (front line executives or staff) and try to provide congenial environment to work.

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