

# Interpersonal Relationship Needs of Employees of Private and Public Sector Organizations : A FIRO Perspective

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## Abstract

The present study investigated the significant difference between various interpersonal relationship needs of the employees of private and public sector organizations ; 437 employees were selected from 55 public and private organizations in and around Kolkata, irrespective of the mode of operations. Fundamental interpersonal relationship orientation - Behavior (FIRO-B) scale developed by William Schutz in 1958 was administered to collect the data from the sample. For analysis of the data, descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA were used. The findings revealed that significant difference existed between private and public sector employees in total wanted need; total behavior needs such as inclusion, control, as well as overall needs score. It was seen that private sector employees held stronger interpersonal needs than public sector employees. From the profiling of their FIRO-B score, it was seen categorically that employees from both the sectors fell in almost similar categories regarding individual need score as well as total and behavioral need scores. This research study would help management committees of these organizations to engage their employees in effective decision making as well as personality development training depending upon their interpersonal needs.

**Keywords :** interpersonal needs, inclusion, control, affection, expression, wanted, private sector and public sector

**JEL Classification:** L1, L20, L25, L26, L33

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Interpersonal relationships are an integral part of any business organization in the market. Different research studies have identified its role in effective managerial decision-making and policy implementation (Furnham, Crump, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2007; Manoharan & Suresh, 2015). Despite being at the center of discussion for quite a few times, interpersonal relationships have many things in their domain that need further exploration. As Natarajan, Nagar, and Ayachit (2011) mentioned that even though different organizations are showing their interest in measuring interpersonal relationships, there is a huge research gap in this field, and hardly any published research work is available in the Indian context.

Coate and Rosati (1988) (as cited in Marker, 2003) mentioned that :

Human needs are a powerful source of explanation of human behavior and social interaction. All individuals have needs that they strive to satisfy, either by using the system, 'acting on the fringes,' or acting as reformists or revolutionaries. Given this condition, social systems must be responsive to individual needs, or be subject to instability and forced change (possibly through violence or conflict). (Preface, p. 9)

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Thus, to prevent organizational conflict, it is important to satisfy certain needs of individuals working in an organization (be it a leader, or manager, or any other employee) to fulfill the organizational aim and vision. Human beings are the most important resource of any organization and hence, developing a clear understanding of the nature of employees is an important aspect of management in the workplace. Dwan (as cited in Abbah, 2014) identified management as “planning goals and specifying the purpose of the agency ; organizing people, finances, resources and activities ; staffing, training, and socializing employees ; leading the organization and the staff ; and controlling, monitoring, and sanctioning when needed” (p.44).

Over the years, researchers have perceived management as being meticulously related to sociology as well as different other social systems wherein managers need to be recognizable of subordinates as those social-psychological beings who need to be motivated periodically (Allen & Sawhney, 2012). Thus, to work as a unit along with the workers, it is important for managers to identify a basic pattern of needs of the employees so that they can be properly motivated to work and, in turn, managed and organized effectively for achieving the future organizational goals.

## **Interpersonal Relationships and Human Resource Management**

In the current era of tremendous technological growth and development, organizations are facing various unique challenges, which are difficult to solve by emphasizing only on the technicality of the organizational process. The volatile business environment and appalling competitive market condition are furthermore making it difficult for the administrative committee to acquire and sustain the most valuable possession of any organization, that is, its human resources. One of the most important concerns that is bothering present day organizations is the lack of skilled human resources in the sector and increasing rate of attrition (Mitra & Ghosh, 2012).

At this juncture of high technological advancement, interpersonal relationships between leader and members, enthusiasm among employees, and locus of control of team members have a significant impact on the commitment and involvement of the employees (Hsia & Tseng, 2015). Henceforth, it is very important to strengthen the relationship of the employees with the higher authorities so that they are more committed and engaged with the organizational process and thus, an effective human resource management policy should be the call of the situation. Various HRM practices such as compensation, training and development, employee participation, security of job, supportive work environment, incentives and rewards play influential roles in enhancing satisfaction among employees depending upon the type of sectors they are involved in by developing organizational commitment among them (Bhaskar, 2016). This, in turn, can help the organization to mobilize its existing resources to deal with the present challenges more efficiently.

Boxall and Purcell (2011) described HRM as "all activities (referred to as HR practices) associated with the management of people in firms" (p. 3). HRM has multiple research studies to prove that its role does matter for enhancing the performance of an organization. Legge (as cited in Gill, 1999) identified largely two types of HRM practices: hard HRM and soft HRM. As defined by Storey (1987, 1995) (as cited in Gill, 1999), hard HRM emphasizes on the quantitative, calculative, and business-strategic aspects of managing the workforce while managing head-count. This has been termed as human asset accounting ; whereas, soft HRM emphasizes on enhancing performance of workers by empowering, refining, and believing in employees to help them achieve organizational goals in concordance with the interests of both the parties. This is done while perceiving employees as proactive rather than passive inputs to the organizational process (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005).

At the present, the market is becoming more aggressive and competitive gradually, and preserving competent employees can be a real challenge for the management. Thus, ensuring basic psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness not only enhance the sustained motivation of the employees, but these are also essential for retaining their psychological growth and well- being (Broeck, Ferris, Chang, & Rosen, 2016).

Ensuring trust among team members can also help managers to ensure higher level of satisfaction towards task performance (Smith & Barclay, 1997). According to Stone, Deci, and Ryan (2009), to sustain autonomous motivation among employees, the management needs to encourage their participation in decision making activities, needs to acknowledge their perspective, clarify their responsibilities, provide them with non-judgmental feedback, minimize coercive controls, and help them develop their knowledge to enhance competency and autonomy. As Heery and Noon (as cited in Marescaux, Winne, & Sels, 2012, p. 9) mentioned that one of the most important practices among soft HRM policies is direct employee participation in the workplace that clearly emphasizes on the role of employees in management decision through direct involvement, which can be beneficial for employees having a high need for control and power. Baumeister and Leary (1995) asserted that frequent contact with people within a temporarily stable, enduring, and affective environment can enhance the feeling of relatedness, which can be very much satisfactory for an individual.

Along the line of the above discussed research studies, it will be right to mention that emphasizing the role of management towards the importance of guarding various needs of employees can be fruitful for achieving organizational goals in the long run.

## **Public Sector and Private Sector Dichotomy**

Over the years, India has emerged as one of the largest democratic countries promoting equal rights and distribution of resources in areas like personal, social, or industry. Post- independence, with a newly elected Government, India has aspired to develop an economy with peaceful co-existence of both the public and private industrial sectors. Gradually, the era of globalization, privatization, and liberalization entered India and deregulation of the economy was further strengthened by introduction of various laws. According to Gouri (1996), privatization got a tremendous boost with the new economic policy in 1991 that allowed relaxing entry restrictions and equity funding. After two economic policies were issued in 1948 and 1950 respectively, Indian industries were divided into two sectors - public and private sectors.

Some industrial fields were completely under public sector and some were entirely under private sector. Over time, even after gaining huge profit, the private sector did face several difficulties over public sector organizations, and one of the main disadvantages was regarding handling its human resources. Lokyo (2012) argued that privatization of organizations often leads to certain counteractive consequences. While emphasizing on profit maximization, private organizations can often lack in maintaining transparency in the process, fail in issuing contracts for maintaining higher standards of performance, and often find it difficult to ensure safety and security of employees because of their inability in maintaining workplace equipment or employee mental health as it incurs high cost.

On the contrary, Vickers and Yarrow (1991) accentuated the significance of privatization in the market. According to them, privatization helps government to subsidize profit sums and escalate market revenues; it has altered the monitoring of managers by connecting their incentive policies with share price or stock options of the company in their remuneration packages, which encourages employees to play the role of active agents in building profit for the private companies as they also get benefitted as the shareholders of the company. While discussing the role of public sector enterprises in developing corporate social responsibility or CSR, according to The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD, 2002), “the commitment of business is to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life” (p. 6).

Fox, Ward, and Howard (2002) argued that public sector firms presently have started taking various initiatives like mandating, facilitating, partnering, and endorsing for the effective handling of business output as well as managing human side of organizations. As a result of the implementation of policies concerning the social side of managerial decisions, public sector business firms often attract employable population to the public sector over

the private sector, which gets reflected in lesser rate of attrition in that sector in comparison with the private sector. According to a study by Mitra and Ghosh (2012), the attrition rates of private sector employees are pretty higher than public sector ones, which in turn not only cost the organization's finances, but also create a 'negative psyche' among existing resources, laymen, and investors about the sector. With the available research studies, it can be said that though management of private sector often gets employees motivated, it remains externally dependent on profit making revenue collections throughout ; whereas, the public sector often aids their employees with social security and safety along with internalized responsibility towards the organization as a citizen of that firm.

Thus, ensuring safety, security, taking care of the psycho- social needs of employees can all prove beneficial for organizations to develop sustainable, enduring workforce in the long run, which shall transform the organizational goal of higher production in the future. Hence, developing various effective HR policies for the empowerment, development, and increased relatedness of employees towards the organization shall inversely influence the organizational effectiveness in the upcoming future.

## **Interpersonal Relationship and Personality**

Sullivan emphasized the importance of interpersonal relationship in shaping a person's unique personality since childhood. Sullivan (1953) opined that longing for interpersonal relationships is a powerful human need, and very few individuals can detach themselves from these needs without deteriorating their personality. According to him, personality exists, and can be studied, only through its interpersonal manifestations as he stated that, "Personality is the relatively enduring pattern of recurrent interpersonal situations which characterize a human life" (1953, p. 110). He emphasized that, "A personality can never be isolated from the complex of interpersonal relationships in which a person lives and has his being" (1953, p. 10). As fields of research, personality (with its intrapersonal emphasis) and interpersonal relations (emphasizing dimensions of interaction among individuals) are both maturing as an alternative yet complementary foci of individual differences (Mahoney & Stasson, 2005).

Sullivan (1954) strongly believed that interpersonal conflicts can be resolved by integrating interchangeable conclusive needs and reciprocal patterns of activity that often lead to a feeling of security and increased probability of recurrence. Kiesler (1996) opined that interpersonal conflict continues when needs and patterns of activity are not initially complementary, leading to persisting tension. During this crisis situation, covert processing of possible alternative steps towards resolution emerges, leading to the possible negotiation of the relationship (Kiesler, 1996).

In 1958, William Schutz proposed the theory of fundamental interpersonal relationship orientation (FIRO). In his FIRO theory, Schutz (1966) proposed that interpersonal relationships could be measured by a person's intention to interact with others. He argued that people's intention to interact with others could be measured by three dimensions - inclusion, control, and affection. According to Schutz, it is an elaborate theory of interpersonal needs that provides a detailed account of three needs to a greater or lesser degree. These are the needs for inclusion, control, and affection. Each of these three dimensions has two behavior directions - expressed and wanted behavior. Thus, there are six dimensions in FIRO - expressed inclusion, wanted inclusion, expressed control, wanted control, expressed affection, and wanted affection.

Schutz (1966) defined the need for inclusion as the inner drive "to establish and maintain a satisfactory relation with people with respect to interaction and association" (p. 18). Need for inclusion can be expressed in two ways. An individual can have a desire or want for inclusion in a group termed as wanted inclusion, and at the same time, may also have a high need to reach out to people to avoid isolation and loneliness, which is termed as express inclusion. According to Schutz (1978), inclusion need is the extent to which an individual makes an effort to include others in activities, to try to belong, to join groups ; whereas, wanted inclusion need is the extent to which an individual desires others to include them in activities, to invite, and notice them as part of their group.

Need for control is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with people with respect to

control and power (Schutz, 1966, p. 18). According to Schutz, the need for control does have two different flows. The extent to which an individual tries to exert control and influence over people, to organize and direct others is called expressed control needs ; whereas, the extent to which an individual is comfortable allowing others to provide direction and expectations, and to influence him or her, is called wanted control needs (Schutz, 1978). The third interpersonal need of the FIRO theory is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with others with respect to love and affection (Schutz, 1966, p. 20), and it is called the need for affection. Like the other two needs of the FIRO theory, the need for affection also has two dimensions. The extent to which an individual makes an effort to have close relationships, to be intimate with and supportive of others, is called expressed affection needs; and the extent to which an individual desires others to act warmly, express personal sentiments, and provide support is termed as wanted affection need (Schutz, 1978).

The theory of interpersonal relationship could be applied to varied situations where the interpersonal relationship is investigated (Schutz, 1966). According to a string of research regarding the application of FIRO theory in practical situations, it was seen that it is highly determined by the number of persons involved in a particular situation and can be observed from three different levels: individual level (one person), family level (more than two persons), and group level (much more than two) (Li & Lai, 2007). According to Li and Lai (2007), individual level applications describe the orientation of an individual in the three dimensions and provide the foundations to analyze his or her social behaviors ; family level applications mainly deal with the orientations of the family members in the three areas that might influence their relationships inside and outside the family ; and group level applications discuss the process by which the compatibility among group members in the three dimensions affect many other dimensions. Interpersonal need incompatibilities among groups can very much lead to negative evaluation of other team members (Di Marco, 1974) in the workplace.

Many researchers over time have considered interpersonal relationships at work as an essential component of working conditions, including periodical interaction between co-workers, managers, and employees, and it can sometimes act as the source of tension and frustration, if not adequately dealt with (Stoetzer, 2010).

## Research Gap

Multiple research studies have been conducted over the years focusing on various dimensions of interpersonal relationship in the workplace like, psycho social working conditions (Stoetzer, Ahlberg, Bergman, Hallsten, & Lundberg, 2009) ; mental health (Appelberg, Romanov, Heikkila, & Koskenvuo, 1996; De Lange, Taris, Kompier, Houtman, & Bongers, 2004) ; trust (Knoll & Gill, 2011), leader- member exchange (Sparrowe & Liden, 1997) ; and loneliness (Lam & Lau, 2012). Some of these studies also explored the application of FIRO theory (Schutz, 1978) in relation with various organizational variables like leadership (Jenster & Steiler, 2010) ; role compatibility and group performance (Liddell & Slocum, 1976) ; team performance (Mansfield, Winter, & Waner, 2012) ; personality and intelligence (Furnham et al., 2007) rather than providing a detailed profile of the orientation of the employees regarding interpersonal relationships.

Though for the last many years, explorations are being done in the field of interpersonal relationships, very few research studies (Manoharan & Suresh, 2015 ; Natarajan et al., 2011 ; Sayeed, 2010) involving interpersonal relationship at the workplace from the FIRO perspective have been done over the years in the Indian context. The present cross sectional study was an attempt to bridge the huge gap in the research studies in exploring the present variable from the FIRO perspective in the Indian context.

## Objectives of the Study

**(1)** To determine the extent to which private sector and public sector employees differ from each other with respect to their interpersonal relationship orientation.



(2) Determine detailed interpersonal relationship orientation profile of employees of public and private sector organizations.

(3) Explore the field of fundamental interpersonal relationship orientation of employees in India owing to the fact that there is a dearth of appropriate research studies in this area for the last 10 years.

## Hypotheses

The research aimed at testing the following hypotheses :

↪ **H0** : Employees from the private sector and public sector organizations do not differ significantly regarding fundamental interpersonal relationship orientation [i.e. (i) the total need of the employees (A. total wanted, B. total expression), (ii) the behavior of the employees (A. total inclusion, B. total control, C. total affection), (iii) the overall need of the employees].

## Methodology

**(i) Data Collection** : The present research was aimed at finding the significant variation of interpersonal relationship orientation of employees across different types of organizations. To test this, data was collected using the survey research method for employees working in different organizations belonging to public and private concerns in Kolkata. The employees were approached through their organizations. The organizations were selected using multistage stratified random sampling method by considering five zones of Kolkata city (North, South, East, West, and Central). Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. The data collection procedure took 6 months (August 2015 to January 2016) and this was followed by analysis for one month.

**(ii) Final Sample** : The age of the participants ranged between 25 and 55 years. We considered only those employees who were designated as first-line supervisors or above and those who had served their present organization for at least 2 years. Only men employees were considered as participants. All the employees who had participated in the present study were graduates and above. The final sample comprised of 437 employees ; 200 employees were from private organizations and 237 were from public firms.

**(iii) Measures Used** : Interpersonal relationship orientation was measured with FIRO- B scale developed by William Schutz in 1958. The FIRO - B instrument contains 54 items. The clients were asked to respond to each item using one of two six-point rating scales. One rating scale elicited the frequency with which the client engaged in the behavior described in the item. The other rating scale elicited selectivity, that is, with how many people the client engaged in the behavior described in the item.

There are 12 scores that are commonly used in interpretations of the FIRO- B instrument, that is, 1 : overall need score, 2 : total behavior scores (total expressed or wanted), 3 : total need scores (total inclusion, control, affection), six individual cell scores denoted by *eI* (expressed inclusion), *wI* (wanted inclusion), *eC* (expressed control), *wC* (wanted control), *eA* (expressed affection), *wA* (wanted affection). It is a self- administered scale with good internal consistency reliability [*eI* = .87, *wI* = .96, *eC* = .93, *wC* = .86, *eA* = .86, *wA* = .85]. Prior to collecting data, informed consent was taken from the participants. Only willing participants were involved in the study. The data were analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA).

## Figures 1 - 6. Graphical Representation of the Distribution of the Total Sample Corresponding to the Need of Expression, Wanted, Inclusion, Control, Affection, and Overall Need Scores

Figure 1: The histogram depicting the distribution of the Total Expression scores of the employees of different organizations

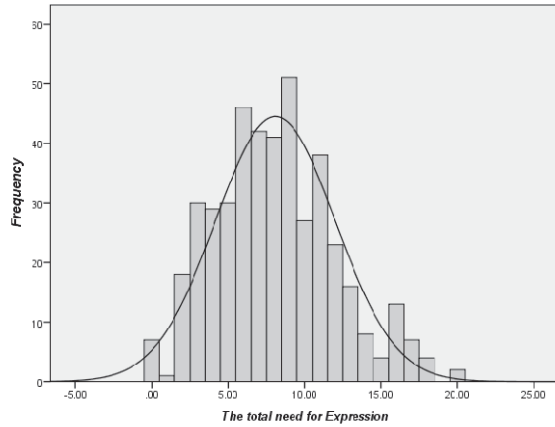


Figure 2: The histogram depicting the distribution of the Total Wanted scores of the employees of different organizations

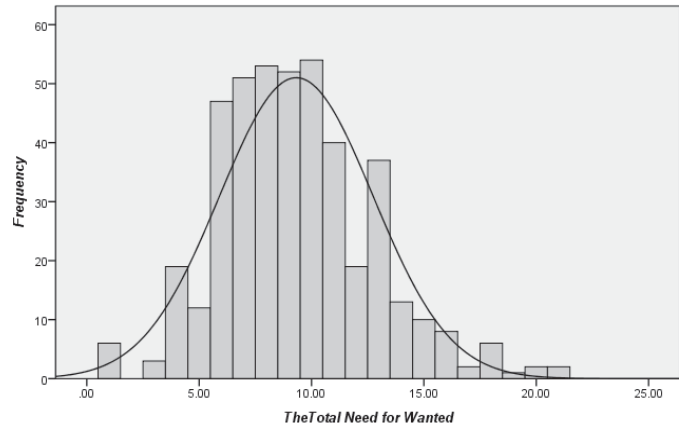


Figure 3: The histogram depicting the distribution of the Total Inclusion scores of the employees of different organizations

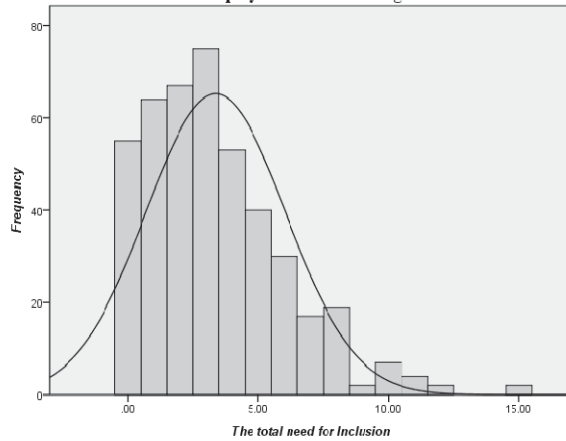


Figure 4: The histogram depicting the distribution of the Total Control scores of the employees of different organizations

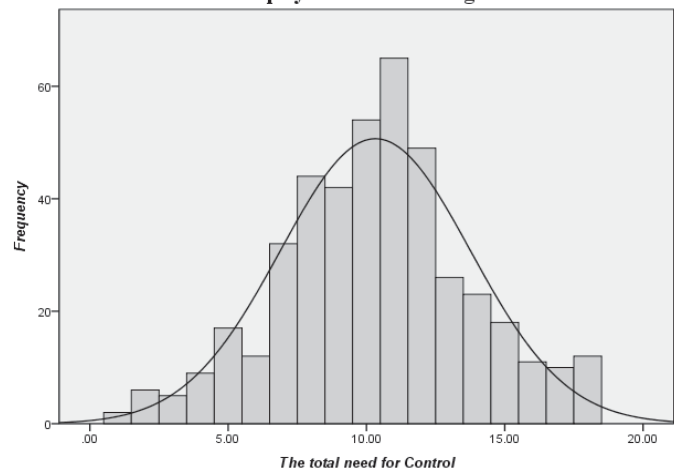


Figure 5: The histogram depicting the distribution of the Total Affection scores of the employees of different organizations

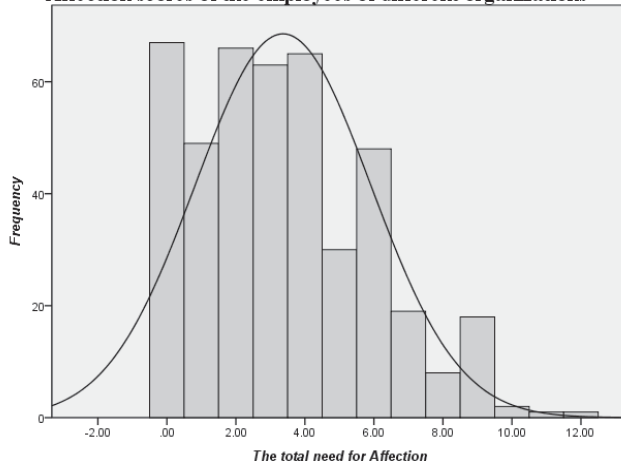
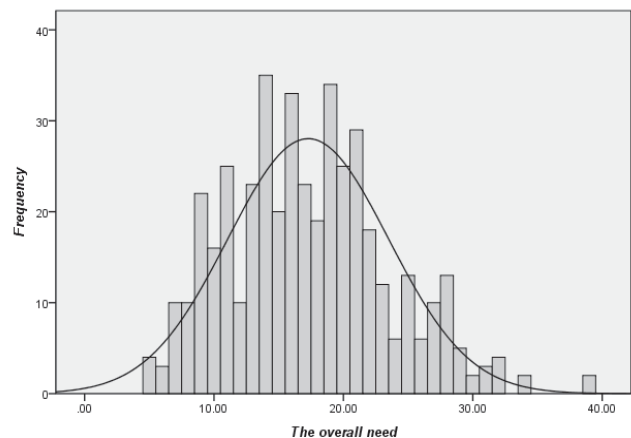


Figure 6: The histogram depicting the distribution of the Overall Need scores of the employees of different organizations



**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (Mean, Median, *SD*, Skewness, and Kurtosis) of 437 Employees of Different Organizations, Irrespective of their Sector (*N* = 437)**

Sr. No.	Statistics	Total Expression	Total Wanted	Total Inclusion	Total Control	Total Affection	ONS
1	Mean	8.0847	9.3227	3.3684	10.3227	3.3638	17.2746
2	Median	8	9	3	10	3	17
4	Std. Deviation	3.91769	3.41727	2.67064	3.44002	2.54282	6.21795
5	Skewness	.412	.506	1.079	-.029	.598	.439
6	Kurtosis	-.060	.627	1.532	.024	-.189	.027

**Table 2. Mean and *SD* Value of Different Fundamental Inter Personal (FIRO) Needs of Employees of Public and Private Concerns and *F*- Value**

	Group	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	Sig	Acceptance/rejection of hypotheses
<b>Total Expression</b>	Private	8.25	4.028	.656	.418	Ho(i)(A)accepted
	Public	7.95	3.825			
<b>Total Wanted</b>	Private	9.78	3.083	6.544	.011	Ho(i)(B)rejected
	Public	8.94	3.639			
<b>Total Inclusion</b>	Private	3.07	2.612	5.722	.017	Ho(ii)(A)rejected
	Public	3.62	2.698			
<b>Total Control</b>	Private	10.96	3.199	4.802	.029	Ho(ii)(B)rejected
	Public	9.79	3.551			
<b>Total Affection</b>	Private	3.37	2.626	.000	.993	Ho(ii)(C)accepted
	Public	3.36	2.476			
<b>Overall Need Score</b>	Private	18.05	6.204	12.798	.000	Ho(iii) rejected
	Public	16.62	6.168			

## Analysis, Results, and Discussion

From the Table 1 and list of histograms (Figures 1-6), it can be seen that sample distribution is highly skewed in the case of total need of inclusion (i.e.  $1.079 > 1$ ) as depicted in the Figure 3. Thus, it is positively skewed. On the other hand, the kurtosis value is also very high (i.e.  $1.532 > 1$ ) and it is positive kurtosis, which means that the distribution is leptokurtic in nature and has a thicker tail and sharper pick. Besides, we have slightly positively skewed distribution for the total expression (as in Figure 1), total wanted (as in Figure 2), total affection (as in Figure 5), and overall need score (as in Figure 6). Distribution is negatively skewed for total control (as in Figure 4). On the other hand, we have leptokurtic distribution for all the variables except total expression (as in Figure 1) and total affection (as in Figure 5). These two are platykurtic in nature. Overall, all mean and median are more or less equal to each other for each variable.

From the Table 2, it can be seen that *F*-value is significant in the case of total wanted, total inclusion, total control, and overall need score as all of these *p* - values are lesser than 0.05. Hence, private and public sector employees differ significantly in their total wanted need (private sector mean > public sector mean), total need for inclusion (private sector means < public sector mean), control (private sector mean > public sector mean), and with respect to the overall distribution of the interpersonal need (private sector mean > public sector mean). There lies no significant difference between the employees of private and public concerns regarding their total expression need and total need for affection.



**Table 3. Individual Needs of Private Sector and Public Sector Employees**

Characteristic behavior	Result		What it indicates
	Private Sector	Public sector	
<b>Expressed Inclusion (eI)</b> I make an effort to include others in my activities. I try to belong, to join social groups, and to be with others as much as possible.	2.35 Medium	2.50 Medium	The result suggests that the employees from both the sectors make an effort to be included in others' activity as well as to involve them in their activities, but these behaviors are noticeable characteristics only some of the time.
<b>Wanted Inclusion (wI)</b> I want other people to include me in their activities and to invite me to belong. I enjoy it when others notice me.	0.87 Low	1.13 Low	The result suggests that employees from both the sectors rarely want to be included in the activity of other people. They enjoy other people's attention very rarely. Thus, even though they sometimes display action so that people include them in a group (Medium eI), but in their mind, they don't want to be a part activity of other people ; rather, they prefer to invite other people.
<b>Expressed control (eC)</b> I try to exert control and influence things. I enjoy organizing things and directing others.	3.87 Medium	3.46 Medium	The result suggests that the employees from both sectors make an effort to control, influence, or dominate others and like to provide structured instructions and leadership to other groups, but these behaviors are noticeable characteristics only some time.
<b>Wanted Control (wC)</b> I feel most comfortable working in well-defined situations. I try to get clear expectations and instructions.	7.42 High	6.42 Medium	The result suggests that the private sector employees prefer to be instructed and work in a structured, well-defined environment ; whereas, public sector employees sometimes find it comfortable to work in an informal environment where they prefer to exert control and instructions to others only some of the time (Medium eC).
<b>Expressed Affection (eA)</b> I make an effort to get close to people. I am comfortable expressing personal feelings, and I try to be supportive of others.	2.07 Low	1.97 Low	The result suggests that employees from both the sectors don't feel comfortable in expressing their feelings, warmth, or affection towards others. Behaviors expressing affection are rarely displayed by them. This means that they hide their emotions.
<b>Wanted Affection (wA)</b> I want others to act warmly towards me. I enjoy it when people share their feelings with me and when they encourage my efforts.	1.56 Low	1.40 Low	The result suggests that employees from both the sectors don't even want others to be affectionate, or warm, or emotional towards them. They don't want to deal with their people's business. As they have both low eA and low wA, they have the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are task oriented and business like,</li> <li>• Feel uncomfortable with expressiveness or affection at work,</li> <li>• Enjoy privacy,</li> <li>• Don't get reassurance from others,</li> <li>• Largely prefer observing than participating,</li> <li>• Not very open about providing any reaction or opinion about workplace issues.</li> </ul>

**(1) Detailed Interpretation of FIRO- B Results by Private Sector and Public Sector in India :** The FIRO- B assessment measures interpersonal needs in three areas: inclusion, control, and affection. For each of the three interpersonal needs, the FIRO-B instrument also provides a measure of how much each need is expressed (the

extent to which one initiates action) or wanted (the extent to which one accepts that behavior from others) by an individual or a group of individuals.

According to Furnham et al.(2007) , senior managers prefer to exert control on others as they have to direct, delegate, lead, and take control (*eC*) rather than letting others control them (*wC*). In the present study, middle-level managers and supervisors were considered rather than senior-level managers. Thus, both in private and public sector organizations, managers showed more *wC* need than *eC* needs in the present study, as hierarchically, they are required to implement the instructions and strategies provided by upper-level managers or senior-level executives. Hence, they want to be given defined rules, regulations, and instructions rather than becoming a leader for being in control of the situation. Ancoin (1989) defined middle level managers as managers occupying a significant position in the organizational hierarchy under the senior executive authority and above the operational team. Some of their functions involve setting priorities for the operational management, establishing bond and support within and outside organizational stakeholders, as well as managing valuable organizational resources. They have multiple responsibilities but without proper authority on organizational strategic goals. Perhaps, when they get promoted to higher hierarchical order, their need dimension would play in reverse.

Furnham et al. (2007) also asserted that there is a good possibility of the senior managers to have low need for wanted inclusion (*wI*) than expressed inclusion (*eI*) as they are required to have constant interaction with stakeholder groups , though they have to keep themselves distant from them emotionally. By involving middle-level managers, the present research finding reflects the same result regarding the wanted and expressed need for inclusion as both private and public sector managers have lower *wI* need than *eI* need.

Dance (2011) rightfully reflected present job requirements of middle - level managers, which involves technical (including administration and checking compliance), strategic (including financial management and strategic communication), as well as people oriented tasks (including leading, motivating the subordinates and operational team). Hence, it can be said that though placed below senior-level executives, middle-level managers have to execute company strategies as a specialist ; have to meet conflicting demands of superiors, subordinates, and clients as well as labor unions while achieving the organizational goals. Thus, middle-level management in the present scenario can be considered at par with the senior-level management as per their job responsibilities or respective salary and packages (Dance, 2011).

Having a demanding job role, it has become a necessary competency for middle-level managers to have an effective communication or interaction pattern, especially the assertive one (Dance, 2011) with various stakeholders (including employees, clients, executive committees, labor unions) for smooth execution of the organizational planning. That is why, maybe, they have developed higher needs for *eI* than *wI* to maintain work-related relationships without any specific emotional attachment with stakeholders.

Furnham et al. (2007) also mentioned in their study that senior managers have a lower need for both wanted and expressed affection may be because of the necessity of keeping themselves from any personal engagement with employees at an emotional level. The present research finding again reflects the same findings as both private and public sector managers hold low *wA* and *eA* needs towards others in the workplace.

According to Hallier and James (1997), middle-level managers often find themselves in a dilemma while presenting interest of the employees as well as self to the senior executive committee. They have also asserted that while trying to protect self-interest in employment contract, middle-level managers often try to address subordinated employee issues in their own interest while disguising employee dissatisfaction outcome with various treatments (Hallier & James, 1997). Hence, middle level managers often try to curb their affectionate relationship with employees for the sake of organizational as well as self- interests. Maybe, that is why, in the present study, middle-level managers restricted themselves from wanting affectionate relationships with their subordinates or higher authority as well as from showing or expressing affectionate attitude towards them.

**(2) Overall Interpersonal Needs :** The indicator of the overall interpersonal needs is the total of all six individual

needs:  $(eI + wI + eC + wC + eA + wA)$ . This result represents the overall strength of the interpersonal needs; it shows how much an organization believes that other people and human interaction can help them attain their goals and achieve personal satisfaction.

The overall interpersonal need score of private and public sector employees is 18.05 and 16.62, respectively, both of which fall in the medium-low category. This suggests that :

- (i) Involvement of employees with others in both the sectors can cause satisfaction among them depending upon the people and context.
- (ii) They are most effective while working alone or sometimes with others only if the objectives are clear.
- (iii) Their work largely involves concentration on data or ideas rather than discussion or presenting their work to others.
- (iv) Employees of both the sectors consider themselves introvert rather than extrovert.

**(3) Total Expressed and Total Wanted Behaviors :** The total expressed score of private and public sector employees are 8.25 and 7.95, respectively, both of which fall in the medium category, which suggests that the extent to which they initiate an action or work proactively with others varies depending upon the context and the situation.

The total wanted score of private and public sector employees are 9.78 and 8.94, respectively both of which fall in the medium category, which suggests the extent to which they are comfortable being reactive to or reliant on others, and it varies depending exactly who they are and the context in which they work.

For both private sector and public sector employees, wanted needs are greater than expressed needs, which means they feel inhibited and dissatisfied when they don't get what they want from others, or sometimes, they grow attached to people who give them what they want.

**(4) Total Needs Scores :** The total need results reflect the overall strength of each need, or how much people seek to satisfy each of these needs in interpersonal situations, and how they will react in any interpersonal situation. The total needs of private-sector employees are 3.07, 10.96, and 3.37 for inclusion, control, and affection, respectively. As they have the highest need for control among all these three needs, they largely prefer to focus on understanding the order and structure of the situation, like who is in charge ; how decisions are made ; rules, policies, and work priorities. Overall, they will be more interested in organizational decision making and policy implementation rather than fitting in, making a new connection, or getting involved with other colleagues (as they have the lowest total need for inclusion). As inclusion and affection are the two lowest needs for these employees, they won't be much concerned about developing any warm relationships at the workplace or exchanging reactions, opinions with others, or including other colleagues in their process of decision-making, quarterly planning or goal setting meetings in the organization. As they have the highest need for control and the weakest need for inclusion, they would be most willing to give up a chance to be involved with other colleagues, taking their help or fitting into a clique or work group in an exchange for the opportunity to get more structure, clarity, and direction in their work.

The total needs of public sector employees are 3.62, 9.79, and 3.36 for inclusion, control, and affection, respectively. They display characteristics similar to those displayed by private sector employees as they also have the highest need for control among all the other total needs ; though it is lower than their private sector counterparts. The lowest total need of public sector employees is the need for affection, which means they will be least interested in building a trustworthy relationship at the workplace, or developing organizational commitment or loyalty to the work group. As they have the highest score for control and lowest for affection, they are the most

willing to give up a chance to get close to people if the situation provides them with the opportunity to have more clarity, structure, and direction in their work.

## Findings

(i) Private sector employees have significantly stronger needs for control than their public sector counterparts. So, they are more willing to take part in different decision-taking programs, implementation of various OD and HRD policies at the workplace. We can say they are more into direct employee participation strategy than their public sector counterparts.

(ii) Besides, private sector employees are significantly more inclined to working with other people and are also more reliable as well as reactive to other people's issues at the workplace than their public sector counterparts, though it is conditional on context and situation as they have stronger wanted needs. But as their expressed needs are lower than their wanted needs, they often find it difficult to convey their thoughts and visions to other members and can feel inhibition at times.

(iii) Private sector employees have significantly higher interpersonal needs than public sector employees, which means they are more interested in achieving goals by building strong interpersonal bonds with their colleagues. But their willingness to work in a group may vary depending on their personal likings and situational needs. On the other hand, public sector employees are more interested in fitting in, adjusting, and accommodating with other group members as they have a significantly higher need for inclusion than their private sector counterparts. Involvement with colleagues is more important for them than for employees from the private sector.

## Implications

Employees with a greater need to be a part of the management process with an aim to be loyal and committed team members are the greatest asset any organization has. The present research study gives us a glimpse of the dynamic world of the inner psyche of these employees (from private and public sector), where they hold their needs, expectations, desires, and demands from their work environment. It can help the manager to understand the causes of success and failure of various HR policies; managements can be better equipped with more effective decision making because they can frame these depending upon the expectation of the workers.

Identification of weaknesses of these work groups in terms of needs will also help managerial bodies implement various training programs for personality and soft skill development. Knowing employees better can in turn help business organizations reduce organizational conflict and attrition rate in this competitive environment. A detailed understanding of interpersonal need dynamics of middle-level managers can help them decide on the appraisal process for promoting them further. Thus, it can prove to be beneficial for the organization in the long run. This research study is a small attempt to provide a detailed description of the fundamental interpersonal needs distribution among different organizations of different sectors in India, and on this account, an effort was made to throw light on how they differ in their aspects of various interpersonal needs.

## Conclusion

As per the profile description, with reference to the interpersonal needs of private and public sector employees, there is not much difference as their scores fall in almost the same categories, but if we go by the analysis of variance interpretation, there are many instances where private sector employees hold stronger interpersonal

needs (except for total affection) than their public sector counterparts. This could be because of relaxations in HR policies, which are more employee oriented presently and which let them participate directly in organizational decision making. Not only this, presently, the private sector follows a new HRM concept, holding employees in a positive light, considering them as human beings rather than machines while ensuring their safety, security, earnings, and overall welfare instead of focusing on output of the job (Barla, 2011). These modifications in HR policies help private sector employees gain more satisfaction in the workplace by satisfying their interpersonal needs in the process.

## Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

This being a cross-sectional study, it was difficult to study the long-term impact of the variables on the sample over time. A single period of time from September 2015 to January 2016 was considered. The study was limited to only men respondents. While exploring the dynamics of interpersonal relationships across different types of sectors, the study could not focus on establishing the relationship of the present variable with other organizational variables such as organizational culture, leadership orientation, team performance, and personality of employees.

Further research in this field is always welcome as there is a dearth of research in this particular area. Interpersonal relationship dimensions across organizations having different mode of operations can be further explored. Above all, a sequential study can be done to explore the present variable among both men and women respondents while determining the impact of various individual related variables such as gender, age, and socioeconomic status of the employees on their relationship orientation at the workplace.

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