

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE DOMINANT
PERSONALITY TRAITS OF THE GENERATION Y AND
ITS IMPACT ON THE PERSONAL AND
PROFESSIONAL DOMAIN

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ABSTRACT

Many studies have been done on identifying the personality traits of Generation Y which is broadly categorized as the population born between 1980-2000. These studies found out that this generation is extremely smart, tech-savvy, confident, upbeat, open minded, creative, optimistic and independent, ideally suited for today's new corporations. They are excellent multi-taskers and prefer text-based communication styles through e-mail and text messages over face-to-face interaction, vastly different from preceding generations of generation Xs. They demand for a flexible working lifestyle and the freedom to develop and advance them- which shows that they are not intimidated by authority or afraid to speak up. They seek supervisors and mentors who are highly engaged in their professional development. Generation Y have a totally different approach towards their life and career as they prefer challenging and meaningful career and work environment. They are eager to learn and willing to try new pedagogical tools that engage their creative minds. In the light of the previous researches this paper attempts to validate these personality traits of the Gen Y for the selected sample of the population.

Keywords: *Generation Y, Personality, Personality Traits, Professional Domain.*

I) INTRODUCTION

We are living in a world where every girl wants to be a diva and every boy desires to be called a dude. Where malls have replaced the street-grounds of the past and childish pranks are substituted with emotional hiccups. A world where

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social acceptance is measured by your friends' list on a social networking site and your coolness by how many new gadgets you have in your wardrobe.

A rising and powerful work force of the 21st century is Generation Y (aged 15-29). This generation represents almost 25.5% of the world population (more than 70 millions). Generation Y are future oriented and opportunity driven and considered highly optimistic and restless. Raised in an era of rapid technological change, they expect opportunities for rapid advancement and more responsibilities at a younger age with highly technical devices. They expect competitive pay but with meaningful development opportunities. Generation Y is a diverse and inclusive generation that has been taught to collaborate and work in teams which is very important in the current global economy.

As per 2001 census the total population of Gen Y in India is 273.4 million which constitute 26.6% of the overall population. Out of this the total male population includes 141.8 million which accounts for 51.87% and female Gen Y population is 131.6 million which is around 48.13% of the total. It clearly shows that 1/4th of the population come under Generation Y. Within a decade the percentage of GenY population has nearly doubled which stands at around 50% of the total population as per the 2011 census. So, it becomes very important to study their characteristics and personality traits as they constitute a major chunk of the working population and their buying behavior and life style plays a critical role in the economic growth of our country.

II) LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researches have been conducted on Generation Y the generation born since 1982 to 2000 as the Millennials. In one of the preliminary study done by Megan E.Lodes in 2010 on *“are generation y (millennial) consumers brand loyal and is their buying behavior affected in an economic recession?”* the author tried to examine the concept of brand loyalty and the characteristics of the generation Y. There have been conflicting results regarding the Millennial Generation and their degree of brand loyalty. Using a sample of 68 undergraduate students, brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, and the effects of an economic recession on buying behavior were evaluated. Results suggest that college students are not brand loyal consumers, that there are no gender differences with regard to overall brand loyalty. The concept of brand loyalty has resulted in two conflicting theories. The first is that Millennials are not brand loyal consumers. The second is that Millennials are brand loyal consumers. Brands will become bigger than ever, as Millennials identify the idea of a big brand as being a return

to community. Millennials are loyal to brands whose products not only provide for the individual but also for the community as a whole (Beirne and Howe, 2008). Millennials are committed to a brand as long as it provides for their needs.

A study done by Phillips, Carol on *"Millennials"Clued in or Clueless?"* (2007) stated that Millennials believe themselves to be reasonable, price-oriented consumers who are not influenced by an attraction to a certain group of brands. Millennials value price and features as the most important attributes of a product, instead of brand name. Millennials want products that match their lifestyle or personality, which is why brand is of almost no importance.

In their study on *"Generation Gab"* (2008) Beirne, Mike, and Neil Howe discussed that Millennials make long-term plans, believing they are capable of accomplishing anything. While older generations lament the ever-increasing usage of technology by the Millennials, this technology is just a tool used by Millennials to fulfill their desire of being part of a community. Millennials are also considered to be sheltered and both expect and want rules to be clearly communicated and properly enforced.

In his study *"Embracing Gen Y"*, Ramanujam Sridhar, (2010) continues to mull over how older marketers can communicate with their young target audience, a different beast altogether. According to him the average Gen Y, if research is to be believed, changes its jobs an average of 29 times and the average time in one job is as long as 1.1 years.

"Mentoring Millennials" by Meister, Jeanne C wilyerd, Karie, in their Harvard Business Review Article, May 2010, Vol.88 Issue 5 , focused on that the Millennial **generation** is a socially aware group who want to be engaged with work that is fulfilling and purposeful and that they expect to feel successful in their work. The concept of microfeedback and its use in coaching employees is discussed. The microfeedback system, which was developed by executive Susan Hutt, is similar to that of a social networking company called Twitter. The characteristics that Millennials want a boss and a company to have and five things that Millennials want to learn are noted. Examples are given of group, anonymous, and reverse mentoring approaches.

Harvard Business Review, Nov 2010 Vol 88 In his article *"How Millennials' sharing Habits can benefit organizations: interaction"* by Andrew McAfee, discusses the sharing habits of members of the millennial generation (Generation Y), and how firms can harness these for the betterment of the organization. Millennials are very comfortable using social-networking Web sites, and with

the transparent and collaborative nature of these and other Web 2.0 media. For companies to benefit from this, they need to establish clear boundaries between personal and professional sharing, and they must also encourage older workers to participate in such media.

“*In Defense of Millennials*”, a study by Lublin, Nancy (2010) discusses about the reputation of Gen Y for being fickle and inscrutable in their behavior, and the strengths illustrated by millennials. The author states that millennials need to be exploited into using their stereotypical qualities in productive ways. The author notes the multitasking abilities of millennials and their management of multiple computer screens at the same time. Millennials and their sense of entitlement is said to make them self-confident and willing to accept responsibility.

III) OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the dominant personality traits of Generation Y with reference to Panvel Khandeshwar and Kamothe.
- To study the impact of their personality traits on the personal and professional domain.

IV) METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary as well as secondary data sources. The questionnaire method is used for primary data collection and internet, magazines articles etc. are the secondary sources of data collection. A sample of 200 respondents which includes working as well as non-working (students) was taken by convenience sampling technique from Panvel, Khandeshwar and Kamothe. Percentage method is applied for the analysis of data.

V) LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Geographical area selected for the study is Panvel , Khandeshwar and Kamothe.
- The study is based on the assumption that information provided by the respondents is true.

VI) DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Three major variables have been studied under the research. They are preference of life style, attitude towards career and dynamicity of personality. For the simplicity of research parameters like sources of entertainment, buying behavior

and brand consciousness have been included under preference of life style. Similarly, attitude towards career have been defined by parameters like factors influencing career preference, expectations from the organizations and factors influencing job considerations. Dynamicity of personality includes tools used for monetary transactions, social networking and communication with friends and relatives. Many other parameters can be grouped under each head but only the above mentioned parameters have been considered in the present context of the study.

A) Generation Y And Their Preferences Of Life Style

Table -2 in the paper discusses about the Preferences of Life style of Generation Y. As per the study 38% prefer watching TV& movie during their leisure time and 35% in hanging around with their friends. Only 7% spend in reading. But contrary to our assumption the study shows that only 7% spend in chatting and 13% in internet surfing (Fig. 1). This can be contributed to the limitation of the location chosen for the study. As the study is conducted in Panvel and near by areas which do not have an exposure to the fast lifestyle as compared to the rest of Mumbai, the results show lesser engagement in chatting and internet surfing. This indicates less accessibility towards technology in smaller towns.

They are young, smart, creative, optimistic, achievement-oriented and brash. They may wear flipflops to office or listen to iPods at their desk but prefers branded cloths as 64% buy branded cloths (Fig.2). Within this figure a majority of the respondents preferring branded cloths are males. This generation doesn't want to go place to place for shopping and prefer a place which is more than shopping and gives a complete experience of fund and frolic along with shopping. They go to the malls for shopping as 73% prefer malls. Only 27% go and buy from other shops or places (Fig.3). It is evident that the life style of the Gen Y not only depends upon their age but also depends on the social setup of the surroundings as well as the accessibility and availability of the newer avenues. The predominant population in Panvel follows a traditional outlook towards life leading to lesser exposure to the latest technology. Additionally, malls and big shopping complexes are also not available. All these lead to a lesser dynamic lifestyle of the Gen Y in these areas as compared to the rest of Mumbai.

B) Attitude Towards Career

Table -3 reflects the attitude of Generation Y towards their career. High expectations of self are the basic characteristics of this generation. They aim to

work faster and better than other workers. They want to achieve everything in a short span of time. Their attitude towards career is not like other generations. 69% said they have selected their career as per their interest whereas 14% got influenced by their friends. 17% took advice and guidance from their parents to select a particular career (Fig. 4). The results indicate that around 1/3rd of the sample population choose a career depending upon their interest. They are very confident and take decisions by themselves and are ready to face the risks involved.

They work for passion and livelihood 91%, social status 8% and other options 1% (Fig.5). The working environment of the Generation Y is a place they emotionally engage with, a space where they socialize in with other coworkers and a space which supports their health and well being. They have a strong internal locus of motivation which makes them highly self motivated. Passion and self belief drives them and they tend to become self depended at a very early age.

Their expectations are high growth and good opportunity in the organization 64%, good salary 29%, 7% prefers good working environment and conditions (Fig.6). This indicates that more than money they work for recognition and self development. They aim high and have higher expectations from life and they are ready to work hard and smart to achieve them. They are more individualistic in nature and crave for self identity and freedom.

C) The Dynamicity of Their Personality

Generation Y have very dynamic personality. This is a generation of multi-taskers, and they can juggle e-mail on their BlackBerry while talking on cell phones while trolling online. They believe in their own worth. Sociographically, they are at home with Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, texting, IM and other instant communication technologies giving them a reputation for being peer oriented and seeking instant gratification. Table -4 is on the Dynamicity of the Personality of generation Y and gives deviating results. As per the study no doubt they have social networking sites 80% and only 20% said they don't use any networking sites (Fig.7) and do chatting and all but still they prefer personal meeting with each other (46%). Generation Y is more inclined to technology and they find it easy. They prefer phones for communication purposes (34%) and even 20% of them use internet chatting to be in touch with friends and relatives (Fig. 8). They generally avoid the use of letters as a medium of communication. They don't prefer socializing in public parties and nor do they

believe in being the popular faces. All they are interested in is keeping in touch with their friends and others by using model tools like online communities, cell phones, Face book, my space, internet, etc.

For conducting their banking transactions, paying of bills etc. they prefer physical approach (70%) and use of internet is just 28% and rest (2%) use other methods like ATMs (Fig.9). It clearly shows that no doubt they are tech savvy and use technology but for their daily routine work and for other important works they prefer physical approach more than using technology.

The study shows somewhat **deviating results** regarding the dynamicity of the personality of Gen Y from the general trend. This can be contributed to the conventional socio cultural environment, lesser disposable incomes, lack of awareness and less technology orientation in smaller towns.

CONCLUSION

The overall approach of the gen Y towards life depends upon many factors like; locational factors, exposure to technology, economic environment, awareness, socio cultural environment, willingness towards change, and risk taking ability. This new cyber gens are used to the facebook and twitter way of life but still prefer being with friends and work for their family. They do understand their responsibility and give importance to high paying career with good growth. They go for branded cloths and prefer malls for their shopping destination as they don't want to waste their time. They are demanding and have little patience to go through the slow pace of life. Their attitude, high-performance and high maintenance level makes them more dynamic.

In the current research it was observed that Gen Y has majorly a dynamic personality with more individualistic approach towards life. In the personal domain they love to socialize, have a constant urge to improve their life style through upgraded buying behavior; and dynamic and innovative entertainment sources. Again their career decisions are motivated by personal interest and passion rather than opinions of friends and relatives, social status etc. They long for a vibrant work culture and high growth prospects followed by good salary, as against the previous generations who prefer stable and low risk job profiles. In the present study it was also found that in certain areas like; using technology for networking and communication; and technology oriented business transactions are very limited. This can be contributed to the lack of accessibility

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Table -1
Sample Characteristics

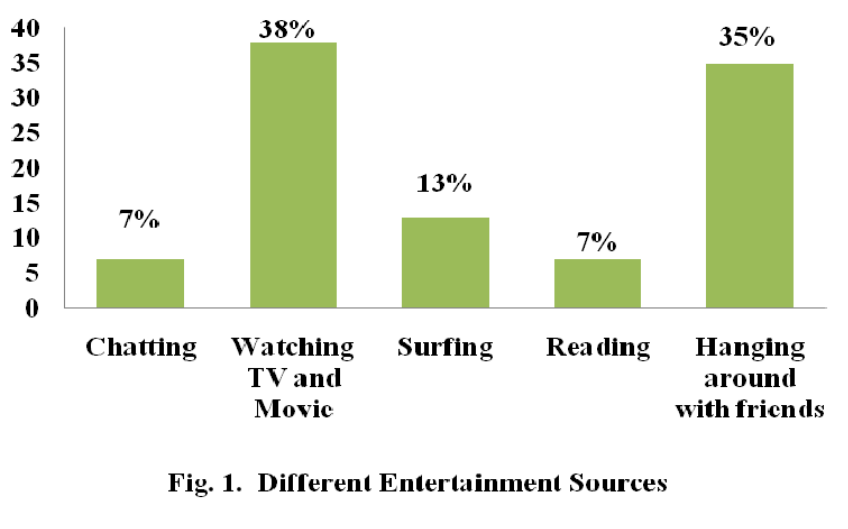
	Number (n=200)	Percent
1. Gender		

• Male	132	66%
• Female	68	34%
2. Age		
• 15-20	12	6%
• 21-25	103	51.5%
• 26-30	63	31.5%
• Above 31	22	11%
3. Educational Background		
• Matriculation	-	-
• Graduation	57	28.5%
• Post- graduation	137	68.5%
• Any other	6	3%
4. Occupation		
• Student	137	68.5%
• Self Employed	-	-
• Private service	63	31.5%
• Government Services	-	-
5. Income (per month)		
• Less then 15,000	131	65.5%
• 15,001 – 30,000	17	8.5%
• 30,001 – 50,000	40	20%
• Above 50,000	12	6%

Table -2

Preferences of Life Style

I) Different Entertainment Sources	Total No. N=200	Percent (%)
a) Watching TV	76	38
b) Chatting	14	7
c) Surfing	26	13
d) Reading	14	7
e) Hanging Around with Friends	70	35
II) Brand Consciousness		
a) Branded	128	64
b) Non- Branded	72	36
III) Preferences of Shopping Destinations		
a) Malls	146	73
b) Other Places	54	27



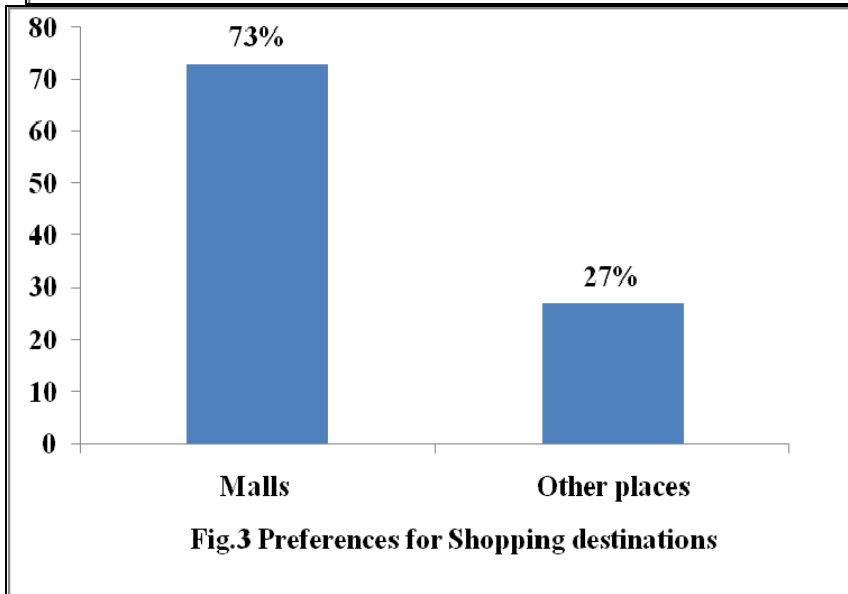
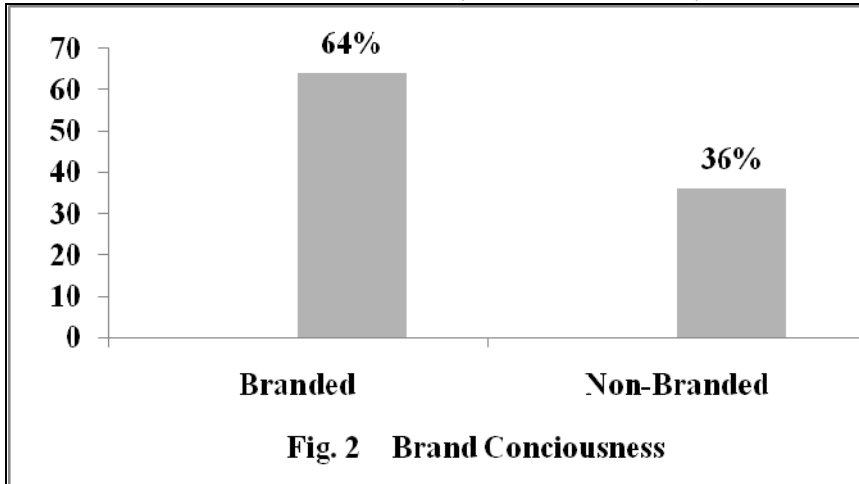
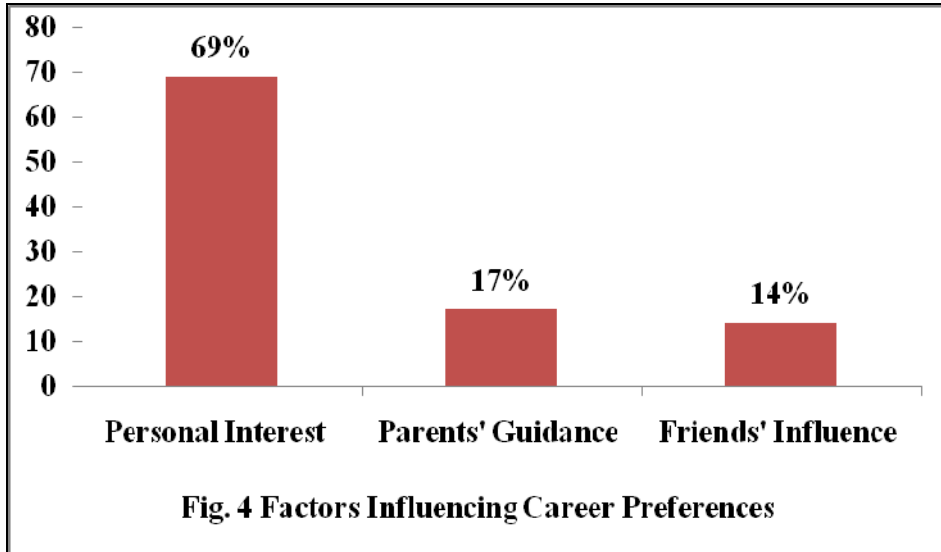


Table -3
Attitude towards Career

I) Factors Influencing Career Preferences	Total No. N=200	Percent (%)
a) Personal Interest	138	69
b) Parents' Guidance	34	17
c) Friends' Influence	28	14
II) Job Considerations		

a) Passion	182	91
b) Societal Status	16	8
c) All the reasons	2	1
III) Expectations from the Organizations		
a) Growth and Development	128	64
b) Good Salary	58	29
c) Good Working Environment & Conditions	14	7



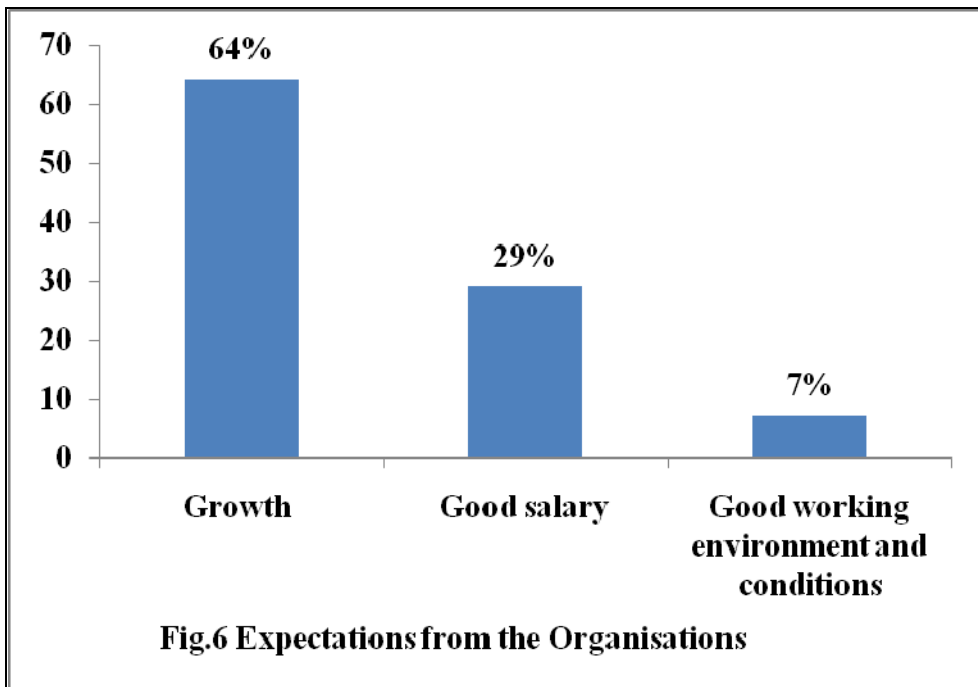
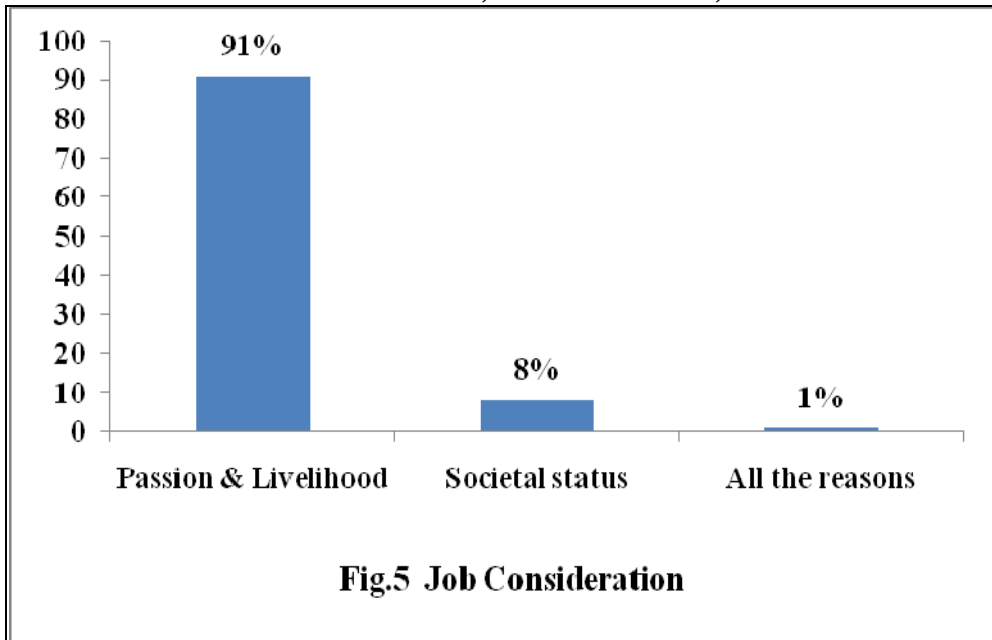
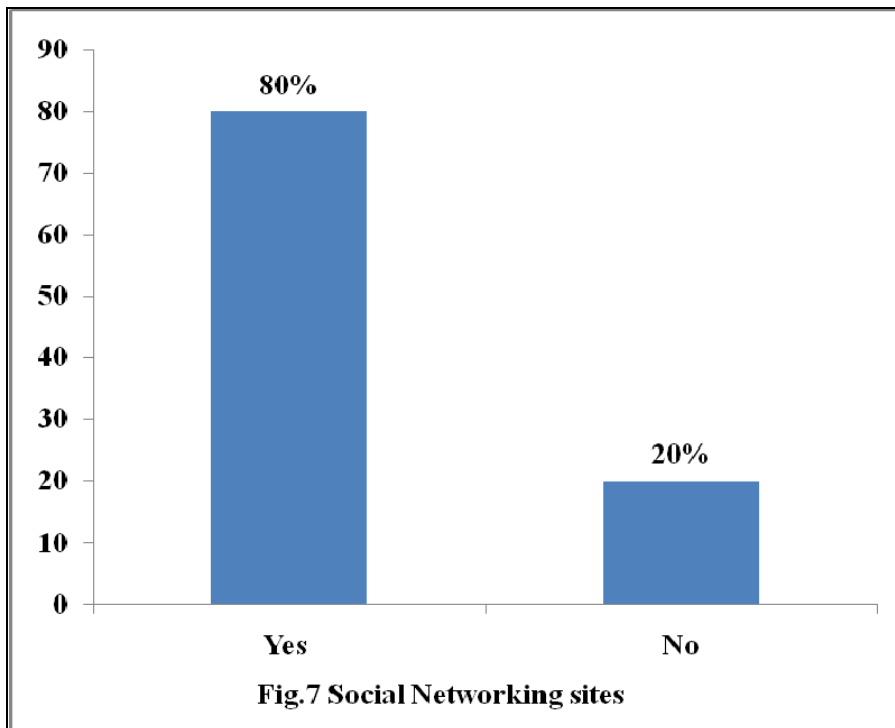
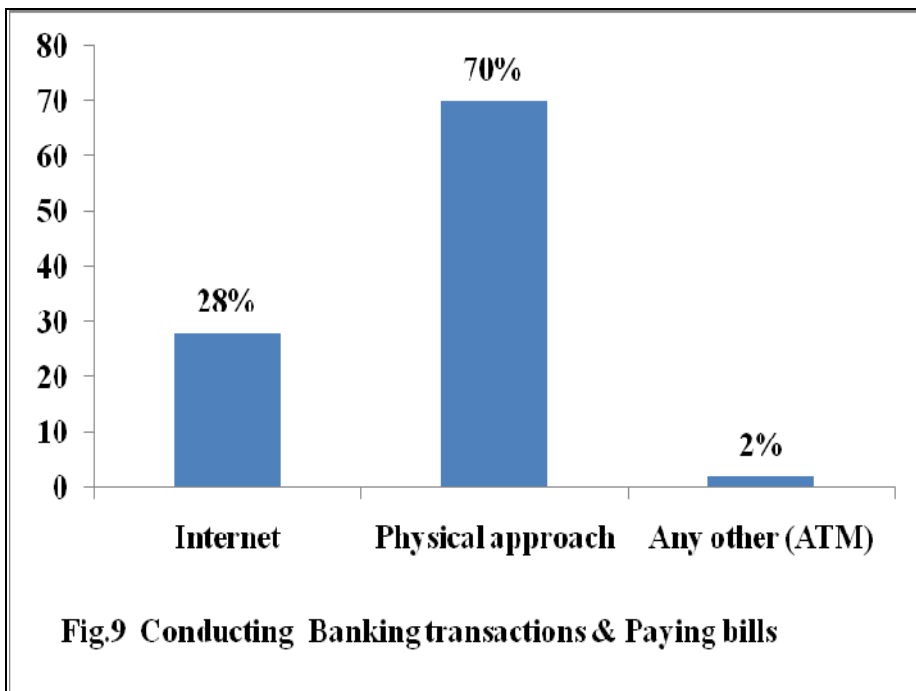
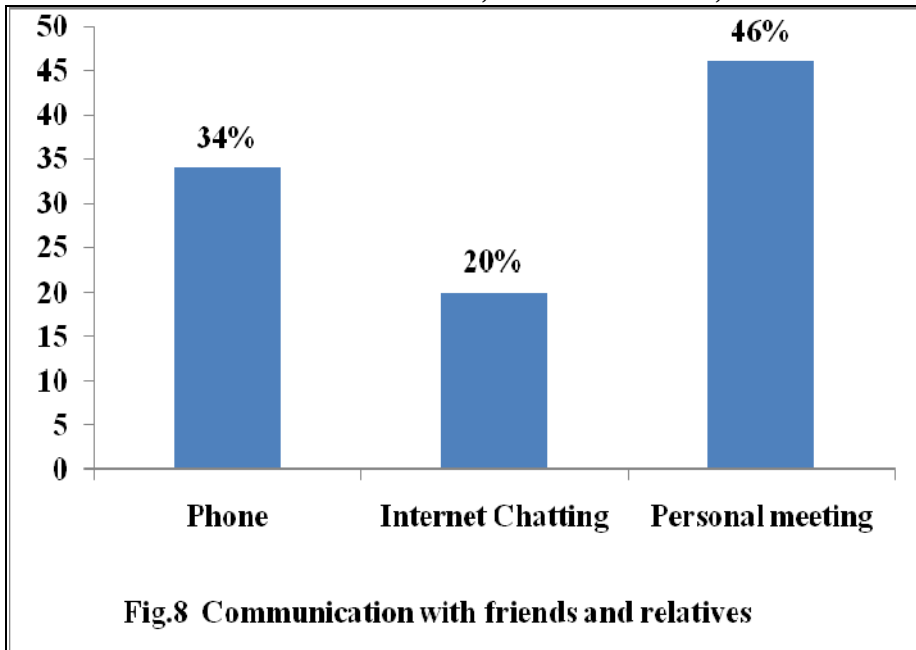


Table -4
Dynamicity of Personality

I) Societal Networking Sites	Total No. N=200	Percent (%)
a) Yes	160	80
b) No	40	20
II) Communication with Friends and Relatives		
a) Phone	68	34
b) Internet Chatting	40	20
c) Personal Meeting	92	46
III) Conducting Banking Transactions & Paying Bills		
a) Internet	56	28
b) Physical Approach	140	70
c) Any other (ATMs, etc.)	4	2





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