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PRESS RELEASE

USEN CORPORATION
transcosmos inc.
OTSUMA WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY

BGM reduces “depression” and “anger” associated with stress

transcosmos, USEN and OTSUMA WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY joint study on “The Effect of Background Music on Call Center Agents”

transcosmos inc. (Headquarters: Tokyo, Japan; President and COO: Masataka Okuda), USEN CORPORATION (Headquarters: Tokyo, Japan; President and Representative Director: Kimimasa Tamura), a member of USEN-NEXT GROUP, and OTSUMA WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY (Main Campus: Tokyo, Japan; President: Masanao Itoh) have conducted a joint study (the Study) to examine the effect of background music (BGM) on call center agents.

The Study revealed that BGM has a certain degree of positive impact in reducing call center agents' stress levels.

The details of the Study will be available to the public on USEN's website, “Music Space Design Lab (<https://usen.com/portal/otodesign/>)” where USEN offers information about the impact of sound.

<Methods and Results>

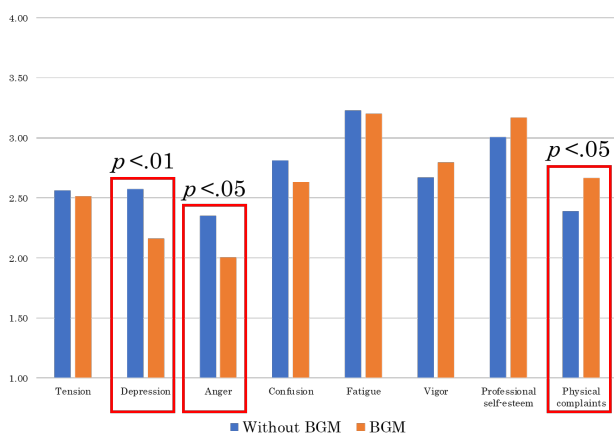
【Period】 : Observation period ① May 13th through June 12th, 2019
Observation period ② June 13th through July 12th, 2019

【Participants】: Call center agents working at transcosmos call centers
(Observation period ① 167 agents Observation period ② 159 agents)

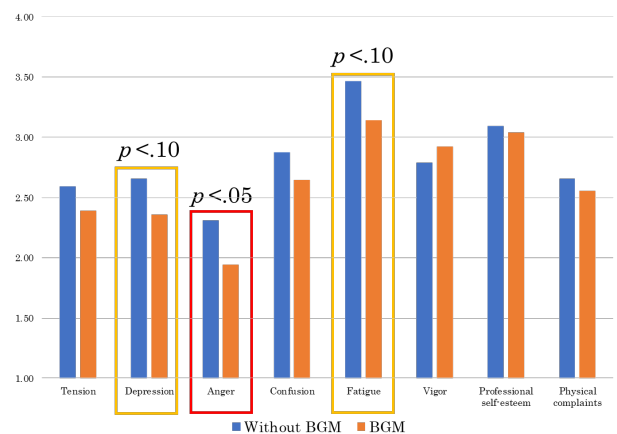
【Methods】: In this Study, participants of both observation periods worked under the two different types of work environment (one with BGM and the other without BGM). Participants were asked to fill out a written feedback questionnaire to assess their temporary mood scale (“excited,” “lethargic,” etc.), professional self-esteem (“my job is fulfilling,” “my job contributes to society,” etc.) and physical complaints (“tired eyes,” “backache,” etc.) under each work environment. The results were used to examine if any differences can be found in their stress level, feelings and self-esteem, etc.

【Results】: The questionnaire results of participants of both observation period ① and ② showed that measured values of depression and anger were lower under the condition with BGM than the condition without BGM, and the variance was statistically significant. A positive correlation was observed between the participants' feelings and their professional self-esteem, which indicated that professional self-esteem may improve when negative feelings are reduced due to the effect of BGM.

Period ①



Period ②



【Comments received from Professor Hiroki Ogyu, Associate Professor Hiromoto Hori and Associate Professor Shuji Honda, Faculty of Human Relations at OTSUMA WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY】

The same results were observed in both observation periods. Based on the fact that there was almost no bias in gender, age and length of service between the two groups, the Study suggests that BGM could have a certain positive impact on negative feelings such as depression and anger. With regard to fatigue and physical complaints, the Study did not show the same results from the two observation periods, which indicates that factors other than music sound influence such feelings. The Study we conducted this time was based merely on a written based self-assessment. We expect that further studies on the effects of BGM using additional indexes such as physiological and job performance indexes will reveal the factors that will increase agents' motivation and will improve call center work environment which currently tends to cause high levels of stress on agents.

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