



SELF-ACTUALIZATION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: ETHNOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

As per the data, India is ranked 5th in the world, when it comes to GDP growth rate. With the growing economy and globalization, higher education in India is certainly facing a paradigm shift. With growing service industry, Undergraduate Bachelor Programs in Commerce have become hub of job providers. Accordingly, the students' behavior and vigor is much better than what it was two decades ago. Self-actualization is the key motivating factor in the behavior of students. The purpose of this research is to identify the relationship between self-actualization and academic performance of undergraduate students. A sample of 100 students were analyzed based on ethnographical, exploratory and empirical research methods. The students were required to take the self-actualization test. The findings of the research suggest that there is a positive correlation between students who obtained higher grades and their self-actualization level. It was also found from the ethnographical study that the participants with high self-actualization were actively involved in Co-curricular activities as compared to the participants with lower self-actualization.

KEYWORDS : India, Commerce, Bachelor Program, Academic Performance, Self-actualization

INTRODUCTION

"The majority of those who are self-actualized are the intellectuals, the researchers and the scientists "as stated by Maslow in his book "Motivation and personality, 1954." Researchers, intellectuals and the scientists have been known for possessing a higher level of awareness of the concept of self-actualization and have been known to be more self-actualized than others. Is it because they have the vigor to perform better among their peers? Is it because they wanted to understand the concept deeper? This study reviews the concept of self-actualization. Researchers find a correlation between self-actualization and zeal to perform well in academics. It further investigates the levels of motivation behind excelling in Examination. Why is that few students perform better than the other? Apart from cognitive skills and other genetic and biological factor is their academic performance affected by "self- actualiz ation".

What a man can be, he must be. This forms basis of the perceived need for self-actualization. This level of need pertains to what: a person's full potential is, and realizing that potential. Maslow describes the desire as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming. Is it because their motivation to a be in a better job or their ability to identify the right career path made them score better marks? Or is it because they are self-actualized they score better marks? Or is it simply because their teachers and parents have motivated them to be a more self-actualized person?

" Self-actualization is the state of ultimate psychological health in which the latent potentialities, talents and competencies of the self are made actual in the continuing process of unfolding. "Self-actualization is the need present in everyone but only a few are able to tap their potential. It is very rare to find self-actualization among individuals who are focused on attaining only their basic needs. Self-actualized people have the drive to think beyond their basic needs and to truly understand their potential. The term "self-actualization" is the keystone to this research paper. Unless one unfolds the meaning of self-actualization, he would not be able to start the process of self-actualization.

Yes, the level of self-actualization would be much higher in a researcher or a spiritual leader but this paper is trying to find the relationship between better academic performance and the students' level of self-actualization.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Kamath *et.al*, 2015 in their research paper examined the relationship between religiousness and self-actualization. The tool used was personal data collection based on 8 items that assessed the extent of religiousness attitudes and behaviors.
2. Irena *et.al*,1999 opines that gifted students who have strong sense of self-actualization achieve high results in the field of creative intellectual attitudes. Self-realization questionnaires were given to 140 young people aged between 16-17 in a high school in Poland. The questionnaire measures a generalized sense of control in young people in school. This test investigates attitudes, motivations, interests, values & other personality traits. The results of the study confirm the correctness of hypothesis.
3. Greene *et.al*,2007 in their research paper seek to accomplish 4 tasks: - to provide an orderly introduction that briefly summarizes a typology of motivation theory, to elaborate on Maslow's early theory, to introduce the work of Maslow that transcends his 1943 model and proposes a modification to that model and to discuss the managerial implication of that model. Self-actualization may be commonly misunderstood as a focus on self and as the last level of Maslow's hierarchy. This article is an amplification and affirmation of what it appears Maslow intended. That is movement from self to other.
4. Donovan *et al*,2006 examined the theories and conflicts in opinion of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. They conducted individual experiments on groups of people to condense the steps to self-actualization. Their research identified 8 ways in which people can achieve self-actualization.
5. Karnes *et.al*,1990 studied self-actualization of intellectually gifted youth through administration and data analysis of reflection of self by youth, a self-actualization measure. Scores for boys and girls were similar and more like those of bright youth of a prior study than like those of the subjects of normal intelligence.
6. Ginsberg *et.al*,1998 present the six steps to attaining self-actualization which they believe to help one's self-esteem to skyrocket. On analyzing works of famous self-actualized people and understanding their characteristics the authors could identify the six steps towards self-actualization.
7. McAlindon *et.al*,1981 opine that the current education system lacks the need to enhance the creativity in people. Many education systems make people go through life doing things they were not meant to do, never finding their niche. They opine that education in the future must focus on expanding creativity by concluding some aspects to be included in the education system in the future.
8. Silvia *et.al*,2013 suggest that a manipulation of conscious self to standards had the same self-regulatory effects. Two experiments were conducted which manipulated attention to

self with subliminal first-name priming. People were asked to complete a computer based task after being instructed that the standard was to be fast or to be accurate. The findings were that when told to be fast, self-focused people made more mistakes and had faster response. When told to be accurate, they made fewer mistakes. The findings suggest that comparing self to standards can occur automatically and that it is attention to self, not awareness of the self per se, that evokes self-actualization.

9. Gordon *et al*, 2004 opine that the 24 goals that comprise motivational systems theory (MST) helps performers to succeed. MST offers a more practical and systemic approach to understanding the relationship between goals, emotions and personal agency beliefs of performers. A group of employees were taken as subjects to prove the hypothesis.
10. Nedra *et.al*, 2006 argues that although Maslow saw the need for future, he initially viewed his pursuits to convince and teach himself rather than to prove and demonstrate to others. It also examines the Maslow's belief that self-actualized people are not perfect and that they too make mistakes.
11. Eleanor *et.al*, 1997 investigated the difference between the level of self-actualization among men and women. In this study research was conducted between Ivy league men and university of Michigan women who resided in the Martha cook dormitory from 1950-1970. The research concluded that men did not progress to actualization of their talent whereas self-actualized twice as compared to men. Moreover, three times as many women were considered accomplished as compared to men. A second part of the study compared two groups of the MC women to each other for difference between groups which might help explain why some women self-actualized in adult life while others did not.
12. Mario *et.al*, 2008 aim to develop a self-actualizing spirituality model. It examines the place of self-actualization in the experience of workplace of 13 Sri Lankan business leaders. Qualitative tradition and case study method, data triangulation was used to analyze the data. The findings of this paper suggest that self-actualizing work arrangements offer a way to implement inclusive workplace spirituality, devoid of the challenges usually associated with it.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is based on Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualization. This is an empirical, qualitative and ethnographical research. Ethnography permits researcher to explore the nature of social phenomenon by observing and experiencing it as a participant in the place it is occurring. Through this process the researcher acquires enough tacit knowledge to understand what the participants experience as meaningful and important. Ethnography is ideal for working with unstructured data and the analysis of data that involves explicit interpretations of meanings and functions.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:

- To understand the levels of self-actualization in undergraduate students.
- To examine the theories and conflicts in opinion of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
- To understand whether Academic performance of undergraduate students is only to get jobs.
- To investigate the difference between the level of self-actualization among men and women.

HYPOTHESIS:

The hypothesis was formulated based on pilot study with twenty participants.

H₀: Self-actualization has no positive influence on academic performance.

H₁: Self-actualization has positive influence on academic performance.

H₂: There is no impact of gender on relationship between self-actualization and academic performance.

H₂: There is an impact of gender on relationship between self-actualization and academic performance.

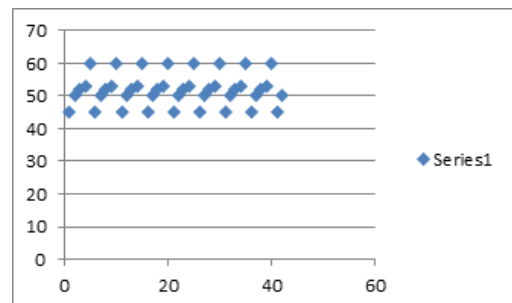
Source of data: 100 students of under-graduate program of commerce faculty were selected. Self-Actualization test was administered on these students. A questionnaire prepared by mind-mastery was used for this purpose. Further, the researchers spent time with these participants to understand whether the awareness of the concept of self-actualization brings any behavioral difference in the participants as a tool. Co-relation is used to find the relationship between self-actualization levels of students and academic performance.

RESULT ANALYSIS

Out of 100, 58 participants have shown the traits of higher self-actualization and 42 participants have shown the traits of lower self-actualization. Researcher used excel as a computing tool for analyzing the data. The scatter plots - A and B give an overview of relationship between self-actualization and academic performance. Academic performance was considered based on participants' aggregate percentage of first and second year undergraduate programme.

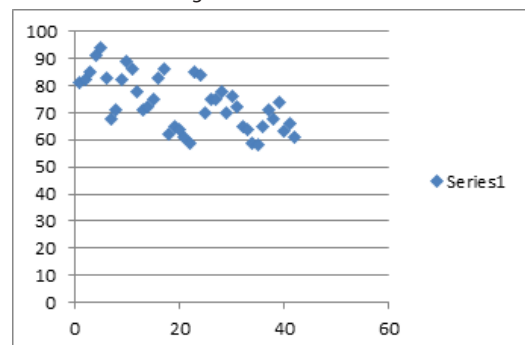
Scatter Plots –A

Result of students with Lesser Self-Actualization



The above graph verifies the relationship between self-actualization and marks scored. Ethnographically it was observed that these participants have shown relatively less interest in other co-curricular activities. It was also found that teachers consider these students as fast learners. In spite their ability to grasp and understand the concepts, their academic performance remained low.

Result of students with higher Self-Actualization



The above figure shows examples of what various correlations look like, in terms of the strength and direction of the relationship, an improvement in the marks scored can be observed. Further the table below gives the overview of co-relation.

Table 1: Representation of the relationship between self-actualization and marks scored

Correlation	
Dependent Variable	Marks of Students
Independent Variable	Self-Actualization
<i>r</i>	0.35

The value of $r = +0.35$, which proves the existence of uphill positive linear relationship between self-actualization and marks obtained by students.

$$r = \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where N = Total No. of students,
X = Marks of Students with high self-Actualization
Y = Marks of Students with Low Self-Actualization

Researcher also conducted an ethnographical study by observing the participants. It was found that the students having high self-actualization have enrolled more in certificate programs and other co-curricular activities as compared to participants of lower self-actualization. The students with high self -actualization also participated in social responsibility initiatives and contributed in various philanthropic initiatives of the institution. It was further observed that participants with high self-actualization + excelled in professional courses like CS, CA, ACCA and CIMA.

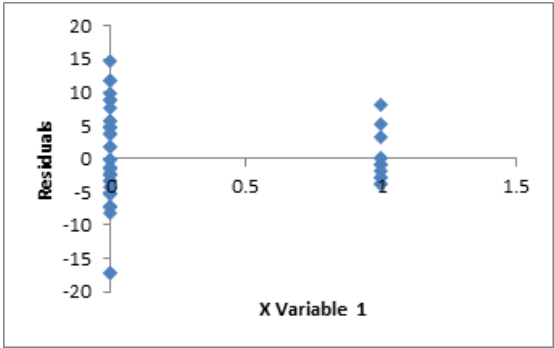


Figure 3: Residual Plot based on Gender: Marks Scored with High Self-Actualisation

It is that girl students have scored marks greater than the Mean value whereas Boys' marks were spread across the mean value.

Table 2: Positive Impact of Gender with high self-actualization on Marks scored

Regression Statistics	
Independent Variable	Marks
Dependent Variable	Gender
Multiple R	0.786034937
R Square	0.617850923
Adjusted R Square	0.611026832
Standard Error	6.352778121
Observations	58

Female students are 61% ahead in scoring marks than male students.

Table 2

Marks Scored by students with High Self-Actualisation	
Mean	70.29310345
Standard Error	1.337487921
Median	68
Mode	65
Standard Deviation	10.18600454
Sample Variance	103.7546884
Range	45
Minimum	49
Maximum	94

The average marks scored by high self-actualized students is 70% , Where 94 is the highest percentage scored and 49% is the lowest.

Table 3

Marks Scored by students with Low Self-Actualization	
Mean	51.78571429
Standard Error	0.7601697
Median	52
Mode	45
Standard Deviation	4.926462711
Sample Variance	24.27003484
Range	15
Minimum	45
Maximum	60

The average marks scored by Low self-actualized students is 51% , Where 60 is the highest percentage scored and 45% is the lowest

Table 4

Marks Scored & High Self Actualisation ANOVA as per Gender			
Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Test Stats	P-Value
Gender	Marks	70.71798068	0.000

Gender has significant influence on marks scored as p-value is < 0.05

DISCUSSION:

Self-actualization has a definite impact on academic performance. Survey and the statistical analysis proves the statement. Further, the Ethnographic Study reveals that the high Self-actualized students are more attentive, focused and creative in their curricular and co-curricular assignments.

One important part to the discussion of the findings of the study of women, is an examination of why these women outperformed men. The difference in the Academic performance of Men and Women in India could have occurred because of the way they are culturally brought up in India. Moreover, the Women students were chosen based on their willingness to participate in the survey.

FUTURE STUDY:

In the developing nation like India, with the stable family structure & the Socio-Economic background the students studying in private higher education institutions are by and large well protected by parents. Perhaps these students also are satisfied with the hygiene, safety, belonging and esteem needs. Researcher would like to probe in her future studies, the impact of these socio-economic & family background on self-actualization.

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