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A Study of Self-Actualization among High Education Students in Sultanate of Oman

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Abstract

The concept of self-actualization has been addressed for almost a century and the first one to deal with this concept was Kurt Goldstein (1939), in order to achieve the individual's potential and in an integrated manner, he reported that Self-realization is the tendency to achieve individual abilities. Then Abraham Maslow designed his pyramid needs which includes five levels, the level of self-actualization is on the top of his pyramid.

The objectives of current study were to find the differences in self-actualization of males and females, who are studying in higher education institutions, to find differences in self-actualization among higher education students based on specialization, and finally, to find differences in self-actualization among higher education students based on the education levels in Sultanate of Oman. The first hypothesis focused on "there are no significant differences between males and females who are studying in higher education institutions" and the second hypothesis focused on there is "no significant difference in self-actualization among higher education students based on the education levels" while the third hypothesis focused on "there are no significant differences in self-actualization at high education students based on specialization in Sultanate of Oman". The descriptive survey method has been used in the present study and according to the nature of the study it self the researcher used stratified sampling technique to select the sample of 300 students (150 males, 150 females) from A'Sharqiyah University in Ibra city in Oman.

In a current study, the researcher used a self-application measure which was prepared by Jones and Crandall (1986) to determine the results of the analysis.

The findings of the current study showed that male and female students who are studying in higher education did not differ in their self-actualization. It means the male is not superior to the female. Also, the findings showed that senior students have a higher level of self-actualization compared to junior students. Finally the third result of the study showed that specialization affects the level of self-actualization among students in high education in Al Sharqiyah Governorate in Sultanate of Oman.

At the end of the present study, the researcher proposes a number of recommendations and suggestions that benefit teachers and those interested in higher education in Oman or outside Oman, which will increase and contribute to the level of self-actualization among students in higher education.

Keywords: *Self-actualization, Maslow pyramid, self-actualization and higher education students.*

Introduction

The psychology of the nurturing environment is the birthplace of many psychological and subjective terms, including the term self-actualization. Kurt Goldstein was the first to introduce this term, which means how to achieve the individual's full potential. Examples of self-actualization are the individual's search for spiritual enlightenment and creating knowledge as well as striving to serve the community and humanity.

Abraham Maslow is the person responsible for highlighting the concept of self-realization through his famous theory on the hierarchy of human needs. Maslow (1943) established a special pyramid for human needs, starting from the basic necessities such as food, water and air and ending this pyramid in the quest for the concept "self-actualization."

According to Maslow's point of view, the individual seeks to meet his various needs, and always goes on and on, ie, toward self-realization, in particular. The concept of self-realization refers to the desire to become more than he/she is now, that is, to exert all ones abilities and energies into what one can become. In other words, how to improve oneself in one's public life and also how to use one's various abilities and talents in different aspects of life.

Maslow's pyramid of needs hierarchy indicated five levels of needs as following:

The physiological needs: These needs are the air, food and water and the person whose needs are not satisfied will be overstated when he/she has the opportunity to do so, a good example of this is when a poor man turns into a rich man, he spends most of his money on food and drinks excessively.

Safety needs: After satisfying the physiological needs, human beings search for safety needs that are: physical safety and staying away from violence work environment safety, as well as psychological security in the family and health.

Belonging Needs: After satisfying both the physiological needs and safety, the person has a desire to achieve the social needs represented in the following: emotional relations and access to love and good

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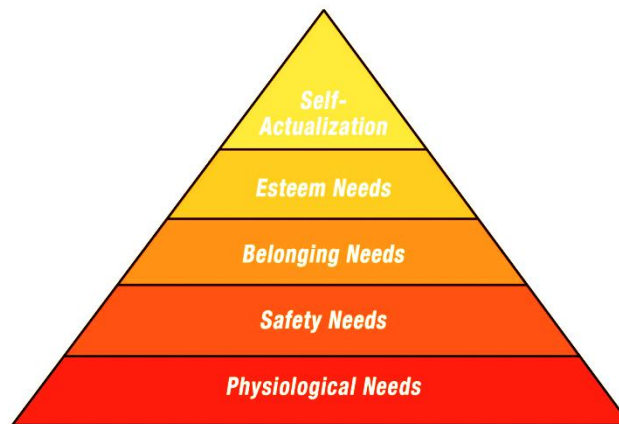
family relations. It's the ability of a person to gain friends and his/her desire to belong to large groups such as religious groups, sports teams and professional organizations.

Esteem Needs: Maslow believes that it is necessary for a human to feel that he/she is an important person which is reflected in the society and also to gain the respect and appreciation of the community. Among the factors explained by Maslow, which contribute to the assessment of the person one can point out good reputation, fame and success.

Self-actualization: On the top of the pyramid, Maslow assumed that the best and noblest needs are the individual's need to achieve their own self, so Maslow called it higher needs. These needs are achieved by maximizing the individual's use of his/her current and potential abilities and skills to achieve maximum achievements. Figure (1) illustrates Maslow's pyramid of humanitarian needs.

Figure (1)

Maslow's pyramid of humanitarian needs



Maslow believes that without meeting the lowest need, the next need cannot be met. A human who has no food and drink cannot search for social affiliation until he/she has food and water. This is considered as the basic needs of human in general.

The Concept of “Self Actualization”

The philosophy of human education begins in the development and preparation of the individual in all aspects of his/her development, whether physical, mental, social or psychological, so that he/she becomes a harmonious and comprehensive personality, not limited to this extent, but goes beyond to develop his/her abilities and skills, so that the person is ready to face life.

Through the reasonable and optimal exploitation of human abilities, education seeks to achieve the perfection of life, the ultimate goal of education itself.

The child is born with instinctive motives and powers. These instincts and innate motivations are supposed to direct the child towards improving and developing his/her potential talents and abilities.

Therefore education supports a person to become every thing that he/she is gifted to as education reveals what is within an individual. Therefore, the knowledge of humans in achieving their goals of self and the exploitation of different abilities and possessing diverse talents is the real goal of education. Therefore, Abraham Maslow proposed his famous theory of human needs and put these needs in a hierarchical order. Maslow explained that satisfying the need at the lowest level comes first and then satisfies the need that follows and thus reaches the human needs that rise at the top of the pyramid which he named "Self-actualization".

Maslow has defined self-actualization as the capability of an individual to perform in the most competent and intensive pleasant style and as well a period where an individual is fully integrated.

Norwood's (1999) proposal that the hierarchy of Maslow's human needs can be used to describe the types and forms of information that human seeking while he/she is in the process of the developing. It is noticeable in human behavior and at the lower levels (Ex. physiological need) they are endeavor to deal with information to meet the basic needs only while the information which are not meet their needs, it will left without follow-up within a short period of time. People in the security phase need information assistance, because at this stage they are seeking, in accordance with their vision, how to achieve security for themselves.

Authorizing information is examined through individuals at the esteem level. People are looking for information on how their personalities can be developed. As a final point, individuals in the development levels of intellectual, aesthetic, and self-actualization seek for different information such as enlightening information, which helps the individual to promote himself/herself in terms of knowledge, cultural and scientific (Huit, 2007).

Attitude towards problems

A person who has a high self-fulfilment character is spontaneous in his behavior and thinking and usually people do not tend to play roles or wear masks to persuade others to do so, or to feel disabled or restricted by their thoughts, feelings and behavior. These people are not afraid to think or believe what others might think about them but that their actions are often spontaneous and they are not restricted in their behavior.

Self-actualization inspiration contains rather a common spirited attitude to problem-solving and expressiveness about self which presumes that the traditional approach to do it is not necessarily the best approach.

This approach can be applied in various fields, whether intellectual, scientific or even philosophical, and this shows in the tasks of our daily lives such as cleaning, walking and other activities. Humans are not concerned about some apparent limitations, or for some inadequacies which they are not able to change or modify. A good example of this is the age or nature of the weather but when they face certain contradictions in their lives, this will lead to feelings which are unpleasant and anxious is one of the most important characteristics of people who seek to achieve their self-actualizations stability. They have a high ability to distinguish between positive and negative actions also have the ability to distinguish between means and ends. They have a consistent and disciplined system of personal values that helps them to be unbiased in decision-making, in addition to having a high capacity to solve various problems, either in the uncertainty of their knowledge in solving the problem; they usually resort to postponing the decision and giving themselves more opportunity to make the appropriate decision.

Overall the attitude of people with high self-actualization is that they are patient in carrying things that are immutable and have the courage to change attitudes and events that are able to change.

Social reciprocal action

People who seek self-actualization are characterized by a relationship with others and their surrounding community through their own autonomy.

They make decisions based on themselves, without the need to refer to or rely on the opinions of people in the community or depend on precise people and also they do not rely on their decisions on the values and norms prevailing in culture of society.

In addition, these people are self-reliant, have a tendency towards privacy and independence and they have their own view of the culture of their society. For example, they do not live up to the values and customs of their society, despite showing their respect for these customs, values and social norms.

In addition to this, self-actualization people have a general orientation towards empathy with humanity in general, friendly with everyone regardless of their religion, skin color, race, age, or thinking. They (self-actualization people) are ready to learn from these groups either was the young or old age, educated or uneducated, close to him or away from him and so on.

As for their personal relationship, self-actualizers are seeking to establish personal relationships that are profound with others. Their choice is often selective, especially with the people they relate to, so that they prefer the companions or the group which allows them to be natural or unstructured.

Importance of the Study

The Maslow pyramid is considered one of the most important topics for many researchers and interested parties. A number of researches and studies have been carried out on the Maslow pyramid, which have been applied to managers, supervisors and consultants and have been applied to school students, but the application to higher education students in the Sultanate of Oman almost rare.

In study of Baliya (1992), the researcher examined the extent of self-actualization of pre-service teachers in relation to social factors, economic situation and intelligence; he found that the intelligence factor greatly affects the level of self-actualization whereas the level of self-actualization did not influence the social life or economic life of pre-service teachers.

It should be noting the role of reward and punishment in self-actualization, where studies have shown that a person with a high level of self-actualization is fully aware that the system or other people will determine the extent of success in the performance of the task, while a person with a low self-actualization will recognize that completely different. These differences are due to differences in cognitive abilities and self-actualization.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher directed this study under topic: “A Study of Self-Actualization among higher education students in Sultanate of Oman.”

Objectives of the Study

- To find differences in self-actualization of males and females who are studying in high education in Sultanate of Oman
- To find differences in self-actualization in higher education students based on specialization.
- To find differences in self-actualization in higher education students based on their education levels.

Hypotheses of the Study

H1: There are no significant differences between males and females who are studying in high education in Sultanate of Oman in self-actualization.

H2: There are no significant differences in self-actualization in higher education students based on their education levels.

H3: There are no significant differences in self-actualization in higher education students based on specialization.

Study Tool

For the current study, the researcher employed Self-Actualization Measurement by Jones and Crandall (1986) for collection data to higher education students in Sultanate of Oman.

Statistical Techniques

In the current study the researcher was interested in the study of self-actualization among higher education students belonging to the Al Sharqiyah in Sultanate of Oman. The researcher chose the method of critical ratio as one of the statistical advantages associated with the nature of the current study and also to achieve the objectives of the study.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms

1. Self-Actualization:- It is the person's aptitude to act in a predominately effective and pleasant manner; it is a stage in which a person will be more integrated and less withdrawn. The researcher recorded the results after the application of the Self-actualization measurement by Jones and Crandall (1986) to higher education students in Al Sharqiyah Governorate in Sultanate of Oman.

2. Higher Education Students: - In the current study, 'higher education students' means the students who are studying at Al Sharqiyah University in Sultanate of Oman and from various disciplines, both male and female.

Data analysis and interpretation

The questionnaire was applied to the sample of the current study represented by the students of Al Sharqiyah University in Sultanate of Oman and at the different levels and disciplines available in the University. The results were as follows:

Regarding to the first objective in current study; the results showed there was no statistically significant difference in self-actualization of male and female students who are studying in high education in Al

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Sharqiyah University. In other words, there are no statistically significant differences in gender, whether male or female. The critical ratio came out to be (0.14) which was less than result which are mentioned in the table (1) value. It means male and female students who are studying in high education did not differ in their self-actualization; therefore and table (1) shows the mean scores of self-actualization among male and female students in high education in Al Sharqiyah Governorate in Sultanate of Oman.

Table (1)

The mean scores of self-actualization among male and female students in high education in Al Sharqiyah Governorate

Category	Mean	S.D.	C.R	Level Significance
Male	154.5	39.9	0.14	Not significant
Female	158.3	46.2		

Consequently; the first hypothesis (H1) was accepted which states there are no significant differences between males and females who are studying in higher education in Al Sharqiyah Governorate in self-actualization.

As for the second objective, the results of the current study have shown there are no statistically significant differences in self-actualization among higher education students based on the education levels. The critical ratio appear to be 0.39 which was less than the table value of 1.92 at 0.05 levels so, it was found significant.

It means junior students in high education did not differ in their self-actualization. It means null hypothesis was accepted which indicate that there are differences of statistical significance in self-actualization among higher education students based on the education levels. Table (2) illustrates the mean scores of self-actualization of Junior and senior students studying in high education in Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

Table (2)

The mean scores of self-actualization of Junior and Senior Students Studying in high Education

Category	Mean	S.D.	C.R	Level Significance
Junior Students	151.4	40.6	0.39	Not significant
Senior Students	174.5	45.2		

Consequently, the second hypothesis (H2) was rejected and null hypothesis was accepted which states there are differences of statistical significance in self-actualization in higher education students based on their education levels. The results showed that senior students have a higher level of self-actualization compared to junior students.

Regarding the third objective in current study; the result shows there are no significant differences in self-actualization among higher education students based on specialization and the critical ratio appear to be 0.33 which are not significant. This means all students who are studying in higher education in all specializations differ in their self-actualization; which means H (3) was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted which states there are significant differences in self-actualization among higher education students based on specialization. The results of this objective showed that Psychology students have a high level of self-actualization while Business students have poor level of self-actualization. Table (3) illustrates the mean scores of self-actualization of some Specialties in high education students who are studying in Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

Table (3)

The Mean scores of self-actualization of some Specialties in high education

Category	Mean	S.D.	C.R	Level Significance
Business	157.9	41.1	0.33	Not significant
Psychology	183.9	48.8		
Engineering	175.2	45.9		
Computer Science	165.7	42.3		

Consequently; the third hypothesis (H3) was also rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted which states there are significant differences in self-actualization among higher education students based on specialization.

Conclusions

The current study focused on a set of objectives. These objectives were reflected in the level of self-actualization among higher education students in Al Sharqiyah Governorate in Oman. The present study has produced concrete explanations related to the problem previously discussed in the current research that can be drawn as follows:

- Male and female students who are studying in higher education did not differ in their self-actualization. It means the male is not superior to the female, neither is the female superior to the male in the attribute of self-actualization in higher education in Al Sharqiyah Governorate.
- The result also showed that the factor of study affects the self-actualization of higher education students in Al Sharqiyah Governorate. The results showed that senior students have a higher level of self-actualization compared to junior students. In the sense that as the student progresses through the stage of study, the trait of self-realization will rise also.
- In order to measure the level of self-actualization and its relation to the specialization of students in higher education, the results of the study showed that the specialization affects the level of self-actualization among students. The results indicated that the self-actualization of Psychology students was higher compared to other majors.

Suggestions for Higher Education

The current study suggests teachers and educators in colleges and universities in the Sultanate of Oman to:

1. This interest is concentrated in terms of the development of their scientific knowledge as well as the development of personal traits such as self-actualization. This growth will not be completed except through effective communication with the students and moreover increasing the relations with them, and these relations must be based on respecting and understanding student needs.
2. The professors/teachers were invited to an intensive training course on the nature of the relations that must be connected between the professor/teacher and his/her student in higher education.

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3. According to the current study, the results will contribute and help teachers on how to create creativity in their students and work to develop this feature through the activation of extra-curricular activities accompanying the curriculum and encouraging students to integrate into the various activities available in colleges and universities.

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