

IMPACT OF DEPARTMENT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ACTUALISATION AND JOB-PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF INDUSTRIAL MANAGERS

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Motivation and job-performance relationship is a topic that has been analysed widely in management literature. In this paper, the impact of department on the primary relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance of industrial managers has been examined. Department of industrial managers has a positive impact on their relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance. In general, the managers belonging to departments that have greater objectivity and mathematical accuracy have relatively higher degree of relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance as compared to the respondents of departments where there is greater element of subjectivity.

I. INTRODUCTION

The primary task of any manager or supervisor is of maintaining an organisation that functions effectively. To do so, he must see that his subordinates work efficiently and produce results that are beneficial to the organisation. Since every action a manager takes in an organisation stimulates a reaction in his employees, he has no choice of whether or not he motivates them, but has choice only of how he does it.¹ To guide people's activities in desired directions requires knowing, to the best of any manager's ability, what leads people to do things, what motivates them.²

Productivity holds the key to success of any organisation and, hence, it is considered as one of the most powerful elements of better economic management both at the micro and macro levels. For raising productivity at the micro level, the basic

task of management is that of maintaining an organisation that functions effectively. To achieve this, the management must harness the potentialities of every individual and group to the fullest extent possible by creating an organisational environment in which every member of the organisation functions optimally.³ To realise this goal, there is a critical need to understand better how, why and when some employees perform well, others marginally and still others unsatisfactorily. Every year crores of rupees are spent on training and developing employees to be more productive and to accept and handle greater responsibilities. Yet, despite the effort of employers, there has been little progress in understanding the relationship between an individual's motivational needs and his demonstrated ability to perform the job. This study is expected to be a step in this direction.

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If such predictive relationship could be established even within the most generally accepted guidelines, it would not only aid the organisations in their financial growth, but would serve to reward the individual as well. More specific implications focus on procurement practices, promotional evaluations and training programmes.

The present study aims at studying motivational dynamics in terms of Maslowian self-actualisation need and its relationship with job-performance. This research is undertaken to advance the state of knowledge in the area of people's motivation in industrial organisations. More specifically, the purpose of the research is to define better the importance of the need for self-actualisation as it affects job-performance. An attempt has been made to examine the impact of 'department' on the primary relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance of industrial managers.

II. EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS, USED

Department is a distinct area, division, or branch of an enterprise over which a manager has authority for the performance of specified activities and results.⁴

Job-Performance is, the execution of a specific duty, role or function within a given organisation measured in terms of eleven basic managerial skills, i.e. knowledge, planning, results, delegating, leadership, motivation of subordinates, training, adaptability, communication, emotionality and growth.

Lower Management Personnel include managers who are at the first level of supervision. In other words, managers who are the first-line reporters in an organisation or its department, division or section comprise lower management.

Manager is a person occupying a position in the formal organisation, who is responsible for the work of at least one other person and who has formal authority over that person.

Middle Management Personnel include all those who fall in between the first-line supervisors and top executives, i.e. Directors and General Managers. In other words, managers between the first-line reporter and the last reported in an organisation comprise middle management.

Self-Actualisation means to become all that one is capable of becoming. Maslow expressed it: "What a man can be, he must be".⁵ In other words, self-actualisation is the desire to become everything that one is capable of becoming. Individuals satisfy this need in different ways. In one person it may be expressed in the desire to be an ideal mother; in another it may be expressed in managing an organisation; in still another by playing the piano. In effect, self-actualisation is the person's motivation to transform the perception of self into reality.⁶ Self-actualisation is equated with optimal functioning.⁷

III. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

- (i) The need-gratification theory or hierarchy of needs as proposed by Maslow is a generally acceptable workable foundation for the study of basic drives of human beings.
- (ii) Basic needs are operative throughout our society and may be found in human beings regardless of their occupation, station in life, or ethnic or cultural background.
- (iii) Human beings seek to satisfy their basic needs continuously and their force can be measured at any point of time.

- (iv) Human beings express these needs not only in the choice of their occupation, but in their desire to grow and succeed within their occupational environment.
- (v) All human beings possess needs of self-actualisation in greater or lesser degree.
- (vi) Biological, social or psychological needs inspire human beings to work and tend to gain priority over the others at one or other point of time.
- (vii) The personal orientation Inventory (POI), the psychological instrument used to measure self-actualisation, does indeed measure self-actualisation as originally defined by Maslow who expressed "much satisfaction" with it (the POI).⁸
- (viii) The WPS Supervisor-Executive Evaluation scales (WPS-ES) are valid for measuring job-performance.⁹

IV. MASLOW'S NEED THEORY

It is the most widely known theory to be applied in management situations. Maslow's theory¹⁰ is a "need" theory of motivation, i.e. it argues that we behave in order to satisfy certain desires. According to Maslow, there are two kinds of needs : (i) Innate needs; which are inherited or unlearned needs such as the needs for food, water, oxygen, appropriate temperature and sex; and (ii) Acquired needs; those we learn as we experience life, including the needs for safety, security, social recognition, self-respect, and self-fulfilment/self-actualisation.

Maslow theorized that human beings strive to satisfy their needs in a specific order or hierarchy, i.e. one set of needs must be satisfied first before the other needs moti-

vate behaviour. Thus, if a need is not satisfied it produces tension that induces us to behave in response to this need in an effort to reduce the tension and restore equilibrium.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs may be explained as follows:

- (i) *Physiological Needs* : Basic to all human beings are physiological needs to survive: the need for food, for water, for air to breathe, to rest, for warmth and shelter from the elements. If these needs are not satisfied, most people are not motivated by "higher" needs. When our belly has been empty for a long time, we cannot afford the luxury of concern about self-actualisation.
- (ii) *Safety Needs* : Once the physiological needs are satisfied on a regular basis, other higher needs arise and these rather than the basic needs dominate the attention and motivation of human beings. The average person needs and prefers to have a safe, organised, orderly, predictable life and to reduce to the minimum the unpredictable or exposure to danger.
- (iii) *Social Needs* : If both the physiological and the safety needs are reasonably satisfied, the next motivator likely to become operative is the need for friendship, affection and interaction with and acceptance by peers. Most people need to be with others at least part of the time when they are at work.
- (iv) *Esteem Needs* : All people in society (with very few exceptions) have a need for a stable, firmly based, high evaluation of themselves, for self-esteem and for the respect and esteem of others. Satisfaction of this need for self-esteem on a continuing basis leads to feelings of self-confidence,

worth, strength and conviction of one's own capabilities and above all of being useful and necessary in the world.

- (v) *The Need for Self-actualisation*: Even when all these four levels of needs are satisfied, we may still often as 'perpetually wanting animals' experience a new discontent and restlessness unless we are doing what we believe we are fitted for. Even though a person may be working in an office, if he believes he can and must make music, he will ultimately be happy only if he fulfils himself by learning to play an instrument either as an absorbing hobby or, in the long term, as a full-time activity. This crowning need was called by Maslow as the need for self-actualisation or the desire for self-fulfilment.

Maslow argued that these needs are present in this hierarchy in all of us. He theorized that once a need is satisfied, it no longer motivates behaviour. He recognised that there are individual differences in the strength of each need. He did concede that in a few cases people may be motivated by higher needs such as self-fulfilment even when their lower needs are not satisfied. In such cases, the lower needs are suppressed.

Maslow's investigation on self-actualisation did not actually start out as a planned research. He admired two of his teachers most, who were 'wonderful people'. He began to wonder why those teachers were so different from the 'run-of-the-mill' people in the world. Out of curiosity he made notes and descriptions about them separately. Gradually he realised that their modes of behaviour could be generalised into one common pattern. Then he selected many other prominent persons, both living and

dead, from political and historical figures as well as from students, friends and acquaintances for study. To his surprise, he found from the characteristics of these selected persons that one and the same type of pattern was emerging. On the basis of these findings, he was able to describe a syndrome which seemed to fit all of them.

Research conducted in the past on self-actualisation was normative and personal in nature, but more recently, interest in this field has shifted away from a phenomenological perspective to a more descriptive and objective one.¹¹

Earlier theories of personality attempted to measure and describe the pathological aspects and psychological illness. Studies in self-actualisation were confined to the clinical situations only. Physiotherapists used to measure the degree of psychological health as a result of counselling, gestalt or T-group experiences and other experimental treatment or training programmes.

In recent years, the trend has been shifted towards growth-oriented theories which are concerned with the development of positive mental health or psychological growth. Research on the various dimensions of self-actualisation is being extended to various other areas such as educational, industrial and social situations.¹²

According to Maslow's theory, the self-actualising person is "a person who is more fully functioning and lives a more enriched life than does the average person: such an individual is seen as developing and utilizing all of his unique capabilities or potentialities, free of the inhibitions and emotional turmoil of those less-actualising".¹³ Thus, a self-actualiser is one who has developed, or is in the process of developing "to the full stature of which he is capable".

Fifteen characteristics of self-actualising people emerged from Maslow's study. More specifically, any given self-actualiser is the one developing in self-actualised direction and may have more or less each of the following characteristics¹⁴:

- (i) He has *more efficient perception of reality and more comfortable relations with it*. In conjunction with more efficient perception, he welcomes the unknown instead of adhering to the known. Also, he does not necessarily have the need to perceive the unknown in terms of the known.
- (ii) He has *greater acceptance of himself, others and nature* even though discrepancies between an ideal and actual image are perceived. As Maslow puts it, "one does not complain about water because it is wet, or about rocks because they are hard, or about trees because they are green".¹⁵ Also, one does not necessarily complain about human nature. One perceives human nature as it is rather than as one might prefer it.
- (iii) He is relatively *spontaneous in behaviour and his behaviour is marked by simplicity and naturalness* and by lack of artificiality or straining for effect. He is conventional when it is expected, provided it is not important to him to behave otherwise. As a result, he is said to prefer situations and friends that do not demand conventional behaviour.
- (iv) He is *problem-centred* rather than ego-centred. He tends to focus on basic issues and eternal questions rather than highly abstracted, easily answered questions. His horizons are said to be broader than those of the average man which in turn leads him away from trivial, petty problems. This seems to make him more serene.
- (v) He has the quality of detachment or a *high need for privacy*. He is not uncomfortable with solitude and isolation and in many cases actually prefers privacy to a greater degree than the average person. He has a high ability to concentrate, make self-decisions, be self-disciplined and be deciding agent rather than helplessly determined by other people.
- (vi) He has a *higher degree of autonomy* or independence of culture and environment. That is, he does not depend on extrinsic satisfactions for motivations; rather he is motivated by his continued growth, by a need to develop latent resources. He is independent of the good opinion of other people. He is also independent of the usual rewards associated with accomplishment and seems more responsive to self-development.
- (vii) He has a *continued freshness of appreciation* for the basic goods of life with awe, pleasure and wonder. However, these intense feelings do not happen every time something is experienced but rather occur unpredictably. He derives strength, ecstasy, and inspiration from these experiences.
- (viii) He experiences on occasion what Maslow refers to as a *peak experience*¹⁶. Mild peak experiences occur frequently in one type of self-actualiser while very intense experiences occur in others. The former non-peaking self-actualisers seem likely to be the social world improvers, politicians, etc., while the latter, peaking self-actualisers, are more apt to write poetry, music, philosophy, and religion.

- (ix) He has a genuine *desire to help the human race*, that is, he has a deep feeling of identification, sympathy and affection for the mankind.
- (x) He has *deeper and more profound interpersonal relations* than other adults. He is capable of more fusion, greater obliteration of ego boundaries. He has especially deep ties with rather few individuals. His circle of friends is rather small. The ones he loves profoundly are few in number.
- (xi) He is *democratic in the deepest possible sense*. He not only recognises others regardless of education, political belief, race, colour or class but also finds it possible to learn from anybody who has something to teach. He has strong sense of right and wrong, of good and evil. He is more likely rather than less likely to counter-attack against evil men and evil behaviour. He is far less ambivalent, confused or weak-willed about his anger than average men are.
- (xii) He *tends to readily recognise the difference between means and ends*. Although primarily interested in the end, he can often enjoy the means as an end in itself. He is strongly ethical. He has definite moral standards; he does right and does not do wrong.
- (xiii) He *possesses an unhostile sense of humour*. He does not find humorous the ridiculing of a single human or group as occurs in ethnic and political humour. He does enjoy poking fun at himself on occasion and respond readily to cartoons that focus on the human situation.
- (xiv) He *possesses relatively high degree of creativeness*; He has a way of getting

directly to the heart of a problem and finding a novel solution.

- (xv) He strongly *resists enculturation* and maintains a certain inner detachment from the culture in which he is immersed. He is more ruled by laws of his own character than rules of society.

If one were to take the fifteen characteristics listed above and set out to identify people as self-actualisers, one would probably be disappointed in that no single person at all times displays all these characteristics. The above characteristics resulted behaviourally in those individuals who are able to resolve polarities or opposites or dichotomies better than the average population.¹⁷

V. THE SAMPLE

Managers who participated in this study were employed in 10 manufacturing organisations located in and around Delhi. For reasons of confidentiality, the identities of the companies are not being revealed. All the ten organisations selected for this study have been in business for the last 26 to 56 years¹⁸.

All middle and lower level managers in the participating companies, with the exception of those who did not have subordinates for supervision were requested to participate. Absentees were ignored. The managers who did not have subordinates were left out as Performance Rating Scales¹⁹ consisted of questions relating to managers having subordinates.

The total number of managers who were distributed the set of research instruments was 587. Of this total, 154 were eliminated for one or the other reason: either the individual did not respond to the questionnaire at all or having responded, the data on their questionnaire were either unintel-

ligible or incomplete. Thus, the total usable sample amounted to 433 participants, or a testable response rate of 74 per cent.

For testing whether the 'department' of the respondents has a meaningful impact on the relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance, all the respondents were divided into five groups (see Table 1).

Table 1: Classification of Respondents

Group	Department (Functional Area)	Participants	
		No.	%
I	Production	98	22.63
II	Marketing	73	16.86
III	Personnel	55	12.70
IV	Finance	51	11.78
V	Others*	156	36.03
Total		433	100.00

Note: * Those managers who did not fall in any of the first four groups, were included in the 'others' group.

VI. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

1. Personal Orientation Inventory (POI)

POI²⁰ designed by Shostrom was used for measuring the level of self-actualisation of the managers. The POI was constructed to measure the values and behaviour characteristics of the self-actualised person. The test was not exclusively based on the formulations of Maslow, but included the theories of Riesman, Glazer, Denny, May, Angel, Ellenberger, Pearl, Beach and Goldberg.²¹

The POI consists of 150 two-choice comparative-value-judgement items reflecting values and behaviour seen to be of importance in the development to the self-

actualising individual. In responding to the POI, the respondent is asked to select the one statement in each pair that truly reflects his personality. Two examples of the POI items are:

(a) Self-interest is natural

Self-interest is unnatural

(b) For me, work and play are the same.

For me, work and play are opposites.

The POI items are scored twice, first for two basic scales of personal orientation, inner-directed support (127 items) and time competence (23 items) and secondly for ten sub-scales²² each of which measures a conceptually important element of self-actualising.

For the purpose of this study, time-competence²³ and inner-directedness²⁴ scales were computed. In addition to these scales, a simple combination of inner-directed and time-competence was also calculated which serves the best "single" predictor of an overall measure of the POI²⁵.

2. The WPS Supervisor-Executive Evaluation Scales (WPS-ES)

The WPS-ES²⁶ were used for evaluating the performance of the managers. Through WPS-ES, each manager of the sample was evaluated twice by himself and by his superior. Both used the same 110 WPS-ES statements. The 110 WPS-ES statements are grouped into 11 areas related to effective management.²⁷ Each of the 11 areas has 10 statements; thus, there are 110 statements in each WPS-ES.

The items in appropriate forms of the WPS-ES are similar in all respects except for changes in pronouns. The grammatical changes were made to further personalise

the self-rating form and to maintain an unmistakable distinction between two forms. An example follows:

Item 27 : WPS-ES: Self-Evaluation:
I worry when my production drops.

Item 27 : WPS-ES: Superior-Evaluation: He worries when his production drops.

Thus, the WPS-ES provides a new and penetrating approach for evaluating key-personnel. This instrument, though in part related to specific job, is given only to managers (defined as those for whom others are working). It focusses on leadership abilities and personality characteristics related to leadership effectiveness. Its main purpose is to facilitate the development of an operational understanding of a complex person: the self-evaluator. By operational understanding is meant an understanding of the self-evaluator in his day-by-day work as supervisor or executive. Once such an operational understanding develops, there should result more effective performance, possibly more responsible work assignments, perhaps additional or specialised training, and corrective changes of one kind or another.²⁸

Greater weight should be given to the self-evaluation (if evaluation is honestly done), since in nearly all cases the self-evaluator will know himself better than the supervisor/superior-evaluator. Even though supervisors are alert, well-informed, and observant, it is very likely that they will miss many subtle nuances of attitudes, abilities, skills, emotions, shades of personality, and work-performance. Nevertheless, evaluations by supervisors/superiors are important, and when verified and justified can be of great value.²⁹

3. Background Information Blank (BIB)

The BIB was specially designed for this research. All the participants of the study were requested to furnish certain biographical and demographic information. Through this BIB, data relating to department of the participants was collected.

VII. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Correlation technique was used for the analysis of the data (see Table 2).

Using the POI: "Overall Measures"³⁰ as the primary independent variables and considering the WPS-ES: Self-Rating: Composite and the WPS-ES: Supervisor-Rating: Composite as dependent variables, the results as shown in Table 2 were obtained.

Taking the POI: Composite as the primary independent variable and considering the WPS-ES: Self-Rating: Composite as the primary dependent variable, for *Group II: Marketing*, self-actualisation was found statistically significantly related to job-performance. The POI: Composite correlated with WPS-ES: Self-Rating: Composite revealed a statistically significant correlation coefficient of 0.37 at the 0.01 level of significance, yielding 0.14 as coefficient of determination. Besides this, one more correlation coefficient was found significant at 0.01 level of significance. All the correlations, significant as well as non-significant, were found positive.

Similarly, for *Group IV: Finance*, a tendency of positive relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance was found. The POI: Composite correlated with the WPS-ES: Self-Rating: Composite revealed a statistically significant coefficient of correlation at the 0.05 level of significance of 0.29, yielding a correlation of determination of 0.08. Besides this, one more correlation-coefficient was found significant at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 2 : POI : "Overall Measures" vs. WPS-ES: Self-Rating: Composite and WPS-ES : Supervisor-Rating: Composite Dependent Variables are: WPS-ES: Self-Rating : Composite and WPS-ES : Supervisor-Rating Composite

	Correlated with:POI : "Overall Measures"								
	Time competence			Inner-Directed			Composite		
	r	r ²	t	r	r ²	t	r	r ²	t
Group I (N = 98):									
Self-Rating	.10	.01	1.00	.17	.03	1.74	.17	.03	1.74
Supervisor-Rating	.04	.00	.42	.20	.04	1.96	.18	.03	1.79
Group II (N = 73):									
Self-Rating	.13	.02	1.13	.40	.16	3.69*	.37	.14	3.39*
Supervisor-Rating	.14	.02	1.20	.15	.02	1.28	.17	.03	1.43
Group III (N = 55):									
Self-Rating	.07	.00	.48	.08	.01	.61	.09	.01	.64
Supervisor-Rating	-.13	.02	.98	-.04	.00	.29	-.07	.00	.53
Group IV (N = 51):									
Self-Rating	.13	.02	.89	.29	.09	2.15+	.29	.08	2.10+
Supervisor-Rating	.10	.01	.74	.20	.04	1.44	.20	.04	1.45
Group V (N = 156):									
Self-Rating	.12	.01	1.52	.12	.01	1.57	.14	.02	1.74
Supervisor-Rating	.02	.00	.28	.10	.01	1.26	.09	.00	1.17

Note : N = 433

* Significant at the .01 level.

+ Significant at the .05 level.

For the other three groups I, III and V, no correlation-coefficient reached either of the tested levels of significance. However, all the scores on ratings of job-performance based on Self-Rating: Composite were positive.

The statistical results indicate that there is a general tendency of positive relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance, especially when job-performance is rated by the manager himself. This is consistent with the earlier findings.

Secondly, the respondents of *Group II: Marketing* functional area have the highest degree of statistically significant relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance amongst respondents of all the groups. The respondents of *Group IV: Finance* department have the second place in this relationship. The relatively higher degree of relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance of these two groups may be because of mathematical accuracy and greater objectivity found in the working of these functional areas.

On the whole, it may be concluded that department of the respondents does have a positive impact on the relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance. The respondents belonging to departments that have greater objectivity and mathematical accuracy have relatively higher degree of relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance as compared to the respondents of departments where there is greater element of subjectivity.

The present study could be considered only as a step forward in examining the impact of department on the relationship between one of the highest forms of human needs, i.e. self-actualisation, and performance on the job.

This research should be replicated before any hard conclusions are drawn for universal application. Similar research and investigation should be conducted in a population sample of greater diversity and coverage.

Notes

1. See Hicks (1967), p. 234.
2. See Koontz et. al. (1988), pp. 372-373.

3. 'Optimal functioning has been equated with self-actualisation'. See Satapathy (1980), p. 2.
4. See Koontz and O'Donnel (1976), p. 785.
5. Maslow (1970), p. 46.
6. Luthans (1992), p. 157.
7. Satapathy (1980), p. 2.
8. See Shostrom, p. 480.
9. Shankar (1988), p. 136.
10. Maslow (1970), pp. 35-38.
11. Shankar (1988), p. 6.
12. Satapathy (1980), pp. 7-8.
13. Shostrom (1974), p. 1.
14. Maslow (1970), pp. 153-174.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
16. Peak experiences are moments of great awe, of intense happiness or ecstasy. They are the subjective experiencing of what is recognised to be one of the high points of life, one of the most exciting, rich and fulfilling experiences which the person has ever had.
17. Maslow (1970), pp. 178-180.
18. Shankar (1988), p. 34.
19. Western Psychological Service (1966).
20. Shostrom (1964), pp. 207-218.
21. Knapp (1976), p. 4.
22. These ten sub-scales measure the primary factors originally described by Maslow as characteristics of the self-actualising individual, i.e. self-regard, intimacy, spontaneity, independence, existentiality, nature of man, synergy, acceptance of aggression, self-actualising values, and self-acceptance. For details, see Knapp (1976), pp. 5-7.

23. Time-competence scale measures the degree to which an individual lives in the present rather than in the past or the future. Self-actualising persons are those living primarily in the present, with full awareness and contact, and full feeling reactivity.
24. Inner-directed scale measures whether an individual's mode of reaction is characteristically "self" oriented or "other" oriented. Inner or self-directed persons are guided primarily by internalised principles and motivations while other-directed persons are, to a great extent, influenced by their peer group or other external forces.
25. Damm (1972), pp. 485-489.
26. Buros (ed.) (1972), p. 406.
27. The 11 areas related to effective management are: knowledge of the work, planning ability, results or productivity, delegating work, leadership ability, morale of workers, training ability, adaptability, communication skills, emotionality and growth potential.
28. Western Psychological Service (1966), p. 1.
29. *ibid.*, p. 7.
30. "Overall Measures" of POI consist of three scales: (a) Inner-Directed, (b) Time-Competence and (c) Composite of (a) & (b).
31. See Shankar (1988).

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