

# IMPACT OF AGE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ACTUALISATION AND JOB-PERFORMANCE :

## A Study of Business Managers

GAURI SHANKAR

### Introduction

It is the quality of human resource which can make or mar any organisation — public or private, national or international. Professionally motivated and committed people can do a lot to make an organisation grow in terms of production, productivity and effectiveness.

Productivity and higher 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.<sup>1</sup>

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 lakhs of rupees are spent on training and developing employees to be more productive and to accept and handle greater responsibilities. Yet, despite the efforts of employers, there has been little progress in understanding the relationship between an individual motivational needs and his demonstrated ability to perform the job. This study is a humble attempt in this direction. It aims at studying motivational dynamics in terms of Maslowian self-actualisation need and its relationship with job-performance.

### Concept of Maslowian Self-Actualisation

The Maslowian concept of self-actualisation<sup>2</sup> implies that a self-actualisation person is free to do what he feels he must do. Considering the primary charac-

---

Dr. Gauri Shankar is Reader, Department of Commerce, Shri Ram College of Commerce, University of Delhi, Delhi.

teristics of such an individual, it would appear that he is positioned better than his fellow employees, to enjoy work, to perform without worry about mistakes and without apprehensions about the future.

Underlying Maslow's description of self-actualising people, these are the premises:

- (i) Basic needs (the need hierarchy culminating in self-actualisation) are operative throughout society and may be found in man regardless of his occupation, station in life, or ethnic and cultural background.
- (ii) Man seeks to satisfy his basic needs continuously, and, therefore, these can be measured at any point in time.
- (iii) Man expresses these needs not only in the choice of his occupation but in his desire or lack of desire to grow and succeed within his occupational environment.

**Objective of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of 'age' on the primary relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance.

**Sample**

The sample consisted of 433 middle and lower level managers of 10 selected business organisations located in and around Delhi. All those managers who fall below the line of top executives i.e., Directors and General Managers were included in this study. All the selected organisations were engaged in manufacturing activities and had been in business for the last 23 to 53 years. The total number of managers who were distributed the set of the 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 questionnaires were either unintelligible or incomplete. Thus, the total usable sample amounted to 433 participants, or a testable response rate of 74%.

For testing whether 'age' has a meaningful impact on the relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance, all the respondents were divided into the following four age-groups:<sup>3</sup>

Group No.	Age-group (in years)	N
I	21-30	93
II	31-45	238
III	46-55	86
IV	56 onwards	16

## Tools

### 1. *Personal Orientation Inventory (POI):*<sup>4</sup>

Shostrom's POI was used for measuring the level of self-actualisation of the managers. POI consists of 150 paired opposing statements in forced choice format. The items are scored twice – first, for the two basic scales of personal orientation, namely, inner-directed support (127 items) and time competence (23 items) and second, for the ten subscales, each of which measures a conceptually important element of self-actualisation. For the purpose of this study, a simple combination of Inner-directed and Time-competence was also calculated which serves the best "single" predictor of an overall measure of the POI<sup>5</sup>

### 2. *The WPS Supervisor-Executive Evaluation Scales (WPS-ES):*<sup>6</sup>

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

## Results

Correlation technique was used for the analysis of the data.

Considering the POI: Composite as the primary variable, and using the WPS-ES: Self-Rating: Composite and WPS-ES: Supervisor-Rating: Composite as dependent variables, the following results were obtained (Table 1):

In group II: age-group: '31-45 years', the correlation coefficients have reached the tested level of significance. Of the possible 6 correlation coefficients, all are positive; 5 are significant – 4 at the .01 level and 1 at the .05 level. The POI: Composite correlated with the Self-Rating: Composite revealed a correlation coefficient of .22, yielding a coefficient of determination of .05, significant at the .01 level of significance.

When POI: "overall Measures" were correlated with WPS: ES: Self-Rating: Composite, correlation coefficients obtained were positive for all the groups.

In age-groups other than age-group II, neither of the tested level of significance has been reached.

From the above statistical results, the following inferences may be drawn:

1. There is a general tendency of positive relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance in all age-groups of the managers.
2. The respondents in the age-group of '31-45 years' are having a relatively higher degree of relationship between self-actualisation and job-

performance. It may be because the respondents in this age-group are more mature, have controlled expectations and also have emotional stability and adjustability with work situation which jointly reflect in higher degree of relationship between their job-performance and self-actualisation.

TABLE 1: Self-Actualisation Vs. Job - performance  
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 <sup>2</sup>	t	r	r <sup>2</sup>	t	r	r <sup>2</sup>	t	
Group I (N=93):										
Self-Rating	.04	.00	.38	.20	.04	1.91	.18	.03	1.74	
Supervisor-Rating	-.09	.01	.89	-.01	.00	.07	-.03	.00	.28	
Group II (N=238):										
Self-Rating	.14	.02	2.14 **	.21	.04	3.37 *	.22	.05	3.45 *	
Supervisor-Rating	.11	.01	1.64	.17	.03	2.64 *	.17	.03	2.69 *	
Group III (N=86):										
Self-Rating	.15	.02	1.44	.18	.03	1.71	.20	.04	1.90	
Supervisor-Rating	.05	.00	.44	.11	.01	1.00	.11	.01	.99	
Group IV (N=16):										
Self-Rating	.24	.06	.91	.19	.04	.72	.24	.06	.94	
Supervisor-Rating	-.02	.00	.07	.47	.22	1.97	.45	.20	1.87	

\* Significant at the .01 level.

\*\* Significant at the .05 level.

N: 433.

- The respondents in the age-group of '21-30 years', in general, are not sufficiently mature and do not have controlled expectations; as they do not feel settled in their present organisations and, generally, keep on trying in number of organisations which jointly, perhaps, reflects on their relatively low relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance.
- Similarly, the respondents in the age-groups of '45-55 years' and '56 onwards years' have more maturity in general; but they may not have any promotional hierarchy in view, which perhaps, reflects, on their relatively low relationship between job-performance and self-actualisation.

On the whole, it may be concluded that age-group of the respondents does have a positive impact on their relationship between self-actualisation and job-performance. The supporting studies have been undertaken by Satapathy;

Waldman and Arolio; and Nandy et al. Satapathy concluded that teachers who were generally younger in age scored higher in both the measures (Time Ratio & Support Ratio) of self-actualisation.<sup>7</sup> Waldman and Arolio indicated that chronological age accounted for a variance, though small, in performance.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Nandy et al. observed significant differences with advancing age in responsibility.<sup>9</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. 'Optimal functioning has been equated with self-actualisation'. A. Satapathy, *Self-Actualisation Among Teachers of Higher Secondary Schools in Delhi*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, I.I.T., Delhi, 1980, p.2.
2. Maslow, Abraham H., *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd Edn., New York: Harper and Row, 1970.
3. The age-grouping of the managers has been based on the assumption that there is more emotional stability and adjustability with the work situation and shop-floor workers in the middle of adulthood than during later adolescence or later forties and fifties.
4. Shostrom, E.L., 'An Inventory for the measurement of self-Actualisation', *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, XXIV (1964), pp. 207-218.
5. Damm, V.J., 'Overall measures of Self-Actualisation derived from the Personal Orientation Inventory: A Replication and Refinement Study', *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 1972, Vol. 32, pp. 485-489.
6. Buros, O.K. (Ed.), *The Seventh Mental Measurement Yearbook*, Highland Park, NJ: Gryphon Press, 1972, p. 406.
7. Satapathy A., *op. cit.*, p. 189.
8. Waldman, David A. and Arolio, Bricce, J., 'A Meta-Analysis of Age Differences in Job-Performance'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 1986, Vol. 71 (1), pp. 33-38.
9. Nandy, Manish et al., *Motivating Middle Management*, Unpublished Report, Calcutta, Dunlop India Ltd., Undated, pp. 5-7.