

Mixed Method Study of Individuals (N=45) on Self-Actualizing

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Abstract

Humans struggle. Struggles create anxieties that can either tear a person down or mold personalities of wholeness. Becoming self-actualized means developing a personality of wholeness. It is said to reach this wholeness we need to go through different anxieties.

Statement of the Problem

Self-actualization is one step in developing a "enlightened maturity" personality, which means being able to achieve goals, accept oneself, and self-assess in a positive realistic way. It appears going through struggles and feeling anxiety plays a large role in this process of personality. This is useful for people who have trouble living a fulfilling life or those who deal with any anxieties and struggles.

Theory

This type continual process of growth is more easily achieved when humans are put through stressful situations(Maslow) like raising children, dealing with old age, drug use and becoming sober or even experiencing death, loss, and grieving. This mixed methods study closely looks at how anxiety affects a person while in the process of climbing the personality ladder.

Hypotheses

- How anxiety effects individuals self-actualization
- What does it mean to be self actualized?
- Are there differences between genders, races, and relationship statuses and how this may affect the outcome
- How can anxiety affect someone? Is anxiety a bad thing for humans?
- Null: anxiety helps people reach self-actualization

Data Collection & Methods

Table 1a shows the sample: N=38, with 31.58% males and 68.42% females. 50% of the males were aged 18-20, 33.33% were 21-29, and 16.67 were ages 30-39. There was more age variety with females, (19.23% that were 18-20, 65.38 were 21-29, 3.85 were 30-39, 3.85% were 40-49 and lastly 7.69% 50-59).

Quantitative Table 1a:

	17 or younger	18-20	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 or older	Total
Q5: Male	0.00%	50.00%	33.33%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	31.58%
Q5: Female	0.00%	19.23%	65.38%	3.85%	3.85%	7.69%	0.00%	68.42%
Total Respondents	0	11	21	3	1	2	0	38

Data Collection & Methods cont'd

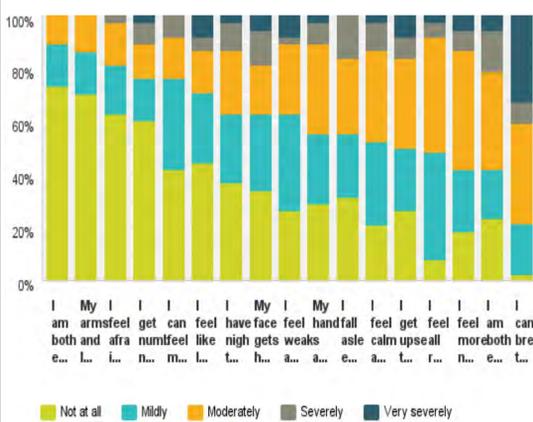
Table 2 shows results of a qualitative sample in which seven face-to-face interviews were conducted. Of those interviews four were female and three were male. I had two females in their 50's another in her 40s and lastly one in her 30s. I had a male in his 50's one in his 30's and another in his 20. These individuals had all very different occupations although that was not a main focus of this research.

Qualitative Table 2

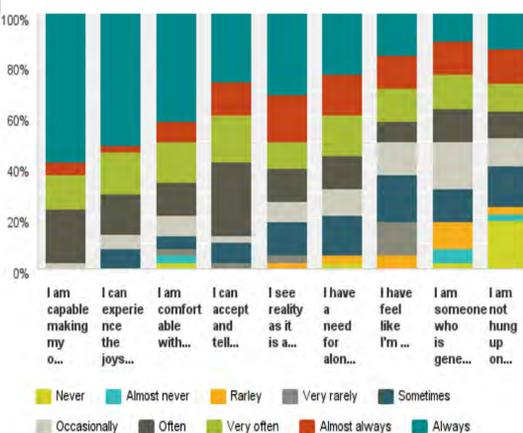
Participants	Gender	Age	Important
Participant 1	Female	52	Real Estate
Participant 2	Female	30	Student/Recovering addict
Participant 3	Female	53	Retired
Participant 4	Male	51	NMSP, now Magistrate Judge
Participant 5	Male	24	Smith's Employee
Participant 6	Female	43	Stay at home mom; has Two degrees
Participant 7	Male	36	Northern student success coordinator; doc. student musician

The quantitative table below displays the responses to the independent variable which measures participant's anxiety within the past few months. The instrument used to measure was a Likert scale ranging from one to five. One being not at all and five being very severely.

Quantitative Table Independent Variable, Anxiety



Quantitative Table Dependent Variable, Responses to Self-Actualization Questions



Data Analysis & Findings cont'd

The quantitative tables for the dependent variable measures participants Self-Actualization characteristics. These 1 statements were measured with a Likert Scale. On a Scale of one to ten, one being never and ten being always. In contrast, the qualitative data gathers participant's personal views, see **Qualitative Answers** below:

Question 1: Understanding Do you feel you understand the differences between the highs, lows, good and bad and know how to use them so no can get hurt? Example	Participants mention that this is a learning process, that teaching their children about the differences, learning from situation to situation. Participants would agree that this is a life lesson that's never fully reached
Question 2: Acceptance Can you tell me of a time when you had to accept yourself and reality for what it is? How do outside influences affect the way you think?	Participants agree that they accept themselves and reality for what it is. They discovered this when most went through struggles.; They thought about themselves when concluding. participants mentioned that good influences are always great, but try to stay away from bad ones
Question 3: Individuality Are you a person who doesn't care what others think and maintain a strong individuality? Example	Participants mentioned that although they maintain their individuality they still generally cared what others thought at some point. The conclusion to why, because they experienced something that made them question themselves.
Question 4: Alone time/ Relationships Do you like to be alone? Thoughts when alone? How are you when building relationships?	Participants mentioned they liked to be alone although some do like to keep themselves busy during alone time; Participants mentioned that they are great at making friends, but some mentioned that making friends has become too hard due to trust or uncomfortable situations.
Question 5: Decisions Can you tell me when someone else decided for you? When a time you made your own? How did these both make you feel	Participants mentioned that they do not like others making decisions for them they accept peoples advise. Some participants mentioned that others decisions have helped make their decisions making ability better.

Participants were asked about their own lives in response to questions based upon Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Responses were very interesting, for example:

Question 6: Life appreciation Do you appreciate life? Why?	All participants answered that they do indeed appreciate life. Participants mentioned having family, having freedom, experiencing death, and having a grounding was the reason why. Overall participants mentioned life's too short to take for granted.
Question 7: Consideration Tell me about a time when you didn't take someone else into consideration or joke about someone without their knowledge? Do you feel you are considerate?	Participants answered this question in many ways. There examples are what answered if they were considerate. Some participants mentioned that its only human to do these things but only if your able to tell that person to their face what they said.
Question 8: Equality What does equality mean to you? Why?	Participants mentioned that this question was brood and answered it that all people are equal. One individual states he prefers equity over equality. Most of the participants needed additional explanation to this question.
Question 9: Creativity How are you creative? How does it impact your life?	Participants mentioned that they did not believe they were creative. The data shows that although they believed this, they still mentioned they had a creative mind.
Question 10: Life Fulfillment Do you believe you will never stop the things you enjoy in life? Have you ever thought differently, if so what changed?	Participants mentioned that although they believe they will never stop doing these things, they were still aware that old age may stop them one day. Some participants mentioned that old ages have already stopped them while others say they want to do more or didn't expect to be doing the things they ARE doing.

Conclusions

The quantitative and qualitative data gathered shows what participants mentioned during their surveys and their interviews when asked questions about Self- Actualizing. These tables were reviewed and analyzed to get results shown. All the participants answered every question openly and honestly. All participants were either filmed on camera or by audio recording. The tables show what I felt like were the most important questions when it came to self-actualizing.

My data supports the theory of Maslow? Or suggests that his hierarchy isn't determinative in steps, but rather participant's responses seem to suggest the idea that going through struggles and feeling anxiety, helps an individual reach critical self-actualization stages and we are who we are because of the situations we go through. Also that these stresses are a good for us and they actually build us up in the end towards self-actualization. Last, it seemed to the researcher that age had an effect, which should be explored further in future research.

Ethics

To ensure confidentiality several steps were taken to keep all information I attained private. Step included ensuring participants understood this was to be used for educational reasons, participants interviews and surveys were kept private, including all information provided. All participants signed or understood instructions on their participation in the research.

References

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Acknowledgements

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