

# Assessment of Demographic Characteristics and Self-Actualization Dimensions of Academic Leaders in Tamil Nadu Universities: An Empirical Study

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**Abstract** - The main aim of the research is to find out the details of demographic characteristics and priorities of self-actualization dimensions of academic leaders in Tamilnadu Universities. This report targets in identifying significant self-actualization dimensions and their importance. The conceptual framework of the paper is based on self-actualization and academic leader's demographic characteristics. The demographic factors analyzed using mean & standard deviation of self-actualization. For this purpose, a sample survey has been conducted taking a sample size of 419 using techniques multistage random sampling. In our research academic leaders belonging to different age groups, gender, educational qualification, different designation, salary and years of experience were surveyed. From the descriptive analysis most of the academic leaders is male and their age group is 49-53 years.

Most of the academic leader's qualification is Ph.D. and their designation are SCAA/AC/Chair/Co-ordinator. Most of the academic leader's monthly income is Rs 150001 to 210000 and their experience 21 to 26 years. The further analysis is Equanimity has been ranked as top most self-actualization Dimensions. This implies that academic leaders give more importance to self-actualization. Academic leader's role is important at any institution of higher education. Their demographic profile is influence to develop the institutions and job tasks they perform everyday have a directly influence on the organization's ability to meet stakeholder expectations.

**Keywords:** Self-actualization, Demographic Characteristics, Academic Leaders.

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges that employers and academic leaders face is the ability to enhance the development of academic staff and retain them due to the nature of their work and lack of time to learn new tasks. Thus, they are overwhelmed by the high level of administration responsibilities (Siegall & Mc Donald, 2004; Winter & Sarros, 2002). Academics tend to exert a high level of commitment towards their profession and discipline, rather than the university institutions (Thite, 2004; Van Balan, 2012).

According to Benson and Brown (2007) the complex and ambiguous nature of academic work can stimulate less identity of an employee with the organisation and this constitutes to greater level of intention to quit. Consequently, the authors all used that there is an important need to discover effective approaches to increase the connection between organizational commitment of academicians and their educational institutions (Gopinath, 2020 a).

According to Capelleras (2005) academic staff plays an imperative role in the universities. and extensive studies were conducted to study the influence of demographic factors not only on self-actualization but also on job satisfaction (Gopinath, 2020 g), job involvement (Gopinath, 2020 h) and organizational commitment (Gopinath, 2020 i). The core function of the tertiary institutions includes research and lecturing students. Academic staff is faced with complicated works in a challenging growing environment. Higher education institutions are the only organisation that focuses primarily on creating knowledge and the processes of transmitting teaching and research. This implies that academic staff work life is created and formed by commitment and performance of their functions. Gopinath (2020 b) has studied the influence of demographic variables on the self-actualization factors like, Acceptance, Authenticity, Purpose, Efficient Perception of Reality, Humanitarianism, Good Moral Intuition, Creative Spirit, Peak Experiences, Equanimity and Continued Freshness of Appreciation. Demographic factors considered for the study is gender, age group, educational qualification, designation, salary and experience, self-actualization factors got influenced by all the Demographic factors invariably.

Every organization wants to be successful hence; it is essential that employers recruit and retain skilled and competent employees. Higher education institutions face pressure to produce competent students and to increase research outputs (Mbona, 2012). Moreover, to achieve high outputs of academic research and competent individuals in preparation to enter the workforce, academic staff need to be committed to work (Gopinath, 2020 c).

Coble & Murray (1984) found that the most effective teachers (Principals, HODs and class room and subject

teachers) were motivated self-actualizers themselves and by implication also the most effective school managers, enhancing the ability of their learners to become self-actualized and emotionally intelligent (Gopinath, 2020 d) as well. Thus, if the education sector could have majority of the high self-actualized pre-service and in-service teachers who can more easily and freely give of themselves to humanity more effectively than the average person's then this could generate effective human resources for any sector of country's development.

Academic staff plays an important role in the success of students in higher learning institutions. Hence, it is imperative that academic staffs are committed to their work - to execute lecturing effectively and produce competent and knowledgeable workers (Gopinath, 2019). Moreover, organizational commitment is an essential part in ensuring the transfer of good quality education to students. The main aim of the research study is to assess the demographic characteristics of academic leaders in Tamil Nadu University.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Older theories of personality have focused more on the pathological aspects of personality development than on the characteristics of healthy person. Writers and researchers eclectically grouped together as third force psychologists, emphasize the positive, developing person in the process of becoming. One of the leading writers in third force psychology, the late Abraham Maslow developed a theoretical model for understanding human behaviour based on the hierarchy of five basic needs: food, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization. He theorized that the person's degree of need gratification is positively correlated with his degree of psychological health; the psychologically healthiest persons being those motivated primarily by the need of self-actualizing. Self-actualization is defined as the process or act of becoming oneself, developing one's potential, achieving an awareness of one's identity, and fulfilling oneself (Le François, 1996).

According to Maslow the healthiest (need gratified) people are better able to take positive self-action and thus able to become better teachers, parents etc. Self-actualizing persons have been described as individuals who are not saints and do have imperfections, but these are those who are freer to give of themselves to humanity more effectively than the average persons (AnvitiRawat, 2015). Maslow's hierarchy. Maslow theory has great impact on educational structure and each level of the hierarchy of needs can be applied to the benefits of better education to the students.

It is the responsibility of a teacher to guide the students towards personal growth using the principles of this theory in practice. It cannot be denied that majorly it is the attitude of the teacher which could contribute to the self-actualization of their students. Thus, it is evident that if the natural ethical assumptions of Maslow's self-actualization

concept are practiced in educational sphere by the teaching work force then many of the educational problems could be solved and to drive a successful economy of any country self-actualizers as intrinsically motivated and energized personalities could form the backbone of society because of their special characteristics (Gopinath & Chitra, 2020).

Frankl (1969) says, "Teachers who are successful professionals are self-actualizing people who lead meaningful lives and make a meaningful contribution to the self-actualizing potential of learners in their charge". This is for sure that for enrichment of self-actualization everyone needs a mentor (teacher as a mentor for pre-service teacher trainees/seniors as a mentor for in-service teachers). Kruger & Steinman (2003), say that the principal who manages to create a positive school climate which supports teacher morale and motivation which effective teaching and learning can take place, ensuring both teacher and learner self-actualization and as well as satisfaction (Gopinath, 2020 f).

Self-actualization is the fifth and highest level need of Maslow's (1943) need hierarchy (see MOTIVATION). It is the fulfillment of a person's life goals and potential. Maslow defined it as "the desire to become...everything that one is capable of becoming" (Maslow, 1943, p. 382). According to theory, self-actualization is a need that motivates people's behavior. A person whose self-actualization need is met is said to be self-actualized, but few are thought to achieve this state. Many famous people in the arts and sciences have been presumed to have achieved self-actualization.

Self-actualization is somewhat akin to the growth need strength component of Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics theory. Both these concepts share the idea that people have a need for continual development throughout their life. Growth need strength, however, is a mental and physical characteristic that varies among people (Gopinath, 2016 b).

A previous study (Margulies, 1969) using the POI to examine organizational climate has shown, for example, that relatively higher levels of self-actualization are related to intrinsic rather than extrinsic work values orientation, and to greater awareness of the interconnect endless between task achievement and social need satisfaction. Further, the behavior of more self-actualizing as compared with less self-actualizing departmental groups was found to be less determined by formal structure, formal role prescriptions and formal lines of authority.

The present research is concerned with application of the POI in testing hypotheses concerning levels of self-actualization of small business owners. Gopinath (2020 j) has conducted study on role of employees' attitude in work place. And enhancing these factors will also improve the attitude of academic leaders of Tamil Nadu University. Gopinath (2020 k) in his study on impact of job satisfaction

and organizational commitment has found positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Gopinath & Kalpana (2020) from results of structural equation modeling the researchers find Job Involvement motivates employee towards fulfillment of the personal life goals. Obviously the fulfilled goals give satisfaction to the academic leaders of university (Gopinath, 2019 c).

### III. NEED FOR THE STUDY

It is vital that tertiary institutions employers are able to attract and retain competent and qualified academics because they serve as a means of production of knowledge (Kinnear & Sutherland, 2000; Gopinath, 2020 e). According to Lew (2011), teaching quality is imperative to create higher quality and competitive graduates. Consequently, the university will be able to attract foreign students and the academic staff will be able to produce skilled and competent graduates who will be able to fulfill the labor demand of various organizations.

Moshoue (2011) postulates that when employees terminate their employment contract, they leave with their abilities, experience, and expertise. The findings of this research will contribute to the body of knowledge and help to understand the demographic characteristics of academic leaders in the Tamil Nadu University (Gopinath, 2019 b).

### IV. METHODS

The primary objective of the researcher is to focus on an appropriate technique to identify the individuals to be included in the sample for the study and develop a reliable instrument to measure the perception of the respondents towards the chosen problem. In this direction, the task of the researcher had been greatly simplified by adopting a standardized and well established tool by Dr. Scott Barry

Kaufman in the University of Pennsylvania, USA (Kaufman, 2018). Further, the researcher attempted to validate the adopted instrument to understand whether it met the standard psychometric procedures without losing its original intentions. This chapter also deals with sampling techniques and the method of sampling within the chosen universe.

Grounded in Abraham Maslow's original writings on the characteristics of self-actualizing people, the CSAS measures 10 Subs Scales of self-actualization: (1) Continued freshness of appreciation, (2) Acceptance, (3) Authenticity, (4) Equanimity, (5) Purpose, (6) Truth Seeking, (7) Humanitarianism, (8) Peak Experiences, (9) Good Moral intuition, and (10) Creative Spirit (Kaufman, 2018). First part of the questionnaire contained questions regarding the general demographics characteristics of the respondents. The second part included a five point Lickert scale to self-actualizing people; the CSAS measures 10 Subs Scales of self-actualization.

The samples for the study have been demanded by the main objective, namely the efficacy of self-actualization on the academic leadership of Public Universities funded by both Central and State Governments in Tamil Nadu. Thus, the focuses of the data collected were from the academics from the universities of Tamil Nadu. The researcher adopted multi stage random sampling and sample size is 419 respondents were randomly selected from the academic leaders.

### V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Reliability Analysis Cronbach alpha reliability analysis was performed to check the internal consistency of the scale items as shown in Table I: Reliability Statistics. It turned out to be .71 which is considered to be acceptable in social science researches.

TABLE I INTERNAL CONSISTENCY RELIABILITY

Sl.No.	Variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
1	Acceptance	2 items	0.71
2	Authenticity	2 items	0.74
3	purpose	3 items	0.86
4	Efficient perception of reality	2 items	0.65
5	Humanitarianism	3 items	0.82
6	Good Moral Intuition	2 items	0.72
7	Creative spirit	2 items	0.79
8	Peak Experiences	2 items	0.77
9	Equanimity	2 items	0.79
10	Continued Freshness of Appreciation	2 items	0.77

Source: Primary data

This section highlights the similarities and differences of the variables in the study. Percentages are used to illustrate the relationships that emerged from the data collected.

TABLE II SHOWING THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Demographic Variable	Groups	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	Male	333	79.5	1.21	.404
	Female	86	20.5		
	Total	419	100.0		
Age Group	Below 43 yrs	45	10.7	2.71	.897
	43 - 48 yrs	112	26.7		
	49 - 53 yrs	182	43.4		
	54 & Above	80	19.1		
	Total	419	100.0		
Educational Qualifications	M.Phil. / Ph.D.	364	86.9	1.17	.485
	NET/SET/Ph.D.	38	9.1		
	PDF	16	3.8		
	D.Litt. / D.Sc.	1	.2		
	Total	419	100.0		
Designation	VC / Registrar / COE	18	4.3	4.00	1.059
	Dean	23	5.5		
	Director	58	13.8		
	SCAA/AC/Chair/ Coordinator	163	38.9		
	HOD	157	37.5		
	Total	419	100.0		
Salary	Below 100000	25	6.0	2.80	.825
	100000 to 150000	117	27.9		
	150001 to 210000	193	46.1		
	Above 210000	84	20.0		
	Total	419	100.0		
Year of Experience	Below 15	25	6.0	2.80	.825
	15 to 20 yrs	117	27.9		
	21 to 26 yrs	193	46.1		
	Above 26	84	20.0		
	Total	419	100.0		

Source: Primary data

In above table descriptive statistics, out of total academic leaders of the sample was a male (79.5%) and female (20.5%). The respondents were asked their specific age, which was used to create continuous variable. The researcher grouped the responses in 5 age ranges. Maximum (43.4% and 26.7%) of the academic leader's age groups of 49-53 years & 43-48 years. The largest category percentage of respondent's education is M.Phil. / Ph.D. (86.9%), followed by NET/SET/Ph.D. (9.1%). The commonly reported their designation is SCAA/AC/Chair/ Coordinator (38.9%), followed HOD and Director (37.5% and 13.8%). As far as their salary is concerned (46.1% and 27.9%) of the academic leaders were having salary of 150001 to 210000

and followed by 100000 to 150000. Maximum (46.1%) academic leaders years of experience is 21 to 26 years and (27.9%) of the academic leaders is 15 to 20 years of experience.

The linking Maslow's theory to contemporary theory and research on personality and well-being. Toward this aim, a new 30-item "Characteristics of Self-Actualization Scale (CSAS)" was developed. Scale validation showed that 10 characteristics of self-actualizing people as proposed by Maslow load on a general factor of self-actualization and demonstrate external validity.

TABLE III SHOWING MEAN DISTRIBUTION OF SELF-ACTUALIZATION FACTORS

S.No.	Self-Actualization Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>I - Acceptance</b>			
1	I accept all of my quirks and desires without shame or apology.	3.53	.900
2	I have unconditional acceptance for people and their unique quirks and desires.	3.73	.834
Overall Acceptance		3.63	0.867
<b>II - Authenticity</b>			
3	I can maintain my dignity and integrity even in environments and situations that are undignified.	3.74	.862
4	I can stay true to my core values even in environments that challenge them.	3.86	.911
Overall Authenticity		3.80	0.886
<b>III - Purpose</b>			
5	I feel a great responsibility and duty to accomplish a particular mission in life.	3.41	1.021
6	I feel as though I have some important task to fulfill in this lifetime.	4.41	.753
7	I have a purpose in life that will help the good of humankind.	3.40	1.020
Overall Purpose		3.74	0.931
<b>IV - Efficient Perception of Reality</b>			
8	I often have a clear perception of reality.	3.80	.940
9	I am always trying to get at the real truth about people and nature.	4.22	.708
Overall Efficient Perception of Reality		4.01	.824
<b>V - Humanitarianism</b>			
10	I feel a deep sense of identification with all human beings	3.88	.814
11	I feel a great deal of sympathy and affection for all human beings.	3.90	.956
12	I have a genuine desire to help the human race.	4.41	.753
Overall Humanitarianism		4.06	0.841
<b>VI - Good Moral Intuition</b>			
13	I trust my moral decisions without having to deliberate too much about them.	4.22	.762
14	I can tell "deep down" right away when I've done something wrong	3.80	.940
Overall Good Moral Intuition		4.01	0.851
<b>VII - Creative Spirit</b>			
15	I have a generally creative spirit that touches everything I do.	4.04	.768
16	I bring a generally creative attitude to all of my work.	4.02	.737
Overall Creative Spirit		4.03	0.752
<b>VIII - Peak Experiences</b>			
17	I often have experiences in which I feel new horizons and possibilities opening up for myself and others.	2.44	1.108
18	I often have experiences in which I feel one with all people and things on this planet.	3.80	.940
Overall Peak Experiences		3.12	1.024
<b>IX - Equanimity</b>			
19	I am relatively stable in the face of hard knocks, blows, deprivations, and frustrations.	4.04	.746
20	I tend to take life's inevitable ups and downs with grace, acceptance, and equanimity.	4.41	.753
Overall Equanimity		4.22	0.749
<b>X - Continued Freshness of Appreciation</b>			
21	I can appreciate again and again, freshly and naively, the basic goods of life, with awe, pleasure, wonder, and even ecstasy, however stale these experiences may have become to others.	4.06	.744
22	I often feel gratitude for the good in my life no matter how many times I encounter it.	3.40	1.073
Overall Continued Freshness of Appreciation		3.73	0.908

5-Point Likert Scale; 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Those reporting more characteristics of self-actualization were more motivated by growth, exploration, and love of humanity than the fulfillment of deficiencies in basic needs. The characteristics of self-actualization were also associated with, Acceptance, Authenticity, purpose, and efficient perception of reality, Humanitarianism, Good Moral Intuition, Creative spirit, Peak Experiences, Equanimity and Continued Freshness of Appreciation. Each variable and its nature of relevance with self-actualization are described in detail in the forthcoming sections.

Participants completed a 25- to 30-minute online survey administered via Qualtrics. Most scales were on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, except for the demographic questions, which had more relevant response options. Most scales have demonstrated prior reliability and validity (see the citations associated with each scale for further information about the prior reliability and validity of each scale). Scale (CSAS) is a 30-item measure that captures 10 inter related characteristics of self-actualization (Table III), adapted directly from Maslow's (1950) list of characteristics of self-actualizing people

The opinion from the academic leaders of Tamil Nadu Universities surveyed about of self-actualization Dimensions have obtained in a five point scale, and the priority of each of the self-actualization dimension have been ranked according to the mean values assigned to them. This has been displayed in Table III.

The above table reveals from Equanimity (4.22) has been ranked as top most self-actualization Dimensions. This implies that academic leaders give more importance to self-actualization. It means academic leaders of Tamil Nadu Universities the face of hard knocks, blows, deprivations, and frustrations. The followed by Humanitarianism (4.06), Creative Spirit (4.03), Good Moral Intuition & Efficient Perception of Reality (4.01), Authenticity, Purpose (3.74), Continued Freshness of Appreciation (3.73), Acceptance (3.63) and Peak Experiences (3.12).

## VI. CONCLUSION

In our research academic leaders belonging to different age groups, gender, educational qualification, different designation, salary and years of experience were surveyed. We have tried to assess the top most self-actualization Dimensions of academic leaders in Tamilnadu University. Academic leader's role is important at any institution of higher education. Their demographic profile is influence to develop the institutions and job tasks they perform everyday have a directly influence on the organization's ability to meet stake holder expectations. Therefore, the Tamil Nadu Universities in India, need to continuously enhance the self-actualization such as Acceptance, Authenticity , purpose, Efficient perception of reality, Humanitarianism, Good Moral Intuition, Creative spirit, Peak Experiences,

Equanimity and Continued Freshness of Appreciation to boost the academic leaders.

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