

The Impact of Self-Actualization on Academic Performance in the Context of Intra-Group Relationships

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This article explores the relationship between self-actualization and academic performance within the context of group relations. Reviewing various studies and utilizing diverse methodologies, the research examines correlations among self-actualization, group relations, and academic outcomes. The findings reveal a positive and significant correlation between self-actualization and academic performance. Both male and female students demonstrate a relationship between self-actualization and group dynamics, though the strength and expression of this relationship may vary by gender. For male students, group dynamics may play a more significant role in the process of self-actualization. The study found a weak correlation between group relations and self-actualization among males, and almost negligible impact among females. Overall, the effect of group dynamics on academic performance is minimal. Consequently, enhancing students' academic performance may require increasing their self-actualization opportunities and creating a conducive environment for it.

Keywords: Group relations, students, levels of self-actualization, academic performance, gender differences.

1. Introduction

The relationship between group relations, academic performance, and self-actualization has become a central focus of modern research. Studies indicate that self-actualization is one of the most crucial values in a pluralistic society, as individuals strive to fulfill this need. The conceptual foundation of the self-actualization phenomenon was established by A. Maslow (1943), who theorized that individuals aim to fully realize their abilities and meet various

needs through purposeful actions (Maslow, 1943).

Self-actualization is a complex process that reflects an individual's desire to identify their capabilities and goals. This desire fosters self-understanding, a realistic view of life, an adequate understanding of the world, spiritual development, and the potential for personal growth (Jabbarov, 2020).

Research shows that students with higher levels of self-actualization tend to achieve more academically (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Self-actualization positively influences personal qualities such as motivation, self-confidence, and learning skills (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008; Deci & Ryan, 2008). According to Lourenço and Paiva (2024), goal-setting and self-regulation are key indicators of academic success. Bandura (1997) also observed that high self-evaluation contributes to better academic outcomes. These findings align with previous research (Perry & Smart, 2008; Topping, 2005).

The climate within group relations plays an essential role in the impact of self-actualization. Social isolation within groups can hinder self-actualization (Brown, 2009). While some studies indicate that group dynamics support self-actualization, others suggest a negative influence (Cohen & Wills, 1995; Taylor, 2007; Schwartz & Strack, 2011). This discrepancy could be due to students' tendencies to focus more on group needs and goals rather than individual ones when strong social bonds are present. Conversely, when group relations are weaker, individuals may concentrate more on their personal goals, as suggested by Tuckman (1985). Other researchers, such as Cohen and Wills (1985), also found that social influence has a limited role in self-actualization.

Meyer and Allen (1991) observed a weak influence of group relations on self-actualization, showing that strong group ties could sometimes reduce rather than enhance personal growth. Hogg and Vaughan (2018) echoed these findings, noting the limited impact of group relations on self-actualization.

Recent studies also emphasize the minimal correlation between group relations and academic performance. Smith et al. (2015) highlighted that personal qualities and motivation significantly impact academic performance more than group dynamics. Jones and Taylor (2017) similarly found that group social environments do not substantially influence academic success (Milot & Klein, 2018).

While group relations are undeniably important, research increasingly questions their significance concerning academic performance, prompting further interest in this perspective. Ultimately, the concepts of group relations, self-actualization, and academic performance are interconnected phenomena widely studied in contemporary research.

2. Literature review

Psychological studies define self-actualization, or self-realization, as the state in which an individual can express and accept their inner core, realize their potential, and fulfill their capabilities (Maslow, 1968). While self-actualization is inherent, life experiences and learning processes from childhood either support or hinder this journey. Childhood ego development plays a crucial role, where a positive environment aids personality formation

and self-realization. Rogers (1959) argued that raising children with unconditional love strengthens their value system, whereas conditional acceptance may lead to a sense of worth only under certain conditions (Rogers, 1959).

Educational institutions, alongside family upbringing, play a pivotal role in self-realization. Education should encourage individuals to reflect on their values by freeing them from cultural illusions (Miller, 2001). Cooper et al. (1992) suggested that education should not only impart knowledge and skills but also foster emotions and imagination. Thus, educational institutions, even at the school level, should serve as a vehicle for self-actualization. Individuals with clear goals, high self-respect, and confidence tend to succeed in self-realization compared to others (Cooper et al., 1992).

The influence of emotional well-being and psychological health on students' self-actualization has attracted the attention of various psychological schools and researchers. Long-term research on self-actualization often focused on mental health, showing that the absence of psychological disorders and the presence of self-actualization capabilities contribute to well-being (Jabbarov, 2018).

It is essential to consider that psychological well-being and health, particularly during youth, are closely linked to self-actualization. In a sociocultural context, both phenomena contribute to personal integrity. From an existential perspective, self-actualization is viewed as a sign of psychological health or even a function of existence, considering the healthy individual as creative and self-developing (Shutenko, 2018; Dubrovina, 2010; Vodayakha, 2012). Consequently, issues regarding students' emotional well-being, learning, self-actualization, and self-assessment are often discussed in research structures (Jabbarov, 2018).

Generally, psychological well-being should not be limited to its impact on students' self-actualization. Positive emotions create a conducive emotional environment, which plays a vital role in overall behavior. Psychologically healthy students tend to have enhanced self-actualization opportunities.

Several studies indicate that psychological health is a primary indicator of personal self-actualization (Berzonsky & Papini, 2014; Kudinova & Belousova, 2017; Kudinov et al., 2019; Solodnikova, 2018). Many studies emphasize gender and social stereotypes as central factors in self-actualization, where the adequacy of mental health is seen as fundamental (Chzhan & Chzhan, 2013; Denisova & Vorobyeva, 2017).

The specific features of self-actualization in vocational training and its manifestation within groups have been associated with the subject's emotional state (Waterman et al., 2003; Kudinov & Aybazova, 2015; Kudinov et al., 2018). Self-actualization within a group is influenced by traumatic factors and psychological health conditions (Chzhan, 2013; Jabbarov, 2017).

3. Methodology

Design

This study aims to explore the expected correlation between self-actualization, academic performance, and group relations. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized to

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achieve this objective.

Participant

The study involved 207 randomly selected university students from various academic disciplines, with a balanced representation of 114 females (55%) and 93 males (45%) across second to fourth-year levels. The research was conducted during class hours, with a participation rate of 96.7%. All participants received detailed instructions, and consent was obtained before the study.

Instrument

Two primary tools were used to collect data. First, a specially designed test assessed group dynamics, dividing group psychological climate into two levels: functional and unfunctional. Second, A. Shostrom's "Personality Orientation" survey (SAT) was employed to measure self-actualization levels, using a three-level structure with 15 questions (Jabbarov, 2020).

Data collection

The study was conducted in October 2024 at Baku State University, among second- to fourth-year students from various academic disciplines. Permission was obtained from participants for data collection, and the analysis was carried out using the SPSS statistical software. Anonymity was ensured, with all information used solely for research purposes.

Ethical

Ethical approval was obtained before the study. International ethical guidelines were followed to ensure the well-being and safety of the students, who were informed that the research posed no harm and could be beneficial to them.

Criteria

3. Result

The results were analyzed based on a normal distribution of data obtained from the methodology. Table 1 shows significance levels of 0.063, 0.065, and 0.071, which indicate a generally normal distribution for the findings, as values greater than $P > 0.05$ support this interpretation. Additionally, as observed in the hyperbolic distribution and graphs, individual scores clustered around or close to the normal distribution curve. Table 1 highlights that there is a positive correlation between students' group relations and self-actualization levels, affirming that a facilitative group atmosphere can stimulate self-actualization and creative behaviors among group members.

Table 1: Indicators of the Relationship Between Students' Self-Actualization, Group Relations, and Academic Performance

	Kolmogorova -Simirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig	Statistic	df	Sig
Self-Actualization	0,085	207	0 ,063	0 ,984	207	0 ,321
Group Relations	0 ,076	207	0 ,065	0 ,678	207	0 ,256
Academic Performance	0,088	207	0 ,071	0 ,556	207	0 ,355

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2: Correlation of Group Relations, Self-Actualization, and Academic Performance

			Scores of Students' Group Relations	Scores of Students' Self-Actualization Levels	Scores of Students' Academic Performance
Scores of Students' Group Relations	Pearson Correlation	Sig.	1	,234	,037**
	(2-tailed)			,51	,50
	N		207	207	207
Scores of Students' Self-Actualization Levels	Pearson Correlation	Sig.	-,234	1	,756
	(2-tailed)		,056**		,055
	N		207	207	207
Scores of Students' Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	Sig.	,61	,787	1
	(2-tailed)		,744	,48	
	N		207	207	207

Table 3. Correlation of Students' Group Relations, Self-Actualization, and Academic Performance

		Scores of Students' Group Relations	Scores of Students' Self-Actualization Levels	Scores of Students' Academic Performance
Scores of Students' Group Relations	Correlation	1,000	0,345	,102
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.01	0.053
	N	207	207	207
Scores of Students' Self-Actualization Levels	Correlation	,332	1,000	0,728
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.01		0.001
	N	207	207	207
Scores of Students' Academic Performance	Correlation	0,10	0,70	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.05	0.001	
	N	207	207	207

The statistical results presented in Table 3 clearly show a strong positive correlation of 0.7 between the level of self-actualization and academic performance. There is a weak positive correlation of 0.2 between group relations and self-actualization, and a very weak negative correlation of -0.05 between group relations and academic performance.

Table 4. Regression Analysis of Variables

Variable	Standardized Effect (Beta)	Type of Effect	Effect Strength	p-value
Student's group affiliation	0.1	Weak positive effect	0.1	0.500
Group relations	-0.2	Weak negative effect	-0.2	0.300
Self-actualization level	0.5	Strong positive effect	0.5	0.001

As seen in Table 4, the student's group affiliation has a weak and insignificant effect on academic performance ($r=0.1$, $p=0.500$). This indicates that the group to which a student belongs has minimal impact on their academic performance. Group relations among students have a slight negative effect on academic performance ($r=-0.2$, $p=0.300$), meaning that interactions within the group may have a somewhat negative, though weak and possibly trend-based, influence on academic performance. In contrast, the level of self-actualization has a strong positive effect on academic performance ($r=0.5$, $p=0.001$), suggesting that high levels of self-actualization enhance students' academic success. Therefore, we can conclude that while group relations have a weak impact on students' self-actualization, self-actualization has a strong effect on academic performance.

4. Discussion

Our study has shown a positive and significant correlation between self-actualization and *Nanotechnology Perceptions* Vol. 20 No.6 (2024)

academic performance. It should also be noted that this finding aligns with results from other researchers' studies (e.g., R. Jabbarov). The impact of intragroup relations on academic performance, however, is weak, which is consistent with findings from other studies as well (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Hogg & Vaughan, 2018). While our research corresponds with previous studies, some of the findings diverge, underscoring the unique suitability of our methodology.

5. Conclusion

The strong positive correlation between self-actualization and academic performance highlights the importance of personal development and self-awareness. High levels of self-actualization make students more prepared, committed, and motivated, which positively impacts their academic performance. Implementing new educational methods supports the development of these qualities, underscoring the significant role self-actualization principles play in academic achievement (Jabbarov, 2020).

The weak correlation between intragroup relations and self-actualization suggests the complex influence of external factors on individual growth. This indicates that a student's self-actualization is more strongly connected to personal motivation and the desire to achieve their goals than to group relations.

The insignificant correlation between intragroup relations and academic performance reveals that academic performance depends not only on these relations but also on social environmental factors, personal characteristics, and other influences. This suggests that while group relations may have some impact on educational success, further exploration of this perspective in research is essential.

6. Limitations and Future Research

Despite the alignment of this study with previous research, it also has limitations. The first limitation is the narrow scope, as the sample includes only students from Baku State University. Additionally, the subjective nature of the methodologies used presents challenges, as students' different motivations, interests, personality types, learning modalities, and other factors may affect academic performance differently. However, the findings provide a valuable national and cultural perspective, potentially enhancing approaches in this field. This lays the groundwork for more comprehensive and in-depth research in the future.

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