



**BRITISH ACADEMY
OF MANAGEMENT**

BAM
CONFERENCE

3RD-5TH SEPTEMBER

ASTON UNIVERSITY BIRMINGHAM UNITED KINGDOM

This paper is from the BAM2019 Conference Proceedings

About BAM

The British Academy of Management (BAM) is the leading authority on the academic field of management in the UK, supporting and representing the community of scholars and engaging with international peers.

<http://www.bam.ac.uk/>

Think Inverted Maslow Pyramid for Building a Great Organization

Shameem Shagirbasha*
Assistant Professor
Great Lakes Institute of Management
Chennai, India

Nixon Fernando**
Research Associate

Think Inverted Maslow Pyramid for Building A Great Organization:

“Organizations can best prosecute their mandates if their stake holders operate from self-transcendence”

-Authors

Abstract

Progressive understanding of Maslow’s theory offers insight into how an industry leader (or any leader for that matter) must design motivation aspects in relation to his followers as also in respect of his organization. The theory of hierarchy of needs initially recommended the movement up the Maslow’s ladder of needs. Further on, deeper insights about the self-actualization aspect of the theory lead to a motivation profile that is recommended by theorists of self-determination. But once we postulate parity between Self-transcendence and self-realization, then a lot of rational investigations into humans’ divine nature, made by exponents of self-realization, offer themselves up for widening the scope of understanding human beings. There are strong coincidences in the literature and applications of self-transcendence and self-realization. These in turn can even act as proof for the original hypothesis of equivalence. For those inquiring into self-actualization and self-transcendence this presents a great opportunity for further inquiry and for developing useful applications. For example there is better understanding about selflessness, efficiency and excellence that can arise as benefits of transcendental psychology if the self-realization aspects of human nature are understood. And one direct application of this is the propensity of the inspirational leader to approach motivation of the followers from top to bottom along Maslow’s hierarchy rather than bottom to top. Leaders of organizations would do well to work at inspiration first and see in it the best chance to tackle all other needs with greatest chance of success.

Keywords: Maslow’s need hierarchy, self- transcendence, self- realization

Word Count: 8677

1. Introduction

Self-realization is a term very often used in literature related to Spiritual practice of the east. Self-transcendence on the other hand is a term used increasingly in western psychology especially transcendental psychology. At the same time, transcendental psychologists do intermittently refer to spiritual thought, spiritual experience and spiritual practice of the east. Similarly Indian spiritual thought leaders are often found to refer to the term ‘Self-realization’ as being close to Self-actualization, which in turn is a term that is part of the lexicon of motivation scientists. Such reference is made apparently owing to the ‘Hierarchy of needs’ model, originally proposed by Maslow; ‘self-actualization’ was the only term, in the original five level ‘Hierarchy of needs’ model, that bore likeliness to the eastern concept of Self-realization.

Over the years the ‘self-actualization’ of the original Maslow’s (1943, 1954) five-stage model has been expanded to include cognitive and aesthetic needs (Maslow, 1970a) and later transcendence needs (Maslow, 1970b). So the self-actualization has now been resolved into four components and transcendence is placed at the highest level (McLeod, S. A. (2017)). With transcendence placed at the highest level in the modified Maslow model, it begs to be seen if ‘transcendence’ or ‘self-transcendence’ is even closer in definition to self-realization than self-actualization is.

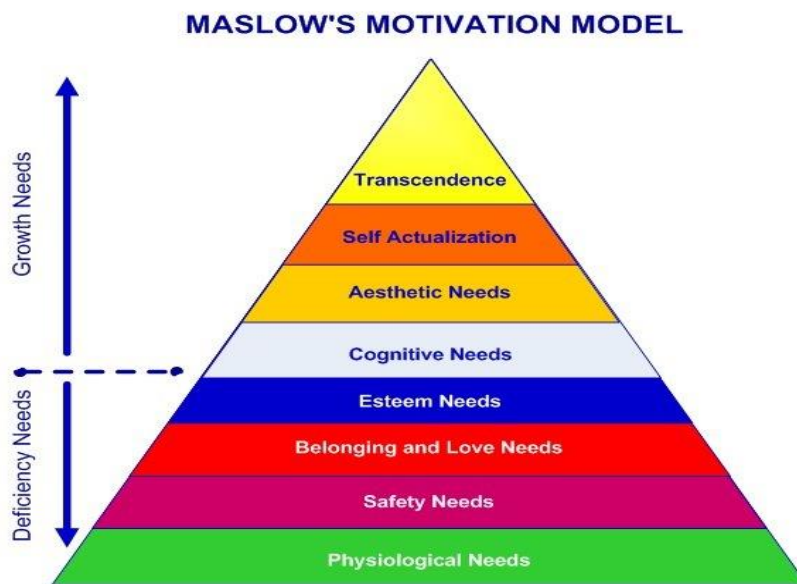


Figure 1: Maslow’s Model

(Source: McLeod, S. A. 2017)

According to Maslow, transcendence is when “a person is motivated by values which transcend beyond the personal self.” Let us call it self-transcendence, or personal-self-transcendence. So

we have two terms Self-transcendence and Self-realization, coming from two different streams of thought. And the question is whether they really refer to one and the same thing? If they do how does it affect our insights on how an industry leader must motivate his people? Or how does it instruct the industry leader to build the motivation system in his organization in pursuit successful prosecution of his organizational goals?

The traditional belief was that people must be motivated by seeking to satisfy needs as they attempt to climb the hierarchy from bottom to top along Maslow's hierarchy. Subsequent theories (and Maslow himself) disputed the strict need to ascend along the hierarchy. Even later theories spoke of aspects of self-actualization as the real efficient motivators. Eventually three psychological needs namely autonomy, relatedness and competence were identified as the real motivators. Would this perception also change if the equivalence between transcendence and self-realization is established?

If the equivalence is established then empirical observations made in the field of self-realization lend themselves to application in motivation theory. And this brings to fore huge amounts of empirical literature that point towards the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs as the starting point for the best kind of motivation.

Therefore the paper tries to establish the proposition that: The best form of motivation offered in an organization would be by starting at the top of the Maslow's hierarchy and by that the organization would be able to prosecute its task to its optimum best and the organization can achieve this even while the stake holders of that organization would enjoy high levels of contentment and satisfaction.

2. Literature review:

2.1 Progress in motivation theory alongside developments in Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory

Going back to Maslow's original five level hierarchy, when the reference is to self-actualization, Maslow refers to a self that is done with its basic physiological, security, social and esteem needs and looks higher. It seemingly has higher potential which it wants to realize. Maslow says, that once the lower level needs are taken care of "*.... they are motivated primarily by trends to self-actualization [defined as ongoing actualization of potentials]*" (Maslow 1968: 25). It is not just about 'thinking' about their potentials though, there is a think-feel duality about it—to gain something is not just a thought process but also a feeling or emotion that there is something bigger. Maslow terms it subsequently as follows '*we must make a place for "experientially based concepts," and for "experientially filled words," that is, for an experience based rationality in contrast to the a priori rationality that we have come almost to identify with rationality itself.*' (Maslow 1970, p9) (Though of course he said this after his ideas about transcendence had reasonably crystalized.)

In his earlier papers Maslow seems to implicitly suggest that people may not be bothered about self-actualization if the primary stuff is not taken care of. For instance, he suggests that people will not bother about self-actualization if their security needs are first not met. And actually recommends that a leader ought to address the lower level needs first in an effort to motivate them—a bottom up approach to motivation. But eventually Maslow, in his later work admitted that, indeed, one can move on to higher needs even if 100% of the lower needs are not satisfied. He said that it was never his intention to say that 100% satisfaction of needs was required, he said that he may have inadvertently created “*the false impression that a need must be satisfied 100 percent before the next need emerges*” (1987, p. 69).

Various other studies went on to show that indeed humans do not truly prioritize the down up sequencing of needs as was originally envisaged by Maslow. For example, a person can gain wellbeing by meeting psychosocial needs regardless of whether his or her basic needs are fully met (Tay & Diener, 2011). Similarly in another instance 150 college students took a survey that addressed the question ‘which of Maslow's levels of need is perceived to be most important to happiness?’ A significant number of undergraduates, both male and female, preferred ‘staying in love’ more often than the other choices, and significantly so, even at the cost of lower needs not being met (Pettijohn, 1996).

Seen together with Herzberg’s theories there is class difference between the lower set of Maslow theory needs (the first four) and the higher set (the top four needs in the 8 level model). While the lower set stood for hygiene needs... (these became less motivating as they were satisfied) the upper motivators acted as a kind of inspiration (these needs were more motivating as more needs were satisfied) (McLeod, 2017). The general consensus is that these two classes of needs can be considered independent of each other and simultaneously taken up by humans. Diener, E. (2011), compares them to vitamins in the sense that the needs act independently and all needs are needed. It might appear that the most basic needs are important when you don’t have them, but there is no hard and fast sequence that the basic ones must be fulfilled in order to get benefit from the others. In fact Susan Fowler, in an article in Harvard Business Review dated Nov 2014 indicates a complete paradigm shift. She argues that there is not much recent data to support Maslow’s Hierarchy, even though it is rather popular. She points out to the work of Self-Determination Theory Researchers amongst the contemporary scientists, for example Dr. Edward Deci who instead lay emphasis on three universal psychological needs. So she says that instead of the pyramid of needs one must rather focus on *autonomy, relatedness, and competence*.

PP Baard et al (2004) summarize in their paper that Self-determination theorists have between the years 1958 (Harlow) and 2000 (Ryan and Deci) relate to these three innate psychological needs. Competence: the ability to attain desired outcomes by succeeding at tasks that are optimally challenging. Autonomy: The feeling that one is the initiator of one’s own actions and therefore experiences choice. Relatedness: Having a sense of mutual respect and reliance with others. A closer look at the definitions of these terms reveals that they belong to the same “think-feel” duality we reckoned earlier in the definition of self-actualization. This suggests that

they could be finer concepts of the self-actualization domain itself. And a connection is indeed evident.

Maslow (1943, 1954) talks of self-actualized people as ‘people who were fulfilled and doing all they were capable of’. Later (1962) he added that they experienced feelings of ‘euphoria, joy, and wonder’ while witnessing the world as-it-is during peak experiences. They were kind-of tuned to the world. Hoffman (1988) further adds that this state of self-actualization is not some fixed ‘happy ever after’ stage but rather a dynamic state in which a person is in a continuous process of always ‘becoming’.

Therefore, Self-actualization is a dynamic state of ‘being’, of having attained to one’s potential. In contrast autonomy, relatedness and competence are ‘characteristics or attributes’ of that state; characteristics or attributes expressed while being in that state or attempting to attain that state. The relationship between the two can best be described using the allegory of an octopus and its tentacles. Therefore while in self-actualization Maslow talks about the attribute of the individual—as if an octopus is desirous of something to catch. Autonomy, relatedness and competence can be considered to be the tentacles through which the catching can be done. In their collectiveness, these three attributes could also be seen as attributes of a person who is acting to fulfil his higher needs—self-actualization—as brought out by Saul McLeod, (2017).

Considering all this we can more or less conclude that the general direction pointed to by the basic Maslow’s theory and the outcomes of the Self Determination theory is more or less the same.

If those that vouch for the latter theory (Eg: Susan Fowler-2014) differ then it is in saying that people in an organization are better motivated by these three traits than the lower ones. They insist that it is not necessary to follow the progression from the bottom of the hierarchy to the top (and as we have seen, Maslow does not disagree with this). Instead give primacy to the drive for self-actualization.

Through this we arrive at the basic advice offered to leaders and organization that the motivation profile for the best of workers must not be built keeping physiological needs at the start and progressively working upwards along the Maslow’s Hierarchy. Instead the focus must be on the need for self-actualization. Or in conclusion we can say that leaders must motivate their followers by focusing on helping them actualize their potential through autonomy, relatedness and competence.

2.2 Excellence in individuals, excellence in organizations and motivation:

The discovery of the Hawthorne effect created a paradigm shift in the sense that it was discovered that Humans were motivated into working not necessarily because they wished to be compensated but also because they felt contentment in certain achievements or in the experience of being useful for something bigger than them.

These ideas came in a structured form in the forties and fifties in the form of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. In the hierarchy both kinds of motivations were incorporated into various levels of needs ranging from basic ones to self-Actualization. Using these precepts organizations tried to progressively compensate the workers covering their various needs with the view that this motivated them to work. The idea more or less was that as the lower needs were fulfilled the goals shifted to the higher levels and there was a stage when people were motivated out of their fullness merely wanting to explore and actualize their potentials. This, perception has left such deep impressions that despite modern scientists claiming more advanced theories like the self-determination theory, the popular culture more often than not refers to this theory to explain motivation.

Herzberg categorized 'human needs' into two factors one set that was required as a kind of baseline hygiene. The other set was what he called motivators. The idea was that the organizations had to take care of the basics to ensure the bare minimum and then address the higher ones to motivate people to contribute towards the organizations' causes.

The theories that followed namely reinforcement theory, expectancy theory, equity theory, goal-setting theory all of which indicated that humans have needs that reflect many finer aspects of living and it was by offering opportunities for things like these that workers could be motivated to work and work well.

The latest of course is the self-determination theory where humans have three psychological needs and in the fulfilling of these needs individuals achieve satisfaction and excellence and organizations would do well to give adequate space for its workers for these opportunities. The yearning for Autonomy, relatedness and competence is what best motivates man. There by the recommendation is that leaders must not look upon their followers as creatures climbing up the Maslow's hierarchy from the bottom upwards but rather as higher order creatures who want to self-actualize—the need for self-actualization. This thrust at motivation, according to them, yields the best results for an organization.

2.3 Concept of Transcendence

The inclusion of the concepts of transcendence in the improved version of the hierarchy helps to resolve matters even deeper.

So what happens after one transcends? Maslow suggests that it is about peak experiences.

'The universal nucleus of every known high religion (unless Confucianism is also called a religion) has been the private, lonely, personal illumination, revelation, or ecstasy of some acutely sensitive prophet or seer... These "revelations" or mystical illuminations can be subsumed under the head of the "peak-experiences" or "ecstasies" or "transcendent" experiences'... The peak-experience itself can often meaningfully be called a "little death," and a rebirth in various senses. (It is) something akin to a climactic explosion which then ends.'

He further extends this into something called as the 'plateau' experience.

'The less intense plateau experience is more often experienced as pure enjoyment and happiness, as, let's say, in a mother sitting quietly looking, by the hour, at her baby playing, and marveling, wondering, philosophizing, not quite believing. She can experience this as a very pleasant, continuing, contemplative experience...' (Maslow 1970)

Describing it further Maslow (1961/1999, p.117, footnotes omitted) says that in this peak experience can make a person relatively egoless. He says that in the experience one develops a greater ability of I-Thou monism just like a mother feels oneness with her child or like someone skilled at work becomes one with his creation. It is this that makes lovers experience oneness. Something that was 'not-self' becomes 'self' in the experience. The self is able to fuse with the world. And therefore the peak experience is a journey of one going 'beyond and above selfhood'.

Curiously enough he says that it leads to a twist or a 'main paradox' as he calls it. The goal of self-actualization is a transitional goal, a rite of passage, or a step along the way' ... way to what...? It is a way to transcending self-identity. Therefore the seeking of a peak experience seems to be an 'end-goal' in itself. Similar to the Eastern one of 'ego-transcendence and obliteration, of leaving behind self-consciousness and self-observation..'

From the above observations from Maslow's work, it is evident that Maslow is convinced that the transcendence that he speaks of, as the highest experience, is substantially equivalent to the highest spiritual experience that is propounded by the spiritual masters of the east. By implication, transcendence, according to his findings, is substantially equivalent to Nirvana of the Hindus, which is also known by the term self-realization.

2.4 Studies about the self

In understanding self-transcendence and self-realization it becomes evident that the concept of the 'self' needs to be explored further. Scientific study about the self has been systematically taken up and in this paper we shall particularly look multiplicity of self-perception. Investigators talk of not just a single self but a multiplicity of it—not in the sense that 'self' is unique to each person and therefore there are multiple selves possible, rather it is about the fact that each person can himself experience multiplicity of self. Going one step further Markus and Wurf (1987) have investigated not only the multiplicity of these perceptions but also the dynamics of it. In the sense that they find that self-perception not only exists, it can take multiple forms and it alters dynamically influencing behavior (both intra personal and inter personal).

Summarizing the progress of literature up to writing of their paper they say that initially Wylie (1974), by reviewing literature had concluded that behavior could not be impacted by self-concept but within a decade's time explorers like Suls (1982), Suls & Greenwald 1983, Schlenker (1985) were able to show that the self-concept is one of the most significant regulators of behavior. They found that initially the self was considered to be 'a singular, static, lump-like entity' but with progress they discovered that it was a 'multi-dimensional, multi-faceted dynamic structure' that played a significant role in social information processing. They also point out that sociologists have also come to a similar conclusion in that an individual carries 'multiplicity of

identities'. Social scientists have shown that identity which contains personal characteristics, feelings, images, roles and social status is subject to dynamic variation. So just as the psychologists, even the sociologists are gravitating to the concept of dynamic self-identities that mimic the resultant of dynamic self-concept.

Talking of multiple representations of the self they say that each representation may vary from the other in importance depending on the degree of elaborated behavioral evidence. Some are positive and some are negative. Representations could also be based on experiences in the time line; some are defined in the here-and-now, some others in the past and others in the future. Variations in self-representation can also be based on whether the self is what actually is, or whether it is what one would like to be, what one could be, what one ought to be or even what one is afraid of being.

The authors also speak of self-representations that vary with strength, meaning that some are central some are peripheral. They say that self-representations also differ in whether or not they have actually been achieved. According to them some selves are not actual, but are possible for the person; other selves are hoped-for ideals.

Eventually in the paper they go on to develop a concept of the "Dynamic Self" and show that a certain group of cognitions which are dominant at a given time act as a "Working-self" and influence action.

The following diagram represents the model that they propound. On the surface we have the person and the social environment and how the person interacts with the social environment. Within the person we have the set of cognitions (self-schemas, possible selves, prototypes, scripts, ego-tasks, standards, strategies, or productions) that agglomerates into the self-concept. This coupled with the intra-personal behavior would account for the Affective-Cognitive system, very much governing the 'think-feel' that we have considered earlier in the paper. And then as a sub set of the self-concepts contained in the individual is the 'Working self-concept'. This sub-set is activated currently in a given situation. They conclude that when stimuli, experiences, or events alert the self-concept then these external inputs attain self-relevant meanings or they become special apparently activating behaviors/responses accordingly.

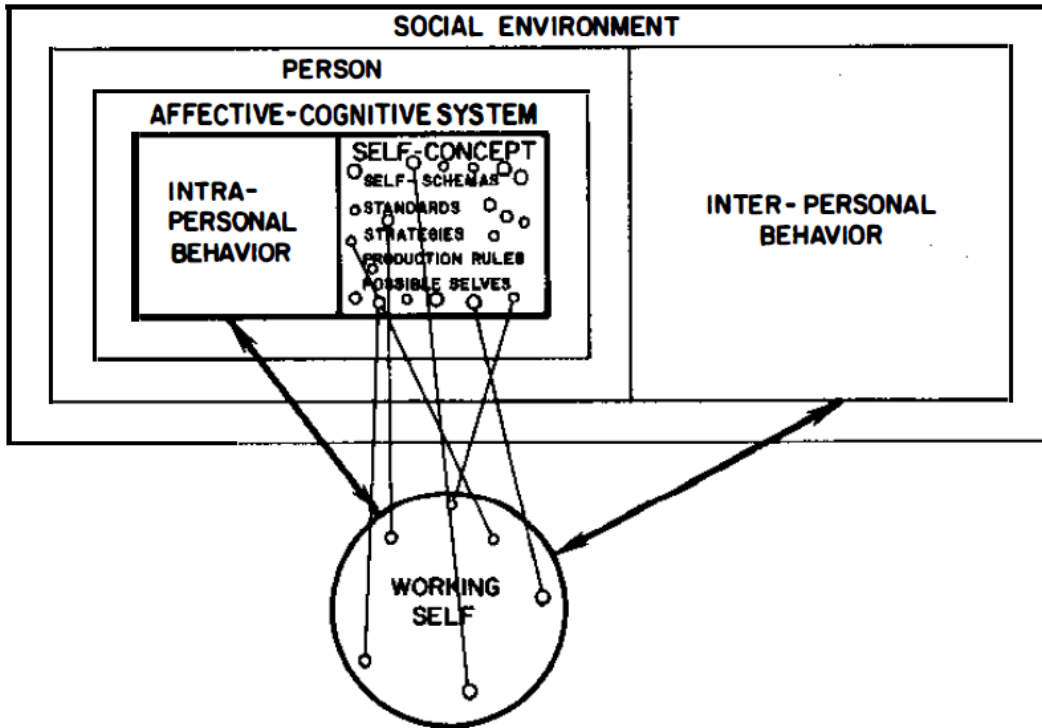


Figure 2: Working Self

(Source: Markus and Wurf., 1987)

Note that the self-schemas, possible selves, prototypes, scripts, ego-tasks, standards, strategies, or productions are all recordings in the mind. The working self can be seen to borrow from the totality of learning accumulated in the mind. They are remains of cognitions and experiences of the time past and reside in the memory. And these ideas, and possibly re-lived experiences, drive action. This easily relates to Descartes' assertion "I think therefore I am". Or to put the same idea in terms of Markus and Wurf, What I am varies dynamically with what I think and what I think is nothing but the working self that is in operation at a given time.

2.5 Existence of multiple self-perceptions from an applications perspective

The fact that there can be multiple self-perceptions at the cognitive level, regardless of what the objective self is, opens a wide range of possibilities in the domain of mind science. Mind scientists in turn teach how this self-awareness can be altered and constructively fixed in order to improve our lives. They say we can even program our lives just by beginning to think about ourselves differently. Robin Sharma's (1999) work titled as "The Monk who sold his Ferrari" is an example of this kind of application. Books like this one have gained popularity as they are known to have produced tangible outcomes in readers. And the potential for use of this understanding is really great. Most self-development coaches use these techniques in writings, seminars and workshops to improve the quality of lives of those who listen and apply the

techniques on themselves. This is a demonstrated science and the applications do yield tangible results; but of course to various degrees of success depending on the instructor, the trainee and the system of techniques adopted.

To summarize we can say that there is potential for multiplicity of perceived self and the 'quality' or 'substance' of that perception can have an impact on the actions, behavior, bearings of the person and therefore as the mind scientists suggest, altering that perception constructively could lead to difference in quality of life for a given individual.

Therefore at this point, in our inquiry about the 'self' (with the intention to inquire into what is the 'self' that is being transcended from and what is the 'self' that is being arrived at), we can conclude that

- a) A multiplicity of self is indeed possible and it is dynamic
- b) It depends on evolved cognitions that in turn also shape perception
- c) The quality of life and action of an individual can be altered by changing the content of that self-perception.

2.6 Objective self

What is this objective self like? One of the attributes of the objective self, we have seen, is the coming of the person into awareness of the present, and as Tolle puts it, power is unleashed. But this is an attribute of the objective self. What is the actual objective self like? How does it appear? Can it be touched? Can it be measured using instruments? Can it be photographed?

Here we tread on thin ice. There are many descriptions, of that which is 'beyond,' made by many spiritual explorers, which can be rather confusing. More over such descriptions definitely fall beyond the scope of scientific investigation due to a very interesting reason. The experts say that this self is beyond the five senses and beyond the mind; something that cannot be touched, tasted, seen, smelled or heard and something that cannot be 'imagined'. The experts say that this 'Objective self' cannot be even imagined by the mind. In St Augustin's case the message came as: 'the ocean cannot be emptied into the small puddle on the shore'. In the book "Mr. God, this is Anna" (Fynn,1974) the message comes through as: 'just as the shadow cannot understand the man so also the mind cannot understand the self, or in other words the self is of a higher dimension than the mind-body mechanism'. So if we take any normal day object like a pencil for example, the mind can perceive it, the senses can see, touch, feel it, but that is not possible with the 'self'. To put it succinctly, the objective self or the experienced self is said to be beyond the mind, therefore beyond all concepts... and beyond all concepts there is only experience. Self-realization is therefore said to be an experiential process.

Spiritual literature reveals that even demonstration of this phenomenon is nothing but the Guru being in that state of having transitioned. It is supposed to be something that no one can give to another, very unlike how one can give a sweet to the other to eat. It is claimed that one must experience the meditative state by oneself and must make that journey through the process of

transition by oneself. In other words, living that transcended state is an individual journey which one has to make by himself, of course prodded on by the trust one has in his leader/teacher/guru. The challenge is, if Jesus Christ tells “Give up yourself”, can the Christian do it? He needs to have faith to leap forward into that unknown.

As a spiritual master Nisargadatta Maharaj puts it, ‘I am That’ is realized. In Christian parlance that state was referred to by Christ as “I Am who I am”. In a similar manner Lord Krishna explains to one of the lead heroes of the Mahabharata “I know who I am, you do not know who you are”. Some modern day spiritual leaders use the term ‘Nirvana’ or as the Bhagwad Gita puts it “Realization of the Supreme Self”. Using Descartes’ terminology in tandem with the above references we can alter his original saying and put it as: “I Am, therefore I think. What I think I am, that I definitely am not. I just experience My Self”

3. Research Gaps:

Can we conclusively say that the best methods of motivation does not need for us to climb the maslowian ladder of wants? (literature review indicates that this is more or less established—though not popularly used)

Is there a difference between maslowian approach and the approach by exponents of deterministic theory? Literature review suggests that one set of ‘needs’ (described by the various levels of the hierarchy) are replaced by another set of ‘needs’ which are psychological in nature. It is still ‘needs’ based.

Is self-transcendence equivalent to Self-realization on an empirical plane? The literature review does give strong indication on the empirical side that this is the case. In fact it is a direct claim by Maslow that most of it is explainable and what is not is actually irrelevant to the basic arguments of this paper.

If we postulate the equivalence of Self-realization and self-transcendence are we talking of one self or different selves?

Is the ‘self’ a fixed entity or is it variable? If it is variable is it static or dynamic? If it is dynamic as the literature review suggests what is it that contributes to that dynamism? (The literature review suggest a cognitive process lies at the core of it.)

On the other hand meditation which is established as one of the means for self-transcendence (as also self-realization) involves the quietening of the mind—a no-mind state. In a no-mind state the cognitive processes all come to a naught. If that be so then what happens to the self-concept? Is there a Self at all?

What happens to motivational profile when shifting from an un-transcended state to a self-transcended state? Is it ‘needs’ based even after self-transcending?

A study of aspects of self-realization, from which Transcendental psychologists draw parallels, a new method of motivation seems imminent. If spiritual guides recommend self-realization before food or death then what implications does this have on motivation theory?

Observing the list of qualities displayed by a self-transcended person, what implications does it have on how a leader in an organization must design the motivation profile in the organization? Should it be along traditional lines or should there be a shift?

4. The self and multiplicity of perceived self:

It is natural to think that the word 'self', when it used in the context of one person, refers to one thing only; that is if the reader refers to his own 'self' then it is understood that the reference is to that one person only, whoever he or she is. But when we say there is equivalence between Self-transcendence and self-realization an important difference comes to light. Let us reckon that 'transcendence' is about a journey; in which case, there is a 'personal self' that is being travelled from... or in other words a certain 'personal self' is being left behind. Then there is the second term self-realization, here a new 'self' is being realized. Therefore in equating the two processes of Self-transcendence and Self-realization, reference is made to two different 'selves' in the context of a single person; one self that is transcended and another self that is realized. So it is like saying that 'A' is transcended and then 'B' was realized... So in this example we see that we are reckoning at least two different 'selves' within a single person.

Are there only two? To dive deeper let us consider the following.

It is suggested that the reader should randomly pick a unique object in the room in which he is currently seated and think about it. Let's say the 'chair' on which he is seated. Actually there are two 'chairs' on which he is seated. That may sound confusing but there are indeed two. There is the one that is actually there physically present in the room and there is one more that is in the reader's mind. The one that is physically present is an objective truth. The other is a 'subjective reality' that is 'perceived'. This applies to any object that is in the room which is being perceived by the observer. Each item perceived in the room is present in the perceiver's head. What is in the room is the objective truth and what is in the observer's head is the subjective perception.

One must note that while the objective truth is scientifically fixed, the subjective reality could be anything, because subjective depends on what one 'thinks' about the chair which is in turn based on how the chair is witnessed and perceived. For a child the 'chair' could well be a 'motorbike' and for the 'carpenter' it could be a 'weight bearing tool'; this is when the carpenter uses it as a load to weigh down a laminate sheet, which in turn he is trying to paste on to a wooden table top. And to another it could be a ladder to bring down things kept at some height. And that is just the utility part of the perception. There could be physical aspects to it too. For example, if someone is wearing dark glasses the chair will appear different to him than it would appear if he were to look at it with the glasses off. Then there could be emotional aspects attached to the perception: the same chair would mean something to someone who received a peck on his cheek from his girlfriend when he sat there and something else to someone who had a fall while using it as a

stool to reach up to something high. And it could mean both to even one person if he had both experiences with the same chair. Therefore a single object can be subjectively perceived as many possible things.

Now let us replace the chair with a friend. The friend is the objective reality out there in the room but there is another friend in the observer's mind too. Which is the real friend? The one that is out there in real life or the one that is there in the observer's mind? And we apply the same multiple perception idea to the friend and again there is great multiplicity possible, for starters he is a friend indeed but to another person he could be an enemy; a neutral to a third.

Let's now take it to the next level. The reader is the only person in the room and he is thinking about himself!

I am occupied with thoughts about my-self.

Which is the real me? Is it the 'Me' that is there in my mind or is it the real me which others too are observing (and is not the 'that person' in their mind)?

If one pays some attention to this 'puzzle' for some time it becomes evident that even if there is an objective real scientific 'self'... there is definitely the possibility of the 'perceived self' that exists in the mind.

And taking that further, just like the multiplicity of chairs owing to perception, there are numerous ways one can perceive a human being. Hypothetically therefore there is only one 'objective self' but there is a possibility of multiple 'perceived selves'—even with respect to one individual.

We shall set the 'objective self' aside for now and focus our attention on the 'perceived self'. Different people think of themselves differently at different times and in different contexts. As time varies, on the basis of their beliefs on what stuff humans are made of, as one ages, as the moods change, and even on the basis of what they have accomplished in life at that time (this is how others perceive us) a person can think of himself as a variety of things. For example there are identical injuries on two people's hands. One of them says 'I am hurt', another says 'my hand is hurt'. Note that while the first one identifies himself with the body, the latter person refers to the body as a thing that is possessed by him, this implies that the two people perceive themselves in a subtle but fundamentally different way.

This multiplicity of perception has been extensively researched especially in context of the consequences of that perception on behavior. That is, in our context of the child playing with the chair, the child who thinks the chair is car and another who thinks the chair is a plane will make different kinds of noises when they are 'driving' it. Similarly if perchance a person thinks of himself as a lion he would rather feel he needs to growl and another who thinks of himself as sheep would feel the need to bleat—metaphorically speaking.

What we can conclude from this too is that depending on moods, depending on external environment and for a variety of reasons even a single person can think of himself differently at different time and by so considering we more or less narrow down on to the dynamic self-

concept brought out by Markus and Wurf (1987). As seen in the literature review (2.5 of this paper) the 'self' as perceived variously subject to various parameters and it is clearly a cognitive process.

Is there an objective self that is beyond perceptions? To take this 'self' inquiry to the next level we go back to the point where we reckoned that there is an objective self and there is a subjective self. We have looked so far into the dynamics of the subjective self that arises from perceptions in the cognitive processes we now check out the 'self' that is beyond perceptions.

We called it the 'objective self'. This self apparently exists by itself, without being colored by perception, neither by others' nor by one's own: a kind of scientific objective truth—the chair that is actually present in the room and not the one that is in the perceiver's mind.

To understand this further let us refer to the insights garnered from self-realization studies. According to this we have seen that meditation is one of the techniques for self-realization. The question arises whether it is one of the techniques that can be used for transcendence? And the answer is yes. Transcendental psychologists agree that meditation is indeed one of the techniques by which people are said to obtain peak and plateau experiences.

This understanding about the nature of transcendence, that there is no mind in the process, becomes significant since the self-concept that we discussed in section 2.5 of this paper is based on cognitions, which are by their basic nature thoughts and ideas. When there are no thoughts there are no perceptions and therefore all subjective perceptions which are in the mind come to a naught. In our example of the chair, one arrives at a state when there is no thought about the chair. There are no perceptions. There is only one chair in the room, the objective truth, and it is being observed. It implies that the chair is just being experienced and there are no thoughts about it.

Along with this the multiplicity of subjective perceptions also goes to naught. In the sense that the multiple ways one can think about a chair is no more there. There is one chair and it is being witnessed and that is all. "That is That" there is no label. Creativity peaks. The term 'Chair' is a label. This label is in the realm of memory, mind and thoughts and it is not attached to that particular object in the room when witnessed from that zero state of mind. To a child, who is wont to observe the world without labels the chair easily seen as a plane or car or house or anything it fancies.

Replacing the chair again with another person we see that the process of meditation moves a person from 'perceiving' the other to merely observing the other. And similarly taking it to the next level one is just observing himself. In this the senses are tools/feelers/sensors and there are no thoughts.

Therefore, if meditation is the process/technique that helps a person transcend and if it is the process/technique that facilitates self-realization then the self that is transcended (being left behind) is a 'perceived self' seen through the eyes of conceptualization and the one that is arrived at is the 'experienced self' without perception, in a state of no-mind.

This therefore should be what Maslow referred to as Being-state attributed self-transcendence. Or the ego-less state.

In conclusion we can say that indeed if we accept the proposition of a parity between Self-transcendence and Self-realization then the difference in the two selves is that one is a perceived self and the other is the observed/experienced self. The former 'self' is given up and the later 'self' is attained. A cognitive process is given up and being-ness is attained.

In 2.8 of the literature review we have looked into the nature of the 'objective self' and find that it is not an observable as is a 'scientific object'. And yet, just as the quantum wave is not an observable and is still central to the very scientific quantum theory, the objective self too can be treated as an 'unobservable black box' and we can focus on the applications that manifest out of it.

This non accessibility of the 'objective self' is not an obstacle in our present investigation. We can limit ourselves to the overall phenomenon and consider only two things, firstly the point of entry to this no-mind state and second club all else, that lies beyond, as the 'transcended state'. We could say that transcending from some point 'P' there is a new position 'Q' accessed or realized—the self-realized state. And we can start identifying the qualities displayed by those that have supposedly arrived at the 'Q' state by observing how these people behave. This observing of self-realized persons or even temporarily plateaued persons is an empirical process that can be scientifically conducted.

Therefore for our present considerations let us say that the transition from the subjective to the objective self is possible and it happens through the quietening of the mind through processes like meditation.

5. An exploration of attributes associated with self-transcendence and self-realization:

Limiting ourselves to observing attributes alone, further substantiation for the claim of equivalence can be obtained by looking at the description of the nature of those that have transcended and those that have self-realized. And the similarity is striking. Both of them talk about, a general state of happiness, peace, improved efficiency at tasks, better relationships. As seen in the literature review (2.4).

Therefore, based on these insights we conclude that at an empirical level, after ignoring the two black boxes namely the unobservable 'objective self' and the 'divine hand' we can presume equality of the two concepts and therefore from the point of view of transcendental psychology benefit from a vast resources of knowledge available in the east on the topic of self-realization.

This brings us to the task that we have taken up in this paper, of checking out the impact of this on the recommended motivation profile for organizations and leaders.

Transcendence introduces a basic paradigm shift in motivation theory: motivated by needs Vs motivated in fullness

Now that we have reckoned the highest level of the Maslow's Hierarchy, what does it say about how motivation has to be pursued?

Note that up to the level of self-actualization in the Maslow's hierarchy, most of the language of motivation is in terms of addressing 'needs'—or in other words, there is a feeling of incompleteness and out of that grows 'needs'. Humans are said to have lower and higher needs and motivation was to be done keeping this in mind. Even the pursuit of self-actualization is intended to address a 'need' felt by an individual to actualize his potentials. Even the latest theory talks of 'Psychological needs'. It says that man is driven by psychological needs and seeks to fulfill them. Given this understanding, the strategy adopted for motivation would include efforts to help an employee understand what he really wants and make available to him opportunities that will help him satisfy those needs.

The understanding of transcendence and Self-realization however calls for a very basic change in approach. Transcendence deals with giving up the mind, so when there is no mind there is no thought and desires are known to be thoughts, physiological needs therefore become 'happenings' that are observed and the 'eating' that could happen after 'hunger' are both seen as part of happening. As Maslow (1970) points out, it is about an egoless state. Desires are not addressed in the first place. Needs are therefore out of the question. Instead we have seen that there is already a sense of fullness, so there is no question of an existing 'need' that has to be satisfied. **And what remains is a sense of wanting to express alone.**

In being in the transcended state, the worker is pre-motivated and is keen to work at excellence.

The role of the leader therefore changes. The aim now is not to tell him 'these are your needs, and by doing this you will be able to fulfil them'; instead the leader tells his followers 'you are already complete, you don't need anything, work to express our highest self, enjoy your work, delight in your service'. In other words, the role of the leader is now to "inspire" the followers to rise to a sense of contentment, joy and fullness that is available after personal-self-transcendence or in self-realization. Because, having achieved transcendence, excellence, creativity, contentment and selflessness are second nature to the follower.

6. The Motivation Profile of the Great Organization:

Having understood that the aim is to have an organization working in the zone of transcendence or at least targeting self-transcendence, and understanding that the closest term that practically brings this to the fore is 'inspiration', special consideration must go into its setting up. When a leader builds an organization and sets up processes in it, he must design within it a motivational structure taking into account a desire to have an inspired environment. Considering that the individuals give their best when they are motivated by their higher natures, the employees must not be dealt with as creatures that are in search of having their basic needs being met. They should not be addressed in a way of reminding them that they are incomplete and they can get

fullness by satisfying certain 'needs'. In fact the purpose of the organization itself must be exalted. That is, a company should not have its primacy at self-service of stake holders; that is the by-product. The primary reason for a company to exist must be to play a role in society to contribute something towards the society's welfare. Taking care of all stake holders, the purpose must encompass some kind of contribution to humanity as a whole ... which is in the best interests of the Supreme Self itself.

Note therefore that in motivating people and setting up motivated teams leaders must not start from the bottom of the Maslow's hierarchy, rather they must start at the very top. In the sense that the leaders must not address security and food needs first, rather they must be more interested in addressing the transcendence needs on priority.

And the reason is clear. The workers in the latter kind of organization, since they are inspired, are at their excellent and creative best; and contented too. All external factors for companies in a given industry being equal, it would imply that this 'up-down' company has a better chance of success in comparison to its 'down-up' cousins. It further implies that the excellent company will stand a better chance of satisfying the lower needs of its stakeholders since it is more successful and since it comprises of a team of selfless people who would relish taking care of one another.

Who is the best leader?: Therefore when it comes to a leader... does he motivate his workers by saying that he will take care of their security... that they will get better pay and perks as rewards, that they will get recognition... etc. and put them in that rat race... or then would he say these things will be taken care of in the best way possible, but let's prosecute this great goal on behalf of humanity that is our purpose in life? The rest will be taken care of.

Best of leaders use this technique. Kennedy's speech "ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country" is a recent popular example trying to motivate using this paradigm. Best systems and religions too use this. It is a matter concerning civilizational thought itself; while the Hindu system of thought seeks to motivate its followers on the principle of "Dharma" or "Duty", Islam too motivates in the basis of "Jihad" which is 'duty to the divine'. Compare these systems which get people motivated to do their duty with another system that motivates its follower to ask for their rights. A duty based system must operate from a feeling of fullness, a rights based system operates from 'need'. A duty based system seeks to 'care' for others and its core inspiration is selflessness; a rights based system seeks to afford individuals the opportunity to satisfy their needs and its core inspiration is equal opportunity to satisfy 'need'.

Therefore if a leader must genuinely bring the best out his people he must not start with 'I will give you this and give you that...' but rather call them to act out of their selflessness for a larger cause... and therein find the energy and work to prosecute the other needs for all and sundry.

This test coming from ancient Indian thought nails it: A situation presents itself to you in which you can give Self Realization to a person, or give him food or you can save his life. Which of the three would you do first...?

Going by the motivation processes that have been in vogue it is but natural to come to the conclusion that a person needs to live first, then his stomach should be full and then you can teach him high fundamental stuff. But the recommendation of the spiritual leaders is not this.

The Ancient Indian Spiritual Teachers say that if it is within your means give them ‘Self Realization’ first. Are they justified in taking this stand?

In summary it can be said that if you want to set up a great motivating profile in your organization, if you want to be a great motivator, don’t go down-up along the Maslow’s Hierarchy. Invert it. Have a team of inspired people and that will give you the best chance for satisfying all the eight levels of needs enumerated in Maslow’s hierarchy for all your stake holders.

7. Limitations and Future Directions:

While it remains to be explored whether this is indeed the winning strategy? The answers can best be obtained empirically and this is outside the scope of this paper. But pointers can surely be given.

- i. The motivation profiles of the highly creative and winning modern teams seem to reflect this
- ii. The motivation profiles of military organizations that have produced heroes who have lived fulfilled lives can be explained through this
- iii. Similar altruistic behavior by priests, monks, nuns who genuinely delight in abstinence seems meaningful only if there is substance in the case for transcendence
- iv. Great tribes, nations and castes, which truly admired transcendence, have shown great resilience and excellence in human history.

This is a conceptual paper and empirical studies are needed to reinforce observations made by Maslow in his book on peak experiences and the correlation with concepts from spirituality

Maslow has observed that people are capable of altruistic action, and non-self-driven action (including terrorist acts) even while being in lower states of the Maslow’s hierarchy. This is not explained in the present paper/model. Further study is recommended.

The two black boxes namely the nature of the ‘objective self’ and the nature of the ‘divine force’. If studied may throw further light on this process of motivation.

References

Baard, P.P., Deci, E.L. and Ryan, R.M., 2004. Intrinsic Need Satisfaction: A Motivational Basis of Performance and Well-Being in Two Work Settings 1. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 34(10), pp.2045-2068.

Hoffman, E., 1988. *The right to be human: A biography of Abraham Maslow*. Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc.

Kenrick, D.T., Neuberg, S.L., Griskevicius, V., Becker, D.V. and Schaller, M., 2010. Goal-driven cognition and functional behavior: The fundamental-motives framework. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 19(1), pp.63-67.

Maslow, A.H., 1943. A theory of human motivation. *Psychological review*, 50(4), p.370.

Maslow, A.H., 1954. *Motivation and personality*. New York, Harper & Row.

Maslow, A. H., 1962. *Toward a Psychology of being*. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company.

Maslow, A. H., 1970a. *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

Maslow, A. H., 1970b. *Religions, values, and peak experiences*. New York: Penguin. (Original work published 1966)

Maslow, A. H., 1987. *Motivation and personality*. (3rd ed.). Delhi, India: Pearson Education.

Pettijohn, T.F. and Pettijohn, T.F., 1996. Perceived happiness of college students measured by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. *Psychological reports*, 79(3), pp.759-762.

Tay, L. and Diener, E., 2011. Needs and subjective well-being around the world. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 101(2), p.354.

Wulff, D.M., 1965. Religions, values, and peak-experiences. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 36(4), pp.235-237.