

A STUDY OF SELF-ACTUALIZATION OF COLLEGE MUSIC STUDENTS (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THEIR LEVEL OF INTELLIGENCE, GENDER AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS)

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ABSTRACT

The study revealed that college music students generally exhibit moderate to high levels of self-actualization, showing growth in creativity, emotional balance, and personal development through music education.

Intelligence was found to have a significant effect on self-actualization. Students with higher intelligence demonstrated greater self-awareness, creativity, confidence, and personal growth, while those with lower intelligence scored comparatively lower. This suggests that cognitive abilities play an important role in personal development. Gender differences were observed, with male students scoring slightly higher in self-actualization than female students. This difference was statistically significant, indicating that social and cultural factors may influence how students experience self-actualization. Socio-economic status (SES) did not significantly affect self-actualization. Students from low, middle, and high SES backgrounds showed similar levels of self-awareness and personal growth, suggesting that intrinsic motivation and engagement with music are more important than economic background. Residential background (rural vs. urban), as well as the combined effects of intelligence, gender, and SES, did not show significant differences. This highlights that in music education, internal motivation and a supportive learning environment are more influential than external factors.

Keywords: *Self-Actualization, Music Students, Level of Intelligence, Gender, Socioeconomic Status.*

Introduction

Education is not just about collecting facts; it is a journey that shapes a person's mind, emotions and overall personality. Humanistic psychologists like Maslow and Rogers emphasize that true education should help individuals discover their strengths and move towards self-actualization—reaching one's highest potential and living a meaningful life. For college students, this idea becomes very important. They are not only studying but also building their identity, handling pressures and preparing for the future. For music students, this process goes even deeper because music encourages creativity, emotional expression and self-discovery. Yet their growth is often influenced by factors like intelligence, gender and socio-economic background. In today's rapidly changing world, higher education is expected to develop confidence, emotional balance and life skills—not just academic performance. In such a context, understanding the self-actualization of Indian college music students becomes highly relevant. Intelligence affects learning, gender shapes experiences and SES influences resources and opportunities, especially in artistic fields like music. Since music education in India provides a rich mix of creativity and cultural learning, studying the self-actualization of music students helps us understand how arts education supports overall development.

This study therefore explores how music students realize their potential and how intelligence, gender and socio-economic status affect this process. It aims to offer insights that can guide educators and institutions in nurturing healthier, more supportive learning environments.

Theories of Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is a key idea in humanistic psychology, and many scholars have tried to explain how people reach their highest potential. Among them, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers have given the most influential theories. Maslow explained self-actualization through his famous Hierarchy of Needs. He believed that people first need to satisfy basic needs—like food, safety, belonging, and self-esteem—before they can reach the top level, where they live creatively, express their true self and use their abilities fully. Maslow described self-actualized individuals as independent, value-driven, open-minded and capable of deep relationships. He also noted that they experience special moments of joy and insight called “peak experiences.”

Rogers saw self-actualization as a lifelong process rather than a final stage. He believed every person has an inner drive to grow, become authentic and trust their own feelings. According to him, people flourish when they receive

empathy, acceptance and genuine support from others. His ideas strongly influenced modern education, especially in creative fields like music, where a supportive environment helps students grow freely. Other thinkers like Kurt Goldstein and Viktor Frankl added that self-actualization also involves realizing one's inner potential and finding meaning in life. Recent work in creativity and positive psychology also links self-actualization with originality, fulfillment and overall well-being.

Need and Significance of the Study

This study is important because today's education is expected to shape the whole personality of a student—not just their academic skills. In this fast-changing world, understanding how young people grow emotionally, creatively and intellectually is essential. For music students, this becomes even more meaningful. Music naturally encourages creativity, expression and inner growth, making them a valuable group for studying self-actualization.

The study also looks at how intelligence, gender and socio-economic status influence a student's ability to reach their full potential. Intelligence may help in academics, but true fulfillment also depends on confidence, opportunities and emotional support. Gender roles and socio-economic background often shape these experiences in subtle but powerful ways.

This research is especially useful for music education, which is often overlooked despite its strong role in building discipline, creativity and emotional balance. The findings can help teachers, institutions and policymakers create learning environments that support holistic development, equal opportunities and student well-being.

In essence, the study highlights that students are not just learners—they are individuals striving for meaning, growth and a fulfilling life. Understanding their journey toward self-actualization can make education more human, supportive and transformative.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to understand how college music students grow towards self-actualization and how factors like intelligence, gender and socio-economic status shape this journey. The key objectives are:

- To assess the overall level of self-actualization among music students.
- To see how self-actualization differs across different intelligence levels.
- To compare self-actualization between male and female students.
- To examine differences based on socio-economic status (SES).

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the objectives, the following null hypotheses were framed to examine how intelligence, gender, socio-economic status and residential background relate to the self-actualization of college music students:

- There is no significant difference in self-actualization across different intelligence levels.
- There is no significant difference between male and female students in their level of self-actualization.
- Socio-economic status does not significantly affect self-actualization.
- Rural and urban students do not differ significantly in self-actualization.

Tools and Instruments

The study used three reliable and standardized tools, all combined into a single Google Form for easy and confidential data collection. Self-actualization was measured using a validated scale like Dr. K.N. Sharma's, which captures personal growth, creativity and emotional maturity. Intelligence was assessed through a non-verbal test such as Raven's SPM, allowing fair measurement of reasoning and problem-solving skills across diverse backgrounds. Socio-economic status was evaluated using Kuppuswamy's SES Scale, based on family education, occupation and income. All instruments were pilot-tested to ensure clarity and maintained strong reliability in digital format, making the online method convenient and accurate for students across different colleges.

Statistical Techniques Used

For this study, the collected data were organized in Excel and analyzed using SPSS to ensure accuracy. Descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage were used to present a clear picture of the students' profiles. To study relationships and differences, techniques such as Pearson correlation, independent t-test, One-Way ANOVA, and Two- and Three-Way ANOVA were applied. Multiple regression was also used to see how well intelligence, gender and socio-economic status could predict self-actualization. All tests were conducted at the 0.05 significance level, helping the study reach reliable and meaningful conclusions.

Population and Sample

This study focused on college students pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate music programs. Music students were chosen because their creativity and emotional awareness make them an ideal group for studying self-actualization. Since the entire population was too large to cover, a representative sample was selected to reflect diversity in intelligence, gender and socio-economic background.

A total of 201 students responded, out of which 173 complete responses were used for analysis. These students were enrolled in various colleges across Himachal Pradesh and filled out a Google Form questionnaire. The sample included 103 females (59.54%) and 70 males (40.46%). In terms of residence, 145 students (83.82%) were from rural areas and 28 (16.18%) from urban areas. This well-balanced sample provided a strong base for studying how intelligence, gender and socio-economic status relate to self-actualization among music students.

Table-1: Distribution of the Sample by Gender and Residence

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	70	40.46
	Female	103	59.54
Residence	Rural	145	83.82
	Urban	28	16.18
Total		173	100.00

Department of Performing Arts, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla (HP), India To compare students' self-actualization levels meaningfully, the study grouped them using Kelley's 27% Method, a common approach in psychology. Out of 173 music students, the top 27% (47 students) were placed in the High group, the bottom 27% (47 students) in the Low group, and another 47 students were randomly chosen from the middle scores to form the Moderate group.

In total, 141 students were included in this comparison, ensuring equal group sizes and fair statistical analysis. This grouping made it easier to study how intelligence, gender and socio-economic status relate to different levels of self-actualization.

Table-2: Distribution of Students by Self-Actualization Levels

Category	Basis of Selection	Mean Score	No. of Students (N)	Percentage (%)
High Self-Actualization	Upper 27% of total sample	69.04	47	27.17
Moderate Self-Actualization	Random 27% drawn from middle 44%	59.06	47	27.17
Low Self-Actualization	Lower 27% of total sample	47.94	47	27.17
Total	—	—	141*	81.51*

Comparative Analysis of Self-Actualization and Intelligence

This section compares the Self-Actualization levels of music students across three Intelligence groups—High, Moderate, and Low—using Kelley’s 27% method. Mean Self-Actualization scores were calculated for each group, followed by a One-Way ANOVA to check whether the differences were significant.

Table-3 shows that students with High Intelligence scored the highest on Self-Actualization (M = 62.57), followed by the Moderate group (M = 59.02) and the Low group (M = 54.37). The ANOVA result (F = 9.21, p = 0.000) confirms that these differences are highly significant.

In simple terms, students with higher cognitive ability tend to show stronger self-awareness, creativity, confidence and personal growth. Because of this significant difference, the null hypothesis is rejected. The findings clearly suggest that Intelligence plays an important role in shaping Self-Actualization among college music students.

Table-3: Comparison of Self-Actualization Scores across Different Levels of Intelligence

Intelligence Level	N	Mean Self-Actualization Score	S.D.	F-value	p-value	Significance
High Intelligence	47	62.57	7.34			
Moderate Intelligence	47	59.02	8.02	9.21	0.000*	Highly Significant
Low Intelligence	47	54.37	8.66			
Total / Average	141	—	—	—	—	—

Note: p < 0.05 = Significant, p < 0.01 = Highly Significant

Comparative Analysis of Self-Actualization and Socio-Economic Status (SES)

This section examines whether students from Low, Middle, and High Socio-Economic Status (SES) differ in their Self-Actualization. SES levels were formed using the Percentile Method, and the mean Self-Actualization scores of each group were compared using a One-Way ANOVA.

As shown in Table-4, the mean scores for Low (58.21), Middle (58.94), and High SES students (59.31) are almost the same. The ANOVA result (F = 0.38, p = 0.682) confirms that these differences are not significant.

This means that SES does not meaningfully influence Self-Actualization among college music students. Students from all economic backgrounds show similar levels of self-awareness, independence, and personal growth. The null hypothesis is accepted.

Overall, the findings suggest that in music education, inner motivation, creativity, and emotional expression matter far more than socio-economic differences when it comes to developing Self-Actualization.

Table-4: Comparison of Self-Actualization Scores across Different Levels of Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Socio-Economic Status (SES)	N	Mean Self-Actualization Score	S.D.	F-value	p-value	Significance
Low SES	87	58.21	8.42			
Middle SES	39	58.94	8.51	0.38	0.682	Not Significant
High SES	45	59.31	8.61			
Total / Average	171	—	—	—	—	—

(p > 0.05 = Not Significant)

Comparative Analysis of Self-Actualization and Gender of College Music Students

This section compares the Self-Actualization levels of male and female college music students. The results show that male students (M = 60.23) scored higher than female students (M = 57.57), and this difference is statistically significant (t = 2.01, p < 0.05). Although both groups show moderate variability in their scores, males display slightly greater dispersion. Since the difference is significant, the null hypothesis is rejected. Overall, male students appear to have a higher level of Self-Actualization, possibly due to greater confidence and freedom of expression, but both groups show healthy personal growth through music education.

Table-5: Comparison of Self-Actualization Scores between Male and Female College Music Students

Gender	N	Mean Self-Actualization Score	S.D.	t-value	p-value	Significance
Male	70	60.23	8.80	2.01	0.047	Significant
Female	103	57.57	8.16			
Total	173	—	—	—	—	—

(t(171) = 2.01, p < 0.05)= Significant

Interactional Effect of Gender and Residential Background on Self-Actualization

This section examines whether Gender (Male/Female) and Residential Background (Rural/Urban) jointly influence the Self-Actualization of college music students. A Two-Way ANOVA was applied, with Gender and Residence as independent variables and Self-Actualization as the dependent variable.

Table-6: Summary of Two-Way ANOVA for Interactional Effect of Gender and Residential Background on Self-Actualization

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F-value	p-value	Significance
Gender (A)	126.58	1	126.58	1.51	0.222	Not Significant
Residence (B)	148.73	1	148.73	1.78	0.185	Not Significant
A × B (Interaction)	62.39	1	62.39	0.74	0.390	Not Significant
Within (Error)	9437.41	137	68.87	—	—	—
Total	9775.11	140	—	—	—	—

(F(1,137) = 0.74, p > 0.05)

The Two-Way ANOVA results show that neither Gender nor Residential Background has a significant effect on Self-Actualization. The interaction between the two variables is also not significant (F = 0.74, p > 0.05). This means male and female students from both rural and urban areas exhibit similar levels of Self-Actualization.

Conclusions

The study revealed that college music students generally exhibit moderate to high levels of self-actualization, showing growth in creativity, emotional balance, and personal development through music education.

Intelligence was found to have a significant effect on self-actualization. Students with higher intelligence demonstrated greater self-awareness, creativity, confidence, and personal growth, while those with lower intelligence scored comparatively lower. This suggests that cognitive abilities play an important role in personal development.

Gender differences were observed, with male students scoring slightly higher in self-actualization than female students. This difference was statistically significant, indicating that social and cultural factors may influence how students experience self-actualization.

Socio-economic status (SES) did not significantly affect self-actualization. Students from low, middle, and high SES backgrounds showed similar levels of self-awareness and personal growth, suggesting that intrinsic motivation and engagement with music are more important than economic background.

Residential background (rural vs. urban), as well as the combined effects of intelligence, gender, and SES, did not show significant differences. This highlights that in music education, internal motivation and a supportive learning environment are more influential than external factors.

Overall, the study emphasizes that music education promotes self-actualization, creativity, and emotional development. While intelligence and gender contribute to these outcomes, socio-economic and residential factors have relatively less impact.



These findings are valuable for educators, institutions, and policymakers, as they suggest the importance of creating a learning environment that fosters creativity, independence, and personal growth, ensuring equal opportunities and holistic development for all students.

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