

Exploration of Self-actualization and Belongingness in *Divergent* Through the Lens of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the process and struggles of the protagonist “Tris”, to satisfy her desire to achieve a sense of belonging and self-actualization in the novel *Divergent*. The research chose Abraham Maslow's Theory of Motivation i.e. the hierarchy of needs to explain the motivation behind Tris's fight to belong and her process of becoming a self-actualized person. The article explores how Tris reached the targeted stages of the hierarchy of needs, after successfully achieving other primary needs like physiological needs, Safety and security needs, and Esteem needs. It is nearly impossible to achieve “social and belongingness needs” when the “physiological needs” and “safety needs” are not achieved. Just like this, “self-actualization” is also impossible to attain if esteem needs are not met. So the research highlights how Tris achieved “belongingness” and “self-actualization” from stage one of hierarchy of needs.

Keywords: Motivation, belongingness, self-actualization, hierarchy of needs, primary needs, deficit needs, growth needs

Introduction

The number one New York Times bestselling author of the *Divergent* Series and the *Carve the Mark* series, Veronica Roth, an American writer was born on August 19, 1988, in New York. She currently resides in Chicago, Illinois and is continuing her career as a full-time writer. In an interview with the *Chicago Tribune* in 2018, she told the newspaper that she had been writing since she was 11 and only started to take her writing seriously when her high school teacher encouraged her to take part in writing contests if she wanted to take creative writing program at her college.

Roth's short stories and essays were part of the collections: "Summer Days and Summer Nights", "Shards and Ashes", and "Three Sides of a Heart". Her famous work *The Divergent Series* which includes two sequels to *Divergent*: *Insurgent* and *Allegiant* were developed into three major movies. The *Divergent Series* also includes several short stories that include: *Free Four: Tobias Tells the Divergent Knife-Throwing Scene*, "Four: A Divergent Story Collection", *Inside Divergent: The Initiate's World* and *We Can Be Mended*. The short story *We Can Be Mended* is an epilogue to the *Divergent* series that sets the story five years after Tris's death.

The book *Divergent* was published on April 26, 2011, and since then it has won several awards like the favorite book of the year by Goodreads readers in 2011, Best Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction, Best Goodreads Author in 2012 and the South Carolina Association of School Librarians Young Adult Book Award in 2014.

Almost every critic and every reader who has read *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins says that the two-book series is similar to the young adult genre and dystopian future settings. In her interview with *The Post and Courier*, when asked about what she thought of when people compared her book series with *The Hunger Games*, she replied: "The *Hunger Games*" did something remarkable. So, in that sense, it's a flattering comparison. But you can't hope to replicate that experience." (Herndon, 2014)

The first part of the novel series, *The Divergent*, is about the beginning of the journey of a 16-year-old teenage girl named Beatrice Prior, which was later changed to Tris after she became the 'first jumper' at Dauntless. The setting of the novel is in the futuristic dystopian Chicago. In the dystopian future, society has divided people into five factions based on their qualities and their behaviors like Amity (the kind), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave) Erudite (the intelligent), and Candor (the honest).

When a child reached the age of 16, they took an aptitude test that determined which faction was more suitable for them and then during the ‘choosing day ceremony’ they had the freedom to choose their faction. Every 16-year-old had to go through this process and those who failed to choose or failed to fit in were kicked out of the factions, only to become part of factionless people which was considered worse than death. Factionless people in a society got no shelter, food, protection or freedom to speak up in the society by the government.

Tris was born in the Abnegation faction but at the choosing day ceremony, she chose the Dauntless faction because all through her life, she felt like she didn’t fit in the faction of kind people. At the aptitude test, her administrator, Tori, told her that her results were unclear which meant that she was divergent and needed to keep that a secret. Being divergent meant that the person had multiple qualities and could fit in multiple factions.

When Tris chose her new faction, she was met with new friends, enemies and challenges. Will, Albert and Christina became her new friends. Peter, one of the initiates and Eric, the new leader of the Dauntless faction, became her major enemies. Tris became the first jumper in initiates’ first test and met her instructor, Four. Four became close to Tris when he kept suspecting that she might be divergent like him and helped her in hiding her secret. Initiates or trainees were told by Eric that initiation consisted of a three-stage ranking process. Those who would rank in the first ten positions would become members of Dauntless and those who would fail to do so would become factionless. Her journey towards acceptance and belongingness began from there.

This young-adult novel is written in the first-person narrative and the protagonist “Tris” is the narrator. There is a total of thirty-nine chapters in the first book and they are all written in the present tense. In an interview with *The Guardian*, Roth said that she prefers to write in past tense but in *The Divergent* books she chose to write in the present tense because she thought that it was suitable for her protagonist and the story. The diction of the novel is informal

and easy to understand for readers. The author used lots of foreshadowing in the novel that always keeps the reader on their toes and hints at the events that could happen soon e.g., when Tris and Caleb ask each other about their aptitude test results, a day before choosing a day, Tris hears the train horn and thinks “.....It sounds like the Dauntless, calling me to them.” (chapter four), which hints at the choice of new faction by Beatrice in the choosing ceremony. There are a lot of flashbacks of her life back in her old faction which hints towards her desire to belong.

One of the objectives of this research is to explore how the protagonist Tris, struggled to achieve a sense of belongingness in her new faction, with her new friends, and with her secret. She constantly fought for a place in the faction and the society while keeping her real identity, a secret. She had a desire to belong to a faction and its people so that she could live a peaceful and respectable life in society. The second objective is to find out how the protagonist of the novel “Tris” struggled to achieve self-actualization while being divergent. This research explores different events and incidents that led Tris towards her self-acceptance. She needed to accept her divergence to become a self-actualized person.

Research Methodology

The method that is used in the present research is the qualitative method. The primary source of data is the novel *Divergent* by Veronica Roth. The secondary source of data is collected from websites, journals, and other research works. The research chose Abraham Maslow’s Theory of Motivation as the theoretical approach towards the novel. The Theory of Motivation, also known as the Hierarchy of Needs was first developed by a humanist and psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1943. He presented his theory with a 5 level hierarchy pyramid that showed humans had to fulfill more important and basic needs before looking for self-growth.

The Hierarchy of Needs consists of 5 levels, starting with the basic, physiological need for food, water and warmth, then need to feel safe and secure, moving on to the need to belong

to social groups, the need to have Self-respect and ending up with the need to achieve Self-actualization. These levels are also divided into two groups that are Deficiency Needs (D-needs) and Growth Need (B-needs). The first four needs are the part of Deficiency needs and the last need i.e., Self-Actualization is the part of Growth Needs. The researcher explores the novel with the main focus of Level 3 (need to belong) and Level 5 (Self-Actualization) of the Hierarchy. The research looks at the characters and the story with this theory in mind.

Pursuit of Belongingness & Achievement of Self-Actualization

In 1943, Abraham Maslow introduced his first paper, “A Theory of Human Motivation” (1943) was first that introduced the theory of Hierarchy of needs which was later on revised in 1954 in his book *Motivation and Personality*. His popular theory focuses on the development of individuals and their motivations. His theory suggested that human beings were driven to the satisfaction of their needs and goals by self-actualization.

The hierarchy of needs is arranged in a pyramid formation, where the most basic and necessary needs are placed at the bottom of the hierarchy, acting as the foundation while the other advance and complex needs, which help in the development of a person are placed above as we proceed upward in the hierarchy. The hierarchy of needs consists of five needs i.e. physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, self-esteem needs, and self-realization needs. According to Taormina’s and Gao’s article “Maslow and the Motivation Hierarchy: Measuring Satisfaction of the Needs”, Maslow believed that the five needs in the hierarchy are like human instincts and they perform a key part in motivating behavior (qtd. in Cherry, 2019). Maslow further divided the needs into two groups that would categorize what is more important for human survival and what kind of need would help in the process of human growth. The two groups are Deficit needs and Growth needs.

In the hierarchy, Deficit needs (d-needs) are those needs that ensure the physical and emotional well-being of a person. These are the basic requirements for a person to survive in

this world. Without the fulfillment of these needs, a person might die or fall ill to severe sickness and that is what motivates human beings to meet their needs. The first four levels from the hierarchy i.e., physiological needs, security needs, social needs, and esteem needs are included in the deficit needs. When the person is under some kind of pressure or facing some kind of threat, their health (physiological needs) and their security (safety needs) becomes their main priority. After taking care of these two needs, they look for someone to keep them company (Social Needs) during or after the crisis. When they complete all these desires, they start focusing on how to be recognized as a respectful person in society or company.

On the other hand, Growth needs (B-needs) arise not because a person lacks something but due to a person's motivation to achieve success and to be the best possible version of themselves (Cherry 2019). The fifth and the highest level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs i.e., Self-Actualization is part of Growth needs as it focuses on the personal growth of a human being.

According to Maslow's theory, human beings try to achieve "higher needs while trying to meet basic needs" (Edie 2017). An individual could be working hard not just to achieve basic needs like food and shelter but also to gain some recognition in the society. A person in society can achieve two needs by performing one task e.g. self-esteem and social needs can be obtained by making friends in an institution.

The hierarchy may seem rigid but human behavior proves that Maslow's stages are "fluid, not fixed" which means that a person could skip over one need and achieve another one above it, just because the other need might be more important at that time (Roth-kahn 2016). This also shows that a person throughout a lifetime reaches different levels and at times where he/she can be lacking in one area but still be able to fully succeed in another area.

The first stage and the bottom tier of Maslow's hierarchy are physiological needs. physiological or biological needs are the kind of needs that a human being cannot live without

or cannot function properly. The requirements to fulfill the physiological needs consist of food, water, shelter, breathing, clothing, rest or sleep, and comfort, etc. If an individual fails to accomplish these needs, he/she becomes a victim of poverty, illness, or even mental disorders. In *Divergent* we can see Tris, the protagonist, achieving this stage when she was with her family in Abnegation where she had a secure roof over her head, food, and comfortable clothes to wear. Her mother was there to comfort her when she needed it.

In chapter 4 of *Divergent*, Tris had to cook dinner after coming home from the aptitude test, as her brother had made breakfast that day, her mother packed them lunch and her father made dinner the night before (Roth 30). This shows that Tris and her family had the opportunity to eat food three times a day which was enough to fulfill her food requirements from level 1 of Maslow's hierarchy.

Tris was able to achieve her physiological needs both in Abnegation and Dauntless. She was able to accomplish physiological needs in Dauntless because she was provided with shelter, food from the dining hall, clothes from the Pit, and comfort for herself and her friends.

The second level of Hierarchy of needs belongs to safety or security needs. Human security needs consist of an individual's safety that means to stay away from any physical harm or threat, economical security, healthiness, and safe environment, "and a safety net against accidents and illness and his/her adverse impacts (ability to receive appropriate medical care)" (Pam M.S. 2015). A person can achieve this stage when they are not pressured by any physical or mental threat. Tris and the other initiates struggled to achieve this level because of the selected positions in the Dauntless faction. The competition for selected positions motivated the initiates to fight and harm each other without hesitation so that they could secure his/her position in the faction. Due to this pressure, initiates and especially the protagonist Tris were always kept on their toes and could never let their guard down, even when they were asleep.

In chapter twelve, Tris was able to achieve her security needs with the help of Four. During the game of “capture the flag”, Tris and Four climbed up the Ferris wheel to find the flag of the opposing team. When they were climbing down, the bar that Tris stepped down on, broke and clattered a few more steps downward which put Tris in a dangerous situation. She asked for help from Four as she dangled in the air while she tightly held another bar. Four immediately climbed down and turned the Ferris wheel on so Tris could safely get down on the ground (Roth 147-150). Abraham Maslow, in his book *Toward a Psychology of Being* said that:

The safety needs, belonging, love relations and respect can be satisfied only by other people, i.e., only from outside the person. This means considerable dependence on the environment. A person in this dependent position cannot be said to be governing himself, or in control of his fate. He must be beholden to the sources of supply of needed gratifications (Maslow 34).

This means that an individual is dependent on others and his environment to fulfill his security needs, just like the way Tris was dependent on Four to save her life. In chapter thirty-five, Tris found herself trapped in a glass tank which was later filled with water. She was saved by her mother before she was about to drown. Her mother became the person she depended on to reach level two of the hierarchy of needs.

Tris achieved her safety needs on multiple occasions like when she killed her friend Will to save her own life or when her mother died while letting her escape from the guards. In chapter thirty-seven, Tris along with her group that consisted of her family and Tobias’ father went to the Dauntless compound to take over the control room to stop the program that controlled the Dauntless soldiers. At one point Tris realized that she had not slept or eaten anything for some time. She was exhausted which proves that her security needs were more important than her physiological needs for the time being (Roth 470). After stopping Eruidite’s

program, Tris planned to achieve her physiological needs and security needs by taking shelter in the Amity faction. Amity faction became a dependable factor for her to achieve her needs.

Moving on to the third stage of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and to the main point of the chapter which is social and belongingness needs, Belongingness is one of the main concerns in the novel that Tris struggles with throughout the novel. Social needs are a part of primary needs that are necessary for a human being. Belongingness and social needs consist of love, acceptance, social groups, family, and friendships (Cherry 2019). Baumeister and Leary suggest that a need to belong is: *"...a need to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of interpersonal relationships, is innately prepared (and hence nearly universal) among human beings"* (499).

If a person fails to achieve these things, they face loneliness, depression, and anxiety. According to Baumeister and Leary: "The general argument is that deprivation of belongingness should lead to a variety of affiliative behaviors and cause various undesirable effects, including decrements in health, happiness, and adjustment."

One of the side effects of not accomplishing the need for belongingness is, that people are unable to form their own identity and place in society. A personality forms when the person knows where he belongs and with whom he belongs. Their family, friends, teachers, social groups, etc. help them define their personality. This is what Tris was looking for in this novel. She was trying to find a place or group that truly defined her personality.

Tris was divergent which meant that she belonged to not one, but all of the factions. She had traits of Abnegation, Dauntless, Erudite, Amity, and Candor. At the beginning of the novel, Tris didn't know she was divergent and always felt like she wasn't completely fitting in with the Abnegation faction. So, she knew she had to choose another faction that would be able to define her but she was afraid if none of the factions defined her then she would be factionless which was thought to be worse than anything in the society. Group association was more

important than anything else for society. Factionless people had no respect, no proper shelter, food, or clothes. In chapter three, when Tori left Tris for a while after the aptitude test, she became upset because she thought Tori would tell her that she didn't belong in any faction. Tris didn't want to be factionless because she knew what it meant as she thought what her mother had told her: "... *we can't survive alone,.... Without a faction, we have no purpose and no reason to live*" (Roth 20).

Whether she was divergent or not, she still had to choose a faction to belong to. Roy F. Baumeister and Mark Leary are two psychologists who worked on the theory of "Need to belong". They published their research work "The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation" in a journal called *Psychology Bulletin* in 1995. In that research, they said:

When other people are in groups, it is vital to belong to a group oneself, particularly a group of familiar, cooperative people who care about one's welfare. Thus, an inclination to form and sustain social bonds would have important benefits of defending oneself and protecting one's resources against external threats (499).

This can be applied to this novel because society is divided into five factions and every faction cared about its people. Moreover, it was very important for people in society to be a part of a specific faction as a person might end up feeling alone. Marcus, one of the Abnegation leaders gave an opening speech on the choosing day, in which he said "In our factions, we find meaning, we find purpose, we find life." (Roth 43).

Tris started to achieve her sense of belongingness when she chose Dauntless as her faction. In chapter seven, the initiates were informed that there would be rankings in the initiation process. Rankings had two purposes and one of them was that only the top ten ranked people would be able to become members of the Dauntless faction while others would become

factionless. Faction motivated Tris to become a member of the faction as the Dauntless had no position to offer. In chapter eight, during training with guns, Tris achieved her sense of belongingness when she hit the middle of the target after many shots. After being in control of a powerful and destructive weapon, Tris felt like she could associate with the Dauntless faction (Roth 79).

According to Leary and Baumeister, belongingness has two key features, one of them is to have recurrent positive interactions with other people and the second one is, to have long-lasting and stable relationships with people having similar and affective concerns (500). Tris achieved this level when Christina took care of her e.g. covering her when she's changing in the dorms, eating together, hanging out together, and getting to know each other. After the fight with Peter, Tris reached the third stage of Maslow's hierarchy of needs when she knew she could rely on Christina for her protection (124).

In chapter twenty-three, she was supported, comforted, and shielded by her friends and her instructor, Four, after she was attacked by Peter, Al, and Drew in the middle of the night. Tris was able to achieve her social needs with the help of her friends and because of her relationship with Four.

In chapter twenty-nine, Tris was feeling unsure about being in the right faction but it soon vanished when she found out that she ranked first in the initiation and now she had become a member of Dauntless. She thought that now it didn't matter if she was divergent or not because now, she belonged to a faction permanently in front of everyone. Now she didn't have to be scared of being factionless (413). Tris was finally able to belong to a faction and had achieved social and belongingness needs from Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

During the tough time, she was saved by her mother. She rescued her out of the glass tank which was full of water and from the guards that were after them. Her mother helped her gain back her belongingness needs when she told Tris that she always wanted to protect her daughter

and that she didn't care about which faction she belonged to (Roth 438, 441). At the end of chapter thirty-six, Tris finally embraced the fact that she was Divergent. She accepted that she belonged to all of the factions, not just Dauntless or Abnegation.

In the end, Tris accomplished her belongingness needs once again when she succeeded in waking up Tobias from the serum's control. Tobias was important to her because ever since she got transferred to Dauntless, he always supported her and cared for her which gave her the feeling of belongingness.

Although Tris had many challenges and confusions in her way of belonging to people around her, friends, family, and to a faction but step by step she was able to clear her mind and her heart about where she truly belonged and with whom she belonged. Tris was able to reach Maslow's hierarchy of needs' third level which was social and belongingness needs. She could achieve that because of her family, friends, her motivation to be in a faction, and most importantly because of Tobias who was not only her instructor but also her partner.

Esteem needs are those needs that help a person feel satisfied and confident about themselves. These needs are important to make people feel valued by themselves and by others. Also, to make them feel that they are meaningful for society. According to Abraham Maslow:

Healthy self-esteem is based on approval, acceptance, and recognition from others, but also upon actual accomplishments, achievements, and success upon the realistic self-confidence which ensues.

External and internal respect, appreciation and recognition from others, self-dignity, self-belief, desire for independence, and freedom, etc. are included in esteem needs. Once a person starts to belong in a group, they would need to maintain her/his position by getting approval and appreciation from others.

Maslow divided esteem needs into two types i.e. higher and lower. The lower type of esteem needs includes recognition, praise, appreciation, status, and respect from others. The

higher type of esteem needs includes self-respect, self-appreciation, personal freedom, self-confidence, and dignity. The lower esteem needs come second to Higher esteem needs because lower esteem needs depend on “inner strength” that is established over time with experience (Komminos 2020).

The achievement of esteem needs by gaining respect and recognition from self and others helps a person feel confident in her/his abilities and make them feel capable enough to achieve greater things in life. This helps them reach the top level of the hierarchy of needs i.e., Self-Actualization. If they fail at accomplishing this stage of the hierarchy because of the lack of self-respect and respect from others, they develop insecurity and depression (Cherry 2019).

Tris achieved the lower esteem needs when she received recognition and respect from other Dauntless members and initiates during and after the game of ‘Capture the flag’ in chapter twelve. She got recognition from Four, someone who she admired in Dauntless and so the praise people get from someone they look up to, will value more than getting praise from another person. Abraham Maslow in *Motivation and Personality* said that: *“The most stable, and therefore, the most healthy self-esteem is based on deserved respect from others rather than on external fame or celebrity and unwarranted adulation”* (Maslow, 1970).

In Chapter thirty-one, Four praised and acknowledged Tris for having only seven fears during the fear landscape. Only Tobias and Tris were the ones with a fewer number of fears. He told her that the Dauntless leaders were impressed by her and that he’d be surprised if she didn’t rank first (Roth 399). This incident assisted Tris to attain her esteem needs that would support her to reach Self-Actualization.

One of the major events that aided Tris in achieving her self-esteem needs was the moment when she ranked first in initiation. She gained acceptance from the Dauntless faction and became a member. She also accomplished the higher esteem needs when she confidently thought that it didn’t matter if she was divergent or not because now, she was a part of the

Dauntless faction (Roth 413). She was able to complete her lower esteem needs when her friends celebrated with her and Uriah congratulated her for ranking higher than her enemies (Roth 414). He gave her respect, recognition, and acceptance which aided her to complete her esteem needs.

The last and final level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is "Self-Actualization". It is also a part of a subdivision group of the hierarchy called the Growth of needs. Once an individual successfully becomes self-confident and achieve his/her Esteem needs, they start to look for contentedness or self-actualization. If a person is not self-confident enough and doesn't trust themselves then it will be impossible for them to reach self-actualization.

Self-Actualization is the realization of one's capabilities, potentials and talents, the fulfillment of her/his targets, and accepting the nature of themselves and others (Jeffery 2020). It is an ongoing psychological process that focuses on maximizing the potential of a person. Self-Actualization is the "*full realization of one's creative, intellectual, and social potential through internal*" (Selva 2020). Self-actualization is an individual process so it varies from person to person depending on her/his different potentials and circumstances.

Maslow wrote a research paper "Self-Actualizing People: a Study of Psychological Health" and included it in his book *Motivation and Personality* (1970). In the research paper, he stated 15 characteristics that can be seen in someone who has self-actualized or is in the process of self-actualization. It is not necessary to have every one of the characteristics that Maslow stated to be self-actualized (McLeod 2020).

The main character of the novel Tris was seen fulfilling some of the traits mentioned by Maslow. In the novel, Tris was able to achieve self-actualization when she went through multiple tragedies and different incidents or when she met different people and became friends with some of them. There were about 10 traits of self-actualization found in Tris's personality and they were: Increase in Acceptance (Self, Others and Nature), Spontaneity, Problem-

Centering, Desire for privacy, Autonomy, Continued freshness of appreciation, Peak Experience, Interpersonal Relations, Democratic character structure, and creativeness (Maslow 153-171).

Self-Actualizing people have higher a tendency to “accept” who they are, what others are like, and their surrounding environment. According to Maslow, self-actualized people “*can accept their human nature, with all its shortcomings, with all its discrepancies from the ideal image without feeling real concern*” (Maslow, 1970). They accept their flaws and qualities with confidence and without any sort of guilt. In chapter five, at the faction choosing ceremony, Tris abandoned Abnegation for Dauntless as she accepted her true nature that she was selfish and brave (47). She knew that she wasn’t completely fitting in Abnegation because she thought she wasn’t as selfless as she should be to stay in Abnegation.

After the death of Albert, Tris had a conversation with Tobias when she was upset about Al’s death. During the conversation, Tobias warned Tris about her Abnegation actions because she was being watched. She wondered whether she was like Abnegation or Dauntless. Instead of choosing any of those two, she accepted that she was like “Divergent” (Roth 313). She accepted that she didn’t belong to just one faction so that made her divergent.

Tris accepted her true self, in chapter thirty-five when her mother saved her from drowning in the glass tank and explained to her what Divergent was and what it meant to be Divergent. Tris accepted who she was with confidence and with no regret or shame when she said: “*I feel like someone breathed new air into my lungs. I am not Abnegation. I am not Dauntless. I am Divergent. And I can’t be controlled*” (Roth 442).

Tris fully accepted her personality and knew how to act from thereon. According to Maslow: “*What a man can be, he must be. This need we may call self-actualization*” (Maslow, 1943).

At the end of the novel, when Tris and the others escaped from the Dauntless compound, she thought about what she represented now and accepted that now she had to become something greater, more than being selfless or brave (Roth 487). She accepted that now she had to become someone better than she was before. In this tough situation where she had no surety of her future, she accepted what she had to become. Tris successfully achieved this trait of self-actualization even though she would get confused and scared which disabled her from accepting who she was with pride.

Spontaneity is one of the traits of self-actualized people. Spontaneity is defined as the act or quality of acting upon things in life without thinking in advance. It is taking the decisions in life on the spur of the moment. Abraham Maslow in his paper "Self-Actualizing People: a Study of Psychological Health" stated that: "*Self-actualizing people can all be described as relatively spontaneous in behavior and far more spontaneous than that in their inner life, thoughts, impulses, etc*" (157).

Tris had a spontaneous personality and it could be seen when she spoke her thoughts without thinking too much or acted on the spur of the moment to get what she wanted. We can find her spontaneity in chapter four when her father explained why it was a hard day at work and Tris couldn't help but interrupt him with questions spontaneously because she was curious. She couldn't stop her spontaneity even when her brother tried to stop her (Roth 34-35). This incident proves that Tris had a spontaneity trait which was one of the traits of self-actualized people.

The Dauntless initiation began when everyone had jumped off the train to the roof and now, they had to jump down from the ledge into the hole that was in the building. Tris impulsively thought that she was proud and that she could jump first so she dared to jump first and safely landed in a net. This act of bravery was taken on the spur of the moment, without

thinking how she would jump down and if she would be safe. This proved that Tris was spontaneous.

Another trait of self-actualized people is “Problem-centering”. Self-actualized people like to help others in solving their problems instead of focusing on themselves and becoming egocentric. Maslow stated in his paper that self-actualized people have “some mission in life, some task to fulfill, some problem outside themselves which enlists much their of energies” (159). Tris was also problem-centric as she focused on the outside problems most of the time like helping her friends, saving them and the entire two factions.

Tris showed her problem-centric side when she climbed up the Ferris wheel in chapter twelve with Four during the game of ‘capture the flag’. She had climbed up the Ferris wheel so she could find the flag and help her team win the game. She was not doing it for herself only. She intended to make sure that her team wins the game that night.

This problem-centric side could also be seen when Tris saved Al from becoming the target when he failed to shoot his knife and obey his orders. She took Al’s place in punishment because she knew he won’t be able to survive through it if Eric was serious. Through this incident, we can see that Tris had another one of the qualities of self-actualized people.

In chapter thirty-six, Tris proved that she had this quality of self-actualization when she spoke about the solution that could save both factions and stop Erudite at the same time. Her solution to save everyone was to wake Dauntless up from Erudite’s control so that they could stop killing Abnegation (Roth 452-453). This proved that Tris was problem-centric because she wanted to save others instead of just protecting herself.

Self-actualized people have a “desire for privacy” and they don’t feel uncomfortable when they are alone. They don’t always feel the need to be around people. Tris proved to have that trait when she went to lie down on the net alone when she was facing trouble with articles about her parents and her old faction. She would be surrounded by her friends to support her

but at that time she just wanted some privacy for herself as she thought *“Tonight, though, I want to be alone”* (262). In her privacy, she calmly thought of her tough times and why she wanted to join Dauntless without knowing about it.

The “Autonomy” of culture, will, and the environment is one of the traits of self-actualized people. Maslow stated in his paper about self-actualized people that:

Self-actualized people are not dependent on their main satisfactions in the real world, or other people or culture or means to ends or, in general, on extrinsic satisfaction. Rather they are dependent on their development and continued growth of their potentialities (Maslow 1970).

Self-actualized people do not care about what other people think about them and take actions according to their priorities. Tris seems to be a self-actualized person because she tends to be autonomous. Several incidents in the novel prove that Tris had an autonomous personality. She said and did what she thought was best for her and didn’t depend on others’ opinions.

Her autonomous personality could be seen in chapter fifteen when she was getting ready to see her parents on the visiting day. She was wearing an outfit that she knew her parents won’t approve of but didn’t care what they thought of her anymore because she was wearing her faction’s clothes and that was her choice to wear them now (Roth 177).

There was another situation in the novel that proved Tris’s autonomy and that was in chapter thirty-nine when Tris warned Tobias’s father Marcus to stay away from Tobias because she knew what he had done to his son. Tris protected Tobias in front of people who didn’t think in the same autonomous way.

“Continued freshness of appreciation” is another quality found in self-actualized people according to Maslow. He stated that Self-actualized people have the great capability to appreciate *“again and again, freshly and naively, the basic goods of life, with awe, pleasure,*

wonder and even ecstasy” (Maslow 1970). This trait could be seen in Tris at numerous points in the novel.

One of them would be when Tris and Four climbed the Ferris wheel together. The feelings she felt when she was with him made her feel excited and appreciative of the moments she had with him. When she was climbing the Ferris wheel with Four she thought *“Something about him makes me feel like I am about to fall. Or turn to liquid. Or burst into flames.”* (Roth 144) In chapter fifteen, when Tris saw her mother again on the visiting day, she almost cried because she was happy to see her and also because she didn’t think any of her parents would come to see her. This incident also proved Tris’s continued freshness of appreciation.

Tris also proved to have this trait of self-actualization when after winning the game of capturing the flag she thought: *“If my entire life is like this, loud laughter and bold action and the kind of exhaustion you feel after a hard but satisfying day, I will be content”* (Roth 156). In chapter twenty-one, when Tris had trouble with the articles about her father, her friends cheered her up in her hard times and she felt grateful and appreciative of it. These incidents prove that Tris had “continued freshness of appreciation” which is one of the traits of self-actualizing people.

Conclusion

The novel’s protagonist Tris at the age of sixteen had to choose by changing her faction or staying with her family in the same faction of Abnegation. From the start, Tris knew that she couldn’t fit in Abnegation and wanted to change her faction. She chose Dauntless over Abnegation and that’s where her challenges of life took a turn. A series of tests began for the selected positions in the Dauntless.

Tris desperately wanted to be a part of a faction because she knew factionless had no respect, shelter, protection, or anything like the life in the faction. She was also Divergent and

had to keep that a secret or else she would die. All these factors motivated Tris to keep fighting for herself.

The research looks at Tris's struggles to belong in Dauntless and her behavior towards achieving self-actualization from the perspective of Abraham Maslow's Theory of Motivation i.e., the hierarchy of needs. The objective of the research is to locate Belongingness and self-actualization in the character Tris.

The two targeted stages of Maslow's hierarchy of needs cannot be achieved without the fulfillment of the other primary stages like physiological needs, safety needs, and esteem needs. They are important for the achievement of the targeted stages and cannot be skipped.

Tris was able to attain physiological needs when she was in both Abnegation and Dauntless. She also achieved her safety needs even though she was tested multiple times. She accomplished her security needs when her mother died for her protection when she killed her friend Will and other Dauntless soldiers for her protection. She travelled with her brother, Tobias and his father to the Amity faction to gain their safety needs.

Social and belongingness need to come after completing the first two stages of the hierarchy. Tris struggled to fit in both Abnegation and Dauntless. In Abnegation she had pretended to be selfless and in Dauntless she had to fight her life to fit in the faction. She achieved this stage when she ranked first in the initiation, when her mother came to visit her or when she became friends with Christina. By the end of the novel, Tris accomplished belongingness when she accepted that she was Divergent and that she belonged to almost every faction.

The next main target of the research was Tris becoming one of the self-actualized people. It is not possible to reach this stage without fulfilling esteem needs. A person cannot self-actualize if they lack confidence or respect for themselves. Tris was able to satisfy her esteem needs multiple times with the help of her friends and because of her self-confidence.

She gained respect from her friends, from Dauntless members, leaders, and from her family when they reunited during the attack on Abnegation.

The process of self-actualization starts right when a person feels confident about themselves and also receives respect from others. Tris's process of becoming Self-actualized started too when she became the first jumper on the initiation day. Self-actualized people have 15 characteristics identified by Abraham Maslow in his paper "Self-Actualizing People: a Study of Psychological Health". It is not necessary to have all these characteristics to be self-actualized. A person might have missed two or three characteristics of self-actualized people and still achieve self-actualization without any issue.

Tris reached the last stage of Maslow's hierarchy of needs with 10 characteristics of self-actualization and they are Increase in Acceptance (Self, Others and Nature), Spontaneity, Problem-Centering, Desire for privacy, Autonomy, Continued freshness of appreciation, Peak Experience, Interpersonal Relations, Democratic character structure, and creativeness. (Maslow 153-171) She struggled to accept who she was from time to time but in the end but eventually, she attained acceptance of herself.

Tris successfully achieved all the stages, especially the targeted stages of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and continued her journey towards the next challenge of her life.

Works Cited

- Adler, Seymour. "Maslow's Need Hierarchy and the Adjustment of Immigrants." *The International Migration Review*, vol. 11, no. 4, 1977, pp. 444-451. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2545398. Accessed 18 July 2020.
- Administrator, Dallas News. "Secrets from 'Divergent' Author Veronica Roth Spilled before Her Trip to Dallas." *The Dallas Morning News*, 2013, www.dallasnews.com/arts-entertainment/architecture/2013/10/21/secrets-from-divergent-author-veronica-Roth-spilled-before-her-trip-to-dallas/.
- Anam, Zahrul. "Social Discrimination Reflected In Veronica Roth's *Divergent* (2011): Marxist Theory." Muhammadiyah University Of Surakarta, 2016.

- Aruma, E. O., and Melvins Enwuvesi Hanachor. "Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy Of Needs And Assessment Of Needs In Community Development." *International Journal of Development and Economic Sustainability*, vol. 5, no. 7, Dec. 2017, pp. 15–27.
- Baumeister, Roy F., and Mark R. Leary. "The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation." *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 117, no. 3, 1995, pp. 497–529., doi:10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497.
- Carpenter, Sadé. "Why 'Divergent' Author Veronica Roth Carries a Spark of Rebellion and Channels Her Younger Self through Writing." *Chicago Tribune*, 4 Apr. 2018, www.chicagotribune.com/redeye/ct-redeye-veronica-roth-divergent-c2e2-chicago-20180330-story.html.
- Cherry, Kendra. "How Maslow's Famous Hierarchy of Needs Explains Human Motivation." *Verywell Mind*, 3 Dec. 2019, www.verywellmind.com/what-is-maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-4136760#.
- Edie, Kerene. *A Review of Lenses on Reading - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*. May 2017, www.researchgate.net/publication/319493873_A_review_of_Lenses_on_reading_-_Maslow's_hierachy_of_needs.
- Einarsdóttir, Salvör Ósk. "How Difficult It Is to Be Different: A Marxist View on Divergent." *The University of Iceland, University of Iceland*, 2018.
- Handoko, Mentari. "Class Struggle as the Impact of Capitalism Seen through Faction in Veronica Roth's Divergent." *Santa Dharma University*, 2016.
- Herndon, Jessica. "Veronica Roth Young Adult Novelist Was 22 When She Wrote 'Divergent.'" *The Post and Courier*, Beverly Hills, California, 21 Mar. 2014, www.postandcourier.com/features/veronica-roth-young-adult-novelist-was-22-when-she-wrote-divergent/article_d5558bc0-dc23-57c8-962a-5a7ce51e111c.html. Accessed 2020.
- Irhamni, Ach. "Tris' Effort to Prove Her Existence in Dauntless Faction in Veronica Roth's novel Divergent." *Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya*, 2019.
- Komninos, Andreas. "Esteem: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs." *The Interaction Design Foundation*, 2020, www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/esteem-maslow-s-hierarchy-of-needs.
- Maslow, Abraham H. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review*, vol. 50, no. 4, 1943, pp. 370–396.
- Maslow, Abraham H. *Motivation and Personality*. Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1970.
- Maslow, Abraham H. *Towards a Psychology of Being*. 2nd ed., Van Nostrand Reinhold

- Company Inc., 1968.
- “Maslow: 15 Traits of Self-Actualized People.” Arts of Thought, 12 May 2020, artsofthought.com/2018/04/22/maslow-15-traits-of-self-actualized-people/.
- “Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs - Overview, Explanation, and Examples.” Corporate Finance Institute, 13 May 2020, corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/knowledge/other/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs/.
- “Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.” GoodTherapy.org Therapy Blog, 14 Dec. 2015, www.goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/maslow-hierarchy-needs. “Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.” Learning Theories, 5 Mar. 2020, www.learning-theories.com/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs.html.
- McLeod, Saul. “Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.” Simply Psychology, Simply Psychology, 20 Mar. 2020, www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html.
- N., Pam M.S. “Safety Needs.” Psychology Dictionary, 28 Apr. 2013, psychologydictionary.org/safety-needs/.
- Paravano, Christina. “Real and Metaphorical Hunger: the Case of The Divergent Trilogy.” *Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies*, vol. n.13, May 2015, pp. 121–135., doi: <https://doi.org/10.13130/2035-7680/4836>.
- Rahmayanti, Deby. “Tris’s Individuation Process as Seen in Veronica Roth's Divergent.” State Islamic University of Yogyakarta, 2015.
- Roth-Khan, Alex. “For Social Work to Work, People Need to Know They Belong (Op-Ed).” LiveScience, Purch, 21 Apr. 2016, www.livescience.com/54505-people-who-feel-connected-rise-from-misfortune.html.
- Selva, Joaquín. “What Is Self-Actualization? A Psychologist's Definition [+Examples].” PositivePsychology.com, 29 Apr. 2020, positivepsychology.com/self-actualization/.
- Site members. “Veronica Roth: 'I Wanted to Let Go of Our World Completely'.” *The Guardian*, 14 May 2016, www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2016/may/14/veronica-roth-divergent-ya-dystopia-carve-the-mark. Accessed 2020.
- “Spontaneity.” Your Dictionary, www.yourdictionary.com/Spontaneity
- Wardana, M. K., and S. Roy. “Ideology and Class Division in Veronica Roth’s Divergent.” *International Journal of Cultural and Art Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2019, pp. 30–37., doi:<https://doi.org/10.1234/ijcas.v2i1.803>.
- Wardani, L. Dyah Purwita Sri, and Dianita Prasetyo Ningrum. “Reflection of Feminism in Veronica Roth's Divergent.” University of Jember, 2017

Wulandari, Arinda Saraswat. "The Effects of Self- Actualization toward Beatrice 'Tris' Prior's Personality as Reflected on Divergent Novel by Veronica Roth." Sultan Agung Islamic University, Sultan Agung Islamic University, 2016.

Zisk, Alyssa Hillary. "Pulling the Rug Out From Under (Neuro)Divergence in the Divergent Universe." *Critical Disability Discourses*, vol. 9, 2019.