

# Self realization through education

Education



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Self-Realization through Education Over the past 32 years of my life, I have been both directly and indirectly impacted by numerous social institutions. Without question, education has been the most influential by creating a positive change in my life. There are many benefits to pursuing an education. First, embarking on a rewarding career path has its own rewards such as a generous salary and social prestige. In addition, an individual's relationships within the institutions of family and marriage are also affected by the presence of an educated head of household.

Lastly, the impact of a good education on mental well-being is tremendous since most people feel a sense of accomplishment after earning a college degree. Above all, I believe that education, as a social institution, has helped to shape my mental attitudes towards society as well as mold my sense of identity. Beforehand, I would like to define the term social institution followed by my own interpretation. According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary, an institution is defined as "a significant practice, relationship, or organization in a society or culture" (Institution, 2010).

I feel that social institutions in particular are systems which require society to form social groups; these social groups work towards their collective goal of attaining desired statuses and roles within said society. Simply put, a social institution is a system that can be used to attain certain social goals that are predefined by its respective social group, governed by a set of social norms. By adhering to social norms of academia, I have been able to earn an Associate's degree which aided me in securing a new career.

By depending on the institution of education, I have been able to meet one of my social goals and achieve Federal employment status. Social

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institutions are necessary components within our society in order to maintain and provide individual stability based on institutional dependence. Social institutions such as economy and education can directly correlate with one another. Common sense in today's society tells us that the more educated a person is, the greater the likelihood that person will acquire high salaried employment.

This so-called common sense also entails that a measure of normative isomorphism, or organizational standard, exists in the form of a college degree in order to establish a common "best practice" (Carter & Clegg, 2007, para 3). Individuals who do not possess the established minimum qualifications for employment are unlikely candidates due to an accepted social perception that said individuals lack the desired aptitude.

In effect, being financially secure and having a successful career that requires a college degree grants a sense of stability in the household. Family is considered to be another social institution and is affected by other social institutions, specifically economy and education. The involvement of the two latter social institutions has a great impact on the quality of life and stability of any given household. Herbert Spencer referred to institutions by using the analogy of society as if it were an "organism" (Henning, 2007, para 3).

Basically, institutions are compared to the organs of the body since they too properly function only with effective interdependence. With respect to family, I believe that children are likely to grow up to become responsible members of society if they are raised in a household with educated parents. Seeking higher learning only strengthens the institution of family through both tangible and intangible benefits. Stability in the household, both emotional

and financial, is directly affected by the level of education held by the working person.

Indeed, family members traditionally benefit from the financial rewards which are bestowed upon the college-educated provider within the household. However, there are a multitude of intangible benefits conferred upon graduation from a college or university. Social prestige, self-confidence, time management skills, and the ability to think critically are the most notable benefits. Abraham Maslow, a noted psychologist and theorist, developed a theory on human motivation that is widely known as a hierarchy of needs.

After a person meets their esteem needs, he or she will seek to fulfill their potential through a process of self-actualization (Myers, 2010, pp 446-47, 564-65). Throughout this process, I feel that education is a key component towards self-actualization. In conclusion, by utilizing the institution of education, I am learning valuable life skills necessary to become a productive and successful member of society, as well as realize my true potential. References Carter, C. & Clegg, S. (2007). New institutional theory. The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology. G. Ritzer (Ed. ). Retrieved from <http://www.blackwellreference.com> Henning, C. (2007). Institution. The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology. G. Ritzer (Ed. ). Retrieved from <http://www.blackwellreference.com> Institution. (2010). In Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Retrieved June 13, 2010 from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/institution> Myers, D. G. (2010). Psychology (9th ed. ). New York, NY: Worth.