



SELF ACTUALIZATION IN HIERARCHY OF NEEDS OF A PRINCESS AS SEEN IN MEG CABOT'S THE PRINCESS DIARIES

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Abstract

the process of self-actualization and self-esteem, especially self-confidence and self-image of the main character in the novel The Princess Diaries by Meg Cabot. This novel tells about Mia Thermopolis, the freshman student at Albert Einstein High School. Like many other teens, Mia has a problem in self-confidence because of her body posture that she thinks does not meet the standard in general. Mia is often labeled as a freak in her school. Her life problem is getting more complicated when she knows that she is a princess from a small country in Europe. Mia's problem is a picture of teenage problems in general, the lack of self-confidence and the bad self-image. But Mia learns to solve all of her life problems in a mature way and wish that she can reach her self-actualization.

In this research, the writer uses descriptive research as the method of collecting the data. As for the method of analyzing the data, the writer uses structural method by understanding the novel, the character of Mia Thermopolis. Data collection technique uses qualitative technique with taking note cards in finding relevant data to the subject of analysis. In data analysis technique, the writer uses technique by interpreting data.

The results of this research are: 1) Mia's self-actualization process at the end of the novel only reach the self-esteem phase. Mia is not yet fully reach her self-actualization, she often still being selfish and mostly still being emotional. 2) Mia's self-confidence at the end of the novel is increase, Mia can accept her own self and flaws. 3) Mia's self-image at the end of the novel changed. Mia learns that what is important is not the appearance but the personality inside an individual.

As closing, even though this novel looks light where the story is only about teenager's life problem in general, but there are a lot of lessons that can be applied in the daily life. Maybe not every girl can be a princess in one night, but the lessons about how can we be confidence are a lot in this novel.

Keywords: *Self-Actualization, Self-Confidence, Self-Image*

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I INTRODUCTION

The reason for choosing a novel can be seen from the ability of novel describe the narrations and the dialogues in detail in order to give the clear understanding about the literary work's environment and the depth of characters' thought and feeling. Novels tell stories, which are typically defined as a series of events described in a sequence.

Self-actualization represents a concept derived from Humanistic psychological theory and, specifically, from the theory created by Abraham Maslow. Self-actualization, according to Maslow (1943:375) represents growth of an individual toward fulfillment of the highest needs, those for meaning in life, in particular.

Maslow's idea of self-actualization must first be contextualized within his hierarchy of needs. Maslow felt that human motivation needed to be studied beyond the contemporary scope of behaviorism because the study of "motivation should be human centered rather than animal centered".

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is made up of psychological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization in a pyramid from bottom to top. Each level of needs must be taken care before the next one can be taken care of, so ensuring one's physiological needs (like food and water) is a prerequisite to ensuring their safety needs (like shelter), ensuring one's safety needs is prerequisite to ensuring one's love needs, and so on.

Self-esteem is defined as a person's overall subjective emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. In more simple word, it is the feel of 'feeling good about yourself' or 'feeling bad about yourself'. Maslow divide self-esteem into two form, the need of respect from others in the form of self-love, self-confidence, skill or aptitude. The first form of self-esteem is more fragile compared to the latter.

In this research, the writer use Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow's theory uses some simple words for his theory that can be easily understand. This theory also can be easily applied by anyone.

The princess diaries is a best seller novel by Meg Cabot. This novel is about Mia Thermopolis, a high school freshman. Mia lives in Manhattan, NY, with her artist mother, Helen Thermopolis. One day, her European father and aristocratic Grandmere reveal a shocking secret that Mia's father is a prince of Genovia, a small country in West Europe, and she is a princess. As mia struggles to maintain her friendship, deal with her mom's relationship with her algebra teacher and get the attention of Josh Richter, Grandmere and Mia's father insist upon turning her into royalty by giving princess lessons. The reluctant princess garners attention from the media and her crush, Josh, but learns she must balance her old life with her new royal responsibility. In 2001, Disney adapted this charming story into a movie with slightly different plot and characters.

II RESEARCH METHODS

The focus in this sub-analysis is the character of Mia, as she is the Princess of Genovia. According to Maslow (1943:6) there are four stages in life before we can reach our self-actualization, which is physiological needs, safety, belonging and love, and the needs for self-esteem. In this novel, Mia keeps mentioning about achieving her self-actualization.

"I guess that's part of my problem. I'm way at the bottom of the self-actualization tree. Like, underneath the roots of it, practically." (49).

The first stage, physiological needs such as needs for food and air has been fulfilled. Mia lives with her artist mother in an apartment at the Greenwich Village, New York. Her mother is a painter artist and her father is a prince from a small European country called Genovia, so Mia have enough money in her life.

Before her life being turned upside down because of the princess stuffs, Mia's life was pretty normal. She will meet her best friend, Lilly Moscovitz every day at Astor Place, where they catch the uptown 6 train together to go to school. The last thing she wanted is for her dad's bodyguard to drive her to school. The only person at the Albert Einstein High School who get dropped off by a chauffeur is this totally rich Saudi Arabian girl named Tina Hakim Baba, whose dad owns some big oil company, and everybody makes fun of her because her parents are all worried she'll get kidnapped between Seventy-fifth and Fifth, where she lives. She even has a bodyguard who follows her around from class to class and talks on a walkie-talkie to the chauffeur. Mia thinks it is a little bit extreme and looks weird. She does not want the same thing happen to her but her dad wants to keep her safe since she is his only heir to the throne, so she needs to forget about the metro.

Mia's dad also give her a bodyguard that will follow her everywhere, except to the toilet, just like Tina Hakim Baba. Mia's bodyguard called Lars, he always carry some guns with him, and his priority is Mia's safety.

Mia's relationship with her family and friends was a little bit bad at the beginning of the novel. Mia cannot express her feelings really well, so her mom gave her a diary so that she can write down all of her feelings in that book. Mia's relationship with her best friend Lilly was bad because Lilly keeps complaining about how bad her look is after her make over. She cracked, and tell Lilly to shut up. She is tired of her best friend putting her down all the time. Mia needs friends, and when Lilly is not there for her she tries to figure out where she belongs. In the lunch restaurant at school she looks for appropriate company.

The first step towards repairing their friendship is taken by Lilly who has matured enough to see and admit her own faults. The Princess Diaries illustrates that without a friend's guidance the protagonist is left to make her own decisions. In this case the protagonist turns out to be strong enough to reject the people who only want her company because of her status. Moreover, she is able to find true friendship elsewhere. In addition, the bonds between the protagonist and her old friend turn out to be strong, and they become friends again. The message of the story, concerning friendship, becomes clear; problems can be solved and friendship can survive crises if you admit your faults and if you can forgive. Besides, it shows that it is possible to make new 10 friends if you open your heart, but that it is important to be careful with whom you choose to be friends so that they are true friends

Mia's relationship with her mother is really good. Although there is a lot lacking in her mother's parenting, Mia loves her anyway. She does not speak about her feelings but she shows them in different situations. For instance, although she has some problems with the fact that her mother is dating her Algebra teacher, Mr Gianini, she wants her mother to be happy and therefore does not reveal her feelings.

Mia makes the decision to handle the situation in what could be regarded to be a mature way. In numerous ways Mia acts as if she is the adult one and her mother is the one who needs to be taken care of. The family seems to

live mostly on take-out food, but when it comes to shopping groceries or dropping off laundry, making sure the rent is paid and other things, Mia is the one who does that. Mia becomes more mature, due to the responsibilities she has. Although the readers can see all the disadvantages in her situation it is also clear that it makes her a strong and independent young woman. The young readers can see that sometimes bad experiences can turn into something they benefit from in the end. Mia's father has had little to do with shaping her during her childhood or teen years. She describes him as a politician living in Genovia. She writes quite unsentimentally about the fact that he has had cancer. Due to his illness he cannot have any more children. Mia writes little about her feelings for her father. She states that she loves him but adds, "I guess". Apparently they have not had that much contact over the years, and there is nothing in Mia's diary that reveals that she would have wanted it to be different. That is probably why she does not appear thrilled when her father breaks the schedule and comes and visits her between the holidays. She understands that this is out of the ordinary, and it certainly is. This is when he tells her that he is a prince. Mia feels betrayed because her parents have not told her earlier. Her father claims that they thought they did her a favour by not telling her about her background. Everything has changed now because her father cannot have any more children, which makes Mia the heir to the throne. Mia's father is a typical example of the absent parent, and it has obviously affected her feelings towards him because she feels ambivalent as to whether she loves him or not. Furthermore, he has not been honest because he has not revealed an important part of his life that also affects Mia. Teenagers, who live mostly with one of their parents, can probably relate to some sense to the protagonist and her feelings towards the absent parent.. Mia does not feel excited about the fact that she is a princess; she can only see the negative side, for instance that her father wants her to move to Genovia something she is strongly opposed to. Finally he compromises and says that she can finish school first, if she then takes care of her responsibilities as his heir. Once more the scenario is probably familiar to many teenagers; on the one hand they are regarded as too young to be informed about important matters, and on the other hand, they are supposed

to be old enough to deal with decisions that others have made for them. Mia's minor revolt against how she is being treated pays off because she does not have to move to Genovia immediately. In Mia's family nothing is typical, not even her grandmother who Mia calls Grandmère. She writes in her diary that Grandmère does not like children because they give her migraine and that she kind of hopes that Grandmère would die. Nevertheless, Mia is forced to take princess lessons tutored by her grandmother, and she receives no comfort when she tries to object, "I don't want to be a princess. I just want to be me, Mia." Her grandmother's reply is: "Don't converse in English with me. It's vulgar.". The nice and caring grandmother portrayed in fairytales does not exist here. Mia's grandmother shows no affection or sympathy for Mia's situation, and it is obvious that Mia has no feelings for her grandmother since she wishes her to be dead. Mia fulfils her obligations despite that, likely because she is used to taking responsibility. But there are some moments that Mia thinks she is not hate her Grandmere at all.

Mia had a crush with the most popular guy at school, Josh. But she cannot deny that her best friend's brother, Michael is hot too, plus he can

always make Mia laugh. At the end of the novel, she realize that she is totally not in love with Josh. Mia has experienced that Josh is both superficial and egotistic, and her first crush is over. But with her bad experience comes the possibility of seeing Michael in a new light, so the entire evening she talks and slow-dances with him

Mia's self-esteem at the beginning is very bad. She always thinks that she is good enough for being a princess because of her appearance. But at the end of the novel, she feels pretty and worth it.

"And if he doesn't show up soon, well, all I can say is HISS LOSS. I look better than I have ever looked in my entire life." (202).

To conclude, Mia already fulfilled all of the four stages of self-actualization by Maslow. She fulfilled her physiological needs, she feels safety and secure, she has a good relationship with her family and friends, she even found love, and she got that confidence at the end of the novel. But Mia still have not reach her self-actualization yet because she still can get too emotional sometimes.

Festinger (1954:117) found that self-confidence in an individual's ability may only rise or fall where that individual is able to compare themselves to others who are roughly similar in a competitive environment.

Mia Thermopolis is a 14-year-old-girl, who is studying in Albert Einstein High School in Manhattan, New York City. Reading this novel is like reading her diary, from her point of view. Mia is the main character of *The Princess Diaries*, because the whole content of this novel is about her feeling and thought. She is also the one who has the conflict, but it is an internal conflict because it happens between Mia and herself. Mia realizes she is not popular and can't exist, so sometimes she can't accept that truth.

"Like everybody doesn't *already* think I'm a freak. I'm practically the biggestfreak in the entire school. I mean, let's face it: I'm five foot nine, flat-chested, and a freshman. How much *more* of a freak could I be?" (1).

This quote is on the situation when Mia knows about her mother relationship with her

Algebra teacher. Mia has suffered for this low self-confidence because of her physical appearance. She even thinks that her appearance is not like a princess at all.

"WHAT? A PRINCESS?? ME?? Yeah. Right. This is how NOT a princess I am. I am so NOT a princess that when my dad started telling me that I was one I totally started crying. I could see my reflection in this big gold mirror across the room, and my face had gotten all splotchy, like it does in PE whenever we play dodge ball and I get hit. I looked at my face in that big mirror and I was like, *This* is the face of a princess?" (35).

This quote above expresses how Mia reacts to the fact. She can't accept it and she deny it. Instead of going home, she goes to Central Park Zoo, and after the zoo closing, she goes to Lilly's house and sleep there.

She is afraid if her friends know, because she very concerns with what people think and say about her. For her princess problem, Mia also

insists that nobody should know about her status. She explains if people, and worse, students at school, know about this princess thing, they will mark her as a freak with bodyguard and limo, and she doesn't want it. She only wants to be a normal teenager.

She realizes she is not popular and most people do not know her. They never invite her to the party or a date. On the contrary, sometimes she prefers to be invisible and does not want to be the center of attention as well.

"A bunch of girls ran out of the bathroom giggling like crazy when I went in, though. Sometimes I wish I lived on a desert island. Really. With nobody else around for hundreds of miles. Just me, the ocean, the sand, and a coconut tree. And maybe a high-definition 37-inch TV with a satellite dish and a Sony PlayStation with Bandicoot, for when I get bored" (146).

This quote above is when Mia goes to school and her secret for being a princess has been spread. From these two different quotes, they show that Mia takes existence as a serious problem in her life, she wants to be existent, but on the other hand, she blames the situation. First, she blames her physical appearance, and then she blames the situation that makes her to be a princess.

Her grandmother sent her to Paolo, the royal hairdresser, to prepare her for being a princess. At first, Mia feels worried and angry because they cut her hair really short, bleached it into really blond, and put some nails on her finger. She thinks that she looks like Lana Weinberger.

"She is turning me into someone else." (104).

But soon, Mia can adjust with her princess lessons and she finally gained her self-confidence at the end of the novel. She even can stood for herself when she needs to.

Pietrofesa (Mappiare, 2010: 73) in his writing explains that the self-image includes all values, attitudes, and beliefs in a person in relation to the environment, and is a combination of a number of self-perceptions that affect and

even determine a person's perceptions and behavior.

In the novel *The Princess Diaries*, Mia Thermopolis is a shy, awkward teenager whose only goal in life is to be invisible. She tries to get through each day with as little attention as possible. Her world is turned upside down when her father arrives to tell that she is a real-life princess. Mia cannot be regarded as self-assured in a positive way when it comes to her appearance, because she mainly describes what that she is not comfortable with in her looks.

"Like everybody doesn't *already* think I'm a freak. I'm practically the biggest freak in the entire school. I mean, let's face it: I'm five foot nine, flat-chested, and a freshman. How much *more* of a freak could I be?". (1).

The way Mia sees herself is confirmed by others. The mean Lana calls her freak and Mia's best friend is not supportive, Lilly says her only attractive features is her eyes. Nowhere is it suggested that Mia doubts that they are right, she just incorporates everything into her own negative portrait of how she looks. Mia is not obsessed with her appearance, but she keeps coming back to it in her diary and she seems a little dejected.

"My breasts have grown exactly *none* since last summer. Mom was totally wrong. I did not have a growth spurt when I turned fourteen, like she did. I will probably never have a growth spurt, at least not on my chest. I only have growth spurts UP, not OUT. I am now the tallest girl in my class." (11).

Mia has started to question why appearance has to overshadow someone's personality. Society's double standard of morality is visible in the novel, on the one hand there is the stress on inner qualities, and on the other hand, teenagers realize that they often are judged by their appearance. There are different ways of handling dissatisfaction with one's appearance, and Mia is often ironic.

"You should see what I look like. You never saw anyone who looked LESS like a princess than I do. I mean, I have really bad hair that isn't curly or straight; it's sort of triangular, so I have to wear it really short or I look like a Yield sign. And it isn't blond or brunette, it's in the middle,

the sort of color they call mouse brown, or dishwater blond. Attractive, huh? And I have a really big mouth and no breasts and feet that look like skis.” (35).

Her attitude confirms that appearance is important to her. Mia often feels like a stranger in her world, because she lives in a world that appreciate beauty and physical appearance, but not heart. She can't understand this world and can't stop thinking about it, why person like Lana Weinberger who is really cruel is so popular.

“ So here I am again, home on a Saturday night. Not that I'm ever NOT home on a Saturday night, except when I'm with Lilly. Why am I so unpopular? I mean, I know I look weird and stuff, but I really try to be nice to people, you know? You'd think people would value me as a human being and invite me to their parties just because they like my company. It's not MY fault my hair sticks out the way it does, any more than it's Lilly's fault her face looks sort of squished.” (68).

This quote shows that Mia feels herself as a stranger, when she is trapped with her father on Saturday night, while her friends are dating with their boyfriend, and other popular students are partying and having fun. This feeling can emerge because Mia sees it from the perspective of stereotype in her culture, that normal teenagers should hang out and date. Mia thinks the situation traps her, but in fact, she is trapping

herself by looking through other people's glasses and standards.

Further into the novel Mia undergoes a transformation, as a result of her princess lessons. Her grandmother takes her to a stylist who cuts off Mia's hair, makes her blond and fixes her fingernails. In addition, she receives fashion clothes. After all, her complaining about her looks one would think that this is an opportunity for Mia, but she does not experience the changes as something positive, “She's turning me into someone else,” Mia writes in her diary. Mia feels what her Grandmother try to do was screwed up.

“”Is that what she's doing?” I started yelling some more. “Well, if that's what she's doing, she has it all screwed up. I never saw a princess with hair this short, or feet as big as mine, who didn't have breasts!”” (106).

But the end of the novel, Mia changed her point of view and thinks that she is actually pretty when she sees herself in her gown.

“I look better than I have ever looked in my whole entire life.” (202)

To conclude, at the first, Mia thinks that her appearance is not good enough. She even thinks that she did not look like a princess at all. But at the end, Mia can embrace her flaws and see the beauty in herself. And Mia learns that is not always about the appearance, what is more matter is the personality.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of Mia's self-actualization. Mia keep saying that she wanted to achieve her self-actualization. Her mother is a painter artist while her father is actually a prince from a small rich country in Europe called Genovia, therefore Mia can fulfill her physiological needs, especially food. She also lives in apartment with her mom in the Greenwich Village, New York. Mia had a bodyguard, Lars, who will follow her around to make sure that she is always safe. Mia's relationship with family and friends is very good. Even though Mia is not the most popular girl in her high school, Mia is pretty popular between her friends. Mia's self-esteem at the beginning of

the story is really low, but she gained her self-esteem at the end.

1. Mia's self-confidence at the end of the novel. The Princess Diaries' story is start with Mia that keeps complaining about herself. Mia thinks that she is not popular because of her appearance that is not interesting enough. Through the novel we can see that Mia slowly find her self-confidence. At the end of the novel, Mia's self-confidence makes her accepting herself and embrace her flaws. Mia learns that she needs to stay true to herself, her friends, and her family even if her world turned upside down. Mia has courage and confidence

enough to face great, unexpected and even unbelievable changes in her life. She reveals her best qualities : honesty, kindness, and sincerity.

Mia's self-image at the end of the novel. Mia always think that appearance is important so that she can be accepted by society. She lives in a

world that appreciate beauty and physical appearance, but not her heart. At the end of the novel, Mia learns that what is more important is not the appearance, but the personality instead. Mia does her best, overcomes different problems and at the end of the novel she finds her love and feels peaceful and happy.

IV CONCLUSION

this thesis has been an effort to prove his study and at the same time to deepen his skill about literary work through writing. However, this analysis might not be perfect, so the writer wants certain inputs and critics from the readers in perfection of this writing. The writer hopes this analysis can add a new expression in

literature world, especially English Department, Faculty of Literature, Ekasakti University. For the reader, the writer also hopes that this writing will give the contribution to the English Department students and whoever may be interested in the subject being discussed.

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