



Raju: A Need-Base Metamorphosis in R.K. Narayan's Novel 'The Guide'

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Abstract: *Psychologist Abraham Maslow's theory of motivation is based on the human needs. According to him, all needs are classified into five need clusters of common to all people. In R.k. Narayan's novel "The Guide", Raju's (protagonist) was a case where the physical guide indeed became a Swami, a 'Spiritual Guide'. Hence he became firstly, a shop owner, and then a tourist guide and later on an agent to Nalini alias Rosie's dance carrier and at last a True Swami (spiritual guide). And this transformation of Raju's journey is guided by a need-based transformation like any other common man.*

Keywords: *Guide; Abraham Maslow, Needs; Motivation; Transformation; Swami (True saint).*

I. Introduction

R.K. Narayan's novel 'The Guide' (1958) is based on Malgudi, a fictional town in South India. The novel describes the transformation of the protagonist Raju from a tour guide to a spiritual guide and then one of the greatest holy man of India. The title refers to the last three of the roles that Raju assumed in his unplanned career, i.e. as a tourist guide, as guide for Rosie and as spiritual guide for society. He begins his career as any other young man of average abilities by fitting into any role that comes his way. He runs the petty shop of his father and when Malgudi station is set up, he runs a bookstall selling old magazines, being enquired by the passengers on various details about the neighbouring places, and he assumes the role of a tourist guide. His chance encounter with Marco-Rosie makes him change his role as a champion of Rosie's craving for a dancing career. He gradually assumes the role of an impresario and manager of Rosie's dance career. Then a transformation is happened from fake swami to true sanyasi (spiritual guide).

II. Objective

Hence the role of Raju (protagonist) is crucial to a proper understanding and analysis of the motives and forces that govern the complex human nature depicted by the author, R.K. Narayan in his novel, "The Guide".

Abraham Maslow was a clinical psychologist who introduced his theory based on personal judgment, which was generally known as the need hierarchy theory. Specifically Maslow theorised that people have five types of needs and that these are activated in a hierarchical manner. This means that these needs are aroused in a specific order from lowest to highest, such that the lowest-order need must be fulfilled before the next order need is triggered and the process continues. Needs are as follows:

Physiological needs are the need at the bottom and include the lowest order need and most basic. This includes the need to satisfy the fundamental biological drives such as food, air, water and shelter. The body craves food, freedom of movement and basic needs.

In this novel, Raju's father had a small shop and all day he sat there selling peppermint, fruit, tobacco, betel leaf, parched gram, and whatever else the wayfarers on the Trunk Road demanded. It was known as the 'hut-shop'. Occasionally Raju is made the in-charge of this hut-shop and the customers found in him a good companion for them. Very soon, Raju's father asks him to handle the business in the new shop at Malgudi Railway Station and it stopped his schooling. Raju's father dies and his mother becomes a widow. Raju closed down his father's hut-shop and set the new shop at Malgudi Railway Station to fulfill the basic needs and to run his home.

Safety needs this occupies the second level of needs. Safety needs are activated after physiological needs are met. They refer to the need for a security and protection of life.

After few days, Raju became famous as 'Railway Raju'. Perfect strangers began to ask him about the famous spots around Malgudi. His friend, the old shark is Gaffur, the taxidriver. Gaffur takes the tourists in his car to various places. In a few months Raju became a seasoned guide. Therefore for the sake of security and protection

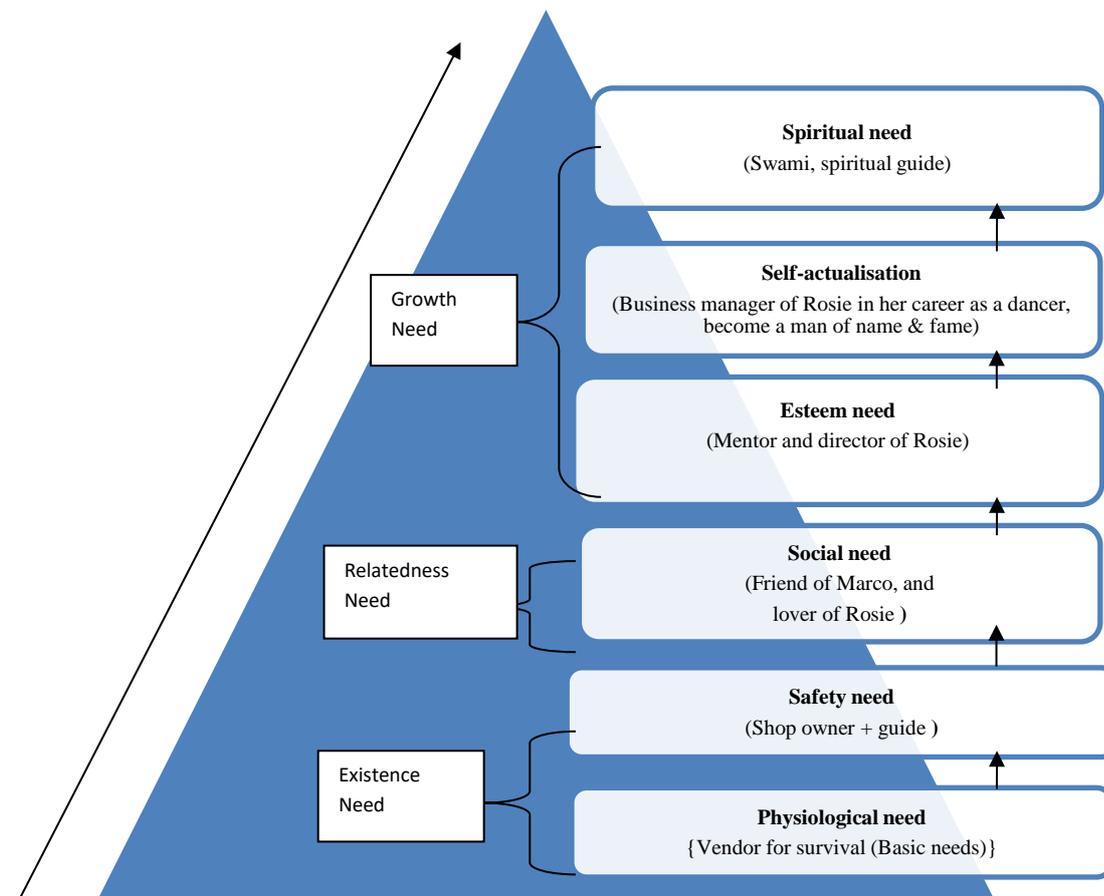
of life, he became a part-time shopkeeper and a full time tourist guide for more secure and protective life by earning more. Physiological and safety need can be called as Existence needs, desires for physiological and material well-being.

Social needs: This represents the third level of needs. They are activated after safety needs are met. Social needs refer to the need to be affiliated that is (the needed to be loved and accepted by other people). The love, affection or belongingness needs come into play after the physiological and security drives are satisfied.

Raju came close with Marco and Rosie and became friend of Marco. Raju did not care for his own shop and his bank balance. The only reality in his life and consciousness became Rosie. Raju confesses, “I will do anything for you. I will give my life to see you dance...” Rosie came to Raju’s home. Raju comforted her and said, “You are in the right place. Forget all your past...” Raju falls in love with Rosy who is interested in Bharat Natyam. Raju was seeking affection, love and belongingness from the others and these needs came true when he met with Marco and Rosie. It is nothing but a desire for satisfying interpersonal relatedness.

Esteem needs this represents the fourth level of needs. It includes the need for self-respect and approval of others. And also esteem needs are the needs for Status, recognition, achievement.

Raju decided to start a new life with Rosie as a public dancer. He thought of Rosie as a gold mine as the Bharat Natyam was really the greatest art business. Now Rosie starts a new phase of her career. As a public dancer she has been christened as Nalini. Raju becomes a man with a mission. He is on the road to become an impresario. He ceases to be the old Railway Raju. Raju adapts himself into a businesslike impresario. He is now conferring favour on them by permitting the dancing programmes. Raju is unwilling to stay in his old house. He rents one at New Extension in keeping with their status. Raju fulfills his esteem needs by getting recognition from others, holding status and touches the desire. He now becomes a man of status.



Raju's Need-based Hierarchical Transformation

Self-actualisation: According Maslow this occupies the last level at the top. This refers to the need to become all that one is capable of being to develop ones fullest potential. The rationale here holds to the point that self-actualised and Self-fulfillment.

After that, Raju has appointed a large staff of servants- a car driver, two gardeners, a Gurakha sentry and two cooks. Raju’s office was on the ground floor with a secretary in waiting, a young graduate from a local college.

Raju's philosophy was centred upon all the money in the world. Raju obtained a medical certificate to say that he needed alcohol for his welfare and became a 'permit-holder'. Raju played Three- Cards with some men. Raju manages her programmes and now he becomes her proprietor-cum-manager. As Rosie soars in her career, Raju becomes wealthy and prosperous man of name and fame.

Spiritual Need is newly included in need hierarchy theory where it defines that after the completion of five needs one person can be motivated by the spiritual motivation. And in case of Raju, he finally transformed himself from fake saint to true saint.

In this novel, Raju made the resolution that he would give up all his thoughts of food for the next ten days. For the first time in his life he was making an earnest effort. For the first time he was learning the thrill of full application, outside money and love. It gave him a new strength to go through with the ordeal. He had been fasting to save humanity from draught. He almost lost all sensations. He stepped into his basin of water, shut his eyes, and turned towards the mountains, muttering the prayer. The headman of the village is Velan who regards Raju as a saint. All the villagers believed in Velan and Raju becomes 'Swami' for them, a true saint.

III. Conclusion

What is of interest is that he is like any average Indian, a flotsam drifting along the stream of life, with least equipment for any role he assumes. His external appearance and gift of speech carry him this far. But inherently all along in life he has been guided only by the needs. And at the end of the novel he sits up and thinks to undertake the fast in earnest, to experiment the veracity of the traditional faith in the efficacy of genuine fasting of a holy man to bring rain for the good of humanity. 'Raju opened his eyes, looked about and said, "Velan, it's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs--", and with that he sagged down'. His needs start with physiological need as a shop-keeper and ends with spiritual need being a spiritual guide for the society. It is the need that comes in path our life which plays as a motive of metamorphosis in Raju like all common people. This shifting of roles in Raju's life is due to need-based motivation and he is being pushed by his needs. Transformation is happened willingly or unwilling in Raju's life for this existence, for the love and for the need of his growth and development. He lives each stage with fullness and zest from the boyhood to livelihood to sainthood.

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