

## **Self actualization of Libby Strout in Jennifer Niven's *Holding Up The Universe Novel***

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### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan proses pencapaian aktualisasi diri tokoh utama Libby Strout dalam novel  *Holding Up the Universe* karya Jennifer Niven. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan psikologi sastra yaitu hirarki kebutuhan Abraham Maslow. Data dalam penelitian ini diambil dari novel, seperti dialog, narasi, dan monolog. Peneliti menggunakan beberapa langkah untuk mengumpulkan data, seperti membaca novel, mengidentifikasi data, mengklasifikasikan data, dan mereduksi data. Proses Libby mencapai aktualisasi diri dilakukan dengan memenuhi kebutuhan-kebutuhan lain, seperti kebutuhan fisiologi, keamanan dan keselamatan, cinta dan rasa memiliki harga diri. Selanjutnya, Libby Strout memenuhi kebutuhan aktualisasi diri. Ia memenuhi beberapa karakteristik aktualisasi diri: penerimaan (diri sendiri dan orang lain), kualitas dari detasemen: kebutuhan akan privasi, hubungan interpersonal, kealamian dalam berperilaku, fungsi otonom, kemandirian, apresiasi yang segar, resistensi terhadap enkulturasi, dan pengalaman puncak.

**Kata kunci:** Hirarki kebutuhan, aktualisasi diri, Libby Strout

### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to describe the process of achieving self-actualization of the main character Libby Strout in the novel of  *Holding Up the Universe* by Jennifer Niven. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with a literary psychology approach namely hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow. The data in this study were taken from the novel, such as dialogues, narratives, and monologues. The researchers used several steps of collecting the data, such as reading novel, identifying the data, classifying the data, and reducing the data. The process of Libby achieving self-actualization is carried out by meeting other needs, such as physiology, safety and security, love and belonging, self-esteem needs. The next was, Libby Strout satisfied the self-actualization need. She satisfied some of the self-actualization's characteristics: acceptance (self and others), the quality of detachment: need for privacy, interpersonal relationship, naturalness in behaving, autonomous functioning, independence, freshness of appreciation, resistance to enculturation, and peak experience.

**Keywords:** Hierarchy of needs, self-actualization, Libby Strout

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Literature is a creative art of written work that expresses a human attitude, feeling, and thinking. It is imaginative work that pictures human life in a society that can be relatable and understandable.

The consideration of literature as a form of art is because it has intellectual and may bring imaginative value concerning the world under the general heading of the aesthetic function of

language. Since literature shares the concern of human life's portrayal, psychological criticism elements will be presented in literary works if humans are the theme of the texts. A literary work gives advantages from psychology in expressing the characters through their mood and leading the reader into the psychological aspect of human reality as described in what is stated in action (Badegul 49). By knowing the person's psyche and personality, we can understand why a character behaves in a particular way in a literary work.

From literary works, readers can benefit from enriching knowledge and enjoying the works. As literature shares the concern about the representation of human life, psychological criticism elements will be present in this research. The psychological aspects will show the character through their outlooks, such as personalities, ambitions, emotions, behaviors towards the surrounding environment, egos, capabilities, qualities, and problems. The one well-known psychological theory is the hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow. There are five stages of needs that are hierarchically organized. Physiological conditions are at the bottom of the stage, followed by security, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. Each level is relative to the other higher level (Eugene 69). The stages are the physiological need, the need for safety and security, the need for love and belonging, the need for esteem, and the need to actualize. Self-actualization refers to the human's desire for self-fulfillment or the tendency to become everything one can become (Maslow 69).

The researchers chose Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory because this theory's values reflect human character needs. At the highest stage of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is self-actualization. Self-actualized people have characteristics such as independent thinking, tolerance, justice, compassion, goodness, autonomy, and self-exploration. In an essay review, Christopher D. Green said, "Self actualizing people spent significant amounts of time in understanding themselves and figuring out their innate potential." (370). Self-actualized people have goals, and the journey toward a goal is just as important as achieving the goal. The self-actualization of the figure can spur the person to develop their potential. The researchers are interested in analyzing the main character to understand about how is self actualization portrayed in Libby Strout as the main character of  *Holding Up the Universe novel through Abraham Maslow theory of self actualization, and character development from beginning to end of the story. The analysis result is expected to raise reader's awareness of differences, acceptance, and against bullying toward somebody.*

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Novel**

A novel is a form of literary work that presents some values through the character's representations, especially those shown by a particular cast of the novel. Reading a novel can give more knowledge in interpreting its content. Furthermore, the readers will know more about various human aspects and things that happen in real life by reading novels. Richard Taylor explains, "Novel is normally a prose work of quite some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and expresses something of the equality or value of human experience or conduct" (46).

## **2. Character**

The other thing to note is that the characters are part of a wider pattern. Characters are members of society, and the author's distinctive view of whom people relate to society will be portrayed in the presentation of every character. As Taylor explained, the character is a supporting element that builds a story (62). Furthermore, in person, they are like an object to represent a human's traits, in reality, such as sadness, disgust, anger, fear, and happiness. Therefore, characters are an essential part of the novel because they supply additional details, explanations, and actions along the events happened in the story.

M.J. Murphy mentions nine ways an author reveals the character's personalities in his book *Understanding Unseen: An Introduction to English Poetry and the English Poetry for Overseas Students*. Eventually, we cannot find all the nine ways in a novel (61- 73). They are : 1) Personal Description. The author describes a character by the way they look. For example, what the character wears, how they act, or behave to identify the uniqueness of their individualism state; 2) Character as seen by another. Instead of describing a character directly, the author can describe the character through the eyes and opinions of another; 3) Speech. The author can give us an insight into the character of one of the people in the novel through what that person says. Whenever a person speaks, whenever they are in conversation with another, whenever they put forward an opinion, he gives us some clues to his character; 4) Past Life. By letting the reader learn something about a person's past life, the author can give some clues to their character; 5) Conversation of others. The author can give us clues to a person's character through the conversation of other people and the things they say about them.; 6) Reaction. The author can also give us a clue to a person's character by letting us know how that person reacts to various events and situations; 7) Direct Comment. The author can describe or comment on a person's character directly, because author's comment sometimes indicate an analysis of a character; 8) Thoughts. The author can give us direct knowledge of what a person is thinking about. He can tell us what different people are thinking; 9) Mannerism. The author can describe a person's mannerisms, habits, or idiosyncrasies, telling us something about characters. From the theories above, it is insinuated that a character may be depicted from the character's way of behaving. Character behavior is an important part related to self-actualization that can be studied. When we read a novel, we are studying the character by the dialogue among the characters, commentary of the author about the character to gain information.

## **3. Characterization**

According to Bacon, characterization is a name for the method an author uses to reveal a character's values, feelings, goals to the readers in a literary work. An author of a story has two kinds of techniques to characterize their characters direct and indirect characterization (1). Characterization is the author's tool to get the readers to understand the characteristics of characters in the story he or she is writing. Bacon also states that indirect characterization occurs when the author shows the character's action and lets the reader interpret what these actions reveal (1). Direct characterization is when the author tells directly about the information of characters to the reader. The authors straightforwardly state the character's name or give commentary so that the readers will comprehend. According to Peterson, indirect characterization involves the author letting the character reveal themselves by what they do or think within the story (1). It can be concluded that indirect characterization uses internal features such as conveying the feeling and thought of the character.

## **4. Hierarchy of Needs**

The researchers used a theory of humanistic psychology to understand the character of Libby Strout with her needs fulfillment journey. Self-actualization by Abraham Maslow is used as a tool to analyze In the hierarchy of needs, Maslow has regulated the human needs in the form of five stages hierarchy. Regarding to Maslow, they are the physiological needs, the needs for safety and security, the needs for love and belonging, the needs for esteem, and the highest need is the need to self actualize.

### **a. Physiological Needs**

At the bottom of the pyramid are basic physical requirements including food, water, oxygen, sleep, and warmth. Physiological needs are the needs of our body for water, food, oxygen, sex, and sleep. Those are the most basic and dominant of all the needs and capable of totally blocking out every other need. Human beings cannot live and survive if their basic needs are unfulfilled before the next stages of needs. It is because water (drinking), food (eating), oxygen (breathing), and sleeping are directly connected to the balance of physical elements. A hungry, cold, or sick will not be very interested in working, socializing, or learning. According to Maslow, basic needs are basic in the sense that if they are unfulfilled, people give them priority over other needs (503).

### **b. Safety Needs**

Many things make people feel unsafe or threatened, such as criminal, personal attack, war, or criminal assault. The fulfillment of safety needs gives a person to feel secure, comfortable, balanced, and calm. These are all human instincts when something bothers their peace. When a person is in fear, all the focus is to calm the fear without thinking about any other task. As human beings, we need freedom from fear of danger, anxiety, or personal attack to maintain and keep life in peace.

### **c. Love and Belonging Needs**

A human being needs others with whom to interact with feeling good about himself or herself within a network of social relationships, which may satisfy the need for self-esteem (Tao & Gao 159). When the basic and safety needs are satisfied, a need for love, affection, and belonging begin to rise. However, love is not only a symbol of sex. It is part of the social nature of human beings; humans love something that makes themselves accompanied. Nevertheless, it is more like an affectionate relationship with people. Some of these needs include: 1) Family or belonging – the need to belong to a group, family, religion, town, or class. 2) Acceptance and understanding – the need to feel all right and to know that others accept people as they are. 3) Loving and affection – the need both to get and give love. 4) Intimacy – the need to share inner thoughts with others in close, caring ways.

### **d. Self Esteem Needs**

People exist with the need to feel they have value for a role in society, and this is called the need for esteem. It is a degree of self-respect and respect from others. Self-respect includes the need for achievement, independence, confidence, and freedom. Respect from others includes recognition, fame, status, attention, and appreciation from other people. According to Maslow, “needs for self-esteem includes two parts, namely the individual needs to feel valued in their lives

in a way to respect ourselves as desire, self-confidence, independence, and freedom, and the second is the appreciation of the other person for what he did” (88).

## **e. Self Actualization Need**

The term “self actualization” refers to a human’s desire for self fulfillment or the tendency for him to become everything that one is capable of becoming. Based on Maslow, the self actualization need is “the human desire to become more and more and to become everything that he is capable of becoming” (46). When a person has the potential skill and ability, they make an effort to utilize it. Maslow stated, “a musician must make music, an artist must paint, poets must write if he or she is to be ultimately at peace with themselves. What humans can be, they must be. They must be true to their nature” (22). Models of the Healthy Personality is stated by Maslow, there are number of specific characteristics that describe a self actualizing person (69-78): 1) Self actualizing persons perceive objects and persons in the world around them objectively. They have an efficient perception of reality that enables them to perceive reality as it is. 2) Self actualizing persons acquire a general acceptance of nature, others, and oneself. It is a matter of accepting oneself, their shortcoming, and their strength; without complaint or worry. 3) Self actualizing persons have a focus on problems outside themselves. They give concerns about the works they are doing. 4) Self actualizing persons are those who attain spontaneity, simplicity, and naturalness in behaving. They do not hide their emotion but can display them honestly. 5) Self actualizing persons are autonomous functioning. This is a simple first step toward the self-actualization of growth motives that comes from within. 6) Self actualizing persons have needs for privacy and independence. They have a strong need for detachment and solitude. Their behaviors and feelings are strongly self-centered and self-directed. It means that they can make up their minds, reach their decisions, and exercise their motivation and discipline. 7) Self actualizing persons have a continued freshness of appreciation. Self actualizing persons continually appreciate certain experiences, no matter how often they are repeated, with a fresh sense of pleasure, awe, and wonder. They take little for granted but continue to be thankful for what they have and will experience. 8) Self actualizing persons experience mystical, or “peak” experiences. When the self is transcendent, and the person is gripped by a feeling of power, confidence, and decisiveness, a profound sense that there is nothing he or she could not accomplish to become. 9) Self actualizing person concern with social interest. They have a strong and deep feeling of empathy and affection for all human beings, as well as a desire to help humanity. 10) Self actualizing people acquire interpersonal relations. They are capable of a strong relationship with others than are persons of average mental health. They are capable of greater love, deeper friendship, and complete identification with other individuals. 11) Self actualizing people have a democratic character structure. There is no certain limitation on building relationships with people, such as social class, level of education, political or religious affiliation, race or color. They told the essence of equality that every person has the same opportunity to know others. 12) Self actualizing people are capable of recognizing discrimination between means and ends, good and evil. Self-actualizing is the person holding that they are enjoying the process of achieving something and the goals they achieve. Therefore, they give consent both on the means and the ends. Also, they have a well-defined understanding of good and evil so that they cannot be easily influenced by confusing situations that enable them to make decisions. 13) Self actualizing people do not acquire a hostile sense of humor. This characteristic deals with persons' ability to make fun of humanity in general, not in specific

individuals. 14) Self actualizing persons have resistance to enculturation. They are able to resist social pressures to think or to act in certain ways. They maintain an inner detachment, an aloofness from their culture, guided by themselves rather than others.

The points by Maslow above delivered the purpose of self-actualization to enrich life experience and increase the happiness and joy of being alive. Schultz' clarifies that self-actualizing person does not strive, they develop (65).

## **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

In this study, the researchers use a qualitative method. According to Mack, qualitative method is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations (11). This thesis aims to analyze elements of the novel which is the novel's character, especially analysis about the main character of Libby Strout in Jennifer Niven's *Holding Up the Universe* novel. Qualitative research is used in this research to obtain the data for analysis in this novel. Whitehead in *A General Theory of Psychological Literary Criticism* stated, "the more appropriate way to pursue psychological literary criticism would be to understand an author's implicit, informal personality theory, match it to the explicit formal theory with which most congruent, and then use that personality theory systematically as a lens through which to view the author's work" (89).

The researchers use psychological criticism, also known as Psychoanalytical criticism, as the appropriate literary approach relates to the study of this research. Based on the explanation above, this study is focused on studying the journey of main character's in fulfillment of physiological needs, safety, esteem, love and belonging, and self-actualization in the novel.

### **1. Data and Data Source**

The researchers got all the data from the sentences of dialogues and narrations in *Holding Up the Universe* novel, which provides information about the main character's needs fulfillment and her self actualization in the novel. The data source of this study is the novel *Holding Up the Universe* by Jennifer Niven. The book contains 400 pages Published by Penguin Random House UK, Inc. London 2016.

### **2. Research Instrument**

This research used the researcher herself as the research instrument. According to Bogdan and Biklen, "in qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument" (13). The author as an instrument in this study serves to establish the focus of research, selecting data sources, collecting data, assessing the quality of the data, analyzing the data, interpreting the data, and making conclusions on the findings.

### **3. Data Collection**

There are some steps to obtain the data. First, the researchers chose to observe the *Holding Up the Universe* novel as the object. Second, the researcher read and understood the novel in order to understand the character's feeling and the deeper meaning in each of the events that happened in the novel. In this step, the researchers read repeatedly and tried to understand the content of the story carefully. Third, the researchers took notes of the required data to answer the statements of the problems correctly.

#### **4. Data Analysis**

The researchers tried to analyze the data that had been collected briefly. The analysis aimed to get valid data that appropriates with the research problems. According to Bressler in *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*, a character's motivations and actions, then, become more complex than simply attributing them to the author's ideas. How individual readers interpreted characters now became an integral part of the text's interpretation (139). The first step is classifying the data which are related to the portrayal of self actualization of Libby Strout's character in the novel. The second, finding the answer to research problems by explaining Libby Strout's characteristics of a character in self-actualization need with the deeper and arranged chronological time. The third, drawing conclusions after the data have been analyzed to answer the research problems based on the result of the research.

#### **D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **1. Fulfillment of Libby Strout's Needs seen from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

The four stages are hierarchical: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, and esteem needs. The researcher needs to identify whether Libby has satisfied her four lower needs in the hierarchy before continuing to reveal her self actualization.

##### **a. Physiological Need**

The first hierarchy stage needs that have to be satisfied are physiological. This need contains the essentials for survival in life such as food, water, sleep, air, warmth, clothing, and sex. Thus, it can be said that physiological needs are related to the fulfillment of hunger, thirst, clothing, and even sexual desire (Maslow 34). While she still relies on her parents for some of these needs, she is more self-reliant than ever because she is making choices regarding how these needs are met. The representation of Libby fulfilling her physiological need for food was reflected in monologue below :

“They didn't see the food I hid from him under my bed and deep in the shadows of my closet. They couldn't know that once I make up my mind about something, I'm going to do it. And I'd made up my mind to eat.”  
(Niven 16)

The monologue shows Libby always finds comforts in food when she is lonely and sad. She never felt a lack of this need because she can easily find it in her house, and eating became her coping mechanism. It is because of the stress of her beloved mother's loss. She used to hide food under her bed. She locked herself up in the bedroom, doing nothing but reading and eating for years. From the data above, it was proven that she had the resources to eat and fulfilled her needs for food.

##### **b. Safety Need**

The second hierarchy stage is safety needs. This needs consists of physical security, stability, dependency, protection, and freedom from threatening forces such as war, terrorism, illness,

fear, anxiety, danger, chaos, and natural disasters. After being able to fulfill the physiological needs, an individual begins to think about fulfilling the level of security. In general, safety needs are the desire to be free from fear of physical danger, emotional threat, and being taken away from basic psychological needs. This need exists to maintain or improve the existing situation. Libby can fulfill her safety needs provided by her loving father.

“I lie on my bed - not the same bed or house I spent twenty-four hours from the day on, back when I couldn't leave the house, but a new one we bought after I lost some weight.” (Niven 74)

Before Libby entered Martin Van Burren public school, she had been homeschooled. The monologue above tells that Libby lies on a new bed in a new house that her father buy after she lost some weight. In her old house, she weighed over 700 pounds at that time and was too large to get through the door. She is known as America's fattest teen, she and her father received despise and a slew of hate mail from people because of that. An environment that does not fair, apparently makes a person feel anxious and insecure. This treatment makes the world seems unreliable, or unsafe. Libby feels down that her video goes viral being rescued by a crane from her old house. Because of that, her father provides her to a new bed, a new house, a new environment. It was Libby's father who supports her feel safe and secure not being in a terrifying circumstance for her. Now, Libby and her fathers live anxious free in their new house. The explanation above shows Libby's need for a secure safety need is fulfilled.

### **c. Love and Belonging Need**

The third hierarchy stage is love and belonging needs. This needs is also known as social need. Social need is the basic need for individuals striving for meaningful relationships with others to build satisfying relations with affiliation motives, and for the sake of happiness. A human seeks a sense of belonging and affectionate relationships with people in general, specifically in their family, group, or community. According to Maslow, love involves a healthy relationship full of affection among people, including mutual attitudes and beliefs. It should also require both people to give and receive love. It is also possible that the need for love can be obtained from family, friends and partners. This can be seen in the following monologue:

“I say "I love you." She says, "I love you too." And then she laughs. "It's kind of crazy. I mean you" "I know what the hell?" She covers her mouth with one hand, but her eyes are shining. I'm thinking about a field of grass on a summer day. I'm thinking about the sun and being warmed from the inside and being warmed from the outside. I take her hand under the gray-blue sky and I'm home.”(Niven 389)

At certain age, human seeks for another source of affection as in romatic relationship from partner or significant other. As Libby went to a public school, Libby socialize with opposite sex peers and started to know about physical attraction, wanting to have someone special to support each other and share loves. It may triggered her to get the affection from partner that is more romantic and include sexual attraction where the lovers can share their affection with. She got it from Jack Masselin who also fell in love with Libby Strout. When basic needs and safety needs



are met, building a strong connection additionally makes a person feel less alone and happier to have support behind them. Thus, Libby's need for love and belonging is satisfied shown by the data portrays above through relationship with Jack Masselin she met on her journey.

#### **d. Self Esteem Need**

The fourth hierarchy stage is self-esteem. After physiological needs, safety needs, and love belonging needs are met, individuals need their self-esteem to be satisfied. Maslow stated that "satisfaction of the self esteem needs lead to the feeling of self confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy of being useful and necessary in the world" (45). Esteem needs are about self-identity, a sense of confidence, strength, self-belief, personal and social acceptance, and respect/appreciation from others. However, if a person's esteem needs are not met, he would feel inferior and weak (Maslow 46).

"I look right into her eyes. You are the most amazing person I've ever met. You're different. You're you." (Niven 230)

After a romantic long drive, Jack drove Libby home after taking her out for dinner. From the narration above, Jack Masselin gives his admiration to Libby. When people find support or appreciation from others, they will figure out that they are valuable and it gives a sense of self-esteem. It helps Libby receives esteem needs in form of appreciation from others for what she has been done. Self esteem impacts a person's decision-making process, relationships, emotional health, and overall well-being. It also influences motivation, as people with a healthy, positive view of themselves understand their potential and may feel inspired to take on new challenges. Self-esteem is closely related to self confidence and self respect. Although Libby struggles with insecurities, she fulfilled her esteem needs proven in the data above.

#### **e. Self Actualization**

According to Maslow, the self-actualization need is "the human desire to become more and more to become everything that he is capable of becoming" (46). This is the stage where an individual has the desire to reveal, develop, and show their abilities according to their potential skills or creativity to obtain satisfaction. Self-actualized are people who, for a variety of reasons, go further than most toward fulfilling their potential, or as Maslow explains it as to find their true selves. To understand self-actualized individuals, Maslow has mentioned a number of specific characteristics which describe self actualization. Libby Strout as an individual who has reached her self actualization has some of Maslow's characteristics of a self-actualized person.

1. Acquire a general acceptance of nature, others, and oneself. Acceptance is an attitude to respect and accept themselves, others, and nature in their weakness (Maslow 155). This attitude leads to a high tolerance of accepting, understanding, and patience toward oneself and others. A person who has self actualized will see others as seeing themselves as having both strengths and weaknesses. The character of acceptance in Libby is shown by accepting the differences between humans.

"I try to put myself in Jack Masselin's skin and imagine what he sees when he

looks at me. Do I look different, in some way, from everyone else? Or do I blend in? Then I imagine that I'm the one with face blindness. What would the world look like?" (Niven 105)

As to what happens between Libby and Jack, Jack sends Libby a letter that says he is guilty of his inconsiderate behavior towards her and tells her about the face blindness disorder he wants to keep from his friend who dared him to do the prank on Libby. Libby is aware that personal faults or unhealthy habits can be improved and changed. Instead, it enhances her empathy and decreases prejudice towards others. This attitude results a high tolerance for others and patience in accepting oneself and others.

"But I'm comfortable where I am. I may loose more weight. I may not. But why should what I weigh affect other people? I mean, unless I'm sitting on them, who cares?" (Niven 310)

As the highest stage in the hierarchy of needs, self acceptance is essential to achieve self actualization. Accepting ourselves improves one's well-being as a human. It is shown from the data above Libby finally experiences a state where she welcomes every part of herself comfortably and fulfills her self actualization need in accepting oneself and others.

2. **Problem Centered.** A self actualized individual is an individual who has a profound personal relationship or they tend to solve the problems instead of avoiding them. The narrations below occurred when Jack told Libby about something about him that he had been hiding after a long time.

"Someone other than me. It's not like you're the only one who has this. I know that may be what it feels like to you, but statictically it's not that rare. At least, it's not as rare as being so super-fat you got stuck in your house. Have you been on the Prosopagnosia Reseachr centers site? Because they have this wallet card you can carry with you and give to people to explain what you have. I'm not saying that's the answer, but maybe it's a start." (Niven 153)

A self actualized individuals are concerned with solving problems outside themselves, including helping others and finding solutions to problems in the external world. These people are often motivated by a sense of personal responsibility and ethics. It is shown above that Jack and Libby are close enough to talk about Jack's face blindness disorder, and Libby had a strong empathy and desire to encourage Jack to find help about his disorder. This was an indication that Libby had a problem centering character who is able to solve a problem.

3. **Attain spontaneity, simplicity, and naturalness in behaving.** Maslow stated that self actualized are individuals who behave openly and directly without pretending. They could express their emotions, actions, behaviors and ideas that are carried out spontaneously honest. The monologues below occurred when Libby gets to be in a car for her driving lesson class for the first tim

“I’m behind the wheel, and I can’t help it- I’m excited. My hands are tingling and there is this crazy heat burning up from my feet, all the way up my legs, into my stomach, through my chest. I feel like I’m on fire, but in a way that lets me know I’M ALIVE.” (Niven 244)

4. **Autonomous functioning.** Autonomous functioning individuals realized that satisfaction with growth motives comes from within, they do not depend on the environment and without being influenced by the situations and conditions. They believe in their potential and inner resources for self-development and inner growth. This characteristics is described in Libby who wants to follow her desires as below:

“I’m starting my own dance club. I’ll take everyone who can’t be a Damsel or anyone who doesn’t want to be a Damsel. We won’t dance in formation and we won’t dance with flags. We’ll just get out there and do whatever we want, but we’ll do it together.” (Niven 324)

Libby is a confident girl, who did not need other people’s approval, accepts herself, believes in her capacities, and can protect herself from negative criticism. She did not follow other people’s rule in finding their happiness. From the narration above, Libby talked to her friend at the school cafeteria. Libby had a dream of being on her high school dance team, but she is told she cannot because of her weight, even though she is talented. It is shown that Libby sets the idea to start a new dance team with her friends and encourages people to pursue their dream of doing what they love and being free of restrictions. She focuses on developing her own personal potential as an individual. Libby realized she must be free to increase her potential. The narrations above portrayed the autonomy or independence that exists in Libby Strout.

5. **Need for Privacy.** A self actualized person had a strong need for detachment and solitude. Self actualized people also tend to be very independent. They did not conform to other people's ideas of happiness or contentment. Libby’s need for privacy can be seen in the following narrations below:

“He says, “Are you sure about this?”. “No. But I’m auditioning anyway. You can’t protect me from everything. If I fall on my face, I fall on my face, but at least I’ve done it.” (Niven 70)

From the narration above, Libby told her father about applying for an audition that requires her father’s consent signature. Her father worried about her decision, but she maintained her stance and the decisions she made. The need for privacy that are shown in Libby strout had freedom of thought and desire without fear. She was able to keep her decision private without being interfered by other people.

6. **A Continued Freshness of Appreciation.** Self actualized always value certain experiences with feelings of happiness, and fascination. After being only in her house for a long time, Libby gets to be in a driving class in her new Martin Van Burens High School. It was her first time

experiencing being in a driver's seat, and she can not hide her excitement. The embodiment of Libby as an actualized who is always fresh in appreciation can be seen in the following below:

“This is the best day of my life. I'm on the highway now and everything is whooshing by, but then I start whooshing along with it all, just like everyone else, like I actually belong out here in this world. Like I could drive all the way up into the clouds, propelled by happiness and freedom.”  
(Niven 246)

Self actualizing persons have a continued freshness of appreciation of specific experiences toward repetitive events in their life. They always continually appreciate the sense of pleasure, awe, wonder, and excitement. From the narration above, the researcher can tell that Libby Strout views the world with a continual sense of appreciation, curiosity, and awe. Even simple experiences continue to be a source of inspiration and pleasure. She feels grateful for the good things in life, no matter how often she experiences those things.

7. **Peak Experience.** Peak experience according to Maslow, when the self is gripped by a feeling of power, confidence, and decisiveness, a profound sense that there is nothing they could accomplish to become. The narrations below occurred when Libby is about to perform a dance in the Gym center with a lot of people watching. She was auditioning for her School dance club shown in the narrations below:

“As I wait for the music to begin, I tell my self, Too many people in this world think small is the best they can do. Not you, Libby Strout. You weren't born for small! You don't know how to do small! Small is not in you! And then the song takes off so do I. Shimmy Shimmy kick kick. Shake boom boom.” (Niven 272)

The data above told about Libby's situation started the performance. It is shown Libby has reached a higher level of perception, where she could handle the pressure from the people's staring at her in the gym centre. She was decisive, and she knew this moments will be the moments of her life, so she was using all her capacities to the fullest and the best. Libby encouraged herself that there is nothing she could not accomplish to become.

8. **Capable of recognizing discrimination between means and ends between good and evil.** According to Maslow, well understanding of good and evil are the perception that could not be easily affected by the confusing situation that encourages someone to make a decision. Self actualizing people have a clear sense of right and wrong conduct and have little conflict about basic values. Libby was a girl who could recognize which was right or wrong shown in the following dialogues between Libby and her counselor's Rachel:

“This boy did a cruel thing, and the person he did it to doesn't speak up” .  
“Is the person in danger?”. “No. The boy probably thought what he did as harmless, but he shouldn't have done it and he shouldn't get away with it.”(Niven 64)

From the narration above, Libby and her counselor Rachel had talked about what happened to her. Libby that what happened to the person who got bullied is terrible and not supposed to happen to anyone. Libby has high moral and ethical standard and does not confuse in making honest opinions or choices.

“Maybe this whole thing happened to teach him a lesson about how to treat other people.” (Niven 104)

In her school, she became the target of the horrible game because of her size to annoyed the target by hugging them until they get upset. Jack’s friend dares the game. Nevertheless, Libby possessed an objective character that relies on her own. Libby did not bother about the bullying she received, but has a wise perception in a positive way. The data above proves that Libby has a characteristics of focusing on how the good behavior should have done, rather than evil.

9. Resistance to enculturation. The final characteristic that Maslow identified is resistance to enculturation. Self actualizing people feel detached from their environment. When people accomplish this goal, they become more diverse and less shaped by a given culture. They are autonomous, follow their standards of value, and do not blindly obey others rules or opinions.

“I’ve got a good personality and a great brain and I’m strong and I can run. I’m resilient. I’m mighty. I’m going to do something with my life because I believe in myself. I may not know what that something is yet, but that’s only because I am limitless. Can you say the same? Life is too short to judge others. It is not our job to tell someone what they feel or who they are. Why not spend sometimes on yourself instead? I don’t know you, but I can guarantee you have some issue you can work on. As for the rest of you, remember this: You are wanted. Big, small, tall, short, pretty, plain, friendly, shy. Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise, not even yourself.” (Niven 316)

Although Libby faces struggles in her environment, she did the best to love herself, knows her worth, and did not let the culture shapes her. Libby believed in equality and thought about all the things she struggles to keep from giving up the battle she is currently fighting, even she almost gave up. The data above was a supporting proof that Libby has a characteristic of resistance to enculturation.

## **2. Discussion**

Based on the data findings, the researcher finds that Libby Strout, as the main character, has fulfilled the five needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs by analyzing how Libby's motivation, personality, and behavior are related to Maslow's theory. The background of her family is rich. Libby has no difficulty fulfilling her physiological need such food and shelter. It is in line with Yohanes Truman’s journal study which found the main character Pi in *Life of Pi* fulfills his needs without the barriers and obstacle because his parents own a zoo and run a hotel business. Pi’s father as a businessman set their economic level in a safe place and feed their families well. Both research has the same characteristic way of the main character fulfills their needs.

According to the study of Abraham Maslow, safety needs include physical security, protection and freedom from threatening forces such as fear, illness, and danger. Libby can fulfill her safety and security needs due to the data in the novel, Libby is protected from fear, illness, anxiety and physical threat that may harm her, she can protect herself in her house or outside of her house that she still dependence to her father for safety needs. In the beginning Libby got her love from her parents. But as she grew puberty begins, Libby develop interest in the opposite gender, and she dreams of romantic love. Especially her from lover or significant other that turned out to be Jack Masselin.

According to Maslow's, to achieve self esteem people have to fulfilled their love and belonging in prior. But the interesting part of this novel, since the beginning of her presence, Libby has the self esteem that makes her lovable that attracts Jack Masselin. Self esteem is more than a prestige, it contemplates a desire for strength, capability, confidence, indepenence and also freedom. Libby gained recognition from others as an extraordinarily confident, independent young girl by showing off her talents even though people talked badly about her inability to do what she wanted because of her size.

Self actualization is the top stage in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. It is the pursuit of enjoyment or excellence whichever people choose to desire. Self-actualization is a continuous process of realizing an individual's own potential by doing what the individual is capable of (Ozaslan 10). Libby fulfilled some of the self actualization's characteristic through some process to become a self-actualized person proven in the previous page.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The following conclusion represents the result of the analysis of Libby Strout and reveals her self actualization through her experience in this novel. Based on the data that have been analyzed, it can be concluded that Libby Strout has fulfilled the five stages hierarchy of needs based on Maslow's theory. First, the physiological needs of Libby Strout had shown when she shared about her stress eating as a coping mechanism to lock herself up in her house from the grief of her mother's loss and she receives some bullying from others peers. She also said that before losing some weight, she always special ordering her clothing. After Libby lost some weight, she got her clothes from the store instead. She usually ate in her school cafeteria daily on school days. She never lacks food. She could fulfill her physiological needs, such as air, food, drink, shelter, oxygen, sleep, and clothing. Furthermore, after several years of being locked in her house and losing some weight, she is finally able to move on her own. Libby's ability to move by herself brought her freedom in life to fulfill her needs.

Libby's second and third basic needs have been easier to fulfill after getting the ability to be in the outside world like other ordinary people. She had a good relationship with her father, and she got a sense of belonging need in the family, also from her counselor's Rachel as the closest friend. Libby's love and belonging needs also can be seen when she falls in love with Jack Masselin. The esteem needs follow three needs before. Her personality and confidence made people recognize her as a brave girl. In the novel, Libby Strout is a character who has a state of mind to choose how to do certain things wisely.

Her characteristics unconsciously made her a person who dynamically develops her character as an individual. Being a self actualized person, Libby already has some of the

characteristics of a self-actualized person since the beginning of the story and some she developed throughout the story. She was capable of recognizing discrimination between good and evil, accepts self and others, has a good interpersonal relationship, believes in her potential, attains spontaneity and naturalness in behaving, and already passed the peak experiences in her life. Based on the study above, there are some suggestions for the next researcher who will conduct a literary subject, especially in *Holding Up the Universe* novel. The novel still offers many literary aspects that are not explored yet. Therefore, it is suggested for the next researchers to analyze other aspects that arise in the novel. For the readers and future researcher, they are expected to learn about the moral value of the novel that tell about Libby Strout's effort in achieving her need. Meanwhile, for the future researchers, they are expected to be able to analyze the same novel, using different approach such as coping mechanism, feminism, or moral value. The diversity of more research that applies different theories will provide futher research findings.

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