

Introduction the
needs involve both
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Introduction

In his theory of human motivation, Abraham Maslow (1943) classified human needs into five classes, which included physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. In his motivation theory, he argued that the integrated wholeness of a person should always form the basis of the theory, with emphasis being on the fulfillment of one's goals and objectives. Maslow further argued that human needs occur in hierarchical manner; meaning that the satisfaction of a particular need relies on satisfaction of another need, and new needs are created or whenever the old needs are satisfied.

With man being a wanting animal, there is no time he will ever be satisfied and thus the motivation to satisfy the needs drives to behave and adopt character that can lead to conflicts with others. We can therefore argue that human needs are often described as the major factors that explain how human beings behave as well as how they interact with others. With all individuals having needs that require to be fulfilled, everybody strives towards satisfying those needs no matter the process.

As a person tries to satisfy his or her needs, he or she may in the process conflict with the other and thus a need to understand how you can solve the conflict. In trying to define the source of conflict, experts have come up with theories that consider how the conflicts can be solved. One such theory is the Human Needs Theory. In his book, *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The process of solving unsolved social and political problems* (1979), Burton, while quoting Abraham Maslow conception of human growth through the satisfaction of the five basic human needs grouped under physiological,

safety, love or belongingness, esteem and self actualization, argues that with the satisfaction of these five basic needs, conflicts would be solved very easily.

According to Burton, rather than covering the five basic needs in Maslow's concept, he reframed and modified the concept and stated that in order to solve the conflicts that continue harming humankind, the other needs most needed to be understood and be satisfied were those of identity, security, recognition, and personal development. He explained that absence of systems that emphasizes the need for an identity continues to be the primary cause of conflicts experienced everywhere in the world. The fact that conflicts will always arise as human beings try to satisfy their basic needs require a qualified resolver or negotiator to intervene. The person should be armed with high levels of communication competencies in order to solve the conflict because the ability to "complete the negotiations is a set of competencies to themselves" (Hudson, Grisham, Srinivasan & Moussa, p2, 2005). Solving a conflict through negotiation includes agreements, designs, or construction, which should tackle the problem effectively.

Therefore, careful negotiation skills are always required to ensure the conflict is managed efficiently. The following are some of the cases of how you can apply human need theory and negotiations in managing a conflict.

Human Needs theory

The human needs perspective of negotiation builds on the assumption that all humans have known biological and social needs that are usually driven by both emotions and values which have to be satisfied. The needs cannot be

used outside the social context. It has been known that humans use both the power in their possession and sometimes coercion to fulfill their needs. This, therefore, creates a conflict. By forcing other people to respond to their needs they create conflicts that frustrates attainment of needs. A human need shall then support either a loss, gain or aspirations frame for interpreting the words.

The Maslow approach assumed that most people are motivated by their own needs thus engaging in the types of behavior in order to satisfy them. The needs involve both material and non-material satisfiers and this makes the priorities confused. In this case, negotiation provides an opportunity for people to assess and prioritize their needs (Spangle & Isenhardt, 2003)

Application of the theory

The theory can be applied in a family case where conflicts are day-to-day occurrences as every member tries to realize his or her needs.

For example, a neighbor who values holding properties as a basis for needs gratification may fight with neighbors over the location where the fence should be erected. The theory of human needs and negotiation skills has been applied in trying to solve the ethnic and religious conflicts (Anonymous, 2009). An example of international cases where negotiations have been used to solve conflicts includes the conflict between Israel and Palestine over the possession of Gaza. The two countries have been in conflict on which country should claim possession of Gaza and negotiators have been trying to use human needs theory and the negotiation skills although to no avail.

Example of other instances where negotiations on human needs have been applied include in issues about the global warming and the cutting of carbon emissions through out the world. Countries have been negotiating on what needs to be done and the challenges likely to be faced if the world is to reduce the carbon emissions. The situation demands the needs of developed world and developing world to be assessed and put into consideration during the negotiations and when drafting of agreements.

Virtues and limitations

The virtues and limitations of the theory according to Rubenstein (ND) are that the theory allows those who seek to find solutions to conflicts a chance to make a sound distinction between the issues which need law, negotiations or even power and those that that can be solved only by employing other measures. When one understands the Human Needs Theory, he or she knows there is no way needs can be traded and that makes Sandole (2000) when quoting Burton to indicate that “ distinguishing needs-based conflicts, and the processes of conflict resolution properly so called, from interest-based disputes and the processes characteristic of strategic studies, conventional diplomacy, and alternative dispute resolution.

” The other fact is that, when the resolver of the conflict is armed with all the basic concepts of the human needs theory, he or she will be able to understand both the tricky and the contradicting issues. This will enable him or her to understand whether there is a need to initiate a negotiation or is a dispute they are trying to solve. If the problem, for example, has been brought up by different personal identities, it will be necessary for one

resolving the conflict to be analytical by exposing the differences and the <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-the-needs-involve-both-material-and-non-material/>

interests that lie in satisfying the needs of the parties involved in the conflict. Therefore, in the end, he or she can be able to offer a wide range of possible solutions in order to solve the conflict amicably. If the resolver can be able to classify the unsatisfied need among the parties in a conflict, then he or she can be able to explain who ever is trying to have control or manipulate the other in the conflict. Finally, a good understanding of the theory enables the resolver to understand the relationship between the conflict and the conflict solution thus in the end he or she will be able to provide a long lasting solution.

If the conflicting parties are able to identify their unsatisfied needs, its only then they can be able to discuss and consider the methods of accommodating each other and thus the necessity of understanding the human needs theory. However, despite the successes of the theory, there exist limitations to which the theory can be applied. Experts have argued that establishing an objective basis for the salient needs as indefensibly de-contextualized (Avruch, 1998). Further Development: There has never been a theory that can satisfy the human needs fully and thus as human beings try to satisfy their needs, conflicts will always arise.

Thus, the human needs theory can be developed further by ensuring the identity need in the context of a personal or group history is established even before entering into the negotiation process. The theory can also be further developed at investigating the needs and satisfiers which might be available thus reducing chances of a conflict arising. Finally, the theory presents solutions at general and abstract levels thus there is a need of

making the theory more centered in understanding the basics needs role in the conflict.

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