

Informative essay on motivational theories

[Psychology](#), [Motivation](#)



To be able to clearly understand what motivational theories are all about it is very important to first define what motivation is and its importance in any organization.

Motivation can be defined “ as a decision-making process, which the individual chooses the desired outcomes and sets in motion the behavior appropriate to them” (Buchanan, Allen 45). Thus motivation could be described as the degree of behavior that an individual wants and chooses to be engaged in.

Motivation is a very importance factor in any organization; for the organization to perform well then its employee have got to be well motivated. A well-motivated employee means higher productivity.

It is the importance of motivation as a subject that led to the development of various motivational theories with a view of helping organizations understand their employees better for higher productivity. These motivational theories include: -

- McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y.
- Maslow’s hierarchy of needs Theory
- Herzberg Two Factor Theory among others.

These papers are going to describe and compare these 3 theories and find the best theory to provide a good platform for employee motivation in a hospitality environment.

Herzberg two factor theory

This theory was developed by Fredrick Herzberg (a psychologist) in 1959, and when developing it, he argued that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are independent of each other. This means that there are certain factors at the work place that bring about job satisfaction whilst others cause dissatisfaction. (Herzberg F., 179)

Herzberg called the satisfiers as 'motivators' and the dissatisfiers he called 'hygiene factors'. The motivators in order of importance are;

- Achievement
- Recognition
- Work itself
- Responsibilities
- Advancement and
- Growth

The hygiene factors by themselves do not provide any satisfaction but are necessary to avoid dissatisfaction. (Herzberg F., 182). If these factors are absent or inadequate they cause dissatisfaction. The hygiene factors include;

- Company policy
- Supervision
- Relationship with supervisors
- Work environment and condition
- Remuneration/pay/money
- Relationship with colleagues or subordinates

- Personal life

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs Theory

Abraham Maslow developed this theory in 1943. Just like McGregor's Two factor theory it is a content theory and forms the basis of Herzberg motivation theory.

In his hierarchy of needs theory, Maslow argues that individual behavior at any given time is determined by his/her strongest or most pressing need. (Maslow, A. H, 12) According to this theory employees have five different needs that are set in a hierarchy or pyramid. They are arranged as follows depending on importance;

- Physiological
- Safety
- Social
- Esteem/Ego
- Self-actualizing

According to Maslow lower level needs have to be satisfied before climbing to the next level. This means that until the most pressing needs are satisfied first, the other needs will have little effect on the individual's behavior. As one need is met it becomes less important but other needs loom up and motivate behavior. (Maslow, A. H, 23)

According to the hierarchy the first needs are the physiological needs that include hunger, thirst, sex, rest and love. These have to be met first before thinking of other needs. The next level of needs to be met are safety needs

which include physical and physiological safety, that is protection from physical harm, disaster, illness, lifestyle, relationship security and security of income. (Maslow, A. H, 37)

After these needs are met the next level that looms is the social need or a sense of belonging; where an individual is now predisposed or concerned with belonging to some form of group where the need of affiliation is met. At this level acceptance by others is a very pressing need.

Once this need is attained the next motivation is the desire for esteem, where an individual desires to derive respect from others. Once this need is attained the next motivating need is the desire for esteem; where the individual derives respect from others and there is some form of recognition, there is a strong need to feel worthwhile and valuable both from within the individual and from others.

Finally when all these needs have been met and at least satisfied, the next need is self-actualization which is defined as the need for an individual to achieve maximum potential or doing ones best thing. There some form of creativity and spontaneity. (Maslow, A. H, 119)

McGregor Theory X and Theory Y

Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y are theories by which managers perceive employee motivation. He termed the opposing motivational methods as Theory X and Theory Y management styles. (Douglas McGregor, 54)

Theory X primarily assumes that the source for most employee motivation is money and security. This theory goes further to assume that an average person has certain characteristics, which include:

- Detests work and would do anything to avoid it
- Is resistant to change
- Lacks any ambition and doesn't want any form of responsibilities and would rather follow than lead.
- Lacks intelligence and is usually gullible and should be closely controlled
- Has a very low level of aptitude for creativity.

Theory Y

On the other hand theory Y leadership style has totally different assumptions where workers are characterized by:

- Consider work to be as natural as play or rest
- When people are committed to organizational objectives, they will be self-directed and creative to meet such objectives
- In all organizations capacity of creativity is widespread
- Individuals seek responsibility if they are motivated
- Ordinary workers do not dislike work. Work could be regarded a source of other satisfaction or punishment depending on working conditions.

In Theory X the management implication for workers is that to achieve organizational objectives the management needs to impose a system of management that involves coercion control and punishment. On the other

hand the management implication for Theory X is that the management has got the task or enabling a working environment where workers can show and develop their own creativity(Douglas McGregor, 76)

Herzberg and Maslow's models have got some similarities, which suggests that for the employee to be motivated the needs have got to be satisfied first. However according to Herzberg only the higher levels of the Maslow hierarchy i. e. self-actualization and esteem needs act as motivators otherwise the rest of the needs if not properly addressed would only cause dissatisfaction.

Hospitality Environment

In the hospitality industry I would suggest Herzberg's Two factor Theory. In the

hospitality industry the workers interact directly with the clients in service delivery. A de-motivated employee's out put would greatly affect service delivery

By applying this model the management will be focusing on rearranging the work so that the motivating factors can be effective. Herzberg went further ahead to suggest 3 ways of making this work.

Job enlargement; here the scope of job is broadened to spice and add up variety to satisfy the ego needs

Job rotation; Makes the job more dynamic therefore enjoyable

Job Enrichment; is a process of motivating employees by giving them the opportunity to utilize their range of abilities.

Conclusion

Most organizations face quite a formidable task of studying and implementing these theories in their management styles. It is worth noting that no single Theory is good enough as the sole answer to employee motivation, nevertheless employee motivation lies in the ability to combine several of the theories depending on the circumstance within the management setup. (Bischof, L, 89)

Works Cited

1. Bischof, L. (1964). *Interpreting personality theories*. New York: Harper & Row.
2. Buchanan, Allen (Fall 1979), " Revolutionary Motivation and Rationality." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 9(1): 59-82. Reprinted in Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel and T. M. Scanlon, eds., *Marx, Justice and History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.
3. Douglas McGregor (2006), *The Human Side of Enterprise*: McGraw-Hill
4. Herzberg F., (1976) " The Motivation-Hygiene Concept and Problems of manpower", *Organizational Development: Managing Change in the Public Sector*, 178-182.
5. Maslow, A. H. (1987). *Motivation and Personality* (3). New York, NY: Harper And Row.