

Article Critique on “A Theory of Human Motivation” by Abraham H. Maslow

Name:

Institution:

Article Critique on “A Theory of Human Motivation” by Abraham H. Maslow

Abraham Maslow was a popular American psychologist who made a lot of contributions in academics with his best articles, one of which is “A Theory of Human Population”. In this article, he tries to understand the factors that motivate people. For this reason, Maslow came up with five needs required for motivation, which are shown in hierarchical levels. The theory is divided into two parts.

The first part has a short preface, where the author outlines some presumptions of the theory. In his theory, he outlines that a human being should be regarded as an integrated unit. A man is also a wanting animal and his needs are more unconscious than conscious. Thus, social and cultural perspectives are not important in the theory. Abraham Maslow also points out a complex set of unconscious and conscious needs as well as socio-cultural factors that motivate the behavior of a person (Maslow, 1943).

The second part is the theory, which has arranged all human needs hierarchically into the deficiency and growth needs required for motivation. The deficiency needs include such physiological needs as food, water and air, safety needs such as health, employment and security, and love or belonging needs like partner, family and community. The growth needs are self-actualization needs, such as creativity and morality, and esteem needs, which include confidence, achievement and self-esteem. The deficiency needs, which are the lower level needs in the pyramid, should be fully satisfied before the growth needs, which the author refers to as the high level needs that affect one’s behavior (Maslow, 1943).

In my opinion, the theory seems to be quite logic stating that various needs are necessary in one’s life. Thus, one can achieve everything he or she wants in life. It makes readers understand the reason for student’s poor behavior as due to safety and physiological deficiencies.

Maslow outlines physiological needs, which mostly include the basic needs in life such as food. Other needs include health and job security, sense of belonging and self-esteem and are important in every environment (Griffin & Moorehead, 2012).

The author of the theory proves that all the needs are important in one's life because they make one live peacefully and feel fully satisfied. For instance, a person at the workplace has some physiological needs such as food to gain energy to be able to work. Safety needs are also required as they guarantee one job security. Social needs enhance teamwork, while esteem helps one recognize achievements that make people feel valuable. Self-actualization instills one with creativity that enables one deal with challenges and assignments at work (Maslow & Lowry, 1973).

However, it should be mentioned that Abraham Maslow has some flaws in his argument. First of all, he generalizes that everyone is motivated by the same needs. To my mind, this seems wrong, since one deficiency may not be necessarily another person's deficiency. People have different needs and occupations at different time of their lives, so they may be motivated by various needs. For instance, a person may have a job security, but lack esteem needs. This person's needs differ from the needs of those who lack security, but have self-esteem. In this case, one needs to understand the current level of needs required for motivation at the workplace (Green, 1992).

The second flaw of the theory is that it has some exemptions that can occur when applied in the real life. For instance, when a person tries to rescue someone from danger at the workplace, he or she may end up putting at risk own security. This normally occurs in ethical dilemmas when one person replaces another one who has lost job for no good reason. The person who replaces the employee may be tempted to save the fired employee. Sometimes, it can make

him or her also loss job. This shows how one can lose security while trying to save another person.

However, Abraham Maslow does not provide enough examples of the real life situations that could be easily applied by readers in their lives. In my opinion, the author should have given examples of the real life situations to enable readers understand the theory and use it in their everyday lives.