

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the various theories of motivation as well as past research on motivation.

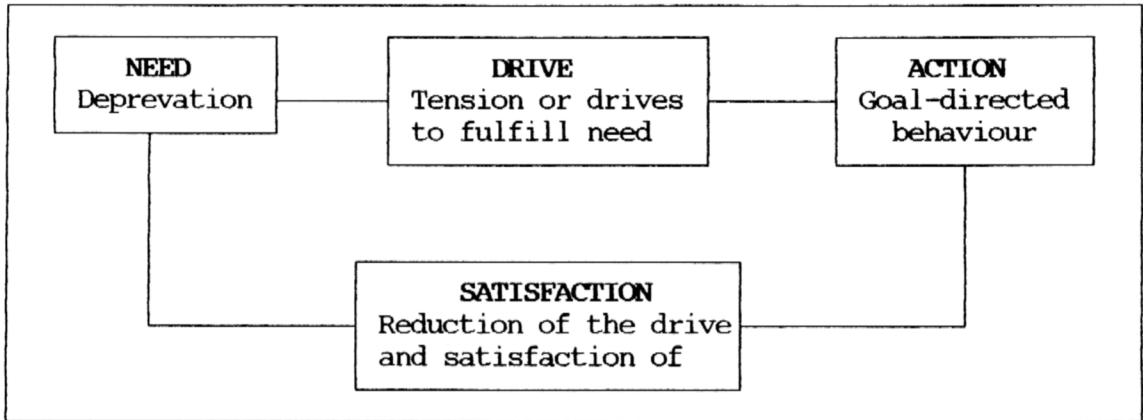
3.1 THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

While there are a number of motivation theories that attempt to explain and identify factors motivating behaviour, these motivation theories can basically be classified under three approaches, namely (1) Needs Theories, (2) Process Theories, and (3) Reinforcement Theory.

3.1.1 NEEDS THEORIES

The four most popular need theories are associated with Marslow, Alderfer, McClelland, and Herzberg. These theories stress on the factors within individuals that cause them to act in a certain way. They attempt to answer such questions as : What needs do people try to satisfy? What impels them to a certain action? Individuals have inner needs such that they are motivated to reduce or fulfill, that is, individuals will act or behave in ways that will lead to satisfaction of their needs, as shown by the model in Fig.5.

Figure 5. A Need Theory Model of Motivation



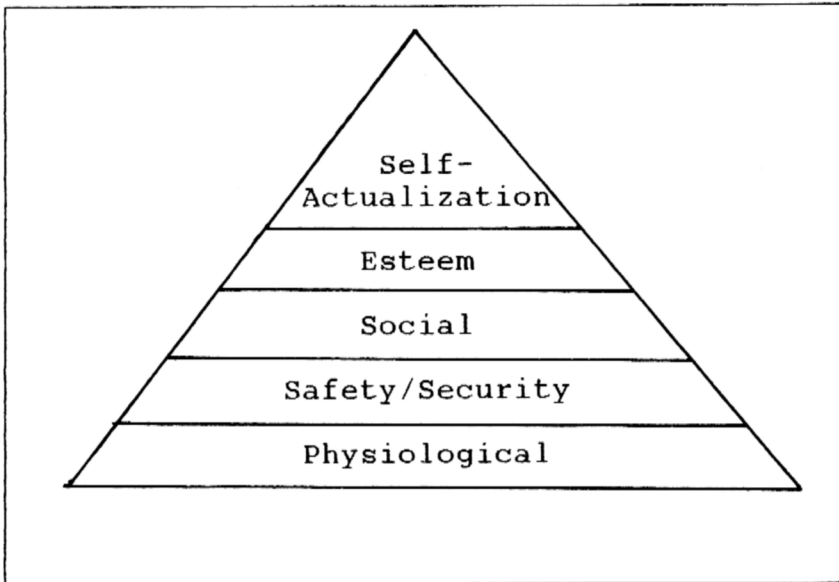
Source: James A.P. Stoner, Management, New Jersey: Prentice Hall International Inc., 1989, p.429.

(i) Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Abraham Marslow developed this first and most popular and well-known motivation theory in 1935. His theory highlighted the humanism of individuals rather than the machine-like qualities emphasised by the scientific-management and classical schools. He stated that individuals have five types of needs, arranged in a hierarchy from the most basic to the highest level, as shown in Fig.6.

Individuals will be motivated to fulfill whichever need is prepotent, or most powerful, for them at a given time. The prepotency of a need depends on the individual's current situation and recent experiences.

Figure 6. Marslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source: James A.F. Stoner, Management, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Interantional Inc., 1989, p.432.

The five types of needs are described as follows:-

a. Physiological needs

This refers to basic needs such as food, water, air and shelter. In an organization setting, the employees are provided sufficient pay to enable them to obtain the above needs. These needs must be at least partially satisfied before an individual desires the next higher level of need.

b. Safety/Security needs

This refers to the needs for safety, order, and freedom from fear or threat. In an orgainzation setting, the employees are provided these needs by means of job security, pension schemes, safe working environment, labour laws, welfare benefits and pension schemes.

c. Belongingness needs

This refers to social needs like affection, feelings of belonging, and human contact. A work environment is a social environment. Unless the employees feel that they are an integral part of the organization, they will be frustrated by an unmet need to belong and will be unlikely to respond to higher-order opportunities or incentives.

d. Esteem needs

This refers to the need for self-respect, self-esteem, achievement, and recognition. In organization terms employees want to be good at their jobs and also feel that they are achieving something important. The organization should fulfill the esteem needs by providing challenging work assignments, performance feedback, performance recognition, and personal encouragement and by involving the employees in goal-setting and decision making.

e. Self-actualization needs

When all other needs have been adequately met, employees will become motivated by the need for self-actualization. This refers to the need for personal growth, self-fulfilment, and to realize one's potential. Marslow stresses that individual differences are greatest at this level. For some individuals producing work of high quality may be a means of showing self-actualization, while for others, developing creative, useful ideas serves the same need.

(ii) Need For Achievement Theory

In the 1950's McClelland focused on the higher-order needs identified by Marslow. Specifically, the theory postulates that each person has needs for achievement, affiliation, and power. Although each person has all of these needs to some extent, only one of them tends to motivate an individual at a given time.

(iii) ERG Theory

Alderfer recognised Marslow's need hierarchy as encompassing three types of needs: (1) Existence, which includes both physiological and safety needs, (2) Relatedness, which comprises love and belongingness needs, and (3) Growth, which incorporates both self-esteem and self-actualization needs. He agreed with Marslow that unsatisfied needs motivate individualism and that individuals generally move up a hierarchy in satisfying their needs.

(iv) Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg postulated the existence of two factors relevant in work motivation i.e. satisfiers (motivators) and dissatisfiers (hygiene). The dissatisfiers are the outward characteristics of work such as pay, security, working conditions and the like. Dissatisfiers are the extrinsic factors which affect job dissatisfaction. Satisfiers however, are the intrinsic factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement and all the elements of work itself. Satisfiers affect job satisfaction.

3.1.2 PROCESS THEORIES

The process theory approach emphasises how and by what goals individuals are motivated. In this view, needs are just one element in the process by which individuals decide what how to behave. The three most popular theories are Expectancy Theory, Goal Setting Theory and the Equity Theory.

(i) Expectancy Theory

Vroom postulated that individuals decide what to do by subjectively estimating the probability of, (1) being able to complete a job task, and (2) whether or not that activity will be rewarding. The three components of the expectancy theory are expectancy, instrumentality and valence.

(ii) Goal Setting Theory

Locke postulated that the primary motivational force behind work behaviour is the achievement of a goal set by the individual himself. Goal-setting causes an individual to compare their capacity to perform with that required to achieve that goal. There are two types of goals; Specific goals are the greater motivators than general goals.

(iii) Equity Theory

Adam postulated that individuals make social comparisons between themselves and others with respect to the variables, outputs, and inputs. This theory is concerned with the perceptions of fairness of one's pay relative to the pay of others by comparing output-input ratios. Outputs refer to items

like pay, fringe benefits and prestige. Inputs refer to the contributions employees believe they and others make to their jobs; like the amount of time worked, the qualifications held in the job, number of units produced and the amount of effort required.

3.1.3 REINFORCEMENT THEORY

The reinforcement theory proposed by B.F. Skinner's research, emphasises the importance of feedback and rewards in motivating behaviour. Positive reinforcement, also known as operant conditioning or behaviour modification, involves repeatedly pairing desired behaviours or outcomes with positive reinforcement, rewards, or feedback. This feedback shapes behaviour by encouraging the reinforced or rewarded behaviour to recur.

3.2 PAST STUDIES ON MOTIVATION

Various studies have been done on motivation as well as on the hierarchy of needs for different individuals in the management ladder of an organization.

Goh (1995), using McClelland's Three Needs Theory, identified the need for achievement to be the dominant factor of motivation for consulting engineers in the Klang Valley. The consulting engineer's organizational tasks were achievement tasks, thus matching the motivational need. The level of need for achievement and the level of need for power of the consulting engineers were dependent on their demographic variables.

In another study on the determinants of motivation, Zippo (1984), found that both management and non-management employees of a large Canadian bank placed a high value on good supervision, good pay, good advancement opportunities, and fair treatment. Nowlin (1982), conducted a study on factors that motivate public and private sector managers in Western New York. The results showed that public managers were motivated by such factors as responsibility, work itself, and the opportunity to grow. The fourth motivating factor was money. Among the private sectors managers, work itself was the leading motivation. Public sector managers indicated that the lack of opportunity for advancement was the factor they disliked most about their job, while the private sector managers listed personal life interference as the aspect of their job they disliked most. Both sectors were in agreement on the importance of work itself and responsibility as private motivators.

The motivating factors that emerged important in Chung's (1974) study include job content, supervision, leadership, work group influence, promotional opportunity, physical environment, performance and reward. The study concluded that managers must use organizational incentives that efficiently promote personal goals.

Various studies have also been conducted on the level of job satisfaction and motivation. Lee (1994), conducted a study on the level of job satisfaction and motivation to work for Tenaga Nasional Berhad. He found that there was no significant correlation between job satisfaction and the motivation to work.

In another study, Lee (1993) found that the overall level of employee satisfaction in the Pos Malaysia Headquarters was relatively high. Yap (1989), found that although doctors in government hospitals had expressed high dissatisfaction with the levels of rewards, fringe benefits, promotional prospects and training opportunities, they expressed satisfaction with their role in helping to treat the sick. In a study with data processing managers, Manze (1984), found that the important motivators were achievement, recognition, work content, responsibility, advancement and growth.