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# Motivation Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

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## ABSTRACT

*Maslow's Hierarchy of needs is a theory implemented by various organizations globally to motivate its employees. The thirty year old theory has been widely used and is gaining popularity during the months of this global pandemic where employee motivation is at low levels. Despite, being used by globally to motivate employees its ineffectiveness can be felt by various organizations. A study claims that autonomy, relatedness, and competence are the basic needs that an organization must fulfil to motivate its employees. Technological advancements have made autonomy, relatedness, and competence as basic needs needed to motivate an individual rather than the hierarchy of needs as postulated by Maslow. Companies must satisfy the three basic needs for increasing motivation in their employees.*

**Keywords-** Motivation Maslow Hierarchy.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Motivation is a management exercise which invigorates individuals to provide services and function better for the comprehensive well-being for the establishment by providing them motives, based on their unrealised needs. Managers constantly need to motivate their employees to get optimum results. Motivation helps employees work harder, achieve the targets set by the organization, increase work productivity and ensure better creativity among employees. (Sabir, 2017) Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a thesis which classifies rudimental human needs in a hierarchy and explains the theory of human motivation.

Through this academic paper I wish to highlight the application of Maslow's motivation theory through the case study of Google. Despite, various companies using Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, technological advancements have made autonomy, relatedness, and competence as basic needs needed to motivate an individual rather than the hierarchy of needs as postulated by Maslow. Companies must satisfy the three basic needs such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence for increasing motivation in their employees.

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## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

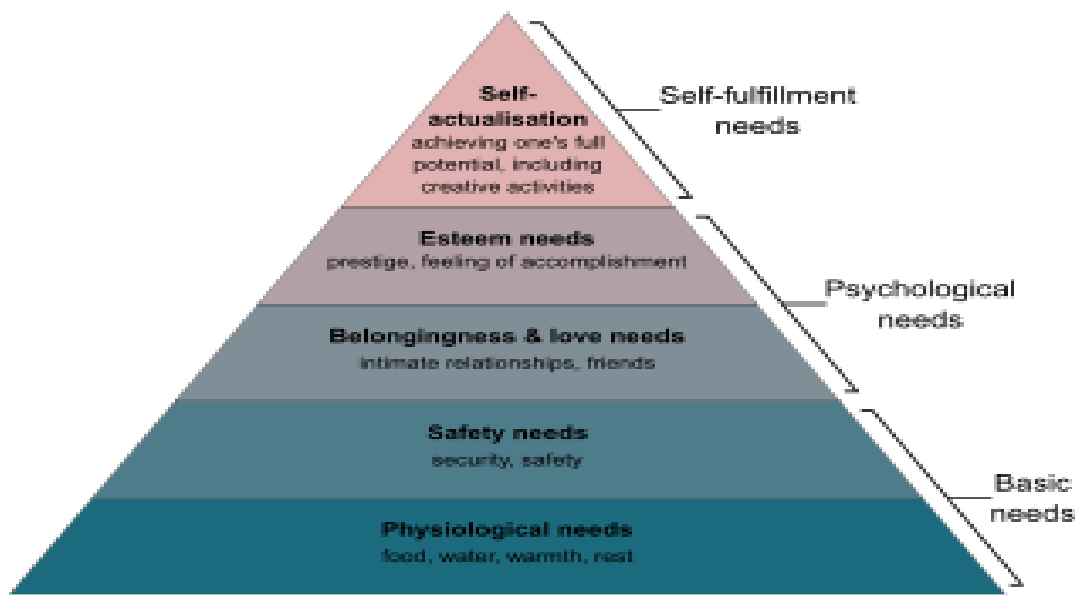


Figure 1.0 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The Maslow's theory of needs was published thirty years ago by Abraham Maslow and is extensively accepted by many theorists. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs primarily talks about the five needs needed to motivate employees. The hierarchical model of Maslow's needs is structured in five levels. The first level being psychological needs such as foods, shelter, and sleep. The second level entails the safety needs such as law, security, and stability. The third level of requirements is belongingness and love. This level incorporates needs such as giving and receiving affection, relationship with friends, co-workers, and family. The fourth level of needs is esteem. This level encompasses needs that are affected by environmental and social acceptance factors. The fifth level, requirements for an individual is self-actualization. It means to augment an individual's future. The hierarchy of needs as proven by Maslow demonstrates that persons are more motivated as they move higher up the hierarchy as individual income increases. To motivate an individual, one needs to understand their present hierarchy of needs and try to satisfy them. (Taormina and Gao, 2013) Maslow's five stage model has been expanded and incorporates needs such as cognitive and aesthetic and finally transcendence needs. Maslow's theories concentrate on human development and how can one accomplish this development. According to Abraham Maslow self-actualization refers to enhancing one's potential, be it in any field that an individual wants to seek perfection in. (McLeod, 2020)

Despite the theory of hierarchy of needs being widely accepted, present day studies lack data to support it. Dr. Edward Deci, an American psychologist and scholar points to three comprehensive cognitive needs essential for motivation. Dr Deci urges organizations and

beings to concentrate on the needs such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence instead of focussing on the hierarchy of needs. Contrary to Maslow's needs, these needs are neither graded nor consecutive. These needs are the basis for human motivation and enhance one's ability to prosper. An individual can contribute towards the well-being of an organization when he has the ability to make decisions for himself. He can overcome difficulties and challenges with the skills possessed by him and have a selfless and helpful nature. When the said needs are satisfied by an individual on a daily basis it leads to higher motivation among individuals. This increase in motivation helps to attract individuals to work on a daily basis thus increases employee's attachment towards their work. (Fowler, 2014)

Recently the digital and technological age has altered the basic requirement of an individual. The age old Maslow's theory of motivation needs to be upgraded with the changing and testing times. In a survey conducted by Forbes it was found that employees primary human needs are "digital in nature." Foods, clothing, shelter has been replaced by digital tools such as laptops, computers and internet connection. The advancement in technology has enhanced the features of video calling thus ensuring easy connectivity of employees with friends, co-workers, and family. The most emphasised needs of Maslow's theory are self-actualization. Technological tools have enabled easy human connectivity, access to education and information. This has enabled employees to excel in their chosen fields. Thus, there is already an increase in motivation with technological advancements. Digital advancement has disrupted Maslow's theory of motivation but if the theory evolves with time it can help motivate employees further. (Link, 2018)

### **III. CASE STUDY: GOOGLE**

Maslow's motivation theory is used by innumerable companies around the world. A brand familiar with every household strives to achieve self-actualization. Google has adapted to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory to motivate its employees. Google satisfies their employees psychological and safety needs by providing free healthy food at its cafeteria, discount coupons to employees to avail free discounts at stores and also provides health insurance. It also ensures the basic healthcare needs of the employees are satisfied as it provides for a nutritionist and a free personal gym trainer. (Choudhary, 2014) Google ensures new parents and their children are taken care of. It offers six weeks paid leave to new fathers and eighteen weeks for new mothers. Furthermore, a holistic work environment ensures bonding among employees. Bonding over foods and drinks in the cafeteria, ensures an environment of belongingness and attachment among employees. Google motivates its employees to attend

seminars, lectures, and undertake research work. The constant learning coupled with a friendly work environment and fulfilling of employees primary needs enables Google to motivate its employees. (D'ONFRO, 2015) Google has modified Maslow's motivational theory to suit its employee's needs.

The corona virus pandemic has caused severe economic loss coupled with an adverse impact on the mental health of individuals. Google has prioritised the health and safety of its employees by ensuring free weekly covid test at home in the United States. Google has promised to bear the cost of testing. An employee can request a test and get his report within forty-eight hours all at the expense of the company. (Singh, 2020) Google in advance has informed its employees to work from home till June 30, 2021. CEO Sundar Pichai indicated that safety and wellbeing of its employees takes a priority during these unprecedented times. (Copeland and Grant, 2020) Google has given every employee thousand dollars to spend on equipment to customise their work place. Google managers are instructed to interact with their peers and subordinates to check up on their mental health. Google has ensured the physical health of its employees doesn't suffer due to various restrictions imposed by the corona virus hence; it has conducted innumerable fitness classes online. (Vasel, 2020) By the undertaking of these steps Google has ensured the mental and physical health of its employees is taken care of.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Maslow's theory must be adopted by leaders globally in the post-corona world where work from home would be a new normal for a long time. Leaders and managers must ensure job security and safety of their employees. This will satisfy their psychological and safety needs. Close contact over the phone and virtual interaction will decrease social isolation and will enhance the feeling of belongings. Finally, webinars and challenging assessment will ensure upskilling of employees where their self-actualization needs are satisfied. (Bradt, 2020) Through these steps managers can ensure their employees are motivated and can contribute towards the excellence of the organization.

In my opinion Google has supported its employees throughout these tough times. Google has rightly used Maslow's hierarchy of needs to satisfy its employee's needs. Google has satisfied the most important needs such as that of safety and wellbeing by providing free tests, health packages, and employee allowances. By prioritizing the health of its employees Google has motivated its employees to work better and more efficiently. Google can further modify Maslow's motivation theory according to its needs. It can offer a four day work week which

will ensure employees to spend more time at home with their family. This four day work week will motivate employees to work harder thus, benefitting the organisation. Google can make it optional for employees to come to the offices during the post corona period. A work from home strategy can be formulated which would ensure employees remain motivated while working from home.

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