Refined Model of Maslow's Needs Theory in Internet Era

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Abstract

This paper attempted to articulate a hierarchy of fundamental motives that serve as both an integrative framework and generative foundation for future empirical research. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (HoN) promulgates that self-actualization, often cited as the highest-order motivation, propels us to fathom our true finesse and attain our ideal self. 150 random samples were collected and tested hypotheses using regression analysis and descriptive, quantitative, and cross-sectional research design. The results indicated a significant relationship between the Internet and Wi-Fi and other levels of needs. The findings were utilized to create a ray of light on the perception that wireless internet has become a basic need, viz., food, shelter, and cloth for many people.

Keywords: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs; Physiological needs; Safety & Security needs; Social needs; Esteem needs; Cognitive needs; Self- Actualization needs; self-transcendence needs.

INTRODUCTION

Self-actualization was brought into being by Maslow with his Hierarchy of Needs (HoN) theory. The term self-actualization can be defined as what capabilities a man possesses that must be utilized for the pursuit of excellence, thus reaching the epitome of happiness and self-efficacy. He then strongly felt in the late 1960s that self-actualization could further be graduated as self-transcendence because the former need is a hale and healthy self-fulfillment avenue to the latter. He believed that finding self-actualization and self-transcendence is tough and limited. Serendipitously Internet made the task easier by coalescing under the same umbrella the efficient family bonds backed with parenting and improvising self-actualization to reach the acme, self- transcendence. Fulfilment is an important achievement of the life goals of a human being, incongruent to the goals of society, family, and additional collated onus. Man begins to become cognizant of oneself and one's environs, thus making his life journey a perennial one. He thrives to accomplish social fulfilment making his family, work, and societal relations live. In this odyssey, he comes across various basic levels of needs starting from physiological, safety, and social to esteem needs.

Albeit Maslow's 1943s model of motivation was a pioneer of modern and contemporary standpoints on domain-specific needs, he paid less heed to reproductive motivations, which were among the basic physiological needs such as hunger and thirst (Marsh, A. (1975). However, modern developments have suggested several renovations to his pyramid (Rasskazova et al., 2016).

The initial perspective of the hierarchy were physiological needs, protection, affiliation and love, self-esteem, and self-actualization, which are revamped in the present era by wi-fi as one of the bottom-most sub-stratal needs that created a strong impact on all the five divisions of HoN (Judith Logan & Everall, 2019).

Self-actualization is an instinctual need that thrives on bringing out the best ability in anyone. While self-actualization refers to fulfilling one's potential and self-transcendence, a sovereign step is for the personages to be altruistic, setting aside their wants, liberating egocentricity, and serving something greater without any expectations in return (Butler et al., 2019).

It has become an irony in the current scenario that one can live without air for a few minutes, a few hours without shelter, a few days devoid of water, and a few weeks without food; unfortunately, one cannot live happily without Internet and without checking their mobile phone for WhatsApp messages, Face book and Instagram likes and comments and calls. The Internet has become one of the indispensable physiological needs for an individual's healthy existence. It has a deep impact on all the levels of human needs commencing from physiological needs to self-actualization, creating a symposium for achieving self-transcendence (Koltko-Rivera, 2016).

A deep adoration of wonderment, creativity, and ecstasy attributed to life experiences could help a self-actualizer to attain transcendence in his desired genre. Cognitive needs help in imparting knowledge, denotations, and assimilation about a fact, which raises a sense of the spirit of inquiry, a thirst for probing, and getting educated in return. Aesthetic needs propound innate passion for getting detached from anything to experience beauty in whatever is believed and aspired. These needs, when gratified, can help manhood to progress to the paramountcy of spirituality. Self-esteem, self-confidence, acquirement, acknowledgment, and stature can be procured when the above-mentioned levels are achieved (Branden, 2011).

Motivational theories advocate the inclusion of cognitive needs and aesthetic needs as the next successive level of esteem needs. Healthy family bonds and effective parenting can foster self-pursuance from childhood. Self-actualization is achieved when one can reach his full potential. One's full potential helps in the successful transformation of the real self into the ideal self with cognitive and enriching preferences that include personal and creative self-growth. The vertex got dichotomized as family bonding and parenting encompassing mate acquisition, mate retention, and parenting; cognitive and aesthetic needs, thus leading to zenith want level transcendence. This dichotomy advocates that the modus operandi of interpretation of motivation by experts than in the 1940s may now differ in 2021 from how people perceive their lived reality presently to make it into a meaningful mediated reality (MacDonald, 1998).

Wi-fi can catapult self-actualizers to redefine progress and advancements of digital technology to utilize the resplendent potential and do what they are capable of. Despite satisfying most of the basic needs, one may still experience new displeasure and impatience until the individual does what he desires and is suitable for (Stosny, 2016). Gadgets like cell phones, Ipads, Kindles, GPS Navigation Systems, tablets, laptops, I-pods, etc., were an intricate part of the digital technology wave that swept all the age groups, making them dependent on internet usage. This created an emergence of the inclusion of the Internet as one of the physiological needs of HoN theory (Dunmo, 2013). To gradually embark up the pyramid of needs leaving behind a daunting continuum of

survival and safety, globalization acts as a connoisseur, helping combat bare necessities, constituting an illusory hunt for affiliation and reverence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Computer-based searches were carried out on online databases, including Emerald, Jstor, and EBSCO, using keywords and wildcards symbols. Manual searches were conducted on journal articles' references identified through the search of the online database. Wongwan (2021) imagined that the current generation is giving a digital twin to the basic physiological needs and self-esteem needs of HoN. The benefits of a faster Internet connection for e-commerce and other business transactions will help to trigger greater profits. This was ramping up when done in excess for socializing would pose a serious threat to security and health of self.

Physiological needs
Kirubel Biruk Shiferaw et al. (2020) conducted a cross-sectional study of stratified random sampling design that was used on a total sample size of 236 acclaimed that health and its dependent industries also sprung up to success with the advent of the Internet. Internet could successfully provide e-health awareness among people. Koay Ting Yin et al. (2019) conducted a quantitative study (N=98), suggesting that Nomophobia, or No Mobile Phone Phobia, the fear of being without a mobile phone, can make one feel uncomfortable and devoid of it. Persistent mobile availability by dint of Wi-Fi to access the Internet has become one of the principal human needs in today's rapidly advancing world.

Sanchita Ghtaatk and Surabhi Singh (2019), with a quantitative and descriptive study conducted on the responses from a sample size of 287, then collected using a questionnaire, cited that social media backed up by the Internet helped job seekers to search for aspired jobs through job portal sites. Social networking sites thrived on providing a higher level of protection of the personal identity of users. McLeod, 2007, opined that gradually embarking up the pyramid of needs leaving behind a daunting continuum of survival and safety, globalization acted as a connoisseur, helping combat bare necessities, constituting an illusory hunt for affiliation and reverence. Transcendence became a workable meme when all the lower super-imposing domains of needs were mostly attained. Denisia A. Dunmore (2013) noted through the qualitative study conducted that technology has become one of the basic needs to be included in Maslow's Needs Theory. Despite the digital divide, gadgets like mobiles and iPods. William Kremer and Claudia Hammond (2013) observed that though there was no comparison to the existing basic survival needs, namely, air, food, clothing, shelter, human touch, and money, the sweet nectar called Internet-backed with Wi-Fi slowly crept into our lives and thus became one of the requisite basic survivals needs among various age groups.

Safety and security needs
Gong et al. (2020) mentioned that e-commerce has helped people to become overnight sellers, being provided with a platform to sell and earn for their wellbeing and financial maintenance. Augmented reality apps helped customers to visualize the product as an illusion, thereby creating a virtual impact of the product or service to be bought. This helped in creating a stable profit market

for a seller where a buyer-without being physically present at the stores, can generate revenue for the merchant. Ashley Autrey (2019) posted statistics on the Internet creating a significant impact on employee satisfaction and retention, and what percentage of employees became cognizant about the demanding skills required by employers online, which no longer made them step back in strengthening their competencies. Recent studies dwelled on the fact that employees felt more secure in their jobs because of the inclination towards their workplace computer/laptop, followed by "fast internet and Wi-Fi". Resplendently, digital needs surpassed employees' air-conditioned cubical space and sophisticated cafeteria in the organization. Digital tools had outrightly become safety and security needs in the minds of employees. Jared Bilski (2018) assumed that the Internet buttressed with fast, accessible Wi-Fi has helped human souls to find new relations on the Internet. This also drew close near and distant relations through social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype, and Twitter.

Social needs
Jared Bilski (2018) presumed that these needs in the digital era can now be termed "Love, Like, Share, and Retweet Needs". The digital twin has helped to connect with like-minded people. Thus, people of all age groups could overcome their loneliness and presume a leaning shoulder.

Esteem needs
This level is asserted to be attained when individuals sense comfort with what they mastered from their triumph and stature. David Houghton et al. (2019), adopting a survey approach (N = 316), exhibited the ability of Facebook to satisfy human needs. They theorized that days do not pass easily to most the adults of various age groups without getting connected to people they love and like, also new friends on Facebook and other social networking applications. Self-efficacy in the workplace can be acknowledged to an employee instantly by an employer using an employee performance appraisal portal that works with the aid of the Internet. Their study enabled them to attain technology-related skills, which were more important than monetary or fringe benefits. Jared Bilski (2018), remarked that the Internet pacifies self-esteem needs by nourishing one's soul with photos posted on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube comments, Twitter tweets, hashtags, and appreciations of WhatsApp status.

Cognitive and aesthetic needs
Saul McLeod (2018) strongly felt the inclusion of Cognitive needs and aesthetic needs as 5th need aids in procuring and imparting knowledge, understanding, curiosity, exploration, need for semantics, and establishing analogy; it would help in appreciation and search for beauty, balance, form respectively. These needs tend to assist man in realizing personal potential, self-gratification, and scaling for personal growth and experiences. Humans may have an urge to chase their knowledge, to gain a better understanding, explore and experience the new world encompassing them. Saud & Mahajani (2022) suggested that with cognitive needs satisfied, one can find a want to refresh himself with the aesthetic needs such as the presence of beauty, nature, art, music, and the other aesthetically beautiful things world has to offer. This resulted in a beautiful fondness of affinity and oneness with nature. The Internet helped the personage of all age groups to unveil

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innate skill sets, e.g., fine arts, through like-minded online communities. These needs assisted man in realizing personal potential, self-gratification, and scaling for personal growth and experiences.

Self-actualization
Abrori, & Rizki, 2022, conducted a quantitative and descriptive study on a sample size of 287 using a questionnaire and hypothesized that self-actualization level was related to the development needs of employees in an organization. The workforce manifested enthusiasm when they got an opportunity to get trained to strengthen their core competencies through specific study or training, thereby getting appreciated for their efforts. Suyudi et al., 2022, related leadership with self-actualization. He thought that this level conceptualized clearly by leaders might benefit them not just to practice reverse mentoring but also help them in learning stuff they don't know from youngsters who do. This can be termed reverse role-modeling. C-Suite leaders might be inspired by the younger employees' quest for self-actualization as the latter had predominant chances of getting trained to fill in their know and skillset lacunae. This, in turn, gave them self-fulfilment of their goals and aspirations. The opportunity for leaders who remained stuck with their 'external scorecards'. These external scorecards were the culmination of experiences gathered from their childhood and in due course of their work. Having personally self-actualized, there can be an urge to help others self-actualize. In this process, the encountering of euphoria and harmonization with a congruent section of people took place, forgoing the ego and normal human consciousness, thus creeping selflessly to the next level of being.

Westin (2022) mentioned that Psychoanalysts propounded that the foundational structure of the needs pyramid was worth implementing when rebuilt with few empirical extensions. He explained the basic intention behind Maslow to design of a pyramid of needs. It reflected his brought up that including cherishable and bitter situations.

Transcendence
Wen et al. (2022), upon conducting three online surveys with Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram users on Amazon Mechanical Turk (N = 491) found that human values like self-enhancement, willingness to embrace change, and self-transcendence are significant instincts of valuable brand-related social media activities. The Internet helped in getting the customers' feedback about the products and services of the companies genuinely. This, in turn, helped organizations to be at the topmost level of success called transcendence.

Gap in the study
Erstwhile research helped bring revised models of Maslow's Needs Theory with the addition of new levels. Some advocated attainment of transcendence after the completion of basic and growth levels only, while some others suggested attainment of zenith level overlapping one level with the other (Douglas T. Kenrick, 2010). It advocates that the eight layered models are overlapping but not a stage-wise accomplishing model that can help mankind to recheck and fulfil his deficient needs at any level and thereby ascend to the growing needs. So much so, this research study tries to establish the correlation between the levels of Maslow's Needs Theory, thus paving a luminous path to sublimation. It strives to bring out a correlation between Wi-Fi, parenting, self-actualization, and self-transcendence that can make an individual a complete man at personal, organizational, and societal levels. This paper attempts to empirically build a contemporary and reassessed pyramid that emphasizes the interweaving of needs at various levels one over the other. This makes it

possible to accomplish the needs optimally and rework other deficit needs, thus gradating to the highest level, self-transcendence.

Objective of the study
The specific objective of the study is:

- To study the role and impact of internet / Wi-Fi on the Hierarchy of Needs.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY
Based on the objective, the following hypotheses were formulated.
H01: There is no significant impact between the physiological needs and Maslow's HoN.
H02: There is no significant impact between the safety & security needs and Maslow's HoN.
H03: There is no significant impact between the social needs and Maslow's HoN.
H04: There is no significant impact between the esteem needs and Maslow's HoN.
H05: There is no significant impact between the cognitive needs and Maslow's HoN.
H06: There is no significant impact between the self-actualization needs and Maslow's HoN.
H07: There is no significant impact between the self-transcendence needs and Maslow's HoN.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted on 150 random samples lent to a strong continuation of five basic needs along with the addition of new needs. All participants completed a brief questionnaire assessing demographic details, including their age, sex, marital status, education background, occupation, and income levels. A simple random sampling technique was used through a structured questionnaire that consisted of 34 questions which included 7 demographics and 27 HoN questions. A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess the dataset (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Data analysis was carried out for descriptive statistics and multiple regression with the help of SPSS version 26. The overall Cronbach Alpha was 0.890, which is higher than Nunally's 0.600, which ensures the reliability of data (Nunnally, 1975).

The demographic profile of employees
The demographic profile of the employees is given in the below table.

Table 01: Demographic Profile of the Employees

Employee Age	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Age group of 20 to 40	104	69.3
Age group of 41 to 60	12	8.0
61 and above	34	22.7
Gender		
Male	71	47.3
Female	79	52.7
Marital Status		
Single	42	28.0
Married	102	68.0
Divorced	1	.7
Widowed	5	3.3
Educational Qualification		
High school	40	26.7
Bachelor's degree	103	68.7
Master's degree	5	3.3
Doctorate	2	1.3
Nature of Work		
Salaried	111	74.0
Self Employed	13	8.7

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Homemaker	7	4.7
Retired	8	5.3
Unemployed	11	7.3
Nature of Job		
Educationist	54	36.0
Professional	38	25.3
Real Estate	2	1.3
Pharma	4	2.7
Public Service	5	3.3
Information Technology	33	22.0
Other	14	9.3
Annual Income		
Under ₹ 2 lakhs	19	12.7
₹ 2 to 5 lakhs	53	35.3
₹ 5 to 10 lakhs	25	16.7
Above ₹10 lakhs	33	22.0
No income	20	13.3

Source: Primary study

It was found that 52% of employees belong to the female category, and they were around 20-40 years old (70%). Around 68% of respondents were married and completed their UG degree (68%). Most of the people were working in a salary-oriented job (74%), and 36% of respondents belonged to an academic-oriented job, and they earned on an average ₹ 2-5 lakhs per annum (35%).

Multiple regression
A structured questionnaire was prepared based on the above review of literature which focused on the various needs of respondents. The multiple regression was conducted to test the level of impact of independent variables on Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. In this test, physiological needs, safety and security needs, social needs, esteem needs, cognitive needs, self-actualization needs, and self-transcendence needs were selected as independent variables against Maslow's hierarchy of needs which was selected as a dependent variable. For both the dependent and independent variables, the 5-point Likert scale was used to assess the level of needs of the respondents. Stated strongly agree to strongly disagree with the statement which was listed in the questionnaire.

Table 1. The Result of Model Summary for the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Model Summary[b]		ANOVA			
R	.986[a]	Model	Regression	Residual	Total
R^2	.971	Sum of Squares	63.658	1.875	65.53
Adjusted R^2	.962	df	7	142	
Std. Error of the Estimate	.114	Mean Square	9.094	.013	149
Durbin-Watson	1.717	F	688.56		
		Sig.	0.000[b]		

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cognitive needs, physiological needs, social needs, Self- actualization needs, Esteem needs, self-transcendence needs, Safety, and security needs
b. Dependent Variable: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Source: Primary study

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The basic assumptions for the regression were checked with all dimensions. The normality of data was verified with the help of skewness and kurtosis value. The result of the calculated value of skewness and kurtosis values falls within the range of ±1.96, which ensures the collected data are normally distributed and ensures there are no significant outliers in the dataset. Both the selected dependent and independent variables are continuous variables in nature. The independence of observations was tested and confirmed with the help of the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.717), which ensures that the selected variables are independent of residuals (Nerlove & Wallis, 1966). We have checked the homoscedasticity of variance for the best fit for the linear relationship. The multicollinearity of the selected independent variables is shown within the thumb rule of tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF), as shown in the below table (Schroeder, 1990).

Table 2. The Result of Multiple Regression for the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

	Coefficients [a]	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T-value	P-value	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	-0.013	0.053		-0.25	0.803		
H_0 1	Physiological needs	0.136	0.008	0.262	18.11	0.000	0.964	1.038
H_0 2	Safety and security needs	0.130	0.014	0.152	9.323	0.000	0.763	1.311
H_0 3	Social needs	0.161	0.012	0.241	13.651	0.000	0.646	1.547
H_0 4	Esteem needs	0.120	0.014	0.186	8.297	0.000	0.502	1.900
H_0 5	Cognitive needs	0.056	0.015	0.073	3.809	0.000	0.552	1.811
H_0 6	Self-actualization needs	0.174	0.014	0.254	12.83	0.000	0.515	1.943
H_0 7	Self-transcendence needs	0.192	0.014	0.299	13.35	0.000	0.501	1.926

a. Dependent Variable: Maslow's hierarchy of needs
Source: Primary study

The result of multiple regression is shown in the above table. The independent variables are selected as physiological needs, safety and security needs, social needs, esteem needs, cognitive needs, self-actualization needs, and self-transcendence needs, whereas the dependent variable is selected as Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Based on the above result, it was found that all the selected independent variables were highly positively statistically significant with the dependent variable and supported H_{01} to H_{07}. Among all the independent variables. Transcendent needs (r =.192) had highly impacted the dependent variable and whereas cognitive needs (r =.056) had the least influence.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the previous literature, the questionnaire was prepared to test Maslow's needs theory. We have tested Maslow's needs theory as per the current scenario with the help of the Internet and WiFi, as mentioned in the below figures. It focuses on the seven viz., physiological needs, safety &

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security needs, social needs, esteem needs, cognitive needs, self-actualization needs, and self-transcendence needs. The data was gathered from academicians and professional-oriented jobs. Based on the multiple regression, it is found that all these seven needs are statistically significant with Maslow's needs theory in the internet era.

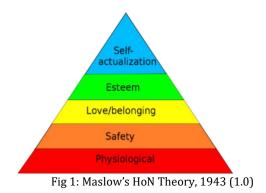Fig 1: Maslow's HoN Theory, 1943 (1.0)

Fig 2: Modified Maslow's H. of Digital Needs (3.0)

CONCLUSION

The multiple regression analysis shows that input variables predict the output variable Internet/Wi-Fi. To culminate, the contemporary 2021 HoN offers a seven-stage overall personality developmental model for the contented living of man. The two apex levels of the needs pyramid – 'Self-actualization' and 'Transcendence' are paramount levels that leaders must develop their own 'internal scorecards'. This can be a daunting challenge for orthodox leaders who cannot come out of the shell of the external scorecards doctrine. A conglomeration of Esteem Needs (inclusive of self-concept and self-efficacy) strongly supported by Cognitive Needs to be backed by Online forums and websites available drove humans towards community service, authentic learning, and extended support for social causes. Internet became a vital want that took a prominent place among the Physiological Needs as humans are social beings, and every juncture of our life is sculpted by a desire to be part of a larger cosmos. Humans become self-reliant only once s/he gains the aspired likeability, admiration, and approval as these proficiencies can be endured.
It can be deduced that man is being propelled from birth for group approval, probably through an 'external scorecard' that steers his/her conduct. Thus, the birth of new levels of needs and inclusion of needs in existing levels took place.

IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Inclusion of adolescents with a larger sample size using longitudinal study in various geographical locations may give some more additional needs due to Covid-19. This reframed theory can be used by industrialists, academicians, and students to understand the different types of motivational factors to motivate their employees and students, respectively.

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