Assessment Task 2: Individual Assignment

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Motivation theories can be classified as process theories and content theories. The content theories focus on the needs of people and the ways needs are prioritized. Fredrick Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow hierarchy theory fall in this category. On the other hand, process theories are related to the cognitive antecedents which result in the motivation. Vroom, Porter and Lawler’s theories fall in this category. This paper seeks to discuss one of the content theory i.e. Maslow’s Theory of Hierarchy of Need and one of the process theories, Vroom’s Expectancy Theory of Motivation by providing, by making a comparison and contrast and elaborating usefulness of each fort managers in real life organisations.

Maslow believed that there is a hierarchy of needs within every individual and each stage of need must be satisfied in order to reach the new level. These needs keep an individual motivated and the ascending order of these needs can be summarized as, need for self-actualization, esteem needs, belonging needs, safety needs and basic physiological needs (McLeod, 2007). Vroom’s expectancy theory offers a framework for investigating work motivation. According to this theory, people are motivated in the ways which produce desired results for them and it enables to predict motivation in the cases where there are alternatives to be chosen (Latham, 2012). The equation of Vroom's theory is *Motivation (M) = Valence (V) x Expectancy (E).* Valence is the individual preference of a certain result, it can be negative when a person doesn’t want a particular outcome and it can be positive when he desires an outcome, and value of E can be zero or one (Estes, 2012).

The Maslow theory was an earlier proposition and the later theories were based on that. Vroom's theory is also based on the foundation of Maslow theory. Overall both theories enable an individual to change their input depending on the expected outcome and desired result (Miner, 2015). Both allow an individual to establish the results that are most likely to motivate others. Maslow theory discusses human needs in a hierarchical manner and his understanding on the unsatisfied needs is also linked with expectancy theory that the desire to satisfy the unmet needs keep a person motivated and that individual concerns to undertake an action that produces the desired outcomes. An individual understands where they are lacking and they will strive to achieve desired results. High expectation results in greater motivation and this approach is the same for both theories i.e. Maslow hierarchy of needs and Vroom’s expectancy theory.

Unlike Maslow's theory, Vroom's theory is focused more on the desired than needs. When Maslow theory relates to internal needs and the factors that can satisfy those needs such as money and time, Vroom's puts efforts, performance and results apart. Expectancy is something which makes a person believes that their extra dedication and performance will produce the desired results, in short, hard work pays. Performance and outcomes, when linked together, make an individual perceive that the excellent performance will provoke a worthy and viable outcome and finally valence connects effort and outcome as dictated by motivation. In Maslow theory, an individual gets motivation from something extra such as something other than just cash or job fulfilment. Expectancy theory becomes most complicate in comparison with Maslow theory in motivating employees because the efforts to perform the task will link to the surrounding and ability to dictate the subsequent performance of an individual. This theory might fail to apply to a considerable amount of people. In contrast to expectancy theory, Maslow theory states that striving for a need, for instance, self-actualization can be the motivation rather than actually achieving self-actualization.

Maslow hierarchy theory is very important for the managers to consider while motivating employees (Kaur, 2013). Maslow argued that if managers motivate their employees by fulfilling their needs they must understand which needs are most important. Maslow theory gives the flexibility to managers to allow the development of their employees in the best possible way which increases satisfaction and motivation. In addition, this theory also aloe managers to understand the specific needs of certain employees ensuring motivation. Expectancy theory can be employed by managers to regulate the outcomes and desires of employees and they can determine the kind of performance needed to perform those goals (Honore, 2009). Managers can make sure that the desired level of performance is possible and they can link desired performance with the desired outcome.

In addition, managers can analyze the situation which may have conflicting expectations and they can ensure equity in the overall system or everyone. The more expectations employees have on their workplace, the greater is the motivation to perform, and this approach is same for both theories i.e. Maslow hierarchy of needs and Vroom’s expectancy theory (Honore, 2009). Maslow theory has greater motivation to employees in comparison to expectancy theory as Maslow theory creates a foundation for the expectancy theory and it focuses on the ways different needs are associated with each other.

In a nutshell, both theories are related to motivation and contribute to motivating employees and individuals. No single motivation theory is sufficient in the modern organisations and each theory has its own merits and demerits. The content and process theories utilize needs and logic and contribute towards ways in which people can be motivated to obtain desired results. Maslow and Vroom's theory has some points of similarities and differences, both enable a person to change his input depending on the expected outcome but the expectancy theory focuses on needs rather than results and it separates performance, achievement and effort of a certain task making it difficult for most of the people to explore their potential. I believe that the Maslow theory is more realistic and the changing workplace needs more new theories of motivation.

# References

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