

Deconstructing Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: A Comparison of Organizational Behaviour and Branding Perspectives

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Abstract : It is said that the pyramid of Needs is not an invention by Maslow but only a graphical representation of his theory. It is also interesting to note how business management schools have adopted this interpreted theory to organizational behavior and marketing subjects. Against this background, this article attempts to raise the point that the hierarchy of needs proposed by Abraham Maslow need not necessarily be represented in a pyramid, but a linear model would be more eligible in the present times. To propose this point, this article presents needs a comparative study of 'self-actualization' (the apex of the pyramid) in organizational behavior and branding contexts, respectively. This article tries to shed light on the original theory proposed by Maslow, which stated that self-actualization is attained through living one's life completely and not by satisfying individual needs. Therefore, in an organizational behavior perspective, it can be understood that self-actualization is irrelevant as an employee's life is not the work and the satisfied needs in a workplace will only make the employee perform better. In the same way, a brand does not sell products to satisfy all needs of a consumer and does not have a role directly in attaining self-actualization. For the purpose of this study, select employees of a branding agency will participate in responding to a questionnaire to answer both as employees of an organization and also as consumers of a global smartphone brand. This study aims to deconstruct the interpretations that have been widely accepted by both organizational behavior and branding professionals.

Keywords : branding, marketing, needs, organizational behavior, psychology

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