



Considering the 'needs' and 'wants' of an individual when building a society: In the context of Maslow's hierarchy of needs

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Abstract

This study uses Maslow's Theory of Hierarchy to study human needs and wants from three perspectives. Sociological, economic, and Christian religious perspectives are each used to evaluate Soapbox's action policies and models. The research uses secondary sources to conduct a literature review. While the main objective is to evaluate Soapbox's action policy and model, this study is based on Soapbox's usual research objectives. Two studies are focused on showing that individual differences in needs and wants are shaped by various individual environments, including economic, social, psychological, religious, and cultural. From the findings, it can be concluded that individuals can improve their well-being by making a clear distinction between needs and wants, focusing on fulfilling them one step at a time. Subsequently, it can be asserted that Soapbox is a beneficial organisation that provides people with opportunities to participate in society and the community in order to effectively improve society, whilst also responding to their own needs and wants. If the conclusions of this study are to lead to future research, we believe that by statistically examining the relationship between needs and wants and human well-being, it may be possible to identify a number of individual 'needs' that can be used to improve the well-being of society as a whole.

Introduction

This research report discusses the differences in human wants and desires between different individuals. This study develops from ideas of the Soapbox model of humanistic theory and aims to explore existing literature to determine whether current findings support or refute the structure of the Soapbox model. According to the Soapbox model, markets and humanity are inherently distinct because of their different fundamental needs. However, as markets arise from human activity they are nonetheless connected. Entities that start at the micro-level (small businesses and people in everyday life) can move to the macro-level through innovation, collaboration, and competition. Large macro-level forces, such as the economy and international policy (including war), thrive through innovation and competition, forming what we understand to be the web of society and economy. The idea here is that humanity's needs, wants, desires, and greed all influence society, the economy, and so forth. Understanding the needs, wants and desires will lead to a greater understanding of the market and society at the macro level, and at the micro level to an understanding of the mental health of people, from the individual to the community and beyond (Kelly. et al, 2007).

Aim

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the work and research that Soapbox performs. Soapbox, as a company, has many aims. The

first is to understand what social problems exist and to investigate how we can engage with individuals and broader society as a whole. The second is to connect the people in that society with the theories investigated in the first objective, and to create greater connections and creativity within and outside of that community. The third aim is that communication within the community will empower people to create solutions to meet the needs of social problems by connecting the needs of the community with information about resources. Finally, Soapbox's knowledge of the gap between people's behaviour and their needs will not only guide Soapbox's activities, but also those of governments and companies, so that solutions to social problems and knowledge can be returned to society and individuals alike.

Methodology

The study will use a literature review to compare existing research with the Soapbox model to determine whether the findings can be used to improve said model and activities, its limitations, and whether it can be put into practical use. In this report I will consider, first, what wants and desires fundamentally are and how they are created according to the Maslow Hierarchy, second, a study of what wants and desires have been studied so far, and finally, what differences there are between people in terms of wants and desires.

To gather research material for the evaluation of Soapbox activities using this research question, the literature review was conducted through Google Scholar. Search terms used included "Maslow's Hierarchy"; "human needs and wants"; and "life satisfaction". In particular, as needs and wants are mentioned in the Soapbox model as being related to society and the economy in the content of the current research, literature related to economics, sociology, and psychology were

included in the research. It should be noted that the secondary research collected in this study is based on similar but differing ideas and theories addressing the research question.

Findings

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory that can be used to understand human motivations and desires. It describes the basic psychological behaviour in which humans attempt to satisfy five levels of "need". This includes a ranking system that implies when a lower ranked need is satisfied, people try to satisfy the next ranking. The five stages/needs in this theory are: "physiological", "safety", "belonging and love", "social needs" or "esteem", and "self-actualisation". A sixth stage was later presented as "transcendence" or "spirituality". All these stages are considered to be human needs. Maslow summarises the first four needs as "deficiency needs" and the fifth stage as "existence needs". In my analysis I consider the fifth and sixth stages, "self-actualisation" and "transcendence", to be wants rather than needs; a move supported by various researchers in this field (McLeod, 2007).

Maslow's theory is used not only in psychology but also in marketing and is one of the most useful theories in considering the construction of society and markets. It is considered that not only needs but also wants are needed to stimulate markets and economies. Society and the economy are deeply interrelated, and the economy is an essential element in building society (Bauer et al., 2015). According to Lane (1978), justice, freedom, virtue, self-realisation, culture (civilisation), and happiness itself are considered human wants within the scope of economics.

A clear distinction between human physical needs and wants can be beneficial to

understand the economy (O'Boyle, 1998). Needs are those that are essential for life as a human being, while wants are those that humans desire, whether they need them or not (O'Boyle, 1998). It can be seen that needs arise naturally from marketing, economic and psychological sources. Economic markets and individuals have significant differences in needs and wants. Within the socio-economic context of capitalism, it can be argued that external factors lead humans to develop synthetic desires, which are separate from their natural needs (Cooper, 2013). Our individual lifestyles, our time (hourly wage), our well-being (purchases for emotional needs), our attention (advertising), and so forth, are all aspects of society commodified in the interests of the economic market (Seeley, 1992).

It is common in capitalist countries for economies and markets to form wants and desires for individuals. High-brand goods, for example, are used and desired both as adornments of the self and as symbols of one's position to others. In today's internet-enabled society, marketing and trends are heavily dependent on online cultures (Bauer. et al, 2015). Therefore, in today's age of abundant access to information, it is likely that desire is stimulated by attractive advertisements and influencers, and materialistic wants are formed. As mentioned above, the psychological need for self-fulfilment also drives people to post on social media to demonstrate their status and status to others via the internet, and to satisfy their need for approval. Wants are both created and amplified through this cycle (Deci. et al, 2000).

For this research question, I have focused on two studies that have examined similar ideas. The first study is quantitative, and measures wants in mathematical terms. The second study investigates sensory and emotional aspects, including religious views of desire in a qualitative way.

The first study, "A humanistic theory of economic behaviour" (Beaudreau, 2012), investigates how psychological aspects of humanistic theory can be used to meet needs and wants in economic terms, and formulates realistic identities as defined emotional and cognitive states. From the literature to date in humanistic psychology and economics on happiness and its measures, this study considered that cultural and genetic factors also change economic behaviour and fulfil wants.

According Beaudreau (2012), like Maslow's theory of stages of needs, there are also stages of needs in consumption activities. Consumers have different categories of wants, and until one basic need is satisfied, they will not consume another (Seeley, 1992). Therefore, basic needs can never be satisfied all at once, but only successively. The results of this study show that there is an important relationship between economics and psychology, and similarly that genetic, cultural, and psychological needs and wants that differ from individual to individual relate to the economy and society through economic behaviour such as consumption.

The second study, "How Do We Address Human Needs and Wants in Health Care?" (Wasson, 2002), distinguishes between needs and wants based on Christian values. This study defined minimum human needs as health. In Christianity, the concept of health is closely related to the concept of shalom, where shalom is translated as 'peace', meaning wholeness, completeness, and happiness. Although different values create differences with regard to health, the World Health Organisation defines health as a state of physical, mental, and social well-being, over and above the mere absence of disease or illness. The study highlights, as mentioned above, that Maslow's final stage is wants, not needs, and that wants may or may not coincide with needs.

To illustrate, when undergoing medical procedures, there are cosmetic treatments for beautifying oneself, or medical treatments to improve or treat health conditions and treatments for diseases. These examples are different stages in Maslow's thinking. However, if the health problem needs and wants are the same, the needs and wants can be of the same significance. In the Christian-based view, they believed that by fulfilling needs and wants and achieving shalom, they would be happy. In a summary of their research, they discuss that all people have different needs and wants—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.

The two studies emphasised that individual differences in needs and wants are shaped by a variety of individual environments, including economic, sociological, psychological, religious, and cultural. The results of this study show that Soapbox's model of relationships between needs, wants, and society aligns well with the research findings and can be treated as affirming the Soapbox's model.

Conclusion

This literature analysis tentatively demonstrates that individuals can improve their well-being by being clearly distinguishing their different needs and wants and fulfil them. Needs, as well established by current literature, are those that are essential to life, and include a desire to be physically, mentally, and socially healthy. In order to maintain normal health in the name of these needs, it is first necessary to fulfil four of the five levels of needs defined by Maslow and requires active engagement with others in society and our communities.

To improve that society, Soapbox effectively offers citizens the chance to participate in society and the community. The specific requirements for Soapbox's goal of creating a healthy society are to give citizens the

opportunity to understand that their health needs must first be met one by one.

It is possible to investigate the sense of value of both needs and wants of individuals and calculate the gap between their needs and wants, based on the needs and wants stages defined by Maslow, to determine who is a person in need of tailored help and solutions. Moreover, by examining the statistical relationship between these needs, wants, and human well-being, it may be possible to identify a number of individual “needs” that can be used to improve the well-being of society as a whole. Soapbox's model provides a clear and practical way to allow individuals and community members to bring forth their notions of needs, wants, and wellbeing through providing active social platforms. Accordingly, Soapbox is well aligned with the literature on needs and wants.

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