



## **Extent of Application of Maslows Need Theory in Motivation of Primary School Teachers in Anambra State, Nigeria**

**Nnamdi Obikeze\* and Kay C. Onyechi\*\***

*\*Faculty of Education, Anambra State University, Uli, Nigeria*

*\*\*Faculty Of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka*

### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the extent to which Maslow's Need Theory could be applied in motivating teachers in Anambra State Primary Schools. It adopted a survey design and was guided by five research questions. A structured questionnaire designed by the researcher was employed to collect data. The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using mean, and standard deviation. The result of the analysis showed that to a lower extent, Maslow's Need theory can be applied in motivating primary school teachers in Anambra State.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Abraham Maslow developed a theory of motivation in 1952. According to this theory, human needs are arranged in a hierarchical order and the satisfaction of one need leads to the other. This theory focuses on five major areas of human needs viz, physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. The principles accruing from this theory have been used by employers of labour, psychologists, and managers in motivating their workers and clients to achieve greater productivity in work places. Motivation is the process of inducing the activeness of an organism and determining its orientation (Ramalingan, 2006). It is a strategy often used in organization by the management to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Motivation therefore enhances productivity among individuals in all settings.

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Okpara (2002) states that motivation is a behaviour directed towards a goal and it may also refer to such word as ambition, aim, aspiration, desire, drive, goal, hunger, love, motive, need and wish. He further stated that a motivated behaviour is instigated, directional, selective and satiable. The employers of labour owe it as a duty to motivate their subordinates to be happy on their job and increase productivity.

The success of any organization depends to a large extent on the effectiveness and efficiency of its employees. It is in the best interest of any organization to find out how to increase the productivity of its different employees. Cook (1983) maintained that the key to improved performance is motivation and for this reason, employers need to understand what their employees need. Similarly, Huse (1982) posited that of all the problems faced by management, motivation is the most intractable because a typical worker is often persistently pressing on his employer to meet his ever changing needs.

The place of motivation in academic institution has been stressed by scholars (Ngwoke, 1988, Ukeje, 1995 and Eneasotor, 2003) Ukeje (1995) observed that the performance of any worker including teachers is dependent on the level of motivation he has received in his work place. According to him, teachers are the pivots of the educative process and therefore can translate educational polices into practice and programmes into action.

Onah (2003) posited that human beings come to work place with individual needs, needs which are accompanied by a state of drive and tensions that results in behaviour directed towards a goal that will satisfy the needs and thus, reduce the drive or tension. Workers are always seeking for means of satisfying their needs, desires and aspirations.

The Nigerian teachers task performance has not been very encouraging. Okonkwo (2000) opined that teachers do not take their work very seriously due to long neglect by the government.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of the study is to ascertain the extent of application of Mashlows Need theory in motivation of primary school teachers in Anambra State. Specifically, the study set out to:-

- (1) Find out the extent to which teachers physiological needs are met in primary schools.
- (2) Ascertain the extent to which teachers safety needs are met in primary schools.
- (3) Determine the extent to which teachers social needs are met in primary schools.
- (4) Ascertain the extent to which teachers esteem needs are accomplished in primary schools.
- (5) Find out the extent to which teachers self-actualization needs are met in primary schools.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions

- (1) To what extent are teachers physiological needs met in primary school?
- (2) To what extent are teachers safety needs met in primary schools?
- (3) To what extent are the teachers social needs are met in primary schools?
- (4) How are teachers esteem needs accomplished in primary schools?
- (5) To what extent are teachers self actualization needs met?

## **METHODOLOGY**

The design of the study was a descriptive survey aimed at examining the extent to which Mashows Need Theory could be applied in motivating primary school teachers. Nworgu (1991) described a survey as one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group.

The study was carried out in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State. The population of the study considered of 1,208 primary school teachers in the area of study (ASUBEB, Headquarters, Awka, June, 2011). The sample of this study comprised 240 respondents randomly drawn from the population. This number represents 20%% of the entire population. The simple random sampling technique involving balloting was employed to draw the sample of the study. A total of 10 primary schools were sampled out of which 24 teachers were randomly selected using the same technique. In all, 240 teachers were sampled and used for the study.

The instrument used for data collection was a 25 item questionnaire titled “Need and Job Motivation Questionnaire (NJMQ)” The instrument has two major sections of A and B Section. A dealt with personal data of the respondents while section B focused on the Mashow’s hierarchy of Needs. The response pattern adopted was a four point likert-type scale of Very High Extent, (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent, (LE) and Not at all (NA) with assigned values of 4,3,2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face validated by three Senior Lecturers in the areas of Educational Psychology, Measurement and Evaluation and Educational Administration drawn from Faculty of Education of Anambra State University, Uli. The experts were requested to vet the questionnaire in terms of its language, construction and ability to address the research questions. The experts critically examined the questionnaire items and made useful suggestions. The corrections/suggestion of the experts were later embodied in the final copy and used for data collection.

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The reliability of the instrument was also established using test re-test method. The copies (20 in number) of the questionnaire were administered on 20 primary school teachers randomly sampled from Awka North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Two weeks later the same questionnaire was re-arranged and printed on a pink paper and re-administered on the same subjects. The result of the first and second administration were collated and statistically analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r). The result of the analysis yielded a coefficient value of 0.88. This high score obtained indicated that the instrument was reliable.

The questionnaire was administered on the respondents by the researchers with the help of three research assistants. The respondents were given 20-30 minutes to complete and return the questionnaire. Out of the 240 copies of the questionnaire administered, only 200 copies were correctly completed and used for data analysis.

The data collected were analysed using means and standard deviation. An average score of 2.5 and above was accepted whereas scores below 2.5 were rejected.

## **RESULTS**

The data collected were analysed and presented in tables (1-5) in accordance with the research questions.

**Table 1:** Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on teacher's Physiological Needs (N = 200).

S/N	Description of Items	X	Sd	Decision
1	Teachers are provided with free food during classes in form of snacks and drinks	1.73	1.03	Low Extent
2	Teachers are paid special allowance for clothing or dressing	2.32	0.85	Low Extent
3	Housing loans are provided for every teacher who desire for it	1.53	0.88	Low Extent
4	Every teacher is offered free accommodation	1.85	0.98	Low Extent
5	Teachers salaries are paid regularly	1.40	0.84	Low Extent
	<b>Cluster Mean =</b>	<b>2.06</b>	<b>0.87</b>	

The results in table 1 shows that all the items listed recorded means scores well below the decision rule of 2.5. This indicates that the teachers physiological needs are met to a low extent in primary schools.

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on Teachers Safety Needs (N=200).

S/N	Description of Items	X	Sd	Decision
6	Teachers generally enjoy job security in their work places	2.96	0.81	High Extent
7	There are provision for teachers death benefits	3.06	0.89	High Extent
8	Teachers appointment are terminated through transparent process	3.29	0.73	High Extent
9	Retiring teachers are paid their terminal benefits promptly	2.09	0.82	Low Extent
10	There is conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning in schools	2.4	0.10	Low Extent
<b>Cluster Mean =</b>		<b>2.69</b>	<b>0.91</b>	

Results in table 2 show that the respondents agreed with items 6,7 and 8 but disagreed with items 9 and 10. However, the cluster mean of 2.69 which is above the cut of score of 2.5. shows that the teachers safety needs are to a high extent met in primary schools.

**Table 3:** Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on teachers social needs.

S/N	Description of Items	X	Sd	Decision
11	Teachers are free to belong to legitimate clubs or associations.	2.91	1.04	High Extent
12	Teachers are assisted by their employers during difficult periods	2.05	1.00	Low Extent
13	The relationship between the government area teachers is very conducive	2.26	0.86	Low Extent
14	There is adequate teacher/teacher relationship	3.18	0.76	High Extent
15	Conflicts among teachers are easily resolved within the school	2.88	0.97	High Extent
<b>Cluster Mean =</b>		<b>2.66</b>	<b>0.93</b>	

Results in table B show that teachers agreed to items 11, 14 and 15 but disagreed with items 12 and 13 which have mean scores below the cut off score of 2.5. Nevertheless, with a cluster mean of 2.66 which is well above 2.5, it shows that the teachers social needs are to a high extent met by the government in primary schools.

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**Table 4:** Mean and Standard Deviation response on teachers esteem Needs (N = 200).

S/N	Description of Items	X	Sd	Decision
16	Goals set by the teacher are not frustrated	1.78	0.87	Low Extent
17	Teachers are highly respected and honoured	2.10	0.88	Low Extent
18	Teachers are allowed to take part in decision making affecting them	1.97	1.13	Low Extent
19	Functions are delegated to teachers to execute by the management	2.66	0.91	High Extent
20	Teachers self confidence is enhanced	2.21	0.97	Low Extent
	<b>Cluster Mean =</b>	<b>2.14</b>	<b>0.95</b>	

Results in table 4 shows that the respondents agreed to item 19 but disagreed with items 16, 17, 18 and 20. The former (item 19) had mean score above 2.5 where as the later (items 16,17,18 and 20) recorded mean scores below 2.5 which is the cut off score. With a cluster mean of 2.14 which is far below 2.5, it shows that the teachers esteem needs are to a low extent met in primary schools.

**Table 5:** Mean and Standard Deviation responses on the teachers self actualization Needs (N = 200).

S/N	Description of Items	X	Sd	Decision
21	Teachers attend seminars and workshops as and when necessary	2.07	0.70	Low Extent
22	Teachers who obtain higher qualification are up-graded immediately	1.95	0.80	Low Extent
23	Teachers are encouraged to aspire to greater position or status	2.22	0.78	Low Extent
24	Teachers efforts are adequately remunerated through promotion	2.26	0.92	Low Extent
25	Teachers enjoy their inalienable right always	2.84	0.91	High Extent
	<b>Cluster Mean =</b>	<b>2.27</b>	<b>0.82</b>	

Results in table 5 shows that except for item 25 that had mean score of 2.84 all other items had mean scores far below the mean score of 2.5. The cluster mean of 2.27 which is far below 2.5 indicates that the teachers self-actualization needs are to a low extent met in primary schools.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results in table 1 indicate that in the opinion of teachers, the physiological needs of food, clothing and shelter as propounded by Maslow

are not yet met in the motivation of primary school teachers. These findings are in line with the observations made by Okonkwo (2000), Ngwoke (2004) and Agu (2007) regarding the way and manner teachers in Nigeria are being neglected in the provision of physiological needs. It is not strange that the teachers responses attracted negative reactions because of the long neglect of teachers welfare in Nigeria. It is a common practice in Nigeria for the teachers to go on strike before their basic needs or requests are met by the government.

Results in table 2 show that the teachers safety needs are to an extent met by the government. These findings correspond with the opinions of Ejiofor (2001) Okpara (2002) and Ugwuegede (2002) who asserted that Nigeria teachers experience safety needs such as receiving retirement benefits, termination of teachers appointment through due process and provision of death benefit to teachers among other fringe benefits. With the passage of free information bill by the National Assembly in 2010 and the present democratic dispensation in place, teachers in Nigeria can now fight for their rights at all times. Before now, the welfare of teachers is treated with levity. Ukeje (1993) posited that teachers are the pivot of the educative process. He contended that it is the teacher who translates educational policies into practice and programmes into action. There is then need to modify and implement some principles of Maslow need theory into the Nigeria Primary School system to make teachers more productive.

Result in table 3 show that the teachers social needs are met to some extent. The findings of the present study is in disagreement with the views of pervious studies (Eneasator 2002 Onah, 2003 and Azubike, 2006) who asserted that teachers in primary school operate under a deplorable condition and this affect their productivity. This ugly trend may have improved with the payment of teachers special salary otherwise known as "Teachers Special Salary Scale (TSSC) currently enjoyed by teachers in Nigeria.

Results in table 4 show that teachers esteem needs are yet to be met by the government. The outcome of this study is in consonance with the opinion of Ukeje (1999) Okeke (1999) and Ozor (2007). These scholars observed that the Nigerian teachers at all levels are yet to be accorded with due respect and dignity by the government and the general public. Nnoli (2008) asserted that teachers are yet to take part in decisions affecting their welfare. There is no gainsaying the fact that this ugly development may have adversely affected teachers task performance at the primary school level. Again Farber and Miller (1981) contended that teachers are rarely allowed autonomy and spontaneity to be innovative in their teaching methods and this leaves them disgruntled and innovated.

Results in table 5 also show that teachers self actualization needs are not met. This finding is in consonance with the observations of Atakpa (1999), Enyi (2002) and Okeke-Ezeanyianwu (2006) who opined that teachers efforts in Nigeria are not adequately remunerated like other professionals such as medical doctors, lawyers, pharmacists among others. It is a common practice in Nigeria for teachers to attend workshops with their own fund.

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Again, the upgrading of teachers after acquiring additional certificate is not automatic as it takes years before such request is honoured by the government.

#### **Implications for the Study**

The implications of the findings of this study is that the inability of the government to fully implement the Maslows Need Theory of (1952) has adversely affected teachers productivity. According to Ivancivich, Loremi, Skinner & Crosby, (1994) Maslow's ideas will help us to understand that every one has a basic need that must be satisfied and the only way to satisfy these need is through hard work. This indicates that teachers must work hard for them to be remunerated accordingly.

Another implication is that this theory does not work in all cultures and among all persons. Agu (2003) asserted that experience and empirical studies have proved that people vary extensively on how hard they work and consequently in their performance or output. Above all motivation still remains a critical factor in influencing behaviour and attitude to work in all cultures.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study and the implications thereof, the following recommendations are made:

- (1) The government should recognize teachers efforts by motivating them through promotions, seminar and scholarships.
- (2) The Headmasters and Headmistresses should encourage their teachers to aspire to achieve greater heights and positions in life. This could be accomplished when the teachers are given the opportunity to go into inservice training so as to up-date their knowledge.
- (3) The governments, parents, and other stakeholders in education should accord respect and honour to teachers in view of their important role in child upbringing and moulding of people's character. For instance teachers who have distinguished themselves through the performance of spectacular task should be identified and given award.
- (4) Teachers should realize that even when all their needs are not met, they must have a change of attitude and assume a positive professional attitude, show more willingness, and moral commitment in their professional duties.
- (5) The government should from time to time meet with the National Union of Teachers (NUT) to ascertain their basic needs and possibly proffer solutions to them. This proactive measure will help to reduce incidence of strike actions often embarked upon by teachers in Nigeria.



## CONCLUSION

This study investigated the extent to which Maslows Need theory could be applied in the motivation of Primary School teachers in Anambra State. The study identified the five areas of Maslows Need Theory viz, physiological needs, safety needs, social/belonging needs, esteem needs and self actualization. Out of these five major areas of the Need theory, only the social needs of teachers were met by the government and therefore applicable. The rest of the needs were not yet met.

It is therefore only reasonable that the application of the Maslow Need theory is cautiously applied to increase teachers productivity. The teachers as key player should endeavour to live upto expectations by performing their task of research, teaching and character moulding.

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