Need Saliency and Job Involvement :Test of a Cross-Cultural Model

Fakir Mohan Sahoo,   Arjun Mitra,   and   Adyasha Mahanti
Xavier University, Bhubaneswar   Utkal University, Bhubaneswar

The need saliency construct of job involvement posits that job involvement is significantly related to salient need satisfaction and is unrelated to non-salient need satisfaction. This is in sharp contrast to the Western Maslow-type of framework where satisfaction of so-called higher-order needs is stressed as a way to enhance job motivation. In order to test the cross-cultural model of need saliency, the work-behaviour questionnaire was administered to managers working in the IT sector. Seventy-six employees participated in the study of which 45 were Indian managers and 31 were overseas managers. The participants were contacted through professional networking sites like LinkedIn and social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. The questionnaire scaled individuals' priority of job outcome factors, satisfaction of salient needs and non-salient needs, total need satisfaction and job involvement. Results evinced a significant relationship between salient need satisfaction and job involvement; non-salient need satisfaction was unrelated to job involvement. The findings were explained within the framework of cross-cultural model of job involvement. Major implications were outlined.

Keywords: Need saliency, job involvement, cross-cultural model, work motivation

One of the most persistent and prominent facts that has emerged from the rapid development of industry is the importance of motivational orientation of employees. In more recent times, the human aspects of workers have been subjected to much closer examination. Consequently, there has been an increased understanding of the dynamic factors underlying behaviour and an increased appreciation of the significance of affect, attitude and motivation. Good management and high productivity go hand in hand. The concept of productivity has come into much greater prominence during recent years in the context of rapid development. In fact, higher production, greater consumption and better quality of life are possible through efficacious management of employees' motivation.

A machine can be repaired if and when necessary but a human mind cannot be easily rectified. Hence, it is very important to motivate an employee from the beginning. The motivational scheme plays a major role to get the cooperation of employees. In the words of Vroom (1964), the more motivated the worker, the more effective is the performance. Since productivity is the effect of performance, it is logical to conclude that proper motivation increases productivity.

Despite the importance of the process of motivation, the construct of work motivation does not appear to be similar across cultures in its application.

The Maslow-type Framework

The psychological formulation of alienation has basically followed the humanistic tradition suggested by Maslow (1954). Maslow initially suggested a theory of personality which was later applied to organizational setup. One of the most popular theories on human motivation was formulated by Maslow. Focusing chiefly on his clinical experience, he thought a person's motivational needs can be arranged on a hierarchical manner. In essence, he believed that once a given level of need is satisfied, it no longer serves to motivate the individual. The need hierarchy of five levels by Maslow has gained wide attention. The five levels are physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs.

The physiological needs involve basic survival. People must labour to satisfy their physiological needs, but when these needs are satisfied to a substantial degree, they wish to satisfy the next higher need. The need level that next tends to dominate is safety and security. People want physical safety as well as economic security. The want of man is unending and continuous; therefore, all needs are never fully satisfied. As soon as one need is satisfied, its potency is diminished, and another need emerges to replace it. This is a never-ending process which serves to motivate individuals to strive to satisfy their needs. There is an important organizational implication of this construct of hierarchy. The lower order needs (physiological, safety, and love needs) reach their peak in terms of their potency and they start declining in their motivational strength. In contrast, higher-order-needs (self-esteem and self-actualization) reach their peak points and continue at that level. For example, employees may seek their respect and recognition (a self-esteem need) initially amongst their colleagues. Yet, gradually they shift their focus from colleagues to regional context, then to national and international contexts. Thus, self-esteem needs do not lose their potency and stand at a very high level. This is also the case of self-actualization needs. From the perspectives of organization, this proposition has an important implication. It is assumed that higher-order-needs are not completely satisfied. Hence, the organization that capitalizes on these higher and intrinsic needs motivates their employees for a longer period of time. In other words, an organization is effective in motivating its employees to the extent it creates conditions for the satisfaction of higher order needs.

Herzberg (1966) draws the same conclusion while using a slightly different language of motivation. He observed that people are essentially independent of each other and they affect behaviour in different ways. Herzberg termed the first category of need as hygiene or maintenance factors and the second category of needs as motivators. There is a similarity between Maslow's and Herzberg's conceptualization. Maslow's lower order needs are hygiene / maintenance factors in Herzberg's terminology. Similarly, Maslow's higher-order-needs are similar to Herzberg's motivators. In general, Maslow-type framework emphasizes job content factors as interesting and challenging nature of tasks.

Taking Maslow's theory as the starting point, Alderfer (1972) has built up a theory which he claims has realistic applications in work organizations. According to him, Maslow's five levels of needs can be rearranged into three: "existence, relatedness and growth". This approach is termed as 'ERG' theory. The existence needs include all forms of physiological and safety needs (Maslow's first two levels of needs). Relatedness needs include relationship with other people (social needs of Maslow's third level). Growth needs include self-esteem and self-actualization needs. According to Alderfer's ERG theory, different kinds of needs can operate simultaneously and if a particular path towards the satisfaction is blocked, the individuals will persist along that path and at the same time regress towards more easily satisfied needs. In this way, he distinguished between chronic needs which persist overtime and the episode needs which are situational and can be changed according to the environment.

However, there are limitations of these work motivation theories as Maslow-type conceptualizations were formulated and developed in Euro-American contexts. There is cultural bias built into the system. In western societies, much premium is given to individuality and individual needs are considered more important than collective needs. This bias is reflected in the theories of Maslow and Herzberg. In view of these considerations, the application of Maslow type explanations of work motivation appears inappropriate to non-western situations.

Maslow provided no empirical substantiation, and several studies that sought to validate it found no support for it (Robbins, Judge & Vohra, 2013). There is little evidence that need structures are organized as Maslow proposed that unsatisfied need activates movement to a new need level (Wahba & Bridwell, 1976).

The position taken by the Maslow-type models is not tenable on two grounds. First, one can argue that satisfaction of intrinsic needs at work may be a sufficient, but not a necessary, condition for work involvement. Work involvement does not necessarily depend on job characteristics that allow for satisfaction of needs for control and autonomy. It must be emphasized that employees have a variety of needs, some more salient than others. The saliency of the needs in any particular person is determined by his or her past socialization in a particular culture and is constantly modified by present job conditions. Different groups of people, because of their different socialization training or different cultural background, may develop different need saliency patterns. They may value extrinsic and intrinsic job outcomes very differently. A specific set of needs (e.g., growth needs) may be salient in one group of employees, but not in another group. A group of employee that considers growth to be the core of their self-image may get involved in jobs that are perceived as offering opportunity for growth. However, such characteristic may not be a crucial consideration in the determination of the job involvement or alienation of some other groups.

A recent study (Huang & DeVliert, 2003) attempted to answer how various factors contribute to job involvement and job satisfaction in different culture. The authors distinguished between intrinsic job characteristics (for example, having a job that allows one to use one's skills) and extrinsic job characteristics (for example, receiving pay that is competitive). The study found that, across all countries, extrinsic job characteristics were significantly related to job involvement and job satisfaction. However, countries differed in the extent to which intrinsic job characteristics predicted job involvement and job satisfaction. Wealthier countries, countries with stronger social security, countries that stress individualism rather than collectivism, and countries with smaller power distance showed a stronger relationship between the intrinsic job characteristics and job involvement/ satisfaction. It can be conjectured that in countries with

greater wealth and social security, concerns over survival are taken for granted. These employees have the freedom to place greater importance on intrinsic aspects of the job.

The second reason for the nontenability of the Maslow model lies in the faulty assumption Protestant-Ethic-type socialization training is the only appropriate way to achieve greater work involvement and consequent industrial development. It must be pointed out that the socialization of the Protestant Ethic variety is not the only type of training that increases work involvement. Any type of training by which people realize that making their role central in their lives can fulfill their needs will increase work involvement.

In many Western cultures, individualism is valued and individuals emphasize autonomy and achievement. The Protestant work-ethic in these cultures train people to value work as being good and central to one's life. In contrast, socialization in many Eastern and Third World countries promote in their members a sense of collectivism and saliency of social and security needs. In these cultures, religious preaching about achieving universal brotherhood of mankind and religious practices advocating the value of sacrificing self-interest for the benefit of others have a different socializing influence. People in these cultures develop a belief in the centrality of work not because work can promote personal achievement, but because it can fulfill the collectivist goals of brotherhood and sharing in life. The Hindu religion, for example encourages a form of work ethic that considers work as central to one's life, but maintains that it must performed as a duty in the service of others (Misra, 1979).

The case of Japan provides another example of a work ethic resulting from Confucianism (a non-Protestant variety). In her classic work, Nakane (1970) distinguishes between the concepts of "frame" and "attribute". She concludes that the Japanese tend to attach more importance to the frame, or organizational situation, within which the individual operates than to the attribute or personal characteristics of the individual. Similarly, Cheng and Stockdale

(2003) compared organizational commitment of Chinese employees to that of Canadian and South Korean workers. While the three types of commitment – normative, continuance and affective – were found in all three cultures they differed in importance. Normative commitment, an obligation to remain with an organization for moral or ethical reasons, was higher in the Chinese sample than in the Canadian and South Korean samples. Affective commitment, an emotional attachment to the organization and a belief in its values, was also strong in China. Chinese emphasize loyalty to one's group. Continuance commitment, the perceived economic value of remaining in an organization was lower in the Chinese sample.

The lack of cross-cultural applicability of the Western model and the problems on interpretation of studies based on those models has led to the development of a new, pan cultural formulation of the issue (Sahoo & Das, 2011; Sahoo, Sahoo & Das, 20110.

Need Saliency

The construct of need saliency assumes that there is no fixed hierarchy of needs across several subsets of human population. At an empirical level, people attach greater priority to certain needs as compared to other needs. The saliency of needs in any individual is determined by his/her past socialization in a given culture and is constantly modified by present conditions. Moreover, motivation is determined by salient need satisfaction potential. More specifically, need saliency formulation points the following two basic propositions:

(i)   Job involvement is significantly related to salient need satisfaction

(ii) Job involvement is unrelated to non-salient need satisfaction.

In a study (Sahoo, 2000), 240 employees from administrative and financial organization were assessed with respect to their work involvement. Half of the employees in each organization type were officers whereas other half of employees was assistants. The examination of predicted pattern of relationship showed that work involvement was significantly

related to the satisfaction of salient needs and it was unrelated to the satisfaction of non-salient needs.

Most of the literature on involvement and motivation is based on observations of western societies where the need for personal achievement, control, autonomy, and power are considered most important for an individual. Western findings claim that intrinsic need satisfaction and protestant-ethic type of socialization training lead to greater involvement and motivation. These western models are inapplicable in non-western societies. They reflect a cultural bias. People belonging to different cultures differ with respect to the importance they attach to different needs. So they may develop a different need structure.

The proposed formulation can be otherwise called the "motivational approach". Within the framework of the motivational approach, the concepts of involvement and alienation are viewed as opposite poles in the same continuum. This continuum refers to the psychological states or experiences of individual workers and is conceived to be cognitive and one-dimensional in nature. Furthermore the motivational approach makes a distinction between alienation from work in general and alienation from specific aspects of work, such as one's present job and organization. The former represents some generalized work values whereas the latter represents more specific beliefs regarding one's present job.

At any given moment, the need saliency within people depends on their previous socialization process and on the perceived potential of the job environment to satisfy their needs. The saliency is determined by their past experiences with groups of which they were members (cultural influence) and jobs that they have held.

As a contradistinction to Maslow-type western model, the need saliency model basically asserts the following two hypotheses.

Hypotheses:

1.   Job involvement is significantly related to salient need satisfaction.

2. Job involvement is unrelated to non-salient need satisfaction.

Method

Participants:

In order to test the pan cultural model of need saliency on IT sector employees, the work behaviour questionnaire was administered to managers working in the IT sector. Seventy six employees participated in the study of which forty-five were Indian managers and thirty one were overseas managers who were sampled from Information Technology sector. The participants were contacted through professional networking site like LinkedIn and social networking site like Facebook and Twitter. The overseas respondents represented different nationalities like USA, UK, Denmark, Scotland, Sweden, France, South Korea and UAE. Most of the participants were in the age group of 25-35 years (Mean = 29.68 and Standard Deviation = 9.41).

Measures:

The questionnaire used in a multi-part measure of job involvement and work involvement. It is developed by Kanungo (1982). The measures have been transculturally used and their psychometric efficiency has been reported by Kanungo (1982). While Saleh (2001) has reported a split-half reliability of .94 and test-retest reliability of .88 for this scale, subsequent use of the measure in Indian and cross-cultural contexts has generated satisfactory level of reliability and validity (Sahoo & Das, 2011; Sahoo, Sahoo, & Das, 2011).

Perceived Importance of Job Factors. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to assess employee's perception of job outcomes. This part of questionnaire contained only items that assess respondent's view on the value of their present job in their lives. Respondents are required to indicate the perceived instrumentality of their job for them by ranking job factors according to their perceived importance. The job factors are listed in random order. Eight of these factors are organizationally controlled extrinsic job factors. These include comfortable working conditions, sound company policy, adequate earning, fair pay, promotion opportunity, fringe benefits, job security and opportunity for professional growth. There are four interpersonally mediated extrinsic job outcomes: technically competent supervisor, considerate supervisor, interpersonal relation, and respect and recognition. The remaining three factors are intrinsic in nature; these are responsibility and independence, a sense of achievement, and interesting nature of work.

The priority ratings indicated by respondent can be analyzed across groups. It is important to note that the factors receiving first two ratings (i.e. 1 & 2) are considered salient needs, whereas factors receiving last two ratings (i.e. 14 & 15) are considered non-salient needs. The identification of salient and non-salient needs of an individual is employed to ensure other responses of the individuals with respect to his or her salient and non-salient needs.

In order to identify salient and non-salient needs of a group, mean priority rating for each need is computed. Once mean priority ratings for all 15 needs are computed, the two specific needs yielding top most mean priority ratings are designated salient needs. In contrast, the two specific needs receiving lowest mean priority ratings are designated non-salient needs.

Job Satisfaction Measures. In the second part of the questionnaire, respondents are asked to indicate on a six point scale their present level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in their job with respect to each of the 15 job factors. The job factors are again randomized in this part of the questionnaire. In addition, respondents are also asked to indicate their overall job satisfaction.

The sum of ratings across all items indicates the total amount of satisfaction. It is also possible to compute salient needs satisfaction score of an individual by summing up ratings across his/her most salient needs. Similarly, non-salient needs satisfaction score can be computed by summing up ratings across non-salient needs of an individual in the form of his/her priority rating given in the first part of the questionnaire. Furthermore, overall need satisfaction is shown by the individual in terms of his or her response to the 16th item of the questionnaire.

Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ). JIQ present 15 statements which directly reflect a cognitive state of psychological identification with a particular job which depends on the saliency of his/her needs and the perception he/she has about the need satisfying potentialities of the job. This part also contains 5 filler items which are not scored.

Thus, the scale contains 10 JIQ items. Some of the items include; "the most important things that happen to me involve my present job", "most of my interests are centered around my job", "usually I feel detached from my job", "I like to be absorbed in my job most of the time". Respondents are asked to indicate their agreement / disagreement on a six point scale. The items are keyed in both the direction. The category includes points from agreement to complete disagreement. Participants are asked to indicate their responses for each of the items. The JIQ score is obtained by summing up individual item scores.

Finally respondents are asked to indicate their age and education.

Results

The basic purpose of the present investigation is to examine the need saliency proposition that job involvement is significantly related to salient need satisfaction and unrelated to non-salient need satisfaction. In order to test these hypotheses appropriate statistical analyses are carried out. Table 1 depicts salient needs and non-salient needs as experienced by Indian and overseas managers (see Table 1). Table 1 shows that both Indian managers as well as overseas managers' report interesting nature of work as the most salient need. However Indian managers view adequate earning as the next salient need whereas overseas managers considers responsibility and independence as the second most important need.

In the context of non-salient needs it is shown that Indian managers view considerate and sympathetic superior as the non-salient needs whereas overseas managers' report organizational policies and practices as non-salient needs. In addition both Indian managers and overseas managers view technically competent supervisors as the least important (non-salient) need.

The relationship between need satisfaction and job involvement is examined in the form of correlation analyses. In the group of Indian managers, the association is examined between salient need satisfaction and involvement measure. The salient need satisfaction is significantly related to JIQ, $r(43) = .37$, $p<.05$. In contrast, the relationship between non-salient need satisfaction and JIQ is non-significant, $r(43) = .17$, n.s.. The total needs satisfaction is significantly related to JIQ, $r(43) = .37$, $p<.05$. The overall needs satisfaction is also highly related to JIQ, $r(43) = .50$, $p<.001$.

Table 1: Identification of Salient and Non-salient Needs of Respondents

Groups	Salient Needs	Non-Salient Needs
Indian Managers	1.Interesting nature of work(a job that you very much enjoy)	1.Considerate and sympathetic superior
	2.Adequate earning(for a better standard of living)	2.Technically competent superior
Overseas Managers	1.Interesting nature of work(a job that you very much enjoy)	1.Sound organizational policies and practice (reasonable and nondiscriminating)
	2.Responsibility and dependence (a job that gives you responsibility to work in your own way)	2.Technically competent superior

In case of overseas managers, the salient needs satisfaction is significantly related to JIQ, r(29) = .38, p<.05. In contrast the relationship between non-salient needs satisfaction and JIQ is non-significant, r(29) = .11, n.s.. The total needs satisfaction is significantly related to JIQ, r(29) = .33, p<.05, and the relationship between overall need satisfaction and JIQ is also significant, r(29) = .35, p<.05.

In addition, the group comparison is investigated. With respect to salient need satisfaction, the result does not show significant group difference, t (74) = 1.50, n.s. The examination of mean scores indicates that Indian managers' report as much salient need satisfaction as do overseas managers (M= 8.18 and 9.04, respectively).

The t comparison performed on non-salient need satisfaction shows no significant group difference, t (74) .64, n.s.. The examination of mean scores indicates that the Indian managers reports as much non-salient need satisfaction as do overseas managers (M= 7.96 and 8.32, respectively).

The t-value with respect to total needs satisfaction does not show significant group difference, t (74) = 1.68, n.s.. The examination of mean scores clearly shows that the Indian managers' report as much total needs satisfaction as do the overseas managers (M = 59.64 and 65.57, respectively). In case of the overall need satisfaction, the t-value clearly shows that there exists no significant group difference, t (74) = 2.57, n.s.. The mean scores examined shows that the Indian managers' report as much overall need satisfaction as do overseas managers (M

= 3.82 and 4.58, respectively).

The t value with respect to the JIQ does not show significant group difference,t (74) = 2.18, n.s. The examination of mean scores clearly shows that the Indian managers' report as much job involvement as do overseas managers (M = 49.77 and 55.97, respectively).

Table 2 depicts the relationship between age and other variables (see Table 2). In the group of Indian managers, there is negative relationship between age and salient need satisfaction. It denotes that salient needs satisfaction of Indian managers' declines with their advancing age. However, non-salient need satisfaction is unrelated to age, but age is negatively related to total need satisfaction. It denotes that total need satisfaction declines with advancing age of Indian managers. However overall need satisfaction and job involvement as measured by JIQ are unrelated to age.

In contrast, the patterns of correlations obtained from responses of overseas managers indicate that each of the variables is independent of age. When the total pool of participants is taken into consideration, it is revealed that job involvement is significantly related to age. This means that managers demonstrate more and more job involvement with increase in level of their age.

In sum, the results show that both Indian and overseas managers regard interesting nature of work as the most salient need. However, Indian managers view adequate earning as the second most important need while overseas managers' report responsibility and independence as next most important need. Both the hypotheses are empirically supported; job involvement is

Table 2: Correlation Between Age and Other Variables

Variables	Indian Managers (n=45)	Overseas Managers (n=31)	All Managers (N=76)
Salient Needs Satisfaction	-.30*	-.09	.01
Non-salient Needs Satisfaction	-.11	-.12	-.04
Total Needs Satisfaction	-.31*	-.04	.05
Overall Needs Satisfaction	-.10	-.07	.11
JIQ	.01	.30	.30**

*p<.05 ,**p<.01

significantly related to salient need satisfaction; job involvement is unrelated to non-salient need satisfaction.

As expected, job involvement is significantly related to total need satisfaction as well as overall need satisfaction. There is no significant group difference between Indian managers and overseas managers with respect to salient need satisfaction, non-salient need satisfaction, total need satisfaction and overall need satisfaction. There is also no group difference on job involvement. In the group of Indian managers only, both salient need satisfaction and total need satisfaction are negatively related to age. This implies that salient need satisfaction and total need satisfaction decline with advancing age of Indian managers. In the group of overseas managers, these parameters are independent of age. Finally job involvement is found to be related to age of managers when total pool of managers is considered. This denotes an increasing level of job involvement with advancing age of managers.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study is crucial both from theoretical and applied standpoints. Theoretically, it makes a significant contribution to an important area of motivation literature. The Maslow-type of framework studied in terms of need hierarchy suffers from two limitations. First, its strong valorization indicating that lower-order needs (so called extrinsic needs) are somewhat inferior to higher-order needs is not consistent with contemporary value-neutrality of science. Second, most of the assumptions built in Maslow-type of framework are derived from individualistic societies of the West where individuals' needs are given more premium.

As a contradistinction to such ethnocentric bias, the present conceptualization in terms of need saliency provides a cross-cultural model of job involvement. It is equally applicable to both western and eastern societies. The model does not recognize hierarchy; rather it recognizes the differing need satisfaction potential of an outcome. Obviously different outcomes have different need satisfaction potential; as a result,

people in a given subset of human population attach different priorities to different outcome factors. The factors that have emerged as salient needs in this study may not emerge as such in other populations of managers.

In a recent study, DeVoe and Iyengar (2004) found interesting differences in managers' perception of employee motivation. The study examined managers from three distinct cultural regions: North America, Asia and Latin America. The results of the study revealed that North American managers perceive their employees as being motivated more by extrinsic factors (for example, pay) than intrinsic factors (for example, doing meaningful work). Asian managers perceive their employees as being motivated by both extrinsic and intrinsic factors, while Latin American managers perceive their employees as being motivated by intrinsic factors. Paradoxically, North American managers though believing that employees are primarily motivated by extrinsic factors actually focused more on intrinsic factors while evaluating employee performance. One explanation is that North Americans value uniqueness, so any deviation from the norm – such as being perceived unusually high in intrinsic motivation is rewarded. Latin American managers focus on intrinsic motivation may be related to a cultural norm termed simpatia, a tradition that compels employees to display their internal feelings. Consequently, Latin American managers are more sensitized to these displays.

Similarly, job satisfaction appears to be a relevant concept across cultures. Yet, there are cultural differences. Evidence suggests that employees in Western cultures have higher levels of job satisfaction than those in Eastern cultures (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007; Tsui, Nifadkar & Ou, 2007). While exploring the possible causes, evidence suggested that individuals in Eastern cultures value negative emotions more than do individuals in Western cultures, whereas those in Western cultures tend to emphasize positive emotions and individual happiness (Benz & Frey, 2003; Warr, 2007).

Watson Wyatt's Work-India survey found that, like their Asian counterparts, Indian workers

are the least satisfied with their compensation and benefits. However, more Indian workers (39 percent) rated this category favourably than did workers in any other country in this region. This study revealed that, compared to employees in any other Asian countries, Indian workers are happier with their work environment teamwork, supervision, and training at the workplace.

Watson Wyatt's Work Study covering 11 countries in the Asia-Pacific region explored how engaged workers in various regions are. It was found that European workers lead with the highest level of engagement, followed by workers in the Asia-Pacific region. U.S. workers are the least engaged. Shorter work weeks, work-life balance, and vacation time keep engagement high in Europe. In-spite of the fact that work conditions in Asia are below Western standards, the buoyancy in economy and optimistic job outlook is keeping workers engaged. Within Asia-Pacific region, India leads with engagement levels at 78 percent, followed by the Philippines. Japan scores the lowest. Despite the economic growth in China, it does not score high on engagement score (Goyal, 2008).

Thus, sensitivity towards cultural differences in needs, values, involvement, engagement and satisfaction is a crucial element. The conceptual flavor of need saliency and its application message offers justice to such sensitivity.

While Sahoo and his associates have examined the validity of the model in different settings in India (Sahoo, 2000; Sahoo & Das, 2011; Sahoo & Rath, 2003; Sahoo, Sahoo & Das, 2011), the extension of this model to cross-cultural context is a significant element. It is also important to recognize the need saliency model is not limited to motivation. This appears to be a robust framework for examining other issues as well. For example, Sahoo (2009) extended this model to examine well-being among the aged. It was shown the well-being of the aged is significantly related to the salient need satisfaction of the aged. Interestingly, females in urban, semiurban and rural areas of Odisha reported the "opportunity to play and talk with grandchildren" as the most important (salient)

needs whereas males reported financial self-sufficiency as the salient need. Sahoo (2004) also found positive association between salient need satisfaction and mental health.

Implications

The cross-cultural model of job involvement suggests important clues for social technology. Generally executives and leaders approach motivation scenarios with the preconceived notions that higher-order-needs offer the solution. Driven by Maslow-type of formulation, they take steps for the satisfaction of higher-order-needs (as expressed in need hierarchy construct) with a view to augmenting employees' motivation.

The empirical validity of the present cross-cultural model posits the contrary viewpoint: salient needs are to be derived from the population concerned. Hence planners and leaders need to approach the whole situation with an open-mindedness. Salient needs are different across different subset of employees; these are also different across contexts. Once identified, involvement enhancing steps can easily be taken.

Finally, it is suggested that the extension of the model to other areas of behavioural issues (psychological well-being, positive relationship, healthy school environment) would be useful from a broader perspective.

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Fakir Mohan Sahoo, PhD, Research Professor, Xavier Institute of Management, Xavier Square, Bhubaneswar – 751013 Email: fakrimohan@ximb.ac.in

Arjun Mitra, Research Scholar, Xavier Institute of Management, Xavier Square, Bhubaneswar – 751013 Email: uh13011@stu.ximb.ac.in

Adyasha Mahanti, Research Scholar, Psychology Department, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar – 751001 Email: addy2329@gmail.com